

Richard Boren
Scottsdale, AZ

February 4, 2014

Mr. Wayne Joyner
3600 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 2228
Los Angeles, CA 90010

Re: The fate of Galambos' work

Dear Mr. Joyner,

I am writing to you in your capacity as a trustee of the Andrew J. Galambos and Suzanne J. Galambos Natural Estates Trust. If you no longer serve in that capacity, I would appreciate your letting me know and advising me where this correspondence might best be directed.

My wife, Pauline, and I first took V-50 from Jay Snelson in early 1975. We subsequently enrolled in almost every available FEI course, including OEC and OESC, accumulating what I estimate to be about 1000 hours of lecture time. We also entered into the book contract and paid for our books. All told, my FEI experience comprises what I think of as the most important part of my education, and that's what I tell everyone.

In Flatland terms I "retired" in 2006 when I sold my business. That gave me the time to do an extensive amount of independent study, consisting primarily of reading books and essays that I had not previously had the time to do, and listening to lectures, both live and on the Internet. As Galambos said, "acquirable knowledge is infinite," so I'll never run out of things to do. I care about what happens to our species, and am willing to work on the multi-generational project of attaining freedom.

Last year I discovered that some of Galambos' courses had been made available online, and was filled with hope that his ideas might finally reach educable people worldwide. Although I feel that I am fairly well versed in those ideas, given that there is no V-201 book I thought it would be interesting to hear V-201 DD while comparing it to my notes from 1975, and quite possibly get more out of it today than I did then. However, I was disappointed to learn that, even with my history as a good FEI customer, I was required to complete V-50 DD first. Cheryl Cerell insisted that those were the rules, and advised me that new material had been added in V-50 DD that would make it worthwhile. (It didn't occur to me at the time, but because I had paid for the V-201 book, there is a case to be made that I ought to be entitled to listen to V-201 DD without charge.) In addition to Ms. Cerell, during the process of enrolling I also interacted with Seth Alden and Bobby Greenberg, and all of them acted in the professional manner that was always the hallmark of FEI staffers.

As I began listening to V-50 DD, I was impressed by the overall production value. It is first rate, and my initial reaction was that I could see myself referring people to the online course. However, because I own *Sic Itur Ad Astra*, I was able to read along as Galambos spoke, and that led to the discovery of three troubling issues. I tried to overlook them, at least for as long as it would take to listen to all of the sessions, but they bothered me so much that after a while I stopped listening to the course and began to think about what, if anything, I should do. The result is this letter. You may be entirely unaware of the problems that I'm about to identify, so the criticisms below, both expressed and implied, are not necessarily of you.

The first problem pertains to a graphic (hereinafter "slide") that can be found at 44:57 of session 1A. (A photograph of this slide as it appeared on my computer monitor is enclosed.) The slide is a quote from the second full paragraph on page 15 of SIAA. The slide reads:

"...Individuals have always made every step in world culture, both for the good and the bad. Every step of both progress and regression is the cause of individual action; it is never produced by mass or mob action." –AJG

Please read the above carefully. Do you see anything wrong? Please decide before reading further.

It would not be surprising to find errors in a transcription of this length. After all, even the words of the clearest speaker can be transcribed incorrectly, and Galambos wasn't always the clearest speaker. In this case there is such an error. It is in this phrase:

"Every step of both progress and regression is the cause of individual action"

Because of a transcription error in SIAA, this says the *opposite* of what is true. The phrase should read:

"Every step of both progress and regression is *because* of individual action" [italics mine]

The transcriber of SIAA wrote "the cause" when Galambos actually said "because." If you listen to the recording I believe this will be clear to you as well.

One might excuse the fault in this V-50 DD slide as simply being within the normal range of human error. But this particular error indicates that the person(s) who created the slide, who thought that this part of the text was so important that they singled it out and extracted it for special attention, didn't understand it. If they had, they would have caught the error. Instead they blindly copied the nice-sounding words without thinking about what they meant. Below I'll address what I believe are the implications of that.

Second, let's look at the slide labeled "Four Alternatives," which attempts to summarize the "Alternatives to the Present Problem" on page 30 of SIAA. (A copy of this slide is also enclosed.) As we know, SIAA is not a literal transcription, but a lightly edited one. In this case, the editor of SIAA altered some of what Galambos said in order to make it clearer in written form. In my view,

the editor did a good job of “tidying up” Galambos’ unscripted remarks, which were a bit clumsy at this point, and in fact contained an error by Galambos. Specifically, in the recording Galambos says he’s going to present four alternatives, but then presents only three, concluding with the words, “The third and last alternative...” The editor of SIAA wisely took out the reference to four, where apparently Galambos simply misspoke. However, whoever made the V-50 DD slide must have felt that he should override the SIAA editor and, because Galambos *said* four, he created a slide with *four* points on it. As a result, in order to list four when only three were given, we get these as the first “two” alternatives:

1. Know there is a problem and ignore it.
2. Recognize there is a problem and do nothing about it.

These are clearly not “alternatives” but the same concept stated two ways. I wonder who would take course V-50 DD and not notice that this is ridiculous. And the points themselves, all “four” of them, are elementary advice. They are about as far from Galambos’ unique insight as you can get, so why create a slide for them in the first place?

