

Trends Like These 221: Robert Mueller SPEAKS!, New Harry Potter Books Coming, Louisiana 'Heartbeat' Abortion Ban, John Wick 3, Faked Nancy Pelosi Video, Uber Booting Bad Riders, Shane Morris's Dumb Lie, R Kelly, and Don't Forget HOT PRIEST!

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Travis: This week: John Wick's beautiful fights, Facebook debate ignites, and Harry Potter rewrites.

Courtney: I'm Courtney Enlow.

Brent: I'm Brent Black.

Travis: I'm Travis McElroy.

Courtney: And I am thirsting over hot priest.

Brent: With Trends Like These.

[theme music plays]

Travis: Hello, Brent and Courtney.

Brent: Hello, Travis, and hello, Courtney.

Courtney: Hello, Brent, and hello, Travis.

Travis: And hello to you, planet earth.

Courtney: That—I—we can't be—

Brent: Oh, wow, the whole planet is listening.

Courtney: We can't be earthist! We have to be like, universal.

Brent: That's true.

Travis: Oh, so now we're gonna be singular dimensional? What about the multiverse?

Courtney: Wow.

Brent: Well, somewhere in the multiverse...

Courtney: You know what? This whole podcast is problematic. Shut it down.

Brent: [laughs]

Travis: Hello reality.

Courtney: Wow, wow, wow.

Travis: Sorry, that cuts off the Matrix. Ugh. Damn it.

Courtney: Damn.

Brent: Yeah, and then you've got the problem of hard solipsism, and a lot of philosophy majors are gonna have issues, so you don't want to say that.

Travis: How about this? Hello.

Courtney: Wow.

Brent: Careful.

Travis: Hm? It's bold, and I like it.

Courtney: Y'know what? You've made a hot take on this day, and a bold statement. You're so controversial and so brave.

Travis: Speaking of this day, it's May 30th, 2019, and it is 5:20PM eastern time. I want to talk about trending news and going behind the lines and debunking and rebunking and seabunking and... be bunking.

Courtney: Just generally bunking.

Travis: We're just bunkin' around, man. Is it true like, to just call us bunkin' friends? Friend bunkin'? Bunkin' up.

Brent: Well, I feel like what that implies... I mean, Travis, you and I kind of quasi-bunked being roommates in college, but...

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Brent: Would it be fair that like, when we all stayed at your house, we kind of sort of bunked? We've bunked.

Travis: We bunked.

Courtney: I'll be in my bunk, nerds. Firefly reference? Guys?

Travis: Yeah, no, I get it. Listen, here's the thing. I'm a dad now, you know what I mean? But I can admit that there was a time when I bunked, y'know? Like, it's gonna be hard when my kid gets old enough, and I'm like, "Hey, don't bunk." And she's gonna be like, "Oh, you never bunked?" And I'll be like, "I bunked, yeah. Listen, I bunked. And I bunked, so I know the..." Or maybe I need to let her bunk so she makes her own mistakes. I don't know.

Brent: Yeah, every now and then, I forget, but I have a flash bunk.

Courtney: You bunked. You bunked so that Bebe could run.

Travis: That's so beautiful and true, Courtney. Um, I saw, by the way, Courtney, I enjoyed your post about the carts... not taking your cart back to a cart corral because you have a kid with you.

Courtney: Thank you, yes.

Travis: I have a two and a half year old, and the idea of not taking a cart back because she was with me has never occurred to me. Like... I put my groceries in the car. I take her and the cart to the cart corral. I take her out

of the cart, and I go to the car. Like... that's just always logically been the progression of the offense for me.

Courtney: I mean, that's just what it is. Now, I'm going to start working on—this is a thing I'm gonna actually start working on in therapy, is not trying to defend myself to like... two people. If I get like, two or three people calling me out on something, I don't need to respond. 'Cause it's fine.

But I had literally two people kind of push back, and one said, um, "Well, clearly, you've never had postpartum depression." To which I said, "Oh, please tell me more about this thing that I have written about many times that I had twice that is the reason I can no longer have children because it was so dangerous I would die if I did it again. But I still put my fucking cart away." But I'm just not gonna engage with that anymore.

Travis: I would also say to that that the person did not tweet "I was unable to return the cart because I have postpartum depression." But rather, "I didn't return the cart because I have a kid," which, those are two different statements. Like... one, you would address in the way that you did. And one, you might have addressed differently. Like... okay, cool.

Brent: Yeah. I think a lot of the calculus on who you clap back at, and who you apologize to on Twitter is just all context. Like, I've got a lot of wonderful, lovely, but sometimes not lovely nerds that knew me from YouTube, and sometimes their takes are terrible, and I'm like, okay.

But y'know, recently in a teachable moment, I attempted to make a joke about tubal ligation, vis-à-vis the bullshit laws in Georgia and other states, and had some friends of mine going, "Hey, um, I don't know about that joke right now." And it was like, oh, that's completely right, y'know what I mean? It's all about context, who it is compared to who you are, and I don't know. I learn stuff on Twitter sometimes. It's good.

Courtney: And y'know, it's one of those weird areas, too, where it's like, I am admittedly very uncomfortable with conflating, or in any way implying that two things are the same, which is someone being like, obviously physically or mentally not in a place or the ability to do something, versus someone just not fucking wanting to. And I don't like when those two are

put together, because it implies that they are somehow the same. And I don't like it, and it makes me uncomfortable.

So for people who are like, otherwise able-bodied. And I'm not saying, based purely on the appearance. Just put your fucking cart away. This is not about that. I'm not judging anyone who like, physically or, like, y'know, otherwise cannot. I get it.

Travis: Obviously.

Brent: Sure, of course.

Courtney: I get it. But, I will say, I had debilitating postpartum depression, regular depression, anxiety... I still put my fuckin' cart away. And y'know what? If I can, at the end of the day... some days, I forget to take my meds. Some days, I don't manage to get out of bed. Some days, I don't manage to get a drink of water. But if I can put my fucking grocery cart away, then maybe I'm gonna be okay. Like, maybe I can survive this day. So be the cart return you want to see in the world. Thank you for coming to my TED talk.

Brent: Nice.

Travis: Y'know, this is a lot like when I tweeted about how I think Back to the Future 3 is the best Back to the Future movie, and is kind of a similar, y'know, I get—I get stuff. People were like, "Ohh, Trav..." Actually, I just got a lot of people saying, "I think you're right." Or, "I respect that opinion." It was actually a fairly lovely Twitter moment as far as the things go. Everyone seemed, uh, to accept that my opinion was my opinion and not me stating facts. So thanks, everybody.

Although, I will now say, privately, on this public show: it is fact that Back to the Future 3 is the best Back to the Future movie.

Courtney: I respect, and I agree.

Travis: Thank you.

Courtney: I think it is the most narratively... in terms of like, pure sequeldom...

Travis: Yes, yes.

Courtney: If we're gonna compare two and three, three is the most complete, sensible movie with the strongest story and the strongest performances. Also, Mary Steenburgen is eternal, and is perfect, and she is forever.

Travis: Yes. Yes. So, you have listed one of my five points of my five point explanation of why I think Back to the Future 3 is the superior movie. One, it is the most coherent, I think, of a beginning to end storyline, without a lot of dips and ducks. I really like Back to the Future 1, don't get me wrong. There are just a lot of like, "Well, now we gotta do this. Oh, shit, what about that?" And I think that Back to the Future 3 is a very coherent story.

Two, beautiful. Just between the set pieces of like, being in like, the beautiful desert and old west and that kind of thing, and also beautifully shot. The costumes are amazing. Everything has that really wonderful, rich brown and tan, and oh, it's so great.

Three, um, I think it's the one in which Marty and the Doc are like, have a preexisting relat—because in the first one, we see Doc from the '50s with Marty, and in the second one, we see a lot of Doc from the '50s with Marty. And this one is like, this is the Doc that knows Marty, and they are together for the majority of the movie, and it is the one in which they are mostly like, two adults in the world, hanging out together, without a lot of like, power, weird power dynamic, getting to know each other, who is who.

Courtney: Yeah! I love movies where people are just like, friends and care about each other. It makes me happy.

Travis: Yes. They are friends. Um, as a genre piece of like, it also holds up as a western. You have the train robbery, you have the showdown, the duel, the gunning, which is really great. Like, it's... and you have the dance, and all that stuff. And this is my favorite one, and this, I actually want to thank

the person on Twitter who said something about this, because it made me realize a fifth point that I had never considered.

Which is, they said, y'know, but Doc spends the whole movie talking about destroying the time machine. And then, like, builds a new one just to go see Marty? And what I realized was, yes, but if you think about it, he spends the whole movie talking about destroying the time machine... and then he meets Clara. And then he has kids. And basically, he buys a minivan.

He goes from having a DeLorean – which maybe comfortably holds two, maybe three people – to having a minivan in the form of a flying steam train, so that he can take his family with him and show them both time and the universe, and now, he has found a newfound joy in his adventures, because he can—he has people to share it with. And I think that that's actually wonderful and lovely.

