

## Cover Letter

This is the press kit for the book *Weapons of Opportunity* by Lori O'Connell. It is also viewable online at [www.WeaponsofOpportunity.com](http://www.WeaponsofOpportunity.com)

This is the first published work by Lori O'Connell. It is a narrative non-fiction telling of her training and teaching experiences in the martial arts.

It will be available for purchase on Amazon.

The Kit contains:

Book Cover Images  
Book Fact Sheet  
Author Bio  
Previously Published Excerpt  
Book Launch Party Info  
Press Releases

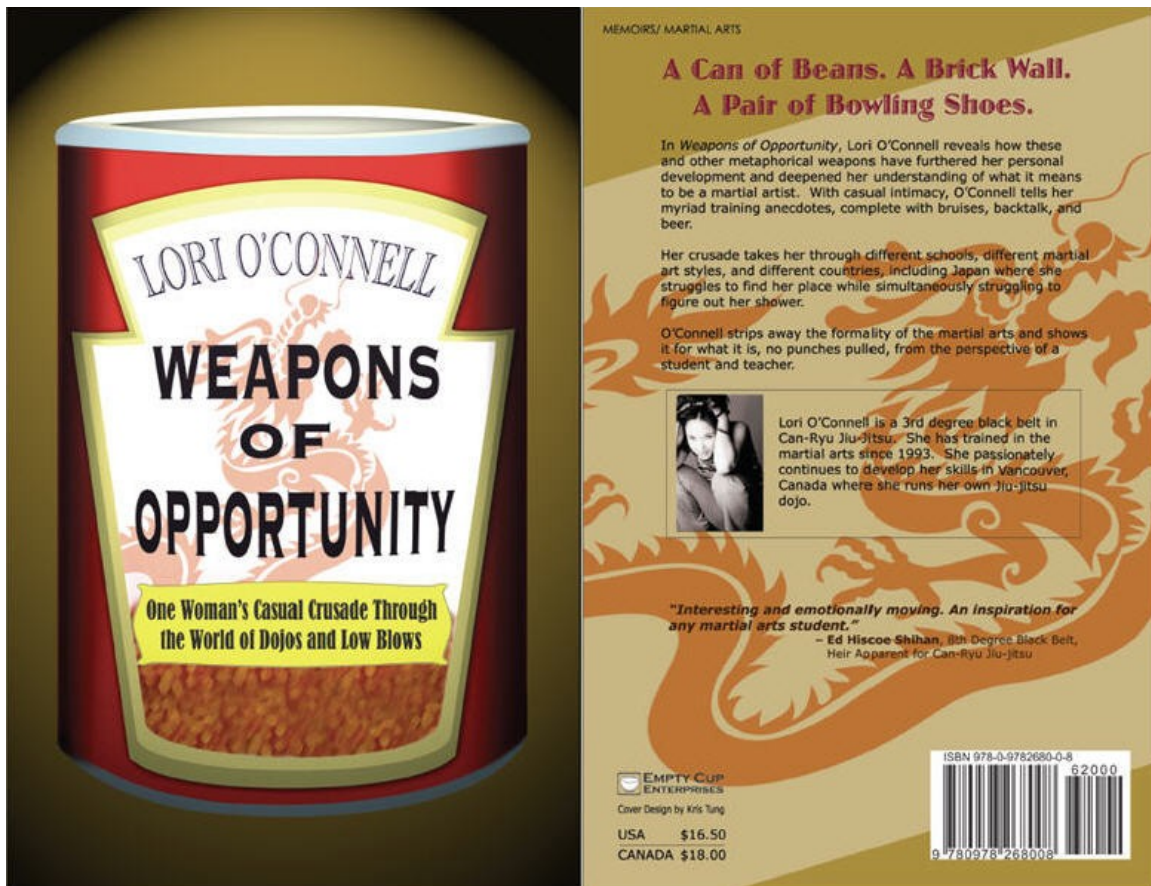
**Vancouver Media Contact:**

Lori O'Connell (author)  
Email: [lorioconnell@gmail.com](mailto:lorioconnell@gmail.com)  
Phone: 604.724.5278

**Toronto Media Contact:**

Stefanie Sigurson (Publicist)  
Email: [stefanie@convertinc.com](mailto:stefanie@convertinc.com)  
Phone: 416.361.0065

## Cover Images



# Book Fact Sheet

## Book Description

A can of beans. A brick wall. A pair of bowling shoes.

