

Appendix: Anti-Fatness with Aubrey Gordon

SPEAKERS

Hannah McGregor, Marcelle Kosman, Aubrey Gordon

(Witch, Please Theme Music plays) (Dance of the Priestesses by Victor Herbert Orchestra)

Hannah McGregor 00:10

Hello and welcome to Witch, Please, a fortnightly podcast about the Harry Potter world. I'm Hannah McGregor.

Marcelle Kosman 00:17

And I'm Marcelle Kosman. And today, in honor of our myth dispelling guest, I want us to talk about some myths that we've dispelled in our own lives. Ooo! Dis-spelled.

Hannah McGregor 00:27

Yeah, get it? I wrote that.

Marcelle Kosman 00:28

Hannah, you're so, so smart. And I want to do that myth dispelling in the sorting chat.

Hannah McGregor 00:38

I can't wait. So Marcelle, I texted you and was like, Yeah, you know, this is like, we're talking to somebody who wrote a book about widespread myths. So, let's talk about some of those things that we sort of grew up being taught and then came to understand as adults, they're not true! And the first one you sent me... *[Marcelle laughs]* Tell the good people what your first myth was.

Marcelle Kosman 01:00

So the first thing that came to mind is a widespread myth that was making the rounds in my residence when I was in first year of university. And it is the myth that eating celery is like negative calories, because apparently celery has less calories than you would expend to eat and digest it. *[Hannah laughs]* And so therefore, eating celery is like negative calories. *[Hannah and Marcelle laugh]*

Hannah McGregor 01:26

Which immediately made me think about my favorite women's magazine, hot weight loss tip, which was to turn the temperature down, because if you're colder, *[Hannah dissolves into giggles]* your body will use more energy? *[Hannah and Marcelle*

laugh] Just shivering in you're freezing cold home, eating celery, like we went beyond the celery limitations and obviously, because at the time of sending you this text was, I believe, actively reading Lauren Berlant, who is you know, famously the killer of the American dream. And so mine was that if you work hard, there's nothing you can't do. **[Marcelle laughs]** I just, I can't be an astronaut, it turns out.

Marcelle Kosman 02:15

I mean, listen, Hannah, not with that attitude, is what I say.

Hannah McGregor 02:19

This is- Stop it! **[Marcelle laughs]**

Marcelle Kosman 02:23

Listen, I could still get Best New Artist Grammy nominations. Okay? It could still happen. It won't. It won't.

Hannah McGregor 02:29

It won't because of all of your unsuccessful pre-existing albums. That's the problem. You're not a new artist anymore. **[Marcelle laughs]**

Marcelle Kosman 02:50

It's true.

(Witch, Please Theme Music plays)

Okay, we've got like a legit celebrity on our podcast today. So we're going to be super hasty, please forgive us. We're just going to race our way right through Revision.

Hannah McGregor 03:00

Mhm. Okay, so we are talking about fatness today. Finally, my favorite topic gets a whole episode. So what do we need to summarize here? I mean, like, bodies, right? **[Sound bite from Talking Bodies by Tove Lo plays: "So if we're talking bodies"]**

Marcelle Kosman 03:16

Yeah, yeah, we should start with bodies. Let's start with disability studies, since a lot of our discussion about non normative bodies comes out of disability justice thinking. So way, way back in our first season, we had guest academic extraordinary Jes Batts on the show, and they introduced us to the medical versus social models of disability. So the medical model locates disability in the individual body, and it frames that disability as

curable or treatable, while the social model distinguishes between impairment and the conditions that restrict people with impairments.

So for example, the medical model would identify someone as being disabled if they were not able to walk up stairs while the social model would look at those stairs and be like, hey, stairs as the default instead of ramps that's like a social material condition that literally restricts the movement of some bodies.

Hannah McGregor 04:19

Yeah, exactly. And then we had Tea Gerbeza on to talk to us a little bit more about disability studies, particularly via the metaphor of lycanthropy. Shout out to Shakira for always helping me remember how to say that word. **[Soundbite from *She Wolf* by Shakira: “Darling, it is no joke, this is lycanthropy”]**

Which uses quote unquote “monstrous bodies” as shorthand for the fear of disabled bodies, and cultures exclusion of those bodies based on fear of contagion. Tea also demonstrated to us how obsessed the wizarding world is with the idea of cure and curability, and then introduced us to the work of Eli Clare, who in their book, *Brilliant Imperfection: Grappling with Cure* discusses society's obsession with quote unquote “curing disabled body minds in order to fit within the desired able bodied norm” and how harmful these ableist conceptions of cure are, especially for folks for whom a version of the self that isn't disabled doesn't exist. There's some real eugenicist thinking undergirding that sort of fixation on cure.

Marcelle Kosman 05:33

And of course, on the topic of monstrosity, we've got to talk about Jess Zimmerman, who came and joined us on the podcast to talk about how the figure of the monstrous woman has been used historically to codify those behaviors that are unacceptable for women. Whether it's, you know, hunger, desire, ambition, anger, childlessness, intelligence, like literally anything, any kind of being too much. And Jess encouraged us not to reject monstrosity, but rather to embrace it and the kinds of possibilities that open up for us when we no longer fear being framed as monstrous.

