

Shedding Grace

Teacher's Guide

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Introduction

It is the summer of 1769 and the Americans begin to push their conflict with the Crown to the point of no return. Jonathan Hamrick, the son of a prominent Boston merchant, has begun his career in the law and is passionately committed to the colonial causes of liberty and freedom. When he is called upon to rescue the failing family business, he finds himself unwillingly engaged in a slave trading venture, which his ailing father believed was their last hope for financial salvation. He makes a voyage to determine for himself the true nature of this human trafficking and what he learns causes him to question the most fundamental ethical assumptions of his time. Upon his return he finds the town in turmoil and is thrust once again, headlong, into the cauldron of confrontation that would quickly lead to war. But, what had once seemed almost self-evident to him was not so simple now and he was no longer sure what was right or what he believed.

Teacher's Guide

The teacher's guide is structured into a twenty-four day time-frame, sequenced to follow a reading of the novel at a rate of one chapter per day. *Shedding Grace* should be integrated with the routine textbook supported study of the background and causes of the American Revolution. It will provide enrichment strategies to integrate values issues seamlessly into the more comprehensive historical treatment. In this strategy, students will be responsible for researching and presenting much of the factual historical information that underpins the novel. They will be divided into eight cooperative groups for this purpose and will share what they learn.

Thinking Skill Strategy: Socratic Seminar Discussion Method

The Socratic Seminar is a time-honored strategy for the encouragement of active student participation; it forces students to think at higher cognitive levels; and it fosters an environment where the student is constantly the focus of attention. The Socratic Method has come to mean a process of creating and discussing questions which are open ended and inquisitive rather than conclusive. The primary components of the Socratic Method are systematic questioning and inductive reasoning. In the Socratic Seminar students, prompted by the teacher's provocative questions or statements, engage one another in thoughtful dialog. The role of the teacher during the discussion is secondary and supportive. It is always the students who have the primary responsibility of analyzing the assigned work. With this strategy, the teacher becomes the facilitator whose job is to maintain an environment that fosters participation. Students are encouraged to consider different and often conflicting ideas. Individually and as a group they are driven to think deeply and critically about issues.

In the Socratic Seminar the teacher asks a general "opening" question addressing the central concept. As students respond to this question they look to each other for

analysis and evaluation of the statements being made. As the students explore the material, responses become longer and more complex. Students begin to challenge their peers. Ideally the teacher leaves the stage, commenting only when it is necessary to provide direction or focus. At the end of the discussion, the teacher asks prepared closings questions that encourage the students to synthesize the various points of the discussion and form a conclusion. Follow up writing samples or reaction papers enhance the process. The Socratic Seminar is an open forum, which fosters both active student involvement and student engagement in higher level thinking. By manipulating the material in a number of thought provoking ways such as researching, generalizing about concepts, applying them to new situations, analyzing their component parts, synthesizing and then evaluating a thesis, the students are actively engaged in all of the levels of thinking according to Bloom's taxonomy.

The value of active learning cannot be overstated. In addition to keeping the students motivated, active learning strategies produce a number of positive outcomes. The research consistently links strategies where students are actively involved with higher degrees of learning and the higher the level of thought process, the more successfully the student internalizes the ideas. Active participation also gives students ownership of the learning process. In the seminar, the teacher is less of an authority and more of a colleague. The ability to construct meaning from a discussion and to generate thoughtful conclusions independent of an external authority provides a sense of empowerment for the students, a feeling that they have control over their own learning. In addition, active participation in discussion assists in the development of social skills. While students are given the opportunity to articulate their own thoughts and feelings, they are also required to be respectful of the thoughts and feelings of their classmates.

Thinking Skill Objectives

1. (Knowledge)The student will recall significant facts about the events that led to the American Revolution.
2. (Comprehension)The student will comprehend the concepts of internal and external ethical authority and understand the nature and importance of individual ethical responsibility.
3. (Application)The student will apply the concepts of internal and external ethical authority to a new and not previously studied problem.
4. (Analysis)The student will analyze the factors which undermined individual ethical responsibility during the years immediately preceding the American Revolution.
5. (Synthesis/Evaluation)The student will write an essay in which he or she assesses ethical responsibility for slavery.
6. (Synthesis/Evaluation)The student will reflect on his or her own innate ethical sense and comment thoughtfully on how it can best be guided.

