

FREE FIGURE REVOLUTION

MARCH 2018

EXECUTIVE REPORT

FAT CENSUS 2017

PREPARED AND PRESENTED BY

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DONATE

OUR STORY

FREE FIGURE REVOLUTION

WE'RE CREATING THE REVOLUTION
WE NEED. WE'RE DEMANDING THE
HUMANITY WE DESERVE.

Free Figure Revolution is a Southern body liberation organization built from Black fat queer futurism based in Atlanta, GA. Our organization works directly from the margins of our society, centering the highest and most deadly casualties of white supremacist humanity standards.

Our mission is to create and take space for all marginalized bodies surviving lethal beauty standards. Our purpose is to continue building a legacy of body liberation and empowerment for all bodies and to destroy antiblack white supremacist violence. Our work amplifies this through radicalizing research to reveal the realities of the hardships marginalized people are suffering, in which we designed and created the Fat Census and the Queer Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Survey. In addition to creating community programming, we are building new worlds where our bodies can flourish, grow, live free from shame, and seek radicalized and accessible peace.

Read more about us at FreeFigure.org. Donate to FreeFigure.org/donate or PayPal.me/FreeFigure so that you can support our work and help us maintain the accessibility of this data report.

THANK YOU

THE PEOPLE AND LONG LEGACY THAT MADE THIS POSSIBLE

HONORING THE WAYMAKERS
AND SHAPESHIFTERS.

To those who have created a legacy - past, present, and future - for fat folks to win, to rise, to conquer, to fly:

Tatiana Mercedes Quincy Brissett, Brienne Colston, Myles E. Johnson, Brandi Wharton, Jamal T. Lewis, Ramon W. Johnson, Mark Aguhar, Andrea Elizabeth Shaw, Mary Senyonga, Vanessa Rochelle Lewis, Ifasina Tameicka L. Clear, Denarii Monroe, Taueret Davis, Bianca Laureano, Sonalee Rashatwar, Caleb Luna, Fannie Lou Hamer, Grace Nichols, Big Mama Thorton, Roxanne Gay, Jessamyn Stanley, Gabourey Sidibe, Monique, NAAFA, Marilyn Wann, Cat Pause, YrFatFriend, Kivan Bay, The Fat Underground, and for every fat person existing, taking up space, shrinking for their own safety, creating fat futures, lost in the trauma of lethal beauty standards, actively fighting against the systems of antiblackness, just getting by, or demanding humanity through your audacity to exist... Thank you.

A special thank you to the data futurists before us, to those who created and implemented the 2015 United States Trans Survey which Free Figure used as a large part of our inspiration to create more evidence-based data; and to Janae Williams, who inspired us deeply to create grassroots fat futurity by mining the data we need for change and inclusivity.

FAT CENSUS

WHY WE NEED THE FAT CENSUS

REASONING & METHODOLOGY

This report was commissioned to examine the intersections of identity and experience amongst fat-identified people. This report provides an analysis and evaluation of the current state of fat folks in the context of interlocking systems of antiblack oppression.

Antiblackness, or antiblack oppression, is an intentional term we use to imply all systems violence we're fighting against including: racism, white supremacist patriarchy, rape culture, heterosexism, transphobia, fatphobia/fatmisia, ableism, colorism, and gender violence.

Most data that is collected or curated around fatness is specifically created to demonize fat bodies, medicalize our bodies (re: define us as obese, overweight, or other) and/or find ways to shrink our bodies. Over 6,000 fat folks participated in the 2017 Fat Census. This is the largest survey of fat folks that is designed around our experiences and identities, for the purpose of creating more resources and protection for our bodies.

We used a simple survey data structure, in which we created a single-round survey with no reference to other data. The analysis conducted has limitations. Some of the limitations include: language barriers, lack of access to the census via digital means, and lack of funding.

CONCLUSIONS

WE DEMAND SOCIETY & INSTITUTIONS OF POWER ADDRESS THE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST FAT PEOPLE.

Overall, our executive summary provides evidence of the violence and ongoing terror fat people face on a day-to-day basis. The findings illustrate the reality that fat people are overwhelmingly harassed, targeted, barred from a quality life, lack access to healthcare, impoverished, and are constantly discriminated against within our homes and public life.

Given this evidence, institutions of power and non-fat individuals within society should address these disparities and ensure that fat folks, especially those who are the most marginalized, are able to live and thrive. This report lays out the clear reality that fat people deserve so much more, and that the active killing of our mental and physical well being is intentional violence.

The rates of constant mental, physical, and sexual harassment, poverty, denial of disability support, unemployment, denial of gender affirming resources, and lack of access or affirmation healthcare must serve as an immediate call to action to create a necessary cultural shift within our society. This call to action requires the active, tangible, and financial investment within fat liberation work, specifically centering Black folks, people of color, superfat, queer and trans folks, and disabled folks. Fat people should be able to live without fear and inherently have the affirming resources they need to survive and thrive.

CITATION, BREAKOUT REPORTS, & THE FUTURE

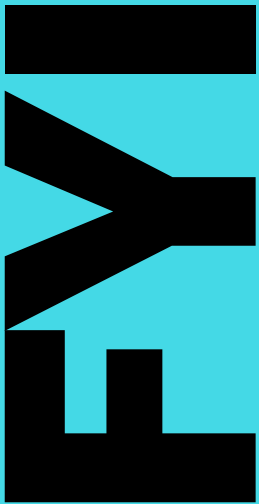
MORE INFORMATION FOR
THE FAT CENSUS.

- ★ **Suggested citation for all data and information within this report:**

Shackelford, Ashleigh (2018). *The Executive Summary of the 2017 Fat Census*. Atlanta, GA: Free Figure Revolution.

- ★ Breakout Reports on specific data sets on Black respondents, People of Color, disabled respondents, SuperFats/ Size 22+ Fats, and LGBTQIA+ respondents will be available later this year.
- ★ In the future, we plan on offering a Fat Census biennial (every two years), so that we can curate more ongoing data that will be less likely to experience the limitations newly founded data normally is. Consistency will help alleviate variable change and create more information and resources for fat communities.

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IMPACT

THE 2017 FAT CENSUS

OVERVIEW OF RESPONDANTS.

WE CREATED THE REVOLUTION WE NEED. WE'RE DEMANDING THE HUMANITY WE DESERVE.

Over 6,000 fat folks participated in the 2017 Fat Census. This is the largest survey of fat folks that is designed around our experiences and identities.

