[0:00] Welcome to Fat Chicks on Top. This podcast contains frank discussions about the body, sexuality, and occasionally uses swear words, which may not be appropriate for people under the age of 18.

This podcast also uses facts, statistics, and mathematics, which may not be appropriate for liberal arts majors.

And this podcast relies on science and reality, which may not be appropriate for evangelicals.

[0:25] Music.

[0:30] Outro Music.

[1:02] Welcome to the show. You are here with your host, Auntie Vice. It's good to be back.

And today I have probably the most recommended author when it comes to book us on dominance that I have recommended in my class, one that I love his writing and his work.

We have Anton Fulman joining us today. Welcome to the show.

Thank you. Happy to be here and honored to hear that that you like my book.

[1:26] I do. I do. So I wanted to have you on the show because I have a lot of people who work in sex education, kink education, but the vast majority of them come from the submissive side.

And that's what gets talked about more when it comes to everything from triggers to safety and all of that.

[1:48] We leave people out on a limb a little more in discovering dominance.

Dominance so you've obviously written from that but before we get into all of all of your work how did you discover you wanted to do consensual dominance oh uh i am primary paraphilic that way it was the only thing that engaged my libido since i had a libido uh it just i even been like i had a i was fortunate to have a pretty decent upbringing i have a great mom she tried to teach me well hurting girls is bad don't try to dominate people and i as like a little kid tried right i tried to have good fantasies and it didn't work right and so i don't know why i am I just am.

I'm oriented towards power and control for anything that's going to feel exciting and sexy.

And not necessarily on the dominant side, right, but towards DS in general.

[3:01] So when there are a lot of folks out there who had similar upbringings, I give my partner, I joke with him that he doesn't want to hit a girl no matter how much I beg.

Because he was raised, you don't hit girls, you don't call them names, you're very consensual, right?

And this is how a lot of people are raised.

So how did you start to deal with uncoupling what you had been taught about being a good man and how you're supposed to treat people to understanding that you could do this in a fun, sexy, and consensual way?

[3:39] Yeah, let's say like refining rather than uncoupling, right?

Because I think that's a great way to raise a kid.

And I think that don't try to hurt people, don't try to dominate them is what we hope that people learn growing up.

And that what I've found in consensual DS isn't like unlearning that, it's learning sort of nuanced levels on top of it around.

[4:07] You know, it's not really hurting somebody if you're doing it in a way that works really well for them and that they want and that they're going to be happy about.

It's hurting, but it's a different meaning of the word hurting, right?

And that consensual dominance is very, very different from non-consensual dominance, from patriarchy, from all of the isms that we live with.

That it's it works when it's fundamentally based on not dominating people on on listening to what they really want and helping them get to it and they're helping you get to what you want and you're doing it together you know on that in that basic level that i want you know that i hope people are teaching their young children it's not really dominant dominating right it's it's consensual It's cooperative, and I found that in part because...

[5:13] I had to because it was the only way I was going to be able to get my libido to work in part.

So I kept thinking about it and, you know, chewing on it and looking for, you know, for any sort of examples or models I could.

I found it in large part through the fortune of finding partners who would be like, hey, hit me, please.

Right and and and really invite me um to to lean into it um and to explore it and i found it through community through finding finding models right even you know when i was when i was first going to college they they invented something called an internet net.

Even before the World Wide Web existed, you could find Society of Janus on Gopher.

It was a thing that happened before the World Wide Web. You could find it on Usenet.

And so you could start seeing models of, oh, yeah, people are doing this and they're having a good time and they're living a good life and they're, you know, enhancing one another's lives.

[6:26] And that was invaluable for me so you bring up society of janice we haven't talked a lot about them on the show but they're they're kind of a core fundamental group in the kink world so why don't you explain what society of janice is sure uh society of janice is a primarily education and consent that sorry sorry, education and community organization around BDSM.

They have, they're the second longest running such organization that we know of.

They are based in San Francisco and they were started in 1974.

So they're two years older than I am.

[7:11] And they do classes, they do parties, they do munches, they have a Discord server.

They provide a place where people can connect around kink, can learn about it, can get an entryway.

Janus is the Roman god of portals, and that's an intentional double entendre, I think.

