

00:00:00	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:00:02	Jesse Thorn	Host	Welcome to the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast. I'm Bailiff Jesse Thorn. We're in chambers this week, clearing the docket. And with me as always... is... Brooklyn's greatest dad.
			<i>[John snorts.]</i>
			Judge John Hodgman.
			<i>[Both laugh.]</i>
00:00:18	John Hodgman	Host	You just made Jonathan Coulton very sad.
00:00:22	Jesse	Host	<i>[Stifling laughter]</i> Yeah, take that, JC!
00:00:23	John	Host	Nooo, no! Jonathan Coulton and I, we have been co-chairmen of the Best Dads... Board of Southern Slope, Brooklyn, for—oh, it's gotta be 11 years running now? We just keep getting re-elected, re-elected. To be fair, no one wants the job. It's a lot of paperwork.
00:00:40	Jesse	Host	Yeah. <i>[Laughs quietly.]</i>
00:00:42	John	Host	Meetings every week. Jonathan keeps the minutes. I'm the treasurer.
00:00:45	Jesse	Host	Ever since Lil' Fame from M.O.P.'s dad resigned. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:00:50	John	Host	That's right.
00:00:51	Jesse	Host	Due to ill health.
00:00:52	John	Host	Yeah. <i>[Laughs.]</i> That's right.
			<i>[Jesse laughs quietly.]</i>
			Uhhh, Jesse Thorn, hello, I can see you there! Out there in Los Angeles, California. Here I am in Brooklyn, New York. And I'm taking a drink from a mug that I got from another podcast that we will <u>not</u> name.
00:01:06	Jesse	Host	Great. Sounds good.
00:01:08	John	Host	I apologize in advance to the misophones.
			<i>[Takes a drink.]</i>
			Guess what I'm drinking? From that slurp, can you guess?
00:01:18	Jesse	Host	I mean, <i>[stifles laughter]</i> if my nostalgic memory is correct—
00:01:21	John	Host	Mm-hm?
00:01:22	Jesse	Host	—I'm pretty sure you just drank some Folgers Crystals that you didn't know were Folgers Crystals.
			<i>[John laughs, Jesse stifles laughter.]</i>
00:01:29	John	Host	When you said "nostalgic memory," I thought you were gonna say Ovaltine. Did you ever have Ovaltine growing up?
00:01:34	Jesse	Host	Rich chocolate flavor, my friend! I was—I—
00:01:35	John	Host	Yeah.
00:01:36	Jesse	Host	My mother's house was an Ovaltine household. I drank a <u>lot</u> of

Ovaltine.

00:01:39 John Host I think that there was a non-chocolate Ovaltine, too.

00:01:43 Jesse Host There's like—I think the original Ovaltine is like a malt-type flavor.

00:01:48 John Host Oof. I'm gonna get some of that.

00:01:49 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:01:50 John Host But that's not what I'm drinking. Both guesses are wrong.

00:01:53 Jesse Host What were you drinking?

00:01:54 John Host So you know that I enjoy making concoctions.

[Both laugh.]

00:01:58 Jesse Host *[Laughing]* Sure!

00:02:00 John Host Afternoon, warm, non-alcoholic concoctions that I can enjoy.

00:02:04 Jesse Host Sure, you were a—you were big into broth...

00:02:08 John Host Big into broth!

00:02:09 Jesse Host ...related—yeah.

00:02:10 John Host BIB. Big Into Broth. That's how they knew me around town.

00:02:13 Jesse Host Mm-hm.

00:02:14 John Host I enjoyed, and still enjoy, Kitchen Basics brand chicken stock, warmed up with a little sriracha sauce. Mm. Some black pepper.

00:02:23 Jesse Host Sounds nice.

00:02:25 John Host But this time, I'm having some peppermint tea. My voice was feeling a little raspy. And I thought, "Am I gonna gargle with some saltwater?" That's something you do.

00:02:36 Jesse Host Sure.

00:02:37 John Host This was the other—this was the other day, I'm fine, by the way. This is a new thing, though, for me. So I'm like, "How can I make this—*[inaudible]* gargle with saltwater. What if I make some peppermint tea and put salt in it?" And guess what, Jesse? I did it, and it's great!

00:02:51 Jesse Host Wow.

00:02:53 John Host 'Cause I love—I love peppermint. And I love... salt. *[Laughs.]*

00:02:57 Jesse Host What a—what an amazing... Like, you invented a—an old Vaudeville trick.

[John cracks up.]

Like, you—you created—*[laughs]*—in the 21st century...

00:03:10 John Host That's right.

00:03:11 Jesse Host ...a thing from 1897.

00:03:14 John Host Yeah. Peppermint tea—salted peppermint tea. "Oh, I see you have gout! Well..."

[Jesse laughs, John stifles laughter.]

"Take this powder, and put it up your nose, and enjoy some salted peppermint tea."

00:03:25 Jesse Host Yeah, you—this is something that, had you not just told me that you had brainstormed it, I would have assumed you would have found the recipe in the papers of Kate Smith.

00:03:35 John Host *[Laughs.]* No. No. And, you know, I thought, enjoying it—'cause it's just a pinch of Maldon (*Mal-dahn*) salt. That's the kind I like. Mahl-din, it's actually pronounced, Mahl-din, 'cause it's from the English town of Maldon. I always thought it was Mal-dohn. Thought it was French salt. You know the salt that I'm talking about.

00:03:52 Jesse Host Sure.

00:03:53 John Host The one that comes in big, chunky pyramids?

00:03:54 Jesse Host Yeah. Absolutely.

00:03:55 John Host Delicious. Delicious. But then I thought, "Maybe I could advance this even further." And talk about—talk about Vaudeville tricks! I thought I might deploy a trick the great Ted Leo, of the *Art of Process* podcast, and the rocks band the Pharmacists...

00:04:15 Jesse Host Teddy Rockstar.

00:04:16 John Host ...taught me backstage, or side-stage, really, at the Coolidge Corner Theatre in Brookline, Massachusetts, before a book event of mine, sometime before. In history. He got some hot water, some lemon, and then some—a couple of shots of tabasco sauce in it.

00:04:32 Jesse Host Hm!

00:04:33 John Host His claim was... that because of the capsaicin (*cap-SAY-iss-in*)—is that what you say it?

00:04:40 Jesse Host Yeah, sure.

00:04:41 John Host You know, because of the hot—the hot, in the hot sauce. That that's a natural anti-inflammatory, and it helps the—I don't know. I've done it a lot when I'm doing voiceover. I'll put some hot sauce into some hot water with some lemon. So I thought, "What if I boost this thing with this—my new—my new concoction with some hot sauce?"

And I'm sorry to say, Dr. Ted, you are a pharmacist of rock. But...

[Jesse laughs quietly.]

Not a pharmacist of this new drink. You—*[laughs]*. The alchemy did not work in this case.

[Beat.]

I shouldn't have put the hot sauce in it. Just keep it simple. This is what we have to remember. KISS. It's not just a band.

00:05:16 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:05:17 John Host It's an initialism. "Keep It Simple, Stupid." Peppermint tea, and salt.

00:05:21 Jesse Host Yeah. It's not—it's not just an act of intimacy.

00:05:24 John Host Oh, is that what it is?

[Jesse laughs.]

Oh right, I forgot about that definition! "Kissing." Oh, interesting.

[Laughs quietly.]

00:05:31 Jesse Host Well, John, not to brag, but I just ordered some French Haribos from eBay, so...

00:05:35 John Host Ooh hoo hoo hoo!

00:05:37 Jesse Host They're Orangina Haribos.

00:05:39 John Host No!

00:05:40 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:05:41 John Host How dare you?

00:05:42 Jesse Host Somebody on Twitter told me that they—whenever they go to France, they bring home Orangina Haribos. I got so excited. And then two days later, someone said, "Guess what I just found on eBay? Orangina Haribos!" \$6.99 a bag, but I ordered two.

00:05:56 John Host These—are—Haribos are gummies, right?

00:05:59 Jesse Host Yeah, the gummy candies.

00:06:00 John Host Yeah. And are they in the shape of bears? Are they the original gummy bears?

00:06:04 Jesse Host No, they're in the shape of Oranginas!

00:06:07 John Host Little Orangina bottles?!

00:06:09 Jesse Host Yeah! The classic—you know, uh—

00:06:12 John Host Yeah, the bulbous...

00:06:13 Jesse Host Yeah. "Bulbous" is exactly the adjective.

