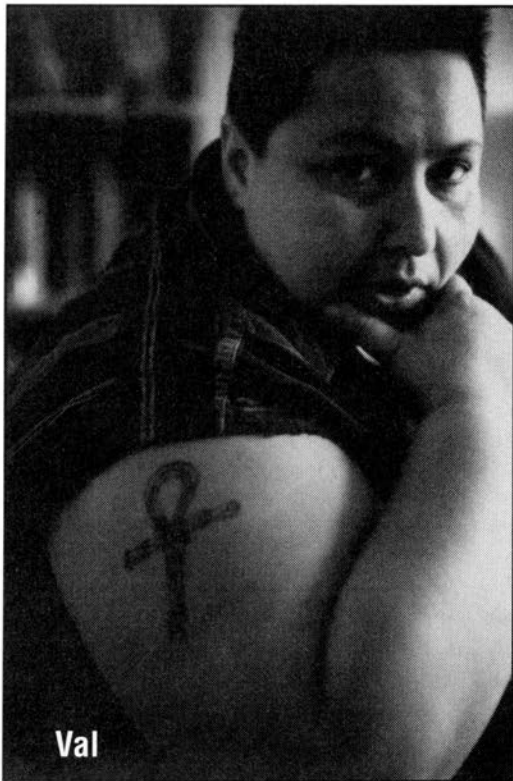


Issue

Survey

How do you feel the dyke community treats you as a fat dyke?



Val

- Hmmm. OK, most of the time, but I don't get hassled a lot for my size anyway—I'm pretty out there. A certain amount of disdain, and I don't get asked to dance a lot in bars/at dances.
- It's my experience that some women are incredibly fat positive about my fat but at the same time moaning about their nonexistent saddlebags. I loathe this type of hypocrisy. But, hatred is internalized—when Kate Moss is shoved down our throats.
- When I was in the community in another town 7 years ago, I often felt invisible or that I was perceived as anathematic or a clown-like figure.
- There's a dyke community? I hadn't noticed. The self-aware gay/lesbian "communities" are so splintered and nasty toward each other. There is little tolerance for genuine diversity.

•Most of the time, I think I get treated OK. There are a lot of women who like fat women. I'm still working through my own fat phobia.

•I certainly feel more accepted, although rarely sexy, but I feel that there are large women who have chosen the lesbian community over the straight or bi- one because they can fit in better, find friendship and love and don't have to make excuses.

•The San Francisco/Berkeley Communities are great. Size is not an issue. In other cities I feel I am treated poorly.

•Some treat me like I'm a bad disease they might catch. Some treat me pityingly. Others treat me like I'm just another dyke. Some celebrate my size.

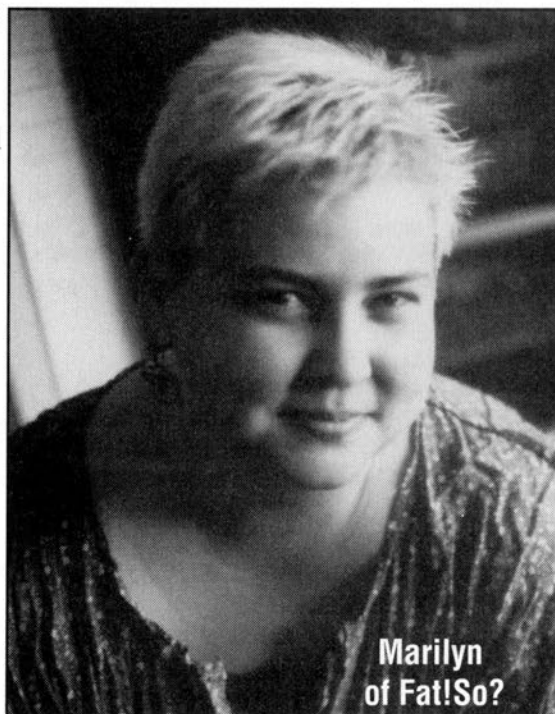
•The community is pretty good to me, but most of my interactions are on-line where my appearance is simply my on-line persona. I've definitely had some negative experiences at Pride and so on where skinny dykes have looked right through me.

