

School of Cooperative Individualism

SINGLE TAX ORGANIZATION

This largely web-based (as yet) school is the brainchild of Ed Dodson (pictured), the dynamic Pennsylvanian Geoist with a large streak of that peculiarly-American libertarianism. It's an immense website well worth more than a mere browse, if only for the outstanding archives that Ed has compiled, which feature a massive collection of essays on a vast array of subjects from the best Geoist minds worldwide.

The stated principles of SCI are:

That all persons share the same species-specific characteristics and have a similar need for the goods (e.g., adequate food, clothing, shelter, nurturing, medical care, education, leisure, culture and civic involvement) for a decent human existence.

That we join together in society to enhance our ability to acquire such goods and for our mutual benefit and enjoyment.

That the source of the material goods necessary for our survival is the earth, equal access to which is the birthright of all persons, as is the full enjoyment of what individuals produce therefrom.

That liberty is the basis for moral human behaviour, inherent in which is the constraint that such behaviour in no way infringes on the liberty of others.

That human behaviour falls outside the realm of liberty and within the realm of criminal license when such behaviour violates the liberty of others.

That the orderly functioning of society requires the granting to individuals of licenses that distribute privileges not enjoyed by others. To the extent such licenses come to have exchange value in the marketplace, this value is acknowledged to be societally-created. Justice requires, therefore, that society collect this value as a fund for equal distribution to all members of society and/or for societal expenditures democratically agreed upon; and

That a society is just the extent to which liberty is fully realized, equality of opportunity prevails, criminal license is appropriately penalized, the full exchange value of economic licenses is collected for distribution and/or societal use, and the wealth produced by one's individual labour (directly, or indirectly, with the assistance of capital goods) is protected as one's naturally rightful property and not subject to taxation or other forms of confiscation.

The mission of the SCI is to promote the socio-political philosophy and principles of cooperative individualism as con-

tained in the statement of principles found at the website. A hope for the future is that those who come to accept cooperative individualism as their guiding principles would raise the resources to establish a community based on these principles, practically applied. Within the community would be a centre for scholars and researchers, publishing, degree-level coursework, leadership training, conferences and seminars. All land would be held by the community and leased to users under a competitive bid process that ensure the full location rent would be collected for use in providing community goods and services (with the potential for a community dividend distributed annually to each qualified member).



Ed Dodson was first introduced to Henry George's writings in the early 1970s as a result of an interest he developed in land use planning. About a year after moving to the City of Philadelphia in 1979 he discovered the existence of a Henry George School and enrolled in its educational program. After graduating from the school, he was invited to join the faculty and has been teaching and lecturing at the school ever since. In the mid-1980s,

Ed began working on a masters degree in liberal arts at Temple University in Philadelphia. His research and writing at Temple frequently focused on Georgist issues, in particular its philosophical principles. Searching for a way to describe George's socio-political philosophy, Ed came across an essay written by E.B. Gaston, one of the founders of the "Single Tax" community established at Fairhope, Alabama. Gaston used the term "cooperative individualism" to describe the principles on which Fairhope was to operate. This term, to Ed, very appropriately described the principles of Henry George. Over the next several years, Ed developed and taught a course at the Henry George School he titled *The Search for the Just Society* exploring history and the struggle to establish cooperative individualism as the basis for the just society. Then in 1997 he established The School of Cooperative Individualism (<http://www.cooperativeindividualism.org>) as an internet education project. Here, visitors can find not only the writings of Henry George and many essays written about George, but access to a growing library of materials on political economy not available elsewhere. Additionally, the SCI website houses a "biographical history of the Georgist movement" that recognizes the involvement and contribution of the countless number of dedicated persons around the globe for more than a century."

The SCI's bannerhead says it all: "The School of Cooperative Individualism, where the idea of liberty thrives!"