

# Fastidious Fatness

An intersectional approach to weight stigmatization

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# The note pad



# Insights

- Dominance of anti-fat attitudes
- Being fat = being unhealthy = being non-athletic
- Bodies being 'read' in terms of body size
- Complexity: what is seen as 'fat'?

# Intersectionality

- Thinking technology
- Understanding processes of in- and exclusion, marginalization and privilege
- Multiple axes of signification (e.g. gender, race, class)
- Identities, normativities, power differentials

(Lykke 2011)

# Intersections - gender



- Women and body size categorizations
- Men and body size categorizations
- Beauty and health

(e.g. Bordo 1995; Bell & McNaughton 2007; Bergman 2009; Monaghan 2007; Orbach 1978)

# Intersections – gender & sexuality



- Heteronormative beauty standards
- Gays and lesbians

(e.g. Huxley et. al 2013; Monaghan 2005; Pyle & Loewy 2009)

# Intersections – gender, sexuality & race



- Big black women as hypersexual
- Hetero-normative White femininity
- Non-western ideals regarding beauty & health

(e.g. Abou-Rizk & Rail 2012; Fuller 2011; LeBesco 2004; Shaw 2005; Popenoe 2004)



# Intersections – gender, social class, sexuality, age and race



- Childhood obesity
- Mother blame
- Structural issues such as racism, social inequality and sexism are obscured

(e.g. Boero 2009; Campos et al. 2005; Evans et al. 2008; Rich 2011)



# Why an intersectional approach?

- 'Fat' is a very ambiguous word / category
- Dominance of biomedical interpretations of fatness
- Need to deconstruct biological determinacy related to body size categorizations

# Discrimination - parallels

- Racism, sexism, homophobia able-ism and fatphobia.
- Corporeal deviance
- Moral panic
- Justification and naturalization through ideas about biological determinism and individualization

# In closing

- Using an intersectional approach to acknowledge practices of weight stigmatization and resist these
- Destabilizing dominant notions about weight and health

# Thank you!

- Questions?
- Contact: [N.vanAmsterdam@uu.nl](mailto:N.vanAmsterdam@uu.nl)
- Full paper:

Amsterdam, N. van (2013). Big fat inequalities, thin privilege. An intersectional perspective on 'body size'. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 20(2): 155-169.