

## CONCLUSION 2 *A Killjoy Manifesto*

A manifesto: a statement of principle, a mission statement. Manifesto: a declaration of the intent of an individual or organization or group. How can one write a manifesto around a figure, the killjoy, or an activity, killing joy?

A manifesto: to make manifest. Moynan King in her discussion of Valerie Solanas's *SCUM Manifesto* addresses this sense of a manifesto as making manifest. She writes, "As a manifesto, *SCUM*'s intention is to make manifest, to render perceptible, a new order of ideas" (King 2013, n.p.). To render a new order of ideas perceptible is simultaneously a disordering of ideas; manifestos often enact what they call for in surprising and shocking ways given how they expose the violence of an order. A feminist manifesto exposes the violence of a patriarchal order, the violence of what I called in chapter 2 "the machinery of gender."

A manifesto not only causes a disturbance, it aims to cause this disturbance. To make something manifest can be enough to cause a disturbance. This intimacy between manifestation and disturbance has implications for how we write a killjoy manifesto. A killjoy manifesto must be grounded in an account of what exists. Why is this important? It is about what we come up against. Some of the worst abuses of power I have encountered in the academy have been when individuals make use of an equality principle, as if to say, boundaries and rules are about hierarchy, so we are "free to do what we want," whereby "free to do what we want" really still means "you doing what I want you to do," given that the *we* is made up of an *I* who has power and a *you* that is subordi-

nate by virtue of their positions within an organization. Note that “doing what we want” not only can be assumed to express an equality principle but can be articulated as a rebellion against institutional norms and authority (they would prevent us from having relationships because they assume boundaries and divisions that we have given up because we are free radicals). A killjoy manifesto cannot be about the freeing of radicals to pursue their own agendas.

A killjoy manifesto thus begins by recognizing inequalities as existing. This recognition is enacted by the figure of the killjoy herself: she kills joy because of what she claims exists. She has to keep making the same claim because she keeps countering the claim that what she says exists does not exist. The killjoy is often assumed to be inventive, to bring about what she claims; or, to use my terms from chapter 6, she is often assumed to be a wall maker. If a killjoy manifesto shows how the denial of inequality under the assumption of equality is a technique of power, then the principles articulated in that manifesto cannot be abstracted from statements about what exists. A killjoy manifesto is thus about making manifest what exists. In the labor of making manifest we make a manifesto.

To struggle for freedom is to struggle against oppression. Angela Davis in *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism* showed how the articulation of unfulfilled longings for freedom can also represent freedom “in more immediate and accessible terms” ([1989] 1998, 7). It is from oppression that freedom is given expression. A manifesto is required when a struggle is necessary to give expression to something. This is why the manifesto can be understood as a killjoy genre; we have to say it because of what is not being done. A manifesto makes an appeal by not being appealing: a manifesto is not an attractive piece of writing by existing norms or standards. It cannot be: it has to strain to be said. And yet a manifesto is appealing to those who read it; a manifesto appeals for something by appealing to someone. A killjoy manifesto appeals to killjoys.

Manifestos are often disagreeable because they show the violence necessary to sustain an agreement. It is not just that the feminist killjoy has a manifesto. The feminist killjoy is a manifesto. She is assembled around violence; how she comes to matter, to mean, is how she exposes violence. Just remember the *kill* in killjoy. This figure reminds us how feminism is often understood as a form of murder; calling for the end of the system that makes “men” is often understood as killing men. We could indeed compare the figure of the murderous feminist to that of the feminist killjoy. What Valerie Solanas ([1967] 2013) does in her manifesto, very controversially, is to literalize that fantasy of the murderous feminist through imagining a feminist collective, or

a mind-set, that is SCUM (Society for Cutting Up Men). It should not surprise us, because one of her points was to be a cutoff point that the *SCUM Manifesto* was read literally; it was dismissed as literal or dismissed through literalism as intending the elimination of men. The manifesto works because it enacts the literalism that would enable its own dismissal. I have noticed this use of literalism as dismissal when working on my feminist killjoy blog. For example, when I tweeted a link to a blog post “white men,” which was retweeted by a white man, another white man called it “genosucide.”<sup>1</sup> Genosucide: the self-willed killing of a people. Or another time a student at Goldsmiths, Bahar Mustafa, allegedly used the hashtag #killallwhitemen.<sup>2</sup> Valerie Solanas is brought back to life on social media. Snap. But of course if this hashtag literalizes a fantasy, you literally encounter the fantasy. The hashtag is turned back into a command; heard as the planning of genocide.

