

MY MOTHER WEARS COMBAT BOOTS: A PARENTING GUIDE FOR THE REST OF US

—BOOK REVIEW—

Jessica Mills' book, *My Mother Wears Combat Boots: A Parenting Guide for the Rest of Us*, was hot off the AK Presses this past November. This 329-page book is an excellent introduction to radical parenting. Following closely on the heels of fellow zinester China Martens' radical parenting book, *The Future Generation*, published earlier in 2007, Jessica's book provides an alternative to authoritarian-style parenting commonly accepted by mainstream and traditional culture.

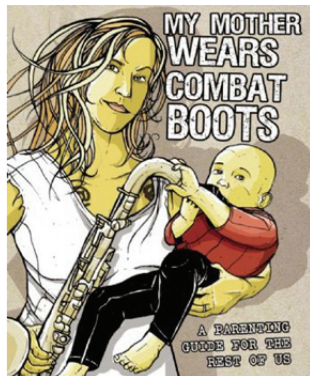
My Mother Wears Combat Boots started out as a regular column in 2000, written by Jessica and published in the popular zine, *Maximum Rock N Roll*. This book, combining the best of the regular column with new and updated information, offers a nice balance between personal experience and anecdotes, with thorough research, scientific data, and relevant resources. Also included are the voices of other radical parents.

The book's chapters are broken up between: pregnancy and birth, 0-3 months, 4-11 months, then yearly after that. Subjects include, co-sleeping, breastfeeding, gender coding, food, school, and the relentless advertising aimed at children and how to teach them to be critical observers of such attempted indoctrination to consumerism.

Not only does this book offer a wealth of information for alternative parenting and explores a range of issues, it does so in an entertaining fashion. Jessica's book is a refreshing perspective on parenting for those of us raising the next generation of free individuals.

You can obtain your copy of *My Mother Wears Combat Boots* at:

<http://www.akpress.org/2007/items/mymotherwearscombatboots>



State of Disunion

NUMBER OF US
SOLDIERS
killed in Iraq in 2007:
901

2007 RANK AS
DEADLIEST YEARS
in Iraq:
1

NUMBER OF US
SOLDIERS
killed in Afghanistan:
117

2007 RANK AS
DEADLIEST YEAR
in Afghanistan:
1

NUMBER OF
AMERICANS
that will experience
homelessness
in a given year:
3,500,000

NUMBER OF DAYS
until Bush is out of
office:
365

NUMBER OF
DISPLACED IRAQIS:
1,200,000

NUMBER OF PEOPLE
THAT DIED ON THE
STREETS
in the Grand
Valley last year:
11

PERCENT BY WHICH
the infant mortality rate
of the Lakota is higher
than the US average:
300

PERCENT OF THE
LAKOTA NATION
that live below
the poverty line:
97

PERCENT BY WHICH
the teen suicide rate of
the Lakota is higher than
the US average:
150

* Sources for the State of Disunion can be found at
www.gjredpill.org

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WOMEN IN THE STRUGGLE: REPORT-BACK FROM THE FIRST ENCUESTRO OF INDIGENOUS ZAPATISTA WOMEN WITH WOMEN FROM AROUND THE WORLD

~VICTORIA LAW~



Photo by: Victoria Law

When I [first] heard the words of the EZLN, I could only understand some words," recounted Mireya, a young indigenous woman who joined the zapatista struggle.

Now, Mireya not only understands and speaks Spanish but has also gained the confidence to stand and speak about her experiences before an international audience.

On January 1, 1994, an army of indigenous people surprised the Mexican government and the world with several armed uprisings in the southernmost state of Chiapas. The EZLN (Ejercito Zapatista Liberacion Nacional or Zapatistas) revived

Emiliano Zapata's demands for land and liberty, adding the rights to employment, housing, food, health, education, self-determination, democracy, justice and peace.

