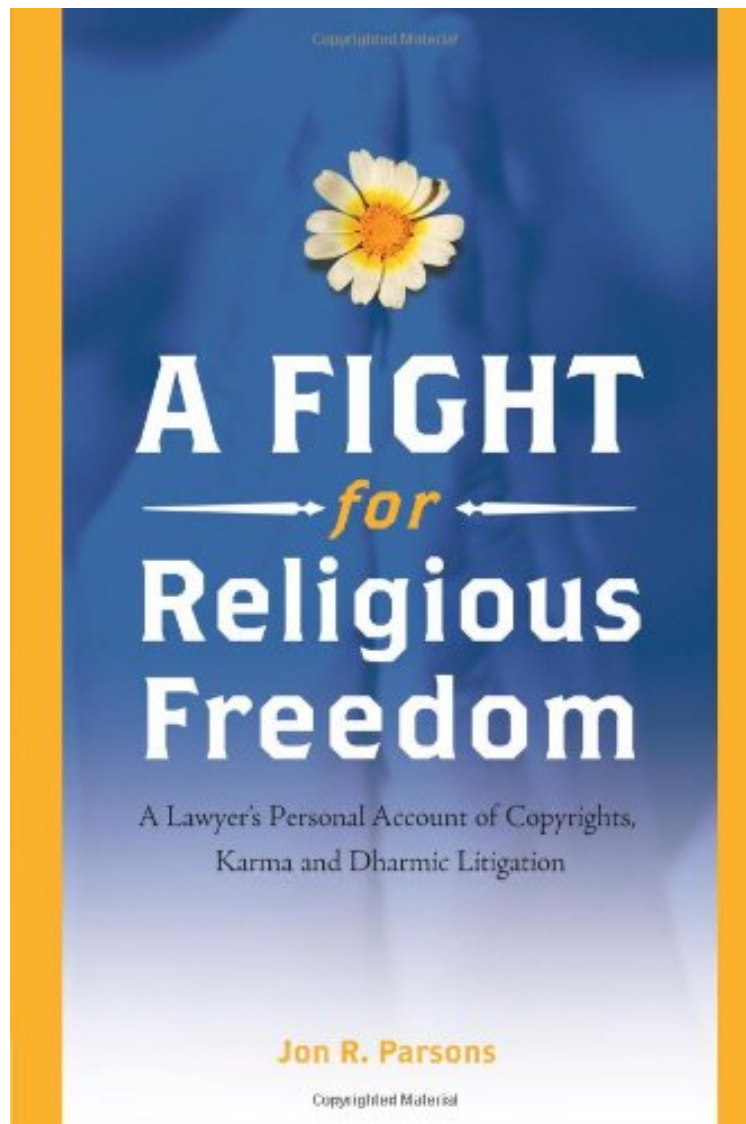


(Ebook pdf) A Fight for Religious Freedom: A Lawyer's Personal Account of Copyrights, Karma and Dharmic Litigation

A Fight for Religious Freedom: A Lawyer's Personal Account of Copyrights, Karma and Dharmic Litigation

Jon R. Parsons

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Jon R. Parsons : A Fight for Religious Freedom: A Lawyer's Personal Account of Copyrights, Karma and Dharmic Litigation before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Fight for Religious Freedom: A Lawyer's Personal Account of Copyrights, Karma and Dharmic Litigation:

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Downright clarifyingBy Tormod KinnesThe book is about a drawn-

