

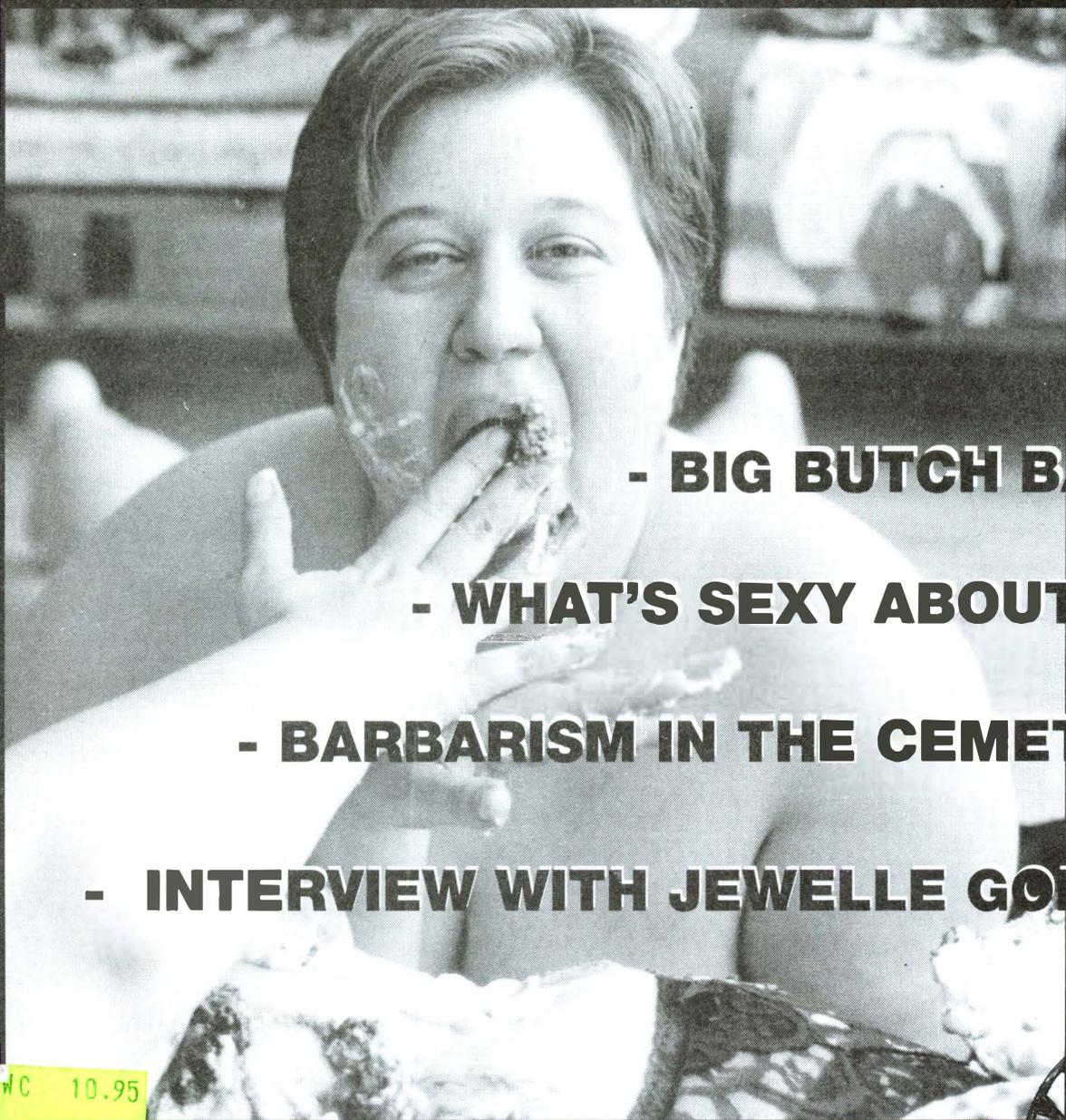
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FATGiRL



#4

A Zine for Fat Dykes and the Women Who Want Them



- **BIG BUTCH BABES**

- **WHAT'S SEXY ABOUT FAT**

- **BARBARISM IN THE CEMETERY**

- **INTERVIEW WITH JEWELLE GOMEZ**

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STORIES
RECIPES
LETTERS
PRANKS
RESOURCES
& more !



FAT DYKE

"TOOLS FOR BETTER LIVING. YEAH"



MARKERS

STICKERS



SELF-LOVE !

Dear Me,
I think you are the coolest babe in town. I love and worship you.
Love me

ACTION

-MAX AIRBORNE- 1995



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Letters

Thanks, Praises, etc.

Hi:

I came across the *Fat Girl* webpage via the Lambda page at Echony.com, my home site. Anyway, I checked it out because I'm fat, and how could I resist a zine called *Fat Girl*? Looks good, so congratulations. I am straight, but your site made me kinda wish I wasn't. Anyway, best of luck. Every little bit of fat-positive media out there is a step in the right direction.

N K S
New York

Yo. *FaT GiRL* is without a doubt the sexiest motherfucking magazine I have ever seen. I haven't had time to read each issue cover to cover yet, but so far I totally dug:

All the pictures—I knew I liked size but I didn't know pictures of naked fat girls could be so much sexier than naked skinny girls. The shaving shots, the ice cream cone shots, the Val and Stephanie spread, Crystal in the tub, Katherine Van De Water Taylor—you even have the best Body M ad.

The interview with Max and Elizabeth—the pictures are hot and adorable and the story is good and strong and funny; Max's "over what weight?" killed me. "Fat Fucking Bitch." "Real Mujeres Have Pansas." "Racism and Fat Hatred." The "Hey you're fat—Hey you're dead" cartoon...

I am blown a-way.

Be beefy.

T
San Francisco, CA

Dear *Fat Girl*,

I almost missed issue #2, so please subscribe me so that doesn't happen again. I love your (maga)zine and especially got off on Lea Arellano's reply to Katherine (in #3)! My consciousness goes up a notch every time I read you. And yes, I'm over 18 (Actually I'm 62 and that's a whole other issue!). Thanks for being there and putting in all the work it must take to get out each

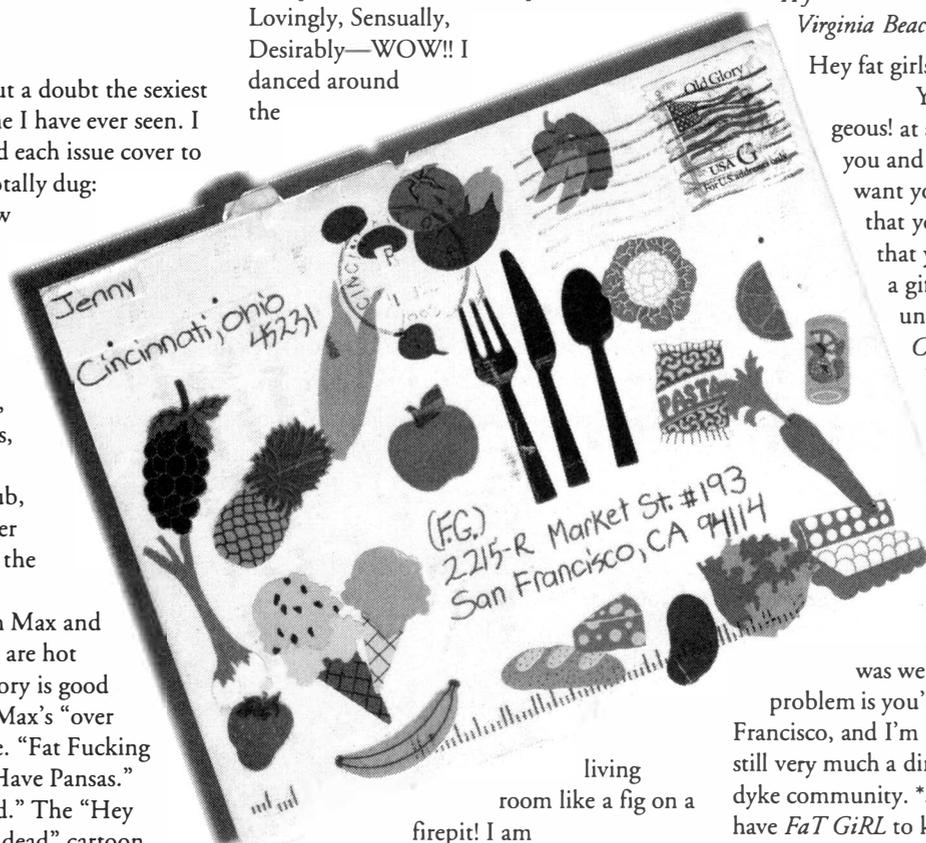
issue of *Fat Girl*.

C B
Berkeley, CA

Dear *Fat Girl* Collective,

I bought my first issue (#3) of *Fat Girl* zine today. It is like a dream come true. It is like Fantasy Realized. It IS the essence of Healing! THANK YOU!!!

As a Fat Dyke, I've endured years of my own self-hatred, as well as society's. To see the epitome of *who I am* presented Lovingly, Sensually, Desirably—WOW!! I danced around the



living room like a fig on a firepit! I am still devouring every word of text, drinking in every image, every photo. THIS is the publication I've been waiting for all my life! My check for a subscription and one of those incredible *Fat Girl* t-shirts will be on its way to you in a couple of weeks. Keep it Coming! This zine is water for the thirsty soul. Now, if I can just meet a woman like one of these here on page ...

MH
Denver, CO

Fat Girl is the best (especially since Sassy switched ownership). Thanks for keeping your S/M slant. Since fat girls, S/M girls, and dyke girls all get under-represented, see-

ing the combination of all three together in one magazine is orgasmic, literally! How could anyone not devour *Fat Girl* cover to cover? And each issue just gets better and better—on behalf of the dykes of Cincinnati, thank you!

Jenny
Cincinnati, OH

Dear *Fat Girl* Staff:

I love your magazine. I read it from cover to cover. I was smiling the whole time. It is nice to see, read and gather info from other beautiful women such as myself. Keep up the good work. If you're ever in Virginia Beach, VA. Stop in. Just EMAIL ME.

Lots of luck & love

AJ
Virginia Beach, VA

Hey fat girls,

You are great! grand! gorgeous! at a sex toy party i found you and bought you, and now i want you all ... i'm so delighted that your fat selves exist and that you're doing this rag; it is a gift to the whole fucking universe!

C
Vermont

Okay, after months of scraping together my extra pennies, I finally went to my favorite neighborhood queer bookstore to buy a copy of *FaT GiRL*...all I can say is it

was well worth the wait. Only

problem is you're all out in San Francisco, and I'm in Atlanta, where fat is still very much a dirty word, especially in the dyke community. *sigh* Well, at least I'll have *FaT GiRL* to keep me company on those lonely nights.

CW
Atlanta, GA

Dear Fat Girls,

I bought issue #3 of your zine as a birthday present for my lover, Susan. After we read it aloud and ogled the pictures I was the one to get a present! She made love to my big juicy butt and came while squeezing my ample flesh. It was thrilling! Her adoration of my 300+ lb. body truly sexualizes all my body parts. I am her Goddess. Thanks for turning up the heat here in Hot'lanta!

NA
Atlanta, GA

FAT GIRL

Fat Girl is a zine for and about fat dykes. Fat Girl seeks to create a broad-based dialogue that both challenges and informs our notions of fat dyke identity. We encourage dialogue based on our lived experiences as fat dykes, recognizing that our lives are various and multifaceted. Fat Girl is produced by an eclectic collective of fat dykes. We come in all shapes and sizes; from diverse ethnic cultures and different class backgrounds.

Fat Girl is a political act.
We want your participation!

Fat Girl is April Miller, Barbarism, Bertha Pearl, Candida Albicans Royale, Laura Johnston, Lisa, Max Airborne, Oso and Selena. Logo by Fish.

Contributors to this issue: A.M. Salt, Bear, Betty Rose Dudley, Bo, Carol Squires, Cathie Dunsford, Charlene, Chrystos, Cuirdyke & MsDaddy's girl, Drew, Elana Dykewomon, Evie Leder, Fish, Hannah, Jane Segal, Jewelle Gomez, Judith Stein, Lanetta, Laurie Avocado, Lea Arellano, Lori Selke, Margaret Sloane-Hunter, Margo Mercedes Rivera, Maria Cimino, Marilyn Kalman, Marilyn Schneider, Miriam Berg, Mr. Anon, Serafina, Sondra Solo, Sooty, Vicki Markin, Zanne.

Cover: photo by V. Markin & J. Segal.
Back cover: Barbarism by Laura Johnston.

Special thanks: Cath Thompson, Mary Frank, Jo, Ellen, Fish, Aileen Wuornos, Deva, Jess, Anna, Lee, Atlanta, Terrehon, Judy, Jennifer Brooks, Women's Cancer Resource Center, Regis, Old Wives' Tales, Junkyard, Marilyn Wann, fatdykes@apocalypse.org, Malt & Farmer.

Subscriptions: Send \$20/4 issues, \$5/sample & a signed age statement to the address below.

Stores: Our terms are 60/40, you pay shipping. Get Fat Girl direct or from Last Gasp or Fine Print.

Ads: Business cards: \$40, quarter page: \$75, half page: \$150. Send your ads ready to scan. We can shrink to fit. Call about our design rates.

Submissions: We accept original work by women that's relevant to fat dykes. Please include a S.A.S.E. with your stuff. We like written submissions that are typed & in a simple font (so we can scan it). We are always on the lookout for art!!! *Don't ever send us your original copy of anything.* Please include a brief bio with your stuff and model releases for your photos (we can send you these if you don't have them).

Deadline for #5 (out 2/96) is December 15, 1995.

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Fat Girl is not to be sold to minors.

Fat Girl, 2215-R Market St. #193
San Francisco, CA 94114
(415) 567-6757 or 550-7202,

airborne@sirius.com or boot@sirius.com

This issue dedicated with love to all the Fat Dykes who did not survive. You are missed.

is a political act

Hello dear Max,

Wow, thanks for sending the massive *Fat Girl* in trade offering for my puny 98-lb. weaking zine. Of course I'll trade any day of the damn year! I have admired *Fat Girl* from afar, borrowing friends' copies and the like, but the \$5 price has kept me from buying it for myself. I find your work a welcome and necessary addition. I am a woman who wants fat dykes in my life, on my newsstand, and wherever the hell else they want to be!

N.
Pittsburgh, PA

Dear *Fat Girl*,

I would like to give all the staff a big "THANK YOU!". Not only is your magazine so hot, it made me realize that fat womyn can have hot, sexy bods and do everything the others do. Surprise! As a freshly out dyke I assumed I was going to be celibate. *Fat Girl* let me see I don't have to go by society's stereotypical groups. I'm a fat dyke and it's ok to get fucked, fuck, and whatever else I wanna do. If nobody likes it then I'll just sit on their scrawny ass!! Go FAT GIRLS of all kinds! Another sister has just joined the ranks!

Fat and mad in Florida,
KK

Greetings from the East Coast! I am writing to say thank you so much for doing such a fabulous job with the zine. I was able to see it at a meeting in DC for fat dykes. I loved it! As well, many others did too. Congratulations!

M
Hyattsville, MD

Hi,

Judy here checking in. It is so weird that I got your letter along with *Fat Girl*. I have wanted to read a copy for a long time but never actually sent for one. I put out 2 half-size zines with a friend in '93 & 3 full-size zines in '94-'95. Enclosed are my two latest zines. I hope ya like 'em. My latest zine called TOP will be done July 15 so let me know and I'll send one on. I loved *Fat Girl*. So many things in my head. I AM A FABULOUS FAT DYKE. So glad to see womyn I could relate to, especially pics of pierced / S/M womyn. It made me feel so powerful as I know that fat girls are as smart, beautiful & sexy as anyone (if not more). Keep up the good work.

FUCK SHIT UP.

In sisterhood,
Judy R
Worcester, MA

Beyond self-hatred

Dear FaT GiRLs,

Wow! Once again you've moved me to new heights and widths. You've inspired and excited me and even provoked thoughts, some of which I can't seem to get out of my head.

One of the most provoking articles in FG #3 was "D and L," the interview by Candida. I really appreciated their openness and making themselves so vulnerable to us!

The part of the interview that I keep thinking about is where D starts out talking about how much harder it is to have a fat lover because of the "shit" she gets on the street. She goes on about how despite our "great fat politics ... most of us still feel like shit ...".

I want to tell you that having great fat politics and loving yourself are NOT mutually exclusive. In fact, I believe that they are synergistic; they can build on each other.

As a fat dyke who has had a series of monogamies, I had never felt real safety in a relationship until 13 years ago, when I got involved with another fat dyke. My experience on the street with her is often hard because of harrassment, but it is also made easier by knowing that I have a constant ally at my side. So when some asshole prick yells something from a car, it feels great (and powerful) to hear both of our voices yelling back. And when the meddlesome lady in the bakery says something

continues...



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A tight squeeze, but fat-friendly!

about how "you really don't need that, do you dear?" and I'm too stunned to think of a quick reply, girlfriend usually has a reply at the tip of her tongue. The world has become an easier place because of our being together.

And because of our being together, I'm able to have a really BIG, full life. I'm able to love myself fiercely. I'm able to enjoy everything about my fat (and her fat) and our fat life. I'm a much happier, healthier, stronger fat woman for having a fat girlfriend. This relationship does nothing but empower me. I'm also lucky to know both fat lesbians with thin girlfriends and single fat dykes who love themselves tremendously.

Now, before you think, "Yeah, right! What planet does this dyke live on?" let me say this. If there were no fat hatred, I'd have a perfect life. I would have everything I want (you know, no bigotry, clothes that fit, etc.). But I still have to leave my house every day, just like everybody else. And I still absorb this culture on a daily basis. And yes, I have moments of self-doubt. As D says, "This is what has manifested by what we live in, and everything we've learned growing up."

But I think we owe it to ourselves to push through those moments to the other side where we can truly love who we are. One of my goals as a fat dyke, for myself and other fat women, is to not feel like shit; to get to a place where we keep the fat hatred outside and as far away as possible. To me, saying you feel like shit only keeps the hatred inside and then the culture wins.

It made me sad to read D's statements. I've come across similar sentiment in other FG stories and interviews. I'm not suggesting we not deal with self-hatred. I'm only suggesting we acknowledge it and push forward to self-love.

There's a poem by Marge Piercy that I like a lot with this great line: "live as if you liked yourself, and it may happen."

Thanks again for all your hard work, and this fabulous 'zine.

Sincerely,
Meridith Lawrence
Cambridge, MA

Fat Dyke Life in Australia

Hello wonderful fat girls.

I was thrilled when I received your first issue sent in our exchange, two days ago (it was issue No. 3). We have absolutely nothing like FaT GiRL in Australia, not even some decent discussion at this stage. About two years ago there were a series of dinners for fat dykes where fat dykes would go to each others houses and eat together. You couldn't go unless you were a certain weight or more. This is a strange concept to me because we are always struggling against the way we are defined by our weight/size. I

heard about the dinners too late but I also heard that skinny dykes were very pissed off that some fat dykes had got together without them.

I am going to give *FaT GiRL* a rave review in *Lesbiana* and hope it is OK to reproduce the cover of number 3 to illustrate the review. Once upon a time I got into serious trouble for publishing a front cover of a woman in a harness and leather cap. My main reason for publishing was the lack of images of women other than skinny ones. She was a meaty, medium sized woman with large breasts. I really believe that one of the reasons why publishing the image gave me so much flack was because the cover girl didn't conform to the skinny "norm" that is expected of us.

I was also really excited to see that you publish an Internet resources list. We do that also (began with

the last issue). Many of the ones in your No.3 were the ones I will include in *Lesbiana* no. 38 (I think it's 38). I'm going to give your WWW site a mention also. Oh goddess, I am so pleased to have made contact with you.

Love and kisses from one fat dyke to some others,

S
Australia

A Little Lesson in Communication

Fat Girl,

You guys are sooo bad at communication. Case in point:

Ordered and paid for #3 and #4 on June 5. Received #3 promptly on June 16. Did not include any word on the fate of #4. I assumed late publication, but as of this date [July 11] still no communication from you about any delay. A short note from you would have negated any reason to write this letter.

You say you need support to help keep publishing this zine through subscription for future issues. How do you get my support?

*Send already-paid-for issue #4.

*Improve your communication with me. If you can put a zine in the mail, then surely it could include a short informal note. At this point, before I subscribe, I would like to receive issue #4 and perhaps a small token of your recognition that improved communication is the key to your continued existence. How? Perhaps a photo of your leader, Barbarism, stretched face down across a favorite studio spanking table, bared and learning, through vigorous spanking, how to improve communication. I also believe that a spankee should be properly restrained in order to feel the full impact of the lesson.

My level of support? A double subscription with no liability on your part should you be unable to produce all the issues implied -OR- a single subscription plus a fee to cover the expenses of providing the above photo. Would I like you to respond? Yes. Do I think you will respond? No.

KK

Mt. Prospect, IL

FG responds: *Thanks for your support, K. But Barbarism doesn't work cheap. In fact, it takes a lot of good sushi, chocolate, hunan eggplant, and custom-ordered metal-and-petroleum-product lingerie to put Barb in the mood to pose for such a shot, not counting the expense of all the pyrotechnics, the airfare for importing suitable disposable stud butch tops, and*



most of all, her valuable time. Although Barb may well appreciate your footing the bill for such an expenditure, practicality says: we'll take the double subscription money.

Since you were so generous in sharing your fine communication skills with us, we've decided that to improve relations with our voracious readers, we'll make a couple of things more prominent in future issues: the publication date, and a statement that we come out (knock on wood) every four months, at least so far.

Awaiting your response and \$40 check (which we're a little miffed not to have received yet).

the *FaT GiRL* Editorial Collective

K responds: Dear *Fat Girl* Editorial Collective,

Quite a mouthful. Thanks for your prompt response to my query. I have looked and looked. Still have not found any reference to an Oct. date for issue #4. OK by me though, I will wait.

If I misread your statement of publication date, then you misread my offer to double the subscription price. That was put forth with a certain spanking shot in mind.

After reading one of your earlier issues,

I didn't think producing the shot would be such a big deal. I found a shot from a "Fat Girl Benefit" at a place called Muff Dive taken by Laura Johnston (I believe a member of your group). It quite plainly showed a spanking booth with Candida (another member of your group) spanking someone named Julie.

It certainly didn't look posed. The hand on Julie's back seemed to keep her the way Candida desired. The doubled-up strap in Candida's hand seems to be quite sternly administering the desired lesson to Julie's body. Sorry if I misread your lifestyle.

Why Barbarism? Thought she was some kind of editor in chief. Would hate to impact her or any of your valuable time for just a spanking by Candida. sorry I misread that your interests are not necessarily in step with what you publish. How silly of me.

Interestingly, your comment as to being miffed almost sounds like a hint that I consider being a spankee. I'm quite fat, you know.

Thoughtfully yours,

KK

Mt. Prospect, IL

Big, Bi & En Large

Hello FaT GiRLs!

Thanks to Sarah-Katherine for making big beautiful BI women visible! It seems too often that bi women are tolerated but still not accepted in many lesbian communities, mainly for the old myths that bi women are "not lesbian enough," among other things. Trans (MTF) women are shut out as well because of myths and stereotypes of trans' experiences.

However, i would like to make one liddle clarification to Sarah-Katherine: Please do not paint all bi women with the same brush. i am bi, and i call myself a dyke (or queer) because it is more inclusive of all non-exclusively straight women/people than "lesbian" or "bi". Am i not worthy of the word "dyke" because i am bi? Remember, heterosexist assholes do not stop and ask you if you are a lesbian or bi before they bash/harrass you! (Perhaps in future issues FG will do a round table discussion on this and other bi issues; les and bi women together, not just les women deciding what to do about the bi women...)

continues...

Elana Dykewomon's

new book of poems

Nothing Will Be As Sweet As The Taste

contains her hit singles

***"the real fat womon poems" &
"big belly on the road from reno"***

among a ton of scorching work exploring love, sex and politics

**Don't miss the first new book in over ten years
from this terrific dyke, Jewish, fat activist!**

Even her mother wrote (true quote):

"few poets are so honest, unpretentious but wonderfully lyrical."

**So check it out — if your local women's bookstore doesn't
have it, get them to order it (from Inland) today!**

Anyway, regarding the *Women en Large* "scandal": i think the term "courageous" is much, MUCH worse than "outrageous"! "Courageous" implies that all fat women are asexual freaks and that April, just by being her BEAUTIFUL self and expressing her sexuality, is being "courageous"! Ms. Notkin needs to work on her internalized oppression a little! Maybe a lot! She should just leave in "outrageous" and leave it at that, because no matter how many times/places you change it, and no matter how much you apologize for it, people will still remember it was there in the first place. Big, Bi and Fucking Beautiful, *wr*

P.S. The photos of Katherine in FG#3 are sooo cute!



Where We Aren't

hey Max,

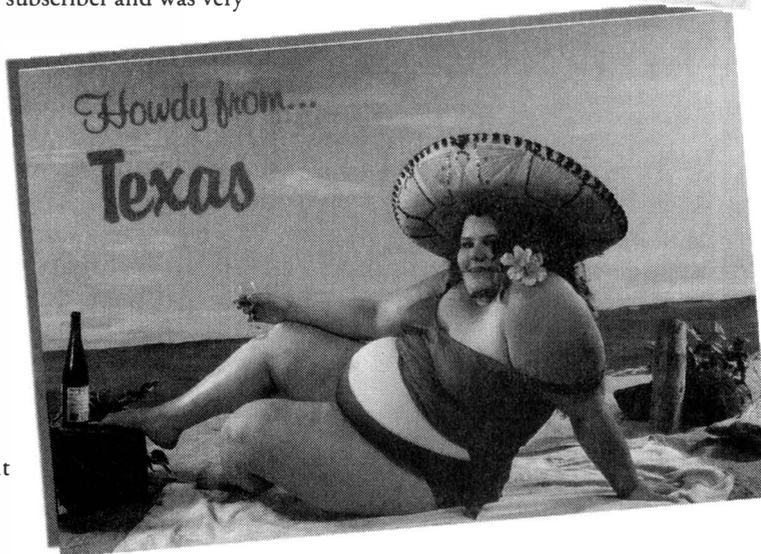
I am a *Fat Girl* subscriber and was very pleased to see your challenge in *Girlfriends* (see page 59). I thought the answer was slippery and noncommittal. I too will get my \$.02 in one of these days, between emails. Thank you for your hard work on *Fat Girl*. I can't read *Radiance* anymore, it pales in comparison and is a bit too whiney now that I am experiencing a 'zine that exudes true fat power!
Sue

Celebrate All Sizes

Hey *FaT GiRL!*

Word UP from a skinny bi-dyke who love, love, LOVES your zine! A friend turned me on to it, and boy did you grrrls open my eyes! Those words and pics are sexy, rockin' and ALIVE! Now I understand the whys and wherefors of being a fat woman in ways I never did, and even how similar—in a way—it is to being dissed sometimes for my size.

The fact is, YOU CAN'T HELP



YOUR SIZE!

Sometimes I hafta explain to people that yes, I eat three healthy meals a day, as should we all, and I still can't help being small, 'coz I was "born that way" ... now I want to add, "just like bigger women - we have little control over body SIZE." I mean, notice how women have vastly differently sized tits? Well, the same goes for the rest of our bodies, too!

We need to accept and celebrate ALL sizes! (from "petite" to "supersized")

Count on me as a sistah!

Big hugs from a Small-Boned Chick,

KF

Ed., *Bi Girl World*

P.S. Dieting SUX—no one should do it! I mean, depriving yourself of food nutrition and pleasure? Does not make sense!

P.P.S. Please don't get down on (non-dieting) small women like myself—like you, this is my natural shape, and there ain't much I can do about it!

Starving a Fat Dog Daily

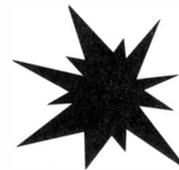
Dear Fat Girls,

I read your second issue and loved it. Please sign me up for a subscription. I am over 21 and so is my IQ. I have enclosed a check with a small donation. You girls deserve it.

A short comment—My vet was always on my back to get me to starve my luscious Fat Dog, Daily. I followed his suggestions and put poor Daily on diet food. It only took me one week to change my mind (read—open my eyes). One week watching her go from a happy, healthy, and thriving dog to a depressed and tired one. Why should these "radical" ideas apply only to me? She eats much less than my skinny dog, Tucker, anyway. The vet is now an ex-vet. All you girls out there, don't starve your furry friends! They deserve to be fat girls, too.

SH

Kirkland, WA



FaT GiRL letters policy

We love receiving letters from our women readers. Consent to publish your letter is assumed unless you specify otherwise. Send letters, art, submissions, gifts and money to:

**Fat Girl, 2215-R Market, #193
San Francisco, CA 94114.**

And don't forget, you can send us email at airborne@sirius.com.

We do not print letters or submissions from men. Please remember: *Fat Girl* is a zine for fat dykes and the women who want them. ✨

Happy Birthday!

Over a year ago we set out to publish a zine for the fat dyke community—the synergy of which has carried us farther than we ever imagined. Recently we found ourselves mentioned in *Time* and *The Nation*. Our web site has been getting an average of 1000 hits a day. Putting it all into perspective is a task in itself. When we stop to think about all the daily work it takes to make each issue happen—it can be quite frightening. The thing that keeps us going is all the incredible positive feedback we get (plus a little break this summer helped check our crotchety-ness and impending burnout).

The real reason that FaT GiRL continues to happen is the support we get from our readers and friends and the incredible submissions that have been pouring in. Sometimes you do get what you wish for. I like to be proven right...there *are* brilliant sexy fat dykes out there with some amazing creative visions to share.

For each of us in the collective, this year has been quite a journey. Collective living ain't easy, as some of you know, but somehow we've managed to get this far and still have a good laugh at each meeting despite ourselves. Hard as it is to admit, we're spreading ourselves a little thin. We desperately need some fat dykes who are interested in working with us—especially helping with distribution, advertising, and photography. We're committed to having a diverse group, so if you don't walk just like us don't be afraid to give us a holler.

The fat girl roundtables have been important features in each of our issues—we've hoped to provide a place where fat dykes who come from differing experiences could get together and talk about the hard issues that our community faces, collectively and as individuals. We've liked the roundtables so far, but feel they lack the depth of interaction we want to see happening. We'd like to take a new approach. Instead of us top-down instituting and arranging a round-

table we hope that you will be inspired to dialogue with the people you trust on the burning issues that are inspiring you. And if you do, that you will submit the discussions to us for publication. Contact us if this rocks your boat. We are open to suggestions, as long as you have energy to help us make them happen.

Publishing FaT GiRL continues to be a political act. Things are crazy politically—in a heated, frenzied way—on international, national and local levels. Everybody is fighting over resources and control. The war on our bodies—our bodies as commodities, as points of control—is ongoing. We welcome your diatribes and insights and actions, so keep 'em coming and keep 'em on their toes.

Many of us have dealt with death this year, in all its shocking and daily ways. Grief has been closely tied to my journey with FaT GiRL. Two days away from shipping our first issue, while doing layout I heard that my grandmother who raised me died. I worked straight through and finished the zine. I chose not to go back to NY for the funeral because I didn't want to deal with my family's fat and queer hatred, while I carried the joy of what I was doing with FaT GiRL and the pain and loss I felt in losing my first love and beloved Grammy. If it weren't for her, I don't think I would have ever ventured into starting FaT GiRL. She shared with me her capacity for love, and had faith in me that was at times blind and self-centered, but was the kind of faith I could run with and change the world. I've spent all year working through the fog of that loss and with the new places my life with FaT GiRL has taken me. So it seemed only appropriate to find myself traipsing naked through the Oakland cemetery, coming home to my body and sex and death while being photographed for FaT GiRL. Beginning a new year and coming full circle, dealing with the underbelly of where our lives can take us—be they places of joy or perversity or confusion or pain. —*Barbarism*

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MANIPULATIONS

The **S/A/M/E** Debate

Dear Fat Girl,

I am writing to you because I am having a hard time with the S/M aspect of your erotica, and I would really appreciate a dialogue about it with you and your readers. I would also like you to know, right off, that I have very much enjoyed your articles and stories, ideas and arts, recipes, and much of your photography.

I awaited your first issue with happy anticipation because what I am discovering in my 30's is that I adore my body, my body is my temple, it is just as beautiful as everyone else's, my sexuality is outrageous, and that there are other fat women out there who feel the same way. It was my hope that Fat Girl would get that message out to the millions of women who don't know their own beauty and value, and I am grateful for the ways in which I see you doing that.

