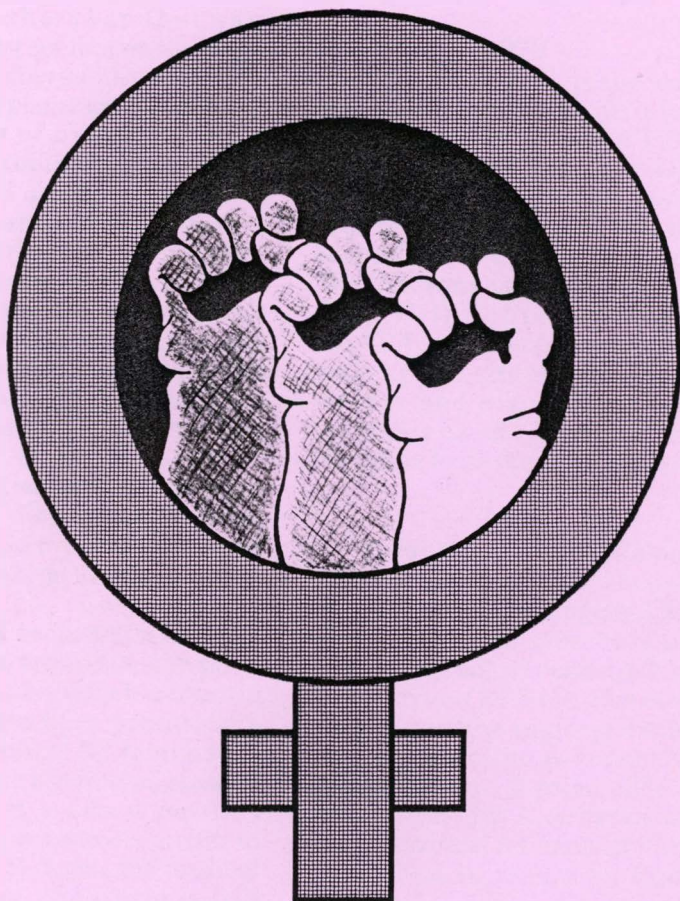


# Fat Feminist Herstory



**Compiled by Karen w Stimson**



## Fat Feminist Herstory by Karen w Stimson, Codirector

### Introduction

1969--the year that saw humankind first set foot on the moon also saw a number of historic events back home on planet earth. In the U. S., a number of events occurred which helped codify the personality, politics and philosophy of a generation and would have a profound influence on coming decades. Among these were: the Woodstock music festival; the publication of *Ms.* magazine; the Stonewall Rebellion; and the founding of NAAFA (originally the National Association to Aid Fat Americans, later changed to National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance). The convergence of all four of these events in the same year was, I think, no accident.

In fact, the conjunction between counterculture, feminism, gay pride and fat liberation which occurred during the late 60's produced a movement--radical fat feminism--whose influence has rippled steadily outward from a small pool of individuals and grass-roots groups to academic, social, legal, and medical circles. Today, the world is still catching on--and catching up--to the revolution radical fat feminists started all those years ago. I am proud to have played a part in the beginnings of this revolution, and would like to share some milestones of our movement's herstory, some of

our accomplishments, and some of our losses, too, along the way.

### 1970

The first full issue of *Ms.* magazine carries an article by a welfare mother, Johnnie Tillmon, who includes fat in a list of adjectives--poor, black, female--each of which, she says, make her a second-class citizen in America. The following issue includes a letter from Bill Fabrey, founder of NAAFA, which commends *Ms.* for making the connection between weight and discrimination and introduces the concept of fat liberation to its feminist readership.

### 1973

Summer--Vivian Mayer (as Aldebaran) and Judy Freespirit, officers of the Los Angeles Chapter of NAAFA and members of the influential Radical Feminist Therapy Collective (RFTC), develop an analysis of the oppression of fat women from the perspective of radical therapy. A paper titled "Fat Liberation" by Aldebaran which outlines radical fat feminist theory is published in *Issues in Radical Therapy.*"

July--The newsletter of the Los Angeles Chapter of NAAFA\* reports the first size discrimination lawsuit, brought by a woman, Carolyn Soughers, who is denied employment with the county civil

service agency on account of her size. The case is being handled by the ACLU. Vivian Mayer, chapter chair, issues a call to action in NAAFA to publicize the case.

