

**Trends Like These 225: Marianne Williamson Dramatic Reading,
Taylor Swift vs. Scooter Braun, Democratic Debate No. 2, 'Gamer Girl
Bathwater,' Charlottesville Car Killer Sentenced, Dalai Lama's
Douche Take**

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Travis: This week: Dems debate more, Braun and Swift at war, and Dalai Lama's cute successor.

Brent: I'm Brent Black.

Courtney: I'm Courtney Enlow.

Travis: I'm Travis McElroy.

Brent: And I'm gamer boy bath water!

Courtney: With Trends Like These.

[theme music plays]

Travis: Hello, Brent and Courtney.

Brent: Hello, Travis, and hello, Courtney.

Courtney: Hello, Brent, and hello, Travis. But also, hello, America.

Travis: Ugh, see, this is what a Wednesday feels like. Very professional, and very patriotic. Coming to you live from America's heartland.

Courtney: [singing] America, America...

Travis: By which I mean, Philadelphia.

Courtney: [singing] This is youuu.

Brent: To be fair, yeah, I do live where America arguably got its start as a nation. And uh, I'll tell you what – it doesn't make the city any more interesting today. But, it is the birthplace of independence in our great nation.

Travis: Y'know, here's the thing. Ugh... hey, it's uh, July 3rd, 2019. 7:30PM Eastern time. Doesn't fourth of July feel like it should be a way bigger deal than it actually is?

Courtney: I mean, I feel like we deserve it to be what it is right now. Not great.

Travis: By which I mean—no, no, absolutely. I just mean like, if you think about it, the amount of celebration the normal person puts into fourth of July is on par with like, Memorial Day and Veterans' Day and Labor Day... like, let's have a cook out and maybe explode some things.

Courtney: I mean, that's really... like, the kind that like—I like holidays that have, ostensibly, their major purpose is hot dogs.

Travis: That's true.

Brent: [laughs]

Courtney: And that's my kind of holiday.

Travis: It is a revelation that is not a revelation that so many people have had before me. But the reoccurring revelation, I should say, of like, when you are a kid, holidays are a big deal. And when you get to be an adult, you're like, "Well... I mean, it's not Christmas."

Brent: Especially an adult that works at home. Like, I have to be reminded that most holidays are coming up, unless they're like, the big three. 'Cause like, I don't know. I don't have a boss going, "Oh, you get this weekend off. This is a three day weekend for you." To me it's like, oh... well, I guess if everybody else is taking off, I could. I... I don't know. It's a weird thing.

I mean, this one I'm going to.

Courtney: Especially when they're like, smack in the middle of the week.

Brent: Yeah.

Courtney: 'Cause like, well, now this is just inconvenient.

Travis: Do you have fourth of July plans, everyone?

Brent: Um, my plans are doing a little bit less work, and hanging out. I don't really have any plans.

Travis: Okay.

Courtney: Kind of same, TBH. John has the kids tomorrow, but I think we are all, as a family, going to go see the fireworks.

Travis: Okay.

Courtney: And I think I'm gonna just find some kind of excuse to have brats. 'Cause that's really what I want.

Travis: That's fair. I'm going to a fourth of July brunch, and then I'm gonna take a fourth of July nap, and then Bebe and Teresa and I are meeting Justin and Sydney and Charlie and Cooper somewhere for like, a family vacation-y thing.

Courtney: Aww.

Travis: And we'll probably try to avoid fireworks, because Bebe, much like myself, is confused as to why they exist, and off-put by how loud they are.

Brent: Oh, yes. Same. Same. And to be fair, I had tubes in and out of my ears as a kid, so they were like, particularly scary painful. But I mean, like,

look... if people like them, great. I'm not trying to take them away from you. But I've never really—

Travis: Y'know what? I am. They terrify my dogs. I would like to take them away. For the last like, five days, I've been dealing with my dogs barking at every single pop.

Courtney: I did just remember, honestly, that I have a new puppy. So...

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Courtney: I don't know how that's gonna go.

Travis: The only time I ever truly appreciated fireworks is living in LA, my friends, you could get on top of their apartment building, which was like a three story building. And like, there were—you could see 360 degrees around you, and there were fireworks going off in every direction in every neighborhood. And like, it like—it was almost like orchestral. That was pretty cool.

Courtney: I like that Buttercup is barking. She's chiming in. She's just like, "I'm against fireworks. Please make them stop."

Travis: She does not care for them. Uh, what's everybody drinking?

Courtney: I'm drinking a cabernet called Rumpus.

Travis: Ooh. I like that word.

Courtney: Yeah.

Travis: I'm having a fizzy lemon drink.

Courtney: Fizzy lifting drink.

Brent: Is it a generic one?

Travis: Yep.

Brent: [laughs] Well, I'm having a not-quite-as-generic Spin Drift raspberry lime sparkling water with just a little bit of real juice in it.

Travis: Hey. What do you all say we get into this uh, slightly briefer than normal holiday episode?

Courtney: Let's get to it.

[theme music plays]

Travis: Listen, a-holes and b-holes. It's time for Beyond the Headlines. This is my new uh, kind of edgy persona, Mean Travis.

Brent: Now, you know we're gonna get flak from the c-holes out there on social media.

Travis: Alright. A-holes, b-holes, c-holes, d-holes... every hole...

Courtney: On behalf of the c-holes, thank you for this representation.

Brent: [laughs]

Travis: Um, listen. We got one Beyond the Headline, but it's a big one, and it contains a real powerhouse name that could be the beginning of a series of... I don't know, maybe. We'll see. On Sunday, June 30th, Big Machine music group announced that it had been acquired by mega manager, Scooter Braun for 300 million dollars. Now, you might be wondering, as was I, why is this trending news? And it is because of one name.

Big Machine is the company that owns the master recordings of the last six albums by Taylor Swift. Braun represents Justin Bieber, Ariana Grande, Carly Ray Jepsen, Kanye West, and many others. The day that the sale was announced, Swift took to Tumblr with an emotional post which, among other things, described Braun as a "incessant" and "manipulative bully."

Now, Swift originally signed with Big Machine when she was 15 years old. And according to her post, she had tried numerous times to buy her recordings, or even the company, but was always denied. `Cause you have to think, Taylor Swift's got 300 million dollars, right?

Brent: Oh, yeah.

Travis: She could buy that. She could do it. So, this is what she said.

"For years, I asked, pleaded, for a chance to own my work. Instead, I was given an opportunity to sign back up to Big Machine records and "earn" one album back at a time – one for every new one I turned in. I walked away, because I knew once I signed that contract, Scott Borchetta would sell the label, thereby selling me and my future.

I had to make the excruciating choice to leave behind my past. Music I wrote on my bedroom floor, and videos I'd dreamed up and paid for from the money I earned playing in bars, then clubs, then arenas, then stadiums."

So, you may be wondering – what does owning the rights to someone's masters mean? Well, first, what you have to know is, it's different from owning the physical masters, right? Basically, when you own the rights... okay, this is a better way to put it. This is from Vox, before I get bogged down.

"What's more important—" This is from Vox. "What's more important is that owning the rights to master recording means owning the rights to make, sell, or distribute copies. Anyone who wants to make a copy of the recording must ask for permission from the owner of the master rights. And now, those rights belong to Scooter Braun, which means that if someone wants to license You Belong With Me so they can put it on a TV show or in a movie or an ad, they need to get Braun's permission, and they need to pay him a fee."

