

Trends Like These 252: Coronavirus Spreads, Impeachment Update, Kobe Bryant Dead at 41, The Presidential Primaries are Upon Us, Study Says People Lie to Appear Honest, Brad Pitt's Nametag

Published on January 31st, 2020

[Listen on TheMcElroy.family](https://www.themcelroyfamily.com)

Brent: This week: Bernie polls high, why, people, why, and Ken Starr sure did try.

Courtney: I'm Courtney Enlow.

Brent: I'm Brent Black.

Courtney: And I'm not gonna lie. I'm honestly—I'm gonna tell you the truth. I'm being honest. No shit. No lies detected. Seriously. For real. I'm not lying to you here. I'm gonna te—

Brent: With... Trends Like These.

[theme music plays]

Brent: Hello, Courtney!

Courtney: Hello, Brent!

Brent: Here we are on another episode of Trends Like These, real life friends talkin' internet trends. We're doin' the thing. In real life, we actually just had like, a little catch up conversation, but we're basically—we're getting to reenact the beginning of it again, which is weirdly refreshing. Like, I suggest all y'all out there listening... sometime, just talk to a friend for ten minutes, and then stop for like, I don't know, ten seconds... and then start again. And it feels like you get to have the whole, like, "Hey, how's it goin'?" All over again.

Courtney: Get to just do it again.

Brent: Yeah. It's pretty cool.

Courtney: Can you believe—

Brent: I think we get to do—

Courtney: Can you believe it's the 35th week of January?

Brent: [laughs] It feels like it. I can't believe it's already the... actually, y'know, you're joking, but uh... next month is going to be longer than usual, 'cause it will be a leap year month.

Courtney: Mm-hmm.

Brent: I keep telling people I'm moving on February 29th, and they'll either be like, "[laughs] That's funny, but I don't get it."

Courtney: "That's not a day!"

Brent: I'll be like, "Nope. All those leap year people." What is it, every four years?

Courtney: Yep.

Brent: They have a birthday? Yeah. That would be int—I mean, I guess it's not worth being precise when you're a leap year baby. Being like, "Well, this year, my birthday's on this day." It's like, nah. Just keep it simple.

Courtney: I remember one of those, like, ask the manager kind of stories from a long time ago, basically saying someone, uh, wrote in saying that their birthday was a leap year, and so, the office would like, buy, y'know, cake or treats or whatever for people for their birthdays, but they refused to do it for this person, because their birthday was on a leap year. [laughs] And it's like, well, it's not your birthday, so... you don't get cake.

Brent: Yeah. I think if there's one group that deserves to be marginalized, and really just kind of hated, it's leap year babies. Sorry. You deserve it.

So... movin' on. Nah, we love our leap year baby friends. I wonder what the odds of that—

Courtney: If we can only have one group to target, to come toge—the leap year babies will be our vagina monster at the end of Watchmen that brings us all together.

Brent: Yep.

Courtney: Yep.

Brent: We're not gonna be leapist on this show. I was just kidding.

Courtney: We're not gonna be bunnies. Leapist.

Brent: No. [laughs] What are you drinking?

Courtney: That's wordplay. I am drinking a, uh, a—it's a wine. I even looked at the name and I don't remember what it is now, but it's something. Uh, and then I'm drinking a passion fruit La Croix.

Brent: Well, at least give me some deets on this wine.

Courtney: The wine is—

Brent: Put me there.

Courtney: So, it's red.

Brent: Oh.

Courtney: It's from the... it's from the French reds section of Benny's.

Brent: I love that baseball team. [laughs]

Courtney: It's probably, like—it's not—it might be a Côtes du Rhône? I think its name is Nicolas. When it introduced itself to me and shook my hand. [laughs] It's like a—it's like a... [gibberish] It's French. There's Syrah in it.

Brent: That's my favorite region of France.

Courtney: That's basically—that's how I go into the French reds section of Benny's. I was like, "What has the most Syrah?" And I get that.

Brent: Nice. I am a – I probably said this on the show before. I typically do South America, because particularly, like, Argentina, I find has the best bang for buck in terms of like, it tastes pretty good, but it's not... y'know what I mean? Like, it tastes like a \$20 bottle of some other place for \$11. Anyway, that's my experience.

Courtney: That's what I—that's—that is my hot tip for the French reds section. If you get into like, the Côtes du Rhône section, um, there are some really good ones for like, between \$13 and \$15. And they are delightful.

Brent: Well... I would like to be drinking some wine, but I have had one of those days. Y'know—oh, by the way, we're recording just about 6:20PM, Eastern time, on Thursday, January 30th. And it's that time of the evening where I'm crashing, 'cause I had a bunch of caffeine during the day after not a great night of sleep. So what I want is more caffeine. Buuut... I know my body's gonna get to sleep very easily if I don't. So, I'm gonna power through!

Courtney: I just thought to myself how tired I feel, and I realized it's 'cause I haven't had caffeine at all today, because I had a dentist appointment this morning.

Brent: [gasps] Oh no!

Courtney: And so, I had to like, have perfect, gorgeous teeth. But it turns out, my teeth weren't perfect and gorgeous, 'cause I missed my last cleaning, so they had to do a deep cleaning. And they like—they do that

thing where they hit you with like, the really pointy water pick. And it hurts real bad. So my teeth hurt. I've got that like, fluoride, like, uh... like, gel on my teeth. It's still there, where it feels like you've got like a coat of plastic on your teeth.

Brent: [laughs] Yeah.

Courtney: And I hate it. But I never had coffee. And I'm like, "Oh, why am I so sleepy night night?"

Brent: Yeah, honestly. I think I would have a problem. Like, I've thought about getting off coffee many times. Like—or by that, I mean just off of caffeine, except for an occasional treat. But it's like... it's kind of like, y'know... I've quit smoking before, and you need some time. Like, you can just do it in the middle of your life, but uhh... if you've got important stuff to do... I don't know about other people. The irritability, the tiredness, the... all the stuff.

But um... oh, I was gonna say something about coffee. Oh, the dentist! Um, I need to go as well. I skipped last year. I had a—I didn't have dental insurance. But I do now, but can we talk about the fact that like... no matter how far dental technology has come, those bite wings that they put in your mouth to x-ray still hurt like hell. Is it just me?

Courtney: They're so bad!

Brent: They just like, scrape your gums.

Courtney: They're terrible, and they're bad, and they feel weird, and I don't like 'em.

Brent: Why do they have to be like that? Like, I honestly—the last time I was at the dentist, I thought, "Do really rich people still have to get their, like, gums scraped by a bite wing thing? Or... is it just like, they know they can afford to be knocked out with laughing gas and have their entire mouth fixed up at any time like an auto shop? Like the pit stop"—

Courtney: Yeah, what does Gwyneth Paltrow do?

Brent: —pit stop at the NASCAR thing. Just like, all these guys come in and just... [drill sounds] Takes five minutes.

Courtney: I like to think that uh, the jade egg thing works, uh, with everything. So they put a jade egg in Gwyneth's mouth, and that's how they do the x-rays. And then they clean her teeth by just throwing jade eggs at it.

Brent: Have you been watching the Goop? Have you been watching the new Goop?

Courtney: I have not been watching the new Goop, 'cause I think it's gonna make me mad.

Brent: That's how I feel. I have a friend that says that there was one episode that kind of was very forward thinking in terms of the way that they just like, casually showed genitals. And I'm like, well, that's good, I guess. Like, I'm one of those people that's like, more dicks in Game of Thrones doesn't make ya gay. What are we worried about here? Let's balance it out. But...

Courtney: I'm all for like, just being real—like, accepting body parts as they are. Not sexualizing them, just like, letting body parts exist. Um, I feel weird that like, that's... that's progress that we're getting on the backs of like, y'know, all the other shit she does, like anti-vaccine kind of like, tangentially related things.

Brent: Oh, yeah, yeah, for sure. For sure.

Courtney: Where it's just like, y'know what? Like, if people could vaccinate their kids, I'll cover up my boobs. I'll do that for you.

Brent: Yeah. I have got so many thoughts, but my main one is that, when I went to the Philly naked bike ride in 2017... I've talked about this before, I think. I basically just, after being around hundreds of naked people for

hours, I really felt like, oh, this is unexpectedly the key to desexualizing the body, is just being bombarded with bodies constantly. And you just start to not really... it's not titillating. It's not like, "Ooh! I'm seeing a boob!" Yeah, dude, you're seeing a thousand boobs.

Um, and... I don't know. Like, I used to say, maybe ten years ago, when I'd hear somebody say like, desexualize the female body. And I'd be like, [snorts] good luck. But after that day, I kind of went like, I don't think people should be naked all the time, uh, because first off, temperature control and climate. Like, we don't all live in a place where that's possible.

But, I think if it were less of a big deal in terms of being forced to wear clothes, the whole thing would be less of a big deal. That's how I feel.

Courtney: I feel like, y'know, like, sexual boobs are one thing. And then, just livin' the day to day life, swingin' and floppin' about boobs are a whole different thing. And if you get the—like, the swingin', floppin' around boobs, they're not as sexy anymore. Just let them be.

Brent: Well, and the thing is, they—in my perfect world, right? They could be because you are grant—like, you were invited to enjoy them, too. Does that make sense? Like, it's not about how they look, and it's not about you being an object. It's more about like, "Oh, you like me? You're inviting me to come to boob town? Wow! That's hot." But not necessarily just like, you being an object of flesh. Anyway. Um...

If you're just joining us, this is the philosophy of nudity with Courtney and Brent.

Courtney: This is Boob Town.

Brent: [laughs]

Courtney: It's the sequel to S Town.

Brent: Uh, so I'm having a tangerine La Croix. Um, to answer your question. [laughs]

Courtney: [bursts into laughter]

[theme music plays]

Brent: This week, Trends Like These is sponsored in part by Honey Book. Now, I don't know about y'all. I have basically been my own business for about ten years, and I feel like so many people, even if they have a regular day job, they've got their side hustle. It's part of our current gig economy, and it's not always easy, but... Honey Book can help.