AS OF JANUARY 2018:

6,320

RESPONDENTS

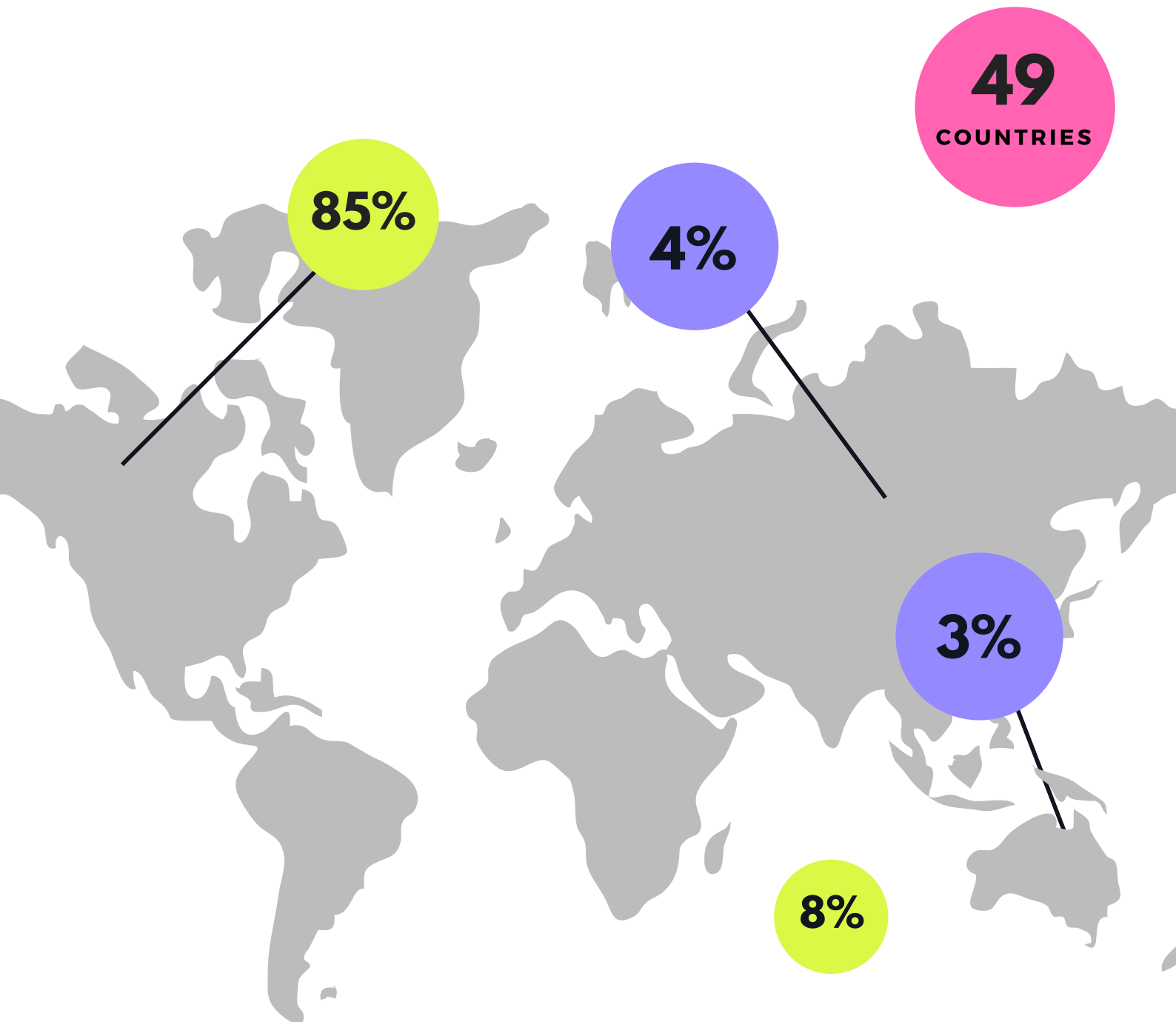
This section will break down the demographic information of those who participated within the 2017 Fat Census by category. The categories include:

- I. Country
- II. Race
- III. Gender
- IV. Sexuality
- V. Disability
- VI. Age
- VII. Size



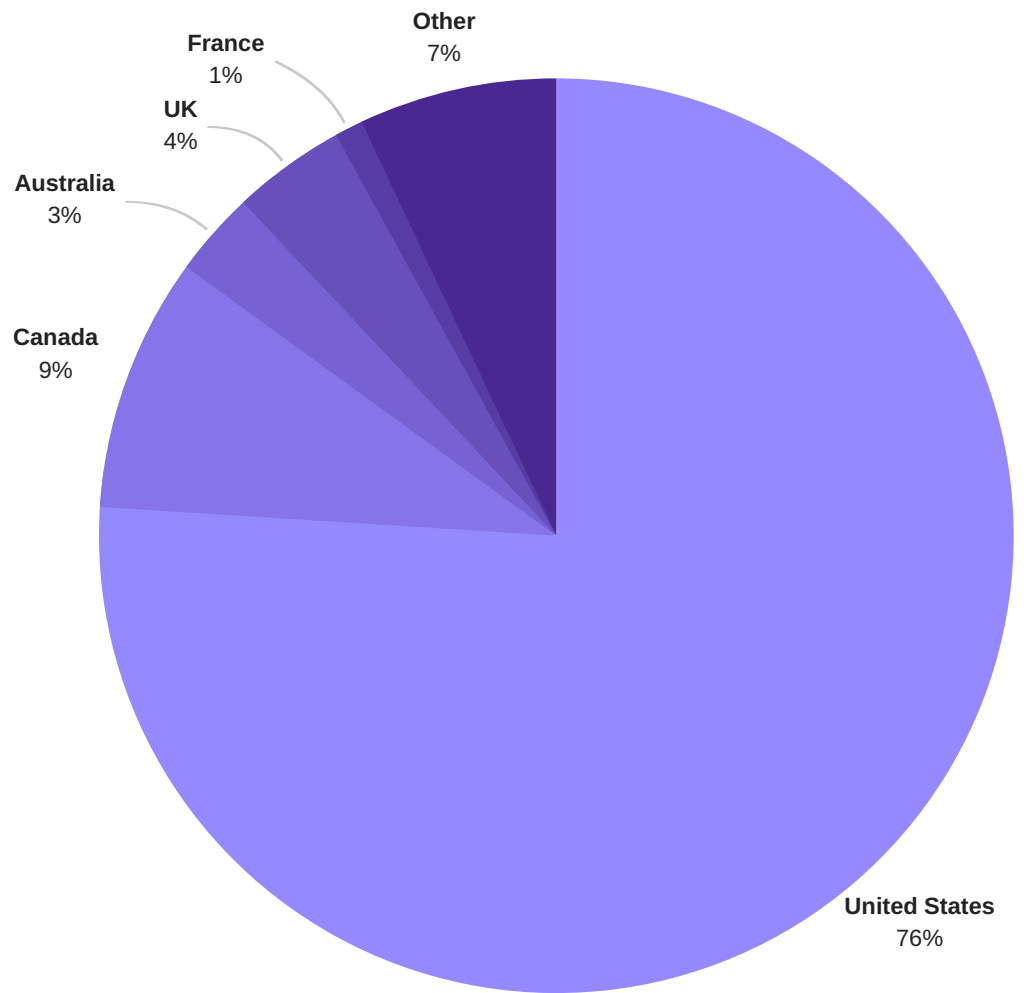
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GLOBAL REVIEW