When the first issue came out featuring S/M photos, I was shocked, as I suppose, was the intent. I went through my own private check-in around appreciating diversity, and realizing that everyone has their own truth, pleasure, pain, reasons, etc., and reminded myself of the importance of being exposed to as many varieties of expression as possible. I thought it was an impactful first impression, and a look at one facet of our community, but I did not expect it to be the typical or regular focus. I do not think S/M represents the sexuality of most lesbians.

With this last issue, I feel the need to speak up. It makes me very sad that so many people find the need for sex to be painful in order for it to be pleasurable. This is not entertainment for me, it is tragedy. There are those who would argue that enactment of violent sexual scenarios can be in some way healing for survivors of non-consensual sexual violence. I do not profess to know if that is true. I do know that people perceive pain in many different ways, and what is pain for one is not for another.

I am an alternative medical practitioner who has found that close to 80% of the women I treat are survivors of childhood, physical, sexual, or ritual abuse. I am not unfamiliar with these issues, and I can tell you that there are a whole lot of ways that I find my patients healing themselves which involve safety and building trust, learning about soft, gentle, and loving ways to touch and be touched, discovering that they can feel sensations of pleasure without having to numb-out physically or emotionally, and which hopefully will enable them to experience the joy and ecstasy of sexuality as an expression of love (a whole other topic worthy of mention).

I see many of your photographs promoting the infliction of pain, terror, violence, and domination. I consider this sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. Though it may be perfectly acceptable for some, for others it is very upsetting. My question is, what does this have to do with being Lesbian, Fat, or Female? If I wanted to see this kind of

material I would subscribe to a sadomasochistic magazine. If this is what you want to be, that is your choice. You will lose me as a reader, and possibly lose others as well. We would ALL lose though, because otherwise I think you have a great thing going, and we need a good forum for lesbians, and fat people, to feel strong, heard, beautiful, erotic, and unified.

I hope that you will publish this letter, partly because I would really like to hear others' responses, but mostly because I would like for you to hear how other readers feel on the topic of S/M in your publication.

Wishing you all the best.

Sincerely,

S J

Santa Cruz, CA

Candida's reply:

"What does S/M have to do with being Lesbian, Fat and Female?"

Well, what does being a lesbian have to do with being fat and female? Meaning, if it's part of your sexuality, and you're fat and female, guess what? It's relevant. It's yours. And most likely, it's all quite interconnected. If dildos don't do it for you, fine. If you instead prefer to indulge in patchouli oil, hot chili oil, chainsaws, Hello Kitty, a Magic Wand, or the Bee Gees while you get off, more power (pardon the pun) to you. None of those things do it for me, personally; in fact, I admit

to finding some of them repulsive. But it seems pretty egocentric to ask what someone's sexual kinks have to do with their identities as fat lesbians. Or do you not see a diverse sexuality as being relevant to a zine for fat dykes and the women who want them?

Being sexual—blatantly, openly, courageously sexual—is a revolutionary act for fat people.

Fat people are not seen much at all in most media (other than in the before pictures of weight loss ads), let alone seen as sexually active or even (gasp)

sexually desirable. We publish what we find hot, and what our contributors find hot enough to send our way: bondage, needles, domination, intelligence, thick-framed glasses, fisting, cleavage, and ice cream of numerous flavors, including vanilla. Send us your picture of fat sexual delight, and unless it involves minors or biological men, chances are we'll print it.

Part of looking at the diversity of fat sexuality is opening your eyes; it doesn't mean that you'll necessarily like what you see.

Selena's reply:

The main reason FG publishes S/M erotica is because we're perverts and we think it's hot and sexy. Shocking folks is not a goal. I'm not going to argue that S/M represents the sexuality of most lesbians, and FG has never claimed that it does. But it's here in the zine to stay because it does represent the sexuality of many lesbians and other

It makes me very sad that so many people find the need for sex to be painful in order for it to be pleasurable. This is not entertainment for me, it is tragedy.

dykes, including the women who work so hard to put FG out there.

It may be news to many of our readers that FG does not have huge numbers of erotic photo-layout submissions and modeling prospects to wade through. If you want to see more vanilla/non-S/M sex in the zine, send us your photos! Put your ass where your mouth is! The wider the variety of smut we have, the better. But there's no way that we're going to not print stuff because its too kinky. If you wanted to see S/M photos of fat women you'd look at S/M magazine? There are few enough to choose from, only one is dyke-oriented, and none of them show fat women. If you want a magazine that doesn't show S/M, you could pick up one of the many lesbian publications that share your views on the subject. Or start your own zine, and exclude everyone you damn well please, but it's absurd to ask a bunch of women who don't share your prejudices to reflect them in their work.

I think this is partly about the difference between a magazine and a zine. A magazine is a product designed to appeal to a target audience and make money.

If that's what we were about it would make a lot of sense to ditch the S/M content, along with the more explicit or "hardcore" sex. We could increase our distribution and

appeal to more people. There are a lot of lesbians out there who are offended by any representation of sex at all—if we dropped the sex out of FG entirely we might be able to sell to them, too. But FG is a zine, and a zine is more personal than that. FG does not presently make money or pay those of us that work on it. Our pay is making a zine that we love, filling a gap in available publications, and touching like-minded souls. The more women we reach, the more women who find FG and like it, the better. The inclusion of S/M sex is not accidental or incidental to what we are doing here. It's included because lots of us are S/M dykes, and we're not about to marginalize ourselves. But FG is not intended to be an exclusively S/M oriented publication—I hope (and believe) that we can appeal to open-minded dykes of various sexualities. If our smut doesn't turn you on, turn the page.

As for the specific comments that you make about S/M—they contain a tiring number of unfounded assumptions and contradictory statements. (Which partially accounts for my somewhat sharp tone here.) I'm not even going to try to address all of them. Suffice it to say that S/M, like other kinds of sex, can be loving, caring, and full of trust and intimacy, and those of us who have sex that way are no more insecure, numbed-out, or incapable of experiencing pleasure than anyone else.

But I figure I'm probably not the first to tell you that, and I'm not interested in the same old lesbian sex wars debate. The level of discourse in that argument has been disappointingly low. Your characterization of S/M sexuality as sexual exploitation and abuse but yet "perfectly acceptable for some" is a case in point. Exploitation and abuse are never acceptable, and consent is the line that divides them from acceptable behavior. Fucking someone without her consent is rape. Hitting someone without her consent is abuse. But I don't believe that hitting is inherently abusive any more than fucking is.

As for what S/M has to do with being fat or being a dyke—it's something that some fat dykes do, just like cooking, vanilla sex, or buying clothes. Therefore they all have a place in FaTGIRL.

The inclusion of S/M sex is not accidental or incidental to what we are doing here. It's included because lots of us are S/M dykes, and we're not about to marginalize ourselves.

I, too, would like to see FG be a place for "lesbians" (and bi women) "and fat people to feel strong, heard, beautiful, erotic, and unified," but unity gained through exclusion would be an illusion, and people who can only feel strong and heard when they don't have to listen to others might as well pick up a different magazine.

April's reply:

I work on FaT GiRL because I feel the work is important. My hope is for the 'zine to be both a refuge and a catalyst, for every fat dyke to look inside and, somewhere, see herself reflected. I hope we will inspire, encourage and challenge our readers and—by our very existence—change the world.

I believe we can achieve these goals only by telling the truth about ourselves and our lives.

I would not presume to estimate the number of fat dykes who share my experiences or my desires, but when I write a piece I know that my responsibility is to be as honest and true to my life and my sexuality as I can. I am a bi-racial, fat, femme, S/M dyke. All of these characteristics inform every part of my life. All of these characteristics are as important to me as breathing.

I think it is unfortunate that you see only pain and terror in photos where others see deeply intimate, loving and joyous sexual relationships. I think it is *tragic* that you are considering cutting yourself off from FaT GiRL simply because we will continue to publish expressions of sexuality which challenge your own.

FaT GiRL is committed to producing a high-quality 'zine representing the broadest possible range of fat dyke realities and sexualities. If you feel that your sexuality is underrepresented it is your responsibility to change the situation.

Our next submission deadline is December 15, 1995.★



JOANNE



Joanne deMichele, *December 21, 1973 - August 29, 1995*

Contrary to common belief, Joanne didn't overdose on heroin. She died detoxing. Joanne went to S.F. General Hospital and was refused compassionate withdrawal meds.

"Kicking's a bitch," she was told. Joanne waited in the lobby of General Hospital over twenty-four hours the week before she was actually admitted. Admitted with active TB, a bladder infection, a sprained ankle, dehydration, malnutrition, and heroin withdrawals. General was incompassionate and rude towards her and her roommates, trying to get her out of there as soon as possible. She was in overnight, then released. Her vital signs weren't intact. She couldn't walk—not even with a cane or crutches—she was so weak.

Her roommates carried her home, she laid on the couch and died that morning.

Joanne is dead due to General's negligence and disregard to a fat, user, dyke, whore's life. They killed her. If they had admitted their neglect she might have been able to get better care elsewhere. Instead, they pretended they were doing the best they could.

I went to General and talked to a head nurse interested in more humane and responsible care for the poor. Of Joanne's story she said she'd heard a hundred of the same. "It's all about health care reform. The medical field has become free enterprise and the care is getting shittier." She said to vote (*whatever*) and to write letters to editors, which, although I'm pessimistic about, I encourage people to do. That's Joanne's story. I wish there was a way I could say this neglect will never happen again.

If you have any ideas or want more information, call BACORR (415) 437-4032.—*Erica B.*

You cruised me in the airport on the way back from the March on Washington. Sly smile, sparkling

brown eyes, strong shoulders for days, and a cute defiant gait. You wanted to move from Seattle to San Francisco. Soon after, I was helping you and your mom move into our flat. Life couldn't have been more thrilling. So much to choose from, you couldn't make a decision.

A message scrawled on a scrap of paper amidst dirty dishes. Joanne died. Call....

Things I will remember. Your endless questions always putting me on the spot and how you'd listen outside my bedroom door to me having sex with that sly smile on your face. Watching you watch all the girls. Swapping fat girl clothes and stories. Dressing up as horny housewives and playing truth or dare. Your way with words and the poems and endless letters you could write and I could never answer. How you hated your friends for being junkies and not listening. How cool it all seemed. All the beads you'd weave into strands of dancing color as vibrant as your laughter. Anger and missing you.

All the conversations you never finished. You choosing to survive and kick. No one listening. And then you're gone. Dead at 22? Fucking drugs and no money and no health care and if you're a fat working class sex worker dyke addict pervert nobody gives a flying fuck cause they are so afraid of being like you they can't take the time to know you.

—*Barbarism*

I almost didn't recognize her, the last time I saw JoAnne. I saw her from the back and recognized her shaggy purple hair, but the person standing on the corner of 16th and Mission was so much skinnier than she was. But then I hadn't seen her in a couple of months.

She turned her head—it was her. I yelled after her, "JoAnne!"



From *assassin child*, by Joanne deMichele

you will be the assassin child/ bringing water pistols filled with piss/ to theme parties in 1999.

we will be the Wild Children/ thinking in images/ hide and seeking./ we will be the Wild Children/ sharing superstition like penny candy/ pulling the pigtailed of our demons./ slitting our wrists to become blood sisters./ this world our school room./ these city streets our playground./ we will be the Wild Children/ unwanted, unwilling to play certain games./ swearing: cross my heart hope to die stick a needle in my eye!/ we will seek each other out for survival/ and find majic like bugs in each others greasy hair./ we will find majic in the darkened allies/ where the Wild Children are rumored to gather/ and scheme/ and spread.

you can be my terrorist/ and i will be your poet./ you will be unauthorized/ and i, undiscovered./ we will fill the walls of the president's bathrooms with threats of freedom; poetic terrorism./ we will watch our backs./ sharpen the knives on our tongues./ carry each other home on hopes that things can change/ and expectations of assassination.

She came toward me and we chit-chatted. She was on her way to get supplies for a party she and her roommates were having that evening; I should come. But I had other plans.

How are you doing? I asked in that tone of voice that meant, have you kicked yet? Of course she hadn't. I knew it from how thin she was—at least 60 pounds lighter than when we lived together—and how gaunt and gray her face was. Her eyes flicked about in that evasive way learned from being high.

Everyone keeps telling me how good I look that I've lost so much weight, she said almost bitterly, even people who know. I didn't know what to say; she didn't look good, but I could see how people whose measure of attractiveness was weight might think so, if they could ignore the gray skin and nervous eyes.

You should come by on your way home, I told her—I still have those books for you. I'd promised her some books that made a difference to me when I kicked: Ram Dass' *Grist for the Mill*, Aleister Crowley's nineteenth-century tale of kicking cocaine, and an inspiring biography, *Assata*. Yeah, maybe I'll be by later she said.

We hugged, a genuine hug, and each went our own way.

We shared vicarious lives, JoAnne and I. When she first moved to the City and was anxious for its realness, I told her tales of my life as a junkie in L.A. years ago. We sat on the back porch, smoking, and I shared my romantic view of heroin—the view few others were willing to admit, I thought. I was glad to have an audience that didn't share the judgmental attitude of most people. I told her how being high was like Sunday morning, everything was fine and you just didn't care. I told her how pathetic I became, letting slimy junk dealers feel me up so I could cop. I told her how sticking a needle in my arm was euphoric and *uuunph* like sex, penetration and all. I told her how I'd throw up, every single time: a quick nausea would build in my stomach a few minutes after shooting up and I'd go vomit neatly into the toilet, then relax into my high.

I told her how at one point, when I was still able to make that decision, that I'd considered stopping junk—but didn't because for the first time in my life I was losing weight and feeling good about how I looked. She shared how she'd gotten addicted to speed at age 12 or 13 for similar reasons, taking the usual route through diet pills, but managed somehow to quit cold turkey. She thought maybe that was why at almost 20 years old she still hadn't started her period.

I told her how we'd use needles over and over again until the metal tips broke off because there was no needle exchange back then—and how careful we tried to be about bleaching them every time. I told her how one time I almost OD'd—I actually turned blue but my friends revived me—because I'd had a glass of wine before junk. And how eventually I'd shoot almost anything—sleeping pills, whatever—just not to have to face wanting to die all the time, being disappointed every time I woke up to another day.

I told her how I'd been unable to live without it because I was suicidal—yet how in some ways it kept me alive, sedated me, and kept me from taking that final step. And how I'd been lucky, been able to

beat the odds and quit, thanks to a cushy country club rehab center courtesy of my white middle-class safety net (great health insurance). And how I'd done it here and there since then without getting myself re-addicted. And how it wasn't heroin, it was people's ignorant attitudes about it, that made it so socially stigmatizing and isolating.

I don't know what this all meant to her, but when she started shooting up I felt both responsible and secretly giddy. When her roommates found out and kicked her out, I felt protective of her and indignant of their assumptions that shooting up would make you steal from your friends and flake on the rent—after all, I had never stolen from my friends! I became her sometime drug counselor, defended her to our friends and kept trying to ignore the idea that this might be a "safe" way for me to use occasionally.

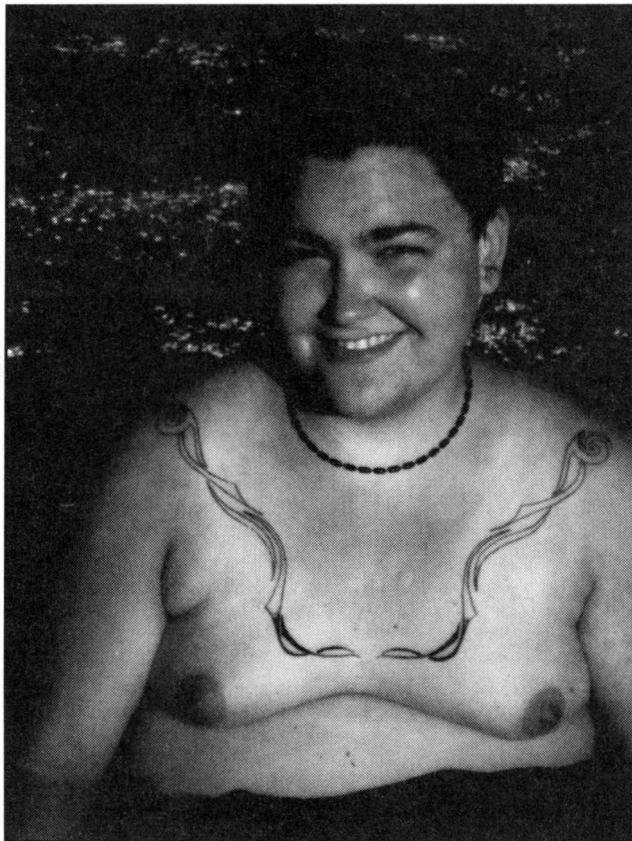
When it was obvious that she couldn't stop, I counseled her: move away from your junkie friends, go to meetings, try to get into a treatment program. I told her of my own experience playing with needles—at first I was afraid that doing S/M with sharp points would be a "trigger" for me, make me want to use; but after trying it, I found that it satisfied my needle lust, got me high in a much cleaner and purer way than junk, and safely channeled my self-destructive urges. Some naive part of me thought perhaps S/M could save JoAnne from addiction.

We did use together once; it was ugly. She had a hard time hitting a vein through her thick flesh so she poked again and again in frustration, leaving tiny spots of blood along her arm, before finally hitting. My big veins were easy, but I took too much and was nauseous and vomiting for several hours. That was the third or fourth time I'd had that experience at separate points in the past four years, and I realized that the only way heroin would ever be good for me again would be if I did it repeatedly—something I'm not willing to do, at least not until I win the lottery.

After that night, we met for lunch a couple of times and talked on the phone. Each time I shared my experience of getting clean with her and tried to give her real advice and help. At one lunch, she told me excitedly how she was making so many changes in her life to make it easier for her to quit: moving into a sober household of queer punks like herself, getting into therapy. Yeah, but when are you gonna quit? I asked. I know how hard it is, I told her, and anything that makes it easier is good, but you just gotta do it. I knew she wouldn't quit until she was good and ready. She tried a few times, even moving home to Seattle for a month at one point.

After I saw her that last time at 16th and Mission, I wondered to myself: if she would've been okay with her body image, might that've enabled her to quit? Maybe, like me, she'd kept doing it because she was losing weight—until she lost the ability to choose. Yeah, it's a lot more complex than that—but I remember being 19 and suicidal and feeling fat and ugly, and junk not only let me not care, but starved me skinny. Is it bulimia if you use heroin to throw up?

—Anonymous ★



Joanne

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO JOIN

DINNER HAS ENDED AND YOU ARE STUFFED WITH GOOD FOOD AND SPARKLING CONVERSATION. PERHAPS YOU THINK YOU ARE SATIATED.....BUT WAIT! YOUR PRESENCE IS REQUESTED IN THE NEXT ROOM.

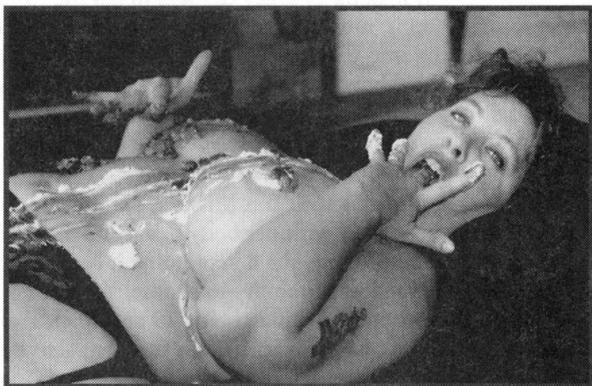
DESSERT IS BEING SERVED.

GRETA CHRISTINA'S FABULOUSLY DELICIOUS AND FRIGHTENINGLY EASY CHOCOLATE PIE

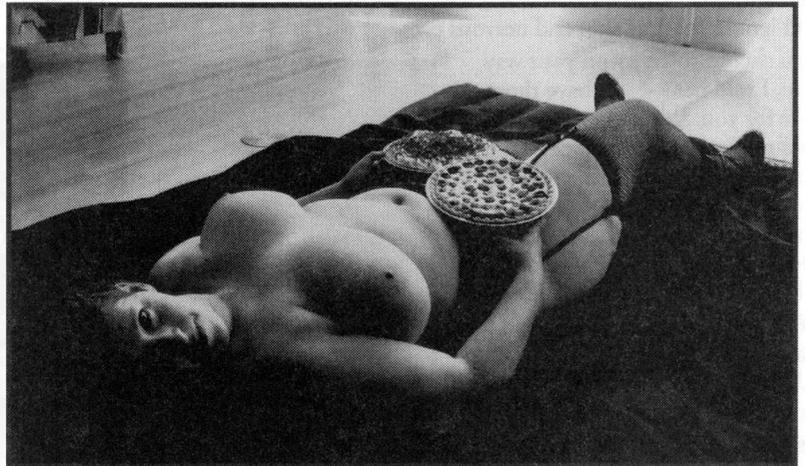
(This recipe gets done quicker than you can write the title.)

- 1 unbaked pie shell
- 1 stick butter
- 2 squares baking chocolate
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 3 Tablespoons evaporated milk
- 1 pint whipping cream

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Bake the pie shell for 5-10 minutes. Melt the butter and chocolate, remove from heat. In a mixing bowl, add all the ingredients except whipping cream. When well-mixed and smooth, pour into the pie shell. Bake for 30-35 minutes. While pie is baking whip the cream (you can add sugar if you want it sweeter). When pie is done and cooled, top with whipped cream and chocolate shavings.



Oooh that tastes sooo good . . . here's another:



I have three desserts for you . . . two are pictured . . . I hope you enjoy them as much as we did!

SELENA'S BLACKBERRY SOUR CREAM PIE

- Crust:
- 1/2 cup butter
 - 1 1/4 cups flour
 - 2 Tablespoons sour cream
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Cut butter into the flour till crumbly, add sour cream and salt. Make into a ball or pattie and refrigerate for one hour. Roll out dough onto a 9" pie pan. Poke the bottom and bake for 10-20 minutes, until slightly browned.

- Filling:
- 3-4 cups blackberries
 - 4 egg yolks
 - 1/2 cup sugar
 - 1/4 cup flour
 - 1/4 teaspoon salt
 - 3/4 cup sour cream

Mix everything except blackberries till smooth. Spread or pour half of the mixture onto the crust, put berries on top and cover with the rest of the mixture (don't overfill). Bake 40 minutes until set and lightly browned.

THE KITCHEN SLUT FOR DESSERT

UPSIDEDOWN CAKE

(This recipe came from Juana Lemos and Debbie Hughes, the pastry chefs of Greens, SF.)

Fruit:

Nectarines, peaches, apricots or plums — 4 to 6 medium, sliced with the skin on. Of course, you could also use pineapple, or berries are nice, or any mixture you'd like...

Caramel:

1/4 cup butter
2/3 cup sugar
Splash of rum or brandy (optional)

Melt butter and sugar in a 10" to 12" ovenproof saucepan, add a splash of liquor (optional) then remove from the heat. Place fruit on top and set aside. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Cake batter:

3 oz. butter, softened
1 cup plus 2 Tablespoons sugar
2 eggs
1 Tbsp. vanilla and/or 2 Tbsp. liquor

Cream the butter and sugar, add eggs one at a time, vanilla and/or liquor (optional). Set aside.

Sift together: 1/2 cup flour, 2 1/4 teaspoons baking powder, and 3/4 teaspoon salt

Set aside: 1/2 cup milk, 1/4 cup sour cream or creme fraiche and 1 cup Candy Spiced Nuts* chopped (recipe to follow).

Add half of the flour mixture to eggs; then add 1/4 cup milk, rest of the flour, then rest of the milk, mixing vigorously. Fold in sour cream or creme fraiche and the nuts. Pour the mixture over the fruit in the saucepan and bake for 1/2 hour to 40 minutes, till a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Take a knife around the edge of the pan, put plate on top . . . and turn it upside down, letting the caramel run down the sides.

Serve warm with vanilla ice cream.

***Have you had enuf? No? More?
Well the Kitchen Slut would never leave you
unsatisfied.....***



*CANDY SPICED NUTS
(These can be made ahead)

Photos by Jane Segal & Vicki Markin
Logo by L. J.

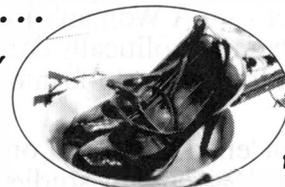
1 oz butter
1 teaspoon cinnamon
Pinch nutmeg
1/2 cup brown sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla
1 cup coarsely chopped pecans

Melt butter with spices and sugar; add pecans and stir until completely coated. Remove from heat and set aside for cake batter.

And that concludes your sweet tooth . . . Satisfied?

Till next time . . .

Love,



the Kitchen Slut

***P.S. Thank you X, for modeling and helping to
clean up the messes I make.***

Wet

Hibiscus

Cafe latte
Cappuccino
Espresso
Jasmine tea
Raspberry tea

Hibiscus tea...gigantic apricot double blooms, like labia folded in around each other, wet with dew and inviting a hungry tongue to lap up their moisture in the hot Hawai'ian sun.

"So whad'ya want, sister?"

Cowrie looks at the young dyke behind the counter, fascinated to see that waistcoats are back in fashion, minus all the dyke buttons of the seventies in Aotearoa.

"Hibiscus, thanks."

"Sure. Anything to eat?"

Cowrie is tempted to say hibiscus but realizes the dyke won't have a clue what she's on about. She is actually longing for vegemite, some kind of savory flavor, so she eyes the croissants.

"Blue cheese croissant with sprouts will be great, thanks."

"Wannit melted?"

"Yeah. Ta."

The dyke swings around, gathers the croissant, plasters it with blue cheese, pokes it under the grill and tends to the hibiscus tea.

"Are Alice, Carol, or Natalie around?" Cowrie asks, not wanting to disturb the young woman's concentration as she pours out the hot water.

"Who?"

"Well, when I was over here doing research in the eighties, they established Mama Bears. I helped out the painting. It was a really exciting time, since these women had also started up the first women's bookstore in America—A Woman's Place, in Oakland—until the new politically correct collective chucked them out for being old-fashioned working class dykes."

"Really? I've seen 'em about, but I only work here on afternoon shifts between my studies, so I'm usually gone before they come for the evening events."

by Cath Dunsford

"They are amazing women.

Carol was one of the famous dykes in Judy

Grahn's *Common Woman Poems*—you know, 'Carol with her crescent wrench'?"

The young dyke looks at Cowrie as if she's crazy.

"Was she into S/M or something?"

"I don't think that was it. More a woman capable of fixing her own car."

"Oh." The young dyke looks disappointed.

"Judy Grahn was working on the final revision for *Another Mother Tongue* then and a small group of us workshopped and gave feedback on it, right here in Mama Bears Bookstore. Paula Gunn Allen held Women Warrior classes to reclaim our lost warrior selves, using her own Native

American traditions.

Beth Brant launched the first Native American Women's Anthology at the opening night of Mama Bears. This bookstore holds living herstories within its walls."

The young dyke does not seem to know the names

Cowrie mentions, does not seem that interested.

"So what are you studying?"

Cowrie asks.

"I'm in the Gay and Lesbian Studies Program at UC Berkeley. Second year."

"Well, that's the group I'm teaching next semester. So you'd better do some homework," Cowrie ventures, smiling.

There is an immediate change of attitude.

"Really? I thought you must be from Fat Lip

*"Imagine
entering into the face
of a gigantic wet
hibiscus..."*

Readers' Theatre and you were just putting on that accent to prepare for one of your shows. So you're the scholar from Australia. Pleased to meet you."

Cowrie is stunned. Not that she is called Australian; that's usual. U.S. geography is from movies and she remembers the fuss when *Crocodile Dundee* came out here. That's about the limit of their Pacific knowledge. But it is not this that concerns her. It has been some time since she has been singled out for identification solely on her looks as a large woman. And coming from a young dyke who has had all the opportunities Cowrie missed in her earlier years to understand these politics, she is still ignorant.

"So why did you think I was with Fat Lip?"

"Well," the woman blushes, "isn't that obvious?"

"Do they have many other Maori-Hawaiian-Pakeha actors, then?" Cowrie asks, pushing her case.

"I'm not sure. No. It's not that. It's well, you are rather chubby. Not that it isn't fine, but you really oughta get more exercise."

Cowrie is ready to explode. Just today she has walked from Grove to UC and the length of Telegraph—about three miles—and she'll do five by the time she has shopped and returned home. The usual per day for her.

"Well, here's some advice. You had just better go read *Shadow on a Tightrope* and everything else written since before you dare set foot in my Lesbian Studies course," Cowrie whispers into her ear.

The young dyke stares at her in disbelief. Cowrie feels guilty.

"Hey. That was a bit harsh, but it gets tiresome to have to defend myself, especially in safe havens where I least expect to. I won't hold it against you. What's your name?"

"D.K."

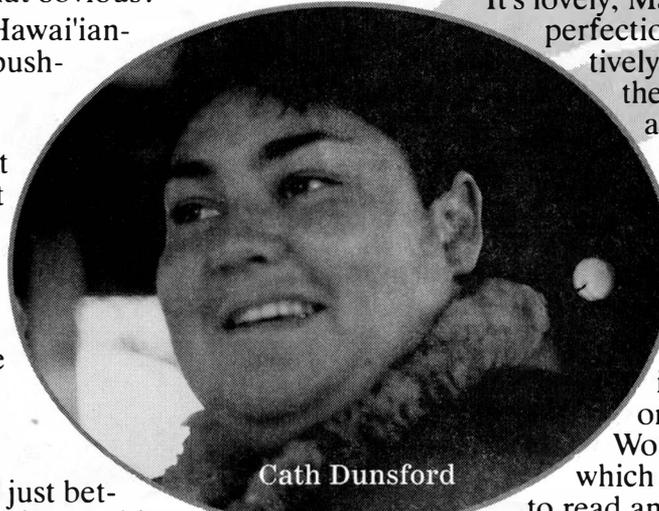
Cowrie leans over to whisper in her ear. "Well, D.K., next time you see a fat dyke, just try to imagine what it would be like to immerse yourself in the most erotic Georgia O'Keefe flower paintings, or Lariane Fonseca's sensuous photographs from *If Passion Were a Flower*. Imagine yourself floating on the ocean in a kayak, watching whales make love in the Baja Lagoon. The majesty, the beauty, the passion, the power. Imagine entering into the face of a gigantic wet hibiscus, savoring the moisture and moving your tongue up toward the tip which turns into an exploding frangipani bursting with the most fragrant, erotic perfume you are ever likely to

encounter. Then think about whether you'd rather lie down next to a blade of grass."

Now it's D.K.'s turn to be stunned. "Gee, I'm sorry. I never thought of it like that. So, what are you doing tonight?"

"Forget it, D.K. I never sleep with students and I'm already in love with a beautiful Hawai'ian woman." Cowrie doesn't add that they can't be together because Koana is blood family. "Thanks for the thought. Save it for the next luscious large woman who comes in here."

By now, the late afternoon lull has been replaced by women buying books and some coming over for coffee. Cowrie takes her tray and thanks D.K. for her croissant.



Cath Dunsford

"It's lovely, Ma'am. Melted to perfection." She licks seductively around the edge of the croissant and winks at D.K. "I'll see you in class."

D.K. busies herself behind the bar but cannot get Cowrie's words from her head. She waits until the night rush is over and buys a second-hand copy of Wolf's *The Beauty Myth*, which she'd been meaning to read anyway, but didn't really feel applied to her. She is thin, cute, spiky-haired and available. She never entertained the thought of ever sleeping with, being attracted to, or even being seen with anyone over 110 lbs.

She also finds an interesting essay in an old copy of *Radical Voices: Obesity and Women—A Neglected Feminist Topic*. She tucks the purple hardback into her pack and pays for both the books at the till. She doesn't know if she'd really bother if this foreign woman wasn't teaching the prescribed visiting scholar's course which all level two students have to take. Damn! But lucky she knows now. She'll do her research and get top marks. Or that's what D.K. thinks. And maybe she'll even score with a fat dyke, just to see what it's like. Wonder if there are fat dykes into S/M? One did come to a meeting at F.J.'s but she didn't stay. They were all relieved. D.K. knows this isn't what Cowrie intends, but she's not going to be lectured to by some scholar from a far flung island at the end of the world without a challenge. ✨

Wet Hibiscus is the first chapter of Cathie Dunsford's next novel.



OUTRAGEOUS

award-giving duties, decides who the most shining entries are in the Parade.

Well, when we won the Most Outrageous Award the first time in 1992, we all had mixed feelings about it, but for the most part were quite pleased. After all it's recognition for hard work. But what was so outrageous??? There was a centerpiece: a large wooden triangle painted pink with two embracing fat women painted on it. There were also fat women sitting and dancing around the float, some scantily clad, but no one even naked. It should be noted that when the awards were presented no one notified us where the ceremony was being held. There were lots of unreturned phone calls, etc. I had to think maybe they were trying to avoid us.