As a creative business owner, you may know how to make your clients look good, you may not. But who is helping you look good? With Honey Book, you can take on the day, knowing everything is in one place, so you stay organized and always look professional, no matter what you're doing. Honey Book is an online business management tool that organizes your client communications, bookings, contracts, and invoices, all in one place.

And like I said earlier, it's perfect for freelancers. But also, entrepreneurs, small business owners that want to consolidate services they already use, like QuickBooks, Google Suite, Excel, and MailChimp.

There's lots and lots of moving parts when you run your own business, especially if it's not something you do with a bunch of other people. But I am both a sole proprietor, and I co-own an LLC, and these are things that really help me, because boy, there are so many moving parts. So many things to forget until it's too late, and so many easy ways to get disorganized.

With Honey Book, you can automate your busy work. They have easy to use templates for emails, proposals, brochures, and invoices, and right now, Honey Book is offering our listeners 50% when you visit TryHoneyBook.com/Trends. Payment is flexible, and this promotion applies whether you pay monthly or annually.

So, go to TryHoneyBook.com/Trends for 50% off your first year. That's TryHoneyBook.com/Trends.

Courtney: Trends Like These is also sponsored by DoorDash! DoorDash, uh... y'know, they hooked us up with a little... a little gift code, so that we could get ourselves some food, and uh...

Brent: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Courtney: So quick, uh, nepotistic aside, it's my boyfriend's birthday. Happy birthday, Dan! He listens every week. He's great. I love him a lot. But we decided to be sloth people last weekend.

Brent: Yes.

Courtney: And literally not leave, like, the bed. So it's like, well, y'know what I've got? That DoorDash code. And we ordered a literal, actual fuckton of sushi. And ate it in bed, which is difficult. But we did it. And it was—

Brent: It's a balancing act.

Courtney: It was great.

Brent: But it's also kind of exciting.

Courtney: Yeah.

Brent: I'm sure.

Courtney: Dan did have to like, go to the door to answer the door, obviously. But... I maintained my not leaving the bed. John and Yoko sleep in situation.

Brent: Now, if I may, we—all three of us cohosts got DoorDash codes. I'd used it before, but it was cool to use it again. But interestingly enough, Courtney, as you and I talked about before we went to record, we both got a bunch of sushi with our coupon code. Um, and I love sushi. But I live in a very urban part of town. There's actually nowhere to park on my street, except a bus lane. Uh, which isn't a place to park.

I have driven up on the sidewalk many times. Here's what I'm getting at. I did the ultimate DoorDash, because the guy said, "Hey, I'll be comin' up with your food in a second." And I was like, "Thanks!" I come out to my front door, which is the bottom of an apartment building, and he rolls down his window and says, "DoorDash?" And I go, "Yeah!" And he hands me the sushi out the door of his vehicle, and I walk five feet to the door of my building, and it was beautiful. Truly, a door dash.

Courtney: Ordering is easy. You can just open the DoorDash app, choose what you want to eat, and your food will be delivered to you wherever you are. Not only is your favorite pizza already on DoorDash, but there are 340,000 restaurants in 3,300 cities! So you might find a new favorite, too.

With door to door delivery in all 50 states and the Canada, order from your local go-tos, or choose your favorite national restaurants, like the Chipotle, the Wendy's, the Cheesecake Factory.

Brent: Oohhh, the Cheesecake Factory...

Courtney: [whispers] I know. Oh my god. I want a hazelnut cheesecake like, right now.

Brent: My guilty pleasure. [sings to the tune of the Pokémon theme song] Gotta catch 'em all, Cheesecake Factory!

Courtney: I had the hazelnut cheesecake for the first time at Travis McElroy's house, 'cause you know who loves cheesecake factory is Travis Patrick McElroy.

Brent: Mm-hmm!

Courtney: Long may he live. Isn't it crazy that he's been gone for like, two years now? Isn't it crazy that Dot is four?

Brent: For all 35 weeks of January. It's been... it's been a minute.

Courtney: But right now, listeners can get five dollars off their first order of \$15 or more when you download the DoorDash app and enter promo code 'TrendsPod.' That's five dollars off your first order when you download the DoorDash app from the app store and enter the code 'TrendsPod.' Don't forget, that's promo code 'TrendsPod' for five dollars off your first order from DoorDash.

[theme music plays]

Brent: Courtney.

Courtney: Brent.

Brent: It's me, Buzz Lightyear.

Courtney: [gasps] You're not Brent at all!

Brent: No. I sound like him, for sure. But I just came to tell you that, in this segment, we're going to infinity... and Beyond the Headlines! Welcome. This is Beyond the Headlines. It's me, Brent again.

Courtney: I refuse to believe that hasn't been done before.

Brent: I refuse to believe it hasn't been done before, but I defy you to go take the time to find which episode it was done on. [laughs]

Courtney: [laughs]

Brent: Some listener's gonna be like, "Oh, actually, that was, uh..." We don't number them, but... anyway.

Courtney: That was one of the episodes with the really long title! I know it.

Brent: It probably has happened. It probably has happened. But this is Beyond the Headlines.

Courtney: I almost say Beyoncé the Headlines every episode. I've only said it on the air maybe twice. But I really want to say it every time.

Brent: I think that my natural podcasting style, as you can tell from the Wi-Five, which is always my segment, is, what if I just basically say the same thing every time, and don't have to be as funny and clever as Courtney and Travis? But that's just me. Um... but I'll do it if I have to, even if I'm probably recycling a thing that's happened before.

Courtney: I believe in you.

Brent: Um... Infinity and beyond is actually coming all the way, full circle back to when we said that the last time. That's just plain math.

Courtney: That's true.

Brent: [laughs] Okay.

Courtney: Bed, Bath, and Infinity and Beyond. There you go.

Brent: Yes. Ugh, my favorite place to go and buy things. Mostly infinity. Hey!

Courtney: The coupons never expire.

Brent: [laughs] So, as long time listeners know, we love to debunk the kind of headlines you see, like, "Scientists say coffee helps you live longer!" And, "Scientists say wine is good for you!" And, "Scientists say wine is bad for you!" Et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

Usually, the study barely implies a thing in its actual text, and the editors at various news outlets just crank that thing it implies up to 11. This week, I'm covering a study that is, um... I'm not trying to sell it to you as accurate, uh, and I'm not trying to say that it's not a good study. It's just... more about revealing something that may be baked into our culture, or may, in some way, be kind of a human condition thing. And I thought it was interesting.

A team of scientists at three different universities published a study this past weekend in the Journal of Experimental Psychology, and they did an experiment involving 100 American adults. Yes, I know, it's a pretty tiny cohort. And found that people try to avoid seeming dishonest, and that, at times, "the desire to appear honest can actually lead people to lie."

Now, I read over the study, and it seems like, sometimes, it's hard to distinguish someone lying to appear more honest, or lying to show other attributes, like modesty or humility. But it reminded me of this type of argument I saw between typically cis hetero couples back when I lived in New York.

I was then living with my uh, at the time girlfriend and our dog. And because we lived above a bar, we would often get to witness what we came to call 'Shakespeare in the park' out our window, AKA, boyfriend messed up and girlfriend takes him outside to confront him about it.

And if that sounds reductive, I invite you to live above Sunswick Bar in Astoria, New York for a year and tell me that most arguments between couples aren't about a man texting or messaging a woman behind his partner's back.

Uh, and a pattern I noticed was men stalling by letting their partner know that they were going to be honest. Things like, "I'm'a be real with you." "I'll be honest." "Honestly." "The truth is..." "I gotta keep it 100." "Let me be honest." Et cetera, et cetera. One guy got stuck in a loop of, "Honestly, I'm gonna tell you the truth. Honestly, let me tell ya. Like, honestly..." I guess it didn't help that he was drinking.

Now, we're not all a straight guy drunkenly trying to weasel out of getting caught in a lie. But it does make me think about certain times in my life when I've seen someone sort of humble-brag about their honesty. Like, someone kind of like, "Yeah, you know I'd never lie to you, right? You know I don't bullshit you, right?"

And right around my first playwriting course in college, I started to go like, "Wait a minute. That's what we call clumsy exposition." Kind of like, y'know,

if the first thing somebody tells you on OK Cupid is, "I'm a feminist!" It's like, why did you feel the need to lead with that?

And one more thing before we break into a discussion. There's a thing we say in our culture; at least, the English-speaking countries I know, where we start a sentence with, "I'm not gonna lie." Now, I don't think the phrase "I'm not gonna lie" is usually a lie to look more honest, but... isn't it weird that there's this phrase very, like, almost ubiquitous phrase that sort of implies that the default would be lying? That the listener should be prepared for a deviation from the norm, which is lying? I don't know. Anyway.

What do you think? Do you think people sometimes, uh, lie in order to seem more honest? Does that comport with your life experience?

Courtney: I need to confess to you, I don't know what the fuck that means. Does this study provide examples of what the fuck that means? Like, in what way are you lying to appear more honest? Are you lying about things you did that day? Because the real thing you did that day is unbelievable. What is this? I don't understand.

Brent: For instance, doing games of chance, like, gambly games as part of the experiment. And winning a certain amount, and then claiming to have won less. Like, lying about it to seem, in a way, more, I guess, honorable.

There's also this weird thing in the study where people were asked how far they drove, and they typically undercut the number. Now, again, that one is a little bit, like I said, in terms of distinguishing between... uh, trying to seem a little more humble, or a little less like you're bragging, trying to do a pissing contest.

Courtney: Yeah, I think I—I think I do that, because it's a Midwestern thing, where it's just like, "Oh my god, it's not too far at all! Oh my god, no, I'll totally do that for you! It's not out of my way in the slightest." That kind of thing, where it's like, I'm not trying to like, seem more honest. I'm trying to be the nicest person in the world, [whispers] because all I want is for everyone to love me.

Brent: [laughs] I mean, honestly, I think that there is something—

Courtney: You just did it. You just did the thing. You just did the...

Brent: Oh no! Oh no!

Courtney: [gasps] Breeent. You are your own study.

