

00:00:00	Sound Effect	Transition	Three gavel bangs.
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 is the kind of the chore coat, Judge John Hodgman.
00:00:11	John Hodgman	Host	Yeah, I'm wearing a chore coat. I finally got my chore coat that I always wanted for Christmas. You know what I got for the holidays, Jesse Thorn?
00:00:19	Jesse	Host	A coat and chores?
00:00:21	John	Host	<i>[Chuckles.]</i> I already had the chores. I needed a coat. I've been lusting after a classic, French-style, blue chore coat. Couldn't find a vintage one that would fit me, because I guess French laborers in the '60s just were just little slips of things. These people just smoked so many Gitanes that their metabolism was like bananas. And so, I couldn't fit into them. But I found one. I got two chore coats. <i>[To the tune of "12 Days of Christmas".]</i> I got two chore coats, one case of the flu, one case of pneumonia. No, one case of pneumonia, ooone bout with goooout! Then I got covid, then I had all my wisdom teeth taken out except for one, because that one was never erupted.
			And do you know what? It's been a stretch; I'll tell you what. But I'm looking at this—you know, we're around the new year, and I feel good finally, and I'm really happy to be here at least virtually with you, my friend Jesse Thorn, to clear this docket. We've got some other friends coming on via voice memo—voice memo madness, today. Gonna have some cameos via voice memo. You can just—you can just read a thing into a voice memo. Do you know what the industry standard is, Jesse, if you're auditioning for a cartoon voice job?
00:01:42	Jesse	Host	I mean, I presume it would be like a professional recording studio, and you send an uncompressed .wav or .pcm file.
00:01:49	John	Host	No, no. Industry standard. This is what the—this is what I've been told to do by the people who know what to do. "Just read it into a voice memo." Just read it into your phone. But for audio quality, they recommend that you do it in a closet with a coat over your head.
			<i>[Jesse laughs.]</i>
			That's the industry—that's the professional advice. I'm like no problem, I'm already there. I'm already in this closet with a coat over my head. I'm not coming out.
00:02:15	Jesse	Host	There might be pneumonia out there!
00:02:17	John	Host	<i>[Shudders.]</i> No, I'm back out there. I'm back out there in the world, safely. Safely. I mean, look, I'm glad that I had these bouts with these diseases and whatnot, because like I know that I got it out of my system. 'Cause we're about to hit that road, and I can't wait to do these shows. And I'm glad to know that I've got a few antibodies in my body. It'll be a little bit protective so I won't get sick on the road. Maybe I will! Who knows? There are a lot of question marks. But yeah, I'm taking that coat off my head. I'm walking out into the world. You and I are gonna be doing some great shows. I believe that there are still tickets available in Seattle. Port Townsend is way sold out. I'm hearing tickets—low-ticket alert, as they say on the email mailing list. Low-ticket alert definitely in Los Angeles. And if

you haven't moved quick on Denver or Portland or Seattle or San Francisco, I encourage you to do so by going to bit.ly/JJHOWEST. J-J-H-O-W-E-S-T. It's gonna be fun, Jesse.

00:03:13 Jesse Host I think we're gonna have a great time. And no matter where you live, you can watch the live stream. We're gonna be live streaming from San Francisco Sketch Fest. That is gonna be a ton of fun. You can go to SFSketchFest to get your tickets to that. I'm really looking forward to that, because for years we have had people saying, "Oh, come to Peoria. Come to Milwaukee." And we just can't go everywhere we'd like to go. Unless we have the magic of the internet! Which we do! So, you can enjoy our live show, see stuff that you couldn't see anywhere else, live from SF Sketch Fest—one of our favorite places to be. I'm really excited about that. So, if you're within the sound of this voice, you can get tickets at SFSketchFest.com to watch our live show!

00:03:57 John Host Yeah! We haven't—you know, look, I'd still love to do a tour of the Great Lakes. But until we do, if you're up there in—you know—Thunder Bay or Duluth or anywhere on the shores of lakes Superior, Huron, Michigan.

00:04:12 Jesse Host Tahoe.

00:04:13 John Host Tahoe. Yeah. I was gonna say Erie, but it's not that great a lake. Lake Ontario's pretty great. Any like—great or not so great! If you got internet, you can get this show. Just go to SFSketchFest.com, find our show page on there—'cause you're gonna see a directory for all the incredible acts that are happening at the Sketch Fest. You'll find us there, and there's a link right there where you can buy tickets. Brought to you by Moment—a company called Moment. There you go!

00:04:43 Jesse Host Okay, here's a case from Elise in Portland, Maine.

00:04:47 John Host Ooh! I know that place.

00:04:49 Jesse Host "My friend, Christian, is a physical fitness trainer. And I've been working out with him for years. Our dispute is what to call the following training exercise: starting with eight repetitions of a given exercise, you first do eight total sets. Then you do one fewer rep each set until you get to one rep."

[John shudders.]

00:05:16 John Host This sounds horrible!

00:05:19 Jesse Host This is already making me feel sore.

00:05:19 Jesse Host What a nightmare!

[John laughs.]

00:05:41 John Host "He calls this a ladder. I call it a pyramid. To me, a ladder would start at one, peak at eight, then come back down—a total of 15 reps. He says this is a pyramid. Please advise so that one of us may razz the other for eternity."

00:05:41 John Host Weeell, not eternity, Elise. I mean, I admire that you're getting in the gym—that you're hitting it. And that will—I hope—prolong your life. But you're not immortal. None of this is gonna make you immortal. So, not eternity, but I will—I will—I will grant razz rights in a second. I don't know. I—*[sighs and groans]*. You know, now that I'm feeling a little bit better, I was like, "Maybe I'll start going back into the gym! The YMCA! Where I can do whatever I please. I can have a good meal and I can do whatever I feel! Exercise!"

00:06:14 Jesse Host I wanna go to these good meal YMCAs, by the way.
00:06:19 John Host *[Laughs.]* That would be pretty great. I was gonna go this morning, but I couldn't go. Do you know why, Jesse? I had an emergency.

00:06:25 Jesse Host What was that?
00:06:26 John Host The cat was in the bed. *[Chuckles.]* I can't get up when the cat's in bed with me! And so, I had to stay there for hours! I did a little email. The cat didn't mind. But eventually, I had to get up and take a shower. Maybe I'll go tomorrow. I don't know, though! I don't know a lot about reps and sets. I'm presuming that this is a kind of a weight training or muscle training. Right?

00:06:51 Jesse Host Yeah. I mean, we're talking about eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one, here. So, eight of something and so on.

[John agrees.]

00:07:03 John Host I think I have it pictured in my mind.
I went online to find out the difference between a ladder scheme and a pyramid scheme. And I ended up giving a lot of money to this one website, but it's gonna pay off I'm pretty sure.

[Jesse laughs.]

But I also found that there was a lot of confusion. Some websites said that a pyramid scheme was not descending, but in fact ascending in intensity and then descending in intensity. Some said that it was—started low and then got more intense. Some said it started high and got less intense. Some said that that's actually a ladder scheme. Some said that the ladder scheme and the pyramid scheme are the same. Some said that they're different. Who am I gonna turn to, Jesse Thorn? I don't know. Who's better than the internet?