Hannah McGregor 06:13

Hmm, oh, I love becoming monstrous. It's like becoming ungovernable. But with more claws.

Marcelle Kosman 05:19

Tentacles.

Hannah McGregor 06:20

Yep, we're both right. And finally, of course, I can't personally. Me? Oh, me? I can't think about techniques of policing women's bodies and behaviors without thinking about sentimentality.

Marcelle Kosman 06:35

You?

Hannah McGregor 06:36

Yeah, me. I know. A shock. Which, according to scholar Kyla Schuller was one of many strategies used in the 19th century to codify its sex difference in order to stabilize emergent white supremacist understandings of civility. You gotta go back, go back to the sentimentality episode, if this is whew, but you know, that's what we're doing. This is revision. So basically, Schuller's argument is that white women became responsible for managing the potential overflow of feeling that went hand in hand with the malleability of white people, which was a precondition for civilize-ability.

So sentimentality became part of this whole sort of body of techniques for managing the fact that white women had to be really feeling-zy, but maybe that could become too much. And the other techniques that emerged around the same time included temperance movement and diet. So the gendered policing of women's bodies was part of white supremacy's constitution of white women as responsible for civilizations, you know, the emotional side. Which is part of how some scholars have linked fat phobia to anti Blackness, because fatness becomes sort of a sign of like a failure to live up to the civilized white ideal. By the way, for more on that history, I really recommend Sabrina Strings, *Fearing the Black Body: the racial origins of fat phobia*, which is a great study.

Marcelle Kosman 08:10

Hannah. We're not supposed to learn new things in revision, that's for the next segment. Ungovernable.

Hannah McGregor 08:17

Sorry. Sorry. I'm too excited. Let's go!

(Witch, Please Theme Music plays)

Hannah McGregor 08:28

That was a whirlwind segment. But I just couldn't wait to start picking our guests' brain, (gross) in transfiguration class.

Marcelle Kosman 08:36

Our guest today is writer and podcaster Aubrey Gordon, pronouns she/her. She writes under the pseudonym, Your Fat Friend, illuminating the experiences of fat people and urging justice for people of all sizes. She is co-host of the Maintenance Phase podcast, author of *What We Don't Talk About When We Talk About Fat*, and most recently, the author of the brand new book, "*You Just Need to Lose Weight*" and *19 Other Myths About Fat People*. Welcome, Aubrey!

Aubrey Gordon 09:05

Thank you for having me. I'm very excited to yell professionally about things that I yell about personally on the regs. This sounds great.

Hannah McGregor 09:14

Oh my goodness. What a delight to have you here. Why don't we just launch in with a little, some light yelling? **[Aubrey laughs]** Just to get a taste of it. Could you tell us a little bit about your relationship with the Harry Potter books?

Aubrey Gordon 09:29

Yeah, I will say like, it seemed like everyone under the sun when they came out I was absolutely swept up in reading every book as soon as it was released. All of that kind of stuff. I distinctly remember in my freshman year in college, maybe, it was one of the book release times and I was back home from school and Powell's Books in my hometown of Portland, Oregon had a big midnight release party, where they were like, projecting stars and moons and wizard stuff on the side of the building and had like a band. **[Hannah laughs]** It was like a whole thing. And I was there, I specifically wore a hat to just be like, I want to see any male classmates. This is...

Hannah McGregor 10:13

Oh! **[Hannah laughs]** I thought you meant like a sorting hat or something! **[Hannah and Marcelle laugh]**

Aubrey Gordon 10:17

No. Oh my God, I wish that I had approached that from a cosplay perspective. And not from a like, Ooh, you're at a release for a young adult book sort of perspective, in the way that like a mortified teenager would. But that's what I did. And I was totally mortified about being recognized. And that is what happened. Like five other people from my high school graduating class were also there in line. They were like, oh, man, you're into these books? Me too! And it ended up being like a deeply lovely thing. I was totally mortified to be judged and didn't put it together that if someone else was there to judge me, they were also there to get the book. Take it down a couple notches, anxiety.

Sort of later on in adulthood, my relationship to the books became a lot stickier as I went back and reread them as a fat adult who had sort of stopped trying to diet and lose weight, and a bunch of things that seemed really natural about the books to me the first time around, seemed really unnatural, and shoehorned in and alienating and, like mean, to me when I returned to them. And then following that JK Rowling was just like, I have some thoughts about trans women, internet. And I was like, Oh, great, this isn't getting better, neat.

Hannah McGregor 11:37

The way that she was like, sorry, did you read some subtext in my books that suggested that I might suck? Don't worry, I'm going to make it text for you.

Aubrey Gordon 11:44

Confirmed. [*Aubrey laughs*] Totally. Totally.

Hannah McGregor 11:47

I got you.

Aubrey Gordon 11:48

Yeah! So I would say the older I get the stickier and more complex and more critical my view on the books becomes, not because they aren't lovely and comforting and fun stories. But because every time someone with my body type is mentioned, it is like a real wild ride. And usually a bad one. Uh oh.