00:06:16 John Host And the—if I recall correctly, Organina is the—the—it was very popular in—*[muttering quickly]* in New England, a region in the Northeast in the United States—

[Back to usual volume/speed]—uh, in the eighties, Orangina. And they advertised that they had actual pulp in it.

00:06:29 Jesse Host It is a pulpy drink.

00:06:30 John Host Yeah.

00:06:31 Jesse Host It's a great drink. It's still something you would order in a café in Portugal.

[John laughs, Jesse stifles laughter.]

I think.

00:06:38 John Host Pulp is not usually a—a—something you wanna advertise.

[Jesse laughs.]

"Mm, pulpy! Hi, I'm John Hodgman for Orangina. Are your soft drinks not pulpy enough? Guess what? You're about to get pulped!"

00:06:58 Jesse Host *[Stifles laughter.]* "Are—are you concerned your beverage is insufficiently murky?"

00:07:02 John Host *[Laughs.]* I still remember the very distinct sensory feeling of holding that bulbous Orangina bottle. 'Cause if I remember, the bottle itself was kind of dimpled like an orange.

00:07:13 Jesse Host Yeah. Exactly. It's a very vivid—this was the time before Clearly Canadian.

Let's get into—

00:07:21 John Host Wait a minute, no.

[Pause.]

I gotta—alright, we gotta bring this up. Since you brought up Orangina Haribo...

00:07:28 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:07:29 John Host Have you been following this feud that Dan McCoy of *The Flop House* is having with the universe? Ray?

00:07:35 Jesse Host *[Laughing]* You mean his lifetime?

00:07:38 John Host On Twitter? *[Laughs.]* Regarding specifically buttered popcorn-flavored jelly beans?

00:07:46 Jesse Host Ugh.

00:07:48 John Host And his belief that they are good?

[Jesse makes another distressed sound.]

No, Dan. Dan? You're wrong.

00:07:52 Jesse Host Augh.

00:07:53 John Host That's the first—that's the first ruling I'm gonna make on *Judge John Hodgman*.

00:07:56 Jesse Host Ugh.

00:07:57 John Host We've been playing it nice with *The Flop House* for a couple of years now! Making podcasts with Elliott, hanging out with Stu at his bar. Apologizing to Dan for saying that he looks like Walter the Muppet, which he does.

00:08:07 Jesse Host *[Laughs quietly.]* Yeah.

00:08:09 John Host But now?

00:08:10 Jesse Host Walter's probably one of the handsomest Muppets.

00:08:13 John Host Yeah, but if you're gonna be compared to any Muppet, you don't wanna be some Muppet-come-lately like Walter.

00:08:17 Jesse Host That's fair.

00:08:18 John Host You wanna be OG, like Bunsen Honeydew, like me.

00:08:20 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:08:21 John Host Yeah. Or Sam the Eagle, like you.

00:08:24 Jesse Host Thank you.

00:08:25 John Host You've got—you've got some Sam the Eagle vibes. I mean, not in your politics. Oh, I forgot, you have no politics; you're an employee of NPR.

Anyway, first—first justice! Uh, *Flop House*, the feud's back on! Until Dan... apologizes. People like what they like. *[Stifles laughter.]* But

stop saying that buttered popcorn jelly beans are good. Just say, "I like them."

00:08:44 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:08:45 Jesse Host They also ruin the other jelly beans. That's my only beef. Like, I like licorice jelly beans.

00:08:50 John Host Mm-hm.

00:08:51 Jesse Host I don't mind eating a black jelly bean. But the problem is, when it's in the classic jelly bean mix, just a traditional jelly bean mix, if you get a licorice with a red one or a purple one or whatever, it ruins the red one and the purple one, 'cause it doesn't go with the other fruity flavors.

00:09:05 John Host *[Whispering]* Oh boy.

00:09:06 Jesse Host So you have to eat your jelly beans one at a time from—if there's—or just carefully avoid the black ones. If I get an orange one and a red one, they go together fine!

00:09:13 John Host Right. Right. You can't—right. You know, pandemic-related isolation hits all of us different ways.

00:09:20 Jesse Host Yeah.

[Both laugh.]

00:09:23 John Host I like thinking about these things.

00:09:26 Jesse Host *[Stifling laughter]* And Dan McCoy is suffering from jelly bean madness!

00:09:29 John Host Jelly bean madness, and Walter the Muppet resemblance syndrome!

00:09:34 Jesse Host *[Chuckles.]* Here's something from Katie:

"My husband Spencer and I have two small dogs. I would like to take them on kayaking adventures with us. With lifejackets, of course. Spencer thinks it's unsafe to bring the dogs with us. I think he's being unreasonable, and I would like you to order him to at least try to take them out with us once. If it goes well, I think they should be included on most kayaking trips in the future."

00:09:58 John Host I thought I was gonna have nothing to say up top. I thought I was gonna have nothing. I didn't even get to mention that when we were talking about all those rummy games last time?

00:10:09 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:10:10 John Host Turns out mummy rummy is a real thing. Someone sent in a picture. Thank you.

00:10:12 Jesse Host Yeah. It's like a game that you would buy at the gift shop of a archaeology museum, yeah.

00:10:18 John Host Thank you for letting me get that out.

00:10:20 Jesse Host Winner, best game, 1995, São Paulo game-off.

00:10:24 John Host *[Laughs quietly.]* Yeah. You saw it, too. Thank you, Dan. Listener Dan. @DanzGraziano. For sending in mummy rummy and blowing my mind.

Alright. Let's get to kayaking dogs. Jesse Thorn, you are a

companion to two wonderful dogs, Sissy and Coco.

00:10:41 Jesse Host That's true.

00:10:42 John Host Are you a kayaker?

00:10:45 Jesse Host No, but, uh, I've been known to ride in a dinghy.

00:10:48 John Host *[Stifling laughter]* Okay.

00:10:50 Jesse Host Take a little dinghy ride at Poppy Lake, in the Sequoia National Monument.

00:10:55 John Host Yeah, that's right. Don't you have a little—a rowboat or something up there?

00:10:58 Jesse Host Yeah, I mean, it's not my rowboat, but there is a rowboat. Unfortunately—*[laughs]*—I have a cabin in the Sequoia National Monument in a... in a census-designated place that has basically completely burned to the ground.

00:11:11 John Host Mm, I'm sorry to hear that.

00:11:12 Jesse Host Um, but my—my cabin is—is still there, I learned recently, so thank—thank goodness for that. Um, the lake burned down, to the extent that a lake can burn down, uh, taking with it, I think, probably the community rowboat. But there is a rowboat that just sort of sits on the shore. That someone brought up there.

00:11:33 John Host Right.

00:11:34 Jesse Host And there is a couple of different broken paddles. And you push off into the lake, and go around the outside of it, and look at minnows.

00:11:42 John Host I don't wanna get all nautical with you.

00:11:44 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:11:45 John Host Oars.

00:11:47 Jesse Host Yeah, well... I mean, no, I'm—I'm not sure they're even oars.

[John laughs.]

They may very well be paddles. I don't know what the difference is.

00:11:53 John Host Mm-hm.

00:11:54 Jesse Host *[Stifling laughter]* But it's a really eclectic group of implements.

00:11:56 John Host Well, I'm very sorry to hear that, and our best wishes go out to everyone who's been affected by these wildfires in the West, and I hope that, you know, everything can be rebuilt, and that the lake is okay, and you—your community is okay, first and foremost, and that when the time comes, you can get a new rowboat... with some actual God-or-whatever-damned oars. And oar locks.

Anyway—

00:12:26 Jesse Host Oh, there is 100% no oar locks on that boat. *[Laughs.]*

00:12:29 John Host Well, then, maybe you got paddles.

00:12:31 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:12:32 John Host Tell—my question is, have Sissy and Coco ever been out on the rowboat? Yes or no.

00:12:36 Jesse Host Absolutely, 1000% yes. And they hate it.

00:12:38 John Host Are they—*[laughs]*. What do they do?

00:12:41 Jesse Host It's great.

00:12:42 John Host What do they do?

00:12:43 Jesse Host I put them in—so I was at a garage sale in South Pasadena, the nautical capital of Southern California. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:12:48 John Host That's right.

00:12:50 Jesse Host And there was someone selling some safety lifeboat jackets—what are those called? *[Laughs.]*

00:12:55 John Host PF—PF—personal—PFDs. Personal flotation devices.

00:12:58 Jesse Host Life—yeah. Personal flotation devices for dogs.

00:13:01 John Host Right.

00:13:02 Jesse Host And I bought them, because—

00:13:04 John Host PFDs FDs.

