

Queer of Science: ZINES

If you do not wish this session to be recorded, please private message one of the presenters: Alekhya, Claudia, Erin, or Jenna

Introduction

Welcome to the [Barnard Zine Library](#) & [Teaching, Learning, and Digital Scholarship](#) department!



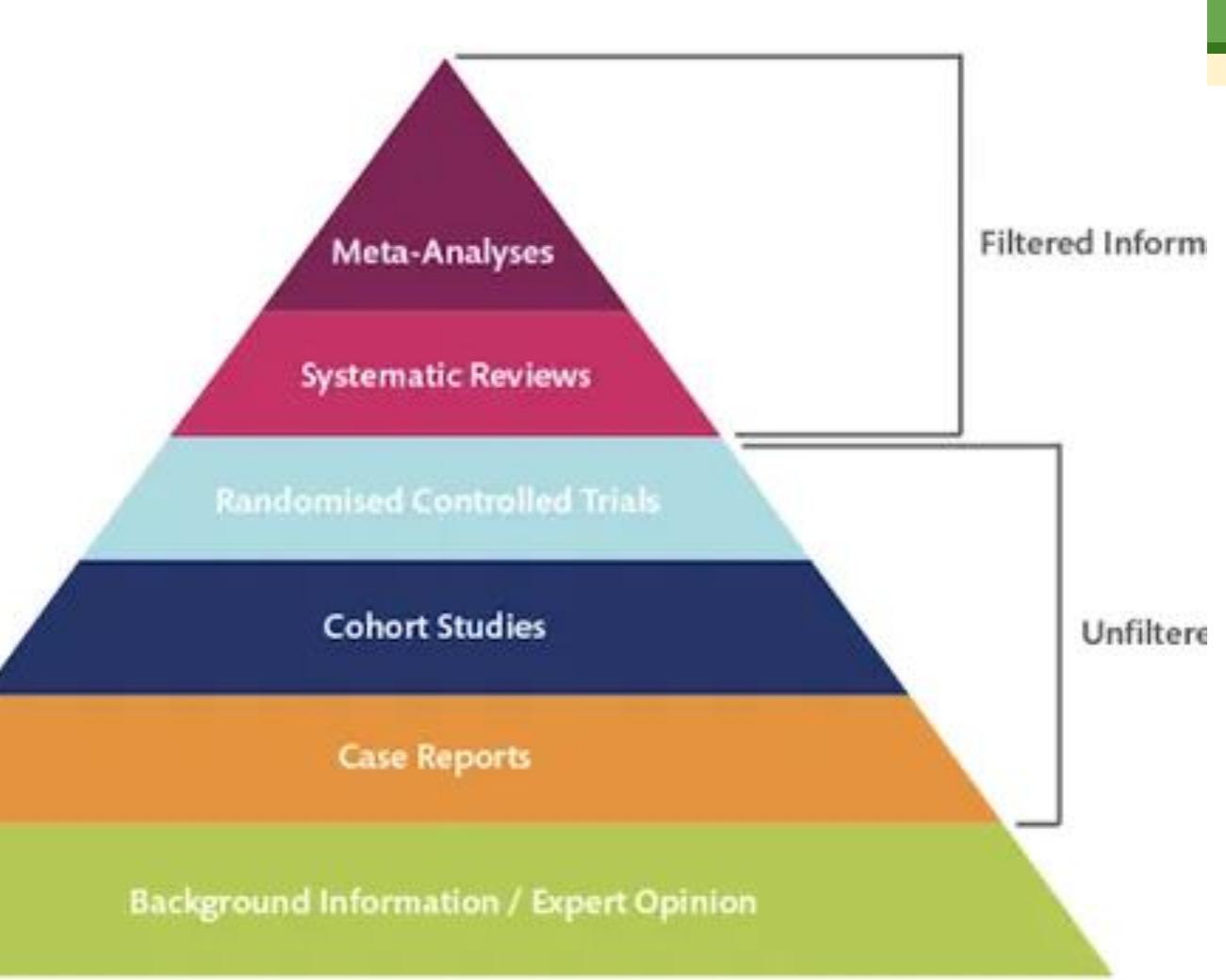
The Power of Scientific Observation and Nuance

It seems like there is a binary right now: Trust/Believe Science! OR “I did my own research” where “own research”=searched Google

Power in observations, personal reports, journaling, our own metrics

Science is produced by humans, corporations and other interests with biases and different motivations

Science has often been wielded to oppress groups of people



Evidence Based Medicine Pyramid

What is the purpose of a case report?

A case report is a **detailed report of the symptoms, signs, diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up of an individual patient.**

Case reports usually describe an unusual or novel occurrence and as such, remain one of the cornerstones of medical progress and provide many new ideas in medicine.

To me, case reports actually seem like they should be considered extremely relevant and high priority.

Honoring Observation and Questions

What does it mean to honor our own observations and questions about health, nature, and other areas of science when experience is often devalued?

