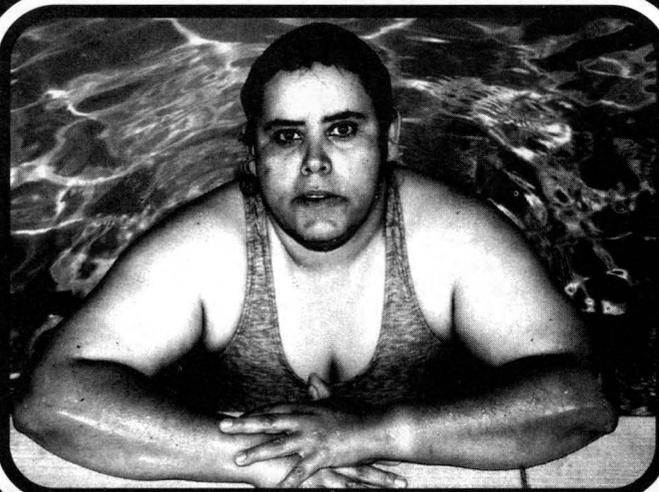


# FATGiRL

## SPORTS SURVEY

Approximately twenty dykes responded to this survey which was primarily distributed in the San Francisco Bay Area. Many women were surprised to find themselves sobbing as they answered the questions. What on the surface seems to be "fun and games" actually unearthed some very painful issues for us fat women. It was also interesting to note that only one woman who answered the survey identified as an "athlete."



Jacque at Making Waves, the swim for fat women, in Albany, CA.

My parents never mentioned exercise. They are working-class Cubans, and exercise is what you do at work... It would never occur to them to strap themselves into a machine to build muscle or bicycle in the same spot for hours just to sweat.

# WHAT SPORTS DO FaTGIRLS PLAY?

Aerobics Archery  
Athletic Fucking  
Badminton Basketball  
Bicycling Body Building  
Boogie Boarding  
Dancing Field Hockey  
Hiking Ice Skating  
Netball Pool  
Roller Skating Running  
Shotput Skiing  
Softball Swimming  
T'ai Chi Tennis  
Volleyball Walking  
Water Exercise  
Weight Training  
Wrestling Yoga

If you go to a gym,  
do you feel comfortable  
there?

.....  
I couldn't possibly go through that nightmare again. Every single person stared at me. It is a mixed place in my small town and I was the fattest person trying to exercise by about 100 pounds.

Not unless I'm with another fat woman.

The ladders out of the pools are often too narrow. They barely fit me sideways and this makes for some creative entrances and exits.



FOR THE ENTIRE FIRST YEAR THAT I BELONGED TO THE Y, I DIDNT SHOWER THERE AND WENT HOME ALL SWEATY BECAUSE I JUST COULDNT BEAR GETTING NAKED THERE. I FINALLY STARTED USING A BEACH TOWEL TO COVER MY BODY ON THE LONG WALK FROM SHOWERS TO LOCKERS. NOW I JUST CARRY THEIR HANDKERCHIEF-SIZED TOWELS AND I LET MY FAT BODY BOUNCE AND MY STRETCH MARKS SPARKLE AS I WALK AND I DARE ANY OF THEM TO UTTER A PEEP.

## WHAT KIND OF SUPPORT OR HARASSMENT DO YOU GET WHEN YOU ARE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE?

⑤ I've been verbally attacked by male motorists when riding my bike. Although I don't know if that's sexism, homophobia or fat hatred. Probably all of the above.

⑥ Support can be double-edged. People who don't know me can be very patronizing and assume that I'm trying to lose weight when I'm exercising.

⑦ I swim at the public pool during times when there are lots of older people, disabled people and some fat people. Mostly I'm just one of the folk. I have also developed "reverse radar" - not noticing stares and giggles. I've noticed that as I've grown older I'm much less a target. My theory is that now that I'm old enough to not be of sexual interest to many people they don't care that I'm too fat to be considered (by them) a sexual object. Young fat women draw anger because they are perceived to have become too fat to be a "good" sex object.

⑧ Someone I worked with years ago pissed me off during a tennis game when he said he was "going to run me around the court" so I could lose some weight. Of course that's all I needed to win so powerfully that he was sufficiently humiliated.

⑨ I avoid this whole possibility. And resent it.

⑩ Mostly by men- the usual way they feel free to comment on women's bodies, except worse. I feel particularly vulnerable with my big ass perched high on a bicycle seat or when I'm wearing a girlie bathing suit instead of the trunks and top I feel comfortable in at the fat swim. When I wear tank tops I choose the ones with snarling pit bulls in dangerous looking collars to ward off assholes.

⑪ Lots of smiles @ the Marina where I walk- probably because I am usually smiling.

⑫ People interpret my presence as an invitation to gawk, hiss, and laugh.



# DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF AN ATHLETE?

**N**o, not any more because I don't play team sports.

**N**o. I read too much. Its safer.

**N**ot anymore because I rarely participate in sports.

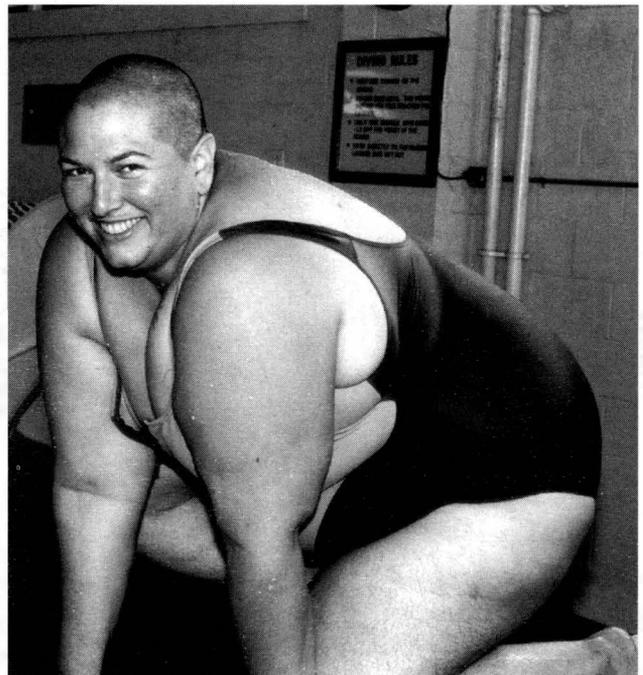
**N**o, never. No more than I consider myself an alien life form...

