

00:00:00	Jesse Thorn	Promo	<p>Hey, folks, it's Jesse, the founder of MaxFun. Since we postponed our annual MaxFunDrive in mid-March, we have gotten a lot of questions about if and when we'd be rescheduling it. And honestly, we've been asking ourselves the same thing.</p> <p>Well, now we have an answer for you. The 2020 MaxFunDrive will start on July 13th. That's coming up soon. We decided to have the Drive now, because it's always brought a lot of joy and excitement to our community, and certainly to us. And to be totally honest, it's also the main source of income for some of our hosts.</p> <p>Like pretty much everything right now, this year's Drive is gonna be a little different. We'll still be bringing you very special episodes, fun community activities, premium thank-you gifts. But we also know it's a weird time, and for some folks a really difficult one. Some people are in a position to become new or upgrading members; others can't right now. And that is okay. We'll have ways for you to support MaxFun at every level, including some ways that won't cost you anything.</p> <p>We're also gonna run the drive for four weeks instead of two. We didn't think it was a good time to be rushing anybody, and having a longer Drive lets us be a little more low-key [<i>chuckles</i>] in our Drive pitch. It also gives us more time to do fun stuff! Like the weekly live streams we'll be putting on for charity throughout the Drive.</p>
00:01:18	Jesse	Promo	<p>Most importantly, we want the 2020 MaxFunDrive to highlight all the ways we support each other and our communities. We also wanna show how grateful <u>we</u> are to <u>you</u> for making all the work that we do possible.</p> <p>Stay safe. We'll see you July 13th for the MaxFunDrive.</p>
00:01:34	Sound Effect	Transition	[<i>Three gavel bangs.</i>]
00:01:37	David Rees	Host	Welcome to the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast. I'm Guest Bailiff David Rees, filling in for Jesse Thorn. We are in chambers this week to clear the docket. John, hello!
00:01:48	John Hodgman	Host	Hello!
00:01:49	David	Host	It's me, David.
00:01:50	John	Host	I know, you're—you're my friend! My pal. My bud.
00:01:54	David	Host	Doubly blessed.
00:01:55	John	Host	And we've got a lot of justice to dispense. But first of all, I wanna say thank you, David Rees, for dropping by to help me wade through all this injustice today. Because I know you're busy over there on your own podcast, <i>Election Profit Makers</i> .
00:02:13	David	Host	Extremely busy. Making profits off this election.
00:02:16	John	Host	Starlee Kine and Jon Kimball talking—it is—I'll say this. I listen to only a couple of podcasts that touch on politics of the day. Because it's hard. There's a lot. There's a lot going on.
			[<i>Both laugh.</i>]
00:02:31	David	Host	Yep.

00:02:32 John Host And sometimes you just wanna listen to two guys talk about what food they hate, or whatever.

00:02:35 David Host *[Laughing]* Mm-hm.

00:02:36 John Host But if you all have not checked out *Election Profit Makers*, check it out. Because Starlee and Jon and David are having conversations about events of the day, structured in a loose way around this website PredictIt.org, where you can essentially buy stock in various political events happening or not happening.

But it is so funny. *[Laughs quietly.]* And so cathartic, and so great, to hear you guys talk about whatever you're talking about. And can I also say... this skyline rating that's been going on is amazing.

[Both laugh.]

00:03:14 David Host I'll explain.

00:03:15 John Host Please.

00:03:16 David Host So one of the co-hosts on *Election Profit Makers* is my friend from seventh grade. ...He's not in seventh grade, but we met in seventh grade.

[John laughs.]

He's—he's old like me now.

00:03:24 John Host Right.

00:03:25 David Host Jon Kimball. And Jon Kimball is a huge fan of all kinds of data, especially obviously being from Chapel Hill. He's very interested in college basketball, and infrastructure, modern urban infrastructure, and especially skylines. And he's consistently re-ranking the world's great skylines.

[John laughs.]

You know, sorted according to... population of metropolitan statistical area, sorted according to raw aesthetics, and so he's always bringing in these crazy theories about skylines. And—I don't know if you've listened to this week's episode.

00:03:58 John Host I don't know that I have!

00:03:59 David Host A teacher—you don't have to put this in your podcast. But it is an exclusive, so you might want to.

00:04:04 John Host Alright.

00:04:05 David Host A teacher in Bali who listens to our podcast asked their class of third-graders to rank the world's skylines.

00:04:13 John Host Wow.

00:04:14 David Host And sent us a pie chart of the results. And John Hodgman, guess what the number two skyline was? According to these third-graders in Indonesia.

00:04:21 John Host I—uh... alright, number two skyline. According to third-graders—

00:04:25 David Host Number two. It's a place you and I have been together.

00:04:28 John Host Oh! Okay! Ummm... Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

00:04:36 David Host Hartford, Connecticut.

00:04:38 John Host No!

00:04:39 David Host Yes!

00:04:40 John Host How dare—*[stifles laughter]*—how dare they!

00:04:43 David Host It was number two! And Jon Kimball—when we were talking about these results on the podcast, Jon Kimball was like, "You know what? Hartford is a great skyline. It's thick."

[John laughs.]

And then I got disgusted and changed the conversation.

00:04:54 John Host You know what? I've driven up I-91 many, many times in my life. There is a certain Emerald City-type majesty of all of those fairly tall buildings arising up out of the otherwise bland poppy fields of Connecticut surrounding it.

00:05:13 David Host Mm-hm.

00:05:14 John Host But let me tell you something. I've been in that skyline, we both have.

00:05:16 David Host Right.

00:05:17 John Host *[Whistles.]* After five PM.

00:05:19 David Host Yeah.

00:05:20 John Host You know what makes that skyline so pristine?

00:05:22 Crosstalk Crosstalk **David:** There's no humans.

John: Complete absence of human beings.

[Both laugh quietly.]

00:05:24 David Host Right. Exactly. That's like *The World Without Us* skyline.

00:05:28 John Host Yeah. You feel like—

00:05:29 David Host Remember that book, *The World Without Us*?

00:05:31 John Host Oh. No, I haven't read that one. Is that a book that you wrote?

00:05:34 David Host It was a bestseller like 12 years ago, and people are talking about it now in reference to COVID.

00:05:38 John Host Oh.

00:05:39 David Host It was basically a scientist was like, "Okay. Pretend all humans just disappeared off the face of the Earth, instantly."

00:05:45 John Host First of all, what a relief.

00:05:47 David Host Right. "What would happen?" And then it's like, "Well, after four hours, the New York City subway pumps are no longer pumping water, so all the streets start to collapse."

00:05:56 John Host Oh!

00:05:57 David Host After a year and a half, deer are living in the top floor of the CEO suites of skysc—it just goes through, like, the world without us!

[John laughs quietly.]

It's the perfect title! Like, "Here's what would happen!"

00:06:04 John Host Yeah.

00:06:05 David Host It's really wild. Anyway. Yeah.

00:06:06 John Host Alright! I'd like to read that. Recommended reading!

00:06:10 David Host Recommended reading!

00:06:11 John Host The David Rees book club, *The World Without Us*. But do check out *Election Profit Makers*.

And then there's another reason that I'm so excited that you're here, David, because you and I—I've discussed this with the listeners of *Judge John Hodgman* many a time. You and I have been working on a secret project for going on... 300 years now. An—*[laughs quietly]*.

00:06:30 David Host Mm-hm!

00:06:31 John Host Feels like it. An animated project. Animation takes a long time. And we just learned very recently that our short form animated show for the cable network FXX is a go! It's happening; it's being released.

00:06:48 David Host They're gonna put it on TV and the Internet!

00:06:51 John Host That's right, that's how it happens! July the 9th, 2020.

00:06:56 David Host 7/9/20! Burn it in your brains!

00:06:59 John Host The name of the show is not *Cake*, but that's what you wanna look for. 'Cause *Cake* is the animated—short form animated, live action comedy anthology show that our show is a part of. And then each episode of *Cake* will be streaming on Hulu the next day.

Now. What is the name of our show? I cannot tell you. *[Laughs.]* It did not occur to me that when we named this show, uh, I would never be able to mention the name of the show on *Judge John Hodgman* because we do not like to swear on the show. And while the name of the show incorporates one of the—I would say lower tier swears, swear words. Wouldn't you say, David?

00:07:37 David Host Well, it's your show.

00:07:39 John Host Right. It's on the bubble.

00:07:41 David Host Yeah, that's true. It's on the bubble. The liminal space between polite and impolite language.

00:07:45 John Host Yeah, that's right. By—also, by the way, a little stealth market for [Bubble](#), the Maximum Fun sitcom.

00:07:52 David Host Oh, there you go.

00:07:53 John Host Yeah. No, so here's the—here's the thing. Our show is a detective show. It's about detectives. So you can do a little detective work, if you want. Here are your clues:

The title is lifted from a lyric in a They Might Be Giants song called "Can't Keep Johnny Down." By the way, surprised me that TMBG would use this phrase in one of their songs. But—

00:08:20 David Host Are they not dirty?

00:08:23 John Host They tend to be—they tend to be pretty... clean.

00:08:25 David Host Alright.