00:13:05 Jesse Host They were the right size, and there were two of 'em, and it was \$5, and I'm like, "Great. Now I'm gonna put my dog in a boat." And, uh, what I like best about them, to be honest, is not bringing the dog in the boat. Because what happens is the dog nervously paces around inside the boat, thus making you nervous 'cause the boat's too small.

00:13:24 John Host Yeah.

00:13:25 Jesse Host For someone to be moving around like that, even if it's a 20-pound dog.

00:13:28 John Host Right.

00:13:29 Jesse Host What I like best about them is that when I put them on my pets, they have a handle on the back.

00:13:34 John Host Yes!

00:13:35 Jesse Host Uh, that allows me to pick my dogs up like a suitcase.

00:13:38 John Host *[Giggles.]* You don't even need to put 'em in the water! You can just have fun.

00:13:43 Jesse Host I just walk around holding my dogs... like two suitcases.

[John laughs quietly.]

From a—you know, like a—a character who's lost in an airport in a seventies movie.

00:13:51 John Host That's fantastic.

00:13:53 Jesse Host It's a joy.

00:13:55 John Host And I dare say, appropriate. Because, uh, you're safe. Your dogs have PF...Ds, FDs. Personal Flotation Devices For Dogs. And you are on very calm water.

00:14:10 Jesse Host Indeed.

00:14:12 John Host And you're in a—and you're in a rowboat. Did I already say that? You're in a rowboat.

00:14:16 Jesse Host Hm.

00:14:17 John Host Now, have you—do—are you familiar with the, uh, the phrase "Tippecanoe (*Tippy Canoe*) and Tyler Too"?

00:14:23 Jesse Host Sure.

00:14:24 John Host It was a—it was originally a campaign song of the Whig Party's Log Cabin Campaign in the 1840 United States Presidential Election regarding William Henry Harrison, the Hero of Tippecanoe, and his VP nominee John Tyler. "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too." It's a—"Tippecanoe" is not a reference to the fact that canoes are tippy. It's actually a place in Indiana.

But I'll tell you what. Canoes are tippy. And you know what's tippier? Kayaks.

00:14:52 Jesse Host Yeah. They're designed to—you—to—to ride a kayak, you have to prove that if you tip over upside-down, you can tip back right-side-up.

00:15:00 John Host Yeah.

00:15:01 Jesse Host 'Cause upside-down, your face is underwater.

00:15:04 John Host Yeah.

00:15:05 Jesse Host Face is one of the top things people use to breathe.

00:15:07 John Host *[Laughs.]* Yeah. And when your face is underwater, your dog is deeper underwater.

00:15:11 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:15:12 John Host Or floating near you in terror.

00:15:14 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:15:15 John Host Yeah. I mean, look. I—I have—I have done some kayaking. And it is very, very, very nerve-racking. Once you're out on the water, it's fine. And look, I'm not the most gracious of swans. Getting myself into a kayak is, uh, a risk of full immersion every time. And one time, my wife and I went kayaking in a bay. And we were having a grand old time, and we said, "Let's go out to that island that we can see."

And as soon as we were out of the bay, we were in rollicking waves. And by—"rollicking" usually has a positive connotation. I just should—should have said, "horrifying waves, that I knew were going to swamp us and kill us." And if I had a dog with me, of almost any size, surely my life would be... low-quality to zero by now. I was wearing a personal flotation device, of course. But it's cold! It's cold in the waters of Maine. It's no good.

So I approach this question from Katie and Spencer—this dispute, I should say—with real, real trepidation. Because dogs are your friends. And yet, balance in a kayak is a very, very delicate arrangement. So of course I went to the Internet to find what I thought I would find, which is "Please don't go kayaking with your dogs," and all I saw were, "Yeah, here's how you go kayaking with your dog."

[Both laugh.]

"Lots of people do it all the time." *[Laughs.]*

00:16:49 Jesse Host Yeah. I mean, the answer is, you just—if you're worried about

balance, you just mount the dog in a gyroscope!

00:16:53 John

Host

Yeah, that's right. *[Laughs.]* They do. They have dog—I mean, basically, it's like, if there is any activity that you can do with a dog—that you can imagine adding a dog to—there is a company that will try to make that happen, so they can sell that stuff to you.

So not only will this happen, Spencer. Katie will do this, at some point. But it's happening all over... this hemisphere, at least! The part of the Internet that I found. And you can find—you can go to—there—*[laughs]*—there are lots of, of course, videos on YouTube about how to kayak with your dog.

The one I hit was from this person—he's a man from Massachusetts, the commonwealth in New England, named The Comeback Kid, and his dog's name is Loki, and if you would like to spend some time watching a man and his huge German Shepherd sit on the floor of his bathroom with his back—

[Both laugh quietly.]

—with his back to the bathtub! The place that he chose to shoot this video! *[Laughs.]* As he tells you all the steps they took, and all the good deals they got on personal flotation devices. And then watch him and Loki kayaking around. Uh, it's a wonderfully—it's a wonderful, charming video. He's got a great Boston accent, or Massachusetts accent. I'm not sure exactly where he's from. And the—and him talking to Loki as they paddle around, uh, is almost ASMR-like in its calming quality.

00:18:26 John

Host

I checked out a lot of this guy's other videos. It's a lot of, like, "How do you repair a thing in your car?" which sounds handy. I did not find any, uh—any invitation to join a white supremacy movement, which is always a plus when you're coming across a new YouTube channel. I don't know—I don't know anything else about this guy. He seems like a nice fellow. You can check that out if you want. I don't know.

But one piece of advice The Comeback Kid gave, that I think is really important if and when you do this, Katie, is that you heed me, and he... You don't want to be in water you don't understand. You wanna be in calm water. Both The Comeback Kid and I agree on this. You want to train your dog slowly to get used to the kayak, only in a place where you are close to shore, and you are not gonna be in any danger, should your dog or you go in the drink.

It would be good if that drink were warm. Not ice cold, like the waters of Maine, where it's gonna be wildly unpleasant. But you know, a warmer place. So the drink might be sort of like Ovaltine. Like, cold Ovaltine temperature. Uh, and if your dogs are smaller, I think that that's probably... best, right? 'Cause if Loki fell out of The Comeback Kid's kayak, there's no way Loki's getting back—this dog weighs 125 pounds, or something. But if you've got Coco and Sissy—sized dogs, that you can pick up like a handbag at the airport, then you can just pluck 'em out of the water and put 'em right back in your kayak.

So take it easy. Take it slow. Find calm water that you know. I—that—I wanna find something that'll rhyme with "know" again, but I

can't.

[Jesse laughs quietly.]

So just follow those rules.

00:20:14 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:20:16 John Host And get those PFDs! FDs!

00:20:20 Jesse Host Susan says:

"My best friend and I have been arguing about the meaning of the Bob Marley song, 'No Woman, No Cry' since high school. Does it mean, as I say, 'If you don't have a woman, you won't cry,' or as she says, 'Please woman, don't cry?'"

00:20:37 John Host Well! Jesse, what's your take?

00:20:39 Jesse Host Well, as a graduate of UC Santa Cruz...

[John laughs.]

The—the Bob Marley's *Legend* of universities...

[Both laugh.]

00:20:50 John Host Yes?

00:20:52 Jesse Host Uh, I—I've—I heard this song in a four-year period over seven billion times.

00:20:56 John Host Yes?

00:20:58 Jesse Host To me, it seems self-evident that it is the latter. "Please woman, don't cry." Now, if I were gonna do research on this, I would probably call DJ Hadai, from KZSC FM in Santa Cruz, uh, a really nice white guy with dreadlocks, uh, who would compete in sound system competitions while toasting in Patois.

00:21:19 John Host Hmm.

00:21:21 Jesse Host Which is apparently totally a thing. Even, like, Japanese dudes in sound system competitions toast in Patois. "Ear me now!" and the whole nine yards. Uh, very sweet man, DJ Hadai.

00:21:35 John Host Okay.

00:21:36 Jesse Host Um, so I would double check with him, given his expertise in the subject of Jamaican Patois. *[Laughs.]*

But I'm gonna—I'm gonna say that, uh, my impression was always that it was, "Please woman, don't cry."

00:21:47 John Host What I liked about what you said was, "If I were to do some research." Right?

00:21:50 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:21:51 John Host "If I were to do some research." You had in mind, right, a very specific person with a very specific, uh, skill and knowledge base that you could reach out to. So perhaps Susan, who wrote in, felt, uh—uh, "Oh, well, I don't know DJ Hadai. I better ask John Hodgman."

