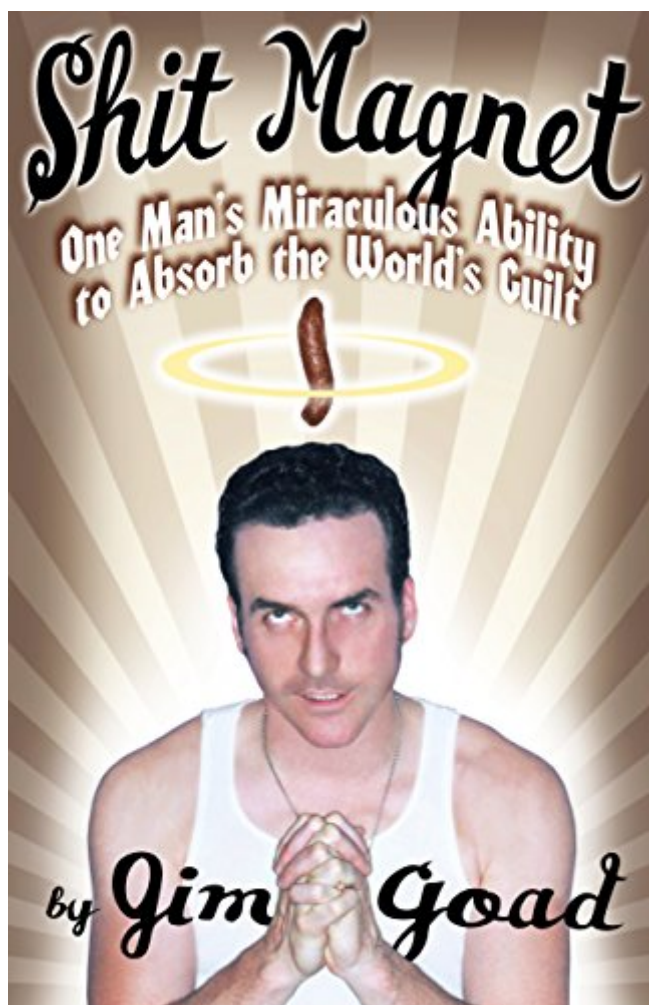


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# Shit Magnet: One Man's Miraculous Ability To Absorb The World's Guilt



## Synopsis

The book's central theme is GUILT: how it's a uniquely human idea, and whether this raises us higher or drags us lower than other animals; how guilt is disabling and why individuals and societies tend to scapegoat; how the act of blaming the enemy and slaying him is history's propulsive force; and my miraculous ability to redeem others by absorbing guilt from them.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Not as easy a read as The Redneck Manifesto but it's entertaining. You'll be wondering how this guy made it thru childhood.

informative, hilarious, horrifying.

Mostly an autobiographical history of Goad's life, mainly focusing on his relationship with now-deceased wife Debbie and his violent dance with a girlfriend which led to his two year

incarceration. Along the way, Goad also lists various outside influences which he feels shaped his angry personality. He admits to making bad decisions, but also loudly states that others share the blame. Some people will throw a fit and accuse Goad of dodging all responsibility. But, regardless of what you might think of his self-justification, the writing is good. As for the previous reviewer who reduced the writing to mere shock value, I disagree. Aside from maybe the intro page to each Answer Me! issue, none of Jim's writing has ever struck me as just shock value. He just has an aggressive writing style and a very sharp wit. Although a couple of Magnet's rants get repetitive, most of it is very gripping. Take a chance, and buy a copy for yourself. I don't think there's anything out there quite like it.

When I first read this book about 7 years ago my favorite-author allegiance changed from Tom Robbins to Jim Goad. You should buy this and all of his stuff. Pronto.

