

# FIGURE 8

Refuse to feel shame about your body!

#4

Chub  
Love!



*Fighting  
for  
Fat  
Rights!*

In this issue:  
The Truth about Alli, Fat Activist Profiles, Indie  
Fashions, Fat History, Too Fat to Adopt?  
Inspiration, Links and lots more!

Hello,

Welcome to the new issue of  
Figure 8!



The subtitle for this issue is "Refuse to feel shame about your body!" This is something I experience a lot - shame. It isn't just about my body; it pretty much comes up for me in every aspect of my life at one time or another. It is almost always about comparing and hearing the voice of someone else in my head. That someone else could be a parent, a friend, what I imagine a stranger says, what a stranger has said, advertising, everyone! But it is me who is letting these voices validate something negative about myself that I already feel. I have been working hard to not feel that way. I refuse to feel shameful about myself!

Imagine if we no longer felt shameful about our bodies!  
**It would be a shame-Free Revolution!**

Refuse to feel shame about your fat body, your facial hair, your wrinkles, your small breasts, your chubby thighs, your grey hair, the hair on your back, your double chin, your pimples, your large nose, everything that we are told to fix, alter or get rid of!

Refuse to be ashamed! Don't participate in the shaming of anyone else because of these things. They are human, we are all human. We are biological animals - and our bodies all exhibit different variations of human physiology. It is useless to have some moral judgments about your body; these things are no indication of your

personality or worth. You may not love everything about your body, but you don't need to hate it. Adding shame on to anything doesn't make it go away and only makes it more unbearable.

In this issue I profile a lot of activists. I wanted to address fat activism and make sure it is clear that all kinds of activism are needed! I started to write a short paragraph about my history in fat activism and it turned into a full article. It was interesting to get it all down - to see the last twenty years of my life in this way. You never know what one event or meeting will turn into. In the interview with stina she mentions how seeing a photo of someone on a blog really changed her. Just seeing that photo of this woman changed her attitude, switched her over to looking at loving herself. You never know who you will reach with even the smallest of gestures. The more we put out there, the better.

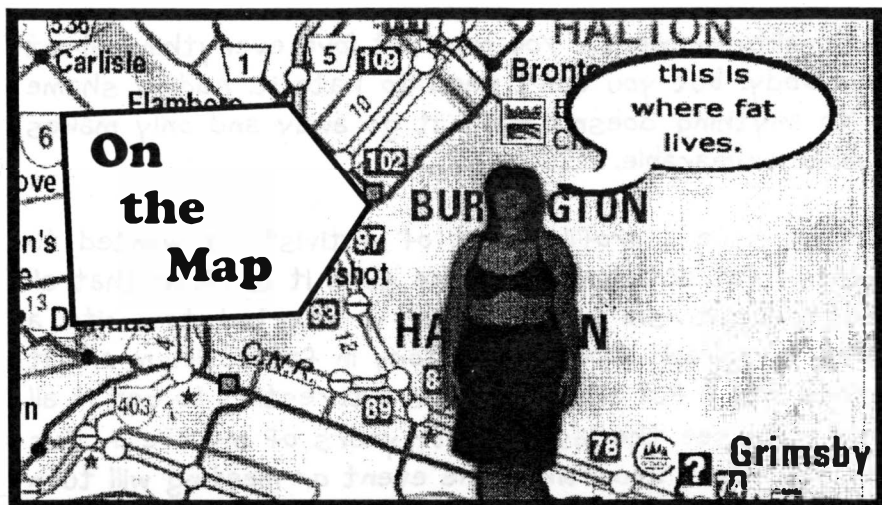
so, ask unapologetically for an armless chair in a restaurant, compliment another fattie on how they look, mention your attraction to that adorable fatso across the street and stand up to anyone who fat bashes. You never know who could witness these things and how it can change their life.

Thanks for all your support and the amazing rad fat stuff you all are doing. You continue to inspire and amaze me!

chub Love to you,

Krissy





An interview with zine editor and fat map maker, Stina

I met Stina through my blog community on Live Journal. One day, a mutual friend posted about a "fat map" she had received from Stina. There was a picture of it and it totally intrigued me. I wanted one! I emailed Stina and asked if I could get a copy of her zine and a fat map of my own. It came a couple weeks later and I laid the map out on my coffee table. It was a map of Montreal and there were lots of different black and white pics of fat women across the map. I knew many of them, the FATASS cheerleaders were included, along with fat activists and live journal friends and other women who I had seen on other fat positive sites. There were also pictures of some animals and a plate of nachos and a cupcake.

I was surprised what a powerful thing this simple map was. I was familiar with these images and the city of Montreal had no special significance to me, and yet seeing these pictures of strong, smiling fat women pasted on this map, symbolizing that we are everywhere, we are around the corner, across town, over the bridge - it was a very strong impression.

The zine, Chubbluv, was just as good. It was short, simple and brought something fresh to the fat activism dialogue.

Stina is 26 and she currently lives in Ontario, Canada. She is working on the next issue of Chubbluv, which is going to be in a much different form than her

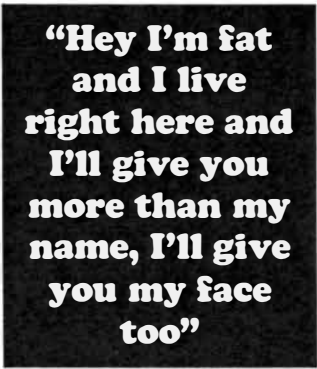
first issue. She is looking for contributors. I wanted to interview her about the maps and the new version of her zine.

**Can you tell me about what the inspiration was for you to make the fat maps and what did you want to accomplish/create by making them?**

I had just found bigfatblog.com and started reading through some news items and came across an article which was about the idea of doctors in the UK getting paid 1000 pounds for giving up every address of a fat patient they had in order to make a fat map. I think the goal was to see where fat lives so they could figure out what causes fat. My fat map was me saying "Hey I'm fat and I live right here and I'll give you more than my name, I'll give you my face too"

**What has been the general response to them?**

People loved them! My first map was just me and I kept getting requests from people to make one with them on it, with me included. Then I made a full size map and offered to make one for anyone who wanted one and before I knew it I was making over 20 of them. After I sent them out, I would get emails from the recipients with the most amazing words of how much they loved them.



**How many have you made now?**

I think about 20-30 full size ones. I just made some mini maps and sent them to the Portland Zine Symposium, so I'll see how they do.

**Why do you include the animals and food in them?**

At first, I asked everyone who wanted a map, who/what they wanted to see on it. There were requests for foods and animals. The animals come from the recent interest in weight loss pills for pets, and just this jealousy that pet owners have with one another over whose pet is fatter, and if yours is the fattest, you lose. The food came from the idea of having to hide the fact that a fat person eats. I've seen so many people lie about what they ate because they are embarrassed, I've also seen, and done it myself, where if a fat person is in public and is offered food, they reject, or they don't finish their whole plate of food, because they don't want anyone to say "Wow, did you see how much

she/he ate???" It means "Yeah, I'm fat and sometimes I like to eat nachos or cupcakes"

**What are your plans for the fat maps? Are you planning to continue making them?**

I am doing more. Right now I am making mini maps, but only with people on them, the original ones were all made by request and personalized. These newer ones are a bit more polished. I would love to make a fat map quilt one day. I want to see how people, outside my friends, feel about these maps and then I can maybe get some more ideas.