November--the LA chapter splits from NAAFA over differences in politics, practices, and process. Members of the former chapter found the Fat Underground, a collective of fat activists with strong ties to the radical therapy, lesbian, and feminist communities. Judy and Aldebaran coauthor the "Fat Liberation Manifesto", a document outlining the collective's political ties to other oppressed groups, its anti-diet stance, and its demand for equality in all areas of life for fat people.

Also in November, as a result of sending out my first press release for a local NAAFA chapter I am interviewed for the Hartford Courant\* newspaper. This results in the first article in the mainstream press to discuss the connections between sexism and sizism, cultural fatphobia and eating disorders, weight-loss surgery and mutilation.

## 1974

The Fat Underground publishes position papers\* on sexism, job discrimination, health care, public access, stereotypes, psychiatry,

eating, and humor. Collective members Aldebaran, Lynn Mabel-Lois (later McAfee), Gudrun Fonfa and Réanne Fagan write monthly articles\* for *Sister*, an LA feminist newspaper. The F.U. facilitates consciousness-raising and support groups for fat women, actively engages the media, tries to educate women's health clinics, and publishes its brochure "Before You Go On a Diet, Read This"\* in English and Spanish. Lynn teaches Aldebaran how to use a medical research library, making possible the unearthing of the core of medical findings which will form the basis for a future anti-diet movement and research by the Wooleys and others.

June--NAAFA feminists in the East (there are three of us) are forming a Feminist Caucus of NAAFA. I write to Aldebaran with the news, and she writes back, "We are excited about the prospect...and wish you lots of luck. We think you'll need it." Prophetic words--due to intense opposition from several anti-feminist Board members, our proto-caucus never gets off the ground. Still, at the NAAFA convention this year (the first year workshops are offered, after a proposal I make to include them is accepted), Karen Wynne Cohen and I co-facilitate a workshop on "Fat Women and Feminism."

August--Singer Cass Elliott, formerly of the Mamas and the Papas, dies. At the Women's Equality Day celebration in LA, her death from a cardiac arrhythmia brought on by dieting sparks the first fat protest. Aldebaran writes me, "Feeling was very intense both in the F.U. and in the fat women's problem-solving group. On August 25th., in the middle of the

### **Size Esteem**

(term originated by Richard K. Stimson)

is the bimonthly bulletin of

*Largesse*

The Network for Size Esteem

Subscriptions to *Size Esteem* and our quarterly newsletter, *food for thought*, are \$20.00 per year for both (\$24.00 Canada and Mexico, \$31.00 international, U.S. funds only, please) from:

*Largesse*

The Network for Size Esteem

P. O. Box 9404

New Haven, CT 06534-0404 USA

Phone/fax (203) 787-1624

© 1994 by the Network

celebration, Lynn Mabel-Lois of the F.U. went on stage and gave a speech eulogizing Cass and indicting the medical profession for her murder...at least twenty fat women walked up on stage with Lynn, carrying candles and raising clenched fists. Some of them were strangers who joined the march on the spot."

Fall--both NAAFA and NOW (the National Organization for Women) publish their first writings on fat feminism: in October my article "Fat Women and Feminism"\*, challenging the women's movement to come to grips with fat feminist issues, appears in the *CT NOW Newsletter*; it is followed in November by a revised version which Bill Fabrey asks me to write for the *NAAFA Newsletter*, entitled "Fat and Female--One Woman's View"\*. A primer on the relationship of sexism to sizism, it is published over the printed objections of the newsletter's editor (a woman).

## 1975

November--"Uptight and hungry, the contradiction in psychology of fat" by Aldebaran is published in *RT: a Journal of Radical Therapy*.

I take a suitcase full of fat feminist literature on the train to Long Island, where NAAFans Dianne Rubinstein, Rhea Bardin, R.N., and I set up a table at a women's health fair. On the way back, still wearing my "Fat Pride" button, I have an encounter in New York City's Pennsylvania Station with a woman from Overeaters Anonymous who tries to corner me with her "success" story; with the literature to back up my claims, I

give her something to think about when she gains the weight back.

## 1976

April--Sharon Bas Hannah (later Sharon Lia), poet and F.U. member, wins a fat feminist victory when a letter\* she writes to the Town Council in Venice Beach, CA, results in the council's voting to remove the "weight-loss" label from a summer movement program it offers and expressly endorsing the right of fat women to participate without fear of ridicule or harassment.

Spring--"Health and fat awareness" by Aldebaran is published in *Issues in Radical Therapy*.