00:08:27 John Host And when you're listening to all your They Might Be Giants songs, this one is called "Can't Keep Johnny Down." That's—that—this—it has the exact word that is the title of our show in it somewhere.

Also, take a listen to "Your Racist Friend" by They Might Be Giants. Good to listen to right now.

Two—clue two, David. Are you ready?

00:08:47 David Host Hit me with the second clue, Investigator.

00:08:49 John Host The one-word—or I should say compound word—but the one-word title of the show is the nickname of the fictional town in North Carolina in which the show is set, and that fictional town in North Carolina is? David Rees?

00:09:05 David Host Richardsville, North Carolina!

00:09:07 John Host Richardsville, North Carolina. By now, the seventh-graders listening in the car have probably already guessed—*[stifles laughter]*—what it is. While the parents are scratching their heads, wondering.

And the third clue is that the title of the show incorporates a slang for a private detective. Because in the show, I play John Hunchman, a private detective who in Richardsville, North Carolina, was once the most regionally famous boy detective in town. Solving all kinds of crimes for middle-schoolers. Solving all kinds of mysteries—

00:09:43 David Host For his—for his classmates! Solving mysteries for classmates.

00:09:46 John Host Solving all kinds of mysteries for my classmates. Like, maybe like a young adult series of novels you might have read.

00:09:51 David Host Mm-hm.

00:09:52 John Host That shall go also unnamed. For legal reasons.

And now I am in my forties, and still living in this town. But I have failed to thrive, and I am solving crimes for teenagers still, and it's embarrassing. And David Rees plays David Purefoy, my character's former high school bully and arch enemy, who is now my partner, driver, unlikely ally, and I daresay... friend.

00:10:23 David Host I would daresay only friend.

00:10:24 John Host *[Laughs.]* He is—you are my only friend in the show, except for—except for my dad.

00:10:29 Crosstalk Crosstalk **David:** Your dad is also a pretty good friend.

John: My dad is my friend.

00:10:32 John Host Voiced by the great Stephen Tobolowsky.

00:10:34 David Host Yeah. He was incredible.

00:10:36 John Host He was. So this show was so much fun to make with you, David.

00:10:40 David Host It really was a lot of fun. It was fun to write the scripts, it was fun to review the animation and the designs of the characters and the backgrounds, and it was fun—it was fun for me, growing up in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, to try to sneak in little references, little local references—

00:10:58 John Host Yeah.

00:10:59 David Host —into the place names and business names and character names of our show. It was—

00:11:03 John Host Well, right. My—Stephen Tobolowsky's character, the character of my dad, is based on your friend Jon Kimball's dad.

00:11:10 David Host Based on Jon Kimball of *Election Profit Makers*, AKA the Skyline Svengali—was based on his dad.

00:11:17 John Host Yes. *[Laughing]* Skyline Svengali...

00:11:18 David Host Who—yeah.

00:11:20 John Host And we also have other incredible voices on it. One of our favorite guest bailiffs, [Jean Grae](#), is in the first episode, this one that's coming out July 9th.

00:11:28 David Host Mm-hm.

00:11:29 John Host On *Cake*, on FXX.

00:11:31 David Host Jean is in the first episode, along with Zach Galifianakis.

00:11:34 John Host Who's he?

00:11:35 David Host Who plays a—plays an alt-right guy with diarrhea.

[John laughs.]

It's a pretty good episode!

00:11:40 John Host Plus Kristen Schaal, Paul F. Thompkins, Janie Haddad Thompkins, Obehi Janice. So many great, great voices actors and pals and friends—

00:11:48 David Host Jon Glaser, Jon Benjamin.

00:11:50 John Host Jon Glaser, Jon Benjamin! Archer himself! So in any case, it was really, really fun to record all these friends, to work with my friend David Rees, to make this thing over a period of years. There was—you know what, David? There was only one part that was not fun.

00:12:08 David Host Huh, this is a little mystery for me to solve! Give me a clue. We'll see if I can solve it.

00:12:13 John Host Um...

00:12:15 David Host The one part that was not fun to make... about—

00:12:18 John Host It has to do with the date July 9th.

[Beat.]

00:12:22 David Host *[Under his breath]* 7/9/20...

00:12:25 John Host It's not a numerology issue.

00:12:27 David Host *[Regular volume]* Oh, it's not? Okay.

00:12:29 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** I'll tell you.

David: Uh, I give up. Yeah, tell me.

John: I'll tell you.

00:12:31 John Host The one un-fun part of this was working with you over the past couple of years and contemplating the fact—*[stifles laughter]*—that when this thing comes out, there's so much television, and there's so

much now going on in the world, more than we could even possibly imagine, that no matter how long a lead time we had to let people know about this... no one would watch. *[Stifles laughter.]*

Even the *Judge John Hodgman* listeners, and the *Election Profit Makers* listeners, would not—would not remember to watch. Then I would contemplate that, and I would be like, "This is all for nothing."

00:13:14 David Host

You don't think all this stuff will be wrapped up by July 9th?

00:13:18 John Host

No, I do not think it will be. So that is why I beg your indulgence, dear listeners of *Judge John Hodgman*. And invited my friend David Rees—who also, by the way, is a person of profound moral compass and will add a lot to this docket as we separate justice from injustice, coming up.

[David laughs, John stifles laughter.]

That is why we have taken all of this time to say to you: Please check out the show that has too salty a name to name on *Judge John Hodgman* by tuning in to FXX if you're a subscriber at 10 PM on July 9th! It's part of *Cake!* Or check it out on Hulu the next day. Un—salty titled David Rees and John Hodgman project.

00:14:03 David Host

I would say, you could also come over to my podcast, *Election Profit Makers*. I'll tell you the title in two seconds.

00:14:09 John Host

That's right. You'll just say it over and over and over again.

00:14:10 David Host

Like, I don't think kids listen to our podcast.

00:14:12 John Host

Yeah. Yeah.

00:14:13 David Host

It's too boring.

00:14:14 John Host

That's the surest way to solve the mystery that we have laid for you.

00:14:16 Crosstalk Crosstalk

David: Right.

John: Follow the breadcrumbs to *Election Profit Makers*.

David: It will be a huge spoiler in, uh—in our podcast.

00:14:21 David Host

The third act of each episode is just me repeating the name over and over again.

00:14:24 John Host

I know you got—I know everyone's got a lot on their plates. And the number one message of the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast these days is, "Don't add burdens to other people if you can help it."

But we did not get a lot of time—we did not get a lot of advanced notice as to when this was gonna come out. And now we know. So now you know. And let's move on! Let's clear the docket!

00:14:43 David Host

Let's do this justice. Are you ready, John?

00:14:45 John Host

Yes. Please.

00:14:47 David Host

Have something from Joe here. He says:

"My husband of more than 30 years has placed our marriage in jeopardy. He picks through the large bag of chocolates from Costco to get the ones he wants at that moment. Like most of us, he enjoys all the flavors inside, but he has changeable favorites."

[John laughs quietly.]

"This has included, for example, his eating all the Sea Salt Soiree in one sitting."

00:15:09 John Host

Ugh.

00:15:10 David Host

"Leaving none of that flavor for anybody else! Please order him to blindly choose, *[stifles laughter]* and happily accept any and all flavor grabs at random."

[John laughs.]

"Leaving one's spouse Sea Salt Soiree—less repeatedly is akin to alienation of affection!"

00:15:27 John Host

[Sighs.] David Rees, you ever go to Costco? I don't—I don't get over there. But I can only guess that—*[laughs]*—when you're talking about a large bag of chocolates from Costco, we're talking about like a contractor's garbage bag sized bag.

00:15:40 David Host

Yeah, you have to leave it out front of the house.

00:15:42 John Host

[Laughing] Yeah, right. You have to—

00:15:44 David Host

Like a storage pod. You can't bring it into the house.

00:15:45 John Host

Yeah, you have to buy a—

[Both laugh.]

00:15:46 David Host

You walk into the bag and pick out the chocolates you want, and then you walk back into your house and eat 'em.

00:15:52 John Host

[Laughs.] That's right. That's right, you have a pod delivered to your house.

00:15:55 David Host

Choc-o-pod, Costco Choc-o-pod.

00:15:56 John Host

Yeah, exactly. And Joe's husband goes in there and goes, "A Sea Salt Soiree for me, Sea Salt Soiree for me, not for thee!" What do you think, David Rees, about this idea of picking through the bag to get your favorite flavor and leaving none for your husband?

00:16:12 David Host

I think this is a good argument for holding a second bag.

00:16:17 John Host

[Shocked exhale.] What?! A—a double pod?!

00:16:19 David Host

Well, if you're already going to Costco—right? I've been to Costco once or twice in my life. Once I went on a friend's membership. And I just remember their—*[sighs/laughs]*.

[John laughs quietly.]

I bought the biggest box of Sharpies. I was so excited.

[John laughs harder.]

I felt like a millionaire. I bought the—it was like a 50—'cause you know how you leave pens all over the place, and you can never find a pen, and you're scrambling around like, "Wasn't there just a pen here? Where'd I put my Sharpie?!"

00:16:46 John Host Right.

00:16:47 David Host Soon as we got to Costco I was thinking, "This is—I'm gonna buy so many Sharpies."