**Your first issue of Chubbluv was a small personal zine, but your plans for the next issue are going to be different, correct? It is still under the name Chubbluv? Can you tell me about it?**

Yes, the next issue, still under the same name, is going to be quite a bit different. The reasons for the change is because I felt that all the things I knew about fat activism have/are being done by people who already do it so well – like Marilyn Wann and you!! And I want to see something that has everything I am interested in. I have always liked magazines like Bust, but I would never read about fat issues, and you would only see a fat girl in a fashion spread every tenth issue. I want to include music, art, fashion, sex, politics, personal stories, all by fat people or people who are involved with or somehow include fat issues in their work. It's very interactive with contributors from all over. Anybody who wants to be involved can. An example is that there is a theme for the fashion spread and interested people were asked to submit a picture of them following that theme. It's also very important that all spectrums of fat are shown.

**How do you mean?**

Whenever I see a fat girl in a magazine it is the same body type. I don't think plus size models represent what fat is. I know there are many different body shapes at different sizes. I want to show all spectrums of fat, and I am really trying to make this happen with the second issue of Chubbluv. Unfortunately most of the pictures we get are on the smaller end of fat, but I keep looking and pushing and going to specific people asking them to get involved.

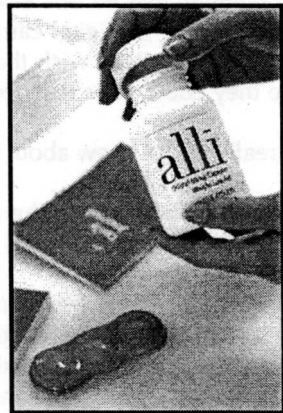
**Do you have any thoughts on the new generation of fat activists, of which you are one?**



# alli™

## The Poop Your Pants Diet!

By the time you read this will have no doubt heard of the new diet drug Alli. Between the TV campaigns, store displays and radio spots it is hard to miss. The 2007 marketing budget for Alli is \$150 million and seven ad agencies have been hired. An intense guerilla marketing campaign was started with the launch of Alli which included creating a "professional" organization that fed the media stories about the effectiveness of Alli and the dangers of weight loss drugs that were not Alli. News programs, magazines and talk show hosts took the bait and reported "news" stories based on this propoganda masquerading as legitimate news. A "documentary" was also sponsored by the company who sells Alli. It was called "Fat: What No One is Telling You" and it ran on PBS stations, falsely appearing as an objective program interested in the real truth of this issue and promoting Alli. At the same time, one million copies of a diet book also went on sale, along with 3.5 million starter kits.



Alli (pronounced AI-EYE) is the first over-the-counter diet drug approved by the FDA. GlaxcoSmithKline paid \$100 million for the U.S. rights to Xenical (orlistat) and for its petition to the FDA to market an over-the-counter version of a diet drug that had been previously available by prescription only. They gave it the friendly sounding name of Alli and made it available to any one who



chooses to spend the 2 bucks a day. GlaxoSmithKline are anticipating sales of 1.5 to 3.9 billion per year. Launching this diet pill has been the largest investment made in any over-the-counter brand in the past decade, said Steve Burton, a company president.

Over the past five years, prescription sales of Xenical have been steadily declining. In 2000 sales were at 202 million, by 2005 it was down to 86.6 million. GlaxoSmithKline knew all too well that an over-the-counter diet drug would now be available to consumers who would have not been able to get it before, including people with eating disorders, teenagers and people who are already thin. This new consumer market translates to big profits.

**With Allies like this,  
who needs Enemas?**

According to Prescription Access Litigation (PAL), a consumer advocacy coalition of more than 125 organizations, there

actually are prescription diet drugs out there that have better safety records. These could have been used as an over-the-counter drug. Alli, however, is not one of them. It is very dangerous to be used without supervision. It has little effectiveness, it compromises your health and it offers the user a host of disgusting side effects, which PAL lists as "diarrhea, oily spotting, oily stools, flatulence with discharge and fecal urgency".

Because of the heinous lack of responsibility on the part of GlaxoSmithKline for putting out Alli, PAL gave them the first "Bitter Pill" award of 2007, titling it "With Allies like this, who needs Enemas?"

Part of Alli's campaign is to "break through the clutter with straight talk". Advertisements say that losing weight is hard work and that Alli only helps. Good diet on exercise on your part is just as important as taking the pill. The marketing states "It won't be easy, nothing worth it ever is. But greater weight loss is possible, 50% more than with dieting alone...if you have the will, we have the power." However, in clinical trials, people taking Alli along with dieting and exercise for a two-year period only lost an average of 3 pounds more than those who were dieting and exercising alone. Those

three pounds will cost an average of \$750.00. But, money isn't the worst way you will pay.

Alli claims to help you lose weight by working to block the absorption of fat by the body. If you take in too much fat, your body expels it in an incredibly embarrassing and smelly way. Alli's own advertising states that one of the side effects is gas with oily spotting, "in fact you may recognize it as something that looks like the oil on top of a pizza". This is what they say in the advertising and marketing! This is what they are using to sell it to us! Imagine what it is really like!

On the website the company tells you how to prepare for the side effects. This is a hint at how really bad it is:

*...pick a day to begin taking Alli, such as a weekend day so you can stay close to home...You may feel an urgent need to go to the bathroom...it is probably a smart idea to wear dark pants, and bring a change of clothes to work...the bathroom is the best place to go [if you get gassy].*

This is the sugar coated version. Here is how one healthcare practitioner put it when responding to a thread about Alli on a healthcare blog:

*HOWEVER, and this is VERY important...you will LEAK orange, foul-smelling oil from your tushy if you eat fatty foods! It will not clean with toilet paper, it will stain the toilet bowl until scrubbed with bleach, and it will leak THROUGH your pants uncontrollably, also staining your clothes (it is VERY hard to get out, even with bleach). This will happen only once to convince you to decrease your fat intake..lol. No fast food on this medicine, no greasy foods, no pizza especially. I don't know why they don't warn people about this. I am an ARNP[Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner] who prescribed it to many patients, but I gave them the warning to be careful. Carry baby wipes, and an extra set of pants!! At least until you know how it will affect you.*

*Sorry, but somebody needs to warn the public. I will be afraid to sit on a cloth seat (think theater) anywhere in public when this comes out! The leaking stain is 99% permanent (smell too!).*

GlaxoSmithKline has taken the reality of these side effects and done some incredible marketing on this product. First off, they don't call them side effects, instead they use the more harmless sounding term "treatment effects" and they make it seem like they are doing you a favor by giving you crippling diarrhea, leaving you smelling like death and permanently ruining your outfit.

*While no one likes experiencing treatment effects, they might help you think twice about eating questionable fat content. If you think of it like that, Alli can act like a security guard for your late night cravings.*

They make it all seem so nice and benign. The truth is that you cannot eat more than 15 grams of fat per meal without getting these side effects. That is a tablespoon of butter/margarine, oil or salad dressing. And you cannot splurge and use your three whole tablespoons of fat on one meal! You have to spread it out evenly through-out the meal or you will be going through a lot of clothes.

