

Thesis for the
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Weighted Words: The Podcast for Fed-Up Fat Girls

Artist Statement and Thesis Overview

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About the Creator

Cheyenne Davis is a NYC-based graduate student and Creative looking to make art that is inclusive and heavily POC-influenced. Her main focal point is plus size advocacy through various mediums such as photography, writing/editorial work, social media campaigns, etc. Her thesis work is spawned from a topic that is very close to home.

From an early age, Davis has experienced fatphobia on a personal level. Feeling shame from discrimination coupled with lack of plus size individuals in Media caused her to feel that there weren't many images that she could relate to. Representation matters, and having a lack of representation of a community creates a narrative that is inaccurate and one-sided. To analyze and explore this, Davis will create a thesis project that entails writing a personal essay and creating a photojournalist collection of various plus size womyn from various walks of life with an accompanying podcast.

Cheyenne notes her biggest inspirations as Kehinde Wiley, a black artist that uses intense color palettes and style that puts primary focus on Black individuals in white spaces of art, and Lizzo, a Black, fat artist that she looks up to because of her confidence and advocacy for larger-bodied folks. She will use these two influences to both properly pay homage to larger bodied womyn while making the project fun, informative and aesthetically beautiful.

She wants to use this work to both uplift the participants and showcase their work but to also inform the masses on the challenges that fatphobia present in regards to representation. Davis' main goal is to use her art as a vehicle to drive the conversation in unpacking toxicity and lack of body diversity in Media and beyond.

Project Overview

Title: *Weighted Words*

Logline: Feeling slighted by lack of body diversity in media, plus-size womyn from various walks of life weigh in on topics surrounding representation and misrepresentation of larger-bodied individuals in media.

Tagline: The podcast for fed up fat girls.

Synopsis: *Weighted Words* is a conversational podcast geared to address the sentiments of larger-bodied womyn's perspectives on society and media. From social media influencers, to models, a Pro-Domme and even everyday people, this podcast will take place in a space that makes the guest most comfortable so that they can provide honest responses to questions pertaining to their identity and representation in media.

Structure: The structure of this podcast is five 15-30+ minute episodes per season. The episode would commence with a brief introduction from the host, a recap of the previous episode and then segue into introducing the guest and the topic. This is followed by an in-depth conversation about the topic at hand.

Target Audiences:

- Fat womyn, primarily fat womyn of color ages 18-40.
- Fat Activists Groups

Project Origins

Prior to its current format, *Weighted Words* was initially a documentary under the name of *The Weight of the Industry*. However, as time went on, the project morphed into what it is today- a podcast with occasional accompanying videos. The genesis of *Weighted Words* came from my own personal experience. As a Black woman living in a fat body, I always felt that there was a lack of representation in Media spaces. I never saw bodies that looked like me on screen, nor did I come across many works by fat creatives that were mainstreamed. The times where I have seen larger-bodied individuals, however, the images were mostly misrepresentative of the community. Examples of this are television shows such as *This is Us* and *Shrill* where the only fat femme-presenting bodies are White, and their story arcs stem from a foundation of weight loss, body negativity and the constant cheerleading of Black, supporting characters, who often times had more compelling and complex storylines, yet they were almost always reduced to the background. Although we have made some progress in putting fat bodies on screen, there is still much to be desired and critiqued. This is where *Weighted Words* came in.

I wanted to create a safe media platform for fat womyn, primarily fat womyn of color, to address the issues that plague our community and how they manifest in television, social media, radio, print media and beyond. I curated a list of larger-bodied womyn from a pro-Domme, to a professional marathon runner and everyday womyn to talk about topics such as dating, sex, fitness and how they intersect with their bodies and how others perceive it. I have also selected some supporters (i.e. a curator of an inclusive erotica site and a theatrical actor who is a

supporter and lover of fat womyn) to discuss their involvement in the community and how their work provides an inclusive space for them.

Media Format

The format of *Weighted Words* is a podcast with some accompanying videos. I initially elected for the project to solely be a podcast because I wanted to focus more on the voice of my interviewees and not their looks. I felt that doing a video wouldn't be as empowering because I didn't want viewers to focus only on how my contributors are physically presented and miss the message of my work altogether. However, during production, I realized that a visual component may be empowering because it not only helps to put a name to a face, but it also is empowering to see fat bodies taking space, speaking their truth, and above all else, existing. This being said, season two will be fully filmed and audio recorded so that *Weighted Words* can live on multiple platforms and also be more accessible to viewers and listeners alike.