[John sighs.]

"I will never have to look for a Sharpie." And I walked out with a huge box of Sharpies that... I feel—this was like, maybe 15 years ago? I might still be using some of these Sharpies. It's incredible.

00:17:05 John Host Wow.

00:17:07 David Host They're like, self-generating or self-propagating or something.

00:17:10 John Host You're still sitting on the Costco Hoard of Sharps?

00:17:13 David Host Something like that, yeah. And my brother and his family are big, big Costco—they're power users.

00:17:19 John Host Right.

00:17:20 David Host They go to Costco for everything.

00:17:21 John Host Right. How many Sharpies did you think you got in that pack, would you guess? Ballpark.

00:17:26 David Host Honestly, probably... 20. Twenty-five.

00:17:29 John Host *[Exhales appreciatively.]* I love Sharpies so much, too.

00:17:32 David Host Well, I was labeling a lot of envelopes at the time.

00:17:35 John Host Yeah. That happens.

00:17:36 David Host So—and that's perfect. Sharpie is the best for labeling—write down a address on a Manila envelope on a Sharpie? It's just like—

[Both shudder euphorically.]

Office Depot Supermodel Mode. Yeah. It's incredible.

00:17:47 John Host The pleasures of the textile world! Do you know what I mean? All that—

00:17:51 David Host The tactile world of—

00:17:52 John Host Sorry, yeah, the tactile world. Excuse me, you're right.

00:17:53 David Host Yeah. Yeah.

00:17:55 John Host All that stuff, all those feels and smells that we remember from seventh grade, that aren't a part of our lives anymore.

00:18:00 David Host Mm-hm! Mm-hm!

00:18:02 John Host Hm, the smell of a Sharpie. What's your favorite color of Sharpie?

00:18:05 David Host Black!

00:18:06 John Host Right? Okay.

00:18:08 David Host But I recently got into the sparkle colors. The gold and the, um... silver, and—well, what happened was—we don't really have to get into this, but I got really into—

00:18:20 John Host No, I think we do.

00:18:21 David Host I got really into circuit bending a couple years ago, and colored Sharpies are a great way to mark up a circuitboard for where the

bend points are. So it's like, you have like, color-coded—like, "Okay, the leg of this resistor pairs well with like, this other resistor over here. I'm gonna label both of those with this red Sharpie, so that when it comes time to solder the wires, I'll remember what to connect with what." 'Cause otherwise you just lose track, and it's overwhelming. So I love—

00:18:47 John Host Circuit bending—

00:18:48 David Host Yeah.

00:18:49 John Host You're taking old audio tech and guitar pedals to make weird, crazy sounds.

00:18:53 David Host Yeah, like old Casio keyboards from the eighties. You open 'em up and you can rewire them to produce, uh, like—*[laughs]*—

00:19:00 John Host Right.

00:19:02 David Host —really crazy noises. Yeah.

00:19:03 John Host So those sparkle Sharpies. Let's say they come in a pack of 100.

00:19:07 David Host Woo!

00:19:08 John Host And let's say you and I go in on them together, 'cause we're on one of our adventures.

00:19:13 David Host Uh-huh.

00:19:14 John Host We roll—you know, we're off to Hartford to check out the greatest skyline in the world. Spot a Costco—

00:19:18 David Host One of our classic office supply capers.

00:19:20 John Host Right. Spot a Costco, and you're like, "You know, for my circuit bending, I need a certain style—I need a certain couple of sparkle Sharpies, but they only come in a pack of 100. Let's go over to that Costco and get 'em."

And I'm like, "Okay, I'll split the cost with you." And then as soon as we get to the car, I'm like, "Hang on, David." And I go in and pick out all the sparkle Sharpies that you want, and I'm like, "These are mine. This is my half." How would you feel?

00:19:44 David Host Annoyed! I mean, I underst—

00:19:45 John Host Right!

00:19:46 David Host I—yeah.

00:19:47 John Host Yeah! Cheated!

00:19:48 David Host Yeah. Cheated.

00:19:49 John Host That wasn't the deal!

00:19:50 David Host I would say, "Hold on one second, I'll be right back." And I would just run into Costco and get my own bag of Sharpies. And say, "Since I can't trust you..."

00:19:59 John Host *[Stifling laughter]* Yeah?

00:20:00 David Host "...to handle the equitable distribution of these goods that we've both invested in..."

00:20:06 John Host Right.

00:20:07 David Host "You leave me no choice but to come up with my own private

supply."

00:20:10 John Host Private source!

00:20:11 David Host "From which I will get high."

00:20:12 John Host Private source!

00:20:14 David Host Yeah.

00:20:15 John Host I think that—

00:20:16 David Host Also, Sea Salt Soiree? I would be like, "You can eat all those you want!" That doesn't sound good to me. That sounds like eating...

00:20:21 John Host What does it ta—what is—

00:20:22 David Host Sea Salt... Soiree.

00:20:23 John Host Soiree.

00:20:25 David Host It must be that type of chocolate that has big chunks of salt in it.

00:20:28 John Host See, that's the only—

00:20:29 David Host But what does "soiree" mean? Party? Or nap?

00:20:31 John Host Yeah, "soiree," an evening party.

00:20:32 David Host Okay.

00:20:33 John Host *[Laughs.]* Yeah. Because after you eat all that chocolate, you are not taking a nap. You're gonna be jumping up and down, dancing to an orchestra at the gazebo on the boardwalk of Ocean City, New Jersey.

00:20:45 David Host That's exactly what I was gonna say!

00:20:47 John Host That's a soiree.

00:20:48 David Host Yeah.

00:20:49 John Host I—second source is always—when people have difficulty sharing, it is often, I think, my tendency to solve the problem by saying, "Just get your own bag! Come on."

00:20:59 David Host Mm-hm.

00:21:00 John Host What are you—you know, you're going to Costco. What is it, two cents for a 500-pound pod of chocolate?

00:21:04 David Host Yeah, right. Exactly. Yeah.

00:21:05 John Host You know? But I think there needs to be a punitive element to this. Because this has been going on for some time. And let's face it, Joe's husband owes Joe some back-chocolate! So I would say this. Next three 500-pound chocolate pods you get ordered to your house by Costco, Joe's husband does not get to pick any favorites. Joe decides. Joe picks out the chocolates for his husband. And he can do that... with extreme prejudice. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:21:41 David Host Yeah, I like this!

00:21:42 John Host You know what I mean?

00:21:43 David Host Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

00:21:44 John Host Like, "Uh, this time, you only get the Kale Denay chocolate."

00:21:48 David Host Mm-hm.

00:21:49 John Host What's the worst chocolate in a bag of chocolates, David Rees? I

don't know 'cause I don't eat a lot of chocolate.

00:21:52 David Host I'm not really a chocolate person. I guess just, like...

00:21:56 John Host Jennifer Marmor, do you have a thought?

00:21:57 David Host Yeah...

00:21:58 John Host What's the worst chocolate? Nougat? I like nougat. But people don't.

00:22:02 Jennifer Marmor Guest I like nougat, too. If I—

00:22:03 David Host Caramel. I would get rid of all the caramel.

00:22:05 Jennifer Guest Mm!

00:22:06 David Host I think caramel tastes funky. Tastes like a foot. I don't like it—I don't like caramel.

00:22:07 John Host I don't care for caramel at all.

00:22:09 Jennifer Guest Mm-hm. I like it.

00:22:10 John Host You like it? Okay.

00:22:11 Jennifer Guest Yeah.

00:22:12 John Host We gotta get Jennifer Marmor on board with this one, then.

00:22:14 Jennifer Guest It's fine.

00:22:15 John Host What about a brandied cherry type situation?

00:22:17 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Jennifer:** *[Emphatically]* No. Absolutely not.

David: *[Even more emphatically]* I looove that! Ohhh!

[John and Jennifer laugh.]

00:22:21 David Host Cherries in chocolate?! Cra—it drives me crazy! And then you bite into it and it has that goopy brandy?!

[John shudders in horror.]

[Delighted] Ohhh!

00:22:28 Jennifer Guest You're saying that like it's good, but it also—

[Jennifer and John laugh.]

00:22:31 David Host It's so—it's like the most mature thing—

[John is making gagging noises.]

It makes you feel like... a PhD, when you eat chocolate and goop comes out.

00:22:40 John Host What?! *[Laughs.]*

00:22:42 David Host *[Laughs.]* Yeah! It's so fancy!

00:22:44 John Host Dr. Cherry Brandy is in the house?

00:22:46 David Host Yeah! Yeah.

00:22:47 John Host Alright.

00:22:48 David Host "Terrence Cherry Brandy!"

[John laughs.]

"Cultural anthropologist, at your service."