Marcelle Kosman 12:12

I'm reading them to my daughter right now. And I have talked about this in other places before but like the degree to which I am constantly editing the text on the page, so that I'm not just like naturalizing hate speech. It's shocking.

Hannah McGregor 12:29

Also, the degree to which the plot is not changed when you just take out the adjective fat in front of everything-

Marcelle Kosman 12:36

-everything bad-

Hannah McGregor 12:37

-that Dudley does, it's like, oh, it's almost as though it wasn't part of the plot at all Not necessary. But we got another segment to talk about that. This is the segment where

we get a theoretical grounding and our theoretical grounding today, Aubrey, is going to come from you and your great mind and your cool book.

Aubrey Gordon 12:58

Thanks team. That's great. I'll take that! Sure! *[Hannah and Marcelle laugh]*

Marcelle Kosman 13:01

So you've structured your book around the idea of myths, right? You're talking about the myths about fat people. So when we're talking about the circulation of biases that contribute to marginalization, and oppression, particularly related to fatness, where did these myths come from? How are they perpetuated and turned into common sense?

Aubrey Gordon 13:25

I mean, I think a couple of things. One, I would say that the source material for the myths is bias, which then creates some sort of justification for the bias and perpetuates it, right? So things like, quote, unquote, "obesity is the leading cause of death in the United States", or causes 400,000 deaths every year. That is a number that was retracted by the original authors of the study. And also like, if 400,000 Americans were dropping dead every year, just from being fat, you would know somebody.

Hannah McGregor 13:58

Yeah, you'd know somebody who died from fat.

Aubrey Gordon 14:01

You would know someone who just got so fat they dropped dead, right? That's like not actually, empirically a thing. Fatness is associated with risk factors for other health conditions which may prove fatal, or complications from those things may prove fatal. But instead, we've decided to recenter all of those health risks just on the proxy indicator of the size of someone's body. So I mean, I would say a lot of it is that the bias predates the science and therefore the bias is an underpinning of almost all of the science, right?

That quite a bit of what we find when we look to sort of the construction of the quote unquote, obesity epidemic is researchers who thought their research was not getting funded well enough and ran a campaign to get more funding and more media attached to the scourge of quote unquote, obesity, right? And that led to pretty directly a huge spike in anti fat bias in the US population. And there is now research illustrating that exposure to that media, the sort of constant media that we see and hear that usually features B-roll footage of fat torsos and clothes that don't fit. And usually with a bag of McDonald's in the frame, right? That exposure to that kind of quote unquote, obesity

epidemic media directly increases not only personal bias toward fat people, but individual dislike of other fat people.

So there is sort of this idea that this kind of bias and these sorts of myths actually, like come from hard and fast science, and you might not like the truth, but here's what it is and duh-duh-duh-duh-duh. And when you start sort of peeling back the layers, what you see is that quite a bit of it is very heavily debated amongst scientists. It is far from a sort of foregone conclusion. And what that actually functionally allows us to do is what we set out to do in the first place, which is exclude fat people, judge fat people, and feel like we are good people for judging fat people sort of in the process, right, feel like we're on a mission.

Hannah McGregor 16:11

I love this. And I immediately want to have such a long conversation about public health and science communication. But that's not what we do on this podcast. So we're not going to, everybody, you know, all of our listeners already listen to Maintenance Phase. So keep listening to that. We really like talking about discourse and ideology, though. And imagine how my little heart lit up when I read you refer to these myths as, quote, "tools of power and dominance". I was like, yes, yes. Coach is going to edit this out. She hates when we snap while we talk. ***[Soundbite of a sports whistle blowing]***

So, when we are talking about discourse as a tool of dominance, it's often worth asking, Who is becoming more powerful via these discourses? So whose power and dominance is enhanced by structural fatphobia? Who's getting secretly rich?

Aubrey Gordon 17:06

Yeah, totally. So I think there's two questions here. One is; who's getting secretly rich? And two is; who's getting cultural power?

Hannah McGregor 17:14

Ooo! Economic and cultural capital!

Aubrey Gordon 17:21

Oooooo!! Look at us go! ***[Hannah and Aubrey laugh]*** I would say who's getting rich is pretty clearly people who are selling you solutions to the scourge of having a fat body, right, to the major problem of being larger than someone else expected you to be. So your Weight Watchers, although less so lately, their stock price is down about two thirds in the last year. Whoo.

Hannah McGregor 17:40

Oh, and didn't Jenny Craig just go bust?

Aubrey Gordon 17:42

Jenny Craig just went bust.

Hannah McGregor 17:44

Just dance on that grave.

Aubrey Gordon 17:45

At the same time, Novo Nordisk is just printing money as they make Ozempic. And Wegovy and Manjaro. And all of those, right? So drug companies are doing quite well out of this, and have been active players in the construction of the obesity epidemic. Because if it's a public health issue, then surprise, your product is now a necessity to an entire nation state. So that's part one is just who's getting rich. Part two is who's getting cultural power? And I think this is a place where it's really useful to think about meritocracy as a construct, and who is served by meritocracy as a construct, and it's always the people who are already on top of the quote unquote, meritocracy, right?

