

VALERIE SOLANAS

SCUM Manifesto

LIFE IN THIS SOCIETY being, at best, an utter bore and no aspect of society being at all relevant to women, there remains to civic-minded, responsible, thrill-seeking females only to overthrow the government, eliminate the money system, institute complete automation, and destroy the male sex.

It is now technically possible to reproduce without the aid of males (or, for that matter, females) and to produce only females. We must begin immediately to do so. Retaining the male has not even the dubious purpose of reproduction. The male is a biological accident: the Y (male) gene is an incomplete X (female) gene, that is, 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.

The male is completely egocentric, trapped inside himself, incapable of empathizing or identifying with others, of love, friendship, affection, or tenderness. He is a completely isolated unit, incapable of rapport with anyone. His responses are entirely visceral, not cerebral; his intelligence is a mere tool in the service of his drives and needs; he is incapable of mental passion, mental interaction; he can't relate to anything other than his own physical sensations. He is a half-dead, unresponsive lump, incapable of giving or receiving pleasure or happiness; consequently, he is at best an utter bore, an inoffensive blob, since only those capable of absorption in others can be charming. He is trapped in a twilight zone halfway between humans and apes, and is far worse off than the apes because, unlike the apes, he is capable of a large array of negative feelings—hate, jealousy, contempt, disgust, guilt, shame, doubt—and moreover he *is aware* of what he is and isn't.

Although completely physical, the male is unfit even for stud service. Even assuming mechanical proficiency, which few men have, he is, first of all, incapable of zestfully, lustfully, tearing off a piece, but is instead eaten up with guilt, shame, fear, and insecurity, feelings rooted in male nature, which the most enlightened training can only minimize; second, the physical feeling he attains is next to nothing; and, third, he is not empathizing with his partner, but is obsessed with how he's doing, turning in an A performance, doing a good plumbing job. To call a man an animal is to flatter him; he's a

machine, a walking dildo. It's often said that men use women. Use them for what? Surely not pleasure.

Eaten up with guilt, shame, fears, and insecurities and obtaining, if he's lucky, a barely perceptible physical feeling, the male is, nonetheless, obsessed with screwing; he'll swim a river of snot, wade nostril-deep through a mile of vomit, if he thinks there'll be a friendly pussy awaiting him. He'll screw a woman he despises, any snaggletoothed hag, and, furthermore, pay for the opportunity. Why? Relieving physical tension isn't the answer, as masturbation suffices for that. It's not ego satisfaction; that doesn't explain screwing corpses and babies.

Completely egocentric, unable to relate, empathize, or identify, and filled with a vast, pervasive, diffuse sexuality, the male is psychically passive. He hates his passivity, so he projects it onto women, defines the male as active, then sets out to prove that he is ("prove he's a Man"). His main means of attempting to prove it is screwing (Big Man with a Big Dick tearing off a Big Piece). Since he's attempting to prove an error, he must "prove" it again and again. Screwing, then, is a desperate, compulsive attempt to prove he's not passive, not a woman; but he is passive and does want to be a woman.

Being an incomplete female, the male spends his life attempting to complete himself, to become female. He attempts to do this by constantly seeking out, fraternizing with, and trying to live through and fuse with the female, and by claiming as his own all female characteristics—emotional strength and independence, forcefulness, dynamism, decisiveness, coolness, objectivity, assertiveness, courage, integrity, vitality, intensity, depth of character, grooviness, etc.—and projecting onto women all male traits—vanity, frivolity, triviality, weakness, etc. It should be said, though, that the male has one glaring area of superiority over the female—public relations. (He has done a brilliant job of convincing millions of women that men are women and women are men.) The male claim that females find fulfillment through motherhood and sexuality reflects what males think they'd find fulfilling if they were female.

Women, in other words, don't have penis envy; men have pussy envy. When the male accepts his passivity, defines himself as a woman (males as well as females think men are women and women are men), and becomes a transvestite he loses his desire to screw (or to do anything else, for that matter; he fulfills himself as a drag queen) and gets his cock chopped off. He then achieves a continuous diffuse sexual feeling from "being a woman." Screwing is, for a man, a defense against his desire to be female. Sex is itself a sublimation.

The male, because of his obsession to compensate for not being female

combined with his inability to relate and to feel compassion, has made of the world a shitpile.

After the elimination of money there will be no further need to kill men; they will be stripped of the only power they have over psychologically-independent females. They will be able to impose themselves only on the doormats, who like to be imposed on. The rest of the women will be busy solving the few remaining unsolved problems before planning their agenda for eternity and Utopia—completely revamping educational programs so that millions of women can be trained within a few months for high-level intellectual work that now requires years of training (this can be done very easily once our educational goal is to educate and not to perpetuate an academic and intellectual elite); solving the problems of disease and old age and death and completely redesigning our cities and living quarters. Many women will for awhile continue to think they dig men, but as they become accustomed to female society and as they become absorbed in their projects, they will eventually come to see the utter uselessness and banality of the male.