00:22:52	John	Host	Look, Joe, you know your husband best. You know what your husband dislikes.
00:22:56	David	Host	Right.
00:22:57	John	Host	Next three bags, that's all the chocolate that he gets. And then thereafter... here's something to do to pass the time while you're staying safer at home! Next—then after that, the bag you get? Sort out the chocolate. Split 'em up by half. Equally.
00:23:13	David	Host	Yep.
00:23:14	John	Host	Or do some classic Halloween evening horse-trading! But no. Joe, you can't be just going in there and grabbing your—whatever your fave is these days, and hoarding it all to yourself. It's uncool.
00:23:28	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:23:29	John	Host	Alright. We got that—
00:23:30	David	Host	I agree.
00:23:31	John	Host	We got that solved. Thank you, David.
00:23:32	David	Host	Alright. Next one?
00:23:35	John	Host	Let's move on!
00:23:36	David	Host	Diane writes in to say: "I read on a message board a suggestion to buy used books written by Tucker Carlson, Bill O'Reilly, and others, and then use the books as kindling for campfires." <i>[John exclaims/sighs wordlessly.]</i> "My better half, Mark, thinks burning books is wrong. He says that by taking them out of the supply chain, we're actually increasing the demand for them." Hm. "I believe that I am doing a good public service by shopping at local bookstores, removing the books from public rotation, and saving money on fire-starting tools." <i>[John laughs.]</i> "I would like to be allowed to burn books written by right-wing <i>[censor bleep]</i> ." Whooooa! Whoa! Language! "When I am camping with friends <u>other</u> than Mark. Mark would like to have no books burned at all." This is— Wowie McGowie. Yeah. This is—this is heavy. I have a very... Hm.

00:24:30 John Host I have a feeling about this. I—I mean, I—I just have a repulsion to the idea of burning books. I'm with Mark. What do you think, David Rees?

00:24:39 David Host Well, it's so interesting. Because this week on Twitter, believe it or not, there was a controversy.

00:24:43 John Host What?!

00:24:44 David Host And the controversy involved—

00:24:46 John Host You're talking about the famous website where people get together to collaborate on fun jokes that lift everybody up?

00:24:51 David Host And chill out? Yeah.

00:24:52 John Host Yeah.

00:24:53 David Host Some—there was some—I mean, I did not follow this one closely. It just flew by me. But it's enough for me to make an uninformed opinion about it, in the spirit of Twitter. So I will summarize it as follows:

There was some article about quote-unquote "decolonizing your bookshelf," you know? Like, making sure that you—

00:25:10 John Host Uh-huh.

00:25:11 David Host —that the books you have in your home, it's not just a bunch of old white fuddy-duddies.

00:25:14 John Host Right.

00:25:15 David Host And maybe, like, swapping out some of your old—I don't know what the examples would be. You know, swap out some of these old guys for writers who are not old white fuddy-duddies.

00:25:25 John Host Right.

00:25:26 David Host And a conservative columnist was like, "Here it is, book-burning! The book-burning has begun." And I was kind of like, "Mm... Taking a book off your shelf, or just squishing it up to make room for a new book... I don't think that's book-burning!" It produces no heat!

[John laughs.]

There is no destruction! You know? It is—

00:25:47 John Host Yeah.

00:25:48 David Host It is not an arresting image of intellectual contempt. And John, you know this. My dad was a librarian.

00:25:55 John Host Right.

00:25:56 David Host So obviously, the issue of books—or the burning of books—is something that he has strong opinions about. And I guess I do, too. Ah—

00:26:06 John Host I mean, look! Look! I don't like Tucker Carlson.

[Beat.]

By the way, if any listeners didn't know that this is where I stood—

[Both laugh quietly.]

—here it comes. Bill O'Reilly, I also have no fondness for, and I think has done more harm in the world than good. But Bill O'Reilly, you know, is in appropriate—I'm sure he's making a lot of money. But he's in appropriate cultural exile, now. Compared to Tucker Carlson, who has his old spot on Fox News. And what Tuck—

00:26:40 David Host

Right. Tucker Carlson is in his ascendancy.

00:26:44 John Host

Yeah. And Tucker Carlson is, I think, actively spreading horrific misinformation, and frankly racist rhetoric that is harmful to lots and lots of people. I think he's bad. I don't think he's fake news, I think he's bad news.

00:27:03 David Host

Mm-hm.

00:27:04 John Host

And one of the things that disturbs me the most about Tucker Carlson is, I know someone who used to... sort of work adjacent to Tucker Carlson. And knew Tucker Carlson somewhat. And that person has said to me, "I don't know what happened. He—Tucker Carlson was always conservative. I didn't see eye to eye with him politically or in terms of policy. But there was a conversation to be had with him. But he has now transformed into a person that I don't recognize, particularly around the issues of anti-immigration, and frankly racist dog whistles. That was not part of his repertoire before."

So not only is Tucker Carlson causing, I believe, damage to our society, culture, and real people by espousing hateful views. In my opinion. And I'm right. But also, I'm now met with the possibility that he is doing it all in bad faith! That it is not even conviction of his. That he has changed—he has had some conversion experience that may be he just became more racist naturally, or he made a decision to push hard on that. So that's gross.

So these guys are gross. But even then, I feel like, uh, I don't wanna burn their books. That is such a symbol of right-wing anti-intellectual, anti-free speech destruction, that I don't want to have any part of that. That is not something—that specific action, in particular, I don't care for.

00:28:42 David Host

I have a question. Do you think the iconography and the associations of literally burning books—like, I picture... black and white photos of huge piles of books on fire in the early 20th century. Do you think that's generational, and that kids that spend most of their time reading do so on devices, they just will not have the same visceral reaction to book-burning that people of our generation will have?

00:29:07 John Host

Yeah. I mean, you can't burn a TikTok.

00:29:10 David Host

Right. Yeah.

00:29:11 John Host

So... I don't know. I don't know whether they will have that visceral reaction. But I am—but that's why I am here, elderly John Hodgman speaking to all of the seventh-graders who are listening right now. *[Stifles laughter.]* If you and your friends are thinking of having a book-burning party and putting it on TikTok, let me—even if it's Tucker Carlson's books, please don't do it! That's gonna—that is a highly charged visual that will live on the Internet forever, and will follow you for the rest of your lives!

00:29:42 David Host Not if they wear black ski masks.

00:29:44 John Host Well, listen... Now, I gotta take Mark to task here. 'Cause he doesn't know what he's talking about. If they were buying new books by Tucker Carlson and Bill O'Reilly—

00:29:55 David Host That was gonna be my question, exactly. Yep.

00:29:56 John Host Yeah. Then yes, you could be juicing the demand for those books at those bookstores. But Diane specifically said buy used books by Tucker Carlson and Bill O'Reilly. And here is what I would say. Used bookstores are amazing. These are books that have been sold and are now out there in the world. They are not gonna generate any more—any further royalties to Tucker Carlson or Bill O'Reilly, or whoever it is.

The—purchasing those books from a used bookstore is a direct donation to that used bookstore. And you will be taking those books off the shelves of that bookstore, and thus freeing someone who might be triggered by seeing them later on down the road. You're taking those words out of the public conversation. Don't—I would not burn them. Because—

00:30:49 David Host Just—or just recycle 'em! Just pulp 'em!

00:30:50 John Host Yeah!

00:30:51 David Host Turn 'em into new books!

00:30:52 John Host Yeah.

00:30:53 David Host Like the Bible says, "Beat your swords into plowshares."

00:30:55 John Host Yeah. Recycle them! Let that paper be turned into pages on which a new and better normal can be written, which we're all working together to do. That's what I would do with it. I think that's a much better symbol. And by the way, Diane, where are you going camping? What are you doing right now, going camping?

00:31:14 David Host *[Laughs.]* Also, taking a bunch of books in your backpack to burn at the campsite, it's like you're—

[Both laugh.]

I imagine her going around town to all these used bookstores, and being like, "Yep, I'll take one *Killing of Lincoln* by Bill O'Reilly, and you have Tucker Carlson, I'll just buy out your Tucker Carlsons," and she has this huge backpack full of these hardcover books. These dumb airport books. Lugging them along. *[Laughs.]* Her friends are like, "What's in your backpack?!" She's like, "Just wait. Just wait. It'll be worth it when we get to the campfire."

Then they get to the campfire, and they're eating, and they're making their s'mores, *[laughs]* and then Diane is like, "Welp!" CLONK.

[John laughs.]

Huge backpack hits the ground. "Now we're really gonna have some fun! We're gonna burn all these books!"

People would be like, *[hesitant]* "Mmm..."

[John laughs.]

I don't know.

00:31:55	John	Host	I mean, that's the thing! Like, if your goal in life—as it is my goal—is to do <u>nothing</u> that makes Tucker Carlson or Bill O'Reilly happy, don't burn their books.
00:32:04	Crosstalk	Crosstalk	David: They would looove for that footage to leak!
00:32:08	David	Host	John: They would love it! They want— "Antifa mastermind Diane leads deep-woods sleeper cell and book-burning! Fascism is here, ladies and gentlemen! You can read about it in my new book!"
00:32:16	John	Host	Yeah.
00:32:17	David	Host	" <i>The Dirty Secrets of Diane.</i> "
00:32:19	John	Host	Make a donation to your used bookstore. Take their words out of the thought stream. And recycle those books. That's what you do.
00:32:28	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:32:29	John	Host	Solved it. Also—
00:32:30	David	Host	Heavy one. That was a heavy one.
00:32:31	John	Host	Don't—and kids, don't burn books on TikTok, no matter who they're by. <i>[Stifles laughter.]</i> It's just a <u>bad</u> look. It's a bad look.
00:32:39	David	Host	Let's take a quick break. More items on the docket coming up in just a minute on the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast
00:32:46	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:32:48	John	Promo	Bonjour! Ou bonsoir. C'est de bon. Je m'appelle Judge John Hodgman. Je suis—mmm, I'm—well, I'm inside a closet in Maine. That's why I sound different. And I'm trying to remember my high school French! And I'm <u>not</u> doing a good job.