It's the portal to the kink community, and they're really into putting things in holes.

You know so yeah it's it's existed since the 70s it runs on this like wonderful 70s model where there's no real like leader figure there's not even a board there's just a meeting once a month and whoever whatever members show up make the decisions like really directly a society run by by those who show up and it's worked, you know, it's worked for over 50 years.

[8:09] Fifty years, exactly, because I'm 74, so I'll be 50 this year.

I hope they have a big anniversary party. Me too.

Me too. They're a wonderful group. For our listeners, I'll have a link in the show notes so that you can find their stuff and connect. Tons of resources.

[8:26] So when you're finding this and you're finding out about dominance, was it different than the models that are out now?

Because kink has really expanded in what's out there, what people can access.

What I do the most of, sort of my niche, which is I'm a cis straight man, I'm mostly taking the dominant role in my dynamics, that was always there because that's actually mainstream, right?

The only thing that's actually kinky about consensual cis white male dominant is the consensual part. All the rest is just normal.

So that was there. What's been interesting is seeing how other options have gotten more airtime, right?

[9:19] That when I started, there was less space for other kinds of gender expression, other different vectors of power, other expressions that didn't look as much like the sort of stereotype of dominant and above.

Leather vest with a whip and you know that the sort of basic image you have of what ds looks like um i think there's there's a lot more sort of different flavor available now.

[9:58] You bring up consent. Your book is Consensual Dominance. You write a lot about consent.

And coming from a straight cis male side, what does that look like?

I'm queer. Quite a few folks I've had on have talked about it more from the querying aspect.

But as a straight guy, what does it look like when you start talking about true consensual dominance? It takes a lot of unlearning, right?

Because there is this very well-worn, very easy-to-access path to dominance that's not really based on consent for people like me.

It's just because the whole world is set up so that we're sort of in charge and people are kind of conditioned from birth that when, you know, the old white guy with the beard talks, they shut up and listen, you know, all of that stuff.

And you can very easily just sort of roll into that.

[10:58] And you see a lot of people who do roll into that and sort of think that they're like, born to be a true master.

And you're like, actually, no, dude, that's just privilege. That's everybody who looks like us.

Um but if you do it comes with uh it comes with downsides it comes with big pit traps that you fall into because you're we can so easily roll over people that they're not really happy they're not really getting what they want there's you know you can very easily trigger people's fawn response and they'll tell you that yes they're consenting but they're not really getting what what they want exactly and eventually that that sort of bubbles up into resentment and so you see a lot of cis male poppy people who have an easy time getting partners with their like big hot i'm a dom guy routine and then they lose partners because they're not really satisfying their partners and so they they cycle through them boom boom boom boom one after another which is is hurtful for their partners and I think also not satisfying for them.

So yeah, the trick is that you've got this very easy to see, easy to follow path laid out in front of you, but it's not really a great path.

[12:19] It's some internal work to sort of see the other options, to see past it, right?

To try to choose other things that are maybe a little harder, but actually can go deeper and be more reliable and more satisfying.

I guess that's the short answer.

And we owe a lot to the queer folk who are figuring out new models because that gives you another example to look at, right? Like, oh, I could do something more like that.

[12:53] So you talk about all of this kind of systematic privilege that comes with certain identities.

And I think that's one of the conversations we had, you know, in the Kink community, we've talked about black and white relationships.

[13:05] We don't we haven't really branched off into many other dynamics, but black and white relationships, a little bit about male and female relationships.

Relationships but what does it take to recognize where you have privilege just not meaning that you've had an easy time getting through life but that systematically there's certain things that you haven't had to think about how have you become aware of issues that you may need to consider when you're going into a dominant and submissive relationship oh i feel like there's a lot of answers to this question to that question and none of them are complete right how do you is you could just say empathy is but but that's not a very actionable answer is it listening to reading stories of people who are.

[13:51] In different positions of privilege so the more you can sort of try to get get those other perspectives the that helps um finding those those pit traps that exist in the sort of heteronormative male dominant paradigm like you starting to notice that that that system isn't really set up for for cis men to be fulfilled and happy either it's set up for us to be in power but that's different right so if you if as as the cis guy if i can start to notice the ways that i'm not really being fulfilled filled by this script that's been laid out for me that is a way to start opening the doors to other options.

