

Andy: [\(00:00\)](#)

What's up, Beardos?! In today's episode, it's time for another mailbag where we respond to your questions, comments, and concerns.

Paul: [\(00:32\)](#)

Welcome to the show. I'm Paul.

Andy: [\(00:34\)](#)

And I'm Andy.

Paul: [\(00:36\)](#)

And we are The Bearded Vegans, a podcast, featuring a dissection of all things vegan.

Andy: [\(00:40\)](#)

If you're just tuning in for the first time, you can find all of our previous episodes at TheBeardedVegans.com and you can always reach us by emailing TheBeardedVegans@gmail.com.

Paul: [\(00:51\)](#)

Has it been 10 episodes already, Andy?

Andy: [\(00:54\)](#)

Oh, how the time flies it's actually been more than that. It's been 12, cause we did two little replay classic episodes in there as well.

Paul: [\(01:01\)](#)

It feels like just, just yesterday. We were doing our last mailbag, Andy. I always enjoy these. It's a nice, it's a nice way to connect to the listeners and for us to do very little work in preparation of the episode, which is always nice.

Andy: [\(01:16\)](#)

Oh boy, Paul, you know, you always say that and I spend about three days sifting through our email and voicemails putting these together. I then drop a package at Paul's feet and he goes, yes or no, thumbs up or thumbs down, like a king sitting on his pedestal, staring down at the peasants.

Paul: [\(01:32\)](#)

And then I get on mic and I say, Hmm, such a little work I've done this this week. [both laughing]

Andy: [\(01:39\)](#)

And then the mailbag episode's a time where we like to get a little bit of housekeeping done as well. So every 10 episodes, we pick a new featured organization or activist or grassroots project that we are encouraging you, our wonderful listeners to donate to. And for the last 10 episodes, we were encouraging you to donate to Food Love. You can check out the interview we did with

Food Love founder, Kimberly Renee, about nine episodes ago. And we were all set to announce a new organization in today's episode, and we were kind of crossing the T's, dotting the I's and we realized that a specific fundraiser we were going to point you towards ended, uh, pretty recently. So, uh, we're going to reveal who the new organization is next week

Paul: [\(02:24\)](#)

In a real Arrested Development fashion, Andy, we're donating to TBA.

Andy: [\(02:32\)](#)

[Laughing] Absolutely. And, uh, Paul, I feel like we, we rarely talk about this ongoing, in perpetuity review contest that we do, but, uh, anyone who leaves us a review on the ol' iTunes there, you get a chance to win some free Bearded Vegans swag. And if that is you and you've left us a review on iTunes, stay tuned to the end of this episode. We will announce not one, not two, but three lucky winners. Uh, we will send you some fun Bearded Vegans buttons and stickers and all that good stuff. A personalized note. Oh my.

Paul: [\(03:07\)](#)

Especially those Australian listeners.

Andy: [\(03:11\)](#)

Yeah, got not one but two Australian winners this time around. So if you left us a review from Australia, stick to the end of this, check your watch, check the run time of the episode and strap in.

Paul: [\(03:22\)](#)

All right, Andy, with that, let's get into the mailbag.

Andy: [\(03:51\)](#)

The listener mailbag is comprised of questions, comments, and concerns that we cull from our Instagram, not, not our Facebook, Paul. I feel like we rarely ever do anything with our Facebook, but also our email and our brand new Bearded Vegans Beardo hotline, which you can call into at 32 37 Beardo, the email is thebeardedvegans@gmail.com. Uh, we get more questions than we can possibly answer in a single episode, but know that we read and listened to all of your questions and your comments that you send our way and we greatly appreciate them. And we do our best to respond to you, even if it is offline. And even if it is a year after you send the email. But eventually we try our best to, to get around to it, so just know that we really appreciate everybody who does connect with us and values our input on these things. And as always, you know, we're, we're rarely authorities or experts or teachers on any of this stuff. We're just two guys trying to figure it out. So I guess take everything we say with a grain of salt, but, uh, we love musing over your questions.

Paul: [\(04:54\)](#)

Yes, definitely. And with that, Andy let's kick it off. The first question from Justine are via Instagram: "I've been loving listening in on so many Clubhouse rooms lately. Any plans for the podcast to join the platform? Maybe do a live podcast?"

Andy: [\(05:10\)](#)

Paul, do you have an iPhone?

Paul: [\(05:12\)](#)

I do.

Andy: [\(05:13\)](#)

Do you know what Clubhouse is?

Paul: [\(05:15\)](#)

I don't. [Both laughing]

Andy: [\(05:18\)](#)

So that right there answers your question, Justine. So Clubhouse is sort of an audio chat room situation. It's kind of new. It was launched only for iOS users, so if you have an iPad or an iPhone, you can use it. Uh, sadly some of us peasants like myself who have an Android phone are locked out of that platform. But basically I've seen a lot of activists doing this now where it'll be essentially like an online panel, the type of thing that you would see at an animal rights conference or a veg fest or something like that. And there'll be a collection of activists. And obviously people are using it for a variety of means across the, the human, the spectrum of human existence. But within the activist world, it'll be like, let's do a vegan 101 room and there'll be a couple of people there that are, I guess, I assume from what I've seen Paul, there's a couple of people that are speaking, and then there's sort of people that are listening in on that. It's audio only, there is no video component of the thing. And I've seen a lot of activists that I really enjoy the work that they do have been doing work on this platform lately. Obviously right now, we're just entirely boxed out of doing it because I do not have an Android phone. And I, Paul, I feel like as much as I see that this could be a really interesting platform. I also feel like our goal is a podcast has always been to make the content that we create as accessible for people as possible. That's why we spend a decent amount of the money that we bring in to pay for transcriptions and just making sure it's available as many places as possible. So I feel like it'd be weird to, to throw a discussion that we do into a format where literally half of the population, I know it's like roughly half. I forget what the exact split is between iPhones and Androids, but like, you know, like half of the people just do not even have an opportunity to listen in. To me that feels like a really weird thing that I wouldn't actually want to do. So until it becomes something that's more widely available to people, I can't imagine that we would go out of our way to be on that platform. Even if I did have an iPhone,

Paul: [\(07:23\)](#)

It's probably worth acknowledging that, you know what we're doing right now, even if we're trying to take measures to make it more accessible, obviously it's not going to be accessible to

everyone that is podcasting or, you know, when we do the Instagram lives very, very rarely at this point, like there's a, it's always going to be inaccessible to some and obviously we want to try to make it more accessible, but that's, that's always going to be an issue regardless. Yeah.

Andy: (07:52)

So, so knowing that there's already people that perhaps would benefit from, or at least enjoy what we do that don't have the internet, don't have the means to, to listen in or something like that, I just, I just don't know why we'd go out of our way to do something that's like even more inaccessible that locks people out because they don't have like an expensive phone. You know?

Paul: (08:15)

If I'm being honest, Andy, so obviously I did not, I was not super familiar with this before this discussion happened. But also I think for me personally, I like our format of recording things because we can edit them. We could take out the bloopers, of which there are many and we can kind of make clean it up a little bit, and if there's something that we're like, oh, I, I, I know what I'm trying to say, but I don't really like how it came out or the way that it came out could maybe be interpreted in a different way. We can literally just go back and re-record it. So that we're as clear as possible with the message that we're trying to get across or the points we're trying to get across. And for that reason feel like, you know, even when we did the Instagram lives for previous mailbags, I was even still always get so nervous about that. Like, oh, am I going to be good at this, at this thing that's live? And I think I'm just not great at that live, live discussions in general, because I'm always better at like thinking about something and then coming back to it later and writing it down or, you know, things like that. So for that reason too, I think I would be, uh, you know, not super wanting to get into that kind of platform anyways, just cause it's not my thing. Personally, it's not my thing.

Andy: (09:34)

Yeah, I mean, Paul, as we led up to this, we had a reason we didn't do the last mailbag over an Instagram live, which was that you were not feeling well and we knew we had to kind of be able to pace ourselves. If I don't know you started projectile vomiting mid recording or something like that. And as this one was coming up, I was kinda like, eh, I'm not even going to bring it up. I'm not even gonna ask Paul because there is something about that pressure of having people there. And also my attention being divided between the discussion we're having and also keeping an eye on the comments and all that kind of stuff. Not to say that we won't do them in the future. There is something fun about really being able to interact with, with all y'all that are listening in, in a real time. But yeah, I don't know if that's specifically our jam. And I think especially in a time where it feels like almost, I don't know, maybe more than ever, at least in my lifetime or in my time as an activist, it feels like there's a lot of activism that's based around, uh, interpreting people's words as uncharitably as possible. So, so there is that there is that fear when you're speaking off the cuff and you're not, like I definitely thrive on writing things down and fine tuning them, and if we ever have like an Instagram post, you can be like, like an infographic type thing, not something that's just like, oh, here's some food that I ate, you can be sure that I have written something down and revised it 10 times, and then sent it to Paul and we go back and forth on and all that stuff because it does feel like you have to get everything

perfect right now. So, so Paul, I feel, I feel your, your fear and hesitancy, I don't know if fear is the right word, but you know, your hesitancy to do that sort of like live thing as well. And I'm, and I'm pretty much right there with you. You know, I, I do plenty of live panels and presentations and they're, they're always very like nerve wracking to me as much as I do enjoy doing them and connecting with people that way as well. So yeah. So anyway, all that is to say, don't expect us to be on Clubhouse anytime soon.