Listen. Have you ever wanted to learn a new language? What if you wanted to learn an old language, like French? Or a language you used to know, like French? It can be intimidating! Whether it's having enough time to set aside for lessons, or feeling like you're not truly seeing progress, you can still get rid of all those roadblocks and start speaking sooner with Babbel. Avec Babbel.

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Ash-oh-de-je... em... ah... en? Is that how you say letters in French? Anyway. Babbel. Language for life.

00:34:42 Sound Effect Transition

[Three gavel bangs.]

00:34:44 Promo Clip

Music: Mellow synth piano and percussion plays in background.

Mallory O'Meara: Hey! I'm Mallory O'Meara, a weird fiction reader who enjoys whiskey and owns a book weight.

Brea Grant: And I'm Brea Grant, a science fiction reader who likes ice tea and reads to escape the world.

Mallory: And we host *Reading Glasses*, a weekly show that dives into reading suggestions, goals, complaints, and the really important questions, like, "What are the best reading snacks?"

Brea: And, "Seriously, Mallory, what is a book weight for?"

Mallory: Every week, we talk about reading.

Brea: It's not a book club! You're not going to have to listen to us review a book you haven't read.

Mallory: You just have to be excited about books, authors, the bookish community, writing, and talking about reading!

Brea: We can literally talk about reading, like, all day long.

Mallory: Reading Glasses!

Brea: Every Thursday on MaximumFun.org. Glasses!

Mallory: *[Laughs.]* I thought about doing that!

[Brea laughs quietly.]

[Music fades out.]

00:35:29 Sound Effect Transition

[Three gavel bangs.]

00:35:31 David Host

Welcome back to the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast! I'm Guest Bailiff David Rees, filling in for Jesse Thorn, and this week we are clearing the docket.

00:35:39 John Host

Alright!

00:35:41 David Host

You ready for another one?

00:35:42 John Host

I'm ready for another helping of injustice.

00:35:44 David Host

Here comes another helping. Rainer says:

"Dear Judge Hodgman,

We often find in our house that ice cream straight from the freezer is rock-solid, and thereby difficult to scoop. I approach the—I—"

00:35:57 John Host *[Exhales emphatically.]* First of all—first of all—

00:35:59 David Host It's too real already. It's too real for me.

00:36:01 John Host Tell me why.

00:36:03 David Host Because I know what this feels like! I mean, I don't eat a lot of ice cream anymore, but if you had one of those big things of Edy's Ice Cream—

00:36:09 John Host Mm-hm.

00:36:10 David Host —you could like, snap the spoon in half when you try to get into it! You know?

00:36:14 John Host *[Laughs.]* Well, I was gonna say congratulations to Rainer on having a freezer that actually keeps the ice cream hard!

00:36:22 David Host Oh!

00:36:23 John Host Because we have one now, but there—the—

00:36:25 David Host You got a weak freezer?

00:36:26 John Host We've definitely had high-quality refrigerators in our lives. You know, the like, brand-name refrigerators. You know, not like—not like, off-brand. *[Laughs quietly.]* Frigidane, or Whorlpool. Like, the real thing! And they can't keep the ice cream hard! This guy's got like a Nancy Pelosi-style freezer.

00:36:48 David Host Yeah, this is classic Nancy Pelosi bait. Listen to this; it gets better.

00:36:51 John Host Alright.

00:36:52 David Host I just read ahead a little.

00:36:53 John Host Okay, good.

00:36:55 David Host So Rainer writes:

"I approach this issue with either a heated spoon, brute force, or some combination of both. My wife Agnes, on the other hand, leaves the ice cream out on the countertop until it softens up enough to scoop with little resistance. Melted and subsequently re-frozen ice cream—"

[John sighs.]

"—obtains an undesirable texture. Agnes is convinced that the benefits of scoopability outweigh any taste or texture-related damages. I would like Agnes to adopt one of the following techniques."

00:37:29 John Host *[Laughs quietly.]* You go, Rainer. Let's hear it.

00:37:32 David Host "A, the heated spoon."

00:37:33 John Host *[Dramatic announcer voice]* The heated spoon!

00:37:34 David Host "B—*[laughs]*—the brute force."

00:37:37 John Host *[Dramatic announcer voice]* Brute force!

00:37:38 David Host "Or C, some new technique—please advise—"

00:37:41 John Host *[Laughs.]* New?

00:37:42 David Host "—that protects the sanctity of the ice cream texture."

Rainer is wrong on this.

00:37:47 John Host Ha!

00:37:48 David Host I'm gonna jump in.

00:37:49 John Host Speak.

00:37:50 David Host I love Agnes.

[John stifles laughter.]

Agnes is living her life exactly how I would live my life. You take the ice—this is what you do. You plan out your evening. "What time am I gonna sit down and watch TV tonight? And what time am I gonna be done eating this entire bag of Trader Joe's peanuts? So—"

00:38:09 John Host *[Laughs.]* Don't forget your Sea Salt Soirees.

00:38:11 David Host "And my Sea Salt Soirees. And then I'm gonna eat half this brick of sharp cheddar cheese, and then it'll be ice cream time! When I'm like two or three episodes into my favorite show."

So given that, let's say ICT—Ice Cream Time—is planning to hit around 11 PM. What time am I taking that ice cream out of the freezer...?

00:38:34 John Host Right.

00:38:36 David Host And—you know what I mean? To—just—

00:38:37 John Host Yeah!

00:38:38 David Host As he said, until it can scoop with little resistance. "Until it's softened up enough to scoop with little resistance." So poetic. So you take it out ahead of time. Let it find its balance with the room temperature. Get a little sludgy and soupy, the way we like it. I agree with Agnes!

00:38:55 John Host Yeah. I do, too. Because Rainer, what Agnes is doing is not letting the ice cream melt. She's letting it thaw. It's a difference!

00:39:07 David Host It's like decanting wine!

00:39:08 John Host Yes!

00:39:09 David Host You have to let it breathe a little!

00:39:10 John Host That's exactly so! It's—

00:39:11 David Host And also, there's something else I'm mad at Rainer about.

00:39:14 John Host Please.

[Beat.]

00:39:16 David Host He—his argument against doing this, against exercising a little forethought and doing a little menu planning by putting this ice cream out early?

00:39:23 John Host Right.

00:39:24 David Host He says, "Melted and subsequently re-frozen ice cream obtains an

undesirable texture." You're—you're put—who has leftover ice cream?!

[John laughs.]

After that lid is off, the great game is afoot! If you—if your argument is, *[whining]* "I don't like it when my wife makes the ice cream warm, because then when I go to eat it weeks later it doesn't taste good," *[stops whining]* it's like... You don't like ice cream, if you're having leftovers of ice cream.

00:39:48	John	Host	Yeah.
00:39:49	David	Host	Right?
00:39:50	John	Host	Right.
00:39:51	David	Host	Come on, Rainer, get your head in the game.
00:39:52	John	Host	Right. Well, and it's a classic case of a person using pseudoscience to stand in for their own impatience.
00:39:58	David	Host	<i>[Groans.]</i> Oh, it's so—it's such a type, and it happens <u>all</u> the <u>time</u> . You're right.
00:40:03	John	Host	Becau—right.
00:40:03	David	Host	<i>[Pompously]</i> "Melted—uh, the—I don't have time to present my entire paper. I'll just read you the abstract."

[John laughs quietly.]

"In our study—sample size $n=1$ —melted and subsequently re-frozen ice cream obtains an undesirable texture." Then—then a thousand footnotes. Come on, man.

00:40:18	John	Host	Right. But he's—I mean, look. He's not... <u>wrong</u> , in the sense that if you let a pint of ice cream <u>thoroughly</u> come to room temperature and <u>melt</u> , such that it is liquid, you can't go and re-freeze it and expect it to taste right. But <u>thawing</u> it, letting it get a <u>little</u> bit soft so that you can scoop it—we do it every night in our house. I know a good ice cream texture when I see it, and it does not alter the texture in an undesirable way.
00:40:47	David	Host	<u>Please</u> rule against Rainer. <u>Please</u> rule against Rainer.
00:40:50	John	Host	And— <i>[laughs]</i> —what Rainer—what Rainer is doing is, he wants to avoid—right? The <u>planning</u> that <u>you</u> are talking about. 'Cause that's too much work for Rainer. Rainer is the—Rainer is impulsive! Wants that ice cream, and wants it right away! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:41:07	David	Host	Right.
00:41:08	John	Host	You know what I mean? It's too much work for Rainer to say, "You know what? Oh, I'm gonna take—I think I'm gonna have ice cream at—you know, whatever, 11. It's 10:40. I'm gonna take it out in five minutes, and then set an alarm to go get it and then put it back."
			Doesn't wanna take the <u>care</u> to take care of the ingredients. <i>[Stifles laughter.]</i> He just wants to <u>grab</u> that ice cream out of that freezer!
00:41:31	David	Host	But—
00:41:32	John	Host	And you know what I think Rainer <u>really</u> wants to do, more than

anything else?