And so, that... welcome, this concludes my TED talk about why I think Back to the Future 3 is a superior Back to the Future movie. Brent, do you have any takes you would like to share with the audience, and then maybe defend?

Brent: Um, well, y'know, if we had an entire Max Fun bonus episode, absolutely. I just want to make sure everybody knows that the one flaw, or perhaps crowning moment of the film, is a shot where I think the director and the editor just missed this thing. But when you meet – spoiler alert – when you meet Doc Brown's children at the end of the movie, there's this quick moment where one of them like, does like a "come here" beckon with his hand, and then, points to his crotch in this really random way.

Travis: Huh.

Brent: It's amazing. Have you never noticed that?

Courtney: It's just kids needing to go potty.

Brent: That's the thing. It's like, he's holding—

Courtney: They just gotta go.

Brent: He's holding his stare. He's not moving at all. He just does this weird little hand movement that's like, what were you doing? Anyway, everyone should YouTube it after they listen to the show.

Courtney: Also, the score—the score of Back to the Future 3 is very good, and the song that plays at the dance with like the ZZ Top old timey guys is very fun to mouth trumpet to, 'cause it's just like, [mouth trumpeting]. I do it all the time.

Travis: Also, the guy in Back to the Future 3 who was working like, the gun game, the shooting game, is the guy who plays Lyle in uh, in Blazing Saddles. Um, which leads me to believe that Blazing Saddles and Back to the Future 3 take place in the same universe.

Courtney: Brooks to the Future 3.

Travis: Yes.

Brent: Nice.

Travis: I also want to say, Brent, to your point, it is also one of the most stand out things. I think it's the younger kid in that scene. And this isn't about the looks of a child, but rather, the face he is making is like, a very like, Damien Children of the Corn-esque face.

Brent: That's the one! That's the—the blonde one. I think it's Vern. I don't know if it's Jules or Vern, but he's just like—

Travis: I think it's the second kid, yeah. It'd feel weird to name your older kid Vern and your younger one Jules.

Brent: Yeah, he's got a real mannequin look on his face. Yeah, it's—it's really worth watching that clip, just for the sheer, "What?" of it. What are you all drinking?

Travis: Oh, very good question. I am having a Urban Artifacts Pinwheel Orange Gose, and right next to it, I've got an Urban Artifacts Key Punch Key Lime Gose in reserve.

Brent: Well, that's lovely.

Courtney: I am drinking a wine. I don't honestly remember which one it is. It's a pretty bottle from Benny's. But more importantly, with my wine, I am drinking... so—

Travis: [Borat voice] My wine!

Courtney: [Borat voice] My wine! Clever. With us. Topical. Uh, there is a... do y'all know they make a 40 ounce rosé?

Travis: What?

Brent: No.

Courtney: It's a 40, and it's got rosé in it.

Brent: Is it some high gravity rosé? Is that what we're talking about?

Courtney: It's just rosé in a 40. And it's good rosé. Do not mistake me. It's very good. So I've been using it as a water bottle, because I just want to keep the bottle. Now, look, we can get into the questionable aspect of turning, y'know, 40 ounce bottles into this like, very like, somewhat expensive, basic, white thing. But y'know what? Instead, what I'm gonna do is just like, enjoy these 40 ounces of water that I've poured myself.

Brent: Do it. Do it.

Travis: Hey, y'know, we have a little bit of a light episode this week, so I want to ask you two. Just, this is, y'know, not trending news, and we... little bit of self-care corner. What's something you're looking forward to this weekend?

Brent: I'm looking forward to telling you guys what I'm drinking, sir.

Travis: Oh, yeah, right. Sorry. Brently, I'm sorry that it seemed like I wasn't interested.

Courtney: Brent's self-care is including himself in this podcast.

Brent: It's true. Well, and all the time. No, I'm just—I'm drinking water. I just felt left out. The end. Sorry. Self-care.

Courtney: Wow. Glad you interrupted us for that. Is it even in a 40 ounce—

Travis: I am glad.

Courtney: Is it in like, a 40 ounce wine bottle or what?

Brent: Not yet.

Courtney: Oh, do it.

Brent: But I might just follow the trends.

Courtney: Live my life.

Brent: Like Courtney's.

Courtney: Courts like knees?

Travis: So what are you guys looking forward to?

Courtney: I am looking forward to... let's see, here. What do I got going on this weekend? I'm gonna have, like... my children.

Travis: Oh, well that's nice.

Courtney: I always look forward to them. They are very good small human people. Um, I am looking forward to... oh, y'know what? Farmers' markets. Farmers' market time is my self-care time. I love farmers' markets.

Travis: Ooh!

Courtney: So like, in uh, in Springfield, Illinois, the Old Capital Farmers' Market is a lovely farmers' market downtown. And there is this one stand. And I'm going—like, look. I know that the demographic of Springfield area people, or people who will visit Springfield and listen to this show... it's not like, huge.

But for those of you who do, there is this stand. It's like a home bakery called Simply Grace, and they do uh, macarons. Like, homemade macarons that are the size of a goddamn burger. They're enormous, and they make me so happy, and I get three every week and eat them in like, one sitting, and it's fine.

So that's my self-care, is just giant-ass macarons.

Travis: Brent?

Brent: Um, if I were going to be a man who uses wordplay, I'd call those macro-macarons. But I'm not going to.

Travis: Ooh.

Brent: 'Cause I'm not that kind of guy. Um, I am going to an event in Virginia soon called MAGStock. It's sort of a camping offshoot of MAGFest, and it's like a bunch of nerds, typically drawn together by either video game music or just sort of nerdy DJ chip tune stuff. But we all go camping.

Courtney: This is where you do those shrooms?

Brent: Well, that's the thing. I did a buuunch of shrooms in one go last summer, and it was... it was... I learned some stuff, but I think this time I would rather not, y'know, spend hours thinking that I'm fine, but really, I'm telling people that all shoelaces are tied and untied at the same time, and wondering if the wizard cosplayers are really there. So I'll probably not do shrooms this time.

But I'm looking forward to being out in nature, seeing a bunch of my cool friends. It's gonna be awesome.

Travis: Uh, I am going to, here in Cincinnati, the Bunbury Music Festival.

Courtney: Ooh!

Travis: Which I bought tickets to forever ago, solely because Fall Out Boy, my favorite band, whom I have never seen in concert, is headlining Friday night and playing a concert. I was like, well, they're gonna be in Cincinnati, I'm gonna go. And so, I bought tickets, and then, I have remembered, and then again forgotten that I am going to it several times over the course of that, to the point where I had it like, tacked up on the wall behind my desk. And today, I turned around and looked at it and said, "Oh yeah, that's tomorrow." And I completely forgot.

Courtney: I have to do that a lot. Julian's birthday party is this weekend, and she is having a dance birthday party, like, at her dance school. Uh, we can like, rent the space, and a dance teacher comes, and they teach her and her friends a dance. And it's adorable. And she wanted it to be... I asked her like, what is the theme? What do you want to do? Some kids do Disney theme, and some kids do this.

And she said she wanted it to be... Britney Carly Gaga. So it's Britney Spears, Carly Ray Jepsen, and Lady Gaga. If you were wondering if this is my child, [whispers] this is my child. But I have had to like, put it in my calendar every single day saying like, Saturday is Julian's birthday party. Saturday is Julian's birthday party. Because I have that thing where like, I know that like, June 1st is her birthday party. But I don't realize that that means that's Saturday.

Travis: Yes.

Brent: Now, real talk, guys. We all have Macs, right? None of us use Windows?

Courtney: Yeah.

Brent: Okay, so, I don't know if this is a life hack that only I do, but boy do I do it a lot. First off, the calendar app, you can customize on your desktop, not your phone.

Courtney: Oh, I have it on both. I got things just blowing up all day, every day. I have to.

Brent: That's the thing. I keep my reminders going if it's a big event. Like, I'll have it remind me two weeks out, one week out, two days out, one day out. But also, I'm constantly telling Siri, "Remind me in two hours, blibbity flibbity flop."

I do it for laundry. I do it for everything, just 'cause like, I'm a little bit forgetful. My meds make me a teeny bit foggier. So Siri is like a wonderful administrative assistant.

Courtney: One final last like, self-care corner thing, 'cause I'm gonna get to another show that like, I care very deeply about, and I care about so much that I had to make it a Beyond the Headline. But I just watched the entire first season of Succession, and I cannot recommend this show enough. It is like, already scratching my Game of Thrones itch.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Courtney: But it's like, modern, and like, current, like, sociopolitical rich family dynamics, and it is incredible, and the cast is stupendous. Cannot recommend enough. Watch Succession. Kieran Culkin, you're gonna get pants feelings. That's the risk you take.

Brent: Um, before we get to headlines, or Beyond the Headlines, I think we just have something Travis found. Travis, do you want to read the headline of the week that you found?

Travis: Headline of the week: "Owners of a Noah's Arc replica file a lawsuit over rain damage."