So basically, long story short, he's going to be making money off of her work as well as being in control of who uses it and who doesn't. Which is not a

great... if you ever see, like, a commercial for some weird thing that like, has a really like, punky band music, and you're like, "Why would that band give, y'know, Subway the rights to this song?" The answer is, they didn't. The person who owns the rights to it did.

Brent: Yeah. And as long time listeners know, any time this kind of comes up, like... I have... y'know, I'm more of a capitalist and more of a hippie in different ways. But this is one where I'm like, I am uncomfortable with people owning the rights to music if they had zero involvement in the production.

Travis: Yes.

Brent: Because it feels... and I mean, look, it's a real slippery slope. But as a musician, it's just... y'know, Taylor Swift said it beautifully. Things she wrote that were personal to her, that were entirely from and of her, somebody else owns, and thereby kind of owns her. I think it's gross.

Travis: Yeah. And that's the thing – even if you're sitting there thinking like, "Well, Taylor Swift's fine. She's making bank." I mean, that's probably true. But like, it's a whole, like, creative, y'know, artistic issue of like... y'know, but here's the thing. You could make the argument that in any kind of art, like if you paint a painting and then you sell that painting to someone, you no longer own the painting. You don't get commission if they sell the painting for more than they bought it.

Same with like, I don't know, if you're an architect with a building... anything like that. But I think the difference is like, this is her actual, human voice being... I don't know. I just—I feel different about it.

Brent: Yeah. And I don't have any solution, by the way. If someone's like, "Well, what does your perfect world look like, then?" Well, I don't know how to make it make sense in the society in which we live. I just... as a principle, the idea of someone owning a right and then fighting you over it or suing you over it when they had nothing to do with creating it is just icky to me.

Travis: So, why does Taylor Swift have beef with Scooter Braun? Well, let's all harken back to 2016, shall we? Kanye West releases a song called 'Famous.' In that song, he says, "I feel like me and Taylor might still have sex. Why? I made that bitch famous." Gross.

So, Taylor was appalled by the line, yes, and spoke against it. Now, the Kanye Camp claimed that they had reached out to her and gotten permission to use the line, which she denied. Then, Kim Kardashian published a video showing Kanye calling Swift and obtaining permission to use the line; although, admittedly, the word 'bitch' was omitted in the ask.

So, it was real bad public relations for Swift. It made her look really bad, as there were lots of people who, y'know... this is one of the things about Taylor Swift, too. For whatever reason, for someone whose whole persona seems to be about like, how sweet and nice she is, like... she is at the center of a lot of feuds, and a lot of like, rivalries and stuff. You can find a lot of that.

And so, there were many people who jumped on the narrative of, "You said yes to make Kanye look bad, and then tried to like, hold it against him or whatever."

Courtney: There's writer, Maria Talerca, who said basically, even when Taylor Swift is right, her argument is wrong. Like, she just kind of has a... it's just a kind of weird disconnect with how she responds to things.

Travis: Yeah. And once again, I—I know I say this every episode now, but I'm not gonna get in—I think you could make a conspiracy claim of like, she knows exactly what she's doing, and her whole thing is... But like, I don't think a human being, no matter how famous or how much money they're making or whatever... I don't think any human being like, happily invites people to yell at them and be mad at them and be mean to them.

And like—and I stress, happily. Y'know what I mean? I think there are people who do that and maybe have some kind of issue that they're dealing with or whatever, or they are angry, and they want to make other people angry. But I don't know, it just doesn't seem like... I wouldn't want to invite that kind of thing on me.

So uh, the famous music video also contains weird, fake, nude images of many celebs, including Taylor Swift. Which, as far as I'm concerned, is indefensible. Like, okay, you could make the claim, "Well, she gave permission to use the line." Okay. But then... the music video, like... it's weird and gross.

So, as Braun was both West and Kim Kardashian's manager at the time, it is Swift's belief that he played a part in all this. Though, admittedly, it's hard to determine the size of said part. Beyond that, Swift also says that Braun actively bullied her after the event. This is also from Vox.

"She also maintains that Braun was trying to actively bully her after Kardashian released those videos. Specifically, she cites a now deleted Instagram post made by Justin Bieber, also a Braun client, shortly after Kim released the video in July, 2016, showing Bieber on his phone call with Braun and West. The caption said, "Taylor Swift, what up?""

So as you might imagine, some of the things in her Tumblr post have been disputed. Bieber says the caption of the post was his alone, and in fact, Braun chastised him for making the joke. Borchetta says, backed up by screen caps, that the offer had been that, as soon as she signed the ten year contract with Big Machine, she would immediately own all of the masters from her past albums – not one by one, as she claimed.

There's a lot going on. And as you might imagine, battle lines have been drawn. Not only are there supporters in the form of Swift fans, and amazingly, Braun fans, but other artists have picked sides. The feud is raging on social media with Brendon Urie, Demi Lovato, Todrick Hall, Courtney Cox, and even Iggy Azalea getting involved, as well as many, many others.

So this is one of those things of, I don't know how this will end, or even if it will. Y'know, this might be one of those things where it's like, and now this is just a rivalry slash feud for forever. But I think the difference here, apart from a lot of those feuds that we see in social media and pop culture these days, is that there is also a very real legal and business side of this. Where

now, this feud is between two people who are intrinsically linked financially right now.

So, we'll keep you updated if any new info on this story develops.

Courtney: I will say one thing that um, that we didn't mention here, but is kind of a piece of this is that, uh, Taylor Swift's dad is on the board for Big Machine. And he apparently did sit out for this call that like, made this decision. But like, he would've known. So that's a weird thing.

Travis: Well, that's the other thing. Yeah, there's a big thing, another element is, Taylor claiming that she was not made aware of this sale before it happened, and of course, uh, Borchetta saying that he totally did, and people saying that she totally knew. Other people saying that she knew, but she didn't know that it was being sold to Scooter Braun, or she didn't know the particulars of it... I mean, it's a lot of back and forth at this point.

Still, I mean, I don't envy Taylor Swift's position on it, but it's unclear as to like, what actually is happening.

Brent: Yeah.

[theme music plays]

Brent: This week, Trends Like These is sponsored by Quip. Now, y'all have heard me talk about Quip before. Y'know what I did like ten minutes ago? I used my Quip toothbrush, because I have plans right after we record this podcast, so I'm gonna go out with fresh breath and teeth that feel really clean.

Quip is an electric toothbrush. But unlike the big bulky ones that are hard to travel with, and that you gotta charge on a charging stand, uh, they fit easily into your toiletries bag. They're basically the same size as a manual toothbrush, and they're as great for traveling as they are at home.

Quip features sensitive, sonic vibrations, a built-in, two minute timer that tells you when to change sides, a multi-use cover, and brush heads are

automatically delivered on a dentist recommended schedule every three months for just five bucks.

Quip is also one of the first electric toothbrushes accepted by the American Dental Association. So, as I've said before, I've been brushing with a Quip since 2017. I like it a lot. No plans to change. Recommend it.

So, Quip starts at just \$25. And if you go to [GetQuip.com/Trends](https://www.getquip.com/trends) right now, you can get your first refill pack for free. That's your first refill pack free at [GetQuip.com/Trends](https://www.getquip.com/trends).

[theme music plays]

Courtney: So every week, we take the politics, we round them up, and we do a Politics Roundup. But this week, y'know what I'm thinking? Like, let's just let our politics be free range.

Travis: Let's let our politics hang loose.

Courtney: Like, let's just—

Brent: Yes, let's let our politics flag fly.