[14:44] Again, maybe in a way, everybody's actually selfish, right? We want to increase our happiness.

And so if we just tell people, you have to not do this because it's bad, but you have all these privileges, you just have to give them up.

That's not a very good pitch, but it's also not the full truth, right?

Right. The full truth is there is there's a deeper level of happiness that you can reach for yourself by finding ways to be truer to what you really need instead of your assigned role in society and to have more mutual relationships with people who are close to you.

[15:23] And you bring up identifying what you really need, and I don't think we teach straight cis men to have that conversation with themselves.

Else how did you so you you know you talked about how you need a power dynamic to really get the the sexy aspect going how did you figure out what you actually need because a lot i know so many men around your age straight men around your age that haven't done that and haven't they're they're unhappy but they can't tell you why or what they might need yeah that's another big question isn't I think kink helps with that, because even though cis male dominant kink is pretty much in line with the mainstream, you're still not supposed to use whips.

Like you're still sort of stepping off the script a little bit and and stepping off the script a little bit helps you to see that you can step off that there's something outside the script, and because it exposes you to all the other people who are doing kink in different ways and you can, start to think like oh well i might want to taste this i might you know i might go over here and.

[16:41] And yeah, maybe in ways it's the same answer as the last one, right?

As the last question, you, you look at perspectives other than your own, um, really go out of your way to read what's been written or jump in or, or listen in on the conversations for people who are at different positions of privilege. Um.

[17:08] You bring up reading a lot and listening to other people what have been the sources for you where you've drawn on that there's also a lot some some things that i've read, that i found really interesting recently um specifically around kink and power exchange there is a uh super cool i'm gonna say new but my brain is bad at time this is it's probably actually been out for years now there's a book called uh hurts so good that is a are you familiar, yeah yeah yeah this is great study of uh pain for pleasure not just in like a bdsm sense but in a a like spread out to connect it to everything from ballerinas to ultra runners to hot pepper eaters that i thought was really insightful about understanding what what is up behind masochism.

[18:12] And uh another more recent book called please scream quietly if you're familiar it's uh uh by okay i've only read her name i haven't heard her name so it's julie fennell or maybe fennel i'm not sure um i've seen the name yeah but it's a uh sort of ethnography of the kink scene particularly around the mid-atlantic of the u.s that's neat because she does a lot of actual like it's not just her perspective it's a bunch of research she sent she uses questionnaires and interviews to bring together a lot of different perspectives on what people are actually doing and how it's changed.

[19:02] So the other part about this that we often don't talk about is to get actual consent from all partners. There's a lot of talking.

And we often don't teach men in our society how to have extended conversations.

Like, you know, little girls go off and they have all of these talking things.

Boys play differently generally.

What did it take to get really comfortable having the conversations?

Because some of them are easy. Some of them are not so easy with partners, you know, for you, just how'd you get comfortable with all that communication?

Man, have I gotten comfortable with that? I, I feel like I'm working on it.

[19:48] Practice, practice is a big part of it. Finding partners who are, are ready or willing to engage, ready and able to engage with you on that also because i think that's something that actually most people don't get a good grounding in i mean maybe there maybe it's somewhat better for folks who are raised as little girls and then people who are raised as little boys but in my experience everybody's sort of grasping for how to have good intimate communication um i got a lot out of and continue you to get a lot out of the the non-violent communication track and their methodology, both in terms of specific tools to learn and use and also.

[20:41] As a way to see what the possibility is right to to look at a model and say like oh there's, like i feel like i started out not even knowing what it was i needed to learn about having deep and productive conversations and just seeing you know people talking about how they solved these different problems and were able to to you know improve their skill in these different ways was helpful just being like oh i didn't even know that was a problem um or that that skill was as possible.

[21:20] I think that comes up for a lot of us because this is a continually lifelong journey with kink.

And part of that is discovering what your limits are.

Most of the conversations represented in the wider kink world is that bottoms or people on the right side of the slash have limits because we're the ones who could get more physically hurt and all that.

But dominants have limits. And so let's talk about a little bit about finding your limits as a dominant and communicating those. Yeah.

