



## HATEWATCH

# INTELLIGENCE REPORT ARTICLE PROVOKES FURY AMONG MEN'S RIGHTS ACTIVISTS

May 15, 2012

by Arthur Goldwag

The last issue of the SPLC's [Intelligence Report](#) presented a scathing portrait of "a hard-line fringe" of the Men's Rights Movement (MRM): "women haters whose fury goes well beyond criticism of the family court system, domestic violence laws, and false rape accusations," whose rage is "directed at all women, not only perceived feminists."

The article, entitled "[Leader's Suicide Brings Attention to Men's Rights Movement](#)," provoked a tremendous response among men's rights activists (MRAs) and their sympathizers.

"Piggybacking on the two minutes' hate against Limbaugh," the [National Review Online](#) sarcastically declared, the "clueless commissars at the Southern Policy Law Center" have "found a new arena of hate groups, comparable to neo-Nazis and the skinheads: the 'manosphere' of misogynist web sites." The website [In Mala Fide](#) was defiantly proud: "Before, our enemies ignored us. Now, they point their gnarled, disgusting fingers at us, sputtering syllables of disapproval."

A Voice for Men's Paul Elam tried on a collegial tone at first. "The goals of SPLC and AVfM are quite similar," he averred in [open letter](#) to the SPLC's president, Richard Cohen. "We both work to identify groups who seek to oppress others, and inform the public of the inequities they would perpetuate." But just days later, in a post headlined "[Southern Poverty Law Center Linked to Hate Activity](#)," he changed his tune.

It should be mentioned that the SPLC did not label MRAs as members of a hate movement; nor did our article claim that the grievances they air on their websites – false rape accusations, ruinous divorce settlements and the like – are all without merit. But we *did* call out specific examples of misogyny and the threat, overt or implicit, of violence.

Thomas James Ball, for example, who was hailed as a martyr on so many men's rights forums, called for arson attacks on courthouses and police stations. The Norwegian mass killer Anders Breivik wrote extensively about the evils of feminism. We included as much as we did about Register-Her.com because it is so intimidating to its targets, not all of whom are criminals. When Elam accused Vliet Tiptree, a pseudonymous contributor to RadFem Hub, of "calling for extermination of half the human race; the male half, that is," he offered a [cash reward](#) for her real identity. The names and locations of several candidates were publically aired.

Elam and the authors of countless angry posts and letters have demanded to know why the SPLC hasn't also condemned feminist man-hating (or misandry, to use the MRM's preferred term).

"You do know that there is a forum out there called 'RadFem Hub' that actively advocates infanticide, gender-selective abortion and killing/mutilating men and boys, right?" one letter asked us. "Read the SCUM Manifesto," another said, "and research the reception it has received over the years, and the regard with which many feminists still hold Valerie Solanas."

Solanas was the undeniably disturbed woman who shot Andy Warhol in 1968. "Life in this society being, at best, an utter bore and no aspect of society being at all relevant to women," her manifesto began, "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."

SCUM stands for "Society for Cutting Up Men," and it is true that Solanas continues to be much-read and quoted in some feminist circles. ("We don't really cut up men," the tagline of the [Feminazis](#) blog cheekily declares. "Well, unless they deserve it.")

The existence of hatred on one side of a color, political or gender line hardly justifies its presence on the other. And radical feminists do say hurtful things about men. "[T]reatments can be developed to mitigate the death-drive of men, their hierarchical psychology, their insensitivity to the pain of living creatures, their pleasure in violence and intimidation, their acquisitiveness, their rape and phallic obsessions," Tiptree wrote in a post on RadFem Hub called [Radical Feminism Enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century](#). "[M]y best bet is that what's wrong with men is that their androgens need genetic modification. I'm serious about this. If we can do it with corn, men ought to be easy." Few possessors of Y chromosomes could read her words without feeling queasy. But to

characterize her essay as a well-developed plan, as Elam and his colleagues do, is not only ridiculous, it is willfully obtuse.

Cathy Brennan owns the domain RadFem Hub. “I don’t hate men,” she told me. “I have a father, I have a brother, I have a son. The war that Paul Elam is waging is in his head. I worry about women and children and the increasing violence in our society.” When I asked her what she thought of Solanas’ “Scum Manifesto,” she laughed. “I view it as *A Modest Proposal*-type work of literature, a satire. It’s brilliant, but it’s not my personal bible.”

While men’s rights activists fantasize about existential threats to the male sex, real [gendercide](#) is being committed against girls in China, India, East Asia, the Caucasus and other parts of the world.

Of course, some radical feminists do hate men, and when MRAs lurk in members-only chat rooms and cherry pick their angriest, most shockingly over-the-top posts to reprint on their own sites, as an MRA “[mole](#)” did at a forum called [RadFemSpeak](#) (which is not affiliated with RadFem Hub), they commit the same injustice they accuse the SPLC of doing to themselves. No one makes a very favorable impression when they’re spewing bile.

This is a lesson that some MRAs are beginning to learn for themselves. “With all of the kooks inhabiting the manosphere, it was easy for the SPLC to smear anti-feminism,” one MRA site sadly [concluded](#) after our article appeared. “The problem is larger than just AVfM. Even rational anti-feminist blogs and organizations like the False Rape Society and SAVE [Stop Abusive and Violent Environments] are being tarnished with the same brush because the MRM ‘leadership’ has failed to deal with the kooks.”

“Women are not feminism. ... To equate the two is beyond ignorant,” a [thoughtful MRA blogger](#) wrote. “[I]deologically speaking, I have some issues with feminist theory, but honestly, I think it’s a distraction from working on the real issues that face men. ... issues like: Homelessness - Men’s Health - Education - Suicides - Homicides - Deaths on the Job - Family Court Inequalities - Child Custody - Criminal Justice System - Incarceration Rates - Prison Rape and Violence - Domestic Violence - Unemployment - Drug and Alcohol Abuse - Military Deaths and Service - Vilification in the Media - Legal Inequalities. This is what the MRM is all about; this is about social justice and equal protection under the law.”

I dare say that if social justice and equal protection under the law were all that the MRM were about, then the SPLC would have had no reason

to write about it. If the article inspires more self-criticism in this vein,  
then perhaps it did the Men's Rights Movement a service.

*Comments, suggestions or tips? Send them to [HWeditor@splcenter.org](mailto:HWeditor@splcenter.org) and follow us on [Twitter @Hatewatch](https://twitter.com/Hatewatch).*

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