Paul: ([11:28](#))

Plot twist. Tomorrow, signed up for Clubhouse. [Both laughing] I'm going rogue without Andy!

Andy: ([11:34](#))

And I guess I do want to say that, like what I said about the accessibility thing, I don't want to say like cast dispersions on any activists that are doing that. I know there's a lot of value, if a platform is going to be a big platform, there's an immense value in getting in early and establishing yourself. So, so like I, the benefits, I understand why people do that. And I also understand the appeal of something that isn't recorded that is just like a live discussion. So, so I see those things, but I think for us and like the work we're trying to do, it doesn't really fit with that, in addition to the accessibility issues that we mentioned.

Paul: ([12:08](#))

Next up, Nico emailed in, and this is regarding The Last Pig review that we did a few episodes ago. And, and specifically Nico was emailing about how we were confused about the name because there was not a single, there did not seem to be a single last pig, and we were like, why isn't it called Last Pigs, for instance. So Nico says, "I've just finished listening to the podcast while cooking, if you must know, and although I haven't watched the movie, it occurred to me that Bob might be The Last Pig." Bob is the farmer in the, in the movie. "You depicted him as socially isolated and bonding with the pigs as if they were his only family, which he is now the last member of? Question mark?"

Andy: ([12:54](#))

Paul, I don't know, there's not a question here, but when I got this email, I had, it was like the mind blown GIF, you know? And I was like, whoa, what if Bob *is* The Last Pig? [Paul laughing] So I just threw this in here because I wanted to acknowledge that I cannot speak to whether or not that was the, the filmmaker's intent or not, but that is the only explanation that I will buy at this point.

Paul: ([13:20](#))

Yeah. Andy, it certainly makes sense. Do we think, is that cool? You think like, [Andy laughing] is that like, is that cool that they, that they're, you know, they're implying that, even though again, you can go back and listen to the, listen to the, the, the review. Really enjoyed the movie, and I think the story, you know of Bob was very inspirational. I think it's a good story to get out there to people. Is it cool that the filmmaker is kind of being like, oh yeah, Bob is one of the, like one of them, one of the family, uh, versus like, is that, is that of like a very human centric thing to be placing upon these pigs who were in fact being exploited?

Andy: (14:05)

I mean, people definitely come to us to learn if things are cool or not Paul. [Both laughing] Because we're both hip and with it. Uh, I mean, I don't know. I, I, even though this explanation makes total sense to me, I, I kind of feel like that couldn't have been the filmmaker's intention because it, it feels so unexplicitly stated, you know? But the film does end. The final shot is that aerial view of Bob walking off into the blank void of nothingness. So I guess Bob is The Last Pig, but I feel like it could point to the, the sort of the collective oneness of, of all of beingness or, you know, something like that. Some sort of cosmic sense, the royal we, something like, but, uh, I don't know. I, I struggled to have any sort of problem with that explanation and I think I'm fine with it.

Paul: (14:59)

I feel like you're getting dangerously close to Gunda levels of artsy, fartsy interpretations Andy. [Andy laughing].

Andy: (15:07)

How dare you speak ill of Gunda! [Paul laughing].

Paul: (15:10)

But yeah, no, no, Nico, thank you for emailing in. Cause like Andy said, you know, it was a real mind blown moment.

Andy: (15:19)

I love it. I'm totally here for it. Speaking of pigs, we did this whole episode on, you know, non vegans, animal exploiters, co-opting vegan phrases, vegan tactics, vegan talking points. And so we focused a lot on this Pig Adventure situation. That's at Fair Oaks farm in Indiana, which is basically like a pig education adventure park type thing, like a low rent adventure park, I would say with the CGI shower, whatever, whatever it was, [both laughing] where you pretend to scrub yourself as you walk into the pig barn. Anyway, in that episode, we mused upon like, who is this for? It's the question we love to ask? And I, one of us at least posed the potential theory that this is probably a place that a lot of like middle school type field trips happen. And so we got an email or actually a voicemail from Kyle, from Muncie, Indiana who can confirm, not living too far away from Pig Adventure. That, that is indeed a good portion of the people that go there are these field trips. Um, interestingly Kyle also mentioned that he had a friend who went there and went vegan as a result of that trip.

Paul: (16:37)

Thus lending evidence to your, or I don't even remember who said this, that, that Pig Adventure is actually being run by vegans as a, as a, uh, a real secretive mission to turn everyone vegan.

Andy: (16:50)

Well, maybe not Paul. So we got this really interesting voicemail.

Listener Emily: (16:55)

Hi, this is Emily. Long time listener, first time caller. I'm calling about the Pig Adventure episode, where you express shock that they could humanize pigs and still show the conditions under which they were raised and that people would still eat them. But that dichotomy has always existed in a human animal relationship. Farmer Bob or whoever it was from The Last Pig is not the first farmer to look into the eyes of a pig and find a connection to the pig, and then murder her. Millions of humans over the course of history have done the same thing. He was just lucky enough to live in a time where he could make a choice. Traditionally people in England and white people in colonial America, probably other places too, but I just know more about them, would keep pigs and other animals in the house in the winter. Pigs are endearing animals who can relate to humans in these unique way. People would spend all winter indoors interacting with those animals and then murder them for their flesh. Then when they did that, they felt upset. So they would trade with their neighbors so they wouldn't have to eat their roommate. Um, I've read admittedly secondhand accounts that were exaggerated, perhaps for humor of farmers who would cry or be depressed when it came time to kill what was essentially their dog for most of human history. Most people who lived in agrarian societies felt a connection to an animal whose flesh they then consumed. It's only now that we live in a system that has the caloric luxury to live differently. I do think if people had a choice between murdering an animal that lived in their home or buying broccoli from a store, they'd eat more broccoli. But factory farming allows them to pass off that guilt, just like switching bacon with your neighbor back in the day, used to. I don't want to devalue compassion because I think that's an important part of vegan activism, but I don't know if it's ever going to be enough to overcome 10,000 years of human history.

Paul: (19:03)

Yeah, Andy, you know, I, I definitely agree with Emily that even though we are often surprised at how, you know, these sorts of farmers can say that they have these close relationships, oh, they're like family to me, these sorts of relationships with the animals, but then kill them or, and, and exploit them, even though I feel like it's often shocking to us, I guess it really is just seemingly woven into the fabric of humanity, I guess? Or, or the human existence up until this point. And obviously I can't speak for like every single, every single country, every single culture, every single people, but because farming has been, humanity has such this, this history with farming, it does seem like even though there's this weird dichotomy of having this closeness with the animals while also exploiting them and totally being okay with that.

Andy: (20:08)

See, Paul don't know if I agree with that, your specific assessment, that it is woven in like that, I guess just, just to like briefly give a phrase to what it is we're talking about, the ability to love animals and eat them too, is woven into our, like the human genes or whatever. I feel like it's the survival that is woven into our existence and the fact that we love animals and eat them too, and you know, I, I'm saying that to simplify down a very complicated thing, so hold your emails. But I think that that is us actually struggling against our innate human nature. I think that everything that is pointed out in this voicemail from Emily, which is that people have to trade the animals that they were raising to slaughter in order to feel good about eating, essentially their

companion animal. To me, that's like, wow, we are going through some extreme hurdles to justify something that, at least at the time, people had to do for survival's sake, and as this rightly pointed out, like now we have the luxury to not have to engage with that. Of course there is even more distance between us and the animals that we exploit for food via factory farming, or even just like, I think even, even like your local farm, I imagine the vast majority of people aren't going down there and spending time with the pigs, they go to the farmer's market and they feel really great about purchasing animals' flesh from a, you know, quote unquote more humane type of source. So I feel like, I feel like all of this to me is humans struggling against our, our natural instincts to, to love at least certain types of animals. Obviously there's a huge empathy gap with like fishes and chickens and animals like that. But, uh, I don't know. I feel like it's us struggling against that, that innate human nature, you know?

Paul: ([21:59](#))

Well, I don't know if I would and Andy, I will go as I edit this, I will go back and listen to exactly what I said. And if I said something that I am now disagreeing with, I will edit it out. Just kidding. I won't do that. I think I should clarify. I don't think it's necessarily like the innate nature, but it is the thing that has been hammered into us over time. Like it is, you know, maybe evolution or maybe like that is how we have evolved into having this, I guess, non compassion, or we've evolved in such a way that we can repress that sort of, I guess, compassion. Like, like I think Andy, I am the, the optimistic side of me wants to believe, like you were saying that the innate nature of humans is to be compassionate. That is also what I want. I would like to believe that. And I think that may be what's happened is throughout history, we have worked very hard to repress those, those emotions to the point where it's just second nature to say, man, like, oh yeah. Like to, to be able to exploit an animal in that, in that way. So I don't think I was completely disagreeing with you, but maybe I wasn't also completely agreeing with you.

