



August 2020 NAAFA Newsletter

In This Issue:

1. [Invitation to the Future of NAAFA Committee](#)
2. [NAAFA Opposes Racism](#)
3. [Anti-Racism Resources](#)
4. [Laura Hoesterey Baker](#)
5. [Nothing New in Guidelines from Canada](#)
6. [Fat Fall Reading List: Highlighting Black Authors](#)
7. [NAAFA Chronicles](#)
8. [Media and Research Roundup](#)
9. [Video of the Month](#)

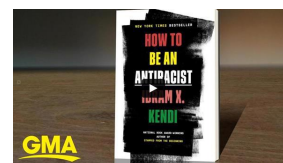
Invitation to the Future of NAAFA Committee

In December 2019, the Board of Directors invited NAAFA members to join a newly formed Future of NAAFA Committee, which began meeting in January 2020. We are delighted with the work of these committee members and their projects and initiatives to move the organization forward. Just one of those projects was the creation of an updated website that is phone-friendly. Another was in support of the issuance of NAAFA's statement in opposition to racism and in support of Black Lives Matter.

To date, the Board of Directors has worked alongside the Committee members to develop proposals. The Committee is now moving into a new phase to act independently of the Board as a "think tank" for development of proposals and projects.

If you have an interest in being involved in the Future of NAAFA Committee but were unable to commit to it previously, we are opening this invitation to join. The Committee would be tasked with making recommendations to the NAAFA Board of Directors on:

Video of the Month



What does it mean to be anti-racist?

This brief segment of GMA explains that just saying you are not a racist is not enough. You need to be actively anti-racist. It's an action word.

[youtube.com/watch?v=2klmWo0Madw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2klmWo0Madw)

Quick Links

[NAAFA.org](https://naafa.org)

Facebook

[Main](#)
[Toronto, ON, Canada](#)
[Capital \(DC\)](#)
[Clark County, NV](#)
[SF Bay, CA](#)
[Los Angeles, CA](#)
[Orange County, CA](#)
[End Bullying Now](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Instagram](#)[YouTube](#)

- How to promote NAAFA and attract the next generation of size activists/advocates
- Potential new projects including description, timelines, budget, and recruitment
- Planning for a future Conference

Committee members should have an eye on the future of the civil rights of fat people and the NAAFA organization. We're looking for forward thinkers; those with an understanding of intersectionality and how various diverse groups of fat people will be included.

All Committee meetings will be held online, and recommendations made to the Board of Directors through a Board Liaison.

If you are interested in participating in the Committee, please contact Darliene Howell via private message on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/darlieneh> or email us at naafa-secretary@outlook.com no later than August 31, 2020. Thank you for your continued support of NAAFA!

Health At Every Size and HAES are registered trademarks of the Association for Size Diversity and Health, and are used with permission.

Join Our
Mailing
List

NAAFA Opposes Racism

by Darliene Howell



The NAAFA Board of Directors has committed to anti-racism and anti-oppression work. **You cannot fight against the oppression of one group of marginalized people and ignore the oppression of others.**

We, as a Board of Directors, are moving beyond our statement of anti-racism and taking action.

Action 1: The entire Board of Directors will be participating in anti-oppression training.

Action 2: The Fat Community Project

Fund mini-grant program includes grants for anti-oppression work/training in and beyond fat community.

Grant Category: Solidarity with Other Anti-Oppression Causes

This category supports intersectional activism by providing resources to assist fat individuals or groups in creating or attending activities that work toward ending the oppression of other marginalized groups.

Examples: planning an accessible movie screening of *Crip Camp*, organizing a group to attend a Black Lives Matter rally, building a float for a Pride parade.

Action 3: We will be featuring anti-racist resources in our monthly NAAFA Newsletter and on our naafa.org website as part of our goal of education.

Action 4: We will continue to conduct webinars featuring BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual +) presenters. To find out more about our webinar series, go to <https://naafa.org/webinars>

I know that as we work on dismantling racism in ourselves and our organization it will lead to even more concrete action. This is important and necessary work that we as an organization are committed to do. We ask all of you to pledge to fight systemic racism and oppression in all its forms: in your life, in your community and in our country by learning more about racism and oppression and taking action.

One action you can take right now is in supporting this work through giving. You can designate any donation to a specific program area to further the goals of anti-oppression work. Go to <https://naafa.org/joindonate> and click on the "Main Giving Form" link. Select the Fat Community Project Fund to allow us to give more mini-grants to those seeking assistance in a community project. Select the Public Education Fund to donate to allow us to give stipends to presenters and to pay for transcription services to make transcripts available to hearing impaired people. All donations are tax-deductible and greatly appreciated.

Anti-Racism Resources



Racism in America is a systemic issue. It supports the marginalization of non-white people. As a white person, it is not enough to believe "I'm not racist." It's necessary for us to recognize the history of racism in our country and the systems in place that not only allow it to continue, but reinforce it. It's a requirement for us to take action to dismantle the system for everyone to be truly free and to have equality.