Hannah McGregor 18:32

Yeah, pretend you earned it and everybody else who's not the same as you didn't.

Aubrey Gordon 18:36

Totally. That's exactly right. So like, for people my size, for example, according to the National Institutes of Health, I have a less than 1/10th of 1% chance of attaining my sort of BMI recommended healthy weight in my lifetime, right? That I am likely to be fat for the whole rest of my life. And what that means, and what we've sort of told ourselves about fatness is you're just not working hard enough. You haven't tried enough things, you haven't worked hard enough at it. And if you did, things would be really different for you. And I would actually be able to tell by looking at you and I can now tell by looking at you that you're not really trying, you haven't really dieted, you might be saying that you did but you didn't. And your body is sort of an abject failure.

And I think we focus a lot on the ways in which that marginalizes fat people and excludes fat people and sets a whole cultural template for thinking about fat people. And something that we talk about less is how much individual thin people benefit from having their body type complimented, from people assuming that they have a trick to stay thin when, like the rest of us, then people are mostly dealing with a genetic hand but they were dealt, right, and an environmental hand and all of that sort of stuff.

So I mean, I think there is both this question of like, who's getting rich and that is absolutely like Snidely Whiplash territory like full villain stuff. But when we look at sort of our social scripts for complimenting weight loss, for staying silent about weight gain, little moments like that that happen every day, what we're doing is constantly telling thin people that they are better than fat people. And I think that's an uncomfortable reward to look at. But it is one that is kind of everywhere all the time.

Hannah McGregor 20:23

As an add on to that, can I just ask a little bit more about like, what kind of thinking underpins that belief that fat people could become thin people if we wanted to enough? Because I think that sort of myth of total potential bodily control is really pervasive.

Aubrey Gordon 20:43

Yeah, I mean, I think again, the source code for that one is the pre existing bias, right?

Hannah McGregor 20:49

But where does that come from?

Aubrey Gordon 20:52

Well, I think part of the place where that comes from is kidlit and YAlit, honestly.

Hannah McGregor 20:57

Wow.

Aubrey Gordon 20:58

Like, if we're talking- I'm genuinely, sorry. Whoops! *[Hannah laughs]* Right, but like, particularly in my niece and nephew growing up trying to find books for them, that first of all included fat characters. And second of all, included fat characters that were not a punchline or a bully, was extraordinarily difficult. I think this is one of those things like a gender binary, like looksism, like all kinds of stuff that we just are sort of thrust into a world and it is thrust upon us. And we aren't really given another option of a way to think about fatness and fat people.

So I think that's kind of the beginning of all of that. It starts really, really, really young. And honestly, like, even for parents with small children, or even infants, will be told the BMI of their infant. The American Academy of Pediatrics is now recommending weight loss interventions for kids as young as two, right? Like, these are messages that start extraordinarily young. So the idea that we could somehow escape it or be without bias in that environment doesn't really hold water for me.

Hannah McGregor 22:13

Yeah, just raise kids in caves. It's fine. Just as an experiment.

Aubrey Gordon 22:16

Yeah, totally. Just like cheese, or gruyere. Cave age them. Quote. Me. On. It.

Hannah McGregor 22:21

Raise children in caves like cheese. I say it every day. *[Hannah and Aubrey laugh]*

Marcelle Kosman 22:29

So Aubrey, in the killjoy spirit of ruining people's fun, and given your exquisite capacity to bust myths, is there a particular myth that you take pleasure in busting? One that you would like to highlight for us?

Aubrey Gordon 22:48

Boy, oh, boy, oh, boy, there are so many to pick from. *[Aubrey laughs]* I would say the one that tends to be a really good entry point for folks and thankfully is becoming more known now is the origins of the BMI, which is our sort of primary way for measuring who we consider to be medically fat or medically thin, right? For the uninitiated, for the unfamiliar, the BMI was created by a Belgian astronomer, not a doctor. He was really mad that the Enlightenment was leaving Belgium in the dust and he genuinely wanted to put Belgium on the map. That was his main thing.

Hannah McGregor 23:25

Yet another thing the Enlightenment fucked up for all of us.

Aubrey Gordon 23:29

Yeah, I mean, no question. He was trying to find the average man which he considered to be an ideal. So if he could find an average of people's physicality and behaviors and all kinds of things, then that would be something we could all strive toward.

Hannah McGregor 23:46

[Hannah laughing] Mediocrity. Just collectively strive for being totally average!

Aubrey Gordon 23:48

Absolutely. Listen, if we're all striving for mediocrity, he nailed it. *[Hannah laughs]* Because his source material for this was exclusively white men who were military conscripts in the 1800s. So if you are not a French soldier, the BMI was not built for you. It then sort of sat on a shelf for a while until it got picked up by American Insurance

companies who wanted to find ways to charge some policyholders more and some policyholders less, and they decided on fat folks to charge more.