Brent: [snorts] I am my own study.

Courtney: [laughs]

Brent: That's just what therapy is all about for me. Just the results. Once a week. [laughing] Um...

Courtney: When I say things like 'not gonna lie,' it's usually, I'm about to admit, uh, a guilty pleasure of some kind that—

Brent: Of course.

Courtney: That society does dictate you lie about. I'm not gonna lie. I've seen the Backstreet Boys three times.

Brent: Right. And I mean, I guess, as much as I was make—

Courtney: I'm not gonna lie. I have all of their albums, even the most recent ones.

Brent: I guess it's usually in a situation where it would be advantageous, or less embarrassing, to lie. Um... also, while we're on the subject, I... I contend that no one knows the exact definition of the slang word 'low key.' I don't think they do. I think they use it to slightly soften what they're saying, but I don't know if it means, like, on the DL, or if it means like, the... lesser version of. Or what. People just use it as like, an adverb. Just for funsies. Or an adjective. I don't know.

Courtney: Yeah, once words become mimetic, I think they lose their meaning, and just become everything. Like, everything is shade. Everything is the tea. And now, what this honestly is is uh, white people coopting AAVE. That's its own story. I'm sorry. I'm sorry that we do that. We don't have our own culture, so we steal yours. [laughs] I'm so sorry.

Brent: Sounds about right.

Courtney: Yeah.

Brent: Yeah, I don't know. I'd like to hear from, uh... I'd like to hear from our audience about this, because it, for me, it was the kind of thing where I don't think I do this in particular. Like, do I do things to make myself feel or seem like a better person? Well, like sure. Um, but... the fact that the study found that makes me wonder...

Oh, I guess my point a second ago was to say, it feels like a thing I've seen other people do in various ways. Um, but I want to know. Does this—do these findings comport with your lives? Do you feel like it's just another one of those studies that's like, yeah, they had a small amount of people, they found some bullshit that some people do but not everybody does. I want to know. So let us know.

Courtney: I'm gonna be honest with you. Honestly, like, I'm not gonna lie. I just want you to know, I'm gonna tell you the truth. I'm not gonna bullshit you. Like, I'm not—I'm not fuckin' around here. Not gonna lie. Honestly. If I'm being honest, TBH... no.

Brent: [pause] That... that was masterful. I just want you to know.

Courtney: Thank you. Thank you, I appreciate that.

Brent: Good job. GJ. Ten slash ten. Would listen again.

Courtney: Um, this one is a rough one. Content warning – this includes, um... death by helicopter, but also, rape and sexual assault, and this could

be a really triggering story. It has been a really triggering story. It continues to be a really triggering story for a lot of people.

Um, on Sunday, January 26th, news broke that a helicopter crash claimed the lives of Kobe Bryant, his daughter, Gianna Bryant, also known as Gigi; Orange County College baseball coach, John Altobelli; his wife, Keri; their daughter, Alyssa; mother and daughter Sarah and Payton Chester; Mamba Academy basketball coach, Christina Mauser; and pilot, Ara Zobayan.

The helicopter was flying from Irvine to Thousand Oaks for a basketball game Alyssa and Gianna were to play in for their AAU team, The Lady Mambas. Famously evil website, TMZ, broke the scoop, because that's all it was to them, before family members of the victims could even be alerted.

Brent: Ugh.

Courtney: There are complicated emotions surrounding Kobe Bryant and his death. In 2003, the then 24-year-old Bryant was accused of raping a 19-year-old hotel employee in his Colorado hotel room. Assault charges were eventually dropped, but you can read the Daily Beast's extensive report of the graphic details.

Ultimately, Bryant stated, "Although I truly believe this encounter between us was consensual, I recognize now that she did not and does not view this incident the same way I did. After months of review and discovery, listening to her attorney, and even her testimony in person, I now understand how she feels – that she did not consent to this encounter."

Neil Irvin, the director of the nonprofit Men Can Stop Rape. said in 2016, "Kobe is the only accused individual who I've ever seen provide an apology in writing in my 16 years of doing rape prevention work. I've read it, and it fits with what I know about rape. Survivors don't lie. The question I'm left with is, how do you honor Kobe's statement and what appears to be his subsequent growth without ignoring there was a survivor who also has to overcome the violence that Kobe admits to?"

And that's a question we're all dealing with, some better than others, and some, much, much worse. After tweeting the Daily Beast story, Washington Post reporter, Felicia Sonmez, was suspended from her position, herself a survivor of sexual assault. And for all the survivors of sexual assault, seeing someone accused of rape being celebrated as a hero can be triggering.

Brent: Sorry, just so I understand—

Courtney: Yeah.

Brent: Sorry. Just so I understand. So, Felicia Sonmez, uh, just sort of tweeted an old story about this, uh, about Kobe's accusations? Or...

Courtney: Yeah. She tweeted the story, um, absent of context. She did not further, y'know, open the tweet. It was literally just a link to the story.

Brent: Gotcha.

Courtney: And then... um, I'm gonna actually pull up her other tweets real quick.

So, she tweeted the Daily Beast article, y'know, without context. This was an article from 2016. But then, she got tons of pushback on this tweet. People were mad that it was too soon, uh, people, y'know, obviously, they went on the attack, because that's what people do on Twitter.

She then tweeted, "Well, that was eye-opening. To the ten thousand people, literally, who have commented and emailed me with abuse and death threats, please take a moment and read the story, which was written three plus years ago, and not by me. Any public figure is worth remembering in their totality, even if that public figure is beloved, and that totality is unsettling. That folks are responding with rage and threats toward me, someone who didn't even write the piece, but found it well reported, speaks volumes about the pressure people come under to stay silent in these cases."

Brent: Yeah. I think that, um... I know you'll keep me honest here. I think Kobe's just one of these figures that – and I've had this thought before, I don't know if you have – that if what had happened, in I believe it was 2005? Thereabouts?

Courtney: 2003.

Brent: 2003. Okay. I think if that had all happened, or come out, in, say, 2018, I think it would've been a different story. Because I think that was still during a time when, um, the whole reason #MeToo happened and had so much passion behind it was because of the time that came before it, of which that was a part. And I... it's not really me passing a judgment one way or the other on him. Um, it's more just me saying... I think that sometimes, certain people, by the culture at large, um, get a pass, whether they should or not.

And so, when you go up against that, I guess, like... I don't know. Like—I mean, when you and I first talked about this story, there was a question of like, well, how do we... how do we even talk about this? Because it is so polarizing. There is this missing this hero, and there's also this problematic past that, um, was bad enough when it happened. But I think we would look at differently if it had come out or happened later.

Courtney: I mean, I hope that we would, but I honestly don't know that that's true. Because we still, to this day, are dealing with, um, matters of, y'know, call it he said she said, and the default is to believe the man. One thing that I do think has come out of #MeToo is, um... and this, y'know, this was part of the Aziz Ansari story, where there is an area of—of sexual... misconduct is the only thing coming to my head, 'cause it's... it's not necessarily... out and—the way we think of assault.

Brent: Mm-hmm.

Courtney: But it is not consensual. It is wrong. But it has become so normal to women to experience, that we sometimes either, y'know, we have to just live with it as this uncomfortable thing that happened, or even joke about it. I've—my friends and I joke in that like, gallows humor way, about

men pushing our heads down and stuff like that. Because we've all experienced it.

But it's also a matter of men feeling entitled, and not being—not knowing. Genuinely—not necessarily not knowing, but not believing that no means no. And feeling entitled to take what they want.

Brent: Yeah.

Courtney: And that is what I feel, for me, that has been the conversation I keep wanting to have. Where it's not an out and out, like, cancel culture, this guy's a fuckin' monster, lock him in a cage at the bottom of the sea. It's... this is something society has told us is normal for a long time, and it's not. So let's all just change our fuckin' behaviors.

Brent: Gotcha.

Courtney: Um... Now, as I said, for all survivors of sexual assault, seeing someone accused of rape being celebrated as a hero can be really triggering. I understand that. But several women whose work I admire have pointed out how it is more nuanced than that.

Writer Aja Barber wrote, "Trump is set to be reelected. Woody Allen still makes movies. Alabama almost elected Roy Moore, if black women hadn't voted en masse to save the day. Prince Andrew still receives royal dollars. None of this is okay, but every white lady needs to tell her your opinion on Kobe."

And honestly, that's true. When David Bowie died, there were a few think pieces here and there, but I remember the overwhelming reaction to his death being positive, with minimal, if any, focus on his sexual encounters with 15 year old girls, quote unquote from Lori Maddox, one of those herself, quote, "baby groupies," or his 1987 rape accusation by a different woman.

All of the people who I, understandably, have seen be really upset about this, I don't remember that with David Bowie. And it's that explicit bias kind of thing, where I don't think people realize they're doing it.

Brent: Mm-hmm.

Courtney: But there are people held to a different standard. I talk about it all the time with women, and now I'm talking about it with black men. So, with that, I am choosing to amplify and direct our listeners to the words of black women on the subject, rather than hoist my thoughts and views where, frankly, theirs are the ones that have the most weight.

Bitch Media editor in chief, Evette Dionne, wrote, "Many feminists have the capacity to hold space for assault survivors and mourn someone who meant so much to so many black children and families around the world. I thought about my brother, who loved basketball and idolized Kobe Bryant as a high school athlete. It seems that the empathy of white people, and white women in particular, didn't stretch that far until they were pushed to consider more than one dimension of his legacy."

She went on to tweet, "I know it might seem radical or feminist even to rejoice in someone's death who has harmed someone or multiple people in their lives. But it is possible to crouch callousness in theory and call it righteous, and that's just not the feminist tradition I am a part of."

In an essay for Time, Dionne wrote, "The #MeToo movement has helped equip us with more nuanced understanding of sexual violence. A person can be good to their spouses and their children, donate lots of money, and create indelible work that influences, and can also be a monster. And yet, it's difficult to process legacy in the face of tragedy.

Thanks to the pressures of social media, in which we react to unfathomable events in real time, we often fall into a binary of good or bad, wrong or right, on the side of survivors, or on the side of a rapist. It is rarely that simple.