October--Aldebaran moves to Connecticut and contacts me in New Haven where I am living. She joins our local NAAFA chapter, writing for its controversial newsletter that I edit, *The Fat Review*\*.

## 1977

Spring--Sharon Bas Hannah follows Aldebaran East to New Haven. With my then-husband Darryl Scott-Jones, we four found the New Haven Fat Liberation Front (FLF).

June--"Fat Liberation--A Luxury?" by Aldebaran\* is published in *State and Mind*.

October--the FLF has a public confrontation with Yale psychologist Judith Rodin, Ph.D., over inaccurate remarks she makes about fat people to an American Psychiatric Association meeting. A report on the encounter with Rodin, entitled "The Calorie Controversy: Who's Cheating?\*", is written and

published by the FLF.

## 1978

February--Aldebaran and the FLF present a 6-part series of workshops at a New Haven women's center on fat feminist issues, including one titled "Images--Social and Self" with feminist sociologist Natalie Allon of Hofstra University. Other topics include health issues, eating disorders, sexuality, exercise, and social change.

March--a three-part series on the FLF in the New Haven press\* is followed by a full-page feature in the *New York Times* Sunday edition\*, the first coverage of fat feminism by that bastion of the Establishment.

The first article in Fat Liberator Publications' information packet of writings by the Fat Underground is published. Titled "A Fat Women's Problem-Solving Group: Radical Change"\* , it is an account of the first fat women's support group, organized by the RFTC in Los Angeles during 1973 and '74. It establishes the principles for recovery from chronic dieting and internalized fat oppression--including the principle of giving oneself permission to eat--which will be popularized by anti-diet groups and health professionals a decade and a half later.

## 1979

After a year on a severely restricted diet, Karen Wynne Cohen takes her own life. She is mourned by her husband Ira and friends who loved her. I dedicate my poem, "In Memoriam"\* , to her.

Psychologists Susan and O.

Wayne Wooley publish the first research incorporating writings by Aldebaran and other fat feminists: "Obesity [sic] and Women I--A closer look at the facts"\* and "Obesity [sic] and Women II--A neglected feminist topic"\* are published in *Women's Studies International Quarterly*. Another paper by the Wooleys, "Theoretical, practical and social issues in behavioral treatments of obesity [sic]"\*, is published in the *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*. The Wooleys' professional validation of medical facts and political theories pioneered by a radical movement, braving ridicule and criticism from many of their colleagues, will be largely responsible for the growing acceptance of fat feminist ideas in the scientific and academic communities in coming years. It will also inspire other researchers--like Paul Ernsberger and Paul Haskew, David Garner and Esther Rothblum--to do additional research.

## 1975-1980

In cities as far-flung as Boston, Minneapolis, Atlanta and San Francisco, a fat women's community is beginning to take root and grow. Influenced by the writings and charismatic leadership of Fat Underground members and other radical fat feminists, fat lesbians and bisexuals are turning a chorus of voices into a symphony. Writings by fat women on fat oppression and fat liberation appear in respected lesbian/feminist publications like *Out and About*, *Off Our Backs*, *The Second Wave*, *Lesbian Tide*, and *Sojourner*, as well as in feminist bookstores. Across the U.S. and even abroad, members of this far-flung grass-roots movement find each other at events like women's music festivals and

Jewish feminist conferences. Tired of being treated like second class citizens by their nonfat lesbian feminist sisters, these radical fat feminists are creating a sisterhood where size is admired, celebrated and prized, where fatness equates with power, strength and beauty.

## 1980

April 18-20: the First Fat Feminist Activist Working Meeting takes place. It is organized by members of the FLF and BFL (Boston Fat Liberation, which will later become Boston Area Fat Liberation, or BAFL). Seventeen radical fat feminists--including Judy Freespirit (CA), Judith Stein (MA), Diane Denne (MN), and Aldebaran (CT)--from grass-roots groups across the country as well as from NAAFA gather in New Haven, CT. They network, facilitate workshops on topics including size discrimination, disability rights, and fat oppression within the lesbian community, and share an evening of fat women's culture. The same weekend, speakers from the Fat Feminist Meeting present a keynote panel on fat liberation at a women's health conference being held concurrently in New Haven, the first ever presented at such an event. They also offer three workshops at the women's health conference, including one on "Anorexia and Compulsive Eating" co-facilitated by Aldebaran and Prudy Smith, a recovering anorexic, which explores the links between eating disorders and fat oppression.