Courtney: Let the politics just like, do what they want, and not vaccinate them, just because like, that's like, some tyranny. And this is all in honor of our first politic free range chicken person.

Brent: [laughs]

Courtney: 'Cause we're gonna get to the broader subject of the second democratic presidential debate momentarily. But I want to spend a bit on one particular candidate. Specifically, that human vial of patchouli with a crucifix on it, Marianne Williamson.

Travis: Oh boy.

Brent: [laughs]

Courtney: Perhaps best described by author Maureen Johnson as “like a sentient glass of chardonnay.”

Travis: Man, Maureen Johnson is the best.

Courtney: She’s just so good. Um, I'd never heard of Williamson before. Like, literally, the first time I heard of Marianne Williamson was probably two episodes ago, and I thought you guys were just like, making up a person.

But I decided to educate myself through the most presidential of all means, her tweets. And oh, my babies, did I learn some things. I'm going to read some to you now.

[music plays]

Courtney: [echoing] “Instead of missiles of fire that shower the earth with fear, imagine missiles of peace that shower the earth with love.”

Brent: [laughs]

Courtney: [echoing] “The universe literally loves you.”

Brent: [laughs] Okay.

Courtney: [echoing] “Humanity needs a mental shower. We need to wash off all prejudices of the 20th century and stand naked beneath the waters of eternal capital T truths.”

Brent: Hmm. Okay.

Courtney: [echoing] “It is a woman’s primary job to take care of children at home, because every child is one of our children, and the earth itself is our home.”

Travis: Oh, I see what you did.

Courtney: Mm-hmm. Um, there's gonna be a running theme here. I'm just letting you guys know. See if you can catch it, like a weird Pokémon.

[echoing] "Transformation is always possible, and we're always on a journey. This is a painful moment, but one pregnant with possibilities."

"The universe is eternally pregnant. New life is always growing and developing inside it, even though we can't see it."

"Every moment is fertile with new possibilities. Each of us is pregnant with new energy and new love. Give birth to a more loving you."

Brent: [laughs] My goodness.

Travis: Gross.

Courtney: [echoing] "Every soul on earth is pregnant now with a new possibility. Do you have the courage to face your fear and give birth within yourself?"

Brent: [laughing]

Travis: What?

Courtney: All I'm picturing is uh, Tobias Fünke, The Man Inside Me. Like, that's all I'm picturing right now.

Brent: Yeah.

Courtney: [echoing] "Each of us is pregnant with a better version of ourselves. Life starts over when we allow it to."

"Each of us is pregnant with a better version of ourselves." [laughing]

Brent: [laughing]

Travis: What kills me about this is, every one of them is almost... you almost understand. Like...

Brent: Right.

Courtney: She came up with this, and she was like, "Holy fucking shit, I am doing great."

[echoing] "You spent long enough with the old you. You can download an upgrade." That lost...

Brent: God, these mixed metaphors...

Courtney: That lost its metaphorical plot almost instantly. [laughing]

Brent: Seriously. I can mix a metaphor, but she is schooling my ass. Holy shit.

Courtney: [echoing] "We are always pregnant with a truer version of ourselves." Every few months, she just trots that one out again. Like, slightly differently worded.

[echoing] "At every moment of your life, the universe is either expressing a miracle, or is pregnant with the next one."

Brent: Wow.

Travis: And just to point out, 'cause Courtney is not giving you this bit of detail. Like, the last four tweets have been from 2012, 2009, 2013, and 2014. Like, this is something she comes back to over the course of like, five years.

Courtney: Oh, no. Like, she—this is like, a ten year commitment to this word, 'cause this next one is from 2018.

[echoing] "In order for a child to be born, a woman's body must expand. In order for a new world to be born, all of our minds must expand. Our dedication has to deepen. Our seriousness has to increase. And our love needs to grow more fierce. We've been pregnant for a while. Now labor has begun."

See, the worst thing that happened to her was 240 characters. [laughs]

Brent: Yeah. [laughs]

Courtney: [echoing] "Sometimes, we have to be pregnant with an idea before we're ready to give it birth into the world."

Brent: [laughing] God.

Courtney: [echoing] "A wisdom culture is emerging from the imaginal cells of a disintegrating, individualistic society. We're pregnant with the possible world." It's a boy!

Brent: Is 'imaginal' a word? Imaginal cells?

Courtney: [whispers] I don't know that it—I don't think it is. I don't think it is.

Brent: I think she's pregnant with making up words. Anyway.

Courtney: [echoing] "You know what? The universe is always pregnant with new possibilities. Register for tonight's live stream."

Travis: [laughs]

Brent: [laughs]

Courtney: [echoing] "You're either doing something brilliant, or you're pregnant with something brilliant. Life never does not have great plans for you."

Brent: Aye ai ai...

Courtney: Guys, I'm not done yet, and I am going to keep going. I did not screenshot all this shit for nothing.

[echoing] "Humanity is dis-eased." Because there is a hyphen between 'dis' and 'eased.' [echoing] "And needs a healthy immune system if it's to heal. Each of us can be an immune cell in the body of humanity."

Travis: What?

Courtney: [echoing] "If you understand what heals the heart, then you could understand how to heal the world."

Travis: ... What?

Courtney: [echoing] "Embrace the world and love it fiercely. Surrender to the role of cosmic lover, and miracles will accompany your every move."

Travis: What?!

Courtney: I am... I just got a contact high from reading those. Like...

Travis: It... it's... they're so all not actionable that it drives me bonkers.

Courtney: I am—

Travis: Like, they sound—

Courtney: Bothered.

Travis: --like they might be motivational or helpful, but you walk away going like, "Okay, so what do I do?"

Brent: Yeah. I would say, as the one of us who enjoys shrooms somewhat regularly, there are the kind of thoughts you have when you're coming down from shrooms that feel totally actionable, totally make sense to you, and you are gonna change everything. And then, you sober up and go, "Ahh, that was a real shroomy thing to say."

Feels like she just doesn't have that boundary where she goes, "How do I translate this into something that makes sense to anyone else who's not on this hallucinogenic, psychedelic plane?"

Courtney: I know that I have referenced this Kids in the Hall sketch before, but like, she like it came to life. It's that one where Scott Thompson is just like, "Pot promotes pizza pieces impossible. Profitable." Like, that's what she is. She's like, trying to like... she's just... she's hemp, but a person.

Brent: [laughs]

Courtney: Her primary platform, based on her tweets, if we... like, if we just love hard enough, all of our problems are gonna be solved. And as policy goes, ranks up there between 'underarm crystals' and 'store brand turmeric.'

Brent: Yeah.

Courtney: Vogue did a piece on the five other female candidates – Elizabeth Warren, Kamala Harris, Kirsten Gillibrand, Tulsi Gabbard, and Amy Klobuchar. Marianne Williamson was briefly mentioned in the piece, identified as, "spiritual advisor to Oprah Winfrey."

Brent: [laughs]

Courtney: Williamson took to Instagram, stating, "You might've noticed who's not in this picture, and let's be clear why it matters. The issue is ethical responsibility on the part of the media. The framers of the Constitution did not make Vogue magazine to be the keepers of America's political process, here to determine who and who is not considered to be a serious political candidate."

The framers themselves determined the qualifications for the presidency – that someone was born here, is over 35 years old, and has lived here for 14 years. If they wanted to say more, then they would have. They didn't say more for a reason."

Travis: I'm pretty sure, didn't they also say like, land owning male?

Brent: Yeahhh.

