



SCUM Manifesto

Valerie Solanas , Avital Ronell (Introduction)

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SCUM Manifesto was considered one of the most outrageous, violent and certifiably crazy tracts when it first appeared in 1968. Valerie Solanas, the woman who shot Andy Warhol, self-published this work just before her rampage against the king of Pop Art made her a household name and resulted in her confinement to a mental institution. But the Manifesto, for all its vitriol, is impossible to dismiss as just the rantings of a lesbian lunatic. In fact, the work has indisputable prescience, not only as a radical feminist analysis light-years ahead of its timepredicting artificial insemination, ATMs, a feminist uprising against under-representation in the artsbut also as a stunning testament to the rage of an abused and destitute woman.

The focus of this edition is not on the nostalgic appeal of the work, but on Avital Ronell's incisive introduction, "Deviant Payback: The Aims of Valerie Solanas." Here is a reconsideration of Solanas's infamous text in light of her social milieu, Derrida's "The Ends of Man" (written in the same year), Judith Butler's *Excitable Speech*, Nietzsche's Übermensch and notorious feminist icons from Medusa, Medea and Antigone, to Lizzie Borden, Loreenna Bobbit and Aileen Wournos, illuminating the evocative exuberance of Solanas's dark tract.

SCUM Manifesto Details

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From Reader Review SCUM Manifesto for online ebook

Robert says

Hey, I wrote a book. How can I get this published? Nobody will touch it? What if I tried to kill a famous person? Hello fame!

Adam says

I am both a walking dildo and a walking abortion. I, like every man, know deep down that I'm a worthless piece of shit.

Well, shit. Look, here's the thing. People either compare this to something like *A Modest Proposal* or they dismiss it as the work of a raving lunatic. Very few feminists would agree with Solanas. Especially since Solanas has lots of (really offensive) shit to say about women, especially women who like fucking dudes ("raving sex maniacs" is a very mild example).

The manifesto is intellectually inconsistent, stupid, frustrating and thoroughly enlightening all at once. She makes exactly zero points that aren't obvious (and few that wouldn't have been obvious at the time). But the worth of the thing is in its presentation. Regardless of whether or not Solanas believed everything she wrote, the manifesto is an interesting reversal of exactly the kind of shit men have been saying about women for fucking ever.

Check out Youtube comments, subreddits, comments on porn sites. Note how often and how easily women are openly talked about as being good only for fucking. Note that this is about as mild as the comments get. Read this manifesto (it's short) then consider how just about everything Solanas says has exact parallels in misogynistic discourse. Which is everywhere.

If you're a dude and have been around other dudes, you've probably come across this language. I've made it, like, a mission not to hang out with frat boys and shit. But I've still come across this kind of thing. I've been around dudes and they've been talking to a buddy who's been through a breakup and shit like "it's just a cunt. You'll find another one" has indeed been said. I know because that lovely couplet (note the "it") was said directly to me. The speaker was a liberal arts grad who has Judith Butler books on his shelf. And also Weininger.

Plus it's not like *murderous* male rage isn't everywhere either. From the barely concealed snuff films featuring sexy chicks being hacked to pieces that populate multiplexes and Netflix and stuff to thoroughly mainstream porn that constantly reinforces misogynistic ideology by in essence 'killing' off any part of a woman that separates her from an ego-boosting, pleasure-giving machine.

Now reconsider my opening paragraph, composed of stuff Solanas says about men in this manifesto. Consider, if you're a dude, how women have to hear the equivalent *all the fucking time*.

Of course we should strive for an equal society and respect each other and work to live together free of gender-based hatred and yeah yeah yeah.

But, for the short time you spend reading this book fuck that shit and forget about it and read the book as the valuable Swift-like satire it indeed amounts to. Whether or not Solanas intended it as such.

Because goddamnit, despite my knowing better, I kinda think the world needs this book. It is fine rhetoric. Completely implausible and idiotic if you take it seriously, just as misogyny is. But unlike 'satire' of misogyny that plays into reinforcing misogyny, it's got something going for it.

I, walking dildo and worthless piece of shit, temporarily salute you, Solanas.