Journal about observations over time

Track publicly or privately

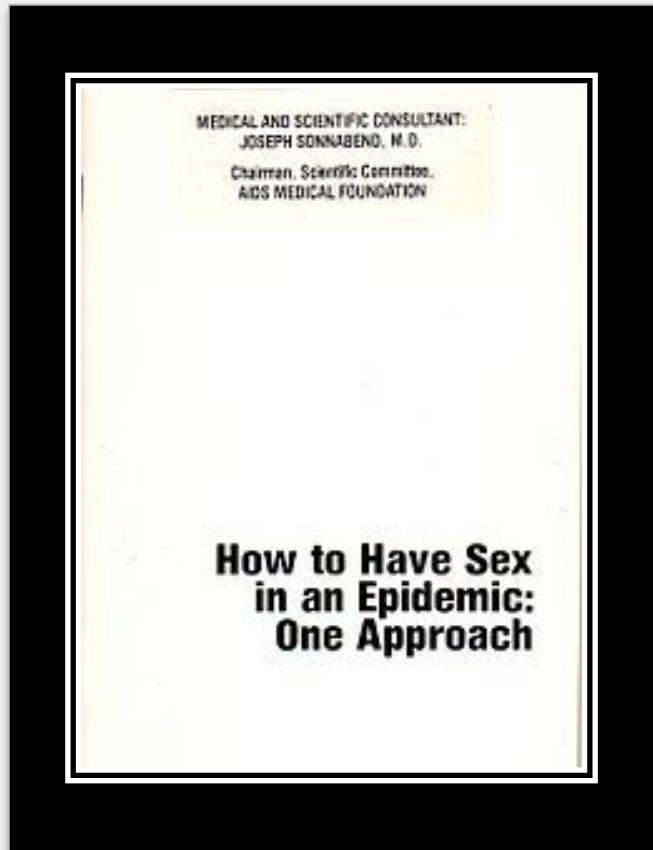
Ask questions

Look at examples

A microscopic image showing several red, rod-shaped HIV particles. These particles are surrounded by numerous small, green, spherical objects, likely CD4 or CD8 T-cells. The background is a dark blue, textured surface.

Case Reports in HIV/AIDS

How to have sex in an epidemic zine



Self reporting with Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD)

The only time I have seen much discussion of PMDD in popular culture was on an episode of the show Taxi, which aired in 1983



Appearance of Spring Peepers



We're HERE!

Observation of Spiral Jetty



Relevant Zines!



Wade, Carrie. Evidence-based Practice: Can Medicine Be Unbiased?

<https://clio.columbia.edu/catalog/15437029>

Camille, Natasha Cheche : Trouve : What "Western" Medical Students Could Learn from Haitian Vodou.

<https://clio.columbia.edu/catalog/11905522>

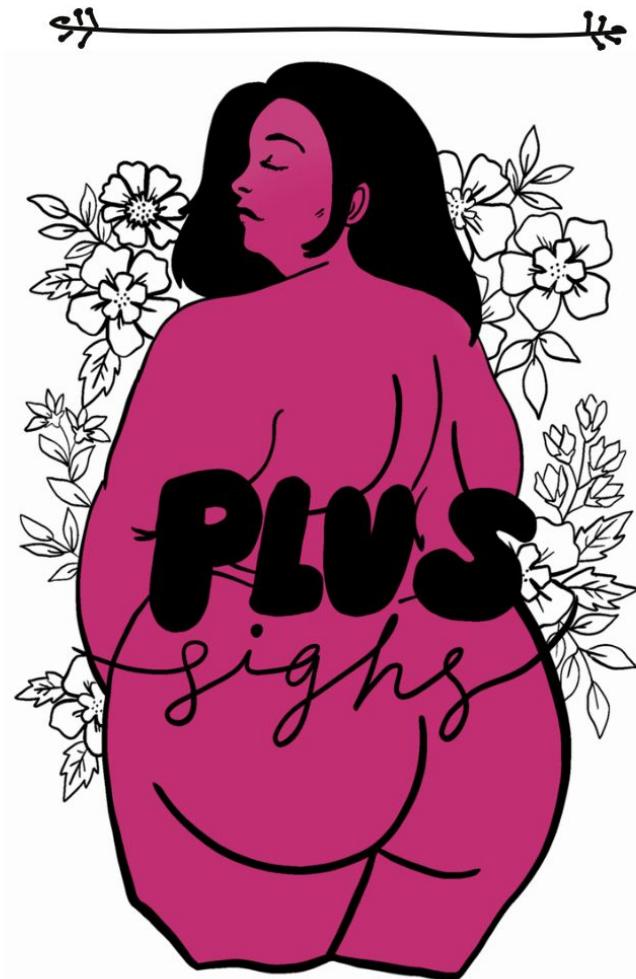
Non Grata, Alicia Take back your life : A wimmin's guide to alternative health care.

<https://clio.columbia.edu/catalog/4783043>



Little, Nicole Elizabeth Ounjian. A Hastily Assembled Guide to Climate Disaster.

