

LETTERS FROM GRANDPA #309

Dearest grandchild,

In our last letter we listed some of the differences God made between men and women. Accepting the way that God made us is key to our happiness both here and hereafter. To underscore this fact this letter will remind you of the life and legacy of the late Valerie Solanas. Her attorney, Florynce Kennedy, described her as “one of the most important spokeswomen of the feminist movement”. Her life and legacy should make any thinking woman skeptical of the feminist movement.

My father’s sister, Clento, died in her teens and is buried beside her mother and father at the Newtonia, Mo. Cemetery. This is a mere three and a half miles from the humble dwelling where Grandpa John Mouton worked as a share-cropper. A Civil War battle was fought there Sept. 30, 1862. Consequently, my father plowed up many cannon balls when he was a boy. At any rate, by Clento’s own request, this famous poem is written on her tombstone. “Hello, my friend, as you pass by – As you are now so once was I. As I am now so you will be – prepare for death and follow me”. Someone wrote a poignant sequel to the poem saying: “To follow you I’m not content until I know which way you went”. This caustic response is especially apropos with reference to Valerie Solanas.

- Valerie was born April 9 1936 to Louis and Dorothy Bondo Solanas in Ventor, New Jersey.
- Her parents divorced in the 1940’s and Valerie moved with her mother to Washington, D.C.
- She was pregnant and unmarried at 15.
- She graduated from High School in 1954 and began studying psychology at the University of Maryland. She supported herself by doing odd jobs, panhandling, and prostitution.
- She developed an uncontrollable hatred for men.
- In 1967 she was involved in two movies: “I, a Man” and “Bike Boy”.
- Also in 1967 she wrote a play “Up Your . . .” and sought Andy Warhol to produce it. One version of the play has the heroine killing her male lover, and the other version killing her infant son simply because he was born a boy.
- Also in 1967 she wrote the SCUM Manifesto (Society for Cutting Up Men). She sold mimeographed copies on the street. Her “manifesto” envisioned a utopian society without men.
- On June 3, 1968 she set out to murder three men. She shot Andy Warhol and Mario Amaya, but her gun jammed when she tried to shoot Fred Hughes.
- Warhol was shot through both lungs, liver, spleen, and esophagus, but lived!
- Valerie was sentenced to only three years, but was out in two. The judge counted the year she spent in a mental hospital as time served.
- On Christmas Eve 1968 she phoned Warhol and demanded that he give her \$20,000, drop all criminal charges, put her in more movies, and get her on the Tonight Show with Johnny Carson. She warned Warhol that if he didn’t do it, she could “always do it again”.
- When she got out of prison she returned to prostitution to feed her drug habit.
- It seems that Valerie never had a positive relationship with any man including her father and the long list of men to whom she sold her body.
- In addition to her hatred for men she also developed a contempt for sex in general. She even considered her lesbian lovers as weak and undisciplined.
- On April 26, 1988 she was broke and alone and died of emphysema and pneumonia in a welfare hotel in the Tenderloin district of San Francisco. She was only 52 years old.
- She was a lost sheep but the Good Shepherd could have saved her if only she would have given Him a chance!

My heart is broken when I hear about people like Valerie Solanas. If only her father had loved her. If only her mother had blessed her with self esteem. If only she had learned to laugh and sing Jesus loves me when she was a child. "If only", however, is wishful thinking that does no good. Like Lincoln at Gettysburg we need to recognize that it is for us the living to be here dedicated to the unfinished tasks that are before us. These tasks not only include loving little children in our own home, but reaching out to hurting children like Valerie who are desperately in need of love.

Many years ago Stefanie Fast was abandoned by her mother in war torn Korea. She was only four years old. Her bi-racial ethnicity left her with no legal status and prejudice against half breeds made survival even more difficult. Their ethnic slur for children with foreign fathers was "Toogie". Toogies were at the bottom of the social strata. The fact that Stefanie survived for the next three and a half years borders on the miraculous. Surviving the harsh Korean winters was especially difficult. During that time she was tortured, raped, and even thrown into a pit filled with human waste. Once, for stealing food from a farmer, she was tied to a water wheel and each revolution put her face under water scraping dirt and gravel. On another occasion she was thrown into a bombed out building to be eaten by rats. After a few years of living like an animal she was covered with boils, dirt, lice, cross-eyed from malnutrition, and plagued with parasites. Finally she lay dying in a garbage dump. Providentially, a World Vision nurse was passing by and heard her moan. Soon the blond haired blue eyed nurse was kneeling by her side. The nurse considered the emaciated child too sick to survive, but as she started to leave she heard a voice from heaven saying "She Is Mine". Today Stefanie laughs and acknowledges that it is quite unusual for anyone to hear a voice from heaven, especially a Lutheran nurse. At any rate, Stefanie was taken to the orphanage and somehow survived. When a Christian couple expressed an interest in her she brushed the man's hand away from her head and spat on him. Remarkably, David and Judy Merwin overlooked her pitiful condition and rage and adopted her as their own. The transformation of her life was not easy, and did not happen immediately. Today, however, Stefanie Fast is a wife, mother, grandmother and a world famous Christian author and motivational speaker. Virginia Bendure, who is a part of our congregation, once lived in Korea and knew Stefanie personally. Too bad Valerie Solanas didn't have a Christian family to love her like Stefanie did!

If you have 54 minutes to spare this is a link to Stefanie's testimony <https://youtu.be/kGzAf0CheNs>

Jesus, as you know, came to seek and to save the lost (Lk. 19:10). Sometimes, of course, He uses people like David and Judy Merwin to help Him do it! Maybe he can use you and me too!

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce