

Trends Like These 246: Runner Assaults Journalist, TikTok Suppresses User Content, Star Wars media Round Up, Articles of Impeachment Presented, Executive order on Judaism, Elizabeth Warren Earned Money, UK Election, Cocaine Santa Sweater, Promising Young Woman

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Travis: This week: Trump order second guessing, TikTok user suppressing, and a film gets Courtney's blessing.

Brent: I'm Brent Black.

Courtney: I'm Courtney Enlow.

Travis: I'm Travis McElroy.

Brent: And I'm a doodie jerk.

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!

Travis: And hello everyone. That's right – I'm lookin' at you, person listening to this.

Courtney: Put your pants back on, for the love of god.

Travis: Do put your pants back on. You're at work.

Courtney: [laughs]

Travis: Unless you work somewhere where you don't have to wear pants. Or...

Brent: Wait, you're supposed to wear pants at work?

Travis: Well, you work from home, Brent.

Brent: I will be right back. I will be right back.

Courtney: I had a—I had a bit of a fashion period in college where I originally started as a dance minor, where to my ballet classes, I would wear pants on pants. I would wear two pairs of pants.

Travis: Okay.

Courtney: I would wear like, dance pants, and then I would wear sweatpants over my dance pants.

Travis: Oh, gotcha.

Courtney: I had so many pants. So I am wearing—I wore more pants so that other people could go pantsless. So if you're pantsless right now, I wore the pants for you. You're welcome.

Travis: There was—

Brent: Okay, I'm back. I'm back. What'd I miss?

Travis: There was a time in high school, and I'm not proud of this at all... but I also will talk about it whenever. And I was in show choir. That part I am proud of. Show choir rules. I was also a drama, like—I almost said drama major, but like, as close as you can be in high school. I was taking like, two drama classes somehow at the same time. And I wore, uh, like, basically tear-away dance pants. Like, movement pants. And jazz shoes. So

that I could just like, move from both classes without having to change clothes.

And then, for some reason, with that look... button up dress shirt.

Courtney: Wow.

Travis: Yeah.

Brent: Solid.

Travis: Until one day, uh, a couple of the older girls in show choir pulled me aside and said, "Hey, we need to talk about all this. You're a cool guy, and you're nice and attractive enough, but you need to stop wearing this." [laughing]

Courtney: But you're wearing the fashion equivalent of a mullet.

Travis: Yes. Whatever this is, it's... it's bad.

Courtney: Whatever it is, it needs to stop.

Travis: It's both bad as a theater look, and bad as a preppy look. We don't know what you're going for. And I...

Courtney: Hot cop on the bottom...

Travis: I appreciate them.

Courtney: Business up top.

Travis: Yeah, not great. Not great. It is five PM Eastern time, December 12th, 2019, in the common era. It is two weeks before Christmas. Uh, which, let's go ahead and get this out of the way – we're not going to be doing a Christmas episode, because that would require us to record, y'know, at Christmas, and we're not gonna do that.

But also getting out of the way, my wife, as of this week, is like 35 weeks pregnant, and basically, the baby could come... whenever, at this point. So when that happens, I'll be going on hiatus for a while, uh, while I tend to my family. Um, what's everybody—

Brent: It's weird how you said that in a way that sounded sarcastic, but like, you will be, and should be tending to your family. [laughing]

Travis: I will be.

Brent: We're all behind you in that.

Courtney: Yeah. We're—we're fine with this. [laughing]

Travis: Well, here's what happened there, Brent. I'll part the curtain a little bit and give you a little behind the scenes here. I bit my lip really hard, like, two days ago, and it still hurts like shit, and for some reason, as I was saying that, it hurt my lip, and something in the pain made me sound sarcastic. [laughs]

Brent: Okay, good, yeah. 'Cause it was like—it sounded like you were really resentful of this family you have to tend to.

Courtney: [laughs] "My family, I *guess*."

Travis: I'll tend to my *family*... uuugh. No, I'm very excited. As is, uh, Teresa and Bebe.

Courtney: Before we get into all the things and the bevs and all that, I want to say a little quick thank you to people. I want to thank everyone for all the nice words and being understanding about me needing last week off.

My grandpa passed away over thanksgiving week, and as a lot of you know, I've had a rough year the last year or so between divorce, and ongoing challenges of working out that existence afterward, getting acclimated to being a single parent, general life with anxiety and depression, changing

meds because of the anxiety and depression, wondering what happens when you mix alcohol with these new meds while recording the show. That was sure embarrassing. Couple of you caught that in the iTunes reviews.

Uh, I just appreciate the patience of all of you who have been patient. You really mean a lot to me, all of you, and I'm happy I have all the yous out there. And boys, I'm very happy to have the yous.

Travis: Of course.

Brent: We're happy to have you.

Travis: I'm happy we're all here. This is gonna be... I'm—I'm really looking forward to this episode. I'll just go ahead and say it. And I'm enjoying an ice cold... water.

Courtney: I'm actually enjoying *two* ice cold waters – a still, and a sparkling.

Travis: Whoa! Brent—

Courtney: And a strawberry bubbly. It's the only bubbly flavor I like. Is strawberry.

Travis: Brent, tell me you've got three ice cold waters.

Brent: Ugh, I'm such a disappointment today! I only have one very small can of peach Perrier. I've said it before, but these little eight and a half ounce cans make my hands just feel so big and strong, so...

Travis: Okay.

Brent: My bad. I dropped the ball. But it is tasty.

Travis: That's how I feel when I carry you and Courtney through this show. Just so big and strong.

Courtney: Yep. Like just little cans of Perrier. Don't you get thirsty?

Travis: You're my little cans of Perrier.

Courtney: Don't you get thirsty after the tiny Perrier?

Brent: Well, I mean, I stay pretty hydrated throughout the day, so... yes, but... then there's another one typically in the box that I buy. I don't know, look, I just got into them when I was doing whole 30 last year. It's like, "Ugh, I need a snack, but I can't have one! Ugh! I'm gonna just pound this small amount of super bubbly liquid and feel big and strong, 'cause it's a tiny cylinder of metal."

Travis: Um, before we get to Beyond the Headlines, I thought, here's a funny Bebe story that's gonna be a nice kind of palette cleanser. We'll bookend with a funny Bebe story, and then Wi-Five of the week, and that—it'll be a nice bookends.

The other day, it was just before bedtime, and I had set Bebe on the potty so she could, y'know, try and poop. And then I ducked back in there after giving her some privacy, which she requested. And I said, "Did you poop?" And she said, exactly like this... [singsong] "You'll have to seeeee!"

Courtney: [laughs]

Brent: [laughs]

Travis: And here's the thing – she hadn't. [laughs] She was just trolling me.

Courtney: Yeah! I love that little baby troll.

Travis: It was great. [laughs] It made me so happy.

[theme music plays]

Travis: Hey, Brent. Brent!

Brent: Hey what? Yes?

Travis: Brent!

Brent: May I help you? Mm-hmm?

Travis: Courtney!

Courtney: Yes?

Travis: How long have I been asleep?

Brent: Oh, it's been at least a week.

Travis: Oh! I've slept straight through it! We're Beyond the Headlines!

Brent: [pause] Alright then. [in a British accent] So should I get the goose for you, sir? The one as big as me?

Travis: Yyyes.

Brent: Okay, great. Will do.

Travis: I started saying your name over and over again before I knew where I was going with it.

Brent: That doesn't shock me.

Travis: Okay.

Brent: You're the kind of improviser you are. It's like, "I'm juggling, I'm juggling, I'm going to—I'm gonna drop the ball on purpose... only to pick it up with my foot. Not let it hit the ground. Keep jugglin'."

Courtney: But y'know what? That's what happens here every single week. We never know where we're going until we're already Beyond the Headlines.

Travis: That's true.

Brent: Yep.

Travis: So, TikTok, one of the newest social media apps with more than one billion downloads globally, admitted on Tuesday that they've been suppressing content created by users assumed to be "vulnerable to cyber bullying." Um, which, if you just, like, take that completely out of context... if you say, they're protecting people from cyber bullying, cool. But then you throw in that word, 'suppressing.' Ooh.

So, it... [sighs] They basically were suppressing content created by disabled, queer, and fat creators. Their examples of people who were likely to be harassed, uh, listed people with facial disfigurement, autism, down syndrome, people with facial problems such as a birth mark, and on and on and on.

Brent: Woof.

Travis: Yeah. And this came to light after the German site, NetzPolitik, reported that TikTok asked moderators to watch 15-second videos and decide if the creator looked like the type of person others might want to bully. If the answer was yes, moderators are told to flag the accounts of these "vulnerable users," which in turn, makes it impossible to broadcast those videos outside of the user's home country, and in some cases, it even prevented their videos from appearing on other users' feeds.

Courtney: Even saying "vulnerable users" feels so concern-troll-y. It's like, "We're protecting you. You don't understand."

Travis: Right?

Courtney: Condescending.

Travis: And we'll get more into this, and we'll discuss this, but it also—I cannot imagine being a moderator, and my job being, “See if you think this person could be bullied.” Like, that’s so negative and subjective—okay, well, let me look at this person’s face and see if I can pick things out that I would make fun of.

Courtney: Yeah.

Travis: Uh, so—

Brent: Now, is this—is this done, essentially, by people going through?

Travis: Yes.

Brent: Is there any algorithmic element?

Travis: No.

Brent: Okay. So this was people making those subjective choices one by one.

Travis: Correct. Yes.

Courtney: It’s like, “Do you want to dump this person’s books?”

Travis: Right.

Courtney: “They're out.”

Travis: Um, NetzPolitik obtained a list of flagged users, and found it included people with and without disabilities, and many had bios that included hash tags like #FatWoman, #Disabled, or had rainbow flags or LGBTQ+ identifiers in their bios.

A TikTok spokesperson told NetzPolitik that, “This approach was never intended to be a long-term solution,” and claimed that these policies were

no longer in use. They went on to say, "While the intention was good, the approach was wrong, and we have long since changed the earlier policy in favor of a more nuanced anti-bullying policy and in-app protections." But, when NetzPolitik looked further, they found the content suppression rules were in effect as recently as September.

Now, the big controversy is whether or not TikTok actually believed this suppression policy was a helpful way to reduce bullying. Online harassment has always been a difficult problem, and people with disabilities, larger bodies, or who are LGBTQ identifying are definitely targets. One study in Boston found that students with disabilities were nearly twice as likely to be cyber-bullied.

Buuut, that same study also found that students with disabilities were more likely to receive support via social media. [sighs] The internet can be a dark and mean place. However, many minority groups have turned to it as a place to connect to allies and other people going through similar struggles. Social media provides an opportunity to share experiences, find role models, and explore content that reflects minority life in a way that mass media so often doesn't.

In some cases, it can even help push mass media to let these people into venues they previously would've been excluded from. Aaron Philip, a disabled trans influencer, got modeling contracts with Sephora and Dove after going viral. And when Keah Brown's hash tag, #DisabledAndCute took off, she was able to land a book deal with Simon & Schuster for her essay collection, *The Pretty One*.

TikTok isn't the only social media site that's come under fire for suppressing minority content creators. Earlier this year, Facebook removed a video containing a sexy picture of amputee, Vicky Balch, on the Facebook page of Ability Access, which supports the disabled community. Already not cool, but it became doubly not cool when a Facebook employee told the page, "You will have to understand that some people see disability as disturbing." That person fuckin' sucks.

Uh, the company apologized, but it still didn't restore that video, saying that Balch's partial nudity still violated their adult content standards and had

nothing to do with the fact that she's disabled, and that is, let me check my notes... yep, says right here: bullshit.

Um, so, the thing that really struck me, like, about this, was TikTok, when asked about this, was like, "Yeah, we did that. We were trying to help, and yeah, we realize it was wrong *now*..." And it's just one of those things of like, it just strikes me as... and maybe I'm wrong, 'cause I couldn't find anything to indicate one way or the other. But seems like a decision made by a room full of people with no actual experience of this?

Courtney: We know it—what it feels like is... and this is, y'know, this is schools. This is, y'know, lots of different things, where it's... they don't know how to police the bad behavior, so instead, it's like, "Girls, you can't wear short shorts..."

Travis: Right.

Courtney: "Because boys will get distracted and do bad things." So it's always up to the person who is going to be victimized to be somehow punished or impeded from expressing themselves, rather than, at any point, having to deal with the more difficult job, I guess, of actual shitty bad behavior.

Travis: It reminds of me of like... and maybe this is still going on, but I saw a lot of quotes, when like, the first, uh, early discussions about like, the Me Too movement and Time's Up started, where like, there were these dudes saying like, "Well, I guess I can't even hire women now, because like, wh—ugh, I can't—what if an employee says something—" Like, that's not... hey. That's not the right way to handle that. You know that, right?

Like, that's the thing is, I look at this, and it's amazing to me... that... in this day and age, in the year 2019, that someone would say to like, a board room of people, "Here's what we'll do. Anyone that we think looks weird, we'll make it so other people won't see their videos so they don't get picked on." And someone in the room wasn't like, "Hey, that's fucked up." Like... this—this just seems, like, so... base... humanity to me.

Courtney: And I bet they thought they were genuinely helping. Like, “We’re protecting them! We’re a lot like heroes. I bet we’ll get some kind of prize.”

Travis: It’s—and I think that, to me, is what’s so fucked up about it. Like, I would—I think there would be a part of me that could understand and kind of contextualize this more, if it turned out like, they were just complete and utter, like, on purpose assholes. But instead, this kind of... obtuseness, this like, “What? We—they don’t want to get picked on, so we made it harder for people to pick on them.” It’s like, you—you so missed the point, that it’s weird to me that you weren’t trying to miss the point.

Courtney: So if you know me at all, you know that I love Star Wars. I am exceptionally excited for the Rise of Skywalker. But the recent press cycle has been, shall we say, a bit messy. So let’s break it down.

First, Daisy Ridley did an interview wherein she was asked about privilege. And I’m just going to read this whole bit. She said, “The privilege I have – how? No, genuinely, how?” Well, I say, in terms of wealth, class, education – that kind of privilege, in knowing how to decode the rules in certain spaces. As a caveat, I add that both of us have privilege, and it’s not a criticism; I was simply curious to know what she thought. Things take an awkward turn.

“Well no, because, no... ” There is a very long and tense pause, before she insists that, actually, there is little difference between her experience and that of her co-star John Boyega, who grew up in south London to British Nigerian immigrant parents. “John grew up on a council estate in Peckham and I think me and him are similar enough that... no. Also, I went to a boarding school for performing arts, which is different.”

But surely, nine years of private education gave her some additional confidence. “No.” Ridley leans on her elbow while twirling a small knot in her hair. “No. I think, also, it has taken me a little while to be okay with it. I was always fairly confident, and I think that comes from being part of a big family who are all quite chatty.”

It's an unexpectedly defensive detour, as if the mere mention of privilege is an attempt to diminish Ridley's hard work or talent. I try to change the subject but get the distinct feeling that her publicist, sitting behind me in Ridley's eye line, has made some sort of silent intervention. "I'm not saying what you're saying is wrong," Ridley adds. "I've just never been asked that before, so I'm like, oh. I don't think so." We move on."

And that's actually the way a lot of people respond to the very concept of privilege. It is immediately a thing that makes people defensive, to which I always think, y'know, privilege isn't a, like, uh, punch card that you can trade in for like, a better life. It does not mean that you don't have, y'know, negative experiences and hardships. But it means that you maybe don't have the same hardships or as many hardships as other people. But people get very, very defensive about it, and of course—

Travis: Courtney, I have a quick question. I haven't read this article. Before the quote of "the privilege I have, how—" Do we know exactly what the question was?

Courtney: Okay, so, it—what it came out of was a—she's kind of talking about like, her family and things like that. And the reporter says, "I ask if she thinks it has been easier to be confident and navigate her celebrity because of the privilege in her life of boarding school, her upbringing, and so on. Ridley is suddenly incredulous."

