



**national association
to advance
fat acceptance**

October 2017 NAAFA Newsletter

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**Video of the
Month**



**Détente in the War on
Obesity**

Continuing with her new series, Dr. Linda Bacon will convince you that it's time to put health -- and caring -- back at the heart of health care.

<https://lindabacon.org/videos/plea-detente-war-obesity>

Legislative News



Great news! State legislative bills have been introduced in Massachusetts and New York. In the Massachusetts bill, height

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and weight would be added to the anti-discrimination law. In New York, weight would be added for employment and licensing.

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NAAFA has written in support of both bills and we are asking all residents of these states to stand in support of them as well. In addition to writing to the author of the bills, ask your district representative to co-sponsor the bill.

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POTENTIAL LETTER:

Dear Representative/Assemblymember (name of legislator),

As a resident of (state), I stand in support of (bill number). Discrimination based on body size has increased as the weight of the population has increased. It affects the daily lives of countless individuals and families through inequities in employment, education, public accommodation and health care.

(If you have a personal story about weight discrimination, please include it.)

I am asking you to support this bill and stand for Equality At Every Size.

(Your name and address)

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Here is specific information for each state:

MASSACHUSETTS

MA Bill H.952, <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/190/H952>
Please contact the House Judiciary Committee and Rep. Rushing's office

Massachusetts Joint Committee on the Judiciary
24 Beacon St
Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Contact in Rep. Rushing's office: Caroline Sherrard,
Caroline.Sherrard@mahouse.gov

NEW YORK

Bill A08689, <http://nyassembly.gov/leg/?bn=A08689&term=2017>

Nick Guile
Legislative Aide
Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal
Room 627 Legislative Office Building
Albany, NY 12248
p. 518.455.5802 | f. 518.455.5015

Contact in Assemblymember Rosenthal's office: Lauren Schuster, schuster1@nyassembly.gov

Disaster Relief Update



Dawn McDowell Brooks, our person on the ground in Texas, has done an incredible job of receiving, organizing and distributing your generous gifts of clothing to disaster victims. She has not only distributed your clothing in Houston and Austin but was able to connect with shipments of supplies going to the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. She thought she was taking on one disaster and got three!

Most of her efforts have been receiving and routing unopened boxes and packages through a network of her friends to a variety of locations throughout southeast Texas that will see that people get the clothing free of charge. Recently she and a friend drove 500 miles round trip to deliver boxes of clothing to a location in Beaumont where people will come to find clothing that will actually fit them!

"I haven't been opening these boxes, but today, as we were helping to set up, we did open some. One box had 12 packages of size 13 underwear for women (what a windfall!) -- there were also lots of new 4, 5 and 6X pants and tops, some new bras, and a box of men's socks and underwear. The gently used clothing (I didn't see it all) was amazing -- like new! Christy was very teary eyed when she saw the generosity of the NAAFA community".

We have discussed whether or not to ask the community for more help. We believe it is time for us to turn our attention to relief efforts for California. So many generous folks who have held clothing drives and sent many, many boxes of clothing for the hurricane victims are now in peril themselves. The destruction of property by all the fires currently burning in CA is overwhelming. Friends in Santa Rosa and elsewhere have lost everything.

We have been blessed with another member of our community who will receive our shipments and take them to the locations in northern CA who so desperately need them. Please address your shipments to:

Dr. Deah Schwartz, 6156 Hillmont Drive, Oakland, CA 94605

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE FOR YOUR OVERWHELMING GENEROSITY. BIG FAT HUGS!

Monthly Meme: Size Diversity

naafa

Diversity is not limited to the inclusion of people of different races and cultures; it includes classes, genders, age, orientation, sizes, shapes and other physical appearances and abilities.

#EqualityAtEverySize **#SizeDiversity**

Harm Reduction

by Cinder Ernst

Last month I told you that I was going on a motorcycle trip to the Alps! I also mentioned that my



hip pain was so bad I did not know how I would get through the trip. Before I left, I got a spider bite that needed prednisone. The prednisone helped my hip and I was able to ride! I had an amazing trip and was able to do about 70% of the riding. Funny how things work out.

I have been dealing with this hip for years, without really needing/wanting to know what was going on. But it turned a corner and I knew I needed more help, so I went to the Orthopedist. Now I know: my left hip is bone on bone. I'm not sure when I will have my hip replacement. I'll know more after my next appointment. I am actually happy to have the diagnoses so I can get on with surgery and back to riding.

As I wait to find out what happens next I am focusing on staying as strong and stable as I can. I am doing whatever exercises still feel good to me. I am making sure, as much as possible, that I keep my strength and flexibility intact. I am feeling satisfied as I make the best of where I am.