The figure of the murderous feminist is useful: it allows the survival of men to be predicated on the elimination of feminism. Much feminist creativity has literalized a fantasy that does not originate with us, including the film *A Question of Silence*, discussed in chapters 8 and 9, where the man that is killed in an act of feminist revenge stands in for all men. And in a way of course you are being violent in exposing violence; if you are letting the violence come out of your own pen, to travel through you, you have to let the violence spill, all over the pages. And you are in a certain way calling for the end of white men because you are calling for the end of the institution that makes white men. “White men” is an institution, as I discussed in chapter 6. We do want to bring an end to him. But of course, at another level, it is harder to redeploy the figure of the murderous feminist than the figure of the feminist killjoy. Feminists are not calling for violence. We are calling for an end to the institutions that promote and naturalize violence. Much violence that is promoted by institutions is concealed by the very use of stranger danger, as I have discussed throughout this book: the assumption that violence only ever originates with outsiders. It is because we expose violence that we are heard as violent, as if the violence of which we speak originates with us.

To be a killjoy can also mean being understood as someone who kills life because there is such an intimacy between the life principle and the happiness principle. In being against happiness you are assumed to be against life. And as such there are life risks in being a killjoy. It is not that in being assigned a killjoy (and as I have argued, she always begins as an assignment because the feminist killjoy is announced from a position of exteriority; she already has a life of her own before we are assigned her) we are always willing or able to

receive this assignment. In fact, as I explored in part I, the figure of the feminist killjoy often comes up in situations of intense pain and difficulty: when you are seated at the table, doing the work of family, that happy object, say, you threaten that object. And you threaten the object by pointing out what is already there, in the room; again, you are not being inventive. But what a feeling: when all the negative feeling that is not revealed when the family is working becomes deposited in the one who reveals the family is not working. I will never forget that feeling of wanting to eliminate myself from a situation that I had been assumed to cause.

**It is a downer; we are downers.**

A killjoy manifesto has company: books that bring things down, books that enact a collective frown. *The Dialectic of Sex* could be read as a killjoy manifesto, a book that has too quickly been dismissed as assuming technology would liberate women from biology, a book that showed that when the sexual division of labor structures everything, nothing will liberate anyone. Sarah Franklin describes how the “bulk of Firestone’s manifesto was based on an analysis of what has held a certain gender stratification in place for millennia” (2010, 46). *The Dialectic of Sex* is optimistic because it accounts for how liberation is difficult to achieve. No wonder she has her killjoy moments. Firestone wants to explain why this system that is not working keeps on going, a system that she has no doubt eventually will kill us all. And for explanations, she turns to love, to romance, to the family. These institutions are promises of happiness. An institution can be organized around a promise. And they become ways of organizing living by assuming that proximity to a form will get you there. So, of course, Shulamith Firestone in turning in this direction turns to happiness. As I have already noted, she describes her “dream action” for the women’s liberation movement as a smile boycott (Firestone 1970, 90). Perhaps we could call this action, following Lisa Millbank (2013), a smile strike, to emphasize its collective nature. Collectively we would strike by not smiling, a collectivity built out of individual action (not smiling is an action when smiling is a requirement for women and for those understood as serving others through paid or unpaid work) but which requires more than an individual. A smile strike is necessary to announce our disagreement, our unhappiness, with a system.

**We must stay unhappy with this world.**

The figure of the feminist killjoy makes sense if we place her in the context of feminist critiques of happiness, some of which I discussed in chapter 2 (see also Ahmed 2010). Happiness is used to justify social norms as social goods.

As Simone de Beauvoir described so astutely, “It is always easy to describe as happy a situation in which one wishes to place [others]” ([1949] 1997, 28). Not to agree to stay in the place of this wish might be to refuse the happiness that is wished for. To be involved in political activism is thus to be involved in a struggle against happiness. The struggle over happiness provides the horizon in which political claims are made. We inherit this horizon.

A killjoy becomes a manifesto when we are willing to take up this figure, to assemble a life not as her (I discussed the risks of assuming we are her in chapter 7) but around her, in her company. We are willing to killjoy because the world that assigns this or that person or group of people as the killjoys is not a world we want to be part of. To be willing to killjoy is to transform a judgment into a project. A manifesto: how a judgment becomes a project.