That day, from the balcony of San Cristobal's city hall, the zapatistas also put forth "The Revolutionary Law of Women," stating that women should have control over their own lives and bodies. In an area where many indigenous women continued to be sold into marriage by their families, prevented from learning Spanish, turned into baby-making machines and accorded little respect in the community, the proclamation

"STRUGGLE" ON SECOND PAGE

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“STRUGGLE” FROM FIRST PAGE

was indeed revolutionary. The EZLN carried this idea into indigenous communities, often astonishing the women they met.

Although activists, anthropologists and other outsiders have written about many of these conditions and changes, this was the first time that many of these women were publicly voicing their stories.

Older zapatista women spoke about life for indigenous women before 1994. Comandanta Rosalinda described life under the finca system, in which indigenous families worked for a large landowner or patron: “Women were exploited and raped by the patron.” Like the slave system in the United States, an indigenous girl’s first “lover” was often the patron. “Her father could do nothing because it was the patron,” the comandanta recalled. “In addition, women had to get up at three in the morning and work until six or seven in the evening for the patron.”



Photo by: Victoria Law

Indigenous women also had to contend with a lack of consideration from their own men: “Only the men had rights. We did not have the freedom to leave the house, to participate in community decision-making, to take on community responsibility. We were stuck in the house. We were only allowed to work in the kitchen, care for our children and our family’s animals, wash clothes... We worked without resting until ten at night. But the men had the opportunity to do other things because their work was outside.”

Women realized that they could slowly die from poverty or take a risk and join the zapatistas: “We went to fight,” recalled a woman named Elina, now a captain in the zapatista army. “We were not afraid because we knew that we

could die of curable disease or hunger.”

“We women, along with our men, decided to declare war on the bad government and against the army because we had enough of injustice, of seeing our children die,” recalled Laura, a mother living in Oventik. “If we didn’t declare war, we’d continue seeing our children die of hunger and it is for this reason that we rose up on January 1, 1994, and, together with our compañeros, said, ‘Ya basta!’ [‘Enough already!’] And, on that day, some of us women participated in the taking of San Cristobal de las Casas, Rancho Nuevo and other important places.”

Other women stayed behind to protect their homes. “The majority of us women, the support bases of the EZLN, stayed with

our children because they are [still] dependent on us. We stayed to ensure the safety of our communities,” continued Laura.

Although men have often refused to understand the importance of women in the struggle, the zapatista women reiterated that

they are not seeking to split from the men in their communities: “We participate together with our compañeros,” she stated. “We are not separating from the men. We understand that we must struggle together—women and men.”

The slow recognition of women’s equality has not stopped women from becoming active in the reorganization of their communities: “Now, women are promoters of communication, health promoters, education promoters...” a companera added.

Women have also taken steps towards ending economic dependence on men: “In 1997, we formed a cooperative of women artisans,” began a woman from Oventik. There are three women’s cooperatives now.” The cooperatives give the women more

“STRUGGLE” ON PAGE SEVEN

“STRUGGLE” FROM PAGE TWO

control over the prices they are paid for their goods. “Now we no longer have to offer our products in the streets of San Cristobal,” stated one member. “Also, the stores pay us the price we want, not the price that they want.”

Many of the women read their presentations. While this may seem unimpressive at first glance, the fact that, little more than a decade after the zapatista uprising, women are now able to read in Spanish, compose speeches and narratives in Spanish AND present them before an audience demonstrates the gains indigenous women have made in the zapatista communities. Two young girls spoke about their experiences attending the autonomous schools that the zapatistas have formed for all children. “My family supports my right to study,” stated the young Maria-Linda. Before 1994, only boys were sent to the government-run schools. Girls were kept at home and expected to work hard as their mothers, leaving no time for education or even play.

“Thanks to the struggle and to my elders, I can study, play, dance at parties,” Maria-Linda said.

The last day was devoted to hearing about the struggles and work of the women who had traveled, often from far, to the encuentro.

