



2-1-2015

Dreaming in Chiapas

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Recommended Citation

Smith-Cavros, Eileen (2015) "Dreaming in Chiapas," *Quadrivium: A Journal of Multidisciplinary Scholarship*: Vol. 6 : Iss. 1 , Article 6.

Available at: <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/quadrivium/vol6/iss1/6>

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Dreaming in Chiapas

By Eileen Smith-Cavros

When I visited Chiapas, Mexico, in the 1990s, the Zapatista movement emphasizing equality and rejecting the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was in full bloom. The social movement had the fervent support of indigenous people hoping for a better life, land rights, and the more equal use of natural resources and distribution of benefits.

This painting, done many years later, was inspired by the many little girls I met in Chiapas who spent their summer days selling small homemade wool dolls depicting Zapatistas on horseback. I couldn't help but wonder what the girls dreamed of under the full moon in the countryside near San Cristobal de Las Casas—and I wondered if they dreamed of the dolls they made and sold—and the horseback riders who aspired to change the course of their world.