Judith Stein of BFL, who sits on an advisory board for the publishing collective of Our Bodies, Ourselves, takes audiotapes\* I have made of the workshops and panel back to Boston to document the need for revision of

the book's anti-fat, pro-dieting stance in favor of one more size-informed; she succeeds admirably, with the new edition even including a fat liberation resource section. From the tapes I also produce a radio documentary entitled "Nothing to Lose"\* which is aired on community radio stations. Complete proceedings of the First Fat Feminist Working Meeting are compiled\* and circulated to participants, who form F.A.T. (Fat Activists Together), the first coalition of fat feminist activists. Among other things, the coalition will be instrumental in finding a publisher for the anthology of fat women's writings that will become Shadow on a Tightrope.

Also in April, across the Atlantic, fat feminists in Amsterdam, Holland, declare a national day of support for fat women. About 45 fat feminists gather together to network and establish a national coalition.

August--Kelly (aka Eileen Ross) of the Boston Fat Dykes gives a workshop at the Michigan Women's Music Festival entitled "The Goddess is Fat." This will later be incorporated as an essay in Shadow on a Tightrope.

October--A Fat Dykes Weekend is sponsored by the Minneapolis Fat Dykes, with networking, social activities, and workshops on a variety of topics.

Also in October, the first issue of the F.A.T. coalition newsletter is published. Kelly serves as editor of this zine, which reprints news clippings and magazine pieces on fat-related topics and circulates information from coalition members.

Three years after the FLF's confrontation with Judith Rodin over her remarks to the American Psychiatric Association, the APA rescinds its classification of obesity [sic] as a mental disorder. This year's edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders declares that "Simple obesity [sic] is...not generally associated with any distinct psychological or behavioral syndrome."

### 1981

May--"Vet Vrig" ("Free Fat"), a fat activist task force, is established by fat feminists in Holland "to fight size discrimination and the restrictive beauty standards that are forced upon us." The task force issues a call for fat women in that country to contribute to a "book of complaints" the group is compiling of prejudiced and oppressive treatment they encounter.

Back in the U. S., with the help of attorneys from a Center for Independent Living in California, Louise Wolfe and Judy Freespirit pioneer the concept of using federal disability legislation to redress weight discrimination, and successfully pressure their state to define a policy of accepting such cases.

"Why Liberated Eating?" by Vivian Mayer (aka Aldebaran) is published in *Women: A Journal of Liberation*. Coming at the same subject from a different direction, Kim Chernin's groundbreaking book The Obsession: Reflections on the Tyranny of Slenderness is also published. It is the first in a long procession of books by (mostly non-fat) feminists who link our cultural

fatphobia to the epidemic of eating disorders and distorted body image occurring among women of all ages and sizes, and will help precipitate a full-fledged anti-diet movement some ten years later.

Dr. Susan Wooley briefly becomes a consultant to Lane Bryant, giving talks on the dangers of dieting and other fat feminist issues at its chain of stores.

### 1982

May--the first performance "For Fat Women Only" of Fat Lip Readers Theatre takes place in Berkeley, CA; the following night's show is open to all women. This legendary performance arts group, founded by Judy Freespirit, Louise Wolfe, and other radical fat feminists, becomes the vanguard of a thriving fat women's cultural scene in the area. With events like Fat Fridays at the Women's Building, a Fat Politics Speakers Bureau, fat contingents in gay pride marches, and more size-friendly awareness anywhere outside of a NAAFA Convention, San Francisco becomes a mecca to radical fat feminists, lesbians and bisexual women everywhere who are starved for a sense of community and belonging.

October--The seventh (and last) newsletter of the F.A.T. coalition is published.

### 1983

Nine years after the first attempt at a NAAFA Feminist Caucus, the new incarnation organized by Deb Ernsberger takes wing and flies, this time with the blessing of NAAFA's leadership.

Summer--I organize a fat

women's support group in the New Haven area which will evolve in the next decade (with the help of my husband Richard Stimson) into *Largesse*, the Resource Network for Size Esteem.