With over 6,000 respondents to the Fat Census, we reached 49 countries and 5 continents. **Eighty-five percent (85%)** of the respondents were located in North America. **Four percent (4%)** of respondents were located in the UK. **Three percent (3%)** were located in Australia. And **eight percent (8%)** of respondents were groups within an 'Other' category denoting the various different countries and continents all over the world.

COUNTRIES

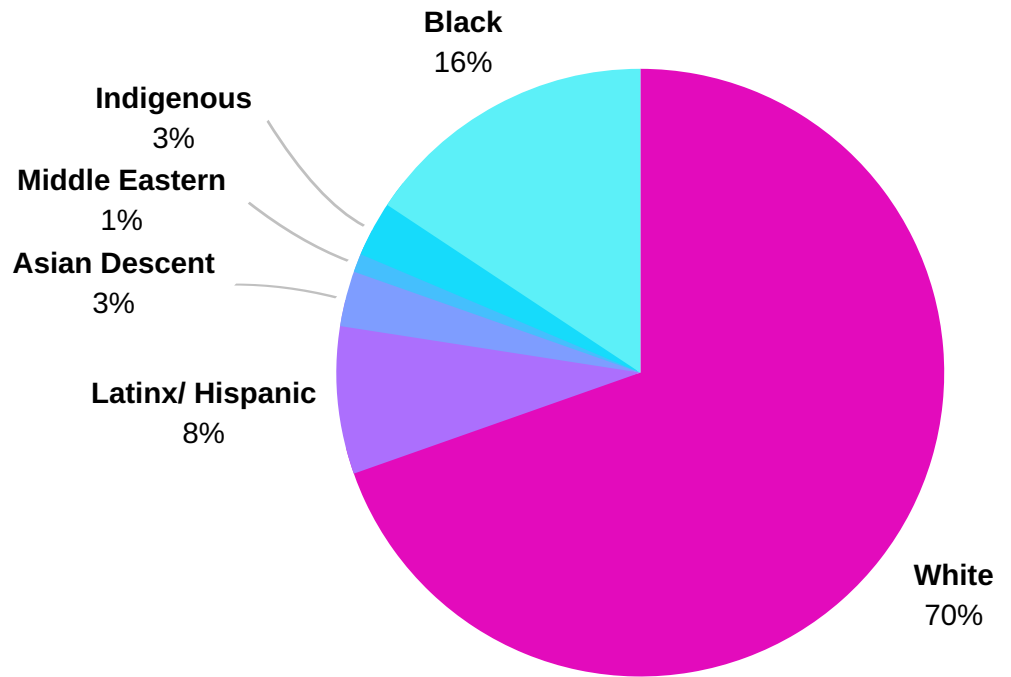


FORTY-NINE COUNTRIES

- United States
- Canada
- Australia
- United Kingdom
- France
- England
- Germany
- New Zealand
- Ireland
- Sweden
- Brazil
- The Netherlands
- Denmark
- Finland
- Scotland
- Lithuania
- Trinidad & Tobago
- Norway
- Argentina
- Portugal
- Switzerland
- Belgium
- Mexico
- South Africa
- Iceland
- Italy
- Japan
- Spain
- Austria
- Chile
- China
- Colombia
- South Korea
- Singapore
- Great Britain
- Greece
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- Romania
- San Diego
- Thailand
- Costa Rica
- Czech Republic
- El Salvador
- Hong Kong
- India
- Indonesia
- Kenya
- Latvia

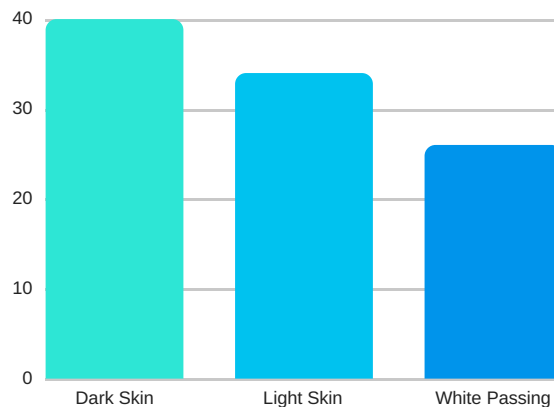
RACE

RESPONDENTS BY RACE



The racial breakdown of the respondents indicates that **seventy percent (70%)** were white, **sixteen percent (16%)** were Black, **eight percent (8%)** were Latinx/ Hispanic, **three percent (3%)** were Indigenous, **three percent (3%)** were of Asian Descent, and **one percent (1%)** were Middle Eastern. **Ten percent (10%)** identified as multiracial - which means they marked more than one racial identity.

Of the people of color, **forty percent (40%)** were dark/ brown skin, **thirty-four percent (34%)** were light skin, and **twenty-six percent (26%)** were white-passing.