From there, it kind of backed its way into the medical system, most notably with a study that found that it was the least ineffective tool for quote unquote “predicting obesity”. It won out over water displacement and calipers. And it was found to and I quote, “correctly predict obesity about 50% of the time”. The BMI was never designed for nor was it ever adjusted for anyone who's not a cis man and anybody who's not white, and it has been shown repeatedly to harm the health of trans people, communities of color, women, all kinds of folks. That one tends to be like a real “welcome to the party” kind of myth to bust. **[Aubrey laughs]** Has your appetite been wetted? Here we go. **[Marcelle laughs]** There's more where that came from. **[Aubrey laughs]**

Hannah McGregor 25:16

I have sort of one last like really burning question I want to ask, which is about fat liberation versus body positivity. And if you could talk a little bit about, like the theoretical and political differences between those movements.

Aubrey Gordon 25:33

I should start out by saying that the body positivity movement has sort of two twin roots. One is radical fat activism that dates back, to according to some, the 60s. According to some, prior to that. And the other is eating disorder recovery spaces. Initially, it was conceived as a justice movement for folks whose bodies put them on the margins. In the 2000s, a bunch of corporations got wind that that was a phrase that people were using, and started using it in their commercials for Halo Top or soap or what have you. And the movement was flooded with a bunch of people who had seen TV ads, but didn't necessarily assent to, like an anti racist politic or a disability justice framework or any of that kind of stuff.

So it very quickly sort of collapsed in on itself and became a series of maxim's, right, that were things like, “love your body”, and “who cares what anybody else thinks”, and “body positivity is for you, as long as you're happy and healthy”. And over time, that became I'm in favor of body positivity, as long as you're not, quote unquote, obese, right? So the very people who had sort of created the movement or co-created the movement were being shut out of it. And over time, many, many fat folks have, you know, ceased to call themselves body positive, myself among them. Fat liberation is sort of an interesting one, it dates back to The Fat Underground in the 1970s, which was a radical queer collective of Jewish folks, I think, mostly identified as lesbians.

Hannah McGregor 27:09

Oh god. Yes. Yeah. Love. Yeah.

Aubrey Gordon 27:12

[Aubrey and Marcelle laugh] Love it, love it. They essentially wrote a list of demands of things that they wanted to see, things ranging from a movement that is forged in allegiance to all oppressed peoples to accountability for and and end to the diet industry, to accurate medical information for fat folks and competent care for fat folks. I mean, really baseline things that I think even today read as pretty radical for folks who are not deeply steeped in fat politics, and categorically should not be seen as radical things. Right?

Like, the idea that fat people should be able to get competent health care does not strike me as like a radical demand. And yet, here we are. I think fat liberation is having a renaissance right now. It is being sort of collectively defined and redefined in community right now, as we speak. So it's a framework that is, I think, generally aligned with more social justice principles. It's more explicitly anti oppression, more explicitly political, and very clear that fat folks are at its center, right, leaving much less room for thin people who saw a Halo Top ad to show up and be like, this movement is mine now. Which is sort of like, through no one's ill intent, the way that that particular cookie crumbles.

Hannah McGregor 28:42

Oh, my God, you're so kind and generous to say through no one's ill intent. **[Aubrey laughs]**

Aubrey Gordon 28:50

Ill intent through advertisers and unchecked implicit bias from many of those thin folks. Right? But I don't think anyone's set out to be like I'm hatching a plan to hurt fat people. **[Hannah laughs]** That's just the way that people operate. Right? Like I think it's actually much more damning that people's default setting is like I don't need to think about fat people's humanity. And I don't consider it ill intent.

Hannah McGregor 29:16

There's such an ongoing fundamental failure to think about fat people's humanity that I can see how body positivity worms its way through, by constantly offering thin people away for it to be about them.

Aubrey Gordon 29:28

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. And I think even in fat liberation spaces, even in sort of fat justice work, it is absolutely remarkable to me the consistency with which thin folks can refocus themselves, and will identify themselves not as a potential sort of source of

bias, or a person with bias to work through, but will consistently identify themselves with fat people and recenter themselves as the most injured parties under a system of diet culture, which is real wild when fat people are dying of anti fatness, right, like that is a that is a wild take, team. And it is sort of the main take from many straight sized folks on fat politics, it's like that or you've got blood on your hands. This is very dangerous. How dare you. Which is, again, wild to say about a movement advocating for health care.

Marcelle Kosman 30:23

I'm just thinking it might be useful to talk through a couple of terms, maybe. Because one of the things that I really had no idea was the origins of the term obesity, and why the term obese is incredibly shitty. And so would you be able to maybe just give us a quick primer on like, why obesity, not a great term?

Aubrey Gordon 30:51

Yeah. So there is this idea that, you know, doctors can't hurt your feelings, sort of the idea. And I think there's two things to know there. One is, this is a term that predates its medical use, it dates back to Latin, where it literally translates to having eaten oneself fat, right? So there is inherent judgment in "You did this to yourself" is built right into the term, which is in defiance of again, like everything we know scientifically at this point, counteracts that.

And the other thing that I would say is, I would urge folks to reconsider this sort of framing of it's a medical term, you don't get to be hurt by it, because I would say, fat folks experience astronomical rates of misdiagnosis, mistreatment in doctor's offices, not having equipment that works for us. I mean, my own personal history with health care providers is that almost anytime I go in for almost anything, I'm told that I need to first lose weight and then come back when I have lost weight, and they will look at my symptoms.

