

00:00:00	Sound Effect	Transition	<i>[Three gavel bangs.]</i>
00:00:01	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 coastal Maine's number one... New York-based author...
			<i>[John laughs.]</i>
			...of humorous memoirs... with the initials JH... Judge John Hodgman!
00:00:25	John Hodgman	Host	Hello, yes! With you as always, but <u>not</u> with you... as always. But with you in spirit, and visual! I can see you here. You can see me here, in the studios of WERU Community Radio. 89.9 FM. Don't dial in 99.9 anymore. They don't do it anymore. Right, Joel?
00:00:45	Joel Mann	Guest	That's right.
00:00:46	John	Host	Right. I don't know why they shut that one down. <i>[Stifles laughter.]</i> There's a lot of controversy, I understand. Very—uh, Joel doesn't wanna talk about it.
00:00:52	Joel	Guest	No.
00:00:53	John	Host	Right. Uh, obviously here with our friend, Programs and Operations Manager here at WERU Joel Mann. Joel?
00:01:01	Joel	Guest	Good to be here with you, Judge.
00:01:03	John	Host	Our—ooh, that's a lot of talk from Joel there all of the sudden. Joel, last time I saw you—
			<i>[All three laugh.]</i>
			Last time I saw you was at the supermarket—
00:01:11	Jesse	Host	More like "Chatty Cathy," man.
			<i>[Joel laughs.]</i>
00:01:13	John	Host	I know. Well, you know, we've all been alone for so long! You know? All of the sudden we can't—we can't <u>afford</u> to be flinty misanthropes like, uh, like we move to Maine to become.
00:01:24	Jesse	Host	I can see Joel exchanging a sentence or two with maybe a—a big iron wood stove.
			<i>[John and Joel laugh.]</i>
00:01:31	John	Host	I ran into Joel in the supermarket about a week ago, and Joel wouldn't stop talking to me! I was trying to get my groceries, and Joel said—you said you were gonna pick up a gallon of scallops.
00:01:44	Joel	Guest	Yes, I did. Right off the boat.
00:01:45	John	Host	You say "scallops" ( <i>rhymes with "gallops"</i> ) or "scallops" ( <i>rhymes with "dollops"</i> )?
00:01:47	Joel	Guest	Scallops. ( <i>Rhymes with "dollops"</i> .)
00:01:48	John	Host	Yeah?
00:01:49	Joel	Guest	Yeah.
00:01:50	John	Host	Were you getting 'em there from the supermarket, or were you—?

00:01:51 Joel Guest No, no, no. I got a diver who dives, and, uh—

00:01:54 John Host A gallon! How many is—?

00:01:55 Joel Guest Every year I get a gallon.

00:01:57 John Host How long does a gallon last you?

00:01:59 Joel Guest 'Til August.

00:01:59 John Host Eugh. God.

*[Joel laughs quietly.]*

You freeze 'em?

00:02:02 Joel Guest Yeah! They're perfect when frozen.

00:02:04 John Host Oh, okay.

*[John and Joel laugh.]*

00:02:05 Joel Guest Yeah, yeah, no!

00:02:06 John Host I was gonna say! "How do—how have you lived?!"

Now, I wanna get some scallops today, where do I go?

00:02:10 Joel Guest Call David Tarr. I'll give you his number.

00:02:13 John Host Alright. So I'm gonna get some scallops after we record this podcast.

*[Jesse laughs.]*

Yeah, I'm up here in coastal Maine. Hiding out. *[Stifles laughter.]*  
Hiding out with an elderly relative.

00:02:23 Jesse Host *[Laughing]* I'm just—I feel so inadequate for not having my own scallop diver!

*[John and Joel laugh.]*

00:02:32 John Host Ah. It's true—

00:02:33 Joel Guest Everybody has a scallop diver, don't they?

00:02:35 John Host I'm here in coastal Maine, hiding out with my family for the foreseeable future. Jesse Thorn, you are there in Los Angeles, looking good in your home studio, and Jennifer Marmor, you are also there in Los Angeles, looking good in your home studio. Uh, how are you—are you guys doing as okay as possible?

00:02:53 Jesse Host *[A leaf blower is audible in the background.]*

Yeah, you know. I mean, my friends the Gardeners just arrived, and they're building a house across the street from my house, and I live on like a... 15-foot-wide street. *[Laughs.]*

00:03:05 John Host Are we gonna—

00:03:05 Jesse Host With no sidewalks! *[Laughs.]*

00:03:06 John Host Are we gonna hear a leaf blower today, or what?

00:03:08 Jesse Host Hey, it just started, baby! It's here!

00:03:11 John Host Oh, great! I'm here in the isolation booth at WERU, where they are

maintaining impeccable, uh, depopulated, multiple cleanings a day. I'm in a room where no one else has been for months, said Joel. I can tell. But I'm sitting in a chair—listen to this!

*[Whoosh, click, mingled with the leaf blower.]*

Oh, wait a minute.

*[Louder whoosh, mingled with the leaf blower.]*

You hear it go "FSHH, FSHH, FSHH"? Can you hear it, Jennifer Marmor?

00:03:37 Jennifer Marmor Producer

Yes. I can hear it.

00:03:38 John Host

That's not as good as a leaf blower. I'll try to find a better sound for you here in the studios of WERU. Maybe the sound of my voice, as we lay down some justice. You and me, Jesse Thorn, old friend. What do we got on the docket?

00:03:51 Jesse Host

Here's something from Jay. He says:

"Is butt leg?"

*[Beat.]*

00:03:55 John Host

*[Laughing]* What?

00:03:56 Jesse Host

I guess I should read the rest. I kinda wanna leave it there.

*[Jesse and John laugh.]*

That's like a question my three-year-old would definitely ask. Frankie would say, *[high-pitched]* "Dad, is butt leg?"

*[Jesse and John laugh, Jesse stops the toddler voice.]*

"My view," says Jay, "is the gluteal region is part of the leg, an argument endorsed by my med school textbooks and anatomy professors. Functionally, and even aesthetically, butt is leg!"

*[John laughs.]*

"But, my friend says, 'Butt cannot be leg! Butt is butt! Nothing more. If anything, butt is hip! The gluteal muscles act on the hip joint.'

The argument is not settled, and cannot be without a decision by the judge. Thank you for considering our case."

John, would you say that you're more of a butt man, or a butt man?

*[Jesse and John laugh.]*

00:04:46 John Host

Well, look. I'll tell you one thing. I'm not a writer of anatomy textbooks. I'm no butt doctor, with a—with—like this guy.

*[Jesse laughs.]*

With his fancy med school degree in buttology. I'm a fake judge. And like a real judge once said about movies featuring naked butts and other shamey parts, I may not be able to define butt, but I know a butt when I see it.

What do you think, Jesse? Butt—is butt leg?

00:05:15 Jesse Host

*[Derisively]* No.

00:05:16 John Host

No—no?

00:05:17 Jesse Host

No! Of course butt isn't leg! Butt—*[struggles briefly for words, then sighs]*.

*[John laughs.]*

Would you ever say, uh, "Yeah, things got hot and heavy with my high school girlfriend. She touched my leg." Referring to your butt? No!

00:05:37 John Host

I mean, if I were in high school and a person, you know, touched my elbow, I'd wonder about the implications. Whether they were romantic or a sign of, uh, disdain. Certainly if someone touched my butt, though, I would know to feel something. Whether that is... fear, *[stifles laughter]*, arousal, or anger at being intruded upon.

Butt is—butt is not leg. Right?