Andy: ([23:13](#))

Well, let's argue about it to the death, Paul. [Both laughing] Yeah. I mean, I think that there's like a lot of complex mental and emotional mechanisms that are going into it. I think we're, we're definitely oversimplifying what's going on here. And I, I think, I definitely agree with those, those last few lines from Emily saying, I don't want to devalue compassion, because I think that's an important part of vegan activism, but I don't know if it's ever going to be enough to overcome 10,000 years of human history. And I think that, that anyone that's been listening for the last two years or so I think has seen that kind of mental journey, that activism journey, talking point journey that you and I have been on that has gone from a point that I think many vegan activists are at, which is if I just give enough people the right information, they will make the compassionate choice to going, ooh, I don't know if that's what it is. And then you start to move into the field of, you know, the stuff that a friend of the show, Jake Conroy, the Cranky Vegan, is always talking about, the pressure campaigns and eliminating the source rather than the, the demand type of thing. And I think we need all of it. We need that diversity of tactics, but, but I agree. I don't think that our like compassion alone is enough to get us to where we need to go, because I think, I think there's like a whole cocktail of, of human functions and evolutionary functions that prevent us, a lot of people, from making those changes.

Paul: [\(24:40\)](#)

I guess, Andy, you've heard the optimistic side of me now let's hear from the pessimistic side of me. The pessimistic side of me, Andy, wants to say, without changing that aspect of humanity, though, even if you do all these other things that can like nudge it forward, nudge veganism forward, could it ever be that the majority, even the majority of humans are vegan without changing, you know, this thing that you're saying, which is like the th th that you and Emily are saying, which is like the thousands of years--and I guess I was saying it too, of hammering into us that it's like, it's okay to exploit animals in this way?

Andy: [\(25:17\)](#)

I mean, I feel like this is sort of like the age old debate that's been happening within vegan activist circles forever. That we've certainly engaged in many, many a time before. And like I said, I, I think it's both, like, I don't think we should give up on reaching the masses and, and one-on-one conversions because I think that that is a very, not that it's an easy thing to do. Like obviously getting somebody or leading someone to a point where they're willing to drastically change the way that they view animals and their consumption habits and all that kind of stuff. Certainly it's much easier now for a lot more people than it ever was before. I don't think we should give up on that, cause that's the thing that we could just do in our daily life while we're going about doing all the other things that we do. But I do think that we need to spend a lot more time, I guess, as a movement focusing on sort of the, the higher level, bigger picture aspects of this as well. And, and like with everything, why not both? You know?

Paul: [\(26:16\)](#)

Why not both, Andy?

Andy: [\(26:17\)](#)

But all of that aside, Paul, I thought this was a very astute and very thoughtful voicemail that we did receive from Emily and something that is important to keep in mind.

Paul: [\(26:27\)](#)

All right, Andy. So this next email from Zia says, this is an interesting one.

Andy: [\(26:34\)](#)

So curious to have this discussion.

Paul: [\(26:36\)](#)

Have you ever heard of the card game Vegan, Not Vegan? It is a pretty straightforward card game with pictures of mostly food products on one side and says either Vegan or Not Vegan on the other side, along with a couple of sentences about why or why not. Players take turn guessing whether the product pictured is vegan or not and gets a point for every correct answer. The person with the most points wins. I picked this game up on clearance at an outlet store because I was curious and like trivia games. However, after having it for a while, I find myself asking the question that Andy so often asks about movies: who is this for? Is this a game meant for vegans to play and prove who the most vegan person in the room is? Is it a game for new

vegans to help them learn what foods to get and what to avoid in a fun way? Is it something made by non vegans that is a tongue in cheek commentary of how hard and restrictive the vegan diet is? It seems like in the wrong setting, this game could be used to intentionally or unintentionally shame new or growing vegans, or possibly overwhelm them with the do's and don'ts. It also seems like it isn't something that would appeal to non-vegan coworkers at an office party or a game night with your social club, or maybe I'm just overthinking this. So what is your take? A fun game for a social subgroup? Helpful vegan teaching tool? Well-intentioned product that does more harm than good? Or something else?

Andy: ([28:00](#))

Paul, have you ever heard of this game before?

Paul: ([28:02](#))

Nope. No, I have not.

Andy: ([28:04](#))

I have not heard of this game before. Zia actually offered to send a copy to me. So that is actually on the way, perhaps that'll be some sort of like future bonus content or something like that. Only 56 cards total, Paul. It feels like you could blow through that pretty quickly.

Paul: ([28:22](#))

Not much replayability on this game, Andy.

Andy: ([28:25](#))

No, definitely not. And it is, it's very bizarre. So I did actually find you can buy it on Amazon. So I found the product page there and there is pictures of these cards and Paul, you can, you can see those. The examples that they give for instance is Oreos. And then it's just a picture of Oreos. On the other side, it's green, it says: "Vegan. Surprisingly Oreos do not contain milk. They are entirely soy based." And the other picture is marshmallows. On one side, it says: Not Vegan. Marshmallows contain gelatin from pigs." And like already Paul, I just see so many huge flaws in this game. I know this before we even actually answer Zia's question, but there are vegan marshmallows out there.

Paul: ([29:11](#))

You talking Dandies, Andy?

Andy: ([29:13](#))

Talkin' those dang Dandies! And I think Trader Joe's makes a vegan marshmallow. I feel like I saw some Veg News piece about some brand that Walmart's carrying now or something that's vegan. And so, so there's that. And then obviously there's the more complicated issues about like the, the sourcing of the chocolate of the Oreos and things like that. So it's definitely not a very nuanced game, regardless of how we feel about the purpose of it.

Paul: ([29:38](#))

Yeah. I wonder if there's a big disclaimer in the instructions. The, I'm sure, one very small page of instructions on how to play this game, if there's a disclaimer, that's like, hey, some of this is subjective. Or, you know, anything that is listed here is not vegan, if you see us at a store and it says "vegan insert item name here," then it is probably vegan.

Andy: (30:04)

Yeah. Yeah, and so, and also products change formulas, you know, from time to time as well. So something could be listed as vegan now and it could be not vegan in the future. So that's also very weird.

Paul: (30:16)

So Andy, when I, my, my gut reaction upon seeing this was like, what the heck is this? And like, you know, this doesn't seem like it would be really that entertaining to many people. And my first reaction, my, like I said, my, my initial reaction was I feel like a very negative towards it. But then I said, you know what? Maybe I'm being too harsh. And Andy, there are people that, you know, that could learn things from this. And there are people for whom that this would be a great avenue for helping to learn the differences between vegan and non vegan things. And I think I shouldn't discount that even if that is not a huge amount of people. And even if it's not going to be super entertaining for me, you know, I shouldn't be, um, being such a Debbie Downer about it. And, and I think that I can see that some people could get benefit from this. It could help some new vegans who are really struggling like, oh, I'm, I never know what thing is, what thing is vegan and not vegan. And obviously, like you said, Andy, it's typically more difficult than just saying this thing is always vegan or this thing is always not vegan. However, I think you and I, having been vegan for enough time that it's, you know, going grocery shopping is second nature, I think you and I, Andy, subconsciously, when we look at things, even though we're probably still checking ingredients pretty regularly, we know what things are typically vegan, are typically not vegan, we know what ingredients to look out for and certain things. And for someone that's just going vegan, like that's probably more difficult. So this could be helpful for that, for that person.

Andy: (32:10)

I mean, I feel like in theory, I agree with that, but just seeing what I see already in that there is something that could be vegan or could not be vegan listed there, it feels like it would be more confusing than anything.

Paul: (32:25)

Uh, I don't know. I mean, Andy, like how often do people say, that are not vegan say to you, oh, is blank vegan? Is bike vegan? And, and the answer is probably gonna be like, well, there are vegan versions of this, but, but blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. I feel like it's nice for, for a newer vegan to be able to know like most of the time, this thing is not going to be vegan. Most of the time, this thing is going to be vegan. I'm really trying to find the positives in this, Andy.

Andy: (32:58)

I know, Paul, you're trying real hard here. I thought this would be a dunk fest. But I don't know. I mean, I feel like wouldn't, wouldn't the message that we would want to get across to people is, anything you can eat I can eat vegan? I do wonder, and I guess we'll see when this game arrives, but how many of these cards do you think are like actual brands of something because Oreo is a brand of cookie versus the general concept of marshmallows, you know?

Paul: [\(33:27\)](#)

The idea of, Andy, what is a marshmallow? [Both laughing]

Andy: [\(33:36\)](#)

So Paul, getting to the core of who is this for, I could tell you what the product description is on Amazon. It says, "Put your vegan knowledge to the test! Popular food products are presented to pose the question, are they vegan or not? This yes or no game for the woke generation is trickier than it sounds. And you'll be surprised by the products that wouldn't make it into a vegan cookbook."

Paul: [\(34:03\)](#)

I did a big old eye-roll at "this yes or no game for the woke generation..."

Andy: [\(34:11\)](#)

Uh, it goes on to say this new and amusing card game is loved by kids, adults, and teens, and makes a hilarious party game to play with friends and family, makes a great travel game, or it can be played at home on the sofa or at a table. A perfect addition to holiday games.

Paul: [\(34:31\)](#)

I think they are overextending their... Overextending their hand. I don't know if that's the right expression, but I'm going with it about who this is actually going, how many people this will be appealing for. But maybe Andy, when you get it, you can tell me all the hilarious hi-jinks that you have fighting this game.

Andy: [\(34:50\)](#)

Oh, you know, I'm going to make you play it with me. Maybe there's a tabletop simulator version of Vegan or Not Vegan. Paul, the one thing that I do want to show you, in terms of how will people perceive this game on the Amazon product page, there's actually a video of people playing the game. And I would like you to watch that briefly,

Paul: [\(35:11\)](#)

Andy, already watched that.

Andy: [\(35:14\)](#)

Do you have anything to say about the background music on that sucker?