Travis: See, it's interesting to me. And like, I think Courtney, you can speak to this, too. I have been interviewed, and I know you have done many interviews. And it's... I—one, I do understand where she says at the end, like, "I've never been asked that before." Where like, sometimes, if it is a thing that you've never thought of before, you can get a little bit flummoxed by it.

But also, I would say, without knowing the exact wording of the question, like... sometimes, the question can be such of like, the interview subject might interpret it as like, "Do you think it's been easier for you to be successful because of your privilege?" Right? Where it's like, uh, and then, when the interviewer redoes the question, right, that it doesn't... read that way?

Like, I'm not saying that that is what happened, and I'm not defending... I'm not defending Daisy Ridley here at all. But it's just—I don't know. I always am a little incredulous when it comes to like, pulled quotes in interviews, of like—

Courtney: Well, that's kind of a lot of what's been going on with like, all of the Star Wars press cycle. Like, it's a lot of comments and quotes that have been kind of, I think, shifted out of context.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Courtney: To shape some kind of narrative. Now, I will say that, if that came out of nowhere—and like, 'cause that—that wording of, "Do you think celebrity is easier to navigate because of your privilege?" I don't know that I'd know how to answer that.

Travis: Right.

Courtney: Like, I'd be like—I—I don't understand how those things go together. The issue comes in when she says that there is little difference between her and John Boyega.

Travis: Right.

Courtney: Like, that's—

Brent: Yeahhh.

Courtney: That's something that, y'know... that's...

Brent: I feel like, in uh, let's say 2012. Y'know, like, I was first hearing phrases like 'check your privilege.' I think I made, like, a joke on Twitter, comparing it to like, checking your luggage. Haw haw. But like, I will say, it's 2019. It sounds like it was a bit of a left field question, but... I don't know. I'm surprised that this is not a topic on which Daisy Ridley would have a little bit more facility talking about.

Travis: Well, so, that's why—I mean, once again, just to kind of analyze the sentence here, the sentence, "John grew up in a council estate, and I think me and him are similar enough." Like, is she saying like, we both came from completely different backgrounds, and now we're both able to handle these situations well? So I don't think it has anything to do with my background? Y'know what I mean?

Like, it's possible she's not saying that there is no difference in privilege or background, but rather, that the privilege isn't what helped her be successful, because John Boyega doesn't share that privilege, and he is just as successful as she is. Like, it is—it is a strangely worded question that I think you could interpret the answer in many different ways. Y'know what I mean?

Courtney: Yeah, and of course—of course, conservative media has kind of glommed onto a lot of these, basically saying like, "Oh, they set her up to, y'know, answer this badly," and stuff like that, 'cause they always do when stuff like this happens. But...

Travis: I don't—I don't think it's that. I mean, that's the thing is—

Courtney: No, it's not that, but it is—I get that it would be a weird question that you, at first, didn't know how to answer. I just...

Travis: What she should've done—

Courtney: That's why I think everyone needs media training.

Travis: [laughs] Yes. This is—hey. Everybody, listen. Here's—this is me, Travis. I've never had media training, but uh, I'm pretty good at bullshitting my way through both job interviews, media interviews, uh, I don't know, spoken reports I did in middle school. When asked a question that you don't know the answer to, you can always say something like, "Huh, that's an interesting question. Y'know, I guess I've never thought about it before."

Buy yourself some time. Don't answer right away. Buy yourself some time.

Courtney: I don't understand why—like, this is gonna sound like, probably a combination of shitty, cynical, and naïve. I don't understand why people don't just fucking lie. Like, how do you not just—like, even if you don't feel a certain way, how do you not just say like, "Y'know what? You're right. I do." Like, y'know? Just go with it. Just 'cause it looks good. I don't know. I don't know. That's my PR speaking.

Brent: If you don't understand the question... ask for a clarification! Like, it was a little bit of a mouthful. I don't know. I mean, like, the thing is that, then, like—

Travis: This—I will say, one time—one time—

Brent: Go ahead.

Travis: And this was, I think, right before the My Brother, My Brother, and Me TV show came out. We had, uh, this interview scheduled with someone, and they were very nice. Let me be clear. The interviewer was great and we had fun with them. But like, apparently, the day before, they'd been told like, "This piece isn't going to run in what you thought it would. It's going to run in this one now." And it completely changed the question. And I think the question is like, um, "What advice would you give, like, to guys about dating?"

And like, we took that question, and the three of us immediately said like, "Oh, we wouldn't." [laughs] That was—our answer was, "Oh, we wouldn't do that." And the whole interview became about like, the idea of gendered advice, and the idea of saying like, "Alright, dudes, here's how..."

But like, I think that that is the thing of like, if you get asked a question that you are worried about how the answer is going to make you sound, but you're also worried about not—about like, dodging the question, and seeming like you're dodging the question, it can put you in a tricky position.

That said, I will wholeheartedly look at this, and look at the quotes, and say... Daisy Ridley did not answer this question well.

Courtney: Mm-mm.

Travis: I think whether, much like TikTok, whether it was like, pointedly, y'know, bad, or just obscure, uhh... she could've been clearer in owning her privilege while still, like, building up her, y'know, other marginalized voices in the entertainment community.

Courtney: Well, and I'm curious about the um, the intent of the author, because the... there was a screenshot that went around the other day that I retweeted, and it's a much lengthier version of this section of the article. And then, the current one is the one that I just read, they took out a whole bunch about like, kind of detailing, like, her family members and stuff like that, and pointing out that uh, John Boyega, uh, went to this, y'know, prestigious theater school on a hardship fund.

And they took all of that out, and then, there's a note at the end saying, "Some misinformation about family." So I don't really understand—like, there's some weirdness about this article that I don't really 100% know.

Brent: Disney meddling? Am I missing the point?

Courtney: Y'know what? I'm gonna... probably. Probably.

Brent: Hmm.

Courtney: So then, John Boyega did an interview with Height Beast that got a lot of callouts from fans for him speaking negatively about The Last Jedi. Now, this, in my opinion, frankly seems to be more a result of the writer more so than Boyega. Here's a quote. "The Last Jedi sidetracked that character progression, much to the chagrin of fans and Boyega himself. The Force Awakens, I think, was the beginning of something quite solid."

Travis: And this part is—wait, so, what—

Courtney: This part—yeah, I was about to say, 'he said.'

Travis: Okay.

Courtney: Um, "The Last Jedi, if I'm being honest, I'd say that feeling was a bit iffy for me. I didn't necessarily agree with a lot of the choices in that, and that's something that spoke to Mark Hamill a lot about, and we had conversations about it. And that was hard for all of us, because we were separated."

So to me, that kind of feels more like a personal opinion, or the experience of the actual making of the film, and being separated from his friends, as Finn spends most of the film with Rose, played by Kelly Marie Tran. We'll get to that in a second. Here's a way reachier part to me.

"Like many fans online, Boyega believes in the themes previously established within the Star Wars franchise, rather than the focus on the realism introduced in The Last Jedi, and would only return to the character if the future story encapsulated those classic characteristics."

"The banter, the bickering, the undercover romances that then manifest an epic moment... that, for me, is Star Wars. It's not hyper real or realistic or grounded. Don't do any of that. It's like connection, family, and friendship. If they're going to do it in that direction, then absolutely." It seems like he's answering a different question that has nothing to do with Last Jedi.

Travis: Right. Right.

Courtney: And the writer like, kind of shoehorned that in there.

Brent: Still, and I think I understand the context of this, but like... I feel like he's goin' a bit rogue when the third one hasn't even come out yet. Like, that's a lot, no?

Courtney: Yeah, well, and I think that what he's asking about, like, the writer was asking about if there was a—a—like, a hypothetical movie just focused on Finn.

Travis: Right.

Brent: Ahh.