00:06:05 Jesse Host

Yeah. They're—butt and leg are two entirely—I mean, have you ever gotten out the slow cooker to cook yourself a Boston leg?

00:06:12 John Host

No. And nor have I ever cooked the butt of a pig in a slow cooker. 'Cause a pork butt is its shoulder! Stupidly. Not even the part of the pig!

Is butt shoulder?? Sometimes butt is shoulder, but butt is never leg. Except in anatomy textbooks. So how do we reconcile these two realities?

I will allow this, to, uh, Dr. Buttminster Fuller.

*[Jesse laughs.]*

This is ultimately a "Is a hotdog a sandwich?" time-waster of an argument. But since pointless arguments and podcasts about them are about the only entertainment we're gonna get this winter until we can see each other again, I will allow it. And I will reconcile it this way. For the doctors out there. I will say that each cheek is a part of its respective leg. But taken together, they become a butt. Which is its own thing.

00:07:12 Sound Effect Sound Effect

*[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:07:13 John Host

Is that fair? Am I splitting the baby on that one?

00:07:16 Jesse Host

No, I think that's fair, and I—I would also just ask you to give blanket permission to all toddlers to ask the question, "Is butt leg?"

00:07:25 John Host

Oh, that's granted. They need no permission. Toddlers are out here asking the hard questions! We as a society, and as a culture and a civilization, need toddlers asking, "Is butt leg?" I'm not sure I need

Dr. Jay Butt Man, last name redacted, asking. Writing into a podcast to—he's just acting like a toddler. I want a genuine toddler question.

00:07:47 Jesse Host I have a clarification here. We would accept that question from Dr. J Julius Erving.

00:07:52 John Host Oh—*[stifles laughter]*—yeah, of course.

00:07:53 Jesse Host If Julius Erving wanted to ask, "Is butt leg?" we'd be glad to—we'll answer pretty much any—if Julius Erving—if you're listening right now, and I'm gonna extend this to, uh, Walt Clyde Frazier—

00:08:04 John Host Yep.

00:08:05 Jesse Host Clyde Frazier, Dr. J, if you're listening right now, feel free to write in with any question. You get an automatic pass onto the air.

00:08:12 John Host Yeah! Any question. And anyone within the sound of my voice... uh, who has a toddler in their lives... email me, hodgman@maximumfun.org, the best question your toddler has asked recently.

Have your children asked any good questions lately? Like, mind-benders?

00:08:30 Jesse Host My youngest child asked a question the other day that I think fits this. Which is, "Dad? Why is the moon always following us?"

*[John or Joel inhales or exhales appreciatively.]*

00:08:43 John Host Yeah! See? Look. Joel Mann is across the glass from me, just nodding his head sagely.

00:08:49 Joel Guest That's a good one.

00:08:50 John Host *[Laughing]* Yeah.

00:08:51 Jesse Host Yeah. *[Laughs.]*

00:08:53 John Host I want some mind-breaking toddler questions in my inbox. And I want more—I want more dogs on Jesse Thorn's lap. I'm seeing one dog on Jesse Thorn's lap.

*[Jesse laughs.]*

When we come back from the break, I want there to be two dogs on his lap, sharing the neck hole of his shirt.

00:09:11 Jesse Host More items on the docket coming up in just a minute with me, Judge John Hodgman, and my dog Cocoa, who just jumped onto my lap, on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

00:09:20 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:09:22 Jesse Promo Hey, it's Bailiff Jesse! So, every episode of the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast is of course supported by the members of [MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org). And now more than ever, we are very grateful for every single one of you who sends us a few bucks every month to pay, uh, not just John and Jennifer and I, but the staff of Maximum Fun and all of our hosts, and talent, and producers, and so on and so forth.

We're also, this week, supported by our friends at Brooklinen!

00:09:53 John Promo Right. Last time we talked about Brooklinen, I told the story about how I had gotten some of these sheets. They're really good. And I

told the story about how it was the first time in my life that I did not get white sheets. That's always been my default. Straight, flat, plain, white sheets. I got—I got graphite sheets! And a steel Oxford stripe duvet cover and accent pillows. It's—I really branched out. I went from white to shades of gray. But it was a real evolution in my life. And two things have happened since then.

One: Some of you on Twitter, I've seen, *[stifles laughter]* have been copying that combo and buying those sheets and that duvet cover, and posting your shopping carts online as the Hodgman Collection. Hm. Thanks for your support.

*[Jesse laughs quietly.]*

I hope that you used promo code "hodgman." But also, weird. *[Laughs.]* It's weird you're sleeping in my sheets, and replicating my bedroom! Especially since Brooklinen—

00:10:50 Jesse Promo

No, I support it.

*[John laughs.]*

I'm all for it.

00:10:53 John Promo

You know what? So—

00:10:54 Jesse Promo

I think that's great.

00:10:55 John Promo

Yeah, me too. I think it's—I think it's fantastic. And the other thing that happened was every day since I got these sheets, I wake up in them and I say, "These sheets are amazing." And they really are amazing. And then I just stay in them as long as possible. Because as you know, this is already the year of staying in bed as long as possible, and I have a feeling that 2021 is gonna be the same. And it's not even winter yet.

You don't deserve to be in sheets that you don't love. Luckily, Brooklinen has you covered.

00:11:22 Jesse Promo

Yeah. Brooklinen works directly with manufacturers to make luxury available directly to you, without the big luxury-level markups. They've got all kinds of products to fit your needs and tastes. It's not just bedsheets, John!

00:11:37 John Promo

They got robes! You know what I love about this. They have waffle-knit robes. I love a waffle-knit. How do you feel about waffle-knit?

00:11:46 Jesse Promo

Waffle-knit robe is a dream! Makes you feel like you're in a luxury hotel right there in your own home.

00:11:50 John Promo

Loungewear, candles! Robes! And they even have sheets—linen sheets, which I've never slept in. I'm gonna give them a try, I think.

00:11:59 Jesse Promo

John, that's the best sheets.

00:12:00 John Promo

Is it really?

00:12:02 Jesse Promo

I'm sitting here. I got linen sheets on my bed right now. Linen sheets are the top type of sheet. It's—they're wonderful.

00:12:09 John Promo

Never tried 'em before. I'm gonna use promo code "hodgman" and get some. Brooklinen has over 50,000 five-star reviews and

counting. And they even offer a 365-day money-back guarantee.

00:12:22 Jesse Promo That's one year, three out of four years.

00:12:26 John Promo Look. Listeners to Judge John Hodgman, you can pick whatever color you want. Go ahead! Sleep in the exact same color combo of sheets that I sleep in!

*[Jesse laughs quietly.]*

It's the next best thing to finding my house and watching me sleep! I prefer the former to the latter! Go to [Brooklinen.com](http://Brooklinen.com), and use promo code "hodgman" to get 10% off your first order and free shipping.

00:12:47 Jesse Promo That's [Brooklinen.com](http://Brooklinen.com), B-R-O-O-K-L-I-N-E-N dot com, and enter promo code "hodgman" for 10% off your first order plus free shipping.

00:12:59 John Promo [Brooklinen.com](http://Brooklinen.com), and use promo code "hodgman" at checkout.

00:13:04 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:13:07 Promo Clip **Music:** Fun, jaunty, upbeat music.

**Renee Colvert:** Well, hello. I'm Renee Colvert.

**Alexis Preston:** Hi, I'm Alexis Preston. And we're the hosts of [Can I Pet Your Dog?](#)

**Renee:** And we got breaking news. We got an expose! All the beans have been spilled, via... an Apple Podcast review that said, "This show isn't well researched."