The average recommended fat intake for healthy adults is 65-80 grams. The average fat intake needed for growing teenage boys is 100 and for teenage girls it is 73 grams. Young people still growing, the elderly, pregnant women and anyone with gastrointestinal or absorption problems are of special concern. Because this drug is the first of its kind over the counter, there is no way to regulate who takes it.

Susan Norris, M.D., of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that the lack of actual weight loss and the common "gastrointestinal adverse effects (explosive diarrhea, fecal incontinence, abdominal cramping anal leakage and oily discharge") are not the issues that worry medical professional the most. The most disturbing thing about the release of Alli is that there is no clinical support or long term benefits for actual health

outcomes of taking the drug, such as cardiovascular disease or death.

Alli reduces the absorption of fats. Yet the absorption of those fats is necessary for good health. There are certain vitamins that need fat to benefit our body. With use of Alli, the body cannot get the nutrients from vitamin A, D, E and K. Vitamin A is important for growth, healthy bones and teeth, reproduction and vision. Vitamin D is critical for helping to maintain bones and teeth, muscular strength and more. Vitamin E is essential for healthy skin, plays a key role in immune function and promoting healthy red blood cells.

**..they tell us it  
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it is our fat that  
is the culprit..**

Vitamin K is needed for normal blood clotting and bone health. Twelve percent of Xenical users became Vitamin D deficient within 2 years. Vitamin E deficiencies were documented in 6 percent of those taking it. Now that millions of people have access to Xenical in Alli, the numbers of these deficiencies will surely climb!

It makes me so mad thinking about this. Everyday there is a story in the paper about how fat Americans are costing so much in medical bills. Through the complete irresponsibility and greed of GlaxoSmithKline and business like them, millions of Americans who believe that they are to blame for everything including high insurance costs will take this drug. They will get sick from using it and then WILL end up costing more at the doctors office than someone who didn't feel shamed into taking it. And what will go down on the record is that this person, this FAT PERSON needed more medical care than a thin person.

This is what is repeated over and over with each new pill or surgery. They shame us into doing it, they tell us it is for our health and when the surgery or drug backfires, killing us or making us sick, it is our fat that is the culprit, not the greed or short-sightedness or just plain fat bigotry of these so called medical professionals.

Alli says often in its advertising and literature that losing the weight is work that YOU have to do, Alli can only help. It is an easy out that masks itself as honesty.

The real honest truth is that corporations like GlaxoSmithKline will keep producing and marketing dangerous consumer products as long as we keep buying them! They will fund "studies" that are reported as news to scare us and shame us into feeling like we are sick and then they will market a new pill or surgery that will supposedly save us all. In the meantime we get sick and die and they get richer off of our own money and we are partly to blame. Do not participate! Do not accept all news reports or marketing. Question and research for yourself and speak to you friends and family about it. Once we stop buying the products, they will stop making them.

Epilogue:

After I wrote this I discovered the Alli forum on the website. People who are using Alli can post topics and ask for help, support or in some cases just rant. It is suprisingly engrossing. Many people state it isn't working for them, many people say it is and they have lost x amount of weight, some people have gained weight. Almost everyone beats themselves up and wonders what they did wrong. They all still look to Alli to help them understand how to make it work for them. A few people have questioned the whole thing and don't seem to be getting any response from the moderators. But, the most fascinating thing is the people who have strayed from the diet and have had terrible side effects - although few people on the site call them side effects, most have totallly fallen for the marketing and call them TE's, short for Treatment Effects.

The people who strayed from the diet, ate something fatty and then experienced terrible side effects ("my body won't stop leaking," ruining clothes, pooing oil, having terrible smelling gas and pains - sometimes for days) all laugh it off. They all have completely bought into the "plan" and say, oh well, it is my fault. And yet other users still feel the need to chastise them abut staying on the plan. It is a bizaare thing to witness.

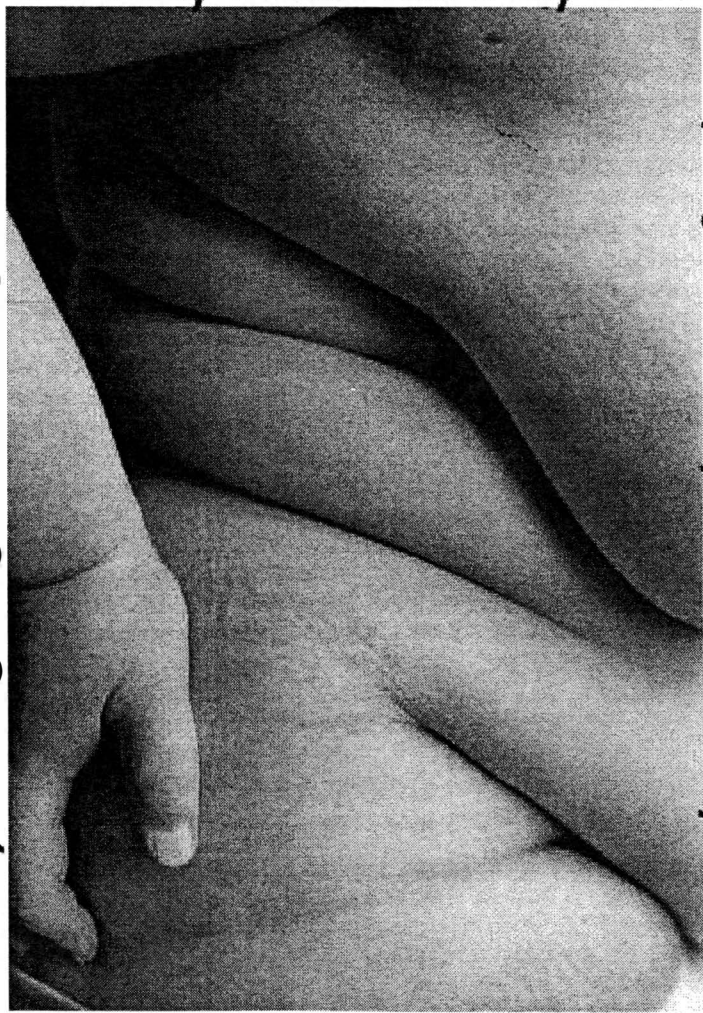
Sources:

Prescription Access Litigation - <http://www.prescriptionaccess.org>

JunkFood Science - <http://junkfoodscience.blogspot.com/>

Alli official site- [www.myalli.com](http://www.myalli.com)

This body is forgiving. This body is beautiful. This body works. This body loves. This body laughs. This body sweats. This body wants truth. This body is equal. This body is loved.



# Lessons in Fat History

Lynn McAfee

Lynn McAfee was on a diet from her earliest years. As a child in 1950's, Lynn was a fat, active little girl. Her parents were very worried and fearful about having a fat daughter. They took her to doctors who were cruel and unfeeling toward her and she spent her growing up years constantly being on a diet. She was given her first mix of amphetamines when she was seven. She would lose weight for awhile, develop a tolerance to them and then gain back the weight. Her youth and adolescent years were spent like this. She tried to commit suicide. At fourteen, she almost died from a ruptured appendix because she was too afraid to go to the family doctor. The last time she had an appointment the doctor called her a gorilla and went on about how fat and disgusting she was.

