

Jack Schwartzman

An Impromptu Biography

Jack Schwartzman has been connected with the Henry George School since 1938 when, as a student of Frank Chodorov, he was asked to join the faculty. This was the same year that Schwartzman had become an attorney in the State of New York.

Born in Russia, Jack Schwartzman came to the United States in his teens, and has been the recipient of four college degrees, including two earned doctorates. His departure from Russia was dramatically described in two widely quoted autobiographical essays, "Flight from Kiev" (*The Freeman*, 1942) and "Lilacs" (*Fragments*, 1966).

Once he became bitten by the bug of teaching, as exemplified by the fiery classes he conducted at the HGSSS, Jack Schwartzman determined that teaching was to be his lifetime vocation, instead of a hobby, and he did not stop until he achieved his burning desire. After a short interval of teaching mathematics at The Rhodes School, he persevered (teaching seven different courses) until he became Professor of English at Nassau Community College. The greatest tribute to any teacher was paid to him in March of 1974, when he was nominated by the president of the college for the New York State State Chancellor's Award for excellence in teaching.

At the Henry George School of Social Science, Schwartzman taught twelve different courses, all with unvaryingly large enrollments. He was also a member of the Speakers' Bureau and addressed numerous audiences. (In the last four decades, Schwartzman has spoken to hundreds of groups on scores of diverse topics.)

Taking time out to serve in the Army of the United States (from which he was discharged as an officer, and received a Citation), Jack Schwartzman also contributed to the Georgist cause by organizing two branches of the Henry George School: in Seattle (with Robert Clancy and George Dana Linn) and in San Francisco (with J. Rupert Mason). He is a member of the Academic Advisory Council of the HGSSS, and recently was considered for nomination to its Board of Trustees.

The great thrill of Jack Schwartzman's life (besides teaching classes jammed with beautiful girls) is writing. His book, *Rebels of Individualism* (New York, 1949), made a tremendous impact on the

libertarian world. After having more than a hundred articles published in various magazines, Schwartzman achieved his "success" by becoming Chairman of the Board of Editors of *Fragments* magazine. To this day he receives mail from all over the world asking that the "temporarily dormant" intellectual quarterly be revived. To all this urging his answer is: "Soon."

In 1973, Jack Schwartzman traveled through Israel as a member of the American Professors for Peace in the Middle East. Speaking in Israel, he propounded the tenets of Henry George.

As to his philosophy of teaching, Jack Schwartzman subscribes to the Socratic method (which he learned at the Henry George School), coupled with a brand of insanity, wild humor, and unrelenting dynamism which stamp his classes as unique. For the rest of his life, he pledges his troth with truth, as personified by Henry George and the school that expounds his principles. And Jack Schwartzman expects to be around for many eternities.

So much for the more-or-less objective biography of this most interesting man: the dates, the places, and the events. But to write objectively is to leave too much unsaid, for there is far more to Jack than his remarkable accomplishments. A few lines must be written from the heart, to bespeak his character and his personality. He is gregarious, demonstrative, ebullient, and volatile. However, these qualities are not a superficial pose; they reflect a deep affection for people and a rare compassion for their weaknesses. Socially, Jack is the best of boon companions, and spiritually he is the warmest and truest of friends.

To hear Jack Schwartzman discuss Henry George is a revelation. He is less intrigued by Georgist economic proposals (which he sincerely advocates), than he is by George's love of liberty, his desire for justice, and his hope for the future of humankind. To Schwartzman, George is to be respected for his brilliance as a political economist, but revered for the nobility of his social philosophy. Such reactions show Jack's feeling for that which is right and good.

Perhaps this brief account is ending on a personal note, rather than with editorial formality. But how do you write "objectively" about someone you love?

—S.A.M.