Paul: [\(35:16\)](#)

Oh, I didn't, I wasn't paying attention to the background. He's like I was too distracted by these people who are like losing their shit about how funny this game is. [Both laughing] What was the background music? Was it ska?

Andy: (35:29)

Ska, baby.

Paul: (35:30)

Ooh. Like that.

Andy: (35:32)

Which, which, uh, you know, sadly in the, the, you know, the parlance our times I think is meant to imply this is a very jokey, cheesy, corny thing. I think this, this video is casting aspersions upon the, the well of genre of ska. Uh, but he, but like within this video, Paul, there's a card for honey, and it's not vegan. And one of the people, comments, "Bees are people too!" And they're all laughing. You know, it's, it's like a thing that's like kind of mocking veganism. It doesn't feel like it's meant to convey any sort of educational component.

Paul: (36:07)

Andy, after reading the description, which is the official, I would assume is the official description that the game is putting out and watching that video, I feel like this game doesn't know who it wants to market itself to. Like, it's, I feel like it's trying to, it's trying to market to everybody. Like it's trying to be, it's trying to appeal to everybody when in fact, I don't think it will appeal to anybody, some might say.

Andy: (36:34)

It's a real, four-quadrant 56 card game. But Paul, I guess to like answers Zia's question, I feel like not enough thought was put into this thing to really get any sort of actual guests as to like, what is this for? What is the intention? I feel like there's not any sort of ill intent behind it, but it also doesn't feel like the type of thing of vegan would put together as like an educational tool. It feels like some AI-generated cash grab.

Paul: (37:06)

It's like a wish card game. It does, you know, I, I agree with you about that, Andy, though, that it does feel like this was after a long day on Friday, when they needed to make their quota of how many card games they came out with that week, they were like, what about this one? And everyone was like, yes, please. I just want to go home. Because yeah, no, you're absolutely right though that it doesn't seem, and this is, I feel like this is what I was trying to get when I was saying, it feels like they're walking this line where I can't tell if they're trying to make fun of vegans or actually be a thing for vegan, because it doesn't seem like it goes enough in either of those two ways. But it feels like even though, obviously I wouldn't want a game that's making fun of vegans for obviously for obvious reasons it feels like they should have gone more in one direction or the other in order to make it like a game that makes sense to me.

Andy: [\(37:58\)](#)

All right. We've talked enough about this game. Before we get to the next question, just want to give a quick shout out to our newest Patreon donors. Huge thank you to mysteriously solo named Brad...

Paul: [\(38:10\)](#)

And Susan F.

Andy: [\(38:12\)](#)

Yeah. So thank you to everybody that is contributing to the Patreon, helping to keep this podcast going and make it more sustainable for us, make it more accessible via the transcripts, and just covering all the costs that are associated with, with doing this whole thing. And if you want to help out the podcast, you can go to thebeardedvegans.com/beardo, spelled B E A R D O. That'll give you all the options. If you do sign up for the Patriot and you get access to 30 plus bonus episodes, perhaps in the future, an episode of Paul and I playing Vegan or Not Vegan. I can't imagine how horrifically boring that would be to listen to, but

Paul: [\(38:51\)](#)

Andy, we should do that without having looked at the cards or anything. And then we can get into all the hilariousness of the game, like and it'll be all caught on all caught on tape.

Andy: [\(39:03\)](#)

Maybe we'll be pleasantly surprised. Maybe we'll be shocked at how amazing this is.

Paul: [\(39:08\)](#)

Maybe that is our next Instagram live. I don't know the pressure might get to me. We're getting a what's it called? What's the new thing called? Clubhouse just to play Vegan or Not Vegan. [Andy laughing]

Andy: [\(39:24\)](#)

Perfect. All right. So we got an email from Katie who says, "I went vegan a little over a year ago. My partner and I have been together for over seven years. He is not vegan. He is open to trying new vegan foods and about 50% of his diet is vegan. He has mentioned that his biggest hangup with going vegan is breakfast food. While on a road trip, he made a comment that if I cooked breakfast every day, he would go "fully vegan." Of course I would love for him to go vegan, but I'm conflicted on this. Should I cook his breakfast every day?" Paul, before you answer this question, have you ever had someone say, if you cooked for me all the time, I would go vegan?

Paul: [\(40:08\)](#)

No. [Both laughing] Andy, you know what my cooking is like.

Andy: [\(40:12\)](#)

As I was asking that I was just picturing, you're presenting people with a plate of raw tofu, and you're like, it's great. [Both laughing] I, on the other hand, I've had plenty of people say that to

me. I love, I love to cook in general. I love to cook for other people. I love just showing people how delicious plant-based food can be. And I've over the years, I've heard many people say, well, if you were cooking for me all the time, I could easily go vegan. And that's also just a thing that I've heard a lot of people say. So you know how sincere that actually is or whether it's just sort of a way of saying, Hey, this food is really good, I guess who knows it's up to the individual, but what do you think of this situation that, that Katie finds herself in?

Paul: [\(40:54\)](#)

Well, Andy, I guess that was kind of my first question is, do we want to answer this question as if this, this partner is in fact being sincere, that they will go fully vegan as long as Katie cooks him breakfast every day? Or do we want to answer this in a more, what I would assume to be like what you were saying, which is, this is something that people say, but it's not necessarily like a binding contract that they are entering into.

Andy: [\(41:27\)](#)

I mean, there's a huge difference between like a friend or like a family member of mine saying, well, if you were cooking for me all the time, I would go vegan, versus an actual, uh, I assume that they are living together, you know, partnership for the purpose of this question we can assume they're living together, I suppose, that, you know, like where, where it actually is a physically feasible thing to actually happen. Certainly there are many partnerships where one, you know, one partner is doing the majority of the cooking anyway. So it's not like that out of the realm of possibility that someone would be like, oh, I do most of the cooking anyway. So I'll add an extra three meals on, you know, I don't know how often Katie's actually cooking, but like, I I've just like in a general sense, I feel like it is actually a possibility, versus a lot of times when people say it, it's not someone that they're actually living with and, and, you know, have that kind of potential situation.

Paul: [\(42:22\)](#)

I do get that. Andy. I think the thing that I'm getting hung up on is the fact that it is specifically breakfast. Because I get, you know, something like pancakes, which, which if you are not vegan and someone says, make vegan pancakes, the first time that person might say, I literally have no idea how to do that. But after one time of doing that thing, or a couple of times, or multiple times, if you're me and are not good at cooking, it's like you kind of get down the difference between making vegan pancakes and non vegan pancakes. And I would argue the difference between those two things is incredibly minimal. And I guess, yeah, the thing that I'm kind of hung up on is breakfast food specifically, unless you're making, like, I dunno, unless Katie is making, you know, hash browns and it's like, oh, this super duper potato, I don't know why potato dishes are the ones that are coming to my head right now, home fries, all these things that are.

Andy: [\(43:25\)](#)

Keep listing potato dishes, Paul.

Paul: [\(43:31\)](#)

Tater tots, all these things that are a little more intricate, in my opinion, breakfast food is pretty straightforward. You know, like a bowl of cereal or even pancakes, which I, in my opinion, Andy is the king of breakfast foods, but like a bagel and cream cheese. Even sausages. You know, if, if this person is used to eating sausages for breakfast, and then it's saying, well, I'll go vegan if you make me the thing, clearly they know how to make a sausage. They know how to put something on a frying pan. And, and I would argue vegan sausage is probably easier because really let's be honest, Andy, you're just heating them up. You're not actually like changing the, I dunno, the molecular structure of that food. You're just basically heating it up. So I would argue is even easier. So I guess I'm just like, is it, is it really the thing that you're saying, which is like, oh wow, this person cooks really good. If you cooked for me, then I'll eat that. Or is it just, this person is trying to make a, and this is no shade on, on Katie or the partner. This is just me throwing out in general. Is it instead the person saying like, if you do something extra for me, then I will go vegan. And it has really nothing to do with the fact that it's breakfast.

Andy: [\(44:43\)](#)

Yeah. And, and that, that really is the larger question here. And before I respond to that, I want to point out a couple of things. One Paul, I would love to have seen what the hell you were doing to sausages in your previous one days where you were changing the molecular structure.

Paul: [\(44:58\)](#)

Andy, I don't think I've ever cooked a sausage in my life. I was not a big, uh, sausage person, even in my pre-vegan days. I don't think I've ever cooked a like, uh, a flesh sausage.

Andy: [\(45:11\)](#)

You are not a person made of big sausages.

Paul: [\(45:14\)](#)

I was not a big sausage guy. [Both laughing]

Andy: [\(45:17\)](#)

Uh, and it's interesting that you say breakfast is easy because I feel like for a long time vegan breakfast was one of the harder things to find when dining out, but you're right. Things like a smoothie. That's what I do every morning. And it's, couldn't be an easier thing to do. Toast. Yeah. All of the things that you listed, if, if the agreement like spoiler alert, I don't think you should actually go into that agreement, Katie. But if the agreement did happen and you're like, fine, I will literally pour you a bowl of cereal every morning. And that's what, [Paul laughing] you know, like that couldn't be like an easier thing to do, but even like a really nice breakfast sandwich, my partner and I have been making those a lot lately and you just like toast up some bread, you cook up the beyond breakfast sausage, which is amazing, throw a little JUST Egg in the pan. Also, Paul, I have totally turned around on the JUST Egg.

