



## **TAKING UP SPACE**

**How Eating Well & Exercising Regularly  
Changed My Life**

by  
Pattie Thomas, Ph.D.  
with Carl Wilkerson, M.B.A.  
foreword by Paul Campos,  
author of *The Obesity Myth*

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### **Expanded Biography for Carl Wilkerson**



Carl Wilkerson is a deeply passionate human being who has many skills, talents and educational experiences, some of which may seem contradictory in nature and none of which can be said to describe the sum total of his life.

He is a writer, composer, lyricist, filmmaker, humorist, radio producer and performing artist. He has a Bachelor of Science from Wake Forest University in mathematics and an MBA from the Goizueta School of Business at Emory University.

Wilkerson is an entrepreneur. He is a public philosopher. He loves to travel. He has a working knowledge of French and is learning Spanish.

Oh yeah, and Wilkerson is deeply and passionately in love with a fat woman. This last fact about his life is many times the only one to which people pay attention. In the current cultural climate, being associated with fat people is as “bad” as being fat.

That is why, when given the opportunity for yet another collaboration with his wife and creative partner, Pattie Thomas, Wilkerson accepted the challenge with relish. Thomas’s sociological memoir, *Taking Up Space*, is about being fat and the physical, emotional and economic costs of trying to pass for thin in a culture and society that wages war on fat people.

By making her life as a fat woman a case study, Thomas and Wilkerson outline how stigma limit and shape the life chances of **all** people. Together they demonstrate how the “war on obesity” can be won, not by losing weight, but by simply giving up the battle with the bulge and instead learning how to carry one’s weight well.

For Thomas, this is especially hard because she faces debilitating illnesses that may be directly related to her efforts to lose weight over a 30-year period. Wilkerson plays the role of her caregiver with compassion. His collaboration in this project directly reflects his desire for the war on fat people to end so that both he and his partner can develop and pursue their passions with as few social and physical barriers as possible.