

00:00:00	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:00:01	Monte Belmonte	Host	Welcome to the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast. I'm summertime—less fun time, given the circumstances—guest bailiff, Monte Belmonte, from 93.9 The River WRSI in Northampton, Massachusetts, filling in for actual bailiff Jesse Thorn. This week: "Dance Dance Resolution."
			C.W. brings the case against his husband, Jeff. The C.W. wants to dance with somebody. He wants to feel the heat with somebody! Yeah, he wants to dance with somebody—
			— <i>[singing]</i> with somebody named Jefffrey!
			<i>[Speaking]</i> C.W. wishes that Jeff would get the party going on the dance floor. See, 'cause that's where the party's at, and Jeff will find out if he do that. But Jeff don't feel like dancing, dancing, even if he finds nothing better to do! And asks C.W., "Why'd you break it down when he's not in the mood?" Even when they are alone at home.
			Will Jeff save the last dance for C.W.? Or will C.W.—
			— <i>[singing]</i> —be a'dancing with himseeelf? Oh-oh-oh-oh!
			<i>[Speaking]</i> Who's right? And who's got two left feet? Only one can decide!
00:01:03	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[As Monte speaks below: Door opens, chairs scrape on the floor, footsteps.]</i>
00:01:04	Monte	Host	Please jump to the left, and then step to the right, put your hands on your hips, and bring your knees in tight as Judge John Hodgman steps and ball changes into the courtroom and presents an obscure cultural reference.
00:01:11	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Door shuts.]</i>
00:01:13	John Hodgman	Host	Ha-cha! This isn't—this isn't the quote. This is just me saying, "Ha-cha!"
			<i>[Monte laughs.]</i>
			To Summertime Guest Bailiff Monte Belmonte. For putting in the work, doing the preparation— <i>[laughs quietly]</i> —to write that intro. Let me show you the entirety of <u>my</u> preparation. I found a quote to read.
00:01:34	Monte	Host	Okay, good!
00:01:35	John	Host	And here it is.
			"The Soul Train Line only lasted the length of one song. But in that time, Don Cornelius brought you a diverse world on its feet. And what that did was abolish the regionalism of ghetto America. Back then, the country was much bigger than it is now. Whatever was happening on one side of the country, the other side would never know about. For instance, there was a way of life in the Northeast, its own style, lingo, and dance, that other parts of the country weren't privy to. The same went for the Southeast and the Midwest.
			Watching <i>Soul Train</i> inspired teens to move to LA to be on the show

and display their slice of life. Dance and fashion amalgamated, and Black people, regardless of location, began to think on one wavelength."

Summertime Guest Bailiff Monte Belmonte, please swear the litigants in.

00:02:31 Monte Host

C.W. and Jeff...

[Speaking] Put your hands in the air, come on say yeah, everybody over here everybody over there, jump to the rhythm, jump-jump to the rhythm, jump. Now everybody look at your hands. That's a "Safety Dance" precaution.

[Someone snorts.]

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you Lord of the Dance or whatever?

00:02:51 Jeff Guest

I do.

00:02:52 C.W. Guest

I do.

00:02:53 Monte Host

Do you swear to abide by Judge John Hodgman's ruling, despite the fact that Hodgman won the 1991 Brookline Boot Scootin' Boogie Championship?

00:03:00 Jeff Guest

[Stifles laughter.] I do.

00:03:03 C.W. Guest

I do.

00:03:04 Monte Host

Judge Hodgman, you may proceed.

00:03:06 John Host

Not in any way true. I have won zero contests for dancing.

[Monte laughs quietly.]

And nor will I! I am medium okay at it. I'm gonna be honest with you, Jeff! You have an advantage here. Because I am medium okay at dancing... and it takes me a lot of various forms of persuasion to get me to do it. But... this whole thing could be solved right now, if one of you, Jeff and C.W., can possibly name the source of the cultural reference that I read while I walked, did not dance, into the courtroom.

C.W., let's start with you.

00:03:49 C.W. Guest

Uh, I—I—it was a great quote, by the way! It had a lot of amazing content there.

[John laughs quietly.]

I have no idea, but I'm gonna attempt a guess. Which is, uh, Rosie Perez from her Fly Girls stint on *Living Color*, regarding the power of dance. I'm guessing that that was from her.

00:04:05 John Host

It's an interesting guess! *Diary of a Fly Girl*, Rosie Perez. Perhaps! Maybe? Let's add it into the guess book. But Jeff, now you have a chance to steal it back! Do you know the source of the quote that I read as I entered the courtroom?

00:04:21 Jeff Guest

No, I was hoping it would be something from "The Safety Dance."

But I have no idea. *[Laughs.]*

00:04:26 John Host You—*[laughs]*. That is absolutely my speed as well. And I couldn't see before, when Monte was swearing you in—we are connected to each other across multiple states, using teleconferencing technology. Did you do the "Safety Dance" moves when you were being sworn in? I missed it, 'cause I was looking at my little piece of writing to read.

00:04:48 Jeff Guest I do not dance.

00:04:49 Monte Host Not even "The Safety Dance"?!

00:04:51 John Host "The Safety Dance—"

00:04:52 Jeff Guest *[Laughing]* No.

00:04:53 John Host Monte, tell me if I'm doing it right. It's palms forward, and you frame your face with one palm—

00:04:57 Monte Host Right.

00:04:58 John Host —beneath your chin, and one palm above your chin, right? And then—

00:04:59 Monte Host And then every once in a while there's a big—

[Claps.]

—clap, I believe, if I remember correctly.

[Monte or someone else claps again.]

00:05:02 John Host Right. Exactly.

00:05:03 Monte Host Mm-hm.

00:05:04 Jeff Guest I thought that was the Vogue.

00:05:05 Monte Host Oh, Vogue is a whole different thing.

00:05:07 John Host That's either side of the face.

00:05:08 Monte Host *[Speaking]* Greta Garbo and Monroe, Dietrich and DiMaggio. Marlon Brando, Jimmy Dean...

00:05:14 John Host We're gonna get sued. We're gonna get sued. Don't do that.

[The litigants laugh.]

00:05:17 Monte Host Sorry, Madonna! I'm sorry, Madonna.

00:05:20 John Host We won't get sued, however... by Ahmir Thompson, also known as Questlove. The drummer from the Roots. The great disc jockey of late nights on Instagram, in these days of social isolation. The incredible food maker and eater, and writer-about-er. And as well... documentarian of *Soul Train*! One of the longest-running shows on television, founded by Don Cornelius! And as Ahmir documents in his incredible book *Soul Train: The Music, Dance, and Style of a Generation*, it pioneered a movement in African American identity and sense of beauty, and introduced multiple, multiple, multiple incredible artists to the world.

Soul Train: The Music, Dance, and Style of a Generation. That's the plug. Questlove, please don't sue me for quoting your book. It's a great book. I order everyone to get it.

But now we must hear the case! C.W., you bring this case to me. What justice do you seek against your husband Jeff?

00:06:27 C.W. Guest So I have a husband who will not dance with me at all. Not in my house, not on trips, not if we go out socially. So I seek a ruling that my husband dance with me at home whenever the possibility allows. An actual dance, for a full song. And that whenever we go out socially—which is rare! We're both rather introverted.

00:06:51 John Host Especially these days.

00:06:52 C.W. Guest *[Laughs.]* That's a good point, especially right now!

00:06:55 John Host Obviously the future is changing every hour on the hour. As it always does, but it feels exceedingly malleable and a little bit terrifying, our future, as we move forward into this hopefully better new normal, and work for one.

00:07:08 C.W. Guest This is true.

00:07:09 John Host So I don't know what's gonna happen when this thing gets out there into the world, this podcast. But as we are recording right now, there is still stay-at-home orders here in New York City. You are in Nebraska, however. Is that right?