Paul: [\(46:14\)](#)

I was literally about to point that out, if you did not point it out yourself.

Andy: (46:19)

Uh, you know, this, this is a whole other discussion, perhaps it should be saved for a food bag episode, but I, for the longest time I was talking that crap on JUST Egg. I still don't think it's an amazing product. I would prefer a tofu scramble, but seriously, the convenience factor of the liquid bottle JUST Egg, it's so easy to make. So you can whip up a really nice, really good breakfast sandwich with all those ingredients and maybe some, you know, a slice of your preferred vegan cheese or something like that. And some, some greens and hot sauce or whatever. It's very easy to do. And so I don't know, uh, breakfast has come a long way for vegans. But to get to Katie's question, I feel like it's such a bad arrangement to ever get into, like, if people are going to go vegan, they have to do it because it's something that like they really want to do. And I think as activists, we should be doing what we can to make it easier for people. I think doing what we can do to increase accessibility to plant-based foods is a really good thing for us to be spending our time on. But something that like introduces this sort of weird arrangement and pressure into an intimate relationship, I just feel like it's, I don't know. It's such a, such a, uh, I feel like it's just like a ticking time bomb. I just feel like it's not going to end well.

Paul: (47:44)

And you know, Andy may be like this, maybe Katie would cook breakfast for this person for one week, two weeks, one month. And then the person--

Andy: (47:53)

This person?

Paul: (47:53)

Like this person, this rando, this random person, uh, no, I'm just kidding. Then maybe Katie would, would cook for her partner for, you know, one week or one month. And then the partner would say, oh wow, this is very easy. And I actually do want to be fully vegan. And then like, there's no more need for this sort of, that sort of like negotiation thing. But Andy I'm 100% with you that it does not seem good to enter into this indefinite negotiation, this indefinite contract. And I, I think, you know, if, if the thing is, if, if the, if the negotiation was, can you show me how to do these things? Because I would like to do them more, I think that's perfectly fine. I don't think there's anything wrong with that, but I think it's this whole, like, you're doing something for me, so then I will, I don't know if it's, I don't it's, it's also hard to tell, obviously we're getting a incredibly small snippet of the story. It's also hard to tell if it's like, if you do this thing for me, then I'll do this thing that I know you want me to do. Or if it's, if you do this thing for me, then it will help me achieve this thing that I want to, this place that I want to be, because I feel like that makes a difference.

Andy: (49:09)

Yeah. You say that because non-vegans so often think about veganism in terms of the vegans, which I suppose is understandable. We're sort of the, the representatives that are here in people's lives, not the actual animals, but it's, you know, things like when people say, do you mind if I order the cheeseburger, right? There's a whole book based off that question and

several others by Cheryl Cole. But like, you know, that it's like, it's literally not about how I feel when you order these things. And it's very, it's very nice that you are considerate of my feelings, but people are like framing it as if it's like a thing that they are doing for you. And when they accommodate vegan options or something like that, but really it's about the animals. And so if this is entered into as a thing, that's like, I'm going to do this for you cause you wish I would change to me that feels like, like a really big red flag in terms of like that type of arrangement. And you know, like you said, Paul, we're getting a really limited snippet of what home life is like for Katie and partner here. But--Paul's smiling there.

Paul: (50:18)

Katie and Partner.

Andy: (50:20)

Partner. [Laughing] You know, so I don't know what the labor breakdown is of all the chores, the daily chores that everyone, you know, we all have to do to live in a, uh, uh, domestic domicile or anything like that. But I, you know, it feels like the type of thing that if you were entering into some sort of agreement like that, what if there is a day when you just don't feel like cooking and then all of a sudden you feel like, well, I'm letting the animals down if I don't cook for my partner today, it just feels like that's putting a lot of really weird pressure on yourself. And it's just not the type of thing that in my opinion lends to like deep, meaningful connection between partners, you know? It's this weird sort of transactional thing that's happening.

Paul: (51:06)

Yeah. I feel like, Andy, an interesting component of this that we have not brought up is the phrase, "While on a road trip, he made a comment that if I cook breakfast every day, he would go fully vegan." Because like you pointed out, I do also agree that it is difficult to find, it is difficult to eat out and find good vegan breakfast options besides like going to a diner and ordering plain unbuttered toast or something like that. Is it. So it's like, I do agree with that. And I don't know if that was like a component of this and cause in that case, I mean, if you're on a road trip and I guess it's harder to, you know, cook normal meals, but with, you know, if the transaction was, can you just like help me plan out what I'm going to eat for breakfast while we are on this road trip. I also think that's not the worst thing in the world.

Andy: (52:01)

Yeah. And it, I feel like that really should be the way that it's approached. If, if Partner wants to do this, it feels like it should be like, I would like to do this, and I would, I would love your help getting me started with this. But yeah, like you said, Paul making vegan pancakes, not hard. For those that are not in the know, get a box of Bisquick and follow the instructions, but just replace your egg with a quarter cup of applesauce, and that that's it. That's, that's what you have to do. Everything else is like super simple. I think there's milk in there. Right? You place it, replace it with your, your plant-based milk. It's been a long time since I've done this, but that used to be like the thing you had the band sleep over, you make them a huge stack of pancakes in the morning. So, uh, like it's not that, you know, I mean, I know that everyone has different levels and abilities with cooking and all that kind of stuff, but it feels like these are things that, that can

be taught. And I know that before going vegan, it can feel incredibly intimidating. It can feel like it's this giant, you know, Everest of a mountain for you to, to climb up. And so I don't want to be dismissive and be like, oh, it's, it's easy for someone to do it. But I feel like it's the type of thing that could be, like you said, Paul, a learning situation, let me help you do this because this is something that you want to do, you understand why this is a good thing to do. Rather than I am changing because my partner wants me to change, which isn't to say that there aren't things we shouldn't change about ourselves. Like if you're a total slob change the way you, you are to clean up after or, you know, whatever it is, make it so there's an equal division of labor in the house. Like all of those things are things that are worth changing, but if you're trying to get someone to like change who they are and who their like moral and ethical system is, and that's sort of like a condition of a happy relationship that, and not that Katie put this, the happiness of me in this relationship relies on that. But I do think that's something we're thinking about in more of a general sense.

Paul: [\(53:48\)](#)

Yeah, no, I a hundred percent agree with that, Andy, that was very well put. Did I ever tell you Andy, about the time that I tried to make the biggest pancake that I could? This was like two years ago.

Andy: [\(54:00\)](#)

Was it the size of a pizza or something much larger than that?

Paul: [\(54:03\)](#)

It was, I would say it's, it was the size of a very large pizza, like an extra large pizza. [Andy laughing] I would say.

Andy: [\(54:11\)](#)

Very large. Extra large, in fact.

Paul: [\(54:14\)](#)

I bought like a pretty big pizza pan and I made all the ingredients and I poured it on the pizza pan and I had all four burners going and I was just turning the pizza pan so that it would cook evenly because obviously, like there were parts that weren't on all four burners. So I just kept continuously rotating it and it worked out great, made a big old pancake. It was like, it was like the serving size of like 20 small pancakes or something like that is how much like materials, pancake materials that I put in. It was fricking delicious.

Andy: [\(54:52\)](#)

Paul, what's your game?

Paul: [\(54:53\)](#)

Just comical food, Andy. Comical food.

Andy: [\(54:59\)](#)

Uh, I guess, uh, that, that's the type of thing that's all for the glory, instead of just easily making 20 small pancakes.

Paul: [\(55:06\)](#)

Why? I mean, the inconvenience of having to do 20 individual things versus one big thing?

Andy: [\(55:13\)](#)

As you're sitting there, I know the listener can't see the hand motions. You did have someone that's like spinning like a pottery wheel, almost kind of thing. Just constantly rotating this pancake. I love the thought of you sitting there doing that and be like, at least I'm not making 20 small pancakes.

Paul: [\(55:30\)](#)

[Laughing] Thank God I'm not that guy over there make a 20 small pancakes.

Andy: [\(55:34\)](#)

Do you have photographic evidence of this pancake or is this pre-Gram?

Paul: [\(55:37\)](#)

No, this is, this is only like a two and a half years ago. I, I am relatively certain. I have photographic evidence of it.

Andy: [\(55:45\)](#)

Paul, I have a new mission for you. I want you to make a pancake large enough to be used as a parachute.

Paul: [\(55:52\)](#)

And then just jump out of my second story window. Woo.

Andy: [\(55:56\)](#)

Yeah, test it. It doesn't count unless it actually works as a parachute.

Paul: [\(56:02\)](#)

All right. Off the rails, off the rails. Let's get to this next voicemail.

