

## SSPARC

**Annual Festival of Social Science 2015**

### **Presentation**

Weightism

### **Speaker**

[Dr Jayne Raisborough](#), SSPARC, University of Brighton

### **Abstract**

This paper furthers our critical purchase on the workings of weight stigma by identifying two complimentary discursive processes; hostile weightism (an aggressive response) and benevolent weightism which may manifest as supporting, sympathetic and friendly. Drawing on examples from weight-loss shows, I argue that hostile weightism serves to render fat as abject and benevolent weightism promises a social acceptance, belonging and recognition once larger people comply with instructions that effectively seek their reduction and erasure. Arguing that weight-loss TV shows are visual displays of redemption, I am interested in what is revealed about normative citizen subjecthood when we focus on how an escape from abjection is imagined as fat is shed. My question here is what self are we are asked to diet into? Thinking of weight stigma through these complimentary processes offers further insight into the durability and social acceptability of weightism and allows critical comment on a range of weight-loss TV shows.