*[Alexis gasps.]*

**Renee:** Well, yeah, no duh. Of course it's not! Not since the day we started has it been well researched! Guessing and anthropomorphizing dogs is what we do.

**Alexis:** The *Can I Pet Your Dog?* promise is that we will never do more than ten seconds of research before telling you excitedly about any dog we see.

**Renee:** I'm gonna come atcha with top-ten enthusiasm, minimal facts.

**Alexis:** *[Chuckling.]* We're here for a good time, not an educated time.

**Renee:** So, if you love dogs and you don't love research—

*[Alexis cackles.]*

**Renee:** Well, you know what. Come on in to *Can I Pet Your Dog?* podcast, every Tuesday on Maximum Fun network.

*[Alexis giggles as the music ends.]*

00:13:53 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:13:56 Jesse Host Welcome back the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. We're clearing the docket this week, and we have something here from Jeanne, a former litigant—

00:14:01 John Host Wait, wait. Hold the line for a second, Jesse Thorn. Because... *[sighs]*. There's an injustice that I need to talk about here.

So in this new iteration in this strange alternate reality world that we're living in, doing *Judge John Hodgman*, there have been a few changes. One, we can see each other. Which is great. Two, dogs are in the picture. Always great. Three, new characters! The leaf blower shows up every Thursday! But I just heard—what listeners don't know is during the break, Jesse told me that Cocoa jumped in Jesse's lap because Cocoa is afraid of Leaf Blower. And I don't like that at all.

I invited Leaf Blower to be part of this podcast. I invited Leaf Blower to be a—a member of the *Judge John Hodgman family*. This is a time when we need to comfort each other, and ask—and ask dumb questions like, "Is butt leg?" and trade scallop recipes, and kindle a light in the darkness. I don't need Leaf Blower in here, messing up Cocoa's mood.

So Cocoa? I'm ordering a restraining order against Leaf Blower.

00:15:06 Jesse Host Wow. This is powerful stuff.

00:15:10 John Host I know Leaf Blower is just doing Leaf Blower's job. But Leafie? You can't come in here—Cocoa is an established character.

00:15:17 Jesse Host She's an elderly dog.

00:15:20 John Host She's an elderly dog, and a long-time member of the *Judge John Hodgman* family. You can't be coming in, scaring the dog, Leafie! If you wanna be on this podcast! I know I have no control over—over Leafie, and Leafie's hours. There's nothing I can do. But this is a symbolic restraining order, and I hope that it gives Cocoa some comfort to know that I'm on her side.

00:15:41 Jesse Host Get your act together, Leaf Blower. My dog takes beef pills.

00:15:44 John Host *[Laughs.]* What's a beef pill?

00:15:50 Jesse Host It's a beef-flavored pill for her heart.

00:15:54 John Host That's incredible.

00:15:56 Jesse Host I know.

00:15:57 John Host It's flavored with beef?

00:15:58 Jesse Host It's beef-flavored so she'll chew it. This is an episode of the *Beef And Dairy Network Podcast* waiting to happen.

*[John laughs quietly.]*

But it's happening here in my real life.

00:16:06 John Host I wish that I had a doctor who would be like, "Um, yeah, you—you know, you really should start thinking more about your heart health. You should modify your diet. Uh, you should get some more exercise, and here, take this pill made of beef."

00:16:19 Jesse Host Yeah.



00:16:20 John Host Contradictory. That's all I'm saying. Okay, I'm ready—I'm ready to move on now.

00:16:24 Jesse Host Here's something from Jeanne, a former litigant. She and her sister Liz were in [episode 427, "Coda Conduct."](#) (*Code of Conduct.*)

00:16:30 John Host Oh!

00:16:32 Jesse Host Here's what she says:

"My son Jude and I adopted a wonderful Shiba Inu named Sky ten years ago. Sky is wonderful and sassy, with eyes that always make it clear she's mildly disappointed in you. Although I think it's weird, I refer to myself as Sky's mom when scheduling visits to the vet, grooming, and so forth. It's convenient, and I like it better than saying I'm Sky's owner.

However, I recently learned that Jude calls himself Sky's dad."

00:17:02 John Host Hmm.

00:17:02 Jesse Host What?!

*[John chuckles.]*

"First, that family tree makes no sense. Second, as Jude provides lots of fun playtime for Sky, but zero financial support, Jude seems more like a brother than a dad. Please order Jude to stop referring to himself as Sky's dad."

00:17:19 John Host Uhhh, well first of all, uh, thank you to everyone who wrote in after our last pet-related dispute. I had asked for photos of cats cuddling together, 'cause I needed to look at them, and you sent in some wonderful ones. Also, some of you sent a lot of information, and a lot of letters, some of them quite long, about feline psychology. And I really enjoyed them. Special thanks to listener Sarah, who wrote quite a—quite a novel of an email to me. And I really—*[stifles laughter]*—I really enjoyed it, because—just—she's a veterinarian in Canada! And she gave me a lot of information about cats that I did not have!

Including the fact, Jesse, that one of the reasons a cat looks so ashamed and wary in that litter box is that they're—they are instinctively terrified of being ambushed in the litter box. And one of the things that will cause cats to avoid going to the litter box, in terms of placement, is if it's enclosed, and they don't have a fair view of all of their surroundings, they're gonna feel like they're gonna get jumped as soon as they get out of that litter box.

"They are both prey and predator animals," Sarah wrote, "and they don't have a pack to protect them." I didn't ever think about that!

So Sarah, I know from *Get Your Pets*, the occasional afternoon talk show that I do on Instagram Live where I interview people's cats and dogs. She is the—the—I mean, this is the thing. This is what—do I say, "Cat Mom"? Do I say, "The mom of" or "the owner of" or "the person of..." the cats Captain Jack Sparrow Harkness The Time-Traveling Pirate Kitten, who has one eye, an incredible cat, and Sophie? Who did not get a good name from Sarah? Really—Sarah

really stopped naming cats the good way when she named Sophie?

Anyway, it was nice to get that letter from Sarah. And if she gives me permission—Sarah, if you have—if I have your permission, I'd like to forward that to any letter-writer who writes me requesting it. Your email is really good and interesting.

00:19:20 John Host Alright. Anyway. So there's that. Now. This is the issue here. Who is what in relation to this incredible dog, Sky? So I agree with Jeanne, personally. Jeanne says that she thinks it's weird, and I agree with her, to call yourself your pet's mom. I think that's a little weird. And I know—I can hear the letters being written right now. I'm getting them before we even post this podcast, I'm sure of it.

Because it's very common for people to call themselves, you know, "my cat's mom," "my dog's dad," "my cat's brother-in-law," or whatever it is. I get it. It's a sign of affection. And it is better than... "I am," you know—I'm—this is just a thought experiment, Jesse, I'm not trying to claim your dog here, but like, me saying, "I am Cocoa's owner." What do you say, Jesse?

00:20:15 Jesse Host I'm Cocoa's owner. Not you. Was that the question?

00:20:19 John Host N—no. But the—

00:20:20 Jesse Host You can't have my dog.

00:20:21 John Host Oh no, I was just—

00:20:22 Jesse Host No.

00:20:23 John Host It was just a—a thought exper—it was just like...

00:20:24 Jesse Host No, I love my dog, John. You can't have my dog. And I don't even know how my dog would get to you; you're in Maine, and I—my dog and I live in Los Angeles.