My cousin, Kyle. You know why? My cousin Kyle is down there in Maryland getting a doctorate degree in exercise-ology.

[Jesse "woah"s.]

00:08:08 Kyle Guest He knows. So, I asked him to—I asked him to go get in the closet, put a coat over his head, and record us a little voice memo. Let's hear it from Kyle, see what he found out.
Hello, my name is Kyle and I'm a PhD candidate studying kinesiology at the University of Maryland College Park. After sifting through some of my texts and relevant research articles, I've decided to side with Elise. Beyond anecdotal belief that a pyramid workout starts off with a high workload and reduces either volume or intensity or as a ladder would maintain intensity over a number of steps or reps. I'd like to reference Fleck and Kraemer of 2014, who note, quote, "The pyramidal system of training refers to methods in which sets are performed with increasing or decreasing weights and repetitions in such a way that the number of repetitions is low when the weight is high and vice versa." End quote.

In addition, the National Strength and Conditioning Association's Foundation of Fitness Programming generally refers to the cited workout as a, quote, "pyramid loading scheme", end quote. In my

00:09:29 John Host search, I was unable to find any other relevant information related to ladder workouts or ladder schemed workouts. Thank you. That's my cousin, Kyle! He's gonna be a doctor of *[struggling to pronounce it]* kinesiology. I can never remember it. And he just said it!

00:09:35 Jesse Host Sounds like he takes these kind of things seriously.

00:09:37 John Host Yeah, he does take it very seriously. He's gonna be a doctor of kin-easy-exercise-gym-ology, in the gym-time-ology.

00:09:46 Jesse Host That's doing pushups.

00:09:47 John Host Yeah. But he knows what he's talking about. Now, Kyle's very— Kyle's very funny. I've done bits with him onstage many a time. People who've come to shows of mine back in the ancient past will remember Kyle. He's a really smart and funny guy! But when it comes to muscle movements, this guy's no joke. He's gonna go directly to the source, Fleck and Kraemer. And the pyramidal... or pyramidal or pyramid loading scheme that they described, the one that's in the text, makes sense to me. Because it's not just increasing intensity or decreasing intensity, which would seem like going up a ladder or down a ladder. But you are increasing the weight as you are decreasing the reps. And there, you get some pyramid in there. Right? You go—in one regard you're going up, in the other regard you're going down.

And that, to me, feels like a pyramid as opposed to a ladder. That makes sense to me. Now, I can understand why it's different all over the internet, and pyramids and ladders are described in different ways for different kinds of exercises, or they're considered the same. I think that has to do with what Kyle was saying about anecdotal understanding of what these things mean. Because the fact is, not everybody is getting a doctorate in this. Not everyone has their Fleck and Kraemer at hand to know what the source text is.

00:11:05 Jesse Host John, you know what one of my favorite rap lyrics is?

00:11:08 John Host No.

00:11:09 Jesse Host It's DJ Quik, one of my favorite rappers. He says, "I ain't no big, buff dude. I'm a rap singer. I exercise one finger, that's my strap finger." And me, personally, it's like that but for podcasting instead of shooting.

[John laughs and agrees.]

00:11:26 John Host That's my podcasting finger.

00:11:30 Jesse Host It's your larynx. Your vocal chords.

00:11:34 John Host I would accept any language anyone with muscles offered me. But the point is that *[struggling]* kinesiology—I can never remember what it is even though Kyle just said it. I'm sorry, Cousin Kyle. I love you.

00:11:41 Jesse Host Just say pushups.

00:11:43 John Host Pushup-ology, muscle-buildup-ology and other forms of training. It's a living language. And not everyone's going to Fleck and Kraemer, and probably someone learns one thing in one gym as a pyramid loading scheme and in another gym, they refer to it as a ladder loading scheme. And then, that gets passed down and so on and so forth and so on. So, whatever you're using to describe it is fine, but the book says that what Elise and Christian are doing is closer to a pyramid scheme than a ladder scheme. And I'm gonna side

with my cousin, Kyle. And if you think I'm wrong? Okay. But if you think Cousin Kyle is wrong? If you write in saying my cousin Kyle is wrong, you're gonna get blocked. No one is gonna diss cousin Kyle today.

00:12:23 Jesse Host

John Hodgman ain't no big, buff dude! He's a podcaster. He exercises one finger. That's his block finger!

00:12:30 John Host

My block finger. Exactly. Also, Cousin Kyle has got a really cool dog, and I'm gonna send you a photo of it right now. Do you have your photo receiving device open, Jesse?

00:12:40 Jesse Host

I do.

00:12:41 John Host

Alright. I'm sending you this picture. This is the look that the dog gave me as he walked by on the porch, in Ocean City, near Jersey.

[Jesse giggles.]

Yes, he did not wanna be bothered by me. Presuming that Kyle gives permission, we'll put this up on the Instagram,

[@JudgeJohnHodgman](#).

00:12:59 Jesse Host

[Through laughter.] One tooth coming out.

00:13:02 John Host

Yeah, he's a snaggle toothed English bulldog. You know what his name is?

00:13:06 Jesse Host

[Still laughing.] What's that?

00:13:08 John Host

Sir.

00:13:09 Jesse Host

Aw, what a sweet dog.

00:13:11 John Host

He's a sweet dog. Kyle's a sweet cuz. He's got a sweet dog. Fleck and Kraemer, I can't speak to their sweetness, but I'll speak to their authority. Elise, you're in the right. Christian, you're wrong.

00:13:22 Sound Effect Sound Effect

Three gavel bangs.

00:13:25 John Host

Have fun up there in Portland, Maine.

00:13:27 Jesse Host

Here's something from Mandy in Huntsville, Alabama. "I'd like to hear the judge's thoughts on proper packing etiquette. Is it acceptable to place one's suitcase on the bed to pack and unpack? I think that's gross! Who knows where that suitcase has been while in transit."

00:13:47 John Host

[Beat.] Yyyeah. Uh. What's your instinct here, Jesse? I've got a strong feeling. You can probably guess.

00:13:55 Jesse Host

Wait, it's gross to put the suitcase on the bed? In a hotel room like?

[John confirms.]

00:14:03 John Host

Like in the bed?! Or like on top of a bedspread?

00:14:06 Jesse Host

You raise a good point. There are different scenarios.

00:14:13 John Host

Do people put their butts on their bed? The butt of my pants has been in all kinds of gross places.

00:14:17 Jesse Host

I know! And that's a good question. Do you put your butt on the bed?

00:14:19 John Host

I put my butt wherever I please!

00:14:21 Jesse Host

It's your butt and it's your bed, I suppose.

Yeah! It's my dang hotel room! Either the bedspread gets washed, in which case it gets washed. It's not a problem. Or it doesn't get washed, in which case many much grosser things are on it than whatever is on the side of my suitcase!

00:14:37 John Host

I have to say that I—you know, I have a brother-in-law who—

00:14:43 Jesse Host

You know what, John?! I have two brother-in-laws! So—

00:14:47 John Host Alright, well, I guess you win, then. I guess you win. What do your brother-in-laws say about wearing—as Phoebe Robinson says—your outside clothes on the bed?

