

1988

Allan Bloom - Closing of the American Mind Study Guide

Steven Alan Samson

Liberty University, ssamson@liberty.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/gov_fac_pubs

 Part of the [Other Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#), [Political Science Commons](#), and the [Public Affairs, Public Policy and Public Administration Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Samson, Steven Alan, "Allan Bloom - Closing of the American Mind Study Guide" (1988). *Faculty Publications and Presentations*. 258. http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/gov_fac_pubs/258

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Helms School of Government at DigitalCommons@Liberty University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Publications and Presentations by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Liberty University. For more information, please contact scholarlycommunication@liberty.edu.

Blum - "The Victor"

1. Belief in the relativity of truth \rightarrow openness, fear of intolerance (cf. Hillebrand on pluralism).
 - students cannot defend their opinions - they have simply been indoctrinated
2. Early American education ~~was~~ modeled on the national and industrial man. It has evolved in the last half century from the education of democratic man to the education of the democratic personality.
3. Absolute freedom can tolerate no other absolutes - clear and present danger should see preservation of public ~~and~~ order as the only common good - rejects historicism
4. Civic education now debunks American roots. It is liberalism divorced of natural rights. Ethnocentrism rejected. Indeterminateness becomes a moral imperative. (Lehman)
5. Founding fathers considered minorities bad things - factors were to be restrained. Today - cultural question is valued. The young only acquire a smattering of facts and social scientific formulas. Indifference found foreign places.
6. American culture is in mean, indifference to curriculum content. Damages aspect of global education.
7. Greeks were the first to address the problem of ethnocentrism. Cultural relativism, on the other hand, destroys the west's universal or intellectually superioristic claims - learning it to be just another culture. (D.G.)
8. Historicism is a means to avoid testing our prejudices
9. The best of dogmatism (41) = desire to know what is good; surrendering to what is most powerful

Blam - ~~University~~ University

1. Tradition provides model of discussion on a uniquely high level (cf. ^{Calvin} King).
2. Great danger of the endorsement ^{of democracy} of the majority. Demos of elements from tradition - authority figures are replaced in form of the equal individual. (Brotherhood of equals).
3. Tradition affords a counterforce and a regard to the worldly current.
4. Majority becomes the only tribunal. Agreement on fundamental political principles - states have no states.
 - slavery, institution, monarchy, their way led to rest by the Declaration and the Constitution
5. We lack frequent ideas outside insight.
 - freedom of mind requires the presence of alternative thoughts
 - democracy results in awareness of difference
 - democracy limits official interpretation of the past
 - it promotes sympathy towards those who hold power - there is an accepted principle of legitimacy that breaks the inner will to resist (249)
6. Absent a class to compensate for political and intellectual propensities. (Remnant)
7. Theoretical distance seems minimal since democracy demands commitment.
8. University's task is to keep the government question front and center. - it is the only such center in a democracy.
9. Two democratic tendencies = a) abstractness + slogans replace reflection (cf. sayers); b) preference for deterministic explanations = a consequence of the importance of the individual in democratic society.