Brent: [laughs] I love it.

[theme music plays]

Travis: [singing] Somewhere, beyond the headlines... somewhere, beyond the headlines...

Brent: Brilliant.

Travis: Y'know, sometimes, you think of a joke, and you think, "There's no way I haven't made that before." Have I made that before? I don't remember ever doing Beyond the Headlines as Somewhere Beyond the Headlines.

Brent: Well, the thing is—

Travis: It feels so obvious.

Brent: I don't know, because as... I mean, I remember, Travis, when you were first—the first few years of My Brother, My Brother, and Me, talking about how sometimes, fans remember a bit. But if you talk for over an hour every week, you don't always remember every little detail. And so, the fun thing about that is, maybe you have. Maybe you haven't. I, in this moment, have no idea.

Courtney: It's Schrödinger's Beyond the Headlines.

Brent: Yeah.

Travis: Yes.

Courtney: Yes.

Brent: But the O has two dots over it in 'beyond,' because Schrödinger does, too.

Courtney: Wow. Beaut.

Brent: Yeah. I'm gonna jump into it, here. So this week, Uber, the app that sends a stranger to pick you up and take you somewhere, unveiled a new policy—

Travis: That sounds terrible.

Brent: I know. Um...

Courtney: That almost made wine come out my nose.

Brent: [laughs]

Courtney: That does not feel good. It does not feel good when wine comes out your nose.

Brent: [laughing] No. No, you're...

Courtney: I don't care for it. It's a waste of wine.

Brent: Everything's gonna smell like fermented grapes for a week, yikes.

Courtney: [laughs]

Brent: So, Uber unveiled a new policy this week that may change the way riders behave. For years now, Uber has invited passengers to rate how good they think a driver was on a scale from one to five. According to Business Insider, and other sources, drivers with ratings as high as four point six could be on the chopping block, and that's how it's always been.

It's been misreported by sources lately as prestigious as NPR, that drivers have never had a way to rate riders. But I spoke with multiple Uber drivers, including my old roommate, and apparently, they have had a rider rating system for a long time, but riders apparently had no real recourse if they had a low rating.

For instance, if they were a jerk to the driver, left trash in the back seat... um, so, you could find out your rider rating, and I think you still can, through a series of steps. But it seemed to be basically an academic

exercise, because the app pairs drivers with riders automatically, instead of the drivers choosing which ones they want. So a driver will see your rating, but they'll get penalized if they refuse to pick you up once you've been paired by the app.

Well, Uber announced in a statement on Tuesday that going forward, riders will risk being kicked off of the service and blocked from using it if their rating gets low enough. Their statement said, in part, "Respect is a two way street, and so is accountability. Drivers have long been expected to meet a minimum rating threshold, which can vary city to city. While we expect only a small number of riders to ultimately be impacted by ratings-based deactivations, it's the right thing to do."

Now, Uber is a company with many blemishes on its record from the way internal corporate employees were treated, to sexism within the ranks, to say nothing of the low pay and overall risk taken by the drivers, especially before they had tips. But hopefully, the system will make things a little easier for drivers. Courtney, Travis, what do you think?

Travis: I would like just to suggest... I think that, sure, I think this is a good move. But I would like to suggest, uh, both to Lyft and Uber and any ride share service, that one of the things they really need to implement is some kind of process of, uh, complaint system. A grievance system where, yes, I like the idea of, over time, your accumulated average of scores could get you removed. But there needs to be something of like, also, there are one strike behaviors of, if you do this as a driver or a rider, you are no long—you are banned from the service.

Because I feel like, at least once a week, if not once a day sometimes, I see people – and usually women – who use the service say like, a driver came onto them, and when they complained or went to the ride share service itself and addressed it, the ride share said something like, "Ah, okay, well, you won't be paired with that driver anymore." And it's like, well, that's not nearly far enough.

Brent: Right.

Travis: That's not enough. And so, I think that if they really wanted to address, y'know, the overriding issues as far as making their drivers and their riders feel safe, I think there needs to be something in place of like a one strike, y'know, criteria of, if they do something like this, then they're done.

Courtney: This kind of feeds into my thing that makes me feel a thousand years old, but like, I will kind of always have this, where it's the same way as I feel with AirBnB, and y'know, like, all ride share apps. Where it's just like... it's... it doesn't have the same level of scrutiny and like, y'know, like, backing behind it, and training behind it, as these companies that are actually designed to do it.

Travis: Yeah.

Courtney: And therefore, there's less recourse if something goes wrong. There's like... it's all kind of on you, and it makes me uncomfortable. So that's why like, I still like, when I'm in bigger cities, I take cabs. And like, I stay in—I don't stay in other people's homes. 'Cause it makes me feel like I am safer, both as a woman and as a consumer, in places that like, are like, businesses dedicated to this.

Travis: That's the interesting thing, because I think as you head towards making these like, as you said, ride share services and AirBnBs and that kind of thing, make them safer and safer, you're moving towards making them more and more like the businesses that they were created to disrupt.

Courtney: That's the thing. To make them safe and stable, they just become hotels and taxi cabs. Like, that's really what it is.

Travis: I had this happen with like, a food delivery thing. Where suddenly, I realized, wow, I've just given my home address and like, who I am, and like, just brought someone to my house. Like, I think I... somebody like... and they looked inside my house, and they said, "You have a lovely home," in such a weird, like, delivery, that inside my head, I was thinking, "What's that supposed to mean?"

Like, that kind of feeling of like, we are inviting a lot of strangers over to our houses, and we're getting in a lot of strangers' cars, and we're getting in a lot of strangers' homes.

Brent: I mean, from the other perspective, I ran... y'know, when I was living with my girlfriend in 2014, she moved out. I had to find a way to pay her half of the rent, so I would AirBnB my place out on the weekends. And y'know, it... it goes both ways, and I think this applies to Uber drivers as well. You don't know who's getting in your car or coming to your home, and boy, did I... did I... experience some...

I mean like, look. Hotel staff, that's their job. When you run an AirBnB, the things that hotel staff probably doesn't enjoy as much as other things, you're doing. And uh, it was weird.

Travis: Um, so, next... and listen. This isn't really necessarily headlines so much as, I really want to talk about John Wick 3. So far, John Wick 3 has grossed \$176 million worldwide.

Brent: Ooh.

Travis: Other... listen. If you haven't seen John Wick, why haven't you seen John Wick? But in John Wick, dogs play a very pivotal role in the movie series. And I'm not being flippant. I'm not just saying that because I love dogs. It's very true. And in John Wick 3 Parabellum, even more so, there is an extended, wonderful fight scene featuring Halle Berry and two, I believe, German Shepherds. And I came to find out, Halle Berry became a dog trainer, became qualified dog trainer, for this movie, so that she could train the dogs and work with the dogs for this fight scene.

Brent: Huh.

Travis: Yeah.

Courtney: I feel like if you were going to become, like, a full on assassin, Travis, it would be John Wick style. Like, it would be because like, a dog is sad somewhere, and you need to save the dog.

Travis: This is my personal story about this, in fact. Uh, I was supposed to go see John Wick on Memorial Day. I had tickets. I was sitting in the theater by myself, ready to enjoy John Wick, 1:20PM. The trailers roll, and during the trailers, I get a notification on my Apple watch that I've gotten a text from my wife. Oh, what is it? I look down to see. My dog Lily has eaten some dark chocolate covered peppermint candy things. Oh, no.

Teresa calls the vet, the vet says, "Make her throw up." We needed to give her some hydrogen peroxide in order to do that. We didn't have any. So I stood up from John Wick just as the trailers ended, and I walked out to go home and protect my dog as I would do a thousand times over.

Which I also, I tweeted about this, I couldn't stop thinking about how that must've seemed to the people sitting around me, that I was like, "Welp, just came for the trailers. Bye!" And like, walked out of the room. But Lily is doing perfectly okay, everything is fine, and I went back the next day and watched it.

Uh, here's the thing. Here's what I really like about the—if I may. Um, let me start off by saying, I recognize that John Wick is a... a fairly violent movie. But I feel—the series. But I feel like that doesn't really do it justice, because if I were to say the phrase, like, hyper-violent, I would think about films like Saw and like, Hostel, and y'know, these like... or even something like Final Destination, y'know? Where it's like, how dramatic can we make these big, grotesque deaths, right?

Where, this is more just like, a beautifully choreographed... but rather than being danced, it's fight choreography from beginning to end.

Courtney: It's graphic novel violent. Like, that's how I describe John Wick.

Travis: Yes.

Courtney: It's violent in the way that a graphic novel is.

Travis: Like, the action to dialogue ratio, I think, is actually pretty solid. But it is just an enjoyable rollercoaster of a movie, and I will also say, three movies in a row, they have done what I always want from a franchise, which

is, if you look at John Wick 2, at least in my opinion, and once again, opinions aren't facts. This is subjective. But in my opinion, John Wick 2 is like, okay, we made John Wick 1 again, but 5% more. And then, John Wick 3 is, we made John Wick 2 again, but 5% more. And like, that's what I want.