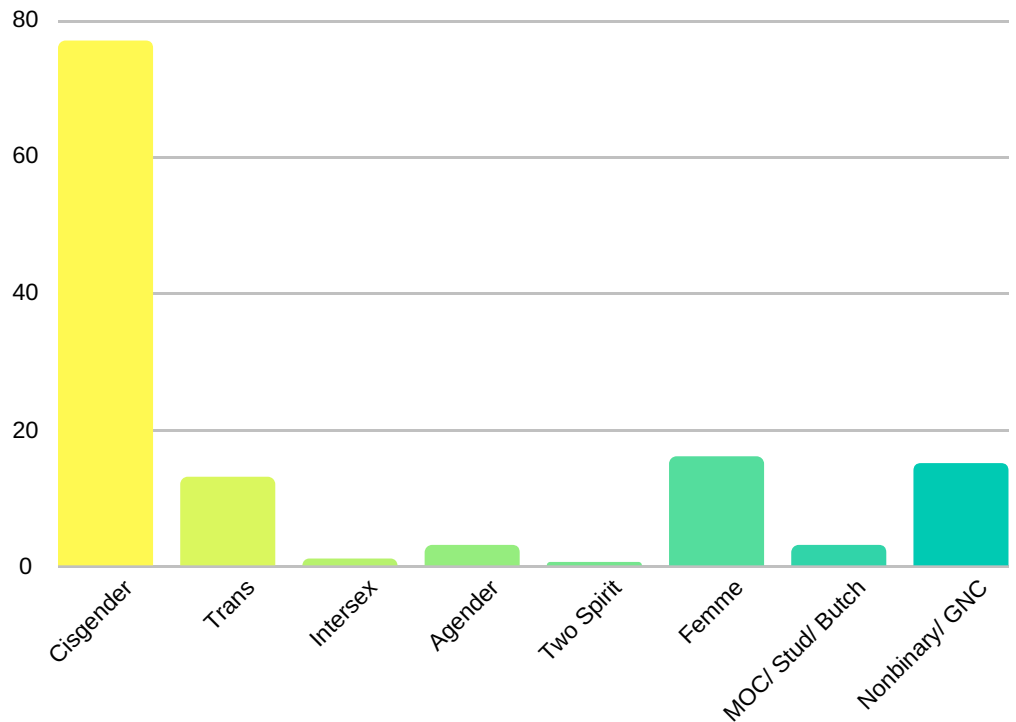


PEOPLE OF COLOR BY SKINTONE



FREEFIGURE GENDER

RESPONDENTS BY GENDER

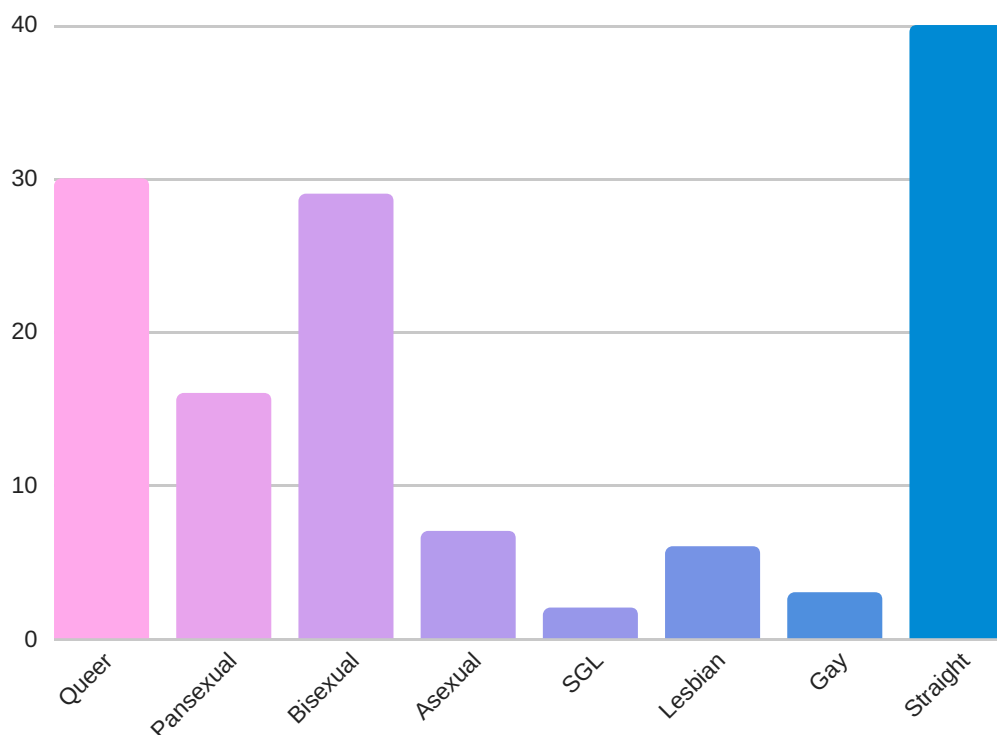


The demographic of the respondents based on gender indicates that **seventy-seven (77%)** identify as cisgender, **sixteen percent (16%)** identify as femme, **fifteen percent (15%)** identify as nonbinary/ gender nonconforming, **thirteen percent (13%)** identify as transgender or of the trans spectrum, **three percent (3%)** identify as masculine of center, **three percent (3%)** identify as agender, **one percent (1%)** identify as intersex, and **one-half percent (.5%)** identify as two-spirit.

The analysis of the gender data does not add up to a clear total number due to the fact that there are as many genders as there are people, therefore multiple gender identities can exist in one single person. The data percentages provided were calculated based on any one person choosing that identity. For instance, a person who identifies as a 'gender nonconforming femme' would be including in the total percentage of both the Gender Nonconforming data percentage and the Femme data percentage. Additionally, we combined the data within the 'Trans' category to include *GenderQueer, Demi-Gender, Bi-Gender, and Gender Expansive identities*. We also combined the data for 'Masculine of Center' folks to include *AG/ Stud and Butch identities*.

SEXUALITY

RESPONDENTS BY SEXUALITY



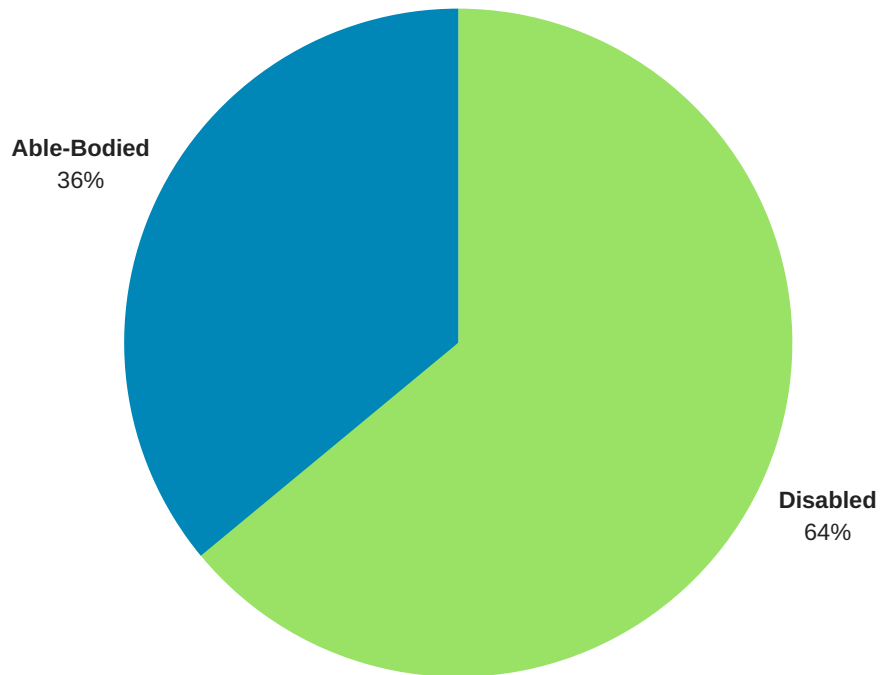
The demographic of the respondents based on sexuality indicates that **forty percent (40%)** identify as straight, **thirty percent (30%)** identify as queer, **twenty-nine percent (29%)** identify as bisexual, **sixteen percent (16%)** identify as pansexual, **seven percent (7%)** identify as asexual, **six percent (6%)** identify as lesbian, **three percent (3%)** identify as gay, and **two percent (2%)** identify as same-gender loving.

