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## Chapter 8

# Sofie's World: Resistance toward the Thin Ideal in Sofie Hagen's Fat Activist Online Content

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### Introduction

One of the core elements of the Western beauty ideal is the thinness norm. The normative body – a body that is not fat – is associated with normality and desirability (Brewis, 2017, p. 5), whereas the norm-breaking fat body presents its polar opposite. In this way, norms regulate, to a large extent (although specific contexts, or fields, always do have a role to play), which bodies possess aesthetic capital, itself exchangeable for other forms of capital. In today's day and age, a thin body equals aesthetic capital and thus potential for upward mobility or socioeconomic advantage, while a fat body equals the opposite – the reversal of existing opportunities (Brewis, 2017, p. 6; Puhl & Brownell, 2001). Therefore, aesthetic capital is a useful way to conceptualize the power that norms hold.

Fat activism, with its 50+ years of history, has risen as a response to discrimination against fat people. With the advent of the World Wide Web and, more recently, social media, this movement for social justice, 'always growing and refining itself' (Cooper, 2008), has spread throughout the Internet environment. In response, I explore stand-up comedian Sofie Hagen's fat activist online content in this chapter. I am interested in how social media activism can be used as an avenue, first, to deconstruct norms related to physical appearance and, second, to show appreciation and recognition for bodies that do not confirm to those norms. I ask: In which ways does Sofie Hagen challenge appearance-based norms via her online fat activism?

Three distinct themes arise out of Hagen's public timeline photo captions on her Facebook business page, which I analyse qualitatively with the help of dialogic thematic analysis (Koski, 2020): offensive resistance, doing fatness wrong

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Appearance as Capital, 135–148



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and ambivalence. Further, an additional motif, encompassing the other themes, presents itself – namely, non-communication, or Hagen’s perceived reluctance to engage in dialogue on social media. I argue that, taken together, these four elements institute a strategy through which Hagen is able to break the prevailing physical appearance norm that thinner is always better.<sup>1</sup>

My impression is that Sofie Hagen’s intended audience is comprised mainly of two separate groups: those already sympathetic to the fat activist cause and those critical of it. These groups do not necessarily follow any particular demographics, although the majority of body positivity advocates, for instance, tend to be young (and white) cis females. That women in particular would be drawn to these thematics is corroborated by research showing that gender plays a central role in how body size is experienced and interpreted: Expectations vis-à-vis embodiment differ among genders, as do their consequences, which tend to be more negative for women than for men (Gailey, 2014; Harjunen, 2009).

This chapter is structured as follows. I first discuss the theoretical underpinnings of the study and then introduce the text’s central concepts and some methodological considerations. Next, I lay out an analysis of the study’s data before presenting the conclusions and suggestions for further research.

### **Theoretical Underpinnings: Appearance Norms, Fat Stigma, Fatphobia and the Good Fatty**

To understand weight discrimination and fatphobia, it is imperative to be cognisant of the prevailing appearance-related norms that give rise to these phenomena. In this study, the focus is on norms related to size and weight of the body in particular. The overall parameters of what constitutes a ‘normal’ or acceptable body are narrow indeed: one must not be too thin, muscular, short or tall. The most prevailing appearance norm in the Western world today, however, dictates that the body – especially the female one (e.g. Harjunen, 2020) – must, first and foremost, not be fat.

This norm is upheld by many core societal institutions, such as school, science (particularly medicine) and the media (Harjunen, 2009). It is maintained and perpetuated through diverse practices and discourses; one example of such a norm-sustaining discourse is that of the obesity epidemic (Harjunen, 2020). Here, fat people are seen to pose a threat to the advancement of the society, including the economy and even the environment. With these types of discourses circulating widely, it is not surprising that fatness is a heavily stigmatised trait, labelling fat people with such qualities as lazy, dirty and even immoral (Brewis, 2017, p. 2; Jutel, 2005; Pausé, 2017).

Fat stigma, in turn, leads to weight discrimination and fatphobia (e.g. Farrell, 2011). I interpret weight discrimination and fatphobia as sanctions for breaking social norms; they can be seen as penalties for exceeding the body weight or size generally deemed ‘normal’ and acceptable. As a term, ‘weight discrimination’ includes all those who are marginalised because, for one reason or another, they do not fit in the ‘normal’ category – in addition to fat bodies, ‘underweight’ bodies

may face weight discrimination. 'Fatphobia', for its part, denotes the widespread fat-hating and fat-fearing culture as well as its concrete ramifications, to which fat people are subjected every day (Harjunen & Kyrölä, 2007, pp. 305–307).