To think of killjoys as manifestos is to say that a politics of transformation, a politics that intends to cause the end of a system, is not a program of action that can be separated from how we are in the worlds we are in. Feminism is praxis. We enact the world we are aiming for; nothing less will do. Lesbian feminism, as I noted in chapter 9, is how we organize our lives in such a way that our relations to each other as women are not mediated through our relations to men. A life becomes an archive of rebellion. This is why a killjoy manifesto will be personal. Each of us killjoys will have our own. My manifesto does not suspend my personal story. It is how that story unfolds into action.

It is from difficult experiences, of being bruised by structures that are not even revealed to others, that we gain the energy to rebel. It is from what we come up against that we gain new angles on what we are against. Our bodies become our tools; our rage becomes sickness. We vomit; we vomit out what we have been asked to take in. Our guts become our feminist friends the more we are sickened. We begin to feel the weight of histories more and more; the more we expose the weight of history, the heavier it becomes.

We snap. We snap under the weight; things break. A manifesto is written out of feminist snap. A manifesto is feminist snap.

And: we witness as feminists the trouble feminism causes. I would hazard a guess: feminist trouble is an extension of gender trouble (Butler 1990). To be more specific: feminist trouble is the trouble with women. When we refuse to be women, in the heteropatriarchal sense as beings for men, we become trouble, we get into trouble. A killjoy is willing to get into trouble. And this I think is what is specific about a killjoy manifesto: that we bring into our statements of intent or purpose the experience of what we come up against. It is this experience that allows us to articulate a *for*, a *for* that carries with it an

experience of what we come up against. A *for* can be how we turn something about. A manifesto is *about* what it aims to bring *about*.

There is no doubt in my mind that a feminist killjoy is for something; although as killjoys we are not necessarily for the same things. But you would only be willing to live with the consequences of being against what you come up against if you are for something. A life can be a manifesto. When I read some of the books in my survival kit, I hear them as manifestos, as calls to action; as calls to arms. They are books that tremble with life because they show how a life can be rewritten; how we can rewrite a life, letter by letter. A manifesto has a life, a life of its own; a manifesto is an outstretched hand. And if a manifesto is a political action, it depends on how it is received by others. And perhaps a hand can do more when it is not simply received by another hand, when a gesture exceeds the firmness of a handshake. Perhaps more than a hand needs to shake. If a killjoy manifesto is a handle, it flies out of hand. A manifesto thus repeats something that has already happened; as we know the killjoy has flown off. Perhaps a killjoy manifesto is unhandy; a feminist flight.

When we refuse to be the master's tool, we expose the violence of rods, the violences that built the master's dwelling, brick by brick. When we make violence manifest, a violence that is reproduced by not being made manifest, we will be assigned as killjoys. It is because of what she reveals that a killjoy becomes a killjoy in the first place. A manifesto is in some sense behind her. This is not to say that writing a killjoy manifesto is not also a commitment; that it is not also an idea of how to move forward. A killjoy has her principles. A killjoy manifesto shows how we create principles from an experience of what we come up against, from how we live a feminist life. When I say principles here, I do not mean rules of conduct that we must agree to in order to proceed in a common direction. I might say that a feminist life is principled but feminism often becomes an announcement at the very moment of the refusal to be bound by principle. When I think of feminist principles, I think of principles in the original sense: principle as a first step, as a commencement, a start of something.

A principle can also be what is elemental to a craft. Feminist killjoys and other willful subjects are crafty; we are becoming crafty. There are principles in what we craft. How we begin does not determine where we end up, but principles do give shape or direction. Feminist principles are articulated in unfeminist worlds. Living a life with feminist principles is thus not living smoothly; we bump into the world that does not live in accordance with the principles we try to live.

For some reason, the principles I articulate here ended up being expressed

as statements of will: of what a killjoy is willing (to do or to be) or not willing (to do or to be). I think we can understand the some of this reason. A killjoy manifesto is a willful subject; she wills wrongly by what she is willing or is not willing to do. No wonder a willful subject has principles; she can be principled. She can share them if you can bear them.

#### **PRINCIPLE 1: I AM NOT WILLING TO MAKE HAPPINESS MY CAUSE.**

It is often made into a specific requirement: you are asked to do something in order to make others happy. You are more likely to be asked to do something to make others happy when they know you are not happy with what they are doing. Maybe you are asked to participate in a wedding ceremony by those who know you are against the institution of marriage celebrated by such ceremonies. They appeal to you by appealing to their own happiness. If you refuse that appeal you are judged as being selfish, as putting your own happiness before the happiness of others.

