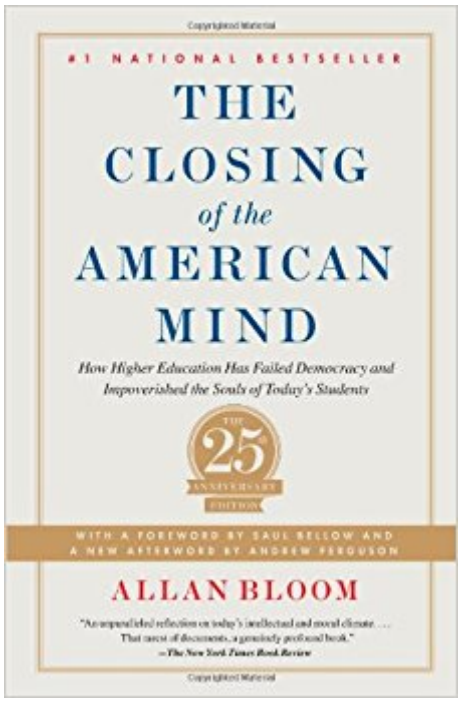
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Closing Of The American Mind: How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy And Impoverished The Souls Of Today's Students



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Synopsis

The brilliant, controversial, bestselling critique of American culture that Ã¢â ¬Å“hits with the approximate force and effect of electroshock therapyÃ¢â ¬Â• (The New York Times)Ã¢â ¬â •now featuring a new afterword by Andrew Ferguson in a twenty-fifth anniversary edition.THE BRILLIANT AND CONTROVERSIAL CRITIQUE OF AMERICAN CULTURE WITH NEARLY A MILLION COPIES IN PRINT Ã Â In 1987, eminent political philosopher Allan Bloom published The Closing of the American Mind, an appraisal of contemporary America that Ã¢â ¬Å“hits with the approximate force and effect of electroshock therapyÃ¢â ¬Â• (The New York Times) and has not only been vindicated, but has also become more urgent today. In clear, spirited prose, Bloom argues that the social and political crises of contemporary America are part of a larger intellectual crisis: the result of a dangerous narrowing of curiosity and exploration by the university elites. Now, in this twenty-fifth anniversary edition, acclaimed author and journalist Andrew Ferguson contributes a new essay that describes why BloomÃ¢â ¬â„¢s argument caused such a furor at publication and why our culture so deeply resists its truths today.

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Customer Reviews

This work by a University of Chicago professor was a bestseller in cloth. According to PW, "marred by the author’s biases, this jeremiad laments the decay of the humanities, the decline of the family and students’ spiritual rootlessness and unconnectedness to traditions." Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Bloom is angry about college studentstolerant of everything, they cannot appreciate the virtues of Lockean democracy and often abandon the great questions about God and man. Meanwhile, the humanities are like "a refugee camp where all the geniuses driven out of their jobs and countries . . . are idling." The reason is partly relativism in the social sciences but largely German philosophers since Nietzsche, especially Heidegger, who "put philosophy at the service of German culture." Bloom's case about the humanities and German philosophy deserves an ear, but his students from "the twenty or thirty best U.S. universities" are nothing like my recent American students, who pursue the old questions with vim and vigor. Perhaps they do not belong to Bloom's elite. Leslie Armour, Philosophy Dept., Univ. of Ottawa, CanadaCopyright 1987 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I have read, in recent memory.Okay in all honesty I expected this book to be a shallow polemic along the lines of some of the "popular" authors today, pushing an agenda and setting up straw man arguments, to provide an illusion of balance. Bloom, never backs down or even bother to set up "illusory" counter theses to further his, he just piles on the examples, historical as well as contemporary to nail his indictment of the vapidness of modern "Higher Education."His thesis that the university today, reflects the general detachment of American society from the Puritan moral values that were paramount throughout American history, is conclusion that I would not have put together.Is this book dated? When I started reading it I would ha e said yes, but as I digest the matter I have just completed, I see in myself the same sins of "culture" and value relativism that he sees as the symptom of the deconstruction of a Liberal education. As a engineering graduate, I hear in my own thoughts of a "superior" education that had very little of the messy humanities as part of my experience. I see that attitude as a shortcoming after reading Bloom, and one that sadly will be difficult to correct. Not that I am going to give up my technical high-paying career to become a philosopher, but I will now be forced to read and reread the very authors that Bloom uses to bolster his argument that it is those questions about values and the role of Man in relation to everything else that is important.I found myself lost in a sea of ideas that I really had not considered at times and Bloom has the tendency to be over pedantic at times. My lack of depth to fully critique his philosophical and historical arguments provides hope that perhaps I will broaden the depth of my literary and historical perspective as Bloom suggests is the failing of my liberal education.

Review of: "The Closing of The American Mind: How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and

Impoverished the Souls of Today’s Students."First published in 1987, Professor Bloom’s seminal treatise on the failed moral culture as perpetrated by our educational systems has proven a watershed moment some 29 years later. In short, his insights have proven true and he has been vindicated from any negative criticism. The text is broken down into contents of three major parts: Part One - Students; Part Two - Nihilism, American Style; and Part Three - The University. The accurate observations made from his vantage allowed Professor Bloom to reduce them to writing as he witnessed the fundamental changes of the educational system in response to the changes in cultural self-centeredness, values, morality, etc. In this case Bloom’s observations were like young chickens that absolutely came home to roost. Today, our children know little or next to nothing about classical education and the premises upon which our Nation was founded. The nuclear family has been reconstructed next to the point of being completely destroyed and our civil society and government have been inherently corrupted. Bloom opines on page 381, "The community of man, in the midst of all the self-contradictory simulacra of community, is the community of those who seek the truth, of the potential knowers, that is, in principle, of all men to the extent they desire to know." These are the ones who can still save our educational institutions and thus our civilization. Let’s hope it is not too late. Excellent at five stars.

Good book examining how our society has taken a turn for the worst. He examines many facets of our society.

Should be required reading for all Americans.

A little outdated. However that just gives more voice to the issues and concerns bloom was trying to express. great read!

Good book. Explains a lot of things about the decay of society.

I have only read the first 2 chapters, but - WOW - really makes me think. I agree with his main points, and look forward to finishing. Not ’easy reading’ -- a deep subject.

brilliant, although I got a bit lost in the middle of the book. It was my ignorance of philosophy rather than any thing else. Made me read up on what I should know any way. Highly recommended .

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