The consequences of fatphobia include negative attitudes, mistreatment, lack of services and outright discrimination (Harjunen, 2020). Studies show that fatness is socially sanctioned in many life areas of central importance, such as education (Weinstock & Krehbiel, 2009), working life (Härkönen & Räsänen, 2008; Kauppinen & Anttila, 2005) and healthcare (Puhl & Heuer, 2011; Sabin et al., 2012). In addition, weight discrimination has adverse consequences for fat people's physical and mental health, along with an increased mortality risk (Schvey et al., 2014; Sutin et al., 2015).

One attempt to manage fat stigma is to become a so-called good fatty, or 'the fatty that people will tolerate' (Stryker, 2016; see also: Chastain, 2014). A good fatty actively aspires to become not fat or at least subscribes to the idea that thinner is better (Bias, 2014). Deliberately trying to distance oneself from a fat identity and framing fatness as unwanted can be called 'doing fatness right'; such actions might include losing weight on purpose and/or weight loss talk (Harjunen et al., 2007, p. 288) as well as displaying healthy eating and daily exercise (Southard Ospina, 2017).

Adopting a good fatty's behaviours and ways of speaking might alleviate the stigma for the individual engaging in these practices, but it does not question the underlying fatphobic culture (Chastain, 2016). Instead of managing fat stigma, fat activism's *raison d'être* is to challenge it and, ultimately, break appearance-based norms. To remind the reader of the confrontational nature of (Hagen's) fat activism, I call it 'oppositional' (see Pausé, 2015a, p. 2) on occasion.

## Studying Sofie Hagen's Online Fat Activism

As a general starting point, I take activism to mean concrete actions with an established end goal. The ultimate objective of fat activism is to end the marginalisation of fat people, and to reach that target involves 'many sites and interests' (Cooper, 2016, p. 2). In this chapter, I define online fat activism as intentional activity intended to inform and influence others in matters related to fatness, in the soci(et)al sphere in particular, and carried out via digital content on the Internet.

Sofie Hagen is a stand-up comedian, activist, podcaster and author (Hagen, 2019). She is a Dane based in the United Kingdom who writes and performs in English. Hagen is active on several social media platforms – as of April 2020, she had 48,348 followers on Facebook. As an activist, she has been vocal about issues related to discrimination against fat people; one such instance was criticising Cancer Research UK's advertising as fat shaming (e.g. Therrien, 2018). In addition to fatness, she discusses other human-rights-related questions, such as class, race and gender (she describes herself as non-binary; I refer to Hagen as 'she', since she has indicated that her preferred pronoun usage is 'she/he/they' [11 July 2020], thus indicating that pronouns are unimportant to her).<sup>2</sup>

Although Sofie Hagen has a larger audience and perhaps more activity on Instagram and Twitter, I opted for Facebook as a data source for this chapter because all of her posts are preserved there, making it a more reliable text repository than the two other social media sites. I selected data from among the 537 timeline photos on Hagen's Facebook business page with the criterion that photo captions be written in English. Such captions began appearing consistently in early 2015, with the last one included in this chapter posted on 24 April 2020. Since the focus is on captions, I comment on pictures only where appropriate.

There is no need to be logged in to Facebook to access Sofie Hagen's posts. I interpret this to be a conscious choice to allow as many individuals as possible to access her content. In addition to fat activism, Hagen writes regularly on several other themes, such as social anxiety, politics and numerous lighter topics – nevertheless, in accordance with my research task, the analysis is limited to her fat-activism-related writings.

## Categories of Analysis

To analyse the data, I used [Leena Koski's \(2020\)](#) dialogic thematic analysis. The method is comprised of three stages; in this work, they were implemented as follows. First, I acquainted myself with theories related to aesthetic capital, which helped to form the preliminary research question. This theoretical framework then served as the point of departure from which I studied the entire data set. Second, after having read through the data, and keeping the theoretical framework and research question in mind, I formulated some initial content categories (not yet themes *per se*) – the so-called thick excerpts ([Koski, 2020](#), p. 163) found in the captions were particularly useful here. Finally, I proceeded from categories to proper themes, again, by a constant dialogue between theory and data (hence the method's name).