[Jesse laughs.]

Phoebe Robinson, of course, wrote a book called, “Please don’t sit on my bed in your outside clothes.” And it’s a great book. And obviously, her position is clear. My brother-in-law would say, “Yeah, I don’t understand why you would ever get anywhere near your bed in the clothes that you just wore on the subway. And for years and years, I was like, “Oooh, come ooon!” And then, I gotta say that, um, the experience of the pandemic made me much, much more conscious. Obviously, we know now that covid and other respiratory diseases aren’t really transferred from butt contact with subway seat to butt contact with bedspread. But I did think a little bit more about it, and I don’t really lie down even on the bedspread in my outside clothes anymore. Or if I do, I feel funny. I feel funny and I feel like eugh.

00:15:53 Jesse Host Do you sit on chairs in your outside clothes?

00:15:56 John Host I do. Does that make me the lowest form of hypocrite, Jesse? Do you and your brothers in law say that I’m a—

00:16:02 Jesse Host *[Distracted.]* I don’t know! I don’t even understand what the objection here is! What’s the problem?!

00:16:08 John Host I’m gonna throw another one at you. I don’t even think your brothers-in-law will have a defense for this. I wanna know what we’re gonna do about the bugs, to quote the mystery prank phone call that I was never able to find the original source for. And then, I finally found the cassette tape in the basement of our house in western Massachusetts. Played it once. Loved it. It’s this thing I’ve had since the 1990s and had lost, recovered it, played it once, loved it, played it twice. The machine ate the tape.

I wanna know what we’re gonna do about the bugs. Bed bugs specifically, Jesse. This was a big thing during—there was a big bed bug problem in Brooklyn. You know that song by Warren Zevon? *[to the tune of “Werewolves of London”]* “Awooooo, bed bugs of Brooklyn.”

[They chuckle.]

It was his follow-up to “Werewolves of London”. Didn’t do very well. It was about the bed bug problem that we had in Brooklyn! And you didn’t wanna be going to some hotel and get bed bugs crawling into your suitcase overnight. And then, putting that suitcase on your own bed as soon as you got home. You’re gonna get some bed bugs in your bed. That’s where they’re trying to get to. That’s where they’re named for. Bed. Bugs. Everyone was having bed bug problems in Brooklyn probably about six years ago. And it was all throughout our building, and everyone understood you didn’t wanna be going to a hotel—even a nice, clean hotel.

Bed bugs could crawl into your bag while you were sleeping overnight, whether or not it was on the bed in the hotel. And then, when you come home, you definitely don’t wanna put it on the bed, ‘cause that’s where the bugs wanna get to. That’s why they’re

called bed bugs! But you also wanna make sure you wanna put it in a bathtub and spray it down with rubbing alcohol! And run all your stuff through the drier to kill those bed bug eggs. I have to say that I've loosened up a little bit on that, but I still think about it. I don't think that you wanna put your luggage onto your own bed—spread or no. You definitely don't wanna tuck it in under the covers. That would be gross, wouldn't it? Tucking your duffle bag under the covers?

00:18:17 Jesse Host
00:18:20 John Host

It depends on whether you're planning to escape Alcatraz. Yeah, I was just gonna say [*chuckles*] the only reason to tuck your duffle bag under the covers is if you're trying to trick some authority figure or your mom into thinking you're asleep in there when instead you're swimming to the shore of San Francisco or out on a hot date or whatever. Otherwise, I'd say keep your luggage away from that bad, but that's my personal judgement. Putting your luggage on a bed in a hotel? Yeah, I don't think there's—I don't have a problem with that.

You know, I've told the story before about that time that I checked into the intercontinental hotel in Austin, Texas—a really lovely hotel. And I went straight for the mini can of pringles. It was always my go-to as soon as I get into a hotel room. If they have any kind of snack set up, I will immediately down that mini can of pringles. I don't care how many 30s or 40s of dollars that it costs. And I opened that mini can of pringles and guess what? It had already been opened and half of them had already been eaten. And I was very—I was livid! I rarely complain. And I stopped myself, I think. Maybe I'm misremembering. I really wanted to call down and say to the hotel, "You have—you have failed in your most—your most sacred of duties, which is to create the impression that I am the first person whoever entered this hotel room. And no one certainly ever came and hugged and kissed in this hotel room before I came here to stay or did any kind of stuff."

Because the truth is, we know hotel rooms—stuff gets gotten up to in hotel rooms. They're gross and they're dirty. Anyway, Mandy, this wasn't even a dispute. I don't know how I got tricked into hearing this. This was an etiquette question. I don't know who in your life is telling you to put your suitcase on your bed, but if it—

00:20:05 Jesse Host
00:20:12 John Host
00:20:17 Jesse Host
00:20:18 John Host

No, she's telling other people to do this weird, complicated system. She's the one demanding an airlock.

I rule in Mandy's favor against the world and especially Jesse's brothers-in-law.

Bananas.

Don't put your suitcase on your own bed. That's your private refuge from the world and all of the gunk and junk that your suitcase goes through out in the world. However, if you're in a hotel room where you've got two queen beds, go ahead and just use one as your junk bed. It's the same philosophy as the eating bed. I don't know who coined that term. Maybe someone out there in the world will let me know. But you know about the eating bed, Jesse?

00:20:43 Jesse Host
00:20:44 John Host

No!

Yeah. Some people specifically request two queen bedrooms, as opposed to one king bed for example, so that they have one bed that they can eat in and the other bed that they can sleep in.

00:20:56 Jesse Host

Oh, I love it.

[John agrees.]

00:21:06 John Host I've never stopped thinking about my friend Julie Klausner's idea of using one's bed and blankets to construct a snack nest.
Well, Julia's a genius. Snack nest. I don't know if I would make a snack nest in my own bed, but that's what hotel rooms are for.
00:21:13 Jesse Host What's great about snack nests is they also make perfect voice over audition studios.

[They laugh.]

00:21:19 John Host That's what hotel rooms are for, to transgress. I mean, not immorally, please. Don't break your own code of loyalty to your principles and to the people in your life. But I mean like you can go ahead and eat a bunch of tacos on the bed.
00:21:33 Jesse Host Or just watch a bunch of HDTV or the History Channel.
00:21:36 John Host Ooh yeah. I mean, that's the only thing they should show on hotel TVs is HGTV. Jesse, do you know—I've said it before, but I'll remind you if you don't know. Why is *House Hunters International* better than *House Hunters* reg.
00:21:49 Jesse Host I don't know. Why is that?
00:21:50 John Host The *House Hunters International* people are all running from something.

[Jesse laughs.]