Bryant aged and matured, became an official ambassador for women's sport, coached his daughter's basketball team, and took pride in being a girl dad. But none of his commitments to his children, to women's sports, to a more equitable world, negate his culpability."

I really recommend everyone read the full piece, as well as her tweets that inspired this Time piece. We will link to it on Twitter. I also recommend another piece. I'm highlighting specifically black women's writing, um, in—when I was reading. But a piece that I absolutely adored, uh, was Damon Young's piece for The Root, and it's called "On Processing My Messy Feelings About Kobe Bryant's Myth, Life and Death."

There is just... there's... [sighs] There's just—there's more. There's more that... I'm not... I'm not in my lane to say, he was this.

Brent: Yeah. I know what you mean. And at a certain point, it—y'know, like, while I think, sometimes, uh, on Twitter, you may feel, or on this show, kind of compelled to like, have a take... sometimes, it's like you said. There's the cliché of saying, "That's above my pay grade." But like, to me, I feel like it's that, except in terms of like, um... people that should be the person to speak on this. And I am not the mouth piece. I am not the right person to understand this fully enough, and therefore, to talk about it in that way. That's how I feel. Sometimes.

Courtney: Yeah. Ashley Reese wrote a piece for Jezebel about how to talk about Kobe Bryant's legacy. And I mean, a lot of the people that I've read pieces on say, like, it's all the same thing, where it's like, this is complicated. This is... it's hard.

But one thing that I think is really important that uh, Ashley Reese said, "Everyone responds differently to death. Even the deaths of people who have done repulsive things. And even those who do not care an iota for Bryant are able to mourn the death of his 13-year-old daughter, Gianna, who was in no way complicit in Bryant's alleged transgressions, and had nothing but a full life ahead of her.

Or degree for the others that died. Mothers and fathers and their daughters caught in a haze of fog and smoke. The circumstances surrounding the helicopter crash are horrific enough, but the collective morbidity of scrolling Twitter timelines, guiltily refreshing TMZ, and watching ghoulish clips of

cameras shoved in the faces of grieving basketball players forced to abide by the NBA's unyielding schedule, has been overwhelming.

Death of public figures compels us to call our loved ones, dwell on life's fragility, swear off helicopters and small planes and hard drugs. The fallout can even become less about the figure who died, and more about ourselves and our relationships with mortality."

And that's... that's true. That's another piece that I read. I believe, actually, it was the piece, um, from The Root, Damon Young's piece, was basically about like, this is... the way that we look at, y'know, Kobe or any other kind of famous person who lives, it's our relationship to them. It's the way we viewed them. It's the myth that we create.

Brent: Right.

Courtney: And that is powerful.

Brent: Yeah. It's the kind of thing where—and we've done—we've talked about this in so many different ways, but um... For me, y'know, it's that question... Anita Sarkeesian. Y'know, I learned a lot personally from her in the early 2010s, and... she talked about how it's okay to have your problematic fave thing, and y'know, separating the art from the artist. And I think in sports, it can be similar, too.

Like, if you were inspired, uh, to feel like, because somebody else was a hero, you could maybe—you could do something like they did, or whatever... whatever way in which they inspired you or made you—or even just were someone you felt like you knew, because you spent so much time with them, watching games or whatever.

Y'know, it doesn't necessarily have to take that away. You don't have to necessarily feel bad about that. But um, it's really sticky. And I feel like... the reactions to this have been... I mean, I don't begrudge anyone their reaction to it. Honestly. Because he meant so much to some people. Even if it wasn't the totality of him and his story.

Courtney: And that's why, to me, I—'cause frankly, I'm not a basketball person. I know, and I understand, and I respect and appreciate how much he meant to people. But... he didn't mean that to me. So, for me, I feel like it is best for me to defer, then, to people who can exist in both worlds, whose lives have been touched by both worlds, and see the nuance.

And again, at the end of the day, like... this... this is a matter that is... it's... it's a rape story. It's a fandom story. But it's a black story. And I... I don't get—I don't get that say. So, I, instead, defer. And I would encourage all of our listeners to defer to the voices who, this is their lane.

Um, this is... a weird shift, but I swear it's related.

Brent: Okay.

Courtney: An update on a story from last week that is somehow connected to this one. In a statement, Planters announced, they will be putting a bit of a pause on its dead peanut focused marketing efforts.

Brent: It's a weird world we live in.

Courtney: They released a statement to Adage, saying, "We are saddened by this weekend's news, and Planters has paused all campaign activities, including paid media, and will evaluate next steps through a lens of sensitivity to those impacted by this tragedy." And I don't know what to do with this.

They... they fake killed a pretend peanut, and have paused post-peanut-mortem marketing out of respect for Kobe Bryant's family, and I don't know—like, the—that's the weirdest amalgamation of words I've ever heard of in my life.

Brent: It is quite strange. But like, it kind of reminds me – and look, this is not the same thing. However... it reminds me of a similar kind of weird moment, where it's like, "What now? What's the issue?"

And it was when, um... an anthropomorphized can of SpaghettiOs on Twitter... gosh. It was either, like, honoring our honored, passed on veterans, or maybe it was like, 9/11? It was very, like... y'know, trying to like, get in the spirit of the day, in terms of honoring, uh, y'know, something that had happened that was a tragedy.

But also, it was an anthropomorphized can of SpaghettiOs, and it was just veery weird. And people were like, "That's not really what your Twitter or this mascot is for."

Courtney: No. And every, like—there's a new, horrific one of those every 9/11. There was a, uh, a Betty Boop one that I think was the one this year that broke me. Where it's Betty Boop, and it's all cute, and she's saluting, and she's like, standing in front of the two towers. And I was like, "This is fucked up. This cartoon didn't ask for this. This made up cartoon lady in her lingerie did not ask for this."

Brent: Oh, okay. So, just to be clear, so I don't get people telling me I was wrong, and I was, but uh... it seems that the SpaghettiOs thing was, "Take a moment to remember #PearlHarbor with us." And it's this anthropomorphic SpaghettiO himself, uh, holding an American flag, but like, big smile and like, doing that like, tongue lip lick smile thing. It's just awkward.

And then, of course, later, they were like, "We apologize for our recent tweet in remembrance of Pearl Harbor day. We meant to pay respect, not to offend." It's like... yeah, you're SpaghettiOs, though.

Courtney: I'm gonna drop this in our chat, just so you can—not sharing my screen. That's what I'm not doing.

Brent: [laughs]

Courtney: Uh... chat. This is real time Courtney, figuring out how to use Skype.

Brent: Eyyy! Oh, the Skype chat!

Courtney: So this is Betty Boop. Yes, Skype chat.

Brent: Okay. Let's show everyone that we're actually boomers.

Courtney: This is—we are—we're like, some boomer shit. Betty Boopmers.

Brent: Betty Booper. Ohhh! Look at that.

Courtney: Like, look at that.

Brent: Betty Boop...

Courtney: Looking... sexily... [laughs]

Brent: Oh god. That is really... that is really—

Courtney: It's real fuckin' weird, isn't it?

Brent: It's a picture of the two bright lights that are fired into the sky, uh, every—around every 9/11 time of the year in New York City that represent the towers that are now lost. But it's got Betty Boop Photoshopped into the bottom right of a picture of that, looking, like you said, kind of sexily at the lights.

Courtney: Yeah, she's like, pouting.

Brent: And then, top left, "Never Forget." Boy, that is weird. That is...

Courtney: She's pouting, but not in a sad way.

Brent: And y'know, for a second, I was like, "Oh, this is just at Betty Boop news. This is just a fan site." Nope! Verified. This is verified Betty Boop.

Courtney: This is blue check Betty.

Brent: Yikes. Big yikes.

Courtney: Ohh, yikes on bikes.

[theme music plays]

Courtney: Hey, Brent. Knock knock knock.

Brent: Who's there, who's there, who's there?

Courtney: It's me, Paul.

Brent: Oh. Paul who?

Courtney: [whispers] You say Paul who. [normally] Paul... itics Roundup.

Brent: Hello, Paulitics Roundup. That is such a strange name. Is that... Kazakhstani?

Courtney: It's, uh... it's Italian.

Brent: Oh, I see. Well... it's political, either way.

Courtney: It's Italian for Politics Roundup.

Brent: Um... yeah. So, we're gonna roundup some politics stuff for y'all. For Paul. Um...

Courtney: Do it for Paul. That's what I say.

Brent: For Paul! Itics roundup. Okay. Take it away. Tell me some stuff about impeachment.

Courtney: We are in the salad days of the impeachment hearings, and that salad is definitely romaine and will destroy us all. I'm gonna hit you with the highlights of this week. On Monday, Ken Starr – that Ken Starr, to be sure – said these actual words from his human mouth. "The Senate is being called

to sit as the high court of impeachment all too frequently. Indeed, we are living in what I think can aptly be described as the age of impeachment.”

He asked, “How did we get here? With presidential impeachment invoked frequently.” I mean... I think I have an answer.

Brent: Maybe because... ugh.

Courtney: But here’s the thing – Ken has an answer right back. He was merely following the law, as opposed to everyone else. “Instead of a once in a century phenomenon, which it had been, presidential impeachment has become a weapon to be wielded against one’s political opponent.” That’s literally what he did.

Brent: Yeah. I mean, that’s the whole... [sighs]

Courtney: That’s the whole ass thing.

Brent: And just briefest sidebar, I think that the fact that the Clinton impeachment was so political is one reason it’s easy for people in Trump’s base to think, “Oh, this is just revenge for that,” or, “This is just as political,” when it’s not.

Courtney: No. The big difference between, uh, Ken Starr and Robert Mueller is that Ken Starr engaged in the spectacle of it all. Like, that’s—he was much more public than Mueller. In his—in the—the Starr Report that we, y’know, we were like, 11, growing up, knowing that there was a whole report about a blowjob. Um, he recommended in the report that Clinton’s behavior could lead to impeachment. Mueller didn’t do that. Mueller didn’t do that shit.

Brent: Correct.