Listener Sarah: [\(56:06\)](#)

What's up Beardos? My name is Sarah. I go by the pronouns she or they, and I'm from the UK. My question for you guys is how do you navigate around family and friends that constantly commenting on the weight and or size of non-human animals? For example, saying quote unquote, the animal companion needs to go on a diet because they've put on too much weight, are eating too much, or when people see animals in the wild or in their gardens and make comments on how much they're eating or use adjectives to describe them such as fat or chunky. Got a family member in particular who makes comments about non-human animals quite frequently. For example, saying, oh, that squirrel is, is quite chunky or look how much food that

pigeon's trying to shove in their face. And I was saying it in a jokey way as if that animal can't possibly control how much they're eating, they just can't stop themselves. I've known this particular person has suffered in the past and probably is still suffering with issues surrounding their body image. And so when I hear them make these comments, and it's usually actually in WhatsApp groups, it's a passing comment, I kind of wonder if, if it's a way for them to make them feel better about themselves and put themselves above the non-human animals. I've never heard them say these comments about humans before, but it's almost because it's a non-human animal, it's okay. They're not vegan, so I wonder if it's just the way for them to put themselves above both these animals. Um, so I wondered just what, what advice you had, uh, especially cause it's usually a passing comment, I, I feel that if I jump on them about this, I will probably be told that I'm just overreacting and overexaggerating. And it's just a comment on calling a pigeon chunky or something. But I'm uncomfortable with it. And I think it's unnecessary. Cool. Thank you for your help in advance.

Andy: [\(58:24\)](#)

So Paul, this is something that even as someone who has talked a lot about anti-fat bias and, and fat shaming on panels and on podcast episodes, the aspect of applying that to non-human animals, isn't something that I've really thought much about, but the question was also intriguing enough that I thought we should find somebody to, to get to the bottom of this.

Andy: [\(58:51\)](#)

Hey Chelsea,

Chelsea: [\(58:53\)](#)

Hey Andy!

Andy: [\(58:53\)](#)

This is of course Chelsea Lincoln, who is the creator of Fat Vegan Voice. We've had Chelsea on the show before. We'll put a link to the interview we did with Chelsea in the show notes, if you'd like to hear, uh, an extensive interview with Chelsea. We've also done panels together before. Before we get into Sarah's question here, I guess I don't even want to take this aspect of it for granted. Do you think that like fat shaming of animals commenting on their weight, is that, is that a thing we should be worried about? Is there some negative effects of that that we should be aware of?

Chelsea: [\(59:22\)](#)

I definitely think that it is problematic. Um, it can affect both humans as well as non-human animals in various ways. And you know, it comes from fat shaming diet culture that we have in our society as a whole. And so I do think that can affect everyone involved.

Andy: [\(59:40\)](#)

Yeah, and I think that some people might hear this question, they'll be like, well, this is just about you. You don't like overhearing this stuff. It feels like there's almost like two, two sides of this

whole thing. Like one is how it affects the animals. And two is how it affects the humans that are kind of overhearing this stuff, which is sort of the boat that Sarah is in.

Chelsea: ([59:57](#))

I'll start with, you know, how I think it affects, uh, nonhuman animals. So both, um, companion animals as well as wild animals. So with companion animals, oftentimes like vets might suggest, you know, a diet or something for your animal. And oftentimes people can take this in a very unhealthy way and they can start starving animals to try and see the weight loss without any consideration into the animal themselves. For example, my, my cat Oliver, um, he has been told by multiple vets that he should lose weight. And so, you know, we feed him the amount that is suggested per day, rather than free feeding, and he's so active and he's just has a larger larger body size. If I were to then take what the another vet said of, he still needs to lose weight, I would be starving my cat and that's not okay. You know, there's other people that might also take this information and make their companion animals, you know, be more active in a strenuous way that could both be too much for them or cause them pain or get into an accident or lead to, you know, arthritis earlier in life. There's so many different ways that this type of mindset can hurt nonhuman animals since they rely on humans for their care. You know, with wild animals, it could also be something, you know, maybe you're in an area where, um, animals rely more on humans than they should, but it's because of the urbanization of where they're living, and then suddenly you take food away where they got used to that food. Um, and so that could put them in a bad situation as well. So there are definitely ways that, you know, animals can be affected by this mind frame. For humans it definitely, you know, like if I hear people fat shaming, a dog or another animal, you know, I'm gonna hear what they say. And I know that they're thinking the same thing about humans. And so, you know, we've gotten to a point in culture where I think there's still tons of, you know, fatphobia, tons of fat bias, huge problem still, but at least fat shaming is something most people recognize is not being okay, even though they don't always recognize ways that it happens. So almost like this appropriate way to fat shame, but it ends up being towards the human as well as the non-human animal. Um, and so the, the psychological toll of that fat shaming has a huge impact on the humans around them and that hear this. I know I recently heard overheard a conversation that included some fat shaming of animals and one person referred to the animal used to be fit and healthy and they use fit to mean thin. And you know, that stereotype that fit equals thin, fat equals not fit, is hugely problematic. And so like seeing those same stereotypes happen, um, you know, definitely triggered me and made me feel incredibly uncomfortable. Um, and so it's very problematic for everyone.

Andy: ([01:03:09](#))

And that is a pretty interesting, uh, I guess, split in the issues that like a domesticated animal or companion animal might, might have versus wild animals. And I know you have some expertise in this about like why wild animals might look the way that they do, and therefore it might be kind of weird for people to comment on an animal's body.

Chelsea: ([01:03:32](#))

Yes, definitely. You know, I have always wanted to be a biologist and I've done studies with ornithology, marine mammals, all sorts of different animals. So I wouldn't call myself like an expert, but I definitely have, um, a lot of knowledge in this area. And like for example, a lot of times people will see birds out and think, oh, that's, that's a chubby bird. How cute. And it's always interesting how like animal non-human animals when they're like perceived as chubby, they're always cute. Which is true, but it's, it's unfortunate that we can't recognize all species as being, uh, cute. But like with the quote chubby birds, um, what they do is when they're cold, they'll actually fluff out their feathers. And it's a way of creating an isolated area of air around their bodies to keep warm. So oftentimes if you see like a group of, of birds that are around each other and they look, you know, fat, it's, it's probably actually, because they're trying to stay warm and that's their technique for doing that. Body diversity in wildlife is also very true, and it also affects with different seasons. You know, we all know that like bears hibernate for the winter and so they might eat more, same thing with squirrels. Like, you'll see all these like a larger squirrels in the fall time. And it's cause they're getting ready for the winter. Where in the summertime. You might see them not only thin, but also less hair. Cause sometimes they'll actually pull their own like, um, tail feathers, not feathers, obviously tail fur out, um, in order to create some isolation for their, um, more further, uh, nests that are also in trees just like birds. They also can sound a lot like birds. Um, and so there's all these different to animals that we don't talk about. Um, so there's all these different, you know, different ways the animals live in the wild and it's, you know, basically evolution of ways to survive. Oftentimes when you hear or see different animals and you think things about their bodies, oftentimes it also has to do with their specific species or the time of year, you know, things like that. So there's a lot of variety when it comes to just the physiology of animals and even within the same species, there can still be a lot of body diversity.

Andy: ([01:05:49](#))

You know, the reason that obviously I reached out to you is because I've seen you write about this. It's not something I've given much thought to, but hearing you talk about this, uh, it does seem weird for people to comment negatively on an animal's body when it's kind of indicative for the most part, especially for wild animals, as like a survival mechanism, it's a part of what gets them through through life. And so it is weird that people would comment negatively on that.

Chelsea: ([01:06:13](#))

Well, it's really interesting also on that aspect is human bodies. Like oftentimes you hear about diets, you end up, you know, 95% of people regain their weight and majority of the time they actually gain more weight. And that is again a natural response of trying to survive and, you know, make sure that you have enough food and, and, uh, body stores to get through certain times. And so it is a natural thing that human bodies do as well, even though we don't, majority of humans don't live in the wild, so to speak, um, in, in native ways. And so, you know, that is also something that humans still do as well.

Andy: ([01:06:54](#))

I did not know that. So how would you respond if you were in Sarah's shoes for instance, and you overheard these comments? What types of responses do you think someone could give?

Chelsea: (01:07:05)

Uh, that's a great question. And I think a lot depends on the specific circumstance, as well as your relationship with the person and your current comfort level. One thing you can do, like if you can't just leave the situation, you can change the subject. You know, if you're talking about, you know, a dog passing, you know, mention something else about the dog. Um, or if you're seeing birds, you can be like, oh, did you know that they actually use their, their feathers, uh, to create warmth? You know, different things like that. I've just like changed the subject or something completely unrelated at all. And so that's more of like a, a simple way, if you don't want to actually confront the actual language that's being used. You know, another way, if you just want to keep it simple, but say something, you can just say something to the effect of, oh, body diversity is real and important for both humans and non-human animals, depending on who you're talking to, you know, modify as needed. If you actually want to like clarify and really call this out, you can say something like, you know, like if, if your mom was saying it like, Hey mom, can we not discuss this? It makes me feel uncomfortable, and body size is complicated for human and non-human, um, and just kind of like point to the fact that, you know, it's not something that you're comfortable with. You know, you can also share this, you know, the aspect of, you know, this specifically is not only making me uncomfortable, but it also doing fat shaming of animals is not appropriate. You know, really call out what's going on. You know, you wouldn't say this, you know, about, you know, to, to me, I would hope or, you know, the neighbor, so it's not appropriate in this way. Um, we can also lead into a larger conversation about diet culture and fat phobia and fat bias. So, you know, depending on what your comfort level is, there's ways to just kind of get through it or call it out specifically. I think once people personalize it, majority of the time, people will respect that and move on, or you can have a larger conversation about it. I know with my coworkers, when I was overhearing the fat shaming conversation, I was not in a good mental place. And so I just left the situation cause it was like online. So it was easy to hit a button, but I do wish I had said something and just let them know why I wasn't comfortable with it, give a little bit of education and knowing them, I feel like they would have been very receptive. And so, you know, it was a missed opportunity to try and learn, but sometimes you're just not in that place. And you have to respect where you are as well.