Wielding a machete with the word ATENCO written across the blade, Trinidad Ramirez spoke about the government attack on the people of Atenco during the Other Campaign. The attack culminated in many arrests and sixty-seven year prison sentences for three organizers,

“TOXIC MOLD” FROM PAGE FOUR

piece has now galvanized major political leaders on the issue, including Senator Edward Kennedy, who has requested an audit of the issue by the US General Accountability Office. Here in Colorado, we have successfully engaged the office of Senator Ken Salazar as well, who has offered to support a Senate investigation of the issue along with Senator Kennedy, and has asked members of FDRC to testify at the same.

Mold toxins are nothing new. Agriculture has been addressing the problem of mold contamination in feed grains for decades. The USDA regulates maximum allowable levels in milk, acknowledging that certain of these toxins are some of the most potent carcinogens known. The governors’ mansions

including her partner Ignacio del Valle.

“We are struggling for the prisoners of Chiapas, for the prisoners of Atenco, of Oaxaca, for all!” she shouted to thunderous applause.

Women from other parts of Mexico, such as Oaxaca, Guanajuato, Queretaro, Baja and Mexico City also took the stage and described their struggles. Women from Via Campesina, an alliance that represents poor farmers around the world, spoke about their organizing work. Zapatista women read statements from groups that could not attend, such as a group of lesbians in Europe who had called for an Encuentro of Lesbian Women during the same four day period.

The encuentro ended with a fiesta celebrating both the New Year and, more importantly, the fourteenth anniversary of the Zapatista uprising. Boleros, rancheras, cumbias and even Chicana hip-hop blasted throughout the night. That night, as on the previous nights, masked milicianos (zapatista militia) patrolled the community and the surrounding area, a reminder that this was more than a radical party. One topic that had not been addressed during the three days of plenaries, speeches and cultural activities was the looming threat of paramilitary activity, military escalation and increased violence as the bad government assigns zapatista-occupied territory to pro-government, paramilitary-linked families.

• *Victoria Law is a writer, photographer and mother. She is currently writing a book on resistance among women in U.S. prisons.*

in both Texas in 1999 and in South Carolina in 2005 have been evacuated and cleaned of mold infestations, at a cost of hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars. To have private, profit-based opposition to concern surroundings such as a serious public health threat is craven and irresponsible, to say the least.

Visiting the FDRC website and its linked partner organizations will give a more thorough grasp of the issue and its implications. I urge readers to contact their congressman and tell them of your concerns over this issue. Demand to know what actions are being taken by our elected officials to protect their constituencies.

The next immune system saved could be yours, or that of someone you love.

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EVERY MONDAY • 5:30pm

A Voice of Reason, the local peace group meets to strategize local actions to end the war in Iraq.

For more info call 245-3720

Monday, January 21, 2008 • 10AM

Celebrate our Diversity

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration

Gather in front of Houston Hall MSC, march to City Hall for Ceremony.

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RE-DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE BY THE LAKOTA NATION

—A RED PILL INTERVIEW WITH
DUANE MARTIN SR. (CANUPA GLUHA MANI)—

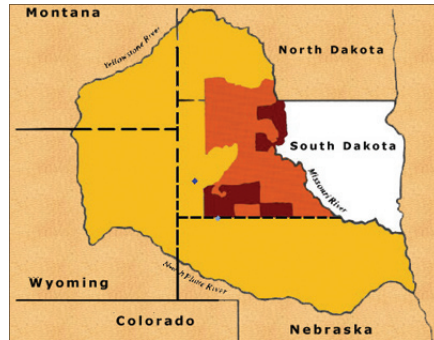
Many people are familiar with the indigenous struggles of the Six Nations in Canada and the Zapatistas of Chiapas, but now that indigenous people's struggle for the freedom of self-determination has fired a shot into the capital of imperialism, Washington D.C. On December 19th, a delegation from the Lakota Nation went to the State Department and formally withdrew from all the treaties that had been signed with the U.S. Government over the last 150 years, essentially seceding from the Union. The Red Pill was honored to speak with Duane Martin Sr. (or known by his true name Canupa Gluha Mani), one of the history-making delegates of the Lakota Nation.