I don't need you to like... but this time, John Wick has an illegitimate child, and also, the aliens come, or whatever. Nope, we're just gonna keep making the same movie, but a little bit more. But heighten it a little bit more.

Courtney: And dogs, dogs, dogs, dogs. More dogs!

Travis: And dogs, dogs, dogs, dogs, dogs, dogs, dogs. Um, and also, Keanu Reeves. I keep waiting for somebody to be like, "Let me tell you a story about what a jerk he is." But every story I've seen, both in print, in like, uh, y'know, magazines and newspapers, and also like, people tweeting about it, or just general social media posts, seems like he's a genuinely nice guy.

Courtney: My boss, Shar, has interviewed him many times, and he is utterly delightful, and there is a video online of um, him discussing how John Wick would kill someone with ice cream if he had to. And it's goddamn delightful.

Brent: Yeah. I always get a kind of like, uh, stoic monk feel from him. Like, he's—or like, a Dr. Manhattan. Like, he's extremely wise and is slightly, like... maybe not exasperated, but like, just slightly over the trappings of this world. Making movies and stuff, but...

Courtney: And has just a big, blue dick.

Brent: Yep.

Courtney: Yep.

Brent: Keanu Reeves.

Travis: This is a weird transition from that thing Courtney just said, but y'know, it was making the rounds not too long ago that—

Courtney: [laughs] If that doesn't sum up this damn podcast, I don't know what does.

Travis: Yes. Steven Colbert asked... asked John Wick. Asked Keanu Reeves something about like, what do you think happens when you die or something like that. And it led to a lot of people talking about the fact that, I believe in like, 2001, Keanu Reeves' partner and their child died.

Courtney: Oh, yeah.

Travis: I believe in a car accident?

Courtney: In a car accident.

Travis: Yeah. And like, I was telling Teresa about John Wick, and I was talking about Keanu Reeves yesterday, and I told her that, and she responded, "Yeah, that can change someone." And like, that was like, a really succinct and wonderful way of putting it, of like, I don't know, it's just... in this day and age, I'm always waiting for the other shoe to drop whenever I feel like, it seems like this person is like, a legitimately good person.

But it seems like Keanu Reeves is a good person. I'm not saying he's a saint, or like, I saw one story people were like, tweeting about what a nice guy he was, and someone was like, "Yeah, I was working security as a strip club that he came into, and he was super nice to us." And I was like, "Aw, cool." Y'know, I'm not saying he's a saint. But I'm saying, he seems like not a bad dude.

Courtney: But there's nothing wrong with that. There's nothing wrong with going to strip clubs.

Travis: No.

Courtney: There's nothing wrong with working at strip clubs. Everything is—

Travis: Not at all. Absolutely. I'm saying that this isn't like... and here's all stories of like, how he came down in a pool of light and fed the hungry.

Courtney: But...

Travis: Like, no, he's just a nice guy wherever he is.

Courtney: TBH, I'd be okay with that. I have a very important John Wick 3 question. How was my sweet baby, Jason "Hang on Man" Mantzoukas?

Travis: So good, and—

Courtney: I love him so much.

Travis: Set up at the end to be in John Wick 4, which has been announced coming May 21st, 2021. He's set up to be in it even more.

Courtney: I need everyone to know that I love Jason Mantzoukas.

Travis: Yes.

Brent: Same.

Courtney: In many ways.

Travis: Hmm, okay.

Courtney: I... it's fine. I could... I would be his beard. If he wanted me to be his beard, I would do it. Like, his actual beard.

Travis: Oh, okay, you mean like, the beard on his face?

Courtney: Not like the, y'know, the reductive gay beard thing. I would literally like, just exist on his face.

Travis: Okay. Um...

Courtney: I'm not gonna dance around that. I want everyone to know it.

Travis: No, yeah, that's... of course.

Courtney: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Brent: Uh... [laughs]

Travis: Um, let's see. I will also say, let's see, what else about the movie? It's just, in general, like... it's also... okay, here's the best thing about it. This is always a thing that like, stands out for me when it doesn't work in movies. But in this movie, everyone's in the same movie. Like, every actor and performer in the movie knows exactly what movie they're in, and they're doing that movie. Y'know?

Sometimes, you watch a movie, and you're like, "Oh, that person thought they were like, in a slapstick comedy, and that person thought they were like, in like a really heady comedy, and that person thought they were in kind of a dramedy thing." But like, in John Wick 3, everybody knows exactly what kind of movie they're in, and that's exactly the job they're doing.

I thoroughly enjoyed it. If you enjoy action movies, if you enjoy like, beautifully done fight choreography, if you enjoy, uh... and it's not even... It's... it also does this thing. This is another... not that this is bad. But y'know how in Fast and the Furious, like, they've all become basically superhuman at this point?

Courtney: Oh, yeah.

Travis: Um, the kind of other side of that that I always enjoy seeing in movies is, I would say, the um... and with Fast and the Furious, I would also kind of put James Bond over there, too. But in a different way, I would say, the like, uh, Ethan Hunt. Your uh, and John Wick in this, and there's another one that's escaping me.

But when you watch a character like, and they're definitely taking a beating. They're tired by the end of the day. Y'know what I mean? Like, they're beat up, too. They are not superhuman. They just happen to barely be winning,

because they are a little bit better. They're a little bit stronger. They're a little bit better of a fighter. Whatever.

But it's not... there is a feeling of like, "Yeah, they could lose. I believe." And in fact, in many points, they do lose, they just happen to survive losing. Like, that's always interesting for me to watch.

Brent: Yeah, it's like a good sports event. You don't really want to see a blowout. Even if your team is blowing them out, it's like, after a while, it's such diminishing returns. The fun is like, the drama, y'know?

Travis: Right. Um, so anyways, John Wick 3. Very good, says Travis McElroy.

Courtney: And y'know what, like, this is not gonna be an anomaly. Like, this is just... there wasn't a ton happening this week in the headline non-political world, and we fuckin' needed to like, care for ourselves. And one thing that I did, but also, I'm not—this trended at least in my circles.

One thing that I did was very quickly get through all of Fleabag, season two. Now, if you have not watched Fleabag, you're missing the fuck right out. Phoebe Waller-Bridge, who is five months younger than me, and that is a thing I am struggling with and will always struggle with, but that's okay, because I'm just happy that she's out there and existing.

Phoebe Waller-Bridge, who also created Killing Eve, has created this show that she also stars in, and it's called Fleabag. And it follows this woman. We never learn her name. Um, the... like, the descriptions and like, reviews, call her Fleabag, just because that's the only thing we have to go on. But like, we never learn this person's name. She is never called Fleabag, anything like that.

It is this woman basically navigating life, dealing with mental health issues, um, trauma, guilt. But it's also the funniest show that I've ever seen, and it's perfect and wonderful and I love it so very much, and I cannot overstate how very, very good this show is. But season two came out—

Travis: Now, I have not seen it yet.

Courtney: Oh, Travis, you'd fuckin' love it. I'm gonna tell you this right now. There are a lot of people that like, I'm not good at knowing what someone will or will not like. You will fuckin' love Fleabag.

Travis: Listen, between you and Tybee telling me to watch it, I'm pushed over the edge. I will definitely watch it.

Courtney: If we both tell you to do something, you do not even breathe first. Just do it.

Travis: I'm done. Yes. I will do it.

Courtney: We are gonna join in this effort together.

Travis: The thing that made it so... like, that now Tybee is telling me about it, and you talking about it makes me want to do, but the thing that Tybee told me that made it very interesting to me is like, direct address to camera.

Courtney: Oh, it's like—it is just nonstop fourth wall breaking.

Travis: Ooh, that gets me.

Courtney: And it's so very good. And I'm not going to spoil anything, but it comes in—it's so very important to the second season, and the thing I'm about to talk about. And I'm not going to say why. I'm not gonna say why, I just want you to watch it yourself and enjoy it. Because God fuckin' damn it, it's so good. No, you're gonna love it. Listen to your girls. We are here telling you the things.

So, season two just came out onto Prime, Amazon Prime, that's where you can find it. I—honestly, this is one of those things I would wholly recommend getting that 30 day trial, 'cause you will knock this the fuck out in like, two days. So if you don't have Prime, can't afford Prime, get that free trial. Watch it, end it. Just beat the system. Take Bezos with your hands.

Um, this...

Brent: [laughs]

Courtney: Second season of Fleabag. There is a character, played by Andrew Scott. You may know him as Moriarty from Sherlock. He plays a character that you perhaps have seen come across your Twitter timeline, Hot Priest. Oh, Hot Priest. He, again, like the titular but not really character, he doesn't have a name. He is just like, the priest.

The internet has named him. The internet's name is Hot Priest, and the internet is right. Fleabag, or whatever, Phoebe Waller-Bridge's character, meets and begins this season-long thing with this hot fuckin' priest. And it is beautiful. It is hot as fuck. And it is also just like, there is a thing that I don't think enough shows realize, where... Fleabag kind of covers it all, where it's like, there's the flawed, female protagonist that is very realistically flawed. And then there is the love interest that sees her.