And what that means is that whatever condition you had progresses and gets worse and becomes more threatening, right? So I would say, rather than thinking this term can't be harmful because doctors use it, I would urge folks to reconsider that and think about it specifically because it's used in medical contexts, it is extra hurtful. And one of the places where folks experience the most overt and life threatening anti-fatness is at the hands of healthcare providers who are trained to do incredible work in many many ways, but are never actually trained to confront their own biases against almost any community and certainly not fat folks.

Hannah McGregor 32:35

Okay, I mean, you know, I wish we could talk about Bruno Latour. But everybody will just have to go and read your book. Because I think we really need to get into those YA novels that underpin structural bias.

Aubrey Gordon 32:51

Let's do it!

Marcelle Kosman 32:54

Holy. Yes

Hannah McGregor 32:55

You see that? That's a professional.

(Witch, Please Theme Music plays)

Marcelle Kosman 33:05

Well, now that we've busted some myths about anti-fatness, let's test our knowledge by looking at how the myths about fat people show up in popular culture. And one piece of popular culture, in particular, known as Harry Potter. It's time for OWL's! **[Soundbite of an owl hooting]**

Hannah McGregor 33:23

All right, Aubrey. The time has come for us to yell about Dudley. **[Marcelle laughs]**

Aubrey Gordon 33:27

Boy. Oh, boy. Oh, boy. What I'm curious about before, once I launch, there's not a lot of coming back for me. So I'm curious about for you all, what are your sort of thoughts on Dudley as a fat character, in particular, like, what do you feel like you're bringing into this conversation about Dudley?

Hannah McGregor 33:46

In the original run of this podcast when we did it in 2015 the two things that we got the most pushback on was our claim that the representations of the Dursleys were fat phobic, and our claim that the goblins were anti semitic caricatures.

Aubrey Gordon 33:27

[Aubrey groans] Boy oh boy. Okay.

Marcelle Kosman 34:07

Goldstein is in the books.

Hannah McGregor 34:08

Yeah, people were like the goblins are not the Jews of the wizarding world because there's one Jew. We found him. His name is Anthony Goldstein.

Marcelle Kosman 34:17

You know he's Jewish because his last name is Goldstein. *[Marcelle laughs]*

Hannah McGregor 34:20

But people were really really upset with our like, basic claim that the emphasis on the fatness of the Dursleys might be just a use of the sort of harmful shorthand where in fatness is meant to stand in for all kinds of moral failings. Because people really wanted to be like, Well, no, but they're starving Harry. And like they're eating, like Dudley's eating all the food. And Harry doesn't get any food. So it's like, they're, I mean, like, they were like, he's an abused child, which like, Yeah, true. Absolutely. Both of these things can be the case.

Like so many things in these books, it's a kind of quick and thoughtless shorthand that's meant to tell us everything we need to know about characters who we will not get any further sort of interiority from. We've got a lot of these kinds of shorthands. So it's like, well, how do we know that Dudley is a spoiled bully, and that his parents are bad parents who are negligent towards children? We make Dudley fat, and we make his mom be into him being fat, because can you imagine a more monstrous mother figure than that?

Marcelle Kosman 35:37

One of the things that I'm really interested in is the way that in Book Five, all of a sudden, the narrative around Dudley's fatness shifts, because we're told that there's been an intervention from the school. I was thinking about this when I was listening to your book, Aubrey, because of the chapter where you talk about how- chapters- but in particular, where you focus on schools intervening, and-

Hannah McGregor 36:06

And like kids being taken away from their families, like the-

Aubrey Gordon 36:09

BMI report cards, the whole shebang.

Marcelle Kosman 36:11

Exactly, yeah. And so up to Book Five, we just get the sense that like, Okay, well, there's a sort of objective omniscient narrator that's calling Dudley fat. But then once we get to Book Five, all of a sudden, it's like, oh, well, no now and Petunia can't ignore it anymore. And so these other objective third parties have intervened and so something must be done and-

Hannah McGregor 36:37

Is it that late? Is it Book Five? I thought he was on a diet earlier than that.

Aubrey Gordon 36:40

He's on a diet in book four.

Marcelle Kosman 36:41

Because then in Book Five, he's boxing, right?

Aubrey Gordon 36:45

Yeah. Correct.

Marcelle Kosman 36:46

Yeah. Okay. Okay. Okay.

Aubrey Gordon 36:47

Book Four is when he gets put on his grapefruit and cottage cheese diet. And the whole family has to do it.

Marcelle Kosman 36:53

That's right. And Harry is literally starving. Yes. But Dudley, also literally starving.

Aubrey Gordon 37:01

And it's seen as a stand-in for his bad behavior once again, because he gets so upset that he throws his Playstation out the window is part of the diet story. I will say that one, returning to that one. Who, as a kid who was put on a lot of diets, is extremely wild the way that that is played as a caricature and also seems to be played for laughs. Like everybody laugh at the bully right now. Oh, he can't even skip a meal. Look at that.