Knowledge Strategy: Report Topics

Much of the historical information that the class learns will result from student research and reporting. Students should be divided into eight cooperative groups with each group assigned one of the comprehensive topics listed below. Student reports should be strengthened by supporting teacher presentations if possible. These assignments should be made several days before the planned reading of *Shedding Grace*.

1. **Mercantilism and the Molasses Act of 1733.** Due: Day 3. *Discussion of the nature of mercantilism will help students to better understand the novel. The report should explain the theory of mercantile economics and the negative ramifications (inflation in the mother country and deflation in the colonies) that resulted from trying to create and maintain a favorable balance of trade. This is a challenging assignment for students and may require considerable teacher input. The Molasses Act of 1733 represents the tendency of an authoritarian system to conflict with other authoritarian systems. Students should read excerpts from the act itself and discuss why it was disregarded by the American colonists. The smuggling of French West Indian sugar is central to events in the novel.*

2. **Salutary Neglect.** Due Day 4. *Mercantilism conflicts with the innate human ethical need to be free, and resulted in resistance. This was understood by Prime Minister Robert Walpole who, in the 1720's, promoted a policy of lax enforcement of the Navigation Acts, which lasted until the 1760's. Strict enforcement of the Molasses Act of 1733 would have meant economic disaster for New England. The policy of Salutary Neglect was applied to this law, in particular, and it thereby encouraged the smuggling of molasses. Later efforts to strictly enforce the customs laws, that had been ignored for so long, was seen as unfair by the colonists. Students will readily understand this.*

3. **Mercantilism in New England.** Due Day 5. *In general the New England colonies relied economically on the same productive assets as did the mother country and for this reason did not prosper in the mercantile system. The foreign trade balance for New England was in severe deficit. In 1759 the New England exports to England totaled about £40,000 while their imports were over £600,000. There was, as a result, considerable economic incentive for independence from England. Students should examine the timber trade, which clearly shows the incompatibility between the mercantile system and the New England economy. Students should concentrate on the "broad arrow" policy intended to ensure a supply of white pine mast trees for the British navy and its impact on the general timber trade. The presence of widespread smuggling and the difficulties encountered by the British authorities in controlling this through the colonial courts closely parallels the events in the novel.*

4. **Mercantilism in the Middle Colonies.** Due Day 6. *Economically, the American middle colonies relied essentially on grain farming, which employed about 80% of the population. There was a robust market for food stuffs within the New World itself and this insulated the middle colonies somewhat from dependence on foreign trade and hence from the negative effects of mercantile restrictions. Middle colony trade with England*

was in deficit, but not nearly so drastically as that of New England and therefore there was very little economic incentive for revolution. Students should reflect on other reasons why the middle colonies revolted from British rule.

5. **Mercantilism in the Southern Colonies.** Due Day 7. *The southern colonies provided several important staple crops which could not be produced in England and were therefore demanded in the mercantile system. Tobacco, indigo, and rice all traded profitably within the British Empire, and naval stores were in great demand. The trade balance of the southern American colonies was positive and profitable. There was no economic incentive for revolution. Given this reality students should reflect on why Virginia was a leader in the break with the British Empire.*

6. **The French and Indian War.** Due Day 8. *The French and Indian War was the immediate watershed of the American Revolution and its importance in this respect should be the focus of the report. Most importantly it removed the French threat in Canada which had acted to bind the colonies to England for common defense. It also created an enormous deficit in the British treasury that caused a rethinking of the policy of salutary neglect of the trade laws, leading to the ill-fated attempts by Grenville and later Townshend to raise revenue in the colonies.*

7. **The Grenville Acts** Due Day 9. *George Grenville decided to change the policies toward the colonies in three important ways. 1. Enforce the regulatory aspects of the navigation acts, 2. Keep a standing army in America and 3. Raise revenue in the colonies through taxation. The report should touch upon the following key acts in some detail: 1. The Sugar Act, 2. The Stamp Act and 3. The Currency Act. These are central to events in the novel which will bring their importance to life. The reliance on Writs of Assistance to help enforce these measures should not be overlooked and students should be encouraged to read James Otis's famous speech against the Writs.*

8. **Townshend Acts** Due Day 10. *The strategies used by the colonists to resist the Stamp Act should be outlined and especially the non-importation agreements, which worked to great effect. Students should be encouraged to read John Dickinson's "Letters from a Farmer." Students should reflect, within the context of their own lives and experiences, upon the get-tough policy of Townshend and the reaction to it in the colonies. The colonial response to the Townshend Acts is central to the events in the novel, which ends on the eve of open confrontation.*

Daily Schedule

The following schedule should be fitted into the teacher's planning calendar. The guide assumes a traditional school schedule of 50 minute classes. Schools with block or other alternative schedules need to adapt it accordingly. It is not necessary for the days to be contiguous. This strategy is equally effective when spread over a longer study of the history of this period.

