

Study Questions – “Letters to a Young Progressive”

PREFACE:

- Do you agree with Adams statement that many college students, “become increasingly enraged at the world and disgusted with other people ... angry over things that aren’t even true ... misled by a miserable generation of professors ... “? Have you personally seen anyone transformed in this way by the college experience?

LETTER 1 – No, Zachary, Glenn Beck Isn’t Charles Manson:

- Why does Adams say he “pretended to be an intellectual atheist”?

- Do you think atheist professors are really able to influence a student’s worldview enough to make students angry?

LETTER 2 – How Being for Equality Makes You Better than Other People:

- What is cultural relativism?

- What does Adams say is the “trap of cultural relativism”?

- What is the “non-judgmental” worldview and what, if anything, is wrong with it?

- What is moral relativism?

- In what way is moral relativism “useful psychologically”?

- What does Adams mean when he says he found moral relativism very convenient when he was younger? What does that tell us, possibly, about those who proclaim atheism?

- How can you relate all of this to Biblical references to “spiritual warfare”? What scriptures help us understand what is happening in our politically correct universities and culture?

LETTER 3 – “The Trees”

- Why did Adams find so much meaning in the song, “The Trees”?

- Ayn Rand was not a Christian. So, why is her illustration of the problem with socialism relevant to our study of “Reasonable Faith”?

LETTER 4 – Social Security and Racism

- How has the definition of racism changed?

- How is that change of definition similar to some “end of the world” predictors?

- How is our Social Security system a form of institutional racism?

- Many would consider topics like this to be “political”, clearly favoring conservative principles and criticizing “liberal” government policies. How does that relate to apologetics?

LETTER 5 – Roger Bannister and the Twenty-Five-Year Mile

- How does the “four minute mile” have implications for the debate over “affirmative action”?

- Why does Adams tell Zach that support of affirmative action is “regressive”, not “progressive”?

LETTER 6 – The Unholy Trinity of Diversity

- Do you agree that we should not say or do anything that creates a “hostile environment”? So, why shouldn’t universities and workplaces have “speech codes”?

- What are Adams’ two major problems with his university’s definition of harassment?

- Why does Adams say that harassment cases always cause harm to the groups they seek to help?

- What is Adams’ “unholy trinity”? Why does he say one of its members is killing off another?

LETTER 7 – Explaining Unexplained Variance

- Do you agree that progressives in the social sciences have caused “substantial setbacks in race relations”? If so, how?

- What do you think are the reasons for some published studies failing to include important variables (e.g. the study concluding that bail is set higher based on race)?

- One professor published a study revealing that African-Americans received nearly half of the death penalty sentences but were only 12% of the population. Is this an example of “unexplained variance”?

- What happens when college students are required to read this kind of published “study”?

- What does all this have to do with the abortion issue?

LETTER 8 – How to Slay Goliath with Just One Stone

Adams says that the progressives’ most noble causes – racial equality, compassion for the weak, reliance on science and reason – are shown to be “a sham” as revealed by their arguments for abortion. Why does he say that?

What are the six arguments for abortion?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

What “offer” does Adams make, after making all his points on the abortion issue, regarding abortions for victims of rape? Why does he make that “offer”? How can we apply that concept to everything we have learned from Tactics and our other studies?

LETTER 9 – Trading Live Babies for Government Programs

- Why does Adams ask progressives if they are willing to trade government jobs for live babies?

- What does this tell us about the real motive(s) for supporting “abortion rights”?

LETTER 10 – Blood Money

- School nurse, aspirin and abortion: What’s the connection?

- What does Adams mean when he says, “For years, the abortion lobby has claimed that the horror of rape justifies legal abortion. Now, it appears that the profitability of abortion justifies their toleration of rape”?

LETTER 13 – Liberals N the Hood

- Adams concludes this letter by saying, “Progressive thinking isn’t very logical. It is often pure emotion feeding on earnest faith in the perfectibility of man.” How does that statement relate to the earlier discussion of the sociologists’ “theories” of criminal behavior?

- Why do you think progressives have faith in the perfectibility of man?