00:20:33 John Host But I'm—

00:20:34 Jesse Host You can have my other dog, Sissy.

00:20:35 John Host Okay, great. But you don't say that you own your children. Do you say that you own—?

00:20:39 Jesse Host No.

00:20:40 John Host —Cocoa and Sissy? Or—or what is the term that you use?

00:20:44 Jesse Host I do, generally. I think I do generally. I occasionally use "parent." My children have insisted that Cocoa and Sissy are their siblings. But that doesn't work for me. Uh, I think Cocoa and Sissy are their weird aunties, if anything.

00:20:59 John Host *[Laughs.]* Mm-hm. I feel that. Yeah.

00:21:02 Jesse Host They're both literally older than my children, and dramatically older in dog years.

00:21:08 John Host Yeah. I certainly appreciate why in Jeanne's case, though, if you have raised a dog from a relatively young age, that you feel a paternal or a maternal instinct towards—and you would think of it as your child, to some degree. But it is a little—it's a little intimate—just for me. It just weirds—it's one of my little weirdsies. It weirds me out a little bit.

00:21:33 Jesse Host John, I have to admit here that while I just claimed that I would

typically refer to myself as the dogs' owner—and certainly that is true, were I calling, for example, the TLC Pet Medical Center in Pasadena where my dogs receive veterinary care...

00:21:49 John Host Mm-hm.

00:21:51 Jesse Host I'm thinking back to earlier this morning when I let the dogs out the front door, uh, so they could go sniff around the front yard, and my wife was coming in at the same time through our front gate.

00:22:01 John Host Mm-hm.

00:22:02 Jesse Host And I greeted her, said hello, then looked at our dogs and said, "Did you know dogs is a type of babies?"

[John laughs, Jesse stifles laughter.]

00:22:10 John Host Is dog baby?

[Jesse laughs.]

That's what—

00:22:15 Jesse Host I think dog is baby!

00:22:16 John Host You think dog is baby?

00:22:17 Jesse Host Yes, she is.

00:22:18 John Host I'm not saying that Jeanne—look, Jeanne's a former litigant. She's a member of the *Judge John Hodgman* family. She wants to say that she's Sky's mom, go for it. If you wanna say that you're—not you, Jesse, but listener, if you have a dog, a cat, a bearded dragon, an emu, go ahead and say that—

00:22:34 Jesse Host Betta fish.

00:22:35 John Host Betta fish. Yeah. You can go ahead and say it. Just know that I'm gonna go, "Eugh. You're kinda diminishing actual parenthood there." But that's fine! It's cool.

But this is not the crux of the case, Jesse. The crux of the case is, if I allow this, can Jeanne's son be the dad of her own... offspring... dog? Or is that only allowed in the British royal family?

[Jesse laughs.]

I feel like that's a—an episode of *The Crown*.

00:23:03 Jesse Host Maybe occasionally the Bible. The Old Testament. [Laughs.]

00:23:07 John Host I think that you're right, Jesse, that the pet is a member of the family, for sure. And if you're gonna incorporate familial names, they should be accurate to the situation. So for example, uh, Cocoa and Sissy are weird older aunties to your children. That's perfect sense, for all the reasons you said. And similarly, with regard to Jude, who loves to play with the dog and show the dog a good time and be Mr. Good Time for the dog, but never is around when the dog needs to go to the doctor, doesn't pay for any of the dog's, uh, food or housing... That's not a brother, Jeanne. You—I would say that Jude is Sky's deadbeat dad.

Jude can refer to himself as his dog's deadbeat dad. And then he

can go get a pack of cigarettes and never come back.

00:23:55 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:23:56 Jesse Host *[Laughs.]* Uh, here's something from Andrew:  
"I'm writing the court seeking a cease and desist order against my fiancée Vanessa."

00:24:07 John Host Mm.

00:24:08 Jesse Host "Vanessa uses the term 'cheers' as a verb."

00:24:11 John Host Mm.

00:24:12 Jesse Host "As in, 'Let's cheers to the newlyweds.' I believe 'cheers' is not an action. It's what you say. The correct phrasing should be, 'Let's make a toast to the newlywed couple,' followed by, 'Cheers!'  
  
Please order my fiancée to stop 'cheers'-ing people."  
00:24:30 John Host Mm. So Vanessa is Andrew's fiancée?  
00:24:33 Jesse Host *[A dog barks in the background.]*  
  
Yeah.  
00:24:34 John Host And they're gonna get married at some point?  
00:24:37 Jesse Host Yeah, and there's gonna be a lot of "cheers"-ing.  
00:24:38 John Host Yeah, that's gonna be a—sounds like it's gonna be a lot of fun.  
00:24:41 Jesse Host Yeah.  
00:24:42 John Host With Vanessa and her family "cheers"-ing each other.  
00:24:44 Jesse Host I think "cheers" is a noun, and what you say is... "Nooorm!"  
00:24:49 John Host *[Laughs.]* Yeah. No, I mean... *[Sighs.]* I'll tell you, first of all, congratulations, Andrew. Have a good time getting really mad—  
  
*[John and Jesse stifle laughter.]*  
  
—at your own wedding, as your new wife and her family "cheers" each other up, down, and all around town. You know, English is a living language. I understand what you're saying. "A toast" is the noun. "Cheers" is something you say. I get it. I would not recommend that you watch *Love Island*, uh, season six, for sure. Because not only are—is—not only is that the birthplace of the incredible catchphrase, "It is what it is, innit?" which is the most—got me through many days, as well as the incredible catchphrase from Mike...  
  
*[Laughing]* Jesse, have you watched *Love Island*?  
00:25:48 Jesse Host No, I missed that somehow!  
  
*[John is losing it.]*  
  
Season six, you said? Do I have to see the previous seasons to understand the storylines?  
00:25:57 John Host *[John recovers.]*

No. No, no, no, no, no. They're all new groups of people every time. And in fact, *Love Island* season six is s—like, the young woman who lives in our house made me watch this. And she said, "You're really gonna like this." And I said that I'm—I—I reserve the right to be correct in saying no. But she was right. It was surprisingly fun and wholesome for a reality show. Like, you actually like these people.

And also, this was the first season where they banned smoking on camera. *[Stifles laughter.]* So you look back at like, season five, and you're like, "Who are these bad kids? Ugh."

*[Jesse laughs quietly.]*

"Give me the season—give me Mike from season six, because—" *[Stifles laughter.]* I don't remember which—it was Trots, I think. I can't remember his first name. But he's—he gets to go on a date with the girl that he likes, and she's really into Disney princess stuff. So they decide that the date is gonna be in a castle somewhere, and they're gonna like, really princess it up, right? And they're gonna keep it at—they're gonna do this scavenger hunt, so she gets clues about where to go, and Mike goes, *[stifles laughter]* "I know what we'll call it: Operation Fairytale."

*[Jesse and John laugh.]*

And then there's a pause, and he goes, "Where do I pluck this stuff from?"

*[John and Jesse laugh.]*

We say it all the time! "Where do I—?" Any time any of us—you know, we're all—look, we're all alone. We're all alone together in Maine. Whatever—we just, like—we're just trying to find a way to get along. Any time we say some dumb idea like, *[stifles laughter]* "I'm gonna put salt on this sandwich" or whatever, it's like, "Where do I pluck this stuff from?"

00:27:46 John Host

Salt on a sandwich... That's actually weird. That's a weird idea. Never mind.