September--The first anthology of fat women's writings, Shadow on a Tightrope, is published. This groundbreaking book, representing the first ten years of the fat feminist movement, originally took shape as a manuscript compiled by Aldebaran and Sharon Bas Hannah during their Fat Underground days from writings and essays by F.U. members, and edited during their FLF days in New Haven. Frustrated in their attempts to find a publisher for the book, they established Fat Liberator Publications to distribute packets of photocopied articles to feminist bookstores and through workshops. When Sharon moved to Boston and Aldebaran entered graduate school, Fat Liberator was taken on by Diane Denne of the Minneapolis Fat Dykes group, who eventually connected with Aunt Lute, a small lesbian feminist press in Iowa which agreed to publish an expanded version of the book, including additional essays and poetry.

October--Three Fat Underground members--Lynn McAfee (now living in Philadelphia), Sara Golda Mayer (formerly Aldebaran, now in Worcester, MA), and Sharon Bas Hannah (now in the Boston area)--have a reunion at a book party I host to celebrate the publication of Shadow on a Tightrope. Carrie Hemenway also attends, and writes later that meeting other strong, beautiful fat women has inspired her to stop dieting. This event also marks Sara's retirement from active

participation in fat liberation to devote herself to scholarly studies and her Orthodox Jewish community.

November--After a long battle with breast cancer, Fat Underground member Réanne Fagan dies, surrounded in her hospital room by a loving family and friends.

### 1984

Fall--The first issue of *Radiance*, a feminist magazine for women "all sizes of large" is published by Alice Ansfield in Oakland, CA. It ushers a new generation of feminist writers and activists of size into the movement.

### 1985

May--*Ms.* magazine finally acknowledges the existence of fat feminism when it publishes a feature article by NAAFA Feminist Caucus member Carol Sternhell entitled "We'll Always Be Fat, But Fat Can Be Fit"\*. The article marks the boom that is occurring in fitness books and videos aimed at fat women.

### 1986

February--NAAFA's Feminist Caucus publishes the first issue of its quarterly newsletter\*, originally titled *Feminist Letter*, which includes reprints of my article "Fat Women and Feminism" from 1974 and Carol Sternhell's *Ms.* magazine article from 1985. The newsletter's second\* and subsequent issues carry the name *New Attitude*.

Spring--The first regional fat women's gathering of NAAFA's Feminist Caucus is held in New Haven, CT, organized by Carrie Hemenway and myself. Carrie and Lynn McAfee become the new



Caucus co-chairs.

## 1987

April--*Matrix*, a respected lesbian feminist quarterly in Santa Cruz, CA, devotes an issue to "'Voices of Fat Liberation: Embracing Our Beauty, Claiming Our Space'". Edited by a diverse group of fat women, it is a landmark collection of essays, poetry, fiction, photographs and illustrations by women of all sizes from thin to supersize on a full spectrum of topics, with a page of local and national resources. It is the biggest issue of *Matrix* to date in the literal as well as philosophical sense, paid for by ads solicited by the fat feminist editors of the issue.

*Matrix* sparks a controversy in NAAFA when Feminist Caucus members who feel it deserves recognition ask NAAFA's Board to acknowledge it and its editors with NAAFA's Distinguished Achievement Award. NAAFA's President (and Caucus member) Nancy Summer proposes an award but a majority of the Board balks, citing objections to nude photos and openly lesbian writers in the issue. A letter-writing campaign ensues, coordinated by Largesse, as lesbian and feminist NAAFAns--and other members, male and female, who support diversity in the organization--voice their objections to the Board's decision. Eventually a compromise is reached: the Board agrees to give a newly-created Achievement Award (without the Distinguished) to *Matrix*. It also votes Distinguished Achievement Awards to *Radiance* magazine and Fat Lip Readers Theatre. The *Matrix* Controversy marks a turning point in NAAFA's history as its leadership is finally forced to

acknowledge the strength and credibility of NAAFA's feminist constituency, paving the way for Feminist Caucus members to gain a majority of Board seats during the next few years.

Also in April, the second annual fat women's regional gathering of NAAFA's Feminist Caucus, a three-day event, is held at a hotel in Norwalk, CT. Co-organized by Dr. Mary Boyle, Vicky Reed and me, it draws fat feminists from as far away as North Carolina. It also draws unprecedented media attention from four newspapers in four days\*, including coverage by *The New York Times* with an article by Andrea Higbie.

In July, under the editorship of Nancy Summer, the *NAAFA Newsletter* publishes a one-page article titled "Fat Feminists: a Herstory" under my byline (as Karen Scott-Jones) in its issue celebrating NAAFA's 18th. birthday.