00:22:04 Jesse Host They're moving countries for some mysterious reason that they never specify. They've got something dark in their past. It's the greatest.
Okay, we're gonna take a quick break to hear from this week's partners. We'll be back with more cases to clear from the docket on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.
00:22:11 Sound Effect Transition Three gavel bangs.
00:22:14 Sound Effect Transition Three gavel bangs.
00:22:16 Jesse Host Welcome back to the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast. We're clearing the docket, and here is something from Elizabeth in Minneapolis, Minnesota. "My friend, Michelle, and I went to a restaurant where the tip is included in the bill. Michelle still tipped cash on top of the total, which I had paid for the both of us. They do this frequently—tipping on top of the tip, including when others are trying to treat. This habit makes me feel cheap even when my tips are 20 or 25% of the bill. Please enjoin Michelle from fixing other people's tips."
00:22:55 John Host Do you ever do this, Jesse? Do you ever bump the tip when you're dining out with people?
00:23:00 Jesse Host I've paid the tip when someone else is paying the bill, as a compromise.

[John affirms.]

But I have never had someone treat me to a meal and then said, "Buuut I also want to pay some. Here is some more in addition to what you are paying."

00:23:17 John Host You've never gone out to dinner with someone—someone is taking you out to dinner and you have the sense that they're gonna cheap out on the tip a little bit?

00:23:26 Jesse Host I mean, I'm not gonna look over their shoulder at what they're writing into the notebook!

00:23:32 John Host I'll tell you what. I've topped the tip before in my life. I'm gonna admit it.

00:23:36 Jesse Host Wow! A tip topper!

00:23:37 John Host I've been a tip topper in my life, and here's the situation in which I topped the tip. You know, if I am going out and someone else is paying and I have an instinct—and this is not judgmental—I have an instinct that they're going to tip like 15%. Because maybe they're a little bit older than me and maybe they grew up in a culture where 15% was the norm, whereas 20% is the norm now. Right? And then, if it's a restaurant that I like to go to personally and care about—alright, let's just *[mumbling]*—no, they're never gonna listen to this. *[Chuckles.]* Let's say my father-in-law is taking us out to dinner in New York.

[Jesse laughs.]

I'll top the tip. I'll top the tip. Now, I don't—I don't know necessarily whether Brad is a tip skimper. He might be tipping very generously! But if it's my city and it's a place that I like to go to, I wanna make sure that those people are taken care of. And so, I'll—you know—discreetly give a little extra cash to the server, drop it on the table, or—you know. That's when I'll top the tip. But on the other hand! And here's another controversial one. This is gonna—this is gonna stoke the fires over in the Reddit. There have been times when I have not tipped at all! Under a very specific circumstance, which is this: when ride share services began—and I'm talking about like let's say a decade or more ago. When Uber first started, whenever that was, and I was experimenting with this new lifestyle, at that time the service told you, "Don't tip the driver. It is all included."

The whole point of Uber at that time was that tech bros in San Francisco who lack social skills and are tired of having to interact with actual humans who might be outside of their social and economic circle—such as cab drivers—they created a workaround where you could get into the car and only the phone would talk to the driver. You would never have to talk to the person or give them money or acknowledge their humanity in any way. And therefore, the whole premise was the tip is included, you just get in, have no contact with a human, and then get out.

00:26:03 Jesse Host You felt like a monarch who had created a human robot to serve you.

00:26:08 John Host Exactly so. The utopian dream of every tech worker in the valley. Turn everyone who is not part of my very small world into a robot who does my bidding and I never talk to them.

So, I did it! I followed the rule! 'Cause I am a rule-follower by nature. Until I was in Seattle, Washington, doing an event. We're performing a show there in a couple of days. Bit.ly/JJHOWEST. And the wonderful comedian, Jen Kirkman, was aghast when I told her that I was not tipping on the Ubers. It was all brand-new. And she was like, "Yeah, I know it says that, but I'm still gonna give the

guy a tip.” And we got into a little dispute over it. And I realized, of course, she’s right.

Since Jen Kirkman is so funny and smart and so right, I asked if she might get into a closet, put a coat over her head, and send us a little voice memo with her take on this dispute between Elizabeth and her friend, Michelle. Roll tape!

00:27:08 Jen Kirkman Guest

Hi, Judge John Hodgman! It’s your friend, Jen Kirkman. You know, I’m reminded of the lyrics that the great Salt-N-Pepa once sang: “There’s only one true judge, and that’s god. So, chill and let my Father do his job.” I’m gonna chill and let you do your job, Judge John Hodgman, but I just wanna weigh in a little bit. Now, Elizabeth says she’s made to feel cheap when Michelle throws an extra cash tip on top of what Elizabeth already tipped. Now, Elizabeth, we all know that no one can make you feel anything. Like Eleanor Roosevelt said something about that, and it’s—you need consent or something. But you know what I mean. So, that’s you’re issue to deal with, right?

Now, I don’t know why Michelle is doing this. Maybe Michelle does think you’re cheap, which again, that’s none of your business. Or maybe Michelle just feels like they’re not contributing enough. So, here’s the deal. How about this? The next time the bill comes and you grab for it, Elizabeth, and you wanna leave a 25% tip and Michelle’s there with the cash ready to throw it down, maybe you both decide, “Alright, we’re gonna leave a 40% tip.” Elizabeth, you put that 40% tip on your credit card and Michelle gives you the cash that they were going to drop on the table. Everybody wins. If that doesn’t work, well then Michelle, you’re going to have to learn to drop the cash when Elizabeth isn’t looking. Make sure that you’re the last one to leave the table, put your hand behind your back, and then just—whoops! Drop the cash on the table. Problem solved. I hope this helped!

00:28:31 Jesse Host

I love Jen Kirkman, and I love that her solution to this involves sleight of hand magic.

[John laughs.]

I love that one hand has cash in it, and the other hand is somewhere else making a distracting motion.

00:28:43 John Host

That’s right. Yeah. Yeah, just have a little penlight in the other hand or a little laser pointer. And say, “Hey, look at that! I’m using a laser pointer over here!” And then, casually throw some cash to the maître d.

00:28:55 Jesse Host

John, is your father-in-law a cat?

00:28:59 John Host

[Giggles.] Um, no, no, no. My father-in-law is a big dog. He’s a big, fluffy dog. I’m sure he tips pretty good. But Jen Kirkman is absolutely right. Either get it out in the open—particularly if someone’s trying to treat you, don’t make them feel small and make them feel cheap. That’s ungenerous of you to like say, “You didn’t tip enough. I’m gonna give some more.” That becomes a power struggle. Either work it out together openly or just—you know—sneak a little money under the table while you’re creating a distraction with maybe some flashbangs or some smoke capsules. And then, you can spin and disappear.

