In the summer of 2009, U.S. Fox television premiered a new series, *More to Love*, a dating competition show from the creators of *The Bachelor* and *The Bachelorette*. The difference in this case was that the female contestants competing for the heart of single guy, Luke Conley, were all plus-size women. Conley himself, who stands at 6’3 and weighs 300 lbs., claimed that his ideal woman is “full-figured and comfortable in her own skin.” According to Fox’s promotion, the series would feature “real women” in an effort to “prove that love comes in all shapes and sizes.” The series trailer emphasized the pride these women take in their size, and their refusal to see themselves as abnormal or unattractive. However, when the series aired it told quite the opposite story, as the female contestants, all of them professionally accomplished and articulate, came forward one by one to confess their miserable experiences of heterosexual vulnerability and humiliation, their perennial failures with diets and weight-loss programs, and their most intimate struggles with
rejection and self-hatred in a culture that encourages women to aspire to size.\footnote{Although FOX has not announced plans for a second season at the time of this writing, promotional copy remains accessible on the network’s sponsored website (http://www.fox.com/moretolove/).}

\textit{More to Love} is indicative of a contradictory cultural turn in media culture that generates narratives of “fat acceptance” — stories consistent with a burgeoning activist movement aimed at renegotiating bodily norms and changing social perceptions of overweight people, who are frequent targets of derision and discrimination. The problem is that these narratives of acceptance remain tethered to an ethos of disciplinary enforcement, medicalization, and emotional injustice that invariably reveal the dire consequences of violating aesthetic conventions of body size. As Amy Edrman Farrell observes in \textit{Fat Shame: Stigma and the Fat Body in American Culture}, popular television shows such as \textit{More To Love} (along with \textit{The Biggest Loser, Mike and Molly, Celebrity Fit Club, Bulging Brides,} and \textit{Honey, We’re Killing the Kids}) exist “within a cultural context that not only abhors fatness and the fat person as a sign of degeneracy, but also one that has made the degradation of fat people a media ritual” (119). Indeed, in a global media marketplace that continues to equate slenderness with Eurocentric ideals of glamour, sophistication and desire, fat is framed negatively by popular health and medical discourses and continues to be comically depicted in mainstream entertainment culture as a sign of gender non-conformity, racial and ethnic otherness, and the comic slothfulness of the lower classes. However, with two thirds of all