



May 2021 NAAFA Newsletter

What Fat Liberation Means to Me: Instagrammers Celebrate Fat Liberation Month!

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Content warning: Some Adult Language

At the beginning of Fat Liberation Month (May), NAAFA invited everyone to post in social media sharing what fat liberation means to them, using the hashtag #fatliberationmonth. There have been photos, video, graphics and written captions expressing the thoughts of fat folx all over social media! Here are a few of the responses we have seen so far this month on Instagram. We invite you to use #fatliberationmonth and share your thoughts on fat liberation on your favorite platforms.

[ambrosiolupe](#)

Happy [@naafaofficial](#) Fat Liberation Month!
Eat that Ice cream and scream with me .. Fuck Diet Culture!!
Check out [@fatfemmecollective](#) for more fat liberation content

[body.lib.robinhood](#)

Of course, the goal of body liberation is that all bodies of all sizes, colors, and configurations have access to all the same resources and are treated with the same respect. So, why the focus on liberating fat bodies when we want to liberate all bodies?

Simply, because fat bodies have more obstacles than other bodies. Fat Black, Indigenous, Brown, and

Video of the Month



Float

The Asian American employee of Pixar who wrote the storyline for Float fully expected it to be illustrated as a white father/son. Pixar felt differently. Pixar and SparkShorts are in solidarity with the Asian and Asian American communities against anti-Asian hate in all its forms. They are proud to have illustrated this inclusive short.

https://youtube.com/watch?v=1HAGuju_yKY

Quick Links

[NAAFA.org](#)

[Facebook Main Members Community End Bullying Now](#)

[Twitter](#)

Asian bodies face the most obstacles. So, we have to focus the fight there. None of us are free until all of us are free. And starting the fight with the hardest aspects of the fight helps us define what liberation really looks like.

What obstacles do fat bodies face that other bodies don't?

- * Fat people can legally be fired for being fat.
- * Fat people are less likely to be hired than thinner people.
- * Fat people make less money than thinner people.
- * Fat people receive less reliable and effective healthcare.
- * Fat people are more likely to have their legitimate medical issues ignored because of their weight.
- * Fat people are more likely to die from chronic diseases, not because their fatness causes disease, but because doctors do not diagnose their ailments or give them proper treatment.
- * Fat people are more likely to be forced into unnecessary medical procedures because of their fatness.
- * Fat people have to spend way more money on clothing.
- * Fat people have much less access to clothing, especially fashionable clothing.
- * Fat people often can't access places because the seating is too small.
- * Fat people face constant harassment and bullying.

People in smaller bodies, even smaller fat bodies, don't experience these obstacles. The answer is not forcing people to change their bodies, which doesn't work long term. The answer is building a more equitable world. That's why we focus on fat liberation.

[Click here to read more](#)

May Anti-Racism Resources *collected by Darliene Howell*

Videos

[Instagram](#)

[YouTube](#)

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Join Our
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SoulPancake has created short videos that talk with people from various communities to learn from their experiences in the *How You See Me* series.

[Why Do Labels Matter? | How you See Me](#)

[Asian | How You See Me](#)

[Black | How You See Me](#)

[Latino | How You See Me](#)

[Arab | How You See Me](#)

[How to Practice Understanding | How You See Me](#)

The Intersection of Fatness and Other Marginalized Communities

[When 'moti' And Unmarriageable Is All That You Are In South Asian Culture](#) by Zahra Haider from wearyourvoicemag.com

[Dismantle Anti-Fatness](#) by Nicole Cardoza from Anti-Racism Daily

[Body Size | How You See Me](#) from SoulPancake

[Everything That We Know About Obesity Is An Indictment Of White Supremacy](#) by Hess Love from wearyourvoicemag.com

[Your Fat Stigma Is Racist - Here Are 6 Ways to Shift That](#) by Caleb Luna from everydayfeminism.com

There's No Vaccine for Fatphobia *by Trevor Kezon*



In this excerpt from Trevor Kezon's original Medium piece, the writer explores the experience of being fat during the pandemic. Find the full article and other writing by Trevor at trevorkezon.medium.com

As a fat person, the only time I was happy to have my BMI shoved in my face was when it made me eligible to receive the COVID vaccine.