**Mean: how could you?**

**A killjoy manifesto: meaning from the mean.**

If you are willing to refuse these appeals, then happiness is not the principle you uphold. You have not found the appeal appealing. And you do not uphold this principle in general because you have come up against this principle before: you have been asked not to say things, to do things, because it would make others unhappy. It does not follow that a killjoy does not care for the happiness of others, or that she might not at times decide to do something because it contributes to the happiness of others. She is just not willing to make causing happiness her political cause.

From this everyday situation of living with the consequences of not making happiness your cause, you learn the unhappiness that happiness can cause. This first principle has been the basis of much feminist knowledge and activism: the identification of how institutions are built as promises of happiness; promises that often hide the violence of these institutions. We are willing to expose this violence: the violence of the elevation of the family, the couple form, reproductivity as the basis of a good life; the violence reproduced by organizations that identify speaking about violence as disloyalty. We will expose the happiness myths of neoliberalism and global capitalism: the fantasy that the system created for a privileged few is really about the happiness of many or the most.

To expose happiness myths is to be willing to be given a killjoy assignment.

## PRINCIPLE 2: I AM WILLING TO CAUSE UNHAPPINESS.

Not making happiness your cause can cause unhappiness. A killjoy is willing to cause unhappiness.

A committed killjoy has a lifetime of experience of being the cause of unhappiness. And she knows this too: when you cause unhappiness, by virtue of the desires you have or the worlds you are not willing to take up as your own, unhappiness is assumed as your cause. It is not. Being willing to cause unhappiness does not make unhappiness your cause, although we live with the assumption that unhappiness is our cause. When our desires cause unhappiness, it is often assumed we desire to cause unhappiness. You might be judged as wanting the unhappiness you cause, which is another way you become an unhappiness cause.

A killjoy is willing to live with the consequences of what she is willing. She is thus willing to be the cause of someone else's unhappiness. It does not follow that she will not be made sad by other people being sad about her life (because they think her life is sad); it does not follow, even, that she would not feel sympathy in response to those made unhappy by her life. She will not let that unhappiness redirect her. She is willing to be misdirected.

Whose unhappiness are we willing to cause? Anybody's unhappiness: that can be the only answer to this question. But there is an "if" here. We are willing to cause institutional unhappiness if the institution is unhappy because we speak about sexual harassment. We are willing to cause feminist unhappiness if feminists are unhappy because we speak about racism. This means that: we are unhappy with this if. This means that: we are unhappy with what causes unhappiness. It can cause unhappiness to reveal the causes of unhappiness.

We are willing to cause unhappiness because of what we have learned about unhappiness from what we have been assumed to have caused. An "I" turns up here; she knows what is up from what turns up. When I spoke out publicly about sexual harassment at my college, I was identified by some as a killjoy without any sense of irony (there might have been a sense of irony given I had already professed to be her). What is important for us to note is that some feminists were part of this some. A feminist colleague said that in speaking out I was compromising "the happy and stimulating" environment that "long-standing feminists" had worked to create. I assumed I was not one of the long-standing feminists because of the stand I took. Yes, even speaking out about sexual harassment can cause feminist unhappiness. If so then: I am not willing to make feminist happiness my cause.



We have learned to hear what is at stake in such accusations. Feminism by implication is a bubble within the institution. But a feminist bubble can also operate as a mode of identification. To protect the feminist bubble you might want to protect it from exposure to the violence of the institution, a violence that is happening elsewhere (another center, another department). Protecting the feminist bubble ends up becoming a means of protecting the institution. You do not want the institutional violence exposed to others. You would prefer to resolve the violence “in house,” even though the “in house” has failed to dismantle the master’s house. Is this why there is such secrecy and silence about institutional violence even among some feminists?

**If feminism is a bubble, we need the bubble to burst.**

When we turn away from what compromises our happiness we are withdrawing our efforts from work that needs to be done to enable a more just and equal world. But this principle of being willing to cause unhappiness cannot be upheld by being assumed to refer only to the unhappiness of others. It is possible that we do not register some situations because to register those situations would make us unhappy. Maybe that is why the killjoy appears: because we are desperate not to register what she notices. Maybe this is why the killjoy appears to those who profess to be killjoys: our happiness too might depend on what we do not notice. Perhaps we keep our happiness through a willed oblivion. We must refuse this oblivion. If something would make us unhappy, when acknowledged, we need to acknowledge it. We are willing to cause our own unhappiness, which does not make our unhappiness our cause.