[21:55] That's important. You're right. Everybody's got limits. Nobody is Superman.

And I think we are often held up by the romanticization of no limits, which is a very romantic idea, right?

Wouldn't you love to be able to just do whatever you wanted?

But even just physically, we all have limits.

And so it's a great sort of, if taken lightly and with some understanding, it can be a fun kind of a fantasy.

See but uh we i think we often yeah our sort of kink culture takes it too seriously and tries to be too literal about being limitless and yeah there's a lot of pressure for people who want to dominate to like we're supposed to be able to dish out anything basically right we're always supposed to be above and bigger than and um you know if we have any kind of limit to our our capacity it's it should be so far beyond the the bottomy person that they never have to worry about it or think about it right is is the the romantic ideal and uh that's that's impossible um i think.

[23:24] You know if you practice kink long enough you you bump into those limits and if you have if you aren't able to talk about them you start having bad experiences and there's your motivation right is that you would like to stop having bad experiences you've got to learn to, be straightforward and and upfront and clear about like okay this is too much for me um whether that's a practical thing like a limit of skill because often people who are on any sort of topish side are getting pushed to do things that maybe they're not actually confident doing right um and that can lead to bad times for everybody and injury for the bottom um emotional limits right like.

[24:14] Like we, we, we on the top side are often also supposed to have a very two dimensional cardboard set of emotions.

We're supposed to be always cold and controlling or whatever, right?

Always ravenous and, uh, and sadistic and, and we're not, we are human beings.

We have a range of feelings that include things like insecurity and sadness and like needing to be cuddled.

And so we're often pushed by partners to to not acknowledge those um and yeah it you you have to find the courage to stand up for yourself and and speak those limits and only settle for partners who are gonna really honor them and maybe one of the key insights is that kink, conversations around kink often come with a deep and unstated assumption that.

[25:18] The the top wants every bottom right the top should the top like consent is for bottoms because why would a top need to not give consent because the top always is a yes that you know you should be able to dominate any everybody and you should want to dominate everybody and there isn't a lot of space there for dominance being sort of choosy um or at least choosy in ways other than like you you aren't enough bottom for me.

So I will take the bottom of your bottom, um, to be, but be able to, to really stop and think about your own consent just in the, like, do I want to do this? Do I want to do this with this person?

[26:02] And once you start thinking about whether or not you want to do this as like a real question that you might be able to say no to your limits start to show up, because you're like oh yeah i mean this person will do all the kink things that are on my list of kink things but you know they aren't nice to me i don't want to do that you know you start checking with your heart and your heart is like no that's where you start to find your your like feelings limits i love that you bring that up because that is so rarely talked about in the kink world is that even if the the person who's approaching you may do all of the the fun and dirty things you want there's more to it for dominance there's an emotional connection, with dominant a lot of people can kind of envision how bottoms or subs get pleasure right because things are being done to us for a lot of folks it's a lot harder to understand how do you get pleasure from spanking somebody or calling them names.

So for you, where does that joy and that pleasure come from?

[27:15] Yeah, I think there's a few things mixed all in together there for me.

And I see that mix in different proportions when I look carefully at other people and their dynamics.

I think there's, you know, if we're talking about dominance proper, right, like control, authority, power, there's a tremendous ego rush in it, right? Right.

And I'll admit that, that you get to feel so big and you get to feel in charge.

[27:51] It satisfies a bunch of the kind of patriarchal goals that are set.

They're not just and also sort of capitalism goals, the sort of the dominator culture.

That's what I want. The dominator culture goals that are supposed to make you feel successful of like getting to boss. everybody around and, uh, and be in charge.

And that feels good.

And, you know, you can, you can take that good feeling in sort of a, an unhealthy addict sort of way, or you can kind of come to wrap your head around it and come to terms with it and not need to be the dominator and dominator culture anymore, but still have fun playing with it. Right.

That's big for me. Uh, there is a lot of in all kinds of topping there's a lot of.

[28:47] Pleasure available in feeling good at something like there's a lot of technique in topping and you can be an expert at tying people up or at whipping them and that's fun it's fun to develop the skill it's really satisfying to you know it to then practice the skill and have people be all impressed by what a good job you did that's fantastic and there's you know.

