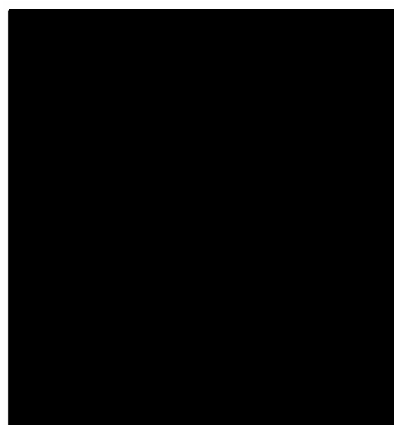


# What do you dislike about being FAT?

Society. Just about everything. The mainstream cultural attitudes. Other people's judgments and advice.



Not being able to look down and easily see my own clit. Also my tits are too big. And it's hard to find good butch clothing in my sizes.

Not being able to ride a lot of rollercoasters, not fitting right on planes or in movie theater seats.

Lots. Negative attention, attention period! Sometimes I want to be anonymous, walk around and observe. Not being able to buy clothes I like. More often than not, I

buy things that FIT. I have so much crap I hate and will probably never wear. I dislike hating my body. I dislike all the energy that struggle saps.

The feeling that people are looking at me, paying attention to what I eat. Not because I feel guilty, but because I don't like the attention.

Discrimination. Feeling awkward and clumsy. I feel unentitled to sex. I feel people judge me. Difficulty finding a girlfriend.

I dislike a lot of things about being fat. I dislike dealing with ignorant-fatphobic-insensitive-thinist-oppressive-bigoted people EVERY FUCKING DAY of my life! I dislike not being able to shop for clothes wherever I want for NO GOOD REASON! I dislike paying more for my clothes for NO GOOD REASON! I dislike constantly struggling to educate and/or ignore people who say stupid fatphobic and/or thinist remarks in my presence.

Not being able to buy clothes in most stores or to buy the clothes I like. Being considered unattractive by a huge percentage of the population. Not fitting into seats or tight spaces and having to turn sideways to go through turnstiles. Being stereotyped. Wondering what people are thinking when I eat ice cream in public.

I dislike that any health problem i have is linked by my health care workers to my size and i have to educate them every single time! I dislike that i can't buy the clothes, styles, colors that i love because they don't come in my size. I dislike that theater seats are often uncomfortably small, also

other seats (bus, train, plane, etc.) make me have to be closer to strangers than i prefer.

Not being able to fit in a booth at a restaurant. Feeling totally cramped on an airplane.

I used to dislike the treatment I received from society—the stares, the comments. Now I can handle the comments—I am wittier than most. My ex-girlfriend drew out my feminine side. I am glad I didn't grow up traditionally pretty. I've developed and interesting inner self.

Sometimes, it would be such a relief to disappear, to not be such a visible walking 'target' all the time for people to project their shit

onto every single day. There's also that lingering and ever-present desire to 'fit in' (literally) and be considered normal, not aberrant. For the most part, I'm really grateful I don't... And let's talk commodity. Women's sexual value = personal power in this society—definitely to my own personal sense of self-worth—and fat women have that much less sexual value than smaller women. It's fucked up, but I feel angry/bad about myself that

my body is less valued than other women's bodies, and that that translates somehow into 'less power.' At a deep level, I blame being fat. Also, I'm a raging fashion-addict, and my options for self-expression are fewer than for smaller women (though requiring perhaps more creativity?). Clothes are harder to come by, with less variety, not really built for REAL women's bodies, and because of the limited competition of providers, way too expensive.

That I feel uncomfortable in my clothes sometimes, that I get out of breath sooner than I think I should; that it's hard to find comfy clothes that I like that don't cost a fortune.

Not being able to get clothes that fit off the rack. Uncomfortable seats. Dirty looks at restaurants and in the supermarket.

The way people will look at you and turn away with a look of smug disgust on their faces. The way you're never asked to dance. The way clothes designers think all fat women can only dress like dowdy old ladies. Come on—give us some clothing selections!!!!

The thing I most dislike has mostly to do with other people's prejudice. I hate knowing that there are people out there who would think less of me because of my size. I have insecurities about social acceptability (in general), and I feel that being fat just makes the odds against me even greater. But this has more to do with other people's attitudes - if I lived in a fat-positive world, this would not be a problem.

I'd like to tuck my shirt in once in a while.

