

tiful" but ignore or affirm the notion of the "body perfect." Disability challenges all notions of perfection and beauty as defined by popular, dominant culture. We must reclaim what has been traditionally viewed as "negative" and accentuate the reality that "differentness" carries with it exciting and creative opportunities for change. A lot can be learned by the experiences of women with different disabilities, as we begin the process of reclaiming and embracing our "differences." This includes both a celebration of our range of sizes and shapes and abilities .

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References

Boston Women's Collective, *The New Our Bodies, Ourselves*, Boston: 1984.

Szekely, Eva, *Never Too Thin*, Toronto: The Women's Press, 1988.

Resources

National Eating Disorder Information Centre, CW 1-304 200 Elizabeth Street, Toronto, Ontario, M5G 2C4, (416) 340-4156. Information and resource centre, counselling.

DisAbleD Women's Network (DAWN) Canada, 7785 Louis-Herbert Avenue, Montreal, P.Q., H2E 2Y1 (514) 725-4123. Feminist self-help, publications. (There are provincial and local DAWN offices in many major cities across Canada that offer a range of activities).

ELIZABETH ZETLIN

I am beautiful

*The woman wins who calls herself beautiful
and challenges the world to change to truly see her.*

Naomi Wolf, *The Beauty Myth*

My breasts dip almost to my waist—thick
as the trunk of a mature cedar.
My hair is medium brown except
when I decide to colour it.
Then the grey turns purple or orange.
My glasses are thick and scratched.
When I smile, there's a fan of lines
and a dimple in each cheek.
The loose skin at my neck crinkles
when I look at myself sideways.
There are two liver spots on the back
of my right hand. I'm short,
buxom and have dark brown myopic eyes
and crooked crowded teeth. My nose
has a bend in the middle as though it were
once broken and when I'm not smiling
I look stern, even harsh.
I've been told I snore and I know I fart a lot.
My feet are long and narrow.
I walk purposefully. Once I was even
mistaken for in-house security at Sears.
My voice is childlike, at least it sounds
that way on tape. I interrupt often
and clear my throat a lot.
When it's very cold, I wear the same
clothes day after day, sleeping in them
to avoid getting undressed.
A few times a year I wear lipstick and cleavage.
It's then that I notice a big difference
in how people respond.

Elizabeth Zetlin co-authored Said the River, a hand-printed book of poems and lithographs. Her poetry has been published in Contemporary Verse 2, Sounding and Poetry Toronto.