And what's John Hodgman gonna do? What's John Hodgman gonna do? I'm just gonna type it into the Internet! And I found out the answer in two seconds, Susan! How dare you? Don't make me your Google.

Now, look. I was all set to find out that Susan, you—that Susan was right! 'Cause I had always heard it as, "If you have no relationships, you never cry." *[Laughs.]* I think that that's because I raised myself as an only-child sexless loner.

[Both laugh.]

And also, I never listened to the rest of the lyrics to give it any context whatsoever. 'Cause I was just like, "Okay. Oh, I know—I know what song this is, playing in the Coffee Connection. I'm just going to tune out now."

00:22:52 John Host

But I did use that Internet. I went to Wikipedia. By the way, donate some money to Wikipedia. I know we got our money going everywhere these days, and we're supporting a lot of funds, and a lot of movements, and a lot of pushes to make, uh, normal a new and better normal. But Wikipedia is a big part of our lives, and they need some cash. Give 'em—I—give 'em five bucks, if you can.

And according to Wikipedia, Susan, you are wrong. Your best friend is correct, as is Jesse Thorn. I quote:

"The lyric is sometimes misunderstood by those outside of Jamaica. Alright. Got it. Message received.

"To mean, 'If there is no woman, there is no reason to cry.' But the lyric is rendered, 'No, woman, nuh cry' in Jamaican Patois. The 'nuh' is pronounced with a short schwa, a 'mumbled' vowel, and represents a clitic, or weakened, form of 'no.'"

And the in—and the connotation being, it is—the singer is saying to his partner, "Please don't cry. No, woman. No cry." This is at least according to Kwame Senu Neville Dawes's book *Bob Marley: Lyrical Genius*. Which is cited in Wikipedia. And until DJ Hadai tells me otherwise—

[Jesse laughs quietly.]

—I'm going to go with the consensus of Jesse's interpretation, what Wikipedia tells me based on an actual book, and remind you, Susan, as well: If you can write to me, you can write to Google.

00:24:27 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:24:29 John Host That sounds mean. Susan? I'm sorry. I'm sounding mean, 'cause you made me do some Googling for you. The fact is I love Googling. I wouldn't do this show if I didn't love Googling. And you know what, Susan? I take it back. Uh, you're still wrong. But, uh, any time you need me to Google something, send it in. I'll do what I can.

00:24:46 Jesse Host Let's take a quick break. More items on the docket coming up in just a minute on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

00:24:54 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:24:56 Jesse Promo Every episode of *Judge John Hodgman* is of course supported by the members of MaximumFun.org. Now more than ever.

This week, we are also supported by a brand new book from a friend of ours, Megan Lynn Kott, called *Unfamiliar Familiars*. If you don't know what a familiar is, it's... a witch's friend. You know, witches have little friends, little animal friends.

00:25:22 John Promo Yeahhh! Witches have—you know, a little—little—a little, like a—like a raven that goes, "BRAAAK!" Or like a little cat that goes, "Reeeowww."

00:25:31 Jesse Promo Exactly.

00:25:33 John Promo Or, you know. It's called their familiar. If you were into D&D, you knew this. But you know what? It's always a cat or a crow. That's dull! Shouldn't there be more? I mean, you want different kinds of familiars, don't you?

Unfamiliar Familiars is a new encyclopedic guide to finding and caring for your unconventional magical animal!

00:25:52 Jesse Promo Capybara. That's my favorite.

[John snorts.]

I want a capybara.

00:25:57 Crosstalk Crosstalk **John:** Burrowing owl—

Jesse: It's the world's largest rodent.

[Beat.]

John: Uh—

Jesse: What about a dik-dik?

John: Is there a dik-dik in this book?

Jesse: It's a kind of—it's like a little tiny antelope—type deal.

00:26:06 John Promo Yeah, they got—hedgehogs apparently pair well with hedge witches. "Hedgehog, rustic defender!" And there's a little note about what hedgehogs are like. "Gentle souls, never attack others. They are, however, masters of defensive magic."

[Both laugh quietly.]

"Most hedgehogs, even the smallest hoglets, know at least a few simple cantrips to dispel predators." There's suggested names: Douglas, Hoggle... *[Stifles laughter.]* Douglas. I love human names for animals. Hoggle, Needle Pig, Spiny, Amy, Rose, and Tansy.

There's just picture after picture of delightful, strange, wonderful, exotic, and simply mundane animals, like the earthworm. What if you had an earthworm familiar? That's for witches who apparently get really excited about tomato season. That's not my joke. That's right here in this book, *Unfamiliar Familiars*.

[Jesse laughs quietly, John stifles laughter.]

Extraordinary Animal Companions for the Modern Witch.

00:26:56 Jesse Promo One of the suggested names for a capybara familiar is Vinegar Tom.

[John cracks up.]

It's a really sweet book. You don't have to be a real life witch.

00:27:06 John Promo

No.

00:27:07 Jesse Promo

You can just aspire to witchery.

00:27:09 John Promo

No, and let me tell you right now. If you're a Dracula? No. You can't buy the book.

00:27:13 Jesse Promo

Yeah. That's the only group that's really excluded from buying this book, is Dracs.

00:27:16 John Promo

Yeah. Dracs can't buy this book.

00:27:18 Jesse Promo

Absolutely not.

00:27:19 John Promo

But Megan Lynn Kott—you know Megan Lynn Kott. She designs all of the enamel pins for the MaxFunDrive every year. She did that incredible calendar of all of your MaxFun friend hosts as cats, if you've ever seen the image of Judge John Hodgman as a big floofy mustachioed cat wearing sunglasses? Uh, se mois.

She's super sweet. She's a wonderful person, and an incredible illustrator, and this book is super duper charming, and fun to read. And I hope that you will check it out. *Unfamiliar Familiars* is available at ChronicleBooks.com, or wherever books are sold. Find out your familiar today.

Oh! You can take a quiz! On ChronicleBooks.com/familiar, take your quiz to find out your familiar, and then get your copy!

00:28:07 Jesse Promo

Ooh, and *Judge John Hodgman* listeners get 30% off at ChronicleBooks.com through December with the promo code "familiars." So go do that! I mean, you could hardly do—Chronicle Books makes such beautiful books, and this one is no exception. So go to ChronicleBooks.com and order Megan's new book. You get 30% off with the code "familiars."

00:28:28 John Promo

You'll know it's *Unfamiliar Familiars* when you find the book with a sloth hanging from a flying broom on the cover.

00:28:37 Sound Effect Transition

[Three gavel bangs.]

00:28:39 Promo Clip

Music: Dramatic organ/piano music.

[Background noise throughout: a howling wolf and cawing crow. April speaks in a sinister voice.]

April Wolfe: Hello there, ghouls and gals. It is I, April Wolfe. I'm here to take you through the twisty, sca-a-a-ry, heart-pounding world of genre cinema on the exhilarating program known as [Switchblade Sisters](#).

[Sinister echo on the title.]

The concept is simple: I invite a female filmmaker on each week, and we discuss their favorite genre film. Listen in closely to hear past guests, like *The Babadook* director Jennifer Kent, *Winter's Bone* director Debra Granik, and so many others every Thursday on MaximumFun.org. Tune in! If you dare...

[Thunder booms, something growls over April as she cackles evilly, and then all sound abruptly cuts.]

April: *[Rapidly]* It's actually a very thought-provoking show that deeply explores the craft and philosophy behind the filmmaking process while also examining film through the lens of the female gaze. So, like, you should listen.

[Same sinister echo effect] Switchblade Sisters!

00:29:26 Sound Effect Transition

[Three gavel bangs.]

00:29:28 Jesse Host

Welcome back to the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. We're clearing the docket with a case here from Michael:

"My wife Stacy is currently playing *Zelda: A Link to the Past*, which is one of my favorite old video games. Since she's playing it on Nintendo Switch, it has a feature where you can stop time and rewind. So when she dies, or takes damage, she can simply rewind and try again.

This cheapens a game that means a lot to me. She also never gets better, because she doesn't have to learn enemy patterns or attacks, since she can just revive any time. She doesn't see this as cheating, and claims it doesn't matter.

I seek an order for her to play the game as it was meant to be played."

00:30:09 John Host

"This cheapens a game that means a lot to me." We'll return to that phrase in a moment. Jesse Thorn, have you ever played a *Zelda* game?

00:30:17 Jesse Host

I have only played—I never had a Nintendo as a kid.

00:30:21 John Host

Right.