00:07:21 C.W. Guest Nebraska.

00:07:22 John Host Omaha? Or Lincoln, or where?

00:07:24 Crosstalk Crosstalk **C.W. and Jeff:** Lincoln.

00:07:25 John Host Lincoln, Nebraska. Nice. Okay! Right now, are you able to go out dancing? Legally speaking?

00:07:34 C.W. Guest Legally speaking, perhaps. Nebraska was one of the few states that never had any shelter-in-place—

00:07:39 John Host Hm!

00:07:40 C.W. Guest —or social distancing mandates.

00:07:42 John Host Ah.

00:07:43 C.W. Guest So at present, it is technically possible. But I will say in fairness, I am, um, as millions of Americans are, I have asthma. So I've been staying at home no matter what, and will, as long as this pandemic goes on.

00:07:54 John Host I feel you, C.W. I am virtually raising my Ventolin inhaler in solidarity with you.

[The litigants laugh.]

00:08:01 C.W. Guest Thank you, I raise mine back.

00:08:03 John Host Good on both of you for staying home and staying safe...er. At home.

Now. Jeff. Why won't you dance with your beloved husband?

00:08:14 Jeff Guest I've never danced.

00:08:16 John Host In your life?!

00:08:17 Jeff Guest *[Laughing]* In my life.

Well, I've waddle-danced. That—when you rock back and forth?

00:08:22 John Host Yeah.

00:08:23 Jeff Guest With—like at a junior high dance.

00:08:24 John Host Yep.

00:08:25 Jeff Guest But that's about the extent of it.

00:08:28 John Host Was that a traumatic experience for you?

00:08:31 Jeff Guest Yes. In seventh and eighth grade I went to a Catholic school, so we were forced to take cotillion, which is dancing and etiquette classes. And so we danced in groups, but we also had individual judging by the instructor. And he would bring you up there and...

00:08:46 John Host Oh.

00:08:47 Jeff Guest ...*[laughing]* tell you how bad you were.

[Someone audibly shudders.]

00:08:49 John Host Individual judging! Oh! This is—let me just say—your pronouns for both of you are he/him? Would that be correct?

00:08:57 Jeff Guest Yes.

00:08:58 C.W. Guest Correct.

00:08:59 John Host I don't mean to presume. But I wanna make sure.

00:09:01 C.W. Guest Sure. Thank you.

00:09:02 John Host Yeah, of course. And you are two men who are married.

00:09:05 Jeff Guest Yes.

00:09:06 John Host Correct? That's how you identify?

00:09:08 Jeff Guest Mm-hm.

00:09:09 John Host So Jeff, going to a Catholic school and being forced to dance with girls and being judged on it, combined with who you are as a human being—I don't know when—you know, what you knew about yourself when. But yeah, that seems like a real recipe for... ick.

00:09:25 Jeff Guest Yes. Extremely so.

[Jeff, John, and Monte or C.W. laugh.]

00:09:30 John Host Yeah. I can understand why you—dancing is not your favorite thing. Have you tried dancing since then?

00:09:38 Jeff Guest Um... no. *[Laughs.]*

[Monte or C.W. also laughs.]

00:09:42 John Host That was it. When would you guess—sincerely! When would you guess was the last time you danced in any kind of public forum?

00:09:55 Jeff Guest Eighth grade cotillion. *[Laughs.]*

00:09:57 John Host That was it.

00:09:58 Jeff Guest *[Laughing]* That was it.

When I was in high school, I went to a wedding for a colleague of mine. Well, actually it was early college. And she invited me to her wedding, and said—and even back then, people knew I didn't dance. And so she goes, "I'm gonna make you dance at my wedding."

[Laughs.]

00:10:13 John Host *[Groaning]* Ohhh!

00:10:15 Jeff Guest So I was sitting there at the reception—

00:10:17 John Host Your "friend."

00:10:19 Jeff Guest Yes. *[Laughs.]* And she yanks me out of the chair.

00:10:21 John Host Ugh.

00:10:22 Jeff Guest To go dance. But thankfully I accidentally stepped on her train and ripped half of her dress off—

[Jeff and John both laugh.]

—so I didn't have to dance!

00:10:30 Monte Host Thankfully! *[Laughs.]*

00:10:32 John Host Where did this wedding take place? In an eighties comedy?

00:10:36 Jeff Guest *[Laughing]* It could have been!

00:10:39 John Host So because you... quote-unquote "inadvertently" destroyed her dress...

[Someone laughs quietly.]

...she got distracted. And her attempt at forceful dancing conversion therapy did not take hold at that time.

[Someone laughs quietly.]

00:10:53 Jeff Guest Correct. Yes.

00:10:55 John Host And how did you feel when you were off the hook?

00:10:58 Jeff Guest Incredibly relieved. *[Laughs.]*

00:11:01 John Host And what did you do for the rest of the time at the wedding??

00:11:03 Jeff Guest Drank!

[Jeff and Monte laugh.]

00:11:05 John Host Mm-hm.

00:11:07 Jeff Guest *[Laughing]* It was at early college, though!

00:11:09 John Host No, no, I understand! I understand. So when—C.W., when did you two meet? And when did it become clear that Jeff... is a non-dancer?

00:11:20 C.W. Guest We met in 2002 at Oklahoma State University. We were both in grad school.

00:11:25 John Host In what field, may I ask?

00:11:26 C.W. Guest Jeff's PhD is in wildlife ecology. He's an ornithologist with a focus kind of on stats. He's a statistician.

00:11:33 John Host He's a bird statistician?!

00:11:35 C.W. Guest **Jeff:** *[Chuckling]* Yes.

C.W.: He's a bird statistician. *[Laughs.]* Yeah.

00:11:37 John Host Hang on, hang on. Let me put this to the test.

[Monte laughs.]

Jeff. As of this recording, it's June 9th, 2020. How many birds are there in the world? Don't look it up!

[C.W. laughs.]

And what percentage of them are cardinals?!

[The litigants laugh.]

00:11:54 Jeff Guest Like one percent. *[Laughs.]*

00:11:57 John Host Alright, I gotta take your word for it! He's Dr. Bird Numbers.

00:11:59 Monte Host Sounds legit!

00:12:01 John Host Ornithology statistics. That's cool! That's a cool job, Jeff.

00:12:04 Monte Host It is cool.

00:12:06 Jeff Guest I don't get out and see birds very often, but I get to write computer code to count them. *[Laughs.]*

00:12:12 John Host You write computer code to count birds?!

00:12:13 Jeff Guest Well, to analyze data from counts.

00:12:16 John Host Goot it. Got it, got it, got it, got it. So would you say that you're more of a coder/statistician than ornithologist?

00:12:25 Jeff Guest At this point, yes.

00:12:27 John Host But was your interest primarily in statistics? Or birds? Are you a statistician who got a job in birds, or a bird person who got into statistics?

[Someone chuckles.]

00:12:39 Jeff Guest The latter. I started off with a interest in studying birds and their behavior—

00:12:44 John Host Right.

00:12:45 Jeff Guest —and I got really good at statistical modeling. So that's where the career path led. *[Laughs.]*

00:12:51 John Host That's a cool job. C.W., what's your cool job?

00:12:55 C.W. Guest I am executive director of a performing arts nonprofit program here in Lincoln, Nebraska.

00:13:00 Monte Host Nice!

00:13:01 John Host *[Sighs.]* Two of you, living in Lincoln, Nebraska. A town that I've never been to. But I've been to Omaha. I've been to the Big O.

00:13:10 C.W. Guest Nice.

00:13:11 John Host Yeah. I liked it a lot. Had a lot of fun there. One of the young cool dudes that I met there said, like, "Yeah! It's like Chicago, but without any major sports teams."

I'm like, "Hm! This sounds interesting to me!"

[Multiple people laugh.]

