

A NEW MODEL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

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# CREATING A KNOWLEDGE COMMON

GROWING A COMMUNITY  
OF SCHOLAR-ACTIVISTS  
TO CREATE THE JUST &  
SUSTAINABLE FUTURE WE  
NEED IN THE 21ST CENTURY



THE COOPERATIVE NEW SCHOOL FOR URBAN  
STUDIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

# ABOUT US

At the Cooperative New School, we build networked learning communities using the time-tested approach of popular education.

We bring environmental justice, social justice, and organizing strategies to the people, to make knowledge accessible to everyone. Our goal is to improve our mutual capacity as scholar activists to make positive change in our own communities.

As student-teachers and teacher-students, each of us has the capacity to produce the knowledge that will change the world. Education is the foundation of on-the-ground action for a socially, economically, and environmentally just future. In community, we seek to change the hearts and minds of everyday people to realize their agency as activists, community organizers, and social entrepreneurs.

We envision growing a committed group of student owners to form communities of learning and scholarship.

As a student owner of the CNS, you will have access the student owner governance body, with an opportunity to join a portion of the CNS's annual retreat. Student- and faculty-owners design curricula, certificates, and activist scholarship research agendas.



[cooperativenewschool.com](http://cooperativenewschool.com)

A black and white photograph of a large crowd of people at what appears to be a protest or rally. Some people are holding signs, and the scene is outdoors with trees in the background.

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# MEET OUR FACULTY-OWNERS



ZAC HENSON



C.N.E.  
CORBIN



PAUL ROGE



MELEIZA  
FIGUEROA

## **ZAC HENSON**

PHD, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA BERKELEY (ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE, POLICY, & MANAGEMENT)

Zac is an educator, organizer, public organic intellectual, redneck, banjo player, and homespun gadfly. He uses the liberation pedagogy of Paulo Freire as one of his primary teaching methods. As part of his dissertation research, Zac co-founded Magic City Agriculture Project, a popular education and urban agricultural community development organization. In 2016, he founded The Cooperative New School for Urban Studies and Environmental Justice.

## **C.N.E. CORBIN**

PHD CANDIDATE, UC BERKELEY (ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE, POLICY, & MANAGEMENT)

C.N.E. Corbin is a PhD Candidate at the UC Berkeley Department of Environmental Science, Policy and Management within the Division of Society & Environment. As City of Oakland Parks and Recreation Advisory Commissioner (PRAC) Corbin serves her community by researching, reporting, and making recommendations to the City Council on Park and Recreation policies. Corbin's interests also include science fiction, AfroFuturism, alternative modernities, speculative fiction, and visionary fiction as tools to (re)imaging a different environmentally just and socially justice future.

## **PAUL ROGE**

PHD, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA BERKELEY (ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE, POLICY, & MANAGEMENT)

Paul is a scholar-activist-educator based out of California. His current projects include agroecology educator at the Multinational Exchange for Sustainable Agriculture (MESA), and staff research associate / lecturer at UC Berkeley. As an agroecologist, Paul has collaborated with various social movements around the world including the Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST) in Brazil and the Center for Integral Farmer Development of the Mixteca Alta (CEDICAM) in Oaxaca, Mexico. Paul is committed to popular and experiential education and to participatory action research.

## **MELEIZA FIGUEROA**

PHD CANDIDATE, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA BERKELEY (GEOGRAPHY)

As a Fellow with the Liberty Tree Foundation for the Democratic Revolution, Mel co-facilitates the Movement School for Revolutionaries, a political education & strategic planning initiative providing workshops on history, political theory, & skills training for activists, community groups and political organizations across the United States. She served as National Press Director for the Stein/Baraka Green Party presidential campaign in 2016, and has been a producer & commentator in progressive media, including Pacifica Radio, Free Speech TV, The Nation, Truthdig, Against the Current, and New Politics.