00:30:22 Jesse Host

I did have a Sega Genesis, which does what Ninten-don't.

[John groans.]

But, uh—*[laughs]*. Yeah.

[John groans again.]

That—was that a sound of, uh, blast processing envy coming from you, John?

00:30:33 John Host

[Laughs.] Yeah. I was just—look, they took it—they turned it into a street fight. That's for sure.

00:30:39 Jesse Host

Yeah. Um, I, uh—I have recently—my friend Jordan Morris, my co-

host on *Jordan, Jesse, Go!*, was kind enough at the beginning of the quarantine to drop off at my house a Nintendo Wii U, which was a sort of intermediary console that was a semi-failure. But he thought my kids would like it. Turns out mostly I play it.

00:31:05 John Host

Mm-hm!

00:31:06 Jesse Host

And it's because it came with the game *Zelda: Breath of the Wild*, which is an extraordinarily awesome video game.

00:31:13 John Host

Oh!

00:31:14 Jesse Host

And I've been playing it slowly over the last six months. Uh, just sort of wan—mostly wandering around. But occasionally, you know, achieving goals. And, uh, it's fantastic. It's so fun and cool. It's so great.

00:31:29 John Host

I have never played a *Zelda* game in my life. But—well, I take it back. I played one *Zelda*-related game. And that game is to log on to a Twitter account belonging to one Ariel—now I've never known how to pronounce her last name. It's D-U-M-A-S. So in French it would be Du-mah. But an Americanization would be Du-mahs. I don't know. Ariel Dumas (*Du-mahs*). A-R-I-E-L, D-U-M-A-S.

Uh, she is a writer for *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, or at least was recently. That's how I knew her vaguely. But the *Zelda*-related game that I would play is to wait for her—which she does from time to time—to say on her Twitter account, out of nowhere, "Zelda is the boy," and watch gaming guys freak out.

[Both laugh.]

And try to explain to her that *Zelda* is not the boy. That Link is the boy, and Zelda is the princess. And then she will just, you know, like, straight-facedly go, like, "Well, no. The—the person on the cover of the box is the hero of the game. So that's *Zelda*. *Zelda's* the boy."

[Both laugh.]

And they're—"No, *Zelda* is the princess! Link is—how can you not know this?" And she'll be just like, "Well, it's this extremely popular series of games that's been around for a long time. So it's obvious that *Zelda* is the boy."

00:32:57 John Host

And it's pure trolling. I mean, it's like—we're not supposed to troll. I get it. But this thing delights me to no end. Any time—you should just go follow her. She's a great Twitterer anyway. And, uh—but this thing that she does just makes me so happy. "*Zelda* is the boy."

[Jesse laughs quietly.]

Anyway...

00:33:14 Jesse Host

When you said you had only ever played one *Zelda* game, I thought it was a build-up to you having rented the *Zelda* game that was only available on Philips CD-Interactive.

00:33:23 John Host

Yeah. No.

00:33:24 Jesse Host

That you could get at Blockbuster. *[Laughs.]*

00:33:25 John Host Oh, yeah. I see Jennifer Marmor laughing along to that one. She knows what you're talking about.

00:33:30 Jesse Host Yeah, Jennifer is really big into full motion video games. *[Laughs.]* FMV.

00:33:36 John Host Jennifer Marmor, are you—are you—can you speak to us for a moment?

00:33:39 Jennifer Marmor Producer Yeah!

00:33:40 John Host Are you a Zeldist?

00:33:42 Jennifer Producer I'm not, but the only *Zelda* game that I ever played was that one for Philips CD-i.

00:33:47 John Host Oh, okay.

[Jesse cracks up.]

I'm just trying to find someone within the sound of my voice for whom *Zelda* means a lot. 'Cause I get it. I get that Michael is connected to this game. But the idea that Stacy playing the game however she chooses to play it is "cheapening" the game... I—I—I can't accept that.

You place the value—you know, you have your relationship with this game, and it is meaningful to you. Stacy is playing her own game. You're not playing against each other, so it's not cheating. You can't cheat unless you're playing against each other. She's playing within the rules, the new—obviously the newer rules, 'cause this is the legacy version of *Zelda*. It's a—literally a link to the past.

Oh, they even put "Link" in the title. I just noticed that. *[Chuckles.]*

00:34:36 Jesse Host Mm-hm.

00:34:37 John Host Funny.

But as is true, controversially, in *Animal Crossing*... whatever the newest one is, you can rewind and go back in time. That's—they're letting you do it. It's not a hack. It's not a cheat. It's the way she's choosing to play the game, the way she wants to play it. And she's not throwing it up in your face, as far as I can tell. She's not beating you on a leaderboard somewhere.

Her experience of a thing does not cheapen your experience of a thing. And that's true no matter what culture is. If you love a TV show so much, and another person hates it, you don't have to get on the Internet to correct them. If you hate Rian Johnson's *The Last Jedi*, that does not mean it's not—*[laughs]*—the best *Star War*. *[Laughs.]* Which is—an argument could be made, it's the best *Star War*!

00:35:31 Jesse Host Nah.

00:35:32 John Host It's a great *Star War*, for sure. It's an amazing movie.

00:35:34 Jesse Host It's probably the best. Whether it, like, is the most—like, obviously the first couple *Star Wars* invented *Star Wars*. It was a pretty big accomplishment. But in terms of just what—which one would I want to watch right now, yeah.

00:35:46 John Host Yeah.

00:35:47 Jesse Host Yeah, absolutely, it's the best *Star War*.

00:35:48 John Host You know, a lot of the more, you know—and it's a term that has now become cliché, but toxic, or just sort of, like, dispiriting, and frustrating, and time-wasting, and hurtful parts of the culture that exist online today in particular is people getting angry at people for not liking things the way they think it should be liked. Or people liking things for the wrong reasons, or people liking the wrong things.

And it's a real waste of time. And it's not just a waste of the receiver's time. It's a waste of the complainer's time. Respectfully, Michael. You should be living your life enjoying the things, and enjoying Stacy, rather than trying to police her understanding or appreciation of the game.

And one of the reasons that I give Ariel Dumas (*Du-mah*), Dumas (*Du-mahs*)—I'm very sorry that I don't know how to pronounce your last name. You're a friend on the Internet! You know what I mean? One of the reasons that I give her trolling a pass is that because she's trolling the trolls. She's trolling primarily—[mumbling] don't wanna generalize—[stops mumbling]—but primarily the GUYS who get up in other people's feeds, complaining that they don't like the video game the right way. That's the art of it.

It's still trolling. It's still trolling. I get it.

00:37:06 John Host So anyway, Michael, I am not saying that you're a troll. I'm not saying you're wasting your life. I'm just saying, as Tony Faulkner once said to me in a Columbia University dorm in 1991: "Take it down a thousand." Take it down a thousand! It's fine. Let Stacy enjoy the game the way she wants to. It does not cheapen the game that means a lot to you. Its value is between you and Zelda, who is the boy.

00:37:34 Sound Effect Sound Effect [Three gavel bangs.]

00:37:35 Jesse Host Karen says:

"I have a harmless habit of leaving empty water glasses around the house. We're not talking very many glasses, usually just three, on my desk, my nightstand, and the kitchen counter. But I work from home, and did pre-pandemic as well, and my husband is a firefighter, who's home several days a week."

00:37:55 John Host Hm.

00:37:56 Jesse Host "It never escapes his notice, and he gets after me about this near daily. If he sees me with a glass, he adopts a joking-but-not-really tone and demands to know how many I have out, after which he generally grumbles off to retrieve and wash them. He's making work for himself, and annoyance for us both, so please issue an injunction against disturbing my glasses."

00:38:17 John Host Making work for himself?! Karen! That does not compute! You're leaving the glasses out! Hang on. Jesse Thorn? How do you feel about half-empty glasses around the house?

00:38:33 Jesse Host I leave glasses out.

00:38:35 John Host You leave glasses out?

00:38:36 Jesse Host I do.

00:38:38 John Host I didn't notice the last time I visited you. Granted, that was some time ago.

00:38:42 Jesse Host I absolutely am a person who leaves glasses out. I often have a glass at my place at the table.

00:38:49 John Host Mm-hm.

00:38:50 Jesse Host I often have a glass on my desk.

00:38:53 John Host Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

00:38:54 Jesse Host And I almost always have a glass on my bedside table. So it's a very similar habit to Karen.

00:39:01 John Host All empty?

00:39:02 Jesse Host Generally empty. Um, and you know, the truth is that I drink so many glasses of water during the day that I probably—in my mind, I refill the glass that's close to me with water.