Equipment & Editing

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, production was supposed to take place in a recording booth/studio setting with access to Pro Tools to do live editing when recording. Being that recording spaces are closed, we have moved to remote work where I have been using Zencast, an affordable website where you can record multi-track audio and download the respective .wav and/or .mp3 files. To record I use a USB condenser microphone with pretty good quality. A computer with a microphone is required to operate zencast, but an external mic is an optional alternative. In terms of videos, I have been using zoom to record and muting it so that I can get

the better sound quality from Zencastr. The final audio files are edited on Pro Tools and then synced with the edited video footage on Adobe Premiere Pro.

In order to complete the production and editing of this project, I have enlisted two fellow classmates to assist in *Weighted Words* related tasks. Ally Harrison is the Co-Producer of the project, and she assists with pre-production brainstorming and making suggestions, listening into the recordings to monitor audio levels and vocal clarity, and post-production promotion of the show. The second individual is Yigit Egyi. As the sound engineer, Yigit assists in monitoring audio levels and vocal clarity during production and also editing, mixing and mastering audio in post-production.

Accomplishments and Challenges

Accomplishments

Although there is only one episode out, *Weighted Words* has been published, it has received so much feedback, praise and commentary. I have received many messages about how the work has touched the lives of many fat femmes, and they look forward to more content being put out. I have also interviewed and worked with many interesting, fellow, fat femmes who genuinely believed in this project and helped shape it into what it has become. The project has also been shared to several social media and streaming platforms for maximum reach and engagement.

Challenges

Weighted Words has faced many challenges, some that could be changed and others that weren't foreseeable and controllable. Being that the pandemic has been unprecedentedly impactful, not being able to record in a studio has presented its own pitfalls. Despite remote work being safer and convenient, it has made it more difficult to edit raw audio. Also, WIFI shortages and technical difficulties have created some challenges as well.

Another aspect that has been difficult to navigate is finding participants for this podcast. I have made a list of individuals ranging from easy and mid-level accessibility to difficult to access. The individuals in the easy/mid category have given the most responses to working with me on my project, whereas those that have greater social media presence and even celebrity status have not been responsive at all. However, I remain hopeful that as the project continues to gain notoriety that I will be able to reach more and more notable people.

Marketing & Social Media Plan

Our marketing & social media objectives for *Weighted Words* podcast are to:

- Create aesthetically pleasing branding that is attractive, relatable and transferable to all forms of promotional platforms and content.
- Establish social media pages and “voice” that will drive user engagement.
- Create “snackable” and shareable content that will encourage influencer collaboration.
- Team with a PR company to maximize public outreach to newspapers, magazines, etc.

Branding

The brand identity of *Weighted Words* looks to have simple and clean yet have bright colors that are eye-catching. These elements make *Weighted Words* both aesthetically attractive and maintain a sophisticated, professional look.

Brand Logos



Fonts

Headings, Abril Fatface, 31.5

Subheadings, Trocchi, 18

Body, Arimo, 12

Color Palette



Target Audiences

The primary audience of my podcast would be womyn ages 18-40. Within this group, the primary focus would be womyn of color within this age range because the constituents of this podcast are mostly womyn of color in this age range. Being that this is the primary audience of *Weighted Words*, creating supplementary content such as user-friendly hashtags, slogans and other shareable content will be crucial for connecting and interacting with this audience. An example of this is the main hashtag created, *#MyWordsHaveWeight*. This will not only only

help to generate profile views but also make it easier to share *Weighted Words*' content but also start conversations surrounding topics discussed in the podcast.

The secondary audience would be collegiate womyn ages 18-30. The ultimate goal is to create a curriculum for Body politics in media by using this podcast as a foundational component for coursework. The *Weighted Words* team finds it important that we reach this population because we find that a lot of collegiate curriculums do not have courses that cover body politics, and there is a need to diversify secondary education as well. Our plan to connect and reach this population is by streaming this podcast to local and university radio stations and also making a social media plan that focuses heavily on using call-to-action posts on platforms such as Twitter and Instagram. Using these platforms specifically will allow us to create "snackable" content that will ensure its consumption by this audience.