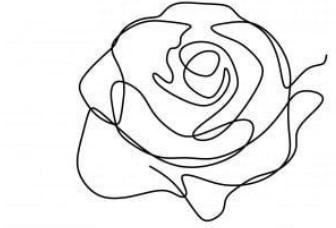
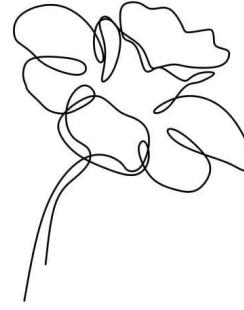
<https://clio.columbia.edu/catalog/15199154>



sarah wood

Plus Sighs: An Introduction

- Sarah Wood: queer, fat illustrator/writer from Michigan
- Author of many zines
- Plus Sighs: looking at what it means to be fat and queer
- Presentation: focusing in on her perspective on fatness & health, and institutional anti-fat bias
- Content Warning: fatphobia, mental health
- Social Media
 - Instagram: @guwanciale
 - Tumblr:
<https://woodsarah.tumblr.com/>
 - heysarahwood@gmail.com



There is so much I have to say about being fat, about growing up fat, that I haven't found the words for yet. How it warps the way you see yourself, how you see others, your relationship with your body, with food, with how you let other people treat you. It rots your brain.

And because we still have doctors going on TV and saying that it's fine to starve your kids, fine to shame them, fine to send them to fat camp and encourage them to develop eating disorders, the brain rot persists.

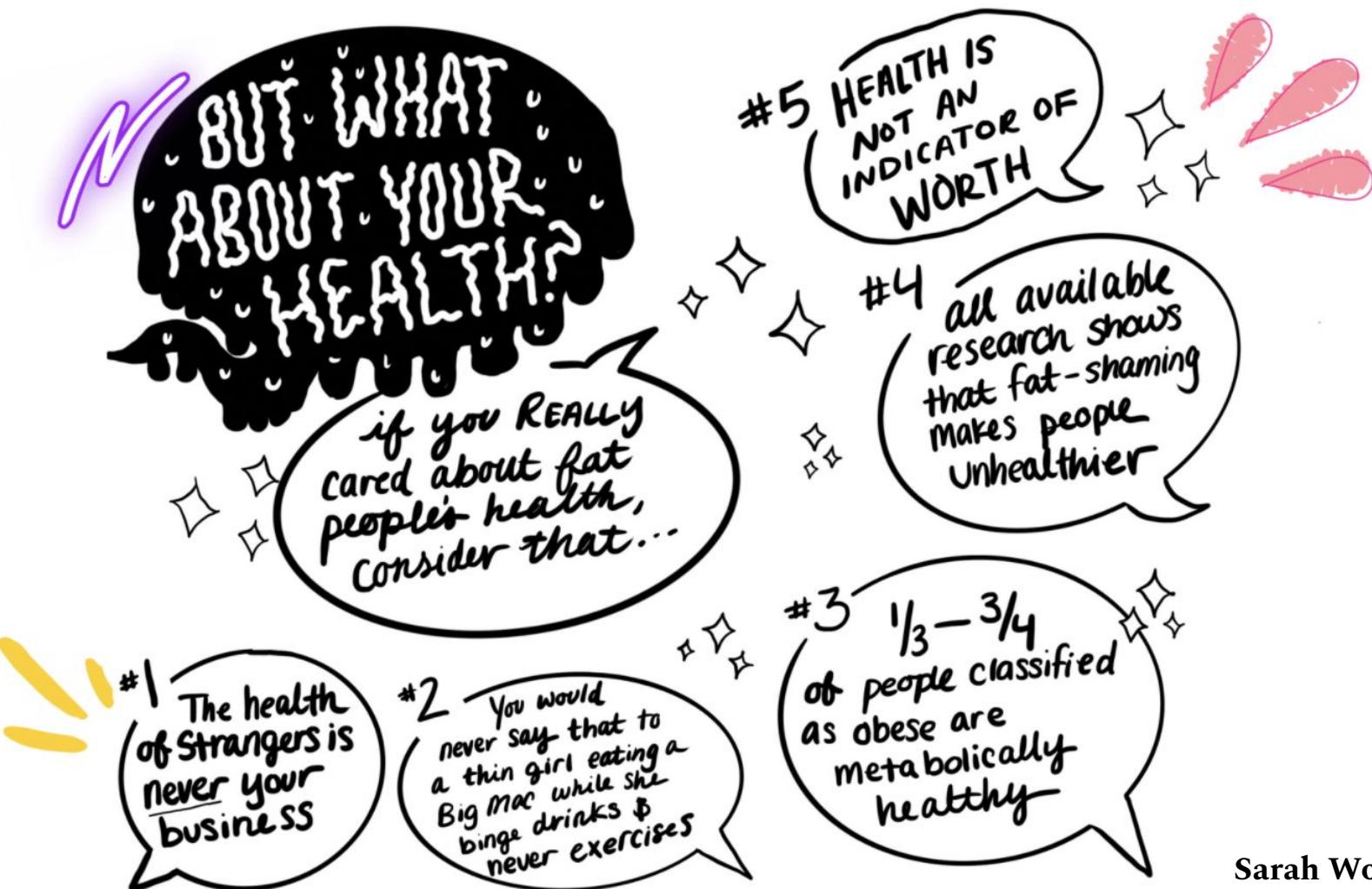
Hating fat bodies becomes so normal and intrinsic that even when you think you've learned to practice body positivity and reject diet culture and wear shorts in public, that brain rot is still in your head. But you have absolutely no language to talk about it, because society has taught you that this is normal, and furthermore that talking about it would just make thin people uncomfortable.