00:29:37	Sound Effect	Sound Effect	Three gavel bangs.
00:29:39	Jesse	Host	Is this the tip you chose?
			<i>[They laugh.]</i>
			Here's a case from Liz in Brooklyn, New York. "I'm prone to car sickness, as a passenger. When my husband, Ryan, and I travel, I typically drive. I ask him to look up the interesting signs and roadside Americana that we pass. He says that's not his obligation as passenger. I obviously can't search them myself. I'm driving! And if I wait until we stop the car, we might be hours past a cool model railroad setup or a natural wonder, or the world's largest something! I would like the honorable judge to order Ryan to look up interesting things as we drive past.
00:30:27	John	Host	So, I reached out to Liz and asked what Ryan believes his obligations as a passenger are. And he did not get into a closet and put a coat over his head to record a voice memo, but I do have a direct quote from him. "As I am not an AI internet search assistant, I am not obligated to instantaneously google anything, such as 'What is that tall building over there?' My only obligations are to 1) let Liz drive on account of her car sickness, 2) assist with navigation, and 3) remind Liz that we have to make it to dinner with our family when she asks things like, 'What's that building/store/rock formation? Should we stop?'"
			Liz counters that people at the family dinner would not mind if they stopped to see the world's largest chair for a few minutes, but that's Ryan's response. What do you think, Jesse? Should Ryan be googling things at Liz's whim as they're driving cross this land of ours? Hang on. What do you think, Jesse? Should Ryan be searching up things on the internet, as per Liz's whim, while they are driving together?
00:31:32	Jesse	Host	Is this dispute about the searching? Or is this dispute about the stopping?
00:31:38	John	Host	What I gather from Ryan's response is that he's concerned that if he searches up "what is that weird thing over there?", that is the—it is a slippery slope that they will slide down to a long stopover looking at that giant chair or that mystery spot or that roadside museum. And then, they will be late. But I think most of all, Ryan doesn't wanna feel like an AI. Ryan doesn't wanna feel like it's his job to take orders from Liz as she drives and look up everything around them, like a human heads-up display. Why? Does it make a difference to you, Jesse?
00:32:16	Jesse	Host	Yeah, because I don't think that this is about Ryan not wanting to look things up. I think this is about a common fundamental disagreement among couples, which is should we stop for stuff or should we blast straight through. And I think that Liz is being disingenuous and I think that, to some extent, Ryan is being disingenuous in their responses to this. If Ryan is suggesting he doesn't wanna be a human computer, what he is really saying—in my opinion—is that he wants to blast straight through.
			<i>[John agrees.]</i>

When Liz says she just wants to learn more, what she is really saying is, “I wanna stop for the world’s largest everything.” Now, Liz sort of suggested that was the case. She was much more explicit about it than Ryan was. But I think that’s the fundamental dispute here. My—

00:33:03 John Host

You’re saying maybe Liz wants to stop at so many world’s largest balls of twine and so forth, such that by the time they get to the family dinner, it will be over, and she doesn’t have to go to it and then you can turn around and start making their way back home with various stopovers then, too.

00:33:18 Jesse Host

Now, John, I am open to both of these, but if I had my choice, I would stop at stuff.

[John agrees.]

Specifically, I would stop at wherever the good food is, even if it was a few miles out of our way. I would stop to go to the bathroom a lot, because I’m a big pee-er. Always have been. And I would stop to go to the thrift store anywhere there was a thrift store, ‘cause the best thrift stores are in places that are in the middle of nowhere. And I would—you know, I wouldn’t go for a hike, necessarily. But I’d see the world’s biggest whatever. Sure. Sounds great.

00:33:54 John Host

Yeah, I think I’m naturally a stopper too.

00:33:56 Jesse Host

But! Ultimately, I respect the arrival time.

[John agrees.]

And I’m not a worrier about the arrival time. I’m an on-time person. But I’m not a get-there-way-ahead-of-time person, as you know from our discussions about airports.

00:34:13 John Host

You’re a just-in-timer.

00:34:15 Jesse Host

Yeah. And I am just in time! I don’t—I arrive on time. I’m on time for things.

00:34:20 John Host

You can’t be a professional broadcaster and not respect hitting your post.

00:34:24 Jesse Host

I went to theatre school, dude. No one can rehearse unless everybody’s there.

[John agrees.]

So, to me, I think respecting that fundamental disagreement is the bedrock on which this decision must be built. *[Chuckles.]* And what the decision is, I will leave to you. Because you are the judge. But honestly, as I do—

00:34:47 John Host

According to Jen Kirkman, I’m also god or whatever.

00:34:50 Jesse Host

Well, I mean, Jen Kirkman decides that. So.

[John agrees.]

It has been decided. JK. A legend.

00:34:57 John Host

You ever have Salt-N-Pepa on a *Bullseye*?

00:35:00 Jesse Host

No, I’ve tried! I would love to have Salt-N-Pepa on *Bullseye*.

00:35:04 John Host

Salt-N-Pepa, go on *Bullseye*. You’re listening to this podcast, and you haven’t been on *Bullseye*. Come on! We love you. Spinderella, too. She’s part of the band.

00:35:13 Jesse Host
00:35:15 John Host

Shoop, shooby-dooby like Scooby Dooby.
[Whispering.] Oh boy, oh boy, those songs were good. Let me tell you what makes a good road trip, since we're about to hit the road. When you're traveling with your friend—and I hope, Liz, that Ryan is your friend and not just your husband. Here's what makes a good road trip. First of all, you arrive on time. And if that means building in extra time to make sure that you're not stressed out, even if you don't stop, build in that extra time! Don't start too late. Ideally, leave early in the morning. Honestly, no one likes to sleep in on a road trip. Hit that road! Because I agree with you, Liz. And I agree with you, Jesse. Stopping on the way is a true delight, whether it's something you planned or something that just comes up.

I remember I think it was the last time we were on tour. Jesse, you know, you need to take some breaks, because of these migraines that you get. Sometimes you need to get some food in you. And we stopped, and you got some—I'm not gonna say the brand of McNugget, but it was a McNugget.

[Jesse laughs.]

Actually, several of them. I was so astonished, 'cause I was like, "I haven't had a McNugget—a name-brand McNugget—in decades! I've spent my life looking down my nose at these McNuggets. And I know all the problems with the McNuggets and everything else, but sometimes you need to eat a food, and the McNugget is there. And that was one of the greatest things I've ever put in my mouth that day! And then, later on that road trip, spontaneously we stopped—for me, in my case, I had an incredible tuna melt at Traveler Food & Books on the Massachusetts Connecticut border. And I was like I haven't been here in 15 years or longer, since I traveled—used to drive between New Haven and Boston all the time.

This place, you go in there. You get a homecooked meal, and every—and they have a ton of books around. And every time you get a meal, you get a—you get to take a free book. And now, I think they ask you to take three books. Not just a free book, but three free books, 'cause they got too many books. Stopping is fun! Stopping is fun. Now. That does not mean that you should turn your husband into a living computer. Liz, if you wanna build in some stops, build in some stops! Do some research and figure out one or two things that you wanna stop for before you even hit the road. Then, whatever Ryan's feeling anxious about—in terms of getting there on time and/or being dehumanized by you as you start referring to him as Siri or whatever, that will be eliminated. 'Cause it's built into the system.

You know what's a resource is that *Atlas Obscura*. You know those guys?

00:37:53 Jesse Host
00:37:57 John Host

Yeah, it's a fun website for learning about a fun thing somewhere. Yeah, like the Maine Desert, which is a weird patch of desert in the middle of Maine. Or Perry's Nuthouse in Maine. These are all gonna be Maine examples. *Atlas Obscura*. You gotta get up there and do more in Maine, honestly. But yeah, I mean, you know. Do a little research in advance. Or check out the research people have already done! And build in a little stop for yourself. And be open to

spontaneity, but I—I mean, I don't think—I think it's a little ungracious of you, Ryan, to say you don't—you won't ever google "what is that building over there". Try to have some fun in your life, for heaven's sake.