Jeremy says

I had no idea how to prepare for college, nor any idea what to do once I got there. I just knew that my friends were going, and I didn't want to get a job. I started by perming my hair. This seemed, somehow, the most logical step, though apparently nobody told any of my friends this, and if asked where I'd gotten the idea, I likely would have replied "I am going to college!" and fled, crying and punching myself. I then went to T.J. Maxx and bought a bunch of weird-looking clothes. Lots of vibrant plaids. Unintentionally, I ended up with an entirely non-matching wardrobe, which if impractical was sort of impressive, though it owed less to an "alternative" perspective than to the fact that I did not comprehend the concept of matching clothes. When I got to campus, my roommate was athletic and wealthy and attractive, all of which was terrifying, so I immediately left my belongings piled on my bunk and made a hasty departure, returning to the dorm only intermittently throughout the semester whenever my smelliness began to seriously encroach on my own respiration. I walked around campus, got lost, and sat on a bench, to look through a campus newspaper I'd found, and contemplate suicide. In the paper was an ad that proclaimed "free records", being given away at the college radio station. Despite my not owning a record player, I decided to find the radio station and take as many free records as possible. This would be an economical and alternative thing to do. I filled two cardboard boxes with crazy records, very few of which featured artists I had ever heard of. I would learn about weird music and it would help me with college. I also found a copy of Poison's "Flesh and Blood", the only record in the bunch I was truly excited about owning, and slipped it in one of the boxes between albums by Doug and the Radioactive Toothpaste Hogs and The Undulating Filing Cabinet Eats God. I then began carrying the two unbelievably heavy and cumbersome cardboard boxes full of records across campus in what I prayed was the general direction of my dorm, stopping only to abandon one of the boxes in the middle of the commuter parking lot (unfortunately it was the box with "Flesh and Blood" in it). One seemingly well-meaning passerby actually offered to help me carry the box, but he had a beard and was scary so I curtly declined his assistance. I finally found my dorm, flopped the box of records onto the floor, and left again, because my roommate was watching football, which was confusing and upsetting to me. After failing to relocate the commuter lot, where my second box of records was no doubt being preyed upon by skinheads, I found myself in the bookstore, where I immediately felt at ease. Books! I boldly approached the poetry section, because I was in college. I noted the name Henry Rollins on a nearby collection, and recognized it as extremely alternative. I put the book back on the shelf within seconds of flipping through it, terrified and thinking fondly of my childhood bedroom. After an hour or so of looking at various things that made no sense, I picked up the "SCUM Manifesto" by Valerie Solanas and purchased it, because it was cheap and I liked the girl's hat on the cover. She somewhat resembled Natty Gann, which I found comforting. I proceeded to a nearby eatery and got myself a Meat Lover's personal pan pizza, a bag of Munchos, a Jolt, and a Hostess fruit pie (a meal I was to revisit daily for the next year), and spent a horrific but not unenlightening hour reading about how I should be killed. Like the rest of the day's events, it was scary, but at least it explained itself well, and for that I was grateful. I got a bag of gummi worms for the road and set off to try to find my dorm, where I could lay stiffly on my bunk and mull over the idea of killing my

roommate in the interest of improving society.

Lindy says

I deeply resent that the top reviews for this book are written by men. May the ghost of Valerie Solanas haunt all of you.

The SCUM Manifesto is important to me because it represents every "irrational" thought I've had when I've been angry and, due to both rage and social constraints placed around the proper expression of women's emotion, unable to express them. In *The SCUM Manifesto*, these thoughts are presented as justified and even logical. When I read *The SCUM Manifesto*, I feel legitimized. This is why I don't understand the manifesto as hyperbole or satire, nor do I feel entirely comfortable saying that the text represents the author's "true beliefs." The thoughts and sentiments expressed within take refuge in their audacity. The manifesto contains everything that isn't supposed to be said in society, polite or otherwise, therefore it can't possibly be true, even if it is. Even so, the "rawness" and "uncensored-ness" of *The SCUM Manifesto* has been carefully constructed; Solanas wrote and rewrote her manifesto over a period of years. That it seems effortless and natural testifies to its artistry. To dismiss *The SCUM Manifesto* as "unhinged" only underlines the thesis that women's rationality will always be made to look like insanity.

Long live SCUM!