So this year, again the float was pretty benign. OK, there was a huge centerpiece; this time it was a 3-D sculpture of two fat women, each about five feet wide and six feet high (just torsos). They were both naked, one standing behind the other. The one in the back was cupping the breast of the one in the front. It was pretty erotic, but outrageous again? Don't

they have any other way to describe us? What makes us outrageous ... it wouldn't be that we're fat?!

All right ... let's take a look at this word "outrageous." Webster's 1984 Dictionary defines it as: "exceeding the bounds of what is right and proper (synonyms: atrocious, flagrant, heinous, monstrous, scandalous, shocking)".

I thought maybe Webster's 1984 edition was a bit dated, so I



Photo by Susan Goldberg

Marilyn

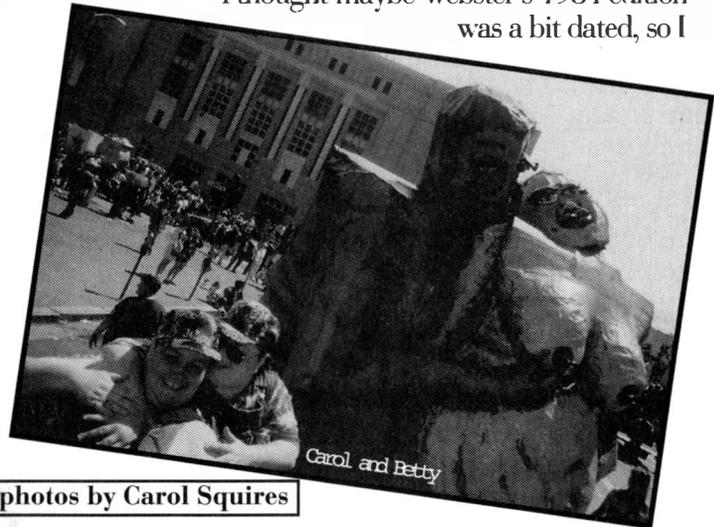
Let It All Hang Out (LIAHO) did a fat dyke pride float in the "Parade" this year... that is, the 1995 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Pride Celebration. It was the second time we did it and the second time we won an award for our float entry in the

category of "Most Outrageous." The awards are given by judges from the Cable Car Awards, Inc., an officious body that presides over the Bay Area's lesbian and gay communities, determining annually who are the most meritorious among us. I really don't know much



Peri

about this group... who makes up the cast of characters, how did they get to be who they are, etc.? I do know that every year they have some Queer Academy Award scene where you pay a lot of money to get in and they give out awards. Cable Car, as part of its



Carol and Betty

photos by Carol Squires

took a look at the thesaurus of Word Perfect 5.1: "disgraceful, insulting, intolerable, offensive, scandalous, abominable, atrocious, heinous, horrifying, monstrous, excessive, extreme, exorbitant, flagrant."

The antonyms they provide are: "acceptable, humane, moderate." (We're the opposite of humane?)

OK, so we don't always go by the book and the mixed part of it is that "outrageous" clearly has positive connotations, like: flying in the face of the norm; stepping outside the bounds of conformity; being really different, exciting, unusual, and good.

All those things fit if you're a fat dyke and you're proud of who you are, you think you and your friends are beautiful and hot, you think you're entitled to human rights, and you want to present this very positive, confident self-image to the world.

OR

COURAGEOUS?

by Marilyn Kalman

On the other hand, it should be noted that every other category of award for the parade entrants was prefaced as "outstanding" (e.g., Outstanding Out-of-Town Float, Outstanding Marching Unit, Outstanding Inspirational Entry, etc ...) The Board of Directors of Cable Car Awards, Inc. also announced that KOFY-TV20 would receive a special award for its premiere TV coverage of the parade. (They just happened to go to commercial break when our float passed by, but who's counting?)

So why do the pillars of the lesbian/gay communities find us outrageous instead of outstanding? The answer has got to be because we're fat. We're just so wild to be out there in lace tights and leather corsets, letting the world see our bodies.



When it comes down to it, I'm glad we got the award. The whole point of the float is to create fat dyke positive visibility (besides the rush and all the fun we have doing it). The parade gives us a tremendous amount of exposure and it's just too good to see all these fat women, standing in the sidelines with beaming faces as we go by. I have to add that the response from the crowd in general, both times, was great. Given this fat-phobic society we live in—that does everything to destroy our sense of self worth—what is done by FaT GiRL, Fat Lip, and LIAHO, as well as all the other fat women (individuals and groups) who say "fuck you" to that oppressive bullshit... is beyond outrageous... it's outstanding, courageous, and downright revolutionary. ✨

Let It All Hang Out (LIAHO) is a loose-knit group of fat dykes who get together periodically to make a fat dyke scene. LIAHO got started early in the summer of 1989, when a letter-writing fatphobe got published in a San Francisco lesbian/gay newspaper. She wrote about how appalled she was to see fat, hairy dykes (wearing next to nothing) and their friends get together for a big street party at the corner of 17th and Castro in San Francisco. Then in 1992, LIAHO had a float in the Pride Parade. In 1995 we sponsored a fat dyke prom, a bake sale in the Castro, and did another float. What's next? Perhaps a fat dyke New Year's Eve dance? We're also talking about doing protests against part of the diet industry. Interested? Drop us a note:

LIAHO
PO Box 27206
Oakland, CA
94602



Southern

Hospitality...

A TRIP TO THE SAN DIEGO PRIDE PARADE

by M.G. Cimino

When my girlfriend's mom extended an open invitation for us to come visit her in her beach house in

San Diego this summer, we decided that the pride parade, held two weeks after San Francisco's, was the perfect excuse. With enthusiasm, I tossed my *FaT GiRL* t-shirt into my luggage. Sondra warned me that we were going to the city that prided itself on being home to the Jenny Craig World Headquarters.

"Haven't you looked around?" I scoffed "The world is ready to confront its fat phobia. Fat politics is here to stay."

The first thing I noticed when we arrived, as we sat looking at the late-afternoon beach crowd, was there were no fat people. I'm not kidding. We sat and watched people go up and down the walk for hours. There were joggers, power walkers, roller bladers, and cyclists, but no casual walkers, no one strolling, enjoying the sunset over the ocean.

"Fat people don't go to the beach here," Sondra's mom said. When I asked why, she just shrugged. I decided they'd all been mowed down by the blondes zipping past in their frenzied athleticism.

The next morning, we donned our parade gear, including my *FaT GiRL* t-shirt. I have to admit I was a little hesitant, but I'd gotten such a great reaction wearing it proudly in S.F., that I figured I might be pleasantly surprised. I was wrong.

Once we'd staked out our spot on the parade route, I went in search of coffee. As I walked, my chest never attracted so much attention in my life. Two separate people outside a juice bar read my shirt, avoided eye contact and said, loud enough for me to hear, "No kidding!" I hadn't had to deal with such blatant fat phobia in years. There were snickers, whispers, and averted eyes. One person, ONE, a gay man, said he liked my shirt. The fat women who saw my shirt seemed embarrassed. I was stunned.

When I returned to the parade route, I could tell my experiences drew some skepticism from my companion. As we waited for the parade, it was easy to keep track of the reaction my *FaT GiRL* shirt drew from passing people. None. It was as if as soon as they read my shirt, I was invisible, with the exception of two queens who strolled by; both complimented me on it and said it was great. Are we keeping

track, girls? I've now had three gay men cheer me on and not one woman even comment.

My girlfriend took matters into her own hands and took some sidewalk chalk. "Fat Girls Rule," she wrote in the street. Our space was being staked out. This was turning into a war. If we were going to be the only fat dykes proud of our size, then so be it. It was time to make some noise and kick some skinny ass.

The parade passed uneventfully. We screamed. We yelled, "Fat Girls Rule!" We were virtually ignored. Not one thumbs up. Not one cheer back. There was no reaction. Zip. Nada. Zilch. The thin people looked through us and the fat people looked away.

The largest group in the parade was the "Gay San Diego Athletes"

contingent. If you tacked on the separate swimming and surfing organizations, half the parade was there because of their physical fitness connection. It was weird.

Finally, from out of the crowd appeared two overweight lesbians. The larger one pointed to her girlfriend's t-shirt that said, "Out and Fat." We're so cool, they exclaimed. She asked about my t-shirt.

"It's the name of a 'zine in San Francisco." I replied.

"What's a 'zine?" she asked.

They then sat down right on our Fat Girls Rule sign and had to be dealt with severely. So much for

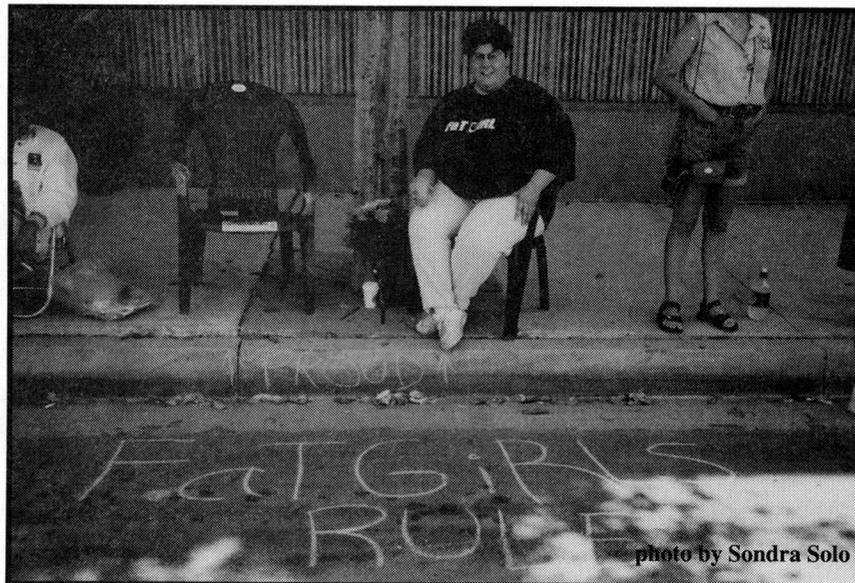


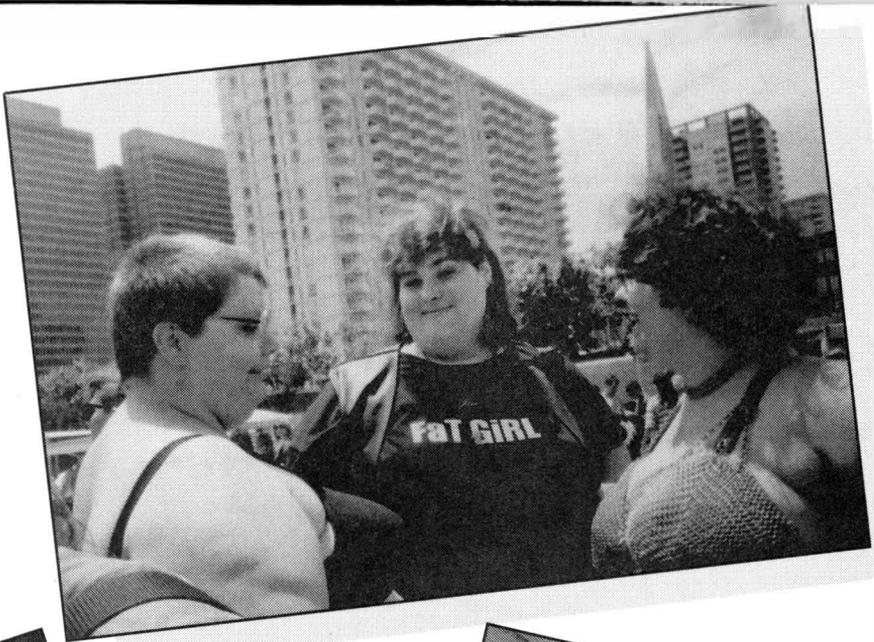
photo by Sondra Solo

bonding with our southern fat sisters.

After the parade, I was depressed. Sondra had warned me there weren't fat people in San Diego. And if they dare leave their house, they're not tolerated. She told me of the day she sat on her porch, looking at the beach when a cyclist rode by. The blonde, thin woman looked over her shoulder as she whizzed past and yelled, "Jenny Craig is open on Saturdays." Her friends laughed hysterically as they pedalled on.

San Diego may be a beautiful vacation spot. The weather may be gorgeous. But the tan and fit blondes who fill the city are some of the ugliest people I've ever seen. ✨

The FaTGIRL booth at the SF Queer Pride Parade (no, that's not the official name) was loads of fun. Candida, Bertha and Barb fed girls strawberries for \$1 (such a deal!), and we all sold T-shirts, stickers, and zines while hanging with old friends, meeting new people, and trying to keep the booth from blowing over.★



...and Northern Exposure



YOU'RE
CRAZY

My pain is my pride and my power. My daily life is fueled by the past.

I recently returned home from my mother's house. It was intended as a farewell trip before my move across country to San Francisco. Within the first two hours it started...

Upon telling my mother that I had learned how to eat fire, and that I'd like to show her and my brother—as a gift—she responded with an emphatic, “you're crazy.”

What an opening. I had to act. “Well Mom, speaking of crazy, there's something I did that I should tell you about. You're not going to like it, but you'll probably see it. Uh, my tongue's pierced; it's pretty subtle, but I just wanted you to know that's what's in my mouth.”

My mom's expression says it all, but she feels the need to elaborate. “Charlene, who ARE you? I mean, you're still my daughter, so I'll always love you, but otherwise I can't relate to you at all!”

I think to myself, “Well, I'm a human being; I'm sure that's something you can relate to.”

Instead I manage to muster up some diplomacy. “Mom, we live very different lives, but I don't think that's a bad thing at all!”

We banter some more about how she can't understand me, and during the whole discussion I'm trying to remain objective in my speech. Considering that I was basically justifying (rather than “discussing”) each of my actions that were suddenly under scrutiny, I think I did a pretty decent job. But never good enough, because good enough would mean that I would be an entirely different person. Good enough would mean that I was a straight, skinny, career-minded “young lady” who was looking for a husband. That's not me.

“Charlene, can't you just join a weight watcher's program that doesn't make you buy their food? It won't be as expensive...”

I start to retreat again, thinking to myself, “But Mom, what's so wrong with me the way I am?”

My mother's still talking: “...Charlene, I know you're big-boned, but that is no excuse for you to be...overweight.”

**“Mama, you send me,
oh, you send me.
Mama, you send me
honest you do, honest you do,
honest you do”**

I am speechless. I'm 24 years old and every time I visit my mother's I regress at least 10 years! Each time, I try to keep myself open in hopes of “working on our relationship.” Instead, I end up vulnerable to her jabs at me. I'm a strong woman, but I don't feel so strong right now. I think about my life at

YOUR LIFE'S
outta control

my house, my friends, my support network, and my accomplishments.

Then I think about how invalidated and powerless I feel right now with my mother.

For the following three days I was more self-conscious than ever about every fucking thing I ate, the way I sat, what I wore, how long I slept, how fast/slow I walked... EVERYTHING.

The day before I left, we went to see a friend

I would be teetering on the edge of being FAT.

I could go down several roads from there. I could either: a) starve myself and obsess about grams of fat and calories, or b) eat what I want, when I want, and treat myself like a normal human being instead of some chick with a problem. Because to me, feeling “normal” isn't about the size of the clothes or the waist or the ass, it's about healthy behavior with food. It

involves acting in accordance with my needs and wants, not someone else's standard of beauty.

Of course, these aren't realizations that come easily to me, even today. I could only believe that after being loved by people who are supportive of me, not dependent upon how I fit/don't fit into society's standards.

That night, when I returned home from my mom's house, I went out dancing and met up with some friends and my lover. I was wearing a racy new outfit which showed off my tits and my friends told me they had missed me and that I

AND YOU SHOULD GO TO
weight watchers

from my childhood. We've been friends since we were two years old and I hadn't seen her in about a year. She wasn't home when we arrived so we waited for her to get there. When she arrived, before I even laid eyes on her, my mother dragged her aside just to tell her how much weight I had gained and how “awful” I looked.

Now, I can't even imagine anyone deliberately humiliating someone else like this not to mention that this being the woman who is supposed to love me unconditionally! I have never been treated with so much disrespect on a continual basis by anyone aside from her: my mom.

**“Big girl, don't you cry-y-y,
(don't you cry)
Big girl, don't cry...”**

Sure I get mad and, believe me, I also confronted my mom the next day about her behavior. Then there's the guilt that I feel upon expressing my anger. I am torn between this never-ending rage and the knowledge that my mother has had the exact same words thrown in her face. She is hurting and I can't help but feel empathy toward her. But there's that rage...

You see, all my life I've been taught that I was BIG. You know: tall, big-boned, and because of this I would always have to “be extra careful with my weight!” because

looked fabulous. I was so grateful to be in the company of people who really care about me. It was then that I asked myself, how can I be so well-loved by people who have only known me two or three years and so misunderstood by a family member who's known me all my life? How can I accept this love when I also feel such acute self-hatred, so freshly cultivated—in soil so old and rich—and I can't get it out from under my nails...

My friends have always acted as my main support structure, but do even more so now that I'm out as a big queer pervert. These are things that my family will never be able to fully know or understand. Sometimes I try to imagine what my life would be like if I hadn't come out into the queer world, and then into S/M, and I am convinced that I would be so very unhappy. I would be trying to fulfill my mother's wishes for a straight, skinny, career-minded “young lady” in a pale pink suit and shoes too tight for this very round, big-boned, woman-loving, body-pierced, anti-conformist goofball. No way. I am learning to love myself too much.

**“I'm harboring a fugitive,
defector of a kind
She lives in my bones and
drinks of my wine
And I'd give my last breath
To keep her alive”**

by Charlene



MARTHA MOODY

A Fantastical Western Novel

review by Judith Stein

Susan Stinson, *Spinsters Ink*,
October 1995, \$10.95

Martha Moody is a rich and complicated novel, nearly edible in its sensuous physicality. At its heart, *Martha Moody* is the love story between Amanda Linger and Martha Moody. But *Martha Moody* is more than mere romance; its careful crafting draws us deeply into the complicated layers of women's lives.

Set in the small-town west sometime in the last half of the 19th century, *Martha Moody* is a grand story about love and sexuality, and the need for truth and the penalty for lies. The plot is both simple and ornate—we travel with Amanda Linger as she moves from a life parched by the absence of nourishment to the deep richness of her life fully lived. Along the way we encounter the fanaticism of Carrie Nation's temperance movement, the survival of unlikely friendships, the price paid by women who break social norms and pivotal opportunities for friendships to survive betrayal.

At the beginning of *Martha Moody* Amanda Linger lives stuck in a loveless marriage on a one-cow farm near the town of Moody. The only real feeling remaining between Amanda and her husband, John, is the affection they both shower on their beloved milker, Miss Alice. John is a lifeless man, controlled by his discomfort with the messiness of the physical world. His one passion is playing trumpet in the Oddfellows Temperance Brass Band. John is distressed by Amanda's sensuality as much as her size: "He didn't like the way my body shifted with the rhythms of my hands. I had big hips and a belly that folded back against me when I leaned to reach Miss Alice..."

And Amanda is a ripe and sensuous woman who knows her own nature even as she knows that she should repress it. After seeing Martha Moody bathe with abandonment in the creek, Amanda is a changed woman. "I have a carnal attraction," Amanda tells Miss Alice, who gives more milk if she's told stories during milking.

Amanda Linger is woman who knows the power of words; she has memorized the Bible, and told and retold Miss Alice her favorite sections. Amanda especially loves the images of physical power: "when God brought streams out of the rocks and caused waters to run like rivers in the desert." Waiting nights for John's sour-tuned temperance band to conclude their rehearsals in the Lingers' barn, Amanda copies down bible stories for the sheer pleasure of forming the letters and touching their power. And certain bible stories feed Amanda's sensual nature—the image of Mary anointing Jesus' feet with oil arouses Amanda sexually, creating a desire which cannot be satisfied by her repressed and repressive husband.

Watching Martha Moody in the creek, speaking with Martha in that wild setting on a Sunday morning when Amanda knows they should both be in church or at least waiting modestly at home, these small rebellions open Amanda to her desire for change. Knowing only that she wants to see Martha again, Amanda churns some of Miss Alice's sweetest cream to butter and approaches Martha about selling the butter in her general store.

In this world both dry and constrained, butter becomes the sweetest lust—the golden, precious slippery balm that moistens both bread and body into sexual heat. And *Martha Moody* is a very sexual and sexy story, where the lust between Amanda and Martha, brought to fulfillment in the aftermath of a visit by Carrie Nation, takes Amanda "to the milky heart of the world where I churned and churned and churned."

For a short while after their first encounter, Amanda is content with their thrice-weekly visits. But opening one forbidden door leads Amanda further away from the woman she is supposed to be. The next night, instead of her usual bible-verse copying, Amanda "wrote a story from thin air." And what a story! Miss Alice has become Azrael the angel cow, and Martha, already too large and strong for a decent woman of her time, flies on the angel cow's back to churn life into a dry and dying town. So we meet Amanda's other Martha, a giant woman with special powers, "able to wrestle buffaloes ... and touch the tops of mountains with her languid double chin."



Susan Stinson

Still from *Gracious Flab*, *Gracious Bone* by Evie Leder

The Martha of Amanda's stories celebrates her size and power in the face of the world's desire that women be restrained and modest. Even as Amanda herself dares to go to town without her corset, the Martha of her stories expands until she is "huge past the point where size can be considered anything less than a blessing of range to the human world."

And this is one of *Martha Moody*'s biggest gifts to the reader. Without fanfare or rhetoric, *Martha Moody* draws for us the exuberant sensuality of two fat women lovers. Size becomes power becomes abundance becomes the deepest sexual experience. Fat women who love themselves have always known the immense power unleashed when our self-love replaces the self-hatred we are supposed to feel. *Martha Moody*, a feast for any reader, is a banquet for fat women and those who love us. ✨

A Fat, Vulgar, Angry, Slut

by Betty Rose Dudley

I usually tell people that I am a fat, white, working-class bitch who comes from a small town in the slightly southern, mostly midwestern state of Missouri. Even though today I live in California, with a salary at least three times more than anybody in my family ever dreamed of legally obtaining, I have been fat, white, and working class for as long as I can remember. I was an obedient child, so the bitch part of my identity is an adult acquisition. I knew that I was a dyke long before I knew there was a word to describe what I was feeling. I am an angry woman, a very angry woman. I am angry at the world, but I am also angry at the dyke community that I have been a part of for the last 20-plus years. Most of all I am angry at myself for the ways I have compromised who I am in order to belong.

My mother was an uptight, incest-surviving sexual prude who, because of the socioeconomic class she was born in to, was also a slut. She was a waitress with large breasts, who wore red lipstick and fingernail polish when she dressed up to party, go to church, or deal with the P.T.A. She hated the word “piss,” although “shit” seemed somehow OK for adults to say, but “fuck” was way beyond acceptable as a word anywhere. She didn’t use “vulgar” language, but my mother knew that she would never be a lady. A lower-class woman can never be a lady, she can only act like one, in the same way a middle-class woman is never really a slut, she only acts like one. What my mother wanted was respect. In the class war, my mother knew deeply which side she was on, and it was not the winning side. My mother, too, was a very angry woman.

I like feminine women, but I have never been one. I say that I am butch, but not married to the concept. Butch is something that I am, not something that I do. I watch dykes “do” butch and femme, with lots of discussion of how to do it properly. For the most part it amuses me and I enjoy the show. What I don’t enjoy is watching middle-class girls “do” butch and femme as “stud” and “slut.” These are working-class roles that middle-class dykes bring into the sexual arena because it gives them the freedom to explore their sexuality in a way that would not be there if they stayed in their own class-bound roles. They strut their stuff on the dance floor or in the bedroom as if they were born to it. They are “bad” girls, girls that want to shock their parents and the world. Yet when they’re not on the dance floor or in the bedroom, they expect to be treated like ladies and gentlemen. They expect a privilege that no slut or stud that I grew up with ever envisioned. They expect the respect that my mother only dreamed of.

I came out in the seventies, when the white, middle-class women’s movement decided, by consensus, that we were all the same and trashed butch and femme women. I didn’t come out where there were bar dykes (women who never have used the word “dyke”). I don’t remember the butch and femme of the fifties; I’ve only read about it. From what I’ve read, it seems to me that it was more of a lifestyle and less of the party style that it seems to be today. Times have changed.

The butch role was far too violent and masculine, and the femme role too passive and feminine to be either politically or

personally correct—sexist assumptions about what many thought of as sexist roles. I came out with middle-class white women who were trying to throw off the shackles of their own class and race-bound roles and who made a collective decision that all other women, regardless of class and race, should do and be the same. They discarded their gender-bound roles. Some of them even gave up their money. Yet they managed to retain an assumption of the privilege to decide that the rest of the world should be like them. In this, they were no different from ladies who have, throughout history, started or influenced the reform movements that came before them. This time, though, they weren’t trying to free the slaves, save sinners, clean up alcoholics or educate and emancipate the poor. They were fighting for themselves and they called it a revolution, a feminist revolution, a nonviolent and overall (considering) rather polite and politely vicious revolution.

Other than the one tomboy butch dyke I’d gone to school with, political lesbians were the only lesbians I’d ever known. I wanted to belong, so I jumped on the bandwagon. I learned the rhetoric, I sang the songs, and I betrayed myself daily in order to be there. I refocused and redirected my anger. I became educated and assimilated and I learned how to get along. I loved women in a pure and political way and drifted benignly in the currents of this placid sisterhood that was going to make us all strong and beautiful and the same. But I was only a sister, and never a lover. I was sure, though, that it must be me. Hey, other fat dykes had lovers. Other working-class women had lovers. I didn’t know any fat, working-class dykes.

A lower-class woman can never be a lady, she can only act like one, in the same way a middle-class woman is never really a slut, she only acts like one.

I was trashed in the seventies on a college campus in the Midwest by a group of white, middle-class, and—at the time—straight feminists. I was trashed by straight women who went around campus spraying dyke symbols on stop signs, playing *Lavender Jane Loves Women* on their record players, and discussing vibrators and where to buy them, while lounging in the middle of the women’s center on campus. I was trashed because one of these women thought that I had called her a dyke. The irony of it all was that I didn’t, but she was. I know, because I ran into her 10 years later at The Brick Hut in Oakland, hanging out with her ex-lover and a group of dykes from Olivia Records. This woman, who had given me nightmares of self-doubt and self-loathing for years, didn’t even remember me.

She didn't remember me. Maybe I should have described myself to her. I was the fat sexual deviant, the one who volunteered to answer the phones at the women's center. I was the one who asked the straight women who painted dyke symbols everywhere what it meant to be a lesbian, where do you buy *Lavender Jane Loves Women*, and how do you choose this vibrator they were always talking about. I was the one who picked up the doctoral candidates survey, left at the center for women to take, and read out loud the title, "Are You Multi-Orgasmic?". I was the one she thought was asking her the question. I was the one who remarked on how powerful her political alliance with another woman could be—a boardroom, not a bedroom, alliance. I was the one who, by then, could not say anything that in her mind was not going to be interpreted as sexual. I was the fat, working-class dyke who had not yet learned to be a bitch. I got an education while I was in college.

I'm still a feminist, still part of a women's/lesbians' movement that changed my life and in many ways changed my world. I'm still, like my mother before me, a fat slut, still part of a fat, working-class family. I am still angry. I am angry at women who abhor the way drag queens portray the worst and most stereotypical aspects of what it means to be female, yet do the same thing when they "do" slut. I am angry at women who abhor the racism that is apparent when Al Jolson puts on black face and falls down on one knee to sing "Mammy," yet do a classist equivalent when they "do" stud. I am angry when dykes buy into the notion that vulgar language and, by extension, vulgar people belong in the bedroom but never the boardroom. I am angry that my view of my body and my sexuality are so frequently and severely affected by other people's definition of what a fat slut is. I am angry at people who sexualize my life, the people and roles I grew up with, and then trash me for being perceived as sexual. I am angry at people who believe that sexual is vulgar unless it is naughty and "cute."

I am a slut. A fat, lecherous, rude, crude, and very nice slut. If I no longer sound like the sisters I was raised with, I'll be damned before I continue to sound like the sisters I came out with.

My straight sisters are fat bikers. They buy their leather on sale at Sears and they buy their motorcycles second hand. They do the South Dakota bike run when they can afford it. They are tough women, with men in their lives, but they are in no way butch. They are femme, but not necessarily feminine; they are sluts. They would be angry and offended if they were called sluts. They curse when they're angry but also yell at the men in their lives for the casual use of "bad" language. They are fat, and the word "fat" is part of their vocabulary of "bad" language. When they are quiet and complacent, not dressed for the road, they are often mistaken for ladies—until they open their mouths. They are not passive and they are not weak. They don't use educated words and they have Southern, "vulgar" hillbilly accents. I use educated words with less of an accent.

A college friend once went home with me for Christmas. After we got back to the dorms, she said, "Betty, you don't sound like your family." My sisters called me at work once. My co-worker took the call and later whispered to me, "Betty, your sisters sound like hicks." My co-worker, also up from the working class, is from New York but she, too, doesn't sound like it anymore. Yet we both, under duress, retain a flavor in our voices that tells you where we came from. We've both learned not to sound like sluts.

I have a dyke friend who is from poverty, and in spite of her college degree pretty much remains there. She likes middle-class dykes because they help her with money in ways that working-class dykes usually don't. She says, "I don't care if they do it because they feel guilty. I need the help, and all working-class people ever do is feel lucky and superior because they have jobs." My friend usually has middle- to upper-class lovers. Her last lover had lots of money.

My friend is an S/M dyke. Her lover keeps her in leather and lingerie and all sorts of slutty costumes and accoutrements. She once dressed up to go to a party; her mother was visiting at the time. She had on a pretty sleazy outfit for this party, and her lover grabbed her and said, "Ooh, baby, what's your Momma going to say when she sees you dressed like that?" My friend looked at her lover with a yeah-right expression and told her, "My mother is going to think 'How pretty! You look very nice.'" Her upper-middle-class lover did not believe her until they went into the living room and Momma said, "Ooh, how pretty. You look really nice dear!"

It makes me angry that the lover did not know that the mother would think that her daughter looked "nice." It makes me angry that you have to pay so damn much money to look really "cheap" in the dyke community. It makes me angry that most of the women who wear this look to party in think that it's only about clothes and are clueless to the fact that it is, and always has been, about people and class. I hate watching the gentrification of my roots taking place in a community that has given me an acceptance that my family of birth will never understand.

I left my fat-phobic, homophobic, family of origin to live in what I once thought was a "better," "more-accepting" community. I lusted after the more "genteel," nice, middle-class femmes and sought a quieter, more peaceful lifestyle than the one I'd been born to. I listened to the acoustic feminist folk music instead of the electric rock-and-roll I'd grown up loving. I have betrayed myself, and as a result I end up belonging nowhere.

I am a slut. A fat, lecherous, rude, crude, and very nice slut. If I no longer sound like the sisters I was raised with, I'll be damned before I continue to sound like the sisters I came out with. I am tacky and vulgar. I wallow in vulgarity, consume it with the hunger fat girls are famous for. I like cock rock; rock-and-roll chords resound in my head. If I think that the lyrics are misogynist then I change the words. I make words and music my own. I take back my power. If the vulgarity of my power bothers you, it is your problem; I no longer let you make it mine. I no longer give you the power to tell me who to be or how to behave. I behave like the fat, vulgar, angry slut that I am. If you want to act like me, or my sisters, in the sexual arena, go right ahead. Don't expect me, however, to abide by your limitations, your definitions, or to collude with you in shame over what you consider vulgar. I am a vulgar woman. I am a powerful female. ✨

Fat & Healthy

by Lori Selke

Many fat girls experience pain in their knees sooner or later. They're certainly not alone. The knee is the most commonly injured joint in the body. This is partly because the knee is probably most complex joint in the body, too, providing lots of places to injure.

There are two main types of knee injuries, acute injuries (like when you tear a tendon or pull a muscle, usually as a result of some immediate trauma), and overuse injuries. Fat girls will most often suffer overuse injuries; for us, just walking is sometimes enough. Because of the increased weight-bearing load we provide our knees, many fat girls will experience sports medicine injuries just from being normally, healthily active, fat girl athletes and those of us who are more active than average are even more prone to overuse injuries of the knee.