But yeah, I think if—I think you have to make those requests, Liz, with a certain amount of graciousness on your side, too. Which is keep it to a minimum, do some research in advance, don't both Ryan too much. He's trying to take a rest.

00:38:43 Sound Effect
00:38:45 Sound Effect
Jesse Host

Three gavel bangs.

Sidenote, to my favorite *Judge John Hodgman* listener, Mrs. Thorn: I understand and support our need to barrel through when our children are in the car. And also, thank you for going on a popular business review app to find a good place for us to eat when I'm driving. I really appreciate it.

00:39:11 Sound Effect
00:39:13 Sound Effect
00:39:15 Jesse Host

Let's take a quick break. When we come back, a request for a stay of justice about jellyfish.

Three gavel bangs.

Three gavel bangs.

00:39:24 John Host

Judge Hodgman, we're taking a break from the docket and making our preparations to hit the road, both IRL and virtually.

That's true. For the first time in a couple of years, for reasons that you probably understand, we're gonna be doing some live shows! Now, the live shows are happening primarily in the western part of these United States. Uh, Seattle, Portland, Denver, San Francisco, Los Angeles. And not everyone lives in those places. If you don't live in any of those cities, or you tried to get tickets to Port Townsend, Washington, but you got shut out 'cause it sold out, you can still check out the live stream of our San Francisco Sketch Fest show at the beautiful Sydney Goldstein Theater anywhere in the world, so long as you have internet.

Please, please, please, go to SFSketchFest.com if you don't live near any of those cities and follow the links and get your tickets for the live stream from San Francisco Sketch Fest. We're really excited to be doing it! And we know a lot of you don't live in Seattle, Portland, Denver, San Francisco, or Los Angeles. Hey, but if you do and you wanna come to the show, good news is low-ticket alert. They're going fast, but you can still get your tickets now by going to bit.ly/JJHOWEST. I mean, I hope they're still available. I'm recording this a couple of weeks before we hit that road. Bit.ly/JJHOWEST or just go to the events page at MaximumFun.org.

Hey, as of this recording, our Los Angeles show is sold out. But if you have a case that you haven't sent in yet for Los Angeles, please do it! Because if we pick your case to adjudicated live onstage, we're gonna sneak you in the side door. Doesn't matter if you have a ticket. MaximumFun.org/ijho if you have a case for any of these cities that you'd like us to consider for hearing live onstage. MaximumFun.org/ijho. And make sure you specify which of these cities you're in! Seattle, Portland, Denver, San Francisco, or Los

Angeles! Plus, that live stream from the San Francisco Sketch Fest. Cannot wait to stream out to the world. All ticket links, including the link to the live stream—as you know—can be found at bit.ly/JJHOWEST. Which is all capital letters, all one word. Or just go to the events page at MaximumFun.org.

00:41:36	Jesse	Host	Anything you'd like to add to that, Jesse Thorn? Corin Tucker in Portland, David Gborie in Denver. You can't beat those guests.
00:41:41	John	Host	I can't believe that I forgot to mention David Gborie in Denver and Corin Tucker in Portland! Who knows what other surprises might await you when you come to see the show? So, follow the links, see us on the road, or see us on the stream. We're very grateful when you come to the shows, and I can say with great authority, it's better when you're there.
00:42:03	Jesse	Host	I'm gonna wear a cowboy hat.
00:42:05	John	Host	Maybe I'll wear a cowboy hat, too! I have one.
00:42:07	Jesse	Host	Frontier Justice! Let's do it. Cowboy hats.
00:42:09	John	Host	Cowboy hats. It's done.
00:42:11	Jesse	Host	Let's get back to the docket.
00:42:12	Sound Effect	Transition	Three gavel bangs.
00:42:14	Jesse	Host	Welcome back to the <i>Judge John Hodgman</i> podcast.
00:42:18	John	Host	Indeed, welcome back! And you know, during the break, Jesse, I hear something from our editor, Valerie Moffatt, which I would like to share with the audience. Valerie, are you there? Valerie, come in, please.
00:42:30	Valerie Moffatt	Editor	Hello, John. I'm here.
00:42:31	John	Host	Share with the audience what you just shared with me about your own road trip fascinations.
00:42:37	Valerie	Editor	So, I have been guilty of what Liz is asking about here on road trips, specifically with <i>[laughs]</i> —with airplanes that I see, on the road. I love airplanes. I think they're very cool. And I have a flight radar app on my phone. And if I'm like out on the road on the interstate with a good friend, and I see a cool airplane up in the sky and I can't quite tell what it is, I will take my phone off the dashboard mount, open my flight radar app, and ask my passenger, uh—
			<i>[They laugh.]</i>
			—to find what the plane is that I'm looking for and tell me what it is.
00:43:19	John	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> And the app? The app will track what planes are in the air around you?
00:43:26	Jesse	Host	<i>[Valerie confirms.]</i> Yeah. It's what they call a cool app, John.
00:43:30	John	Host	<i>[Valerie agrees.]</i>
00:43:32	Valerie	Editor	<i>[Laughs.]</i> You're a planespotter?
00:43:34	John	Host	I've dabbled in planespotting. Huh! Well, here's what I have to say about that. First of all, Valerie, stop doing that.

[Valerie laughs.]

Which is to say you can do it, but I don't like hearing about you like grabbing your phone out of the thing while you're driving and throwing it at your passenger.

[Valerie laughs.]

That doesn't sound safe to me. But I think it's perfectly reasonable to say to your passenger, "Look, this is gonna happen. Download this app. Get ready. If I see a plane, I'm gonna need you to look it up."

00:44:03	Valerie	Editor	That's fair.
00:44:04	John	Host	Yeah. Absolutely. There's some things—and you know what? The passenger, if they're gracious, is gonna do it.
00:44:08	Valerie	Editor	Yes. Yeah. This is not the kind of thing I would do with—you know—a casual acquaintance.
00:44:12	John	Host	No. And Ryan, I think you should be gracious. But it's true, Liz—you know, if you're asking someone to internet search stuff that's in the air or passing by quickly, it's kinda—it's gone before you can get there, anyway. So, you know. Prep your passenger for a few reasonable demands, but I love that. You ever catch a Boeing 377 Stratocruiser in the air?
00:44:37	Valerie	Editor	Haven't caught a Stratocruiser. I've seen Dreamliners. I've seen 747s. No stratocruisers.
00:44:43	Jesse	Host	Guys, I feel like you're too cool for me!
00:44:46	Valerie	Editor	Yeah, I don't wanna brag or anything, Jesse. Sorry though. You know.
00:44:49	John	Host	I also wanna say that, in the background behind you are our producer, Jennifer Marmor, and Richard Robey, who's gonna be our producer on the road when we go on the road. Right, Richard?
00:44:59	Richard Robey	Producer	I am! Hello, hello!
00:45:00	John	Host	Hello to you! And I just wanna say, I've taken a screenshot of the three of you sitting there. And I hope that I have your permission to put it on the Instagram account, @JudgeJohnHodgman, because you're in this position—you look like—you look like three Cylons in the cockpit of a Cylon raider in the old <i>Battlestar Galactica</i> .