And then of course what they're always saying is—and you're gonna really hate this, Andrew, and that's why I'm so happy to say it to you—they say, "Let's have a cheers. Let's have a cheers." They're using—they're not—it's not even a verb. They're getting rid of that whole noun, "toast"!

"Let's have a cheers!" And then they say, "Cheers." And guess what they do then? They have a sip of their drink, alcoholic or non-alcoholic. They look beautiful. They have fun. They're all friends, and they're wholesome.

Don't let your linguistic, uh—I'm not even gonna say pedantry. I mean, I appreciate, you're—you have a certain standard. But don't let it get in the way of fun! And you know, you can say all kinds of words! And to Jesse Thorn's point, you can say, "Cheers" when you're raising a glass to a friend or loved one. But you can also—and this is my ruling right now—you can also say any title of a Ted

Danson sitcom. You can say, "Jesse, here's to you! *Becker!*"

*[John and Jesse laugh quietly.]*

00:28:52 Jesse Host "Ink to us all! Ink to the newlyweds!"

00:28:55 John Host *[Gasps.]* Whoa, deep cut! Wow! *The Good Place* is what everyone's gonna say. "To *The Good Place!*" But I will—when we can get together again, if we have meetups like that incredible meetup that we had in Atlanta that time, listeners, *Judge John Hodgman...* you—if you come up to me and you go—uh, and you raise your glass, and you say, "*Bored to Death* to you, John Hodgman!" I will buy that drink.

*[Jesse laughs quietly.]*

I will buy that drink right there. Also if you say, "*Gymkata.*"

00:29:27 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:29:28 Jesse Host Ah, yes. Karate skills, martial arts kills. Let's take a quick break. When we come back, we'll hear disputes about tonic water, and a letter about parents sucking their own children's pacifiers.

00:29:40 John Host Hmm. That's called a tease!

00:29:42 Sound Effect Transition *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:29:45 Jesse Promo Judge Hodgman, we're taking a quick break from clearing the docket. We've got some stuff coming up that folks should know about. What's going on with you?

00:29:51 John Promo Well, Jesse, the winter solstice is fast approaching, and with it certain holidays that observe gift-giving. If you're in the mood, and the space, and the place to give a gift to a loved or liked one—or if you wanna just punish someone with one of my books—you can go to anywhere books are sold or loaned. *Medallion Status* just came out in paperback, and of course all the other ones are for sale as well. Obviously I'm not touring these days. So if you want an inscribed book, or a signed book, or personalized book, there are a couple ways you can get one even before the holiday.

Just go to [BooksAreMagic.net](http://BooksAreMagic.net). That's my friendly bookstore there in Brooklyn, New York. [BooksAreMagic.net](http://BooksAreMagic.net). You know the drill. Tell them what you want, by me, and tell them what you want me to say in the book, or just sign my name!

Hey, guess what? There's another opportunity. 'Cause sometimes in Maine... there's a store called Leaf & Anna! Now, I was just by there the other day. Not only do they have *Vacationland* and *Medallion Status*, they've got not one—not two—but three complete sets of *Areas of My Expertise*, *More Information Than You Require*, and *That Is All*. And they will also take your order and ship it to you, and I will be able to sign and personalize it to you. So... you can do that if you want!

Also, please remember to watch *Dicktown* on FX on Hulu! [Bit.ly/dicktown](http://Bit.ly/dicktown). D-I-C-K-T-O-W-N. Not a labor of like by me and David Rees, a labor of love. Jesse Thorn—

00:31:21 Jesse Promo John, the other day—

00:31:22 John Promo Yeah?

00:31:23 Jesse Promo The other day I talked about this one scene where, uh, your—  
[laughs]—you and David Rees's characters' buddy is at the nightclub, and you're all sitting in a booth, and then he slips under the table—[laughs]—

00:31:33 John Promo Yeah. Yeah. The great Ronald Peet.

00:31:36 Jesse Promo —when he's done with the conversation. And, uh, somebody just Tweeted me some pictures of their TV while they were watching that scene.

00:31:42 John Promo Yeah.

00:31:43 Jesse Promo To say how much they were laughing at it. [Laughing] And I literally laughed out loud.

[John snorts.]

Looking at my—looking at photographs of someone else's television screen! [Laughs, sighs.]

00:31:53 John Promo If you wanna see what makes Jesse Thorn laugh even through a secondhand screen...

00:31:58 Jesse Promo Yeah.

00:31:59 John Promo ...check out [Bit.ly/dicktown](http://Bit.ly/dicktown). Look for the episode, "The Case of the Maybe Boyfriend," featuring the incredible Ronald Peet as Tucker. And also the incredible Anna Akana as Meg. If you don't follow Anna on Instagram... you may be the last person on Earth. 'Cause everyone's following her. She's making incredible stuff. And she was so funny and great as Meg. So please check it out.

What's going on in your world, Jesse?

00:32:24 Jesse Promo Well, it is the holiday season, as you mentioned, and I do have a store at which people can shop. If you're staying out of physical stores, why not visit my virtual store at [PutThisOnShop.com](http://PutThisOnShop.com)? It's handmade and one-of-a-kind goods. Handmade pocket squares and neckerchiefs.

00:32:43 John Promo Mm!

00:32:44 Jesse Promo And vintage and antique items for, uh, the fancy-pants in your life, or... the goofus. They're good for Goofuses and Gallants.

00:32:53 John Promo Boy! When you say fancy-pants, it's like you read my mind. How'd you know that my eyes were immediately drawn to the fancy monocle man chain-stitched wool patch? That's incredible.

00:33:04 Jesse Promo Yeah, that is really good. Somebody's jean jacket is gonna get 300% better when they put that fancy monocle man letterman's patch on there.

But we have everything from, you know, gold jewelry to—as I've mentioned before—a giant set of teeth.

[John snorts.]

Uh, with an articulated mandible made of that same gooseneck that a gooseneck lamp is made out of. Um, so somebody wants that, I

think! I hope! I just actually bought something that's sort of in between those two things from the legendary Taxco region of Mexico, a legendary silversmithing region. I got, uh, an evil-eye—warding, I presume, pin that is made of silver but contains a glass eyeball.

00:33:52 John Promo

Ooh!

00:33:54 Jesse Promo

It's pretty spectacular there in the fine jewelry section of the Put This On Shop. And plenty of beautiful stickpins, in gold. And weird ones! We've got two gold Edwardian tooth stickpins. Putting a tooth on a stickpin was a big thing around 1900.

*[Jesse and John laugh.]*

1910.

00:34:14 John Promo

I—I don't think I've ever—I don't think I've ever been into the [PutThisOnShop.com](https://PutThisOnShop.com) fine jewelry section! I'm very sad—

00:34:22 Jesse Promo

We have beautiful things!

00:34:23 John Promo

I'm very sad to have missed out on the porcelain seagull stickpin. That would've been very nice.

00:34:28 Jesse Promo

Yeah, you blew it big-time.

00:34:30 John Promo

You don't wanna miss these deals!

00:34:31 Jesse Promo

Yeah. That's what they say. [PutThisOnShop.com](https://PutThisOnShop.com), and if you use the code "justice," you get free shipping in the US on almost everything. All but the very largest things. And you can find it all at [PutThisOnShop.com](https://PutThisOnShop.com)!

00:34:45 John Promo

Wolf to—Victorian nine-carat gold wolf tooth stickpin! I know what I'm getting for Joel Mann.

00:34:51 Jesse Promo

*[Laughs.]* We also just recently had a great episode of *Jordan, Jesse, Go!*, my goofy, uh, talk comedy podcast, with your friend and mine Mr. Tom Scharpling, of *The Best Show*.