The analysis of the sexuality data does not add up to a clear total number due to the fact that there are as many sexualities/sexuality identities as there are people, therefore multiple sexual identities can exist in one single person. The data percentages provided were calculated based on any one person choosing that identity. For instance, a person who identifies as an 'asexual queer person' would be including in the total percentage of both the Asexual data percentage and the Queer data percentage.

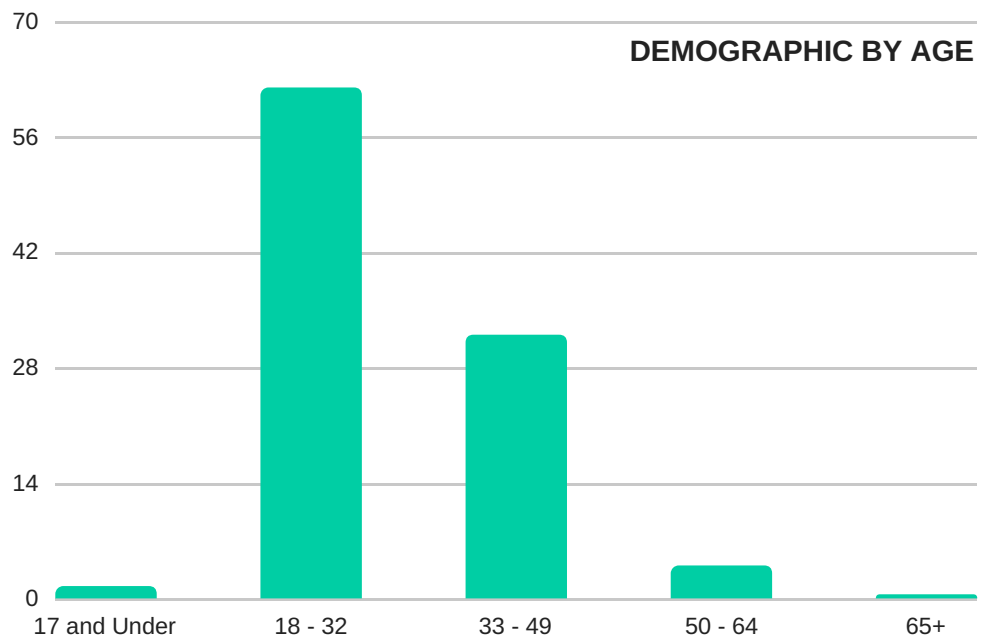
In total, those who identified within the LGBTQIA+ Queer spectrum totaled to **sixty percent (60%)**, while **forty percent (40%)** identified as straight.

AGE | ABILITY

RESPONDENTS BY AGE & ABILITY

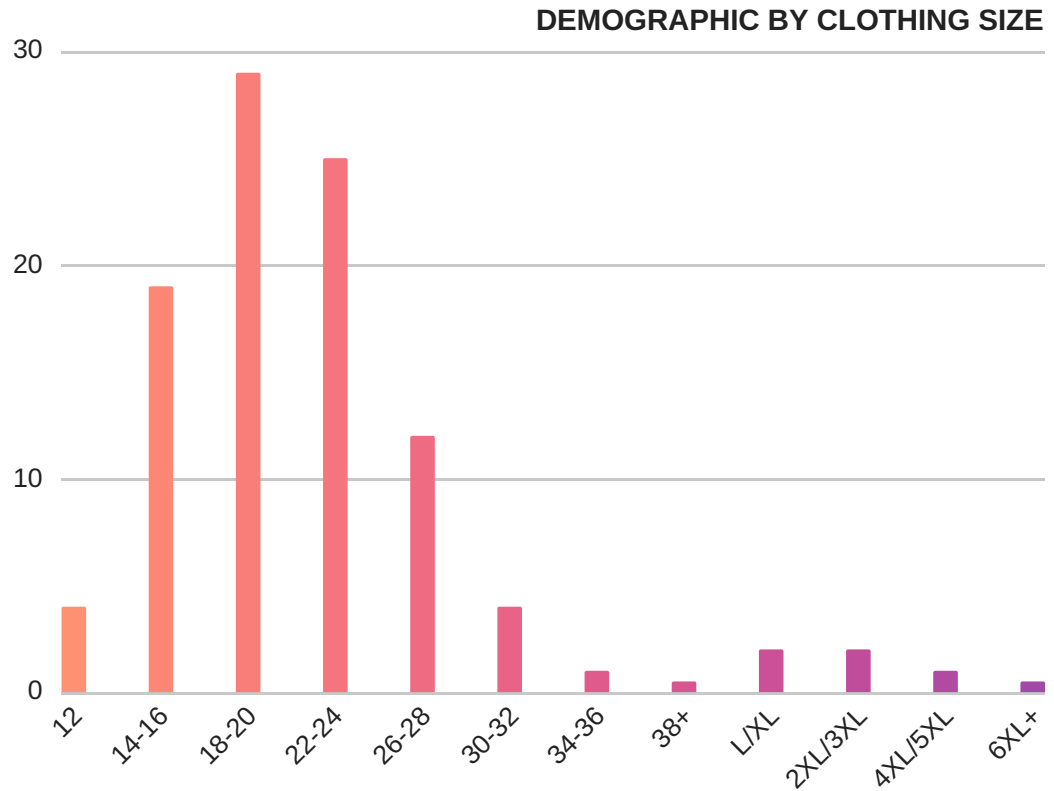


The demographic of the respondents based on disability indicates that **sixty-four percent (64%)** identify as disabled or have a disability, while **thirty-six percent (36%)** identify as able-bodied. The demographic of respondents based on age indicates that a majority of participants - **sixty-seven percent (67%)** were between 18-32 years old, while **thirty-two percent (32%)** were between 33-49 years old, **four percent (4%)** were between 50-64 years old, **one-and-a-half percent (1.5%)** were under 17, and **one-half percent (.5%)** were 65 and older.