**N**o, I don't see what I do as *sport* it seems much more low key than that. Athlete seems too serious a label for me.

**N**o. I think of myself as someone who exercises regularly, but somehow the word *athlete* implies sports, competition or something I don't identify with.

**I** consider myself to have athletic ability, but not an athlete because I don't give it time and energy.

**Y**es, even though being partially disabled compromises what I can do. I have been athletic since childhood and I have always struggled for recognition because of my fat not because of my ability. I love being competitive, especially when I see my opponent size me up as an easy win because I'm fat. I love blowing these losers away.



# DO YOU EXERCISE WITH OTHER **FAT** WOMEN?

Yes, it's the best way to feel less of a freak and it's fun to watch skinny folk see their worst nightmare doubled.

I love the fat swim, although it feels more social than physical. It's way comfortable and safe.

No, but I'd like to. I'd like to be able to play with other fat women and watch those tits and bellies dance.



Fat Swim - yeah, it's great!

I like playing sports with someone whose skill level matches mine and if they happen to be fat that's great because I then feel more comfortable.

It is a RARE skinny friend who doesn't have weight issues lurking behind anything that remotely resembles exercise.

Yes, I swim with fat woman and I love it.

I have in the past. It's nice to have the support.



# How have you been told to exercise?

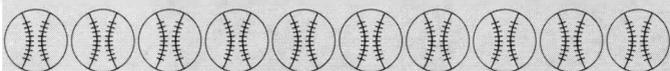
By a doctor because of back surgery.  
By skinny girljock friends many times.  
Just ignore them.

By my doctor as an adult and by my parents as a kid and always in reference to losing weight.

Very few non-fat people even discuss exercise with me since I surpassed 300 pounds.

Constant nagging by media. On the rare occasions I interact with health professionals they berate me as well. They can't believe that I am already very active.

Repeatedly by family, doctors, magazines, tv, etc. All for the purpose of losing weight -- not for pleasure, strength, health, etc.



The worst thing for me about exercise has been the stigma other fat-positive fat women have attached to it.

Regardless of my activity level or physical health I have been treated as a traitor for enjoying exercise. Exercise has been viewed as a fat betrayal and an attempt to become thin.

After a knee injury, exercise became a thing to do. Before that it was never an issue.

By family, doctors, & strangers.



# WHAT IS YOUR HISTORY OF PARTICIPATING IN SPORTS AS A **FaTGIRL**?



I have horrible memories from childhood of PE class. I was tormented, teased, and picked last for every team.

Even though I was a star athlete on two varsity teams my coach was always nagging me to lose weight and offering me diet suggestions.

I am fat and athletic and relatively mobile.

I had never really participated in sports because I always thought I was too fat. About the time I realized that wasn't true, I became disabled and sports were eliminated as a possibility



# Final Takes

I love the high I get from sweating and feeling my body strong and powerful. I enjoy building muscles on my fat body. I like the contrast of my hard calves and ass with my soft round belly and breasts. Pumping iron several days a week and hour-long bike rides give me the stamina for the best exercise of all, riding my wife all night, pumping my cock into her.

The best things about sports are that I have fun and it feels good. The majority of weight-obsessed people struggle with compulsivity, deprivation, guilt, and the eternal search for absolution because for one wild Satan-spawned moment they pleased their tongues.

Some fat dykes have told me I'm not "fat enough" which really hurts because everyone else in society treats me as though I'm really gross or asks me when the baby is due. I've actually considered getting a pregnancy swimsuit - which is infuriating because I've been a dyke for 31 years.

Even though I'm glad they exist 'cause a lot of fat women find them inspir-

ing, I am not particularly impressed by the whole wave of aerobics classes for fat women. They seem a little prissy - it's too close to mainstream anorexic aerobics and beauty culture for me. I hate the authoritarianism of a group of people all copying the leader, not very challenging. So, where are the fat girl bike runs, skateboarders, street hockey players, basketball teams, dancers? Where are the fat girls who play rough and dirty and sexy?

A fat woman breaks all our cultural rules and social bindings for women. We take up space, we look larger and more powerful, more unmanageable, more uncontrollable, and much less suitable as a sperm-receptacle and social trophy prize, particularly if we dare to be happy and move with unrestricted ease.

Being fat makes me feel more shy about beginning to participate for fear of ridicule. I'm much more conscious about who might be a spectator. I'm tired of people at my gym assuming I'm a

beginner because I'm "still fat." I'm tired of seeing women's eyes bug out after they get on a weight machine after me and see that I'm lifting more than they weigh, sometimes more than I weigh.

I'm afraid to enjoy sports as I did when I was younger because I'm sensitive to negative comments and try to avoid any situation where my body might be commented on.

At a gym a few years ago I heard of the instructors telling people that aerobic exercise is good for burning fat, and the proof of this was that "you never see any fat runners." I love to run, but I can't keep going for very long. The instructor's comments made me feel very invalidated and discouraged. Fuck.

