

Welcome Todd!

Post by "Cassius" of January 14, 2023 at 1:52 PM

Absolutely in my case probably head and shoulders THE most important book in turning my thinking was Thomas Paine's Age of Reason. For me it was important in opening my mind to see that someone with a pretty sterling "Founding Father" reputation thought the way he did. Starting with that I went on a binge reading campaign of other deist writers, and of course including Jefferson's material as well. But Age of Reason stands out as so clearly written as to be in a class by itself. So many writings of that period seem dated when you read them today, but Paine's writing style seemed to me (at least at the time) to be like it was written yesterday.

Yes you're right of course that Paine and most of the others in that period were into Deism, so that's a major limitation. Figuring out why they considered themselves to be materialists but refused to go full Epicurean would be an interesting study in itself.

Eventually the deism reading led me to Thomas Cooper who produced some good material too, which I have found useful at times with religious people:

<https://thomascoopermd.com>

Especially his Jefferson-endorsed: [Scripture Doctrine of Materialism](#)