With dialogic thematic analysis as my interpretative tool, I distinguished four main themes in the data: non-communication with the audience, offensive resistance, doing fatness wrong and ambivalence. Non-communication was the only category of analysis not supported by a prior theoretical backbone; it arose entirely from the data set. In the future, and potentially drawing on a grounded-theory-inspired approach, it would be interesting to apply this theme to activism research more generally. Unfortunately, due to space constraints, I am not able to develop this viewpoint further here.

Another lens through which I analyse Sofie Hagen's activism is that of offensive resistance. According to [Caitlin Cawley \(2015, p. 2\)](#), offensive resistance is first and foremost a rhetorical strategy; in other words, her definition emphasizes the central role of language. For that reason, I will employ offensive resistance as a heuristic aid to distil meaning from the data, especially in terms of the language used in Hagen's activist content. In addition, still following [Cawley's \(2015, p. 4\)](#) lead, I understand the word 'offensive' both as an adjective and a noun. When used as an adjective – as in 'offensive resistance' – it is synonymous to aggressive and obnoxious, among others ([Merriam-Webster, n.d.a.](#)). The noun form of 'offensive', on the other hand, signifies attack ([Merriam-Webster, n.d.a.](#)).

A third theme found in Sofie Hagen's oppositional online fat activism is what [Cat Pausé \(2015b\)](#) has called 'doing fatness wrong'. In fact, for Pausé, doing fatness wrong has to do primarily with rejecting neoliberalism ([Pausé, 2015b](#)). This is certainly one part of Hagen's activism, since on many occasions, she criticises capitalism vehemently – as well as diet culture as one of its many guises. However, Hagen 'does fatness wrong' in numerous ways, and not all of them are necessarily tied to this neoliberal ideal; for instance, non-communication is a non-neoliberal way to do fatness wrong (cf. previous subsection).

For this reason, I will also be using the concept of 'flaunting'. This term comes originally from Kenji Yoshino (2006, in [Saguy & Ward, 2011](#), p. 57), who sees flaunting as the non-acceptance to hide, which has the consequence of drawing attention to a visible stigma – in this case, fatness. By using the notions 'flaunting' and 'doing fatness wrong' interchangeably, I want to emphasise that whereas the theme of offensive resistance is chiefly tied to language use, this theme concerns itself with behaviours. Often, flaunting one's fat entails engaging in activities that are considered entirely neutral for non-fat bodies, but off limits for fat ones. Indeed, Jeannine A. Gailey (2014, p. 143) has noted that

...the fat woman who wears tight clothing [is] perceived as flaunting because [she is] marginalized ... From the perspective of the flaunters, they are simply engaging in behaviors that those who are socially unobtrusive engage in all the time without criticism.

Such behaviours include eating something deemed 'bad' in public, wearing a bikini and getting up on stage to perform ([Read, 2011](#)).

The fourth category of analysis is that of ambivalence. Ambivalence – or simultaneous and contradictory attitudes or feelings ([Merriam-Webster, n.d.b.](#)) – in fat activism has been discussed by many in academia ([Cooper, 2016](#); [Maor, 2013](#); [McMichael, 2010](#); [Meleo-Erwin, 2011](#); [Murray, 2010, 2008, 2005](#)). The consensus seems to be that in societies infused with fatphobia, it is very difficult to accept (one's) fat embodiment at all times. Thankfully, this need not be the case for oppositional fat activism to continue to function; resistance can coexist simultaneously with more socially conforming thoughts ([Maor, 2012](#), p. 19).

## **Sofie's World: Features of Sofie Hagen's Oppositional Fat Activism**

### *Non-communication with the Audience*

As I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Sofie Hagen's interaction with her Facebook followers is very limited. Hagen openly admits to not seeing all the messages she receives (11 March 2018), and not responding to comments (4 June 2017). This strategy does not adhere to the commonly held assumption that one

should display reciprocal behaviour on social media platforms. Indeed, Hagen deliberately chooses non-communication:

I'm not reading comments because I'm too busy being beautiful and awesome to read sad man-boys weeping.

