

# "DELIBERATE WEIGHT GAINING AND ENCOURAGING"

BY Randy Sumner

This issue contains features about deliberate weight gaining and encouraging, sexual proclivities about which little has been written. If gaining and encouraging were practiced in the past, and we must assume they have been practiced throughout time, they were practiced in secret by an undoubtedly small number of people, people who did not, sadly, publish detailed diaries of their experiences. Aside from a few medical case studies, there have been no published accounts of these practices, no practitioner role models, no examples, no myth. One might say it was a love that dared not give itself a name, much less whisper it.

While it is possible that deliberate weight gaining and encouraging was discussed in earlier times, in our lifetime it has only been during the last fifteen years that these practices, in the gay community, have been given voice. And it has only been in the past decade that weight gainers and encouragers have come out of their own closets (walk-ins, of course) and mobilized into active social groups with their unique agenda.

Because of this silence, most people don't know anything about weight gaining and encouraging, and many who have heard of it don't understand it or have misconceptions about the practices and practitioners. Even among fat gay men and their admirers, there is still ignorance about gainers and encouragers, and no small amount of prejudice as well.

So just what is deliberate weight gaining and encouraging? Basically, it is an erotica attraction to gaining weight (specifically fat, as opposed to muscle), or to fattening up another individual. It includes those who are aroused by eating, being fed, feeding, or force-feeding another. While no two gainers or encouragers are alike, most seem to have an interest in one or more of these areas.

In some ways, gaining and encouraging is very similar to traditional bodybuilding and body worshipping, and to other body sculpting practices. And for some, elements of control and submission are involved, as they are in other sexual preferences. So what at first might seem odd or really "out there," in reality is merely just another facet of human sexuality, no more unusual or incomprehensible than say, leather sexuality, fetishism, or simply an attraction to blonds. Because our society puts such emphasis on being thin, however, this particular sexual proclivity is subject to more misunderstanding and prejudice than other, more conventional, types of body sculpting and sexual pents.

Prevailing attitudes and ignorance about gaining and encouraging may soon be swept away, for "the encouragement movement" is happening all over the country. Riding the current wave of big men's awareness, gainers and encouragers are coming out and banding together. We now enjoy several forums for our unique interests. There are two newletters that serve the gainer and encourager community: "Encouragement and XXXLNT." "Encouragement" contains articles and artwork that are submitted by the community "at large." It is currently free, but donations are eagerly accepted to help defray publishing costs. To find out about this newsletter, write to "Encouragement", P.O. Box 1377, Madison Square Station, New York, NY 10159.

"XXXLNT" is published quarterly and contains articles of interest to gainers and encouragers, along with personal ads. The cost is \$15.00 per year, which includes the placement of your own personal ad. To get information about this newsletter, write to "XXXLNT", P.O. Box 926 Tallahassee, FL 32302-0926.

Gainers and encouragers in San Francisco and Los Angeles host frequent dinner parties that have become very popular. Held in private homes and occasionally at restaurants, the parties offer supportive and friendly environments for gainers and encouragers and, needless to say, abundant and delicious meals as well. These social events are open to all who have interest in weight gaining and encouraging. If you would like more information about the dinner parties, please call Randy in San Francisco at (415) 824-8750.

Lastly, as a group, we host "ENCOURAGECON," the annual gathering of weight gainers and encouragers. "ENCOURAGECONS" are held in April or May at resorts around the country. We try to hold the gathering on the opposite coast from the one on which "CONVERGENCE" is held. This gives guys more flexibility and travel options during the year. This year's "ENCOURAGECON" was held in northern California and was a phenomenal success. See the article about it in this issue.

These forums are helping gay men come to terms with their interests in gaining and encouraging. Most of us thought we were the only ones on Earth who had these feelings, but thanks to men all over the

country who had the courage to come out as gainers and encouragers and the drive and energy to organize forums and activities for men like themselves, we know we are very much okay and not alone at all. As one gainer and encourager told me the other day:

*"Sexual closets come in layers, it seems. First, I had to come out as gay, then as a lover of big men. That wasn't so hard; there was lots of support. But the weight gain closet door is really nailed shut in this society, and those of us who share that dream owe the encouragement movement a huge bow of thanks for helping us pry it open."*