Allow ample time for cooperative groups to prepare reports. *Be sure students understand the importance of their contribution and the need for it to be delivered on schedule.* Reports may extend beyond one day; there is sufficient space in the calendar to accommodate this, but the teacher should be attentive to timing-out the unit as a whole.

- Day 1** Assign: *Shedding Grace*, Chapter 1.
- Day 2** Discuss Chapter 1. Assign: Chapter 2.
- Day 3** Discuss Chapter 2. Assign: Chapter 3. Report: Mercantilism.
- Day 4** Discuss Chapter 3. Assign: Chapter 4. Report: Salutary Neglect.
- Day 5** Discuss Chapter 4. Assign: Chapter 5. Report: New England.
- Day 6** Discuss Chapter 5. Assign: Chapter 6. Report: Middle Colonies.
- Day 7** Discuss Chapter 6. Assign: Chapter 7. Report: Southern Colonies.
- Day 8** Discuss Chapter 7. Assign: Chapter 8. Report: French and Indian War.
- Day 9** Discuss Chapter 8. Assign: Chapter 9. Report: Grenville Acts.
- Day 10** Discuss Chapter 9. Assign: Chapter 10. Report: Townshend Acts
- Day 12** Discuss Chapter 10. Assign: Chapter 11.
- Day 13** Discuss Chapter 11. Assign: Chapter 12.
- Day 14** Discuss Chapter 12. Assign: Chapter 13.
- Day 15** Discuss Chapter 13. Assign: Chapter 14.
- Day 16** Discuss Chapter 14. Assign: Chapter 15.
- Day 17** Discuss Chapter 15. Assign: Chapter 16.

- Day 18** Discuss Chapter 16. Assign: Chapter 17.
- Day 19** Discuss Chapter 17. Assign: Chapter 18.
- Day 20** Discuss Chapter 18. Assign: Chapter 19.
- Day 21** Discuss Chapter 19. Assign: Chapter 20.
- Day 22** Discuss Chapter 20. Assign: Chapter 21 through 23.
- Day 23** Discuss the conclusion of the novel.
- Day 24** Final Assessment.

Chapter One: Summary

The story begins in Boston with the seizure of Josiah Hamrick's schooner *Freedom* by British customs officials. *The chapter is important to establish the nature of the conflict between the British customs service and colonial New England merchants whose commercial enterprises did not fare well under mercantile restrictions.* There is considerable discussion of both sides of this dispute and the reader is introduced to most of the main characters, especially to Josiah's son. Jonathan Hamrick is a lawyer who is expected by his father to file a civil suit to recover damages suffered as a result of the seizure of their vessel. *There is an obvious frame of reference problem as the two sides see the events from different perspectives. This becomes a common theme throughout the novel and should be explored with students.* The negative colonial impact of the favorable balance of trade practice of mercantilism is brought out in a discussion between Jonathan and his father. *The teacher should be prepared to clarify issues for students, particularly the money supply policies of mercantilism as seen in the Currency Acts, which are mentioned.*

Socratic Seminar Questions

What is frame of reference and how does it influence ethical decisions? *Students should reflect on their own tendency to judge events from a limited perspective. The teacher should encourage discussion of real problems and events in student's lives that parallel the lesson. An effective teaching strategy for Frame of Reference is available at the Teaching Ethics website: www.ethicsineducation.com*

Chapter Two: Summary

Josiah Hamrick meets at the local tavern with other members of the Sons of Liberty. There is discussion of the tactics used to resist the British navigation laws and to harass crown officials. The reader learns more about the colonial governor and his enforcement efforts. The importance of propaganda through the activities of a partisan press is seen. We learn that Josiah Hamrick has entered into a partnership with a Captain Pierre Lévesque to finance a slave trading venture.

