Structure, History, and Culture  
(Marshall Sahlins at Eighty)  

Anthropology 375—History 310  
Spring 2010  
Tuesdays 7:10-11:00

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Office Hours  
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Required Books  
Appiah, Kwame. Experiments in Ethics  
Bourdieu, Pierre. Outline of a Theory of Practice  
Douglas, Mary. Thinking in Circles  
Lévi-Strauss, Claude. The Savage Mind  
Sahlins, Marshall. Apologies to Thucydides  
Sahlins, Marshall. Culture and Practical Reason  
Sahlins, Marshall. How Natives Think  
Sahlins, Marshall. Islands of History  
Sahlins, Marshall. Stone Age Economics  
Sewell, William. Logics of History  
Smail, Daniel Lord. On Deep History and the Brain

Required Books (available for purchase, but multiple copies of each are on library reserve)  
Fishcher, Bobby. Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess  
Sahlins, Marshall. Culture in Practice  
Sahlins, Marshall. Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities  
Saussure, Ferdinand de. Course in General Linguistics  
Spenser, Edmund. The Faerie Queene (available on Google™ Books)  
Shakespeare, William. The Sonnets (available anywhere—web, library, you-name-it)

This seminar will look systematically at several of the key theoretical and methodological issues in the study of human society, past and present. We will begin with the concept of structure, and the ways that it has been interpreted by thinkers in and beyond the fields of history and anthropology. In particular, we will consider the entire oeuvre of Marshall Sahlins—arguably the most persistent and articulate theorist dealing with these matters. The theoretical and methodological focus of the seminar will give students insight that will be useful in projects ranging from history theses to research in a wide range of disciplines.

Evaluation  
Weekly Discussion Notes/Logs (15)  
Short Assignments  
Seminar Paper  

Class attendance and participation is expected. Absence will significantly affect your grade, and late assignments will be penalized.

All coursework is due on Wednesday, April 28th at 5:00 p.m.  
Review Essays Due on Tuesday, May 4th at 5:00 p.m.
Anthropology 375
Structure, History, and Culture
Spring 2010

Read Before the Seminar Begins—January 2010
Fischer, Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess, 1-102
  Introduction: How to Play Chess
  Elements of Checkmate
Sonnet and iambic pentameter websites (see 12/26 e-mail message)

Week I (January 14)—Note special Thursday meeting time
Structure, History, Chess, and Sonnets

Week II (January 19)
Sahlins, Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities
  Introduction: History and Structural Theory
  Reproduction: Structures in the Long Run
  Transformation: Structure and Practice
  Conclusion: Structure in History
Saussure, Course in General Linguistics
  Introduction
  General Principles
  Synchronic Linguistics
  Diachronic Linguistics
  Geographical Linguistics
  Questions of Retrospective Linguistics (Conclusion)

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Fischer, Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess, 103-129
  The Back-Rank Mates: Frames 80-102
Spenser, The Faerie Queene
  Book I, Canto I
  Book I, Canto II

Week III (January 26)
Sewell, Logics of History
  Theory, History, and Social Science
  The Political Unconscious of Social and Cultural History…
  Three Temporalities: Toward an Eventful Sociology
  The Concept(s) of Culture
  History, Synchrony, and Culture: Reflections on the Work of Clifford Geertz
  A Theory of the Event: Marshall Sahlins’s “Possible Theory of History”
  Historical Events as Transformations of Structures: Inventing Revolution at the Bastille
  Historical Duration and Temporal Complexity: The Strange Career of Marseille’s Dockworkers…
  Refiguring the “Social” in Social Science: An Interpretive Manifesto
Sartre, The Search for a Method
  Preface
  Marxism and Existentialism
  The Problem of Mediations and Auxiliary Disciplines
  The Progressive-Regressive Method
  Conclusion

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Sahlins, *Culture in Practice*
  - African Nemesis: An Off-Broadway Review (1964)
  - Poor Man, Rich Man, Big-Man, Chief: Political Types in Melanesia and Polynesia… (1963)
Fischer, *Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess*, 130-154
  - The Back-Rank Mates: Frames 103-124
Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*
  - Book I, Canto III
  - Book I, Canto IV

**Week IV** (February 2)

Sahlins, *Stone Age Economics*
  - The Original Affluent Society
  - The Domestic Mode of Production: The Structure of Underproduction
  - The Domestic Mode of Production: Intensification of Production
  - The Spirit of the Gift
  - On the Sociology of Primitive Exchange
  - Exchange Value and the Diplomacy of Primitive Trade

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Sahlins, *Culture in Practice*
  - The Original Affluent Society (1972)
Fischer, *Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess*, 155-172
  - Back-Rank Defenses and Variations: Frames 125-141
Shakespeare, *Sonnets*
  - Sonnets 1-15