I have so much to say about growing up fat and all the things that a fatphobic upbringing took from me, all the ways that it warped me. But I'm still learning the language. I'm still learning what is and isn't normal, healthy, real, or perceived. I feel like once I learn how to really start talking about it, I'll never be able to stop.

This is where I start trying to talk about it.



Sarah Wood



Sarah Wood

Institutional Anti-Fat Bias

doctors can refuse to treat patients above a certain weight

poor wages

fat patients receive low quality health care

absolutely terrible physical education

food deserts

"obesity epidemic"

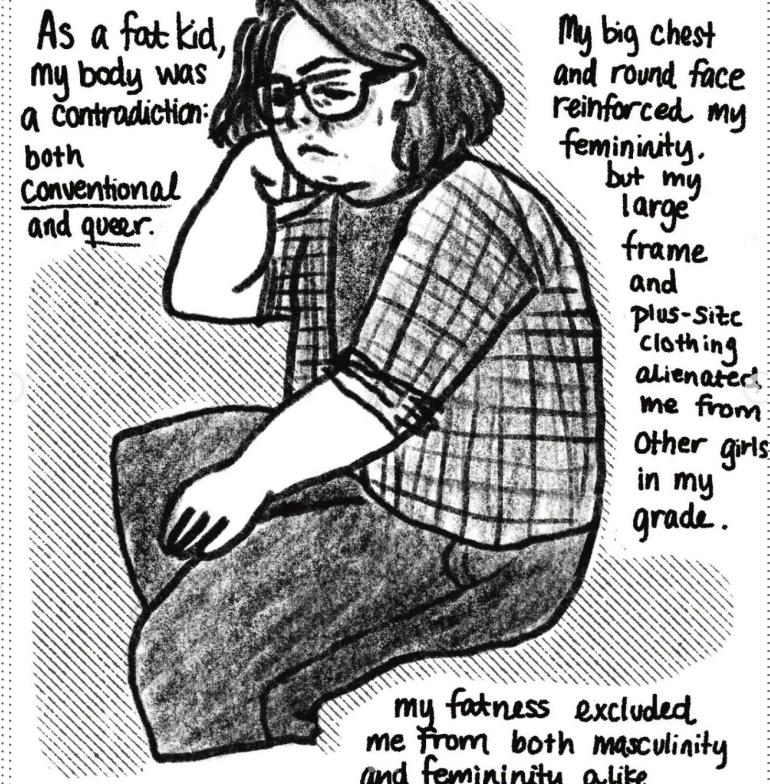
insurance providers don't cover dieticians

New Zine!!!

PART ONE: THE GENDER OF FATNESS



The more weight I lose*,
the more I start to think
about gender.



As a fat kid,
my body was
a contradiction:
both
conventional
and queer.

My big chest
and round face
reinforced my
femininity,
but my
large
frame
and
plus-size
clothing
alienated
me from
other girls
in my
grade.

my fatness excluded
me from both masculinity
and femininity alike.

Sarah Wood

WEIGHT STIGMA

has a huge impact on a person's gender expression.

I think that's why I felt so averse to gender while growing up: neither femininity nor masculinity felt safe to explore, so I avoided both.

- BMI limits for transition procedures
- Medical bias against fat people
- Fatness reinforces secondary sex characteristics
- Gendered expectations for fat bodies
- Fatphobia in the LGBTQ community

Fat-Positive media + eco

My Mad Fat Diary

Rae is a 16-year-old fat girl trying to navigate friendship, family, boys, and body image, all while working to recover from an eating disorder and mental health issues. It's one of my favorite shows—funny, heartwarming, emotional, and a little bit horny. I'm grateful I was able to catch it while I was still in high school—a lot of the lessons she learns from her therapist are lessons I still keep with me.



Work In Progress

This darkly comedic show starts with Abby, a 45-year-old self-proclaimed "fat, queer dyke", announcing to her therapist that if her life doesn't change over the next year, she's going to take her own life. What follows is an incredibly funny, touching, and well-written show that touches on fatphobia, mental illness, queerness, sexuality. There's also a Weird Al cameo. It's an incredibly authentic show and I can't wait for the second season to come out.



Shrill

It's so incredibly cathartic to see a fat woman getting to confront the people that make her feel bad—her coworkers, her doctor, or a boyfriend that takes her for granted. While Annie learns to advocate for herself against her boss, her boyfriend, and society as a whole, her roommate Fran is the ultimate fat, Black, lesbian, stoner scene-stealer.



Happy Fat by Sofie Hagen

Taking Up Space in a World That Wants to Shrink You
Sofie Hagen
Illustrations by Sofie Hagen



What We Don't Talk About When We Talk About Fat by Aubrey Gordon

A primer on the politics, policies, social systems, and history behind anti-fat bias.



The Body Is Not An Apology by Sonya Renee Taylor

A guide to dismantling body-based oppression, starting with radical and unapologetic self love.



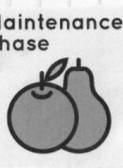
The (Other) F Word edited by Angie Manfredi

Written and illustrated for fat teens, this anthology is full of fat-positive essays, poems, and illustrations that focus on love and affirmation.



Fat and Queer edited by Bruce Owens Grimm, Miguel M. Morales, and Tiff Josua TJ Ferentin

A diverse collection of essays and poems focusing on the intersectionality of fatness and queerness.