**PRINCIPLE 3: I AM WILLING TO SUPPORT OTHERS WHO ARE WILLING TO CAUSE UNHAPPINESS.**

A killjoy might first recognize herself in that feeling of loneliness: of being cut off from others, from how they assemble around happiness. She knows, because she has been there: to be unseated by the tables of happiness can be to find yourself in that shadowy place, to find yourself alone, on your own. It might be that many pass through the figure of the killjoy and quickly out again because they find her a hard place to be; not to be surrounded by the warmth of others, the quiet murmurs that accompany an agreement. The costs of killing joy are high; this figure is herself a cost (not to agree with someone as killing the joy of something).

How do you persist? As I suggested in my survival kit, we often persist by finding the company of other killjoys; we can take up this name when we

recognize the dynamic she names; and we can recognize that dynamic when others articulate that dynamic for us. We recognize others too because they recognize that dynamic.

Those moments of recognition are precious; and they are precarious. With a moment comes a memory: we often persist by being supported by others. We might also experience the crisis of being unsupported; support matters all the more all the less we feel supported. To make a manifesto out of the killjoy means being willing to give to others the support you received or wish you received. Maybe you are in a conversation, at home or at work, and one person, one person out of many, is speaking out. Don't let her speak on her own. Back her up; speak with her. Stand by her; stand with her. From these public moments of solidarity so much is brought into existence. We are creating a support system around the killjoy; we are finding ways to allow her to do what she does, to be who she is. We do not have to assume her permanence, to turn her figure into personhood, to know that when she comes up, she might need others to hold her up.

Audre Lorde once wrote, "Your silence will not protect you" (1984a, 41). But your silence could protect them. And by them I mean: those who are violent, or those who benefit in some way from silence about violence. The killjoy is testimony. She comes to exist as a figure, a way of containing damage, because she speaks about damage. Over time, the time of being a feminist, we might call this feminist time, I have come to understand, to know and to feel, the costs of speaking out. I have thus come to understand, to know and to feel, why many do not speak out. There is a lot to lose, a lot, a life even. So much injustice is reproduced by silence not because people do not recognize injustice, but because they do recognize it. They also recognize the consequences of identifying injustice, which might not be consequences they can live with. It might be fear of losing your job and knowing you need that job to support those you care for; it might be concern about losing connections that matter; concern that what you say will be taken the wrong way; concern that by saying something you would make something worse. To suggest that the feminist killjoy is a manifesto is not to say that we have an obligation to speak out. We are not all in the same position; we cannot all afford to speak out. Killing joy thus requires a communication system: we have to find other ways for the violence to become manifest. We might need to use guerrilla tactics, and we have a feminist history to draw on here; you can write down names of harassers on books; put graffiti on walls; red ink in the water. There are so many ways to cause a feminist disturbance.

Even if speaking out is not possible, it is necessary. Silence about violence

is violence. But feminist speech can take many forms. We become more inventive with forms the harder it is to get through. Speaking out and speaking with, sheltering those who speak; these acts of spreading the word, are world making. Killing joy is a world-making project. We make a world out of the shattered pieces even when we shatter the pieces or even when we are the shattered pieces.

#### **PRINCIPLE 4: I AM NOT WILLING TO LAUGH AT JOKES DESIGNED TO CAUSE OFFENSE.**

This principle might seem very specific: it might seem that it derives from my initial three principles and that it is not worthy of being one all on its own. But I think humor is such a crucial technique for reproducing inequality and injustice. I think the fantasy of the humorless feminist (as part of a more general fantasy of humorlessness of those who question a social as well as political arrangement) does such important work. The fantasy is what makes the figure of the killjoy do her work. It is assumed she says what she does (points out sexism, points out racism) because she is herself deprived of any joy, because she cannot bear the joy of others. Often once someone has been assigned a feminist killjoy, others then will make certain jokes, in order to cause her offense, in order to witness her ill humor. Do not be tempted to laugh. If the situation is humorless, we need not to add humor to it. If the situation is unfunny, we need not to make light of it; we need not to make it fun.

It is often through humor (say through irony or satire) that people can keep making sexist and racist utterances. Humor creates the appearance of distance; by laughing about what they repeat, they repeat what they laugh about. This *about* becomes the butt of the joke. It is no laughing matter. When it is no laughing matter, laughter matters.