In August, Largesse (now listed as a fat feminist network in the Encyclopedia of Associations) sponsors a Cape Cod weekend as a fundraiser to pay the travel expenses from California for one of the editors of the *Matrix* fat liberation issue to the NAAFA Convention in New Jersey this year so she can accept the Achievement Award for *Matrix*.

## 1988

A resolution calling on NOW to go on record opposing size discrimination, originated by fat liberation activists in California including Dawn Atkins and the Body Image Task Force, Fat Lip, and California NOW members, is unanimously passed by California

NOW and sent to the national organization for ratification at its annual conference.

June--Carrie Hemenway and Vicky Reed attend the NOW annual conference in Buffalo, NY, to lobby for passage of the anti-size discrimination resolution. They successfully petition for it, but it is tabled to the following year's convention.

Carrie Hemenway teaches a course on "The Politics of Women and Food as it Relates to Fat Oppression" at U-MASS, and publishes an article entitled "Weight Discrimination and the Law" in *Directions in Applied Nutrition*. Lynn McAfee presents a paper on "Fat Women and Feminism" at a Women and Philosophy conference.

### 1989

April--Holding their three-day annual regional gathering in Washington, DC, NAAFA Feminist Caucus members join in the march on Washington sponsored by NOW for the ERA and abortion rights. Carrying a gold, purple and white banner (Suffragist colors) that reads "Women of Size, Women of Power" and wearing t-shirts bearing the Caucus logo, marchers break stereotypes and make a powerful statement to other feminists at the march.

December--The national NOW Board passes the anti-size discrimination resolution with an amendment that it be ratified at the 1990 NOW convention in San Francisco.

Two important fat feminist videos make their debuts this year: Fat Lip Readers Theatre presents a

video entitled "Nothing to Lose" of classic performance selections from its repertoire; and BAFL (Boston Area Fat Liberation) offers filmmaker Sandy Dwyer's documentary, "Throwing Our Weight Around", featuring conversations between members of the Boston radical fat feminist community on everyday issues like getting fit (set in a gym), finding clothes and unbiased health care, and dealing with street hassles.

Another landmark book, Overcoming Fear of Fat, is also published this year. Edited by Esther Rothblum, Ph. D., researcher and editor of the journal "Women and Therapy", and Laura S. Brown, it features personal and professional perspectives by feminist therapists on challenging fat oppression.

### 1990

April--Sue Campbell, longtime NAAFA feminist and editor of the pioneering *Ample Apple* newsletter, dies of complications from diabetes. Her friend and West Coast Feminist Caucus coordinator Deb Albright writes a moving tribute to her in *New Attitude*.

June--Fat feminists celebrate as NOW finally goes on record opposing size discrimination when the draft resolution passes by acclaim, with no dissenting votes or discussion, at the National NOW Conference in San Francisco. A long list of committed feminists of all sizes from NOW, NAAFA's Feminist Caucus and chapters, the Body Image Task Force, and others have made this victory possible.

Also in June in San Francisco, Fat Dykes take over Castro Street to hold a celebration called "Let it All

Hang Out Day"; residents who might take offense are forewarned to stay inside and turn off their lights! Over 200 attendees enjoy a performance by Fat Lip, speakers, music, dancing and fat-positive merchandise like "Dykes from Hell" t-shirts.

November--The first West Coast gathering of NAAFA's Feminist Caucus takes place in Portland, OR, ushering in a new tradition of fall West Coast gatherings for the Caucus in addition to its spring East Coast meetings.

December--The Body Image Task Force, founded the previous year by Dawn Atkins as a part of Santa Cruz NOW, splits from that organization over political differences. The newly-independent group, chaired by Dawn (who also heads NAAFA's Research Committee), becomes a consensus organization focusing on body image issues as linked to other forms of oppression, with no restrictions on membership other than agreement with the BITF statement of purpose.

"The Famine Within", a Canadian feminist documentary on body image, is released. The film is premièred in the U.S. by the BITF, which also distributes many other films on related subjects.

A Lavender SIG (Special Interest Group), geared to lesbian, gay and bisexual members, is formed in NAAFA.

Lynn McAfee speaks at Yale; Carrie Hemenway talks at Harvard University, Smith and Hampshire Colleges, and addresses a medical group at a Massachusetts hospital.

Nancy Summer speaks to a group in upper New York State.

## 1991

BITF begins publication of its quarterly newsletter.