Andy: (01:09:39)

The last question I want to ask you is about this, this line that Sarah said, that is this just a way for humans to feel superior to animals? And I feel like there's probably some really complicated intersection of speciesism and anti-fat bias and fatphobia going on there. Um, I don't know if you have any, any thoughts on that.

Chelsea: (01:09:59)

It's a great question. And I think it does have to do with, y'all kind of what you just said of, um, the intersection of speciesism and fatphobia, um, and you know, cause even fatphobia is a way of trying to, you know, some people can say be better than, or try and give a reason why it's okay to, you know, treat people certain ways, which is not appropriate. You know, it's obviously connected to social justice issues as a whole and is problematic. So it's, it's definitely a scale of, of power in our society that needs to be squashed. And so how exactly that lines up is

complicated. And I don't have a specific answer to it, but I think in, in general, looking at this from a social justice lens and the connection of oppressions is, is important. And it also goes to why it's so important to talk about these things. With non-human animals, it's complicated because you know, we do, well with companion animals. At least we do have control over, um, a lot of what they can do and eat. So it complicates things, but a lot of the same things are goes across the board, you know, in, uh, human medical care there's lot of fat bias. And that definitely translates into the veterinary profession. Um, even though like all the veterinary professionals I know are so caring and compassionate, um, but it's something that happens it's, it's inundated in our society. Um, so I do believe it's all connected.

Paul: ([01:11:32](#))

Chelsea, thank you so much for providing that response. It definitely gave me a lot of stuff to think about. So thank you again, Chelsea.

Andy: ([01:11:37](#))

Of course, talking to Chelsea gave me, gave me lots to think about as well and started to actually get me to form some sort of thoughts and opinions on the whole thing. And I guess the only thing that I after the fact want to add is that I, I feel like we kind of got a little bit of this in our discussion there, but that people think of, like they only think about like fat shaming, which is sort of like making one individual person feel bad with your comments. Um, but I think it's important for us to be thinking about like the larger systemic and like societal issues of creating anti-fat bias, which is something that's not just about like, you know, hurt feelings, someone feeling bad type of thing. But it's about like creating a society where there is, you know, fat people are less likely to receive adequate medical care. There's actually a wage gap between fat people and straight sized people. And like the list goes on and on and on and on. I would highly recommend reading "What we don't talk about when we talk about fat" by Aubrey Gordon, if people want to educate themselves more on that. And so I think that like these comments about animals' bodies, even if like the animals can't hear them and have some sort of internalized reaction to them, I do think that it can just sort of add to this atmosphere of how we think it's okay to comment on people's bodies and especially like negatively comment on people's bodies, and I think that that all kind of gets wrapped up in it. So Chelsea definitely gave me a lot to think about.

Paul: ([01:13:02](#))

Snd if you want to find more Chelsea...

Chelsea: ([01:13:04](#))

Uh, you can definitely find me at a FatVeganVoice on Instagram, as well as fatveganvoice.com, um, and on Facebook as well. And you can always email me any time if you have anything directly want to ask me at fatveganvoice@gmail.com.

Andy: ([01:13:21](#))

Thanks Chelsea.

Chelsea: ([01:13:22](#))

Thank you.

Andy: ([01:13:24](#))

All right. Let's move into our final voicemail.

Listener Kyle: ([01:13:28](#))

Hey, first time caller, long time listener. This is Kyle from Muncie, Indiana, he/him/his. And the question I was going to propose to you guys is should there be some sort of central governing vegan body? Should there be a vegan reference book? Should there be a vegan leader as it were? And like, guess I'm asking this question because it seems to be coming out more and more frequently about what is the definition of vegan? And if your comfortable with something being vegan and call yourself vegan, then even if you eat backyard chicken eggs and you say you're vegan, then you can still be vegan because that's up to you. Um, on one hand I can kind of see the logic and what people are trying to say that like, hey, there's no real like legal definition of vegan quote unquote, but, um, you know, so why can't I just do what I want kind of thing, as long as it follows in some sort of ethical gray area of veganism? So, um, anyways, that's, that's my, uh, ultimate question and, uh, just wasn't sure if that was, I know it's kind of up your guys' alley and feel like you've talked about things like that in brief, um, from time to time, but wasn't sure if you had addressed whether there should be some sort of ultimate governing body in the past, so, all right. Thank you. Bye.

Andy: ([01:15:23](#))

So, in addition to this voicemail, uh, Kyle did send some, some follow-up email and essentially trying to, to clarify and elaborate on these things and basically saying like, I know that if there was some sort of central governing body, not everybody would abide by it, but don't you think that there would be some sort of benefit in that? So, Paul, what do you think about this idea of creating some sort of like central governing body, some sort of authoritative leader that's, that's really like locking in specific definitions of things. Like, do you think that there would be any sort of benefit in that?

Paul: ([01:16:02](#))

Andy, my initial thought is that I am against this idea. And not that it's like a bad idea, not that it's a bad thing to discuss. I'm not shooting Kyle down, but I think my initial thought is that I wouldn't want something like this, even though like I fully acknowledge that there are all these ethical gray area issues that come out, that, that maybe, make veganism a little more complicated, they could possibly make it a little bit more confusing. And would it be easier if someone just said, this is the way it is and that's, that's the end of it all? Maybe.

Andy: ([01:16:37](#))

We'd be out of a podcast.

Paul: ([01:16:39](#))

That's for sure. But I don't think, I guess one of my main reasons why my answer is no, is that the fact that the fact that we are having all these discussions, Andy, the fact that so many people have these differing opinions on it, if this one organization let's not even say it's one person, cause I, I think, you know, obviously it'd be easy to say like, well, I'm not going to follow what this one person was saying, but let's just say it was like organization that people generally were in favor of and were like, I'm going to listen to what these people have to say. You know, like a CDC-esque organization, let's say, I think even then the fact that people, people are not going to stop, I don't think they're not going to stop having these sorts of disagreements. They're not going to stop having these differing of opinions when it comes to these like little nuanced things. And therefore, I guess, like what, what would that really, would that really change people's actions? I don't think so. And, and, you know, would this be nice for things like labeling on food? Yes, it would. But technically Andy, isn't there already supposed to be regulations on how we can label things and all that sorts of stuff? So if we set up this, is it not also going to just get caught up all caught up in all the bureaucracy and all the other political, what have yous that that food, for instance, food labeling gets caught up in anyways. So I guess for me, Andy, in conclusion, my five paragraph essay, in conclusion, I don't think I see a huge benefit of this, and I could see some potential issues with it, and therefore my initial opinion is no.

Andy: ([01:18:37](#))

Paul I'm with you there. I think that my reason for being so is sort of two pronged, the first of which is the practical aspect of it. I think that, like you said, there already are sort of versions of this. I mean, there's the vegan society in the UK and we have I think it was Vegan Action that does the certified vegan label, the V with the little heart in it. They do the, like the Ben and Jerry's certification. And you see that on a bunch of people's stuff. We now have the plant-based food association, which I know is not, uh, I guess it's just about ingredients, it's not about like the ethical side of veganism necessarily, but there are organizations that do certify specific labels and that there are like the vegan society that puts out like their definition of veganism. And if people, I'm sure some people must look to them as some sort of authority on this whole thing, maybe more so in the UK, I'm not entirely sure UK listeners let us know, but it just feels like it's, it's, it's an idea and it's a concept and it's bigger than one specific governing body. And I just don't think that anyone would accept that type of authority. You know, I just feel like practically speaking, people are going to take this specific ethical framework and they're going to, to change it and mold it and adapt it to what they think is the most ethical over time and, and have those discussions. And I feel your frustration, Kyle, about people that try to cram things into veganism that are decidedly, not vegan. And, you know, we've had our discussions about vegans and seagans and all the different versions of that over the years. But, so I certainly feel that frustration because it just feels almost very silly at the end of the day. But I think that the other prong is that I think it's beautiful that this, this is something that is free to morph and change over time. I think that, like, when I think about the, the just and equitable world that I would like to work towards, it's one that is devoid of hierarchies, it's devoid of like ruling governing bodies. And so I think, like trying to shove veganism into some sort of situation where there is some like supreme leader, uh, supreme master, or, you know, some like panel of people at the top, no matter how well selected and how, uh, just and righteous and open-minded, they might be, there's always going to be problems with that. And so I feel like, I like that in some

way, veganism is in the hands of the people and that we are all free to take that framework and interpret it how we will, and then act accordingly in a way that is going to hopefully build the most just and equitable world, uh, for, for this planet moving forward. I think that that is, even though there are a lot of growing pains and annoyances with that, that make for good podcast fodder, I think that that is one of the more beautiful things about this movement is that it, that it can be so many different things and it can adapt with the various needs of people.

Paul: ([01:21:48](#))

I'm also thinking, you know, the definition of veganism, usually as we're, as we're giving, it usually includes that "as far as possible and practicable" phrase, and would this governing body, would they be the ones who are deciding like, a case is brought before a judge and it's like, were are you actually vegan when this thing happened? Like where you did you do this? Did you live up to your ethics as far as possible and practicable? I feel like it's probably not useful for people or, or constructive, or it's probably not going to really change people's, uh, actions for someone to say, like, no, you're actually being shitty. Like, so there I've definitively labeled you not vegan. And therefore like go out and you are now labeled not vegan. Like, is that really going to help people? I probably don't think so.