Maintenance Phase

Maintenance Phase is a podcast hosted by Aubrey Gordon and Michael Hobbes that dives into the weird history of diet culture and anti-fat practices, such as Weight Watchers, Dr. Oz, The Master Cleanse, and celery juice. I also highly recommend their episode on the shocking prevalence and underdiagnosis of eating disorders among fat people.

**THANK
YOU**

claudia's pick *◦♡* ♡-♡ (zine tech, they/she). ♡°*•,☆♡* ❤

Trying #4 (2010) by LB

A perzine about burnout, emotional labor & distress in Chicago public schools, dental surgery body horror and seasonal depression.



BARNARD
Zines
L12tr
no. 4



At the time, LB (they/them) was an overworked, under-resourced Chicago public school teacher - burn-out eventually gave way to psychosomatic symptoms including vision loss & tooth loss.



We confess about our fears of passing out on the commute home. We confess to knowing that exhaustion will wear our bodies and minds out, will eventually kill us.

"And the crazy thing is, is that I still actually like this job. Through it all. I still do." We both say it. We both convince ourselves.

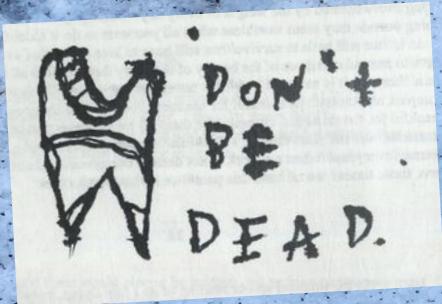
Occasionally I feel like I am making a difference in this world filled with indifference. Then I wonder if I put up with this job because deep down I hate myself and am willing to put up with the pain and the disrespect and humiliation and shame for trying.

8.

I am the teacher with food on clothes 4 times a week, 31 teeth, a lisp and a dandruff problem. This year, that is me, and I don't care.

I tried to make eye contact as I said, "You are a good person. Please believe in yourself."

She started seeing the counselor at school. She started receiving help and made a mural to educate others on major depressive disorder and made a presentation to announce she had finally overcome it after years of suffering. I clapped, and held my words in mouth, unable to ruin her moment by declaring that you never get over it. You will always be in a battle with your doubts and this world.



look up from my stack of final papers.

"Ms. B, I just wanted to let you know...that you were my favorite teacher ever," she finished the sentence right before she bursts into tears. I was shocked and would have never expected this declaration from this stone-faced student who looked as if she dreaded seeing my presence at 7:30 am every day. I lacked the energy this year, the sadness made it harder to give my full effort in the class. I told myself that I had been a shitty teacher for half of the year and furthered the sadness. A student's tears over moving on to the next year had never happened to me before. All of this was news to me.

"Are you ok?" was all I could ask. "Are you ok?"

"Yes, yes, I'm ok."

But you, I'm not leaving the school. I'll still be here



As we wrapped up our reading of *As I Lay Dying*, a student decided to write, "As I Stand Living" on her hand with permanent marker. Perfect.



My body has betrayed me with the breasts that I must push down daily, the necklines like tree trunks, the vertigo from only five hours of sleep, and the oppression from not seeing the sun in four months.

At night I

I am so used to taking care of others that I forgot how to take care of myself.

I took inventory of others stories of seasonal depression during the winter.

"I couldn't get out of bed or even talk for days."

"I have never drank so much in my life."

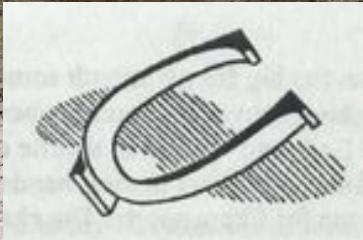
"I cannot leave the house."

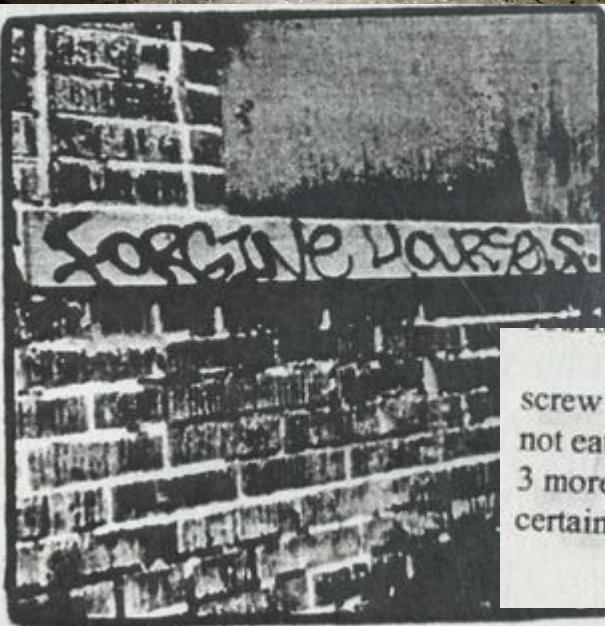
Every conversation I baited people with saying we are all affected by depression this winter. Later into the winter, I added that the depression has shifted into all out rage. Some sympathized, expressing their own sadness and I felt understood for a second. I felt that I would be ok and we would be ok. The shared

... your best when others are depending on you?