At 21, she began seeing a therapist who refused to treat McAfee unless she went on a diet. The therapist would spend the treatment time focusing on how Lynn could better dress to not draw attention to her body size. They would look at magazines and talked about hairstyles. But Lynn refused to go on the therapist's diet. She had begun to realize that weight loss was probably not possible. She had been attempting it for 21 years. She had spent her whole life so far putting off everything, waiting to lose weight before she participated in life. She decided to just be as healthy as she could and forget about losing weight.

She asked a physician why the figures on the failure rate of diets hadn't been divulged. The doctor told her it was because no one wants to discourage people from dieting!

In 1970 Lynn got a job working in a medical library, fetching books for doctors. Suddenly she was surrounded by a huge amount of medical journals and research. Now she could finally find the answers to the many questions she had about obesity and what the true answer was. She began doing her own research. She thought maybe those medical journals had the secret of weight loss in them.

But, she found a different secret. She found evidence that since 1958 the failure rates of diets had been recorded at more than 95%! She was shocked to realize that all along her doctors KNEW that the dieting was not going to work. She asked a physician why the figures on the failure rate of diets hadn't been divulged. The doctor told her it was because no one wants to discourage people from dieting!

Once McAfee knew this truth, her decades worth of shame and frustration about not being able to lose weight were replaced with anger. The medical profession had berated her, damaged her and greatly compromised her health and yet they knew their treatments would not work all along!

In 1973 McAfee moved to Los Angeles and joined the Fat Underground. FU picketed, marched, invaded diet groups, disrupted university lectures, and spoke at political rallies.

A few years later McAfee left Los Angeles and once in her new town, she joined the National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance (NAAFA). Not too long after, McAfee, along with NAAFA Founders Bill Fabrey, Nancy Summers and Paula and Neil Dachis left NAAFA to form the Council on Size and Weight Discrimination (CSWD).

The members of CSWD seek to influence public opinion and policy on behalf of larger individuals through public testimony, letter writing campaigns, and participation in national task forces and committees.

"When I was in the Fat Underground, I thought that if I just told the world they were wrong and showed them how they hurt us, things would change," Lynn said in a 1999 Radiance interview. "They didn't. When I was in NAAFA, I thought that if I could help fat people feel better about themselves, feel more entitled to a better life, things would change. They didn't. So, I decided to downscale my expectations. I realized that I had expected the world to move too fast, to go from A to Z in one or two short leaps. Through the council, I decided to concentrate on moving people from A to B."



As head of the Medical Advocacy Project of the Council on Size & Weight Discrimination, Lynn attends meetings of the Federal Trade Commission and the National Institutes of Health concerning the weight loss industry and national health concerns. She attends and testifies at Federal Drug Administration (FDA) hearings on new weight-loss prescription drugs. Her goal is simply to remind the FDA that it is their duty to ensure that drugs and treatments are safe and effective. The FDA doesn't always listen to her appeals. Because of the overall belief that obesity is such an unhealthy condition, many people, including the FDA, still believe that dangerous side effects from a weight-loss drug are acceptable. But Lynn McAfee knows better and continues to work on our behalf and testify against the release of harmful diet drugs.

*To learn more about the Council on Size and Weight Discrimination and to donate funds so they may continue their work, go to [www.cswd.org](http://www.cswd.org)*

*To read a much more extensive article on Lynn go to the fat underground archives at <http://www.largesse.net/Archives/FU/index.html>*





# Revalucian

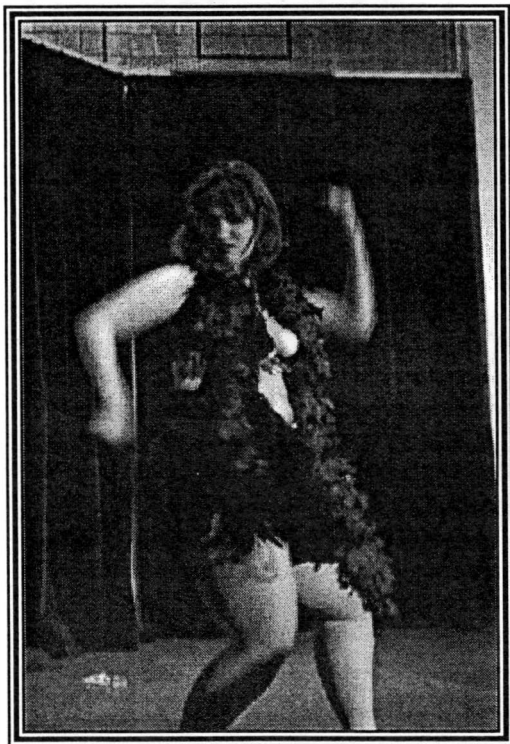


www.bigburlesque.com

*“Any time there is a fat person onstage as anything besides the butt of a joke, it’s political. Add physical movement, then dance, then sexuality and you have a revolutionary act.”*

*- Heather McAllister*

# In Memory of Heather McAllister



I didn't know Heather well, but I was looking forward to getting to know her. Foolishly, I thought I had time. We had met years before her 2006 move to Portland. I knew she was sick and had come to Portland to be with her support system, and still I seemed to think there would always be another time to chat. I did however get to have a few good visits with her and for that I am thankful.

Heather was a fierce friend and defender of fat rights. She was the first person to create an all fat burlesque troupe. The Fat Bottom Revue and Big Burlesque danced at many a sold-out show all over the country. Heather also conducted size acceptance workshops and spoke about fat equality at women's gatherings nationwide. In 2005, Heather and some of her fellow burlesque dancers posed for Leonard Nimoy's series of photographs, The Full Body Project.

Heather left this world in February of 2007. Her smarts, strength and love for fat people and her anger at the injustices we face will be missed in this fight. What we can do is gain strength from the legacy she left behind and pick up part of it and carry it with us, using it to inspire us in our struggles for fat equality.

With that in mind, Heather would probably say to not forget the importance of your relationship with yourself. Remember to love yourself and take care of yourself. I will leave you with some of her words from her keynote speech at NOLOSE (for all of it, please visit [www.nolose.org](http://www.nolose.org))

Photo this page by Kina Williams

To learn more about Big Burlesque go to [www.bigburlesque.com](http://www.bigburlesque.com)

...Fashion is fun long denied us as fatties, but our obsession with aesthetic can overwhelm/hide our deep need to get comfortable in our own skin. We have to acknowledge that most of us still struggle with body image..... We shouldn't get down on ourselves for still struggling. Even if we've spent years in therapy and/or fat civil rights, we MAY have healed the childhood trauma, but we are bombarded every day so it's no surprise...We can talk about fat liberation until we're blue in the face but if we don't love our bodies we will never have it. It is easy for us to intellectualize fat liberation; we're fatties and we've lived in our heads instead of our bodies most of our lives....