I also have to rest a lot more than what I'm used to. I love to read and I have been reading like a fiend. I found Danielle Steele books keep me pretty amused while I've got my feet up. Reading helps me keep my spirits up as I'm resting.

I noticed that limping due to my left hip was starting to aggravate my right knee. That walking was becoming a problem was really a drag. I remembered that I'm pretty good on crutches so now I'm crutching instead of walking when I've got some distance to cover. Crutching helps me stay happy and hopeful.

Here are the aspects of my harm reduction program while I await my new hip. I hope some of you may find this useful. As always, let me know if you need help.

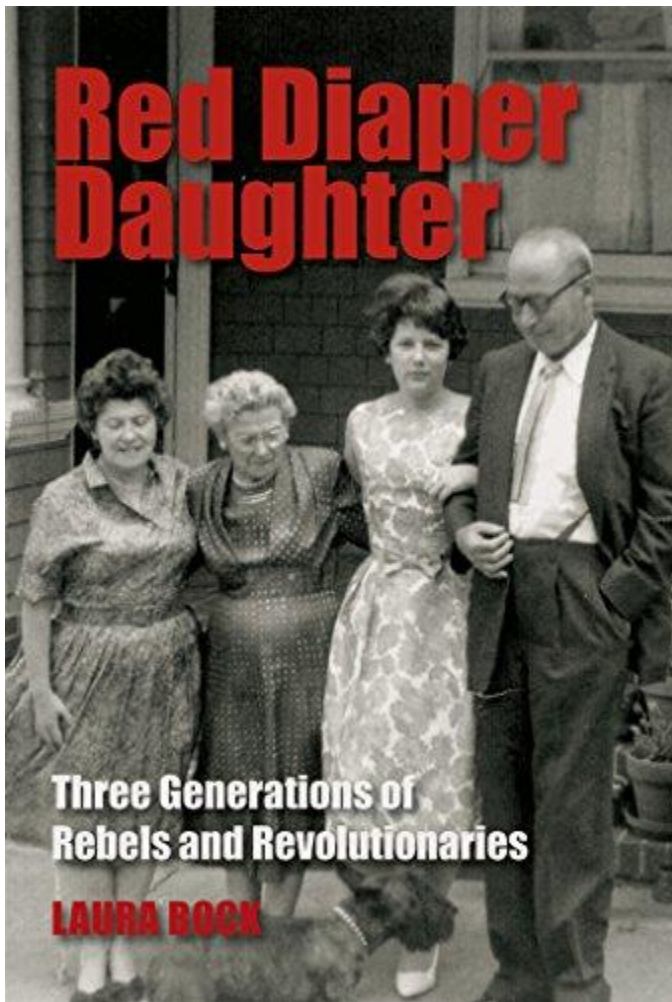
- Moving in whatever way I can
- Small step exercises
- Resting
- Staying hopeful
- Anti-inflammatory meds

Book Review: *Red Diaper Daughter*

Book by Laura Bock

Review by Darliene Howell

Laura Bock's memoirs, *Red Diaper Daughter - Three Generations of Rebels and Revolutionaries*, focus on her life and the history of Russian Jewish immigrants: their politics, their beliefs, and their lives. The memoirs show the reader times of political change, loss of physical ability (blindness and deafness), and loss of family and friends.



During these periods, Laura went from a shy little fat girl to blossom and become the "fat Jewish lesbian socialist feminist" she is today through participation in various writing and support groups. She was one of the founding members of the Fat Lip Readers Theater, and an active member of the Mother Tongue Feminist Theater Collective and the Old Lesbian Memoir Writers Group. If there wasn't a support group already formed for a particular need, Laura would start one!

One of the chapters in the book is called "Life in the Fat Lane" wherein the author includes all of her pieces written and performed for Fat Lip Readers Theater over 18 years. They show her trajectory from a hiding and depressed fat child to a fat woman strutting her stuff on stage and street corner, on television and radio, and at conferences and universities.

Red Diaper Daughter is recommended for anyone with interests in political science, feminism, fat liberation, disability

rights, lesbianism and intersectionality due to its personal narrative on each of these areas.