"I don't know if I will be alive tomorrow, they might kill me," Duane Martin Sr. said. "but we have to do this thing for the children and for the survival of the Lakota. They (the U.S. Government) have to start realizing that we are a people too. Right now they don't seem to understand that."

A veteran freedom fighter and activist, Duane Martin Sr. was one of several protesters who has witnessed firsthand the brutality that the Federal government can unleash upon minorities who stand up for their legal rights. From the occupation of Wounded Knee in 1973, to the Transform Columbus day protest in Denver (2007), he has repeatedly gone to jail in the battle to improve the standard of living for his people.

In his everyday life, the ravages of colonial rule by the U.S. Government have only led to an ever-declining standard of living for the Lakota Nation. To put it simply, Lakota men have a life expectancy of less than 44 years, the median income for Lakota households is around 2,600 to 3,500 dollars a year, and 1/3 of all homes lack clean water and sewage. In addition, 40 percent of households do not have electricity.

Martin Sr. regaled the Red Pill with horror stories of Lakota girls between the ages of 13-23 selling their sex appeal for alcohol and drugs; tales that would leave America weeping in shame if the corporate news



networks didn't try their hardest to ignore the plight of America's indigenous peoples. The re-declaration of independence for the Lakota Nation is "an opportunity for us to be left alone and free to do as according to our laws, and be free to make our own choices instead of having corrupt Washington-appointed tribal governments dictate what we can and can't do," said Martin Sr.

Legally the secession from the U.S. is going to be difficult for the State Department to worm its way around. According to Article 6 of the U.S. Constitution, the 1969 Vienna Convention on Treaties, the U.N. Declaration on Indigenous Rights and all of the treaties that were signed by the Lakota with the United States government going back to the Fort Laramie treaty of 1851, what the Lakota have done is far more legal and ethical than any of the policies that have come out of Washington concerning the Lakota and all the indigenous peoples of the Americas.

Several phone calls made by the Red Pill to the State Department were not returned and we can only assume that they have no idea in hell what they are going to do. We can only hope that the State Department won't decide upon the use of violence to enforce their horrendous policies and the will of a cold, uncaring colonial government. As Duane Martin Sr. said during our brief interview, "It's time to reinstitute what freedom is, not the freedom to buy whatever you want, but the freedom to live however you want."

DEATH ON THE STREETS: HOMELESSNESS IN THE GRAND VALLEY



On December 16th, the Grand Valley Coalition for the Homeless held its annual ceremony for those who died on the streets during the last year. It was bitter-cold despite the bright sunshine, and three inches of snow blanketed the ground. Dozens of men and women gathered early to line up for 'soup.' The Red Pill was able to sit down with Wild Man a Grand Junction native who has been on the streets for the last year and half.

"I knew Lori Adams. She passed out drunk and died of exposure," Wild Man said. "That's how a lot of people pass away." Wild Man came close to being one of the names commemorated at the service. He had a bad case of bronchitis down at his river camp. "I'd've died down there, if it weren't for my friends who got me off the river," Wild Man said.

I asked Wild Man what he thought the nation should do to help the homeless. "We need to kill out the money (sic) to the military, our whole country is based on the military, and use that money for the people on the street."

After a lunch, which consisted of a thin potato soup, stale bread, and weak coffee, people began hanging cards, bearing the names of those who have died on the streets of Grand Junction, on a small tree that was planted in 2003 in memorial.

This year, eleven cards were hung from the tree. Teresa Black, Executive Director of Homeward Bound of the Grand Valley, said that this represented the best count, and that some of the names represented those who had passed away in previous years. "We aren't doing all that we can be doing," Black said, "I hope next year we have no new names to put on the tree."



In Loving Memory Of:
Lori Adams
Steve Hickson
Michael Steel
Ms. Brooks
Hiedi Bray
Magan Chapman
Dennis Miller
Steve White
Christine Fryer
Dave Pendergrass
Richard Bonnell

Wednesday, February 6th, 2008 • 5PM
Drinking Liberally Get together

Kannah Creek Brewing
12th and Walnut, Grand Junction, CO

Saturday, January 26th • 11AM-1:30PM
Buddhist Monks from the Akalokiteshvara Buddhist
Center in Denver will be leading meditation sessions at:

Bacon Meeting Room at Mesa State College,
Grand Junction.