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# HISTORY & INSPIRATION

Highlander, the most venerable movement organization in the South, was founded in 1932 by Myles Horton, a Southern United States educator, labor activist, and socialist. His original purpose for the school organizing laborers and labor activists in Southern Appalachia. Over the years, Highlander has focused on Civil Rights, helping to train many Civil Rights leaders including Rosa Parks, LGBTQ activism, economics and governance.

The Federation of Southern Cooperatives was founded in 1967 as an continuation of the Civil Rights Movement in the economic realm. The Federation was founded to organize black farmers economically through cooperatives and later to protect black-owned land from land loss. The Federation recently went through a significant transition with long-time executive director Ralph Paige stepping down and Cornelius Blanding filling his shoes. The Federation has probably made the most material impact of any movement organization in the South by help black farmers control land.

In 2016, Revolutionary Solutions, formerly Revolutionary Consulting, began xperimenting with popular education, holding four classes in late 2016 and early 2017. In May of 2017, Zac Henson, CNE Corbin, Susan Diane Mitchell, Paul Rogé, Heather Covington, Karen Johnson, Carolyn Finney, and Felicia Harris-Daniels founded The CNS.

The CNS is a combination of the models of The Federation and Highlander, the two most important movement organizations in the South. The CNS uses a cooperative business model instead of a non-profit business model. It is an institution rooted in Southern movements and hopes to replicate the legacies of its elder organizations.

Like The Federation and Highlander, The CNS aims to bring the advantages of the Southern movement to the rest of the world. Our main advantage is the culture of self-defense rooted in Southern movements. The CNS's online education program offers an opportunity to share that culture with the rest of the world.



## POPULAR EDUCATION

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Popular education is politically conscious in that it recognizes oppressive structures in society. It aims at social transformation through the self-empowerment of people who are socially marginalized, or who are not sufficiently served by established academic institutions. Popular education originates in many parts of the globe. Our collaborative structure, in which student-owners and faculty-owners co-create our curriculum, as well as teach and learn from each other, is rooted in these principles.

The faculty- owners at the Cooperative New School draw inspiration from pedagogical approaches articulated by Paulo Freire, bell hooks, and Myles Horton, founder of the Highlander Center, among others.

# CLASSES & WEBINARS

## WEBINARS OFFERED IN 2017

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### THE SOCIAL MOVEMENT BOOTCAMP SERIES

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#### **EMBRACING DIVERSITY, DIFFERENCE, AND INCLUSION**

Taught by C.N.E. Corbin  
June 2017

#### **AGROECOLOGY IN THE CONTEXT OF URBAN AGRICULTURE AND FOOD JUSTICE MOVEMENTS**

Taught by Paul Roge  
July 2017

#### **COOPERATIVES AND COMMUNITY LAND TRUSTS**

Taught by Susan Diane Mitchell  
August 2017

#### **THE SUSTAINABLE CITY**

Taught by C.N.E. Corbin  
September 2017

#### **SOCIAL MOVEMENTS**

Taught by Zac Henson  
October 2017

#### **RESEARCH METHODS FOR SOCIAL MOVEMENTS**

Taught by Heather Covington  
November 2017





# CLASSES & WEBINARS

## WEBINARS OFFERED SPRING 2018

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### URBAN AGRICULTURE AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

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#### **CROP PLANNING FOR URBAN AGRICULTURE**

Taught by Paul Roge  
March 2018

#### **HISTORY OF APPALACHIAN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS**

Taught by Zac Henson  
March 2018

#### **ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Taught by Zac Henson  
April 2018

#### **WORKSHOP: RESEARCH METHODS FOR SOCIAL MOVEMENTS**

Facilitated by  
May 2018

#### **URBAN AGRICULTURE IN THE UNITED STATES AND CUBA**

Taught by Paul Roge  
June 2018

#### **SOCIAL MOVEMENT STRATEGY**

Taught by Zac Henson  
June 2018

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# CLASSES & WEBINARS

## WEBINARS OFFERED FALL 2018

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### **CAPITALISM & RESISTANCE: FROM GLOBAL TO LOCAL**

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#### **MODERN (MARXIST) ECONOMICS FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZING**