You can order a copy through your local bookstore or buy it online at www.smile.amazon.com

NAAFA Chronicles #21

As part of our monthly NAAFA Chronicles feature, enjoy NAAFA's 21st newsletter; the Summer 1975 issue:

http://www.naafaonline.com/newsletterstuff/oldnewsletterstuff/Chronicles/Summer_1975.pdf

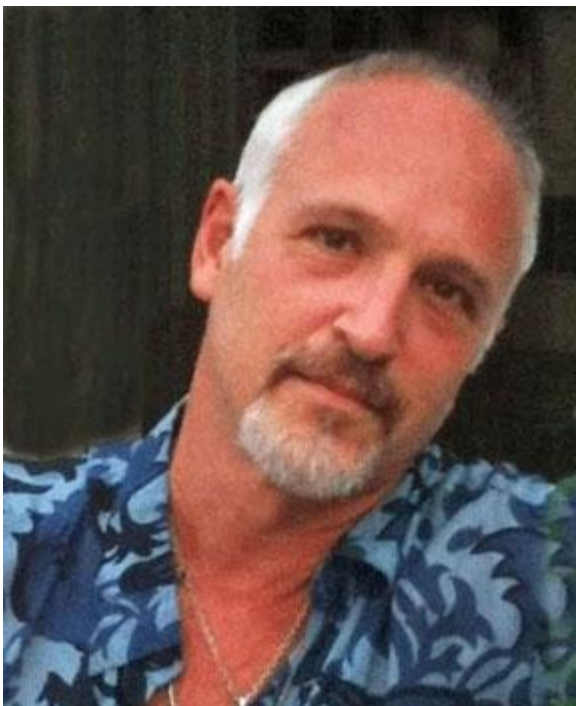
For more, check out the "Chronicles" tab in the newsletter section of the NAAFA website.

Fashion Can't Fix Your Problems . . .

by Stephen Hadley

. . . but it can make a huge difference

I've been designing clothing for fat women since 1997. I never could have guessed how much I would enjoy working with women in this amazing community. The touching



experiences I've had getting to know these women have been a constant blessing.

One of my customers recently wrote me about her struggle to find clothing that fit her body. It was especially difficult in the wake of her battle with a variety of cancers, including breast cancer. Here's how she describes this terrifying treatment process:

"I wasn't expected to make it off the table because it was so bad. I was 32 with 3 children and the doctor made me write my will plus a living will before surgery. Two doctors, four bags of my husband's blood, and 18 hours later I woke up in recovery. I don't know how they pulled it off but they did, I was alive."

"The pain was so bad I was praying to die but I am still here and have battled five more types of cancer and was just now tested positive for the seventh time. I have lost just about everything in your body you can and still live; 41 surgeries now and can't do surgery this time, they said the surgery would kill me so I am on borrowed time."

Hearing this story was heartbreaking. This woman has been through a terrible ordeal and is still fighting for her life. It especially affected me since my own mother died of breast cancer and had, in some ways, a similar experience.

One detail that was the same for my mother and this young woman was their decision to have reconstructive surgery. This is a hard decision to make and each woman has to arrive at on her own. She describes it this way:

"I had breast cancer and was always gifted so to speak with the top section. I didn't realize that I should have told the doctors to bring me down a size to make finding clothes easier. I had been a DD since high school and heard horror stories of the husband not being able to accept the changes."

"I was scared to death so last thing I told the doctors before being put to sleep, measure me and make them the same size. I opted to use my lower abdominal muscles instead of implants so I was cut hip to hip and arm pit to arm pit each going a little further towards my back."

I can't imagine this experience . . . the fear going into it . . . the pain afterwards. And the long term emotional effect of both the illness and its physical effects.

Here's where I am humbled and honored to be a part of this community. She concluded her message to me this way:

"I am bedridden from a list of other diseases but I think if I could wear something to the doctor other than sleepwear I may feel pretty again. I was a beautiful woman I was always told but I don't feel that way anymore."

This is why I am an advocate and clothing designer for the fat community; to help women of any shape or size realize their beauty and show it to the world.

Never underestimate the power of fashion: its ability to change your outlook, cheer you up, and help you face challenges. This has been stolen from fat women for decades, but every person, regardless of sex, age, size, or any other detail, deserves to look, feel, and be treated as beautiful. Because we all are.

I realize that for this woman, wearing one of my tank top designs will not change her life. It will not cure her awful disease or take back any of the pain she's been through. But when she wrote me, "I have a shirt that is an orange colored lace. I have never been able to find a tank top to wear under it so that is great, I can finally pull that shirt out and wear it," I was reminded of why I design clothing in the first place. And I continue to be honored to have any part in helping her face these challenges.

Stephen Hadley, founder of [Generous Fashions](#), has been exclusively creating plus size clothing for women (up to 2x to 4x depending on the item) since 2002. He designs fabric and garments for [generousfashions.com](#) and his [Etsy shop](#), which offers NAAFA readers a [10% discount](#). Sign up for the Generous Fashions newsletter for new arrivals and member discounts.