Courtney: Uh, one of the big things this week, specifically, was John Bolton’s book, his manuscript leaked online, detailing revelations from his time as a national security advisor, including how Trump told Bolton directly

that he was withholding \$391 million of military aid to Ukraine until Ukraine announced investigations of the Bidens.

Mitch McConnell told his colleagues, he doesn't have the votes to block witnesses, so there's expected to be a vote to allow witnesses tomorrow. And people suspect Bolton may be among them.

Brent: Yeah, it's really... it's really tricky. I listened to this really great, uh, discussion today about the fact that it could be 50/50. And like, what I mean by that is, uh... if, I believe, it's four Republican senators...

Courtney: Yeah, it's four Republican senators. If the Democrats can get four Republicans on their side, we get witnesses.

Brent: Yeah. And people that are on the table to do that are like, uh, Mitt Romney, I believe Murkowski, Collins... Toomey, whose office is a block from my apartment... uh, 'cause he's the Pennsylvania Republican douchebag. Um, there's—I heard five names. Those are four that come to mind. The thing is... it could happen. They could end up having witnesses. But if the vote is 50/50, it's unclear.

I mean, I don't think Mike Pence is an unbiased president of the Senate. He's not really involved in the impeachment to come in and rule, y'know, to be the tiebreaker. It might be Chief Justice John Roberts, who's presiding over the whole thing... or... knowing Mitch McConnell, he'd probably be like, [in an old man voice] "Well... that means the answer is no. Ugh." 'Cause he's a melty Jimmy Stewart. Anyway.

Courtney: Don't—don't diminish Jimmy Stewart that way! How dare!

Brent: Yeah, that's true. I'm sorry. My bad. But yeah, the point is that, it might happen, and it might not. It's a very interesting situation with those witnesses, but obviously, we're all hoping that even though, probably Trump won't get removed, witnesses would be good just to show more people the truth of the situation.

Courtney: [sighs] I... I want to have hope. Remember hope? I don't. It's been too long.

Brent: I saw it on a poster once, in the before time.

Courtney: [laughs] The long, long ago. Uh, Donald Trump had some Twitter feelings, as is his wont. "For a guy who couldn't get approved for the ambassador to the UN years ago, couldn't get approved for anything since, begged me for a non-Senate approved job, which I gave him, despite many saying, "Don't do it, sir!" Takes the job, mistakenly says 'Libyan model' on TV, and many more mistakes of judgments. Gets fired, because frankly, if I listened to him, we would be in World War 6 by now, and immediately goes and writes a nasty and untrue book. All classified national security. Who would do this?"

Brent: I will say this. John Bolton never met a war he didn't like.

Courtney: Oh, no, John—

Brent: As much as he's like—he's kind of in that James Comey zone, where like, he can be the friend of the good side, but he also can screw the good side, and is a... a weird figure in that way.

Courtney: Which is very—'cause the Atlantic had a piece today, literally called, "The Moral Courage of John Bolton."

Brent: [blows a raspberry]

Courtney: Calm down.

Brent: Let's relax. I mean...

Courtney: Calm down. Please.

Brent: War hocks have, uh, no problem with making decisions that are gonna kill many, many people that don't deserve it. Period. So yeah. But at the same time... the... [sighs] I don't—I do not wanna shine this guy's shoes,

but... he is a loyal Republican who, if he does testify against Trump, will be hurting certain Republican bona fides. Or I guess what I mean is, he's going to ostracize himself from people that otherwise would've been like, "Oh, I've seen you on TV! You're the mustache man! I like you."

And it just shows that anyone that crosses Trump, Trump ends up putting the target on them, and then they're hated by his base forever. So like, in a way, there is an element of courage, but I'm not really ready to like, throw a party over it or give him a medal.

Courtney: There's an element of wanting book sales.

Brent: That's true. That's a good point.

Courtney: Actual pedophile, Alan Dershowitz—

Brent: Gotta pay for all that mustache oil somehow.

Courtney: So much mustache oil. Like... mustache oil for days.

Brent: Vats of it.

Courtney: Actual pedophile, Alan Dershowitz, defended Trump against the Bolton bomb, saying, "Nothing in the Bolton revelations, even if true, would rise to the level of an abuse of power or an impeachable offense. That is clear from the history. That is clear from the language of the constitution. You cannot turn conduct that is non-impeachable into impeachable conduct simply by using words like 'quid pro quo'..." That's a hard thing to keep saying over and over again.

Brent: It is.

Courtney: "... and 'personal benefit.'" Dershowitz also said, "If a president does something which he believes will help him get elected in public interest, that cannot be the kind of quid pro quo that results in impeachment."

Sooo, that's basically everything. [whispers] There is no law!

Brent: I mean, Dershowitz has made salient points in the past. I... I think, frankly, that he... okay, okay, okay. I just am speculating here that, because he was in a bad situation with all the Epstein news breaking, and he was suddenly having to say things like, "I've had a perfect sex life," which is very much like Trump's 'perfect Ukraine call.' Why is everybody hyperbolic about these things that literally cannot be perfect?

But um, does it make you wonder? If like, Trump having something on him... I mean, look, I'm very much speculating, but it's just such a weird thing for him to be involved, and to be obviously lying.

The problem about saying it's not an impeachable offense is like, first off, impeachment is a political act, not a criminal one. But... anyway, whatever. I'm interrupting, but it's just—

Courtney: Well that's—I mean—

Brent: It is insane to see, uh, Dershowitz acting like this.

Courtney: That's kind of the thing. After months of, "There was no quid pro quo!" Plenty of conservatives are now declaring themselves pro quid pro quo.

Brent: Yeah.

Courtney: Two weeks after saying any indication of quid pro quo was mere hearsay, Ted Cruz went on John Hannity saying, "Quid pro quo doesn't matter." Senator John Kennedy and Rand Paul are now on the downplay party as well, with Paul saying, "I think [Bolton's account] should be taken with a grain of salt. I think it doesn't matter what he has to say." It's almost like there's a concerted effort to dilute Bolton's testimony before it happens.

Brent: For sure. And quid pro quo... it's a form of bribery, and bribery is one of the very few specified high crimes and misdemeanors about

impeachment in the Constitution! Ugh, it's infuriating!

Courtney: It's 'cause it's Latin, and it's confusing people. Just call it bribes. That's what it is.

Brent: Oh, yeah.

Courtney: Uh, the Democratic senators used their question time to shoot their shot. Kamala Harris asked, "President Nixon said, when the president does it, that means it is not illegal. Before he was elected, president Trump said, "When you're a star, they let you do it. You can do anything." After he was elected, president Trump said that article two of the Constitution gives him the right to do whatever he wants as president. These statements suggest that each of them believed that the president is above the law; a belief reflected in the improper actions that both presidents took to affect their reelection campaigns. If the Senate fails to hold the president accountable for misconduct, how would that undermine the integrity of our system of justice?"

I really hope she gets a spot in the White House just devoted to shutting down men. 'Cause she's really good at it.

Brent: She's gonna like, lead up the cabinet department of shuttin' it down.

Courtney: The cabinet of shut up!

Brent: [laughs] She is among the best I've ever seen in terms of that C-span kind of thing of like, basically interrogating someone in a hearing that just cuts to the quick. She's great at it.

Courtney: Bernie Sanders came in with a receipt, saying, "Given that the media has documented president Trump's thousands of lies while in office, more than 16,200 as of January 20th, why should we be expected to believe that anything president Trump says has credibility?"

Brent: Preach.

Courtney: To the damn point. And senators Tom Udall, Richard Blumenthal, Patrick Leahy, and Sheldon Whitehouse decided that everyone is goin' down, asking, "By the standard that the president's council has applied to Hunter Biden, should Mr. Kushner and Ms. Trump's conflict of interest with foreign governments also come under investigation?" Yes! Take them down!

Brent: Ohh, damn!

Courtney: Take down Slenderman! Take down Ivanka!

Brent: Honestly, I have no problem with Hunter Biden—I mean, here—the only problem I have with Hunter Biden being a witness is, it will give an air of legitimacy to Trump's claim that he was super preoccupied and concerned about corruption in the Ukraine. To me, it's like, yeah, maybe getting in on it. Maybe stokin' the flames.

But um, that being said, I don't ca—I think that the Hunter Biden thing was, in fact, a shady, influence peddling situation that was unethical, because his dad was the vice president. Whether or not Joe Biden knew about it, per se, or was in on it, I don't know. I don't care. But um, that's a great point. Uh, by Sheldon Whitehouse and those others. I haven't thought about that yet.

Also, it broke today that – and I'm paraphrasing, because this hasn't really—I didn't find a specific enough piece on it, 'cause it came out right before we went to record. But Rand Paul asked a question that was rejected, I believe by Chief Justice Roberts, because the question, in a fashion, sort of quasi-outed the whistleblower.

Courtney: Yeah, I almost included that, but then I was uh, low on time. Your girl got down to the wire, here.

Brent: No, no, of course. I mean, and here I am, like—

Courtney: No, but yeah, that's true. Like, Justice Roberts basically just said like, "I will not read this question."

Brent: Yeah, and I mean, honestly, I—there are political figures that you can respect for like, 15% of their opinions, and then think they're total losers about the other 85%. And Rand Paul, for a long time, was like that to me. I was like, he wants the wars to not be, uh, so everlasting long and taking up all of our money and resources. He doesn't like the military industrial complex.

There are things about his policies that, in the past, I've been like, "Yeah, but y'know what, at least he sticks to that thing that I agree with." But he has just become this weird, hybrid shill monster. I don't know—I mean, I guess it's because, if you're in Kentucky, you're in Trump country, and you gotta play for the team, or you're not gonna have a job as a senator. I guess that's what it is.

But it's shocking that Mr. Personal Liberties doesn't believe in the... first off, I believe that um, Adam Schiff said that the whistleblower has a statutory right to privacy. I also read that only inspectors general have a legal duty to protect a whistleblower's name. But like, out of principle, it's called a whistleblower for a reason. God, it's so infuriating.