Jennifer says

Since an early age, women are told to look past the misogyny in much so called "great art". Screw that! Here is a hilarious answer to 2,000 (or more) years of patriarchal oppression. Solanas is brilliantly witty, and for those scardey cat, humorless males that say "but she tried to kill someone!" the answer to that is- so did Norman Mailer. And William Burroughs actually KILLED his wife, but we would NEVER hold that against these "GREAT WRITERS", now, would we? Althusser...I'm sure the list goes on of "great artists" and writers who have treated the women in their lives like specks of fecal matter...Of course this book will not appeal to the male identifiers and wussy little daddy's girls who mistakenly think that the patriarchy benefits them in some way, but they'll find out the hard way...Like when they turn 50 or thereabouts...

Tap into your justified rage now and let Solanas bring you a few good laughs...

SmarterLilac says

Yikes. As part of my attempt to get back to 'real' reading, I finally decided to tackle this infamous work.

Ugh. I cannot make myself believe the author was serious about these ideas in a literal way. I think the Manifesto succeeds as a condemnation of patriarchy and classism. My guess is, she was going for some kind of satire--an indictment of '60s radicals and their extremist ways?

The writing, however, is *awful*, and on its face, horribly offensive. It's sad to me that this is viewed by so many as a valid example of second wave feminism or of feminist separatists.

Cemre says

Erkekleri Do?rama Cemiyeti (SCUM=Society For Cutting Up Men) Manifestosu, kanaatimce biraz fazla "uç" fikirler içeren bir metin. Solanas'?n fikirlerinin benim anlad??m, inand??m feminizm ile çok ba?lant?l? oldu?unu dü?ünmüyorum aç?kças?.

Erkekler, Solanas'a göre eksik kad?nlar. Bu eksiklerinin bilincindeler; ama bu göstermekten deli gibi korkuyorlar ve her türlü rezilli?i yap?yorlar. Erkekler kötü, babalar i?renç (bu keskin fikirlerde Solanas'?n küçük ya?ta babas? taraf?ndan taciz edilmesinin etkisi büyük diye tahmin ediyorum)... Keza erkeklerle beraber olan kad?nlar için de Solanas'?n söyleyece?i iyi ?eyler yok.

Kendisi bu yazd?klar?n?n ne kadar?na tam olarak inan?yordu ne kadar?n? tam anlam?yla savunuyordu bilemiyorum; ama kendisi ile ayn? dü?ündü?üm birkaç noktan?n oldu?unu da belirteyim.

?lginç bir "manifesto"; fakat bekledi?im gibi olmad??n? da söylemem gerek.

Anthony D'Juan Shelton says

Gotta love this book. It's so right on and so way off. It's beautiful in theory and tragic in reality.

Kübra Ya?mur says

Erke?in u?ursuz bir Midas dokunu?u vard?r - neye dokunsa boka çevrilir.

?u ufak al?nt? dahi Solanas'?n kafas?ndakiler hakk?nda bir fikir verebilir asl?nda hepimize... O deli de?il. Kesinlikle de?il, sadece ya?am?? zeki bir insan. *Zaten deli yaftas? yemi?lerin ço?u bizden ak?ll? oldu?u için delidir.*

Bir erke?e hayvan demek ona iltifat etmektedir; o bir makine, yürüyen bir vibratördür.

Ayr?l?kç? bir feminist olan bu kad?n?n önsöz de bahsedilmiş? hayat hikayesini (*Wikipedia da okuyabilece?inizden çok daha fazlas? var*) okuyana kadar *deli saçmas?*ndan öte bir ?ey olmad?? kan?s?ndayd?m. Ancak Valerie'nin kim oldu?un ö?rendi?imde sadece ya?ad?klar?na kar?? öfke duyan bir insan oldu?unu gördüm. K?zan, nefret eden ve bunu göstermekten çekinmeyen biri... Tabii bu dü?üncelerine kat?ld???m anlam?na gelmez.

Kitap %99'una kat?lmad??m fikirlerle dolu olmas?na ra?men öyle bir savunma sanat? var ki hayran olmamak elimde de?ildi.

Solanas'?n iddias?:

Eril, biyolojik bir kazad?r: Y (eril) geni tamamlanmam?? bir X (di?i) genidir yani tamamlanmam?? bir kromozomlar serisidir. Ba?ka bir deyi?le eril eksik bir di?idir, daha gen a?amas?nda ya?am?na son verilmi?, ayakl? bir kürtaj. Eril olmak kifayetsiz olmak, duygusal olarak s?n?rl? olmak demektir; erillik bir noksanal?k hastal???, eriller de duygusal sakatlard?r.