Courtney: Like, that seemed to be where it was going. So it's just—like, the things that are coming out, like, are just weirdly out of context. Not even—not just in general, but within the piece itself. Um, the same thing happened when Mark Hamill voiced some of his concerns about Last Jedi, and then subsequently tweeted, "I regret voicing my doubts and insecurities in public. Creative differences are a common element of any project, but usually remain private. All I wanted was to make a good movie. I got more than that. Ryan Johnson made an all-time great one. #HumbledHamill."

So yeah, I'm willing to give Boyega the benefit of the doubt with regard to his comments about the film, because they just feel oddly out of context. But, yesterday, comments he made in an interview were widely spread and made a bunch of people a bit cringey.

Uh, when asked about the backlash the actors faced, most notably, Kelly Marie Tran, who was so bullied by supposed fans, she had to quit social media, Boyega said, "Through social media, we get to engage. We get to have fun. But at the same time, for those who are not mentally strong, you are weak to believe in every single thing that you read. That's, y'know, it is what it is. I don't know. For me, anyway, when I see that, I'm like, "Well, that's not actually true." But no. It is actually not true."

Now, the question did include ask—like, it included Kelly Marie Tran as an example. And therefore, it seemed like he was, in fact, referring to Kelly Marie Tran as somehow weak or not mentally strong. Um, because Kelly Marie Tran was attacked for months. Mostly with hideous racial slurs and threats. It sucked for her.

So Boyega tweeted this morning, clarifying, "In no way was I referring to Kelly when I made my comments; although, the interviewer mentioned her, given the topic. I was really speaking from my own perspective throughout this franchise. Sometimes I felt strong, and sometimes I felt weak. Badly worded, though. I apologize."

So then... [sighs] JJ Abrams, in a New York Times profile, seemingly shaded The Last Jedi. "Johnson," Ryan Johnson. "His movies seem to say, "The answers to these questions aren't as important as you think."" Abrams praised The Last Jedi for being full of surprises and subversion and all sorts of bold choices. On the other hand, he added, "It's a bit of a meta approach to the story. I don't think people go to Star Wars to be told, "This doesn't matter."" Even so, Abrams said, "The Last Jedi laid the groundwork for the Rise of Skywalker, and a story that I think needed a pendulum swing in one direction in order to swing the other."

In the same piece, it says, "But when it was announced that Abrams was indeed returning, his actors breathed sighs of relief. "I cried," Ridley said, explaining that the director brought a comforting sense of structure and security. Boyega said that he was glad Abrams would get to finish the tale he'd begun in episode seven. "Even as a normal person in the audience, I wanted to see where that story was going," Boyega said."" So.

Travis: Can I—can I just say?

Courtney: Yeah.

Travis: I... I have been a Star Wars devotee my entire life. Like, reading the extended universe novels, and watching every piece of content. I loved Last Jedi! What is everyone talking about?!

Courtney: I love The Last Jedi. Well, okay. [laughs] It's... it's weirdly like, all political things? Like, The Last Jedi, the response to Ghostbusters, like... Brent and I have had this talk before about Ghostbusters.

Brent: Yes. I'm not allowed to think either movie is fine, 'cause it's a political matter. You gotta stan it, or you gotta hate it!

Travis: I just, I think...

Courtney: But it's—it's literally a matter of, you have things. Perhaps movies, or candidates, where there are valid concerns and flaws. But the majority of the most vocal people screaming about these things, they're not

having any concern with those valid things. They're just mad about like, girls and people of color.

Travis: Okay...

Courtney: And that's the shit that is most of it.

Travis: It's just—all of—all of this... [sighs] Not—not to boil it down too much, but it really feels like some executives, like, said to the, y'know, cast and crew and producers and production team, like... listen, we need to distance ourselves a little bit from The Last Jedi, 'cause we gotta—y'know, like, we don't want to catch shit about it again. So if the question comes up—

Courtney: Literally, absolutely.

Travis: Yeah. That's it.

Brent: Hmm.

Courtney: 'Cause now you have the anti-Last Jedi contingent feeling victorious. Yes! Everyone hates the bad, dumb movie just like they do! Huzzah! And then you have The Last Jedi fans, like... why are they piling on this movie? Why is everyone Mean Girl-ing Ryan Johnson? Did they not see Knives Out? It's so good. What's happening?

Brent: Oh my god, movie of the year. Loved it.

Courtney: It was so good. I love it so much! Um, uh, K Callan, who played Great Nana Thromby just tweeted me, so I felt really special, 'cause I wrote about her.

Travis: Ooh!

Courtney: Um, but yeah. My take as an entertainment journalist is this. It's just what Travis said. They're trying to appease the trolls by seemingly and confusingly potentially dismissing The Last Jedi, because it will make them

think, "Great, this movie will fix everything!" While maintaining exactly enough wiggle room to say, "That's not what I said at all. This was out of context."

It's a solid business move, honestly, but it's still a big bummer. It smacks of the idea that in order to appease, like, these racists and misogynists who are the large, vocal contingent... y'know, #NotAllStarWarsFans, but like, the loud ones, the ones that they're trying to appease? That's them.

Travis: Right.

Courtney: And therefore, the idea that like, to appease these trash people, the movie needs 'fixed,' in the same way that Jason Reitman's comments about bringing Ghostbusters back to the fans, implied that the all-female one wasn't.

Travis: [sighs]

Courtney: And that the fans, the shitty fans, somehow deserve this superior film, and it sucks. But y'know what? Regardless, I'm excited for this movie, and trolls will have to pry Star Wars from my cold, dead lady hands.

Travis: I one thousand percent agree. I also will say, since you mentioned it, that new Ghostbusters preview looks fun... but it looks completely different from—like, it's a lot—it's weird. It looks fun. It does not look what I think about when I think about Ghostbusters, and it—

Courtney: It looks weirdly serious. [laughs]

Travis: Yeah, right?

Courtney: [laughing] It looks like...

Brent: One draft of Ghostbusters 3 was gonna have them going to hell. Dan Aykroyd is a weird, weird man. The fact that Ghostbusters 2 was like, fun, and kind of family-friendly and a good time was kind of a miracle when you look at what the man wanted to do with it.

Courtney: Literally, Ghostbusters, I think, is good on accident. 'Cause Dan Aykroyd, left to his own devices, you get nothing but trouble.

Travis: It's the edit.

Brent: Exactly.

Travis: It's the edit. That's why there's that one scene in Ghostbusters 1 where he gets a blowjob from a ghost somewhere out of nowhere, 'cause the original movie was something like, 30 or 40 minutes long, and they—

Courtney: Have you seen that crazy clip that's—it's Dan Aykroyd, and uh, maybe his brother? And they're playing like, homeless people, like, in full, like... Emmett Kelly, like, clown hobo make—it's the craziest goddamn thing I've ever seen.

Travis: Yeah.

Courtney: It's nuts.

Brent: I just—yeah. Haven't seen that, but I will say... wasn't that montage supposed to be about how like, ghosts are terrorizing the city, and everything's bad? Oh, and also, I got a sexual favor from one.

Courtney: They're terrorizing Dan Aykroyd's diiick!

Brent: Yeah, like, a little tonally different. Okay. [clears throat] Here's a story that, first off, content warning, this story does involve sexual assault, and our segment time codes are in the episode description.

So, there was a 5k in Savannah, Georgia recently, called the Enmarket Savannah Bridge Run, and a woman named Alex Bozarjian was covering the 5k for local news station, WSAV. She was speaking to news anchors remotely on WSAV's nightly news broadcast, and a man ran by her and smacked her hard on the behind, disorienting and embarrassing her on live TV.

The clip went viral, already having tens of millions of views at time of recording. Now, it could've ended there. The man was ostensibly anonymous. But someone tweeted the clip of it, and uh, Bozarjian retweeted that, saying, "To the man who smacked my butt on live TV this morning: You violated, objectified, and embarrassed me. No woman should ever have to put up with this at work or anywhere. Do better."

But it didn't end there. The man was identified as Tommy Callaway, a 43-year-old resident of Statesboro, Georgia. According to multiple outlets, he's married, has daughters, and works as a salesman. But journalists have also dug up the fact that Callaway is a youth minister in his church, and according to his LinkedIn profile, he's been a Boy Scout leader for 32 years.