In her book, *Weapons of Opportunity*, Lori O'Connell reveals how these and other metaphorical weapons have furthered her personal development and deepened her understanding of what it means to be a martial artist.

O'Connell is a third-degree black belt in Jiu-jitsu who stands among a long line of men who have devoted their lives to the development of the art. Over the years, she has faced many battles with the long-standing training traditions and conventions of the male-dominated world of martial arts.

With casual intimacy, her book tells her myriad training anecdotes, complete with bruises, backtalk, and beer. It details her experiences in different schools, different martial art styles, and different countries, including Japan where she struggles to find her place while simultaneously struggling to figure out her shower. O'Connell strips away the formality of the martial arts and shows it for what it is, no punches pulled, from the perspective of a student and teacher.

This is the first published book by Lori O'Connell.

## Book Details

**Title:** Weapons of Opportunity

**Subtitle:** One Woman's Casual Crusade through the World of Dojos and Low Blows

**Author:** Lori O'Connell

**Non-Fiction ISBN:** 978-0-9782680-0-8

**Publication Details:** First edition, September 2007, Canada

**Copyright:** ©2007 Empty Cup Enterprises

**Price:** \$16.50 USA, \$18.00 Canada **Pages:** 158

**Publisher:** Empty Cup Enterprises

**Website:** [www.WeaponsofOpportunity.com](http://www.WeaponsofOpportunity.com)

## Author Bio

Lori O'Connell published a dozen or so articles in the Ottawa Citizen during high school. After graduating, she went on to complete a BA in Communication at the University of Ottawa, then moved to Japan and taught English for three years on the JET program.

In the summer of 2003, Lori settled in Vancouver, BC, working as a freelance copywriter and editor with local clients in a wide variety of industries.

In early 2005, she delved back into her own personal writing. The first piece she wrote, a flash fiction piece called Road Kill, won first prize in the E-Clips quarterly writing contest. She has since had a number of martial arts related articles published in various newsletters and websites. In Sept. 2007, Lori published her first book, *Weapons of Opportunity*, a narrative non-fiction chronicling her training and teaching experiences in the martial arts.

Currently a 3rd degree black belt in Jiu-jitsu, Lori O'Connell has studied martial arts with a fervor that nears obsession for fourteen years. She teaches at her own club, West Coast Jiu-jitsu, in Richmond, BC, Canada, which she founded in January 2006.

Lori currently works full-time as a marketing developer/ copywriter for a Vancouver website technology company in addition to maintaining her freelance writing work.

Lori O'Connell is available for interview on the following topics:

- *Weapons of Opportunity*
- Martial arts
- Self-defense

# Weapons of Opportunity Excerpt

As Published in the Jiu-Jitsu BC Society Newsletter

## **A Peek at What's to Come**

Book Excerpt from Weapons of Opportunity, By Lori O'Connell

This is an excerpt from a narrative non-fiction book I am writing (slightly modified for format), which is nearing completion. It chronicles my experiences teaching and training in martial arts over the past thirteen years.

The term "weapon of opportunity" was coined by Professor Georges Sylvain, the founder of Can-Ryu Jiu-jitsu. It refers to an object that lay conveniently at hand at the moment of an attack that is used as an improvised weapon in defense.

To quote Professor Sylvain's oft used example, if you are attacked while you're bringing your groceries from your car to your home, carrying a shopping bag with a can of beans in it, you could swing that bag in the air and smack your assailant in the head. You didn't buy the can of beans and with the intent of smacking people in the head with it; it just happened to be in your hand when you reacted. So a weapon of opportunity is really just some every day object that is in the right place at the right time, which you use to your advantage.