Courtney: Well, and Rand Paul has kind of a history of basically demanding that they release this person's name. So...

Brent: Yeah, it's just very weird.

Courtney: Him now being like, "Well, that didn't mean they need to give his name!" Like, no, you know what you were doing.

Brent: Right. And there's also this whole, like, "Shouldn't he be allowed to face his accuser?" To which I say... you are invoking a certain tradition of courts of law. And the problem with that is, y'know what else is like, pretty okay in courts of law? Impartial jurors and witnesses.

Courtney: Yep.

Brent: I almost said a word... let us say, you wusses. Let us say that. That is... 'cause I'm just so mad that—it's like, it's like they, uh, a boxing match,

where all but one limb of one of the fighters is chained down. And then, y'know, like, they're just like, "Well, what's wrong? What's wrong? Why can't you beat us?" And then, when you beat them, it's like, "See?" It's like, no no no! You undermined every principle and tradition of how this stuff works every step of the way!

And it is good that you've got so-called Republican moderates. Your Susan Collines, your Mitt Romneys, saying, "Now, wait a minute..." About this witnesses thing. Because, again, it's just the way that it looks. Trump's super base, they're not gonna believe anything anyone but Fox News or Trump himself says ever. And if they do, and Trump says it's not true, after that, they'll go, "Oh, never mind."

But that's not necessarily who it's for. There are independents—

Courtney: You said you were gonna say a word. What was—was it wimp? Alarmist? Baby? Caitiff? Chicken?

Brent: No.

Courtney: Craven? Cur? Dastard?

Brent: No. It's the—

Courtney: Deserter? Punk? Invertebrate?

Brent: It's the thing that—it's a thing that I shouldn't—

Courtney: Jellyfish? Malingerer? Mouse? Pessimist? Poltroon? Quitter? Rabbit? Recreant? Shirker? Skulker? [laughing]

Brent: You Googled synonyms! You dweeb!

Courtney: Sneak. Weakling. Yellow. Chicken heart. Chicken liver. Faint of heart. Faintheart. 'Fraidy-cat. Gutless. Lily liver. Scaredy cat. Shirk. White liver. Aaand yellow belly.

Brent: Yes to all.

Courtney: It was pussies. It was gonna be pussies.

Brent: That's what it was gonna be. But I am not trying to get into the habit of saying that word, for like, a lot of reasons. It's problematic, but also like, I don't need to. But you know what I meant. And you know the sentiment that I was gonna—that it came to mind with.

Courtney: I remember Salute Your Shorts, like, when I was like, seven. There being an episode where he was like, "You're part wimp, part puss! You're a wuss!" So you kind of did say it. 'Cause that's what wuss is. Part wimp, part puss.

Brent: I mean, yeah.

Courtney: I learned that from that famous documentary, Salute Your Shorts.

Brent: Yeah. Wuss is to the P-word as heck is to hell. Or dang is to damn, I think.

Courtney: I'm fine with it. As the one with the thing, I'm fine with it.

Brent: Okay. Um, what else?

Courtney: I don't speak for everyone.

Brent: I think that—

Courtney: Don't at me.

Brent: No. No. Um, it's a word—it's kind of like, uh... it's kind of like the B-word, where it's not the end of the world, but I just don't need to say it. I just don't need to be a person to say it.

Courtney: But I love saying it.

Brent: Oh, yeah.

Courtney: I looove saying it.

Brent: And I love hearing it. In the right context.

Courtney: Mm-hmm.

Brent: Um, anyway. So, yeah. Um... we'll see how this goes. I really hope the witnesses thing happens. And by the time you're hearing this out there in podcast land, you may already know, because I believe that's happening... Friday, January 31st, the day this comes out. Is that correct?

Courtney: You, the listeners, know more than we, the hostseseses.

Brent: More than I. Um... yeah. So we'll see. [laughs] The whole thing is... there's a lot going on on the inside, but... there would have to be the upset of the ages in order for two thirds of the senate to vote to remove Trump. But if more of his misdeeds can be exposed...

Actually, real quick point I want to make – I wish that the House Democrats had broadened the articles of impeachment! Because abuse of power and obstruction of congress are just... they're kind of mealy mouthed. They're kind of milquetoast, wishy-washy, like... to me, it's like, nah, let's get him on everything! Let's get him on the obstruction of justice that Mueller clearly found!

What are the odds that, out of ten obstruction of justice charges, or rather, um, pieces of evidence about obstruction of justice... what are the odds Trump didn't do any of them? This man. This person. But no.

And this is part of—y'know, the Democrats are the only party you've got if you want to beat Trump. But I just can't carry water for them all the time, because sometimes, they... [sighs] They—they're like—they act as if they don't have a spine, but really, it's because if they play along enough with the

system, then they're still kind of not tipping the boat too much. But anyway. We'll see how it goes.

Now, that being said, that's some Trump news. Let's move over to the Democrats, since I just set them up beautifully. [laughs]

Courtney: You really did.

Brent: It's finally here! Primary season! Over the next few months, Americans will be choosing the nominee of the Democratic party – at least, the ones that are allowed to vote in Democratic primaries. The first primary is Monday, February 3rd. It's actually a caucus, so we'll see the first contest of the primary season. But the actual first primary is New Hampshire, which comes a little ways after that. But yeah.

The first contest is Monday, February 3rd, just three days away, if you're listening to this on the Friday when it comes out. Iowa polls. Uh, I should say, the first one is the Iowa caucus. And polls, uh, about the Iowa caucus over the past few weeks have shown that Sanders and Biden are pretty close together, but Sanders has pulled slightly ahead in polling with the Real Clear Politics polling average for Iowa at 23.8% for Sanders, and 20.2% for Biden. Buttigieg trails around 16%, with Warren around 15%.

Now, again, I'm gonna be mentioning the RCP average. That's not any one poll – it's sort of like the average of recent polls, weighted in certain ways. Uh, RCP is not perfect, but I tend to find them a little more reliable for knowing what opinion is at any given times, as opposed to FiveThirtyEight, which is more of like a forecasting site.

Anyway. The Iowa caucuses rarely select the person who ends up becoming the president, in terms of broad, long history. But they did, in the case of Obama, 'cause he won the caucus in 2008. And judging by 2016, we're not exactly in a predictable timeline, since you know who showed up. But it's also worth pointing out that only four candidates have won both the first two contests since we've had this primary process, and all four times, they won the nomination.

So anyway, Iowa is the first contest in the primary season. They sort of set the stage for the rest of the season, which is why candidates often spend a disproportionate amount of time and money there in Iowa. Which, y'know, that's not necessarily good. I think the primary process is very weird, and Iowa is very small and very white. And I just don't know that it represents any kind of cross section.

And while some people would say, "Well, every other state gets its say," it's like, well, yes. But this is the first one. And also, caucus-goers tend to be much more enthusiastic within their party or their politics than your average, y'know, somebody who watches the news once or twice a week, doesn't pay that much attention. And so, while I'm happy Bernie's leading in the polls, it also just—as a big picture thing, I think the primary process that we do is weird.

I wouldn't have a problem if it was like, we get up to a certain point, like, I don't know, May. Just keep doing debates, keep having rallies or whatever, and then in May, every registered Democrat in the country just votes. And that's the person. The end.

Um, because the way that the primary process works particularly on the Democratic side, historically, seems like it's almost circuitous enough to allow the powers that be to continue to influence, uh, the direction in which it goes, which is part of why it was so stunning to see the republican party just scrambling in 2016... where they got to the point where they were like, "Okay. We're going to float Ted Cruz to everybody, 'cause at least he's not Trump." Ted. Cruz. So we'll see what happens.

Um, now, what's likely to happen over the course of these first few contests? Well, Sanders supporters shouldn't get too excited about Iowa, unless he wins, because a three point polling lead is still within the margin of error. It's basically a Bernie versus Joe race in Iowa, barring a major upset. But a major upset could happen.

Next, after that, is the New Hampshire primary, where the RCP average has Bernie with a strong lead of nearly ten points over Biden, with Buttigieg in third at 15, Warren at fourth around 14. For all the mainstream media's

pushing of Klobuchar, her highest rank in the first four contests is fifth in Iowa, around 10%.

The third primary is Nevada, where the current RCP average has Biden at 25, Sanders at 19. That being said, the tides of primaries often turn on the first few contests. If someone in the fourth or fifth primary down the line is planning to vote for mayor Pete today, but then mayor Pete does poorly in the first few contests, that voter might choose to boost a candidate who's got a better shot.

Bernie's looking strong for Iowa, but Biden could easily win Iowa. And y'know, Buttigieg and Warren aren't dark horses at this point. They look more and more like long shots, but they could win some, or even many of these contests. And I think that's, um—the reason that it's—to the extent that they're long shots, I think that's because they tried to forge their own path in a race that, for better or worse, has sort of two lanes – the Medicare for All lane, and the “more realistic policies” lane.

And Pete has said in the past he was totally for Medicare for All. Now he's for this more wishy-washy circuitous public option thing. And if he's in Biden—if he's closer to Biden's lane, well, then, Biden's got more perceived experience and name recognition, so Pete's fallen through the cracks. Meanwhile, Elizabeth Warren, who always had an uphill climb as a prominent woman in the race, saw her poll numbers shrink after she softened her healthcare plan, and they fell off even more after the leak about Bernie possibly saying a woman couldn't win.

And Courtney, um, I hope I'm not paraphrasing your opinion about how Warren was sort of thrust into an impossible situation with that leak. Uh, where there was no good outcome, she just made her choice.

Courtney: Oh yeah. Mm-hmm.

Brent: But before that happened, she did move a few notches toward the center in her rhetoric and policy proposals. And I think, again, because of that, she and Pete are in between these two brightly defined lanes.

However, we've still got another debate coming. And it'll be between the Iowa and New Hampshire contests.

Maybe Bernie or Biden will screw up or be smeared or embarrassed so badly, we'll see a seat change in polling and outcomes. Maybe Warren or Buttigieg will have such a great night that they, y'know, kind of their trajectory gets moved in such a way that, by the time we get to the Carolinas, or even the super Tuesdays in I think like, five or six weeks, it could be a whole different thing.