Another possibility would be body positive activist groups and organizations as well. One group in particular is the National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance (NAAFA). It's a multi-chapter civil rights organization created to support and advocate for larger-bodied individuals. This organization would not only be useful from an audience standpoint but also from a distribution standpoint being that they are very connected and can possibly assist in promoting the podcast as well. In addition to this, connecting with these groups can also give way to possible participants and interviewees for the podcast. Social media platforms, specifically Instagram and Facebook are great ways to reach out to advocacy groups and organizations.

Social Media Presence & Voice

Weighted Words currently has one social media handle (**@weightedwordspod** on Instagram) with a Facebook group, Twitter account and website in the making. The “voice” of *Weighted Words* is both candid and fun. It’s a voice that is relatable to the target audience that often teeter-totters between being “in your face” and confident. Having this voice is important because it brings to light hard topics and also gives an inspiration and confident outlook on what it means to be larger bodied. In addition to **#MyWordsHaveWeight**, there are other social media campaigns that are offshoots of the *Weighted Words* project which are **#FedUpFatBitch** and **The Weigh In**. “Fed up Fat Bitch” is a campaign geared for fat femmes to give their two-cents on experiences and oppressions that anger them. Despite having a seemingly abrasive title, it is proven to be quite cathartic, receiving some responses from womyn that are indeed “fed up” with being mistreated based on their size. “The Weigh In” is a weekly live stream on Instagram that I host as follow ups to *Weighted Words* episodes or for me to talk about topics that refer to being a fat femme of color. This has proven to be a great way for community members, supporters and ignorant alike to share their perspectives and educate themselves on the plight of larger-bodied womyn. Both of these side projects were created to drive organic growth and user engagement and are advertised with both instagram posts and stories. My overall goal for social media is to continue to post regularly and share content on the **@weightedwordspod** account while simultaneously using the side projects to support it.

@WeighteWordsPod's Instagram Page

weightedwordspod Message

4 posts 92 followers 43 following

Weighted Words Podcast
The award-winning podcast for fed up fat girls.
Created by: Cheyenne Davis (@_mochahontas14) in collaboration w/
@newschoolradio.
linktr.ee/_mochahontas14

Followed by dominique.dawnelle, fi.i.fair, dad.dy.yank.ee + 34 more

POSTS TAGGED

Im so excited for us to be k
bitches and rip fuck boys t

WEIGHTED Words
PODCAST

There is
NOTHING
inherently
NEGATIVE
about a FAT
body

WEIGHTED Words
PODCAST

**COMING
SOON**

SEASON ONE
EPISODE ONE

#MyWordsHaveWeight

Fed Up Fat Bitch



The Weigh In

04/15/2020 @8PM
The Weigh In: Live Weighted Words Q&A with Keyenne & Dr. Cox.

WANT TO BE ON WEIGHTED WORDS?
Message for details!

the Weigh In
A live discussion on fatness and dating with special guest Danni
Tune in on 04/20 @8PM

WEIGHTED WORDS PODCAST

04/24/2020
The Weigh In: Fat Gworl Friday
An Honest Conversation on all things fat
8pm EST

PIC•COLLAGE

Supporting Materials

Links

Podcast: linktr.ee/_mochahontas14

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/weightedwordspod/>

List of Topics

- Fat vs Plus Size and Community Definitions
- Body Positive Movements
- Fat Fitness, Health and Diet Culture (two part episode, first with an athlete. Second with a body positive doctor/ health practitioner)
- Plus Size Modeling
- Professionalism While Being Larger Bodied
- Fat Characters in Creative Works
- Fatness, Sex Work and Kink
- Fatness, Dating and Sex
- Plus Size and Social Media Influencing
- Plus Size Clothing and Representation
- The Black, Female Plus Size Perspective
- Fat Fetishism Vs Fat Positivity
- Disability, Ableism and the Fat Identity
- Fatness and the Queer Identity

- Dance, Music and Fatness
- Fatness and Confidence

Interview Questions from Season One

*Episode #s and titles are expected to change.

Weighted Words: Episode 3: (Title TBD)

Interviewee: Kristyn

Topic: Plus Size Dating Part 2: The Silver Lining and WooPlus

Pre-Interview Questions

Here are questions so that we can get to know you and generate information for a bio to paint a picture of each guest. At your earliest convenience, please provide a written response for these questions. Some of these questions may be asked on the podcast.