00:39:19 John Host Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

00:39:21 Jesse Host It doesn't get gross and dirty, 'cause it's just water.

00:39:23 John Host Mm-hmmm?

00:39:24 Jesse Host And then, you know, at the end of the day, maybe, I put it in the dishwasher.

00:39:26 John Host It's dusty—dusty water. Dusty droplets.

00:39:29 Jesse Host I guess. I guess.

00:39:30 John Host Dusty droplets in there.

00:39:31 Jesse Host Maybe your house is really dusty. Mine isn't. That's actually not true; my house is pretty dusty. *[Laughs.]*

00:39:37 John Host Let's just—we'll table this for a second, 'cause I want us to be friends. So just hang on for a sec. One thing that occurred was—during the past six extraordinary, unbearable months, or however long it's been. Ten years or whatever. You know, we live in an apartment building, and our neighbors, uh, left at some point. For a long period of time. They went—they went away, to a family place, to be out of the city.

And we're close friends with them. And this was during, you know, the beginnings of remote learning and teaching, and my wife is a teacher, a remote teacher, and our kids were doing remote learning, and we would use that—their apartment, with their permission, to do school, basically. Just to get people out from on top of each other, 'cause as you know, Jesse, we all live in one big room, basically.

00:40:31 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:40:33 John Host And at—you know, we weren't spending a lot of time in there. And after three or four months, they were coming back. And my wife decided to go over there and clean up. Right? 'Cause we had been using it. And she came back and she said, "You know, I cleaned up, but then I went in there to like, dust and vacuum? There's no dust. No dust. 'Cause no one's living there. And you know what dust is? Skin. Mostly skin."

It was creepy to learn.

Anyway, you got dusty skin, dusty water glasses hanging around all over the place, fine, Jesse. That's the way you do it. Does anyone in the household, uh, hate it? Does Theresa hate it?

00:41:15 Jesse Host If she does, she's always been kind enough not to mention.

00:41:20 John Host Mm-hm. Theresa is not a firefighter, right?

00:41:25 Jesse Host Not... to my understanding.

00:41:27 John Host Right. So unlike Karen's husband, Theresa wouldn't know that an empty water glass is the most likely way a house fire is gonna start in a home. Did you know that?

[Both laugh.]

00:41:38 Jesse Host I didn't. I did not know that.

00:41:40 John Host Yeah—

00:41:41 Jesse Host But again, my wife is not—my partner is not a firefighter. So I don't know how I would have known that.

00:41:45 John Host Spontaneous skin dust water droplet combustion. It happens.

00:41:48 Jesse Host Got it. Yeah.

00:41:49 John Host That's what Karen's husband knows better than she does! No, it's not true. Obviously it's not true.

It's just that Karen, you and your husband have different standards of tidiness. There's cleanliness, and then there's tidiness. And you know, cleanliness is obviously, like, scrubbing toilets and—and, uh, showers and stuff. Tidiness is what you leave around. And people have a different tolerance level, as we've discussed on the podcast before, for levels of clutter. It's essentially visual pollution.

[Laughs.] In my case. That's how I feel about it.

00:42:28 Jesse Host *[Feigning bafflement]* Which side of this issue are you on, John?
[Stifles laughter.]

00:42:30 John Host I can't stand it!

[Jesse laughs quietly.]

Caaan't stand it!

00:42:35 Jesse Host You're the—you're on the side of people who somehow can have one of those refrigerators with a see-through door.

00:42:40 John Host I have a—I have a refrigerator with a see-through door, and it's fantastic! It's fantastic.

00:42:43 Jesse Host I know! And you somehow are able to manage the inside of your refrigerator so well that it's not embarrassing to have a refrigerator with a—with a *[inaudible]*.

00:42:52 John Host Well, you can't hide anything in there! So you don't let stuff, like, just—there's only so long you can marinate the stump of a burrito, Jesse, before it becomes garbage.

[Jesse laughs quietly.]

If you see it in there, you're like, "Oh, I gotta get to that thing. I gotta eat it." Try—look. I'm not saying my system is correct. I'm just saying it works for me.

00:43:10 Jesse Host

Right.

00:43:11 John Host

But when you join a household, right? You—it's unlikely that you're gonna have the same standards of tidiness, the same standards of, like—you know, like, uh, leaving glasses around. Karen never sees it. But her husband always sees it. And makes a point of letting her know, "I don't like this. I'm gonna clean it up for you." And that does not mean that Karen's right, and her husband is wrong. It just means they have different tolerance levels for tidiness in different ways.

For example, say you're the host of a fairly popular judge podcast. And your... wife... turns a chair into a closet. And it is full of clothes, all the time.

00:43:59 Jesse Host

Mm-hm.

00:44:02 John Host

Now part of my job is to not see that.

00:44:06 Jesse Host

Mm-hm.

00:44:07 John Host

Is to train my brain to not see it anymore. To adapt to that different standard of tidiness. Right? Should I have to live that way? One might argue no.

00:44:21 Jesse Host

[Laughs quietly.] No, one should always live as a twelve-year-old adult man, in a dusty old house, wherein he has what amounts to a bachelor apartment!

[Both laugh.]

00:44:32 John Host

You're talking about me now. *[Laughing]* Yeah, I get it.

00:44:34 Jesse Host

One should carry a briefcase to high school! *[Laughs.]*

00:44:35 John Host

I kept it tidy up there! I kept it tidy up there in my suite of rooms! Everything was—everything was in its place! No empty water glasses! But that's—you know, that's the only consolation of living alone and dying alone, is that you get to set the standard of tidiness.

You have to find a middle ground. I've—and the truth is, Karen, I don't think that it is... great that your firefighter husband, who's out there saving lives and stopping fires—great for him, thank you—I don't think it's great that he's making this big theatrical show of cleaning up these glasses, and trying to guilt you into it. He should be more forthright and send a message. "I can't—I can't stand this. Stop it. Or, like, just one, please."

And you should hear him, and decide whether you can adjust your behavior. Rather than this detante where you just keep leaving those glasses out, and you know he doesn't like it, and you think he's making work for himself, when you're making the work that he feels compelled to do.

And if he's not willing to just have that conversation of feeling with you, then... he should just do the work! Do what, say, certain...

certain hosts of certain semi-popular *Judge John Hodgman* podcast shows do, which is, every morning, go through the house and collect all the discarded cups and glasses, and put them in the dishwasher! The only one who does it, and that's my burden to bear.

[Jesse laughs quietly.]

00:46:06 John Host And I'm—I'm fine with that. I find in favor of Karen, until and unless her husband—whom she didn't even bother to name. He's such a non-entity to her.

[Jesse laughs quietly.]

When the firefighter—hubby firefighter—can speak openly and say, "Here is what I can tolerate. Here's what I can't tolerate. When I see the glasses, it makes me feel like the house is gonna go on fire. Can we just not do this anymore?" And if he says that to you, then you should adjust your behavior.

Until he's ready to be open with you, you're—uh, I find in your favor.

00:46:38 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:46:39 Jesse Host Let's take a quick break. When we come back, disputes about mask-sharing, and sports.

00:46:44 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:46:47 Promo Clip **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.]

00:47:35 Sound Effect Transition

[Three gavel bangs.]

00:47:37 Jesse Promo

It's *Judge John Hodgman*. We're taking a quick break from clearing the docket to talk about what we've got going on. What have you got going on, John?

00:47:44 John Promo

Well, Jesse, of course, uh, David Rees and I co-created a short form animated series the name of which I shall never mention on this podcast, but I will encourage, uh, adults, and adult-minded younger people—it's a hard PG-13, with some cursing language in it—to check it out on Hulu. All episodes are available at [Bit.ly/dicktown](https://bit.ly/dicktown). That's Bit.ly—B-I-T dot L-Y—slash "Dicktown," all one word, all small letters.

And as well, *Medallion Status: True Stories from Secret Rooms*, the paperback edition of my latest book, is being published on October the 13th. You can get it at your public library, or wherever books are stored, shelved, or sold. And I'll be doing some events for that. They should be up on JohnHodgman.com/tour by now.

Now, I'm sorry to do a little bit of political talk. But I just wanted to say that after last week's episode, listener Kelsey reached out to me to say that she is captaining a phone banking team for voter protection in Wisconsin, and I was very glad to spend some time with her and Marzi and lots of other Zoom pals, calling to recruit poll workers and poll observers in that, the great badger state.