Jim Goad is a man I admire... and desperately don't want to become. He's funny. He's poignant. His social criticism is cutting, accurate and iconoclastic. But by his own admission, he is a severely screwed-up individual. This book is his paean to the pitch black comedy psychodrama of his life. In a world where every loser rich boy wishes they were a street-wise badass, Goad is a street-wise badass... and carries all the scars that that life entails. For this reason, this is one of my favorite books of all time. This book succeeds because it gets the tone exactly right. Goad overturns every single rock in his past, but does so without trying to wring sympathy out of the reader. He talks about how his parents beat him, his homosexual dalliances when he was a teenager, and his marital infidelities, leading up to his ill-fated affair with Anne Ryan, the psychotic groupie who got him jailed. But the remarkable thing is that he doesn't try to deflect blame or run from his past. Goad fesses up to his responsibility in these events with wit and vitriol. Like his other writing, this book is a breeze to read, as Goad rattles off sentences like a Satanic street preacher on meth. When I first read this book years ago, I blew through it in one weekend, the book's writing was so fluid and hilarious. My biggest complaint is the tonal shift in Chapter Three, "A Bad Seed Takes Root," which is written from the perspective of a little kid. It's appropriate, given that it's about Goad's twisted youth, but it's a little creepy when contrasted with the rest of the book. As Goad insists on the back cover, this isn't a pure memoir inasmuch as it's about guilt; specifically, the guilt that's resulted in Goad's writing being blamed for triple suicides and White House shootings. He details how just about everyone in his life is as screwed up as him, from the infamous groupie Anne to his wife Debbie, a misanthropic New York Jew who still lived at home into her thirties and spent most of her

time whining, yet only he is ever punished for his misdeeds. Roughly half the book is devoted to Goad's relationship with Anne and the aftermath; indeed, Goad wrote the book while he was in prison for beating her within an inch of her life. Goad proudly owns up to flogging her, but frames in context of how she abused, threatened and tortured him for the better part of a year, from giving him numerous death threats to spitting dog turds in his face to physically attacking him (including biting him so severely he required stitches) to hunting down one of his other girlfriends and beating her with an axe handle... then bragging about it to everyone. And the fact that Goad beat her wasn't enough; she had to invent a whole series of lies about him, which could have very well have resulted in Goad being found not guilty had the feminist DA prosecuting him not cut him a deal. Even Anne's own mother sided with Goad during the debacle, yet it was only him who got punished for their destructive and sick relationship. Goad notes near the end of the book that while he was incarcerated, Anne's luck finally ran out; she was arrested after she ran over a bicyclist in her car (while screaming "I hate bicyclists!") and fled the scene. Even still, she got off with only five months in prison for second-degree assault, while Goad himself was given two years for attempted second-degree assault. He lays the blame for this squarely where it belongs, on feminism and society's myth that women are somehow more innocent and/or "moral" than men. The idea that many women who suffer domestic violence bring it upon themselves is still unthinkable today; imagine how radioactive it was when this book was published over a decade ago. I also enjoyed Goad's descriptions of prison life, which read like an American Kolyma Tales. He bravely points out that the justice system in America has become a racket; despite the falling crime rate, prisons keep filling up because the federal government and the states keep passing laws to make completely harmless "offenses" into felonies. The very structure of American prisons is designed to maximize recidivism; wardens and district attorneys aren't interested in reforming criminals, because they'd be out of a job if they did. When I first read the book, I was also highly amused by Goad's descriptions of life in Portland, which is where his relationship with the crazy Anne went down. Bottom line, this is one of the finest memoirs in recent years, a savage and brutally honest portrait of not only Jim Goad, but America in general. It's a roundhouse kick in the face of this country's hypocrisy and self-righteousness. It's not a book for those with weak stomachs or without spines. It's a book for the rest of us.

After reading Goad's previous, *REDNECK MAINFESTO*, I was anxiously awaiting the arrival of this autobiographical tome. Those who have followed his life from the early days of zine publishing with *ANSWER ME!* through to his relationship woes with Debbie and affair with nutjob Anne will be

intrigued to get (admittedly) HIS side of the story. This is a no holds barred look at his time with Debbie and Anne (WHY oh WHY did you KEEP GOING BACK Jim????) with Goad spending equal amounts of time dissecting both his and their faults. It is a heartwrenching account of infidelity, obsession, hatred and full-blown psychosis. If nothing else I will NEVER EVER complain again when getting grief from my girlfriend.. NOTHING I ever go thru could be one hundredth as bad as the estrogen-fuelled dragons Goad had to put up with. As always he is brutally honest, and admits his part in spousal abuse and his flaws as a human being. You seldom get such honesty in mainstream authors anywhere else. There are no smoke and mirrors here. The book also covers Goad's childhood and latter-day incarceration. Highly recommended.

Jim Goad.... I am not even sure what else to say...if you are willing to read this you are also probably going to love it...or hate it...whichever.

Best writing since Hunter S. Thompson

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