Not that it makes his actions worse or better, but I think it does cast them in a starker light when he's supposed to be a morally superior and ostensibly devout good example, specifically for children. And now that he's been outed, his excuse is, uh... let's just say it's literally unbelievable. He was quoted as saying—

Travis: Yeah. Can I just say, before we get to this... if there has been, over the last couple of decades, and I've been thinking about this a lot lately. Uh, there's a book by John Ronson called, *So You've Been Publically Shamed*. Last week, Tonight with John Oliver just did a piece in which he also interviewed Monica Lewinsky, who, by the way, is brilliant and hilarious and follow her on Twitter. She is great. Um, where they talk about public shaming, right?

And so, you think about it a lot. And this is the point that Brent is about to get to, at which I stopped so much worrying about this dude's public shaming.

Brent: Yeah. Um, he said, "I was caught up in the moment. I was getting ready to bring my hands up and wave to the camera, to the audience. There was a misjudge in character and decision making. I touched her back. I did not know exactly where I touched her."

Travis: Bullshit.

Brent: Now, I can't pretend to know the man's heart—

Travis: I can, Brent. [laughs]

Brent: But if you watch the video, it really looks like... I mean, he looks like the point was not to wave to the camera.

Travis: He bites his lip!

Courtney: No, he did it on purpose. Let us not—

Travis: He bites his lip as he does it.

Courtney: Yeah.

Brent: Yeah, he's got this little mischievous, impish, like... he definitely intended to do exactly what he did.

Travis: He steps out of the crowd to do it. Like, he moves, he aims, and apparently, according to her, hit her very hard. Like, this is the thing, and let me be clear – none of that is defensible. If he had come out and said, "That was, like, I—I feel terrible."

Um, okay, let me put it this way. When I was in, uh, middle school, it was during science class. I remember this very clearly. My friend Hunter went to sit down, and I, with no impulse control whatsoever, moved his chair out of the way. And he fell, and just like, busted his ass, right? And he was very upset and hurt. And I immediately felt terrible. And I apologized to him profusely. Because like, there had not been the right, y'know, no voice said, "Don't do..." Like, I acted on impulse and hurt my friend. And I apologized profusely, and I was punished, right? By the school, as I should have been.

He... smacked her hard, kept running, didn't come forward until he'd already been identified, and still has yet to apologize to her. He has said things like, uh, like 'regret,' and 'if I'd known how upset she was, I would apologize,'

and 'it was a misjudge of character.' But at no point has he ever like, actually displayed any kind of actual remorse and understanding of what he did wrong.

Courtney: Like, we all look at his face, because we're like, it... [sighs] Not that anyone is like, "Well, let's look at his face to like, see if he's actually telling the truth." Like, no, we all know he's lying. That's why we're looking at his face. Like, it's proof that he knows what he's doing.

But look at her face after it happens.

Travis: Yeah.

Courtney: That is... that's a woman who knows exactly what just happened to her.

Travis: Yep.

Courtney: She is on camera. She is at work.

Brent: She was close enough to runners to know that like, there may have been a risk of somebody like, accidentally bumping or whatever, but like—

Travis: Yeah, she's dodging out of the way for the first part of the video.

Brent: Right. But like, ultimately, the—everything you need to know is in a few seconds of footage, and no one can convince, I don't think, any of us otherwise.

Travis: Yeah.

Brent: It's just so obvious.

Travis: Her face. The heartbreak of it, and I've never been in this position. And y'know what? Chances are, I never will be. But you can see in her face, like, all of the stuff that like, she... and listen, I'm projecting here, and I'm assuming. But what I see when I look at her is someone who suddenly feels

like... that she has just been told, by someone else's actions, that she doesn't deserve to be there. She doesn't deserve to be treated with respect.

Courtney: I mean, I... I have. I have been in this exact scenario. I've had to make that face. I have had that, where someone does this, and like she said, you embarrassed me. It is a feeling of embarrassment, humiliation, and it is this like, ingrained feeling that I've done something wrong by existing and having my body there. Someone touched it, and somehow, I am the one that is embarrassed and humiliated. That is what was on her face. And that's fucked up.

Brent: So, in terms of the further consequences and results, the local Savannah Sports Council organization had this to say on Twitter. "Our title sponsor, Enmarket, and the Savannah Sports Council take this matter extremely seriously and fully condemn the individual's actions." And they also banned Callaway from registering for all Savannah Sports Council owned races.

But um, y'know, as far as being publically shamed, the cynic in me says, well, we have a pretty short attention span, so let's let this guy get roasted.

Travis: Yeah.

Brent: Because he deserves it, and also, if it influences other people not to make this choice, good.

Travis: I—I will actually go one step further and say, it—he should face charges. Right?

Courtney: Yeah.

Travis: I think, like, I was kind of ranting about this on Twitter yesterday, and I tweeted like, if he had smacked her in the face, that would—like, he would be in jail.

Brent: That's a good point.

Travis: He hit her. He hit a person. And then, add on top of that, in what is undeniably, uh, a sexually explicit and embarrassing way. But yes, he struck another human being! That is assault! And like, his lawyer put out that he didn't act with criminal intentions, and I didn't know that—"Oh, I stabbed somebody, but I didn't mean criminal intentions by it!" Like, he—

Brent: Yeah, this is becoming—this is becoming a thing with Trump as well. Like, just the idea that like, oh, I didn't mean to! And it's like, how many people... [sighs] It's infuriating. That line of thought is infuriating.

Courtney: When it comes to like, sexual assault, sexual harassment, of course they don't have criminal intent. They don't think they're doing anything wrong.

Travis: Yeah.

Courtney: It's just like a fun, funny thing. No harm meant. It's a compliment. Take it as a compliment. And fuck everyone.

[theme music plays]

Brent: Alright, we have a lot of politics to cover. I'm gonna skip over the usual cutesy intro. It's the Politics Roundup. Here we go!

Quick update on the impeachment process – on Tuesday, the House Judiciary Committee's Democratic majority released two proposed articles of impeachment against Trump, which set the stage for debate about whether to actually formally impeach him. Remember – unless it's happened overnight after we've recorded this, he has not been impeached.

Now, personally, I think they could've had articles of impeachment including sexual assault, conspiracy to break racial discrimination laws, obstruction of justice from the Mueller report, conspiracy to commit campaign finance violation...

Travis: Being a big ol' doodie jerk.

Brent: Being a big old doodie jerk. Um, but that being said, just two articles of impeachment were presented, including abuse of power concerning the Ukraine phone call, which they could've called bribery, but whatever. And obstruction of justice, because he has directed multiple individuals and even agencies within the executive branch not to comply with congressional subpoenas.

Just to, uh, make sure we're clear what we're talking about there, a subpoena means you have to come—

Travis: You have been served.

Brent: Yeah. Now, if any regular ass person does not comply with a subpoena, you are in deep, deep doo doo. But... I mean, it just—we're just seeing so many examples lately of people being above the law. And one thing that was said so much today, as I'll get to in a second, um, was... Democrats in the House Judiciary Committee saying, no one is above the law, and the law has been broken.

And like, you even had one Republican representative trying to fight back against that, and I'm paraphrasing by saying, "No one should be above the law, but nobody should be below it, either!" And it's like, [laughs] what the fuck does that even mean?

Travis: What?

Brent: Y'all are just so full of shit. Anyway. Um, in the time since those articles were introduced on Tuesday, the committee has debated the language of the document, including proposed amendments or grammatical changes.

And like, Republicans on the committee are just dragging the whole process by being... I mean, just—if you watch footage of it, it's infuriating. They'll take every opportunity they can to whine and make it seem like they've been shut out of the process, and go, "Point of order! Point of order!" And it's like, your points of order aren't even correct. You're full of shit.

It's bogus, because the Democrats have been doing this one by the book. Keeping in mind, I'm the first one to call out the Democratic Party establishment when they behave badly. But the Democrats really have been doing this one by the book, and it's actually the Republicans who have not. Like when the president complained about not getting to defend himself against his accusers, and then didn't show up to testify, even though he was fully invited. Or, when as one of the articles alleges Trump told his staff not to testify, even when they were subpoenaed.