[They chuckle.]

00:45:18	Jesse	Host	They look like a tribunal sitting in judgement of our podcast!
00:45:22	John	Host	Yeah! By your command!
00:45:23	Jennifer Marmor	Producer	Who judges the judge?!
00:45:27	Valerie	Editor	We will determine your fate.
00:45:29	John	Host	If you haven't watched the original <i>Battlestar Galactica</i> lately, we'll put out a compare and contrast photo of three Cylons in a Cylon Raider.

[They laugh.]

00:45:42	Jesse	Host	Anyway, here I go. Here I go. Here I go, again. Jesse, what's my weakness? [Uncertainly.] Podcasting? Well, men, but—?
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[John agrees.]

00:45:48 John Host But what rhymes with men that's appropriate for the situation?
00:45:50 Jesse Host It doesn't have to rhyme. Cases was what I was gonna say.
Okay. Cases. Okay. Sure.

Here's one from Zach. "My wife, Danielle, won't let me shush our newborn baby. There are lots of parenting books that say shushing is a good way to soothe and calm your baby. But she says my shushing is grating and annoying. She shushes my shushing! And before you know it, we're trapped in a shushing war that would rival most libraries. Who is in the right?"

00:46:21 John Host Well, you know that I couldn't—I couldn't judge this one without getting a voice memo from Zach's closet with his coat over his head or whatever. So, I did request some shushing. And I'm gonna say—I'm gonna make my judgement based purely on the shushing quality. Hey, by the way everyone, you're not just gonna hear Zach shushing, but you're also gonna hear the baby crying. Just so you know! You'll find out why that's important later. Let's take a listen.
[The baby cries as it's pat on the back and shushed.]

00:46:47 Zach Guest

Ooh!

[More crying, patting, and shushing.]

There we go!

[Long, extending shushing.]

00:47:10 Jesse Host This sounds like the soundtrack of an A24 horror movie!
00:47:16 John Host *[Laughs.]* I don't know. To me, it sounded a little bit like the air conditioning in a Boeing 377 Stratocruiser.

00:47:25 Jesse Host Ooh! Cool!
00:47:26 John Host Yeah. It was one of the first—one of the first planes to have air conditioning, and they also had berths in there—beds for long international flights as well as little bassinets for babies. That's why it sounded to me like a Boeing 377 Stratocruiser.

00:47:44 Jesse Host I thought you meant births in their beds! *[Chuckles.]* Like, the flights are so long—

00:47:50 John Host Maybe someone gave a birth in the berth, but I'm talking about B-E-R-T-H.

00:47:54 Jesse Host Jen, it sounds like if we take one of these airplanes, you can come with us on tour!

00:47:58 John Host *[Jennifer "woo-hoo"s and laughs.]*
Yeah, that's right!

No, they had little—they had little cots, and then you would go downstairs—yes, you could go downstairs—and go to their little cocktail bar in the basement of the plane. Boeing's 377 Stratocruiser. I've never seen a plane that looked like this. Anyway. This shushing, Jesse. What do you think? Grating and annoying or appropriate?

00:48:18 Jesse Host Well, I think this is a perfect example of por que no los dos. Right?
[John laughs.]

It can be grating and annoying and appropriate. *[Chuckling.]* Like, there's not a lot of conveniences associated with babies.

[They laugh.]

Like, I think it's—I think it's appropriate to be bothered by shushing noises. I won't tell anyone what kind of noises to be bothered by. But I can speak from experience and say that it is helpful with calming babies.

00:48:51 John Host

I'll say this. What I heard with my expert ears—my judging ears; I put them on every time I record—

00:48:57 Jesse Host

—was a sequel to *The Green Knight*.

00:48:59 John Host

Exactly right. First of all, that baby sounds cute. Second of all, that shushing is annoying. But I can't dispute its effectiveness. It seemed to work. That baby got shushed and burped. But in any case, got soothed. That said, you gotta—you gotta respect your partner, especially if you have a baby. You gotta extend some extra graciousness to the person who birthed that baby. And I'm not talking about flew that baby in a Stratocruiser. I'm talking about had that baby taken out of their body. Uuh, you're probably both exhausted, but if your partner says to you, "Don't make that noise around me," you gotta respect that.

So, if you've got another room to go into, a shushing room, you can do your shushing. But don't do your shushing around your partner, because it might just be driving them bananas, and no one needs that. You're—you gotta do what you gotta do. Everyone's just trying to live through this, including that little baby. It's a weird time for all of you. So, just take extra gentle care with each other. Keep your shushes to yourself and your baby. That's your personal shushing time with your baby.

00:50:06 Sound Effect Sound Effect

Three gavel bangs.

00:50:08 Jesse Host

By the way, I joke about this being a horror movie soundtrack, but sincere apologies to those parents who can't bear the sound of a child crying. My wife can't even like listen to the Stevie Wonder song "Isn't She Lovely". Like, I'll play—one of my favorite albums is *Small Talk* by Sly & the Family Stone. And it opens with a baby crying. And my wife can't hear it.

[John affirms.]

I mean, if she heard "Are You That Somebody" by Aaliyah, produced by Timbaland—which is completely built around weird baby noises—I think her head would explode.

00:50:44 John Host

I also wanna let our listeners know that as far as I know, Zach did not actually go into a closet and put a coat over him and his baby's head to record that shushing, which probably would be unsafe.

00:50:55 Jesse Host

Finally, we have here a request for a stay of justice. Do you remember the case "Blob Justice", about the—*[chuckling]*.

00:51:02 John Host

Yeah. Jellyfish tank?

00:51:04 Jesse Host

[Laughing.] Yeah, exactly! Kayleigh, the wife, had a case against David, her husband, who wanted to put a jellyfish tank in their house.

[John confirms.]