I've never been to Lincoln, which is a college town, right?

00:13:26 Jeff Guest Yes.

00:13:27 C.W. Guest It is.

00:13:28 Jeff Guest And the state capital.

00:13:29 John Host And the state capital. Thank you very much. Our bird statistician there.

[Someone laughs.]

Making sure I've got the facts straight. Alright, C.W. So you have an incredible job of meaning there, because you're working in a nonprofit performing arts center. And you're involved in the performing arts! So dance is a part of your life. Part of your passion, would you say?

00:13:48 C.W. Guest I would say. And I should clarify. We're what's called a presenting fine arts organization. So we bring in touring artists, and we have our own chorus as well. But yes. Dance is absolutely important to me. I grew up around music. I never can recall a time in my life when we weren't dancing around the house, or—

00:14:04 John Host You can't recall one time in your life when you weren't dancing around the house?! That sounds exhausting!

00:14:10 C.W. Guest *[Laughs.]* Uh, it—it was, actually. It was—it was very tiring. The thing is, I come—like, I come from a family where everything was sort of made musical. Chores, those sorts of things. And Jeff knows, 'cause even around the house now, any time I'm doing dishes or whatever, I'm always dancing and moving and singing, 'cause that's—that's a way to burn calories, and also to still stay true to my love of music. But I'm always dancing.

I was kicked out of show choir in college, but I am a dancer.

00:14:39 John Host *[Stifling laughter]* Okay.

00:14:40 C.W. Guest In my head. In my head.

00:14:41 John Host Yeah.

00:14:42 C.W. Guest I'm not really a dancer, but in my head and in my house, I'm a dancer.

00:14:44 John Host So you met in graduate school. And at some point you had to have said, "Hey, let's go dancing," 'cause you love to dance so much, C.W.! And when did you learn that Jeff was like, "Uh-uh"?

00:14:57 C.W. Guest So I knew early on. Like, early on, probably in the first two months. And again, I was fine to even dance in his apartment at the time. But he was absolutely adamant that that was not gonna happen, that no matter the music—even music he liked! He was into sort of, um, nothing that I was into, but punk—he called it Chicago industrial kind of punk at the time.

00:15:18 John Host Uh-huh.

00:15:19 C.W. Guest So groups like Mazzy Star, Skinny Puppy, those things. I don't see how you dance to that, but I'm willing to try.

00:15:23 Monte Host *[Laughs.]* You dance like this. You sway back and forth.

00:15:27 C.W. Guest Oh, okay! *[Laughs.]*

00:15:30 Jeff Guest Or you jump up and down a lot.

00:15:31 Monte Host Right.

00:15:32 John Host I just have to say that because I can see the litigants now that we're recording via teleconference, Jeff, I almost saw you sway. Like, you got close.

[The litigants laugh.]

Are you doing okay? You feeling okay? You did half a sway.

[Jeff chuckles.]

00:15:46 C.W. Guest I saw it, too.

00:15:47 Jeff Guest That'll be my dancing for the year. *[Laughs.]*

00:15:50 Monte Host He nearly faded into you, C.W.

[Jeff laughs.]

00:15:53 John Host Jeff, what is this genre of band?

00:15:56 Jeff Guest He's conflated Mazzy Star, which was kind of like a post-punk, new wave type band, with Chicago industrial. They were... like, RevCo, uh... Skinny Puppy was one band. Some of the names aren't—*[laughing]* aren't polite to say in mixed company, so—

00:16:12 John Host Dr. Bird Numbers gets cooler and cooler, C.W.

[Someone laughs.]

00:16:17 C.W. Guest He is very cool! I love him, I absolutely love him, he's my best friend. I just think he'd be that much cooler if in addition to counting birds, he would dance with me. That would make me very happy.

00:16:26 John Host When you went to a RevCo show, Jeff, what would you do at the show? Just stand there? Would you shoegaze?

00:16:33 Jeff Guest *[Laughs.]* Um, I'd usually try to find a booth or something, and then I'd just listen to the music.

00:16:40 John Host Okay. So—C.W., go ahead. I feel like you were about to say something.

00:16:44 C.W. Guest No, I was just gonna say, Jeff was born in a really great time for music, and it wasn't—he was born in June of 1971, and that time—Jeff's seven years older than me, again we met in grad school—but it was a great time to kind of love music and embrace it. And I—I've embraced the music that he loves! Often I'll play Mazzy Star around the house, or try to sort of get something on that Jeff might dance to, but it doesn't happen.

00:17:10 John Host What is the name of the band? Mazzy Star?

00:17:11 Jeff Guest Yes.

00:17:13 John Host Okay. Got it. Got it. I don't—I was not—I'm—never heard of this band! Have you heard of them, Monte Belmonte?

00:17:17 Monte Host Yeah, they had that one big hit "Fade Into You," which I referenced.

00:17:21 Jeff Guest Which he quoted. Yeah. *[Laughs.]*

00:17:22 Monte Host A moment ago, when Jeff was—

00:17:23 John Host Oh, excuse me.

00:17:24 Monte Host —easily swaying back and forth.

00:17:27 John Host Yeah, let me see if I—let me see if you can dance to this music. I don't care if Mazzy Star sues us.

00:17:31 Monte Host You can shoegaze to it. That's for sure. You can sit in a booth and enjoy this music.

[One of the litigant laughs.]

00:17:35 John Host Hang on, I gotta skip this ad for Teachers College on YouTube. Alright, there we go.

[Pause.]

I listened to this song from minute 1:12 to 1:16. Producer Jennifer Marmor, I think we can play that without getting sued.

[Someone laughs.]

00:17:51 Music Music Guitar and tambourine. Slow, relaxing.

00:17:58 John Host That's only four seconds of the song. For me to know that no one would ever dance to this song.

00:18:04 Monte Host Slow dance!

00:18:05 John Host *[Exhales thoughtfully.]* Good point. Good point. That's a—

00:18:08 Monte Host It's a great slow dance song.

00:18:09 John Host Yeah...

00:18:10 Monte Host You could leave room for the Holy Spirit at your cotillion.

00:18:14 John Host Yeah, that's—that's a true, like, eighth grade—even though this is '90—1994, neither you nor I, Jeff, were in eighth grade at that time.

00:18:22 Jeff Guest No.

00:18:23 John Host But when you talk about that kind of, like, slow waddle with the barely touching arms of an eighth grade slow dance, this song would be part of that. For sure.

00:18:34 Jeff Guest Yes.

00:18:35 Monte Host Let's take a quick recess. We'll be back with more of C.W. and Jeff's case in just a moment on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

00:18:41 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:18:44 Promo Clip **Music:** Fun, cheerful, soft music.

Benjamin Partridge: If you're looking for a new comedy podcast, why not try *The Beef And Dairy Network*? It won Best Comedy at the British Podcast Awards in 2017 and 2018. Also, I—

[Audio suddenly slows and cuts off.]

Speaker 1: There were no horses in this country until the mid to late sixties.

Speaker 2: Specialist Bovine Arsefat—

Speaker 3: Both of his eyes are squids' eyes.

Speaker 4: Yogurt buffet.

Speaker 5: She was married to a bacon farmer who saved her life.

Speaker 6: Farm-raised snow leopard.

[Strange electronic audio.]

[Beginning audio returns.]

Benjamin: Download it today. That's the *Beef And Dairy Network* podcast, from MaximumFun.org. Also, maybe start at episode one. Or weirdly, episode thirty-six, which for some reason requires no knowledge of the rest of the show.

[Music fades out.]