•The white-girl community is quick to act pretty much the same throughout the states, in my experience. I have had my size and butch persona viewed as one, so women often comment about when they first saw me they thought I was "big and scary" or that I'd hurt them. They'd tell me after being introduced in a group social scene, "you're really sweet" and they'd feel silly for their assumption. I'm tired of having to coddle these smaller women, that no, I'm not gonna eat them, or bite them, or hurt them. Unless of course they ask me real nice.

•Dykes treat me better than straight women who treat me better than gay men who treat me better than most straight men, in general. Bi men and women are the best, maybe because the bi movement is just beginning and bi people still get so much crap from gay & straight groups. Transgendered women & men are very nice to me, as a fat dyke—maybe for the same reason.

•i feel like someone who is (and has to be) acknowledged as a powerful person in my community—I am outspoken & a hard worker. I have been out as a fat liberationist for so long that most don't make their "I have to diet" comments around me any more, and most don't act like I'd be a better person if i were just smaller. But I know others are still treated this way.

•It's hard to say. I guess some superficial dykes don't come on to me. (I don't know. I really don't.) Some "stylish dykes" don't ask me to dance. I guess I'm not really sure. I think



Marilyn
of Fat!So?

some beautiful fat girls don't want me to be their girlfriend because they want a skinny dyke to balance out their large size. Screw them. They're stupid.

- It depends. I feel more accepted amongst older dykes. Young club dykes feel like high school.
- Myself, I feel like the dyke community here in Portland,

Oregon generally ignores my weight (for better or for worse). I've seen some really positive responses to fat dykes in other areas. At last year's gay pride parade in Seattle there was a great

roar of cheers for the fat dykes float. The crowd loved their chant of "We're FAT. We're CUTE. We RECRUIT!" And my fatgirlfriend and I have gotten a lot of positive attention (well, at least NOT negative attention) at parades in Chicago and San Francisco...people always seem to want to take our picture (we're pretty sure it is because we're fat...at least that is how we've interpreted this phenomenon). But here in Portland, well, we just haven't noticed any good or bad responses.

- With more positive attention than the straight world, i.e., I am treated more like a real person and not just a FAT woman. More valued sexually, as well. With contempt—still second-best to someone with a "great" body, or as someone to whom slim dykes can (and do) feel superior. With shame—being fat is still something to be "embarrassed" about, and other dykes feel so oppressively awkward about it they wish you'd shut up & go away
- Well, in the S/M community, I feel accepted, even valued more highly for my size (more padding=easier to hit). Being big was more of an issue in places where the dykes are more closeted, like St. Louis or Vermont. It's as if being fat was too obvious, like being butch. If you didn't fit the mold of boyish sportsdyke or svelte femme, then you were a threat.
- Um, probably as not nearly attractive as a not-fat dyke. I don't get cruised, that's for sure. And a LOT of skinny dykes say stuff, like "I'm so fat!" to my FACE and don't even realize that I outweigh them by at least 75-100 lbs. or if they DO realize it, they sure as fuck don't show it.

- Good when it comes time for helping out with the shitwork that needs to be done but as far as acknowledging me as a fat dyke not too great.
- We're tolerated.
- My answer to that is it would depend on which dyke community you are talking about. There are wide variations across the country and one can't anticipate anything for sure in a new town. What I can say about the Bay area is that there is a greater consciousness and better treatment of fat dykes than anywhere else I know of, although it's far from perfect. There is a lot of out, visible support of fat dykes, but there are also a lot of dykes who harbor the same prejudices as the rest of the population, including fat dykes who have internalized the societal messages. I'd say that the overt oppression is less in our community than in most places. Still, as a fat dyke I don't feel particularly comfortable at larger events where most of the dykes are not fat. While many in this community still harbor negative attitudes about fat dykes, at least in general they keep their mouths shut about it. That's something, but I still ain't satisfied.
- Unsure as I'm just now entering this community. I, however, anticipate more rejection than acceptance. Maybe I've been conditioned by the media/society to expect this response?
- I don't feel it's a very big issue with other lesbians. I mean in general, I don't mean specific women. There have certainly been times when I've felt negative reactions from individuals, but not from the community in general. I used to be fairly slender, up until about 6 years ago, when I put on a lot of weight at once. I don't feel it's made any difference at all in my ability to feel accepted and included in the lesbian community. If anything, I have an easier time relating to people now than I used to - though I don't think this has anything to do with my size. I'm just in a better place emotionally. And that's a much more important factor in how I get treated than my size, I think.
- Some reject me. Some accept me. Just like any other community. ✨