Given the reality that Galambos made a mistake and promised four points but gave only three, a simple slide acknowledging his minor error could have been inserted, or perhaps an audio edit could have been made to remove the error entirely. However, the way it was done could hardly have been worse.

The significance of this is that both of these slides were prepared and approved by a person or persons who supposedly have such a deep understanding of Galambos’ work that they are qualified to be its custodians, to make editorial decisions, and to severely limit and restrict access to it. I’d say that the above calls their qualifications into question. Further, I’d say that it also calls into question the entire idea that only “certain people” are “qualified” to hear Galambos’ work. Who is qualifying the qualifiers?

The third problem is far more serious. In SIAA, on page 10, and again on page 51, Galambos gives credit to Jay Snelson. However, because I was reading the transcript as I listened, I noticed that Snelson’s name had been removed from the V-50 DD recording in both places. The audio edits were done skillfully, and I would say they are undetectable to anyone besides perhaps a forensic audio examiner.

Galambos had a name for the removal of people from history in this way: primary murder. In the days of Stalin, people disappeared from photographs. As he purged them from his inner circle, so too did he attempt to purge them from history. (I believe that Galambos mentioned this specifically.) Today, North Korean dictator Kim Jung-Un’s uncle has disappeared from official photos. Rewriting history is the antithesis of what Galambos taught. Whatever complaints Galambos or anyone at FEI may have had about Snelson, this is hardly the way to address them.

I was present when Galambos “fired” Jay Snelson in front of a stunned audience. Because Snelson did not protest (at least not that I heard), I assumed that Galambos was justified in his

action. It wasn't until 30 years later that I came to know Jay on a personal level, and helped proof and edit his book, *Taming the Violence of Faith*. I have never met a more decent, gentlemanly man than Jay Snelson. I believe that his treatment by Galambos was probably unjust and that Galambos probably owed (and still owes) him restitution. Jay said nothing about it, his remarks about Galambos in response to my questions were always respectful, and he credited him with being one of his three most important intellectual antecedents.

The cruel nature of Galambos' sneak-attack public dismissal of Snelson was unwarranted. And as a business decision it was a terrible one because Jay was producing the vast majority of FEI's new customers. It was downhill for FEI enrolments after that. As I think most of us would agree, Galambos was often his own worst enemy, this being just one example.

Even if for argument's sake one assumes that Snelson deserved to have his contract with FEI terminated, there is no excuse for attempting to remove him—or anyone—from history. The kindest interpretation of this attempt to do so is that it shows poor judgment, no matter how good the intent. At worst it shows a rejection of the principles espoused by Galambos, and the willful commission of a Spaceland crime. No matter what, it is inexcusable. As with the slides, this misdeed was committed by a person or persons who are custodians of Galambos' work, and who set the standards for who is allowed to see that work and by what means. In my view, no one who understands and agrees with what Galambos taught could possibly condone this.

I trust that you will take prompt action to have the slides fixed as a matter of basic error correction, and that as a matter of morality you will restore Snelson's name to the recording, notifying every previous taker of V-50 DD of these actions.

The disheartening nature of the above caused me to think again about the lack of a V-201 book. As already mentioned, I paid for the books that were supposed to contain V-50 and V-201, respectively, believing that I was buying the right to do with them as I would any book. I was thrilled to get Book 1 and relied on the written statement of the trustees that the second book(s) containing V-201 would be forthcoming. I had none of the concerns that one might have in a Flatland commercial transaction, and waited patiently. It never occurred to me to complain about the delay, or ask for a refund. In other words, I trusted the trustees. However, it is now clear (from court documents and trustee correspondence) that the trustees decided not to publish a V-201 transcript and deliver it to those who paid for it, and further decided not to publish this decision, let alone defend it.

Although we have been admonished not to claim that we know "what Galambos would have wanted," can it possibly be that he would have wanted what is going on with his work today? With the creation of the Internet, there is now an abundance of information and ideas regarding stateless societies, much of it available free or at low cost. With the Internet, a real opportunity exists to create the Moral Island now, and the Natural Republic in the not too distant future, including the computerized ability to handle innovations and royalties per the principles of V-201. And yet, almost 50 years after Galambos first disclosed the ideas central to V-201, his influence is nil.