00:19:24	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:19:27	John	Host	Jeff, do you feel that you just don't—you don't have the moves? I mean, you <u>don't</u> have the moves! You've never <u>tried</u> the moves!
00:19:33	Jeff	Guest	I don't have any musical ability or rhythm whatsoever. Since I was a kid. My parents tried to teach me piano, it didn't stick. I was in grade school band for two years, and after the two years, still couldn't play my instrument.
00:19:47	John	Host	What was your instrument?
00:19:49	Jeff	Guest	Cornet.
00:19:50	John	Host	<i>[Laughs quietly.]</i> Right. Bad starter.
			<i>[Monte and the litigants laughs.]</i>
00:19:55	Jeff	Guest	I could make it sound really bad! <i>[Laughing]</i> But I couldn't make any music.
00:19:58	John	Host	That's... not a skill. <i>[Laughs.]</i> Making a cornet sound bad is not a skill. Making it sound good is the skill.
00:20:06	Jeff	Guest	And the last two semesters, we were taking adult piano lessons at the university, before the virus shut everything down.
00:20:11	John	Host	Oh, wow!
00:20:12	Jeff	Guest	I <u>still</u> could not get rhythm in <u>any</u> shape or form. I could play the notes, but it did not sound like music. And when we were clapping out beats, I could not follow that at all.
00:20:25	John	Host	Clap with me. Well, there's gonna be a delay because of the... the teleconference.
00:20:30	Monte	Host	But this'll be fun.
			<i>[The litigants laugh.]</i>
00:20:34	John	Host	<i>[Clapping on every beat]</i> One! Two! Three! Four! One! Two! Three! Four!

[Jeff (presumably) joins in, out of sync.]

One, two—no. Keep going, Jeff.

[Jeff claps a slightly halting count of four.]

No. You're faking!

[The litigants laugh.]

There's no way you can be that bad at clapping!

00:20:50 Jeff Guest

[Laughing] Ask Charles! *[Inaudible]* C.W.!

[Monte laughs.]

00:20:55 C.W. Guest

It's—yeah. Yeah. He can be very bad. But I think music is a universal language. I tell Jeff that all the time. So it's accessible as anything—

00:21:03 John Host

Obviously is not!

[Multiple people laugh.]

00:21:08 C.W. Guest

I—I can't—I mean, given what you just saw and heard, I can't argue. Maybe some will never speak the language. But I'm hopeful that the ruling today will encourage my husband to, if I may continue the metaphor, become fluent in it.

00:21:20 John Host

Quick question. I know the answer to this. First, when did you get married, C.W.?

00:21:26 C.W. Guest

So we got married in 2004, when it was not legal anywhere. But we got married then. And then we were legally married in Iowa ten years later, to the exact date, time, and hour.

00:21:35 John Host

Oh!

00:21:36 C.W. Guest

So we've been married almost fif—over—just over 15 years.

00:21:40 John Host

So you've had two wedding ceremonies of a kind.

00:21:43 C.W. Guest

We did. We did. Yes.

00:21:44 John Host

Did you dance together at your—either of your weddings?

00:21:48 C.W. Guest

Not in the least, because my husband told me no.

[Someone laughs quietly.]

And I wanted it each time, but he was not on board with it. So we did not. Any—either—we didn't even have a—there was no dancing! We didn't even have a reception that involved dancing or DJ.

00:21:59 Monte Host

Wow.

00:22:00 Jeff Guest

Just food.

00:22:01 C.W. Guest

I want—I wanted it!

00:22:03 John Host

Yeah! It was not—Jeff, it is not enough that you dislike dancing. You must withhold dancing from others.

00:22:11 C.W. Guest

[Laughs.] That's a good point.

00:22:12 Jeff Guest

As often as possible. *[Laughs.]*

00:22:14 John Host I mean, the people who know you must love you, and so they must know that you don't do any kind of dancing. Couldn't you have at least let others dance at your wedding, Jeff?

00:22:28 Jeff Guest I suppose.

[C.W. laughs.]

00:22:31 John Host *[Sighs deeply.]*

00:22:32 Jeff Guest But a DJ is so expensive! *[Laughs.]*

00:22:35 John Host Make a playlist!

00:22:38 C.W. Guest Exactly.

00:22:38 Jeff Guest Okay. Good point.

00:22:42 John Host So C.W., when your husband won't dance with you, how does it make you feel?

00:22:48 C.W. Guest It makes me feel... temporarily rejected. I mean, I get over it. I've been with him a long time, I love him, again he's my best friend.

00:22:56 John Host You've been together for a long time. Yeah.

00:22:57 C.W. Guest Yeah! For sure, you know, almost 20 years we've been together. It makes me feel like he's unwilling to meet me halfway on something that I think is a fair request and important to me. And it makes me feel like we—we're not doing our part, as a gay couple, I think.

[Someone laughs.]

Because I think that—you know, we're in an era of marriage equality, and why not set the example, right, in our own home, and then build from there and externally to show the younger generation that gay men, too, can dance?

[Someone laughs.]

00:23:26 John Host That's right. That's right. Why—you have an obligation to show the world that two gay men can dance together. It's never been done before!

00:23:34 C.W. Guest I like—no, I like to think that—

00:23:36 Jeff Host We show two men can't dance together! *[Laughs.]* Because one can't dance!

[Multiple people laugh. Someone claps.]

00:23:44 C.W. Guest You know, here's my argument in a nutshell. I feel like Stonewall happened so that, among many other things, gay men could be themselves. And Paul Lynde appeared on *Hollywood Squares*, and RuPaul has done everything that RuPaul has done, *[stifles laughter]* so that gay men can be out and proud. And just comfortable with ourselves!

So I always say Jeff is amazing. He's incredible. He's intelligent. He has nothing to be ashamed of. I always say dancing's like a lot of other things. Few of us are really good at it, so—so... many of us should still have fun with it.

And may I add—or will I have an opportunity to add one final piece

for my case, Judge?

00:24:20 John Host Alright. I'll allow it.

00:24:23 C.W. Guest I will say—and I think it's salient, but I defer to your judgment. The biggest argument Jeff and I ever had was in 2007. And it was a long, extended dialogue regarding who was the sexiest and most erudite male celebrity, and he insisted it was Justin Long, and I said Judge John Hodgman. So—of course, they didn't have John at the time, but I insisted upon that. So I want you to know where he stands in relation to your celebrity, sir!

[Beat.]

00:24:48 John Host Excuse me for a moment.

[Everyone else bursts out laughing. Someone claps.]

I'm—I apologize. I just—I had to mute myself there so that I could, uh—I could cough, and take a drink of water, and then SPIT IT OUT!

[C.W. laughs.]

In a spit take! You're sitting there in Lincoln, Nebraska, C.W., trying to curry my favor!

00:25:16 C.W. Guest Absolutely.

00:25:17 John Host By suggesting that you found me more attractive than my co-star in the Apple ads, Justin Long. And you're trying to say that—all that proves to me is that you have—you do not perceive reality correctly!

[Someone laughs.]

00:25:33 C.W. Guest Well, I would say I probably don't, *[laughing]* and Jeff can back me up on this, having been married to me.

[John laughs.]

But, yeah. If it'll win the case, absolutely. And of course it's a sincere compliment to you, Judge Hodgman.

00:25:43 John Host I pr—I take it as a compliment!

00:25:46 C.W. Guest Absolutely.

00:25:47 John Host But it does not—but it undermines your case as a rational actor.

[Jeff and Monte laugh.]

00:25:54 C.W. Guest As soon as I said it, I thought that, but I thought, you know, "It's too late to pull it back now," so I went for it.

00:25:59 John Host Jeff.

00:26:01 Jeff Guest Yes.

00:26:02 John Host When you think about dancing, how do you feel?

00:26:06 Jeff Guest Extreme anxiety.

00:26:08 John Host Right. I mean, even when it is suggested that you dance alone with your beloved husband, in your house. With literally no one watching.

00:26:19 Jeff Guest Yes. We do—

00:26:20 John Host Why not?