Socratic Seminar Questions

What is propaganda and is it wrong? *Reasoned argument is normally used to support predetermined ethical conclusions. Propaganda is the advocacy of a partisan position. Students should also consider if the ends justify the means in using propaganda to further a good cause.*
What is a conflict of interest and why is it considered wrong? *Conflict of interest was rarely seen as a problem in the late 18th century. This is clear by the conflicts that routinely exist in the novel. Students should discuss how the failure to be objective exacerbates ethical impasses.*

Chapter Three: Summary

Josiah Hamrick tells his son that they are nearly bankrupt and that the family's future is riding on the success of the slaving venture. *This chapter offers a good opportunity to discuss the importance of family bonds.* There is further discussion of the impact of the Sugar Act. *The teacher should help students understand the distinction between regulatory and revenue taxation.* Josiah tells his son that to be successful in life “you need to know the right people.” *Discuss this with students.* There is a considerable amount of corruption at play in the commercial dealings of the time and this is brought out. *Discuss this with students. Relate it to similar problems existing today.* A discussion between Governor Wederborn and Lieutenant Governor Barthurst gives the British perspective. The governor then talks with his wife about his frustrations in governing Massachusetts-Bay Colony. We learn of the imminent arrival from France of their daughter Rachel and of a coming-out cotillion for her, which is planned.

Socratic Seminar Questions

What is loyalty and to whom are you expected to be loyal? *Loyalty is an extremely powerful innate human ethical drive. A sense of obligation to support other members of one's recognized ethical cooperative group results from the understanding that the strength of the group protects the interests of its members. The family is the most powerful of the ethical cooperative groups impacting most people's lives.*

Chapter Three: Report Due: Mercantilism

It is important for students to understand that mercantilism was a command economic system which restricted individual freedom in the perceived interest of the greater group. The conflict leading to the American Revolution was part of a transition taking place in the West from controlled markets to free markets. Resistance to authority is a natural and innate human ethical urge that worked to undermine mercantilism and led to the rise of free market capitalism.

Chapter Four: Summary

The colonial court recovers Hamrick's sloop from the British authorities and Jonathan goes with the sheriff to Castle Island to retrieve it. He knows the court was bias in his favor and wonders “if this were the way things always worked.” He thinks about bringing a suit against the crown for damages. As they return to Boston in the longboat he thinks about his impending slave voyage and about the nature of slavery itself. Hamrick expresses some of the common rationale of the time to justify slavery. Jonathan sees Rachel Wederborn for the first time and is smitten by her beauty. Rachel is met at the pier by her mother and Colonel Benjamin Beresford. We learn something of their private affairs.

Socratic Seminar Questions

What is rationalizing and what role does it play in ethical decision-making. *The teacher should explore the reasons supporting slavery expressed in the novel and discuss whether they are reasons or rationale. Human beings are ethically driven by powerful innate imperatives, which act like emotional instincts and reason is often only a self-serving justification for these. Ethics education is very much about freeing one's reason and allowing it to function.*

Chapter Four Report Due: Salutary Neglect

The teacher should relate the issue of fairness to student's lives. Students should try to determine what criteria they would use to decide if an action were fair or not. Discuss why Salutary Neglect made later enforcement of the Navigation Acts difficult.

Chapter Five: Summary

The Sons of Liberty meet at the Tally-Ho Tavern and discuss their anti-British strategies. Rachel talks with her friend Abigail Whitmer and we learn more about their personal lives. *There is an opportunity to discuss the role of women in late 18th Century society. Students should consider the importance of education on the changing role of women.* Governor Wederborn discusses with Beresford his suspicion of the motives of Lieutenant Governor Barthurst.

Socratic Seminar Questions

What is a precedent and why is it important? In urging resistance to the Navigation Acts an American says: "If we give in to this, then what constrains them from ordering us in some other instance?" *Discuss the concept of precedent with students and ask them to relate it to events in their own lives.*

Chapter Five Report Due: Mercantilism in New England

British "broad arrow" policies in the management of the New England forest was widely resented and is a good case study reinforcing the impact of the sugar restrictions outlined in the novel.

Chapter Six: Summary

Rachel and Abigail unpack Rachel's things and talk. We learn more about their personal lives. Governor Wederborn, Colonel Beresford and Lieutenant Governor Barthurst

discuss how to respond to the unrest in the town. We learn more about the disagreement between them. Rachel talks with her mother and father about the upcoming cotillion.

