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UNH Economics Seminar Explores the Evolution of Strong Reciprocity

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Oct. 14, 2003

DURHAM, N.H. – Herbert Gintis, emeritus professor of economics at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, is the featured speaker at the Friday, Oct. 17, 2003, Economics Seminar sponsored by the University of New Hampshire’s Whittemore School of Business and Economics.

Gintis presents his research drawn from two papers, “The Evolution of Strong Reciprocity,” and “Explaining Altruistic Behavior in Humans,” from 2:10 to 3:30 p.m. in Room 318 McConnell Hall. The lecture is free and open to the public. Visitor parking at UNH is located off Route 155A on Mast Road; a free shuttle bus service is available to campus locations from the visitor center.

Gintis will discuss his research about possible explanations for the human cooperative behavior in terms of self-interest. Part of the explanation that he offers lies in the concept of strong reciprocity by which humans cooperate with each other and punish those who do not. Gintis considers whether this may be an evolutionary stable strategy. He taught at the University of Massachusetts from 1976-2002 and is an external faculty member at the Santa Fe Institute. Gintis is part of a long-term research project about the microfoundations of political economy and runs a large, interdisciplinary research project “Economic Environments and the Evolution of Norms and Preferences” funded by the MacArthur Foundation.

The Economics Seminar series is a weekly event of the Whittemore School’s graduate degree program in economics that highlights the research of the school’s faculty, graduate students and visiting academics.

For more information, contact Karen Conway, at 862-3386 or ksconway@cisunix.unh.edu. Advance copies of Gintis’ paper are available by contacting Sinthy Kounlasa at 862-3457 or sinthy.kounlasa@unh.edu.