00:26:21 Jeff Guest —occasionally waddle-dance. So that we don't ever dance is not true. *[Laughs.]* We do at least once or twice a year, like, the—I'll do the—that'll be my dance for the year. *[Laughs.]*

00:26:31 John Host Yeah! You do a little Mazzy Star back and forth?

00:26:35 Monte Host Love it.

00:26:36 Jeff Guest Yes.

00:26:37 John Host So C.W., in fact, Jeff has met you halfway. He's done the only dance he ever learned to do.

[Someone laughs quietly.]

Your complaint isn't that he does not dance, your complaint is he doesn't dance the way you want him to dance.

00:26:49 C.W. Guest I respectfully disagree on the following. Because it is a maybe 30-second waddle. It's never a full song. There was one time we danced to a full song, and it was our first wedding anniversary. I do give him that. I absolutely give him that. But I would love a full song! A full couple of rounds on the dance floor that is our wooden, not laminate wood floor in our house. I want more than one song. I would love that.

00:27:11 John Host What was the song you danced to on your anniversary? The whole song?

00:27:14 C.W. Guest I think it was Norah Jones' "The Nearness of You." 'Cause that was performed at our wedding in 2004.

00:27:20 John Host That's a good waddler.

00:27:21 C.W. Guest It is.

00:27:22 John Host Yeah. You sent in some evidence. Most of the evidence that you sent in is irrelevant, adorable photos of yourselves and your cats.

00:27:32 C.W. Guest It's true.

00:27:34 John Host For the record, they are—all of these photos of you together at—the—when you first met in 2003 at Oklahoma State University, and then your first marriage, your second marriage, very, very adorable. Plus Bea and Levi, your two blind cats.

00:27:54 C.W. Guest Correct. Yeah.

00:27:55 John Host Incredible. They'll all be posted on the *Judge John Hodgman* page at MaximumFun.org, plus the Instagram account, at [@judgejohnhodgman](https://www.instagram.com/judgejohnhodgman) on Instagram. In particular—hoo! Bea, who has no eyes. One of the most amazing cats I've ever seen. She's so amazing.

00:28:17 C.W. Guest She really is incredible. And super sweet, if I may say. I'll just add she had recurrent eye infections as a kitten. So they were removed.

[John and Monte make sympathetic sounds.]

And that was before we had her. We got her and Levi from our local Humane Society two years ago, and they've just enriched our lives. And they're wonderful! Yeah, they get around as good as they would if they had sight. They're great cats.

00:28:36 John Host Adorable testaments to your love for each other—

00:28:39 C.W. Guest Thank you.

00:28:40 John Host —and your love for these cats. And this incredible, immortal vampire cat.

[C.W. laughs.]

And then Bea, the cat with no eyes. Your kindness, your generosity of spirit, your decency. And they're all irrelevant!

[Someone laughs quietly.]

The only piece of evidence that has any relevance is this video—maybe even—is this video of C.W. dancing a line dance at a wedding.

00:29:08 C.W. Guest It is.

00:29:09 John Host I'm watching it now. What song is this?

00:29:13 C.W. Guest This is "The Cupid Shuffle." It's at a friend's wedding in 2013. Jeff and I were attending, and the song came on, and I said, "Jeff, come and do the song with—the dance, the line dance," and of course I got my usual no. So I went out and danced, and unbeknownst to me—and I'll give this to Jeff—he recorded me. And, uh, so I—
[laughs].

00:29:29 John Host Jeff recorded you—participated by recording.

00:29:32 C.W. Guest He did. He did. And I give him that! But I would much rather have had him out there dancing with me.

00:29:36 John Host And let me just say this to you, C.W. You've got some moves.

00:29:40 C.W. Guest I try.

00:29:42 John Host You know, a wedding is one of the only circumstances where I might get up to dance. A line dance I won't do, because I don't know the rules. You just got in there and did it!

That said, about halfway through, you took off your suit jacket and you were revealed to be wearing a white T-shirt underneath it.

00:30:01 C.W. Guest *[Laughing]* I was.

[Monte laughs.]

00:30:04 John Host A white T-shirt under a vest.

00:30:06 C.W. Guest Yeah, it was hot, and I'm a chubby musician. I—

00:30:09 John Host You're lucky that Bailiff Jesse Thorn isn't here right now.

[Monte and the litigants laugh.]

To judge your sartorial choices.

00:30:16 Monte Host I'm much more forgiving.

00:30:18 C.W. Guest Fair point. Thank—thank you.

00:30:21 John Host When you were dancing to that Norah Jones song on your anniversary, Jeff, were you feeling anxiety?

00:30:27 Jeff Guest Uh, no.

00:30:29 John Host Alright. C.W., you mentioned you felt a little rejected. Jeff—I mean, and you know that you're not being rejected, but Jeff—

00:30:35 C.W. Guest Of course!

00:30:36 John Host —how did you feel when C.W. says that?

00:30:40 Jeff Guest It's somewhat upsetting.

[Monte or C.W. laughs quietly.]

'Cause I kind of think we have danced. *[Laughs.]* The waddle dance that we do once or twice a year! But it's—there—the amount of skill required for the level of dance that he is wanting is just beyond my capability. I mean, if I was—joined that line dance, several people there would have been injured. It makes me upset, but I think it's unrealistic expectations.

00:31:05 John Host C.W., is it the case that you feel that Jeff is shy about dancing? It has been—

00:31:13 C.W. Guest Yes.

00:31:14 John Host It has been displayed that he is genuinely unskilled at rhythm. That the learning curve to become a okay dancer is... high, for him. But that you believe that if he were to overcome his shyness, no one would judge him on his lack of skill.

00:31:36 C.W. Guest I concur with that. That is absolutely correct.

00:31:39 John Host That would be your argument.

00:31:40 C.W. Guest Yes, sir.

00:31:42 John Host And Jeff, may I say that I think that that is true. I was looking at that video, and C.W. was doing some good dancing. But most—most people at a white wedding are not good dancers.

[Someone laughs.]

You can get away with a lot of not—it's not the Soul Train Line, where you have to display your moves. A waddle will get you pretty far. Do you feel held back by your shyness?

00:32:15 Jeff Guest I think that may be part of it. But most of it is just a complete lack of skill. So it's not the shyness, it's the not wanting to look like a complete and utter idiot.

00:32:23 John Host Yeah, but Jeff, you know that no one becomes a doctor of bird-counting overnight! You have to study! You have to go to graduate school!

[Someone laughs quietly.]

I mean, you were taking those piano lessons! Clearly you want to bring music into your life. Do you think you'll ever go back to those piano lessons?

00:32:47 Jeff Guest I'd like to!

00:32:49 John Host Yeah.

00:32:50 C.W. Guest He was good at piano. I just wanna say that. He's bad on him—he's

hard on himself about a lot. *[Stifles laughter.]* But he was good! He was learning piano. And I think that's true for a lot of things Jeff does. I think he could learn dancing—