This serves as a perfect metaphor for the many aspects of my personal development in the martial arts. Over the years, specific people, objects, experiences, while at the time may have seemed small, insignificant, sometimes even a nuisance, have taught me important lessons and shaped me into the martial artist I am today.

This is the inspiration for my book and chapter titles.

## **Weapon #19: An Ambitious Yard Stick**

Sean and John were two students in the university Jiu-jitsu class that Gordon taught and I assisted with. They were both old friends of mine from high school, so the three of us had known each other for many years. They decided to take up Jiu-jitsu after I got my black belt, knowing that I would be getting more involved in teaching.

The two of them made great training partners for each other. Not only were they friends, they were well-matched in terms of ability. Sean, though he had no martial arts background whatsoever, was a complete natural. He had great physical learning skills and intuitive understanding. While he had participated in sports of all kinds from when he was a child until the end of high school, it was obvious that his abilities had more to do the kind of uncanny physical knack that you either have or you don't.

John, on the other hand, though not physically gifted, had over ten years of martial arts training under his hat. I've found over the years that the more training you do in one martial art, the easier it becomes to pick up skills from other martial arts. It's not necessarily to do with similarity between the arts themselves, but more from having become familiar with the pattern of learning. John was fortunate to have developed this early in life having started training at the age of seven.

Before and after classes, I watched the pair very enthusiastically practicing all their techniques in preparation for their yellow belt test. Their abilities had developed well beyond the usual training requirements for the next belt and yet when it came time to test, they didn't feel they were ready yet. They even requested an extension when we went out for coffee one day after class.

"You could talk to Gordon Sensei for us. I honestly don't think my strikes are smooth enough yet," Sean reasoned.

"Yes and my throws aren't flowing well yet either." John added.

To this, I shook my head and rolled my eyes with a smirk. "Either way, you two are testing for your belts at the end of the semester. Just trust me, you're ready," I said and took a sip from my coffee, while the two of them expressed needless frustration.

I wasn't going to explain to them that they were already training far above the white belt level as it was. Why would I discourage them from getting the most out of their training? They were using perfection as their yard stick to measure their readiness to test. Though it wasn't the same yard stick we as instructors were using to evaluate their development.

Having denied their request, they returned to their training with renewed vigor, determined to achieve the level they wanted by time of their tests.

It was a group test, like we did at the end of every semester. Christine came in from main Hiscoe dojo as the black belt examiner. She was a stocky woman, strong and tough as nails. No one who knew her ever questioned whether she deserved her belt. They probably would've received a head butt in answer. She made a great examiner because she had a good sense of when and how much to push people so that they achieve their best.

Even with the extra training, Sean's strikes still weren't perfectly smooth, nor were John's throws perfectly flowing, but their levels of training completely blew Christine away. She looked over at me at one point as I watched the test from the side. She raised her arms and shoulders in questioning gesture, while her facial expression was one of utter disbelief.

After the test, she came over to me to inquire about our two wonder boys. "Lori, where did you guys find these two? They're amazing! Their technique's more like what I'd expect a green belt." Christine couldn't help but laugh when I told her that they hadn't thought they were ready for the test.

What Sean and John didn't realize was that as a student, you don't have to be absolutely perfect at every technique at a belt level before you test. First of all, perfection is an ideal that theoretically is never attained in the martial arts. The goal is simply to learn each level to the best of your current ability.

Some people will have to train longer than others to achieve this depending on the individual's natural ability, background and frequency of attendance. But if a student over-trains at a level without pushing on to the next, they'll begin to stagnate, working on the same old techniques *ad nauseum*.

The student needs to learn the new techniques that are offered at the following belt level because those new techniques will give them a different perspective on their old ones by teaching them different skills and body movements. This cross-training serves to polish the foundation they have already built.