00:41:36 David Host What's that?

00:41:37 John Host Heat up a spoon. How did that pass without comment?

00:41:39 David Host I know. Right.

00:41:40 John Host How are you heating up that spoon, Rainer? *[Laughs.]*

00:41:42 David Host Just got *Requiem for a Dream* over here with this ice cream, Rainer. Come on, now.

And what drives me crazy about Rainer is that he—*[sighs]*. He wants the spontaneity of just all of the sudden being like—eyes pop open, "I want ice cream right now!"

00:41:56 John Host Right.

00:41:57 David Host But then, because he hasn't done the work, he's like, "But the ice cream is hard because it just came out of the freezer! And even when I heat my spoon or apply brute force... it still doesn't work! Judge, come up with a new way for me to eat ice cream that's soft as soon as it comes out of the freezer!" Like, who are you?! Judge Ice Cream?!

[John laughs.]

Get outta here, Rainer. You're banned from listening to the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

00:42:21 John Host I'm afraid Rainer's gonna come for both of us with a hot spoon sometime.

[David laughs.]

Like, what are you—what are you, taking a—you taking a ice cream scoop and holding it over an open gas flame?!

00:42:30 David Host *[Laughs.]* Yeah. Classic.

00:42:31 John Host Ag—no. Agnes. All in on Agnes on that one, Rainer, sorry.

00:42:35 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:42:36 David Host All in on Agnes! Queen... of Room Temperature Ice Cream. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:42:41 John Host Not room temp! Thawed!

00:42:43 David Host Alright, fine.

00:42:44 John Host Yeah.

00:42:45 David Host You know what I used to do, when I lived in Boston? Hoo!

00:42:47 John Host No, I don't.

00:42:48 David Host After a long night bending elbows with my friends at the Model Cafe—

00:42:52 John Host Sure.

00:42:53 David Host—in Allston—

00:42:54 John Host In Allson, Mass.

00:42:55 David Host—one of my favorite bars of all time.

00:42:56 John Host Yep.
00:42:57 David Host I would then go to the 7-Eleven on Western Ave.
00:42:58 John Host Mm-hm.
00:42:59 David Host And buy a liter of 7 Up, *[stifles laughter]* bring it back to our little apartment, and go into the little TV closet, and open the 7 Up, and let it get completely flat.

[John stifles laughter.]

And then drink it while I watched, uh, *Kids in the Hall* until three in the morning.

00:43:13 John Host *[Stifling laughter]* Why—

00:43:14 David Host Yeah, man.

00:43:15 John Host Why would you want flat 7 Up?! I mean, I—people like what they like, but it's not—

00:43:18 David Host Because it—there's no bubbles, and it's just the good stuff, and none of the tingly stuff!

[John laughs quietly.]

That was just a phase I was going through. I thought of it when I was thinking about this ice cream thing. Like, letting it breathe. Decanting it.

00:43:27 John Host Yeah.

00:43:28 David Host Yeah...

00:43:29 John Host Also, by the way, you speak of Boston—and I'm just gonna—I know we already ruled on this, but just one more point to refute Rainer's point of view. What's the number one ice cream place in Boston? A town known for its ice cream.

00:43:42 David Host A town? I was gonna say it's, uh, whatchamacallit, Herrell's, right?

00:43:45 John Host I was gonna say Toscanini's. In Cambridge.

00:43:48 David Host Ohhh my gosh, I forgot about them! Yeah!

00:43:50 John Host I mean, I love Steve Herrell. I love Herrell's.

00:43:51 David Host Right.

00:43:52 John Host But like, Toscanini's—anyway, you go into any one of the palaces of ice cream that you find in New England. 'Cause in New England—that's a region, by the way, in the Northeastern part of the United States, David. I'm not sure if you knew that. Sort of Southern Canada.

00:44:05 David Host Never been there. No interest in it.

00:44:06 John Host Yeah. When you go into one of the ice cream palaces of New England—one of the high—the upscale places... and you say, "I'll have a vanilla cone, please," and they scoop the ice cream for you, what do you think? Do you see them heating up their scoops?

[Both laugh.]

No, they're getting in there!

00:44:25 David Host Right.

00:44:26 John Host They're opening the freezer, scooping it, putting it—and it's scoopable! Right? It's not so rock-hard! That's 'cause their freezers are set to the proper temperature for ice cream to be held at a scoopable, uh, colloidal state! That—

00:44:40 David Host But—yeah.

00:44:41 John Host And because your freezer is doing too good a job, Agnes is correct to bring the temperature of the ice cream down to that appropriate state! It can stay in that state forever!

00:44:49 David Host But you know what, John?

00:44:50 John Host What?

00:44:51 David Host It's not even that. And I know we have to let this case go—

00:44:53 John Host Do we? *[Laughs.]*

00:44:54 David Host —but it is so under my skin right now. This guy is driving me crazy, because Rainer, go back and look at—his initial submission was... He says, "The heated spoon." He doesn't own an ice cream scooper! Do you understand what—he's doing this with like a soup spoon! You—

00:45:11 John Host Yeah.

00:45:12 David Host That's why he's having the—just buy an ice cream scooper, man! An ice cream scooper is designed for this heavy-duty, cold, packed-up ice cream scooping! You can't go in there—do you understand what I'm saying?

00:45:26 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Yeah! You're right. Look—alright. We did it.

David: Yeah, forget this. Alright. Yeah. Alright. Moving on.

00:45:30 John Host *[Stifles laughter.]* We solved it. Whew!

00:45:32 David Host Alright. Here's something—

00:45:33 John Host One more thing! They don't call it Hot Stone Creamery!

[Both laugh.]

00:45:36 David Host That's—whoa, that's true!

00:45:38 John Host Like, when they're doing those—one—

00:45:39 David Host Hot Spoon Creamery!

00:45:40 John Host One thing that Steve Herrell pioneered—back when the ice cream store was called Steve's and now called Herrell's, in Northampton, Massachusetts, never forget—is that, uh—is the mixing! When you're mushing your Sea Salt Soiree chocolates into your ice cream, what do you think's happening?

00:45:55 David Host Right.

00:45:56 John Host You're let—it's thawed! Alright. Let's move on.

00:45:59 David Host You're aerating it, also.

00:46:00 John Host Oh—*[sighs]*... man. I wanna get some ice cream.

00:46:01 David Host Okay. Here's something from Alex:

"My wife thinks it's weird that I flip past the first slice of bread in the loaf, which is the end piece. I think it's weird that she doesn't!"

[John laughs.]

"I think that the end piece acts as a sealant!"

[Both laugh.]

We got another scientist! You have a lot of scientists listening to this show!

00:46:21 John Host

Oh, David Rees, you have no idea.

00:46:23 David Host

"I think that the end piece acts as a sealant to keep the surface of the next piece from drying out."

00:46:30 John Host

Whew!

[David sighs.]

Now, David, before we get into this... *[stifles laughter]* I happen to know that the Alex who wrote into us is someone from the Maximum Fun family of podcasts.

00:46:42 David Host

Okay. Alright.

00:46:43 John Host

Alex is the producer of [Dr. Gameshow](#), which is an incredible podcast. Comes out from Jo Firestone and Manolo Moreno.

00:46:54 David Host

Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

00:46:56 John Host

It's an incredibly fun show where listeners make up gameshows, and Jo and Manolo and the guest participate in them.

00:47:04 David Host

They have to play the gameshows.

00:47:05 John Host

They play the gameshows. It's great. It's great. And that said, Alex, you know, as we discuss this, justice may still—may yet be harsh. Even though I am your friend.

Because here's the thing. I will say, David, that Alex speaks to one of the great moral quandaries of the kitchen. What about that end piece of bread? 'Cause no one wants it.

00:47:33 David Host

The heel! Yep.

00:47:34 John Host

No one wants the heel of bread. And yet, if you are like me and detest food waste in all forms, you gotta force yourself to eat it.

00:47:44 David Host

Mm-hm.

00:47:45 John Host

Right? You can't—have you ever thrown away the heel of bread? I'm gonna tell you right now, I've done it from time to time. I've looked—I've taken it out, I've looked at it, and I'm just like, "No one wants this. Toss it. I'm just—wanna make a sandwich here. I don't need—"

00:47:57 David Host

Right. Yeah, yeah.

00:47:58 John Host

"I don't need this extra hump of crust."

00:48:01 David Host

"I'm not a cobbler trying to make a new boot over here."

00:48:03 John Host

[Stifling laughter] Right.

00:48:04 David Host

Right.

00:48:06 John Host "I want that slice right there, behind that heel."
00:48:09 David Host Yep. Yep.
00:48:10 John Host But it is—it's a hard—
00:48:13 David Host You have to eat it! I mean, you have to.
00:48:14 John Host You have to eat it. Right.
00:48:15 David Host Wasting food is a sin.
00:48:16 John Host Right.
00:48:17 David Host And you have to—especially now. You just have to eat everything.