[29:17] But for a lot of people around DS, there's a lot of attraction to structure in their lives, especially if we're talking about long-term throughout the relationship DS, that it gives you a framework for relating that can be very safe for some folks and very smooth.

And like, they just have a better relationship when there's a structure about who gets to decide what and, and how to, how to take care of it if there's any disruptions to, to the relationship.

And I'm just giving a smattering here, right?

There's, it's sort of like you say, you know, why do people like making art?

Well, they like making art for all kinds of reasons, right? But there's some big ones.

But if we tried to make just like a bulleted list, it will never be a complete list.

But one other thing that I think is interesting that I want to point out is that there can be horse trading.

There could be a lot of like.

[30:28] I do this thing and then you do this thing I like, right?

Or that feels good for me. That there can be like, I'm going to give my partner this spanking because my partner is just over the moon about getting spanked and it's very physically, sensually pleasurable for them.

And then I'm going to be the big dominant and I'm going to be like, now you give me oral sex for as long as I want.

And then And they're not only going to do it, they're going to be like all slavishly devoted and enthusiastic about doing it.

And that's going to be fantastic for everybody.

[31:06] That often, in general, kinks don't have to perfectly line up so that all the partners involved equally directly enjoy all of them.

You can find ways to intermingle your pleasures so that each person is getting what they want and giving what the other person wants.

And I like that you bring up that they don't have to align.

A lot of people, especially newer to kink, will have a list of you have to have all these things to line up.

And I've even seen now on FetLife and some of the other social sites of, please fill up this application to be my submissive and prove that you can do all the things, right?

Which can be its own kind of little role play that people do, right? It can be sexy to be like, oh, I have to apply.

And then they'll choose whether they accept me or not. Oh, my goodness.

But they don't have to perfectly align in any way. Anyway, and the other thing that I like is you've been in this long enough to know that things change, limits change, desires change.

As you've aged, how have things changed for you?

[32:21] Um, certainly my, uh, my toy bag has just shrunk and shrunk over time.

Um, when I, when I first got to get involved in like a in-person public kind of kink community, the thing that everybody did was flogging.

It's like rope is now you went to a party, there would be a line of crosses along the wall.

There would be a line of bottoms on each cross. There would be a line of tops for each bottom, whack, whack, whack, whack, whack away with the floggers.

And so I got a flogger because that's what tops did.

And I learned to flog and it took me, I don't know, a few years to realize that I just, it just didn't interest me at all, actually.

Um and to sort of move start uh getting deeper into what i really want instead of the the kind of what everybody's doing the the cookie cutter image of what a top does um and that has been a continuing trend where like i don't have a lot of equipment i use at this point it's because i've And this took me a while.

I've narrowed down that what I'm really interested in is the DS.

It's the playing with authority.

[33:43] That wasn't apparent to me at first, right? I had these images in my head.

I had these stories I read, and I knew they were sexy, and they involved authority, and they involved spanking, and they involved chains, and they involved all these things.

I knew that like that stuff was sexy, but it's not like I automatically understood exactly what part of it was sexy.

I had to try it all for a while.

And so I've kind of, it's been a big focusing process for me of figuring out just what the bit is that is really the core of what I'm into.

[34:22] And you bring up that you know there's always there's a trend of what is the popular play right and rope we started this season with mix bliss um talking about uh rope and bondage and all of that and how suspension used to be a very edge play thing yeah it was very centralized there's a lot of pressure especially as you're coming into the community to develop skills around whatever is popular and a lot of folks have a desire to fudge their resume for how skilled because it takes a while to develop these skills yeah i know especially if you're you know a cis guy to admit that no i don't really know what i'm doing here can be very tricky so what would you say to folks out there who have that need to kind of fudge their resume of their skills as a dominant yeah the big thing is that while it's really hard to believe this you will get so far.

[35:24] With humility um i you know i'm not just telling you you should do it i'm telling you it works that if you walk into spaces where you might find partners around kinky stuff and you're the person who says hey you know i'm learning and i'm exploring and are you interested in starting small and learning and exploring with me it it tends to result in people feeling like they are safe with you and people feeling like it's not intimidating to connect with you and.

[35:59] Off you go and then you can learn with people right um whereas trying to fudge your way.

