



Mommie Brain
Rachel Zients Schinderman

Send comments to editor@smdp.com

Saying it loud and proud

I READ AN ARTICLE ONCE THAT DISMISSED some woman at a party for defining herself as a "mom." The writer of this article was pregnant and determined to be more than "just a mom." She judged this woman for her momness and wrote a whole article professing how she would be different. Work would define her, not diapers or preschool worries.

I didn't bother to finish reading the article because it bothered me so much. Her belittling of this woman struck me. I may do other things in my life, but at my core, I am a mom.

I always wanted to be a mother, though I was never overly interested in baby-sitting or babies. But I had a feeling in my gut that someday I would be a mother, someday I would hear a voice say, "Mommie," and know it was meant for me.

So the good people of The Santa Monica Daily Press have allowed me to share my thoughts on motherhood with you. While I have been writing for years, I have never written a column before, so I hope as I come to you in these pages you allow me to find my way.

A little about some of the players.

There's me, obviously. Originally from New York, I have lived in Los Angeles for almost 12 years now, more than half of that time in Santa Monica.

I am 37, have brown hair, and can often be seen wandering down Wilshire Boulevard pushing my son in his stroller (or chasing after him).

I have spent too much money at The Pump Station and The Right Start due to living a block from each. And I haven't felt quite as cute and thin as I would prefer since my pregnancy.

My son Benjamin is 2 years old. He likes to swing at the playground. He loves Dora. And he has never been the best sleeper. I think he is quite the looker.

There is no way to mention my experience of motherhood without mentioning that when my son was born there were complications.

I know this will not define him or me forever, but at the moment, and for the last two years, I spend most of my time with him managing his care.

I am happy to report he is doing great, and if you saw him at the playground you would not think a thing, but just as everyone's experience defines them, this is mine and it will find its way into this column. As will what parks I like and other regular mom stuff.

Then there is my husband, Jay, a truly lovely man, also from New York, who knew I was a writer when we met so he was very aware that he would be written about. He seems okay with it. He's good like that.

As I write this, he is giving Benjamin a bath and singing Hava Nagila to him mak-

ing him and me laugh.

Then there is Santa Monica. My husband and I struggle often about moving back to New York to be with our families.

THERE IS NO WAY TO MENTION MY EXPERIENCE OF MOTHERHOOD WITHOUT MENTIONING THAT WHEN MY SON WAS BORN THERE WERE COMPLICATIONS.

But then we'll go the Farmers' Market on Main Street on Sundays, or stroll over to Whole Foods or feed the ducks at Douglas Park, and Santa Monica will take hold and keep us in place, embracing us as we make our home here, no longer there. This city has reassured us that if you have to be away from your family, this is a really good place to do it.

I thought about what to call this column: Santa Monica?

All I do is Laundry?

But I chose Mommie Brain because often it seems my brain is in a fog of momminess, but then on the plus side, my thoughts have expanded because of the experience of motherhood.

I also run writers groups under the same name for moms and moms-to-be to document their experience, so it was a name I was already familiar with.

Motherhood is challenging. I don't always get it right. I try not to judge how others parent, though I admit I have. At times, from pregnancy to nursing, it has felt like an assault on my body.

And because of how hard this all can be I am always a little in awe of it. I applaud moms whether they stay home or go to work.

Work is not a dirty word. I did not set out to be a stay at home mom, in fact it still takes me by surprise. But now that I am home, or rather now that I am a mom, I recognize how all encompassing it can be.

So, if asked at a party what I do, I would probably say, "I write, but at the moment I am home raising my son." Or more direct, I would say simply and with pride, "I am a mom," for I do it all day and all night long and I work hard at it.

RACHEL ZIENTS SCHINDERMAN lives in Santa Monica with her family. She can be reached at Rachel@mommiebrain.com.

COMPLETE AUTO ELECTRICAL SERVICE

Starting & Charging Systems • Electrical Shorts
Alternators • Heating/Air Conditioning • Re-wiring
Computer Analysis • All Makes & Models

EXPRESS AUTO SERVICE

310-399-6076 2700 Lincoln Blvd. #3 (corner of Hill & Lincoln — enter from Hill) www.expressautom.com



M.D. Integrative Wellness



Robert Krochmal, M.D.
Board Certified Nutrition
and Family Practice

Are you ready for a Weight Loss Program that addresses BOTH your Weight and Well Being?

- Proven Safety and Success (10-20 lbs per month)
- Weight Loss Medicines, Herbs, Supplements
- Personalized Plan/Body Composition Analysis
- Comprehensive Medical Support
- Excellent Record for Sustaining Weight Loss

Come in by August 31 and receive \$75 worth of weight loss products with initial visit

310-625-9548

1460 7th Street, Suite 201, Santa Monica
Above Santa Monica Homeopathic Pharmacy
www.mdintegrative.com, drrob@mdintegrative.com

INTERESTED IN ADVERTISING IN THE ONLY LOCAL DAILY PAPER IN SANTA MONICA?

Santa Monica Daily Press

Call us at (310) 458-7737

WALK TO PREVENT SUICIDE

2008 OUT OF THE DARKNESS COMMUNITY WALKS



REGISTER ONLINE AT OUTOFTHE DARKNESS.ORG

Out of the DARKNESS
COMMUNITY WALKS

LOS ANGELES WALK
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2008
SANTA MONICA CITY HALL

818 593-8110
www.afsp.org/losangeles
www.outofthedarkness.org

TELL SANTA MONICA WHAT YOU THINK
WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR
EMAIL TO EDITOR@SMDP.COM OR FAX TO (310) 576-9913
Santa Monica Daily Press Visit us online at smdp.com