There are some other risk factors for overuse knee injuries as well. If the muscles on one side of the knee are noticeably stronger than the muscles on the other side, the kneecap can end up being pulled awkwardly. It's fairly common for the front muscles of the thigh, the quadriceps, to be stronger and looser than the muscles in the back of the thigh and knee, the hamstrings. Sometimes, the supporting muscles to the left and the right of the knee are unequal in strength, too. There are also some fairly common anatomical abnormalities that can predispose someone to knee pain and injury; knock knees, flat feet, and bowed legs are three examples. Theoretically, women are more prone to knee injuries as well because women's wider hips create possible knee instability. Whether this is true in practice, however, isn't well-documented.

When you go to a doctor with pain around the kneecap, the diagnosis you're most likely to receive is that of patellofemoral pain syndrome. This diagnosis, unfortunately, doesn't mean much more than "unexplained pain in the knee." If you didn't injure it in any way you can remember, and there isn't any inflammation anywhere, this is the most likely diagnosis.

Another common overuse injury is tendinitis, which is an inflammation of one of the tendons around the kneecap. This is often accompanied by a swelling around the area and tenderness at a specific spot.

A third, fairly common overuse injury is bursitis, which means that one of the fluid sacs, or bursae, that cushion some of the structures of the knee is inflamed. Again, often there is swelling and/or tenderness in a localized area.

A more serious condition is osteoarthritis. This is the most common form of arthritis, and it means that the cartilage at the ends of the bones in the joint have been damaged. The symptoms of osteoarthritis include fairly constant aching, soreness, and a grinding sensation when the joint is used. Inflammation will also often accompany these symptoms. Often, osteoarthritis will affect old injury sites or joints that have been repeatedly injured. Fat girls often get arthritis of the knee

at a relatively early age, by the way, especially if they have a history of knee problems.

Unfortunately, knee pain is one of those ailments that doctors most often advocate weight loss to treat. It's true that the less weight brought to bear on a bad joint, the less likely it is that that joint will be (re)injured in the future. But there are other ways to cope with knee pain.

For milder knee pain such as patellofemoral pain, bursitis, and tendinitis, ice, elevation, rest and anti-inflammatory drugs such as ibuprofen, naproxin, or acetaminophen can help a lot in the short run. Often, this is all that doctors prescribe (other than that suggestion about losing weight).

For severe or long-standing knee pain of any type, surgery is sometimes recommended. A discussion of the various surgeries, their procedures, recovery afterwards, etc., is outside of the scope of this column, however. One note: there is some evidence that knee replacement surgery, which is sometimes recommended in certain cases of osteoarthritis, may not be as successful with fat girls as it is with other patients. It's also possible that artificial replacement knees may wear out faster in larger women than in others.

Longer-term treatment and prevention of overuse knee problems is probably also a good idea. There are lots of things besides losing weight that fat girls can do to lessen the chance of overuse injuries in the future.

The first is, buy and wear good shoes, especially if you're exercising regularly, though it's a good idea even if you're not. If you have high arches (like I do), this is even more important. Find a pair of athletic-style shoes that provide good arch support, feel comfortable and supportive (not too loose or roomy), and make them your daily wear shoes, if you can. Sometimes, a doctor can help describe the kind of shoes you should look for; the shoe store sales staff may also be able to help.

One thing to consider, especially if you're a runner: the average running shoe isn't usually designed for runners weighing over 180 lbs.; they don't compensate for the increased impact per step. So you may have to ask around for shoes designed for heavier runners. Another possibility is to buy sorbothane insoles for your daily-wear shoes so as to increase shock absorbency, whether or not you're a runner or athlete.

Sometimes, investing in a set of orthotics is also a good idea, especially if for some reason you're not willing or able to wear athletic shoes daily. Orthotics are shoe inserts designed to compensate for some of the anatomical irregularities that contribute to knee pain and injury, such as flat feet, high arches, or knock knees. Some orthotics are available over the counter from makers such as Dr. Scholl's and can be found in just about any drugstore. These are good for mild pain and anatomical conditions, and they're also much less expensive than prescription orthotics. Prescription orthotics are custom-made for your foot and are used in more severe cases. Unfortunately, they cost

a lot, but they are often covered by medical insurance, if you have it. If you have foot pain as well as knee pain, or if you wear shoes that aren't otherwise very good for your feet, orthotics are probably something to seriously consider.

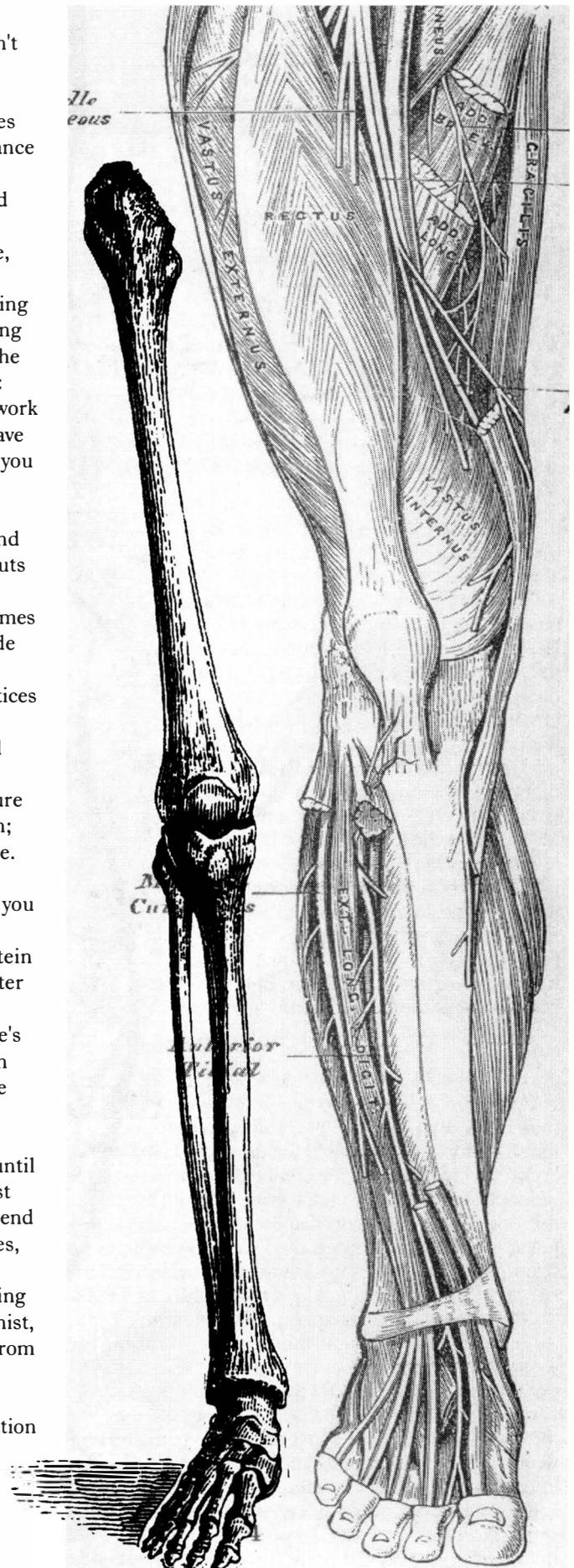
Finally, an important tool for the prevention of knee overuse injuries is exercise. There are a large variety of exercises to strengthen and balance the muscles around the knee; far too many to list and describe here. A good book on physical fitness and weight training should have a good section on such exercises. Another place to look is in a book on sports medicine; the one I recommend and use is *The Sports Medicine Bible*, by Lyle J. Micheli, M.D. (HarperCollins, 1995, ISBN 0-06-273143-2)

Some exercises, called isometrics, involve simply tensing and relaxing various muscles in your calf and thigh and around your knee, or pointing your toe up or forward, holding, and repeating. These exercises have the advantage of convenience; they can be performed just about anywhere: on your morning or evening commute, while you're sitting at a desk at work or at home, while you're eating dinner at the dinner table. They also have the disadvantage of being very boring, in many people's minds. Still, if you don't otherwise feel you have time to start an exercise and stretching regimen, exploring isometrics may be a good idea. Again, a good book on physical fitness should mention them; doctors also often recommend them to help rehabilitate knee injuries, and they will often have handouts and references available at the office or clinic.

For osteoarthritis, capsaicin creams, such as *Zostrix* cream, are sometimes prescribed. I'm told that these creams can be very valuable; they provide a gentle warming sensation to the joints and soothe inflammation. Capsaicin is derived from cayenne peppers, by the way, so cayenne poultices are a good alternative remedy. In fact, cayenne poultices can be used effectively on just about any inflamed joint condition; consult any good herbal remedy book for details on how to prepare a poultice.

As far as alternatives to traditional Western medicine go, acupuncture is the most noteworthy technique for dealing with knee injury and pain; it's especially useful for immediate pain relief, at least in my experience. Acupuncture techniques are fairly easy to learn. A book such as *Body Reflexology*, by Mildred Carter (Parker Publishing Co., 1983), will tell you more than you ever need to know; some books on alternative therapies in general, such as *The Natural Remedy Book for Women*, by Diane Stein (Crossing Press, 1992, ISBN 0-89594-525-8), will often also have shorter sections on how to perform acupuncture on yourself. (Books such as Diane Stein's can be a bit new-agey to some people's tastes (I know she's at the limit of what I can take, for example), so be warned.) Or, you can seek an acupuncture professional (such as a massage therapist), or else a friend who's been trained or who taught themselves. In any case, acupuncture should never be performed on swollen tissue, so if a part of your knee is swollen near a pressure point, it might be best to wait until you've healed a bit further. Nonetheless, acupuncture is one of the most effective pain-relief tools this columnist has ever encountered; I recommend it highly. In addition to pain relief, it can also loosen over-tense muscles, making it much easier to walk normally and without strain again.

Unfortunately, our weight does put us at greater risk for experiencing knee injuries and pain at some point in our lives. (Your intrepid columnist, alas, knows this all too well; she learned what she knows about knees from many trips to the doctor and many more attempts at self-treatment.) But don't let knee pain stop you from being a healthy, active fat girl. As you can see, there are lots of other risk factors to take into consideration as well, and lots of preventative and treatment strategies we can draw upon, too. Take advantage of them! ✨



arms bigger than

by *Candida Albicans Royale*

she was most ungentle-
manly in her manner her way
of treating me

can be narrowed down to a simple look
aimed at the decorative fleshy mounds
I draw to my heart like plumage
like wrapping paper
like pink fluffy frosting
on a cardboard cake

I ♥ my body

There is a certain look I let fly on the hand-
some face that is trained on those distant mammaries
I guess they're mine
while we chat about nothing
in particular.

It's those arms, though, arms bigger than
larger than
arms that reduce me to the size of a pebble and about as hard

I have known sharpness always and worked it to a fine edge, even
taken pride
in it but this dull numbness is foreign & I wonder
who has taken my libido for hostage and if
you find it, will you please ask about my heart?

thanx,
c.

p.s. Am I fat?

First Date

by *Candida Albicans Royale*

When I get home
alone, I'll cast my clothes off
fling shoes to the floor and sink
my fingers into that casserole dish
red sauce that bubbled
over the edge when I first took it
from the oven and burned my mouth on it; this dish that
waits for me to pull out
chunks that congealed in my absence and
suck them soft while I try to quit
shaking.

For some reason, it's all I can taste when
this stranger puts her tongue in
my mouth and I know
later it won't taste half as good

ARRIVAL

by Marilyn Hollinger

The anticipation is thrilling, the fear deep and evident. I approach the door of the play house, toy bag in hand, dressed to the teeth, and I'm scared. I'm dressed in my high femme top finest, and I feel strong and sexy, but I still feel that pang of uncertainty. I'm going into a room full of sex and wonder, but will anyone find my 260-pound frame sexy? Will they see the rolls of fat under the lace, see the belly shake as I walk, and also see the power, the sensuality? Will they want me, not find me disgusting?

I set my shoulders back and angrily press the button, trying to shake off those doubts. While I wait for the door to open I think back on past lovers, trying to center myself. My thoughts land on Pamela, and I spend the next five seconds reliving a year and a half of ecstasy.

From the beginning, Pamela was after me. Not in any conventional sense, because she knew that wouldn't do. She wanted to feel my whips on her broad back and fat ass, and she wanted a woman big and strong enough to hold her down, slap her silly, and fill her up. Several inches taller than me and many pounds heavier, she wasn't used to being able to find that anywhere, so she was intrigued by my statement about never finding a woman I couldn't overpower.

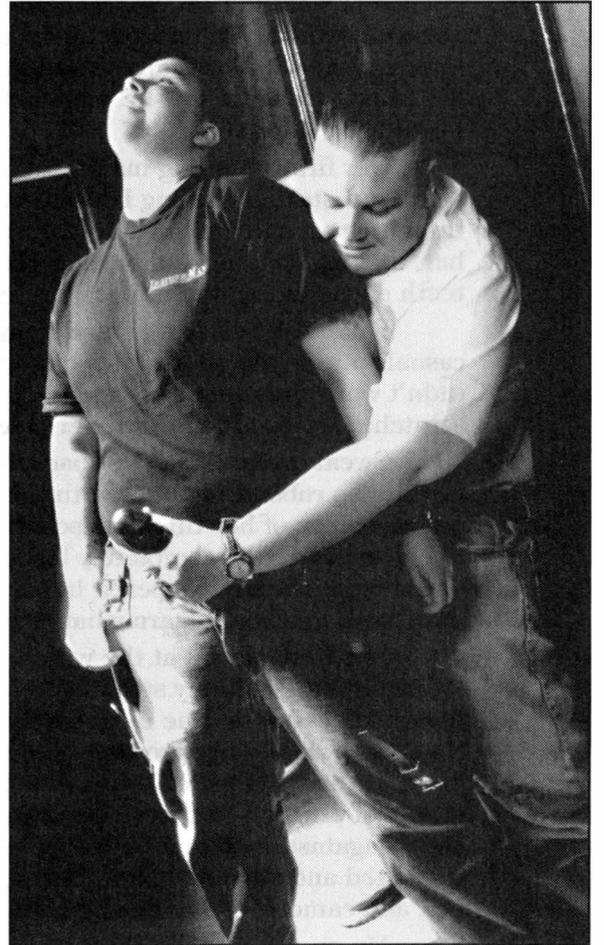
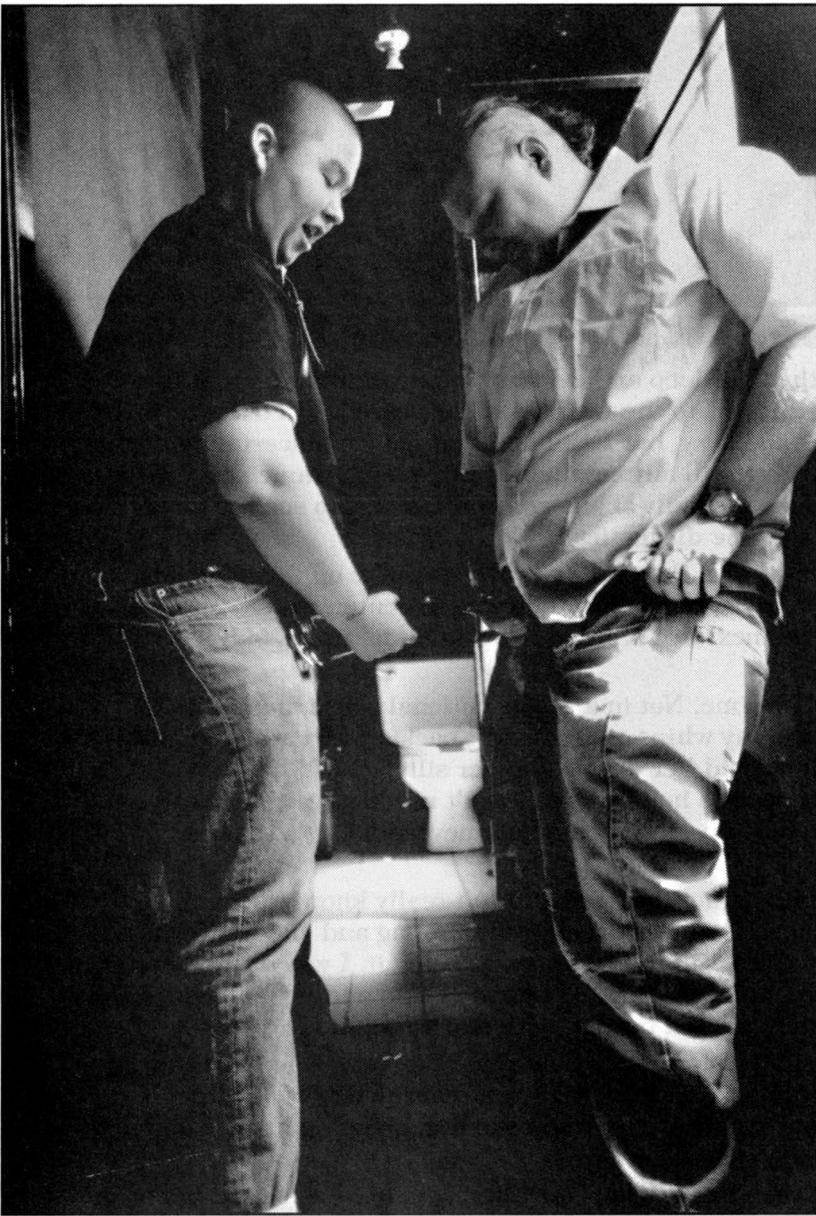
Our first wrestling match was excruciatingly sexy. She didn't really know what to expect, so when I started tickling her she was surprised. Then I started nibbling and she went wild, thrashing around and moaning, trying to stay still but completely losing it. I was draped over her, digging my tongue into each plump crevice, taking big hunks of skin and flesh between my teeth and grinding them together, leaving red and purple teeth marks behind.

Finally she couldn't stand being submissive under that kind of torture. She tried to casually shrug me off of her back, really shocked when what would normally get her free didn't work this time. I locked my legs around her hips and rode her, slapping her ass and scratching lines of red down her pale hills of softness.

Sweat broke out on her back, between her thighs. Or rather, it started as sweat, but soon her thighs rubbed together with her own juice, betraying her excitement. I reached around and pulled on one of her thick, muscled arms, yanking it from beneath her. She fell forward with force, startled. She completely lost control then, really struggling in earnest to get up. I pinned her shoulders and whispered in her ear, "Just keep trying, bitch, but it won't work. You're mine now, and you'll learn what that means soon enough."

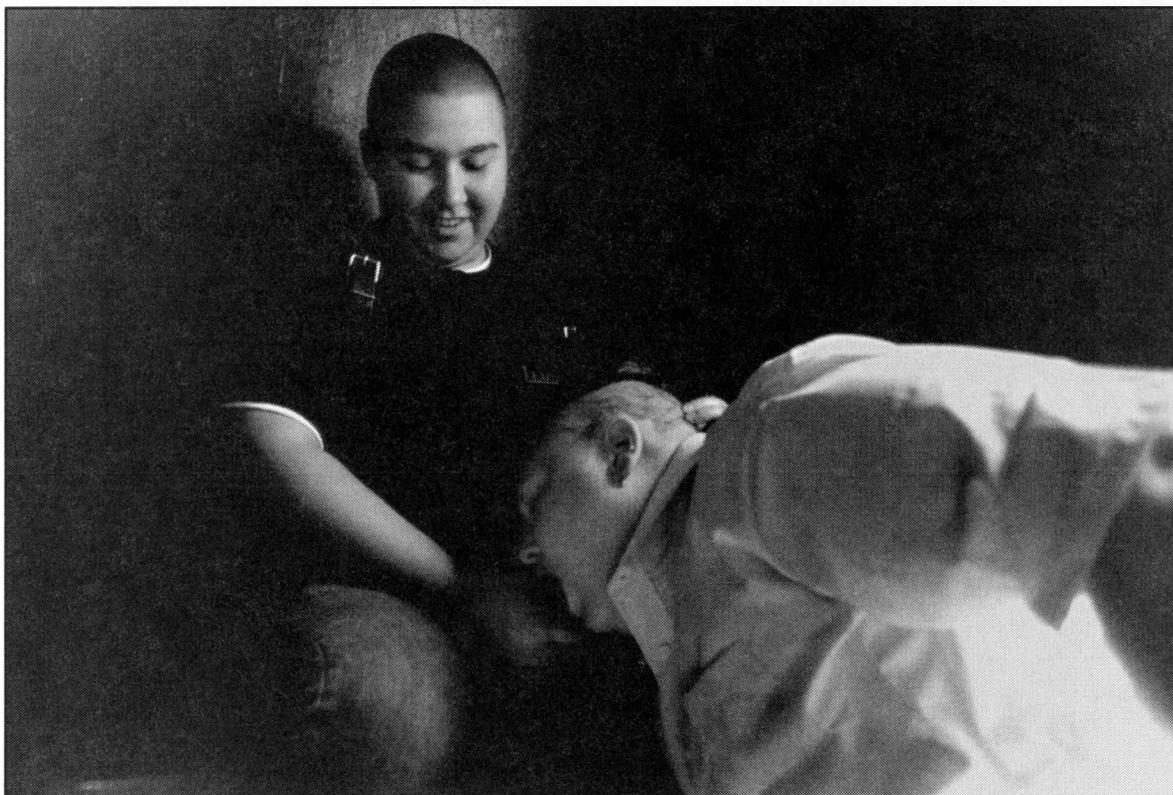
She first gasped at the words, then at her reaction to them. My lock on her wrists was stronger now. I slid my stockinged leg up along hers, forcing her thighs apart to bury my knee in her wet softness. She moaned, but now I had her. Fighting would mean losing the motion that was bringing her growing excitement to fulfillment. She arched her back to make one final effort at throwing me off, but I ground my knee in harder and her struggling subsided. Her grunts of exertion turned to moans of pleasure as she squirmed some more, now pressing her ass up against my round belly, begging me to hurt her more. I did, moving quickly against her drenched and engorged cunt. She strained against me, the nail marks in her wrists now forgotten, and came with a force she hadn't felt before.

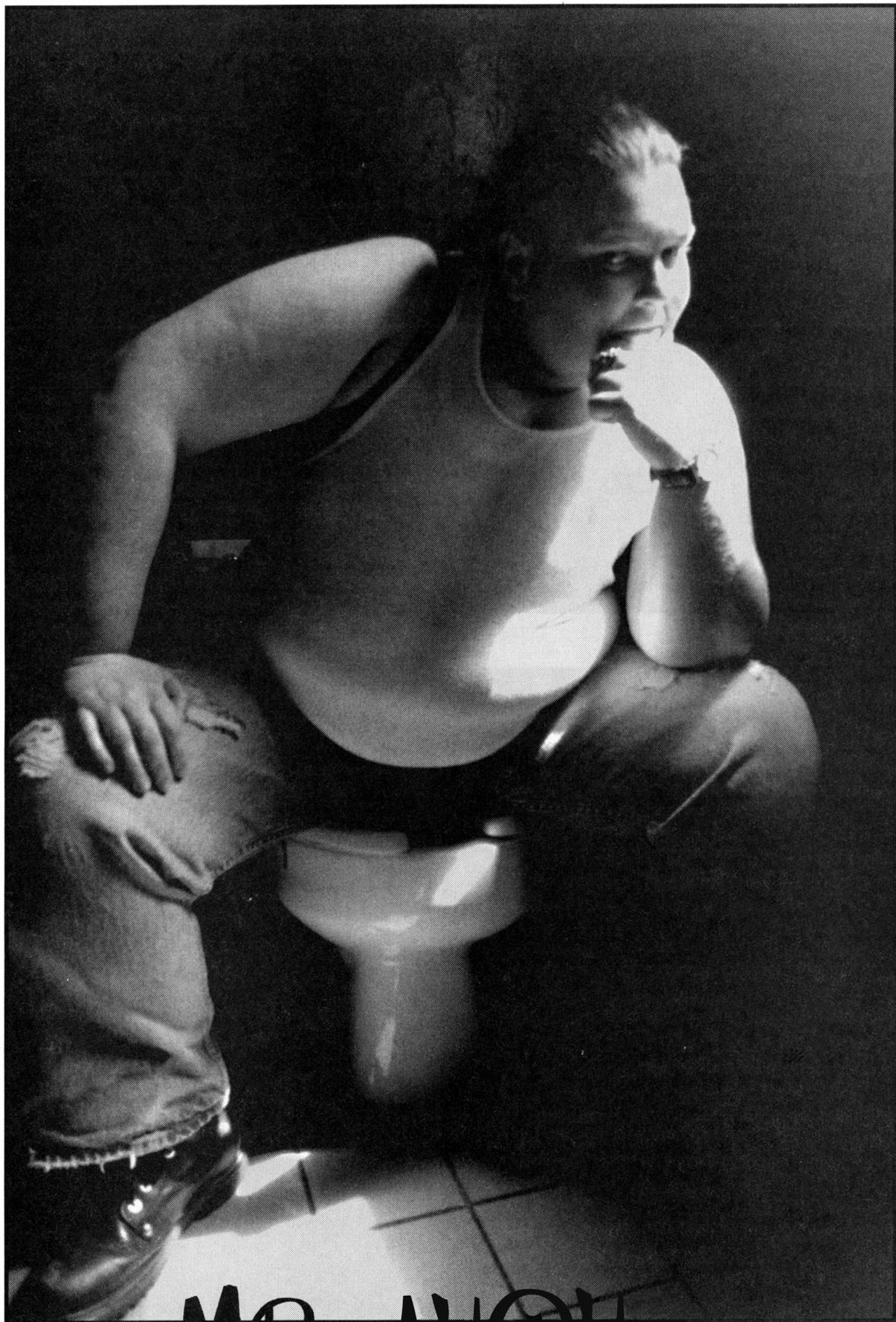
My reverie was cut short by the door being swung open. I stepped inside, to a different world. The three women registering ahead of me turned to look. One with round eyes and breasts looked longer, not bothering to hide her appreciation of my outfit or her hunger at the whip at my side. Her eyes met mine and locked there. The fear in my belly disappeared and I stepped forward, shedding the ghosts and starting a new adventure. ✨



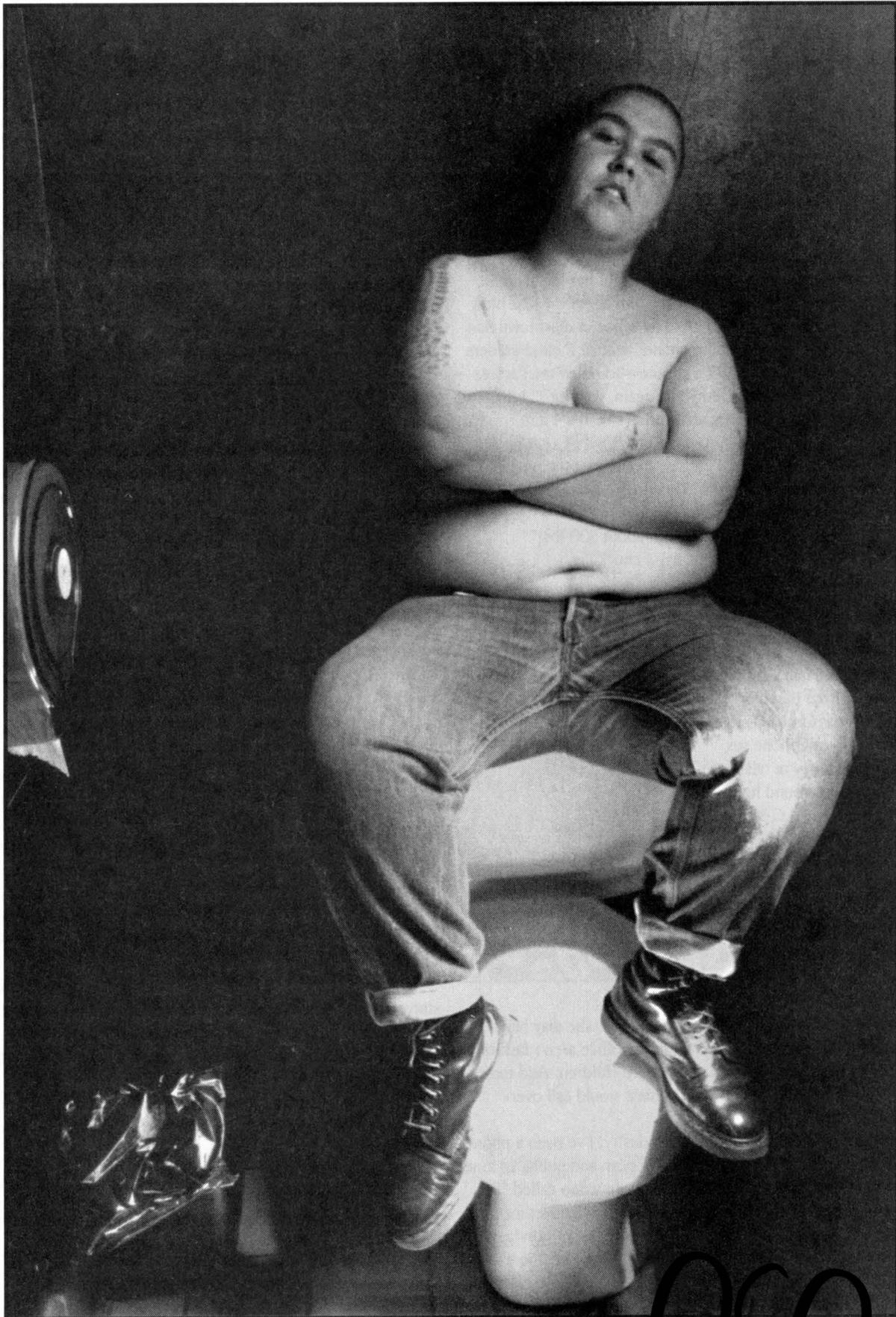
Potty TRAINING

PHOTOS: LAURA JOHNSON





MR. ANON



OSO

Confessions of a Fat Sex Worker

by Drew

"Oh my god, what are you doing?"

Shit, I think, I'm going to lose this call.

Somewhere in Arkansas, an angry wife has caught her husband on the phone with me. He's jacking off while I tell him about my first blow job, my first woman. I am safely curled up in an office in downtown San Francisco. All around me, women cradle phones against their shoulders and murmur sweet nothings—at \$3.99 a minute—to horny men across the nation. "Are you talking on that filthy line again, you pig?!" I hear him laugh at her, and realize that they are both drunk. It's 4 a.m. in Arkansas.

"YOU HOME-WRECKING WHORE!" she shouts into the phone.

I get called bitchcuntslutwhore all night. This does not faze me.

But what she says next stops me cold.

"You know, all those phone sex girls weigh about 500 lbs!"

"How much do you weigh, honey?" he asks, chuckling.

"135." I purr.

That night Tara, my phone sex persona, gained 2 inches in her bust, 3 in her hips, and got 4 inches shorter.

Still nothing like me, of course.

Well, we both have red hair. But I'm not a 22-year-old co-ed from Berkeley, and I sure as hell don't measure 36D-28-36. Most of the men who call phone sex lines know the woman they're talking to probably isn't prancing around her apartment in 6" heels and a G-string. She probably isn't a Playboy bunny, either, or she wouldn't be working for \$8.00 an hour. The success of the call depends on my abilities as a storyteller, not on my dress size.

But after telling hundreds of men, night after night, that you look like Jessica Rabbit, it starts to get to you.

Because Ms. Arkansas wasn't exactly wrong. Sure, she may have exaggerated a little, but most of the women in the office aren't fashion models. Most are straight and married. Many have children. And most are what the Metropolitan Life height-weight charts would call overweight or obese.

I've done lots of different jobs in the sex industry. I've been a phone ho off and on for two years. I've written reams of porn and publish a zine about erotic submission. I starred in a fat fetish porn video called "Big Thighs and High Heels," or something like that. Men I've never met have written me letters about how they tie up their dicks, put on lacy red panties and masturbate, thinking about me standing over them with a whip. (They've even sent pictures.) A lesbian S/M magazine published photos of me licking boots and dripping wax on my own tits. Men have paid \$120 an hour to beat my ass with a riding crop.

But nothing ever made me feel quite as dirty as that woman's voice, with its Arkansas drawl.

Because I've heard it all my life. That fat=ugly=undesirable. What I do for money on the phone, on video or in a San Francisco bondage house is like writing fiction: an artful lie that still manages to tell the truth. I've told the real story of my first girl-girl fuckfest over and over: a college dorm room in Westchester County; Elvis Costello on the stereo; my best friend and her boyfriend and a bottle of Southern Comfort. I like giving blow jobs—but only to my dyke Daddies, and I like getting fucked in the ass—but only by women with really small hands who know how to say bitchcuntslutwhore. I like watching submissives eat out of dog bowls and I like kneeling at the feet of a woman who's just put six perfectly-spaced cane stripes down the front of my thighs. Sex work is like real life. Only straighter. And thinner.

