

Travel Tales
by
Llewellyn Toulmin

Life and Plans of an International Super-Model
Part 5

We are talking with super-model Faviola Dadis, who was caught up in the famous “Phocea” scandal in the South Pacific. This month we ask her what this “party girl” thinks was the best party ever, and the intersection of modeling and “cross-cultural neuroscience.” If you think all models are shallow bubble-heads, prepare to be surprised.

What languages do you know?

I am fluent in English and Dutch, and proficient in Mandarin, German and French.

Where do you live now?

Amsterdam; I sold my house in Las Vegas.

What are your favorite things in life?

Tea, the ocean, music, playing chess, my Rottweiler Mojo, my friends, and my family.

What do you want to do later in life? Faviola and her Rottweiler Mojo

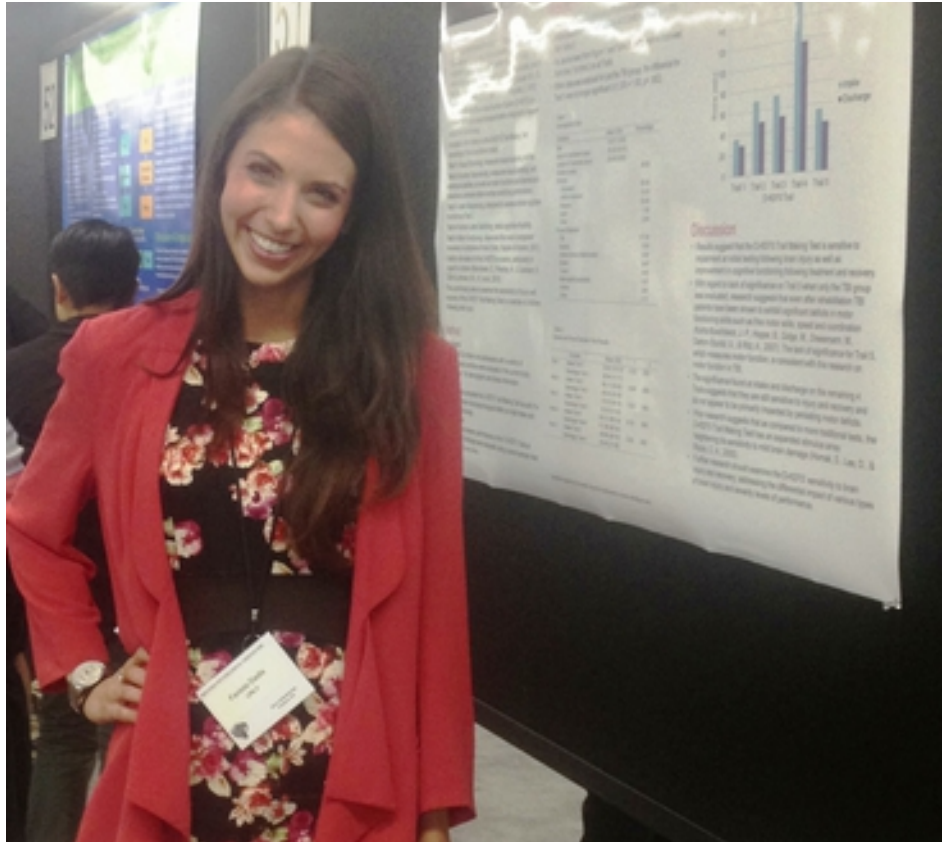
I’m working toward my PhD in neuropsychology and have just been accepted for study at Oxford. A little bit different from modeling and PR!

Press accounts state that you are doing well in biology, calculus and chemistry.

Yes, I’ve studied all those subjects at university and get straight A grades. I’ve been on the Dean’s list three semesters in a row. I am finishing up three studies for publication and editing a textbook on dementia.

On your Facebook page you describe yourself as a “ninja assassin” and “gangsta—self-explanatory.”





Super-model Faviola is also a super-brain, and is studying for a Ph.D. in neuro-psychology at the University of Oxford in England

That's just me being silly, but my nickname in Chinese does mean assassin. I have a tattoo of the characters on the inside of my bottom lip.

Have you studied martial arts?

Yes. I dated a few famous UFC fighters who sparked my interest in martial arts. I've been kickboxing for over 10 years and even got to train in Thailand.