The few remaining men can exist out their puny days dropped out on drugs or strutting around in drag or passively watching the high-powered female in action, fulfilling themselves as spectators, vicarious livers,* or breeding in the cow pasture with the toadies, or they can go off to the nearest friendly suicide center where they will be quietly, quickly, and painlessly gassed to death.

Prior to the institution of automation, to the replacement of males by machines, the male should be of use to the female, wait on her, cater to her slightest whim, obey her every command, be totally subservient to her, exist in perfect obedience to her will, as opposed to the completely warped, degenerate situation we have now of men not only not existing at all, cluttering up the world with their ignominious presence, but being pandered to and groveled before by the mass of females, millions of women piously worshipping before the Golden Calf, the dog leading the master on the leash, when in fact the male, short of being a drag queen, is least miserable when his dogginess is recognized—no unrealistic emotional demands are made of him and the completely together female is calling the shots. Rational men want to be squashed, stepped on, crushed, and crunched, treated as the curs, the filth that they are, have their repulsiveness confirmed.

* It will be electronically possible for him to tune in to any specific female he wants to and follow in detail her every movement. The females will kindly, obligingly consent to this, as it won't hurt them in the slightest and it is a marvelously kind and humane way to treat their unfortunate handicapped fellow beings.

The sick, irrational men, those who attempt to defend themselves against their disgustingness, when they see SCUM barreling down on them, will cling in terror to Big Mama with her Big Bouncy Boobies, but Boobies won't protect them against SCUM; Big Mama will be clinging to Big Daddy, who will be in the corner shitting in his forceful, dynamic pants. Men who are rational, however, won't kick or struggle or raise a distressing fuss, but will just sit back, relax, enjoy the show, and ride the waves to their demise.

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Early in 1967 Solanas approached Andy Warhol at his studio, the Factory, about producing *Up Your Ass* as a play and gave him her copy of the script. At the time Warhol told the journalist Gretchen Berg: "I thought the title was so wonderful and I'm so friendly that I invited her to come up with it, but it was so dirty that I think she must have been a lady cop. . . . We haven't seen her since and I'm not surprised. I guess she thought that was the perfect thing for Andy Warhol."

Also in early 1967 Solanas wrote and self-published the *SCUM Manifesto*. While selling mimeographed copies on the streets, she met Maurice Girodias of Olympia Press (French publisher of *Lolita*, *Candy* and *Tropic of Cancer*) who gave her an advance for a novel based on the manifesto. (With this \$600 cash she visited San Francisco.)

During this time Ultra Violet read the Manifesto to Warhol who commented, "She's a hot-water bottle with tits. You know, she's writing a script for us. She has a lot of ideas."

Later, in May 1967, after Warhol had returned from a trip to France and England, Solanas demanded her script back; Warhol informed her he had lost it. Apparently, Warhol had never any intention to produce *Up Your Ass* as either a play or a movie; the script was simply lost in the shuffle, thrown into one of the Factory's many stacks of unsolicited manuscripts and papers. Solanas began telephoning insistently, ordering Warhol to give her money for the play.

In July 1967 Warhol paid Solanas twenty-five dollars for performing in *I, a Man*, a feature-length film he was making with Paul Morrissey. Valerie appeared as herself, a tough lesbian who rejects the advances of a male stud with the line that she has instincts that "tell me to dig chicks—why should my standards be lower than yours?" Solanas also appeared in a nonspeaking role in *Bikeboy*, another 1967 Warhol film.

Warhol was pleased with her frank and funny performance; Solanas also was satisfied enough that she brought Girodias to the studio to see a rough cut of the film. Girodias noted that Solanas "seemed very relaxed and friendly with Warhol, whose conversation consisted of protracted silences."

In the fall of 1967 at the New York cafe, Max's Kansas City, Warhol spotted Solanas sitting at a nearby table. He instigated Viva's insult of Solanas: "You dyke! You're disgusting!" Valerie answered with the story of her sexual abuse at the hands of her father. "No wonder you're a lesbian," Viva callously replied.

Over the winter of 1967–68, Solanas was interviewed by Robert Mamorstein of the *Village Voice*. The article, "SCUM Goddess: a Winter Memory of Valerie Solanas" was not published until June 13, 1968, after the shooting. Solanas commented on the men interested in SCUM: "... creeps. Masochists. Probably would love for me to spit on them. I wouldn't give them the pleasure. . . . The men want to kiss my feet and all that crap." Her comments on women and sex: "The girls are okay. They're willing to help anyway they can. Some of them are interested in nothing but sex though. Sex with me, I mean. I can't be bothered . . . I'm no lesbian. I haven't got time for sex of any kind. That's a hang-up." She told Mamorstein that Warhol was a son of a bitch: "A snake couldn't eat a meal off what he paid out."

Solanas also talked about her life; she had surfed as a young girl. She panhandled and even sold an article on panhandling to a magazine. "I've had some funny experiences with strange guys in cars." According to the interview, she wrote a few pulp sex novels and was paid \$500 for one. (Could this have been the novel that was to have been based on the *SCUM Manifesto*?) She was interviewed on Alan Burke's TV talk show; when she refused to censor herself, he walked off the set. The interview was never aired.