And every winter I argue that it makes us stronger, tougher than other cities with shutdown infrastructures and casual shoes. But this winter did not make me stronger. It made me feel desperate and exposed, oppressed under the weight of anxiety and depression. Already having a tenuous relationship with depression, this winter pushed me over the edge.

The





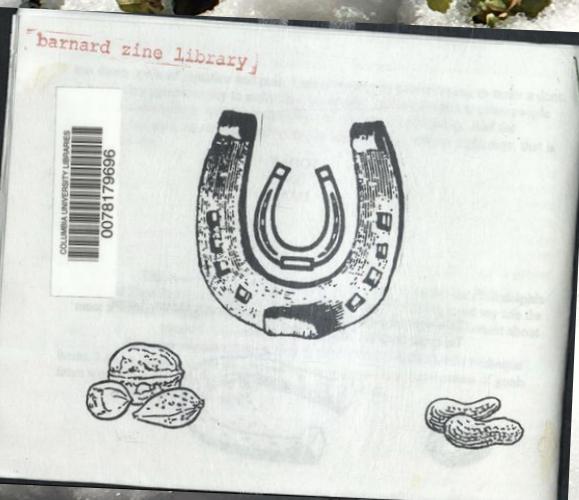
burning the stem of my esophagus; and, thus for five years I chewed gum on the two dollar and twenty five cents train to work and two Febrarys ago I heard a crack in my mouth and found a chip of my tooth that I just thought was a leftover peanut from last night's habitual snacking and I ignored it like I ignored everything in my life besides anxiety and work and I lost a tooth from anxiety and fear. I lost a tooth from stress and depression. I lost a tooth and smiled crookedly and taught with a lisp and freaked out my students with the stitches and spat out onto the overhead projector with dribbles of saliva for all to see. And I lost a tooth and I lost it all.

edges of my mouth.

I did not get a new tooth. I got more bone implanted into my gums, a screw drilled into my jaw, more stitches all along my gums and a list of food I could not eat. 3 more months with an open root canal and 5 other cavities need to be filled. 3 more months with a gaping smile, tooth aches and the inability to pronounce certain words.

I had bragged to my students about receiving the new tooth over break. When I returned to the front of the class with a swollen face and difficulty talking out of the right side of my mouth, they said nothing.





In writing, I look for a narrative. I look for an end. There will be no end with this. There will always be a winter. There will always be the sadness. There will always be the struggle.

It is now just realizing about what matters and how to continue onward and upwards, working on fighting the nothingness. Working on not causing harm; working on making meaning; working on making change.

This was written during the first week of summer for the Philadelphia Feminist Zine Fest because if there are two things that have impacted my life the most it would be feminism and zines. And it gave me a space to be honest about issues I cannot even express to my closest friends.

And now summer is here. I sit in my backyard with burned barbecue items. I sit on the beach and try to not fear the winter. I hear the screams of goals from world cup games echoing throughout out my street.

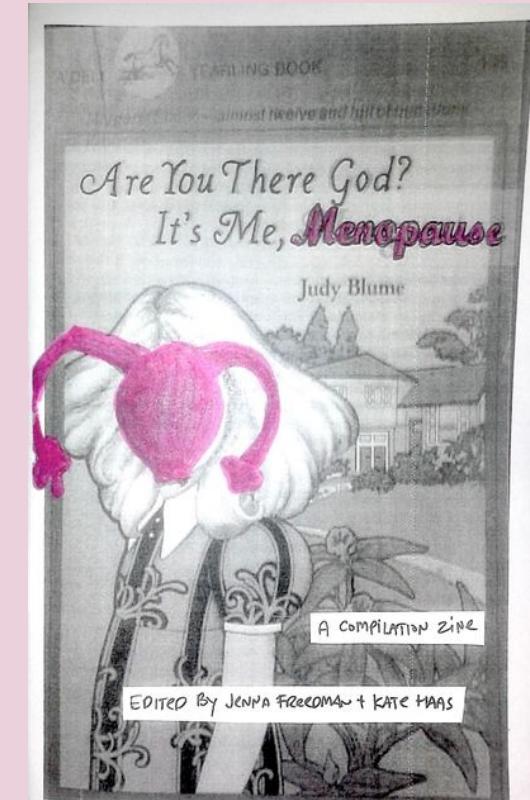
I want all of the days.

I cannot even express to my closest friends.
And now summer is here. I sit in my backyard with burned barbecue items. I sit on the beach and try to not fear the winter. I hear the screams of goals from world cup games echoing throughout out my street.
I want all of the days.

thank you ♥*:☆♡♥!

Are You There God? It's Me, Menopause

- Dilemma: lack of info, useless doctors and even nurses
- Stigma
- Read it yourself, don't just buy it for your mom
- What's missing: trans experiences (which I didn't think to see out at the time, 2014), few BIPOC contributions, no early menopause stories
- This is a print-only zine, not even held in our library
- Peri/menopause zines in our library

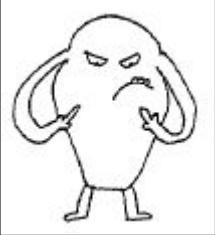


Are You There, God? It's Me, Menopause

I was sautéing onions when it happened: a sudden, unfamiliar, decidedly unpleasant warmth in my chest, which quickly suffused my face and neck. Dizzy and light-headed, I turned off the flame and stumbled across the kitchen, where I collapsed onto a stool.