As you might imagine, those people doing that are almost entirely Republicans. And the whole thing is just Orwellian. On our day of recording, Republican representative, Jim Jordan, moved to eliminate the entire first article of impeachment, and of course, was voted down.

Travis: Bold move!

Brent: Yeah. Yeah. Again, just whatever they can do to slow the process down, but also to have a clip to show on Fox News of them seeming to valiantly fight the total, like, Draconian hoax being carried out.

Now, one thing that was brought up, uh, during all this, was Hunter Biden's admitted substance abuse. And y'know... [sighs] First off, I don't think that has anything to do with anything. I will say, if the Democrats were more honest about the actual corruption carried out by Hunter Biden and Burisma, uh, that would be more transparent. But tactically speaking, any admission of wrongdoing there would be multiplied by a hundred and plastered all over Fox News and talk radio until the end of time. So... here we are.

Um, Trump has, obviously, done many illegal and unethical things before and during his presidency. Duh. Unlike during the Nixon era, Republicans in congress now are much more concerned with staying on the good side of their rabid pro-Trump base than, uh, upholding established laws and norms. And even an apolitical person watching this, I think that they would just get the sense that, at least one side is seriously gaslighting the people.

It's... I'm having a hard time describing what it feels like, 'cause it's so theatrical. And you just have... it's like these two sides are truly handing the

talking stick over to each other, and then it's like, a different reality that they're performing.

Um, so anyway, at time of recording, we don't know the results of the Thursday vote, and ranking member, Doug Collins, says the debate could go all night. So, that's one of two stories where we're unfortunately gonna have some delayed gratification, just 'cause of the timing of the recording. But we will, as always, keep you posted as this story continues to unfold.

Travis: So! There's been a lot of talk about this executive order that Trump is planning to sign about Judaism. So let's talk about it.

[static noise] Hi, everybody. Travis here. Sorry to interrupt myself. But I wanted to let you know that uh, while I was talking about this story that I had researched and written copy for early Wednesday morning, Courtney shares with me an updated story about how the New York Times misreported it. So we'll discuss that more once I report on the wrong facts. But I wanted to leave in the part where I talked about the wrong facts, so you guys would understand what everyone was talking about in a wrong way.

Okay, back to my wrong copy. [static noise] Uh, the executive order would interpret Judaism as a race or nationality, not just a religion. Trump is hoping that this will prompt a federal law penalizing colleges and universities who haven't fostered an open and accepting community for minority students. Okay... I keep wait—you keep waiting. You're listening. You're like, where is the catch?

The argument for is that, over the past couple of years, the Boycott Israel movement has left Jewish students feeling unwelcome or attacked on campus. By signing the order, Trump is taking action against this by essentially replicating bipartisan legislation that has been stalled in Congress for years. Both Democrats and Republicans are promoting this policy change in an effort to combat both anti-Semitism, as well as the Boycott Israel movement.

The White House has even reached out to some Democrats, activist groups, and people who have typically been critical of Trump to build support for the order. Jonathan Greenblatt, the chief executive of the Anti-Defamation League, said that the group recorded its third highest level of anti-Semitic incidents in the last year.

"The fact of the matter is, we see Jewish students on college campuses, and Jewish people all over, being marginalized. The rise of anti-Semitic incidents is not theoretical, it's empirical." David Krone, a former chief of staff for senator Harry Reid, has actually been lobbying for years to get this policy in place. He went as far as to applaud Mr. Trump for the executive order. "I know people are going to criticize me for saying this," Mr. Krone said, "But I have to give credit where credit is due. It's too important to let partisanship get in the way."

Krone and Reid had been fighting for this order for a long time, bringing it before the Senate in December, 2016. It passed unanimously, but died in the House, as that session of Congress ended. Krone continued to work on the issue after Reid retired. It was Krone who reached out to Jared Kushner, the president's son-in-law and senior advisor. Kushner is the Jewish grandson of Holocaust survivors, and he embraced the idea.

With his support, the White House drafted the order, and Trump agreed to sign. And there's so much of that, that just on paper, it doesn't sound like the worst thing, y'know, ever. There are people agreeing on it across the aisle, so maybe there's something there. Well, here are the issues.

First of all, critics complain that declaring Judaism a nationality across the board could be used to stifle free speech and legitimate criticisms of Israel, all while under the guise of wanting to fight anti-Semitism. In fact, the state department's definition of anti-Semitism in this case has been criticized as too open-ended and sweeping. They define it as "denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination."

Which, one could argue, Donald Trump is doing by declaring that they are now a nationality. The definition goes on to showcase examples of such anti-Semitic behavior, like "claiming the existence of a state of Israel is a racist endeavor."

Uh, Yousef Munayyer, the executive director of the US Campaign for Palestinian Rights, said that he thinks Trump is trying to silence Palestinian rights activism. He points out that by signing this executive order, he's rebranding opposition to Israel as an act of anti-Semitism, when it's really, uh, could just be a person's political opinion, unrelated to their feelings on the Jewish religion.

"Israeli apartheid is a very hard product to sell in America, especially in progressive spaces. And realizing this, many Israeli apartheid apologists, Trump included, are looking to silence a debate they know they can't win." Now, anonymous administrators said that it is—it was not meant to quiet free speech, which, okay. But all of that aside, let's have a conversation about Trump's action towards Jewish folks.

Over the years, he's been accused on several occasions of making anti-Semitic remarks himself, turning a blind eye to anti-Jewish tropes, or emboldening actual white supremacists, like the ones in Charlottesville in 2017.

Just last weekend, before the Israeli American Council, he told a Jewish audience that they were "not nice people," but would support his reelection because "you're not going to vote for the wealth tax." But he also claims to be an unflinching supporter of Israel, and a champion of Jewish Americans. He moved the US Embassy to Jerusalem, supported settlements on the West Bank, and recognized the seizure of the Golan Heights.

He also came at representative Ilhan Omar, Democrat of Minnesota, when she said support of Israel was "all about the Benjamins," meaning money, probably because he didn't want to be called out. Jeremy Ben-Ami, the president of J Street, a liberal Israel advocacy group, said that the president's order was a cynical effort to crack down on critics, not to defend Jews from bias.

"It is particularly outrageous and absurd for President Trump to pretend to care about anti-Semitism during the same week in which he once again publically spouted anti-Semitic tropes about Jews and money."

Brent: Thank you.

Travis: So, what actually happens if this executive order goes through? Well, under title six of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the department of education can withhold funding from any college or educational program that discriminates “on the ground of race, color, or national origin.” You’ll notice it didn’t say religion there, which is why we’re all here.

Trump’s order is basically saying that Jews are a people or a race with a collective national origin in the middle east. Um, all of this comes right after the department of education ordered Duke and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to rebuild their middle eastern studies program, accusing it of having biased curriculum. This is part of a broader campaign by Betsy DeVos to get after perceived anti-Israel bias in higher education.

While prominent Republicans are expected to attend this signing, many Democrats will not, due to the recent impeachment proceedings. And though the executive order is not permanent and can be overturned by the next president, Trump’s actions may have lasting effects, because his successor may find it politically unappealing to reverse it.

Brent: I just think that like... we’re in a weird age where, yes, anti-Semitism, or at least, vocal anti-Semitism is on the rise. I think that, frankly, Trump’s election has, uh, opened the flood gates a little bit. Look at Charlottesville. And y’know, at that time, Trump was saying, “Oh, good people on both sides.” And it’s like... so, clearly—and y’know, you got David Duke saying it’s great that Trump is basically representing us. I’m paraphrasing, but um...

So, like, the accusation of anti-Semitism has become something that can be used as a bludgeon, particularly by conservatives. But the irony is that... okay, while anti-Semitism is a problem, it’s a blight on our country and its history, and I’m not saying it’s only a conservative thing. But... I just roll my eyes, because it’s like, you’re just... you’re just talking about Israel, with whom we have a problematic geopolitical relationship. And it’s a topic that you can’t really make anybody happy on.