I do think that debate, we're going to see, uh... we're gonna see some last ditch efforts to attract voters by all remaining candidates. And y'know what? The better Bernie does, the more you're gonna see op eds by people like David Frum, who said, "Trump can't win!" And then, Trump won.

But like, you're gonna see... basically anyone, even if it's Warren, and Biden and Warren are close, you're gonna see people in the establishment writing op eds about why it shouldn't be Warren, because the powers that be, even the ones that will donate to the Democratic party or vote for Democrats, they still want... uh, someone who's not gonna rock the boat very much, just like Joe Biden, who was quoted of saying, of his plan, "nothing will fundamentally change." That's what they want.

So if it looks like that's gonna happen with a Warren or a Sanders, get ready for an onslaught on them. Like we haven't seen since, I don't know, anti-Trump stuff in 2016.

Courtney: I want it to be March now.

Brent: You do?

Courtney: I honestly do. Like, I—[laughs] I want to just like, skip ahead and see who gets the fuckin' nomination, so that we can then like, plan accordingly. [laughs]

Brent: Well, what's interesting is like, the chasm of possibilities. We could absolutely know who's got the nomination by super Tuesday in five or six

weeks. Or... it could get hairy and go all the way to May or June. And I—I don't know about you. I'm hoping... ugh. I mean, you know I want it to be Bernie. And if it were Warren, I'd be like... again, I wish she were different on Medicare for All, but I would super be fine with it.

My fear is the fact that it seems like... if all the polling says, if Bernie can't quite get there, then we go aall the way over to Biden, skipping the probably better ideas of Warren and... mmm, policy-wise, Buttigieg. That guy's got some skeletons in his closet and some things I don't like about him, but... but yeah.

It's like, such a different... and I mean, I guess we're kind of back to 2016 in that way. Very different visions for America, and there isn't really much of an in between. Kind of Warren, but again, like...

Courtney: It's gonna be... it's gonna be a bummer. Like, if it's Biden. I really don't want to see Biden.

Brent: Yes. Well, I just don't want to cheerlead him.

Courtney: Now, am I gonna vote the—like, if he gets the nomination, am I gonna fucking vote for him in November? Of course I am. Because anything would be better than this. Like...

Brent: Of course. A can of soup.

Courtney: To say otherwise is a kind of privilege that we just—people are dying. We don't have time for it.

Brent: Yeah.

Courtney: But I'm gonna be real fuckin' bummed. I still have hope! I still have hope for you, Liz!

Brent: I mean, I'll be significantly more bummed than I was when Bernie lost in 2016. Um, mostly because... I assumed Hillary could beat Trump. I

don't know if Biden can. Um, and I do think Bernie can. And I think that part of that is enthusiasm.

Courtney: Can I—can I admit that I'm—I'm really fuckin' scared that no one can? Like, I'm—

Brent: I don't buy that.

Courtney: In that I need—I need to like, allow myself to feel that fear.

Brent: Oh, sure.

Courtney: Because it's either... it's either, frankly, being practical, or it—because last time, I had hope. Last time, I had hope.

Brent: Well, sure.

Courtney: I was certain. That like, this—Hillary was gonna take it. And then she didn't.

Brent: Yeah, I think a lot of us had just—it was a foregone conclusion.

Courtney: So, I... I don't know if Biden can beat Trump. I don't know if Bernie can beat Trump. I don't know if Warren can beat Trump. I'm fuckin' scared. I just want it to be someone.

Brent: I agree. To me, I guess what I was getting at is that like, I... here's what it comes down to. I'm in a swing state for the first time in my life. I've never lived in a swing state during an election. And so, what I do, not just where I vote... 'cause I'm in Philly. So like, Philly's gonna go blue. But I'm nearby to places where I could volunteer or canvas and really make a difference.

And... I realized recently, I don't know if I could canvas for Biden.

Courtney: Right.

Brent: Because what's my argument for Biden? It's, "He's not Trump! At least he's not Trump! Least he beats Brand X!" That is not an argument.

Courtney: [sighs]

Brent: And y'know, whether people agree with my feelings about Bernie or agree with his policies, I, and a lot of people, could passionately – especially if they'd stop being jerks, some of these Bernie bro types. I hate that term, but as we've talked about, there are people that definitely create the stereotype for a reason.

Courtney: [laughs] If the—if the term fits, you must acquit.

Brent: Alright. Yeah, let's acquit all the Bernie bros. You said it, not me.

Courtney: Acquit them!

Brent: Courtney Enlow. You heard it here.

Courtney: They're acquitted from the planet.

Brent: No no. Anyway.

Courtney: They can go to other planet. Everyone else gets to stay and be cool.

Brent: I just—I think that the reason Biden would have a hard time beating Trump isn't even the fact that he is increasingly looking enfeebled and stuttery and, uh, just doesn't seem like he has the quick wit and the fight that he did even in the 2008 election. And I'm not trying to, certainly, y'know, I hope not to offend anyone or hurt anybody's feelings saying those things about him, but let's be real – you're gonna need to come off a certain way in a debate against Trump.

And one thing I like about Bernie is that he doesn't mind, sometimes, having that sarcastic air and being like, [impersonating Bernie Sanders] "Oh, oh,

well, then I guess it's okay to bomb civilians. Oh, okay." Like, that kind of thing could play well.

And I think Warren, too. She can have that like, silver tongue. What's that one thing she said about, that she got the gay marriage question, and I think her answer was something like, "Well, the good news is, you don't have to get gay married." Or something like that. I'm definitely paraphrasing.

Courtney: Yeah. Like—

Brent: She's—she's quick on her feet.

Courtney: If you don't—then don't marry one, basically. Yeah.

Brent: That's it. Yeah. Whereas like, I think Pete is just gonna be relentlessly bullied by Trump for being this little kid kind of figure. And that's not fair, but—

Courtney: It would very literally be like watching a jock just dunk on, like, the smart nerd.

Brent: Yeah. Trump would give him wedgies for two hour debates at a time.

Courtney: Pete's gonna get so many swirlies.

Brent: [laughs] Ugh. I would've liked Pete to be better, but he's just... we could do a whole mayor Pete thing some other day, but I don't think he's gonna make it past super Tuesday, so...

Courtney: No. I don't know if I've actually said on air that like, I don't—I don't want him to be president. I don't like him as a candidate. But that like, my heart softened for Pete, because my grandpa who died recently, uh, really liked mayor Pete, and there was just something really cute to me about a 98-year-old World War II vet that liked—that liked mayor Pete. And I was like...

Brent: In the abstract, that—

Courtney: Pete, you're great.

Brent: In the abstract, your grandfather being like, at that age, being like, for a young, uh, to some people, exciting, gay candidate is beautiful.

Courtney: I know. I loved it. So I was like, y'know what?

Brent: That being said, like—

Courtney: Pete, I'm not gonna shit on you anymore, 'cause my gee liked you.

Brent: I mean, the thing is, I don't blame you for that. The thing is that there's some—there's some questionable stuff with race and police, and...

Courtney: Oh, no, 100%. Like, I literally only have—

Brent: I just want to make sure I say it to the people who don't—

Courtney: —like, warm grandpa feelings right now. Like, Pete sucks.

Brent: No no no, of course. And I don't want anyone out there listening to be like, "That's not okay." Because, look, y'know... grandpas. But Pete also like, just has... the companies he worked for, and the ways—the—my biggest problem with Pete Buttigieg? I think that you—everything you need to know about him is wrapped up in the following thing.

He got called out for taking donations from billionaires. And Elizabeth Warren, one of her best lines in the debates, was talking about the wine cave. So, what did Pete do near one of the fundraising cutoff dates? His campaign sent out an email – and I'm like, slightly paraphrasing, but I'm not changing the content of what happened – trying to make a contest with donating small amounts of money. Like, people that donate a small amount of money are gonna be entered into this contest.

And the thing is, yeah, the reason for that is to make it look like the average donation is actually small, which is a thing that Bernie, and I also believe Warren, uh, have been able to claim, 'cause it's true. 'Cause they have actual grassroots support. That is just so slimy. It is so transparent. Um, and disrespectful, to disrespect the intelligence of, uh, potential Buttigieg supporters and also anybody paying attention.

Anyway!

Courtney: Real quick, before we get to the bits...

Brent: If you really want to know what I—yeah, let's do some Tidbits.

Courtney: Um, I just actually saw, there was a, uh... when I was writing my copy, this hadn't happened yet. Uh, but one of the questions during the impeachment hearings, Elizabeth Warren asked, speaking of our girl, Liz, "At a time when large majorities of Americans have lost faith in government, does the fact that Chief Justice is presiding over a trial without witnesses diminish the trust in Chief Justice, Supreme Court, or Constitution?" Yas, queen.

Brent: Alright.

Courtney: Speakin' truth to fuckin' power.

Brent: Mm-hmm. What's next?

Courtney: She said it to the man's face. Right now, I'm just celebrating Liz for a second. I just—I need to, because I want her to win.

Brent: Enjoy.

Courtney: But... now we're gonna do Tidbits.

Brent: Yes.

Courtney: Um, spoilers for this week's Doctor Who. So just like, go over there for a minute. Just go over there. Just like, go over there. You need to go.

Brent: Two minutes max.

Courtney: Go over there. Just go over there for a quick second. Okay, so... this week on Doctor Who, we had the first black Doctor. The first black female Doctor! We had two female Doctors on the screen at the same time! One of them was black! Jo Martin made her first appearance as The Doctor, along Jodi Whittaker as The Doctor.

Now, we don't yet know, uh, what iteration of The Doctor Jo Martin's Doctor is. It's some kind of timey-wimey nonsense, but we're gonna find out, and I'm very excited. I really—I was just like, super stoked on this character from the moment she walked on screen, 'cause she didn't know she was the doctor yet, 'cause she had the Chameleon Arch.

But she was just like, perky and joyous, and I like, loved her. So I'm really excited to see where this goes, and I hope she is a canonical, actual, proper Doctor, and they don't, uh, take that back, because that would suck real bad.