NEXT SUMMER•DEMOCRATIC and REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

You'd better mark it on you calendars now, and request the time off of work, because at the end of next summer, large protests are going to rock Denver and Minneapolis. The DNC is going to be in Denver from Aug. 25-28th and the RNC is going to be in the Twin Cities from September 1st-4th. Check out www.recreate68.org and www.ncwelcomingcommittee.org for more info and updates. See you in the streets.

AN IRAQ WAR NEW YEARS RESOLUTION

The mainstream media filter is up and running again at full speed. The Bhutto assassination in Pakistan and the Kenyan riots have recently offered beefy news stories, but let's look at this past year at war and see what we think. How is the war going?

For starters, we have already been at war in Iraq (and Afghanistan) longer than we were at war with Germany and Japan in World War II. Does that prick your ears up a bit?

Surge, surge, surge. Remember that magical mantra, and how it was going to fix everything? Well, it hasn't, but you wouldn't know that by watching the news. 2007 was a record year; more G.I.s were killed outright than in any other year so far--901. Imagine all of the horrific injuries thrown into that meat grinder as well. Not incidentally, 3,896 Iraqi troops have been killed.

The U.S. Army has forcibly moved into neighborhoods and separated neighbors at will, giving and taking away homes at will. 2.3 million Iraqis have become refugees and they will have to come back sometime, so what little peace that has been achieved is temporary.

In another little numbers game, U.S. "snatch squads" have arrested and imprisoned over 150,000 Iraqi men. Like at Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib, they are rotting without charges and they have no chance at seeing a lawyer. Small wonder that 98% of Sunni and 89% of Shia want the U.S. out of Iraq. The total number of dead Iraqis from the war is 1,392,602.

2007 may be remembered as the year that the allies lost Afghanistan. U.S. military deaths (110), suicide bombings (140), and heroin production all hit record levels this year. Virtually nothing outside of the capitol, Kabul, is anywhere near stable. Rural tribes are remaking friendships with the Taliban, largely looking for protection. Unfortunately, there is no protection from the increasing number of "accidental" bombings from the U.S. Air Force. Last year's civilian death toll exceeded 6,500.

Things are not going well in Iraq or Afghanistan, and no political peace process is in sight. In this New Year, let us resolve to not turn our heads anymore. Now is the time for protests and letters to the editor campaigns. •

TOXIC MOLD: A PUBLIC HEALTH BATTLEGROUND

In June of 2000, I made the largest single mistake of my life: I rented a garden level apartment in Salida, Colorado that contained a large infestation of toxic mold, and it has changed every aspect of my life since. It started with crippling arthritis in my hands and feet in the mornings. Then came the migraine headaches, the blurred vision, constant diarrhea, liver pain, irregular heartbeat, loss of motor control, and overwhelming, crushing fatigue.

The symptoms above resulted from changes in my immune system caused by massive overexposure to toxins associated with mold, and to contamination in my belongings for years thereafter, despite moving several times. I've since had conclusive blood testing done indicating I am now wildly reactive to the toxins in certain molds commonly found in indoor environments.

I've been able to control my symptoms

by taking the extreme measure of abandoning my home and possessions, and living outdoors almost full-time from January of 2004 to April of 2006. I now reside in an Airstream trailer that had been stored in the AZ desert for years, which I spent 10 months gutting down to the metal and rebuilding with mold free materials. However, I am still so intolerant of inhalant exposure to even tiny amounts of the toxins associated with certain fungi that I can't be in most buildings for more than a few days, or even minutes, depending on contamination. Since my overexposure to mold, I have faced the reality of losing my house, land, all belongings, career, relationships and even state of residence, as I have had to move seasonally to where I could at least sleep outside in the winter.