**...FAT LIBERATION has the potential to completely transform our society—literally from the inside out. If we can harness the power of the Activism, Academia, and Art triangle to the inner spiritual work of loving our BODIES from the inside out, we can create a social movement different and more powerful than any we've known in our lifetimes. Yes, fatties, we ARE the vanguard of social justice in the 21st century!**

....Surround yourself with fat-positive images. Stop reading Cosmo and watching TV. Get naked in front of a full-length mirror. Get a tattoo on the fattest part of your body and show it off. Touch, tattoo, decorate, reveal, show off the fat parts of your body. Have sex naked, with the lights on. No lingerie/boxers! Take bubble baths regardless of gender. Find a way to be naked in the sunshine. Swim naked. Slow down. Get pictures taken of your body, nude and clothed, that are flattering without hiding. Say nice things about your fat parts and other people's fat parts. Eat mindfully and gratefully. Move. Sweat. Take a "physical" risk. Get bodywork—learn and share reiki, massage, barter/trade nonsexual and sexual touch. Wear comfortable clothing—lose the girdle! And perhaps most important, develop a relationship with a really great best friend/family....

**..I love our community with a passion and ferocity that I've never felt for any individual person. I see fatties on the street and I want to run up and hug them and kidnap them to NOLOSE. When I see fat children I want to find a way to communicate with them how perfect they are in the bodies they have and give them a suit of armor that lets in love but keeps out all the world of hurt I know they are likely in for....I am finding out that we are put on this earth to learn how best to love each other.**

# Cute Clothes and Good Ethics

Support your local Indie clothes store!

As a large person, good clothes are often hard to come by. They are few and far between and once you find the right piece, chances are you will see your outfit on a number of other people. Thanks to the internet it is easier to find and shop at the small independent stores across the country. Some merchants make one-of-a-kind pieces, some manufacture in small batches and some are large enough to have a regular print catalog. Thankfully, these companies choose to make clothes for the bigger body, often, this is all they focus on.

It can be hard, sometimes, to plop down some cold hard credit card numbers for these independent clothes. You may have to go through the annoyance and cost of mailing it back if it doesn't work, or you may be stuck with something that was custom made for you that you don't love. In addition, often the prices are a little higher than you want them to be. But, keep in mind, these small companies are working in small batches and having things made in the country, probably in their own town – one of the many reasons it can be more expensive.

However, it is so important to buy from these size-positive companies and individuals. They are choosing to focus on us - fat people! They are thinking and considering the diverse body shapes, the array of sizes and the needs of large bodies everyday! We need to support them, we need to help make them successful, not only so they will stay in business, but also so more people will see us as a market that needs addressing. I mean, think of how many clothing stores there are out there for small size women. You see one every time you turn around. Do you think that there are 30% of that number for large women? Not even close, and yet we make up at least 30% of the population!

Check out these great independent stores and internet businesses. Buy from them if you can, if not, spread the word and show them to your fat friends and family. Bookmark them and keep them in mind. These companies want to make clothes for YOU – oh, the Chub Love!!



**Making It Big** – [www.makingitbig.com](http://www.makingitbig.com) - This is a great resource for the supersize woman. MIB's clothes are often more mature, lots of batiks and casual clothes. I find things here once and a while and they are always my favorite. The quality is amazing, they wash and machine dry and look great.

**Says Who?** – [www.sayswho.com](http://www.sayswho.com) – They do not sell over the internet, but if you are ever in the Bay Area try and make a visit. You will find lots of sophisticated batiks and funky styles, but since they also make their own line of cotton and linen you never know what other treasures you will find. Everything is beautifully made, all machine wash, tumble dry!

**Igigi** – [www.igigi.com](http://www.igigi.com) – This San Francisco based business has grown a lot of the last few years. Now, they also have a brick and mortar store for you lucky people in the Bay Area. Igigi has quickly become a leader in plus size fashions. Lots of formal, sexy and evening wear.

**Decent Exposures** – [www.decentexposures.com](http://www.decentexposures.com) – I have been buying my bras from these people for years. They make high quality cotton items and you can get a fancy velour bra! They are excellent at working with you to get the right fit.

**B&Lu** - <http://www.bandlu.com/> - you probably know about this place, but in case you don't you need to know. Seriously cute and popular styles from 1x – 5x. I have seen many of these on and they don't disappoint.

**DieselFemme Wear** – [www.dieselfemmewear.com](http://www.dieselfemmewear.com) – Retrotech gear that combines industrial & boudoir, recycled & new, costume & practicality. Diesel Femme makes new cocktail dresses by recycling slips and adding fringes, chain, whatever you want! Now, your new frock will be as unique as you are!

**Size Queen Clothing** – [www.sizequeenclothing.com](http://www.sizequeenclothing.com) – Under the name Big Boxers of Brooklyn, these people have been making the best boxers (I have three!) and robes for years! Now, they are in Portland moving into a new line of clothes and what I have seen is very exciting and unique. Keep an eye on the website from the new styles.

**Five or Six Girls** – [www.fiveorsixgirls.etsy.com](http://www.fiveorsixgirls.etsy.com) – Deb has recently started her own line of clothes for the big girl and she goes up to 8X! Cute tops and skirts made from recycled and new fabrics. Really fun stuff and the prices are so good! Etsy is becoming a good resource for some plus size handmade clothes. Read on for more.

**Revamped Fashion** – [www.revampedfashion.etsy.com](http://www.revampedfashion.etsy.com) – All reconstructed skirts and tops. Very cute and only in plus sizes!

**Nice Face** - [www.niceface.etsy.com](http://www.niceface.etsy.com) – She says she will make her designs ANY SIZE! Super cute stuff, retro, school girl dresses and tops. The thing that is nice about all these handmade sites is that often they love to custom make stuff for you, just ask them!

**In the Starlight** - <http://inthestarlight.com/> - ridiculously cute skirts with poofy matching petticoats. She will make any size. I got a set and recommend it. Petticoat is so cute and puffy! Lots of choices of skirts fabrics.

## Too Fat to be a Good Parent?



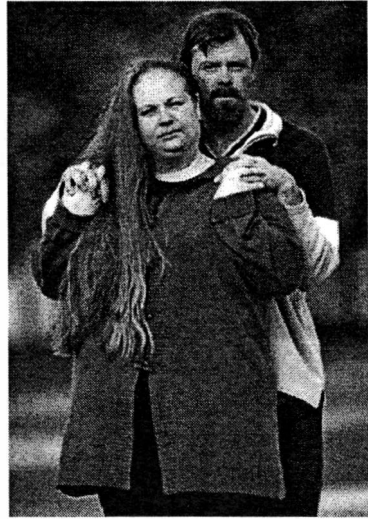
Kylie Lannigan and her husband want to adopt a child. The couple, who live in Australia, have spent the last three years filling out paperwork, fulfilling qualifications and getting approval. They have been through an information seminar and an adoption training program. In addition, their medical records, police records and finances have all been checked out. They've passed in all areas. And yet, they still are being told by The Department of Human Services that they cannot adopt a child. The only reason is because Kylie Lannigan is fat.

It seems absurd, I know. Kylie Lannigan is a 29 year-old, 280 pound woman. She is a full-time chef at a hotel bistro. She walks to work; she has tested negatively for diabetes and heart disease. No one could reasonably say that her health is an issue in her raising a child, and yet she is being denied solely because of the size of her body. They have told her she has to lose 90 pounds before they consider her.

How does this make her a better parent? If she starves herself into losing 90 pounds quickly so she can hurry up and get her kid, how in the world does this make her a healthier, happier and better equipped parent?