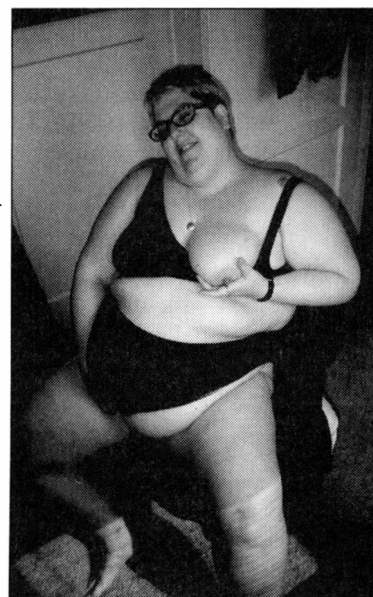
Not enough sexy clothes or clothes that fit in general.

Some problems I feel are intrinsic to being fat have to do with mobility. I used to love being physically active—riding my bike, taking long walks, going on hikes, swimming, etc. I still do all of these things, but they aren't as much fun, because it is much more difficult. Anything that is weight-intensive (where gravity plays a role), such as hiking, is much harder. I have to drag much more weight up that hill than I used to! So I have more limits now—I can't go as far, as high, or last as long as I used to. I know if I didn't have this limitation I would be much more active in the outdoors, and I miss that.

Internalized fat-phobic culture shit. The weariness of constantly being on guard for the words and actions of fat-phobes, the lack of clothing/shoe options smaller bodies have available, dealing with the medical and employment establishments.

I hate small tubs, chairs that break when I sit in 'em. I yell at skinny girls in the fat-girl stores to "get the fuck out." Also clothes are pricey and a bitch to find. Stupid men who yell shit out their cars passing by me. I hate turnstiles and theater seats. I hate it when I am rejected by a woman, and if I don't know 'em real well I can't help but feel it's cuz I'm fat, even if I'm told differently. I am pretty secure about my size, but it's still my Achilles heel sorta.

Sometimes I feel heavy, too big. If I gain 5 or 10 pounds I can't button my jeans. That sucks. I'd like to be 10 lbs. thinner. Feel a little too big in the belly right now.★



Pudge photo: J. Halbig



Sarah-Katherine Lewis of Pasty

Fat-phobia.

Other people's shit.

And the fact that I've internalized some of it.

# What do you like about being FAT?

My size!!! I feel powerful and immovable. As a woman, I've always been made to feel like I should shrink into the corner and take up less space; now that I'm comfortable with my body size, the very people who could once humiliate me are forced to be intimidated by me when I fight back.

I like the political education I get from it. It caused me to get hip about feminism earlier than if I was skinny. An almost universal hatred forced me to be strong. I found allies and wrote, made art, worked on loving my body (an on-going challenge). I like the filter it is. Some people, men and women, blow me off for fat—their loss. But, it's a lit-mus test for bigots. Love that.

I like big tits and big ass, curvy hips and meaty thighs, round face and soft skin. I love cleavage. I love to jiggle.

I'm soft. When I give my body to someone, I'm giving a lot. My breasts are very large (DD) and beautiful. Round. Cantaloupes.

I like my fat. I like being large, powerful, sensuous, heavy, sexy, intimidating, inviting, enfolding, warm, extremely soft, able to stare down big creeps, able to take up a lot of room and annoy people, able to be a tender pillow for a sad friend, or a soft playground for an exploring lover. I love being in bed with a lover, and being fat. As a fat woman, I am agile, graceful, and very flexible! I have almost 300 pounds on my side. I like annoying the health workers who think I should have high blood pressure, a dangerously fast heartbeat, diabetes, and a high cholesterol level. (Ha!)

I like exasperating the predictions of my mother's skinny family members that I would be loveless, jobless and in poor health at 30, when I fact I have the best lover(s), the best sex, the best job and the best health of my life—and my health, at least, is better than any of theirs!

I like posing for incredible photos, painting life-size full-body portraits, walking around my apartment topless with the shades up! I like being the fattest person on the beach, the only one who can go into the ocean without a wetsuit!