[Both laugh.]

We finally have permission to just eat everything.

00:48:25 John Host *[Laughing]* It's true, it's true.
00:48:28 David Host Do your part! Just eat everything.
00:48:29 John Host Just eat everything!
00:48:31 David Host Yeah.
00:48:33 John Host I think—
00:48:34 David Host So I guess the—I guess the question is—well, go ahead. I didn't mean to cut you off.
00:48:37 John Host Well, no. I mean...
00:48:38 David Host *[Laughs.]* Talking about it acting as a sealant. I love it!
00:48:41 John Host *[Laughs.]* Yeah.
00:48:42 David Host But I agree with him! But go ahead. Go ahead.
00:48:44 John Host Well, right! We don't—we—we're—we agree with you, Alex, that that heel of bread is undesirable. I think where we take issue with you, Alex, is once again using pseudoscience to stand in for... basically your desire not to eat that hump of crust. Right?

00:49:07 David Host Well... *[Sighs.]* We actually need more information. Because he doesn't make it clear—I mean, I think, based on this correspondence from Alex... I think Alex does what I do! Which is you slice into this new loaf of bread that you love so much and you're so stoked about eating. And you have that heel.

00:49:31 John Host Ohhh.
00:49:32 David Host And you're like, "I can't deal with this yet. Let me just keep moving this—" It's like a bookend! Right?
00:49:37 John Host Mm-hm.
00:49:38 David Host And the heel, you just keep—the loaf is getting shorter, as you keep removing slices, and that heel just keeps getting closer and closer to its mate on the other end of the loaf.
00:49:48 John Host Right.
00:49:49 David Host The whole time, it's acting as a high-quality sealant.

[John laughs.]

It's keeping the rest of the loaf moist. Right?

00:49:55 John Host *[Laughing]* It's—

00:49:56 David Host Which I agree with! I know—but I do agree with that! And I used to bake a lot of bread, 'cause I went to a hippie college. And then finally, this is what happens. You get to the end of the loaf. All interior slices have been consumed. And now you're left with two heels! Right?

00:50:12 John Host Two heels. You mate the heels.

[Someone smacks their hands together.]

00:50:14 David Host And you do the—and you do the thing that stinks, but you gotta do it, especially now. You make a heel sandwich.

[John laughs.]

And you just have a heel on the top, and a heel on the bottom. And what you have to make sure, 'cause I've eaten a lot of heel sandwiches—make sure this—this is an opportunity to make a really hardy sandwich!

00:50:32 John Host Okay!

00:50:34 David Host Because the heel, structurally? It can—it's a load-bearing piece of food. Right?

00:50:38 John Host Right.

00:50:39 David Host I mean, this—and that's in part why it acts as such a great sealant!

00:50:42 John Host Yeah.

00:50:43 David Host It's so dense. You can—this is when you can make a sandwich out of, like, gravel. Right? Or just bones. 'Cause it—this thing—these heels will stack up to anything.

00:50:55 John Host This is not a tea sandwich situation. Like, you—

00:50:58 David Host This is not your cucumber sandwich, where there's no crust. This is the—actually the opposite of a cucumber sandwich.

00:51:01 John Host Right. You—

00:51:02 David Host This would make a British person's head explode.

00:51:04 John Host Yeah, you put in some watercress and a thin slice of lox in there, that—the heel's gonna overpower it. You're just gonna be munching bread.

00:51:14 David Host Right. Yeah.

00:51:15 John Host You need to put like, about two pounds of high-quality meats and cheeses in there.

00:51:21 David Host Mm-hm.

00:51:22 John Host Right? And like—you know what it's like? It's like a muffuletta. You ever have a muffuletta in New Orleans?

00:51:28 David Host Ohhh! Okay.

00:51:29 John Host *[Stifles laughter.]* Basically, it's a whole loaf of bread.

00:51:31 David Host Right. Yep.

00:51:32 John Host But it's stuffed with high-quality meats and cheeses. And then a—a very specific olive spread. And it's fantastic.

00:51:42 David Host Oh, right. Yeah.

00:51:44 John Host You make a muffuletta outta the heel. But I'm gonna—David, look. I didn't—I have not baked a lot of bread. I—what I think Alex is talking about is—and even if you bake bread, that heel is not gonna—the heel will never protect your bread from drying out! Only a plastic bag will do that.

00:52:05 David Host Well, presumably the—I don't think he's leaving the bread out on the counter with just the heel stuck up against it—

00:52:11 John Host Right!

00:52:12 David Host —attached with a rubber band, being like, "What do we need a breadbox for?! The heel's doing all the work!"

[John laughs.]

I'm sure they're putting their bread in a bag, or in a breadbox. He's just keeping that heel—

00:52:22 John Host No.

00:52:23 David Host —as an additional moisture reserve factor. Okay? It's classic science, John.

00:52:28 John Host *[Laughs.]* No.

00:52:29 David Host Read any peer-reviewed journal. It's in there.

00:52:30 John Host Look. I respectfully disagree. Alex, we're actually finding in your favor here, I'm glad to say. Because even though I find your argument that the end piece acts as a sealant—your bread is gonna be in a plastic bag, anyway. Particularly if it's pre-sliced, you're buying it from a store.

00:52:49 David Host Mm.

00:52:50 John Host If you're not making it yourself. I don't know what's going on in your house. That end piece is not acting as a sealant. You don't have to lie about why you don't want it. It's perfectly fine to not want it. And it is perfectly un-weird that you're—for you to flip by it until you get to the end, and you make the David Rees heel sandwich.

And I am sorry that your wife has so heel-flip-shamed you to the point that you need to make up this fake science. Just say...
"Beloved wife, I'm just saving it for the heel sandwich at the end. I'm gonna mate the heels."

00:53:29 David Host Go heels.

00:53:30 John Host And that's a beautiful thing. Go heels.

00:53:32 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:53:33 David Host Let's take a quick break. When we come back, we'll hear a case about pencils!

00:53:37 John Host What? You're an expert on pencils!

00:53:40 David Host Let's see how much I can remember from my glory days. My former career.

00:53:45 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:53:47 Promo Clip **Speaker 1:** *[With crackling and static, as though speaking through a*

walkie-talkie] Rocketship One, this is Mission Control. Come in.

Speaker 2: *[Similar crackling and static]* This is Rocketship One! Go ahead!

Speaker 1: Rocketship? What's your status on MaxFunDrive? Shouldn't we have seen it by now?

Speaker 2: Sorry about that, Mission Control. Turns out I miscalculated.

[Beeping noises.]

Speaker 2: Current projected ETA for MaxFunDrive is...

[Computer beeps.]

Speaker 2: —July 13? But it looks different. It'll be for...

[Quick beep.]

Speaker 2: —four weeks. So it's longer than expected. But all readings point to—

[Quick beep.]

Speaker 2: —low-key?

Speaker 1: *[Sound of keyboard clacking in background]* Oh! That will be good. But can you verify that there are still special gifts for new and upgrading monthly members?

Speaker 2: Verified. Sweet gifts for new and upgrading members, plus amazing new episodes and even special weekly livestreams for charity.

Speaker 1: Copy that! Rocketship, can you confirm ETA for MaxFunDrive?

Speaker 2: Mm, 90% probability of MaxFunDrive from July 13 to August 7.

Speaker 1: Did you say... 90%?

Speaker 2: There were a couple of decibel noises and I might've carried a zero wrong...

Speaker 1: I—I'm just gonna pencil in July 13 to August 7. Mission Control out.

[Sound of crackling communications device.]

[Three gavel bangs.]

00:54:53 Sound Effect Transition

00:54:55 David Host Welcome back to the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. This week we are clearing the docket. Here is something—

00:55:00 John Host Now, David, I'm gonna interrupt you here. I wanna present this case

to you.

00:55:04 David Host Oh! Alright. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

00:55:05 John Host Rather than you present the case to me.

00:55:06 David Host Yeah, yeah. Okay.

00:55:07 John Host Because listeners may not know that aside from *Election Profit Makers*, David's podcast with Starlee Kine and Jon Kimball, available now wherever you get your podcasts—aside from *Going Deep with David Rees*, the great two seasons of still available incredible how-to show on TV, about how to do things you think you know how to do, like tie your shoes and shake hands. Incredible. Watch that with your seventh-grader. Boy. That's so much fun.

00:55:53 David Host Yep! That started back in 2010. It came out of my work with the US Census.

00:55:59 John Host And you—people would send in their pencils, and you would sharpen them for them, and send them back.

00:56:03 David Host Mm-hm!

00:56:04 John Host And then you wrote a book called *How to Sharpen Pencils*. Which sounds silly to some people's ear, until they read the book and realize that, A, it is literally about how to sharpen pencils, [*stifles laughter*] but B, more figuratively about the dangers of chasing absolute perfection in life. Would that be fair to say?

00:56:23 David Host That's very fair to say! And you should know, because you... wrote the foreword to that book!

00:56:30 John Host That's right. We've been collaborating for a long time together, David. And I tell you what, it's—everything we've done together has been a pleasure, including the too-salty for *Judge John Hodgman*—named animated show.