Media and Research Roundup

by *Bill and Terri Weitze*

November 1, 2016: According to a survey, Americans believe that obesity is as serious a health threat as cancer, and that fat people would be able to lose the weight with enough will power despite scientific research showing otherwise.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/01/health/americans-obesity-willpower-genetics-study.html>

<http://www.norc.org/Research/Projects/Pages/the-asmbnorc-obesity-poll.aspx>

http://www.norc.org/PDFs/ASMBS%20Obesity/ASMBS%20NORC%20Obesity%20Poll_Brief%20A%20REV010917.pdf

February 16, 2017: A study of bariatric surgery versus intensive medial therapy for diabetic patients concludes that patients receiving surgery have better outcomes. Many of the researchers received grant and/or fees from Ethicon, a surgical supply company involved in bariatric surgery.

<http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa1600869#t=article>

April 2017: A study concludes that intentional weight loss by postmenopausal women is associated with a lower risk of endometrial cancer.

<http://ascopubs.org/doi/10.1200/JCO.2016.70.5822>

May 10, 2017: A meta-analysis of existing evidence finds that commercial weight-loss programs are ineffective to achieve modest (but clinically meaningful) weight loss and have a high rate of attrition, suggesting that these programs are unsustainable for most people.

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1359105317705983>

June 21, 2017: An article in *The Economist's Voice* discusses obesity, or other health indicators, may be a predictor of voting patterns and thus a new political force.

<https://www.degruyter.com/view/j/ev.2017.14.issue-1/ev-2017-0006/ev-2017-0006.xml>

September 11, 2017: Research indicates that having been fat during your life puts you at risk for certain chronic diseases even if you are no longer fat, and that weight loss does not eliminate the risk.

[http://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797\(17\)30310-0/fulltext](http://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797(17)30310-0/fulltext)

September 12, 2017: Three women in Winnipeg have established the Good Fat Care website, which matches weight neutral healthcare practitioners with fat patients so that they can go to the doctor without being stigmatized for their weight.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/winnipeg-weight-discrimination-health-1.4286675>

September 13, 2017: Bullying is not just child's play; bullying can hurt and even kill. Billies almost killed this boy by hanging. NAAFA says END BULLYING NOW.

<http://www.theroot.com/interview-mother-of-8-year-old-nearly-hung-in-nh-speak-1805654536>
<https://www.naafaonline.com/dev2/education/ebn.html>

September 18, 2017: *Health News Review* looks into deaths that may have been caused by the use of two new gastric balloon devices, and why the reported deaths may just be the tip of the iceberg.

<https://www.healthnewsreview.org/2017/09/orbera-intragastric-balloon-deaths-questions-go-unasked-and-unanswered>

September 20, 2017: STRIPED (Strategic Training Initiative for the Prevention of Eating Disorders, a project of Harvard University and Boston Children's Hospital) supports Massachusetts bill H. 952, which proposes adding height and weight as a protected class to the State's existing civil rights law.

https://cdn1.sph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1267/2017/02/FINAL-H952_PolicyBrief_Sept-20-20171.pdf

September 20, 2017: The Royal College of Surgeons condemns the actions of East Riding Clinical Commissioning Group's denial of routine surgery for patients with a BMI over 35 and smokers, and instead referring these patients for weight loss and stop smoking programs.

<http://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/health/overweight-people-and-smokers-to-be-denied-surgery-for-six-months-in-four-yorkshire-hospitals-1-8763080>

October 4, 2017: A report by researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) concludes that 13 types of cancer are associated with being overweight or obese and that these cancers increased by 7% between 2005 and 2014. However, (a) colorectal cancer (traditionally associated with fatness) decreased by 23% over the same period, and (b) the report included all instances of these cancers whether or not the patient was actually fat.

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/319639.php>
<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/wr/mm6639e1.htm>

October 4, 2017: Gabrielle Deydier is French and she is fat. Her book *We're Not Born Fat (On Ne Nait Pas Grosse)* looks at France's fat phobia and bigotry, and the book is already bringing awareness of fat phobia and discrimination to the people of France.

<https://au.be.yahoo.com/style/beauty/a/37341597/plus-size-author-gabrielle-deydier-reveals-size-8-fat-in-france>

October 9, 2017: An article claims that the cost of treating obesity will increase to \$1.2 trillion a year by 2025 worldwide. That number is from the World Obesity Federation (WOF) and it includes all kinds of health problems, such as joint damage, as obesity-related diseases even though both thin and fat people have them.

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/oct/10/treating-obesity-related-illness-will-cost-12tn-a-year-from-2025-experts-warn>
<https://www.worldobesity.org/who-we-are/history>

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.