Taught by Zac Henson  
September 2017

#### **LAND, LABOR, CAPITAL: ORIGINS & FUNDAMENTALS OF CAPITALISM**

Taught by Mel Figueroa  
September 2017

#### **THE DISMAL SCIENCE: ECONOMICS, DEVELOPMENT, AND THE INDUSTRIAL WORLD**

Taught by Mel Figueroa  
October 2017

#### **SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZING**

Taught by Zac Henson  
October 2017

#### **ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Taught by Zac Henson  
November 2017

#### **HERE WE GO AGAIN: CAPITALIST CRISES & THEIR CONSEQUENCES**

Taught by Mel Figueroa  
November 2017

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# CLASSES & WEBINARS

## WEBINARS OFFERED SPRING 2019

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### **THE SURVIVAL SERIES: EVERYDAY RESISTANCE**

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#### **HOW TO CHECK YOUR CAR**

Taught by Zac Henson

March 2019

#### **SUBSISTENCE IS RESISTANCE: MAROONS & THEIR LEGACY**

Taught by Mel Figueroa

April 2019

#### **ENTOMOPHAGY AND THE RAISING OF EDIBLE INSECTS**

Taught by Paul Roge

April 2019

#### **BASIC AUTO MAINTENANCE: OIL CHANGE AND TIRE ROTATION**

Taught by Zac Henson

April 2019







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## **SCHOLAR-ACTIVIST BASED RESEARCH AND CONSULTING FOR EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES**

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The Environmental Justice Knowledge Factory (The Factory) is the activist scholar arm of The Cooperative New School. As activist scholars we strive to bridge the gap between higher education and public service by employing our academic frameworks and toolkits to enact social change through conducting on the ground research at the community level and with community members. We believe that everyone has knowledge to contribute to the larger discussion of environmental justice. We are both experts and novices, teachers and students, and community members and global citizens who have a stake in creating a more just society.



### SERVICES

- Research Approaches
- Archival Research
- Content Analysis
- Ethnography/Interviews/Surveys
- Participatory Action Research (PAR)
- Organic inquiry
- Deconstruction of Policies and Plans



### DELIVERABLES

- Whitepapers
  - Plans
  - Reports
  - Community Presentations
  - Cultural Narratives
  - Cooperative Economic Analyses
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# FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

## **CERTIFICATE PROGRAM**

We aim to begin offering full-length semester classes beginning in fall 2019. We hope this will form the basis of a multi-year certificate program in Urban & Environmental Planning. Students will receive a world-class education in core concepts of urban studies & environmental justice, practical training in research and planning methods, with an individualized capstone project that will help prepare activists & community organizations to pursue campaigns in their local areas.

