

Danielle Savarino  
Puritan Paper

November 20, 2002  
Mrs. Montejunas

## Charity:

How did the Puritans perceive charity and how does Reading observe it charity?

If you were a Pilgrim coming in from the Mayflower, you were probably Puritan. Puritans thought that they should set up a community based on religious principles. Religion and church surrounded Puritan's lives. The Puritan people constantly had to go to church and pray. The Puritan's believed in predestination which is the idea that when you are born, God knows every decision that you will make and furthermore knows if you will go to heaven or hell. However, you have no clue where you are going until you die. Another part of the Puritan beliefs is that you should help the people that were poverty-stricken and that were doomed to suffer in this "world". Charity was viewed as comfort to those that fell under these qualifications. The Puritan people basically had to help these types of people considering that the Puritans were above these poor, unfortunate groups of people. Also, since the giver did this charitable act, this was a sign of the goodness of the giver.

Charity, in this present time, is looked upon as an extremely gracious act by the person willing to give up time and possibly money. Not that many people give to charity or spend their time helping the unfortunate. Since the view of God and the church is changed significantly since the Puritan people, so has charity. Charity was something that "had" to be done by every Puritan person that wanted to be accepted into heaven if that was what predestined. Now, people have really lightened up about the whole issue of charity.