And what if she isn't healthy, what if she doesn't walk to work each day or she does have diabetes, does this make her a bad parent? How many parents and grandparents have you known that would be denied based on these claims?

It seems unthinkable and inane. It seems like some weird one-in-a-million case. But it isn't. And don't feel safe about it because it is in Australia. As I write this there is a man in the U.S. who was just denied the right to adopt his own cousin because of his size.



**Kylie and Dave Lannigan**

Picture: Rob Leeson

Gary Stocklaufer is a foster parent and has already adopted one child, but when he went to court recently to adopt his cousin he was denied the right based on his size. The judge said he was unfit and she made that decision based on the fact that he **might** have health problems in the future. She is denying him based on the possibility that he might have health problems during his lifetime! Everyone can have health problems in the future, everyone could get hit by a bus or get cancer! It is completely ridiculous and simply an excuse for prejudice.

In 2007 China changed the eligibility standards for adoptive parents. They have a list of things that are not acceptable and on this list is a BMI of 40 or above. Currently in Korea and Taiwan you are not allowed to adopt if you have a BMI of 30 or above.

Think of all the role models and caretakers of your life. The ones who gave you love, sustenance, comfort, and shelter. Think of the people you looked up to growing up and even now. How many of those people were fat? How much would the quality of your life have been lessened if you or your parents or your grandparents were not allowed to be raised by a fat parent?

# All Kinds of Fat Activism

## My History in Fat Activism

I was first introduced to Size Acceptance, as it was called back then, in 1987 when I started working for a local Bay Area large-size clothing store. I was 22 years old. The store, Says Who?, was started in 1983 by two friends with roots in the feminist movement. Through these women and the women who worked there, I learned to question the myths I had about fat and fat people. I was fat, too, and had always had been, so I was already used to rethinking size issues. Although, every positive thought I had in those days were often followed by ten negative thoughts, usually provided for me by myself, the media or even my family.

At the store I worked with 10 to 20 customers a day who were at different stages of self-acceptance. Some of them taught me, some of them I taught. We all helped each other move closer to self-love and positive feelings, not only about ourselves, but of each other. I saw in many of these women such impressive things; accomplishments, beauty, humor, sexiness and strength. I helped them find clothes for new jobs, art openings, books releases, marriages, events, and travels all over the world. It was a good education for me and it was my first active years of fat activism, although I didn't really think about it that way back then. I would tell women when they looked gorgeous, smart or sexy in something. Sometimes I was the first one to ever tell them this. I challenged women when they put themselves down, when they tried to dress in clothes too big or when they didn't want to spend money on something that looked great on them because they were planning on losing weight.



Modelling clothes at Says Who? 1992

We carried Radiance magazine at the store and I read each issue. I spoke to women about injustices and fat myth busting and I listened to them cry about



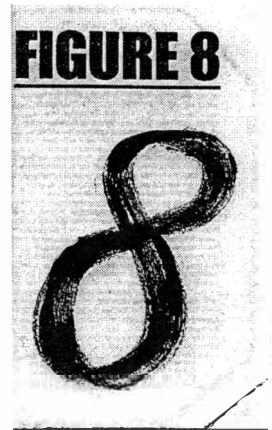
unsupportive husbands and mothers. Around 1993, Marilyn Wann came in one day and we talked about writing. About 6 months later she called me up when she had the idea to do Fat!So? We discussed zine ideas over beers and became friends.

This began a new phase of my activism. By being friends with Marilyn and helping her bounce ideas around for the zine and later the book, by contributing some writings myself and being a part of the beginnings of her career, I became more aware of so many things. She was on fire, as always, and was doing interviews, workshops, and TV appearances. She would tell me all the new horrifying things she had been researching and all the wonderful emails she had received from people. I was becoming more political and angrier about fat prejudice. I began some outlines for my own fat zine called Figure 8 (I had been doing a personal pop-culture zine for awhile by then), but it got abandoned as I became more and more engrossed in college radio. I was managing the Says Who? in Palo Alto full time and doing shows at Stanford's radio station, KZSU.

Because of my involvement with the radio station and my job, I didn't get to partake in some of the famous protests or the height/weight discrimination law that was passed in San Francisco because of Marilyn and her peers' hard work. At the time I felt this made me not an activist. I figured that maybe it just wasn't my style. Maybe I just wasn't that kind of girl. I liked being in my little cave doing a radio show. The idea of being out there on stage like Marilyn was seemed improbable to me, even though I was once a theatre major and preformed regularly.

In the summer of 2000 I moved to Portland Oregon. I no longer had the daily support and connection to the fat community that I had for 13 years I was at Says Who? I didn't realize how much I had come to rely on that. Without a fat community I was feeling more and more insecure. I was struggling with being a fat 36 year old in a crowd of thin twenty-somethings, which seemed to be the crowds I was always in at the time.

Then the first Portland Zine Symposium happened in July 2001. I wanted to have a zine for it, so I created a one page Figure 8. In it I addressed some of my own feelings about being the only fat girl in the room; I created a quiz and wrote a little essay on listening to Howard Stern. I took it to the zine symposium and put it on a free table. I took some workshops, I met Chelsea, a girl from Corvallis, who also was doing a zine on fat issues called "Take It, It's My Body". I took a radical cheerleading workshop. This workshop was what first inspired me to create a fat cheerleading squad. I had the idea that day and was totally excited about it.



The second day of the symposium people came up to me and mentioned Figure 8. They had already read it and they loved it. Some of these people later became my friends. That first Portland Zine Symposium was so

influential for me, and once again, didn't realize that at the time. It was small, only about 20 tables, but it was my favorite one! I didn't want to leave there each day, even though I had seen everything there was to see.

At the beginning of 2003, I saw an announcement on Craig's List that they were looking for volunteers for an event called FatGirl Speaks, which was to take place that May. I went to the next meeting. There I met Stacy Bias, a number of excited and motivated women and I also met up with Chelsea again. We were trying to think of who we could get to perform at FGS and I said, maybe we could have a fat cheerleading act! Everyone was thrilled with the idea and my dream from a couple years earlier was realized in a large show of hands. We had a cheerleading squad! Chelsea and I began working on cheers and choreography, Stacy wrote some awesome cheers, we were ordering pompons and practicing all over town. F.A.T.A.S.S., the Fat Action Allstar Spirit Squad debuted at FatGirl Speaks in 2003.

That year I also put out a complete issue of Figure 8. Through the rest of 2003 and 2004 FATASS preformed at a number of venues, taught workshops and marched in rallies. In 2004 we preformed two sets of cheers and a dance at FatGirl Speaks in front of 900 people.

Marilyn Wann co-mc'd that show and once when we were behind the curtains waiting to go on, I was struck with the whole arc of the last ten years. Here we were backstage, all dolled up in costumes, waiting to perform in front of 900 enthusiastic people. This wasn't anything new to her, but was to me, but what really struck me is that here we were together. Ten years ago, I would have never guessed that I would have been there too!