Önsöz de yazd???na göre bu, daha sonralarda kan?lanm?? bir tezmi? imi?. -?ahsen ara?t?rd?m ama pek bir ?ey elime geçmedi.- Bu konuda resmi bir makale okumad???m sürece dü?ünce belirtmeyi istemiyorum.

Hatta di?iler bile niye üretilsin ki? Neden gelecek nesiller olsun? Bunlar?n amac? nedir? Ya?lanma ve ölüm bertaraf edildi?inde neden ürenilsin? Biz ölüktenden sonra ne olaca??n? niye umursayal?m? Bizi takip edecek bir genç nesil olmamas? neden umurumuzda olsun ki?

San?r?m Solanas'?n fikirlerinden en kar?? ç?kt???m budur.

Kendisi, anneli?i bir **hayvanyl??a** benzetmi? s?k s?k. Kad?n?n anne olu?unu a?a??layan sözlerinin yan?nda baba figürüyle ilgilide çok kat? sözleri var. Sepetteki bir çürük elma için tüm sepeti atamazs?n?z. Kendi hayat?ndaki insanlar taraf?ndan u?rad??? haks?zl??? böyle genele yaym?? olmas? beni rahats?z etti.

Dedi?im gibi; ben anneli?in tam tersine kutsal oldu?una inan?yorum. Hiç kimse, hiçbir ?ey bu dü?üncemi de?i?tiremez. Emek veren her kad?na, ko?ulsuz ?arts?z sevmeyi bilen her anaya sayg?m sonsuzdur.

Ba?ka bir deyi?le kad?nlarda penis haseti yoktur; erkeklerde kuku haseti vard?r.

Ama unutmamak gerek, Solanas'?n dedi?i gibi "**SCUM bir ruh halidir.**" ve bu dü?üncelerde bu kad?n?n ruh haliydi...

Her erilin, derinlerdeki en gizli sakl? korkusu di?i olmay?p eril, yani insanl?k-alt? bir hayvan oldu?unun ortaya ç?kmas?d?r.

Anthony Vacca says

On one hand, Valerie Solanas' self-published 1968 incendiary quasi-treatise, the *SCUM Manifesto*, is a full-on attack of the male-dominated status quo of 20th century American society, and—if viewed as a vicious satire à la Swift's *A Modest Proposal*—is written in as spirited and vile a voice as any one of the many vitriolic grotesqueries to be found in the best of Alexander Theroux's writing. The manifesto's humble opinion is that women are the only half of our species that deserve to live and that we would all be better off if the other half—those mindless, talentless meat machines we call men—were made extinct as quickly as possible. This set-up allows Solanas to stab many small knives into notions such as patriarchy, democracy, capitalism, marriage, labor, sexual identity, and (my personal favorite) Western Culture's awful and shameful habit of dismissing art made by women as not as important as the more “serious” work of men, as seen in the following passage:

The male “artistic” aim being, not to communicate (having nothing inside him, he has nothing to say), but to disguise his animalism, he resorts to symbolism and obscurity (“deep stuff”). The vast majority of people, particularly the “educated” ones, lacking faith in their own judgement, humble, respectful of authority (“Daddy knows best” is translated into adult language as “Critic knows best,” “Writer knows best,” “Ph.D. knows best”), are easily conned into believing that obscurity, evasiveness, incomprehensibility, indirectness, ambiguity, and boredom are marks of depth and brilliance

“Great Art” proves that men are superior to women, that men are women [note: it is Solanas’ contention that all men strive to be women, since their maleness is a genetic deformity, so all acts of subjugation are the results of men trying to hide that they are not women], being labeled “Great Art,” almost all of which, as the anti-feminists are fond of reminding us, was created by men. We know that “Great Art” is great because male authorities have told us so, and we can’t claim otherwise, as only those with exquisite sensitivities far superior to ours can perceive and appreciate greatness, the proof of their superior sensitivity being that they appreciate the slop they appreciate.

