

from Leslie Feinberg August 2011 transgenderwarrior.org
my research notes on the medical politics driving the "Lyme Wars"

Part 1:
'Casualty of an undeclared war'

I have Lyme disease and co-infections. I, and uncounted others, are casualties of an undeclared war.

The medical battle in the U.S. over the seriousness of the Lyme epidemic, over the actual nature of the disease, and over its treatment, is popularly referred to in the media as the "Lyme wars."

Why is the testing, diagnosis and treatment of Lyme a battlefield, especially at a time when Lyme and other tick borne co-infections (Lyme/+) have reached epidemic proportion across the United States and around the world, and is still growing?

The military theorist Carl von Clausewitz stated succinctly, "War is the continuation of politics by other means."

Politics represents the battle of contending interests of economic forces.

Both statements hold true in the "Lyme wars."

The following are my own research notes, with sources, about the Lyme wars, and how and why this battle is holding back scientific research and development.

I'm not a doctor; I'm a Marxist scientist: a dialectical and historical materialist. I can't give medical advice or prove how Lyme spirochetes can best be tested for, or treated or cured.

Testing, diagnosis and treatment of the Lyme spirochete are scientific questions. There are no journalistic answers to medical questions about the nature of Lyme disease.

The only reliable answers to medical questions require scientific development of more sensitive tests, widespread testing and reporting, conducting more medical research, and compiling the clinical experiences of doctors who treat people with Lyme and serious tick/flea-borne co-infections (Lyme/+).

Under capitalism, however, competition for profits and competitive secrecy determine who get the patents, the funding, and the profits—thereby skewing science as a whole, and medical scientific understanding of the Lyme/+ epidemic in particular.

Therefore, I offer these notes as ammunition for those who find their bodies, and the lives of those around them, under fire in the Lyme wars.

As Frederick Douglass concluded: "Without struggle, there is no progress."

Next: Combatants in the Lyme wars