## **LAND BASED SUSTAINABLE CAMPUS & TRAINING CENTER**

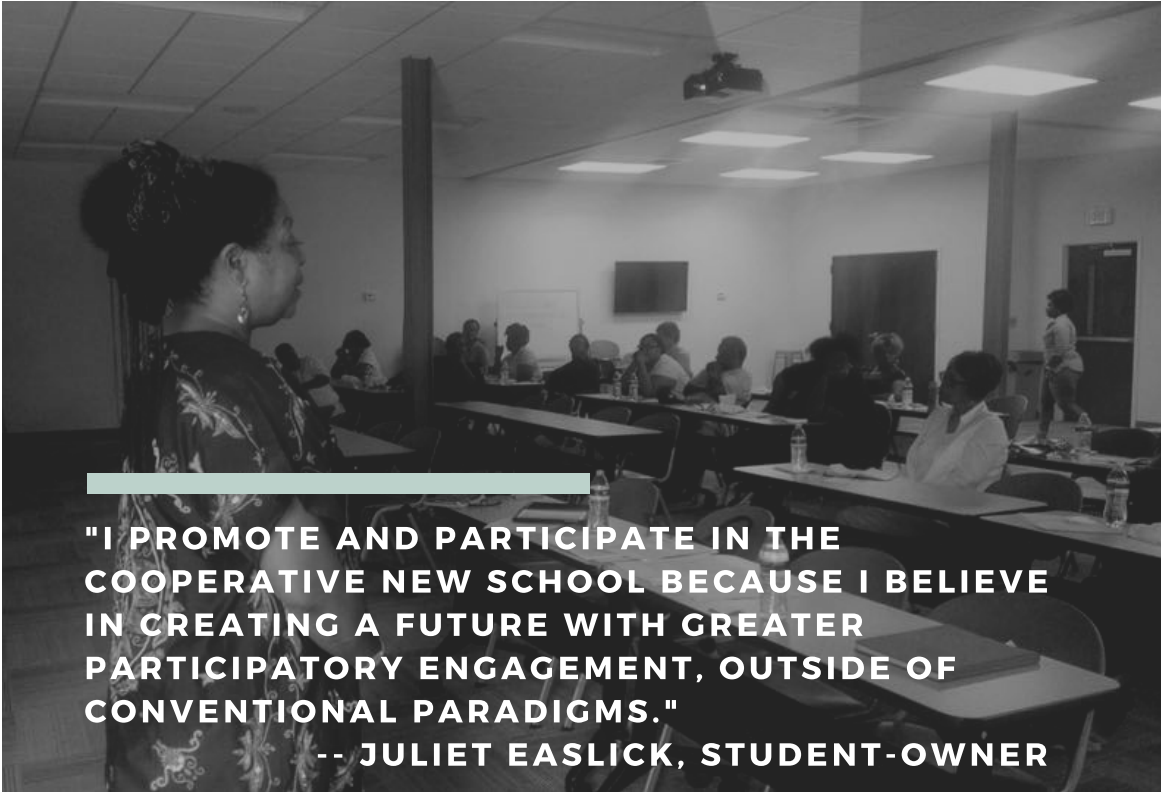
Among our many long-term goals, we aim to eventually acquire and develop land-based physical campuses in core areas throughout the country, to provide space for affordable, intensive hands-on training and a living laboratory for the skills our students will develop, including urban agriculture, sustainable building, and community organizing.



**LEARN MORE:**  
[cooperativenewschool.com](http://cooperativenewschool.com)



# TESTIMONIALS



**"I PROMOTE AND PARTICIPATE IN THE COOPERATIVE NEW SCHOOL BECAUSE I BELIEVE IN CREATING A FUTURE WITH GREATER PARTICIPATORY ENGAGEMENT, OUTSIDE OF CONVENTIONAL PARADIGMS."**

**-- JULIET EASLICK, STUDENT-OWNER**

"Their broad-based model is much more inclusive than most "urban studies", geographically and racially diverse. Too many groups are all about development and capitalism, favoring the rich and pushing the poor aside. I have hope for this group." -- Miles Drake

"I joined the Cooperative New School because it is sorely needed, especially now as neoliberal universities increasingly underserve both students and faculty. Being a faculty-owner allows me, as a first-generation, low-income scholar of color, the freedom to fulfill my own educational mission, working with communities I generally don't see on college campuses." --Mel Figueroa

"As a student in the Cooperative New School, I relate to the popular education method here where information and ideas are exchanged and related by all participants. I have gotten out of the classes skills that I have used in advocacy and activism. And knowledge where there were ideas I had in my own readings and thinking that were further expanded for me much more quickly than I would do alone.." -- Juliet Easlick

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

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# SUPPORT US

There are many ways you can help our project:

- Sign up for classes
- Become a student-owner
- Contract with us for research and/or training
- Donate money or land
- Spread the word!

# CONTACT US

EMAIL US:

[INFO@COOPERATIVENEWSCHOOL.COM](mailto:INFO@COOPERATIVENEWSCHOOL.COM)

FIND US ON THE WEB:

[COOPERATIVENEWSCHOOL.COM](http://COOPERATIVENEWSCHOOL.COM)



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