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Guys We F****d

podcasters take on slut-shaming at JFL42

+ local women find their voice in the new medium

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Corinne Fisher (left) and Krystyna Hutchinson



STORY BY MICHELLE DA SILVA

SEX, LIES & PODCASTERS

Guys We F***ed's Corinne Fisher (left) and Krystyna Hutchinson hilariously subvert sexual stereotypes at JFL42

Dee Guerrero

GUYS WE F**ED PODCAST** performing at JFL42, Thursday (September 21), 9:30 pm, Queen Elizabeth Theatre (190 Princes'). \$35, passes \$55-\$299. jfl42.com.

There's really great sex. There's really bad sex. Then there's the stuff in between – the one-night-stands and hookups that leave you wondering, "Was it as awkward for them as it was for me?"

Most people never find out. You either don't see that person again or you don't ask. But what if you asked? What if you got direct feedback on what you were like in bed? And what if you did this on a podcast – with thousands of listeners?

New York City-based comics Corinne Fisher and Krystyna Hutchinson launched Guys We F****ed, an anti-slut-shaming comedy podcast, in 2013 for this very reason.

"I got dumped by a boyfriend, had an epic breakdown and sat around for a year feeling sorry for myself and being depressed," Fisher explains. "I thought it might be helpful for me to interview past sex partners to figure out what I was doing incorrectly so maybe I could better myself in the next relationship."

When she told Hutchinson about her idea, the anti-slut-shaming angle was added.

"Krystyna had an experience where she was mistaken for a stripper instead of a comedian, and we've both had instances of being treated differently for being sexual women," Fisher adds.

Their working relationship began in 2011 on a stand-up show called Sorry About Last Night. They hosted the popular weekly web series Girls On Girls, where they'd recap HBO's Girls, before Fisher's broken heart spurred the podcast.

Now with nearly 200 episodes under their belt and over half a million subscribers, they're coming to Toronto as part of JFL42 for a live recording show. Their podcast guests will be other comics attending the festival.

When I reach both women by phone, they're in separate Manhattan apartments. Hutchinson informs me she's folding her underwear after a red carpet event the night before. They admit they're slightly bewildered that such glamorous things are now part of their lives.

Hutchinson recalls the first time she realized people listened to the podcast. She was riding the subway when a young woman next to her blurted out to Hutchinson that she had an STD. She continued talking about the guy she was hooking up with before Hutchinson interrupted, "Wait, what's your name?"

"People feel very connected to me because podcasts are a one-way conversation," Hutchinson explains. "They meet me and feel comfortable because I've divulged so much about my personal life."

On the podcast, they bring on ex-boyfriends and former flames to discuss various topics from sex positions to what it's like growing up Jewish in New Jersey. They handle frank conversations on threesomes, choking kinks, rim jobs and facials with equal parts science and raunch.

“

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Nothing's off-limits except revealing people's real names. Thus, convincing guests to come on the show isn't difficult thanks to the relative anonymity podcasting provides.

"We always ask every person we interview before hitting the record button if there's anything they don't want to talk about," Hutchinson says. "You shouldn't be expected to share every intimate detail, and we completely respect that, but the types of people we usually get are typically more than willing to share."

Although both comedians talk about sex in their stand-up routines, there was something different about sharing these personal details in audio files.

In fact, Hutchinson hid the podcast from her mother for two years, afraid she'd offend her traditional values.

"When my mom found out, she ended up being a guest on the show, and I learned that she had been sexually assaulted when she was younger, which was one of the reasons why she was so protective of me at 16," she says. "Our relationship has changed. We're closer, and we can talk about this stuff now."

But not all new listeners have responded so positively. Hosting a podcast about female sexual empowerment in America's current political climate has been challenging. They hear feedback all the time about how they shouldn't be promoting promiscuity and sex-positivity, but they don't plan on changing what they do.

"A few listeners have asked us not to talk about politics," Hutchinson says. "I wish politics and sex weren't related, but I live in a country where the government has a say over what I do with my body. Until that stops, we can't not talk about politics."

For Fisher, the link between political and private affairs hits closer to home. Her boyfriend voted for Trump in the last election and still supports the president. She hates talking about it and feels forced to defend her relationship from angry strangers who email her regularly.

"Obviously, everyone knows my viewpoint on things. I don't like Trump. Every night I come home and have fights with my

boyfriend about it, but I feel like America's in this situation because we're so divided."

Hutchinson adds that she actually wants to invite more guests who have opposing views and morals onto the podcast.

"It's important to have conversations with people who disagree with you," she offers. "Podcasting is a very democratic form of media because we are not bound by what our sponsors tell us we can and cannot say."

This is one of the reasons why podcasting is growing so quickly, especially among female and non-binary producers, who struggle to carve out space in traditional media. (See related story, page 44.)

For Hutchinson and Fisher, their approach to having their voices heard, whether in podcasting or stand-up, has been the same.

"We just didn't check in with anyone if it was okay," Fisher says.

They've applied the same confidence to their first book, F*CKED: Being Sexually Explorative And Self-Confident In A World That's Screwed, which comes out October 24. After hearing feedback from past partners for years, Hutchinson and Fisher are doling out their own advice based on the thousands of letters, emails – and random subway interactions – they've received over the years.

"Corinne focuses on self-esteem and how to enjoy your sexuality, while I get into the more nitty-gritty sex stuff like anal and three-ways," Hutchinson explains.

She adds that while women often tell them that listening to Guys We F****ed makes them feel empowered and much more open to talking about sex with their own friends and lovers, Hutchinson's favourite feedback comes from men.

"They'll say, 'I didn't know women talked like this or enjoyed sex this much,' or, 'I was really ignorant about a lot of shit and you guys opened my mind,'" she says. "That's really cool to hear and pushes us to keep going."

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Krystyna Hutchinson (left) and Corinne Fisher want women to feel empowered talking about their sex lives.