In my new awareness of this issue, I have found that, at a minimum, it is probable that hundreds of thousands of others in

"TOXIC MOLD" ON NEXT PAGE

"TOXIC MOLD" FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

the United States are experiencing similar effects. Many of these are children and the elderly -- not only are these people unable to use the measures I found necessary to survive, their doctors seem unable or unwilling to diagnose the problem.

In September 2004, along with others from across the country who have suffered this tragedy, I testified about my experience before the US House of Representatives in Washington, DC. At a televised press conference there, chaired by human rights activist and fellow mold victim Bianca Jagger, Dr. Simone Sommer, MD made the statement that "Mold is the greatest public health threat of the 21st century." Congressman John Conyers' (now Chairman of the US House Judiciary Committee) office had introduced a Bill (HR 1269), which would change legislation to classify mold as a hazardous substance, along with radon and asbestos, and make immediate emergency relief available to those affected.

After introduction of Mr. Conyers' bill, intense opposition was immediately rallied to defend corporate liabilities. A landmark \$32 million judgement of mold damages in Texas caused the insurance industry to move as one to exclude all mold related damages, an unprecedented development. Most tellingly, counter to the historical victims advocacy of the Indoor Air Quality testing industry, Professional "Experts" armed with Industrial Hygiene certifications and toxicology degrees, now defend corporate interests in courts of law. Some of these professional legal commentators have histories of defending the Tobacco Lobby. A recently published document from the activist group Policyholdersofamerica.com notes that in 2003, 19,700 mold claims were filed nationally, of whom 8,200 claimants were indicated as to having gone on to file personal bankruptcy. With 4.5 persons per affected household, this suggests that as many as 35,000 people in this country may have been made homeless and disabled because of mold poisoning in the year 2003 alone. With reported histories of this problem dating to the 1970s, the potential number of undiagnosed illnesses are certainly far higher, perhaps putting this issue in the same class of public impact as AIDS in the US -- but with exponentially higher financial liabilities for stakeholder

industry. Curiously, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) is not tracking reported incidence, despite widespread coverage in the media and relentless petitioning by public health advocate groups to do so.

It doesn't take much imagination to envision the chilling boardroom decision--making and subsequent political lobbying going on here.

After my testimony in DC, I was asked by senior staff from Congressman Conyers' office to found a nonprofit organization that would be able to assist with public education and awareness of the issue to help move support for legislation forward. While having zero public service experience or even larger awareness of political issues, I felt that it was my duty to respond here, as my background, with not only being affected by the issue, but having some history with public relations work would be of benefit. I since successfully structured, and was granted emergency, expedited 501(c)(3) status from the IRS for a nonprofit foundation, the Fungal Disease Resource Center, Inc. (FDRC). <http://www.fdrinc.org>

While my involvement in this issue has been an extraordinary and life changing event, my story of illness and overall life impacts is told over and over by those affected by toxic mold exposure. In a paper we distributed to every member of the House in September 2004, stories of victims prefaced the signatures of hundreds of petitioners. We also introduced the release of a new compilation of peer-reviewed American medical research on the subject. This reference will provide doctors the information they need to diagnose, treat, and contribute to ongoing research.

Advocates for this issue have been recently making some excellent headway in clearing the political decks to move this issue forward on the legislative front. In January of 2007, a front page article on the severe conflicts of interest inherent in the research uniformly presented by the defense in mold litigation was published by the Wall Street Journal. Members of FDRC, along with numerous others, contributed to the basic underlying journalistic research that was ultimately vetted and expanded on in a year-long investigative report by WSJ reporter, David Armstrong. The WSJ

"TOXIC MOLD" ON PAGE SEVEN

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Saturday & Sunday March 1-2, 2008
7th Annual Local to To Global Justice Teach-In
For more info contact:
localtogloballjustice@yahoo.com
ASU Tempe Campus, Tempe, AZ

Deadlines for Upcoming Special Issues
Spy Issue: Feb. 11, Iraq War Issue #3: March 11, Drug
War Issue: April 11, Wealth and Poverty Issue: May 4

Submissions Welcomed!