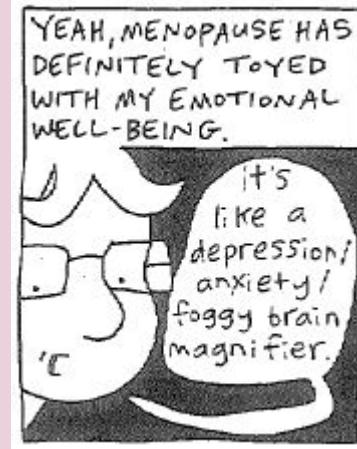
[Kate Haas](#)



Kelly Keigwen in [Krissy Durden's contribution](#)

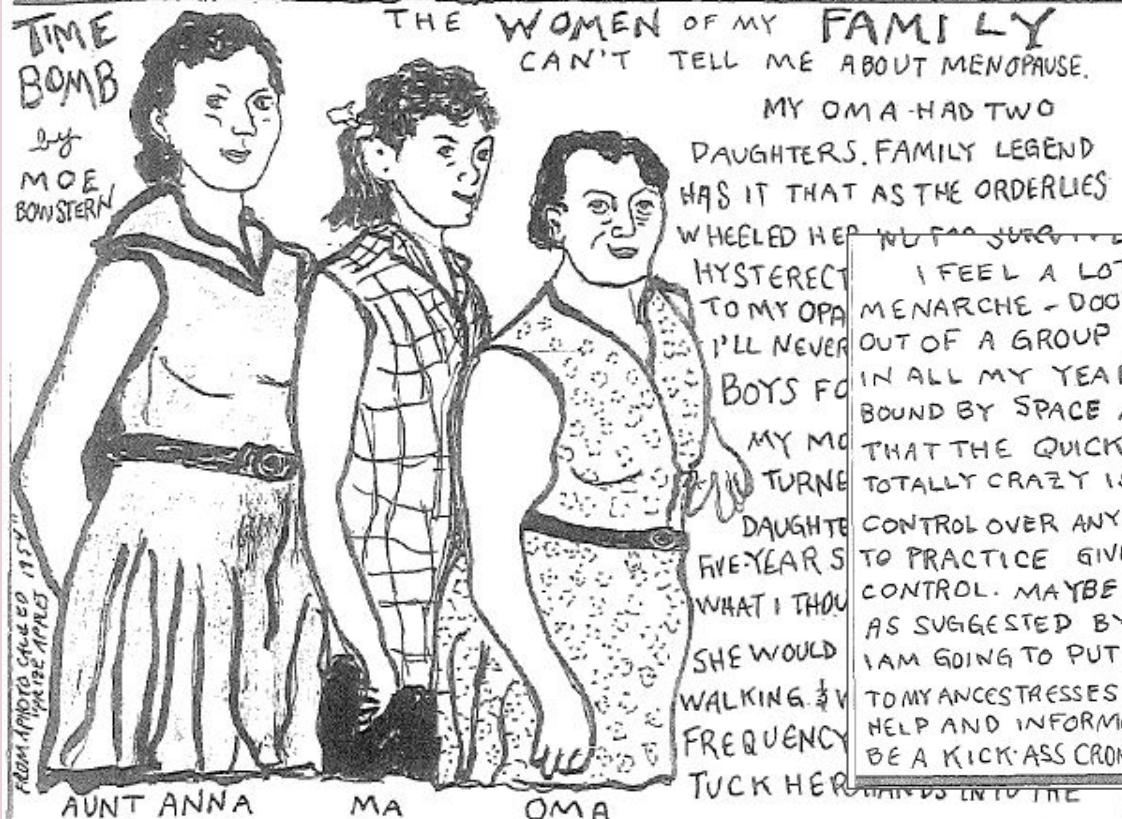
We need to share info and de-stigmatize it. I like to just say “Menopause!” really loud in public spaces every once in a while. No joke. Try it.

[Jude Vachon](#)



[Carrie McNinch](#)

Are You There, God? It's Me, Menopause



[Moe Bowstern](#)