But I guess I just... it's—in a way, the idea of protecting Jewish people against anti-Semitism? Of course! Of course, nominally, that's good. But yeah, I feel like this is a cynical ploy to be able to clap back a little bit more strongly when people basically just want to see things from both sides and take into account what it is to be a Palestinian human being.

Travis: [static] Hey, me again, folks! The Travis of the future! It was, at this point, that Courtney had passed along to me the uh, Slate article. And that Slate article reports on, uh, an article in—from JewishInsider.com. Jewish Insider had obtained a draft of the executive order. It makes no reference to defining Judaism as a nationality.

What it does, at least according to the text they received, it calls on government departments enforcing title six of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, or the IHRA, definition of anti-Semitism. Uh, basically, it says, uh, it calls for the enforcement of “title six against prohibited forms of discrimination, rooted in anti-Semitism as vigorously as against all other forms of discrimination prohibited by title six.”

It also calls on departments enforcing title six to consider “contemporary examples of anti-Semitism, identified by the IHRA to the extent that any examples might be useful as evidence of discriminatory intent.” It makes no reference to uh, nationality or national origin.

That said, it should be noted that the IHRA has many, uh, contemporary examples of anti-Semitism, which include claiming the existence of a state of Israel as a racist endeavor. Uh, and it also notes in its working definition that “criticism of Israel, similar to that leveled against any other country, cannot be regarded as anti-Semitic.”

Uh, so, there you go. Uh, that's the updated... uh, the updated copy, there. Back to the show! [static]

Courtney: Uh, you may have heard the horrific, hypocritical news. Elizabeth Warren made nearly two million dollars working as a consultant for

corporations and financial firms while she was a law professor at Harvard University, University of Pennsylvania, and other law schools. That lying trollop. She did so over the course of... three... decades... average out to \$66 thousand a year. That trollop!

Brent: [snorts]

Courtney: With an income. Pretty normal for lawyers. As Jennifer Rubin at the Washington Post points out, it may be unfair to imply this was evenly earned over the course of 30 years, the bulk of it being earned from 1995 to 2012, so more like 20. Uh, as Rubin writes, from 2008 to 2010, a period for which Warren has released tax returns, her outside work brought in the average of \$200,000 a year.

She reportedly billed \$675 per hour in some cases, which like... that's what lawyers do? That's what legal consultants charge for big money corporations? Like, I'm not trying to be an asshole here. That's just like—that's... I feel like... I feel like it's a big conversation about like, her specifically, but that's what lawyers do.

Um, she was not yet in the Senate. For what it's worth, Rubin wrote a piece today titled, "Warren's Desperation is Showing," lamenting Warren "swiping at Biden and Buttigieg." So, y'know. Take it all into account at the same time.

The New York Times pointed out that Warren also did a considerable amount of free or pro-bono legal work during her tenure, and also that there are literal billionaires running against her in addition to her fellow millionaires on the front running of the candidacy. But please, never forget that things are only really big issues when women do them.

Brent: Uhh, yeah. I just think this is... we're gonna see more of this as she continues to do well in the polling. Um, I think that being a progressive and a woman is a very hard thing to be in this campaign, in this race. But like, the people putting forward this narrative are absolutely helped by... I mean, I know I beat this horse every week, but...

Like, corporate-owned media outlets and opinion piece writers, and all these people going, "Well..." I mean, they've done it to Bernie, too. Like, "Oh, he's a millionaire! Who is your god now?!" And it's like, well, you're billionaires. This is a fucking, like... [sighs] Mike Bloomberg just bought himself almost \$40 million of advertising to start the campaign, but yeah. Bernie and Elizabeth are millionaires, or have made millions. It's bullshit.

Courtney: I think of that one web comic that's like, "Ah, you reject society, but you live in it! Interesting!" Like, you have not gotten anyone here. Like...

Brent: [laughs] Yes. Exactly. Ohh, my my my, this next one. This is a day of us just not quite knowing what's gonna happen, whereas I think that if we recorded tomorrow morning, we'd have more to tell you. But well... look, this is the nature of news. And so often on the show, we're trying to prevent these things from happening, but it's very easy, based on timing, or y'know, the one source you have, everybody's running with that source, but then you realize, oh, that wasn't quite right.

You do the best you can, and we're gonna continue to do the best we can and be honest with you instead of just pridefully sticking to our guns, right or wrong. That being said, I'm gonna read you the copy I wrote for this next segment, and then give you an update at the end of it, just so we can have a little time capsule of my naivety. [clears throat] Here goes.

I'd just like to point out real quick that over in the UK, they're holding a general election today. Today, Thursday. Special thanks to our UK correspondent, Dave Bulmer, who helped me with some of the facts on this.

So unlike over here, they can have a general election as often as Parliament decides to do it. It's mandatory that they happen at least once every five years, but this is gonna be the third one in the past four years. And the broad strokes are that Boris Johnson, the current prime minister, the guy with the blonde hair of a five year old who just woke up, heads up the conservative party, also called the Tories.

Jeremy Corbyn, who's... eh, a very rough UK equivalent to a Bernie Sanders heads up the Labour party, which is a rough equivalent of our Democratic party; though, all of their parties are more liberal by comparison.

I've seen a lot of independent journalists pointing out how the corporate-owned media in the UK, they just don't like Corbyn. They report on him much more negatively, or not at all, compared to Johnson. Kind of like what happens to Warren and Sanders over here.

The latest poll suggests that 43% of voters favor the conservative party. 33% Labour, 12% liberal Democrats who are sort of this centrist wildcard party, and very marginal parties add up to the remaining 10%. And so, without going into all the nuts and bolts, the government of the UK could soon be even more conservative, possibly leading to a quicker and starker Brexit. Or, could be led by the more liberal party, who could try to hold another referendum on Brexit to see if people really want it, knowing what they know now.

In my opinion, it will be a bellwether of things to come in the UK and the US, since our politics often have parallels. If Labour wins, maybe that's a sign that voters are waking up to more progressive ideas. If the Tories win an even larger share of seats, then what are we even doing?

And um, as we've been recording, I've been refreshing my screen, but... at least according to uh, exit polls, it looks like the conservatives are set to win. Now, at time of recording, there are 65 seats called 'too close to call.' So, they may have a plurality. They may not. I mean, the thing is that, if you're listening to this, you could probably Google and find out way more than I can tell you now, but... it is looking very bad for Labour.

It is looking—it'll be a real shock. It'll be the moonlight Oscar of exit polling if it turns out that Labour actually ends up... if it ends up that Corbyn is the prime minister. And it's a real bummer. And one tweet that I saw that I really don't like reading, but I think that it gives me some pause, is that... Twitter is not the world. Twitter is not the electorate.

Because man, all day, multiple days in a row, I've just been sitting here going, "Ah, the conservatives are gonna get creamed! It's time they get what's coming to them! Obviously, everybody agrees they've gone too far!" And... well... uhh... maybe not. Maybe not.

Tidbits, anyone?

Courtney: I would love a bit.

Travis: Yes, I would love a bit. Uh, so, Walmart Canada is apologizing this week after selling a Christmas sweater where Santa is straight up doin' some coke.

Brent: [laughs]

Travis: Yep. You heard that right. The sweater in question featured an image of Kris Kringle himself, sitting at a table with three white lines of cocaine, straw in hand, and the words, 'let it snow' stitched above. "These sweaters, sold by a third party seller on Walmart.ca, do not represent Walmart's values and have no place on our website," Walmart said in an updated statement on Monday.

Wouldn't it be weird if Walmart just came out and said, "I don't know what to tell you. These sweaters directly reflect Walmart's values."

Brent: [laughs]

Travis: Uh... [laughs] "We have removed these products from our marketplace. We apologize for any unintended offense this may have caused." Then they go on to say that the sweaters were not offered by Walmart.com in the US, which to me, sounds like, y'know, like the US missed out. They probably would've sold pretty well here.

Brent: Yeah.