It's very important for an instructor to know who to hold back and who to push forward. It's particularly difficult to make the decision to hold a person back whom an instructor may feel needs extra training. Even if the student has a good attitude, it's hard to tell him that despite his hard training, he's not yet ready to test for the next level, especially when students who have trained for a shorter period are being promoted ahead of him. This can lead some instructors to test such a student before he is ready, not wanting to disappoint and possibly lose him as a student.

When Christine finished the test, she took them aside to speak to them as a pair. "You two did amazing tests. They were probably the best yellow belt tests I've ever seen," she informed them, to which they responded with humble thanks. "I do have a couple of very minor corrections for both of you, but they really are minor."

Afterward we went off for a beer to celebrate. I couldn't help but be curious what they thought of Christine's evaluation. Before I even asked, they answered my question.

"So we were ready were we?" John rounded on me, smilingly confrontational. "Christine Sensei made corrections for both of us at the end of the test; we told you we weren't ready yet!"

To this, I could only sigh.

## Important Dates

**Official Book Launch:** October 1, 2007

### **Vancouver Launch Party**

Date: October 10, 2007

Time: 7:00pm – 2:00am

Location: G Sports Bar and Grill, 1208 Granville St, Vancouver

Details: This will be a costumed theme party at which guests are encouraged to dress as their favourite TV or movie action heroine. For more details, see press release.

### **Ottawa Launch Party**

Date: October 14, 2007

Time: 4:00pm – 9:00pm

Location: Broadway Bar and Grill, 1896 Prince of Wales Drive, Ottawa

Details: All are welcome to drop by this casual party to celebrate the release of *Weapons of Opportunity*.

### **Toronto Launch Party**

Date: October 17, 2007

Time: 6:00pm – 2:00am

Location: The Gladstone Hotel, 1214 Queen St. West, Toronto

Details: This will be a costumed theme party at which guests are encouraged to dress as their favourite TV or movie action heroine. For more details, see press release.

## **Pay Tribute to Action Heroines at the *Weapons of Opportunity* Book Launch Party**

Date: Wed. October 10, 2007

Time: 7:00pm-2:00am

Venue: G Sports Bar and Grill, 1208 Granville St, Vancouver

(Vancouver, BC – September 12, 2007) -- On October 10, the public is invited to celebrate action heroines at the launch party for Lori O'Connell's martial arts memoir book, *Weapons of Opportunity*, at G Sports Bar and Grill.

The party will have video clips from films with some of the most lively action heroines playing in the background, including Tomb Raider, The Matrix, Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon and more. Guests are encouraged to show up dressed as their favourite heroine and those that do will receive a 50% discount on their book purchase.

"It was the image of tough action movie heroines of the early nineties that piqued my interest in martial arts back when I was sixteen," says author Lori O'Connell, who will be signing her novel dressed up as Trinity from The Matrix. "I can't think of a better way to celebrate the launch of my book."

The party will run from 7:00pm to 2:00am, during which patrons will be able to buy autographed copies of O'Connell's book.

### **Media Contact:**

Lori O'Connell (author)

Phone: 604.724.5278

[lorioconnell@gmail.com](mailto:lorioconnell@gmail.com)

Book website: [www.WeaponsofOpportunity.com](http://www.WeaponsofOpportunity.com)

\*Members of the press will be given a free copy of the book.

## **Pay Tribute to Action Heroines at the *Weapons of Opportunity* Book Launch Party**

Date: Wed. October 17, 2007

Time: 7:00pm-2:00am

Venue: The Gladstone Hotel, 1214 Queen St. West, Toronto

(Toronto, ON – September 12, 2007) -- On October 10, the public is invited to celebrate action heroines at the launch party for Lori O'Connell's martial arts memoir book, *Weapons of Opportunity*, at The Gladstone Hotel.

The party will have video clips from films with some of the most lively action heroines playing in the background, including Tomb Raider, The Matrix, Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon and more. Guests are encouraged to show up dressed as their favourite heroine and those that do will receive a 50% discount on their book purchase.

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### **Media Contact:**

Stefanie Sigurdson (Publicist)

Phone: 416.362.0065

[stefanie@convertinc.com](mailto:stefanie@convertinc.com)

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