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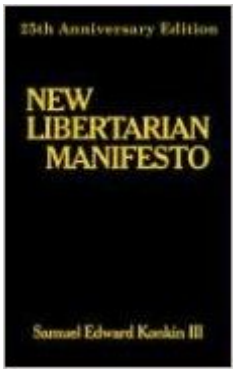
New Libertarian Manifesto



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Synopsis

New Libertarian Manifesto -- The 25th Anniversary Edition, by Samuel Edward Konkin III (1947-2004), brings the groundbreaking work back into print. First published in October, 1980, the Manifesto is the most concise treatise on Counter-Economics and Agorism available to the public. Five chapters encompass Konkin’s unique view of libertarianism: I. Statism: Our Condition; II. Agorism: Our Goal; III. Counter-Economics: Our Means; IV. Revolution: Our Strategy; and V. Action: Our Tactics. The 25th Anniversary Edition is the fourth printing of the book, which has been an underground anarchist classic. Also included in this edition are critiques of New Libertarian Manifesto by Murray N. Rothbard, Ph.D., Robert LeFevre, and Erwin S. Strauss, and replies by Samuel Edward Konkin III, which were published in Strategy of the New Libertarian Alliance in 1981 and long out of print until now.

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Customer Reviews

Samuel Edward Konkin III’s New Libertarian Manifesto could be seen as the "Final Revelation" of libertarianism. While Murray Rothbard synthesized Austrian free-market economics and classical liberalism to create the philosophy of libertarianism (aka "market anarchism" or "anarcho-capitalism"), SEK3 takes things a step further, and offers a strategy for achieving "agorism" -- libertarianism in practice. That strategy is "counter economics.""Counter economics" probably needs a new name. It is short for "counter-establishment" economics, and was widely understood as such in the aftermath of the "counter culture," but now the term "counter economics"

sounds like "un-economic" or "anti-economic." Regardless, SEK3 was anything but "anti-economic" -- he was a student of the Austrian school, and dedicated the New Libertarian Manifesto to Ludwig von Mises and Murray Rothbard (and Robert LeFevre). What is meant by "counter-establishment" economics is eschewing the "white" market -- that is, the state controlled market -- for black (illegal, non-violent) and grey (of questionable legality) markets. The idea is that evasion, avoidance, and ignoring of the state will lead to its demise.Konkin also discusses a "red" market -- that of violence. This is distinguished from the black market, even if both are deemed illegal by the state. Prostitution, where the prostitute is voluntarily engaging in the sale of sex for money, is a black market activity. But where the girl is forced to prostitute herself by an abusive pimp, it is red market, and not condoned.Konkin makes the case that there are already millions of black- and grey-market operators throughout the U.S.

If you are looking for an introduction to libertarianism, this is not the place to start. For that, pick up a copy of What It Means To Be A Libertarian by Charles Murray.If you have any involvement with libertarianism, you are well aware of the "cat herding" problem within the movement. But what do you expect from a philosophy that is so deeply opposed to hierarchy and control? SEK3, in this book, lays out his own particular brand of libertarianism that he called Agorism.What is agorism? Agorism, from the greek word for market, is a anarcho-capitalist philosophy that holds that all interactions between individuals should be voluntary. Pretty straight forward libertarianism, one would think, but with his roots in the Old Left, it does have a different flavor than libertarian systems that developed out of the Old Right. The major difference is the focus on counter-economics rather than Austrian economics. if you are coming to libertarianism from the left, this book will definitely help you explain yourself better to your former comrades.On the minarchist-anarchist debate, this book is solidly anarchist. I tend to favor minarchism and communitarianism, but I do see the validity of SEK3’s arguments, and he does a better job than most arguing against minarchism.major weakness- I don’t believe you can ignore the state to death. this approach led him to some arguments with the "partyarchs" and the "kochtopus." (his terms). but, this approach does have more compelling things to say about how to live your life that other wings of libertarianism don’t. sure, you can read Reason and vote Libertarian as a main stream libertarian, but as an agorist you will actively work to live your life in ways that purposely exclude the government.

For years, this book has remained an entirely relevant guide to pushing the state into irrelevance. Though he is now deceased, Samuel Edward Konkin (SEK3) has forever made his mark within the

minds of radicals who feel all functions of government should either be privately provided or done away with altogether.The central idea this book illuminates that distinguishes it from typical anarcho-capitalist writings is what SEK3 has dubbed "Agorism." This is both an ideology as well as a tactical plan for how to do away with the state. There are two main pillars that the book highlights as being part of agoric thinking. First, it is an adaptation of Robert LeFevre's concept of agoric institutions. This is basically a preference over individual contractors as opposed to large corporations. The book rightfully describes big corporations not as flowing from a free market, but instead as creatures of the state.This preference for individual contractors makes perfect sense; if a business performs a service poorly because of the mistakes of a single employee, should the business be held accountable or should the client have the choice of selecting a different employee for the task? Obviously the latter is ideal since large businesses are simply "voluntary" versions of collectivist enterprise.Simply put: Corporations don't screw up, individuals do. The New Libertarian Manifesto also gives an brief but excellent account for how an agoric society would operate in practice. SEK3 describes how market-based actors could provide safety and security, and his account for how the role of insurance would play in the process was truly an eye-opener for me.

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