There are photos on your Twitter site of you playing late night chess in a "bondage costume" at the Electronic Daisy Carnival Las Vegas music festival. Tell me about that.

If there's a chess board around you can almost guarantee I'll be playing! That was a very special night though—EDC attracts 300,000 people and everyone dresses up in the wildest costumes you can imagine. My bondage outfit was nothing compared to some of the other people there! The VIP section has a life-sized chess board, so of course we played a few games while we danced and listened to the DJs.

The "Twellow" website describes you as a "notorious party girl." True?

I'd say it depends upon whom you ask. I'm definitely known for being a socialite and party girl, but I have a very serious side also. It's all about balancing work and play.

One website says you were a “VIP host at TAO” (the massive nightclub at the Venetian hotel in Las Vegas) and “got paid to party and dance on tables and couches.” Correct?

Yes it certainly is! So much fun and so much stress—I worked there when the club first opened in 2006 and was the hottest place in Vegas. My clients were all A-list celebrities and it was my job to make sure they were taken care of, and also to provide a guest-list of beautiful girls for the club. TAO created their image by catering to very high-end clientele and I’m proud to be a part of the team that started it. Being a VIP host is a hectic life because you have to be out all night long, then in the office the next day for meetings and booking clients, guest-lists, events, etc.

One story states that you could make \$1000 per night at TAO. True?

That’s about average for a good VIP host at a top nightclub in Las Vegas. We get a base salary and then commissions on guest-list, table sales and bottle sales. Plus tips.

What was the best party you ever attended?

A party I went to in Phuket, Thailand definitely stands out. About 50 of my friends and I rented out the six-star resort Sri Panwa for a week, and took yachts back and forth to private islands all day long where we had massive parties set up. DJs, models, and lifesavers filled with Dom Perignon, floated around in the water. All night we had raves with different music in each villa. Everyone was assigned their own personal butler that would get you ANYTHING you wanted, and in between parties we got massages at the spa. It was epic.

What are your pastimes?

Snorkeling, scuba diving, paddle-boarding, hiking, reading, singing, listening to all types of music, playing chess, painting, and Japanese anime and manga.

Do you collect sea glass?

Yes, since I was little. I like the rare colors -- blue and purple. I would love to find a red piece one day. Vanuatu, Maui, and Bali are the best places.

What books have you read recently?

I recently finished *Red Azalea* by Anchee Min. It’s the true, captivating story about the author’s life in Maoist China.

Do you have any pets?

Yes—a Rottweiler named Mojo.

What achievements are you proudest of?

I think each chapter of my life has had its own achievements. In modeling I'm proud of my contracts with Versace and shoots for "Vogue." I'm very proud of my good grades and determination to succeed in life. In my personal life I'm proud that I've been able to be a good daughter, sister, aunt and friend.



Phoebe was under arrest in Vanuatu for a year, then was damaged en route to Thailand

world!

Do you have any concluding thoughts?

While modeling, PR, and being a socialite have been fun, they were a means to build valuable connections in the business world and pay for my education. I'm dedicated to finishing my PhD, and really enthusiastic about my research in neuroscience. It might seem like the two worlds don't fit together, but it's all about creating balance.

Would you sail on "Phoebe" again?

I might visit her, but I doubt I will ever sail on her again.

Do you ever plan to return to Vanuatu?

Probably not anytime in the near future—say like the next 15 to 20 years!

Lea Toulmin is back in Silver Spring after almost three years in Vanuatu.

What have you done for charity?

I've always been a very active philanthropist—even when I was a child. When I was seven I started a foundation called The Rainbow Group that raised money for the Children's Hospital. I got the idea when a few children with disabilities visited my gymnastics class. I love animals—I rescued three Rottweilers, rehabilitated them, and placed them in homes. Most recently, I started volunteering with Best Buddies, which pairs you up with someone with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

You describe yourself as a "gypsy." Where have you traveled?

It's easier to say where I haven't traveled to and would like to go: Egypt, Nepal, Tibet, India and the Seychelles.

What is your favorite place?

Shanghai and Hong Kong for the parties. Capri, Italy for the amazing Blue Grotto. And Amsterdam because it is home and is one of the most beautiful cities in the