(1 October 2017)

Fat activists are frequently exposed to online hate speech (Cooper, 2018; Kinzel, 2016; Read, 2013, 2018), including fatphobic antagonism (Bolden, 2018). I would therefore suggest that the unwillingness to engage in reciprocal communication points to Hagen wanting to protect herself from being silenced (the reference to 'sad man-boys weeping'). In other words, by maintaining non-communication on Facebook, Hagen 'negotiate[s] the risk of interference from perceived outsiders' (Bolden, n.d.). According to my interpretation, this allows her to continue her fat activist role while reaching an ample number of people via the largest social networking site in the world.

At the same time, Sofie Hagen acknowledges that she receives contact from those members of the audience who are sympathetic to her cause:

I don't see everything you guys message or email me, so I rarely answer, but I truly appreciate that you reach out.

(11 March 2018)

This passage, then, suggests that Hagen values contact from her audience but is not often able to reply – one of the reasons being that she does not read the messages, anticipating that many contain hate speech (cf. the preceding quote). Indeed, as indicated, to continue producing thought-provoking content without self-censorship, activists such as Hagen may avoid reading the messages and comments they receive. Consequently, they have less opportunity to communicate with those who could be open or curious about the fat activist cause. This can have a stifling effect on fat activism in the long run, particularly because a significant part of it happens online. What is more, prospective fat activists might be repelled from the movement upon learning of the frequency of receiving online hate.

### *Offensive Resistance*

Of the forms Sofie Hagen's oppositional fat activism takes, offensive resistance is perhaps the one that would be most intuitively associated with opposition. As mentioned above, I employ offensive resistance as an aid for analysis, notably in terms of language use; I interpret content that includes swearing and/or insults as offensive. The following excerpt serves as an example:

This is a big day. I am on the front cover of Politiken with one of my best friends and idols, Andrea Storgaard Brok, because of our

newly started movement, FedFront – an obesity-glorifying and anti-capitalist movement. We are trying to create a network for fat people. And we are trying to kick social structure in the dick. Front page, motherfucker. Front page.

(7 February 2017)

Some of Sofie Hagen's fat-activist messaging is directed towards marginalising societal structures, as in the passage above. Her text not only celebrates the visibility of her non-normative body on the cover of Denmark's biggest paid newspaper (also related to the next theme, doing fatness wrong); in addition, it vigorously opposes structures that promote capitalism and discrimination on the basis of body size. According to media scholars, the virtual space becomes more competitive by the day, and provocation is seen to be more effective than moderation in growing one's follower base (Maasilta, 2012, p. 51) – Hagen's colourful language use could be suggestive of this phenomenon.

In addition to criticising society at large, at other times, Hagen's communication is aimed at those harbouring negative opinions about fat people:

The post I made a few days ago has naturally meant that a lot of people have commented with either extreme ignorance (dieting advice or pretending to be concerned about my health – in which case, go fuck yourself) or with vile and abusive comments.

(26 September 2017)

According to my analysis, a significant part of the captions I categorised as offensive resistance directly address a simultaneously singular and collective 'you'. Here, the previous emphasis on abstract societal elements is switched to individuals. This shift makes it transparent that in the end, prejudices are always held and acted upon by human beings.

Offensive resistance and non-communication with the audience can be seen to intersect in three ways. First, by not responding to comments and messages and thus not 'playing by the rules', i.e. that social media usage should be based on interaction, Sofie Hagen breaks the social media platforms' rules, which in itself can be interpreted as offensive. Second, by not responding and by being offensive, Hagen violates the gender norm that females should be courteous and considerate of others. Third, she breaks the norm dictating that fat folks must act in an obedient manner, almost to the point of rendering themselves invisible. Interestingly, the demands of the two latter norms converge quite a bit.

### ***Doing Fatness Wrong***

Earlier in the chapter, I outlined some characteristics of 'doing fatness right', such as living a healthy lifestyle. I then turned to its opposite – doing fatness wrong – and its sub-category, flaunting, which include actions like eating and drinking without restraint. This exact activity is present in the excerpt below, which, moreover, contains a hallmark element of offensive resistance: swearing.



I have decided to just fucking eat and drink and love myself. I'm not going to eat kale and be a miserable prick so that I can live even longer and eat even more kale. Kale begets kale. So nah, fuck that. I know it bothers you that I am fat and I have no shame about it. ... #KaleBegetsKale (22 March 2018).