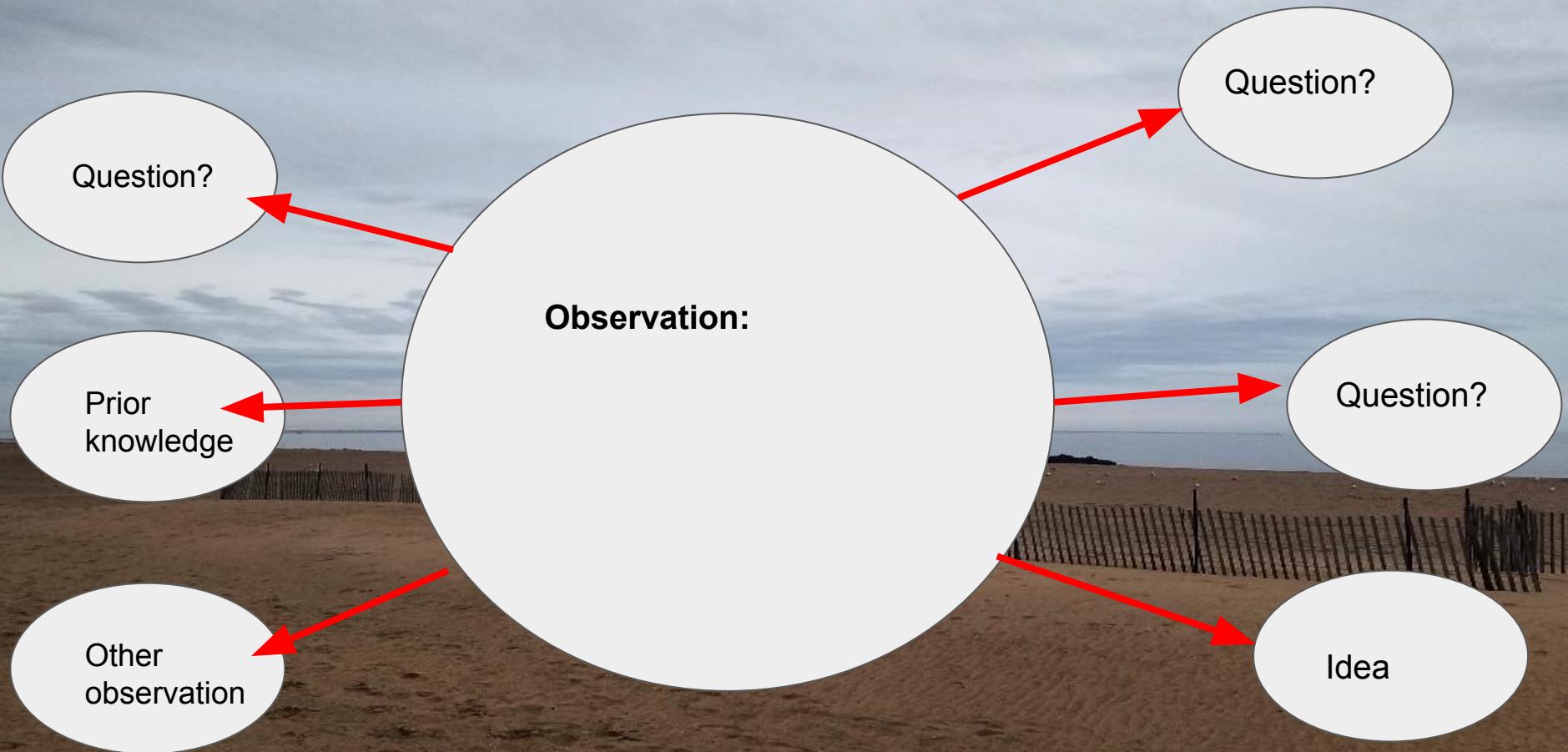
I FEEL A LOT LIKE I DID IN THE DAYS BEFORE MY MENARCHE - DOOMED, AND ALSO FEELING SLIGHTLY LEFT OUT OF A GROUP I AM NOT SURE I WANT TO JOIN. BUT IN ALL MY YEARS AS A HUMAN WOMAN BOUND BY SPACE AND TIME, I HAVE LEARNED THAT THE QUICKEST WAY TO FEEL TOTALLY CRAZY IS TO PRESUME THAT I HAVE CONTROL OVER ANY CORNER OF THE UNIVERSE. I AM GOING TO PRACTICE GIVING UP ANY IDEA OF CONTROL. MAYBE I WILL GET TO RUN AWAY, AS SUGGESTED BY SUSAN WEED. ALSO I AM GOING TO PUT A GENERAL CALL OUT TO MY ANCESTRESSES, TO SEND ME ALL THE HELP AND INFORMATION I NEED. I WANT TO BE A KICK-ASS CRONE! BUT IT'S KINDA SCARY.



Questions and Comments

- Address questions and comments in the chat!
- Additional comments and questions!
- We will pause recording to keep conversation private

Idea generation template



Idea generation template example

Question? How is climate change influencing hibernation and migration habits

Spring peepers enter a state of suspended animation in the winter

Other observation How can I observe more? What's my metric?

Observation: I thought I heard the chorus of spring peepers in Prospect Park the other night, but it seems early

Question? Can the spring peepers enter and exit suspended animation as the weather changes?

Question? Is it early? Or was it normal?

Idea

Turning the template into a zine

I think the zine could be a journal for keeping observations and metrics over time

A public zine would be a good way to enter your own observations into the public conversation without having to present a formal conclusion

A record of observations useful for benchmarking

Can include a privacy notice about whether you want the zine circulated by a library or not

Citations & resources

- [zines AND \(health* OR scien* OR technolog* OR engineer* OR math*\)](#)
- Wood, Sarah. *Plus Sighs*. June 2021, <https://woodsarah.tumblr.com/>
- Excerpts from “The Gender of Fatness” Taken from Sarah Wood’s Instagram ([@guwanciale](#))
- [Trying #4](#) by LB
- [Zine-making template](#)
- <https://zines.barnard.edu>
- Follow up with Jenna & Claudia: zines@barnard.edu
- Next zine library event [Leave Comic Sans Alone: Exploring Accessibility and Zine Making](#)