But on the other hand—and this is a dirty fallacy of a hand—it is hard for me to take this tract as a truly well-executed work of subversive feminist satire, considering Solanas’ sad and disturbing personal history of sexual abuse and mental illness, plus her proclivity for shooting pop-art icons named Andy Warhol for no particular reason. Also, Solanas contradicts several of her arguments numerous times throughout the tract, and besides all the manic glee to be found in her frothing against the system, she offers only the vaguest notions of pursuits for women to engage in, such as curing all diseases (death included) and grooving with one another. Solanas praises women’s ability to “groove” with one another dozens of times throughout the manifesto without really explaining what “grooving” actually entails (she seems to suggest that “grooving” does not mean girl-on-girl action, you perverts) or how it makes for a more meaningful pursuit than staples such as art or literature.

So while the *SCUM Manifesto* can be praised for its in-your-face nature and sense of rebellion (both of which I admire), I’m not sure (nor qualified) to pronounce it as a serious work of social philosophy. If anything, Solanas’ work seems to me more a cultural artifact, one that uncovers the potential for cruelty in an indifferent and heteronormative society, and the terrible costs it takes from those it subjugates.

Alexander Santiago says

The assertion by its author of the inherent superiority of women over men, and whose book opens with “. . . men are a biological accident . . .” and puts forth that argument in a rollercoaster debate, you know you are definitely in for a hell of a ride. Thus is Valerie Solanas’ magnum opus - *SCUM* (Society for Cutting Up Men) Manifesto - a feminist classic from the revolutionary change of the '60s, in which she penned her edgy, radical, brilliant thoughts and ideas, namely the purging from the earth the scourge of all of the world’s and society’s ills - M E N! *SCUM* Manifesto is a one woman battle cry that roars LOUDLY in its beliefs and sheer audaciousness in what should be done to reinstate women to their rightful place in the hierarchy of society. Her passage on men who set out on a mission to get a “piece” is (painfully and truthfully) hilarious! I came across this work of literary genius (some would argue madness) after watching Mary Harron’s “I Shot Andy Warhol”, which centered on the factual incident in which Solanas shot, and nearly killed, '60s pop artist Andy Warhol. Overall, I found “*SCUM*” to be a raucously thrilling read.

Bari says

"The male is a biological accident: the Y (male) gene is an incomplete X (female) gene, that is, it has an incomplete set of chromosomes. In other words, the male is an incomplete female, a walking abortion, aborted at the gene stage. To be male is to be deficient, emotionally limited; maleness is a deficiency disease and males are emotional cripples."

-genius!

Ayse Kelce says

Radikal, net ve ac?mas?zd?. Yazar?, so?ukkanl?l??? için, binlerce kez tebrik etmek gereklidir.

melydia says

Why are manifestos so often written by crazies? This 50-page anti-male screed by the woman most famous for shooting Andy Warhol is, well, kind of hard to read. I can ignore the man hatred - that's a matter of opinion - but many of her suggestions for improving the world are simply batty. First, that her notion of communism would work. It's inconceivable that all the people of the world would work together towards Solanas's idea of the common good. Second, "automation" does not mean zero work. Machines must be created and maintained. (Of course, I suppose Solanas would expect men to take care of this.) Third, old age is not a disease, and scientists do not hold the secret to immortality. That's patently absurd. If they did, don't you think these supposedly selfish and insecure men would have made themselves immortal by now? So in short, while this was a reasonably entertaining read in parts purely for the novelty factor, it's not something I would recommend. They're not dangerous ideas, merely nonsensical ones.

Nika says

the reviews for this alone are priceless. wow, a dude crying over someone not representing him accurately in media, wonder how that must feel... also, derailing with stuff like "what if this was about women instead" is irrelevant because you can't seriously think that that has never been done before (and was mostly met with a surprising lack of outrage), right?

anyhow, this was a pretty energizing read.

mark monday says

cute book, and a handy guide for getting rid of some of these annoying guys crowding up the planet. valerie solanas is adorable!

Evan says

I'm reading this, as a man of course, and cheering on Solanas' bad-ass, hilarious, blunt-force-trauma, withering, genocidal rant against men. If I might make a crude equation, my irrational response might correlate to a Jew cheering on Hitler at the Nuremberg rallies. (Yes, it is a crude equation -- I'm not in danger -- but you get my drift).