00:35:00 John Promo

Ohhh.

00:35:01 Jesse Promo

Among other outlets. Tom came on and was really wonderful, *[stifling laughter]* and we talked about how the day after September 11th, he drove to Trader Joe's and ate an entire Trader Joe's cheesecake in their parking lot.

00:35:16 John Promo

*[Laughs.]* I never heard that story! And I thought I heard 'em all!

00:35:20 Jesse Promo

That's a really good one.

00:35:21 John Promo

I thought I heard all the Tom stories!

00:35:23 Jesse Promo

*[Stifling laughter]* He also asserted that C-3PO is the worst character in all fiction.

*[Dissolves into laughter.]*

00:35:29 John Promo

I'll want to have that conversation with him, but I will—but rather than bother him, I will go listen to that episode of *Jordan, Jesse, Go!* and hear his arguments first. And then I'm gonna—might take it to him.

00:35:41 Jesse Promo

Yeah. *[Stifles laughter.]* You can also, if you're looking for a holiday gift, go to the blog—the Put This On Blog at [PutThisOn.com](https://PutThisOn.com), and you



can find—we have a decade of holiday gift guides, of which I am very proud. We don't just choose flavor of the month stuff. So I—I'll look through an eight or nine-year-old holiday gift guide, and I'm always like, "Hey, these are great recommendations still!"

So go to [PutThisOn.com](http://PutThisOn.com), my menswear blog, and you can find lots of recommendations for the—for the mask pal in your life who wants something nice.

Let's get back to the docket.

00:36:16 Sound Effect Transition

*[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:36:20 Jesse Host

Welcome back to the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. We're clearing the docket this week. Here's something from Barbara. She says:

"My husband and I both enjoy an occasional vodka tonic. But we only buy tonic water made with cane sugar. During the pandemic, we order our groceries ahead of time and pick them up at the curb. Sometimes I end up with an item we didn't mean to order, or didn't want. So we leave these items with our neighbor, who volunteers at our local food bank.

Recently, we mistakenly received tonic water containing high-fructose corn syrup, which we try to avoid. My husband wants to donate it to the food bank. He reasons that there may be a food bank patron who appreciates a cocktail. But it strikes me as callous in a kind of, 'Let them eat cake,' Marie Antoinette-ish way.

What should we do with it?"

00:37:08 John Host

Uh, first—first of all, you don't make a cocktail with tonic water. If you're putting tonic water in a thing, that's a mixed drink. It's not a cocktail. Second of all, we're recording this in December. This is a time of desperate need. Food banks are absolutely slammed across the country with people who are living with food insecurity. Massive numbers of people have been just thrown into economic places they never expected to ever be in their lives. And then massive numbers of people are—were already relying on these food banks, and now there's less and less and less to go around, and we all know why.

So, credit to you and especially your neighbor, Barbara, for thinking of that food bank. And I hope that everyone listening can give a moment to find a food bank in their community and think about how they might help out by donating food, or time, or money. Whatever you can spare. I support an organization in Park Slope called Community Help in Park Slope, or CHiPS. That's one that I like. And much like Barbara and her husband, I make a point of donating at a minimum, once a year, one bottle of Campari a week.

*[John and Jesse laugh.]*

No, I don't do that. I give them something they can use, like time or food or money!

00:38:38 Joel Guest

Scallops.

00:38:39 John Host

Scallops. Thank you, Joel. A gallon of scallops. They freeze beautifully.

Jesse, what do you think? Should they donate tonic water to a food bank?

00:38:49 Jesse Host

Honestly, I'm so hung up on people avoiding high-fructose corn syrup. It's just a whole thing.

00:38:57 John Host

Look, Barbara—yeah. That's a good point, Jesse. We're—Barbara, you're a valued listener, and of course, whatever you wanna put in your body is obviously your choice. And you know, the whole New Coke vs. Old Coke wars were around the different flavor profile of high-fructose corn syrup vs. cane sugar, and that's reasonable as well.

The Mayo Clinic, which is still an authority on some things I guess—I like it 'cause it's called "Mayo." They say that there's no real personal health difference between high-fructose corn syrup and other sweeteners that's been proven. However, high-fructose corn syrup, you know—that does not have a personal risk compared to other sweeteners, so much as it is a community risk, because as Michael Pollan will tell you, it just... It's a super cheap sweetener, and it just promotes the growth of corn, which is a kind of devastating crop to just—and maize, I'm talking about, if you're listening in the UK.

It's a not very good crop to grow. It's not a very sustainable crop to grow. And has negative impacts environmentally.

00:40:02 Jesse Host

Yeah. The problem with high-fructose corn syrup is not that it is more unhealthy for you than cane sugar or beet sugar, or wherever else you are getting your sugar. The problem with high-fructose corn syrup is that, you know, in the United States, corn is a highly subsidized crop. High-fructose corn syrup is therefore much cheaper than other forms of sugar. You know, sugar is very similar no matter its source.

But because it is so much cheaper, it is used heavily in processed foods, because it's a very affordable ingredient that people like to taste. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:40:42 John Host

Right.

00:40:43 Jesse Host

But I don't have a problem with someone donating a bottle of tonic to the food bank. Just as I don't have a problem with there, you know, not being restrictions on the foods people can buy with funds from government food programs. People are capable of making their own decisions. If the food bank doesn't want it, they can throw it in the garbage. If nobody who is a patron of the food bank wants it, they're welcome to leave it on the shelf or throw it in the garbage.

People are capable of making their own decisions *[stifles laughter]* and managing their own stuff, whether or not they are a food bank or a person who needs food help.

00:41:21 John Host

Yeah!

00:41:22 Jesse Host

So it's—it's totally fine with me. Like, my first—*[stifles laughter]*—my first choice would be like, in this case, you'll probably survive drinking the high-fructose corn syrup tonic this time. But beyond that, yeah, sure, give it to the food bank!

00:41:38 John Host Yeah.

00:41:39 Jesse Host They'll tell you if that's not something they accept.

00:41:41 John Host This comes down to a court of *Judge John Hodgman* precedent with regard to whether or not it's okay to fill up—uh, to refill your cup at the fountain soda machine, or to just get seltzer and—with your own bottle, or whatever it is. And people who come to a podcast to ask for a moral ruling when it's very, very easy to just... find out what the truth is. Ask! You know... Asking in the way—the best way to help, of course, is asking in the way you are—are asked to help. And sometimes that involves you asking people who are doing the work how to help.

And you know, the easiest solution to this would have been to go to your neighbor who volunteers at the food bank, and say, "Do you think the food bank wants this?"

And if your neighbor says, "Sure!" or, "Ehh, I don't think so." If they say no, then guess what? Give the neighbor the tonic. You know? Don't tell them about the corn syrup. Don't tell 'em about the corn syrup. They probably don't even know.

And you know what you add? Add a bottle of Plymouth Gin. As a tribute to your neighbor's good work. Unless they're non-drinkers or whatever.

Uh, you know, that—that's how you find out things, is you ask!

00:42:50 Jesse Host There are few things, John, that make me more mad—and this is not a case of this—but there are few things that make me more mad than people shaming folks who get food assistance over what they are using their food assistance for.

00:43:05 John Host Mm-hm.

00:43:06 Jesse Host You know, you hear these stories about, you know, "Oh, I saw somebody paying with food stamps, or paying with EBT, who was buying four big steaks!" Or whatever. First of all, you know, anecdote is anecdote. It's not a useful sign of what people are actually doing on the whole.