Courtney: Yeah, they also said like, white dude.

Brent: Yeah.

Courtney: "They didn't say more for a reason. They were leaving it to every generation to determine for itself the skillset it feels is necessary to navigate the times in which they live." [whispers] I don't know that they did. I just don't know that.

Travis: No...

Courtney: "President Franklin Roosevelt said that the administrative aspects of the presidency are secondary, and the primary role is moral leadership. If we're going to free this country to be all that it can be, then first, we have to free ourselves from the thought forms dictated to us by a corporate political media establishment. It is the people and the people alone who should decide who will be their president, unburdened by the insidious influence of an elite on patrol. Period. Full stop. #BigTruth Marianne2020.com."

Okay. [sighs] Like, this isn't happening. Like, I mean, her. She is fetch. She is not going to happen.

Travis: Yes.

Courtney: Calm down.

Travis: This is... I'm sure we'll talk about this in a minute, but just, if you didn't watch it... 'cause we talked about it a little bit last week. Of all the 20 candidates who set foot on the democratic debates stage last week, no one more than Marianne Williamson... like, I was sitting here, every time she talked, just thinking like... it's not you. Like, there is no universe in which it's you, Marianne.

Brent: [laughing] Right.

Courtney: No. Like, I mean... and if anyone believes in multiple universes in which it could be her, it's Marianne Williamson. But I feel like it's also none of those universes.

Travis: That's the thing. If everyone else on that stage—

Courtney: Like, if we're in the multiverse, none of the verses.

Brent: But okay. That being said, if Trump's whole presidency were like, season one of the fucked up timeline show, I will say, y'know, and the second season being Marianne Williamson as president would probably keep people watching. If, y'know, in total fear.

Travis: I think that would jump the shark, Brent. I think that that would be a bridge to-- People would be like, y'know what?

Brent: Okay, you're telling me that—

Travis: I bought it when it was the Trump guy, but—

Brent: You're telling me Trump in the White House isn't jumping the shark? I feel like the timeline we're in, the shark has been jumped.

Courtney: I don't want to watch the show anymore. Can we just cancel the show and get an adult?

Travis: Yes.

Brent: God, I wish.

Travis: I'm ready for Nick at Nite to come on, y'know?

Courtney: Yeah. So for what it's worth, Vogue defended themselves, stating, "We were in no way discrediting Marianne Williamson—"

Travis: Saying, "She's not gonna win."

Courtney: She's not fuckin' real! Uh, "We are in no way discrediting Marianne Williamson and all she's accomplished."

Travis: I mean, we are, but we don't want you to know that.

Courtney: I mean, like... but, no, but really, though. "For the photo, Vogue wanted to highlight the five female lawmakers who bring a collective 40 years of political experience to this race." The shade of it all, but it's true, because they are actual, like, politic people. Because in fairness, the total would still be a collective 40 years of political experience if Williamson had been in the photo, 'cause she has none of it.

Brent: [laughs] Yeah.

Courtney: She finished fourth in a 2014 bid for California congressional seat. That's it. That's it. That's all she's got. Now, why do I seem so dismissive of this candidate? Well hey, I'll tell you. In addition to her basic bullshit brand of motivational self-help writing – which, your mileage may vary. To each their own. I think it's gaggy, but whatever.

My biggest issue with Williamson is that she is vocally skeptical of vaccines and psychiatric drugs, as well as psychiatric conditions period. And that, my friends, is disgustingly dangerous. Especially right now, as more and more credence is being given to anti-vaxx nonsense, pushed by – who else – Marianne Williamson.

Travis: She said, if I remember correctly... didn't she say that like, uh, government mandated vaccines are draconic and...

Courtney: Draconian.

Brent: Draconian, yeah.

Travis: Draconian?

Courtney: Draconian, if you will. Um, I got more tweets.

Travis: Yeah, they're not dragons. Sorry.

Courtney: They're dragons. I... y'know what, I don't want the government making me have dragons.

Travis: No. We're all pregnant with dragons.

Courtney: Not in my America. [laughs] We're all pregnant with dragons. We are all the Khaleesi we want to see in the universe. Um, here's some more tweets. These are the ones that are less funny, because... no.

"Note to digesters of pills that "just take the edge off" – sometimes, the edge should be on. This is not a time in America to be numb."

Travis: Mmm.

Courtney: "Serious mental problems are one thing. But the trend of casual antidepressant use is a pharmaceutical scam. Not a time to be numb." And in other tweets, she has specified like, what she sees as actual mental illness, as opposed to what, y'know, the rest of us might just have. She has specified like, schizophrenia and other more severe illnesses, as though the rest of us just struggling with like, depression and anxiety are just like, y'know, fuckin' around, twiddlin' our thumbs.

"The answer to depression is more scientific research, only if you think of it in simply biomedical terms." [laughs] Like, that's one of those things that like, I got to the end of that sentence, and I was like, okay, hear me out: fuck you. But it goes on, and it gets better.

"The medicalization of depression is a creation of the medical industry. For a millennia, depression was seen as a spiritual disease. And for many of us, it still is."

Travis: [sighs]

Courtney: I'm... okay, look. I... [grunts] Big pharma has its own issues, but like, depressed people aren't it.

Travis: I would also argue, Marianne, that for a millennia, depression was seen as a spiritual disease, and nobody got helped. And now, let's compare. Hey, Marianne. Who's life do you think is better? A depressed person in 2019, or a depressed person in 1019? Hmm.

Brent: Nailed it.

Courtney: And you know what she would say to you, Travis? [slurred] "Girlfriend, you are so on."

Brent: [laughs]

Travis: Yep.

Brent: Yep.

Courtney: "There was no stigma to depression..."

Travis: This is Marianne again. This isn't Courtney saying this.

Courtney: [slurring] Hey, it's me, Marianne Williamson. "There was no stigma to depression until it was medicalized. If you, yourself, were helped, that's wonderful. But it doesn't change the fact that most antidepressants are being prescribed by doctors who aren't even mental health professionals, and many times, when people are simply SAD." All caps. Who else does sad in all caps? Hear me out.

Brent: Oh, God.

Courtney: “There is no blood test for clinical depression. It is an arbitrary diagnosis.”

Travis: Fuck off.

Courtney: So this is a reply to someone else, saying probably like, hey, what the fuck, mental illness. And she said, “For schizophrenia and bipolar, et cetera, yes. For those with non-pathological depression, numbing is not true help.” Non-pathological as a, like, precedent to like, an illness is some like, nonsense. Shut up.

“The psychotherapeutic psychopharmacological industrial complex is one of the most threatening forces in America today. Putting our children on psychotherapeutic drugs does more cause to depression than to heal it. Parents, awaken.”

Travis: Also fuck off.

Courtney: Here’s what I don’t like. This bitch trying to tell my kids what to do. And in this one, like, I feel like this one could get us in a very, like... it’s not as... it’s—not that it’s worse than everything else. It’s just as bad as everything else. But it like... just... good God, fuck you.

She shared an article shortly after Robin Williams died. And her caption was, “The truth about antidepressants: helpful for some, but harmful for others.....” Nine ellipses. And it is linked to an article from a like, anti-psychiatric drug website with the quote, “Today, NBC news and the BBC and others proclaiming no drugs or alcohol were found in Robin Williams. These headlines couldn’t be more wrong.”

And it’s literally referring to the antidepressants he was on. It was—it’s an article that is purely designed to scare monger about antidepressants and antipsychotics. So literally, fuck you.

Brent: And I think that—

Courtney: Literally, fuck you.