Sure sometimes I worry about the political implications of what I do. Are the divorce courts in Arkansas that much busier because of me? Am I oppressing my sisters by perpetuating myths of feminine beauty? What about the men I've seen in person? Have I shifted their perceptions

of what a hot woman looks like?

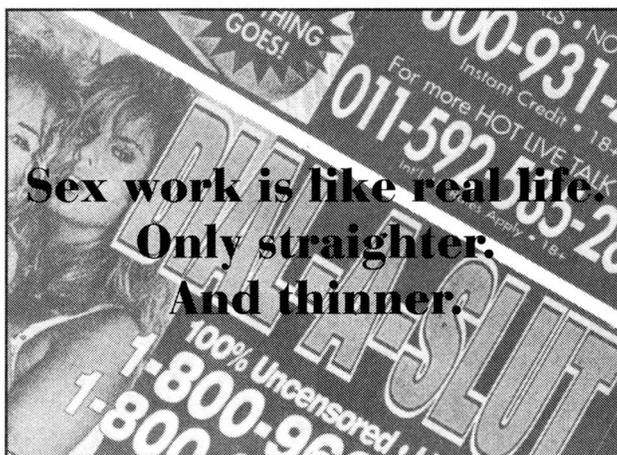
And is there anything so bad about American dollars making their way from the pockets of rich white straight men into the pockets of fat leatherdykes?

Sex work has taught me that I own my body. It has taught me that sex is a choice. That work is a choice. That what is attractive about me is not a lie. That telling stories gives me power. That people don't always hang up when they know the truth about me. The First Woman Who Broke My Heart fell in love with me when I weighed over 200 lbs. She left me when I had

starved myself down to 143. Love and desire did not depend on my weight. I had to sit down and do the math: if I think so-and-so is gorgeous and fuckable and everything I ever wanted in a woman, and she's fat, and I'm fat, then . . . then . . . (Say it:

I might just be gorgeous and fuckable and everything she ever wanted in a woman, too.) Math never was my best subject. But I always liked word problems.

Sex work is the place where the great powers of our culture—sex and money—come together. And like the high school prom, it's one party I never thought I'd be invited to. So I went and threw my own. And everybody came. And came. And came. ✨



Laura Antoniou's Some Women:

a brief report of my favorite essay

by Cuirdyke & MsDaddy's girl

I always seem to be at the small end of any bell curve ever plotted. All of my important interests and defining characteristics are far from the norm. So I really enjoy finding something that brings together two or more of them. This is the first reason that "Heavy S/M: Fat Brats Speak Out" by Christine is my favorite essay in Some Women.

Reading an essay by another fat lesbian, who is proud of who she is, was affirming. I recognized myself in a lot of what she had to say. I, too, have struggled with fatphobia, both within myself and in society. As a fat woman, I am bombarded daily with the message that it is not OK to be what I am, and it took me a long time to realize that it was that message, not my body, that is really not OK.

In the short time that I have been in the S/M scene, I have observed, like Christine, an unusual acceptance of fat women. As Christine says, I find myself appreciated for what I like to do, not just what I look like. In fact, I hadn't even thought about it much until I read her article. Now, as I do think about it, it seems fitting. Coming out into the S/M scene was, for me, an act of accepting and acknowledging an important and valuable part of myself, a part that had been deeply hidden because society had taught me that it was unacceptable and bad. Now, as I exult in my new freedom to be myself, to receive and enjoy the sensations I crave, it is appropriate that my fat body is the vehicle for these sensations and is accepted. Society condemns both S/M and fat. It gives me particular pleasure to reflect on the fact that it is through this fat body that I experience the exquisite pain/pleasure of S/M.

When I'm in a scene, I don't worry about what I look like. I'm focused on what I'm feeling, and on what my top is doing and demanding of me. If anyone watching doesn't like my body because it is fat, that is her problem; it doesn't trouble me.

The situation is, of course, not perfectly idyllic. I still encounter internalized fatphobia in other women, and I'm not completely free of it yet myself. But when I look around at a play party or S&Mazons meeting and see other fat women enjoying themselves and their bodies, it feels very good. At the Philadelphia Leather contest, I watched as a fat woman won the title. I felt proud of the community I had recently become a part of. She had been my favorite as I watched the contest, and it was gratifying to see that the winner was not selected based on the larger society's standards of beauty. In closing, I want to echo Christine's plea, "will fat ever be a simple descriptive word?" I am a fat S/M dyke, and I like being what I am. ✨



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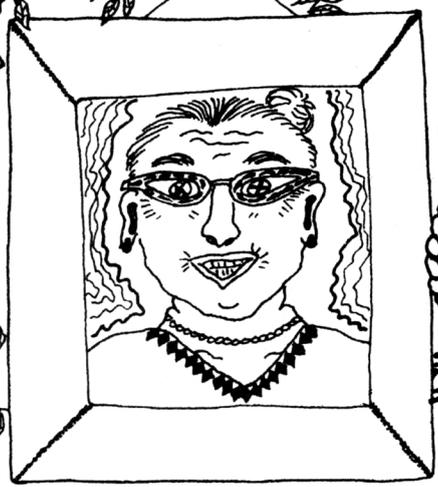
TRUE TALES

from life **in the fat lane**

PART II:

THE FAMILY

MAX AIRBORNE ~ 1995



GREAT GRANDMA: died in her 50's addicted to diet pills.



GRANDMA: now in her 75th year of dieting & food obsession.



MOM: a feminist, almost 50, still eats behind her husband's back.



ME

The Fat Lady Emerges and Takes Aim

by Elana Dykewomon

Everyone thinks the fat lady is good for three things: a belly laugh, a maternalism that encourages a soft sinking in, and a furtive, guilty indulgence in all foods forbidden.

After a certain point, where human fleshiness exceeds the boundaries of a culture's self-image production, the bigger she is the better. Instant-access global images make you jaded; you want the fat lady to be truly huge, completely compliant. On her flanks handbills of projection are plastered, her haunches present themselves as canvases for nasty-minded abstract expressionists, her wide loose upper arms are perfect for tattooing mottoes both innocent (mom) and self-deprecating (skull and crossbones), her breasts offer unlimited graffiti opportunities as they pitch and roll fast on the darkened subway tracks of imagination and her stomach is the envy of muralists worldwide who long to incorporate stretch marks into maps of Europe and Africa's extinct great mammals.

Altogether she is the billboard warning: civilization stops at my mouth - I am the original scofflaw and there's nothing you can do about it. While everyone waits patiently for red to turn green, I check the traffic out and waddle where I please. Etiquette means

nothing to me, my elbows go where they want, and all I need is a fork and spoon - most of the time my fingers will do. I am long past being ladylike by your dictionary though you still use the word, hoping to invoke some sense of constraint. In my eyes you can read how little I think of most enterprise, your rockets and your borders. I am anarchy as body.

What thrill, what terror she evokes! Most shun her with a shiver - anyone can see she is not the appropriate candidate for middle management, fundraising, the Pulitzer Prize. The few who squeeze through the turnstile of ambition - there was a fat woman once who ran the Boston symphony - girdle their loins, marshal their vast psychic powers to impress upon you that you do not see what you see; you see instead an intelligent, directed competency and we all know competency is sharp, a machete, masculine. It's possible, we agree, that the fat lady, having given up ladyness, may have buried her femininity and thus may be allowed, on rare occasions, to achieve.

But rarely. She is, more likely, the monster in the basement, so gaping she might eat her own children as she eats herself into an expanding creation. Wait—that's not the chuckle, bosom, easy indulgence you thought you'd find. As she walks, the earth moves and it's no longer

possible to deflect her barrel and billow from consciousness. Not lady, not girl, she pitches and heaves. The fall of the Roman Empire came, they say, when its citizens got fat.

Now you can hear her laugh. She shakes off your fingerpaintings, your pamphlets and moralities; she emerges grinning and impressive as any butterfly, the fat dyke.

It is I who make men and women writhe in their constrictions. Control is greed, not appetite. From each according to her ability, to each according to her need. I have driven through your small towns and know that the houses are built on the bones of those your armies and neglect forcibly displaced. All that time there was enough room for everyone, even me, if you had known how to come in peace. I am no one's cushion, will not apologize for getting the joke. I am all toughness and generosity. I am body as anarchy: collapse, renewal, relief. ✨

I am anarchy as body



Laurie Avocado, by D. Chen-Fields

I received this letter, with no return address, shortly after May 6th, International No Diet Day. —*Miriam Berg*

Dear International No Diet Coalition,

We heard about your No Diet Day and I thought you might like to know how we celebrated it.

We are a group of fat activists called the Fat Guerrillas. We hate what the diet industry does to women in this country. We decided we wanted to do something that would have an impact on would-be dieters, but we didn't want to have to work with the media because they usually get stuff wrong.

For this operation, we chose code names of beloved fat animals, either real or cartoon: Garfield, Miss Piggy, Babar, Dumbo, Porky Pig, Winnie the Pooh, and Shamu (myself). We took on the names of oppression many of us had actually been called in order to rob those names of their power to hurt us.

We rendezvoused to form our battle plan and to gather supplies. We took diet warning labels, the ones that list all the health problems associated with dieting. The full text of the labels, if you haven't seen them, is: "Warning! Dieting has been shown to lead to anxiety, depression, lethargy, lowered self-esteem, decreased attention span, weakness, high blood pressure, hair loss, gall bladder disease, gallstones, heart disease, ulcers, constipation, anemia, dry skin, skin rashes, dizziness, reduced sex drive, menstrual irregularities, amenorrhea, gout, infertility, kidney stones, numbness in the legs, weight gain, compulsive eating, anorexia nervosa, bulimia, reduced resistance to infection, lowered exercise tolerance, electrolyte imbalance, bone loss, osteoporosis, and death." (*They are available from the Body Image Task Force, P.O. Box 934, Santa Cruz, CA 95061, \$1.00 for a sheet of seven.*)

Our other main supply was a bookmark which reads: "Stop! Diets don't work. Dieting can harm your health. It's time to stop hating our bodies. Try a different approach. Health problems? Insist on good, respectful medical advice, and do what will improve your health other than losing weight. Feel unattractive? Get yourself a consultation, from a friend or a professional, and make yourself over in the image you want to project. Embarrassed by jokes at your expense? Fight back! Let the bullies know that body bigotry is unacceptable. Wish you could move more easily? Find a form of physical activity that really feels good and give yourself the gift of making it part of your life. Can't stop eating compulsively? Get help from a professional who uses the nondieting approach. Skeptical? Think about the billions of dollars the diet industry would lose if people decided to start liking themselves just the way they are. Never heard of this stuff before? Read more about it in the books and magazines listed on the other side." The other side has a little bibliography of important books and magazines. (*Bookmarks are published by the Council on Size & Weight Discrimination, P.O. Box 305, Mt. Marion, NY 12456, \$1.00 for 10 bookmarks.*)

So we loaded up on bookmarks and labels, and set off in two cars. We had CB radios and made sure to speak only in code.

"Porky, come in Porky, this is Dumbo."

"Porky here."

"We are approaching target number one, will meet you there. Dumbo out."

"Right. Porky out."

Target number one was our local library. We parked outside and

sent in two Fat Guerrillas. They found the weight-loss section and placed a bookmark in every diet book in the library.

Target two was a bookstore, but parking was difficult so we decided to split up and let mobile unit two take that target while mobile unit one handled the health food store and drug store in the shopping plaza.

"Dumbo, this is Porky. Mission accomplished at target two. Meet you outside your target."

"Dumbo is on a mission. This is Shamu. Your message received, Porky, and good work."

"Rendezvous outside our target. Shamu out."

"Roger, Shamu, Pork out, Pig out." (Porky and Miss Piggy used that as their sign-off from then on.)

We were pleased to find out that the health food store no longer carried Dick Gregory's Bahamian Diet Powder, even though Dumbo had been looking forward to getting the chance to place warning labels on those canisters. Anyway, we were able to send a serious warning to anyone who goes to Fay's Drugstore intending to buy Ultra Slim-Fast or Dexatrim, and the health food store's bookshelves were appropriately enhanced with bookmarks in all the diet books.

Next, we traveled along the local roads, seeking out posters for the "Magic Diet." These posters, laminated in plastic to make them last longer, have been stapled to utility poles all around our region. They give a local phone number, belonging to someone known to the group to be a sleazy character who preys on innocent, desperate fat women. He sells a diet powder, the kind of product that is responsible for most of those health problems listed on the warning labels, and tries to get his customers to become distributors of the stuff so he can make commission. Those diet pyramid scams can be found all over the country. Since the FTC has not yet moved to stop them, we decided it was up to us.

We knew that he had no legal right to post "Magic Diet" signs on public utility poles, poles which carry our electricity and telephone lines. So as we found each sign, we would stop and park and Garfield, our valiant warrior, would get out and unceremoniously rip it down. We called this the highway beautification program; later we decided that we had an obligation to adopt these local highways and that if this letter should ever reappear we would plan forays to once again rebeautify the region.

We covered a lot of territory that day. We went into the nearest city and hit a large department store and several stores in the mall. Porky almost got caught labeling Slim-Fast at a large department store, but all the clerks could figure was that we were trying to shoplift and they couldn't see any place for us to hide those big cans. We put a bookmark in every Susan Powter book (and many others) in our local mall. We cleaned up the entire highway, removing "Magic Diet" posters all along the commercial strip.

When our missions had all been successfully accomplished, we went to the soft ice cream drive-in and celebrated with cones and shakes as we sat around the statue of a nice, plump cow that adorns the drive-in. On our way back to Fat Guerrilla base, we hit a supermarket that we had missed before (Miss Piggy needed to buy dog food anyway).

A week has gone by and we have heard of no repercussions from our actions. Perhaps we will never know. But we can imagine someone, feeling terrible about her life because she thinks she's the fattest

REPORT FROM THE FRONT

What do you want from

I want them to not talk about themselves being too fat. This is something I've had happen a lot. I want them not to use fat-phobic language. I feel like they ignore the fact that I'm fat, but still make negative comments about other fat people.

Encouraging words about fat, food, etc. I don't want to hear about their fucked-up body image. I mean, I can help and encourage, but I don't want to hear about how they think they're fat. It's insulting. Some fucking respect. I'm not asking for total understanding.

I want thin and medium-sized women to deal with their body-image dysphoria and realize that there is a world of difference between their experiences as women who hate their bodies and my experience of being fat. All women's bodies are hated in our culture, but that doesn't mean all women are fat. Get with the program girls! Start looking at yourselves and looking at me for real. Get on with the business of loving yourselves. It's radical!

Educate yourself. This may include asking me questions (which I'll gladly answer), but goes beyond that. There's info out there (health, social/cultural/psychological and historical perspectives), seek it out, listen with an open mind, apply critical thought to it all (from the "fat is great" stuff to the "fat will kill you" stuff to the "do this and you'll be thin and happy forever" stuff). *Make up your own mind.* I'll try not to be too self-righteous when you agree with me! (And if we don't agree, I need you to respect my position, as I will respect yours. This means we do *not* try to convert each other—EVER.)

as a woman on the small end of fat i want people to stop expecting me to pass. "oh, you're not really fat" is not an acceptable response to my calling myself fat. i don't want them to assume i'm torn up with guilt / self-hatred / whatever about how "horrible" i look. i don't want them to assume i'm trying to lose weight. i don't want to hear how they're not really dieting, they're following a "sensible weight-loss program." Bullshit. i don't want to hear that it's fine for me to be fat but for themselves they've just never been happy at their larger size. what they're saying is they're doing everything in their power to look less like me. i want them to not be suprised when i'm offended by that. if they can't do those things, they're not allies.

More hugs! Folks seem to think we're insulated from all negativity,



but we're just better at hiding it or working it out as rage.

Thank you for recognizing that they exist! Acceptance of themselves as well as of me, an openness to learning the topic, the willingness to be confrontive with anti-fat attitudes in everyone.

Make it clear that fat activism is not simply a defensive reaction, that thin people can also see fat-phobia as irrational.

Don't assume that a fat person has a) no self-esteem; b) no will-power or c) no self-control. I've heard all those things in the past and they've put me on diets. I lose weight on diets but I don't keep it off once the radical diet is finished. And I'm tired of being miserable. I'd also like the support in shopping. It's not a lot of fun going to a mall that has no stores carrying my size.

It would be great if thin people thought about fat people when planning meetings, etc. We went to a McDonalds last night that actually had moveable chairs instead of only booths or fixed chairs. Much more comfortable and I'll remember where it is for the future! On the other hand, I went to a meeting from my 12-step program that was in a diner with nothing but booths and they were marginally comfortable for me. There are coffee shops in NYC that I won't go to because of the booths. I don't like having my breasts sit on top of the table...

What do I want? Respect! When do I want it? YESTERDAY, TODAY and TOMORROW!!!

I want them to *stop* trying to put me on a diet ... I *like* the way I am and don't need to be svelte to be sexy *or* happy!! I can paddle a canoe or hike with the best of

them and I won't have a heart attack from a little or a lot of exertion.

1) Don't tell me how fat you feel, all 130 lbs. of ya. 2) Don't hand me any suggestions on how to cut my fat intake. 3) Don't assume I have a 'hormone' or 'metabolism' problem. I might. But I'm not 'sick' or 'ill', so don't worry so much. 4) Please don't pity me, or say you feel bad for me, because of any issues related to my weight. I LIKE myself. 5) Additionally, don't assume I have personality problems, or self-esteem problems, or if I say, "Geesh, I should get out and walk more" or something to that effect, don't assume I'm slamming myself. Please remember that I do care about myself and my body; being fat doesn't mean that I've stopped. 6) Most importantly, DON'T tiptoe around the fact that I'm fat. I'm not sensitive about it as much as you might think. If you feel uncomfortable about inviting me to participate in what you might think is a strenuous activity or something that you think I might not enjoy, invite me anyway. I have the opportunity to decide for myself. 7) Examine your own internal fat-hatred by yourself. I might love you to pieces, but unless I can actually help you get over your size-acceptance problems, please don't subject me to complaints about your body and your fat intake, etc. I care enough to want to help, but I'm not an emotional dumping ground.

Acceptance. The ability to listen to and value my experiences.

i want them to understand that every time i walk out of my house i am forced to be a fat activist by virtue of society's disrespect for fat people. whether it is too-small booths at a restaurant i would otherwise patronize, size 6 turnstiles at the local cd store that force me to stand on tiptoe and squeeze through, or just the stares and ridicule of those who've either never been fat, or worse yet, have been fat and have starved themselves to thinness and hate me for not doing the same—i have to deal with it and still hold my head up proudly and that makes me a fat activist. i want them to be proud of themselves for breaking the chain of fat prejudice and even if they are quiet allies i want them to know that every step, no matter how small, eventually reaches the ultimate goal of global acceptance for fat folks.

To be seen for who I am, not what I am. And (for them) to SPEAK OUT on my behalf.

acceptance of who i am, not what i look like

reader survey says...

your non-fat allies?

Understanding. Not to hear, "if I don't drop 6 lbs., I'm just gonna die."

Love and understanding and acceptance.

I can't stand the way some skinny (also fat) people assume that I *don't want* to be fat or that I think I'm ugly. I don't think I'm ugly (only after I've hit the whiskey and slept all night on my face).

What everyone wants—acceptance. And I am not interested in their diets. If I meet a friend for lunch and she goes on and on about her butt size then only orders salad ... I order what I want, saying "There is more to life than prettiness, I'll choose stamina!"

Acceptance of my identity as a sexual being and to stop assuming that because I'm fat I must be unhealthy and an overeater.

First of all, I want more fat women to be my allies. Not to offer to be my "diet buddy." Or wail in self-hatred. Or invite me to OA or Weight Watchers so I can be like them and think/talk about food/eating all the time. I want non-fat women to either mind their own business or ask me out on a date, if they're so interested in my body. Same for non-fat men. And I want fat men to stand tall, not commiserate.

I want to be able to sit on all my allies who encourage me to sit on their laps and I'm intimidated cus I don't wanna squish them. So I tell 'em I don't sit on women smaller than me.

That they actually fight fat oppression and don't expect me to educate them. That they question the standard of beauty in the dyke community.

1) I want them to get over that medical thing. Even women who are generally hip to the ways ideology can bury itself in "science," the kind of women who are ultra-skeptical of studies that look to daily hormone dosage for a breast cancer "cure," etc... these women too often buy into the assumption that being fat is always, for everyone, less healthy than being thin. I don't want to get that "health" shit anymore. 2) I also want them to understand the

social discomforts of being fat. I want them to think about why I might be a bit testy after a day at the mall. I want them to think about why certain club atmospheres which are all about worshipping skinny bodies might make me uncomfortable. And, above all, I want them to understand that me losing weight is NOT the solution to my discomfort in these situations. 3) I want them to get a clue on "thin privilege" in the same way that straight allies need to get a clue on straight privilege, or in the same way that I've tried to get a clue on my white privilege—I want them to realize the ways in which things they take for granted can be points of real pain for fat people. 4) I want them to do some of the work of objecting to fat-hating places, media, incidents, etc., so that I don't end up feeling like I'm whining or harping on it all the time and that no one else gives a shit. Is it too much to ask?

Acknowledgement that fat is political and personal. Comfortable sofas instead of rickety chairs—taking my size into consideration, the way they do my allergies or my sobriety. Gestures of kindness and consideration. Willingness to discuss fat without embarrassment. Understanding when i talk about being fat and start crying. Advocacy. Help in educating the clueless. Reassurance on those bad days when i feel ugly and unsexy. Public statements of appreciation for and solidarity with fat women. The space to be who i am, as i am, and not have to endure preachy suggestions on how i should live my life unless i ask for input!

It's taken me many years to become

open mind.

acceptance.

appreciation.



somewhat at ease with my size and my only personal issue comes when i am uncomfortable in my body or when some "born again thin" or "thin from birth" person finds it necessary to point out health risks or other such *helpful* info or wonder what caused me to be fat or offer to help.

Drop the stereotypes and get the clue that DIETS DON'T WORK! Accept their own bodies.

- 1) To be seen as a sexual human being.
- 2) To be seen as a *human being* period.
- 3) To not have every bite of food placed in my mouth scrutinized.
- 4) For them to understand just how hard it is to be in this body.
- 5) For them not to affect a "well, all you have to do is lose weight" look on their faces whenever I bitch about finding good femmy clothes in my size (I guess I should say non-matronly femmy clothes).

- 6) For them not to be afraid to touch me—fat isn't catching.

* I want to be able to say the word "fat" aloud in a group—it's the truth, not a put-down or a dirty word

* I want consideration of my needs, not pity for my "situation/problem"

* I want to be considered "dateable material" (even though I might not be into non-fat girlz)

* I want to talk about my size and my life—and not be immediately reassured that I'm "not that fat" or to get "nutrition tips"

* I want to be able to be ANGRY (and not fat=jolly all the #@&*\$% time!) ✨

CLASS/CONSCIOUS



The following roundtable is an excerpt from a discussion on the dynamics of fat and class between fat dykes (in order), Margaret Sloane Hunter, Hannah, Oso, Margo Mercedes Rivera, Selena and Lea Arellano.

Lea: My name is Lea. I'm Chicana. I come from working-class background, and I consider myself working class presently.

Hannah: I'm Hannah, and I come from a mixed-class background. My father had a white collar job most of my life, but my mother and my father grew up poor. My mother grew up really poor. She grew up in the back woods, with no plumbing and all of that. Both of my parents had jobs when I was growing up. Culturally, I identify with my mother, and I identify as working class. I'd like to make it clear that while my father was white collar, he never went to college. Because he was a white man and it was the fifties and he was lucky, he happened on this chain of events that led him into that world. And he died of a heart attack when he was 51, which—I think—talks about his class life at work. Right now, I own a business, which I think makes me middle class. The basis of my class analysis is somewhat Marxist. So, in terms of my relationship to the means of production, I own it.

Margo: My name is Margo. I'm mixed-race Ashkenazi Jewish and Latina. My father was raised poverty class in Peru. My mother was from a lower-class background. I grew up working class and have earned my living at working-class jobs for most of my life. I presently have a white-collar job but feel that I still retain working-class values.

Margaret: My name is Margaret and my parents are working class. I've been pretty solidly working-class background. I resist the word "class"; I like "income." I've been around people who have a high income and don't have any class. But I have a middle-income job; I work for the state, but I don't own it. And I would very much like to be in a higher-class bracket than I'm in, because I don't like struggling. I live from check to check, and so I guess that makes me

pretentious. My parents are both black, African-American. When I was a kid, my mother used to put labels on hair grease jars for money, and then she went to night school. And then she got a job with the county. My father sold this little nickel-and-dime life insurance for a while. Then he worked at the post office, I believe, before they split up. My father then moved into a middle-class life because he bought a house, after many years.

Oso: My name's Oso, and I'm a Chicano. I'm bi-racial. I was raised working class by my grandparents and, when they died, I sort of moved around from family member to family member, and took care of myself pretty young. And I recently married into money. My wife has...she comes from money, and her family is upper middle class, at least. So, I think right now I'm in a transition. I work at a bookstore—at Old Wives' Tales. I don't make a lot of money, but I am recently in a very privileged position financially.

Selena: My name's Selena, and I grew up on welfare, with a single mother who was herself from upper middle-class, waspy background. She was a runaway as a teenager. I didn't meet my father until I was 16. I'm not real clear on anything about that side of the family, except for I've met people, but I don't know anything else particularly. My mom was struggling on welfare, and was working in job program to job program for awhile, until I got older. She went back to school, and was a school teacher. I was a student. One of the things that's crucial to me, and it's been an issue in my life about this, is the difference, the line, between how much money you have and the social class that you're assigned, because there's privileges you get from cultural mannerisms and belonging, and then there's money.

Transcribed by Cath Thompson, Edited by Barbarism

Hannah: Something of interest to me is culture and class. My mother's people are hillbillies. I did go to college, and I met a number of white, urban, working-class women who took a lot of my cultural mannerisms as middle-class traits because I was taught to be quiet and polite, I was pretty much written off as a suburban, middle-class white person. When I met Lea, it was a real relief to me, cause I don't know any other hillbillies... That's not true—I know one. It's like we come from a similar culture. Poverty is a big piece of that culture because the values come from the poverty. I wondered if people wanted to talk about that—their culture and class, and how they interact. One thing about fat and class that's really clear to me: in my family, the men are tall and thin, and the women are short and fat. There's this big myth about how people get fat from eating a lot, and my mother's mother did not eat a lot. There was not a lot of food to be eaten, and she ate the same thing as her husband, who was very tall and very thin. What her body did with it and what his body did with it were really different. That concept of fat connected with over-consumption seems not real to me. I read somewhere that in this country, as men get more money, they're likelier to be heavier, and women who have less money are likelier to be fatter. That is how it is—the men are thin and the women are fat, and no one has money in my mother's family.

Lea: I do notice that the thinner you are, there are a lot of assumptions about the more class you might have. I've seen that thinness is a more important value to middle-class and upper-class women. Not that it wasn't something that was talked about in my family. The majority of people in my family are fat—not all of them, but the majority. But that wasn't a focus; the focus was survival, and the focus was making sure that everybody ate, that everybody was fed. For me it gets a little bit convoluted because also, as a woman of color, there's that whole piece about assimilation. They put a doll in front of you as a child, and that doll would be blonde and she would be thin, and she would be tall, and these were the images you were playing with as a kid. And I remember, as a kid, thinking...first of all, I didn't like dolls, and I'm sure that there's other reasons why I didn't like dolls, but I remember one of the reasons I didn't like dolls was because none of them looked like me. How my mother would deal with it, I remember coming home from school at about eight years old when she put me on my first diet, because I'd come home crying, and it was the kids would say, "Dirty fat Mexican. Fat Mexican, dirty Mexican." And she says, "Well, you know what, we can't do nothing about the Mexican part, but we can do something about the fat." Because my mother believed diets worked.

Margaret: Were you in an all-white...?

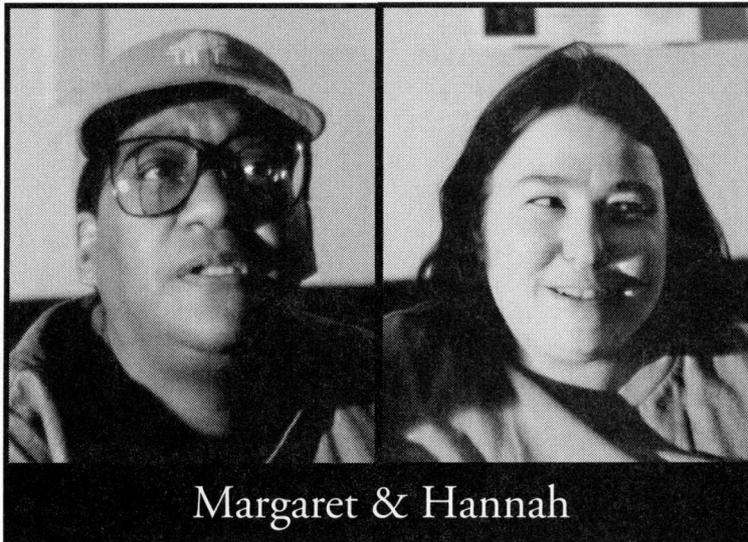
Lea: I was in a white, working-class neighborhood, and there was only four children of color in my whole school, and they didn't live

in my neighborhood. Our family was the only family of color. So it was like she thought if she could help me lose weight, she'd be protecting and supporting me. I don't think she would have done it if I wasn't coming home a lot and complaining. What was important to her was that I was going to school, and showed up for school. That was what was important to her.

Margaret: I have a different experience. There's the reality and there's the myth. The reality is that a lot of successful black women were fat—mostly singers and entertainers, and stuff like that. Those were role models; those were people we applaud and clapped and everything, but I don't know of any of my friends who weren't berated by their mothers, particularly about weight, which is a big thing in my family. It doesn't matter if in the family all the women are fat. It still was a big deal. I have to say not all of the women in my family are fat; some of them are quite thin. But that's an issue. It's a big issue—it's always talked about. I don't know if it's so much embarrassment as that "we want you to be as successful as you can, and your being fat might hold you back." You might not get the right boys, the best boyfriend. You might not get the best job. But in black humor there's a lot about laying up with a big-butt woman and loving it. I'm talking heterosexual, now. There's a lot of acceptance among black men of big titties, big butt, big-hipped black women. That's just kind of like the thing. Yet, there's still this thing about losing weight or being too big. On some levels, especially in this country, class can change by who you marry, or what job you get, or your income or whatever it is. I wonder if those things aren't pretty universal. I wonder if the pressure for women to look a certain way is not something that crosses class lines. Because I hear middle-class women say the same thing—a different theme, a different reason, but still, it's about women being put in a mold for whatever reason. But we can only talk about our own experiences, and our experiences are from the class background that we come from. My father died a couple of weeks ago. I went home for the first time in 20 years. I'd stayed away because I didn't want to deal with all the fat stuff. It was just very interesting being back home, and I guess after being away 20 years, people knew; they didn't say one word. I was much bigger when I arrived two weeks ago than I was when I left. But yet, there was still talking about other people, or when watching TV, having people comment.

Margo: My experience of being fat within my cultures has been mixed. My Jewish mother enjoyed her fat body and often would belly dance half-naked in the living room. My father also thought my *zaftig* mother was sexy. But from the outside world my mother got the message that it was not o.k. to be fat, so she intermittently made us both diet. Both sides of the

family liked how I looked when I was just a little bit fat (around 200#). They'd say, "Oh, you look so healthy," and they'd pinch my ass. But once I reached 250# and started hitting 300#, it wasn't o.k. any more. The same grandfather who adored me five years before would incessantly badger me about how much I weighed.



Hannah: I don't also mean to imply that it was acceptable for women to be fat in my family. I was not fat as a child, but I was told that I talked too much, I ate too much, and I was lazy. And one of my friends said to me, "Well, this is what I think you should do: you should talk more, eat more and work less. Those should be your goals in life." I think that is related to class, because I don't talk a lot. I mean, I have always worked really hard, and I work really hard. That's part of my cultural training, too. If you're a woman, man, you work!