Right? But it is seen as part of his comeuppance. He has to get thin and he can't even do that. At one point, we talked about this a little bit ahead of the record, but like, Oh, my God, man, the first time you meet his group of friends, they are described as all being big and stupid. And Dudley is the leader because he's the biggest and stupidest

of them all, right? When he gets pranked at one point by, I think, it's the Weasleys, they give him a pig tail?

Hannah McGregor 38:03

That is something that Hagrid does to him when Dudley started eating Harry's birthday cake that Hagrid brought because he obviously can't help but just like, immediately begin to compulsively eat any cake put near him, and Hagrid tries to turn him into a pig and fails to do so and just gives him a pigtail which has to be surgically removed, I believe.

And that is absolutely played as a laugh and is one of many ways in which fat people are ritualistically punished in the series, primarily through- I was thinking about this. And we've got Dudley being turned into a pig, we've got aunt Marge being blown up into a giant balloon, and then we've got the scene where Slughorn disguises himself as a huge overstuffed armchair.

Aubrey Gordon 39:00

[Aubrey gasps] I had completely forgotten about one. Yep.

Hannah McGregor 39:05

I was like, this is really interesting. This recurring trope of taking fat bodies and literally transforming them into non-human objects or sort of more literal monstrosities as a way of just being like, look how gross these people are, like it's in keeping with the tradition of magical punishment as it operates in the series. And clearly, fatness is punishable according to the logic of the series.

Aubrey Gordon 39:37

And I would say, Listen, this is not a trope that JK Rowling invented by any stretch of the imagination, right? I think to your point earlier, Hannah, it feels really like it's sort of this thoughtless picking up of tropes. That's just like, Oh, if there's a bully it's a fat kid. Yeah, like if there's that parenting happening, like what's the, you know, apex of bad parenting? Letting your kid get fat. Not that kid's life falling apart or being a bad person to be around, or any of that sort of stuff. It has to be, it has to have this sort of layer of icing on the cake that is like, and it has to be a fat person.

It's a tough one. Dudley is a tough one, because you are meant to hate him in the book, and there's no question that his conduct is terrible. And I think there is a way of reading this character, as a kid who is pushing back against forced changes to his body, which no matter what you sort of think about him and his actions, that is a wild position to be put in as a child, to have to defend the way that you look, to have to defend your size.

And when I have gone back to that as an adult and read it, I feel small and powerless in the way that I felt as a kid being put on diets small and powerless, right? Because this is, again, not Rowling's own invention, but an encapsulation about how most of us had been taught to think about fat kids, right? And it just feels really restrictive and kind of awful. But there aren't a lot of like fat people who are good people with their own stories and their own complexities happening in this book.

Marcelle Kosman 41:20

Now that I'm thinking about that kind of pushback that we got in talking about the way that Harry represents the Dursleys, and his anti fat language and stuff, like, I'm wondering if part of the problem that people were having is that that kind of critique meant that Harry was himself hateful in this like, hateful dynamic. So the Dursleys treat him badly, so he should be allowed to hate them. But then to be told that like, well, the way that he's hating them is actually really oppressive and hurtful to readers. I think that made a lot of folks uncomfortable.

Aubrey Gordon 41:57

Yeah, I will say it feels reminiscent, as you're sort of describing that dynamic. I'm like, oh, that's familiar. That is very reminiscent of fat folks' critiques not of Donald Trump, but of the discourse around Donald Trump, which made fun as much or more of him for being a fat person than for being a racist, and like a serial sexual abuser, and assaulter. And like having terrible policies and stoking white nationalism, and all of these things that he did. Instead of focusing on those points, we ended up focusing on things like Mara-lard-ass or whatever, right? And that whole, like the picture of his butt looking big and things like that, right?

Hannah McGregor 42:42

I still remember, a tweet from the time or somebody was like, this is going to have zero impact on him. But it is going to make the lives of fat people who are not rich and powerful worse.

Marcelle Kosman 42:53

Totally.

Aubrey Gordon 42:54

Right. He's not going to see your tweet. But every fat person who follows you is and is going to learn that you're not actually a safe person to be around and talk to about this stuff. And that it is more important to you to dunk on somebody for being fat than it is to sort of fix the political problem that we're in. I think, listen, Dudley Dursley is fictional and a child and not Trump. **[Hannah laughs]** We'll start there.

Hannah McGregor 43:20

Three undeniable facts.

Marcelle Kosman 42:23

So true.

Aubrey Gordon 43:24

I'm here to deliver on facts! That is a child and not a president! I know the difference.

[Marcelle and Hannah] But I think similarly like, listen, part of what anti-fatness does is distract us from the actual actions and character of fat people, including bad fat people, right? That it becomes the main target instead of talking about like, Dudley is straightforwardly a bully. And wouldn't it be interesting if this book spent some time on how he got to be that way?

What would accountability for his bullying look like? Rather than accountability, quote, unquote, for his fatness? Right, like I think there's a pretty rich conversation that gets missed when we just sort of revert to talking about folks bodies and I will also say for Dudley and Vernon both, like every description of them is like their fat chins obscured their non-existent necks on top of their round torsos before they heaved themselves out of their chairs and waddled fattily down the hall, right? Where you're just like, Jesus, god!