00:56:42 David Host Yep!

00:56:43 John Host Debuting as part of the *Cake* anthology series on FXX July 9th at ten PM, and then streaming on Hulu thereafter. Please, please, please check it out. But this is a pencil-related dispute, so I'm gonna present it to you, 'cause you're the pencil judge.

00:56:54 David Host Okay, I like this. This—I like this. Role reversal.

00:56:57 John Host Here's something from Caleb:

"This is a geometric philosophy dispute between my wife and me. I think that a pencil has eight sides. But she says it has six sides. My argument is that the so-called top and bottom of a pencil—"

—and I believe "top" meaning the eraser, and "bottom" meaning the point of a pencil—

"—also count as sides, geometrically speaking. She says that the top

and bottom don't count, *[stifling laughter]* because only the sides are called sides."

00:57:28 David Host

She killed him with that one!

00:57:29 John Host

[Laughs.] "We moved the argument to how many sides a door has. She says a door has two sides, the front and the back!"

[David sighs/groans.]

"I say six! Because a door is a three-dimensional box. I ask that you rule that I am at least technically correct."

00:57:48 David Host

Isn't that the subtext of every question a husband writes in to you about?

[John laughs.]

Is like, "Judge, we both know this is a bunch of BS. But just say I'm technically correct!" Right? "That I'm a little scientiiist!" Yeah?

00:58:01 John Host

[Laughs.] You go get 'em, David Rees.

00:58:03 David Host

Alright. I rule in favor of his wife. A pencil has six sides. It doesn't have eight sides. Because—okay. This guy says he wants to talk about geometric philosophy? Let's talk about Wittgenstein. Let's talk about the Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* vs. the Wittgenstein of the *Philosophical Investigations*.

00:58:21 John Host

Here we go.

00:58:23 David Host

Is the definition of a word some immutable, platonic ideal that in perfect conditions can describe the world perfectly? Or is the definition of the word the way in which it is used in society? Right?

00:58:36 John Host

Right.

00:58:37 David Host

He is trying to make a technical definition of "side," such that any three-dimensional object, no matter how narrow, like a pencil or a door—

00:58:48 John Host

Right. Right.

00:58:49 David Host

"—aaactually technically has this many sides." You use that type of language in conversation, you are deliberately obfuscating people's understanding so that you can feel clever. And I know this, 'cause I studied philosophy!

[John laughs.]

Like, that's the name of the game. We invented this game! Okay?

00:59:05 John Host

Right.

00:59:06 David Host

Go read the German idealists. Okay? See how many—*[stifles laughter]*—see how many sides they think a pencil has!

[John laughs.]

Right?

00:59:11 John Host

Mm. *[German accent]* "Thirty-five, actually."

00:59:13 David Host

So as someone who has read and written extensively about pencils,

and has literally toured an American pencil factory...

00:59:23 John Host Which one?

00:59:24 David Host General Pencil, in New Jersey. Shout-out to one of the last American-made #2 pencils. The only pencil I use for my clients.

I'm gonna rule with his wife. A pencil has six sides.

00:59:36 John Host Yeah. I mean, I'm with you, David Rees. I feel like now—now, in these days more than ever, we need to communicate clearly with each other.

00:59:46 David Host Mm-hm.

00:59:47 John Host And in these days more than ever, we need to not get on each other's nerves over nothing.

[Both laugh.]

00:59:54 David Host Yep! Exactly.

00:59:55 John Host You know?

00:59:56 David Host On this issue, there's only... one side.

00:59:57 John Host *[Laughing]* Ohhh!

00:59:58 David Host How about that? You could have like, a harp. You could have the sound of a harp play after that.

01:00:02 John Host Sure. Jennifer Marmor, do we have a—do we have a harp?

01:00:05 Jennifer Guest Yeah. I—it's in my pantry with me.

01:00:07 John Host Okay, good. Cue the harp.

01:00:09 Music Music Short, ascending harp trill.

01:00:10 John Host Woo, that sounded great! Thank you, David. Good suggestion.

01:00:12 David Host Judge. Do you know why most pencils have six sides?

01:00:16 John Host I do not know why!

01:00:18 David Host It's because of tessellation. Because it is the most efficient use of wood. Pencil manufacturing is a game of margins. And they're constantly maximizing their resources under a lot of constraints. And years and years ago, it was realized that if you are making a barrel-shaped object that can fit comfortably in the hand, the way to pack the most pencil shafts into a single slat of wood is to make them hexagonal.

01:00:47 John Host *[Exhales appreciatively.]* Hexagonal meaning six-sided?

01:00:50 David Host You got it. And I'm gonna tell you something else.

01:00:52 John Host Alright.

01:00:53 David Host This is something I discovered years ago.

01:00:54 John Host I can't wait.

01:00:55 David Host And I haven't had occasion to bring it up in casual conversation because I haven't had a casual conversation in years, but... the iconic hexagonal six-sided barrel of a pencil shaft is mirrored on the molecular level by the hexagonal shape of graphite.

[John gasps.]

Which is an allotrope of carbon. And graphite composes a pencil's quote-unquote "lead." So when Caleb shows up talking about how a pencil has eight sides, I have to double down and insist it has six sides. Because even at the molecular level—!

01:01:31 John Host Right!

01:01:32 David Host The very stuff of life the pencil shaft contains, the graphite, is six-sided.

01:01:37 John Host Yeah. Don't dishonor graphite on my podcast, Caleb.

01:01:40 David Host Yeah.

01:01:41 John Host When you said, "Do you know why a pencil has six sides?" and I said, "I do not know," do you know what it reminded me of?

01:01:46 David Host What's that?

01:01:47 John Host The scene in our "too salty to be named on *Judge-John-Hodgman*" cartoon show—

[Both laugh.]

—where one character asks the other one, "Do you happen to know..." What was the question? *[Laughs quietly.]* I can't remember what it was. It's the Lil Blurp episode.

01:02:01 David Host When your dad has become the manager of Richardsville's most famous SoundCloud mumble rapper?

01:02:06 John Host Right.

01:02:07 David Host And they're shooting a video in the abandoned mall—

01:02:09 John Host Yeah.

01:02:10 David Host —and all the ocelots have gone missing?

01:02:11 John Host That's right.

01:02:12 David Host And we are called in to find out what happened to the ocelots, and who's sabotaging the video shoot?

01:02:17 John Host And my character, John Hunchman—

01:02:19 David Host *[Laughing]* Oh.

01:02:20 John Host —asks the mumble rapper, "Do you happen to know XYZ?"

01:02:23 David Host Oh, yeah! What does the kid say? He says... "Yo, I do not happen to know!"

[Both laugh.]

Lil Blurp! Famous mumble rapper.

01:02:32 John Host Leave all of that in, Jennifer Marmor! That's a preview!

01:02:35 David Host Spicy preview!

01:02:36 John Host There you go, there's a spicy preview! Of just some of the fun David Rees and I have, in our new "too salty to be named on *Judge John Hodgman*" animated show, premiering July the 9th, ten PM, as part of the *Cake* half hour of animated, live action short form haha. Available on Hulu streaming after that. And you know, I hope you get

a chance to check it out. And I hope if you like it, you tell a few people about it. 'Cause we really enjoyed making it.

01:03:10 Crosstalk Crosstalk

John: David Rees, thank you so much for being my guest bailiff today!

David: It was my pleasure. Thanks for having me on!

01:03:15 John Host

Yeah, it's my pleasure! And make sure that you listen to *Election Profit Makers* as well, wherever you get your podcasts, 'cause it's a real delight. It's a real delight every week.

01:03:24 David Host

Thank you.

01:03:25 John Host

Alright. The docket is clear! That's it for another episode of *Judge John Hodgman*. Our producer is Jennifer Marmor. Play that harp again, Jen!

01:03:32 Music Music

Two short, ascending harp trills.

01:03:33 John Host

Yeah!

[David laughs.]

Follow us on Twitter! David Rees is [@david_rees](#) on Twitter. And those are small letters, with an underscore between "david" and "rees." And "Rees" is spelled R-E-E-S. No E on the end. And I'm [@hodgman](#). That's H-O-D-G-M-A-N. No E in the middle.

Make sure you hashtag your *Judge John Hodgman* social media posts [#JJHo](#). Follow the show on Instagram at [@judgejohnhodgman](#), and check out the Maximum Fun subreddit to discuss this episode at [MaximumFun.Reddit.com](#).

Submit your cases at [MaximumFun.org/jjho](#), or email me. I read 'em all, David Rees! I read 'em all. Hodgman@maximumfun.org. No case too small. No case too big. Some cases too medium.

We will not see you next time! Because this is a podcast! But I hope you'll hear my voice on the next *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. Thank you for listening.

01:04:32 Sound Effect Transition

[Three gavel bangs.]

01:04:35 Music Transition

A cheerful guitar chord.

01:04:36 Speaker 1 Guest

[MaximumFun.org](#).

01:04:38 Speaker 2 Guest

Comedy and culture.

01:04:39 Speaker 3 Guest

Artist owned—

01:04:40 Speaker 4 Guest

—audience supported.