[36:07] While it it feels less vulnerable because you don't have to admit that you don't know things you actually don't get as far with people and then also of course you end up getting in over your head and getting into situations where you hurt somebody or uh you just don't give them the time that they expected you to give them and then they start you know telling their friends about about that and it goes south wow it really can um i want to touch on briefly aftercare for a dominant or a top because that aftercare is almost completely focused on the submissive yeah do do tops do dominant need aftercare in general in general yeah you know i think.

[37:00] Kink tends to be an intense and a vulnerable experience for everybody involved, and that we should always expect that it's not just going to come to a rapid end and everything goes on as though nothing had happened.

And that, yeah, people on the toppy side often want, need, benefit from some kind of denouement to kinky things we do, and that it's very individual.

The other thing that I often notice about aftercare is that there's a lot of very strong tropes about what aftercare is, and that in reality, different people need different things and need different things at different times.

And, you know, instead of having your aftercare bag with all the things that you're going to going to have available for your partner after a scene, you should be better to just have like a couple hours and that you don't have anything else planned and you're going to talk with them afterwards about what they actually need.

[38:20] But i think often often people who are topping dominating after they've had a intense experience they want reassurance that their partner knows they're a good person and you know doesn't think they're actually a big evil monster sometimes what people want is like a.

[38:43] A gradual coming down from the power high where they're still treated with some exaggerated respect and deference for a while afterwards and it feels really like dropping to be like okay the color came off so screw you now you know i'm gonna go go back to uh being sort of dismissive or or uh very independent so you know those those two sets of needs might be pretty different and you gotta figure out which right well and i found the longer you have a relationship with somebody in a ds setting the more that evolves and the more you really understand what each other needs yeah hopefully and for me that that that's where a lot of the bonding comes in like Like, I'm into more of the extreme degradation, humiliation, that type of stuff.

Love it. But to come back and just light his cigarette and sit at his feet and tell him, you know, yeah, I know you still respect me, even though you just called me all of these horrible things.

And thank you for that, because that was really hot, you know?

Even though and perhaps more because of. Right.

[39:57] Yeah. Yeah.

Talking briefly about power exchange gets really complicated for me because, uh, I think so many things are very different in those different, different in like the long-term bonded relationship context versus the occasional play partner context versus the pickup play at a conference context, right? Right.

And I can often, I think I can tell what context people are assuming when they do write about power exchange.

They'll write something like, you know, you absolutely must schedule an aftercare session after every scene.

And I'm like, yeah, that's probably true if you're doing pickup play at a conference.

Whereas in my long-term bonded relationship, the relationship is our aftercare.

Like, that reassurance that, you know, we still care about one another and that we respect one another and that we are going to support one another is, like, the fact that we are married.

[41:10] Where do you find joy in kink?

[41:15] Oh, all over. I guess one big place that I find joy and kink is in the seeing people and myself get the freedom to access their passions fully and on their own terms.

When it's really working well, that's what I see is that it is a way for people to escape from a whole lot of shoulds and scripts and prescriptions about what you ought to want and what sex ought to be and what relationships ought to be and what passion and joy are.

[42:10] Ought to be and really let themselves get closer to what it is for them what are you currently grateful for also many things i will go with i am i am currently in and always grateful for the the excellent people who have chosen to submit to me and the devotion that they give me and the way that they let me.

[42:46] Access and play with this like fucked up kinky dominant desire that is like something that nobody ever really has a right to to do to people but that i get to do because they they uh so want me to do it to them that's fantastic if our listeners want to find your book if they want to take a class from you if they want to connect with you plug all your sites you can you can find I find all of my educational stuff in one place on the website.

That's consensualdominance.com.

That's got all my books and a bunch of essays. Whenever I feel like writing something, it goes up there.

And if and when I do classes, they'll go out through, I'll announce them on a mailing list that you can find on that site.

You can follow me as mr fullman on fat life too if you want similarly whenever i do any, educational professional kind of stuff i will i'll mention it there and listeners will have all those links and more in the show notes thank you so much for being on the show it was wonderful to connect with you my pleasure thanks for chatting.

[43:59] Music.

[44:30] Thank you for listening to this episode of Fat Chicks on Top.

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