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PUBLICLY FAT: NARRATIVES OF FATPHOBIA, DIET CULTURE, AND INTERSECTIONAL FEMINISM

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In spite of recent advancements within the academic community—particularly within the discipline of Women, Gender and Sexualities—fatness is still overwhelmingly viewed as a singular issue rather than a complex site of social interrogation that impacts every aspect of our lives. Fatness is typically understood through the medical model of obesity and/or eating disorders, a piecemeal approach that unfairly problematizes fatness, allowing the dangers of fatphobia and diet culture to thrive as forms of oppression. In my thesis, I interrogate these oppressive systems as an intersectional issue using a framework based on Marie Matsuda’s “other question” in which she challenges us to identify multiple points of oppression by asking *how is it also when how is it also?* I use the practice of auto-ethnography, using my own personal experience living in a fat body in a fatphobic world as a site of analysis through which I attend to these concerns of oppression, including intersectional moments with race, class, and cisheteronormativity. To this end, I buttress my own experiences by looking to the treatment of fat bodies and subjectivities in popular media, as well. Ultimately, I explore how the emerging arena of Fat Studies is necessarily intersectional and can be used as a model to improve our understanding of many oppressions experienced by marginalized communities.