00:32:59	John	Host	Bird counters take themselves seriously! I know.
00:33:02	C.W.	Guest	<i>[Laughs.]</i> They do. He does, anyway.
00:33:04	John	Host	Jeff, C.W. outed your age. You recently—or are about to have a birthday, in June.
00:33:11	Jeff	Guest	Yes. Yes.
00:33:12	John	Host	When is your birthday?
00:33:14	Jeff	Guest	The 30th.
00:33:15	John	Host	Oh, I was so close! But wrong. Too bad. Third was the number I was looking for. June 3rd. Oh, well. I'm older than you! Ugh.
			<i>[Someone laughs quietly.]</i>
			By 27 days. Don't like it.
00:33:27	Jeff	Guest	Oh, wow.
			<i>[Multiple people laugh.]</i>
00:33:29	C.W.	Guest	Oh, that's your birthday! Okay!
00:33:30	John	Host	Yeah...
00:33:31	C.W.	Guest	Happy birthday, by the way.
00:33:32	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	Monte: Yes, happy belated birthday!
			Jeff: Happy birthday!
00:33:34	John	Host	Stop ingratiating yourself, C.W.!
			<i>[Monte and the litigants laugh.]</i>
			A real John Hodgman fan would have known that already! Look up <u>my</u> Wikipedia page before you come here to flatter me! Drop some deep cuts!
00:33:51	C.W.	Guest	<i>[Laughs.]</i> Well deserved. I'll take that.
00:33:52	John	Host	"Loved you on your three-episodes arc on <i>Red Oaks</i> on Amazon."
			<i>[C.W. laughs.]</i>
			That would be one you could have really gotten that—not that "I think you're sexier than Justin Long." An <u>obviously</u> untrue fact!
			<i>[Someone laughs.]</i>
			Alright. C.W.
00:34:06	C.W.	Guest	Yes.
00:34:07	John	Host	What would you have me rule if I were to rule in your favor?
00:34:11	C.W.	Guest	I would say, given today's discussion and given the case and the ongoing pandemic, I would settle for a ruling that when we can dance at home for the entirety of a song or two, three or four times a

year, to a shuffle—the walking dead shuffle—we do that. I would settle for that.

00:34:29 John Host *[Laughs.]* Can it be to the *Walking Dead* theme song?
[Monte and Jeff laugh.]

00:34:33 C.W. Guest That would be fun, actually. That—now we're getting into some choreography. I'm up for that.

00:34:38 John Host Jeff. May I presume that you would have me order that you never have to dance again, and that this never come up again?

00:34:45 Jeff Guest Exactly.
[Jeff and C.W. or Monte laugh.]

00:34:47 John Host Not even a once-a-year thirty-second or one-song waddle?

00:34:52 Jeff Guest Well, status quo would be a good ruling as well.

00:34:55 John Host And status quo specifically to your mind is, so that I know...?

00:34:58 Jeff Guest One or two waddle dances a year.

00:35:02 John Host I think I've heard everything I need to in order to make my decision. I am going to Electric Slide into my chambers.
[Someone laughs quietly.]
I'll be back in a moment with my verdict.

00:35:07 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[As Monte speaks below: Door opens, chairs scrape, footsteps.]*

00:35:08 Monte Host Please rise as Judge John Hodgman forms a conga line out of the courtroom.

00:35:12 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Door shuts.]*

00:35:14 Monte Host C.W., you seem to have said, as gay men in Nebraska, that this not dancing publicly is a social justice issue. Do you believe this to be true? Are you in an environment where you feel like you need to be advocating for gay men in the face of... Nebraska? Through dance, I guess?
[Monte and Jeff laugh.]

00:35:37 C.W. Guest I absolutely believe that. The answer is absolutely yes. I think that representation matters, and you never know who's looking. And sure that the time might come when we're out socializing, and if we can dance, someone might see us and go, "Wow." And also, if Paul Lynde was willing to get up there and be on the center square that was aired to the heartland for *Hollywood Squares* and make a difference, then the least we can do is dance now in 2020. That's how I feel about this case.

00:36:03 Monte Host Jeff, do you feel that in any way, your dancing in public is a social justice issue of importance for gay men in Nebraska?

00:36:12 Jeff Guest Uh, absolutely not.
[Monte and Jeff laugh.]

00:36:17 Monte Host Now, Jeff. Do you want to dance—inside, deep inside—but are afraid to dance, because you feel like you don't have rhythm? And because

you feel like people are—like, do you secretly want to dance, but just—or you really have absolutely no care to dance whatsoever?

00:36:36 Jeff Guest No care to dance whatsoever. It—I don't find its entertainment value. It just seems... like a bunch of people moving rhythmically in a room together.

00:36:46 Monte Host As a bird doctor, have you ever done the Chicken Dance?

[Someone laughs.]

00:36:51 Jeff Guest I have not! *[Laughs.]*

00:36:53 C.W. Guest That's a good question!

00:36:54 Monte Host *[Monte whistles part of "The Chicken Dance," a cheery tune.]*

Make you wanna move at all?

00:36:59 Jeff Guest No.

00:37:00 John Host We're gonna get sued, Monte! We can't—

00:37:01 Monte Host I'm sorry! I won't do any more—

[Jeff laughs.]

Let me just ask you—I think this is in the public domain. Does this make you wanna dance at all?

[Speaking] Four calling birds, three French hens, two turtledoves, and a partridge in a pear tree.

[John and C.W. laugh.]

00:37:15 Jeff Guest No. Nope.

[Jeff and C.W. dance.]

Makes me long for cooler weather!

00:37:21 Monte Host Well, will Judge John Hodgman whip? Or will he Nae Nae? We'll see what the judge has to say in his verdict, and we'll be right back on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

00:37:30 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:37:31 Host **Music:** A quick, energetic drumroll leads into exciting techno music.

Jarrett Hill: Hey, I'm Jarrett Hill, co-host of the brand-new Maximum Fun podcast, *FANTI!*

Tre'vell Anderson: And I'm Tre'vell Anderson. I'm the other, more fabulous co-host, and the reason you really should be tuning in!

Jarrett: I feel the nausea rising.

Tre'vell: To be *FANTI* is to be a big fan of something, but also have some challenging or “anti” feelings toward it.

Jarrett: Kind of like Kanye.

Tre'vell: We're all fans of Kanye. He's a musical genius, but, like, you know...

Jarrett: He thinks slavery's a choice.

Tre'vell: Or like *The Real Housewives of Atlanta*. Like, I love the drama, but do I wanna see black women fighting each other on screen? *[Singing]* Hell to the naaaaaw, to the naw-naw-naaaw!

Jarrett: We're tackling all of those complex and complicated conversations about the people, places, and things that we love.

Tre'vell: Even though they may not love us back.

Jarrett: [FANTI!](#) Maximum Fun! Podcast!

Tre'vell: Yeah!

[Music fades out.]

00:38:20 Sound Effect Transition

[Three gavel bangs.]

00:38:22 John Promo

Summertime Guest Bailiff Monte Belmonte, we are in chambers taking a break from the case. Tell me, what have you got going on in your life that our listeners might wanna know about?

00:38:32 Monte Promo

I'm still no the air, doing the morning show at 93.9 The River, WRSI, Monday through Friday. Although taking a brief break after many months of rigorous new quarantine programming, where I have tried to remind people what day of the week it is, given their new circumstances.

[John chuckles, Monte stifles laughter.]

And created weekday quaranthemes, as I'm calling them, where each day of the week, we have a new theme that we all get together and do Michigoss Monday, which is like—I call it with the Patron Saint Weird AI, where I play a lot of, you know, Weird AI and fun novelty music.

Tear It Up Tuesday, a punk and soul dance party. Wanderlust Wednesday, where I take—people make requests, and I take them to places they can't actually go, through the means of music.

00:39:15 John Promo

Cool.

00:39:17 Monte Promo

Thingalong Thursday, where we liter—I literally sing over a lot of actual hair metal and Barry Manilow on the radio. And then Rare Request Riday, 'cause there was not good alliteration with that one. And I—

00:39:29 John Promo

Rare Request Riday??

00:39:31 Monte Promo

Yeah. It was really a stretch by that point.

00:39:33 John Promo

Ruh-roh. Yeah.

00:39:33 Monte Promo

Where I am just sprinkling in an occasional request. And the listeners are always trying to request the most obscure thing, which makes it more difficult. But I keep trying to remind them, I'm not going all-request. I'm playing a request rarely.

00:39:47 John Promo *[Stifling laughter]* Got it.

00:39:49 Monte Promo It's a lot of push and pull.

00:39:50 John Promo Oh, they're taking it literally—

00:39:51 Monte Promo Yeah.

00:39:52 John Promo —and they're trying to come up with the rarest possible song.