Socratic Seminar Question

What is betrayal and do you think it is unethical? *The opposite of loyalty is betrayal and it is judged to be one of the most reprehensible ethical acts by the innate human ethical sense. Students should discuss betrayal and why they dislike it so intensely. They should be encouraged to relate this to their own personal experiences. in their personal lives.*

Chapter Six Report Due: Mercantilism in the Middle Colonies

It is difficult to sustain a thesis of economic causation for the American Revolution since only the New England colonies were seriously restricted by mercantilism. Students should reflect on why most of the colonists in the middle colonies favored independence.

Chapter Seven: Summary

Jonathan Hamrick argues his case in the Court of Common Pleas. The bias of the court in favor of the Americans is clearly shown. The Americans meet at the Tally-Ho to celebrate their court victory and a richer picture of colonial life emerges. *The legal strategies pursued by the Americans in the novel are fully consistent with the practices at the time.*

Socratic Seminar Question

What is the difference between rules and ethics? *Society is governed by rules to referee the natural conflicts that emerge between competing interests. Human beings, however, rarely judge events from a perspective broad enough to encompass all interests. For this reason, people have great difficulty being objective. Discuss the problem of “getting a fair trial” with students. Use contemporary examples.*

Chapter Seven Report Due: Mercantilism in the Southern Colonies

The southern colonies prospered within the British mercantile empire and had no economic incentive to seek independence yet they produced some of the cause's greatest leaders. Students should reflect on the power of ideas and emotions in driving human actions.

Chapter Eight: Summary

Jonathan meets Rachel in the reception line at the ball. Josiah Hamrick and Governor Wederborn discuss the political conflict between the colonists and the British government. We get a clearer picture of the impasse and its causes. A crisis develops when the Governor gets word of the unexpected arrival at Castle William of two Irish regiments.

Socratic Seminar Questions

In what ways has the disagreement between the colonies and the mother country been framed as an ethical issue? *The colonists see British behavior as a threat to their freedom which is an assault on the self-regarding side of the innate human ethical sense. The British see American behavior as a threat to societal stability and an assault on the other-regarding side of the innate human ethical sense. Many ethical impasses are of this type and do not respond to reasoned argument since the two sides see different issues. In such cases reason quickly becomes rationale in support of a cause.*

Chapter Eight Report Due: French and Indian War

The importance of the French and Indian War in setting the stage for the Revolution should be the thrust of the report. This is best studied as a classic frame of reference issue with each side seeing a different picture. There is considerable discussion of this in the novel.

Chapter Nine: Summary

Wederborn and Beresford disagree about the best way to handle the expected unrest in the town. Rachel is told by her mother that Beresford has requested permission to ask for her hand in marriage. Rachel tells her mother that Hamrick is escorting her to a political rally on the Common. She goes against her mother's wishes and experiences the mob atmosphere and is frightened. Rachel and Jonathan spend the rest of the evening together and talk.

Socratic Seminar Question

What is duty and what happens when duties conflict with one's innate sense of right and wrong? *People naturally feel obligated to their ethical cooperative groups. These bonds can be very strong and can result in dilemmas. In the case of Jonathan Hamrick there are two*

emerging conflicts which he must resolve. One involves his father's expectation that he take over the family business, which he does not want to do; and the second and more fundamental involves the expectation that as part of this he become a slave trader when he believes it to be ethically wrong. Students should bring forth examples from their own experiences of similar types of dilemmas.

Chapter Nine Report Due: The Grenville Acts

While it is important to touch upon the key details it is more important to understand the failure of the two sides to adequately communicate. Students should reflect on why the two sides weren't listening to each other and to relate that to similar situations from their own experiences.

Chapter Ten: Summary

The Governor talks with his daughter about the deteriorating situation in Boston. Josiah Hamrick goes over the details of their impending slave voyage with Captain Lévesque. Jonathan goes to see Rachel, but is prevented from doing so by her father. Jonathan embarks on his first sea voyage.

Socratic Seminar Questions

In what ways is Rachel correct when she says the following to her father about the Americans? “Perhaps you don't really understand them. They only want what we all want... liberty and happiness.” The narrator says: Rachel Wederborn was wallowing in a quandary. Her heart was with the Americans, but her loyalty was to her family. Ask students to comment on their own similar experiences.