00:51:20	John	Host	Man, don't we live in a wonderful world, John? <i>[Chuckles.]</i> We really do. I think I ruled that they had to wait until their child was three years old.
00:51:27	Jesse	Host	Well, let's hear Kayleigh.
00:51:30	Kayleigh	Guest	Hi, Judge Hodgman. This is Kayleigh, from the "Blob Justice" episode, way back in 2019. During our hearing, you ruled that we get a jellyfish tank by our then newborn's fourth birthday. This momentous occasion is now less than a month away. However, we recently had our second baby, and she is just now six weeks old. I throw myself on the mercy of the court and request a stay of justice until the new baby is three. I promise that our toddler is not bereft of jellies, and new baby is not a supremely labor-intensive con to deny my husband his tank. I await your ruling. Thanks, Kayleigh.
00:52:06	Jesse	Host	You know how some people call dogs fur babies? <i>[John confirms.]</i>
00:52:12	John	Host	Do you think jellyfish could be called blob babies? Blobby blob babies? For sure. But maybe you'll never get a blob baby if they keep having human babies.
00:52:20	Jesse	Host	Skin babies, I call them.
00:52:22	John	Host	<i>[Chuckling.]</i> I just don't know where this ends, Kayleigh! I mean, first of all, congratulations on having your daughter, it sounds like. And I hope all is happy and healthy in your world. I don't know, though! I mean, a ruling is a ruling. Who's to say that you're not just gonna call me up in three years saying, "Alright, now we had another baby." Maybe you're just gonna keep having babies to avoid having these blob babies in a tank in your home. Hm! What do you think, Jesse?
00:52:52	Jesse	Host	I don't know. I mean— <i>[sighs]</i> I think that she's right, but I also—I just feel terrible standing between anyone and a tank full of jellyfish! <i>[Laughs.]</i>
00:53:05	John	Host	Yeah! I mean, Kayleigh, your husband has waited four years for the justice that I ruled. Kayleigh wrote that their new child is an unknown entity. "Who knows if we got—" This is a quote. "Who knows if we got a tank smasher?"
00:53:22	Jesse	Host	<i>[Laughs.]</i> It's true! Some skin babies are tank smashers!
00:53:25	John	Host	Some skin babies are tank smashers! <i>[Sighs.]</i> I feel for you. Uh. But I'm gonna—I'm—no. Gotta get those blob babies. I mean, you know, look. Your husband can take mercy upon you and voluntarily put it off, but there is no mercy in the court of Judge John Hodgman. The fake law is the fake law. As soon as that older child hits that fourth birthday, your husband is legally—internet legally allowed to get those blob babies and make sure that they're kept in a childproof tank, free from smashers. I know that you're not gonna like this, Kayleigh, but I gotta stick by the ruling. I apologize.
00:54:15	Jesse	Host	The safest thing would be to get the jellyfish tank and then get a separate tank for the children.
00:54:22	John	Host	<i>[Snorts.]</i> If I recall correctly, the jellyfish tank was gonna be kept in a den area anyway. It needs to be—I mean, like all things in your home, it—you should be evaluating it for child safety. And if that means putting it in a child off-limits area if you have that available to you, I think that would be a happy solution. Just let your husband go into his tank room, close the door, lock it from the outside, and

then you can have a happy family without him. Let him raise those blob babies forever.

00:54:54 Jesse Host The docket's clear! That's it for another episode of *Judge John Hodgman*. Judge John Hodgman—

00:54:58 John Host Hang on. Hang on. Let me—let me—let me—let me just poll the tribunal back there. Cylon leader, Cylon pilot, Cylon navigator, are you receiving me?

00:55:08 Valerie Editor We're receiving you, John.

00:55:09 John Host Well, this is an unprecedented situation, then. A court of appeals—we've never had one before. But a court of appeals usually has three judges. So, since you're sitting in that odd way anyway, what are your votes? Jellyfish tank or no?

00:55:23 Valerie Editor Hm. *[Sighs.]*

00:55:25 John Host Just go with your gut.

00:55:26 Valerie Editor My gut says no. I don't wanna overturn a settled law in this court, but my gut says—my gut receives the plea for mercy.

00:55:35 John Host Okay, Jennifer Marmor. What is your vote?

00:55:39 Jennifer Producer My vote is "not yet". Their lives are too wild right now, with the newborn. Taking care of blob babies on top of regular babies? Whooo!

00:55:49 John Host That's another no. Okay. Robey, what is your vote?

00:55:54 Richard Producer I also say no. And I say, for the time being, how about a nice jellyfish screensaver?

00:55:59 Jesse Host That would be great. Let's get Berkeley Systems on the line.

00:56:04 John Host *[They laugh.]* Well, thank you all three of you. And in the parlance of the Cylons: by your command. I can't believe it, but Kayleigh, you win! I have been overruled by the tribunal of Cylons. And thus, sorry Kayleigh's husband, hold on those jellies for another three years.

00:56:25 Sound Effect Sound Effect Three gavel bangs.

00:56:26 Jesse Host The docket is clear! That's it for another episode of *Judge John Hodgman*. We will not only see you next week, but also on our live stream—no matter where you are—that's Saturday, February 4th, from SF Sketch Fest. You can get your tickets at SFSketchFest.com. *Judge John Hodgman*, created by Jesse Thorn and John Hodgman. Our producer is Jennifer Marmor. Our editor, Valerie Moffatt. Our road producer, sitting in this week, Richard Robey. We're on Instagram, [@JudgeJohnHodgman](https://www.instagram.com/JudgeJohnHodgman). Follow us there. You can see—I gotta tell you, people sometimes think that I'm like faking my dog laughs.

[John affirms.]

I love seeing—if the dog is doing—if the pet is doing something funny, like—again, I don't just wanna see a picture of your pretty golden retriever. I mean, I'm glad to look at it. I like them as much as the next guy. But you're not gonna get an audible reaction to me from just a nice dog pic. But if your dog—or cat, for that matter, or even a tortoise or a *[with a hard G]* gerbil—is doing something funny—?

00:57:35 John Host He's doing something funny!

00:57:36 Jesse Host Yeah, send it to me! And yes, a single snaggletooth on already one of the funniest dogs, that is enough. I am sincerely laughing at a dog that is like a flat-faced pile of blob with one tooth sticking out!

It's hilarious! Look at the Instagram and tell me I'm wrong! Don't tell me I'm wrong, or I'll exercise my block finger.

[John laughs.]

Check out the Maximum Fun subreddit at [MaximumFun.Reddit.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/MaximumFun).

00:58:10 John Host That's also where we go to ask people for titles these days, is over there at that fun subreddit, [MaximumFun.Reddit.com](https://www.reddit.com/r/MaximumFun). And Jesse—you know, we recently released our 600th episode. I didn't wanna make a big deal of it, because—you know—after a while, birthdays—you stop celebrating them. Once you get my age. And I'm really just holding out 'til we can celebrate our 666th episode. That's the next one I'm gonna make a big deal out of. But it doesn't mean that it didn't happen, and it's been such a pleasure to make all these episodes with you and Maximum Fun, our current producers and editors, and those who helped us in the past. And I was wondering if our audience has any disputes having to do with anniversaries, notable dates, reunions.

I have a college reunion coming up. Did you receive a leather gift on your copper anniversary?

[They laugh.]

00:59:08 Jesse Host That's a true faux pas.
00:59:11 John Host "This is a conductive anniversary!"
Did you get into a dispute with someone at your high school reunion or did you settle one? Or do you have a beef still? Has someone ever forgotten your birthday and how did that make you feel and what did you do about it? Tell us about it! We're looking for anniversary disputes. Write them in to [MaximumFun.org/jjho](https://www.MaximumFun.org/jjho).
00:59:31 Jesse Host Settling a dispute at a high school reunion I like! No case is too small, so remember to submit your cases at [MaximumFun.org/jjho](https://www.MaximumFun.org/jjho). We'll talk to you next time on the *Judge John Hodgman* podcast.
00:59:44 Sound Effect Transition Three gavel bangs.
00:59:47 Sound Effect Transition Cheerful ukulele chord.
00:59:48 Speaker 1 Guest [MaximumFun.org](https://www.MaximumFun.org).
00:59:50 Speaker 2 Guest Comedy and culture.
00:59:51 Speaker 3 Guest Artist owned—
00:59:52 Speaker 4 Guest —audience supported.