A week after my first shot, I sipped my coffee and opened Twitter for my usual morning doom scrolling. I noticed Obesity and Krispy Kreme were trending and knew it was going to be a bad day. Krispy Kreme had announced that they were offering a free donut every day for the rest of the year to people who could show proof of vaccination. In true fashion, Twitter quickly spiraled out into a fatphobic shitstorm. This was exacerbated by a study reporting that 48% of millennials reported an average weight gain of 41 pounds. The anti-fat bile that spewed forth quickly overtook my relief and reminded me that the vaccine couldn't protect me from the fatphobia waiting for me at the other end of the pandemic.

I've spent the entire pandemic worrying that my weight made me more susceptible to COVID, but now that the world's close to reopening, I have an entirely new set of concerns.

Early in the pandemic, my Pilates instructor offered to do virtual sessions with me over Zoom. I shrugged it off because I thought the gyms couldn't possibly be closed that long. Two weeks later, my back was a mess, and I was so anxious I could barely function. I took my instructor up on his offer, having two sessions a week to aid my anxiety and as a marker that time was in fact passing.

A few months later, my social media were full of people reeling from the changes the pandemic had brought to their bodies, dubbing the newly added weight "the COVID 19." One day during my session, my instructor stopped and complimented me for my commitment during a session. "You're really doing amazing. I have to ask, have you lost weight?"

My skin crawled. "Not exactly." Despite my regular Pilates sessions, I had gained a significant amount of weight during the pandemic. I didn't have an issue with it -- my weight regularly fluctuates, and I love my fat body -- but it's always uncomfortable to be confronted about any kind of change in your body. In the noise of the fat panic, I tried to stay attuned to my body. Being locked inside changed how my body worked and moved. When I resumed Pilates via Zoom, I no longer had Pilates equipment and machinery to rely on for support. All the work was with my body, save for some resistance bands, a magic circle, and the occasional 10-lb weight. At first, I felt awkward and clumsy. I had to really focus on balance and stamina, something which seemed impossible as every depressing day started to blur together. As much as I resented the change to my Pilates regime, it gave me something I desperately needed between binge-watching and bread-making: a routine.

Still, I reeled every time I saw a headline about obesity as a comorbidity for COVID. I panicked that if I needed to go to the hospital, they would deny me care or even turn me away so they could treat someone less fat. Any time I saw a light at the end of the tunnel, cases would surge again, and my fears would swallow me. Summer came and went without Pride parades and fat gay pool parties. Fall came and cases dwindled, but I remained sheltered in place on Halloween and dropped off Thanksgiving plates in friend's driveways. When the winter surge came, I saw friends get hospitalized who had been even more careful than I had. At Christmas, I exchanged gifts over fences and spent holiday parties over Zoom. Still, I worried that it wasn't enough. Finally, the first vaccines rolled out, and it seemed like 2021 might bring some hope.

[Click here to read more](#)

Reflections on Growing Up Fat and Chinese American

by Amy Rios-Richardson



Content warning: IWL, fat-shaming, and food restriction mentioned

In Chinese culture, women are supposed to be small. Not just in stature, but in how we exist in the world. There is this old school idea that Chinese girls should be quiet, small, slender, take up as little space as possible. There is no being loud, there is no taking up space, there is absolutely no being fat. Well. I'm fat. And I always have been. I grew up culturally Chinese American. My mom and her family immigrated from China and Taiwan. My dad was Mexican. I grew up with my mom and her side of the family. I grew up around slender and athletic girls and women. I was neither of those things.

Some of my earliest memories of fat shaming and weight stigma come from ones I loved the most.

One of my uncles played a "game" where every family party, he would pick up my cousin and me, and compare our weights. I was always heavier, of course, but it was a joke to him. The cousins would gather around and holler in laughter as he made exaggerated (or maybe not so exaggerated?) faces at how hard it was to lift me up. Then one day, when I was around 10 or 12, he declared he couldn't pick me up anymore. I was too heavy for him. I was humiliated. I wished so hard that I could look like my cousin, with her narrow shoulders and long, skinny legs.