Lea: Culturally, that being an Indian, the closer we are to our indigenous roots, the less we worry about being fat. Because some of the Indian women that I come from are fat. They're large, fat women. One of my favorite artists is Zuniga, and all of the women that he depicts are these huge women. And these are my ancestors, you know. My eight-year-old goddaughter Anivela, who's my niece, is going back to school now, and she told my mother last week, "I want to go on a diet, because I have to go back to school on the 17th." So in the summer, she's cool. She's going to her synchronized swimming, she's going to her kung fu, she dances at the pow wows with other Indians. But here comes school, where there's a lot of peer pressure. It's a mixed school, so there are white kids and there are brown kids, and she doesn't feel it in the summer. The activities she's doing and the people she's having contact with in the summer, and other kids that are in those activities, they're not putting the pressure on her. One was synchronized swimming, where the bodies are very diverse, and it was 200 little girls doing synchronized swimming, and the only thing when I asked her what kind of experience was that, well she said, "The only complaint I had was that they didn't choose me to be the one they lifted up." So she says, "I really wanted to know what that felt like, to be lifted out of the water. My suit was sparkling." I have a lot of transference with her, 'cause she's going through exactly what I went through as a kid.

Selena: I know a little girl whose mother is also fat, and who is chunky. I don't know if I'd call her fat. She's a little girl, she's big, muscular. Her mom is totally behind her, totally trying to counteract all the messages, but the girl wouldn't ever say, "I'm going to tell my mom on you." She'd be like, "I don't want to tell my mom. She'd make a big deal about it. She'll go down and yell." I don't know why the difference is like that. It's really hard to watch her still have the support and still go through all that pain.

Oso: When I was very young, it was okay for me to be fat. My family was mostly fat, and it was all fine until—and I think this was true for everything about me—until I hit, like, 12. And then I was supposed to stop playing with trucks, and stop playing with boys, and start wearing clothes that are like girl clothes. Therefore, to start being thin. And my mother didn't care that I was fat, but people pressured her. When it was other people coming from the outside saying, "Maybe you should start making her wear dresses now. Maybe you need to stop buying boy clothes. Maybe you should put her on a diet." It's interesting, the kind of pressure that different people get. That isn't necessarily from inside my family. A lot was from the outside, or from my aunts, who had left and got their own set of values about needing to lose weight, and then wanting to bring them back home.

Hannah: I think that a person has to cut a swath for herself. I would say that I've never been hard up for a date. I don't go to places where

there are little skinny girls looking for little skinny girls, because I don't need that. I can get that anywhere. I really do feel, as part of owning my ancestors, I'm wearing my grandmothers' bodies. I did not have their lives, and in a lot of ways, I am the freaks' freak of my family, but there are things about me that are true to the integrity of who my grandmothers were. And this is part of it. You are looking at it. It's not just being fat and working class, but it's the whole package of it. I grew up with my father who was a chemical engineer. I'm the first person in any generation of my family ever to go to college. And I got to college and totally freaked out because I did not belong there. Logically, I should have been able to just go right through college, go to law school or whatever, and to mutate into a middle-class person. But because of the totality of who I am, and a lot of other things, I just couldn't make that transition.

Margaret: It's interesting you say you feel like you're wearing your ancestors. I'm not sure that my ancestors sat around eating Cheetos. I think my ancestors ate natural food, and somehow or other I got away from that. Culturally, the food I eat, a lot of it was leftovers and so it wasn't the healthiest. What I've been struggling with in the last couple of years is how to appreciate what was good about my culture, and what is good about my culture, and get away from the public relations—about my culture. Unromanticize stuff that's maybe leading me to my grave. I think that there's certain things that I'm struggling with not embracing anymore, and saying whenever we have a gathering, it bothers me that there's so much food. I've gone through that back and forth over "is that self-hatred, 'cause skinny women get together?"—I don't really care about the skinny women. I don't care what they have at their table. I wonder, is it we're trying to show, "Fuck! We're fat! We can eat fucking Cheetos!! Fuck you!!"? Or, "fuck, I can eat a Cheeto and" [gags]. I struggle with that all the time, because I want to be honest about my feelings about my fat. I almost don't have any reactions anymore about if the little kid on the street says, "Fat lady!" I like myself. If I want to go work out in a gym, or if I choose not to eat anything at this table, I don't want to feel like I'm selling out the fat community like I have been made to feel in the past, when it was just terrible to talk about black women and feminism. That's what I'm trying to struggle around this fat and class. And yes, I have this image of big, tender black ladies with big titties comforting and nurturing. But, fuck, we nurtured so fucking much, everybody's sucked our tits away! Know what I'm saying? So I'm wondering how much of that is romantic? How much of that is really African? How much is it really healthy and good? And I don't have answers for it. I know it's something that me and some other black women have been talking about a lot lately. I'm 48 now, and the last some years now, I've really tried real hard to stop living my life for my daughter, for a lover, for the lesbian community, which I love dearly. Just trying to get to a place where, okay, this is me. I hope you like it, but if you don't, I like it. And it's a hard thing.

Lea: When I was little, I remember going hungry. And I know hunger is one of the worst pains I have felt. And I'm not necessarily talking about dieting or self-starvation. I'm talking about when there's nothing! As a child, you're really afraid, and you start hiding little cans of green beans and shit under the bed. After the first time I experienced that, I did that. I had this stash of canned food under the bed, and I don't remember ever pulling it out and eating it, but I just had it there.

Margo: Does this ever go away? That's the difference between

poverty class and working class. I remember someone told me about Richard Wright, and how he grew up poverty class, and he never got over that. He was a famous writer, and he'd go around with little balls of bread in his pocket.

Lea: I think it's always with you. I don't think you ever totally get over it. I think it manifests in different ways. Since I've become adult, I've never gone hungry, except when I dieted or self-starved. And I think it is all connected.

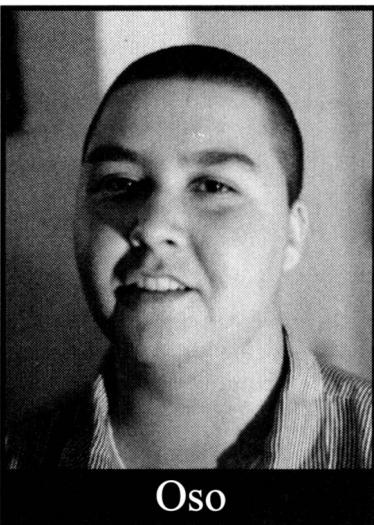
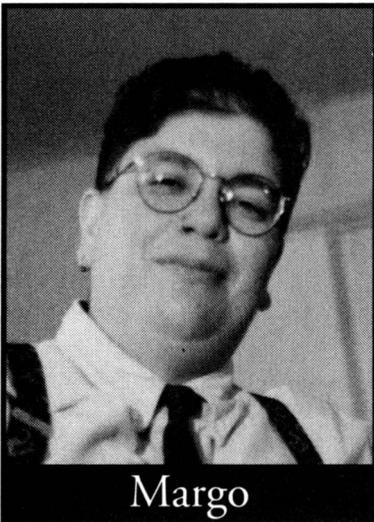
Oso: Sometimes I get really weird about it. We just had this big elaborate wedding. Her family helped us with a lot of money. I remember standing there having this photographer take my photo and

I thought even in this \$300 tuxedo, hand-made for me, I still don't look like them. There's a picture we have of me with her family, and I'm just as dressed up and more than all of them. There is that feeling of not fitting, no matter what clothes I wear. Or if I try and make sure I'm saying all the right things, I still feel like it's not my place. They could be just in shorts or whatever, and I could be completely dressed up, I still feel like you could tell. I feel like I don't look like I'm from that space.

Selena: I feel like that everywhere—not everywhere, 'cause I'm from Berkeley. Berkeley people are weird; sometimes people are weird. But I don't fit in, really, with the sort of normal suburban middle class, that I wasn't raised with it. But I don't fit in with a lot of working class cultures, either. I'm cultural-ly different. Especially, when I was in college, where people tend to be a little bit more self-righteous and see everything in two shades.

Lea: You know, this is working class stuff. There's not a moment that I don't think about money—when I go out to eat and what I order. I'm going to tell you, most of the time, what I order is determined by what I have in my pocket. It's not determined by what I want. It's very seldom that I go to a restaurant and order what I want. That's where my income is right now. And even if it wasn't, I think that I'd still do that, because I have all of those things in my mind. My last girlfriend took me out to dinner (for my birthday) at this incredible restaurant—and she spent \$65, and I said to her, "A family could have eaten on this for a week." I'm sorry. I didn't want to sound ungrateful or anything, but that's what I thought about when I was eating.

Oso: I had a lot of anger about coming into a relationship with someone who I felt had all this privilege all her life. I feel she worries about money, and I'm, "You don't have to worry about money. What are you worrying about?" I



think that I had to fight getting into always being like, "Well, we should just go out. Or we should just pay for this person, or whatever, because you have it. Why shouldn't we..." I felt like I didn't have it, and now you have it, so let's use it. So it's been an interesting struggle for me to realize how to balance it.

Lea: In my family, the females have a big loyalty about money and each other. Not about the boys—the boys are doing a lot better than the girls. But it's like that. It's like whenever we have some money come into our life, even if it's not a lot, what's the first thing that happens? We share it. I'll send my mother this much; I'll send my sister this much. And they do the same thing to me. But we don't send the boys shit—they don't need it. And they don't send it to us, really, unless we ask. That's just a female loyalty we have around money and class with each other.

Hannah: I really believe that people who have privilege can't see it, or can't see much of it. I know a lot about class, because I basically identify as working class. I can see it all around me. I'm white and I feel very ignorant about race, and I've worked very hard to deal with racial issues in my life, so I can not hurt women of color who I love. Like Lea's mom is like my mother, and so when people say stuff about Chicanas, believe me, I take that personally, because it's that way. I'm married to someone who's middle class, and I see the class stuff in her family. The bottom line is that they just basically—not personally, but basically, in general—think that they're better than me because I'm working class. They never say that, but it comes out in ways. I find it very hard to be in that type of relationship with a person from another class. If you can manage it, that's great, but it's very hard.

Margaret: Are they working class? There's class-conscious people. I think that would make a difference—consciousness and how they use their privilege—used it or abused or not used it, or whatever it is.

Lea: I had that same thing happen with a middle-class, sort of on the borderline, upper middle-class Puerto Rican/African-American woman. Her family never took me seriously as her partner—never. When she started being with middle-class/upper middle-class other women of color, they took them seriously. But I never was up to snuff with them—ever—and I knew it, that I never would be. It was almost like they expected me to entertain them. That's what I was good for.

Oso: My in-laws are good Berkeley liberals, so they have all the right rap, at least on the outside. And I think also they were so scared

about me and the way I looked, that they had such a hard time getting past that to even let themselves get into racial issues or class issues. It took them months to get past that I didn't have hair.

Selena: "Hey, that bald girl's not white."

Oso: They had this thing, "Oh, I like this person. She must not be all these things that I don't understand. She must not be so different." So they would ask, "So where did you go to college?" And I'd say, "I didn't go to college." "Oh, so do you have brothers or sisters, or anything?" Her father asked me about my family, and I was trying to tell him that I do have a half-brother. He said, "Oh, where does he live?" And I said, "Well, he's in prison." And he's a little hard of hearing. "Uh...uh...oh, anyway, let's have some cake." I think they have a hard time seeing things that they think of as very different in someone they think is a nice person.

Lea: There's a book that's just come out—*Lesbians Come Out of the Class Closet*. I've been reading it and I've really been enjoying it. I really want to find more language to talk about this. The more I talk about it, the less of a sting it has. I think talking transforms it, can transform it. I don't want to be punished for what class I come from, and I don't want to punish anyone for what class they come from. I'm really not interested in that. I just want us to find a way to respect each other and communicate about it. Because I have friends, and I love them dearly, but still they say things, and it's like, "Ouch!!" And you know what? I do it too. I may not do it about class, but maybe I do it about other things. And I want to hear the "ouch." If somebody can't say anything to me...if they say, "ouch," I'll know there's something I need to learn. Because we get alienated, then we get isolated, and I think isolation is what's killing us. I know that it's one of the hardest things for me that I've felt isolated and alone. And I don't want to. I want to be in community, like I used to be in the '70s.

Margo: I agree with you, and I think most people don't want to talk about class anymore. I think that people I talk to, they see class as this thing we talked about in the '70s. I feel very relieved that I'm in a relationship with another woman from a lower class, but it also feels like we're miles apart, because my parents did own a house. My dad was a cabinet maker. We worked every weekend at the flea market selling stuff to make money, and we did it on our own. It's in a very working-class neighborhood, but it's still a house. It still had a driveway. It still had a backyard. And my lover comes from poverty class, and she grew up in the projects. And that's miles and miles apart. It would be miles away from somebody middle class, but it's still a huge difference. I think it's good you bring up this book, because I think it's an issue that's on the table again.

Selena: Something I'm glad to talk about, although I was dreading coming in here—not consciously dreading. My body was dreading it, just because there's been so much pain in my life around it, and I haven't sat down and talked about something like that since college. Somewhere after college, it was very judgmental. It was like everyone sits there and tries to say exactly the right PC line, and everyone else sees if they get it wrong. And that's license to attack them. Talk about feeling "ouch," I felt it from my mother. 'Cause my mother is upper middle class, culturally. She's got this mentality...she manages to maintain a lifestyle beyond mine on the same income. I don't know how she does it. I'm convinced you're just born with that and you just create it around you. I don't know. I can't do it. So there's that divi-

sion where I don't feel like—there's some very real ways in which I'm different. She's always telling me, "Oh, just go ahead and buy it. Oh, it's okay, put it on the credit card. It'll be all right, it'll be all right, it'll

be all right." For her it is all right. I feel sick to my stomach over that kind of thing, 'cause my experience is, it's not going to be all right. You don't know where the next money's coming from. And it's really good for me to get to be in a relationship with someone whose class background is pretty similar to mine. I've been in relationships, the hardest one I ever was in was with a Chicana woman whose family had a lot more money than me, and they were working class. So it was like we crossed. I was poor but middle class culturally, and she had a lot of

money. And my girlfriend now is from basically hippie-freak parents. You know, people that were poor, but were from another cultural background. And it takes a lot of pressure off. It wasn't until I was with her that I realized all the tensions that there were either way, being with people that grew up middle class with money, or people that grew up working class with no money.

Lea: These labels, I'd like to examine them, because "working class"—what the hell is that supposed to mean? Because a lot of times, my father didn't work. So I say "working" working class, but it came and went—the work. And that really affected us. And that when we had poverty was when he and my mother weren't working. Except that my mother always worked in the home full-time, plus!

Margo: And you know what else?! I heard somebody once define what working class was—it just meant that you worked. But you could work at anything. If you were a doctor, you worked. If you were a lawyer, you worked. So therefore, you were working class, if you worked. And I don't know *where* that comes from.

Hannah: That's why I like having the basic frame reference that I have, whether it's tired, useless or whatever. To me, there are some basic things that give me some clue, that just because your father was a doctor and he worked, that does not mean you're working class.

Oso: Well, like everything, right? Like we all identify as fat dykes, but we're all really different sizes. And working class to one person means like a really different amount of income to other people.

Lea: Even being able to work, these days, is a privilege, because there's so much illness in society. So it's really changing the face of class. ✨



Got Something You Want To Talk About?

ORGANIZE A ROUND TABLE

Send a copy of the tape or transcription to:

FaT GiRL
2215-R Market Street, Box 193
San Francisco, CA 94114

Goddess

by Bear

Her voice dives across the pool deck
Deking around the men's braggadoccio to strum my ears
Women so sunburn beautiful are meant to be size six or less, I thought
With husband trailing behind like a quacking pulltoy
Every motion crane-smooth she shucks her loose tunic and shorts
I hear a salesgirl tell her, covers a multitude of sins
There is disgust from the assembled boys for her full thighs
Gravity-bound breasts and childbirth hips
Sly cuts about hard teenagers, not a ripple when they rut
I would like to rock her cervix with my knuckles
And enjoy remaking the bed afterwards

Touch Mirror

by Laurie Avocado

I have to admit there are times when I am in love with my own body.
This is the body I was meant to be.
These pictures, spread before me, could be me.
I touch the wet place,
Wishing I could feel this soft flesh,
This generosity,
This home,
To be enveloped by you
You who are so much like me
A mirror of touch
(not that brittle image-giving surface of cold glass)
A mirror of my flesh, my touch,
A world of me.

Bo & Chrystos Photos by Nadine

ASK THE

GEAR



QUEEN

Judging by the contents of my 'in' box, it appears that my readers have an interest in packing. Well, let me do my poor best to answer all the intriguing questions raised by your charming letters...

First of all I should mention that there are at least two forms of packing: one which creates a nice bulge to show-off, fondle, and rub against (soft packing), and another (hard packing) which is—in addition to all of the above uses—insertable.

Soft packing has a (probably infinite) variety of forms, but the basics are easy. Put on a close-fitting pair of undies, briefs, or a jock-strap, stuff the groin to create an appropriate bulge, and voila! You're ready to go.

Hard packing requires more in the way of equipment (namely a dildo and some form of harness), but the technique is similar to that of soft packing. Insert the dildo into the harness and put them on, then "banana curve" the dildo up to fit into a jock strap, etc., or tilt it down to ride along your leg under boxers or jeans.

Of course, things can get a lot more complicated.

For both hard and soft packing, expect to spend some time working out a combination of underwear, cock, and clothes that feels ok to you. It is common to wear some form of underwear under whatever you are packing, and not uncommon to wear two layers of underwear over it. Try briefs/stuffed jock/boxers, or briefs/dildo and harness/briefs/jeans and change whatever doesn't work for you.

If you are packing hard, you might want to consider packing a smaller dick than you might ordinarily use for fucking, as larger items are harder to manage when they're stuffed down your pants leg. (They're also a lot easier to give head to, but we weren't talking about that.) However, do keep in mind that action between fat bodies sometimes requires extra length, what with bellies (and butts) bumping. If the look of a harness ruins the mood for you, try wearing a pair of men's fly-front briefs over the harness and pulling your hard-on through the fly when you're ready for action.

Speaking of action, a lot of girls say that a snug-fitting pair of button-fly jeans make "the best harness I've ever used." Just open the fly all the way, put your dildo at the bottom of the opening with its base/balls resting on your pubes and the shaft thrusting forward, and button the jeans as far as you can. (This is a good moment to switch to a different dildo if you're into that sort of thing.) I hear that this method gives you lots of control, plus nicely targeted er...stimulation from the base of the dildo.

Special thanks to Terry Sapp.

If you are packing soft plan to experiment with the material you use for stuffing. I've heard of women using all sorts of things—from realistic medical prostheses to candy bars ('cause Snickers really satisfies). Just remember that you're looking for a combination that is secure, comfortable, and unobtrusive. You want girls to notice the bulge, not the noises it makes when you move or how it looks as it falls onto the floor.

If you are looking for something more realistic than socks, you can make your own cock and balls by carving them out of heavy-duty foam, or by following these instructions:

Cock: Take an unlubricated condom without a reservoir tip (say, Trojans in the orange box), fill it with hair goop (like Dep) until the size seems right, tie it off like a balloon, and roll and tie another condom or two over it for leak protection.

Balls: Follow the same procedure as for the cock, but make two considerably smaller balls. Don't worry about getting them to be identical sizes; balls tend to be naturally asymmetrical.

Assembly: Cut up a pair of tights and use them to cover/encase your cock and balls. (This involves sewing by hand, which—while it doesn't have to be neat—needs to be carefully done to avoid puncturing holes in the condoms.)

The set I examined used the stocking and stitching to create some beautiful naturalistic details. The stocking was lightly stretched around the cock and stitched to form a small ridge on the underside of the shaft. This stitching ended about one inch below the head of the cock, and the final stitches were used to secure a tuck of fabric that was about one inch deep on the top side of the cock, and faded to nothing underneath. (This tuck is hard to describe, but well worth trying to achieve, as it allows you to perfect the look of a circumcised or uncircumcised penis according to whether you roll it up or down.) The balls were stitched into a separate unit (with some light stitching between them to define the shape) and then the two units were stitched together with the cock appropriately positioned above the balls and the extra fabric at the top forming a small, firmly constructed loop which could be used to hold the works to your body by using a waist-sized piece of elastic.

Since I don't usually pack I made a set, that I wore to a FaT GiRL staff meeting, where I passed it around for opinions. It was such a hit that it didn't come home with me! (What greater recommendation could there possibly be than the fact that someone developed such a relationship with the cock-and-balls that she couldn't leave without them? I had to give it to her.)

Have fun,

—The Gear Queen

P.S. Just in case you were wondering if femmes can pack, I thought I'd let you know that I made myself another set. I rather like wandering about with a dick under my skirt. - G.Q.

Washing Up

by A.M. Salt

I've got my legs wrapped around the legs of our kitchen table and the metal is cold but it feels good. This is my favorite spot to sit and watch the potato dance because it's really close to the sink and that's where Mom always sets the pot when she's ready to start mashing. She grins, grabs the pot of potatoes she just drained and picks up her favorite masher. The heavy pot goes onto the side of the sink and she reaches into the cupboard for butter, then into the fridge for milk.

Dad's sitting here too, and now and again he looks down at me from across the table and winks. I think he winks to tell me that he knows what's coming and he thinks it's funny too, but we'd better not let Mom catch us. She makes her lips go real thin in a straight line, then turns her back to us and starts chopping at the big chunks of potato in the pot. When she has them all mushed down smaller, she starts to stir in a circle. Just a slow small circle at first, but when the butter melts in and the milk gets blended better, she speeds up. Pretty soon she's going so fast that her arm looks like it's flying, and that's when her butt starts going. It starts shaking in the same direction that she's mashing in, and I think that if her butt didn't move like that she might just take off through a window, or through the door if we forgot to close it. Dad says Mom has a butt nobody can do nothing about.

He smiles at me and we keep on watching until she bangs the masher on the side of the pot and covers them up to keep them warm. He reaches into his back pocket, pulls the long wallet, along with the chain, onto the table in front of him. His big thumbs undo the snaps, flip through credit cards, pictures of some dead horses and twenty dollar bills.

"See this here," he says, and flicks me the picture of him and Mom when they got married.

"All this other shit is nothin. I don't own anything else."

I flip my thumb over one corner, where the edge is starting to come apart.

"You hear me?"

"Yes Dad."

"Let's go wash up then."

My Dad has really skinny bowed legs and I guess they're skinny because he has to work them a lot harder to move the rest of him around. His belly hangs over his belt in kind of the same way that the loose skin under his chin hangs over the top of his shirt.

The skin on the outside of his knees is pinker than the rest of the skin on his legs; everything else is white-white under the brown hair that's thick on his calves, but not so thick on his thighs.

"Come on Chubs, lift up the seat like I showed ya."

I lift it just the right way, like he taught me. I put two fingers under the very front edge of the plastic ring and raise it up real quick, but I always make sure not to let it bang against the back of the toilet. So I slow down just before it's about to touch the tank until I hear a little click that lets me know I can let go. Sometimes I do it so good I don't hear anything at all.

"Good job girl, now what're you gonna do?"

I still haven't learned to do this part right, and Dad says that I better keep trying until I get it exactly right but I don't know when that will be. I mean, the last time he taught me, he kept saying, "Move your fingers under a little bit more there Chubs, that's right. Just like that. Now squeeze Dad just a little bit. There you go." So the next time, I try to do the same thing, but he always tells me to do something different, so I guess maybe I'll never get it right.

The skin that hangs down between his legs, the thing he has me squeezing now, is a darker pink than the skin on the outside of his knees even. It's kind of rough and wrinkly and reminds me of chicken-killing time.

When it's time for the old laying hens to die, or when we have a couple too many roosters, then Mom gets the thick block of wood from under

the workbench in the barn and brings it, with the hatchet, under the trees at the very edge of the woods by our house. It's my job to catch 'em with my long stiff wire—bent into the shape of an "L"—so that when I carry it like I would normally walk, hands swinging straight down by my sides, the curved part almost touches the ground, but not quite. There's a little hook on the very end so when I sneak up on the right chicken and slide that end around one leg, I can yank 'em off their feet before they know it. Not that chickens are all that smart but I don't like getting pecked or scratched.

Anyway, after Mom chops their necks and we pluck them we take them into the kitchen to pull their guts out. The skin on their necks is long and loose and has big bumps just like what Dad has under his thing, except the chicken's is on the wrong end and, after all, it's dead.

I can't think of anything else to do except to do it the same way I did it last time, so I try to hold all of this part of my Dad in my hand, even though it's way too big.

"You best not have any mashed potatoes tonight girl, otherwise you gonna be outgrowing your clothes faster than me and your Mom can afford to buy more."



"Uh huh."

I like potatoes though, and think I can probably go get some after he and Mom go in their room tonight.

"No gray, you hear me?"

"Yes Dad."

I start to move my fingers one after the other, like my Mom does sometimes when she rests her arms on the table and clicks her nails down.

"Right here girl."

Dad moves my hand a little more toward the front of his chicken neck with one hand and takes the end of his thing in the other.

"Here comes the river Chubs, watch now."

He likes to say that almost every time.

Sometimes when we're sitting on the couch after the chores are done, he takes my hand and pulls me up after him and he says, "Time to go piss a fair river."

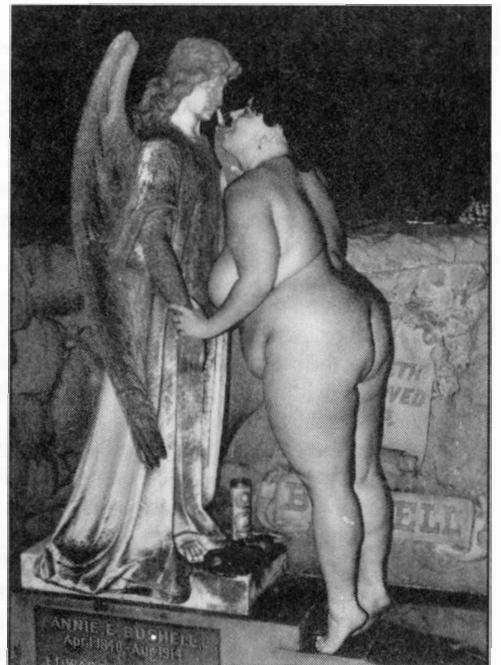
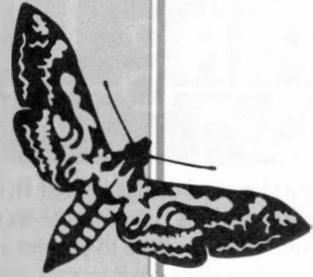
Just a little comes out at first, but makes a really big splash anyway, then just stops. He moves his fingers back toward mine a little and then pulls them out toward where the water comes out. All of a sudden, it is like a river.

Not like the streams that run through our back field after the snow melts, but a really fast yellow gush that sinks into the clean water in the toilet like it's heavier. Like the blood that drips from the plates into the dishwasher when we have pot roast for dinner.

Dad lets out a big breath and rocks sideways to move his feet further apart. The pink skin that's stretched tight over the outside of his knees, so tight that I can see some bones in there, brushes my arm and all of a sudden I can smell what we're having for dinner.

Fresh fried chicken rolled in flour, wishbone, leg and gizzard for me. Potatoes mashed with butter and milk, thick gravy with black specks of pepper floating all through. Green beans, yellow beans, wax beans and new potatoes cooked down with chunks of bacon and celery. Yellow squash dipped in egg, rolled in cracker crumbs and fried brown. Hot buttered rolls. ✨

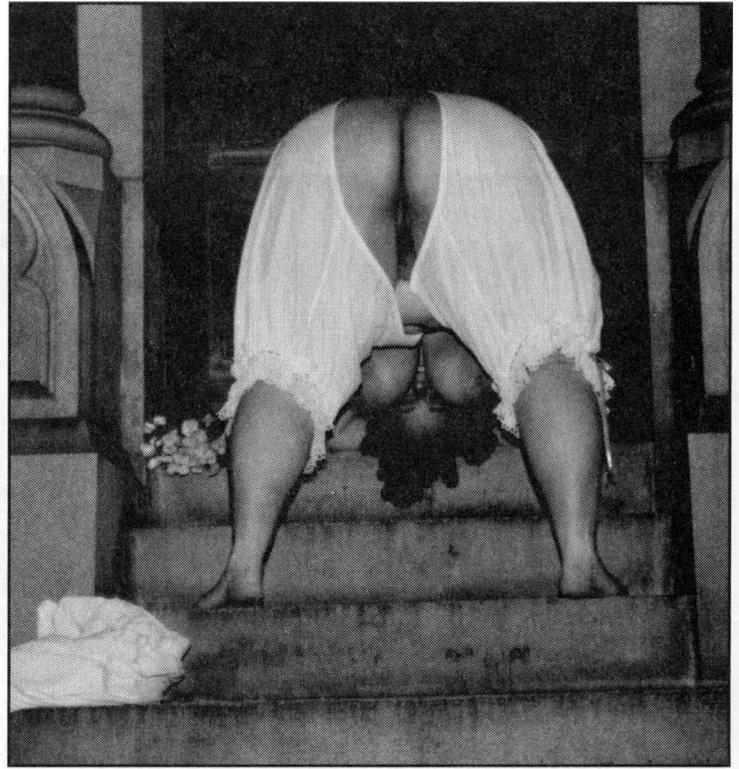
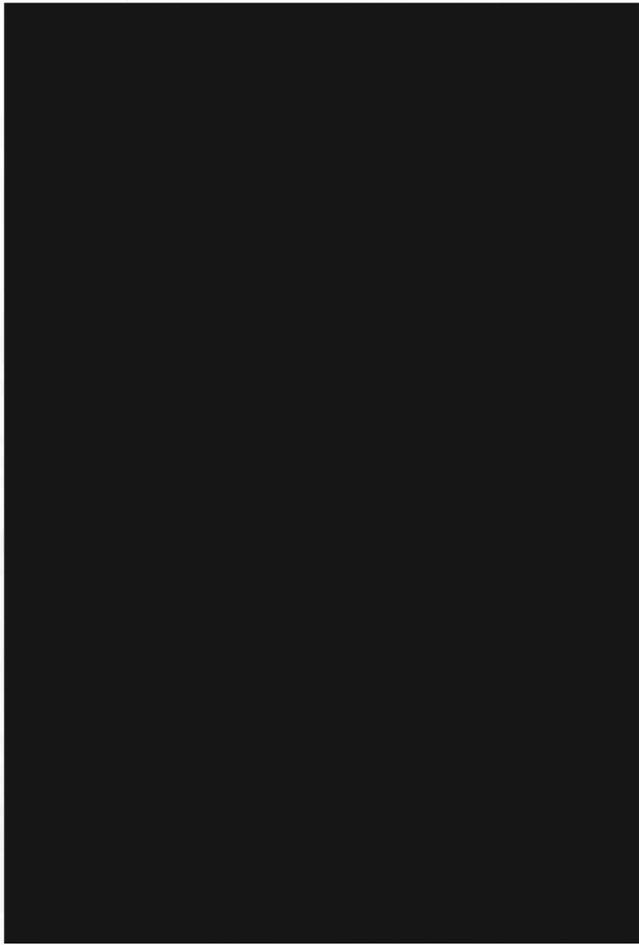
B Is For Barbarism In The Cemetery



Photos
Laura Johnston



Where Creatures Go Bump In The Night...





What's Sexy About

Funny thing, I find fat women really attractive, but I hate it in myself. Hmm. I love the way many fat women move.

They are soft, round, lusty, big enough to take me on, sexy, hot, fuckable, cuddleable, full of attitude, sassy, bold, brave, I've got to stop I'm getting wet.

Round, soft, forgiving curves. Substantial, something to hold on to. Power Strength Energy

You can't crush us or hurt us. Two large dykes can wrestle like no one's business.

Wow—what isn't sexy about fat women!!! Imagine rivers of cunt juice flowing out of a canyon-sized pussy over pillowy strong and tender thighs. Rest your head on a fat belly,

a giant breast or in the softest crook of a fat girl's neck. THAT'S what is sexy about fat women!

Fat women are delicately tiger-striped along their bellies and breasts and thighs and

arms. Some fat women have marvelous purple tracers of veins in their legs that look like marbling (the kind of marbling people pay \$100s to put in their Victorian homes).

Fat women have the softest skin.

Fat women are fun to wrestle with.

Fat women have "float-up bra" contests in the hot tub!

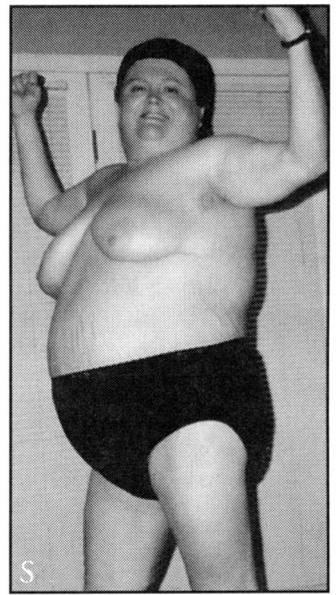
Their texture. I know it sounds awful and stereotypic, but I like soft, cushy, squeezable women. "Built for comfort," yeah. I also like women I'm not afraid I'm gonna break. My last gf was very thin and very delicate and I felt like I was married to a china plate. So big, sturdy women who are also soft and cushy...sounds like fat dyke heaven to me.

