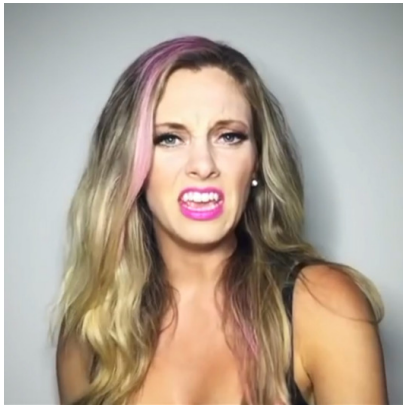


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## Let's All Remember That Fat-Shaming — Which Is Mean — Doesn't Even Work

By **Melissa Dahl**



Nicole Arbour, a YouTube personality who **calls herself** (<https://www.youtube.com/user/niclearbour/about>) a comedian/recording artist/motivator (sure), recently posted a video titled **"Dear Fat People"**

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXFgNhyP4-A>) that's basically a six-minute rant in which she vehemently argues in favor of fat-shaming. (The video — which has racked up more than 1 million views — was temporarily pulled down, but was back online as of Monday,

**according**

([http://www.cnn.com/2015/09/06/entertainment/fat-](http://www.cnn.com/2015/09/06/entertainment/fat-shaming-nicole-arbour/)

[shaming-nicole-arbour/](http://www.cnn.com/2015/09/06/entertainment/fat-shaming-nicole-arbour/)) to CNN.) At one point, Arbour says, "If we offend you so much that you lose weight, I'm okay with that."

This is not very nice, first of all, but also, it's not even how any of this works. Here's a gentle reminder: Making fun of fat people for being fat does not encourage them to lose weight, **and in fact in many cases it may lead to weight gain**

(<http://nymag.com/scienceofus/2014/09/fat-shaming-doesnt-work-is-mean.html>) . The "it's for their own good" defense doesn't stand up to the scientific evidence.

For example, in a **study** (<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0070048>) published in 2011 in the journal *PLOS ONE*, Angelina Sutin and Antonio Terracciano of Florida State University College of Medicine tracked the weight of more than 6,000 Americans for four years, from 2006 to 2010; they also noted whether the participants reported being treated unfairly because of their size. The men and women who were overweight in 2006 *and* said they'd experienced weight discrimination were more than twice as likely to have become obese by 2010, as compared to the overweight participants who hadn't felt discriminated against. Another **paper**

(<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/oby.20789/abstract>) published last year in the journal *Obesity* came to the same conclusion: **Fat-shaming appears to lead to weight gain.** (<http://nymag.com/scienceofus/2014/09/fat-shaming-doesnt-work-is-mean.html>)

Both studies are observational, rather than experiment-based, so they can't prove that one thing definitively led to the other — and if they did, why. But the association makes sense to Rebecca Puhl, the deputy director for the University of Connecticut's Rudd Center for Food Policy and

Obesity, who has studied the impact of weight stigma for 15 years. “Stigma and discrimination are really stressors, and, unfortunately, for many people, they’re chronic stressors,” Puhl **told** (<http://www.nbcnews.com/health/fat-shaming-actually-increases-risk-becoming-or-staying-obese-new-8C10751491>) me back in 2013. “And we know that eating is a common reaction to stress and anxiety — that people often engage in more food consumption or more binge eating in response to stressors, so there is a logical connection here in terms of some of the maladaptive coping strategies to try to deal with the stress of being stigmatized.”

Once again: Fat-shaming is not a very kind or even useful thing to do, so stop it, please.

*SOURCES: CNN*