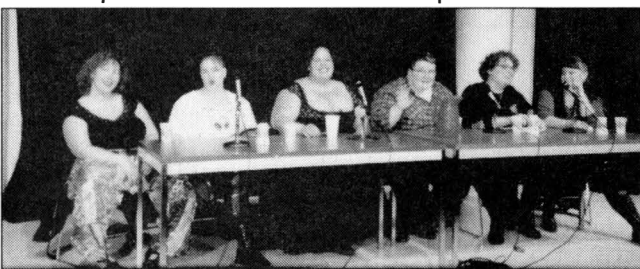
I don't get cold very easily—lots of insulation. My lap is very comfortable for kids and cats to sit on. I feel that my size makes me less vulnerable. And best of all, I and totally buoyant! When swimming, I don't even have to tread water to stay afloat, while my skinny friends have to kick and paddle constantly. Ha, ha!

I like being cuddly. I am comfortable in taking up my space. I like to wrap my big loving self around a friend or lover and give 'em that big warm smother love of a fat girl all soft-like.

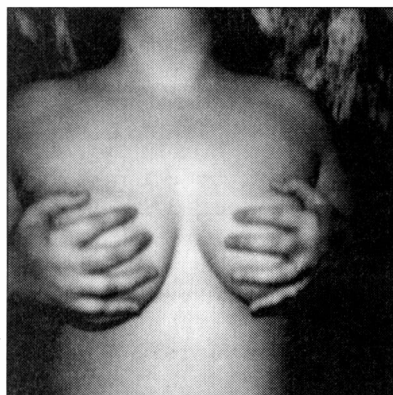
This is HARD...I'm not supposed to like anything about it, right? I guess I like that I can't ever just \*blend in.\*

The freedom of letting my body decide what size it's going to be. Not worrying about constant diets and where and what I can eat. I'm also a big scary bitch!

**Fat GiRL speaks to students at UC Santa Cruz photo: Laura Johnston**



My power within. Not a whole lot.



Stephanie M. photo: JAC

I'm warm, and men don't fuck with me on the street any more. I take up space, and people stay farther away from me.

I love my body. I am soft, warm, and curvy. I *feel* like the embodiment of pleasure and luxury!

I like taking up space. I like my softness and that I can be a soft pillow for those I care for. I like how some clothes drape on me. I like intimidating some people (especially the obnoxious ones who make fun of me and other fat women). I like being substantial.

Being and looking stronger...Although skinny women have a lot of 'privilege,' I like that I'm not treated as someone who is frail or weak. That I take up space in the world means I demand it. Also, having big curves feels like a big part of my femininity.

My presence is certainly known when I enter a room (I'm told that I look rather foreboding). Also, I'm kinda tall too so that adds to the presence.

I stay warm! I'm really curvy and I think that's sexy. I'm not usually worried someone's being friendly *just* cause they'd like to fuck me.

I like a lot of things about being fat. I like taking up space. I like being/acting proud to be fat to our society's dismay. I like saving on hot water bills (because I use less water in the tub than my skinny neighbors). I like feeling powerful and intimidating. I float really well. I like saying "Biggest butt gets the front seat," and not getting any argument.

Feeling strong & grounded. Being able to get flogged a lot. Feeling powerful and nurturing. Having a lover grab or bite into my flesh & swoon.



Syndee Branton

Non-conformity. Never needing a two-ply jacket. Resonating strength. Well, it gives me something to work on. It's important to have a cause so I have something to live for. It's not enough being an aging, disabled, working-class, Jewish Lesbian. Being fat gives me a movement to work in. It gives me an opportunity to be stared at in public places, made fun of on television, pointed out on the street by small children, berated by my mother, seen as stupid, lazy, and out of control. On the other hand, I like that I am allowing myself to be all that I can be, that I'm not torturing myself to fit into society's unreasonable mold. I like being big and powerful. I like the way I feel when I touch myself. I like to think of myself as an Orca, huge and beautiful and graceful.

I think I like being large because, when I was young, I was always very small. Not only short, but very skinny, and very young-looking. People always thought I was much younger than I was, and didn't take me seriously. Plus I got teased and ridiculed a lot for being so tiny. So I now have a feeling of satisfaction about being a person of substance. At last, I'm not smaller than everyone around me!

Lots of "presence". No one doubts I'm there. People listen. I don't get hassled on the street like my thin friends do. I intimidate men (heh, heh, heh).

The sense of having a large enough body to contain all that is within my mind and spirit. I feel I'm just the right size for who I am—and that's BIG. ★



Amanda Hayman

You, too can have your picture in Fat GiRL...just send it our way! Special thanks to all the friendly galz pictured here who sent in their mugs!

There is more of me for tattooing and piercing.