1. What's your name?
2. How old are you?
3. What are your pronouns?
4. What is your occupation?
5. What is your involvement in the larger bodied movement?

Interview Questions*

Here is a preview of the interview questions. Questions may be added or deleted due to the course of the conversation. This is mostly to get a feel for the tone of the conversation. Please let me know if there is anything you do not feel comfortable with answering.

1. Let's get into it! What is your go-to way to date? Organically, online or both?
2. Which app(s) have you tried?
3. What are some of your dating experiences both in person and on these apps?
4. Name one of your most memorable experiences.
5. Has dating been harder or easier for you as a plus size woman?
6. What has helped to make this process easier/ harder?
7. Let's switch gears- it's important to note that there are positive experiences with dating as well
What brought you to WooPlus?

8. What is your personal experience with this app?
9. What is your advice to plus sized womyn looking for love?

Penny: Episode 3(Title TBA)

Interviewee: Penny

Topic: WooPlus and Dating for Plus Size womyn

Duration- 15-30+ minutes

Interview Questions*

Here is a preview of the interview questions. Questions may be added or deleted due to the course of the conversation. This is mostly to get a feel for the tone of the conversation. Please let me know if there is anything you do not feel comfortable with answering.

1. Tell us about what WooPlus is.
2. Give us the origin story- how and when was the app developed?
3. What is the mission and/or goals of this app?
4. What are some key features of the app? How does this contribute to making WooPlus more user-friendly?
5. What are the demographics of this app? (i.e. is it more men than womyn?)
6. Being that it is a dating app, what sets WooPlus apart from others such as Tinder, Bumble, OkCupid, etc?
7. How does this app ensure a safe space for plus-sized womyn?

Weighted Words: Episode 5 (Title TBA)

Interviewee: Kris

Topic: Kink and Fatness

Duration: 15-30+ minutes

Pre-Interview Questions

Here are questions so that we can get to know you and generate information for a bio to paint a picture of each guest. At your earliest convenience, please provide a written response for these questions. Some of these questions may be asked on the podcast.

1. What's your name?
2. What are your pronouns?
3. What is your occupation?

Interview Questions

Here are some questions that will be asked during the recording. Please let me know if there are any questions you do not feel comfortable with answering.

1. I briefly mentioned that you are a pro-Domme, could you please elaborate on what that is?
2. Now let's jump into kink- what is kink? How does it tie into your work?
3. You and i can both agree that kink is not only a descriptor but it is also a community. Similarly, fat/larger bodied/ plus-sized are also descriptors and a community as well. How does fatness and kink intersect?
4. We know how being fat is in vanilla, or non-kinky relationships. Do you think kink creates a safer space for fat womyn?
5. Is there fat fetishism in kink?
6. If so, what does that look like?
7. How does your body contribute to your occupation as a pro-Domme?

Episode 5 (Title TBA)

Interviewee: Keith

Topic: Allyship and the Plus Size Community

Duration- 15-30+ minutes

Interview Questions

Here is a preview of the interview questions. Questions may be added or deleted due to the course of the conversation.

1. What does the term plus size mean to you? Do you feel it's representative of a community?
2. What are some of your beliefs surrounding the treatment or mistreatment of this community? Where do these beliefs come from?
3. Based on your love and support of larger bodied womyn, when and where did you realize that you were a supporter?
4. What does your allyship mean to you? How does it differ from support?
5. Are there any challenges that you face in being a body-positive supporter?
6. As a male supporter, how can you teach others to put aside their privilege when supporting large-bodied individuals and womyn in particular?
7. Are there ways that the body-positive population and movement can support you?
8. As an actor, collaboration is inevitable and is equally challenging and rewarding. How would you liken your support to your craft?
9. Let's talk about you- how did you come across WooPlus?
10. Besides *Hamilton*, what are some prospects/ventures that you are currently working on?

Weighted Words: Episode 4 (Title TBA)

Interviewee: Carly

Topic: Erotica and Fatness

Duration: 15-30+ minutes

Pre-Interview Questions

Here are questions so that we can get to know you and generate information for a bio to paint a picture of each guest. At your earliest convenience, please provide a written response for these questions. Some of these questions may be asked on the podcast.