But, of course, humor can challenge things by bringing things to the surface; I noticed this in my survival kit. But there are differences that matter in what laughter does. Feminist humor might involve the relief of being able to laugh when familiar patterns that are often obscured are revealed. We might laugh at how white men assemble themselves by reducing whatever we do as “not white men” to identity politics. We might laugh even about being poster children of diversity; and laughing does not mean we do not experience pain and frustration at being called upon by institutions to provide them with smiling colorful faces; to make our faces theirs. But this is not laughter that allows us to repeat what causes offense; it is a reorientation toward that cause. We do not repeat it; we withdraw.

The killjoy exists in close proximity to the figure of the oversensitive subject who is too easily offended. This figure is always evoked whenever social critique is successful: that something has been closed down or removed or lost (a loss that is mourned) because others are offended, where to be offended is to be too easily offended, to be weak, soft, impressionable. “Toughen up” has become a moral imperative, one that is (like most moral imperatives) articulated by those who think they have what they claim others need. Indeed this figure of the oversensitive subject might come up in advance of such a loss, or to avoid such a loss. The moral panic over trigger warnings often evokes this figure, specifically the figure of the oversensitive student who is not attuned to the difficulty and discomfort of learning, as if to say: if we let your sensitivities become law, we lose our freedom. I would argue that freedom has become reduced to the freedom to be offensive, which is also about how those with power protect their right to articulate their own views, no matter what, no matter whom.

If not wanting histories that are violent to be repeated with such violent insistence, or at least if asking questions about the terms that enable that repetition means being deemed oversensitive, we need to be oversensitive. When you are sensitive to what is not over, you are deemed oversensitive. We are sensitive to what is not over. We are sensitive because it is not over.

#### **PRINCIPLE 5: I AM NOT WILLING TO GET OVER HISTORIES THAT ARE NOT OVER.**

It is not over. We say that, with insistence, as we watch others declare things over. So many declarations, and they participate in the same thing. The current British prime minister, David Cameron, says that one thing that made Great Britain great was that we “took slavery off the high seas.” Great Britain is remembered as the liberator of the slaves, not as perpetrator of slavery; not as a country that has benefited from the mass enslavement of others, from the colonization of others. When colonialism is referred to in the book upon which citizenship tests are based in the United Kingdom, it is described as the system that introduced democracy, law, bringing benefits to others. A violent history of conquest and theft imagined as the gift of modernity. And today, wars are still justified as gifts, as giving freedom, democracy, and equality.

**When it is not over, it is not the time to get over it.**

A killjoy is willing to bring this history up. A memory can be willful. And so we know what happens when we do this. You are accused as the one who is

getting in the way of reconciliation. You are judged as the one who has yet to do what others have done: get over it; get over yourself; let it go. You become the open wound because you won't let things heal.

We are willing to be the ones who fail the project of reconciliation. We know the success of that project is the failure to address these histories of injustice that manifest not only in the unresolved trauma of those for whom this history is a bodily inheritance, a transgenerational haunting, but also in a grossly unequal distribution of wealth and resources.

**How a world is shaped is memory.**

And they say: but look what you have been given. Equality, diversity: they all become gifts for which we are supposed to be grateful; they become compensatory. We are not grateful when a system is extended to include us when that system is predicated on inequality and violence.

**PRINCIPLE 6: I AM NOT WILLING TO BE INCLUDED IF INCLUSION MEANS BEING INCLUDED IN A SYSTEM THAT IS UNJUST, VIOLENT, AND UNEQUAL.**

It is often an invitation: come in, be part, be grateful. Sometimes we have few options: we are workers; we work; we make do. We have to survive or even progress within an institution. But even for those of us who are included, even when we do receive benefits (we might have salaries; we might have pensions), we are not willing that inclusion: we are agreeing that inclusion requires being behind the institution, identifying with it. We are willing to speak out about the violence of the system, to strike, to demonstrate. We are willing to talk about the rods, to risk being identified as the wayward arm.