Of particular interest here is the 'mock' hashtag #KaleBegetsKale, used as an ironic counterpoint (Weller, 2011, p. 70). In addition to the caption above, which discusses neither eating nor being fat as shameful, several of the photos picture Sofie Hagen eating in public (either in restaurants or at home settings with other people; Zdrodowski, 1996). As Saguy and Ward (2011, p. 70) stated,

...when fat-identified women affirm their difference, whether in a bikini or in a restaurant, [they are often doing it] ... to challenge social norms in order to gain social inclusion.

Speaking of bikinis, another way that Sofie Hagen does fatness wrong – or flaunts her fat – is by donning a swimsuit in public and writing about it. Here, Hagen's refusal to cover (to apply Yoshino's definition of flaunting) happens both literally and metaphorically. Not only does the swimsuit expose her bare skin, but by posting about the photo shoot, with a picture included, she also renounces the societal preference for fat folks to remain invisible and not stand out:

Oh hi, this is a photo of me taken from a swimsuit photo shoot in Dubai for a women's magazine. Objectively speaking, I look fucking hot as shit.

(26 September 2017)

In addition, Sofie Hagen exposes her stomach in more than a dozen photos. To underline that she is comfortable in her own skin, a sympathetic face is often drawn on her midsection. Such a picture is also the cover photo of her book (although not in all language versions – something worthwhile to explore in itself). I interpret Hagen flaunting her fat body as a conscious choice to break the norms and to question the prevailing beauty standards, all while pointing out how they have been thoroughly fabricated and upheld by the current system.

While Sofie Hagen's fat body does not constitute aesthetic capital in the society at large in this day and age – quite the contrary – it is important to note that it might in some smaller circles. If the general societal ethos revolves around dieting, exercise and weight loss attempts, those norms are not accepted in Hagen's 'world'. Suddenly, fatness and the exposure thereof, so abhorred elsewhere, become the 'currency' through which one can express independent critical thinking, heightened awareness of social justice issues and empowerment (cf. Åberg, 2019). Ergo, although a body's size might not accommodate mainstream norms, physical appearance is still being used to make a statement about oneself.<sup>3</sup>

### *Ambivalence*

I have discussed how Sofie Hagen challenges appearance-based norms through her activism. Up to now, and besides the theme of non-communication, I have analysed this opposition through the concepts of offensive resistance and doing fatness wrong/flaunting, which both rest on a solid fat identity. In order for these strategies to be carried out successfully, there can be no 'wavering' in (one's) fat corporeality and the messaging about it: if oppositional activism is to be efficient, the fat identity needs to be wholly endorsed. Still, this does not seem to hold true entirely for Hagen's content. In some captions, albeit admittedly few and far between, she acknowledges the ambivalence she feels towards her body:

I want to say something about this photo. My initial reaction was 'I look big'. And not in a cheerful-hurrah-YAY-I-LOOK-BIG way, but in a 'Why didn't I wear a belt; I look bigger than I am, I could have looked smaller if I had worn something else' [way].

(28 November 2016)

In the following passage, in turn, Sofie Hagen draws the audience's attention to the oft-repeated mistaken idea that the work of a fat activist would and/or should be grounded on them loving their body:

... one of the questions I got asked the most ... was about how OFTEN I loved my body. If I had bad days. And the answer is, yes I am human. Of course I have bad days. But I can honestly not remember the last one. It's been months. I either like my body, or I don't think about it. It's neutral. ... (Not that it's easy to change the way you think and feel. It's taken me 5–6 years. Lots of therapy and unlearning and educating myself. But – the feeling is forever. 95% of diets fail. So you might as well put your eggs in the brain-basket).

(17 January 2020)

Of note here is that Hagen speaks of either 'liking' her body or considering it neutral. Although the original questions are about 'loving' one's body, she does not use that word herself (thus, perhaps, instantiating yet another aspect of non-communication by formulating the answers in a way that she herself sees fit?). She is aware that, to a certain extent, the ambivalence regarding (her) fatness might be a permanent feature in her thinking but also that loving one's body unconditionally is not required to engage in fat activism (see also [Omaheimo & Särämä, 2017](#)). According to Hagen, it is possible for her readers, too, to acquire this sense of body neutrality – by '[putting their] eggs in the brain-basket'.

Unavoidably, what I present above is a limited selection of the central findings; for example, Sofie Hagen's reservations about the body positivity movement would certainly warrant further analysis. As one indication of the data's richness,

multiple themes at times can be found within a single caption; due to space constraints, I have not been able to include the captions in their entirety. Readers are encouraged to seek out the posts in question to get a deeper sense of their context (the attached dates should be of help). In addition, the boundaries between the themes are porous. In this chapter, I have presented the four themes as distinct for clarity, but they do share common traits – for instance, swearing is often present in both offensive resistance and doing fatness wrong, and non-communication intersects with all three.