Travis: Um, and apparently, this is just a thing with Walmart's website. It's become, uh, y'know, like a third party...

Brent: Walmart.com has become like an Amazon, where lots of different people can like, sell their stuff through Walmart, but Walmart's really just doing... I don't even know if they're doing fulfillment, but they're doing the e-commerce side of it and taking a cut.

Travis: Yeah, exactly. And this isn't the first time that the Walmart marketplace has gotten in trouble, because people have like, they've sold everything from drug paraphernalia to products with racial slurs on them.

Brent: Well, yes. So many of these companies, like, they just... they get so big. YouTube's got a problem in certain ways. Almost all social media networks. And Amazon and Walmart have these problems where they're too big to monitor, uh, properly, what they're even selling. And—or is that just the lie they've sold us? Actually, could they do it very easily if they wanted to?

Like, I don't know about y'all, but like, I'll just straight up out myself. I have bought a one hitter. Let's say it was for tobacco. But I've bought a one hitter on Amazon. I didn't search "marijuana one hitter." I like, searched similar things and got products that have like, 30 words in the product name, but they were exactly what I needed, and Amazon turned a blind eye, or never knew about it. It's a weird world we're in. Very strange.

Courtney: For what it's worth, I really did laugh at that sweater.

Brent: It was great.

Courtney: 'Cause it's really funny.

Travis: I agree. I think—maybe, would it have been better if it had been like, a snowman? Or like, an elf?

Courtney: Just a really jazzy elf. [laughs]

Brent: [laughs]

Courtney: Um... y'know, we've made some jokes about some of the iTunes reviews that we specifically get about me hating men, and being a feminazi, and a race traitor who hates white people. All that good stuff. We have fun here. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. But if you, too, are a man-hating feminazi, have I got the movie for you!

Get thee to your local YouTubes and watch the trailer for Promising Young Woman, starring Carey Mulligan, and holy shit. Like, I had actual tidbits that I was going to write about. But instead, I needed to spread the good, good word about this movie. I am so excited for it. It looks both triggering and cathartic, and it's like I willed this movie into being. What is the opposite of a pro-incel movie, if it's a movie where a woman destroys a tepid nice guy date rapist? This is it! I've never been more excited or happier! 2020 is the year of misandry! Ha ha ha!

Brent: And possibly In the Heights.

Courtney: Yes, that looks good too!

[theme music plays]

[music plays]

Lisa: Hey, if you like your podcasts to be focused and well-researched, and your podcast hosts to be uncharismatic, unhorny strangers who have no interest in horses, then this is not the podcast for you.

Emily: Man, what's your deal?

Lisa: [laughs]

Emily: I'm Emily.

Lisa: I'm Lisa.

Emily: Our show's called Baby Geniuses.

Lisa: And its hosts are horny, adult idiots. We discover weird Wikipedia pages every episode.

Emily: We discuss institutional misogyny.

Lisa: We ask each other the dumbest questions, and our listeners won't stop sending us pictures of their butts.

Emily: We haven't asked them to stop, but they also aren't stopping.

Lisa: Join us on Baby Geniuses...

Emily: Every other week...

Lisa: On MaximumFun.org.

[music plays]

[music plays]

April: Hi, it's me, April Wolfe, the host of Switchblade Sisters and co-writer of the new horror film, Black Christmas.

Katie: And I'm Katie Walsh, film critic and occasional host of Switchblade Sisters.

April: We're here to announce that, for one episode, we will be doing something a little different. Much like Jeff Goldblum in David Cronenberg's The Fly, I will be going through a truly disturbing transformation.

Katie: April will transform from the interviewer into the interviewee. I will be asking her all about her new film, Black Christmas, her writing process, and ongoing existential dread.

April: But I will also be discussing John Carpenter's perfect masterpiece, Prince of Darkness.

Speaker 1: You guys seen any movies you like?

Katie: So tune into Switchblade Sisters for a one of a kind episode with April Wolfe, and me, Katie Walsh.

April: See you then!

Speaker 2: Only the corrupt are listened to, now.

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: Today's Wi-Five concerns a neighborhood in rural southern Mexico, and it's a fairly new neighborhood, stocked with very similar houses, soon to be 50 in total, all about 500 square feet with finished roofs, windows, and interiors.

What sets this area apart is that it's the world's first 3D-printed neighborhood. Yes, a startup called New Story has a giant, 33-foot long 3D printer that takes a mere 24 hours to erect an entire two bedroom house, and they're aiming to be part of the solution for affordable housing in some of the poorest communities in the world.

The non-profit has already built more than 2,700 homes in Haiti, El Salvador, Bolivia, and Mexico using traditional construction. But in Haiti, where people struggled to rebuild after the 2010 earthquake, New Story refined and streamlined a process to finish homes much more efficiently.

Two years ago, they partnered with a construction tech company called ICON to begin developing a 3D printer rugged enough to work even under the harshest conditions, and to build structures that could withstand the elements, including the seismic activity known to happen in many of the areas that need them most.

And it's also a very smart machine. Built-in software monitors the weather conditions, and the machine can just adjust the mixture in real time to create the highest possible print quality, according to the humidity levels throughout the day. And on top of the challenge of pioneering innovations in a still-fledgling technology field, they've had to deal with roadblocks along

the way, including a literal roadblock where their giant 3D printer, being hauled on a truck, was held up at the US-Mexican border for three months.

But they finally got down there, and helped dozens of families upgrade from shanty shacks, typically made of corrugated metal and other found objects and materials. These are people who earn a median income of \$76 a month. Many of the families will own indoor plumbing for the first time in their lives, and the same technology could help disrupt the construction of affordable housing in the United States, too.

Earlier this year, ICON printed a welcome center for a planned community in Austin, Texas, designed for the chronically homeless, and they're starting to print homes in that area that'll be completed within a few months. It's an exciting time to be alive, and it's nice to see that advances in technology don't always funnel down to new consumer products that create haves and have nots. Sometimes, it can help make life better and easier for people who really need it.

So, to New Story, ICON, and everyone else involved in this new push to give homes to the people who need it most, Wi-Five.

[theme music plays]

Travis: Alright, folks, that's gonna do it for us. But before we let you go, uh, real quick, I wanted to tell you. So, my brothers and my dad and I, we do a podcast called The Adventure Zone, and we've been working with Twogether Studios to produce, uh, The Adventure Zone Game. It's based on Adventure Zone: Balance. It's a cooperative storytelling card game. Uh, it expands the Adventure Zone: Balance universe, and it's super fun. It's rules-light and easy to learn. And it's available for preorder now!

So, if you go to TheAdventureZoneGame.com, you can preorder it. There's a special limited edition, as well as the regular edition. Both are available for preorder! So uh, go check that out. Uh, Courtney, what about you?

Courtney: You can find me on SYFY Fangrrls. Uh, SYFY, SYFY Wire, is actually doing a Star Wars podcast leading up to the release of The Rise of

Skywalker. I will be on the episode talking about The Force Awakens, so tune in when that happens. I get to let my cohosts know about Ben Schwartz doing the voice of BB-8 that they didn't know, and it was like, the greatest moment of my life to listen to them find that out in real time.

Um, yeah. And you can also listen to my other podcast, Strong Female Characters.

Brent: Man, Travis has a game and Courtney has a podcast. Should I plug my game or my podcast? Uh, both. Number one, made a game. UseYourWords.lol is the URL you go to. Uh, it's really fun. And also, I've got a new podcast called Question Box, the game show podcast of shockingly personal questions.

And we've had guests such as... Travis and Courtney, and uh, other people that you like from this show, or that you just like from the internet. So check it out. We're on all the major podcast platforms, and again, it's called Question Box.

Travis: Uh, and that's gonna do it for us. Go check out all the other amazing shows on MaximumFun.org. Uh, you can rate, review, and subscribe on iTunes. And yeah, join us again next week!

Wait, hold on. Am I forgetting anything?

Courtney: Yeah, you literally are. [laughs]

Brent: Wow, you forgot to ask if somebody was forgetting! That's amazing!

Courtney: See ya next time!

[theme music plays]

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