1. What's your name?
2. What are your pronouns?
3. What is your position at Aurore?

Interview Questions

Here are some questions that will be asked during the recording. Please let me know if there are any questions you do not feel comfortable with answering.

1. What is Aurore?
2. Walk us through the site. What are some key features?
3. What type of content is curated on the site? What sets you apart from other erotica sites such as Literotica?
4. Let's talk about erotica. What are some common trends in erotica that you find to be problematic and why?
5. What about fat bodies in erotica? How do you find them to be portrayed?
6. Is fatphobia an issue you look to address in your content curation?
7. How do you make the site inclusive?
8. What are some body positive content and events that Aurore has hosted/created or plans to host/create?

Weighted Words: Pilot (Title TBA)

Interviewee: Dr. Joy Cox
Topic: Nomenclature and Its Appropriateness in the Larger Body Community

Pre-Interview Questions

Here are questions so that we can get to know you and generate information for a bio to paint a picture of each guest. At your earliest convenience, please provide a written response for these questions. Some of these questions may be asked on the podcast.

1. What's your name?
2. How old are you?
3. What are your pronouns?
4. What is your occupation?
5. What is your involvement in the larger bodied movement?

Interview Questions*

Here are some questions that will be asked during the recording. Please let me know if there are any questions you do not feel comfortable with answering.

1. Let's talk about the community. What are some words that are synonymous with being larger bodied?
2. I've found some definitions of common terms that we use:

Plus size- denoting or relating to clothes of a size larger than those found in standard ranges

Full-figured- : having a rounded body shape : not thin

Fat- (of a person or animal) having a large amount of excess flesh.

From a scholarly standpoint, what are your definitions of these words?

3. Having heard both definitions, how do you personally feel about these terms?
4. Let's discuss the word fat. What type of connotation does this word carry?
5. Is there a reclamation of this word?
6. Are there any words that you feel are acceptable/ unacceptable?
7. How do these words hold weight in our representation?

***These are a baseline for questions, but others may or may not be asked.**

Weighted Words Episode 2 (Title TBD)
Topic: Fatness and Dating (COVID-19 Edition)

Duration: 15-30+ mins

Participants: Danni Adams, Maya Brown, Fajer Hussein, Mariah Morrison, Soffiyya Rashid, Janisha Rodriguez

Pre-Interview Questions (Please Fill out and Send to me by EOD 04/22/2020)

These answers will be used for your introduction and for blurbs on the Weighted Words website and on the @weightedwordspod page.

- First and Last name
- Pronunciation of your full name
- Pronouns
- Occupation
- Fun fact

Interview Questions*

Here are some questions that will be asked during the recording. Please let me know if there are any questions you do not feel comfortable with answering. **Keep in mind, that the tone of this interview is a conversational, open and honest round table. Please do NOT feel shy or that your words will fall on deaf ears. We are all here to listen to one another.**

1. What is your definition of dating?
2. Dating apps or organic dating?
3. What type of dating apps are you on (*i.e. Is it an “inclusive” app such as Tinder, Bumble OkCupid, etc. Or is it a group-specific app based on race, size, etc.)?
4. Has dating been harder or easier for you as a plus size woman?
5. Name a memorable dating experience.
6. How is fat dating portrayed in media?
7. Do you think our bodies will still have an influence on dating during COVID-19?
8. Have you participated in any quarantine-related dating practices (i.e. teleconferencing dates, phone calls, etc.)?

***These are a baseline for questions, but others may or may not be asked.**

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I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to all the individuals who contributed to the creation and publication of my thesis project. Some of these individuals include:

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My teammates Allison Harrison and Yigit Egyi for helping me get this podcast off the ground during a pandemic. They have both put in a lot of love, time and their tremendous skills to make *Weighted Words* the best that it can be.

New School Radio for giving *Weighted Words* a secondary platform to connect my work with The New School's student body.

WooPlus, the dating app for larger-bodied singles and their supporters, for their collaboration in an episode of the project.

My interviewees Dr. Joy Cox, Kris, Danni, Janisha, Mariah, Maya, Fajer, Soffiyya, Keith, Carly, Penny, and Kristyn for their contributions to *Weighted Words*. This is a monumental project that could not have been done without your honesty and commitment.

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This has really helped the project in building its platform.

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