

## IN MEMORY OF KEN MACKINTOSH

I first heard the name Ken Mackintosh in the early fall of 1998 when Hans Hoppe asked me if I had ever heard of him. I said I hadn't and Hans, with something of the air of putting one over on me, said that Ken was a sociologist deeply interested in Austrian economics and libertarian political theory who lives in Conway, Arkansas, a small town of about 40,000 which has been my home for about a year and a half, and that he had submitted articles to the *Quarterly Journal of Austrian Economics* and to the *Journal of Libertarian Studies*, periodicals for which both Hans and I serve as co-editors.

This, I confess, knocked me for a bit of a loop. Not only is it rare to run across a scholar with an appreciation for Austrianism and libertarianism in Arkansas, but to find one who was also a sociologist, of all things, is truly exceptional, even amazing.

Needless to say, I telephoned Ken right away, and he agreed to have lunch with me. Frankly, I thought Hans was pulling my leg; he was not. Ken was everything Hans said he would be, and more. I found Ken to be knowledgeable about all sorts of obscure Austrian economists and libertarian theorists with whom I was acquainted, as well as free-market oriented sociologists, of whom I was ignorant (to tell the truth, I thought the very concept of a modern sociologist such as Ken who favored economic freedom to be a veritable contradiction in terms.)

We must have had lunch together a half dozen times or so. In addition, Ken attended a lecture I gave at the University of Central Arkansas's Honors College on libertarianism, which served as a further impetus for our discussions. It was a pleasure to begin to get to know him in this way.

I learned later that Ken was denied tenure at UCA to a large degree because he didn't publish. And I can readily understand why. According to Ken's wife Rita Rose, "there were very few sociological journals interested in his work; he really had no publication outlets at the time."

Well, that may have been true half a decade ago, but in the last few years Ken was a very prolific author. His article "Sociology as Anti-Economics" has just been accepted for publication in the *Quarterly Journal of Austrian Economics*, and you see before you his "Sociological Theory in the Shadow of Durkheim's Revolt Against Economics," in the *Journal of Libertarian Studies*. In

addition, Rita Rose informs me that he has had another article accepted for publication, and has submitted several more, all in the last little while.

His untimely passing at the age of 62 means that the world, at least our little bit of it, will miss a strong voice for liberty, intellectual sanity and freedom, and from a very unlikely disciplinary (and therefore even more precious) source. For me, personally, Ken was a witty man, with a great sense of humor, and much empathy. We were fast becoming friends, and I shall greatly miss him.

- Walter Block