WE KNOW SIZES

RESPONDENTS BY SIZE



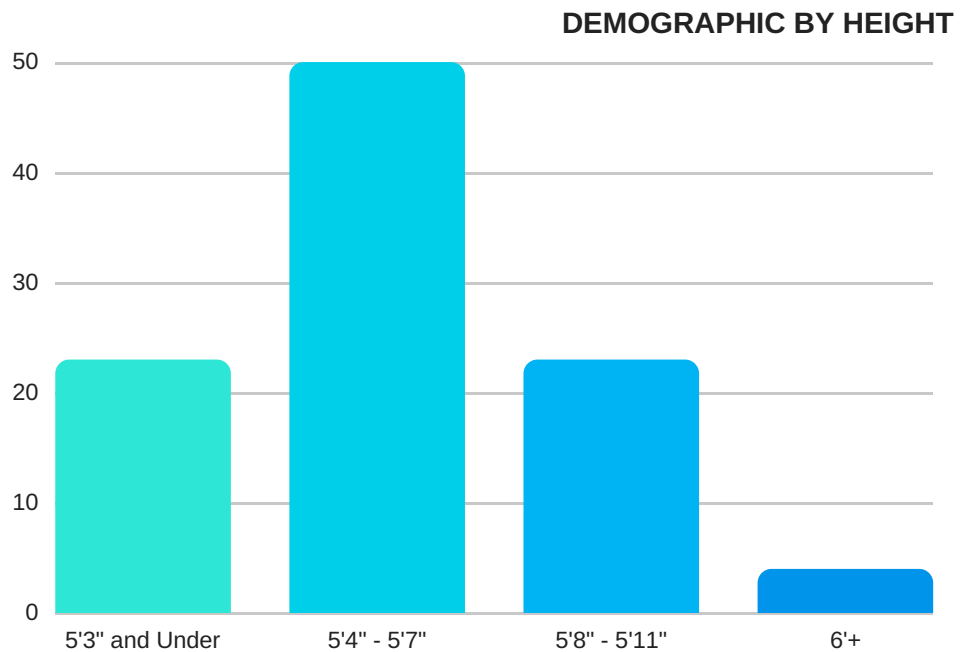
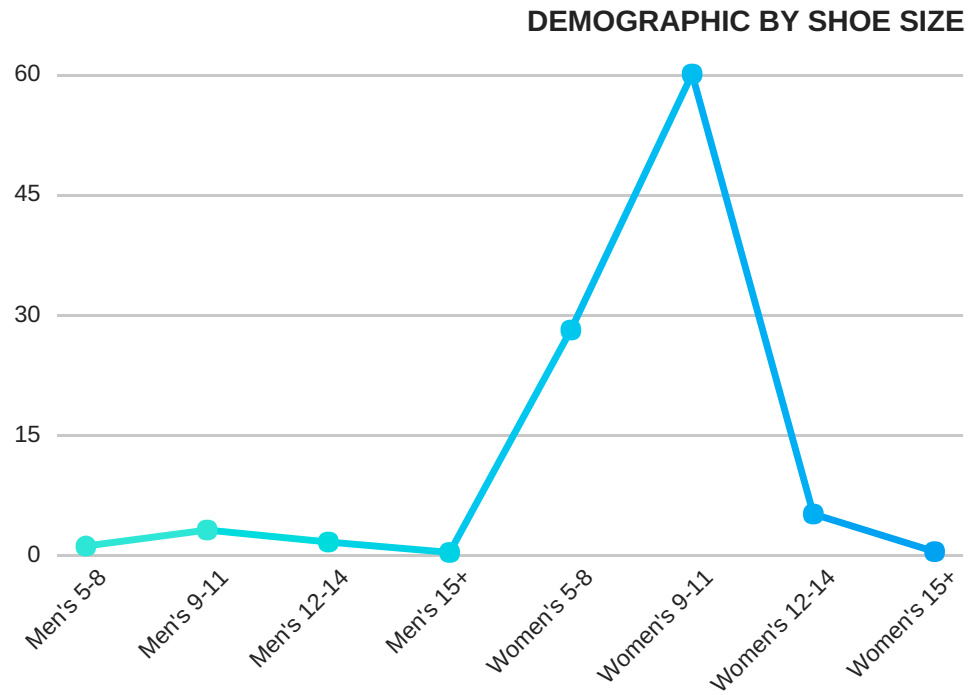
The demographic of the respondents based on clothing size indicates that **twenty-nine percent (29%)** were sizes 18-20, while **twenty-five percent (25%)** were sizes 22-24, **nineteen percent (19%)** were sizes 14-16, **twelve percent (12%)** were sizes 26-28, **four percent (4%)** were sizes 30-32, **four percent (4%)** were size 12, **two percent (2%)** were size L/XL, **two percent (2%)** were size 2XL/3XL, **one percent (1%)** were sizes 34-36, **one percent (1%)** were size 4XL/5XL, **one-half percent (.5%)** were size 38 or better, **one-half percent (.5%)** were size 6XL and up.

The demographic of the respondents based on shoe size indicates that **sixty percent (60%)** were US Women's sizes 9-11, **twenty-eight percent (28%)** were US Women's sizes 5-8, **five percent (5%)** were US Women's sizes 12-14, **three percent (3%)** were US Men's sizes 9-11, **two percent (2%)** were US Men's sizes 12-14, **one percent (1%)** were US Women's size 15+, and **one percent (1%)** were US Men's size 15+.

All size data are coded in United States sizes.

WE KNOW YOUR SHOE SIZE

RESPONDENTS BY SIZE



The demographic of the respondents based on height indicates that **fifty percent (50%)** are 5'4"-5'7", while **twenty-three percent (23%)** are 5'3"-and under, **twenty-three percent (23%)** are 5'8"-5'11", and **four percent (4%)** are 6' and up.

HEALTHCARE & MEDICAL DISCRIMINATION

61%

of fat folks had at least one negative experience with a healthcare provider in the last year.

- **Sixty-one percent (61%)** of respondents have had at least one negative experience with a healthcare provider in the last year.
- **Sixty-four percent (64%)** of respondents have been misdiagnosed by a healthcare provider due to weight-based healthcare.
- **Sixty-three percent (63%)** of respondents reported having someone close to them ignore their symptoms due to believing their fatness was the source of their condition/ sickness.
- **Seventy-eight percent (78%)** of respondents have avoided going to the doctor due to fear of being mistreated as a fat person.
- **Eight percent (8%)** of respondents have avoided going to the doctor due to fear of antiblackness and/or racism.
- **Thirty-six percent (36%)** of respondents have avoided going to the doctor due to inability to afford care.
- **Twelve percent (12%)** of respondents reported that gender markers have prevented them from completing their patient care information correctly.