And second of all, let people make their own choices.

00:43:33 John Host Yeah!

00:43:34 Jesse Host And the result of this hysteria is that food benefits are the target of cuts across this country, have been for some time, to the point where they were—those cuts were so capricious that a court had to stop them from going into effect earlier this year at the start of the pandemic. And... you know, giving people money to buy food is the single most effective way to alleviate the suffering of poverty. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:44:06 John Host Yeah!

00:44:07 Jesse Host It is more effective than food—food banks will tell you the same thing. Food banks will say, "We're here because, you know, there's excesses in the food system that we can help manage and get food that it would otherwise go to waste, to people who need it, etc., etc., etc., but if you wanna do something about hunger, just give people

unrestricted money to use to buy food."

And so, uh, yeah. I'm really like—and I also just think—*[laughs]*—as a person who, uh, spent part of his childhood in... what we'll call semi-poverty. Uh, I was—I never felt food-insecure, though I think I probably was at some times. As a person who spent his childhood in semi-poverty, I really believe that—*[laughs]*—poor people deserve pleasure as well!

00:45:04 John Host *[Laughs.]* Yeah! And they need that sweet quinine in the tonic water!

*[Jesse laughs.]*

That's a natural anti-malarial! If that's an issue in their lives. Let them—

00:45:13 Jesse Host *[Laughing]* I mean, I think the real question at the heart of all of this, John, is it's weird that tonic water's a thing.

00:45:21 John Host *[Laughs.]* Oh, Jennifer Marmor's giving us a heavy nod there! Joel Mann-ish heavy nod! Across a continent!

00:45:30 Jesse Host Tonic water in the 21st century, outside of the context of—*[laughs]*—a tropical world without anti-malarial drugs is really a challenge food. *[Laughs.]*

00:45:42 John Host Yeah. I would say this. Barbara and Barbara's husband, you're not Marie Antoinette. You're doing a wonderful thing by thinking to donate food that you can't use, for whatever reason, to a food bank. And I agree with my bailiff and yours Jesse Thorn, that the food bank can distribute that food however it sees fit. I agree with myself that if you have a question about what is suitable or not for the food bank, there's an easy way to find out, and it's not asking a podcast. It's asking your neighbor.

And then I think you can ask yourself, especially in this time of year and in this year of years, is—"Can I do a little bit more?" You know? I appreciate—it's something that we all have to ask ourselves. 'Cause when you see and you hear the stories of people lining up at three AM to get leftover tonic water from a food bank, or actual nourishing food, right? It's just hard.

So maybe go a little bit further. Maybe push yourself a little bit to go beyond your neighbor and contact the food bank itself. Maybe ask the food bank what it needs in support. What is the kind of food bank that the food bank really wants, or finds most valuable to distribute? And order a case of that food for them. Right? Or volunteer some time. Or just give money! To the food bank. Or other programs that are alleviating poverty and food insecurity.

I mean, that Fever-Tree Tonic... That's super good tonic water! I like tonic water. I'm not like Bailiff Jesse Thorn. I like it. That—and I think I know the brand that you're referring to, and I—'cause it's—I don't think it has high-fructose corn syrup. Fever-Tree. It's got a cool name. It's a tree that's got a fever. Not very popular right now, I realize, but it's a good name, good bottle. They make a good—uh, they make a good ginger beer, I think. I'd love for them to be a sponsor of this podcast.

00:47:40 John Host In any case, this is not to shame you. This is only to hear you, appreciate you, and, uh... maybe you consider making a more direct contact with the problem. And I'm saying that as a challenge to myself as much to you, Barbara. To make a more direct, hands-on contact with the problem, and help in the way that you—that people who are working on the problem ask you to help. I think you'll feel better if you do.

00:48:09 Sound Effect Sound Effect *[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:48:10 Jesse Host By the way, I wanna give a shout-out to all the Maximum Fun members who bought pins this year. You might've heard a promo on a Maximum Fun show. But I'll say it here in the body of the program. Our members, in buying pins, and us in selling those pins, and, you know, having them designed and etc., etc., etc., raised very close to \$100,000 for Give Directly, who do exactly the thing that we were just talking about. Give Directly essentially chooses people who qualify for public assistance at random, and gives them direct cash grants.

00:48:47 John Host Great.

00:48:48 Jesse Host Which is the lowest-overhead, most effective way to alleviate poverty in most instances. And they have a COVID-19 relief program that we raised almost a hundred grand for. And I'm really proud of MaxFun's community for making that happen. 'Cause that's a lot of people's lives changed by something as stupid as pins. So thanks, everybody.

00:49:13 John Host Yeah, thank you very much, listeners! Joel Mann, is there an organization—a food relief organization here in Maine that—?

00:49:21 Joel Guest There's the Emmaus Center. That's in Ellsworth. And then there's HOME, right up here across the street.

00:49:26 John Host Yeah.

00:49:26 Joel Guest Both two really worthy causes.

00:49:27 John Host Yeah. So what's the first one again called?

00:49:30 Joel Guest The Emmaus (*eh-may-iss*) Center.

00:49:31 John Host "Amaze"?

00:49:32 Joel Guest *[Articulating]* Emmaus.

00:49:33 John Host Emmaus.

00:49:34 Joel Guest Emmaus.

00:49:35 John Host Oh, E-M-M-A—yeah.

00:49:36 Joel Guest Yeah.

00:49:37 John Host We'll put it in the show notes.

00:49:38 Joel Guest Okay.

00:49:39 John Host All these organizations will be in the show notes, Barbara, if you and your husband wanna make yourself a vodka tonic and, uh—and then kinda, you know, maybe have a second one, and then all of a sudden you're typing in an extra couple of figures in that donation form, you know what I mean?

*[Jesse laughs quietly.]*

And then you'll feel—and then you'll "cheers" to yourselves for being

a terrific, involved citizen.

00:49:59 Jesse Host Finally, we heard from a couple of listeners in response to a case we heard in episode [493, "Mr. Clicky-Keys."](#) In that episode, we ruled on a case about picking up baby pacifiers with one's toes.

00:50:18 John Host Katie is a doctoral student of biological anthropology—  
Wow.

00:50:19 Jesse Host —and sent in some scientific advice. She says—yeah. Agreed. "Wow" is the o—it's the only appropriate response to that.

00:50:26 John Host Wow.

00:50:28 Crosstalk Crosstalk **Jesse:** Biological anthropology.  
**John:** Biological anthropology!

00:50:31 John Host That's incredible!

00:50:32 Jesse Host "Please tell the Foot Dad—"

*[John cracks up.]*

"—that if he's concerned about his baby's microbiome, he should lick the pacifier instead of showing off his circus skills."

*[John sighs.]*

I like this one, because it comes from a place of science and contempt for circus skills.

00:50:46 John Host *[Laughs.]* I like this one, too. Because it gets in, it does the job, it gives information, it totally needles that dad...

00:50:57 Jesse Host Mm-hm.

00:50:58 John Host And no offense to Sarah the Canadian veterinarian and Cat Mom to Jack and Sophie... letter's short. Boom! In and out! Zip! Zip, zip, zip! Love it. I love hearing from everybody. I loooove it. I really do. And if you got something you need to get off your chest, go ahead. We're all reaching out and trying to make connections during this dark time. We all wish—we don't all have a Cocoa on our laps right now.

So, you know, please do write to express yourself. But, um, yeah! You know... I'm a human being who reads these things! *[Stifles laughter.]* Take some time. Take some time. Thank you.