Each month, we will be featuring educational resources in this section of the NAAFA Newsletter. Some resources will be historic information about systemic racism. Others will be resources on doing the internal work of understanding ourselves and how we play a part in that system. There will also be actions that can be taken to directly oppose racism.

These resources have been shared with us. One action we can all take now is to share them with others.

This month, we are featuring these resources:

The Truth About the Confederacy in the United States (FULL Version)

Jeffery Robinson, the ACLU's top racial justice expert, discusses the dark history of Confederate symbols across the country and outlines what we can do to learn from our past and combat systemic racism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QOPGpE-sXh0>

White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack

An essay by Peggy McIntosh, associate director of the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women.

<https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/mcintosh.pdf>

Anti-racism resources for white people

A mega-document of resources compiled by Sarah Sophie Flicker and Alyssa Klein

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1BRIF2_zhNe86SGgHa6-VIBO-QgirlTwCTugSfKie5Fs/edit

Laura Hoesterey Baker

It is with great sadness that we share about the passing of long time NAAFA member Laura Hoesterey Baker, who passed away on July 19, 2020 after an extended illness. Laura left behind her husband, John and daughter, Katie.

Baker was the Vice-President of the Fat Disorders Resource Society (FDRS) and was a Special Education and General Education Teacher as well as Reading Specialist. Over the course of her 22-year career, Laura taught children from kindergarten through eighth grade. She was a Dercum's Disease, Lipedema and Lymphedema patient who experienced years of fat bias and lack of diagnoses. Her desire to educate healthcare providers and fellow patients about fat disorders motivated her to volunteer for FDRS.

Laura enjoyed writing, singing, sewing and swimming. Their two cats kept her company as she spent her time on home projects, writing interests and volunteering for the FDRS. NAAFA friends remember fondly the water aerobics classes she led at NAAFA conventions. Laura was inspirational as she courageously fought to raise consciousness of Dercum's Disease, Lipedema and Lymphedema. She is missed.

Nothing New in Guidelines from Canada



Earlier this month a group of Canadian doctors published Obesity in adults: a clinical practice guideline, "intended to improve the standard of, and access to, care for individuals with obesity in all regions of Canada". The National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance (NAAFA) believes that, upon close examination, these guidelines present no new information and perpetuate the myth that fat bodies are diseased simply because they are fat.

These guidelines hinge on the premise that excess fat is a disease. Against the recommendation of their own scientific advisors, the American Medical Association declared "obesity" a disease in 2013. Now Canada is going down the same precarious path. Many experts believe this will further damage the already fragile relationship between physician and fat client.

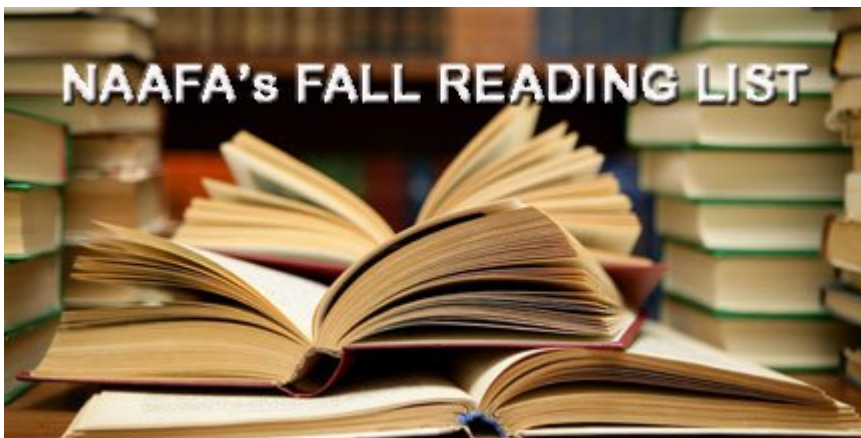
"I don't think these people are aware of the utter disconnect between what they are doing and what would be helpful to us. I don't think they would be happy knowing how this situation undermines the power of the therapeutic alliance, our respect for them, and their chances of achieving their intention to actually support health. For us, it is profoundly troubling to have to rely on people who are defining simply aging in our bodies as evidence of our bodies being diseased," stated Dr. Deb Burgard, Psychologist and Fellow of the Academy for Eating Disorders, and NAAFA Advisory Board Member.

Some medical providers are beginning to accept the fact that diets don't work. Much of the public has also realized that their individual experiences of losing then regaining weight are not personal failures, but rather a feature of the weight cycling industry's business model. As the public wises up, the faltering weight cycling industry has had to convince doctors to be their marketing arm, propping up interventions that do not create lasting health or weight change in the long run for most people. By arbitrarily declaring a body size a disease, the money can keep pouring in because insurers are compelled to pay for "treatment," even though in this case it is generally ineffective.