out lawsuit that "morphed over the years into four lawsuits and two appeals, together with writ petitions to both the California Court of Appeal and the U.S. Supreme Court", writes the author, lawyer Jon R. Parsons (p. 13). He vividly describes a legal battle between two organisations that say have the same gurus, but still disagreed enough for Self-Realization Fellowship to sue Ananda Church, founded by Swami Kriyananda. Why? SRF was trying to "put Ananda out of business", said Judge Garcia once. (p. 13)The author, Jon R. Parsons, a Palo Alto lawyer, represented Ananda during the lawsuit. With apt metaphors and easy-to-understand language, Parsons tells of Ananda's struggle. Only after a twelve years of efforts and at great costs Ananda won 95 percent of the issues. Parsons also supplies titbits of information on various issues,The main story is how a dedicated group of people stood their ground for twelve years and won the right to publish a lot more Yogananda material than SRF wanted. Ananda won on almost all issues at last, after dramatic twists and turns, where for example SRF's lawyer, a Flynn, was thrown out of the court for acting rudely, offensively and also against lawyer. "It wasn't all fun and games," comments Parsons codes (p. 165-66). Yet, Ananda won against on most issues.. As a result, many teachings and photos of the guru Yogananda are available to the world.The book is a rare find, and worth reading, since it there are lawsuits with several oddities, all penned by an entertaining, pleasant and humorous author. Easy-to-read lawyer's talk!More from the history: In 1990, Self-Realization Fellowship (SRF) filed a massive lawsuit against Ananda, trying to establish itself as the sole "owner" of Yogananda's "name, image, and likeness." SRF failed. Twelve years later, Ananda had won at least 95% of the rulings in the case, but the drawn-out struggle had been long, labyrinthine. Parsons' account divulging struggles between Ananda and SRF, and dispels several snide references by SRF against Kriyananda and Ananda.All in all, Parson's book is about what happens when an organization (SRF) fails: someone writes a book! Parson's account makes one distrust SRF leaders at that time, leaders that began to battle another church society for years, spending millions of dollars.Yes, it is material for a good movie.Jon Parsons, a great story teller, clear-minded and often humorous, presents Ananda's toil to get oriented about what really went on, what were the issues, and he also describes SRF's attempts to copyright Yogananda material, in the end to "win some, lose some": SRF did not lose everything, while Ananda "won much and lost little", and that was the end of it, in 2002. (p. 168-69).Thanks to Kriyananda and Ananda and their legal fights against SRF, much Yogananda material is now in the public domain.0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I'm sure that poor Yogananda must be turning in his grave [if that ...By TomThis book really grabbed my attention. From the time I opened it I found it so gripping I did not even want to put it down. Now, I don't know anything about this swami Kriyananda, but I do know a bit about Yogi Yogananda from some of his writings,and I do believe that swami Kriyananda's story as told by his lawyer is true. But I cannot get over the fact that in the name of religion these women whom Yogi Yogananda appointed to carry on his works and mission would stoop to such low morals and ethics as what were brought out in court. It just goes to show what some people would do when authority is given to them. I'm sure that poor Yogananda must be turning in his grave [if that is possible] to see what his organization has been reduced to.2 of 4 people found the following review helpful. a must readBy Roman Midnight MusicI read this in 24 hours as I couldn't put it down. I even told my girlfriend to yes, call her mom, while I finished the book.I knew nothing about the Self-Realization Fellowship or Ananda Church before this, having only read the Autobiography. Unlike what the SRF says, according to this book, when I hear the word "self-realization" I think of India and 5000 years of history not only Yogananda, but this is the story of control and power by a very shallow organization whose members (as the writer says, the third President of the organization didn't understand the teachings and Yogananda said she wasn't right for the job) abuse the legacy they are endowed with to feed egos and bank accounts. This is a must read.Because of this book I'm now hesitant to buy anything with the name SRF attached to it as it won't be Yogananda's words.Now, I'm waiting for the following in a 'someone vs. Adidam' future case as because guru Adi Da Samraj is holy and special and god and thus gave his books the unconstitutional not recognized and not legal 'perpetual copyright' and now those folks like to talk to other people like they know about copyright laws when they've made up their own laws.It's all control for these organizations. It has nothing to do with the gurus (I might like Yogananda more now). And, it shows where the teachings have fallen flat as these groups, and there are many others, use the subdue the ego teachings to boost their own egos. It's sad. Or, it's like they've been with the organization so long that when the teacher dies they're desperate to hold on to their lives as they know it, even to the detriment of the teacher. But, it makes one really distrust writings put out by a teacher after his death. I mean, this books says they sat on one of Yogananda's books for 40 years that, while reading for printing, was worked on. What needed to be done? Lots of editing? Indeed! And, not good.The sad fact is that when the central hub lets go of that control the organization almost always expands and grows far more.