Brent: Agree. I'm all for it. I've never been much of a Whovian, but I think it's awesome. Um, okay. Shifting gears.

Next Tidbit involves the Coronavirus, which we touched on last week, but oh gosh, I hope I didn't touch. Ha ha. Uh, okay.

It seems that it's gonna get worse before it gets better. According to NPR, the virus has spread to all regions of mainland China. The rapid spread has led to Russia closing its border with China. A cruise ship in Italy has a possibly infected Chinese person aboard, which has kept more than 6,000 people on the ship in port near Rome. They'll remain there until tests confirm whether the passenger is carrying the virus or not.

There have now been over 8,200 confirmed cases of the virus worldwide. Not deaths – cases. But let's keep in mind but only five of those are American, and the global death toll is much lower. As with lots of people, or rather, as with lots of respiratory illnesses, the people most at risk are children, the elderly, and people who have compromised immune systems. So if you don't fit those descriptions, you're pretty unlikely to get it, unless you're in mainland China.

But even then, like, 8,200 cases sounds like a lot. But even if they were all in China, that's one infection per half a million. And even a country as big as China has only had 170 deaths, which is literally one in a billion.

So, that being said, I did see on the hour before we went to record that the US has reported its first person to person transmission today, Thursday. But the CDC cautioned that the immediate risk to the American public is very low. The World Health Organization has, though, declared it a global health emergency.

I'm sorry for the see-saw, y'all. There's just a lot of information coming out about this. [laughs] Yeah, the WHO has declared it a global health emergency, but that doesn't mean it's the movie Contagion. It just means that it's a serious issue that needs to be dealt with. It's kind of like on Star Trek, when they go to yellow alert. Let's get serious about this thing, but it's not red alert. It's just a step up from the norm, in terms of protocols and now we're gonna handle this. It is not time to freak out.

But... it is time to wash your hands, sneeze into your elbow, do not go to work or travel if you have cold or flu symptoms. And at least try, if your boss is like, "You need to get to work!" Just try to be like, "It could be the Coronavirus. Are you willing to risk that?"

Anyway, folks, it's almost definitely gonna be okay.

Courtney: The Grammys! They happened.

Brent: They sure did. They Grammy'd to, and they Grammy'd fro. This is one of those things... there's always—they always try to make trending news

out of these events, but I feel like, for me, a lot of times, it ends up just being like, about as interesting as... I don't know, like, a tri state area plumbing awards thing, y'know? Like, no shade to plumbers, but like, I don't really care. [laughs] I don't really care what your awards ceremony is like. Somebody won. Great.

And part of that is like, can we agree – the Grammys... so often, it's like, a year where one artist wins so many things, and then two years later, they're nobody?

Courtney: Yeah.

Brent: Like Nora Jones, or Alicia Keys? I'm not saying they're nobody. But like... they didn't have the—it's almost like they never have the career that's implied by being the darling of a whole Grammys year.

Courtney: It honestly—it might as well just be the billboard awards, 'cause that's what it is. It's just the most popular songs.

Brent: Right. Just send 'em—just send 'em a thing. I don't know. Whatever.

Courtney: Except... for the American Folk category, which Patty Griffin won, so... I love Patty Griffin.

Brent: I think—am I right in thinking Hadestown won musical theater? And also, Michelle Obama won something? I forget. Anyway. This is how much we know about the Grammys.

Courtney: Yeah, the ones they don't show are great.

Brent: Yeah. Speaking of award ceremonies, Brad Pitt attended the annual luncheon for Oscar nominees, and the man decided to wear a name tag. That was the headline, anyway, making it sound like Brad Pitt, Bradford Bradley Pittford, brought his own 'Hello, my name is...' sticker with his name Sharpied onto it. No. Everyone had badges with their names on them that

were given to them. For all we know, they may have served security purposes.

Like, I went to the IAC building in New York once. They were pretty serious about me having to have my visitors sticker visible at all times. It's a cute headline, but like, no. Brad Pitt was not worried that no one would know who he is. He's the guy from... Goodwill Hunting?

[music plays]

Helen: Hey, J. Keith?

J. Keith: Hey, Helen. I hear you have a true false quiz you want me to finish.

Helen: I do! Here we begin. We host a trivia game show podcast on the Max Fun network called Go Fact Yourself.

J. Keith: True!

Helen: Correct! The show is all about celebrity guests answering trivia questions about things J. Keith enjoys.

J. Keith: False. We sometimes don't talk about baseball or cats.

Helen: Thank god. It's questions about things *they* enjoy. Next, we bring on surprise experts every episode.

J. Keith: True!

Helen: Correct! Final question – it's just the two of us sitting alone with these guests.

J. Keith: False.

Helen: Correct! We have a live audience at the Angel City Brewery!

[small audience cheering]

Helen: See?

[ding]

Helen: You can hear Go Fact Yourself every first and third Friday of the month, and if you don't listen, you can Go Fact Yourself!

J. Keith: True!

[music ends]

Speaker 1: Listen, I'm a hotshot Hollywood movie producer. You have until I finish my glass of kombucha to pitch me your idea. Go. [slurping]

Ify: Alright. It's called Who Shot Ya? A movie podcast that isn't just a bunch of straight white dudes. I'm Ify Nwadiwe, the new host of the show, and a certified BBN.

Speaker 1: BBN?

Ify: Buff black nerd.

Alonso: I'm Alonso Duralde, an elderly gay and legit film critic who wrote a book on Christmas movies.

Drea: I'm Drea Clark, a loud, white lady from Minnesota.

Ify: Each week, we talk about a new movie in theaters, and all the important issues going on in the film industry.

Alonso: It's like Guess Who's Coming to Dinner meets cruising!

Ify: And if it helps seal the deal, I can flex my muscles while we record each episode.

Speaker 1: I'm sorry, this is a podcast? I'm a movie producer. How did you get in here?

Drea: Ify, quick! Start flexing!

Ify: Bicep! Lats! Chest! Who Shot Ya? Dropping every Friday on MaximumFun.org, or wherever you listen to podcasts.

[music ends]

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.

[Wi-Five slap]

Brent: This week's Wi-Five involves blood, so if you're not interested in hearing about that today, skip ahead line one or two minutes in your poscad. Poscad? That's not a word. In your podcast player. There we go.

So, as you probably know, there are four main blood types, and if you get a transfusion of an incompatible type with your own, it can really mess with your body or even kill you. So it's important to make sure that all types of blood are available for transfusions. That would be the case, of course, unless there were some way to make all or more of the blood available to hospitals and first responders type O negative.

Type O negative is often called the universal donor, because it can be transfused without a bad reaction to anyone, regardless of their blood type. Well, there have been some really exciting developments out of the University of British Columbia, where biochemist, Stephen Withers, has been working with a team for years to figure out how to convert blood types other than O into O negative.

And what they recently found, uh, was a way to use gut enzymes to strip away the things that make A type blood A type blood, and turn it into O negative blood. A type blood is shared by around 30% of people, whereas only about seven percent of people have type O negative. So, if they rolled this process out, blood shortages could potentially become a thing of the past – or at least, way less common.

And the Withers team isn't stopping there. They're determined to eventually be able to convert any blood type to O negative, and the techniques they're learning and continuing to refine could lead there. So these are big breakthroughs that could have a huge positive impact on the medical community worldwide, and that is why we say, to Stephen Withers and his team at UBC... Wi-Five.

[theme music plays]

Brent: That's gonna do it for another Trends Like These. This one was a little bit longer than usual, and I am fine with it. We're bringing you that content. No extra charge for the extra minutes of edutainment. Infotainment.

Courtney: Bringin' that fresh 'tent.

Brent: Yes. Um... Please listen to all the amazing podcasts on the Maximum Fun network. You can find more of them at MaximumFun.org. Uh, please give us a good rating and subscribe to us on whatever podcast platform you use. Courtney, would you like to tell people where they can find you and what you're working on?

Courtney: You can find my stuff at SYFY Fangrrls. Also want to thank everyone who did the, uh, AMA in the Trends Like These Facebook group. You were all wonderful, absolute delights. And... yeah! That's what I got goin'!

Brent: Alright! Um, as for me, I now have two other podcasts. One is a limited run, the other is ongoing. The first one is ongoing, and it is Question

Box, the game show podcast of shockingly personal questions. It is what it sounds like. It's an interview show. It's also got a game element. Very rude questions. Very real topics, uh, from sex, to family, to death, to all kinds of things. Politics, even. And I have got some things I haven't even said on this show.

But, I have said things to one of the cohosts on the show. In fact, both of them, Travis and Courtney, have both been on Question Box. You can find that wherever you get your podcasts.

And also, for the length of the first season of Picard, the new Star Trek show on CBS All Access, my literal best friend and I, Matt Villeneuve and I, are doing a podcast called The Luc Out, which you can also get on... I think we're on most of the platforms. But if we're not on the one you like, you can just go listen to it directly by finding us on Twitter, @TheLucOut.

But I think that is going to do it for another Trends Like These. Courtney, am I forgetting anything?

Courtney: Yes, we both forgot to say that, uh, Ted Danson has come out in support of Mike Blumberg. [laughs] That's the energy that I'm going into the Good Place finale with.

Brent: Mandy Moore for Buttigieg and Ted Danson for Blumberg. Awesome.

Courtney: NBC, you're doin' great!

Brent: [laughs] See you next time.

[theme music plays]

Courtney: My headphones hurt my head. Oh, y'know what it is? I'm wearing thicker glasses than usual. So my headphones and my glasses are combining to just put my head in a goddamn vice.

Brent: Good ol' girthy spectacles.

Courtney: Good ol' girthy specs. That's what they call me.

Brent: [laughs] Alright, then.

Courtney: [laughs]

Brent: I can't imagine anything that I know less how to respond to. But um, hey, Mustin, none of this is the flub at the end of the show. I know you know. I'm just saying it so I know I know.

Courtney: It's not a fun outtake for anyone.

MaximumFun.org

Comedy and culture.

Artist owned.

Audience supported.