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HEALTHCARE & MEDICAL DISCRIMINATION

- **Fifteen percent (15%)** of respondents reported that gender affirming resources were harder to find as a fat person.
- **Twenty-four percent (24%)** of respondents reported being denied or having to do extraneous labor to receive hormone therapy due to their size.
- **Twenty-six percent (26%)** of respondents reported that fatphobia prevented their ability to receive gender affirming surgery.
- **Six percent (6%)** of respondents reported that they use a mobility accessory.
- **Forty-nine percent (49%)** of respondents reported difficulty to find mobility accessories due to their size regardless of ability.
- **Thirty-six percent (36%)** of respondents reported being denied disability support due to their disability not being visible.

26%

of fat folks reported being denied gender affirming surgery due to their size.

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MENTAL DISTRESS & WELL BEING

- **Seventy-nine percent (79%)** of respondents have contemplated suicide and/or have dealt with suicidal ideation in their lifetime. While twenty-one percent (21%) have not.
- **Fifty percent (50%)** of respondents have contemplated suicide/ dealt with suicide ideation in the last year.
- **Thirty percent (30%)** of respondents have attempted suicide in their lifetime.
- **Six percent (6%)** of respondents have attempted suicide in the last year.
- **Seventy-two percent (72%)** of respondents reported not having access to physical fat-positive spaces.

79%

of fat folks have contemplated suicide, or dealt with suicide ideation in their lifetime.

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SPATIAL DISCRIMINATION & INACCESSIBILITY

62%

of fat folks experienced
being unable to fit in a
facility or the seating of the
facility.

- **Sixty-two percent (62%)** respondents reported being unable to fit in a facility.
 - **Amusement Parks:** 60%
 - **Restaurants:** 54%
 - **Schools:** 47%
 - **Airplanes:** 46%
 - **Bathroom Stalls:** 41%
 - **Public/ Private Transportation:** 36%
 - **Work:** 17%
 - **Other:** 14%
 - **Housing:** 5%

- **Fifty-one percent (51%)** of respondents that said they experienced being unable to fit in a facility said it happens frequently.
- **Twenty-six percent (26%)** respondents reported they verify the space of a venue prior to going.
- **Forty-five percent (45%)** respondents reported inaccessibility of space for their body size and comfort hindering their ability to learn or pay attention.
- **Twenty-eight percent (28%)** of respondents reported that spacial discrimination affected their ability to do their job, be present, and/or be comfortable.

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SPATIAL DISCRIMINATION & INACCESSIBILITY

- **Twenty-two percent (22%)** of respondents reported being discriminated against on a plane in their lifetime.
- **Nine percent (9%)** of respondents reported being discriminated against on a plane in the last year.
- **Twenty-eight percent (28%)** of respondents who experienced discrimination on planes reported other passengers made commentary on their size.
- **Seven percent (7%)** of respondents who experienced on-plane discrimination reported being reseated and/or deboarded.
- **Four percent (4%)** of respondents who experienced on-plane discrimination reported being forced to buy an additional seat.
- **Thirty-six percent (36%)** of respondents who identified as disabled reported being denied resources due to their size.

22%

of fat folks reported being discriminated against on a plane in their lifetime.



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BEAUTY & FASHION

- **Sixty-nine percent (69%)** of respondents reported not being able to find clothes in their size easily.
- **Forty-one percent (41%)** of respondents reported that they do not live within 5 miles of a store that carries their size.
- **Seventy percent (70%)** of respondents reported shopping online more than in-person due to limited sizing.
- **Sixty-seven percent (67%)** of respondents reported that if and when they are able to find clothes in their size, they are not affordable based on their income.
- **Twenty-nine percent (29%)** of respondents reported shopping online more than in-person due to accessibility.
- **Twenty percent (20%)** of respondents reported shopping online more than in-person due to harassment.
- **Thirty-five percent (35%)** of respondents reported not being able to find shoes in their size easily.



69%

of fat folks are
unable to find clothes
in their size.



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BEAUTY & FASHION

- **Thirty-eight percent (38%)** of respondents reported that if and when they find shoes in their size, they are not affordable based on their income.
- **Twenty-four percent (24%)** of respondents reported that they do not live within 5 miles of a store that carries their shoe size.
- **Twenty-five percent (25%)** of respondents reported not finding clothing/ items marked as 'Nude' that matches their skintone.
- **Twenty percent (20%)** of respondents who said their wear or enjoy makeup, cannot find their shade range in foundation/ concealer easily.
- **Twenty-seven percent (27%)** of respondents said if and when they can find their shade range, they cannot afford those products.
- **Sixteen percent (16%)** of respondents said they do not find products for their hair type easily.
- **Twenty-four percent (24%)** of respondents said if and when they find products for their hair-type, they cannot afford those products.



27%

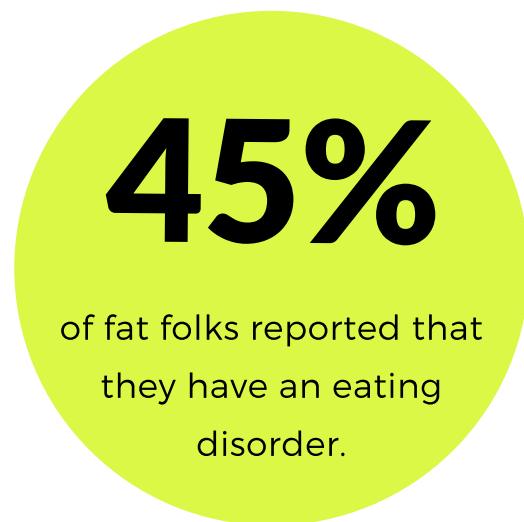
of fat folks cannot afford makeup in their shade range.



