

Culture and Practical Reason

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"The main thrust of this book is to deliver a major critique of materialist and rationalist explanations of social and cultural forms, but in the process Sahlins has given us a much stronger statement of the centrality of symbols in human affairs than have many of our 'practicing' symbolic anthropologists. He demonstrates that symbols enter all phases of social life: those which we tend to regard as strictly pragmatic, or based on concerns with material need or advantage, as well as those which we tend to view as purely symbolic, such as ideology, ritual, myth, moral codes, and the like. . . ."—Robert McKinley, Reviews in Anthropology