00:39:54 Monte Promo Totally. King Crimson, like a 15-minute-long song. Absolutely not.

00:39:58 John Promo Yeah. No, no, no, no. No. No. And what time does your show start in the morning?

00:40:02 Monte Promo Six AM! Eastern Daylight Time.

00:40:04 John Promo Ugh. Hoo! And can people listen live, via their smart speakers or computers?

00:40:11 Monte Promo They absolutely can. At WRSI.com, or the Tune In Radio app. Or if you just want all of the kind of fun interviews and conversations I have with listeners, I do have a podcast called *A Week of Mornings*, where it's all of my show, but without all the music, because we don't have that license.

00:40:27 John Promo Oh! I did—you know what, Monte? I did not realize that. I'm going to subscribe right now.

00:40:33 Monte Promo Well, thank you!

00:40:35 John Promo Click clack click! Mouse clicks! Did it! Done! Easy. Monte, let me tell you about something.

00:40:41 Monte Promo Yes.

00:40:42 John Promo Before we get back to this case. I have spoken occasionally, over the past—*[exhales thoughtfully]*—I would say almost two years that my friend and yours, David Rees, and I have been working on a secret project. That we had been working on this secret project.

And now I am here to tell you. The secret project is done.

[Monte gasps.]

It has been done for some time.

[Monte gasps again.]

It has been "in the can," as they say. And now the can is about to be opened! I am announcing, right now for the first time, ever, on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast:

David Rees, your friend and mine from *Going Deep with David Rees* and *How to Sharpen Pencils*, and I have collaborated on a ten-episode animated TV show for FXX. A network! A network, Monte!

00:41:34 Monte Promo Wow!

00:41:36 John Promo On cable television! Now, what is the name of the show? Well, Monte, this is family-friendly podcast. *[Laughs.]* And FX as a network tends to be a little provocative.

[Monte laughs.]

So! I can't tell you the name of the show! I can only tell you that it's a detective show, and you can become detectives as well. The show is named... after a lyric in a They Might Be Giants song called "Can't Keep Johnny Down." The name of the show is also a reference to the setting of the show, which is the fictional town of Richardsville, North Carolina, which has a nickname that I cannot say. Because that is the title of the show; it's too racy.

And the theme of the show is that I, John Hodgman, play a character named John Hunchman, who used to be a regionally famous prodigal boy detective in this town. Much like a series of young adult novels you might have read once.

00:42:43 Monte Promo

Yes!

00:42:44 John Promo

But who has now grown up, and—*[stifles laughter]*—and is now a sad, 40-something-year-old man who has never left town, and is still solving mysteries for teenagers.

[Monte laughs.]

And David Rees is my former high school bully and arch enemy, who has also failed to thrive, and is now my partner in our detective agency. He is my driver, and my unlikely friend. We are detectives. If you're a detective, you can probably figure out what the title of the show is! But if you don't feel like doing that, do this instead:

Tune in to FXX on July 9th. That's Thursday, July 9th. Our show—name redacted—is part of FXX's show *Cake*. It's an anthology show, their weekly showcase of animated and live-action short-form comedy programs. *Cake* comes on at ten PM Eastern and Pacific on Thursday, July 9th. Our first episode will be shown during that block. It will come—the—each of the ten episodes will come out each Thursday thereafter. You can watch live on FXX and streaming the next day on FX on Hulu.

John Hodgman and David Rees—*[stifles laughter]*—secret project! July 9th on *Cake*, on FXX. It's so much fun, and we really hope you like it. Secret project, name redacted, Thursday, July 9th, on *Cake*.

Alright. Let's get back to the courtroom for my verdict.

00:44:20 Sound Effect Transition

[Three gavel bangs.]

00:44:22 Sound Effect Sound Effect

[As Monte speaks below: Door opens, chairs scrape on the floor, footsteps, door closes.]

00:44:23 Monte Host

Please rise as Judge John Hodgman Electric Slides back into the courtroom, doing the New Electric Slide this time, and presents his verdict.

00:44:31 John Host

I am very torn in this. Because I believe that life is made better and more tolerable through music. And the enjoyment of music. And even, I daresay, dancing. As a person who is shy about his own body, it is very difficult for me to make the transition into dancing. Much as it is difficult for me to make the transition into, uh, getting into a bathing suit, and letting the world see the shame of my upper half. It is hard! But as discussed in my book *Vacationland*, by John Hodgman, available wherever books are found—

[Monte and John laugh quietly.]

—which is to say on stoop sales and in little free libraries, because I'm not sure anyone's selling that book anymore, but anyway. You know, making transitions from one state to another, from one state of comfort to a state of discomfort, whether that is physical or emotional, is very hard. But once you get through it, it is enduring and survivable. And often quite euphoric, ultimately!

So there is definitely a part of me that wants to order Jeff to just get over himself and dance. But then I was appreciating something else. And it—and thank you, Monte, for asking those questions. I confess that I was listening from my chambers as you were talking to Jeff and C.W. At some point you asked Jeff about dancing, and he said, "I do not see—"

I'm paraphrasing, Jeff, forgive me. "I do not see the point of it. To me, it is just people moving rhythmically in a room."

[John stifles laughter. Jeff or Monte laughs.]

And I was like, "Ooh! Maybe Jeff is an android."

[Multiple people laugh.]

00:46:28 John Host

Maybe Jeff's—I was remembering that Jeff could not even clap in rhythm properly! Maybe Jeff perceives reality in a very different way than I do. 'Cause even if I don't love to move from a non-dancing state to a dancing state, when I see dancing, I know what it is! *[Laughs.]* I know it's an expression of physical joy and beauty and art! It is enjoyable to experience, even if you are not doing it! It is not just a number of question mark non-people swaying rhythmically in a room! It's a thing that happens, that people do! Jeff! It's dancing!

You al—you perceive reality in way, perhaps, that's different. And in the same way, you know, C.W. perceives reality in a way that is different as well. First of all, he finds me attractive. Don't—

[C.W. laughs.]

I don't know—we don't know what we see! *[Stifles laughter.]* It's like that old college dorm room thing at the University of Oklahoma, right? Where he was like, "Is the color blue that I'm seeing the same color blue you're seeing? Is John Hodgman attractive, or no?" The answer should be clear! I don't know what C.W. sees. He perceives a different reality where dance needs to be part of life.

C.W., you made an argument that gay men rioted at Stonewall. Rioted, by the way. Rioted.

00:47:57 C.W. Guest

Yeah.

00:47:59 John Host

Because change happens due to direct action, and sometimes breaking the rules.

00:48:05 C.W. Guest

Correct. Amen.

00:48:07 John Host

They didn't write a strongly worded letter. Just saying. They rioted for

the right to express themselves. And we have all benefited from that. They rioted for the right for gay men to express themselves fully, and you are arguing that Jeff is dishonoring that fight by neglecting this invitation to express himself fully.

But C.W.! What if this is Jeff, fully? You know that he is shy. That's true. And shyness is something I don't think anyone ever regrets conquering. But! I have seen Jeff clap!

[Multiple people laugh.]

And unless—*[stifles laughter]*—unless he was, you know, sabotaging his clapping on purpose, I could see a—I see a situation where Dr. Bird Numbers... *[emphatically]* just doesn't have the knack.

The combination of middle school trauma, plus basic shyness around this area, plus basic lack of skill, plus not understanding what people dancing are doing—

[Monte laughs, John stifles laughter.]

—plus the time-honored precept of *Judge John Hodgman* that people like what they like. And they don't like what they don't like, and you have to respect that. All of that entwines to me to say that... Jeff is someone who does not like to dance. It makes him anxious and uncomfortable. He loves you so much that he has done it on several occasions, though you refuse to admit it, C.W.

[Someone laughs.]

To the best of his ability, which is low. And he does not want to do it any more.