Brent: I think the publication is um, a scientology publication.

Courtney: Of fucking course it is.

Brent: They're already against, uh... I mean, for reasons of um, their silly bullshit religion that is all about making money, they're already against like, psychiatric drugs and whatever. Whatever makes people keep paying money.

Courtney: Is that actually—and I'm honestly embarrassed that I didn't figure that out, because I was clicking around on this website, trying to find any information about like, what was putting it out. And it was such like... like, circular linking stuff that I—like, I knew that it was fake, but I did not figure out that it was scientology, and that makes a lot of sense. Anyway.

Brent: Well, it's like scientology is... it's like Cutco. They don't want you to know, 'cause you've heard of them.

Courtney: Right. Fuck Marianne Williamson. She sucks. But she is very funny, but like, not like... we already did the like, "Oh, wouldn't it be funny if this guy was president?" And it didn't go great.

Travis: Yes. Please, please, please remember that. Because that's the... man, listen. I made jokes about her, too. But don't let jokes become a weird kind of support, an ironic support. She sucks. Like, don't... don't do it.

Courtney: Yeah. And she's also—she's a big Bernie fan. So when she inevitably drops out, she's gonna throw her support behind Bernie. Hey, Bernie? If you're listening – I know you are. You listen every week. Um, just say no?

Travis: Which, by the way, thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Courtney: Say no? Say no thank you, please?

Travis: Yes. You don't need her support.

Courtney: No? She bad?

Brent: [impersonating Bernie Sanders] The universe is pregnant with me saying no thank you.

Courtney: [impersonating Bernie Sanders] It's pregnant with millionaires and billionaires.

Brent: [laughs]

Travis: Listen. As a transition, because Brent just did a spot on Bernie Sanders impression...

Brent: Thank you.

Travis: As a transition, everything Bernie said in the debate, I wanted him to end with, "Boom." I don't know why. Just something about—

Brent: [impersonating Bernie Sanders] And boom goes the dynamite.

Travis: Just something about his delivery of everything, it would just... it would just fit in perfectly, y'know?

Courtney: I would like for someone in the debates to go full Bojack Horseman and say like, "Suck a dick, dumbshits!" After they say their thing. 'Cause I think it'd be great.

Brent: We're only one election cycle away...

Courtney: It would appeal to me personally.

Brent: They're all starting to curse a little bit, just to seem like, edgy and cool. But like, we're one election away from that happening.

Courtney: Okay, I will say, when they do it, it's 'cause Corey Booker using it to like, y'know, stand up for Kamala Harris was very good. I'm for it 100%.

Brent: Well, yes, but that was also after Julian Castro saying he was pissed off, and didn't Pete Buttigieg say ass? One of them said ass. I forget.

Travis: Yes.

Brent: They're all just getting naughty. Um, okay, so as you probably know—

Courtney: [laughs] Democratic candidates after dark.

Brent: [laughs]

Travis: Hello.

Courtney: Hey, it's me.

Brent: Too hot for the debates stage.

Courtney: Hey, it's me, Andrew Yang.

Brent: [laughs] So, mere hours after we wrapped recording on last week's episode, I'm getting—I'm just gonna skip this. There was a debate. You know that. This was the one with Biden, Sanders, Harris, Buttigieg, Yang, and the rest, including the singular Marianne Williamson.

So, first off, Biden's stock went down. Harris' went up. That, in my opinion—

Travis: Can I just say? Biden did so bad.

Brent: Oh yeah. Yeah. And that is the main takeaway from this debate, I think. Um, Biden seems to be tone deaf to what democratic voters want,

except, y'know, for like the moderate ones who like gay people, but also want to keep our country's fiscal situation exactly how it is.

And I'm not just exaggerating. Like, the best example of that is when Biden said, at a recent fundraiser in New York City, that regarding his presidency, "No one's standard of living will change. Nothing would fundamentally change." There are reports that source anonymous Biden campaign staffers, and this is to your point, Travis. They say he doesn't listen to his debate prep team. He's old, and he's set in his ways. And that, I think, comports with his very '90s style rhetoric.

Like when he says, "It's important to restore the soul of this nation." I... I hate that kind of rhetoric, because it sounds good—

Travis: That's nothing.

Brent: But it means, exactly. It means nothing. And I kind of dislike flowery or clever canned lines in the first place, but we'll get to that.

So, Joe's polling numbers have gone down, Kamala's have gone up, and the best example of why that is, is this moment when Harris, who was positioned as the only African American on the dais, called Joe out for his opposition of school integration via bussing. Let's listen.

Kamala: Um, I do not believe you are a racist. And I agree with you when you commit yourself to the importance of finding common ground. But I also believe, and it is personal, and I was actually very—it was hurtful to hear you talk about the reputations of two United States senators who built their reputations and career on the segregation of race in this country.

And it was not only that, but you also worked with them to oppose bussing. And there was a little girl in California who was part of the second class to integrate her public schools, and she was bussed to school every day. And that little girl was me.

So, I will tell you that on this subject, it cannot be an intellectual debate among democrats. We have to take it seriously. We have to act swiftly.

[audience applause]

Joe: It's a mischaracterization of my position across the board. I did not praise racists. That is not true, number one. Number two, if we want to have this campaign litigated on who supports civil rights and whether I did or not, I'm happy to do that.

Travis: Can I also just say one kind of big overriding thought on this one, on this debate?

Brent: Yes, please.

Travis: So, I was surprised by... so, if you watched the first night and didn't watch the second night, or watched the second and didn't watch the first, the first was comparatively calm and measured compared to the second. Like, there was a lot more shouting over each other, interruptions, and direct challenges to each other in the second night than there was in the first.

It got a lot more heated in the—there was a moment, which we may or may not get to, where like, Swalwell said something to Buttigieg, and Buttigieg gave him this look like, "Fuck you, man." It was aggressive. Like, there was—

Brent: Well, I wonder if that's because... I mean, like, the first night seemed whinier. Like, "Uh, but I wanted to say something," but the thing is that like, the second night had a bunch of heavy hitters.

Travis: That's true.

Brent: The first night was like, Warren and some others. And even though, y'know, people like Castro, they like Booker, et cetera, they're not really heavy hitters in the polling. And the second night had just more of the people that are being voted for in these popularity polls.

Um, so, yeah. Uh, Kamala also had a slick moment where a lot of candidates were trying to get a word in, to your point, Travis, about everyone kind of arguing and all that stuff. And she said, "America does not want a food fight, they want to know how we're gonna put food on their table." This is another one of those... like, look, I know having prepared lines like that is a good strategy. But when they're a little bit too clever by half, I gotta roll my eyes a little bit. And that goes for all the candidates.

And a lot of them had these little lines here and there. And I don't know, maybe just 'cause I'm a dramaturge, but like, when they feel naturalistic, I'm like, "Okay." And when they feel like, a little too polished, a little too 'Pokémon GO to the polls', I'm like, "Mmm, okay."

Travis: Wait. You think 'Pokémon GO to the polls' wasn't in the moment?

Brent: [laughing] Turns out, not off the cuff.

Travis: Huh. Speaking of – you talk about strategy. Another, now, just real quick, is a lot of them relied on some pretty heavy, uh, like, rhetoric that's like, "Oh, I see. I see what you're doing." Y'know? Like, Harris had a lot of the like, "Let me tell you about this person who lives in this state and has to deal with this thing." There's, y'know, a lot of like, a person goes to the ER and has to worry about the... y'know, a rhetoric of storytelling to get points across.