And that is weirdly rare in film, television, all of the above. Because there tends to be this thing where like, a flawed female character, she's flawed because she's quirky. She's clumsy. Y'know, stuff like that. If she's a protagonist, and therefore not just purely "the bitch," the villain, her issues are less severe, or, rooted in sexual trauma. That is a very longstanding trope that I think many of us recognize. We've talked about it a lot on um, Strong Female Characters, my other podcast.

That tends to be a whole entire thing, where like, sexual trauma is the thing that makes the hero's journey for women. Because what tends to be male show runners can't envision what a woman could possibly go through beyond that. Whereas, in this show, because it is completely like, y'know, show run by a woman who is also the main character, the other main character is her sister. I mean, there are men in the show. There are—everyone in the show is completely flawed and disastrous. But no one is purely good, no one is purely evil.

But it's one of those things you can see yourself in, and for her to like, have a love interest or a person who sees her, understands her, does not judge her, that is fucking rare. So beyond just like, y'know, the headlines, if you will... beyond...

Travis: Well done.

Courtney: Just like, recommending this, this show fucking matters, and I want everyone to watch it. And y'know what, honestly, you can knock this out so quickly, because there's only two seasons. Phoebe Waller-Bridge is not going to do any more. She felt that this story had culminated properly.

It did. It's perfect. I wish there was more. I wish that I could just like, swallow it like delicious water. But I can't, and I want you all to love it, because it's so goddamn good and wonderful, and might make you also feel seen and good. [sighs] I love Fleabag.

[theme music plays]

Brent: Trends Like These is brought to you in part by Green Chef, a USDA certified organic company. Now, all three of us on the show were treated to some samples of Green Chef, and I gotta say, I'm not someone who... I can cook three things. One of them is a bowl of cereal. Um, but, so, y'know, going into this, going into receiving the ingredients for a healthier meal, y'know, I am always like, "Ahh, can I even do this? Do I have the pots and pans?" Answer: yes. And like, there's just a real satisfaction to looking at a complete plate of food that you... that I would never know how to make, but it's easy, and it's fun.

Travis: Y'know, if anybody has listened to basically any of my other podcasts, they—or even this one—they know that I'm a fan of like, meal subscription services. Uh, and Green Chef is no different. I love it. It comes, y'know, you get a bag that has like, all the ingredients right there in it, so you don't have to worry about, "Oh, do I have the right things to make this thing?"

And y'know, for me, I requested the carnivore option, because I enjoy meat. And that comes in the box, too, kept cold by ice packs and there. And what I also really like is, with Green Chef, I requested a family size option, 'cause there's three of us, and Bebe basically eats as much as, I don't know, a grown folk. And so, there's like, enough in there that you could feed like, a family of, I don't know, five or six, I think, depending, off of one meal.

Or, you could make them both, and have meals for yourself for like, the whole week. Whatever you want to do. I really enjoyed it.

Courtney: So, I got the gluten free option. And I got it like... basically, if you get—even if you don't get the family thing, you get at least, like, it's two meals, probably, out of everything. Or like, or one meal. Real talk. I did the southwest fajita burgers. I got one meal out of that. But it was a delicious meal.

Brent: [laughs]

Courtney: But the thing that I love... so like, we kind of have like, both ends of the spectrum here. Brent is like... Brent doesn't cook much. Travis and I both love cooking. And my big thing that kind of kept me from doing the meal subscription boxes for a long time was this thing of like, "Well, no, I love to cook. I want to cook. It's my self-care. It's a thing that makes me happy."

You're still cooking. It's literally just all the like... most of the chopping. Not all the chopping. Like, they'll send you whole carrots, stuff like that, where it's just like, the stuff that is, like, the minor work, or would produce more waste. That's handled. Rather than, y'know, if you're gonna get like, an entire garlic bulb, you just get like, two cloves, and things like that.

And so, you're still cooking. And that's the thing that made me really happy. It's a lot of ingredients that like, I didn't necessarily have in the house that I put together into this really delicious thing. I got um, I got an artichoke braised chicken dish. I got... the other thing that I really liked was um, it was honey barbeque pork chops, and it was just so good, and it was stuff that like, I could easily just go out and buy, but I had it all, and it was there, and I got two delicious meals out of it.

Also, if you get the um, like, the honey barbeque pork chops, there is this... it comes with like, a salad that you put together, and there's a sumac vinaigrette.

Brent: Mmm.

Courtney: That is... I want like, a whole bottle of it. Like, hey, Green Chef, if you hear this, if you want to just send me a bottle, I will talk about this forever, because that was delicious. It was very good.

Brent: One thing I like about it from my perspective is, I'm learning a lot about cooking as I go. Like, y'know, how to cook a chicken thigh. I would've just been like, I guess put it in the oven? I don't know. But anyway, with Green Chef, it's easy to eat well and discover new recipes every week that you'll love to cook, and there's lots of meal plans. I do paleo; or rather, I picked the paleo plan. There's also vegan, vegetarian, pescatarian, keto, gluten free, and omnivore.

Recipes are quick and easy with step by step instructions, chef tips, and even photos to guide you along and help you know how to plate it. So, for a total of \$75 off – that's \$25 off each of your first three boxes – go to GreenChef.us/Trends, and the number 75. That's GreenChef.us/Trends75.

[theme music plays]

Courtney: You know what my favorite shape is?

Brent: What's that?

Courtney: Round.

Brent: Oh.

Courtney: So what if we took politics and made it like, round? Also—

Travis: Whoa, slow down!

Courtney: But also, hear me out on this. Up.

Brent: I had planned a politics rhombus up, but y'know, now that you talk about it, I think a circle might be a better shape to do this in.

Courtney: [laughs] I don't know that the audio is gonna make it in, but I was like, should I start it off? And I'm just like, I don't even say no. I'm just like, I'm just gonna fuckin' do it.

Brent: I'm super happy with it.

Courtney: And hey, hey women. Sisters are doing it for themselves!

Travis: I have heard that, yes.

Courtney: I've heard it a time or two.

Travis: We often need to debunk things as we talked about at the beginning of the show. We debunk a lot of stuff on this show. And in fact, I think we can confidently say that it was one of the main purposes for the show, why this show exists, is saying like, hey, here's a thing.

However, I do think there is a side effect to debunking things on the internet, and I'm gonna get to that in a second. But first, so a week or so ago, a video of Nancy Pelosi started making the rounds on social media. Just in case you don't know, Nancy Pelosi is the speaker of the house, okay, and often the main kind of clash political rival person for Donald Trump. Considering the fact that Nancy Pelosi is in charge of, y'know, the house of representatives, which is now controlled by democrats, so there's a lot of friction there, to say the least.

So, this video of Nancy Pelosi appears to show Pelosi giving a press conference and slurring her words, stuttering, and sometimes making no sense at all. The video was quickly debunked as having been doctored. Someone had slowed down the video in an effort to make Pelosi seem drunk or sluggish.

This, from AP News, Hany Farid, and I apologize if I'm pronouncing that incorrectly, a digital forensics expert at the University of California Berkley, said the video had been slowed down by 75%, creating a significant distortion in Pelosi's speech. "It is not somebody using the latest technology," Farid says. "Anybody can do this."

So it's not even like, a good fake. Apparently, there is a term for when somebody like, uses, uh, basically CGI, computer technology, to create videos whole-cloth that are faked, and they're called deepfakes. And this is what's referred to as a cheap fake, because it is just very simply doctored. Anybody with like, an iPhone, basically, could do it.

Brent: Can I very quickly just explain the deepfake thing? Because I've been wanting to talk about it on the show for a while.

Travis: Yes, go for it.

Brent: There haven't been any huge trending stories about it. But what's scary about deepfakes is, y'know, a computer program now can listen to a person talk, and in the case of public figures, can listen to their speeches, interviews, and replicate their speaking patterns and their voice from typed out text. But also, just the same way that Snapchat can sort of quickly get an idea of the topography of your face and then do stuff with it, it can also scan someone's face in a high resolution picture and then sort of lay it onto a 3D model, leading to surprisingly convincing videos.

I've seen one of Obama. I've heard deepfaked audio of Trump that he didn't actually say. And so, it's good that we're debunking the fact that it's not a deepfake, but just while we're on the subject, these things are probably only gonna get more convincing, and it really makes me wonder how people are going to be able to verify or—

Travis: Well, we'll talk about that more in a second.

Brent: Or do the opposite in the future.

Travis: Yeah, yeah.

Brent: Okay.

Travis: Um, oh, another terrifying thing about deepfakes is that it's used often to overlay people into pornography. That's a thing.

Brent: Oh.

Travis: Yeah. A lot of like, pornography fakes going around. There were a lot of stories about that not too long ago. So that's, I don't know, not great, to say the least. So, even though this video was quickly proven as fake, the videos have millions and millions of views. Giuliani even tweeted – it's Rudy Giuliani. Just in case you were confused. Which Giuliani, Travis? Rudy Giuliani even tweeted a link to one of the videos; though, the tweet has since been deleted.