### **What kind of activist am I?**

Sometimes when I see websites, books or articles that mention the "big names" of fat activism, it gets me all riled up. The article mentions all the speaking these activists do, the workshops, the press they have gotten, the books they have written and I wonder why I haven't done that? Why isn't my name up there? Twenty years of being a writer and being in the fat activist communities and I feel like I should have created more; tried harder, put myself out there more. But then I remember the dread I feel when I do agree to be on panels or to teach workshops. I just don't feel like I am made for that kind of activism. I am not quick enough on my feet. I like doing a zine, I like organizing Cupcake, the local fat friendly dance party. I like taking a break from fat activism, it can be too much sometimes. And yet, still, in my worst self-doubting moments, I sometimes return to the thinking that I am just not that good an activist. But, I am. And so is anyone.

Activism doesn't have to be flashy and on stage. I am grateful to the people who can be that, I am thankful that they take center stage and perform so well. I can enjoy being on stage sometimes, too, but the stress up to it is not something I handle well. Even if I had never left the clothing store, had never done Figure 8 or started FATASS, I would still be an activist. I probably affected as many people

through my years at Says Who? as I have through the zine, it is just a different group of people.

**In this fight for fat rights there can be many different approaches. Some are small, quiet and subtle, others are loud, big and strong, and there is a need for everything in between as well.**

Being fat means being visible, so take advantage of the fact that people will notice you and what you say about being fat. If by being active and out spoken about loving your body along with being non-judgmental of others encourages people to rethink their judgments and myths of what fat people are, then you are an activist. Whether you are refusing to discuss dieting/food; not accepting fat bashing, walking down the street with pride or riding your bike, all of these things can spark a movement towards acceptance in another person.

There are lots of ways to contribute to this revolution. There is no need for any of us to disqualify ourselves. Every person is needed in this war. You don't have to write a book or zine, work at an event or lead a workshop. Although those things are needed and I am very grateful to the ones who can provide such options, there are so many other ways you can participate. **Your words, skills and talents are desperately wanted. All voices are needed. That is the only way people will be able to hear our roar across the land!**



# Everyday Acts of Fat Activism

Here is a small list of things you can do everyday that support yourself and fat equality

- ∞ Mention your fat – there is nothing to be ashamed of, nothing to apologize for, you can let people know that you are aware of your size and fine with it.
- ∞ Take up space unapologetically - don't worry about being bigger, make it clear that you need a different chair, a larger robe.
- ∞ Stop waiting to lose weight to enjoy your life. What are you waiting to do? Do it now.
- ∞ Speak up when someone else is put down.
- ∞ Don't identify your worth by what you ate that day.
- ∞ Don't comment on a person's weight loss or gain, don't say thank you if someone asks if you have lost weight.
- ∞ Don't participate in making food a moral issue.
- ∞ Write emails to fat bashing companies.
- ∞ Use comment cards or email to tell a restaurant that is not fat accessible. Some people may not realize that their chairs or booths are excluding people.
- ∞ Don't laugh at fat jokes
- ∞ Reconsider the images of men and women that you have around the house, are any of them fat? Do any of them look like you?
- ∞ Organize a support group to do something you are intimidated to do: hiking, swimming, salsa dancing

# **Fat Girl Anime!**



## **An interview with anime artist Sarah Perry**

**Tell me about what made you want to draw chubby anime?**

I'd been drawing anime-style art since I was twelve, but, as per the anime aesthetic, my characters were always VERY tall and thin, and I actually (and this is really sad!) considered a drawing of a larger sized character to be less beautiful to look at! It wasn't until recently that I realized the discrepancy; it was like I was ashamed to draw characters that looked like me. Why should that be? The anime style is all about exaggeration and glorifying physical extremes (huge hair, huge eyes), why shouldn't that translate to physical size as well?

**What has changed for you since you have been drawing your characters fat?**

I am starting to see my body as a work of art! Being able to look at myself in the mirror and use myself as a reference for my drawings is an amazingly empowering thing. Before, my body was just kind of a box for my mind and hands, something that I would never, ever think of putting on paper because of what I perceived to be aesthetic flaws. What I had to do was just stand back, look at my body from a technical standpoint and try to recreate, on paper, what I saw. I drew the "sinful" rolls and the roundness and the wide hips and all I thought about was making them look the way they look in real life. And when I was through, and I had a drawing of a genuinely fat woman who looked like me, I realized how

much I liked it. And, in turn, I realized how much I liked what I used for reference, i.e., myself. I am aesthetically pleasing. I am worth drawing. I am worth looking at, really LOOKING at. And so is every other fat woman out there.

**Are there ever any fat anime characters? Are they ever the heroes or heroines?**



I have seen a few fat male characters (there's one in Naruto and one in Digimon). They aren't generally the main characters; usually they are supporting protagonists. In general, they are good-hearted (usually very kind and gentle, and often lovers of children and animals... and cake), a bit silly, sometimes perceived as simple, though not always. What I notice a lot of, too, is that fat male characters are very strong.

I really haven't seen any fat female characters in anime, though, and this is a little discouraging!

**How have other anime fans reacted?**

They like it! One of my friends is a big anime fan (she's seen many, many more series than I have) and she thinks it's great. I think anime fans notice the absence of full-figured (or even regular-sized) women and girls in anime and would definitely be open to more realistically-proportioned characters.

**Is there any story about the cover girl?**

She is still in the prototype stage; but she is definitely a very strong, capable, kick-ass super heroine.



To catch up with Sarah you can reach her at <http://renatamcfarland.livejournal.com>

# BIG MOUTH

say it loud!  
say it proud!

Sharing resources, networking, positive role models, skill sharing, inspiration, connecting: these are the tools a revolution. Here are some very highly recommended books, zines, sites and other stuff to get you going.

## Resources

**Living XL** – [livingxl.com](http://livingxl.com) – this is a new catalog that was launched just this year by the parent company Casual Male XL. This catalog is a very exciting thing! In one place you can find fold up camping chairs, sleeping bags, step stools, scales, towels, life vests, bike gear, tons of basic things that are hard to find big enough or sturdy enough.

**VoluptuArt** - [voluptuart.com](http://voluptuart.com) – a collection of art and gifts that will help you celebrate your body. Statues, mugs, boxes and all things Fat!So?, including Marilyn Wann's beautifully handmade Yay! scales! I believe this is the only place that carries them. Stand on the scale and be given a body-loving compliment instead of your weight. Now that is a good way to start the day!

**Super Sized Cycles** – [supersizedcycles.com](http://supersizedcycles.com) – Plus-size bicycles and tricycles made for the larger body. They even have electric bicycles for when you hit that killer hill! Lots of info here about riding as a large person, bikes show weight capacity and there are clothes, helmets and everything you need to hit the pavement.

## Communities

**Bellies are Beautiful** – [belliesarebeautiful.com](http://belliesarebeautiful.com) - An online community gallery dedicated to positive body image for all people! You can browse the belly self-portraits and send in one of your own. Rejoice in the love and diversity of the belly.

**Fatshionista Live Journal Community** – Some people sign up for a blog on Live Journal just so they can post on Fatshionista. Fatshionista is a community that was sent up so Live Journal users could post about plus size clothes and fashion, however the very active blog community has quickly become a full fledge online fat positive site and a wonderful resource. Although, most of the talk is fashion, the members of Fatshionista will post about anything that has to do with being fat, clothes, body image and politics. And the community is always ready with a good answer and an encouraging word.