I think we know what Galambos would *not* have wanted, and that would have been for his ideas to be irrelevant and forgotten. His claim to be the integrator of volition doesn't allow for that, but it appears to be what is likely to happen. As a prime example, a Google search for "Galambos" reveals few results. Among them is the FEI website offering the courses. However, the most prominent references to Galambos position him as a nut, a crank, a minor player and so forth. Chief among them are Harry Browne's essay, which at best damns him with faint praise, and N. Stephan Kinsella's ignorant dismissal of his ideas, complete with name-calling. (Mr. Kinsella is ignorant because he never took a Galambos class and is kept ignorant because reading V-50 and V-201 is presently impossible.) Kinsella, who is prominent in the libertarian community, e.g., the Mises Institute website, is known for his stand *against* intellectual (primary) property. Where is the Galambos counterattack? There is none. One probable result of this is that prospective customers for FEI's online courses, doing their homework before enrolling, will see the distorted and negative opinions about Galambos on the Internet and elect not to enroll.

There are now many excellent books that demonstrate both the immorality of the state and the lack of need for it. Galambos did that, of course, but others have too, both before and since. A number of people, e.g., Bastiat, Molinari, Spooner, Nock, Rothbard, LeFevre, Tannehill, Friedman, Rose, and Huemer, have made the case against the state rather well, and their work is easily available to anyone who wants it. However, Galambos' work is essentially inaccessible.

And if we rid ourselves of the state, whether by collapse, revolution, ballot or disuse, then what would we do? Some of the writings of these men go into great detail about how a fully privatized and voluntary society would function, and make a persuasive case that it would be successful. The world could still use Galambos' unique arguments on these issues, but who is ever going to hear them?

Galambos' ideas are locked away, accessible only to people who somehow discover the FEI website, jump through hoops to enroll, and then spend hours hearing material that could be read in a fraction of the time, and probably understood better. However, if turned into written form—the way that most great ideas are spread to educable people—Galambos' reach and influence, to say nothing of his fame, would dwarf what it is today, which approaches zero. The same goes for the secondary property rewards to his Natural Estate.

At the time of my enrolment in V-50 DD it appeared that there wasn't enough revenue to give full-time employment to anyone, which implies minimal profits, if any. My sense is that enrollments in the online program are few, both in absolute terms and in relation to the number of people—intelligent, curious, educable people—that could be reached via other means. Galambos' ideas need to reach young people, including grade-schoolers who are still forming their world view and who don't have to be un-brainwashed. But young people expect easy Internet access to information, not barriers, not "referral by a 'qualified' graduate," a current requirement for enrolment in V-50 DD.

Galambos believed in markets, and yet his work really isn't in the marketplace. Recently I looked for and found a Galambos Facebook page, which displayed this form message from Facebook:

"This Page is automatically generated based on what Facebook users are interested in, and not affiliated with or endorsed by anyone associated with the topic."

Who, seeing that, would conclude that Galambos is an important figure and would want to hear his ideas? Very few people, I think.

Perhaps at no time since the American Revolution has the world been more ready to take advantage of Galambos' ideas, and yet they aren't available in any real sense, let alone marketed worldwide via free media such as Facebook. Because of the Internet, companies with virtually zero budgets can and do engage in more marketing than what is apparently being done for Galambos, who doesn't even have an intentionally created and administered Facebook page.

Years ago Galambos' trustees obviously made a decision not to perform on the contract that Galambos had made with his customers. Forget the legalese, and the various entities, and the interpretation of contractual clauses, and so forth. In plain English, Galambos accepted payment for books that he never got around to writing. After his death, in an act consistent with what Galambos taught and with the book contract, the trustees did what they could with what they had, and published a V-50 transcript as Book 1. They also promised to do the same with Book 2. However, that promise was not honored. Why?

It must have been that someone—a single individual, because all ideas originate with individuals—got the idea to unilaterally change the contract, and persuaded the others that it was "the right thing to do." Perhaps, back then, and depending on the rationale, I would have agreed. But what has been the result? Given the benefit of hindsight, how does that decision look today? Would Galambos be happy with the number and quality of customers for the online courses? Would he be happy that his influence on civilization approaches zero? Unless there is something of which I am completely unaware, that's the trajectory his influence is on, destined to be an obscure historical footnote, if that.

Galambos clearly intended his ideas to be released in book form without restrictions, like any other book. I urge you to deliver a V-201 transcript, even electronically, to those who paid for it, or their heirs, to also sell it on the open market, and to reintroduce SIAA to the market. If the ideas have merit they will thrive in the marketplace. At least they will have a fighting chance which, in my view, they don't have now. I would be glad to help in any way I can.

Please contact me with your responses to any or all of the above. If I don't hear from you within a reasonable time I will interpret that as a rejection of the various positions I've taken here, and follow the dictates of my conscience.

Sincerely,

Richard Boren