00:50:15 John Host

I'm going to find in Jeff's favor. He is making the effort to show you that he loves you by doing something that he feels uncomfortable doing, and is bad at, three to four times a year. Whatever the status quo is.

But Jeff... No one ever regrets overcoming shyness. And I believe that there is a crime that has been committed that must be put right. You did not allow people to dance at your wedding. That is not an expression of self. That is a denial of pleasure of others.

If I am—and this court is—to respect your non-dance-itude, you must respect the dance-itude of the people you love, including C.W.! And look! Dr. Bird Numbers, you're the coolest guy in Lincoln!

[Someone laughs.]

You're coding—you're creating algorithms for the counting of birds! You love RevCo and Mazzy Star!

[Someone laughs.]

You've got—when you go to a wedding, you just sit there and you watch! Or you film! You take part in it your own way! So when it is next safe for us to gather in groups, and breathe on each other

again, in at least middle school slow dance distance, I order you—upon the appropriate anniversary—to co-host a party. Get a playlist. And let your friends dance around you! And Jeff, I mean literally, you have to sit in the middle of the dance floor on a chair.

[Multiple people laugh.]

00:52:19 Jeff Guest *[Laughing]* I figured.
00:52:20 C.W. Guest I love that!
00:52:23 John Host You can have a cocktail table. *[Laughs.]* And you can just sit there and watch. Maybe they will lift you up! Like at some weddings! Yeah, you know what? You gotta "Hava Nagila" it.

[Multiple people laugh.]

That'll show you! After that, though, Jeff?
00:52:43 Jeff Guest Yes?
00:52:45 John Host I want C.W. to never mention this again.

[Jeff laughs.]

That is merely penance for preventing people from dancing at your wedding. Do you understand?
00:52:53 Jeff Guest I do.
00:52:54 John Host Alright. And I think you'll have a good time being lifted up in a chair by people and dancing. Who are dancing.
00:53:02 Jeff Guest Sounds terrifying.
00:53:04 C.W. Guest Thank you, Judge.
00:53:05 John Host This is the sound of a gavel.
00:53:06 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Tap-dancing.]*
00:53:08 John Host Judge John Hodgman rules; that is all.
00:53:10 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[As Monte speaks below: Door opens, chairs scrape, footsteps.]*
00:53:11 Monte Host Please rise as Judge John Hodgman flosses himself out of the courtroom!
00:53:15 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Door shuts.]*
00:53:16 Monte Host C.W., you didn't win this case this time. However, a forthcoming dance party seems like it will be a fun affair. And Jeff, the status remains quo, but my question is—and we didn't get into this too much—but are you averse to slow-dancing, too? 'Cause that's sort of just, like, hugging C.W. while rotating.

[C.W. laughs.]

00:53:40 Jeff Guest Um—no, it just depends on how complicated the movements are. There's a lot to integrate when you're listening to the music, trying to follow the beat, and trying to remember steps and things.
00:53:52 Monte Host Would you be happy with a more regular slow dance, C.W.? As opposed to some sort of fancy, upbeat Spice Girls dancing?
00:54:01 C.W. Guest I could live with a slow dance, but I will say I'm happy with today's

ruling, only because our 20th wedding anniversary is in four years, and I'm all about the Judge's "Hava Nagila" dance with my husband in the middle. I'm happy with that.

00:54:13	Monte	Host	I hope you'll include Mazzy Star and RevCo on the playlist. <i>[Jeff chuckles.]</i>
00:54:17	C.W.	Guest	Definitely.
00:54:19	Monte	Host	Well, Jeff and C.W., thank you both for joining us on the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast!
00:54:23	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:54:26	Monte	Host	Another case in the books!
00:54:28	John	Host	Hey, Monte, before we go to Swift Justice, I wanna thank Jill Graves for naming this week's episode, "Dance Dance Resolution." It doesn't often happen that there are, like, two case names that I love equally and I can't decide. And this week there were three. So I just wanted to shout out as well to JJ Gertler for "Verdict at the Disco." That would have been great.
00:54:48	Monte	Host	Nice.
00:54:49	John	Host	And Tom Lawson suggested "Strictly Courtroom." All really good. So we gotta get some more dance-related episodes so we can use those titles in the future. And thanks to everyone who submits titles week after week. You're all amazing. If you would like to name a future episode, follow <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> on Facebook ! We regularly put out a call for title submissions there.
00:55:11	Monte	Host	You can follow us on social media. John's on Instagram at @johnhodgman , and on Twitter at @hodgman . I'm on Twitter at @MonteBelmonte . Hashtag your <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> Tweets #JJHo . And check out the Maximum Fun subreddit to discuss this episode, MaximumFun.Reddit.com . And we're on Instagram at @judgejohnhodgman . Make sure to follow us there for evidence and other fun stuff. Our producer is the fabulous Jennifer Marmor.
00:55:40	John	Host	Yaaay!
00:55:41	Monte	Host	Yaaay!
			Now, let's get to Swift Justice, where we answer your small disputes with quick judgment. Dre asks: "Is my refusal to use the terms 'grande' or 'venti' when ordering a drink at Starbucks contrarian? Or is it a righteous rebuke of gimmicky marketing?"
00:56:03	John	Host	One of the things that I stress over and over again during this time of uncertainty is that we should all lessen the burden that we are putting on each other. Lessen the load! Whether that be viral or mental or emotional. So, yeah. Starbucks has been adding to my burden since it was invented and came to New York City.

That said... while I agree with you in spirit, Dre, by being frustrated by this, refusing to use the terms "grande" or "venti" is not contrarian. Because there is nothing about going to Starbucks that could ever be contrarian.

[Both laugh.]

You are wholly anti-contrarian. What would that be called?

00:56:51 Monte Host

Trarian?

00:56:53 John Host

Yeah. That's right, Dre! You're trarian! Remember: lessen the burden! Every time you make them do the mental calculation, because you refuse to say "grande" or "venti," and they've got to do that dumb Starbucks math to figure out which is the big one, that's adding burden to their lives! Just say what the dumb word is, or go to a different coffee shop. Probably a better idea.

[Sighs.]

00:57:19 Monte Host

There are plenty of coffee shops where you don't need to learn fake Italian.

00:57:22 John Host

That's right. Alright, Monte Belmonte, thank you so much for joining us again. I hope to talk to you later in the summer.

00:57:31 Monte Host

I hope so, too!

00:57:32 John Host

And stay in touch. As always, you are there at WRSI The River, morning after weekday morning, with the great tunes and local programming from the wonderful Pioneer Valley that I miss so much. WRSI.com. We know where you are with social media, but where are you right now, Monte?!

00:57:50 Monte Host

I'm on the Cape of Cod!

00:57:51 John Host

Ah.

00:57:52 Monte Host

We used to get a yurt in a state park in Brewster, Massachusetts, but all of those are closed for camping, so we're borrowing a friend's house for a few days and still enjoying the largely desolate beaches in this early part of the beautiful weather.

00:58:06 John Host

Thank you for taking time out of your break from your truly rigorous morning DJ schedule, that I have never envied.

[Monte laughs, John stifles laughter.]

And that—uh, to join us again as always. So that's about it for this week's episode! Submit your cases at MaximumFun.org/jiho. Or email hodgman@maximumfun.org. No case is too small! No case is too big! Some cases are too medium.

I'll tell you what. I'll decide. Until then, we will not see you next time on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast, 'cause this is a podcast! I can't see you! Goodbye.

00:58:43 Sound Effect Transition

[Three gavel bangs.]

00:58:45 Music Transition

A cheerful guitar chord.

00:58:46 Speaker 1 Guest

MaximumFun.org.

00:58:48 Speaker 2 Guest

Comedy and culture.

00:58:49 Speaker 3 Guest Artist owned—
00:58:50 Speaker 4 Guest —audience supported.