## Blogs

**Shapely Prose** – <http://kateharding.net/> - the blog of Chicago writer/editor, Kate Harding. Kate writes some snappy copy about fat politics, fashion, doing yoga, and many other things. Her blog seems to be getting a lot of attention lately, and for good reason.

**JunkFood Science** - <http://junkfoodscience.blogspot.com/> - an important blog written by the incredible ally Sandy Szwarc. Sandy is a registered nurse and records the truth about food and health, debunking myths and scams. Bookmark this site!

**POLY  
POLY**

**Thunder  
thighs**

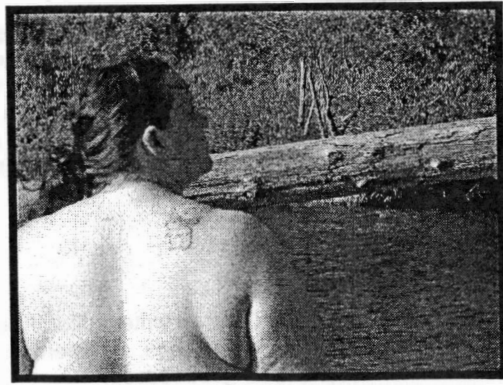
**MY  
body is none of  
YOUR  
business**

**Yes, there is  
THUNDER  
in these thighs.**

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## Take It – It's My Body!

A zine about fighting fat hatred in life; in the world



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[queensizerevolution@yahoo.com](mailto:queensizerevolution@yahoo.com)



# INSPIRATION IS EVERYWHERE!

An excerpt from Pattie Thomas's powerful essay  
"10 Things I am Tired of Discussing."

...We need to stop wasting time deciding which fat person is "really" being oppressed. Discussions about who has it worse in any forum leads to infighting and people feeling the need to justify who they are. They only justification that is required is from those who practice bigotry.

I'll probably say this 150 times in this series, but the way to fight stigma is to confront those who practice bigotry, not by justifying or mitigating any characteristics of anyone who is being stigmatized.

Instead of saying "we are not lazy"—we need to say "stop putting people in groups and declaring that some people are lazy by the way they look."

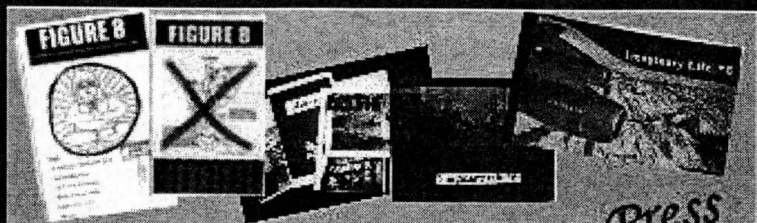
Instead of saying "we are healthy"—we need to say "stop deciding who is healthy and who is not healthy by setting up arbitrary criteria and then declaring that some people are unhealthy by the way they look."

Instead of saying "we are beautiful"—we need to say "stop creating such narrow standards of beauty that most people feel ugly."

Instead of saying "we are good"—we need to say "stop deciding the morality of others on the basis of how they look."

We have nothing to justify. It is bigotry that must change and trying to prove ourselves to that bigotry is a lost cause. We are human beings. All we are asking is that other human beings understand that to decide on the basis of appearances that someone else is less than human is wrong-headed and destructive.

*Pattie Thomas is the author of [Taking Up Space](#). You can read more from this essay and learn about her book at [www.fattiepatties.blogspot.com](http://www.fattiepatties.blogspot.com)*



*dreaming about Pony Boy Press*

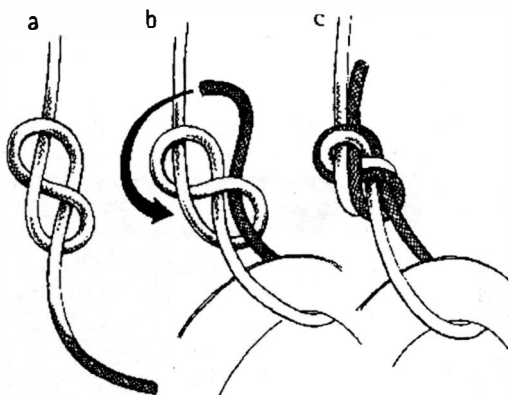


[www.ponyboypress.com](http://www.ponyboypress.com)

*zines, crafts,*

*confessions, obsessions*

*see the shop, read the blog*



Thanks for picking up this copy of Figure 8!

All issues of Figure 8 are still available and you can find them on my website along with the other zines I make. There are also many zines available at microcosm Publishing ([www.microcosmpublishing.com](http://www.microcosmpublishing.com)) and Parcell Press ([www.parcellpress.com](http://www.parcellpress.com)). Please visit these distros, they have great stuff!

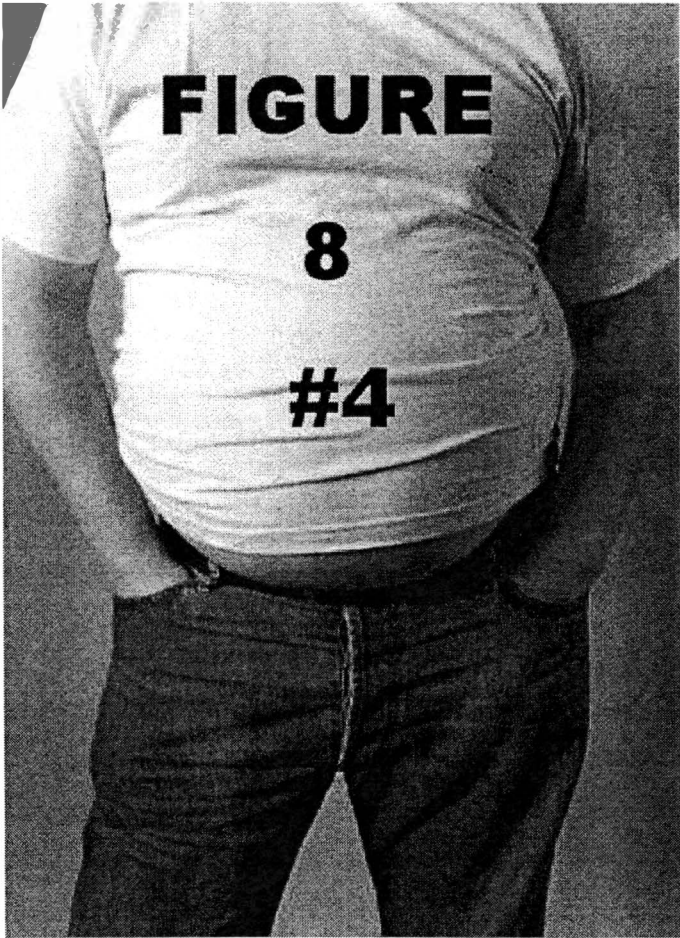
You will also find in my shop lots of crafts; like magnets, gocco printed housewares and project planning journals along with what ever else I have been making. And, hey, you can read my shop blog, too! Please do drop by.

Thanks a bunch to steve for all the inspiration and editing help.

You can email me at [ponyboypress@yahoo.com](mailto:ponyboypress@yahoo.com)

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FIGURE 8 #4 KRISSEY DURDEN © 2007



**FIGURE**

**8**

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