

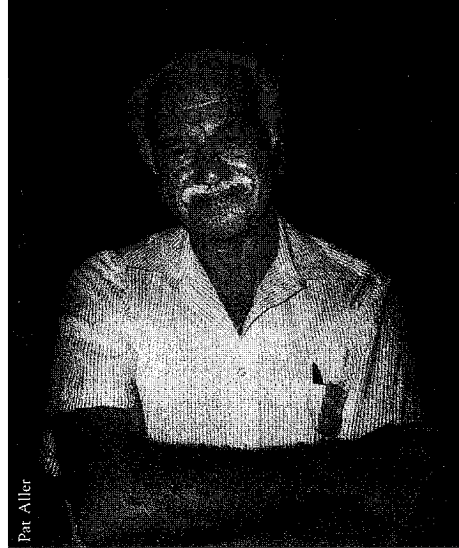
# Jack Schwartzman 1912 - 2001

## A Life in Love with Liberty

by Mark A. Sullivan

While being hospitalized with a heart condition, Jack Schwartzman died with his family at his bedside, on November 30th. It signaled the end of an era.

Jack — Jacob — Schwartzman was among the last surviving “veterans” of the Russian Revolution, having fled the country while still a boy. His memory of that fateful flight by night was recorded in his short piece recalling the scent of “Lilacs” that was in the air. “Lilacs”, reprinted often, was among the most popular of Jack’s many short works. And he was a master at writing short works. His devotion to the English language was reflected in his popularity as an English literature professor at Nassau Community College on Long Island, New York.



The love felt for Jack by his students, friends, and associates led many of them to contribute to *FRAGMENTS: An Individualist Quarterly*, of which Jack was a founder and leading editor. For decades *Fragments* was published — sometimes regularly, sometimes sporadically. While it often ventured into the realm of libertarian political and economic theory, it did not neglect biography, fiction, and poetry. *Fragments* reflected the unique world of Jack Schwartzman. And one last issue, edited by his son, will be devoted to remembering Jack.

In his youth, Jack Schwartzman was a protégé of Frank Chodorov — Jack was a student and Frank was the director at the Henry George School of Social Science in New York in the late 1930s and early 40s. It was around this time that Jack wrote and the School published in its journal, *The Freeman*, a series of short biographies, which a few years later would become the basis of Jack’s book, *Rebels of Individualism*. Meanwhile, World War II intervened. Chodorov’s anti-war isolationism would tolerate no other views, leading to his dismissal as the school’s director, while Jack, on

the other hand, served in the military. *Fragments* was born in the post-war years, and bore a resemblance to Chodorov's short-lived *Analysis*. As an even fragmentary reading of *Fragments* will show, Jack's heroes and inspirations ranged far and wide: Shakespeare, Goethe, Paine, Bastiat, Stirner, Emerson, Thoreau, Tolstoy, Tucker, Mencken, Nock, Chodorov, Rand, and, most notably, Henry George.

Jack's fierce devotion to individual liberty led to his embrace of George's radical critique of property in land. For the individuals to be free, their use – but not abuse – of Mother Earth must also be free. One could rightfully claim as property only the fruits of one's own labor. Only on this basis could genuinely free markets be built. The exchange of privileged claims and titles to the gifts and laws of nature – including the new world "order" of state-supported private monopolization – is a subversion and travesty of true free trade.

To George's economic analysis, Jack combined the anti-state, anti-war, anti-violence critiques of Henry David Thoreau and Leo Tolstoy. Another of his often-published essays is his blistering denunciation of "War Jobs". With the young, unreformed Herbert Spencer, Jack upheld both "The Right to the Use of the Earth" and "The Right to Ignore the State". Jack published his controversial views not only in the pages of *Fragments* but in the many essays published over the years by the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology* edited by his friend Will Lissner, and anthologies such as *Critics of Henry George*, edited by his colleague, Professor Robert V. Andelson.

Jack was himself an outspoken if not rhetorical critic. He could be at the same time a loyal friend and a royal pain – for he often did not spare his dear friends when moved to disagree with them, as I know from personal experience. His presence at conferences, such as ones held by the Henry David Thoreau Society, or the Council of Georgist Organizations, or the Center for Libertarian Studies (to name but a few), did not go unnoticed. His Socratic lecture and teaching style engaged his listeners. He was both humorous and eloquent at dinners held by the Henry George Institute, or his own circle of "Fragmenteers".

To save the best for last, there was Jack's love of friends and friendship. Many of his friends, such as *Fragments* co-editor Leonard Kleinfeld and Henry George Institute founder Bob Clancy, have gone on before him. His surviving *Fragments* co-editors are his life-long Georgist friends Dr. Oscar B. Johannsen and Sydney A. Mayers. Jack was also fortunate to have, at the center of his life, a loving companionship with Fannie DeNoto, who also served by his side as managing editor of *Fragments*. She was his partner in so many ways, and it is hard to think of Jack without thinking of Fannie. She knew how to tame the lion that he could sometimes be.

## George Hansen

George Hansen, one of the nicest guys in the Georgist movement, passed away this year. A lifelong New Yorker, George manufactured and sold lamps for a living. He patented a pivoting wall lamp, known as the “Hansen lamp” (or “bridge lamp”), that became an extremely successful product. The lamps were manufactured in Spain for many years, and George, who was fluent in Spanish, spent every summer in Barcelona.

George Hansen was one of the cohort who came into the Georgist movement under the inspired tutelage of Frank Chodorov — along with Jack Schwartzman and HGI President Sydney Mayers. He taught at the Henry George School in New York in the 40s and 50s. In between, he entered military service. Stationed in downeast Maine, he invented the lamp that would later make his fortune. He also carried on a long and fond correspondence with Sydney Mayers throughout their mutual tours in WWII. Intellectually, he was a disciple of Bastiat, and an enthusiastic supporter of *The Freeman* and Individualism in general.

George continued to volunteer for the Henry George School until the School’s “sea change” at the beginning of the 1970s. In the 1990s, he returned to serve on the Boards of Directors of both the Henry George Institute and the Henry George School. On the Henry George School Board, a strife-ridden period of factional infighting moved George, always a gentlemanly presence, to resign. He remained a staunch Georgist and an enthusiastic member of the HGI’s volunteer faculty until his death. His wife, Corneila, still lives in Manhattan. She is just as nice a person as George was, and we offer her our deepest sympathy. — L.D.

## Jack Schwartzman

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Jack’s blustery and often flirtatious self-promotion seemed as if a façade for a generous and genuinely romantic heart that Fannie always knew how to touch. These fierce, long-lived friendships are worthy of contemplation in a world dominated and, indeed, fragmented, by the quick-fix, take all you can get, lifestyle of convenience. Instead, Jack seemed to devote his life not only to a Socratic pursuit of wisdom, but even to a Platonic devotion to what is true, good, and beautiful. As a philosopher of natural law, he could affirm with Henry George: “Far, far beyond our ken the eternal laws must hold their sway.”

Jack Schwartzman’s life was indeed a life-long romance with life, liberty, and love itself, regardless of the cost. He did not hesitate to close his letters to his associates with “Love”, and sang Love’s praises as often as he sang Liberty’s. And so I close this remembrance with the same sentiment, and the thought of Jack as a divine Fragment who has returned to his source, to Love itself — which is where his free spirit can always be found.