## Conclusions

In this chapter, I set out to enquire about how Sofie Hagen challenges appearance-based norms via her online fat activism. The analysis revealed that Hagen resists the real-life ramifications of aesthetic capital for fat people through four main avenues: non-communication with the audience, offensive resistance, doing fatness wrong and ambivalence.

Non-communication with the audience turned out to be a cross-cutting theme, intersecting with the other three strategies. I interpret this reluctance or unwillingness to engage in reciprocal interaction as being rooted – at least partially – in the fatphobic climate currently rampant in some online fora. In an effort not to expose herself to hate speech, Sofie Hagen ended up inadvertently missing many of the messages meant to encourage her and show support to the movement.

Offensive resistance is first and foremost a linguistic strategy, containing swearing and directed towards oppressive societal structures and prejudiced individuals alike. Doing fatness wrong, in turn, focuses on describing resistant behaviours that affirm the fat body's agency by 'flaunting', i.e. refusing to cover or hide it. Finally, reflecting on ambivalence (conflicting emotions regarding fatness) becomes yet another route by which to challenge body privilege, by showing that activism is possible without a perfectly solid (fat) identity. Taken together, these tactics institute a strategy through which Sofie Hagen can break the prevailing physical appearance norms and question the thinness norm as a widespread form of aesthetic capital.

Of these four elements, some potential paths for especially regarding flaunting now will be proposed for future research. More specifically, academic enquiry would do well to look more closely at the so-called bravery discourse circulating on several social media platforms. The whole idea of flaunting rests on the presumption that when fat bodies do certain things in public, frequently related to eating or dressing – and in so doing often draw negative attention – such actions can be revolutionary because they break the norms regarding what fat folks can or cannot do. Indeed, donning a bikini or eating a hamburger *can* be interpreted as bravery precisely because these behaviours are socially sanctioned, especially for fat women.

However, by emphasising how brave someone is, for e.g. wearing a swimsuit in public (as Gailey (2014) pointed out, flaunting might not be considered as such from the *flaunters'* point of view; on the contrary, they feel they are just engaging

in regular activities that nobody would even notice were their bodies norm-accommodating), not only are the activists reduced to their physicality, with their verbal and/or written messaging overlooked, but the bravery discourse also ends up unintentionally reinforcing the very norms it is intended to challenge. After all, there is nothing brave about looking like the societally preferred norm, whereas the 'So brave!' exclamations serve to underline those instances in which the commented-upon bodies are in some way lacking.

This chapter has shown that Sofie Hagen's activism addresses and questions the thinness norm in a multitude of ways. While fat activists' work is to be applauded, I don't think that ridding the world of fatphobia should be the responsibility of only a few individuals. Because discrimination against fat people is a societal and a cultural phenomenon, it must be tackled on the same level. For example, taking legislative measures to prohibit weight discrimination (see, e.g. [Puhl et al., 2015](#)) would be one step in the right direction. Assuredly, fat activism – online and off – is making a dent in the appearance-centredness of society, but allies are needed to eradicate structural injustices.

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## Notes

1. Throughout this chapter, I use the term 'fat' instead of 'overweight' or 'obese'. 'Overweight' alludes to a normative idea of excess weight, whereas 'obese' has been used in the medical context – particularly in the West – with a firm emphasis on quantification, measuring and BMI charts ([Lupton, 2018](#)). Choosing the word 'fat' over 'obese' and 'overweight' is a way for activists to take it back by deflating the associated derogatory connotations (e.g. [Harjunen, 2009](#), pp. 21–22).
2. The dates indicate the point in time when Sofie Hagen published said post.
3. In fact, one could argue that, as someone who is white, young and able-bodied, being fat is one of the few ways in which Sofie Hagen does not conform. This, in turn, raises a question on the kinds of fat activism that are actually welcomed or acknowledged – especially in the social media sphere. Or conversely: is it possible to do *fat activism* 'wrong'? For instance, will the visually oriented audience on Instagram be able to recognise fat activism if the activists choose to no longer follow the platform-specific, established and aestheticised conventions of (re)presenting fat bodies?

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