LETTER 14 – How LBJ Abandoned Kitty Genovese

- If progressive approaches to understanding and reducing criminal behavior haven’t been “stunningly successful”, what is the primary reason(s) for their failure?

- What do you think of Adams’ closing statement, “The encroachment of the social welfare state in America would not have been possible without at significant decline in Christian charity.”?

LETTER 15 – Camelot

- How is the “routine activities theory” more compatible with the Christian and conservative worldview?

- Does the Bible support the “routine activities theory”? What Biblical principles and/or scriptures apply?

LETTER 16 – The Case for Transistor Control Legislation

- What in the world does Adams mean by “Transistor Control Legislation”?

- How does the convenience store chain’s successful strategy relate to the “routine activities theory”?

- What does Adams mean when he concludes that the features of his childhood neighborhood are still the most relevant factors when it comes to fighting crime?

- “When it comes to fighting crime, _____ is a far more important word than _____.”

LETTER 17 – Government Subsidies and Spousal Abuse

- How was Adams’ internet provider like an abusive spouse?

- Why are government operations less responsive and efficient than free market operations?

LETTER 18 – We Don’t Need No School of Education

- Why does Adams say we should not have education departments to award degrees in education?

1. _____

2. _____

- What’s wrong with the way some education departments train future teachers to handle wrong answers?

LETTER 19 – I Earned My B.S. in Victimology

- Who are the real victims when universities teach “victimology”? Why

- Why did Adams say protestors “should demand a refund from the local university and leave the capitalists alone.”?

LETTER 20 – The Fear of Ideas

- At the time Adams wrote this letter, there were sixteen refereed academic studies demonstrating that concealed carry laws reduce violent crime. Why did his liberal colleagues in the criminology department find those studies “unsettling”?

- Extra Credit! How many violent crimes are prevented by law-abiding gun-carrying citizens? (The answer is not in the book.)

LETTER 21 – Tolerance Presupposes a Moral Judgment

- What is wrong with the refusal of many liberals to tolerate intolerance?

- Why does Adams say the LGBTQIA letter was intolerant of homosexuals?

LETTER 22 – Fox and Foes

- Do you think Fox News is fair and balanced?

- Do you think Fox News is biased? Why or why not?

LETTER 23 – Rester in Peace

- Is it fair to compare George Washington’s soldiers to today’s men? Explain.

- What’s wrong with a university forbidding students and faculty from saying something that we all know is hateful and hurtful.?

LETTER 24 – The F-Bomb

- Adams has been called a fascist because of his support of limited government and increased private ownership, including firearms. How does that compare with the dictionary definition of fascism?

- Extra credit: How did the fascism of Hitler and Mussolini evolve. What ideologies influenced them? Is fascism more “right wing” or “left wing”?

- When someone accuses you of being a “fascist”, or other derogatory name, what are the two questions you should be prepared to ask?

LETTER 25 – Of Mice and Mensa

- Adams says it is beyond dispute that many students _____ during their college years.
- What are the two opposing explanations of why this happens to college students? (Focus more on what each “thesis” means, not on its name.)

- To become more enlightened by further education is to assume there is some sort of _____ upon which people can converge.
- How does the assumption of objective truth square with the dominant philosophy of most universities?

LETTER 26 – Profiles in Anonymity

- Adams challenges Zach to become a man of courage, willing to stand up for what he believes and to take the credit for his beliefs. Were the Ferguson protestors standing up for what they believed? Were they willing to take the credit? If so, what’s the difference?

LETTER 27 – The Constitution Is Dead (Because God Isn’t)

- What does Adams say is “the heart of the matter” when it comes to the progressive world view and progressive politics?

- What was it about that prison in Ecuador that caused Adams to say, “I was wrong”?

- What had he been wrong about?

- Adams says the source of objective moral law that is written on everyone’s heart is _____. He goes on to say that, “God is seen most clearly when we cast our eyes upon _____.”
- What does the idea of objective moral truth have to do with our constitution?

- What did Dostoyevsky teach us about objective moral truth?

- Why does the title of this letter say, “The Constitution Is Dead” (Because God Isn’t)?