Chapter Ten Report Due: Townshend Acts

The debate raging in England about how best to cope with the American colonies is mirrored in the disagreement between Governor Wederborn and Lieutenant Governor Barthurst. Townshend represents one possible course of action. Students should be asked to assume a British perspective and discuss what they would have done. It is useful to bring out the debate in Parliament at the time on these issues and in particular the speeches of Edmund Burke.

Chapter Eleven: Summary

The slave cruise begins and Jonathan writes entries in his journal. We learn more about him as he thinks about slavery and race. *It is important to note that characters in the novel speak with an 18th century perspective and their words reflect the kinds of discussions common at that time.* Jonathan discusses the nature of slave trading with Captain Lévesque and we

learn more details of that enterprise. *Students should discuss the issues brought out in this discussion.*

Socratic Seminar Question

Do you think Jonathan was correct when in reference to slavery, he wrote in his journal: “I am becoming increasingly convinced that it is simply the color and strangeness of these people that prevents their eventual emancipation?” *Human beings have an innate tendency to favor likeness and fear strangeness. Ask students to discuss this urge to conformity which is particularly strong in their own minds.*

Chapter Twelve: Summary

Jonathan discusses slavery with Joseph Butcher and is surprised by the former slave’s views. *There is an opportunity to discuss the concept of equality, which is fundamental to the innate human ethical sense. Butcher defines it as equality of opportunity, but Hamrick wonders if there can be any such thing in the real world. Writing in his journal Jonathan speculates: “Perhaps it is being free that inspires the accomplishment and the stultifying state of slavery that dulls the Negro’s ambition.” Comment on this observation and ask students whether they think it could be true. Ask students to relate any personal experiences where expectation influenced their actions?*

Socratic Seminar Questions

What do you think Lévesque meant when he said, “Joseph is different because he is my Joseph.”? *Human beings judge all ethical matters within contexts. Right and wrong are determined differently depending upon who is impacted. This is one of the most important ethics lessons for students to consider.*

Chapter Thirteen: Summary

Samuel Adams and other patriot leaders meet at the Tally-Ho and discuss their plans to thwart the customs. Wederborn meets with Barthurst and Beresford and they discuss bringing troops into the town. *The increasing tension is accompanied by a rising inability of the two sides to be objective. Students should reflect on why reason has little impact on ethical disputes. Wederborn learns that he is to be recalled to England. Students should be asked to think about the personal ethical decisions being made by various characters.*

Socratic Seminar Questions

Governor Wederborn believes that human nature will cause the get tough policy advocated by his Lieutenant Governor to backfire, while Barthurst believes that it is because of human nature that only getting tough will succeed. *What do you think? Can you offer any contemporary examples?*

Chapter Fourteen: Summary

The *Celia* trades for slaves along the African coast. Hamrick reflects in his journal about how he is gradually descending into evil and how insidious the process is. The *Celia* crosses the Equator and Jonathan is subjected to the “crossing the line” ceremony.

Socratic Seminar Question

What do you think Hamrick means when he says the following of slavery? “And I am becoming numb to it and find myself silently slipping beyond rationale, hiding behind a mask of the mundane and routine by which a thing, even one as grotesque as this, finally goes on unquestioned, because it has always gone on and because it is the way it is...”
Ask students to discuss how choices create parameters for future choices. Consider how lies lead inevitably to more lies.

Chapter Fifteen: Summary

Jonathan’s journal gives glimpses of the middle passage. The *Celia* is overtaken by a hurricane and struggles mightily in the storm. They reach Martinique and the slaves are prepared for sale. Hamrick meets the governor of Martinique and learns more about the corrupt nature of the slave trading business.

Socratic Seminar Question

Are human beings driven primarily by self-interest? *Human beings have a dual innate ethical sense. There are powerful self-regarding urges that incline to selfish behavior, but there is also a powerful other-regarding urge to see one’s ethical cooperative groups succeed. Finding a balance between these is the stuff of ethics education. We can see the search for this balance in the novel where corruption serves both individual and social purposes.*

Chapter Sixteen: Summary

Governor Wederborn meets with the customs commissioners and others to discuss the deepening crisis in Boston. The fundamental disagreement about how to proceed is clear. Rachel talks with some friends and we learn more about her personal life and how it is becoming inextricably mixed with Boston politics.