## 1992

May--Mary Evans Young, Director of DietBreakers in England, founds No Diet Day on the spot during a television interview when she tells viewers, "Remember to celebrate No Diet Day." Queried by her interviewer for the date, she picks one she'll be sure to remember--the day before her birthday, May 5. The first No Diet Day is planned as a picnic in London's Hyde Park but rained out and held in her living room instead.

July-August--The first issue of *Rump Parliament*, an inclusive size activism magazine, is published by Lee Martindale of Texas. *RP*, which began as a special interest group of Mensa, encourages the writing of many fat feminists new to the movement.

August--A civil rights resolution including weight as a protected category, drafted by Dawn Atkins of BITF, passes in Santa Cruz, CA, making it the first city in the U.S. to enact size rights legislation.

## 1993

The third decade of fat feminism begins, as NAAFA's Feminist Caucus and Largesse celebrate their tenth anniversaries.

May--Lee Martindale serves as U.S. Coordinator for the second annual celebration of No Diet Day, bringing this event to an international audience. Nine countries and 35 U.S. states

participate."

June--In a unanimous decision, the California Supreme Court rules that job discrimination based on weight is NOT protected under the state's Fair Employment and Housing Act. The decision comes in a lawsuit brought by fat feminist Toni Cassista against a natural foods store which refused to hire her because of her weight. Two of the judges make sexist and sizist remarks on the bench during the case. Toni vows to persist, and her attorney petitions for re-review.

September--Lynn McAfee's 20 years of confronting "obesity [sic]" researchers with a fat liberation viewpoint pays off when a Harvard Public Health study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* cites discrimination as the cause for the economic disparity it finds between fat and average-size women. Less than 60 days later the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission), a federal government agency, rules that "severely obese [sic]" people can claim protection under federal statutes barring discrimination against the disabled. This ruling, in turn, is instrumental in paving the way for the landmark decision in a suit brought by Bonnie Cook, a Rhode Island woman who accused her state of illegally denying her a job on the basis of "perceived disability" because of her size. In stark contrast to the Cassista decision, for the first time a federal appeals court rules that job discrimination based on weight is illegal, setting a precedent for future size discrimination lawsuits.

### Postscript

I am well aware that this

account is far from complete, and hope readers will contribute additional herstorical material and first-person accounts to expand future updates.

*\*Denotes resources available in the Largesse archives.*

## RESOURCE LIST-- FAT FEMINIST GROUPS

BAFL (Boston Area Fat Liberation)  
P. O. Box 308 Kendall Square  
Cambridge, MA 02142  
617-661-8111  
Activist group, video "Throwing  
Our Weight Around"

Body Image Task Force (BITF)  
Mary Atkins/Marius Griffin  
P. O. Box 934  
Santa Cruz, CA 95061  
408-457-4838  
Quarterly newsletter, political  
action, workshops, education  
projects, public speaking

Council on Size & Weight  
Discrimination  
Miriam Berg, President  
P. O. Box 238  
Columbia, MD 21045  
914-679-1209  
Advocacy, education, public  
policy projects

DietBreakers  
Mary Evans Young, Director  
Church Cottage  
Barford St. Michael  
Banbury  
Oxon OX15 OUA England  
*Db* magazine, workshops,  
International No Diet Day  
founder

*(continued next page)*

Diet/Weight Liberation Network  
Terry Nicholetti Garrison  
Anabel Taylor Hall, Cornell  
University  
Ithaca, NY 14853  
607-257-0563  
"Fed Up!" groups, newsletter,  
education projects

Fat Lip Readers Theatre  
P. O. Box 29963  
Oakland, CA 94604  
Guerrilla & street theatre,  
performances, political action,  
video ""Nothing to Lose""

Feminist Caucus of NAAFA  
Carrie Hemenway, Chair  
P. O. Box 163  
Northampton, MA 01061  
413-586-1286 (Evenings)  
Quarterly newsletter, semi-  
annual gatherings

Largesse, the Network for Size  
Esteem  
P. O. Box 9404  
New Haven, CT 06534-0404  
203-787-1624 (Phone/FAX)  
Computer database, archives,  
newsletter, bulletins, support  
material

LFAN (Lesbian Fat Activist  
Network)  
Helen Weber  
815 15th. Ave. E. #4  
Seattle, WA 98112  
Civil rights support group for fat  
lesbians

London Fat Women's Group  
Charlotte Cooper  
C/O London Women's Centre  
Wesley House, 4 Wild Ct.  
London WC2B 5AU England  
Support and activist group