But seriously, this manifesto -- a fuck-load more fun than Marx's "Communist Manifesto" -- half makes me want to march into the mountain to my demise like the rat I am (being male), led by the Pied Piper's siren-song of pussy.

This magnificently breathless, radical feminist tirade -- filled with contradictions, sweeping generalizations, anti-elitism, paranoia and more -- pretty much rocks! I found myself agreeing with Solanas' assessment of men probably more than I ought to. But seriously, she does pin down a lot of the insecurities and drives for control that have fucked up the world under the domination of men. It's simplistic, but at the same time has more than a grain of truth.

There are far too many gems here to be pulled for out-of-context quotations. Suffice it to say, according to her, among the men who need to be eliminated are "owners of restaurants that play Muzak." Talk about a wicked sense of humor.

Hadrian says

If SCUM ever marches, it will be over the President's stupid, sickening face; if SCUM ever strikes, it will be in the dark with a six-inch blade.

As near as this 'biological accident' of feeble brain and weak will can tell, this book is the Modest Proposal of second-wave feminism. By proposing an idea so ridiculous, so genocidal and violent, so stereotyping and repulsive, the author asks questions about the silent limitations and gilded cages of women in the mid-20th century.

I once got into an animated discussion over beer about this book. I was asked if any man had ever advocated such violence against women. I said yes. If you swapped the gender roles of men and women in this book, you could quickly find the biases in Reddit comments, on YouTube discussions, on any 'news comments' section for any article about feminism, any crypto-fascist beliefs about subduing women, and so forth. It's a good example of verbal irony as there ever was.

Of course any discussion of the book will invariably tends towards the author's own violent illness and shooting of Andy Warhol. Again, though I cannot advocate the violence in this text or the author's own actions, the book is a cautionary reminder of how political fantasies of revenge can degrade into murder.

sologdin says

Not sure if this is serious or not. If serious, it's one of the worst books ever written. If an elaborate satire, then very effective. Object of the satire could be misogynist discourse (i.e., applying the same barbarities to men that are routinely applied to women), or feminist discourse (i.e., taking certain feminist principles and exaggerating them to irrational ends), or the discourse of masculinity (i.e., suggesting that masculinist doctrine sets up an ideal that needs to be cut up (analyzed? destroyed? dissected? vivisected?)).

some comedy throughout, such as:

“Women, in other words, don't have penis envy; men have pussy envy.”

“Despising his highly inadequate self, overcome with intense anxiety and a deep, profound loneliness when by his empty self, desperate to attach himself to any female in dim hopes of completing himself, in the mystical belief that by touching gold he'll turn to gold, the male craves the continuous companionship of women.” (femaleness as derridean supplement to maleness? maleness as always already absent presence?)

“The most important activity of the commune, the one upon which it is based, is gang-banging. The 'hippy' is enticed to the commune mainly by the prospect for free pussy -- the main commodity to be shared, to be had just for the asking.”

“Men cannot co-operate to achieve a common end, because each man's end is all the pussy for himself. The commune, therefore, is doomed to failure.”

“The male has a negative Midas Touch -- everything he touches turns to shit.”

Ultimate object is apparently a state wherein “automation is completely instituted” in the production process. Very science fiction!

Recommended for those who have stripped the world of conversation, friendship and love; readers for whom screwing is a defense against a desire to be female; and well-behaved heterosexual dullards.

Anya says

“The male is a biological accident: the Y (male) gene is an incomplete X (female) gene, that is, it has an incomplete set of chromosomes. In other words, the male is an incomplete female, a walking abortion, aborted at the gene stage. To be male is to be deficient, emotionally limited; maleness is a deficiency disease and males are emotional cripples.”

I've been on the Internet for so long that I am hardly fazed by anything anymore. I mean, only yesterday I saw a picture of a still-born fetus of a pig with calcite growth and caught myself thinking about how beautiful it was.

But this one made me cringe. Not because it was disgusting, but because it was so trippy and weird that the

person who wrote it had to be a different brand of insane and oh, my goodness, Solanas she shot Warhol because she genuinely believed that men are BAAAAD.

A tiny thing that weirded me out was how normal it'd have sounded if the essay was gender swapped; it could easily be an anti-women propaganda. And I'm sure not many people would have bat an eye. (I'm pointing at you, Red Pillers.)