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EATING DISORDERS & DIET CULTURE

- **Forty-five percent (45%)** of respondents reported that they have an eating disorder. **Twelve percent (12%)** were professionally diagnosed, while **thirty-three percent (33%)** were self-diagnosed.
- **Ninety-five percent (95%)** of respondents reported they have dieted for the purpose of losing weight in their lifetime.
- **Fifty-six percent (56%)** of respondents reported that they have dieted for the purpose of losing weight in the last year.
- **Forty-four percent (44%)** of respondents reported they've been fat their entire life.
- When asked how often do you have negative thoughts, respondents reported:
 - **Constantly:** 30%
 - **Frequently:** 44%
 - **Never:** 1%
 - **Sometimes:** 26%
- When asked how often do you have positive thoughts, respondents reported:
 - **Constantly:** 4%
 - **Frequently:** 22%
 - **Never:** 15%
 - **Sometimes:** 59%



EATING DISORDERS & DIET CULTURE

- **Twenty-four percent (24%)** of respondents have been misgendered due to their size.
- **Sixty-three percent (63%)** of respondents reported they have avoided eating in public due to fear of harassment.
- When asked if you value your body, respondents reported:
 - **It fluctuates.:** 42%
 - **No:** 15%
 - **Yes:** 43%
- When asked if you love your body, respondents reported:
 - **It fluctuates.:** 61%
 - **No:** 22%
 - **Yes:** 17%
- Those who reported that they have not been fat their entire life indicated they became fat during these ages:
 - **Early Childhood (5-8):** 26%
 - **Late Childhood (9-12):** 25%
 - **Adulthood (20+):** 21%
 - **Puberty (13-15):** 14%
 - **Young Adult (16-19):** 14%

24%

of fat folks have been misgendered due to their size.

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DOMESTIC, GENDER, & TARGETED BODY VIOLENCE

- **Sixty-four percent (64%)** of respondents reported that they have been sexually assaulted before in their lifetime.
- **Seven percent (7%)** of respondents reported they have been sexually assaulted in the last year.
- **Twenty-seven percent (27%)** of respondents reported they have been physically assaulted before in their lifetime.
- **Three percent (3%)** of respondents reported they have been physically assaulted in the last year.
- **Ninety-four percent (94%)** of respondents reported they have been verbally harassed in their lifetime.
- **Fifty-three percent (53%)** of respondents reported they have been verbally harassed in the last year.
- **Thirty-nine percent (39%)** of respondents reported that they've been harassed online.
- **Eight percent (8%)** of respondents reported experiencing extreme forms of online harassment such as being made into a meme, being doxxed, etc.

64%

of fat folks reported they have been sexually assaulted in their lifetime.

DOMESTIC, GENDER, & TARGETED BODY VIOLENCE

- **Thirty-two percent (32%)** of respondents reported they have experienced intimate partner violence (IPV) in their lifetime.
- **Four percent (4%)** of respondents reported they have experienced intimate partner violence (IPV) in the last year.
- **Thirty-seven percent (37%)** of respondents reported they have experienced domestic violence in their lifetime.
- **Five percent (5%)** of respondents reported they have experienced domestic violence in the last year.
- When asked who their abuser was, respondents who've experienced domestic violence reported:
 - **Family Member: 47%**
 - **Friend: 6%**
 - **Roommate: 4%**
 - **Partner: 43%**
- **Seventy-eight percent (78%)** of those who reported experiencing assault, harassment, and/or violence said they told someone.
- **Twenty-six percent (26%)** of respondents reported who told someone said they met with responses denying their assault or victimhood because of their body size.
- **Sixty percent (60%)** of respondents reported that they do not feel comfortable asking for help from the police.
- **Eighty percent (80%)** of respondents reported they do not see themselves reflected in victim resources.

DOMESTIC, GENDER, & TARGETED BODY VIOLENCE

- When asked how often do strangers comment on your body monthly non-consensually, respondents reported:
 - **1-3 times:** 52%
 - **4-7 times:** 10%
 - **8 or more:** 5%
 - **Never:** 33%
- When asked how often do people close to you comment on your body monthly non-consensually, respondents reported:
 - **1-3 times:** 49%
 - **4-7 times:** 14%
 - **8 or more:** 8%
 - **Never:** 29%
- When asked to give an estimate amount of times you have been harassed in the last year, respondents reported:
 - **Constantly (25-36+):** 3%
 - **Frequently (13-24):** 6%
 - **Never:** 21%
 - **Often (5-12):** 20%
 - **Rarely (1-4):** 49%



CLASS & ECONOMIC INJUSTICE

- **Five percent (5%)** of respondents reported they have been incarcerated in their lifetime.
- **Five percent (5%)** of respondents reported they are immigrants in the countries they reside in.
- **One percent (1%)** of respondents who identified themselves as immigrants reported they experienced harassment or threat to their status due to their size.
- **Forty percent (40%)** of respondents reported they have been denied jobs or promotional opportunities due to being fat.
- **Twelve percent (12%)** of respondents engaged in sex work in their lifetime.
- **Seven percent (7%)** of respondents have engaged in sex work in the last year.

40%

of fat folks reported that they have been denied job opportunities due to their size.

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CLASS & ECONOMIC INJUSTICE

- **Five percent (5%)** of respondents reported they experienced housing discrimination in their lifetime.
- **One percent (1%)** of respondents have experienced housing discrimination in the last year.
- **Twenty-three percent (23%)** of US respondents reported they live below the poverty level.
- **Seventeen percent (17%)** respondents reported that they have experienced homelessness in their lifetime.
- **Three percent (3%)** of respondents experienced homelessness in the last year.
- **Seven percent (7%)** of respondents experienced police brutality in their lifetime.
- **Two percent (2%)** of respondents experienced police brutality in the last year.
- **Sixteen percent (16%)** of respondents reported over-policing in their neighborhoods.
- **Ten percent (10%)** of respondents reported living in food deserts.
- **Thirty-five percent (35%)** respondents reported that they use public transportation.



STAFF & TEAM MEMBERS

THE LIT ASS PEOPLE BEHIND THIS ORGANIZATION



**ASHLEIGH
SHACKELFORD**

CREATIVE & PROJECT
DIRECTOR



**RAMON
JOHNSON**

LEAD PROGRAM
ASSISTANT



**SHAVONTAE
PATRICK**

COMMUNICATIONS
ASSISTANT

Our team is dedicated to making sure we are accountable to our community in providing resources, collaborative initiatives, and transparency. ****Support us: FreeFigure.org/Donate****

Ashleigh Shackelford is the Project Officer for The Fat Census, any questions, concerns, or inquiries around The Fat Census or Free Figure Revolution can be directed to freefigurerevolution@gmail.com.

Ramon Johnson is the lead Program Assistant at Free Figure and curates programming and spaces for fat bodies, any concerns around possible collaborations or events, please email Ramon @ freefigurerevolution@gmail.com.

Shavontae Patrick is a communications assistant, any concerns around logistics, current events, or potential interviews/ meetings, please email Shavontae at freefigurerevolution@gmail.com.