Um, Biden, and tell me if I'm stepping on your points at all. But Biden relied super heavily on like... like, he kept referencing when he and Obama did stuff.

Brent: Oh my God. You know what's funny? Biden criticized, uh, Rudy Giuliani in the 2008 campaign by saying that Rudy would just get up there and say a noun and a verb and 9/11. And I couldn't cobble the tweet together to make it make sense in 280, but like... that's... Joe Biden is now a noun, a verb, and "I was in the Obama White House." Like, we get it, dude.

Travis: Yeah. Every answer had something to do with, "Well, in the Obama administration... In the Obama... well, when we were in office... well..." Like, it was... a lot.

Brent: Yeah.

Travis: Oh, and along those same—actually, I don't know if you have this in here. But uh, Inslee. That's the Colorado dude, right?

Brent: I actually... Washington.

Travis: Oh, right. Inslee is so very clearly wants a book deal. That's all it is.

Courtney: Oh yeah.

Travis: Okay.

Brent: But yeah, he's the climate change and nothing else guy. Like, you can't walk and chew gum.

Travis: Everything he said was, "Here's what I have done. Here's what I have done. This is what I did do." Instead of saying, "Here's what I will do." There was no forward thinking. It was just listing of accomplishments.

Brent: Yeah. Um, so, I don't want to like, dog Harris too much. She brought a lot of fire and passion to the debate. She definitely distinguished herself as a force to be reckoned with. Um, but like, the fact that she did that, I am putting more of a spotlight on her this week.

Um, but that being said, it's worth saying that Andrew Yang, while he didn't really make an impressive showing when he had the mic, he did appear to many to be muted when he wasn't called on. Though, NBC disputes that claim. I mean, ultimately, voters are not ready for universal basic income. He was never gonna make it. But eh, it was, again, not into conspiracy theories, but it did seem like, how am I not hearing from him for this long?

Anyway, while Yang's one thousand dollar a month UBI idea has been laughed out of the room by many, Kamala proposed a policy that would give \$500 a month to families making under a hundred grand a year, citing the fact... well, her office cited the fact that more than half of Americans couldn't afford an unexpected \$500 expense.

Weirdly, the framing of this idea just seems more feasible and attractive than Yang's, even though it's very similar. Um, but like, until a day where congress is dominated by AOC-style progressives, that's not gonna pass. But it's a cool idea.

Travis: Uh, sorry, I said Inslee. I meant Hickenlooper.

Brent: Ohh, gotcha.

Travis: Well, Hickenlooper too.

Courtney: Honestly? They're all the same fucking person. Why are we pretending they're not?

Travis: I know. Hickenlooper did a lot of the like, the government rhetoric, which is, "You know, when I was in control of a state, I did this, so I can do it when I'm in control of the whole country." Which is not... it's apples to oranges, but...

Brent: Hickenlooper is one of these, just like Delaney, who's like, "No, no, no we can't. No we can't. That's my campaign pledge." Like, just... it's not... it's not what people want right now.

Now, I want to say one thing about Harris, because some of you... I don't want to seem like I'm picking on her, and I have my reasons for being skeptical. She's brilliant in so many ways, but I'm skeptical of her as an actual progressive on the order of a Bernie Elizabeth Warren, because she has this habit of supporting progressive policies in a very public space, and then walking them back in a less public space.

Like, she raised her hand at the question, y'know, who would abolish their private health insurance in favor of a government run plan? And she raised her hand, just like Elizabeth Warren had the night before. So far, so good. On the following day, she told CBS that under her Medicare for all policy, private insurance would “certainly exist for supplemental coverage.”

Now, the Bernie Sanders written Medicare for all bill says private insurance would only stick around for elective procedures like cosmetic surgeries. It might be a semantic difference. It might be too nuanced a point about her position to even make. But she’s done... she did something like that earlier in the year, I think around January, and it just... it’s the kind of thing that makes progressives and leftists wary of Kamala, to say nothing of her past as a cop and a protector of cops.

Now, if she becomes the nominee, I will walk through a blizzard of fire to vote for her. But I think she’s gonna have to get her story straight on like, some of the more progressive policy positions if she’s gonna make it through to the primary seasons.

Travis: I thought just—my two cents, I felt that her performance on the debate really solidified her position as a uh, incredibly desirable vice presidential candidate for me.

Brent: Sure. Sure.

Travis: Like, I would be very excited to... I mean, like I said, still a lot of distance to go. But like, if you're looking at kind of two concurrent races going on, like, she is at the front of the vice presidential race for me, and like, in top four or five for presidential race.

Brent: Yeah. Now, meanwhile, Buttigieg did not have a post-debate bump or a dip. And while I worry about his potential to be influenced by corporate donors for a variety of reasons, I thought he actually had two pretty good statements that, if nothing else, seemed kind of like, more naturalistic and off the cuff than the food fight line.

The first one was, "For a party that associates itself with Christianity, to say that God would smile on the division of families at the hands of federal agents, that God would condone putting children in cages, has lost all claim to ever use religious language again." And like, he's not my first choice, far from it, but damn. God, that was... like, how long have I waited for a democrat on that national stage to like, just be that clear about it?

He also said, "If guns made us safer, we'd be the safest country on earth, but it doesn't work like that." So he's got interesting things to say. I think he may fall through the cracks. And related to that, I just want to draw out what I think are the major factions forming in the democratic voting bloc. It's like a big, multi-circle Venn diagram. I should probably have somebody draw it to see if I'm full of shit or not.

But like, okay – you've got the socialist slash leftists, who obviously lean toward a Bernie or a Gabbard. And then, the progressives, slightly bigger circle, you'd add in Elizabeth Warren, possibly Yang. Though, Yang's harder to categorize. Then you got people who prioritize for identity politics, so the straight white male candidates are like, less likely to be in their circle.

Got the moderate or corporate friendly voters, who would definitely shy away from uh, like a progressive or leftist. They'd probably go more like Biden, Buttigieg, possibly Harris, Castro, or Booker. And then there are also young and older voter circles, which affects like, what a voter considers to be feasible or reasonable in terms of policy.

So, all these circles are messy, right? They interact in this messy, intersectional way. So like, a progressive who is also in the identity politics circle? Probably Elizabeth Warren or Tulsi Gabbard. A moderate in the old voters circle? Joe Biden. Moderate identity politics circle? Kamala, Booker, Castro. A leftist in the young voters circle? Bernie Sanders.

Um, and as I hinted at on Twitter, I think as of the evidence we have right now, that Warren actually satisfies more of these circles than any other candidate. And from what I can tell right now, I think she seems to be headed toward the nomination. The Bernie diehards, unlike most other candidates, I think many of them will bend as far as Warren, but probably not as far as Biden or possibly Harris.

And I think that, y'know, moderate and older voters will just vote for anybody just to get Trump out. Um, but the room for growth in the democratic voting base, I think, is young people and the left wing, and that's where I'm coming from on that.

One more thing I want to say after watching these first two debates that Courtney was pleased to hear me sort of uh...

Courtney: [gasps]

Brent: ...articulate via text.

Courtney: Honestly, I've never been prouder. Honestly, like, my heart melted out of my body. And I'm different now.

Brent: Everyone should know that we—the three of us had like, a running group text going.

Courtney: And the group text was just like, "I'm drinking. I'm drinking."