I had an incredible conversation with a woman named Cynthia, who is now gonna be a poll worker, and that's such an important thing to get young, healthy people out to the polls, no matter what party you support. We want—poll workers are typically much older, and much more vulnerable. So—to the virus. So it's great if you can get out there. It's a paid position. If you feel like joining in, Kelsey's group meets every Monday. There are lots of other times you could sign up.

Go to [Bit.ly/gogetemkelsey](https://bit.ly/gogetemkelsey). G-O-G-E-T-E-M-K-E-L-S-E-Y.

00:49:27 John Promo

Listener Ryan wrote in to suggest text banking as an alternative to phone calling, and introverts rejoice, it is an alternative. Texting to voters, encouraging them to register to vote, encouraging them to go and vote, letting them know what's going on. Letting them know what the deadlines are for voting in their state. I myself did a text banking training Zoom yesterday, online, at home in bed. It was—just had to listen. And it looks great, and I'm signed on, and I can't wait to hop on to some texts and start texting people.

If you wanna take the same training I took, you can go to [Bit.ly/gotextemryan](https://bit.ly/gotextemryan). G-O-T-E-X-T-E-M Ry—Ryan. R-Y-A-N. Go text 'em, Ryan! I'm making this harder and harder.

Finally, uh, maybe you're more interested in a local race. I just wanted to share this one thing from our listener Stephanie Hirsch. And I'm giving her last name because she wrote in on behalf of her

mom Sharon Hirsch, who is running for the Texas State House of Representative. HD 66, right now down there in Plano, Texas. She said that this is a district that's been highlighted to flip by groups like Flippable, and listener Meg's Swing Left.

In 2018, her mom lost to the incumbent by less than 400 votes, and that was just with a ragtag group running the campaign, consisting of mostly friends and family. She says:

"We feel really good about this year, but we know it won't be possible if people don't go out and vote." End quote. I think it's absolutely, incredibly adorable and wonderful that Stephanie Hirsch's mom's running for the State House of Representatives in Texas, and that she's out there stumping for her mom.

00:51:06 John Promo

If you wanna find out more about this particular campaign, just go to [Bit.ly/gogetemmom](https://bit.ly/gogetemmom), G-O-G-E-T-E-M-M-O-M. Go get 'em, Mom.

And whether this one's for you or not, state and local races matter a lot! Go out and find one that you care about.

And finally, I just wanna say thank you to Dan, and all the other republican and more conservative-leaning folks who listen to the podcast, who wrote to me, to take me a little bit to task, or to offer a different point of view. Uh, I really enjoyed writing back to them, and talking with them.

I don't do this to change minds. Nor do I do reach-out to change minds. I just feel it's an important time for me to state my values. To tell you how I see things, and what I'm doing. And wishing you well.

So I really appreciate your listening, if you don't agree with me, if you do agree with me. I'm glad you're there. I'm glad for the chance to talk to you. If you wanna bring something to my attention, just write to me at hodgman@maximumfun.org.

Jesse Thorn, what's going on in your world?

00:52:11 Jesse Promo

We just had the huge fall drop of new products in my vintage store, the Put This On Shop. It's a vintage store—not just vintage clothes. There are some vintage clothes, but mostly home goods and gift items, and jewelry, and so forth. You can find it online at PutThisOnShop.com, and you can use the code "justice" for free shipping on your order for almost everything in our store. Everything except the biggest stuff, or overseas shipping.

PutThisOnShop.com.

00:52:38 John Promo

Quick qesh. What's a musical cigar?

00:52:41 Jesse Promo

[Laughing] Uh, hard to say, but they're in their original packaging!

00:52:46 John Promo

[Laughs.] Available at PutThisOnShop.com?

00:52:50 Jesse Promo

[Stifling laughter] Yeah, you got it!

00:52:51 John Promo

Ohhh, what the what?! A Palmer Method penmanship pin?!

00:52:57 Jesse Promo

Yeah! If you've got nice penmanship, or, ironically bad penmanship...

00:53:02 John Promo

You can give that as a gift to some—to your doctor!

00:53:05	Jesse	Promo	Yeah. Absolutely.
00:53:07	John	Promo	This is incredible stuff at PutThisOnShop.com , and I encourage you from the bottom, and the top, and the middle of my heart, please go check it out. There are lots of gifts there. And it's getting to be that time!
00:53:17	Jesse	Promo	Let's get back to the docket.
00:53:18	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:53:20	Jesse	Host	Welcome back to the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast. We're clearing the docket this week. Here's something from Cosima: "I would like to bring a complaint against my husband Mark. We have a set of three matching masks, of which two are his. The third, which is mine, has my name written on it to prevent mix-ups. The problem is my husband <u>constantly</u> uses my mask. I think—"
00:53:42	John	Host	Okay, stop! Stop.
00:53:44	Jesse	Host	Yeah.
00:53:45	John	Host	Alright. Read some more. I know I'm not gonna...
00:53:46	Jesse	Host	Okay.
00:53:47	John	Host	Yeah.
00:53:48	Jesse	Host	"The problem is my husband constantly uses my mask. I think this is gross."
00:53:51	John	Host	Yeah!
00:53:52	Jesse	Host	"I don't wanna use a mask that he's mouth-breathed, and potentially coughed or sneezed into. His argument is that we have traded plenty of bodily fluids." Ew. "So he doesn't see what the big deal is. To be clear, it's not that I'm nervous about getting <u>sick</u> through sharing a mask. It's that I don't wanna smell his fabric-preserved breath, and I shouldn't have to, considering that he has his <u>own masks</u> ."
00:54:13	John	Host	Cosima, you—Cosima, you don't need to make any more argument. I let that go on so we could get out that incredible phrase, "fabric-preserved breath."
00:54:20	Jesse	Host	Uh-huh. <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:54:22	John	Host	That was well-turned phrase. But you were right from the beginning! The mask has your <u>name</u> on it! Cosima's hu—like, this is another thing. It's like, people have different standards! Of what they perceive to be hygienic! It's just—it's just different. And also, there is the <u>reality</u> of what is hygienic: Don't use someone else's mask, dude! I don't care that you swap spit! That has nothing to do with it! It's just a comfort level. And the thing is, like, when you <u>make</u> — <i>[laughs]</i> —when you co-habitate, and you make an arrangement that is to everyone's comfort—right? Such as, "We'll have matching masks, but I'm gonna put my name on mine, 'cause I wanna use mine exclusively." That agreement is baked into the fact that her name is on the mask.

You can't just violate that agreement. You've made the agreement. Stick to it! And don't try to come up with specious arguments that make Cosima feel like she's gotta turn to some Internet judge, and over-explain her position, because you're out there gaslighting her that it doesn't matter! It matters to her. Period.

00:55:27	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:55:29	Jesse	Host	Finally, Colleen says: "What counts as a sport? My brother Jimmy holds the asinine position, 'No ball, no sport.' Meaning in order to be considered a sport, rather than just a game, it needs to be played with a ball. When I point out that this would exclude hockey, which is played with a puck, he says a puck is a type of ball."
00:55:50	John	Host	Oh, boy.
00:55:51	Jesse	Host	"Your Honor, I'm seeking an injunction against my brother to make him drop the ludicrous notion that a hockey puck is a type of ball. I'm <u>also</u> seeking this court's ruling on what distinguishes a game from a sport, or specifically whether a ball is required for sportdom. Please settle this so he and I can go back to discussing comic books in peace."
00:56:10	John	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> Jeez! Jesse Thorn, is a puck a ball?
00:56:14	Jesse	Host	No.
00:56:15	John	Host	Alright.
00:56:16	Jesse	Host	It's a puck.
00:56:17	John	Host	It's a puck. It's a puck! Yeah. Is hockey a sport?
00:56:20	Jesse	Host	Yes.
00:56:22	John	Host	It's a ball-less sport.
00:56:24	Jesse	Host	Yeah, it's a puck sport.
00:56:26	John	Host	Right. So if a hockey puck is not a ball, let me ask brother Jimmy this. Is Formula 1 race car driving a game? Or a sport? Jesse? <i>[Pause.]</i> Is that a game, or a sport?
00:56:40	Jesse	Host	Wow. I mean, I guess it's a sport.
00:56:44	John	Host	Right.
00:56:45	Jesse	Host	I don't like either choice.
00:56:46	John	Host	It doesn't have a ball.
00:56:49	Jesse	Host	No...
00:56:50	John	Host	I mean, it would be pretty incredible if you just threw a beachball out into the—you know, make that part of the race. <i>[Stifles laughter.]</i> Throw a bunch of beachballs out while they're all racing around, and

they have to avoid them.