Meals with my grandparents were always confusing. On the one hand, they'd tell me to eat less rice and carbs, and comment on my weight and appearance. On the other hand, they'd always tell me to "eat up" in Mandarin. Culturally, if your elders offer you more food, you're supposed to take it. It was a lose-lose situation for me. I wished I could disappear at mealtimes, slip away in the background where nobody could say anything about my body, or what I was putting in it.

One of my aunts used to work in the factory for a big clothing label, and she'd often bring home bags of clothes for my cousins to try on. One day, my aunt brought over a bag of clothes for me, saying her daughter had grown out of them, so maybe I could wear them, since I was younger than her. Well. None of the clothes fit me, and I had to stand there silently while my aunt and my mom commented on my size. I held back tears until after my aunt left. The clothes stayed in my bathroom, on the floor, taunting me next to the scale.

[Click here to read more](#)

Fat Lib Month Events



NAAFA Chronicles 64

We present NAAFA's 64th newsletter, [December 1985](#), as part of our Chronicles series.

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

Media and Research Roundup

by Bill and Terri Weitze

September 2020: A study concludes that the preoperative dietary restriction is the cause for most of the metabolic changes that have been attributed to Roux-en-Y gastric bypass surgery.

<https://doi.org/10.2337/db20-0131>

April 19, 2021: In the *Every Body Talks* column, questions are raised about the origins and purpose of the Body Positivity Movement, but few are answered.

https://www.dailyuw.com/wellness/article_7242af9e-a0c4-11eb-8e65-e3af6842af93.html

April 22, 2021: Peacock's show *Rutherford Falls* co-stars native American and fat woman Jana Schmieding, and the show was quick to introduce a love

interest. Schmieding discusses how much she has internalized the myth that fat people are not attractive.

<https://www.refinery29.com/en-us/2021/04/10433006/rutherford-falls-peacock-cast-jana-schmieding-reagan>

April 22, 2021: A reduced version of photographer Laura Aguilar's Los Angeles show has finally made it to New York, four years after the original exhibition, featuring Aguilar's intimate photos of her own fat body.

<https://dnyuz.com/2021/04/22/she-turned-her-audacious-lens-on-herself-and-shaped-the-future/>

April 25, 2021: An article on Vogue.com looks at the lack of options for high end apparel for fat bodies, which is especially evident at award shows where fat celebrities struggle to find fashionable clothing for the red carpet.

<https://www.vogue.com/article/can-we-dismantle-fat-phobia-on-the-red-carpet>

April 27, 2021: Dietitians of Canada decline to endorse the new Canadian Adult Obesity Clinical Practice Guidelines for several reasons, including excessive emphasis on weight loss.

<https://www.dietitians.ca/News/2021/DC-endorsement-decision-on-Canadian-Adult-Obesity>

April 30, 2021: In these two articles, Aidy Bryant talks about herself, her character on *Shrill*, and the importance of normalizing representation of fat people.

<https://people.com/health/aidy-bryant-says-doctor-suggested-she-get-gastric-bypass-they-assume-she-wants-to-lose-weight>

https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/tv/aidy-bryant-show-final-season/2021/04/29/4e6f0382-a755-11eb-8c1a-56f0cb4ff3b5_story.html

May 2021: Tigress Osborn is interviewed by The Curvy Fashionista about NAAFA's first annual Fat Liberation Month.

<https://thecurvyfashionista.com/naafa-fat-liberation-month>

May 2021: The latest issue of *Fat Studies* is now available. This issue focuses on fatness and the law.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/ufts20/10/2?nav=tocList>

May 5, 2021: Jennifer Weiner warns that the diet industry is looking to profit off people's concerns about weight gain during the pandemic and urges you to resist.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/05/opinion/culture/dieting-covid-weight-loss.html>

May 8, 2021: A *Los Angeles Times* article talks about how the pandemic brought into focus the discrimination faced by the fat community from a

healthcare industry already rife with fat bias.

<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-05-08/analyzing-covid-vaccine-inequity-through-obesity-lens>

May 11, 2021: New weight loss drugs are being developed using incretins, naturally occurring hormones. The drugs are slightly more effective than most, showing average weight loss of 15%, and 20% or higher weight loss of 30% of the patients tested; but once you stop the medication the weight comes back.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/11/health/obesity-drugs.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: <https://naafa.org>

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