Brent: [laughing] Yeah, pretty much. Pretty much. Or we would just like, write like, "What the fuck?!?!". Anyway. So, after these first two debates, though y'all know I do stan Bernie for his policies and his career, he and Elizabeth Warren have pretty similar politics. They want to do pretty similar things. But she is way better on the debate stage.

She is agile and polished. He is kind of brute force and just doesn't pivot. Goes back to his points. And if he doesn't know how to answer a question, just repeats a point. Even though I think it's a correct point, it's not like... he's not... y'know, she's the Chun Li. He's the Zangief. Um, but uh, and she's just better at articulating her plans in easy to digest ways.

Look, Bernie definitely moved the Overton window in 2016, and created more room for people like, uh, congressman Ro Khanna, Ilhan Omar, even former Bernie Sanders campaign volunteer, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. But in terms of the presidential race, the net effect of Bernie Sanders may have

been to roll out the carpet for Elizabeth Warren, who will likely run a better campaign than him, and whose similar policies will likely draw former Bernie or Bust types over to her, since she's almost everything that they want.

But if the 2020 election season were a Mario Kart race, we'd still be in like, the first 30 seconds, so let's not get too ahead of ourselves. I just... I really feel like there's a lot of energy going toward Elizabeth Warren for a lot of good reasons.

Travis: Can I talk about the two maybe weirdest, silliest moments of the second night debate real quick?

Brent: Please.

Travis: When asked... so, the question was along the lines of like, when he was elected, uh, president Obama, his two big goals were healthcare and uh, climate change. And that, ostensibly, because of opposition, was really only able to like, effectively tackle one, and so focused on healthcare. If you were to beat president Trump and become president, what would your number one priority... what's the first thing you would do?

Go down the line, there was a third, maybe 2.5 moment, where I think it was Kirsten Gillibrand, who also just, her thing that she kept going back to is, "I have actually opposed Trump." Which is not a bad... not a bad, uh, platform.

Brent: [laughs]

Travis: Uh, but she said, like, eight things. And then the next person was uh, was Harris, and Harris was like, "Oh, I like that. Uh, yeah. Uh, DACA, and guns, and healthcare..." And uh, that was pretty funny.

But then, Joe Biden leapt to, uh, "Well, I'm gonna correct you, because Obama actually was able to not only take care of healthcare, but also called a summit of all the leaders of the country..." And the moderator was like, "Okay, what would you do?" And he was like, "I would focus on defeating Trump."

Brent: [sighs] Moron.

Courtney: Cool. Cool story.

Travis: Which you've already done, you dumbo. But then, the best one was uh, piece of garbage Marianne Williamson said, her first act would be to call the leader of New Zealand...

Brent: [laughs]

Courtney: [laughs] We—okay, we have to include that audio here. 'Cause honestly, like, none of us can do it justice.

Travis: That's true.

Courtney: I tried, and I know that I failed, and I... we're gonna just play it right here.

Marianne: My first call is to prime minister of New Zealand, who said that her goal is to make New Zealand the place where it's the best place in the world for a child to grow up. And I will tell her, "Girlfriend, you are so wrong, because the United States of America is going to be the best place in the world for a child to grow up."

Travis: That's... that kind of moment, right there? That audio we played you? That should be a thing that like, in 2024, when someone's like, "I want to run for president!" They should be like, "Have you ever said anything like this? 'Cause if so, you're not allowed on stage. We need people to—like, we need people who aren't gonna waste our time."

Like... oh. [sighs] It was such like... especially as, with everybody yelling over each other and going over time, I think... Chuck Todd's his name, right? And uh, and Rachel Maddow.

Brent: Rachel Maddow.

Courtney: Yeah.

Travis: Were so over the whole thing, so obviously, that then she said that, and I think even Chuck Todd was like, "Okay." [laughs] And it's like... alright, yeah. Yep, we're all thinking it.

Courtney: Okay.

Travis: Okay. Alright. Okay. Hey. From the US of A, let's tid some bits.

Brent: Alright. I'm down.

Courtney: U-S-A! T-I-D!

Travis: Nailed it. The Dalai Lama discussed the possibility of a female successor in a BBC interview, but stressed that if the next Dalai Lama were female, they'd need to be attractive.

Brent: [laughs]

Travis: Now, this is not the first time that he has said this. Back in 2015, he said that an unattractive female Dalai Lama "would not be much use." His office released a statement Tuesday, saying, "His Holiness genuinely meant no offense. He is deeply sorry that people have been hurt by what he said, and offers his sincere apologies."

And that is a terrible apology.

Courtney: His Holiness is sorry to all those uggos out there.

Brent: Well, and here's the thing – like, Travis, I know you got a little more copy. But like, is he? Is he like, in a position, in terms of just, universal attractiveness, to like, neg some imaginary female Dalai Lama?

Travis: No.

Brent: It's just a weird... anyway. It's quite strange.

Travis: I don't mean no in that he's unattractive. It's just, what a weird fucked up opinion to have.

Brent: Yeah, like, if you want to replace me, clearly, you've gotta be the fuckin' hottest shit on the planet. Am I right?

Travis: It's... that's a weird thing to say if you're talking about a powerful CEO. Then multiply that times infinity when you're talking about a religious leader. Like, fuck you. Okay. The Dalai Lama, the statement from the Dalai Lama's office went on to say the Dalai Lama has "a keen sense of the contradictions between the materialistic globalized world he encounters on his travels, and the complex, more esoteric ideas about reincarnation that are at the heart of Tibetan Buddhist tradition. However, it sometimes happens that off the cuff remarks, which might be amusing in one cultural context, lose their humor in translation when brought into another."

AKA, it was just a joke.

Courtney: Big titty bitches really does sound way more beautiful in the original Tibetan.

Travis: [laughs]

Brent: [laughs] Alright, well, in a world where we are no longer shocked when a killer cop gets let off the hook, or a Brock Turner gets six months in an AirBnB, here's a verdict that feels like, at least some juries have their heads on straight. Remember how a man drove his car through a crowd of counter protestors at the rally in Charlottesville back in 2016? He killed a woman named Heather Hayer, and injured 26 other people.

The guy's a Nazi. Let's be clear. He's spoken in support of the Holocaust. He has social media to promote violence against basically any group he considers to be nonwhite. So, he did not lose control of his vehicle. He was striking out against the people who were there to fight Nazis and white

nationalists and white identitarians. And I don't know, mayo boys. I don't know what these dick beans call themselves.

Anyway, I buried the lead. He got life in prison. Go fuck yourself, you Nazi douche.

Travis: Uh, one last tidbit, here. Belle Delphine, a British cosplayer and self-described "gamer girl," announced that she would be selling jars of bath water that she had sat in while playing games for \$30 a jar. Some think it is a great business move and are praising it. Some see it as disgusting and perverted. Some see it as undermining the legitimacy of female-presenting people in the games industry.

The jars are currently listed on her website as 'out of stock.' Discuss.

Courtney: I'm fine with this. Fuckin' take their money. It's great. I'm for it. 100%.

Brent: I'm so glad we agree, Courtney. I'm so glad we agree.

Travis: I will say, I am 80% fine with it, of like... listen, here's the thing. What you have to think about is, are you opposed to the act, or are you opposed to the underlying issue of the thing? Right? Of like, I am opposed that the world we live in makes this a thing.

Courtney: If dumb fucking trash monsters want to buy her bath water, fucking she deserves their money.

Brent: Well, so, the thing is like, as someone who... I am friends with, associate with, and have learned a lot from sex workers, both online and in person, sex bloggers, sex educators... the thing is, this strikes me as just sex worker adjacent, and more in like a cam girl or a paid porn actor, like an a la carte porn actor thing. Like sometimes, they'll sell underwear that they supposedly wore, or they wore during a particular time, or this or that.