Trump has also tweeted a video, or linked to a video, that amounts to a super cut of any time Nancy Pelosi stumbled verbally in a press conference. Which is just such the pot calling the kettle black. Like, I... [sighs]

Brent: You could do that with anyone. I actually had a plan when I was more of a YouTuber to take, y'know, 'cause I used to listen to Bill O'Reilly's podcast excerpts to see what he was up to. And y'know, people that read... we do it on the show all the time. People that read text or prepare speeches have little moments where they flub, or they stutter, and you could make a super cut of *any* public figure flubbing and stuttering, to say nothing of our dumbass president.

Travis: Yeah, here's the thing. He is a terrible public speaker. Like, and that's not even... that's objective. That is objectively true, is that he rarely completes sentences, he doesn't finish thoughts, all of these things. And so, for him to be like, "Look at Nancy Pelosi, ha ha ha," it's just so hypocritical.

Anyways, speaking of hypocritical. Also, while I was researching this, watch the video of someone saying, uh, like, during, y'know, a Q&A kind of press thing with Trump, asked him about the personal attacks on Nancy Pelosi. And his response is, "Well, have you heard the stuff she says about me?" And it's like... but you're... so... that doesn't...

Brent: [laughs]

Travis: Anyways. So, um, an interesting part of this story is Facebook's refusal to outright ban the altered video. They have down ranked it, which basically means like, it's less likely to pop up in your feed. Like y'know, it

just gets bumped down and bumped down and bumped down. Hopefully it just stops showing up.

But they didn't just take it off the site, and Facebook has said that this is a decision, "We don't have a policy that stipulates that the information you post on Facebook must be true." And this has led to a debate between one side that believes that Facebook has a responsibility to take down videos like this that are known fakes, and the other side that believes that that would lead to Facebook becoming a censor for content on the site.

And y'know, we've talked before, just before it comes up. We've talked before that freedom of speech only applies to like, I can say something and there will be no government, like... for example, I was recently at Greenbrier Resort in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. And in the Greenbrier Resort is a fallout shelter that was meant to be the backup home for Congress in the event of a nuclear attack.

And after existing in secret for three decades, it was uh, like, there was an expose on it in the Washington Post. And the author of the expose suffered no recourse from the government, because of freedom of speech and freedom of press, right? That's one thing.

Me saying something on Facebook and Facebook saying, "Oh, okay, well, we're gonna take that off Facebook." That has nothing to do with freedom of speech. So, um, this—the debate is very interesting to me. And I suspect that it is going to come up more and more as we head towards the 2020 election. Facebook and other social media had a massive effect on US politics in recent years, and especially on the 2016 election.

And I understand both sides of the debate, honestly, because an edited video of Nancy Pelosi, that's an obvious call, right? Here's the video, here's the unaltered video, great. This is a fake, it should be taken down. But what if, instead of a video, it was just like, someone's grandma posted like, "I heard Nancy Pelosi was a drunk." Right? Well, that's, y'know... no. Should we take that down? Should we ban the grandmother? Should Facebook be going through and removing any information that's put up that's fake? [sighs]

At what point, where does that stop, y'know? And I try to avoid slippery slope arguments, because it's a logical fallacy. There's obviously a difference between someone's grandmother posting something and a fake video going around of a... but, I do see where Facebook would say like, I don't know that it's our responsibility to do that, so much as someone's responsibility to fact check the thing they're looking at.

Brent: Right. And it is, y'know, I think Facebook at least... and if I'm wrong, please tell me, Twitter. But I think that compared to, say, Twitter, Facebook has not set the same number of like, completely inconsistent precedents with matters of speech. Like, I haven't always agreed with them. Whereas, Twitter like, they knock this person off but not that one.

They, y'know... it's... I think that this is really where the rubber hits the road with freedom of speech, because once you get too far into censoring certain content for factuality, well, what if there is a thing that's about Facebook that they just don't like? Or y'know, the fact that all media, including social media, is corporate owned? What if there's... y'know what I mean? There could be conflicts of interest very quickly.

At the same time, it's a real problem. Bullshit being spread around, in the case of the 2016 election, on purpose, and systematically. It's a real sticky wicket.

Travis: So, here's what I was kind of hinting at in the beginning. Here's kind of an issue that, I don't know, maybe you at home have thought of, and maybe you haven't. But I mean, there's the obvious issue with fake videos being posted, right? Of like, well, this is meant to slander and make Nancy Pelosi look bad and undermine faith in these people, or undermine the opinion of these people. And that's obviously the kind of surface level issue with these fake videos.

But I would say that there is also a more, perhaps, insidious underlying issue, which is, leaving those videos up makes it easy for someone to defend something terrible someone actually says or does by saying, "You can't trust any of these videos, they're all fake." Y'know what I mean? How do you know that they didn't fake this, just like they faked that? It becomes this

thing of, you can't trust anything you read on the internet, makes it harder for people to believe the things they should believe on the internet.

If you think about the... I think it was Entertainment Tonight or something, where it was like the Trump, y'know, the microphone left on tape of him saying just fuckin' terrible shit. And people, like... it didn't hit them the same way it might've if it had come out about a politician 30 years prior. Because I think at a certain point, people are like, "Well..."

Y'know, it's something I think about now in movies, where uh, if you watch a movie before a certain point, somebody shows a photograph of something, and everybody's horrified. And after a certain point, you can't really use that as a plot point anymore, because Photoshop exists. Y'know?

Brent: Yeah.

Travis: And like, those kinds of things change over time, and my worry is that we're getting to a point where you could put a video in front of someone of Donald Trump saying something horrendous, and have it not land on them at all, because it's so easy for them to say, "Well, you can't believe everything you see on the internet."

Courtney: On Wednesday, the Louisiana house of representatives passed an abortion ban that would prohibit termination of a pregnancy once a fetal heartbeat has been detected, as early as six weeks. Now, we have discussed these ongoing six weeks bans, but there's one thing we haven't discussed yet, and that is that the term 'heartbeat' is not accurate in this context.

At six weeks, the fetus – and it could also be described as an embryo, but because I'm going to use the term 'fetal pull,' it's y'know, somewhat of an appropriate term. But the fetus doesn't have a heart yet. Fetal cardiac activity is the correct description, at is it the rhythm associated with a developing cardiovascular system.

Now, this may sound like semantics, but I assure you, it is not. Heartbeat as a term is different from the use of like... this like, weird muscular throbbing, y'know?

Brent: Yeah.

Courtney: So using that word is the same thing as using a picture of a cute baby to make people envision late term abortion as murdering a full, live term baby, who would be like, totally fine on its own.

It is designed to pull at the ignorant heartstrings, and use people's medical lack of knowledge as a trick to control reproductive health. If you're going to attempt to legislate healthcare, use the proper terms. Because you cannot legislate cutesy bullshit.

Brent: Fair enough, and well said. So, perhaps the biggest news story of the week, particularly in politics news, involved the nation finally hearing what special prosecutor, Robert Mueller's voice sounded like. I was expecting something a little closer to Jason Statham or Duke Nukem, but still. In a slightly more exasperated and tenor-toned voice than we might've expected, Mueller finally verbally spoke out this week.

Now, democrats in congress have called for him to testify about his report. But in his appearance this week, he said, "I hope and expect this to be the only time I will speak to you in this manner." And he went on to say, "The report is my testimony." He went on to basically say he wouldn't tell anything to congress they don't already know from the text of the report. And like, what is it, a thousand pages? It's huge. Like, it's not like he didn't give them all they need. And he's really not a showboat.

So, what was the core of Mueller's statement? It seems like he continues to be annoyed about how attorney general, William Barr, initially framed the findings, even though he probably hadn't read the whole thing. That's not what Mueller said, but this is a very understated guy. A very apolitical, I should say, guy. But that's just my personal gut feeling about it.

But y'know, William Barr hasn't even given congress access to the nearly complete, unredacted report. By that I mean, the report without certain information that would be illegal to share, like grand jury information. Let's listen to part of what Mueller said, and at the top of this clip, he's referring to the investigation into whether or not Trump committed obstruction of justice. Let's listen.

Mueller: That investigation, if we had had confidence that the president clearly did not commit a crime, we would have said so. We did not, however, make a determination as to whether the president did commit a crime. The introduction to the volume two of our report explains that decision.

It explains that, under long-standing department policy, a president cannot be charged with a federal crime while he is in office. That is unconstitutional. Even if the charge is kept under seal and hidden from public view, that, too, is prohibited. The special counsel's office is part of the department of justice, and by regulation, it was bound by that department policy. Charging the president with a crime was therefore not an option we could consider.

Brent: So he's saying two things. He's saying the special counsel couldn't indict Trump even if they wanted to, because that's unconstitutional according to long standing precedent. But they're also saying they could have cleared him of obstruction charged, but they did not. We already knew that, but his decision to point it out feels like he's trying to reinforce the fact that they did find evidence of obstruction.