But there is a difficulty here. Because surely if you are employed by an organization, if you receive the benefit of employment, it could be said that to maintain a killjoy stance is a form of political dishonesty: you get to benefit from the institutions you critique. We need to start with our own complicity: this is why part II began with the compromised nature of diversity work. To be complicit should not become its own reproductive logic: that all we can do is to reproduce the logics of the institutions that employ us. In fact those who benefit from an unjust system need to work even harder to expose that injustice. For those killjoys who are in regular employment—let's call ourselves professional killjoys; some of us might even be professor killjoys—when we profess we kill joy; there is no way of overcoming this difficulty, other than by starting from it. We need to use the benefits we receive to support those who

do not receive these benefits, including those within our own institutions who do not have the same securities that give us the opportunity to expose the insecurities. Within higher education this means we need to enact our solidarity with students who are fighting for education as a right, for adjunct lecturers and faculty who do not have tenure or who are on short-term contracts, with those professional staff who do the work of maintaining the very buildings and facilities in which we do our work: cleaners, security staff, porters. I have tried to show how killing joy and willfulness also relate to the politics of labor: arms matter, which is to say some end up doing the work to reproduce the conditions that enable the existence of others. When our professional existence is enabled by the work of others, we need to use our existence to recognize that work. We need to expose the injustice of how institutions give support to some by not supporting others. And we need to support those who challenge the conditions in which they work unsupported. Willfulness is striking.

And: we must keep exposing the violence within the institutions that have included us, especially when our own inclusion occurs under the sign of diversity and equality, especially when our bodies and the products of our labor are used by institutions as evidence of inclusion. We become wall breakers. So we must talk about walls; we must show how history becomes concrete. We are not willing to allow our inclusion to support a happiness fantasy. We might need to leave, at a certain point, if our inclusion requires giving up too much, though we are not all in a position to leave.

A killjoy manifesto: requires an ongoing and willful refusal to identify our hopes with inclusion within organizations predicated on violence. I am not grateful to be included in an institution that is unequal. I am not grateful to be included in an institution in which talking about sexism and racism is heard as ungrateful. We have a history of ungrateful feminists to pick up from. Ungrateful feminists; grumpy; grump.

Together: grumps are a feminist lump. A lumpen proletariat: in feminist form with a feminist consciousness.

**PRINCIPLE 7: I AM WILLING TO LIVE A LIFE THAT IS DEEMED BY OTHERS AS UNHAPPY AND I AM WILLING TO REJECT OR TO WIDEN THE SCRIPTS AVAILABLE FOR WHAT COUNTS AS A GOOD LIFE.**

I have already noted how happiness involves the narrowing down of ways of living a life. We can be disloyal by refusing to be narrowed. We live lives deemed by others to be not happy, to be not reaching the right points of cere-

mony. Two women living together, refusing to have a civil partnership, refusing to get married; we are enacting our rejection of heteropatriarchy. To enact a rejection is an action performed with others.

We can come to embody an alternative family line, as I suggested in chapter 8, or an alternative to the family line. I quite like being a lesbian feminist auntie. I know that as a young woman I would have liked to have had lesbian feminist aunties, though I certainly had feminist aunties to whom I owe a great deal. We need to tell our stories to children, to those who are to come; generations need to tell each other our stories, assembled around other lives, those that are faint from under-inscription. We need to tell each other stories of different ways you can live, different ways you can be; predicated not on how close you get to the life you were assumed or expected to have, but on the queer wanderings of a life you live.

I would have liked to have known there were other ways of living, of being. I would have liked to have known that women do not have to be in relation to men. Of course, I struggled for this realization: I became a feminist; I found women's studies; I met women who taught me what I did not have to do; I found women who helped me deviate from an expectation.

**Queer: the moment you realize what you did not have to be.**

We can become part of a widening when we refused to be narrowed. And each time we reject or widen the happiness script, we become part of an opening. We have to create room if we are to live a feminist life. When we create room, we create room for others.

**PRINCIPLE 8: I AM WILLING TO PUT THE HAP BACK INTO HAPPINESS.**

I have noted how the word *happiness* derives from the Middle English word *hap*, suggesting chance. One history of happiness is the history of the removal of its hap, such that happiness is defined not in terms of what happens to you but of what you work for. In my book *The Promise of Happiness* I explored how happiness even ends up being redefined against hap, especially in the psychology of flows and positive psychology: as not something that happens (or just happens). The narrow scripts of happiness are precisely about the violence of the elimination of the hap. We need to recognize the elimination of hap before we can restore hap. We cannot simply use the lighter word as if it can get us out of here. We have to recognize the weight of the world, the heaviness of happiness, how we are brought down by the expectation that we are down. We stumble. When we stumble, when we are in line, we might feel ourselves as the

obstacle to our own happiness; we might feel ourselves to be getting in the way of ourselves. Can we let ourselves be in the way? Can we be willing what we seem to be undoing? I stumble; maybe by stumbling I found you, maybe by stumbling I stumbled on happiness, a hap-full happiness; a happiness that is as fragile as the bodies we love and cherish. We value such happiness because it is fragile: it comes and goes, as we do. I am willing to let happiness go; to allow anger, rage, or disappointment be how I am affected by a world. But when happiness happens, I am happy.