And the thing is, while I don't think she's... I don't know her history as far as like, are these lewds? Are these nudes? I don't know, in terms of her cosplay.

Travis: Or are they just totally rudes?

Brent: [laughs]

Travis: We don't know.

Brent: This just feels adjacent to that kind of thing. And like, does it squick some people out? Sure. But to your point, Courtney, if people want to buy it... okay.

Courtney: Here's the thing. I honestly, legitimately don't care if it squicks people out. She is selling something, and people are buying it. It's either real, or it's not. That's none of their fucking business. These humans are paying her money for, ostensibly, her bath water. Get that money. All of that money.

Travis: I should've said... right, this is one bit of information. They are—well, she's selling it as 'gamer girl bath water.' Which, that's the 20% that I don't like. If she had called it—if she had called it Belle Delphine bath water, I'd be fine. I think that 'gamer girl' is a very charged term that a lot of female-presenting people see as like... they don't call them 'gamer boys,' y'know what I mean?

Courtney: I mean, yeah, but if a girl—if a "girl" or a woman is doing it, I don't give a fuck.

Travis: Okay.

Courtney: Like, 'cause I write for SYFY Fangrrls. Like—

Travis: That's true.

Courtney: If a man referred to like, the site as like, y'know, 'girl site,' I'd be like, go fuck yourself. But when you're owning it, like, do it. Yeah. This is—and I'm not saying like, this is not one of those things where I'm like, "Yaaas, queen, empowerment! #Feminism!" Like, it just is what it is. Take their money. Take all their money.

Brent: I totally get it. Yeah. And if anyone out there is interested in any gamer boy bath water, just DM me. We'll talk prices. I'm kind of open to whatever.

Travis: No, y'know what, Brent? If you want to do that, you have to do it public. You have to have that conversation on Twitter, in public, where God and everyone can see.

Courtney: I thought you meant the bath. I thought the bath had to be public. Which, obviously, it costs more.

Travis: No, you have to do the bath in public like Jean-Paul Marat.

Brent: Prove you took that bath! Prove your balls were in that water!

Travis: Ugh.

Courtney: That \$45 Brental Floss public bath water.

Travis: [laughs]

Courtney: [laughs]

Brent: My balls were in it. Five bucks a jar.

[music plays]

Laurie: Hi, I am Laurie Kilmartin.

Jackie: And I'm Jackie Kashian.

Laurie: Together, we host a podcast called...

Jackie: The Jackie and Laurie Show.

Laurie: We're both standup comics. We recently met each other, because women weren't allowed to work together on the road or in gigs for a long, long time. And so, our friendship has been unfolding on this podcast for a couple of years. Jackie constantly works the road, I write for Conan, and then I work the road in between.

Jackie: We do a lot of standup comedy, and so, we celebrate standup, and we also bitch about it.

Laurie: Yes. We keep it to an hour. We don't have any guests. We somehow find enough to talk about every single week. So find us – you can subscribe to The Jackie and Laurie Show at MaximumFun.org, or wherever you get your podcasts.

Jackie: `Kay, bye.

[music plays]

Speaker 1: I listen to Reading Glasses because Brea and Mallory have great tips.

Mallory: My suggestion for book festivals is just go for one day.

Speaker 2: I listen for the author interviews.

Speaker 3: I was a huge Goosebumps fan.

Mallory: Oh yes. [laughs]

Speaker 3: RL Stein was totally my jam.

Speaker 4: I don't even read – I just like their chemistry together.

Brea: Literally if, on the back, it said like, "This book made me shit my pants." I'd be like, that's... I'm buying this book. Like, I think the problem with blurbs a lot of the times—

Mallory: I like that we both want to crap ourselves over books.

Brea: I'm Brea Grant.

Mallory: And I'm Mallory O'Mara.

Brea: We're Reading Glasses, and we solve all your bookish problems, every Thursday on Maximum Fun.

Travis: Alright, folks, that's gonna do it for us. Thank you so much for joining us. There is no Wi-Five this week. Um, it was a bit of a silly episode to begin with, and y'know, like we said, we're short. Gotta get at the holiday. So here's your Wi-Five. You ready?

I think you're great. And I appreciate you listening to us every week. It means a lot. We do a lot of work on this show, because we know that it matters to you, and we know that sometimes, y'know, you can only stand to find out about current events through kind of a bit of a silly lens.

So it really means a lot to us that you come and you listen every week, that you tell friends that you tweet with us, and that you kind of keep the conversation going. That means a lot, so thank you very much. We appreciate you.

Courtney: And here's your Wi-Two-And-A-Half. I think you're fine.

Travis: Oh, okay.

Courtney: Yeah.

Travis: Okay. Well, there it is.

Brent: [laughs]

Travis: Um, let's see. Get your tickets for upcoming McElroy shows at McElroy.family. Click on 'tours.' And if you go to McElroyMerch.com, uh, we got a whole bunch of new merch, including, for the first time, Monster Factory merch, the YouTube series that Justin and Griffin do. That's up there for the first time ever, and a really cute Angus 'hello sirs' pin that I really like from The Adventure Zone.

Which, by the way, that book comes out in like two weeks. The Adventure Zone graphic novel, book two. Go to TheAdventureZoneComic.com. Preorder it now. You're gonna love it. I'm really proud of it.

Courtney: Speaking of The Adventure Zone, you can read my stuff at SYFY Fangrrls, which will include an interview that I just did with the very good gentlemen of The Adventure Zone, and with Carey Pietsch, the artist, and it's gonna be a bigger piece. Or possibly two pieces. Look, I haven't decided yet. But there's gonna be some Adventure Zone content, freshtent on SYFY.

And you can read all of my stuff there. I've done a lot of... really weird stuff recently, that is my favorite stuff to do. You can also see me at San Diego Comic Con, and I look forward to seeing all of you.

Brent: As for me, uh, some of you have heard me talk about my comedy party game that I've played with Travis and Courtney that I'm very proud of. It's called Use Your Words. If you've been like, "Oh, I'll try it," and then you're like, "\$14.99? I don't know..." It's \$5.99 right now for a limited time on Steam, which is where you can get uh, software for PC and Mac.

So, if you're interested in Use Your Words on PC or Mac, all you have to do is fire up your Steam desktop app, or you can just go to Steam.com and get Use Your Words for 60% off, \$5.99, for a limited time. It's also on all the other uh, current generation consoles, and the Wii U if you just want to grab a copy. Super fun. More information about that at UseYourWords.lol.

Travis: Alright, folks, that's gonna do it for us. Go check out all the other amazing shows on MaximumFun.org. Courtney, am I forgetting anything?

Courtney: We are gonna be gone for a week, but we are pregnant with the next episode.

[theme music plays]

Courtney: Oh God, it kicked!

Travis: [laughs]

Brent: [laughs] See you next time.

[theme music plays]

Travis: There's a fly in the room, and it's driving my dogs crazy.

Brent: But we're good to go, yeah?

Courtney: Yep.

Travis: Yep.

Brent: Oh, okay.

Courtney: [laughs] Hold for the fly!

Brent: I mean, honestly, like, I... it kind of broke up, and I was like, "Is Travis telling us that..." Anyway, forget it.

Courtney: We have a goddamn guest. Be polite.

Brent: As portrayed by Jeff Goldblum. Here I go.

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