Socratic Seminar Question

Who do you trust and why do you trust them? *People naturally limit their ethical responsibilities to other members of their recognized ethical cooperative groups. They expect to give and receive trust and loyalty within those groups, but do not expect the same standards from outsiders. Students should consider this natural limitation on human ethical decision-making in their own lives.*

Chapter Seventeen: Summary

The *Celia* begins its homeward journey and Jonathan thinks about what he has done and wonders if he is any different from the Caribbean pirates they are constantly on watch against. *This is an interesting question that points to the way humans judge right and wrong, within the contexts of we and they.* This point is hammered home in a discussion between Hamrick and Lévesque on the nature of slavery. *Students should be reminded that the ideas and terminology used in the novel are consistent with late 18th Century practice.*

Socratic Seminar Question

Interpret the significance of Lévesque’s remark to Jonathan Hamrick who has told him slavery is wrong. “I think in the future it would be best for you to stay home in the counting house, as your colleagues do, and not look...” How much unethical behavior exists because people look the other way? *There are many examples of this and students should be encouraged to relate the idea to their own experiences.* Hamrick busies himself with routine thoughts to mask his doubts about his behavior. *Students should think about how they too do this.*

Chapter Eighteen: Summary

Jonathan thinks about right and wrong and the difficulty he has in deciding how to act. *Hamrick’s problem is created by the struggle between conflicting loyalties that confuse everyone’s ethical decision-making. Students should relate this to their own lives.* Beresford raids the Tally-Ho and in the struggle Nathaniel Payton is accidentally shot. He is carried to the doctor where surgery is attempted, but he dies of his wound.

Socratic Seminar Question

How would you answer Hamrick when he asks himself the following question? “But do I have a moral obligation to people outside my group? Can I disregard them...?”

Chapter Nineteen: Summary

The Sons of Liberty stage an elaborate funeral for Nathaniel Payton and use it to incite anger against the government. Beresford is brought before a judge magistrate who orders him to stand trial for murder. Wederborn and Beresford discuss his defense with a famous barrister from London. *Be sure students understand the term “benefit of clergy.”* Rachel asks Jonathan Hamrick to defend Beresford. *This creates an enormous ethical dilemma for Hamrick since to do so could be seen as a betrayal by his father and friends.* He agrees to represent Beresford.

Socratic Seminar Question

Is Governor Wederborn acting ethically in his decision-making relative to Beresford’s case? *The case illustrates all of the conflicting considerations that weigh in on a person’s ethical judgments. Wederborn is not technically lying when he says that he didn’t order this particular raid, but he had approved of the crackdown generally. Wederborn is also willing to let Beresford be convicted if it will quiet the political turmoil in Boston. Seeking truth plays very little part in the thinking of most of the key people in this case. Students should compare the events in the novel with their perception of the functioning of the legal system today.*

Chapter Twenty: Summary

Jonathan wrestles with the meaning of justice and doubts that language can capture the truth. *Language is a two-edged sword in the search for ethical answers, often doing more to advance a cause than to find the truth. Students should discuss all the ways words are used to manipulate, or “spin,” the truth. Students should consider the significance of Protagoras assertion, remembered by Hamrick in the novel, that “man is the measure of all things, of those that are, that they are, and of those that are not, that they are not.”* Hamrick reflects on the practice of judging morality on the basis of the group good and wonders if this is right when it hurts particular innocent people. *This is a very important ethical question for students to discuss.*

Socratic Seminar Question

When Hamrick is challenged to stand by his friends and against his conscience, he refuses. Why was this so difficult for him to do? *This is the seminal lesson in all ethics education. Students must cultivate a sense of internal ethical authority to free themselves from the control of external ethical authorities. The aggressive moralism of one’s ethical cooperative groups is a powerful determinant of most people’s behavior.*

Chapters Twenty-One – Twenty Three

Benjamin Beresford stands trial for murder and the story is resolved in the last three chapters, which should be combined for the final assignment.

Summary Socratic Seminar Question

The final Socratic seminar should be used for free discussion of the novel and the light it sheds on the causes of the American Revolution. It is important for students to review the concepts of internal and external authority and how they apply to their own lives. Individuals are constantly bombarded by a barrage of group aggressive moralism seeking to dictate their behavior. Students should be asked to think about and to evaluate this in their own lives. Ethics is about finding a balance between individual freedom and group responsibility. Human beings innately understand the need to live by both sides of this equation and are naturally urged to seek both. Extremes at either end usually result in unethical outcomes. An evaluative essay is recommended.