00:51:32 Jesse Host Katie also sent us a link to an article on this subject from *Science Daily*, that we will post on the *Judge John Hodgman* page at [MaximumFun.org](#). It's a summary of a study from the University of Gothenburg—

*[John exhales thoughtfully.]*

—which suggests that exposure to harmless bacteria during infancy may be protective against the development of allergy, which is I think what Foot Dad was arguing. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:51:55 John Host Mm-hm!

00:51:56 Jesse Host And, uh—and that one way to harmlessly expose children and

infants to bacteria would be... by exposing them to the mouth stuff of the parents, by licking the pacifier.

00:52:14 John Host Yeahhh!

00:52:16 Jesse Host And you have to suck on the pacifier and then give it to the baby. You can't just take it to your favorite rave spots.

00:52:21 John Host *[Laughs.]* Yeah. No. Don't—don't bogart the paci.

00:52:27 Jesse Host Same with the Vicks VapoRub. Save that for when the kid's got a cold.

00:52:33 John Host You know, there are many, many reasons that I miss my mom, who is no longer alive. But one of them—

00:52:39 Jesse Host First and foremost among them, John... is she loved to rave.

00:52:43 John Host She loved to rave. But one of the reasons that I miss her is that I—believe that she told me that when she was sick, her mother—my Nan-Nan—would make her eat a spoonful of Vicks VapoRub.

00:53:01 Jesse Host *[Laughing]* Oh, whoa!

00:53:02 John Host You ever hear of that, Joel Mann?

00:53:05 Joel Guest No.

00:53:06 John Host No. 'Cause, you know, there are probably a lot of home cures up here. In Maine.

00:53:10 Joel Guest Butt leg.

00:53:11 John Host Okay.

00:53:12 Jesse Host Vicks VapoMunch!

00:53:13 John Host *[Laughs.]* And when I said this to people after my mom had passed away, they met me with the same shock and disbelief that you all have met me with. And I don't know whether this was a true memory or not! And I wish I could ask my mom, "Is that—did I make that up? Or did you truly have to eat Vicks VapoRub when you were sick, in Philadelphia?"

We'll never know. But you know what? This is for *Judge John Hodgman* late nights. You put a little Molly in the Vicks VapoRub, you're gonna have a good rave.

*[Beat.]*

00:53:51 Jesse Host *[Laughs quietly.]*

Then we heard from Margaret, who says:

"Also consider oral thrush in babies is a fungal infection. If eight-month-old Thomas's dad happens to have athlete's foot—"

00:54:04 John Host Hm. Hm.

00:54:05 Jesse Host "—he could conceivably give the baby thrush by touching the pacifier with his toes. That's no fun for anyone."

00:54:12 John Host Can't believe we didn't work the promise of oral thrush into the tease for this section.

00:54:17 Jesse Host Yeah, that really put the, *[imitating a record scratch and then techno beats]* "ERRR!" into our, "Untz, untz, untz, untz."

00:54:22 John Host *[Cracks up.]* Bring that beat back!

Uh, you know what I say about this letter? Ditto. Short and sweet. Love it. Thank you, Margaret. Appreciate it.

00:54:33 Jesse Host I just wanna give a shout-out—you know, this was on that clicky keyboard episode where I talked about how I bought a clicky keyboard at the thrift store one day?

00:54:37 John Host Ooh. Yeah. Yeah.

00:54:40 Jesse Host And I love to use it. And I do. I do love to use it. And I specifically said... "Keyboard nerds, don't send me your keyboard Tweets."

00:54:50 John Host Mm-hm! Mm-hm! What happened?

00:54:51 Jesse Host I bought my keyboard at the thrift store, I don't know what kind it is, I don't wanna talk about keyboards more. I do not wanna become a keyboard nerd. I just wanna have this clicky keyboard.

*[Laughing]* I would say 12 to 18 keyboard nerds contacted me regarding their particular clicky keyboard preferences.

00:55:10 John Host Just to tell you about their rig, or to ask you questions?

00:55:14 Jesse Host Both!

00:55:15 John Host Hm!

00:55:16 Jesse Host They wanted to share—I got shared so many pictures of rigs.

00:55:19 John Host Yeah.

00:55:20 Jesse Host So many rig pics were shared with me.

00:55:22 John Host *[Exhales thoughtfully.]* You know who uses a clicky?

00:55:25 Jesse Host Who's that?

00:55:26 John Host Linda Holmes.

00:55:27 Jesse Host The great Linda Holmes, from NPR's *Pop Culture Happy Hour!*

00:55:29 John Host She Tweeted to me, uh, that she used a clicky keyboard. She got one. She sent me a picture of her rig.

00:55:36 Jesse Host They're great, and you can tell on *Judge John Hodgman* probably any time that I'm accessing a website, because of how noisy my keyboard is. *[Stifles laughter.]*

00:55:43 John Host What I love about coming here to the studios of WERU in Orland, Maine, is I have—I can really boost the monitor. And so I hear my keyboard in the microphone really loud in my ears, and it's so satisfying to hear.

*[Speaking in time with several thumps into the microphone]* Bump, bump, bump, bump, bump. Bump, bump, bump, bump.

00:55:59 Jesse Host Yeah.

00:56:00 John Host *[Continuing the thumps]* Untz, untz, untz, untz, untz, untz...

*[Stops.]*

00:56:02 Jesse Host Our thanks to Katie and Margaret for writing in. Our no thanks to the keyboard nerds who @ed me.

00:56:09 John Host Yeah, but listed. Keyboard nerds who have an overlap with music



skills? If you can make a rave song composed entirely out of clicky keyboard sounds and send it, that would make me very happy.

00:56:20 Jesse Host

Yeah.

00:56:21 John Host

We need that. We need profound questions asked by toddlers. I don't need any pictures of cats cuddling together anymore. I got that covered. And if you need anything from me, write me. How about that?

00:56:33 Jesse Host

Yeah. The docket's clear. That's it for another episode of *Judge John Hodgman*. Our producer is Jennifer Marmor. Our engineer in Maine is Joel Mann, Program and Operations Manager at WERU Community Radio in Orland, Maine.

You can listen to WERU at [WERU.org](http://WERU.org), and you can follow Joel on Instagram! His handle is [@themainemann](https://www.instagram.com/themainemann). Uh, that's M-A-I-N-E-M-A-N-N. Follow us on Twitter at [@JesseThorn](https://twitter.com/JesseThorn) and at [@hodgman](https://twitter.com/hodgman). We're on Instagram at [@judgejohnhodgman](https://www.instagram.com/judgejohnhodgman). Make sure to hashtag your *Judge John Hodgman* Tweets [#JJHo](https://twitter.com/hashtag/JJHo), and check out the Maximum Fun subreddit at [MaximumFun.Reddit.com](http://MaximumFun.Reddit.com) to [discuss this episode](#) and share pics of your clicky keyboards.

*[John laughs.]*

Submit your cases at [MaximumFun.org/ijho](http://MaximumFun.org/ijho), or email [hodgman@maximumfun.org](mailto:hodgman@maximumfun.org). And we'll talk to you next time on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.

00:57:31 Sound Effect Transition

*[Three gavel bangs.]*

00:57:34 Music Transition

A cheerful ukulele chord.

00:57:35 Speaker 1 Guest

[MaximumFun.org](http://MaximumFun.org).

00:57:37 Speaker 2 Guest

Comedy and culture.

00:57:38 Speaker 3 Guest

Artist owned—

00:57:39 Speaker 4 Guest

—audience supported.