

AMST 355
Class and Culture
M, TH, 3:30-4:50
CAS 228
Spring Semester, 2009
Roger Williams University

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Hours M W F 1:00 - 2:00
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For **Monday, March 9**

Read, in *Shipler*

#6, *Sins of the Fathers*

pp. 142 - 173

Chapter 6 isolates a problem which runs throughout American culture but has special ramifications in the lower economic classes. The problem is child abuse, and the particular focus is on ways that child abuse interacts with poverty to perpetuate it from generation to generation. I know that numbers of you are psychology majors and may have taken one or more courses which are pertinent...classes in child or adolescent psychology, or perhaps classes in abnormal psychology. IF so, you're more expert than I am, and I'll try to draw on you for comments about Shipler's observations. Be ready to volunteer.

There are some rays of hope here, as was the case in the previous chapter. Pay special attention to programs which make an effort to break the cycle of poverty. Note what motivated those who created the more successful programs, and what led to their particular insights. For further information, visit the [Prevent Child Abuse America Website](#).

For **Thursday, March 12**

Read, in *Shipler*,

Chapter 7, *Kinship*

Chapter 8, *Body and Mind*

pp. 174 - 200

pp. 201 - 230

Remember your Samaritan paper is due today. Submit it by blackboard. Use Internet Explorer or the installed browser on your Mac. Don't use Firefox III. It isn't compatible yet. If you have any problems, let me know and I'll help.

A few years back it was not unusual for graduating seniors to decorate their caps and occasionally their gowns with signs like *Thanks, Mom and Dad*, and *You've Always been There for Me*. **Chapter 7** brings home the importance of kinship as an asset when life takes a horrific turn. Note that kin as Shipler uses the term extends beyond relatives by blood or marriage into the larger network of friends, church members, and others who provide support in times of need. When those networks fail we can

find ourselves in dire times, indeed. Some of this chapter may bring some of you close to tears, but it may also give you a sense of how, occasionally, persons rise to bad occasions through noble actions.

Chapter 8 brings us back to the biology of poverty. Some of you who took U. S. History one will remember that Virginians like William Byrd of Westover complained of the laziness of those who lived on the fringes of society—in places like the edge of the Great Swamp. We now know that malnutrition has its own set of burdens, some of them visible, some of them invisible, and that some of the charges that the poor are lazy or ignorant may neglect some of the effects of bad diet, including mental retardation. We'll look at this today.