A fragile happiness might be attuned to the fragility of things. We can care about the things that break off, the broken things. To care about such things is not to care for their happiness. Caring for happiness can so often translate into caring for others on the condition that they reflect back an idea you have of how a life should be lived. Perhaps we can think of care in relation to hap. We are often assumed to be careless when we break something, as I noted in chapter 7. What would it mean to care for something, whether or not it breaks? Maybe we can reorientate caring from caring for someone's happiness to caring what happens to someone or something: caring about what happens, caring whatever happens. We might call this a hap care rather than a happiness care. A hap care would not be about letting an object go, but holding on to an object by letting oneself go, giving oneself over to something that is not one's own. A hap care would not seek to eliminate anxiety from care; it could even be described as care for the hap. Caring is anxious—to be full of care, to be careful, is to take care of things by becoming anxious about their future, where the future is embodied in the fragility of an object whose persistence matters. Our care would pick up the pieces of a shattered pot. Our care would not turn the thing into a memorial, but value each piece; shattering as the beginning of another story.

But we would not end up with a liberal notion: everything is equally fragile; we must care for everything equally. It is not; I do not. Some things become more fragile than others in time. In time, we attend. To attend to something that has become more easily breakable is to attend to its history, with love, and with care.

**PRINCIPLE 9: I AM WILLING TO SNAP ANY BONDS, HOWEVER PRECIOUS, WHEN THOSE BONDS ARE DAMAGING TO MYSELF OR TO OTHERS.**

So many times, when a bond has been snapped, I have been told it is sad, as I noted in chapter 8. But bonds can be violent. A bond can be diminishing.



Sometimes we are not ready to recognize that we have been diminished. We are not ready. It can take psychic as well as political work to be ready to snap that bond. When you do, when you snap, it can feel like an unexpected moment that breaks a line that had been unfolding over time, a deviation, a departure. But a moment can be an achievement; it can be what you have been working for.

You might be willing to snap the bond. You might need to be willful to be willing. And you might need to recognize that others too need to work to reach a point when they can let go. Share that work. We have to share the costs of what we give up. But when we give up, we do not just lose something even when we do lose something. We find things. We find out things we did not know before—about ourselves, about worlds. A feminist life is a journey, a reaching for something that might not have been possible without snap, without the snappy encouragement of others. But a feminist life is also a going back, retrieving parts of ourselves we did not even realize we had, that we did not even realize we had put on hold.

We can hold each other by not putting ourselves on hold.

#### **PRINCIPLE 10: I AM WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN A KILLJOY MOVEMENT.**

Whether or not you are being difficult, you are heard as making things difficult for yourself as well as others. So much difficulty, you would think feminist killjoys would give up. And yet, when I first began presenting and talking about the feminist killjoy, when I first began working with her as well as on her, picking her up, I noticed how energetic the room would be. Sometimes speaking of her, letting her into the room to do her thing, felt like an electric shock. And she finds herself quickly in a company of killjoys: transfeminist killjoys (Cowan 2014), ethnic killjoys (Khorana 2013), crip killjoys (Mullow 2013), indigenous feminist killjoys (Barker 2015). There will be more of that I am sure.

Why? Because the figure of the killjoy comes up whenever there are difficult histories to bring up. The killjoy is appealing not despite what she brings up but because of what she brings up. She acquires vitality or energy from a scene of difficulty. To be willing to be a killjoy, to be willing to get in the way of happiness, grasps hold of a judgment and takes it on.

We even transform the judgment into a rebellious command.

**Killjoy?**

**Just watch me.**

**Bring it on.**

It can be quite a pickup when we pick her up. There can be joy in finding killjoys; there can be joy in killing joy. Our eyes meet when we tell each other about rolling eyes.

**You too; you too.**

**A fragile movement.**

**Snappy.**

So many moments are abbreviated in our equation “rolling eyes = feminist pedagogy.” We are willing those moments. Moments can become movement. Moments can build a movement, a movement assembled from lighter materials. This is not a secure dwelling. We are shattered, too often; but see how the walls move.

**We are willing to participate in a killjoy movement.**

**We are that movement.**

**Watch us roll.**