**Week V** (February 9)

Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind*
  - Preface
  - The Science of the Concrete
  - The Logic of Totemic Classification
  - Systems of Transformations
  - Totem and Caste
  - Categories, Elements, Species, Numbers
  - Universalization and Particularization
  - The Individual as a Species
  - Time Regained
  - History and Dialectic

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Sahlins, *Culture in Practice*
  - Colors and Cultures (1976)
Fischer, *Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess*, 173-193
  - Back-Rank Defenses and Variations: Frames 142-158
Shakespeare, *Sonnets*
  - Sonnets 16-30

**Week VI** (February 16)

Sahlins, *Culture and Practical Reason*
  - Marxism and Two Structuralisms
  - Culture and Practical Reason
  - Anthropology and Two Marxisms
  - La Pensée Bourgeoise
  - Conclusion
**Week VII** (February 23) — No Meeting: Read Your Review Text
Read your review essay book and write a summary-review of it.

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**Week VIII** — Spring Break

**Week IX** (March 9) — No Meeting: Write Your Review Article “Lead”
Search on JSTOR
Fischer, *Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess*, 226-235
Displacing Defenders: Frames 186-194
Shakespeare, *Sonnets*
Sonnets 61-75

**3,000-word “Lead” for Review Articles Due by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 15th**

**Week X** (March 16)
Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*
The Objective Limits of Objectivism
Structures and Habitus
Generative Schemes and Practical Logic: Invention Within Limits
Structures, Habitus, Power: Basis for a Theory of Symbolic Power

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**Sahlins, Culture in Practice**
The Return of the Event, Again (1991)
Fischer, *Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess*, 236-247
Attacks on the Enemy Pawn Cover: Frames 195-205
Shakespeare, *Sonnets*
Sonnets 76-90
**Week XI** (March 23)

Sahlins, *Islands of History*

- Supplement to the Voyage of Cook; or *le calcul sauvage*
- Other Times, Other Customs: The Anthropology of History
- The Stranger-King; or Dumézil among the Fijians
- Captain James Cook; or, The Dying God
- Structure and History

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Sahlins, *Culture in Practice*

- The Discovery of the True Savage (1994)

Fischer, *Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess*, 248-261

- Attacks on the Enemy Pawn Cover: Frames 206-216

Shakespeare, *Sonnets*

- Sonnets 91-105

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**Week XII** (March 30)

Sahlins, *How Natives Think*

- Captain Cook at Hawaii
- Cook after Death
- Historical Fiction, Makeshift Ethnography
- Rationalities: How “Natives” Think
- Epilogue: Historiography, or Symbolic Violence

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Sahlins, *Culture in Practice*


Fischer, *Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess*, 262-274

- Attacks on the Enemy Pawn Cover: Frames 217-228

Shakespeare, *Sonnets*

- Sonnets 106-120

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**Week XIII** (April 6)

Sahlins, *Apologies to Thucydides*

- The Polynesian War—With Apologies to Thucydides
- Culture and Agency in History
- The Culture of an Assassination

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Sahlins, *Culture in Practice*


Fischer, *Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess*, 275-291

- Attacks on the Enemy Pawn Cover: Frames 229-239

Shakespeare, *Sonnets*

- Sonnets 121-135
**Week XIV** (April 13)
*Discussion Topic — Sonnets and Literature*
Douglas, *Thinking in Circles*
- Ancient Rings Worldwide
- Modes and Genres
- How to Construct and Recognize a Ring
- Alternating Bands: Numbers
- The Central Place: Numbers
- Modern, Not-Quite Rings
- *Tristram Shandy*: Testing for Ring Shape
- Two Central Places, Two Rings: The *Iliad*
- Alternating Nights and Days: The *Iliad*
- The Ending: How to Complete a Ring
- The Latch: Jakobson’s Conundrum

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Sahlins, *Culture in Practice*
- The Sadness of Sweetness; or, The Native Anthropology of Western Cosmology (1996)
Fischer, *Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess*, 292-315
- Final Review: Frames 240-258
Shakespeare, *Sonnets*
- Sonnets 136-154

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**Week XV** (April 20)
*Discussion Topic — Chess*
Smail, *On Deep History and the Brain*
- Introduction: Toward a Reunion in History
- The Grip of Sacred History
- Resistance
- Between Darwin and Lamarck
- The New Neurohistory
- Civilization and Psychotropy
- Epilogue: Looking Ahead

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Sahlins, *Culture in Practice*
Fischer, *Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess*, 316-335
- Final Review: Frames 259-275
Shakespeare, *Sonnets*
- Sonnets 136-154

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**Week XVI** (April 27) — Note 7:00-9:00 meeting
Appiah, *Experiments in Ethics*
- Introduction: The Waterless Moat
- The Case Against Character
- The Case Against Intuition
- The Varieties of Moral Experience
- The Ends of Ethics

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*Review Articles Due by Tuesday, May 4th at 5:00 p.m.*