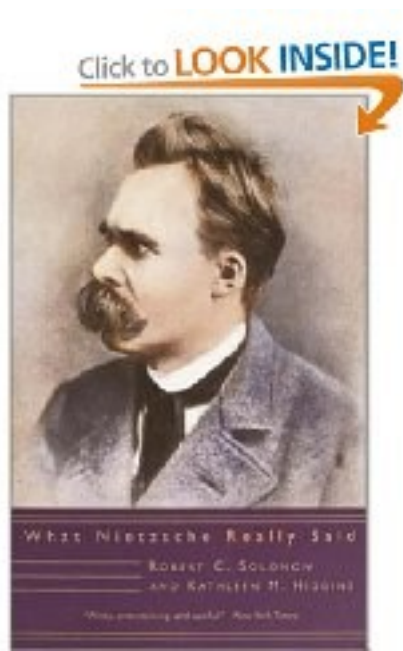


# What Nietzsche Really Said



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From Publishers Weekly

About a decade ago, the late Allan Bloom published his immensely successful polemic, *The Closing of the American Mind*. In it he denounced the erosion of intellectual culture in the U.S., listing Nietzsche as one of the main villains in the story of American decline. Our moral fiber, so the argument goes, has been vitiated by a relativism, skepticism and godlessness that can be traced to the baleful influence of Nietzsche. Bloom's is merely one version of a common view. Higgins and Solomon--both professors of philosophy at the University of Texas, Austin--have much to say in favor of a clear, sober and precise understanding of Nietzsche's writings. In particular, they aim to bring into focus "Nietzsche's affirmative philosophy, his positive suggestions, along

with his famously misunderstood doctrines and his enthusiasms. To think of Nietzsche as nothing but negative, 'the great destroyer,' is to misunderstand him profoundly." In brisk, forthright prose, Higgins and Solomon debunk widely accepted myths and rumors about Nietzsche: he was not a German nationalist, not an anti-Semite, did not hate women and plainly opposed everything the Nazis would later stand for. In addition, Higgins and Solomon give an especially sound presentation of Nietzsche's ethically motivated "immoralism" along with the various other positions that are basic to his writings, including the much misunderstood "will to power." The concept, they say, is largely a later creation of Heidegger and other interpreters who combed Nietzsche's unpublished notes for whatever jetsam might aid their own undertakings. Higgins and Solomon regard "the will to power" with judicious skepticism, wisely preferring the books Nietzsche did write to those he didn't. (Feb.)

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