Everything that's sexy about every woman, only more so!

Softer-than-soft bellies, thighs, faces,

shoulders, backs...sigh...you had to ask this question while I'm at work, huh? Big FAT thighs that quiver and slap at your cheeks when you make a body come.

that peak out of those abundant thighs... juicy, juicy, plump. And when they clamp down with those thighs you are in flesh heaven. I also have a thing for moon-faced



girls—when they smile my thoughts leave my head and all I can do is listen to my heart beat

loud—and fat women tend to have the fullest shining moon faces around.

I never thought about what is sexy about fat grrls...but most of the wimmin I have been with have been thinner than me, although not really skinny. So...I apply this to what is sexy about me...curves, hills, valleys, softness, and a general pleasing to the eye...Thinner wimmin do not necessarily turn me off, but fat grrls turn me on. Phhfft...every grrl turns me on...

The fluidity of fat and muscle as it cooperates in graceful motion.

I am simply blown away by the movement of fat women, especially if they obviously love their bodies.

Their flesh, their warmth, their bulk. I love rolling over at night and putting my arms and legs around a mountain of a woman, cuddling up with her, putting my arms around her and hugging her tight, playing with the flesh on her thighs.

Their power & presence. There's something amazingly potent about fat women; they exude security, sexual energy, potency. They take up space unapologetically. MMMM-MM!

I like their big fat juicy asses that overflow in your hands and that thunder when you slap them. The same big asses that you can take big mouthfuls of, that smush up against your face while you smell that sweet spunky fat girl scent... They have delicious tummies—round, curving,

dimpled, adorned with glorious stretch marks that glow when they are happy and turned on—you can bury your head and heart in those stomachs. I love fat knees that roll over and grace plump calves...and bountiful breasts that touch you at inopportune moments—nipples that venture into casual brushes with strange shoulders and arms. And fat women are sexy with beefy strong arms and rolling shoulders that can surround you and hold you so tight you ain't going anywhere. Fat women are sexy especially when they cover you head to toe in with their weight—you can't breathe you're gonna pee and your heart will burst but the weight of the world disappears and your cunt and her cunt is all that exists. And speaking of cunts. Fat women have the sexiest plumpiest cunts



Max & Barb

The bigness is sexy—it can envelope you. I like to watch fat ripple!

Hard to answer. I find people sexy, not body types.

All those luscious curves. They're softer and stronger than little women.

Cleavage, body pressure, soft skin, big ass, grabbable tits.

What is sexy about fat women? Well it depends on if you're talking about OTHER fat women or me! Other fat women are sexy because they're voluptuous and soft and inviting and cuddly and full of places to hold on! My body, on the other hand, is NOT sexy ... it's fat and droopy and has horrible knees and "things that hang"! This makes me pretty asexual (in my mind and in my enjoyment of sex), so I guess you could say that "repressed sexuality" is the sexiest thing about me.

Her roundness.

They are soft and wonderful for snuggling up with.

We are lush soft curvy warm no sharp corners or hard edges.

We have these lovely mounds of flesh (breasts, buns, stomach, etc.) that move around when we make them. When a fat woman moves in sexual ecstasy, a mountain moves, sometimes volcanically. The power is incredible! I find her buns from the back

quite sexy to watch as she walks. Seeing a fat woman I adore quivering as she walks, sits, moves, makes me wet, and eager to have my body enwrapped with hers.

What isn't?! Curves. Meat. Substance. Strength. I like a woman who can challenge my physical strength. Big women look powerful to me. They take up space that isn't supposed to be theirs. It sounds so theoretical, but there really is this sexual outlandish dynamic to fat

women just *being* that makes me wet. And yet, big women's bodies are often so out there, there is something vulnerable and pervasively appeal-



ing about that that makes me want to get inside and really touch them. Fleishy women make me greedy—handfuls of flesh—my hands and mouth and cunt are always hungry for more.

Fullness. Smoothness. My ex-girlfriend was petite with the smallest breasts imaginable—was a model for teen fashions until she was almost 30. She could have anyone she wanted. She threw fits over my body—she was hungry for every curve! I began to see her point!

EVERYTHING!!!! (Especially their asses...) No, seriously, I love the feeling of being overpowered in bed, and that just doesn't happen with skinny girls. I mean, I'm a bear, I need to bite and claw and wrestle and



they look so sensual. And then of course, there is the way fat *feels*—and it feels great!

Lots 'o curves and soft spots to snuggle

into. Bountiful bouncing flesh. Solid, sturdy. Their roundness, lush breasts/bellies/butts! Beautiful expanses of soft skin! The way fat women open up to their sensual side more quickly

and deeply than thin women.

They are soft, round, very female, feel delightful in my hands and against my body. You can bury yourself in them.

Fat women got those sexy shapes and sexy sounds, with sexy curves and sexy mounds. They got sexy tastes and sexy eyes, Sexy lips and sexy thighs. Fat women got that sexy skin, it's soft and silky it makes me spin. And what is best, their tummies bounce

they're more beautiful, ounce for ounce!

Fat

Women?

struggle when I fuck; that's part of what gets me off. With another fat woman, I can do that and not feel like I'm going to damage her. And then there's all that mushy lesbian stuff about softness and warmth and comfort.

They're substantial and sensual.

Round curves. Soft bodies. Beautiful faces. Shared experiences. Cuddly.

Passionate, romantic, uninhibited.

Lots o' curves! No uncomfortable bones to jab you. They're soft and cuddly.

I find larger women to be more honest and open. Less pretentious. Less worried about their social standing and appearances. Much easier to get to know. Hell, it's nice to have something in common—we've all faced the same discrimination and cruel jokes.

I really love the soft, plump, round look of fat women. I just think

they are gorgeous, like a beautiful work of art. This is probably going to sound weird, but I especially love fat women's arms and shoulders—

There's lots more to hold onto. We're built for comfort, but can speed, too.

I love full bellies and thick hips, round bootys and cleavage to dive into. Yum yum chomp.

Everything, plus, they're fat. I mean, a fat woman is sexy in every way that a skinny woman can be sexy, flirty, smoldering, tough, cruel, shy. Plus, a fat woman is incredibly soft.

Everything!

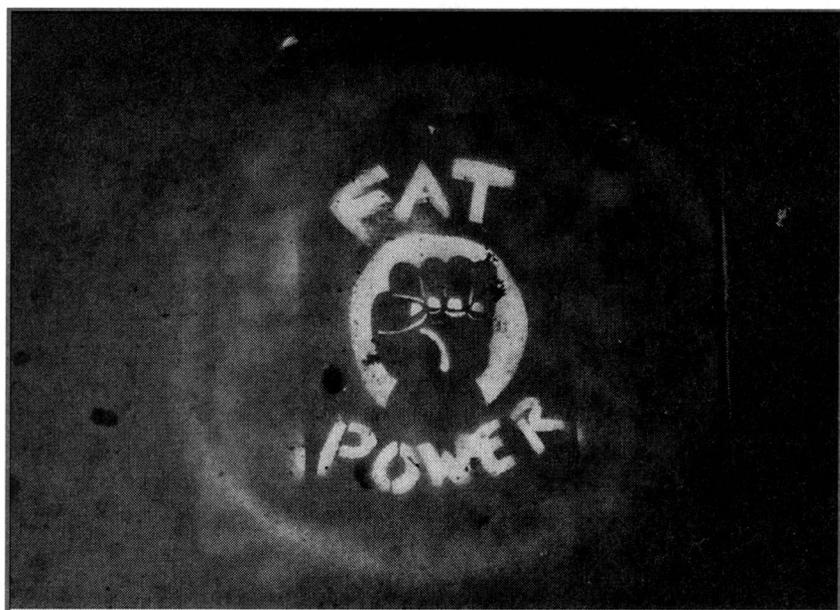
Feminine. Big breasts. Big hips. Sensitivity. Soft, soft, soft. A sexy, attractive, big woman who walks proud and loves herself and isn't afraid to take up space is the sexiest woman on earth.

A lot of things. Lots of woman to grab hold of. I like bigness. I can wrestle with them and not hurt them. ✨

What isn't?!

Write On:

the lip service update



Yes, fat dykes are everywhere,

but from the looks of the media, we don't exist at all (with the rather bizarre exceptions of recent mentions of *FaT GiRL* in *The Nation* and *Time*). We are usually excluded from the dyke media and often the fat media, too. Well, we are sick and tired of being shoved in the closet! A case in point: *Radiance*'s summer issue had a feature story about the new generation of fat activists. Nomy Lamm and one other woman were mentioned, but not one single mention of ANY of the young, fat, DYKE organizing that's going on. Is *Radiance* trying to stay in the closet? Help *Radiance* understand why coming out is important. Write to them! And on the lezzie side of things, here's the scoop on *Girlfriends* magazine.

From *Girlfriends* July/August 1995 issue:

Skip the Skinny

Thank you for mentioning the release of *FaT GiRL*. The more press we get, the more contact we make with fat dykes. Fat dykes are everywhere, yet we are not represented in any of the media. Another way you can help is to start portraying fat dykes in your magazine. I have looked through your last several issues from cover to cover and seen not one fat dyke. Why? Is your magazine only for thin women? If so, I think it's important that you say so,

rather than purporting to be for the enjoyment of all lesbians. (*Girlfriends*: The Magazine of Thin Lesbian Enjoyment?) Fat lesbians exist in great numbers, and so do our admirers.

We need more than just *FaT GiRL*, we need true representation in all the lesbian press.

Max Airborne
FaT GiRL,
San Francisco, California

The editors respond: You're absolutely right. From the look of it, *Girlfriends* has been the magazine of thin lesbian enjoyment. Our only (and admittedly "thin") defense is that we consider our pictorial to be fantasy material, rather than a reflection of the real lesbian community. That's not always a comfortable line for us to toe, however, and we try to balance the limitations of those (all-too-often fatphobic) fantasies with hard-hitting editorial -- especially when it pertains to women who aren't skinny, white, or rich. Moreover, we don't have a policy against featuring rubenesque beauties in our centerfold pictorial (that would be a rough one, seeing that we have plenty of fat girls and their admirers on our staff). Big exhibitionist readers, head up!

P.S.: We applaud your activism, and we're honored to receive a letter from one of our fave 'zines.

Dear Fat Girl,

Hi gals! I've been meaning to write since first getting my greasy little fingers on issue #1. I am so happy you folks have created this

magazine! Keep up the good work! Enclosed is a letter I send to *Girlfriends* magazine I thought you might enjoy.

Your magazine sure does have a lot more zip to it, now doesn't it!

FYI -- almost died over April's butch seduction piece (issue #2) and go go Amiee (great centerfold!).

Best wishes!!! XXXXXXXX

Leah Z

Dear Girlfriends Magazine,

Thank you for the article on Tribe 8, my favorite band ever, and the groovy pictures of all those cute lesbian cowgirls!

However, I felt disturbed by your response to Max's letter in regards to the lack of fat women in your magazine. You stated that, admittedly thinly, perhaps your pictorials reflected fantasy, rather than reflection of lesbian communities. I felt compelled to comment that, excluding the fantasy material of Tribe 8's Flipper, thin women do not people my fantasy world. Much more generously proportioned butches grace my dreams (also significantly less shaven!). Through discussions with my "girlfriends," I know I am not alone in this preference.

Thumbs up to Max and her crew at *Fat Girl*.

To *Girlfriends* magazine, a plea to see my fantasies reflected in your magazine.

Best wishes,

Leah Z



Fat Watch



TWISTED JUSTICE

John Rossi worked at Kragen Auto Parts in Berkeley and San Francisco, CA for 10 years. Then he was fired because he weighed 400-500 pounds. He successfully sued and was awarded \$1 million for emotional distress and lost compensation and benefits, which is the first major CA verdict involving an employee dismissed due to obesity. But this is not the revolutionary case that it could be. Under the CA Supreme Court's mean-spirited and flawed 1993 decision, Rossi had to prove that his obesity was a physical disability by showing it was a physiological disorder. Had it been simply discrimination because of his size, rather than discrimination because of his condition, he would not have prevailed. John Rossi, who is frank when he states, "I don't want to be a symbol, I just feel justice was served," says that with the \$1 million he will now be able to afford the medical treatment that he feels he needs. If you want to share what you think about Kragen Auto Parts' decision to fire Rossi because he is fat, feel free to call them at (510) 649-9007. You might want to also mention whether or not you will shop there in the future.

YOU MUST BE SAVED, EVEN IF IT KILLS YOU

Reinaldo de Carvalho, the Rei Momo (Fat King) of Rio de Janeiro's Carnival celebration, died trying to lose weight. Carvalho entered a weight-loss clinic in Rio and died after losing 66 pounds in 30 days.

SPIT ON SPIN

From page 24 of SPIN's August '95 issue, regarding John Popper, the fat singer/harp player of the band Blues Traveller:

Hippies al Dente: A guide to those crunchy, hairy, hoary, H.O.R.D.E.-derived "noodler" bands.

BLUES TRAVELLER

Wank factor: Lots of really long solos by oversize harpist John Popper.

Useless personnel: About 400 pounds o' Popper.

Funny looking?: Figure it out.

Pearl of Wisdom: From the band's bio: "Some people think being in a band is like having a business, but I'd say it's like being pirates on a ship." Help, we're sinking. Somebody toss the harmonica player overboard!

Fun fact: Because of a broken leg, Popper once spent an entire summer touring in a custom-made wheelchair and specially built van. Just like Ironside!



by Max Airborne & Sondra Solo

SHUT 'EM DOWN!

The weight loss industry appears to be taking a plunge. Companies such as Weight Watchers, Jenny Craig and Nutri/System are in a slump because their customers, 90 percent of whom are women, are walking away. The industry, which neared \$2 billion last year is expected to see revenue dip by 15 percent by the end of 1994.

WE ARE EVERYWHERE

Fat dyke Cathie Dunsford's first novel *Cowrie* was nominated for the American Library Association's Gay and Lesbian Best Book of the Year award. It is also #1 on the Australian Feminist Bookstores Bestseller list.

FAT GIRLS ON TV

Cable watchers check out *All That*, a kids' show on Nickelodeon Sunday afternoons. What the hell for? Well, it seems that one of the teenage actors on the show is a fat girl, and one with attitude to boot! Check it out, and let us (and Nickelodeon) know what you think!

TWISTED PROFITS

You think it's hard being fat now? Imagine the pressure to lose weight and fit in that will exist if a daily shot of 'medicine' can make you thinner. Well, this problem may be very real in the near future. It depends on Leptin. And Amgen, the CA biotechnical company which paid Rockefeller University \$20 million to be able to make 'obesity gene'-related products like Leptin, is depending on Leptin to make big profits.

What is Leptin?

Leptin is a protein that was discovered by inserting the recently discovered obesity gene (or ob gene) of naturally thin mice into bacterial cells.

What does it do?

Back in the 1960s a researcher from the Jackson Laboratory surgically joined the blood vessels of living fat and thin mice. He found that the fat mice lost weight, implying that something in the blood affected weight. Three sets of researchers agree that Leptin is the blood factor that makes fat mice thin. Nobody knows how it works, but some researchers suspect it may be a hormone that acts on the brain to control metabolism and appetite. More Leptin means faster metabolism and higher body temperature. And since Leptin is made in fat tissues, the fatter the animal is, the more Leptin should be produced. The more Leptin is produced, the higher the metabolism becomes and the less appetite there is. Fat mice given daily injections of Leptin lost 30% of their size and ate less.

People have an ob gene similar to mice. Nevertheless, most experts think 'defects' in the ob gene are not likely to be a major reason for obesity in people. There may be many more, maybe 100



more, genes in people that relate to weight and obesity. Also, the mice that lost weight had low Leptin levels. Many fat people have elevated Leptin levels.

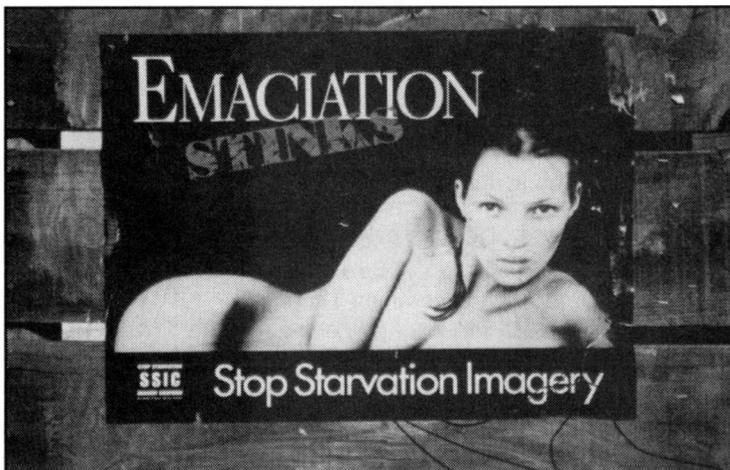
Whether Leptin will cause weight loss in people will probably be discovered in the human trials Amgen will start in 1996. It could be available on the market as early as 2-10 years later. So it remains to be seen whether Leptin, which would be injected daily or implanted under the skin of the patient, is a safe, effective treatment or is simply another "miracle" produced by the diet and drug industry such as saccharin, aspartame and amphetamines whose dangerous long-term effects are ignored or unknown. Sadly, many fat people subscribe to the belief that it is better to be dead than fat and will flock to trade the title 'fat pig' for 'guinea pig.'

SICK MOTHER/DAUGHTER TIDBIT OF THE MONTH

On the Montel Williams show about overweight teens who fight with their moms one mother said to her 13 year-old, 350-pound daughter, "Do you feel if I took you back tomorrow you would lose weight? If you would I will."

SICK FATHER/DAUGHTER TIDBIT OF THE MONTH

Multibillionaire investor Warren Buffett used his love of money to control his weight. He would write a check to his daughter for \$10,000. The check would be payable on a specified date unless he lost weight. She would try to get him to eat and he would get to decide whether he preferred to eat and give Susie the money, or keep the money from her and be hungry (from *Buffett: The Making of an American Capitalist*).



POSTER CHILD OF THE MONTH

Emaciation Stinks posters of *Obsession* waif Kate Moss were plastered all over San Francisco this September. SSIC, the Stop Starvation Imagery Campaign, aims to fingerpoint the distortion of women's images in the media and combat obsession with bodies as objects for products. The posters target Calvin Klein's ad campaigns in an attempt to reach teenage girls who are most susceptible to the influence of the diet industry. As founder Kathy Bruin emphasizes, for teenagers it is "do or die." SSIC is raising awareness for women of all ages and encourages the boycotting of bad companies. Bruin advocates for women to "exercise their integrity and their personal individuality." Their next poster campaign will be "Bodies aren't fashion accessories," and SSIC has future plans to speak in schools and at fairs. The public is hungry to participate in this dialogue—response to their action has been intense, with hundreds of positive calls and letters as well as national press attention. Interested in raising awareness in your community? Write or call SSIC at PO Box 77665, San Francisco, CA 94107, (415) 436-0212, uvula@netcom.com. Donations for posters accepted (limited supply). —*Barbarism*

FAT VISIBILITY?

One of Tokyo's latest popular video games, Fat Floater, requires players to use a joystick to maneuver a fat woman out of a lake and into a slim canoe. The game is lost when the fat woman drowns. ★



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Got some news? Something to get mad about?
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“Lanetta”
Photo by Serafina



RESOURCES

Reviews by Max Airborne & Candida Albicans

We *only* list things we've received since the last issue of FaT GiRL or things with updated contact information. For more extensive Media Feast listings, get your hands on back issues of FaT GiRL. Send us your published work (book, zine, mag, tape, CD, video, CD-ROM, whatever) for listing in this section.

MEDIA FEAST

Books, Mags & Zines

Allright (#2) is a truly brilliant comic by Charlotte Cooper & Simon Murphy. It has lots of fat-positive & queer-positive content, as well as great wacky stories and blurbs. There's the adventures of Ms. Sadie Mae, memories of the 70s, the A-Z of hate, and much more. These two put out a bunch of cool comics. Send 'em a few bucks (cash) and see what it gets you! *Charlotte Cooper & Simon Murphy, 33 Romford Road, Stratford, London E15 4LY, England.* [MA]

Amazine is the zine of the Amazon Girlz, a group of teenage dykes. Issue #2 has comics, reviews of dyke punk bands and movies, astrology, some personal rants, and my favorite: the Slut Smut pull-out section. \$2 to *Amazine, PO Box 720191, San Jose, CA 95172.* [MA]

Artistic Licentiousness (#1 & #2) is Roberta Gregory's steamy sex comic. Her tales bring together many genders, species, and body types. I love the combination of fantasy and reality she creates in her scenarios, bringing the word "sexy" to entirely new dimensions. It makes me happy to read sexy tales that aren't pretty. I mean, really. \$3 each plus a signed age statement (over 18) to *Roberta Gregory, PO Box 27438, Seattle, WA 98125.* [MA]

conmocion #2, the erotica issue. This incredible latina dyke mag is packed with tons of great writing and art about all kinds of dyke sex, interspersed with honest personal and political discussion about sexual issues. There's even some really hot photos of galz on the chunky side having breakfast! Plus reviews, poetry, and an international list of latina lesbian/gay organizations. \$5/sample, \$17/year for individuals, \$30/year for organizations to *conmocion, 1521 Alton*

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from *Allright*, by Charlotte Cooper and Simon Murphy

Rd., #336, Miami Beach, FL 33139. [MA]

Deneuve, June issue (1994). Finally, I opened up the pages of *Deneuve* and saw a fat woman. Or at least, as the spread progressed, plump. Check out the babe on the motorcycle, and feel free to write into *Deneuve* telling them how you want to see even more. \$3.95 to *Deneuve, 2336 Market St. #15, San Francisco, CA 94114.* [CA]

Fat News is the newsletter of the London-based Fat Women's Group. It's a fascinating peek at fat women's lives outside of my American bubble. I appreciate the dichotomy I found in the last issue: on one page is a review of two novels that complains, "There are some sex scenes where the descriptions of S&M acts borders on the pornographic," and then flip the page over to find a review of *FaT GiRL* that's all praise, but warns readers to put aside their charming English reserve before they check it out. Most issues have great comics by Lee Kennedy, too. Send 'em the equivalent of \$3 for a subscription, or something to trade. *Fat News, c/o the Fat Women's Group, Wesley House, Wild Ct., London WC2B 5AU, England.* [MA]

Funny That Way, Issue Zero, Summer 1995. The premiere issue of this queerzine was entirely produced by minors, with all submissions written by people under 21. This is a fierce, bold missive of anger and lust; can't wait to see more by Marcos Ramirez ("to the young straight white man who told me i was melodramatic")—one of the most moving contemporary poets I've read in months—and Yvette Gomez, the dapper young butch whom some of us had the pleasure of meeting while

co-performing on the Joan Jett Blakk show. *Funny That Way* is well-produced, and is closely affiliated with the young theatre performance troupe, the Drama Divas, fostered under the care of Cherrie Moraga and Brava! for Women in the Arts. This zine is a testament to the courage of young out queers everywhere, and also lists and reviews local crisis services for youths. Get a copy for yourself, or send it to a young queer friend in need (I wish I had a copy at 18!); it just might be the isolated, angst-ridden homo's salvation. Twinks rule! \$2.50/issue to: *Funny That Way, c/o Brava, 2180 Bryant St., San Francisco, CA 94110.* [CA]

Lezzie Smut, Winter and Summer issues, 1995. One of my favorite queerzines (just because they're so silly and nerdy about their smut) just got better...the past two issues of this Vancouver-based zine have featured sexy fat naked women doing kinky things and being *done*. Mind you, the majority of women in the photos are on the young and small side; but it's nice to see that L.S. is not just a zine for or about skinny girls. I'll say no more, you should check it out for yourself. \$5 for a trial issue, \$24 for 4. *Hey Grrrlz! Productions, 364-1027 Davie St., Vancouver, BC V6E 4L2 CANADA* [CA]

LFAN (Lesbian Fat Activist Network) has a great monthly newsletter. To receive it for a year, send a \$20 check or money order made out to Wendy Fydenkevez (\$5-10 low income) to: *LFAN, PO Box 635, Woodstock, NY 12498.* [MA]

Living Large is an apa (amateur press association) for folks who want to talk about fat issues. In order to subscribe you must contribute (2 pages every other issue). Part of the idea is that the contributors get to know one another by interacting through writing in the zine. It's

RESOURCES

like a big ongoing conversation (plus more). Living Large is currently open to new members. For a sample issue, send \$5 to *Kathleen Madigan*, PO Box 1006, Elgin, IL 60121. [MA]

Mousie is a zine dedicated to talking about racism in the queer world, interracial politics and desire. Issue #6 (or is it 7?) has a bunch of great comics, in-depth zine reviews, thoughts from OutWrite '95, and letters that discuss racism. The next issue is about racism and sex. \$2 to *Anna Rampage*, Box 440478, Somerville, MA 02144. [MA]

Nimble Fingers. Marva never disappoints—this one's got all kinds of goodies: a great tale of a high-school prank, the best reasons to be a lesbian, tips on determining your figure type, and more. \$1 to *Marva Holmes*, 300 Queen Anne Ave. N., Suite #250, Seattle, WA 98109-4599. [MA]

Nothing to Lose is the monthly one-page newsletter put of FLAB, New York's Fat Lesbian Action Brigade. Send them a donation and ask for a copy of their FLAB Manifesto, which includes the Fat Dyke ABCs and a long-needed list of demands. *Gail Horowitz*, 225C King St., Princeton, NJ 08540. amy_parker@margeotes.com. [MA]

Pasty #4: The HATRED Issue. Sarah-Katherine is at it again, and this time she's on the rampage about everything from teeny-tiny-too-small condoms to things she hates about summer, body parts that disgust her, and her evil housemate: "In short: slim, chick, privileged, WASP princess Jan was complaining to me—fat, poor, blue-collar me—about the women that she worked with, any one of whom could be a double for myself or a member of my family. I was being blatantly insulted by a blithe, chatty, totally oblivious foe. It was a magic moment." Also includes zine reviews and Menarche Hell. \$1 + 2 stamps/trade to *Pasty*, clo Sarah-Katherine, 6201 15th Avenue NW, #P-549, Seattle, WA 98107. [CA]

San Francisco Bay Area NAAFA puts out a monthly newsletter with news and articles about fat issues, as well as local event listings. The June issue had a great article by Francis White called "the Medicalization of Obesity." \$15 for a year to *SF-BA NAAFA*, PO Box 9767, Berkeley, CA 94709. [MA]

Sourpuss makes my day. Its creator Sara is a brilliant teenage fat girl with tons to say (and she appeared recently on Oprah wearing a "fat girls rule" sticker!). My fave stuff from the three issues she sent me: #5 has rants

about Rikki Lake and alienation from the cool people; #7 has rants about ugliness and attitudes toward fat; and #8 has rants about piggy power saving the world from assholes who diss people for being fat, stupid stereotypes, and high-school homo-haters. No price listed, but a buck should do the trick. *Sourpuss*, 330 Ophelia St., Pittsburgh, PA 15213. [MA]

Top? is the latest zine from fat dyke Judy Ricardi. It's got stuff on grrrl bands, sexual abuse, getting mistaken for a guy, a girl's first dyke sexual experiences, self-inflicted violence, and great personal poetry. Honest and raw. Ask Judy about her other zines, too. \$2 or stamps or equal trade to *Judy Ricardi*, 79 West St. #4F, Worcester, MA 01609. [MA]

Venus Envy #1 is M@CE's illustrated testimony of life as a young fat woman, through her self-hatred to the realization that in trying to "cure" herself she was "punishing [her] mind and body as it had been by others... Fighting the pain of a never-ending battle... Do you realize how many of us have lost the battle?!" She's also included a factlist from *the Beauty Myth*, a few poems, and a cartoon tale about self-defense. 2 stamps or trade to *M@CE*, 3520 1st Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55408. [MA]

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Sun 1-6pm

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San Francisco CA 94110

Films & Videos

Go see **Angus!** It's a mainstream movie with big stars about a strong, smart, fat kid who doesn't take any shit from the creeps who torment him. Not that he's some kind of super fat hero (like Fat Girl!)—Angus is a multifaceted character complete with honest anxiety and frustration about being fat. Plus, the supposedly perfect blonde cheerleader that everyone lusts after turns out to be a real person with her own anxiety about her body. It's really funny, too, and made me & Barb weep! You know a film this good won't stay around for long, so go see it now! —*Laura*

Mara Nesbitt makes **individual yoga-stretch videos for fat people.** "At 400 lbs, I know what's possible for people of size, and the yoga positions have been modified to suit our needs. All levels of mobility are considered, and you need never have done yoga before to benefit. The emphasis is on stretching, breathing and relaxing. The goals are to become more flexible and pain-free in a safe manner, to reconnect with your body and learn to enjoy it, and to learn relaxation and breathing techniques to help you with stress. They run about 45 min., are not done in a TV studio, but will give you a good idea of how to move your body in a pleasurable and freeing manner. Each video is custom made" \$50 plus a few bucks for s/h to *Mara Nesbitt*, PO Box 19141, Portland OR 97219.

Nothing to Lose is Fat Lip's video of fifteen fat, feisty women speaking, acting, and singing about being fat in America in the 90's. The message is fat positive and challenges the diet-obsessed, fat-hating culture we live in. \$22.00 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling from *Fat Lip Readers Theatre*, P. O. Box 29963, Oakland CA 94604. ★



ORGANIZATIONS & EVENTS

East Coast US

Big Beautiful Lesbians is a support group for fat lesbians in **Washington, DC**. For more info contact *Michaëlle* at (202) 863-0862.

Fat is a Lesbian Issue is a **New York**-based, fat-positive, anti-diet discussion group that helps queer women learn to accept their bodies at any size. They meet monthly to talk about food, clothing, healthcare, sex, exercise, self-esteem and other issues that impact fat lesbians and bi women. They meet on the 2nd Sunday of every month at the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center, 208 W. 13th St., in Manhattan. For more info, call *Gail and Shira*: (609) 924-9321 or email *amy_parker@margeotes.com*.

FLAB, the Fat Lesbian Action Brigade, is a **New York**-based activist group that fights for the visibility of fat lesbians within the queer community, the fat-acceptance movement and the world at large; works to discredit and destroy the multi-billion dollar weight-loss industry that threatens our survival; and celebrates the beauty and sexiness of fat women. See *Fat is a Lesbian Issue* above for meeting times and contact info.

Midwest US

SAFFO, Sisters Are Fighting Fat Oppression, is looking for fat-positive, les/bi/trans women-positive women based in the **Minneapolis/St. Paul** area dedicated to arming fat women with pride and dismantling diet CULTure, fatphobia/hatred, and thin privilege. For more info, contact *wendy* (*clo UYW*) at 244 *Coffman Union*, 300 *Washington Ave SE*, **Minneapolis, MN** 55455. Phone: (612) 625-0607. Fax: (612) 625-9161, email: *uyw@maroon.tc.umn.edu*

The Venus Group is a social group in **Southeastern Michigan** for big women who want to reclaim the fat female form as love goddess. They meet monthly. For info contact *Heather* at (313) 480-7080.

THE BUTT PROJECT

I WANT TO SHOOT YER BUTT (MOVIES, THAT IS).

BE A PART OF THE EVER-EXPANDING BUTT PROJECT, A MONTAGE OF BOOTIE WHERE YOU DECIDE HOW YOUR BUTT WILL BE SEEN.

WOMEN ONLY.
MUST LIMIT TO BAY AREA,
MY JET IS IN THE SHOP.

K: (415) 285-6485.

West Coast US

The Body Image Task Force is a task-oriented group in **Santa Cruz** that fights size discrimination and looksism and promotes positive body image for all sizes through events, workshops, actions, and public speaking to raise awareness of body-image issues. They need volunteers and student interns. Contact them at *PO Box 934*, **Santa Cruz, CA 95061**, (408) 457-4838.

FaT GiRL is looking for volunteers, especially in the area of ad sales and distribution. Contact us at (415) 567-6757.

Fat Lip Readers Theater is a women's performance collective in the **San Francisco Bay** area that has been creating and performing work from a fat liberation perspective for more than a decade. To get on the mailing list, submit work, or inquire about membership, contact *Fat Lip*, *PO Box*, 29963, **Oakland, CA 94604**.

Girth & Mirth can tell you what's happening in the fat men's movement. 176-B *Page St.*, **San Francisco, CA 94102**, live info: (415) 824-0260, events line: (415) 552-1143.

Lesbians of Size (LesBOS) is forming in **Portland, OR** for the empowerment of fat lesbians. Call *Gail* at (503) 233-1816.