The Canadian guidelines are an attempt to rebrand the same old thing with a dash of politeness. It is not supportive to health to keep prescribing failed treatments and then blame people for the health disparities that result. Real progress will come only when the medical profession turns its scrutiny on its own ghastly history of harm toward higher weight people and resolves to start over to do better, this time by actually listening to fat people.

On the web: <https://naafa.org>

Fat Fall Reading List: Highlighting Black Authors



As the country debates how students should return to class this fall, your NAAFA Board is thinking about the ways we can continue to work on education for our membership and the greater community. Our goal is to increase accessible learning opportunities for fat people and those who support us. We strive to ensure that these opportunities empower fat people, support our membership in understanding and building on intersectionality, and live up to the commitment we made this summer to do more in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement and movements for social justice.

We will continue to bring our membership educational opportunities through our popular NAAFA Webinar Series. In addition, we've put together a Fall Reading List of fat Black voices, recommending one book for each month of the Fall 2020 semester. We'll be working on supplemental materials to support your reading of these books (blogs on our new website, webinars, book chats). We will also continue to expand our recommendations of other resources by, for, and about fat people who are PoC, LGBTQIA+, disabled, and superfat. Stay tuned for more details. Please feel free to send suggestions to our Director of Community Outreach at naafasurvey@gmail.com

September: *Unshamed: Musings of a Fat, Black Muslim* by Leah Vernon

October: *Fat Girls in Black Bodies: Creating Communities of Our Own* by Dr. Joy Renee Arlene Cox

November: *The Body is Not an Apology* by Sonya Renee Taylor

December: *Fearing the Black Body: the Racial Origins of Fat Phobia* by Sabrina Strings

Bonus: *So You Want to Talk About Race* by Ijeoma Oluo

NAAFA Chronicles 55

This month's historical document is NAAFA's 55th newsletter, [May - June 1983](#)

For more, check out the "Chronicles" page of the **new** NAAFA website, <https://naafa.org/chronicles>

Media and Research Roundup

by *Bill and Terri Weitze*

July 2020: A Chinese study finds that underweight patients are at a greater cardiac mortality risk after an acute myocardial infarction than all other weight classes.

https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/article/ihj/61/4/61_19-635/_pdf/-char/en
<https://doi.org/10.1536/ihj.19-635>

June 16, 2020: Writing in *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, four fat activists propose that social science research on fatness, the fat body, and fat experience would benefit from a Fat Studies framework.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2020.1780355>

July 13, 2020: Dr. Sean Maloney has conducted a study wherein he finds that obese patients undergoing emergency general surgery have better mortality rates than underweight and average weight patients.

<https://www.generalsurgerynews.com/In-the-News/Article/07-20/Obesity-Paradox-Outcomes-Better-in-Heavier-Emergency-Surgery-Patients/58954>

July 20, 2020: Not only is BMI a useless tool for measuring individual health, its roots are sexist and racist, and those problems continue to affect people today.

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/bmi-scale-racist-health_l_5f15a8a8c5b6d14c336a43b0

July 24, 2020: Prapti Sarkar explains the difference between body positivity and fat acceptance, and why supporting fat acceptance is important to society as a whole.

<https://feminisminindia.com/2020/07/24/trade-body-positivity-fat-acceptance>

August 5, 2020: Ingrid R. Pipes talks about her pursuit of accomplishments and accolades as a means of protecting herself from judgment of her fat body.

<https://rosewatermagazine.com/2020/08/05/being-the-funny-fat-person-is-serious-business>

August 7, 2020: *Big Fat Science* (at Tumblr) talks about how vaccine trials for COVID-19, like most previous medical trials, will probably be conducted on a homogenous group that excludes fat bodies to reduce variables in the study.

<https://bigfatscience.tumblr.com/post/625815970703933440/is-it-true-that-vaccines-are-less-effective-in-fat>

August 8, 2020: When British talk show host Jeremy Vine asked for thoughts about possible weigh-ins of British school children, the response is almost uniformly against, showing progress in thinking of children's weight and health.

<https://themighty.com/2020/08/jeremy-vine-tweet-weighing-students>

August 8, 2020: Some experts talk about why obsessing over weight gain or lack of exercise during the pandemic is unhelpful, and offer some advice on how to deal with the stress in a more positive way.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/08/at-home/coronavirus-weight-gain.html>

Founded in 1969, NAAFA, the National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance, is a non-profit human rights organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for fat people. NAAFA works to eliminate discrimination based on body size and provide fat people with the tools for self-empowerment through public education, advocacy, and member support.

On the web: <http://www.naafa.org>

Comments: pr@naafa.org

Any products or services mentioned in articles in this newsletter are for information only and should not be considered endorsements by NAAFA.

