

# Issue Survey

***Have you had  
negative experiences  
in the dyke  
community about  
your body size?***



- Several women told me they found me attractive, but none were interested in dating or being more than friends.

- Lesbians are socialized in many cultures growing up. They have the same basic attitudes as other women, mainly fat-phobic.

- Not directly, but the old "no fats" or the more recent pc version, "weight proportional to height" (like whose isn't????) in personal ads irks me.

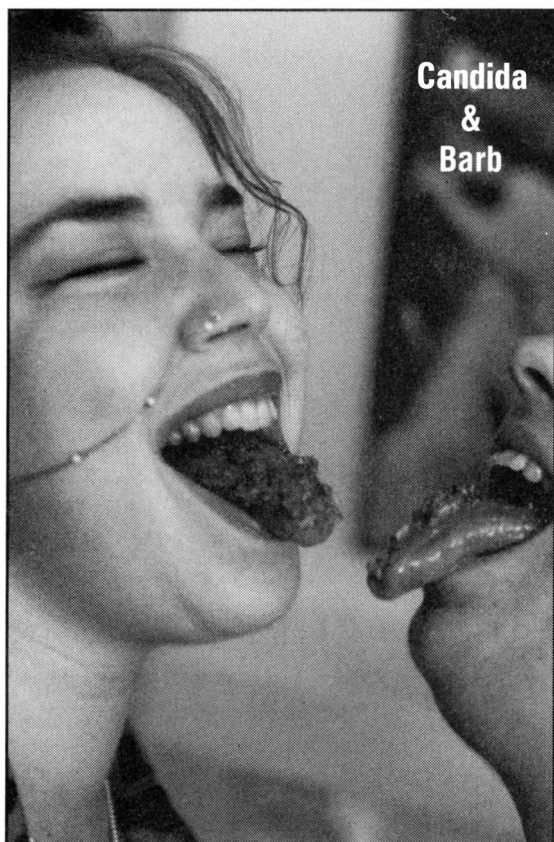
- Yes. Fat-phobia galore.

- In the lesbian community, as everywhere, there are individuals who are insensitive and feel that I as a large woman should do something about my size.

- I'm starting to see lots of personal ads for women looking for trim, fit, weight-proportional-to-height bullshit—just like the gay men.

- Dykes like to be my friend but not my lover. I'm a great friend and lover, but most of them close themselves off from the possibility of being my lover. That's the hardest and most negative experience I have in the dyke community any more. And some in the fat dyke groups seem to be intimidated by my aura of power and self-esteem, self-acceptance, & so they sometimes keep their distance too. The scene: a typical Saturday night at a typical movie theater. The players: a group of people who got together to see a movie. The action: I slid down the row and took my seat between two friends. The seats were a bit tight but I'd never thought about it before. That is until the extremely thin dyke on my left complained, "This is my armrest. God, I feel like I'm suffocating the way you're hanging in my space." I could find no reasonable way NOT to use the arm rest or to move my body "out of her space" except by wordlessly switching seats with someone else in the group. She then had the audacity to complain that I didn't want to sit next to her. AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAGH!!

- Some dykes just don't get it, and are really unsupportive or even bitchy when you bring up incidents or everyday conditions of the anti-fat social reality. That they can't seriously take our "whining" about being dismissed or targeted as inhuman fat blobs indicates, to me, that they don't take fat people and our experiences seriously as real human beings—let alone consider us a worthwhile topic of consideration for social change. I think, quite frankly, some dykes just wish we'd go away. We are an eyesore and a visible reminder to them of everything the straight world assumes about lesbians and that, as women, they fear about themselves.



**Candida  
&  
Barb**

- Yes. There are some women who find my size offensive, and they've said so.
- Some women say stuff like, "I'll go with you to that gym; wanna go?" or "I lost 5 lbs. on this diet; wanna try it?" Some even say helpful things like, "Do you think you might eat more than you need out of depression?" or "I'm concerned about your heart/knees/self-esteem." Some are rude enough to say, "God, she's fat, she's really out of control" about another woman, to me. But I think those dykes (and straight women), when they say stupid, or irrelevant things about my body or my fat sisters' bodies, are usually reacting out of a fat-phobia that is rooted in self-hatred. So, we need to work on all forms of oppression, and not divide ourselves into less-power
- Of course, but it's subtle like, "I feel so fat," or "Do I look fat in this?" The usual ignorant shit.
- Oh, you know, going to a dyke event and not being able to fit in the seats. Having to listen to thin dykes moan about their bodies and their diets. Fat-hatred in the personal ads and fat-phobics who responded to my ad.
- The publisher of On Our Backs refused to publish erotic photos of me and another woman because "dykes don't want to see fat women." Oh really!
- Hmmmm, not great outstanding ones, just the usual frustrations. ✱

• Every time I go to an event where dykes are talking about dieting, where diet food (i.e. sodas) are being served, where t-shirts are not available for women over a certain size (which always includes me), where seats are not provided that I can fit into, or dyke businesses where the aisles are so narrow that I knock things over every time I try to move through the store, or where people who are described as beautiful are always the thin ones, these are all times I experience negativity in the dyke community. I don't need to be told I'm a big fat slob and don't belong. It's enough for dykes to create events and spaces that don't allow me the same access that thin or average dykes have to show me I'm not supposed to be there. I also feel the same way about dykes supporting events that are not specifically dyke events when access is not available to me as a fat woman (or to disabled dykes as well).

• Umm, only in L.A. where skinny, blond, waspy types behaved as though I was beneath contempt. I'm hurt each time I'm invited to a picnic where the only seating is at tables with fixed benches which allow too little space between bench and table for my body to fit; each time I'm invited to a party where there are no sturdy armless chairs to sit in.

• Not really. The only problem is in mail-order catalogs—great t-shirts with slogans often come only up to XL

• Not recently. Years ago I used to get that "if you cared about yourself you'd diet" crap from acquaintances. Lots of good support for fat wimmen in SF/EBay, relatively speaking.



**Max**