00:56:58 Jesse Host I mean, is golf a sport or a game?

00:57:01 John Host That has a ball.

00:57:03 Jesse Host It has a ball.

00:57:06 John Host I—

00:57:07 Jesse Host Involves some athleticism.

00:57:09 John Host Right. Is golf more or less athletic than baseball?

00:57:14 Jesse Host Significantly less.

00:57:15 John Host Hm. What about modern pentathlon, as practiced by Donna Vakalis? Is that a game? Or a sport?

00:57:21 Jesse Host You mean our friend from the Olympics?

00:57:22 John Host Yeah. From the Olympic Games?

00:57:24 Jesse Host Yeah, that's right! We have a friend from the Olympics! Her name's Donna! She's a modern pentathlete! She's been in the Olympics two times. How many times have you been in the Olympics, bub?

00:57:33 John Host Yeah. Zero. Is modern pentathlon a sport, or a game?

[Jesse exhales thoughtfully.]

To remind people, modern pentathlon is five skills. Horseback riding. Swimming. Uh, target shooting. Running. And... fencing!

00:57:50 Jesse Host Yeah. You got it. And it's not just horseback riding, it's horseback riding over obstacles.

00:57:56 John Host That's right.

00:57:57 Jesse Host Like a steeple chase-type thing.

00:57:58 John Host Is that a game, or a sport, Jesse? No ball. Is that a game?

00:58:03 Jesse Host I mean, it's definitely sport.

00:58:05 John Host It's an Olympic sport. Part of the Olympic Games.

00:58:07 Jesse Host It is sport. It falls under the category of "sport." Is it a sport?

[John laughs.]

That's a little weirder.

00:58:13 John Host I can see this is really—this is—you—this is more personal with you than I had thought!

00:58:19 Jesse Host I don't—the—my—the real problem here is I don't know the answer. I think the answer is... that it's—that you shouldn't... shouldn't worry about it too much.

00:58:29 John Host Well, yeah, you shouldn't worry about any of this too much. The whole planet's dying. But...

00:58:33 Jesse Host What about cornhole?

00:58:36 John Host Cornhole?

00:58:37 Jesse Host It's on ESPN. *[Laughs.]*

00:58:40 John Host Jennifer Marmor, you know what cornhole is, right?

00:58:42 Jennifer Producer Yeah.

00:58:43 John Host Yeah. Beanbags—you toss beanbags into a—onto a plank, try to get 'em in the hole.

00:58:46 Jennifer Producer Right.

00:58:47 John Host Beanbags are full of corn. Therefore it's called "cornhole."

00:58:50 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Jennifer:** Right.

Jesse: Yeah.

00:58:51 John Host Uh, I understand why this is an issue. Right? This has something to do with "hotdog" and "sandwich"-ness. And by the way, Alton Brown, I love you, but you're wrong.

00:59:02 Jesse Host It has some kind of weird thing to do with toxic masculinity, as well. *[Laughs.]*

00:59:05 John Host Well—

00:59:07 Jesse Host I can't quite put my finger on what it is about it that has to do with toxic masculinity, but—

00:59:09 John Host Here's—here's what it is. Like, all of the ball sports—which, by the way, it's not a coincidence that all these sports have balls.

There is a preoccupation with the kind of masculine bonding that goes with the team sport that causes some people who like those sports to feel unease with regard to the various sports of solitary personal perfection. There is a lonely, introverted oddball-ness to, say, rock climbing, or free diving, or, uh—or pentathlon, those solo sports, that turns jocks off on some level.

Now, I'm not sure exactly what sport Jimmy is trying to wedgie and stick into the nerdy locker of gamedom. But the fact is, he's wrong. And to prove my point, I got a book that Allison Silverman loaned me. Allison Silverman was the original co-executive producer of *The Colbert Report*, and an incredibly funny comedy writer and talent, and I'm not sure where she is now, but she's a friend of this court.

01:00:11 Jesse Host *Portlandia*, a long time.

01:00:12 John Host *Portlandia*. She was the—one of the original writers of *Portlandia*.

Rules Of The Game: The Complete Illustrated Encyclopedia of All the Sports of the World. Game. Sports. Game. Sports. They go together.

[Pages flapping.]

If it's in this book, it's a sport. So let's look it up. Golf? Golf... Gymnastics combat... Let me look in the index of sports.

[Pages flipping.]

Golf. Page 102. It's in. What was the other one?

01:00:45 Jesse Host *[Stifling laughter]* Formula 1 racing?

01:00:47 John Host Yeah. Ra—ra—Form—car racing. "Circuit racing, Sedan and sports car." Page 294. In. Circuit racing.

01:00:55 Jesse Host Pentathlon, modern pentathlon?

01:00:57 John Host Oh, of course. Modern pentathlon. Uh, yeah. Page 30. In. That's in 30. *[Stifles laughter.]* What about—darts? Yep. Sport. What about—

01:01:06 Jesse Host What about cornhole?

01:01:08 John Host *[Sighs.]* No cornhole. *[Laughs.]*

01:01:11 Jesse Host No cornhole?

01:01:12 John Host No cornhole! No cornhole. Not a sport.

01:01:14 Jesse Host Wow.

01:01:15 John Host Canadian five-pin bowling? Yes. Canadian football? Yes. Canoe polo? Yes. Canoe sailing? Yes. Canoe slalom, yes. Carom billiards, yes. This is all the Cs.

01:01:24 Jesse Host Canoe polo?! Wow!

01:01:26 John Host Canoe polo, page 214. What about korfball? Korfball, is that a sport? Of course it is. Page 132.

"Korfball is played by two teams, each with six men and six women."

01:01:40 Jesse Host *[Thoughtful]* Korfball.

01:01:41 John Host Look, I understand why it's—it's tricky. *The Rules of the Game*, I believe, is out of print. It's a great—it's—it has diagrams. It's one of the great, great fun books to look through when you're looking for the rules of darchery, which is darts plus archery.

[Jesse laughs quietly, John stifles laughter.]

And all the big—all the bigs! You know, I get it. All the big league sports. The major league sports. But here's the thing—

01:02:01 Jesse Host Yeah. Major League Baseball, the National Football League, *Dorf on Golf...*

01:02:04 John Host *[Laughs.]* *Dorf on Korfball.*

01:02:07 Jesse Host Yeah. *[Laughs.]*

01:02:08 John Host I'm willing to allocate sports to the world of physical exertion. Or, in the case of baseball and NASCAR, at least you're outside.

[Jesse laughs quietly.]

Games—*[laughs]*. Games are a broader category, of any contest against opponents with agreed-upon rules. So some games are not sports. Obviously, Scrabble. And some games are abominations. Boggle. But all sports are, to a degree, games. Even the ones that you do alone. Because it's got two opponents: you... and your mind.

I'm gonna put cornhole in there. I think it's a sport. I think it's a sport. More of a game. I get it. That there's a continuum. There are more gamey sports, and there are more sporty sports. But there need not be a distinction. And a hockey puck is not a ball.

01:02:58 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

01:03:00 Jesse Host The docket's clear. That's it for another episode of *Judge John Hodgman*. Our producer is Jennifer Marmor. Follow us on Twitter at

[@JesseThorn](#) and [@hodgman](#). We're on Instagram at [@judgejohnhodgman](#). Make sure to hashtag your *Judge John Hodgman* Tweets [#JJHo](#), and check out the MaxFun subreddit, [MaximumFun.Reddit.com](#), to chat about [this week's episode](#).

Submit your cases at [MaximumFun.org/jiho](#), or email hodgman@maximumfun.org.

01:03:28 John Host

Trampolining! Sport. Hang on.

[Jesse laughs quietly.]

Uh, field hockey, yes. Swimming, rowing. Off-shore yacht racing! Ooh hoo hoo! Powerboat racing! Shinty! That's a sport. Skittles! A sport. Snooker! Sport. Take us out, Jesse. Gaelic football, sport.

[Jesse laughs quietly.]

Grass track racing, sport! *[Laughs quietly.]*

01:03:50 Jesse Host

We'll talk to you next time on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

01:03:53 Sound Effect Transition

[Three gavel bangs.]

01:03:57 Music Transition

A cheerful guitar chord.

01:03:58 Speaker 1 Guest

[MaximumFun.org](#).

01:04:00 Speaker 2 Guest

Comedy and culture.

01:04:01 Speaker 3 Guest

Artist owned—

01:04:02 Speaker 4 Guest

—audience supported.