Making Waves is a supportive recreational swim for women over 200 lbs, every Sunday from 11 am - 1 pm in the east bay. The first Sunday of each month is *Friend Swim* for women of all sizes. Swim fee is \$3 - \$5 sliding scale. For info, call *Linda* at (510) 524-6470.

Sisters of Size is a **Seattle** group for fat dykes. Begun in 1987, the group meets at least twice a month — once to go swimming and once for a focus night of discussion, watching relevant videos, networking, potluck, etc. They also eat in restaurants together, go bowling, kite flying, camping, and have picnics, bonfires on the beach, and parties. They try to have a float in the *Gay Pride Parade* and participate in *No Diet Day* activities. Many friendships have been made through the group. For info, contact *Martha* at (206) 789-1267.

Susan Stinson will be reading in the bay area from her new book *Martha Moody* (reviewed on page 23) at these places: 11/3 (7 pm) at *Two Sisters* in **Menlo Park**, 11/5 at *A Different Light* in **SF**, 11/5 (3 pm) at *Mama Bears* in **Berkeley**, 11/9 (7:30 pm) at *Old Wives Tales* in **SF** (co-sponsored by *FaT GiRL*), 11/10 (7 pm) at *Herland* in **Santa Cruz**, and 11/11 at *Boadecea's* in **Berkeley**. Call the stores for more info.

Water Women is a **Seattle**-based low-intensity water exercise class for large and/or differently abled women and their supportive significant others. Wed & Sun 5:30 to 6:30, \$3 per session, call *Monica* at 206-255-0473.

Women of Width is a **Bay area** fat-positive women's support group, based on the idea that women are healthy and beautiful at any size. The group meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of every month, 7:30 - 9:00 PM, at *Two Sisters Bookstore*, 605 *Cambridge St.*, **Menlo Park** (unless otherwise stated). \$2 is requested to help pay the room rental, but no one is turned away for lack of money. Upcoming meetings are: Oct. 10 is a discussion about affirmations, Oct. 24 is mask-making **Please call *Diane* at 408-254-3905 to reserve your materials**, Nov. 14 is a discussion about food and eating, and Nov. 28 is a dinner outing. For more information call (415) 965-8416, *jwermont@netcom.com*.

Hey, get more **fat girls on t.v.!** And learn more about production while you're at it: *Dyke TV* is shown in various cities across the U.S. In **San Francisco**, it is on *Viacom Channel 53*, and coming soon to the **East Bay**. The planning meetings for local production are the first and third Mondays of the month at 8pm. Call 415-641-6254.

England:

The **Fat Women's Group** is based in **London**. Write to them at *Wesley House*, *Wild Court*, **London WC2B 5AU, UK**.

Non-regional:

Bringing down the "Community"? Seeking submissions for an anthology of writings by queer outcasts. Transgendered, sm, sex workers, perverts, fagdykes, dykefags, heterofreaks, drag queens, high femmes & stone butches, weirdos of all shapes sizes colors & sexual preferences, send your writings to: *Anthology*, 251 *14th St.*, **San Francisco, CA 94103**. Deadline: Nov. 30.

The Council on Size & Weight Discrimination works to influence public policy and opinion in order to end oppression based on discriminatory standards of body weight, size, or shape. Reach them at *PO Box 305*, **Mount Marion, NY 12456**.

Largesse, the Network for Size Esteem maintains a library of archival material on fat liberation dating back to the beginnings of the fat feminist movement in the early 1970's, as well as a computer database cataloging resources in dozens of categories. They invite contributions, and offer free referrals, printouts from their database, and research assistance. *Largesse*, *PO Box 9404*, **New Haven, CT 06534**, (203) 787-1624 *phonelfax* (call weekdays between 12 and 8pm EST), email 75773.717@compuserve.com.

LFAN, the Lesbian Fat Activists Network, is an affinity group for size-friendly Lesbians of all sizes. Contact *Laura Tisoncik*, *PO Box 635*, **Woodstock, NY 12498**, email: 76473.2141@compuserve.com.

& MAIL-ORDER CATALOGS

Internet:

For those with access to the World Wide Web, check out FaT GiRL's homepage at <http://www.icsi.berkeley.edu/~polacklfg/>. For anyone with internet access, there's an email list for fat dykes (send an email message to majordomo@apocalypse.org with the body of the message: *subscribe fatdykes your.email.address*). There's also Big Sistas, an email list for fat black women (for info send email to lwst1+@pitt.edu). There are a couple sex/sm-positive dyke email lists with many fat dyke participants: kinky-girls, for women who do BDSM with other women, and boychicks, for butches and their supporters. (For info write to: majordomo@queernet.org. In the body of the message, write: *info kinky-girls or info boychicks*.) For general lesbian stuff there's the sappho email list (send email to majordomo@apocalypse.org with the body of the message as *subscribe sappho your.email.address*). There are also a couple of fat-related (mostly het) email lists: The big-folks list (subscribe by sending email to big-folks-request@abstractsoft.com with the body of the message as *subscribe your.email.address*) and the fat-acceptance list (subscribe by sending email to majordomo@world.std.com, with the words *subscribe fat-acceptance your.email.address* in the body of the message). News groups are: soc.women.lesbian-and-bi, soc.support.fat-acceptance, alt.sex.fat, alt.support.big-folks, alt.personals.big-folks, alt.personals.fat and alt.sex.fetish.fat.

Folks into IRC check out the #big-folks channel on the undernet ([/server davis.ca.us.undernet.org](http://server.davis.ca.us/undernet.org)).

MAIL-ORDER CATALOGS

by Selena, Laurie Avocado & Elena Escalera

The Ample Shopper

PO Box 116,
Bearsville, NY 12409

This nifty catalog is a compendium of useful gadgets for fat people. Small steering wheels to give you more room in the car. Blood pressure kits with cuffs to fit arms up to 26" around. Extra-large towels. Seat-belt extenders. Personal bidets, sponges-on-sticks, and other personal hygiene items. Wide clothes-hangers, socks for wide ankles, large-sized bangle bracelets, and fanny packs that will go all the way around you. Plus, fat-positive books and videos, including Amplestuff, Ltd.'s other publication, the Ample Shopper—a quarterly consumer newsletter for fat people. (I intend to subscribe, but so far can't tell you any more about it.) It's pretty cool. Check it out. [S]

Banshee Designs (Briget Benton)

923 SE 37th Ave.
Portland, OR 97214
(503)236-6890

I found a woman who makes the coolest silkscreened cotton clothes. Much easier on the thighs than lycra. The colors are incredible and the images are celebrating women. And these gorgeous things come in sizes to 8X!!! I

love her work. When I met her at a craft fair she said, "If I'm going to make clothes with goddesses on them, then I should make them to fit goddesses." Call and bug her for a brochure. [EE]

The Big the Bad and the Beautiful

19225 Ventura Blvd.
Tarzana, CA 91356
(818) 345-3593
1-800-347-3593

They have some cool-looking, simple clothes at good prices, although a proud Fat Girl could wish for a more enlightened attitude from the proprietor, who describes herself in the catalog as a woman of 'size and self-esteem', but also talks about how her clothes offset 'problem areas' and that when you wear them, your friends will say you look 'thinner, more attractive.' Oh well. A bigger problem with this catalog is that not everything on the separate price list is pictured in the accompanying catalog. The descriptions of the non-pictured clothes are intriguing, but it's hard to buy clothes from a description alone. I may order from them yet, though, because they have some stylin' stuff. Tops run from \$26 to \$54. Pants from \$26 for shorts to \$52 for overalls. Skirts \$36-\$54.

continued on next page

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	Store hours: 10 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Monday - Saturday 12-5 pm Sunday (707) 795-6861

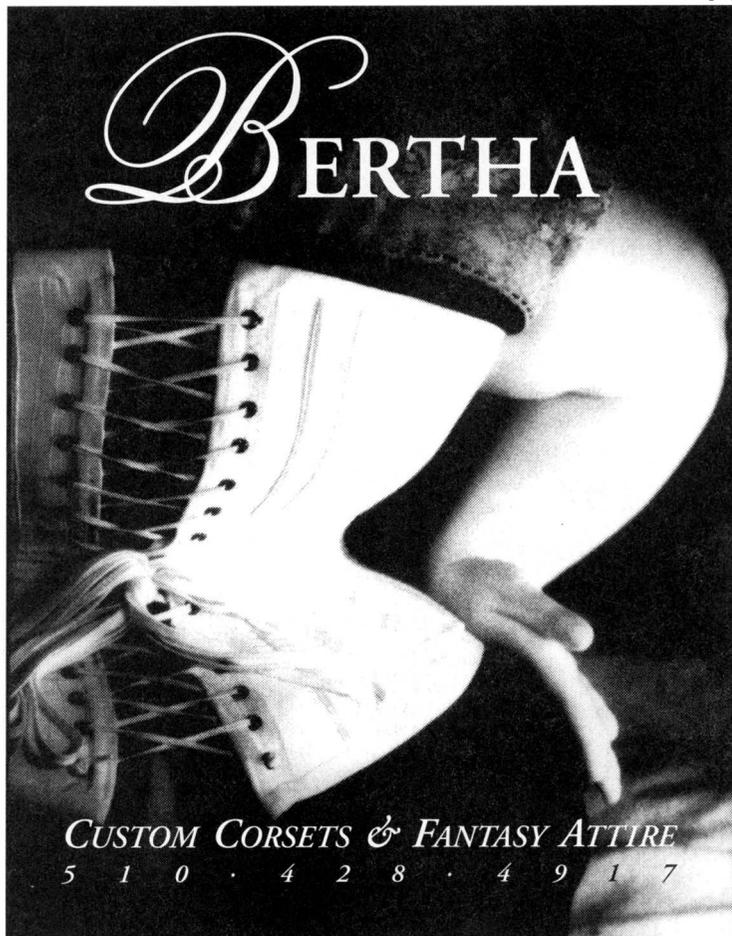


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RESOURCES

Dresses \$42-\$72. Jackets \$68-\$80. Sizes seem to vary from category to category, but in general things come sizes ranging from the equivalent of size 10 up to size 36 or 5X. Everything comes in 50/50 poly-cotton knit in various colors, most of which are not shown. They say they have other fabrics available. Call for styles and prices. Some accessories including large-size bangle bracelets. [S]

Far and Wide

1-800-820-SIZE

This is a new explicitly fat-positive catalog out of Canada that includes a resource section in the back. The clothing runs to simple, classic designs, as well as some batiked and tie-dyed stuff. Other highlights include cotton-lycra undies and bodysuits, nightgowns, recycled rubber belts, and tall leather boots made for wide calves. Sizing varies from item to item, but the range seems to be (in inch measurements) from 40"B, 33"W, 45"H, up to 73"B, 67"W, 77"H, with some larger sizes available on request. On the downside, they're a little pricey. Dresses \$120-135, tops \$68-98, pants \$48-75, jackets \$90-236, skirts \$60, boots \$139-225, all Canadian dollars, presumably, and I don't know what the exchange rate is like. [S]

FSA Plus Woman

60 Laurel Haven
Fairview, NC 28730
1-800-628-5525
Catalog cover price \$1.

A variety of mostly casual clothes in poly-cotton knits and rayon prints. Simple, ordinary, middle-of-the-road clothes on cute fat models. Not particularly inexpensive. Sizes: from 'L'(36B, 28W, 38H) up to '8X'(66B, 64W, 74H). Prices: tops from \$29-79, pants \$35-67, dresses \$82-99, skirts \$48-79. [S]

Gypsy Moon

1780 Massachusetts Ave
Cambridge, MA 02140
Telephone: (617) 876-7095
Mail Order 1-800-955-GYPSY
Customer Service (617) 876-6203

If, like me, you wish it was easier to find outlandish, dramatic, fantastic clothes in large sizes, you'll like this catalog. It's a small-size

catalog that has recently expanded its sizing to include some of us fat girls in their new 'abundant' size. When I sent them a letter requesting their large-size catalog, they sent me a nice letter along with the catalog talking about their new size line and asking for suggestions and advice about expanding and refining it. They have soft, flowy, fairy clothes in gauzes and velvets. Fantasy clothes. Unfortunately, rather than having photographs of their clothes, their catalog is filled with drawings of elves and fairy-tale folk wearing the designs. I call it unfortunate because I find it hard to get a really good idea of what clothes look like from a drawing. I do lust after some of these clothes, though, so I'll be saving up, because prices are high. Sizes: according to Gypsy Moon, their size Large will fit up to a size 18 or 20, and their one 'bountiful' size fits 22-26. Prices: tops from \$38 for a tank top to \$180 for a silk-velvet blouse, skirts \$68-\$240, pants \$38-\$110, dresses \$120-160. [S]

H.L.S.Belts

4757 W.Park #106-410
Plano, TX 75093

One page full of belts, all \$19.99. They are out of the plain black leather kind, what they have are stretchy gold and silver belts, bead belts, colorful braided belts and the like. Some of the belts come in sizes from 40 inches to 48 inches. It's hard to say about the others—sizes are listed as 'plus sizes; one size fits all'. [S]

JW Ramage

1007 Oak Hill Road, Suite B
Lafayette, CA 94549-3805
1-800-715-PLUS

Nightlines Plus has changed its name to JW Ramage, and added more day clothes to its selection. The prices range from moderate to high. The sizes range from A (42" bust) to G (84" bust), but a lot of the items don't come in the full range of sizes. I'd like to see the models in a wider range of sizes too, but the clothes look good and the company is run by a woman named Jill Ramage, whose round and smiling face appears on page 2. [LA]

The Right Touch

95-60 Queens Blvd., Suite 205

Rego Park NY 11374

1-800-233-2883

'Elegant fashion accessories for sizes 16 and up'

Mostly big, dramatic gold-tone and rhinestone jewelry. Some interesting, unusual items. Long necklaces, big bracelets and watchbands. Also lots of pins and earrings (which as far as I know don't need to come in large sizes), and a number of belts which don't come very big at all—some only come as long as 39 inches, and no belt comes longer than 46 inches without a special order, costing \$15 extra. [S]

The Vermont Country Store Catalog

(802) 362-2400

A surprising source for clothes—they pride themselves on being New England Old-time-y and sell home furnishings, gadgets, food, personal care and cleaning products as well as clothes. They would be a good source for the flannel pajamas. They also have clothes in which I would not be caught dead. My cats highly recommend the "Real Catnip in Linen Bags." [LA]

Wintersilks

1-800-648-7455

Wintersilks sells silk underwear. They advocate wearing silk to keep warm, but it's good for keeping cool, especially if you are daring enough to wear this slightly transparent fabric all by itself. It is a pleasure to wear, almost as good as going naked. The unisex 2X shirts are the largest they have and fit my 50" bust just fine. If they made a bra out of this stuff, I think it would change my life, or at least my attitude about bras. They don't have anything that fits my bottom, though. [LA] ★

Do you know about a fantastic source of fat girls' clothing that you'd like to share with other fat dykes? Write about it and send it our way, or just send us the catalog and we'll take care of the rest.

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Contributors

A.M. Salt lives and writes in San Francisco. She misses hay mows and the flecks of black dirt that work their way into the pores on the backs of farmers' necks. She'll probably work a shit job till she dies, if her girlfriend (who is intruding here to tell FG readers that A is supremely handsome) doesn't run her into the ground first.

Miss April Miller fantasizes about being a kept woman.

Barbarism, born to Alien rocker chicks from hell, is looking for redemption in all the wrong places. She is presiding Queen of the Max Airborne Fan Club and collects belly button lint in her very sparse free time, which she covets and longs for...

Bear is a wildhearted gender-fucking butch girl and an example of what happens when one over educates a filthy mind. She would like to gratefully dedicate this to a certain rather talented Cat.

Bertha likes being the Kitchen Slut because she loves hot dishes, feeding people and playing with knives.

Betty Rose is a fat Missouri girl living in California. The only surfing she does is on the World Wide Web. She connected with her lover, a bi girl, through e-mail: bird@sfsu.edu.

Bo is an ex-political prisoner who continues to do community work with Out of Control: Lesbian Committee to Support Women Political Prisoners & Prisoners of War, and the Norma Jean Croy Defense Committee. She was a butch at birth.

Csndida persists in writing poems for FG despite the well-known fact that no one reads poetry in zines. She'll catch on eventually. Meanwhile, she pesters Max for fan-mail.

Carol Squires is a photographer by training, a fat woman by genetics and yo-yo dieting, and a fat activist by her need to survive in a fatphobic world. She lives her most happily, bisexual, polyamorous life in Berkeley, CA.

Cathie Dunsford, author of *Courie* (Spinifex, 1994; see FG#3 for review), currently lives in New Zealand, where she teaches Creative Writing and Publishing. Other works include a bi-lingual poetry collection, *Survivors: Uberlebende*, and her most recent anthology, *Me and Marilyn Monroe*.

charlene is rad, bi, silly, perverted, wacky, weird and looking for dates. a singer, spontaneous performer and shrinky-dink maker, charlene can be found in sf, east bay, and occasionally a social event.

Chrystos is a Native American lesbian poet from the Menominee Nation. She's been a femme for 30+ years. She has four books of

poetry with a 5th (Fire Power) about to be published by Press Gang. She's also a treaty/land rights activist.

CuirDyke and MsDaddy's girl (a.k.a. D.J. Curran) is a fat, tree-hugging, libertarian, celtic pagan leatherdyke.

Drew likes girls with big butts, small hands and wicked wits. She publishes The Servants' Quarters, a panssexual zine devoted to erotic submission and is the co-founder of two internet mailing lists, "boychicks," a list for butches and their admirers, and "kinky-girls," which is just what it sounds like. She lives in Oakland, CA, where she works as a freelance writer and editor.

Elana Dykewomon was an editor of *Sinister Wisdom* for 8 years, and encourages you to support *SW* under the new editorship of Akiba Onada-Sikwoia. Elana's new book of poetry, *Nothing will Be as Sweet as the Taste*, has just been published by Onlywomen Press in London. (Check out the ad for it in this issue.)

Evie Leder is a dyke videographer who got tricked into being a photographer for Fat Girl via digital imaging. Go figure.

Fish will, by now, let us get away with saying any damn thing we want about her. Anything at all. Whatever comes to mind.

Hannah is happily married. She's a small business owner, and what she has learned from bird watching is: Mean females rule.

Jane Segal: pushing 50, photo opportunist, part-time politico, full-time mother.



Judith Stein is a long-time fat dyke activist who loves a good fat girl romance as much as anything! She loves the new fat 'zines because they are the next generation of fat liberation organizing.

Olivia Newton-John ain't got nothin on **Lanetta**.

Laura "Floyd" Johnston believes she was left here as a newborn by aliens to observe and document certain Earth customs which her "people" find interesting. Until she is picked up and brought back to the planet of the cat-people, she is looking for a patroness-of-the-artist, so she can quit her day job and gain more "hands-on" experience to relay to her progenitors. (In other words, she's a GEEK!)

Laurie Avocado grows avocados in her back yard, puts away books in the Hollywood Library, and contemplates the universe from her studio in downtown L.A.

Lea E. Arellano: Desert Chicana dyke, lover of women of all sizes and abilities.

Lori Selke is a big, bi, butch and unemployed leatherperson currently living in Chicago. Her work can also be seen in *Black Sheets* and the forthcoming *The Second Coming*. She's sweet and quiet and demure. Really. Honest.

M. Cimino regularly beats up her inner-child.

Margaret Sloane Hunter is a black, lesbian-feminist activist/writer who lives in Oakland.

Margo Mercedes Rivera is a 35 year-old mixed race butch from a working class background. ["And a damn cute one, at that."—one of the eds.]

Marilyn Kalman is a fat Jewish dyke. She's been a fat activist in the San Francisco Bay area since 1979, having worked with Life In The Fat Lane, the Let It All Hang Out (LIAHO) Committee, and Robust & Rowdy Dance Productions. She's also a tenants' rights advocate and a member of Out Of Control—Lesbian Committee to Support Women Political Prisoners. She appreciates Fat Girl—big time!

Marilyn Hollinger: I'm 33, femme, fat, an out lesbian for 11 years, a non-monogamous S/M top. My passions are women, sex, deep friendships, lesbians, being out, S/M play without hangups, butches (especially butch bottoms), being on-line, Star Trek, and designing usable computer software. I'm an unabashed control freak who can organize any group to do anything.

Max is back in the world of the employed, saving money to publish new and interesting things.

Miriam Berg a freelance writer and the president of the Council on Size & Weight Discrimination, Inc. For more than two decades she has worked to improve women's health care and access to services, and has been an activist in the size-acceptance movement for over ten years.

Mr. Anon's biohazard: At the age of nine, my friend Windy and I got caught peeing in the men's uri-nal at the museum.

Oso is a stone butch Chicana who loves her wife and wishes her cat well in the next world.

Pandoura is a big bi Libra who is just happy to be here.

Poundcake (a.k.a. the Big Cake), age 8, is a fine specimen of a calico cat, with extra toes, or "thumbs" on her front paws. When not munching tuna or snoozing, she enjoys a little roll in the hay with a catnip snake.

Selena is invisible right now, so she can't tell you who she is, what she looks like, or what she does. She could tell you what she thinks, though, if she had the time, which she doesn't.



Serafina is a student at UC Santa Cruz, a photographer with a trigger-finger, and an avid FG fan. More than one of us has commented on her striking beauty.

Sondra Solo: By day, she battles Gap-wearing law school losers. By night, she's doing stuff that would make them gasp.

When not in her disguise as a World Wide Web weenie, **Sooty** is a mild-mannered librarian. At the moment, she is neither fat nor a dyke, but nobody's perfect...

Vicki Markin: 41 year-old butch, photographer of life, mother of a beautiful being!

Zanne "does about 8 million things—she paints enormous, tormented paintings, is working on a comic book, plays guitar for Dyke Van Dick, dj's the queer clubs Junk and Muffdive, and writes brilliantly."—Michelle Tea 🌟

Personals



Laura Johnston

THIS CAT NEEDS A HOME!

Poundcake is a fat, special needs cat who needs lots of love and affection. Call (415) 550-7202 and ask for FaT GiRL.

I am Black, Fine and Fat

I am afrocentric, sometimes elegant sometimes whimsical
I am from Harlem, Philly & Chicago
and my laughter is tinged with the blues
Catch me if you can
catch me if you dare
and find a dreamer
with whom a sunset shared
is a caress

And if you will share the words to your song
I will share the steps to my dance
This is an invitation to my life
and perhaps my heart
If you are butch, mature (over 40), of any ethnic background, you appreciate multicultural diversity, you believe we all have a responsibility to help make this a better world, and you enjoy walks that wander, the ocean and speaking your mind and your heart, romance, good discussions, books, foreign films, cuddling, dancing to salsa, poetry with breakfast and being butch with a woman who enjoys fem and strong, please reply to FaT GiRL Box #22

Looking For a Boston Daddy

Hot fat femme trying to do the dyke dating thing in & around Boston. I'd love to meet you if you're 40+, tall, dark and handsome, intelligent, independent, soulful and attentive. You know how to treat your lady. I promise I'll be a good girl, baby. Please don't make me want to pack up my lingerie and move to the Bay Area. I want to play, lust and love again at home. Tell your friends!
FaT GiRL Box #23

IS IT YOU?

You are a lesbian over 50, independent, warm and cuddly, politically conscious, and looking for a partner who is a lot like you. You've worked on your issues and take responsibility for your own actions. You seek closeness, yet need and want to be a whole, separate person. You are looking for someone to parallel play with, to share your daily joys and pains, to support and be supported by. You are not into fat phobia, melodrama, tobacco, street drugs, scented products, or "power-over" relationships. You are flexible yet know your own needs and boundaries. I am all of the above as well as very fat, disabled, working-class, Jewish, creative, Vanilla femme (31 flavors), ready to meet someone with whom to share my life. Is it you? FaT GiRL Box #24

HAIRY NEW YORK CITY BUTCH

32, 5'10" tall, 300 lbs., super busty (H cup), huge nipples. With hair, hair everywhere — legs, thighs, crotch, ass, tits, nipples — everywhere. Seeks interesting fem who likes me the way I am and would love to serve me and my strap-on. FaT GiRL Box #25

Fat Collectors Unite!

Attractive, huge dyke wishes to correspond with others who collect photos, mags, videos of enormous women. Special interest in tattoos, pierced, unshaven. Especially engaged in bizarre activities. Answer all, trades

offered. Would love your own personal big naked photo (gets mine). FaT GiRL Box #26

Charming Butch Seeks Kind Femme

31 y.o., 5'3", 240 lbs., crew cut, tattoos, sincere blue eyes, brave heart, strong hands, active mind, manners, sexually adventurous, romantic, creative. Holding out for the right lady/slut of my dreams. She must be able to accept and appreciate my big big love...(flowers, coffee in bed, endless supply of foot rubs, you name it). All I ask for is a kind-hearted woman, willing to communicate, with a healthy sex drive, to scratch my back as I lay heavy on top. FaT GiRL Box #27

My Heart Is Open

Dynamic, well-humored butch dyke, 30-ish, hoping for true love (yeah, I know...). Slow-burning, honest, present, sociable (most days), trustworthy, fun, the M-word, working-class, independent. S.F. FaT GiRL Box #28

Write To Me

Express yourself while developing a friendship with this S.F. pen-dyke via crayons or ink, dot-matrix or ink-jet...It's old fashioned 32 cent stamps for me. (I'm just not hip — I'm not on-line.) Vibrant interactions almost guaranteed. FaT GiRL Box #29

Babe in the Woods

Or at least that's how I feel. Fat, fun, feisty, 50-ish. Came out late in my life and have a lot to learn. African American, intelligent, strong-minded, sensitive, sensual, sexy but shy. Love my work, t.v., books, movies, music. Seeking lesbian friends over 40, any race, for letters, chit-chat, and whatever else. Not really seeking a soul mate, but not adverse to the idea. Love and lust after large, soft women. Am mostly femme — love cards, flowers, romance, being "courted."
FaT GiRL Box #30

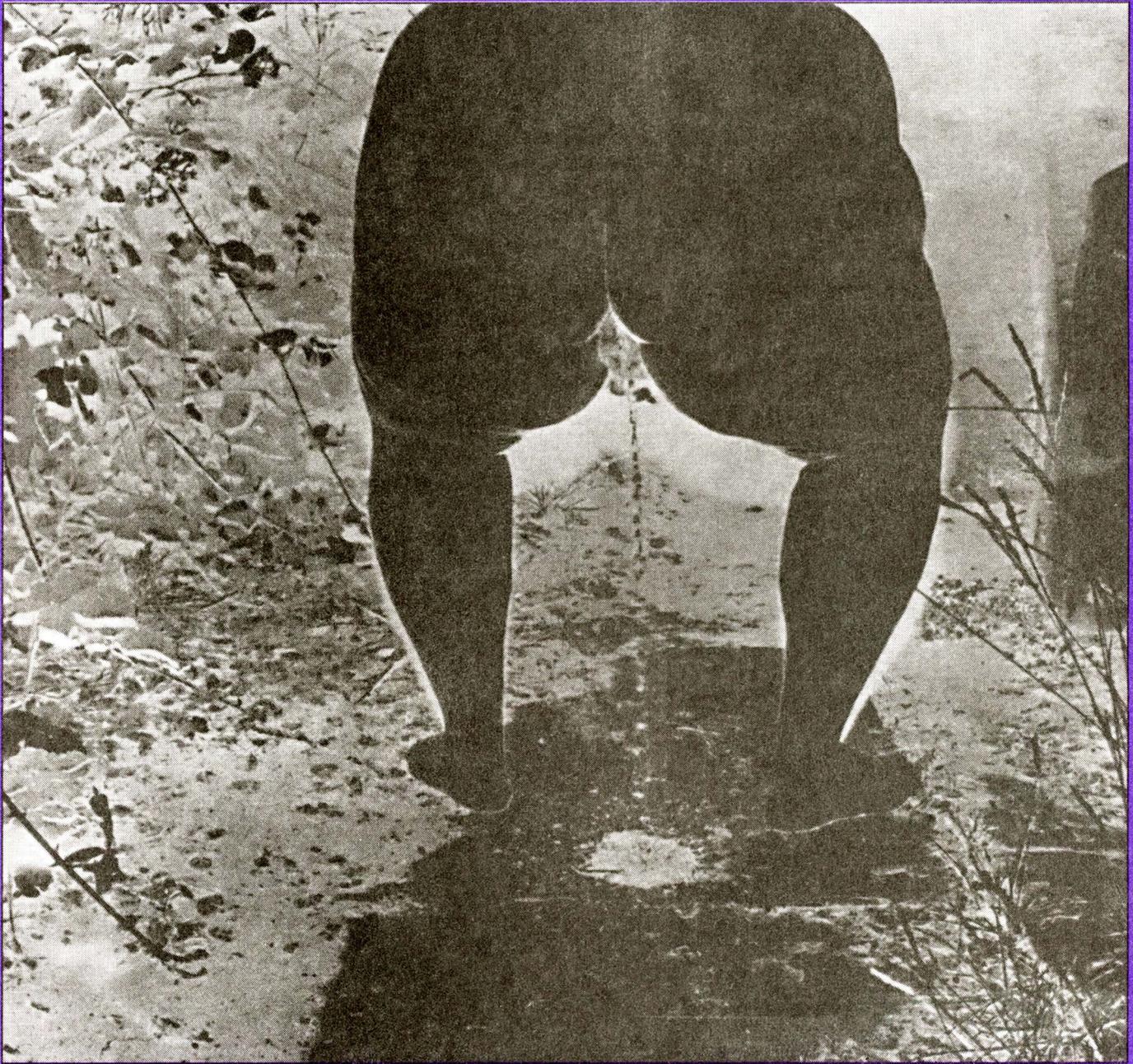
TO ADVERTISE: Send your headline, text, name, address, phone #, and a check for \$5.00 for the first 500 characters + 1 cent per character for each additional character to **FaT GiRL**, 2215-R Market St.#193, San Francisco, CA 94114.

TO REPLY: Pencil your dream girl's box # on the front of a stamped envelope containing your reply. Enclose that envelope in another one and send it to **FaT GiRL Personals** at the above address. We will continue to forward replies to all ads until further notice.

RULES: **FaT GiRL Personals** are for fat dykes and the women who want them. This description is intended to include bisexual and MTF transgendered women. It does not include men. **FaT GiRL** is a fat-positive, diversity-positive zine. Please keep that in mind when writing your ad. We do not accept ads with personal names or street addresses. We reserve the right to refuse to print ads we find offensive.

CHRISTY TURLINGTON: "I THINK, IF MY BUTT'S NOT TOO BIG FOR THEM TO BE PHOTOGRAPHING IT, THEN IT SHOULDN'T BE TOO BIG FOR ME."

CHRISTY TURLINGTON: "YOU CAN USUALLY TELL WHEN I'M HAPPY BY THE FACT THAT I'VE GAINED WEIGHT."



CHRISTIE BRINKLEY: "I WISH MY BUTT DID NOT GO SIDEWAYS, BUT I GUESS I HAVE TO FACE THAT."

DEEP THOUGHTS FROM THE SUPERMODELS

CHRISTIE BRINKLEY: "RICHARD DOESN'T REALLY LIKE ME TO KILL BUGS, BUT SOMETIMES I CAN'T HELP IT."

LINDA EVANGELISTA: "I CAN DO ANYTHING YOU WANT ME TO DO SO LONG AS I DON'T HAVE TO SPEAK."

BEVERLEY JOHNSON: "EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO GET PLASTIC SURGERY."

KATE MOSS: "IT WAS KIND OF BORING FOR ME TO HAVE TO EAT. I WOULD KNOW THAT I HAD TO, AND I WOULD."

PAULINA PORIZKOVA: "WHEN I MODEL I'M PRETTY BLANK. YOU CAN'T THINK TOO MUCH OR IT DOESN'T WORK."

CHERYL TIEGS: "IT'S VERY IMPORTANT TO HAVE THE RIGHT CLOTHING TO EXERCISE IN. IF YOU THROW ON AN OLD T-SHIRT OR SWEATS, IT'S NOT INSPIRING FOR YOUR WORKOUT."

CINDY CRAWFORD: "THEY WERE DOING A FULL BACK SHOT OF ME IN A SWIMSUIT AND I THOUGHT, OH MY GOD, I HAVE TO BE SO BRAVE. SEE, EVERY WOMAN HATES HERSELF FROM BEHIND."

THESE, AND MORE DEEP THOUGHTS, CAN BE FOUND ON SOOTY'S WEB SITE AT [HTTP://WWW.SILS.UMICH.EDU/~SOOTY/THOUGHTS.HTML](http://www.sils.umich.edu/~sooty/thoughts.html)