Again, not surprising to politics wonks, but important to hear straight from the horse's mouth. He only spoke for about ten minutes, and a lot of it was already stuff that we know. Why they investigated, the two main topics they investigated, the rough order of events, he thanked some people that helped. He also resigned as the head of the office of special counsel, and said the office was hereby closed.

But, he did close the appearance with these words. "There were multiple systematic efforts to interfere in our election, and that allegation deserves the attention of every American." So when you get right down to it, despite the huge, explosive trending headlines, what he said wasn't juicy on its face. It wasn't exactly new. But the fact that he felt the need to say it is interesting. He's basically laying out a set of dots that he's not legally able to connect for us.

He had assumed congress would take action on the evidence of obstruction, but as a body, they haven't. here, he is doing an optional appearance of his

own recognizance. Or is it by his own recognizance? You know what I'm saying. It was his choice, he didn't have to.

To point out that, A, if we could've exonerated Trump, we would have. And B, we weren't allowed to indict him. So the window he's left open includes the very real possibility that he thinks Trump did commit crimes, even if he can't say so. And I think that's why he's avoiding any questions. He didn't take questions from reporters, he's not gonna testify before congress, because you know democrats are gonna ask him 80 different ways, "Do you think Trump committed a crime?" And he is just like, "It's in the report. It's all in the report."

But the fact that he chose to publicly reiterate those two points tells you something. Some political analysts have called this a devastating blow to Trump. Even a fair number of Fox News anchors and correspondents said it looked very bad for Trump. And the appearances led to more calls by democrats to impeach him, including almost all the democrats running for president in 2020. But will anything happen as a result that wouldn't have happened otherwise? Um, well—

Travis: No. Sorry.

Brent: [laughs]

Travis: I have now learned in this year, the year of the universe 2019, that if the answer is, "Is something going to happen now because of this?" The answer is always no. Because I have waited three years now for some... anything... for there to be any effect to the cause. And yet, no.

Brent: Yeah, I think that—

Travis: I'm sorry to interrupt. Please go on, Brent.

Brent: No, no, I think you're right. And I... to me, it's like, you gotta expect the no, because that's just what we're used... I mean, if you're not used to no being the answer by now, you're really just... you need to get used to it, because otherwise, you're going to be more sensitive and feel it every time the answer is no.

But y'know, I think we're all always prepared to be pleasantly surprised by the miracle of actual justice or recourse. So Trump is now claiming Mueller was mad because he wasn't named Trump's new head of the FBI, and that the two of them had a business dispute, and therefore, this creates a conflict of interest. The first claim is bullshit, because Mueller was invited for an interview as a possible replacement for Comey. He didn't invite himself – they asked him if he'd come in for an interview.

Trump like, words it as, "He came in here trying to be the FBI head!" And it's like, you... you asked him to. And the business dispute that Trump talks about was the fact that Mueller used to be a Mar-a-Lago member – that's Trump's club in Florida – and Mueller ended his membership. This is 2011, by the way. He ended his membership, allegedly due to a disagreement about fees. Trump's trying to argue that that made Mueller hold a grudge, which is some seriously silly bullshit, considering Mueller's a guy who has a long, long standing reputation as an apolitical, hard-nosed, y'know, stick to the facts investigator.

Meanwhile, some republicans—

Travis: Y'know, Brent, what's also really interesting about that is, sometimes, when someone makes a claim like that, it's really easy just like, then turn that around and say, that is something Donald Trump would hold a grudge against that would cause him to like, launch an entire campaign against someone because eight years ago, they had a disagreement about like, the fees on a club membership.

Brent: It's projecting.

Travis: Yes.

Brent: The way that people who lie assume others are lying more than people who are honest. Um, meanwhile, some republicans in congress are showing even more hypocrisy than before. Record setting. For instance, senator Lindsay Graham. Back when Bill Clinton was up for impeachment in the '90s, Graham said that any president who ignores congressional subpoenas should be impeached.

And while I think Clinton's impeachment was very different in many ways, uh, that's what Trump is doing. Trump is ignoring and dodging congressional subpoenas now, on top of all the other evidence of obstruction and all the rest of it.

And when Fox News' Chris Wallace asked him about that hypocrisy, he being Lindsay Graham, Graham said he... well, he just said a bunch of bullshit, including the fact that uh, he accused the head of the house judiciary committee, Jerry Nadler, of trying to destroy Trump. But in what way were republicans in the '90s not trying to destroy Clinton? It's obvious rank hypocrisy, and it feels like republicans in congress aren't even trying to hide shit anymore, as we'll see later in a tidbit.

But I would like to end this by noting one of my favorite things to come out of this, which was a tweet by Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez that reads, "Mueller is playing a game of taboo with congress. His word is 'impeach.'" Love that.

Are we tidding some biddings?

Travis: Yeah!

Brent: I want to bring you... I want to bring you tiddings of great joy in bit form.

Travis: [singing] And tiddings of comfort and joy... comfort and joy!

Courtney: [singing] May good tids come to you, and to all your bits, too!

Travis: Nice. And topical, too, with Christmas right around the corner.

Courtney: Oh my God, Christmas is right around the fuckin' corner.

Brent: Yeah.

Courtney: I'm gonna get you guys some tidbits. For Christmas.

Travis: But I got you some tidbits!

Courtney: [gasp] But I shaved off my bits to give you some tids!

Travis: Oh no, I sold my tids to get you these bits!

Brent: Oh, goodness. Wow.

Courtney: I heard it after I said it. [laughing]

Brent: No, the thing is, Courtney... I'm gonna be honest with you, Courtney. I briefly got distracted, and came back not realizing you were doing Gift of the Magi, and I was like, what? In the ten seconds I've zoned out, what have we started talking about?

Courtney: [laughs] Gosh, I hope someone got me bikini zone for Christmas. Anyway.

Brent: [laughs] Gift of the Vagi. Sorry, sorry, I'm sorry. Please, keep going.

Courtney: Gift of the Vagi is very good and I'm proud of you.

Brent: Thank you.

Courtney: But, you may have seen a headline wherein JK Rowling is going to release four new Harry Potter books. And you're like, "Holy shit." But you also might be like, "JK, get out of the well."

Travis: JK.

Courtney: Get out of the well. Move on. Move on. Let it go, Elsa. But, the headline is a bit misleading, because they are not fictional, ongoing continuation of the adventures or any kind of new world. They're literally like non-fiction books explaining the Harry Potter world as we know it.

There's going to be Harry Potter: A Journey Through the Charms and Defense Against the Dark Arts, Harry Potter: A Journey Through Potions and Herbology, Harry Potter: A Journey Through Divination and Astronomy, and Harry Potter: A Journey Through the Care of Magical Creatures.

So if you need to like, care for your magical creatures, like, this book's for you, I guess.

Travis: Can I just say... [sighs] So, the way... the way... the way that JK returns to the Harry Potter well reminds me of like, how there are actors like Nic Cage who, for a long time, just said yes to like, any movie. 'Cause they had like, debts to pay. But like, I know that... just... does JK spend a lot of money collecting like, expensive figurines or something, that I don't know about, and she's actually broke and needs to... or is it just like, she was maybe part of one of the biggest cultural pop culture things in history, and just can't move on? Because I wish—

Brent: She keeps saying she's gonna move on, and then she's like, "JK."

Travis: I wish. I wish I could get excited about these books. But the fact of the matter is, she is a meddler when it comes to the Harry Potter universe, and she can't stay out of conversations fans are having outside of her control.

Courtney: She's like, "No, no, no, I'm moving on for real. Y'all, did you know that Luna Lovegood was super into BDSM? Her safe word was expelliarmus."

Travis: For a second... wait, I honestly don't know at this point. Is that a real thing she said? 'Cause I wouldn't doubt it.

Courtney: I mean, I don't think it is, but if I'm about to get sued because she was about to say it, I get it.

Travis: Okay.

Brent: I think that JK Rowling is like the Kelsey Grammer of young adult fantasy novels. Because—maybe not fantasy—

Travis: Go on. Wait, no, hold on, Brent. Go on?

Brent: Because here's the thing. Here's my hypothesis. Kelsey Grammer was Frasier for like, I don't know, 80 years on two different sitcoms. And then that ended, and he's had this string of other things that people haven't liked him as much in. Boss, Back to You, this new Netflix movie where he's not being Frasier. But we all just kind of want him to be Frasier again.

And when I heard about the potential Frasier reunion, I was like, I wish they'd done it before the guy who played Martin died. But, I'm happy to see Kelsey Grammer in the one role in which I like him again. So it's like, is JK Rowling, in her deepest heart of hearts, does she realize she is Kelsey Grammer? She shouldn't move on, she should just be Frasier again.

Courtney: You know what's so funny is that, uh, JK Rowling recently came out and said that Draco Malfoy's favorite food is tossed salad and scrambled eggs.