According to Paul Morrissey in a 1996 interview with Taylor Meade, the contract that Solanas signed with Olympia Press was "this stupid piece of paper, two sentences, tiny little letter. On it Maurice Girodias said: 'I will give you five hundred dollars, and you will give me your next writing, and other writings.'" Solanas had interpreted it to mean that Girodias would own everything she ever wrote. She told Morrissey: "Oh, no—everything I write will be his. He's done this to me, He's screwed me!"

Morrissey believed Solanas couldn't write the novel based on the *SCUM Manifesto* she had promised to Girodias and used this idea that Girodias owned all that she wrote as an excuse. In Solanas' mind, Warhol, having appropriated *Up Your Ass*, wanted Girodias to steal her work for Warhol's use and never pay her so he got Girodias to sign this contract with her.

In the spring of 1968, Solanas approached underground newspaper publisher (*The Realist*) Paul Krassner for money, saying "I want to shoot Maurice Girodias." He gave her \$50, enough for a .32 automatic pistol.

On June 3, 1968 at 9 a.m. Solanas went to the Chelsea Hotel where Maurice Girodias lived; she asked at the desk for him and was told that he was

gone for the weekend. Still, she remained there for three hours. She also visited the office of Grove Press and asked for Barney Rosset who was also not in. Around noon she went to the newly relocated Factory and waited outside for Warhol. Paul Morrissey met her in front and asked her what she was doing there. "I'm waiting for Andy to get money," she replied. To get rid of her, Morrissey told her that Warhol wasn't coming in that day. "Well, that's alright. I'll wait," she said.

About 2:00 she came up to the studio in the elevator. Once again Morrissey told her that Warhol wasn't coming and that she couldn't hang around so she left. She came up the elevator another seven times before she finally came up with Warhol at 4:15. She was dressed in a black turtleneck sweater and a raincoat, with her hair styled and wearing lipstick and make-up; she carried a brown paper bag. Warhol even commented "Look—doesn't Valerie look good!" Morrissey told her to get out ". . . We got business, and if you don't go I'm gonna beat the hell out of you and throw you out, and I don't want . . ." Then the phone rang; Morrissey answered—it was Viva, for Warhol. Morrissey then excused himself to go to the bathroom. As Warhol spoke on the phone, Solanas shot him three times. Between the first and second shot, both of which missed, Warhol screamed, "No! No! Valerie, don't do it." Her third shot sent a bullet through Warhol's left lung, spleen, stomach, liver, esophagus, and right lung.

As Warhol lay bleeding, Solanas then fired twice upon Mario Amaya, an art critic and curator who had been waiting to meet with Warhol. She hit him above the right hip with her fifth shot; he ran from the room to the back studio and leaned against the door. Solanas then turned to Fred Hughes, Warhol's manager, put her gun to his head and fired; the gun jammed. At that point the elevator door opened; there was no one in it. Hughes said to Solanas, "Oh, there's the elevator. Why don't you get on, Valerie?" She replied: "That's a good idea" and left.

Warhol was taken, clinically dead, to the Columbus–Mother Cabrini Hospital where five doctors operated for five hours to save his life.

That evening at 8 p.m. Solanas turned herself in to a rookie traffic police officer in Times Square; she said, "The police are looking for me and want me." She then took the .32 automatic and a .22 pistol from the pockets of her raincoat, handing them to the cop. As she did so, she stated that she had shot Andy Warhol and in way of explanation offered, "He had too much control of my life."

A mob of journalists and photographers shouting questions greeted Solanas as she was brought to the 13th Precinct booking room. When asked why she did it, her response was, "I have a lot of reasons. Read my manifesto

and it will tell you what I am." Solanas was fingerprinted and charged with felonious assault and possession of a deadly weapon.

Later that night Valerie Solanas was brought before Manhattan Criminal Court Judge David Getzoff. She told the judge: "It's not often that I shoot somebody. I didn't do it for nothing. Warhol had me tied up, lock, stock, and barrel. He was going to do something to me which would have ruined me."

When the judge asked if she could afford an attorney, she replied: "No, I can't. I want to defend myself. This is going to stay in my own competent hands. I was right in what I did! I have nothing to regret!" The judge struck her comments from the court record, and Solanas was taken to the Bellevue Hospital psychiatric ward for observation.

On June 13, 1968 Valerie Solanas appeared in front of State Supreme Court Justice Thomas Dickens; she was then represented by radical feminist lawyer Florynce Kennedy who called Solanas "one of the most important spokeswomen of the feminist movement." Kennedy asked for a writ of habeas corpus because Solanas was inappropriately held in a psychiatric ward, but the judge denied the motion and sent Solanas back to Bellevue. Ti-Grace Atkinson, the New York chapter president of NOW, attended Solanas' court appearance and said she was "the first outstanding champion of women's rights."

On June 28 Solanas was indicted on charges of attempted murder, assault, and illegal possession of a gun. In August, Solanas was declared incompetent and was sent to Ward Island Hospital.

August 1968, Olympia Press published the *SCUM Manifesto* with essays by Maurice Girodias and Paul Krassner.

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Solanas: "I consider that a moral act. And I consider it immoral that I missed. I should have done target practice."

—Freddie Baer