Andy: ([01:22:41](#))

And I also think that there's a point where specific definitions might hinder our ability to think critically about things. I'm thinking about conversations about consuming, like mussels or clams or something like that. And, you know, this conversation for a lot of people, or even bees, you know, honey and things. People are like, their animals, done, nothing, to think about. Um, and obviously that is sort of like where I fall, but I also wonder if it prevents us from really exploring, well, like, what actually is it that informs our ethics, if we're, do I care about the definition of something, or do I care about like what the real world actual practical applications are and the effects that they might be having on people, or even how they hold up to my own personal integrity? And if we're just like, well, this is the definition and I follow this because it's the definition, I don't know. I, as someone who loves to pick apart the inner workings of things and really see what makes them tick, just going, well, this is the definition and I don't have to think about it any further is not something that actually interests me. Even if my interpretation of a lot of those, like more, you know, quote unquote fringe, ethical issues is very much in line with, well, they're an animal, so we don't even, you know, we err on the side of caution, like all that kind of stuff. But I, I guess I want a movement. That's all about figuring that stuff out, that isn't just some sort of doctrine that we have to follow, that isn't this very dogmatic way of thinking that is like almost a breathing entity that, uh, that adjust with us as we grow.

Paul: ([01:24:22](#))

Yeah, I am right there with you, Andy. So, sorry. Sorry, Kyle.

Andy: ([01:24:28](#))

So, but again, I totally feel you on the frustration of people that, uh, try to justify ethical, unethical things, things that I would, uh, perceive to be unethical, I suppose, under the guise of veganism. And, and again, I think it's important that we have some sort of general idea of what like vegan

means, but I also don't think that that is the, the only thing that matters at the end of the day. Obviously those of us that, you know, sell the word vegan on a shirt or have a vegan tattoo, like we want it to have like a specific meaning if it's something we really attached to our identities. But I also think that there's something really beautiful in not feeling like our identity is challenged when other people are interpreting it in, in a different kind of way.

Paul: ([01:25:13](#))

Yeah. So that's the mailbag Andy.

Andy: ([01:25:17](#))

Thank you to everybody that sent in your questions, your comments, your concerns. Like I said, we do not get to all of them. I try my best to respond to those of you that, uh, send in the emails. Sadly, the side effect of the voicemail is that, uh, I'm not calling you back. If we're not airing it on the show, I'm not calling you back. So you have to be okay with sending your thoughts out into the void or send a follow up email if you want, if you want a response. But, uh, it's so great hearing from everybody. Paul, last week I said, hearing the voicemails brings me great joy. And you said, they bring you great anxiety. Wha...what's the deal with that?

Paul: ([01:25:53](#))

Because I'm not sure if it's going to be someone that's like, F you, man, I hate you! [Both laughing]

Andy: ([01:25:59](#))

So far that hasn't happened, but most of the voicemails do get transcribed. So you can, in the little like preview window thing in the email. So you can get a general sense if someone's being a jerk or not, and avoid it.

Paul: ([01:26:10](#))

I also think Andy, I'm sure the fact that we don't give, oh, I guess we do give the number at the beginning of the show as well, but we don't play the jingle to the end of the show. So people don't remember it as much unless they've listened to the entire show and they could be hate listening to us, I suppose. But, uh, none so far.

Andy: ([01:26:32](#))

I love the idea of someone just sitting there, like gripping the arms of their chair with like a vein bursting other head, and they're sitting there red and they're like, these guys are so wrong!!

Paul: ([01:26:44](#))

Andy, that those are the types of voicemails that I would like to avoid if possible.

Andy: ([01:26:50](#))

Well, I will act as the screener. So far, that has not happened. So thank you to everybody for being overwhelmingly kind to us in voicemail form and mostly pretty chill in email form.

Paul: ([01:27:03](#))

And Andy, I feel like we got some good voicemail fodder for some, probably some follow-ups in some, some upcoming episodes to some extent. Yeah. I would say that

Andy: ([01:27:13](#))

As usual, we've gotten some really weighty, tough questions to work our way through that upon receiving my thought initially was, wow, this is, this is a fantastic question, and I don't even know where to start and beginning to answer it. So if your question didn't make it on, it's entirely possible. It fell into that category as well. And it might end up being its own episode in the future, or just at another mailbag when we've had a little more time to think about it.

Paul: ([01:27:40](#))

But Andy, you know, the last thing we need to do, we tease it at the top is announced those mailbag winners. So like I said, we're doing one US-based winner and this mail bag, we're doing two Australian mailbag winners.

Andy: ([01:27:55](#))

So anybody who has left a review on iTunes, uh, you are entered in perpetuity to win some free swag from us until you have been announced as a winner. So via random number generator, the first winner from the US is Akire W, that is the name "A-K-I-R-E space W." I know that's normally how we announce our Patreons, but this is someone's actual, uh, iTunes review name.

Paul: ([01:28:22](#))

And our two winners from Australia are NoSoupForYou.

Andy: ([01:28:27](#))

Great name. Chefs kiss to that name.

Andy: ([01:28:30](#))

And gabrielamb or Gabriel Lamb? Gabrielle lamb, Gabriel

Andy: ([01:28:37](#))

Gabri lamb?

Paul: ([01:28:37](#))

Gabri lamb.

Paul: ([01:28:42](#))

Say Gabri Lamb! You know how they say it in Australia?

Andy: ([01:28:49](#))

I think we need a, a bonus episode that's a super cut of us trying to pronounce people's iTunes usernames.

Paul: [\(01:28:56\)](#)

So if you are a Akire W, NoSoupForYou, or Gabrlamb, send us an email at thebeardedvegans@gmail.com. We'll get some swag headed your way. Yeah.

Andy: [\(01:29:06\)](#)

And if you would like to submit your questions for the next mailbag or a future episode, send it to that email, or...

Beardo Hotline Theme: [\(01:29:13\)](#)

Call 'em anytime you need with your moral quandaries, it's 32 37 BEARDO.

Paul: [\(01:29:21\)](#)

Oh. Always love hearing that. Andy, you got some events coming up.

Andy: [\(01:29:28\)](#)

You, uh, you beautiful Beardo listener. You can find me at a number of events in the coming weeks. I'll be at the Bien Vegano, all vegan, 100% percent vegan farmer's market. I think it will be like 60 vendors there. Uh, from what I hear, in Atlanta, Georgia, that's gonna be on June 13th. June 19th, I'll be making the Trek out to Houston, Texas for Vegan Vibe, and June 26th, I'll be at the Triad Veg Fest in Greenville, North Carolina. And I am, uh, announcing and confirming new events by the day. So be sure to go to the Compassion Co Instagram and, uh, you'll, you'll see the announcements over there. Any of these events come by the Compassion Co booth. See me say what's up. Beardo I will give you a Bearded Vegans button and/or sticker.

Paul: [\(01:30:15\)](#)

Andy. Next week. The cicadas are back. That means we should probably talk about them.

Andy: [\(01:30:25\)](#)

I think, uh, I think we'll have a really interesting story to talk about involving cicadas. So unless anything more pressing comes up, probably going to be what we'll be doing next week and should be some interesting conversation fodder, for sure.

Paul: [\(01:30:37\)](#)

For sure.

Andy: [\(01:30:38\)](#)

All right, Paul still, there's some weirdo that just keeps sending us a piece of physical mail. Despite the fact that we're, we've moved around a couple of times over the years. They, this person always finds us, takes a cuts out random letters from a magazine, paste them onto a piece of paper, and it finds its way to one of us. So let me go ahead. And as this tradition, open, open this, this physical letter we received. [Ripping paper] That envelope was the size of a comically large pancake. [Paul laughing] It says, "Life is a waterfall. We're one in the river. And one again, after the fall. Swimming through the void, we hear the word we lose ourselves, but we find the following seven words:

Paul: [\(01:31:47\)](#)

We are the Bearded Vegans, signing off.

Paul: [\(01:32:00\)](#)

Duh. And,

Andy: [\(01:32:02\)](#)

Uh, we'll, we'll do our best to get to you within our limited times and mean time and me and God, Paul, I am so sorry. I don't know why. I'm not like able to speak words like a human being today. Paul, I have a new mission for you. I want you to make a pancake large enough to be used as a parachute. What did you say? That was like, that joke did not go over. Well, you say you wanted me to make a pancake flog. Yeah. And I mean, as far, Paul, as far as it's a flat it's flashcards, as far as game play mechanics, a simple yes or no. That's like, it's also very boring to me,

Paul: [\(01:32:52\)](#)

Which, which again, leads me to believe that maybe it is supposed to be like an educational tool for, for certain people. And for certain people, I think this is, could be a fine educational tool. I know I get your, your gripes about the subjective nature of some of these, for sure. But flashcards, aren't a bad thing. That's how some people learn.

Andy: [\(01:33:11\)](#)

Paul, I feel about flashcards the way you feel about robots.

Speaker 5: [\(01:33:16\)](#)

I will every flashcard. Hi, Andy and Paul. It's your buddy JL out in Colorado Springs. And I'm just leaving a message because you have a phone number and I miss you. And I think you're amazing. And I want to thank you for getting me and all of this home confinement in beautiful Colorado. I was able to get out for walks and hikes and bike rides, even strength. And you two kept me company and always kept me thinking. I think you are a wonderful exclamation point and under Sheaffer.