Travis: Oh no, you read that wrong. He likes to toss salad and then eat scrambled eggs.

Courtney: Ohh, okay. Gay representation, finally. Thank you.

Brent: Oh, oh my goodness.

Travis: Um, here's the thing. I love Harry Potter. I love it. Would I be excited for more Harry Potter content? Yes. But this is what I'm saying. The problem with being a meddler is like, she ended the series, right? And then said, ooh, y'know what? I'm just gonna keep writing it. And keep changing it. And that just... it... no. No.No. I don't like it.

Brent: Well, I've got one more example of honestly disgusting and bold faced hypocrisy from a republican politician. This time, senate majority leader and Yurtle the Turtle stunt double, Mitch McConnell. You'll remember back in 2016, there was an open seat in the Supreme Court, and McConnell kept repeating the lie that congress isn't supposed to confirm a Supreme Court seat in a major election year.

He cited something he called the Biden rule, which was based on an entirely out of context statement by Joe Biden in the late '80s. There is no Biden

rule. He just called it that. But you'd think, in a halfway sensical cogent world, that if McConnell used that philosophy to block Merrick Garland from becoming the next Supreme Court justice, he would stick to it. Nnno. Just like Travis said earlier, no.

Um, McConnell was asked by a reporter this week what he would do if a Supreme Court justice died next year, a major election year. McConnell smiled like a toddler who shit his pants and said, "Oh, we'd fill it." He said some other bullshit, implying that only republican appointed justices care about the law. He knew he was full of shit all along. So did we, but it still pisses me off to see it presented in just such a shit-eating, shameless manner.

Travis: Uh, another tidbit. On May 21st, Shane Morris tweeted about the time he bought a van for a road trip from Los Angeles to Seattle, found a brick of heroin under the hood, stored said heroin in a freezer, I believe sold it, a year later, sold the van back to the son of the original owner sans heroin. The owner of the heroin, who turned out to be a member of the MS13 gang, threatened to kill him. But before that could happen, the gang member was arrested. Quite the roller coaster, and also a complete fabrication.

Uh, Morris came clean about the lie after supposedly his weed dealer told him that bragging about stealing drugs from MS13 could get him killed. Um, in his apology, he also shared the link to his GoFundMe page, saying he needed money so that he could flee for his life from MS13. The GoFundMe page seems to no longer exist.

Brent: Hmm. Well, just real quick before we go to promos, there's a story that broke literally ten minutes before we went to record. R Kelly has been charged with 11 new counts of felony sexual assault and abuse. Four of the charges carry up to 30 years in prison a piece. We will keep you posted on that story as it continues to unfold.

Nnekay: Hey, I'm Nnekay.

James: And I'm James. And together, we are the self-proclaimed wonder twins of podcasting, and host Minority Korner.

Nnekay: We tackle subjects like LGBTQ topics, pop culture...

James: ... and untold histories of American POCs, like the true stories of escaped slave, turned pirate, turned Navy man in the Civil War, turned congressman, Robert Smalls.

Nnekay: Plus, current events from our perspective.

James: Deep dive movie and TV reviews... You'll also get...

Nnekay: ... awesome book recommendations from their neighborhood friendly librarian.

James: Don't forget my award winning Jennifer Hudson impressions. [singing] And I'm telling you...

Nnekay: While never taking ourselves too seriously.

James: Minority Korner. Because together...

Nnekay: ... we're the majority!

James: Every Friday, here on Maximum Fun.

Nnekay: Maximum Fun.

[music plays]

Aimee: Hello, this is Aimee Mann.

Ted: And I'm Ted Leo.

Aimee: And we have a podcast called The Art of Process.

Ted: We've been lucky enough over the past year to talk to some of our friends and acquaintances from across the creative spectrum to find out how they actually work.

Aimee: And so, I have to write material that makes sense and makes people laugh. I also have to think about what I'm saying to people.

Ted: If I kick your ass, I'll make you famous.

Speaker 1: The fight to get LGBTQ representation in the show.

Speaker 2: We weirdly don't know as many musicians as you would expect.

Speaker 3: I really just became a political speech writer by accident.

Speaker 4: Realizing that I have accidentally pulled my pants down.

Ted: Listen and subscribe at MaximumFun.org, or wherever you get your podcasts.

Speaker 5: It's like if the guinea pig was complicit in helping the scientist.

[music plays]

Brent: Now it's time for our Wi-Five of the week. Each week, we scour the internet for examples of folks doing good things and being good people, and we choose one or more to whom we'd like to give an internet high five, or Wi-Five.

[high five slap]

Brent: Today's Wi-Five goes out to Kodi Lee, and while it's not our usual kind of Wi-Five, it made me very emotional, and I think it's pretty uplifting. Cody is blind and autistic, and recently performed on America's Got Talent. Obviously, there is an ignorant tendency in our culture to assume that some special needs people who present themselves in different ways aren't capable of going on live TV and doing what this guy did. I'm just gonna play an edited clip of his appearance. I think it'll speak for itself. Here it goes.

Mel B: Welcome to America's Got Talent. What's your name?

Kodi: I'm Kodi.

Mel B: Hi, Kodi.

Kodi: I'm gonna sing a song for you on the piano.

Mel B: I love it.

[audience cheering]

Mel B: Tina, tell us a little bit about Kodi.

Tina: Kodi is blind and autistic. We found out that he loved music really early on. He listened, and his eyes just went huge. And he started singing, and that's when I just... I was in tears, 'cause that's when I realized, oh my gosh, he's an entertainer. So...

[audience cheering]

[piano music]

Kodi: [singing]

[audience cheering]

Brent: I've listened to it a few times, and I just... I don't know, my heart swells, y'know? It's a reminder not to underestimate anyone just because they're different. So, to Kodi Lee whose song is now absolutely stuck in my head, Wi-Five.

[theme music plays]

Travis: Okay, folks, that's gonna do it for us. Before we let you go, first want to say thank you to Mustin. Of course, check out Mustin.net. Mustin edits the show. Thank you, Mustin. You're great.

I also want to say, if you are... let's see, if you're in the Nashville or Indianapolis area, um, My Brother, My Brother, and Me and Adventure Zone are coming to your town. We're going to be in, let's see, Nashville on the 14th with The Adventure Zone at the Ryman Auditorium. We're gonna be back at the Ryman on the 15th with My Brother, My Brother, and Me, and then on June 16th, My Brother, My Brother, and Me is coming to Indianapolis at Clowes Memorial Hall. You can get all those tickets by going to McElroy.family, and clicking on Tours.

And also, while you're there, if you are in the New York City area or the Portland, Oregon area, we're bringing The Adventure Zone graphic novel book tour to a couple cities. On July 16th, Griffin, Justin, and Carey Pietsch are going to be in New York City at the town hall. On July 16th, Dad and I are going to be in Portland, Oregon at the Revolution Hall. On July 17th, Griffin and Justin are going to be at the Paramount Theater in Austin, Texas, and also on July 17th, Dad and I are going to be at the Ace Theater in Los Angeles.

And then, on July 19th, Carey, Dad, Justin, Griffin, and I are all going to be at San Diego Comic Con at the Balboa Theater. You can get those tickets as well at McElroy.family. The ticket price includes a copy of the graphic novel. And if you're not able to come to those, and you want to get a copy of the graphic novel, you can go to TheAdventureZoneComic.com. It's really good. I'm really proud of it, and I think you're gonna like it.

Courtney: So you can find my stuff at SYFY Fangrrls where I'm an associate editor, and you can also... I'm gonna say this literally one more time after this, so I can just get the people to come see me. But you can see me at Sleeping Village in Chicago on June 13th for the Jordan, Jesse, Go live show, the Boys of Summer of Summer tour. It's the Boys of the Boys of the... it's something like that. It's one of those tour names, and it's very clever.

But I'll be joining Jesse Thorn and Jordan Morris at Sleeping Village in Chicago on June 13th, and I hope to see people there, because I would love to see some of my people that just like, like me, and are used to my nonsense. Also, I bought a new dress for it, so...

Brent: Lovely. Well, I am the designer and co-creator of a comedy party game, uh, that you can get on consoles and PC and Mac. It's called Use Your Words. More information about that at UseYourWords.lol.

But this is literally the first time I'm saying this publically, but I'm working on a second podcast. It's called Question Box, and it's basically just a game show of shockingly personal questions that you can either answer or pass on, and it's in the works. We're doing pilots, but I just wanted to tell y'all here, because I feel like this audience is my podcast family first and foremost.

So just putting that bug in your ear.

Travis: I think that's gonna do it for us. Uh, let's see. Oh, wait, no! Go check out all the other amazing shows on MaximumFun.org, and that's gonna do it for us. Courtney, am I forgetting anything?

Courtney: Yeah, did you know that like, Fleur Delacour had HPV but no symptoms? JK Rowling told me.

Brent: [long pause] ... See you next time.

[theme music plays]

Courtney: Chime in on our boxes is how I do everything I do.

Brent: That's the name of your next podcast.

Travis: There it is.

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