

AMST 355  
Class and Culture  
T, TH, 12:30-1:50  
GHH 206  
Fall Semester, 2010  
Roger Williams University

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### Week of October 19, 2010

For **Tuesday, October 19**

Read, in **Shipler**,

Chapter 7, *Kinship*

pp. 174 - 200

Chapter 8, *Body and Mind*

pp. 201 - 230

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. If you haven't taken the course, this link will let you read from his [\*History of the Dividing Line Betwixt Virginia and North Carolina\*](#). 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.

For **Thursday, October 21**

No new readings for today. I'll be in Houston Texas, attending the American Association of Colleges and Universities Conference, [\*Facing the Divides: Diversity, Learning, and Pathways to Inclusive Excellence\*](#). Many of you already know Professor Laura D'Amore, and she has graciously offered to take my class this period. You'll have a chance to watch another excellent dvd from New American Media. This one is entitled **Affluenza**. As we saw in **People Like Us**, one of the divides among the classes relates to consumption patterns. *Affluenza* asks us to consider whether the culture as a whole is *too* consumption driven. I think you're going to enjoy it, and I'm looking forward to reading what you put in your journals after the experience.