The compelling story of a groundbreaking, 12-year legal battle launched against the smaller Ananda Church by the established and wealthy Self-Realization Fellowshipboth followers of spiritual master, Paramhansa Yogananda, author of the classic Autobiography of a Yogi. SRF's intent was, as the judge observed, to put Ananda out of business. Includes rare vignettes that offer a timeline glimpse into the challenges of Yogananda's own mission to the West.

In 1990, Self-Realization Fellowship (an organization founded by the great yogi Paramhansa Yogananda) sued the

Ananda Church (an organization that also shares Yogananda's teachings, founded by Yogananda's close and direct disciple, Swami Kriyananda). The results of this lawsuit set important legal precedents for religious freedom in the United States, and also liberated the publication of the first edition of Yogananda's classic *Autobiography of a Yogi* for all the enjoy. Author Jon R. Parsons was counsel for the defense in this case (and in a second lawsuit, connected with the first one). With a clear hand and a gift of metaphor, Parsons does an extraordinary job of translating sometimes-complex legalese into easy-to-understand language. One gets the gist of each situation, from the early setbacks for Ananda's defense, to its momentous turnaround and ultimate shining victory. Although this is Parsons first work, he shows signs of an experienced author including penning tongue-in-cheek asides that chuckle over not only SRF's oft-frustrated legal strategies, but also his own legal team's mistakes, and even his own personal miscues. One of the most fascinating aspects of this work in addition to its main theme, a compelling story in and of itself are numerous vignettes from the life and work of Yogananda that draw a striking parallel to the more recent struggles of his devoted disciple, Kriyananda. Here is an engrossing read, covering an important modern-day David and Goliath courtroom battle, that reveals hidden truths about one of the twentieth century's greatest spiritual teachers and his close disciples. Get your copy and enjoy. (Richard Salva September 2012) This is an important book about an important legal case. As a bonus, it's written in an enjoyable, entertaining style. In 1990, Self-Realization Fellowship (SRF), a large, wealthy church with headquarters in Los Angeles, sued a much smaller church, Ananda Church of Self-Realization, in hopes of gaining a monopoly on the teachings of Paramhansa Yogananda, whom both groups follow. To enforce its claims, SRF hired California's third-largest law firm. Ananda, with a much smaller bankroll, hired the author of this book, Jon Parsons, a sole practitioner with offices in Palo Alto. Twelve years later, after an intense legal struggle, the tiny Ananda church had won 95 percent of the issues in the case, setting an important legal precedent for other small groups that face legal attacks by bigger, jealous religious organizations. Parsons is an excellent storyteller and that rarest of creatures, a lawyer with a transparent love of truth and a delightful sense of humor qualities that make his tale enjoyable to absorb. Historically, by freeing Yogananda's legacy from institutional control, Ananda's successful defense of the SRF lawsuit affirmed the principle that the teachings of spiritual teachers belong to the world. Many of SRF's existing copyrights were revealed to be invalid, including the publishing rights to Yogananda's world-famous book, *Autobiography of a Yogi*. Research by Ananda's legal team uncovered how drastically SRF had altered Yogananda's works another important reason for preventing spiritual teachings from being monopolized. Parsons includes little-known anecdotes of Yogananda's struggles, during his early years in America, with racial and religious prejudice, as well as lawsuits filed by disgruntled former students, and scurrilous attacks by the yellow press of the day. Highly recommended. (George Beinhorn, author of *The Joyful Athlete: The Wisdom of the Heart in Exercise Sports Training* November 2012) From the Back Cover Author Jon Parsons is the Palo Alto, CA lawyer who spearheaded Ananda's David and Goliath fight in court, which resulted in a precedent that protects US religious groups from domination by their larger counterparts. About the Author Author Jon Parsons is the Palo Alto, CA lawyer who spearheaded Ananda's David and Goliath fight in court, which resulted in a precedent that protects US religious groups from domination by their larger counterparts.