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Not Trivial: How Studying the Traditional Liberal Arts Can Set You Free

By Laurie Endicott Thomas

Paperback. Condition: New. 372 pages. Why phonics and grammar are not trivial. Why have our political discussions in the United States become so ugly and pointless Why are we suffering from such a breakdown in civility In Not Trivial: How Studying the Traditional Liberal Arts Can Set You Free, Laurie Endicott Thomas explains that the problem boils down to education. The word civility originally meant training in the liberal arts. The classical liberal arts were a set of seven disciplines that were developed largely in ancient Athens to promote productive political discussions within Athenian democracy. They included three verbal arts (the trivium): grammar, logic, and rhetoric. They also included four arts of number, space, and time (the quadrivium): mathematics, geometry, music, and astronomy. These arts helped students learn to think rationally and to express themselves persuasively. The ancient Romans called these studies the liberal arts because they were considered appropriate for freeborn men, as opposed to slaves. Slaves were taught only the servile and mechanical arts, to make them more productive as workers. During the Renaissance, the classical liberal arts curriculum was supplemented by the humanities, including history, philosophy, literature, and art. Like the liberal arts, the humanities were intended...


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