Hannah McGregor 44:30

Trully! Like, He used his fat fingers to touch the phone fatly. Like, why?

Aubrey Gordon 44:38

Sarah Hollowell, who was a fantastic young adult writer herself and a fat person wrote a tweet at one point that was like, I need thin writers to understand that the way that they write fat people is very reminiscent of the way that like, cis men write about women, which is just like her breasts were heaving when she woke up. **[Marcelle laughs]** Like, Okay, you're focusing on the weirdest things. You're focusing on the weirdest things.

Hannah McGregor 45:05

All right, okay, we've talked about Dudley and the stereotype of the fat bully. And we've talked a little bit about the stereotype of the bad parents having a fat child. Let's talk a little bit more about some of our other fat adults. Because we've got Hagrid. We've got Molly Weasley, and we've got Horace Slughorn, who are sort of the big three, the big three other fat characters in this book.

And upon reading a little bit more about how Hagrid is described in the series, I was really struck by him at one point being described as “simply too big to be allowed”, which is an incredible thing to say, and my new tattoo, but he is this other fat stereotype, right? Like he's cheerful. He's bumbling. He's stupid. He bumps into things all the time. He doesn't know his own strength. He's kind of like the big fat clown.

Aubrey Gordon 46:12

Yeah, and I think he also, there's quite a bit of Santa DNA in the Hagrid character construction, just sort of the jolliness and friendliness and providing for folks and all of that is in there. And I think the other thing that really has stood out to me on this most recent reread is how many characteristics Hagrid shares with the fat best friends in rom coms. Right? That like he is there to sort of help along the plot lines of and assist the more real and more sort of valorous thin characters, right? That they are the center of the action, he has considerably fewer plot lines of his own, right? And like listen, every story has a main character. But this particular trope of a fat person who only exists in service to thin people, is like an extremely pervasive one.

And one that I would say just anecdotally greatly influences the expectations from thin people sort of aimed at fat people, right? There is this expectation that we will be present to be sort of emotional midwives to whatever comes next in a thin person's life, that we will absent our own needs and do whatever they need first, right? And I think that there will not be a point at which we need their assistance. But there will be a point at which sort of eternally we are available to them to assist them in whatever ways that they need and see fit.

That feels like it has really sort of shone through with Hagrid's character and again, there are many dynamics going on. There he is on staff at a school, they are kids, right, like, there are formal sort of care responsibilities at play here. But I think there's a way of doing that in a way that gives Hagrid more of a plotline, more of a personality and less of that kind of clownish characterization that you were talking about. What do you all think about Hagrid as a fat character? Clown, for sure. Check.

Hannah McGregor 48:23

Clown for sure. Desexualized, or his potential sexuality is rendered exclusively something that can be played for comedy, which is a really common way that fat people and fat people's sexuality is played in popular culture for sure, right? Like he is allowed to date somebody but it's got to be like, kind of funny and gross.

Aubrey Gordon 48:44

I mean, listen, this is fat Monica on friends, right? She is allowed to date exactly one person and it's the other fat dude who can't stop eating and can't stop talking about Star Wars. Right? And that is seen as her sort of like, quote unquote, punishment for being a fat person is you don't get to get someone who other people might consider attractive or worthy. This is a character that's coded in such a way as to be considered undesirable.

Marcelle Kosman 49:09

It's worth remembering too that even when he does have a romantic interest, not only is that sort of played for the embarrassment of our main three, but also it doesn't get to work out and like I know I've written some fanfiction in my head about how like it's really special and beautiful that they get to be friends and support each other. But like it is also just reiterating that Hagrid is not allowed to be a romantic character or a sexual character that he and Madame Maxine become colleagues in the war on Voldemort and not, like we never hear about the like dating or kissing or anything that like-

Hannah McGregor 49:51

[In a Bro voice] There's not even a single scene where they bone! Gosh!

Marcelle Kosman 49:52

God, not even a single widdle kiss!

Hannah McGregor 49:55

I do love Madame Maxime as an iconic giant woman, but she does not have the same kind of comfort with her giant-ness as Hagrid does, like literally right? That he tells everybody that he's half giant. And he's like, You must also be half giant and she's like, How dare you?

Marcelle Kosman 50:17

Nuh-uh. *[In a French accent]* How dare you! *[Aubrey and Hannah laugh]* How dare you, Hagrid!

Aubrey Gordon 50:24

This one feels like it's about the limits of the author's imagination insofar as those are the limits of our cultural imagination around fatness and fat people, which is sort of like, if you try to imagine a happy fat person in a good functional relationship, I think many people's brains just go like footage not found. Roseanne? Question mark? Do you know what I mean? There are just so few examples of that, that like, you know, overwhelmingly any sort of fat romantic plotlines end with some level of self sabotage from a fat person, or from the natural conclusion that that fat person can't be desired or loved, or whatever, because it feels like we can't actually let our brains get to the point

of fat people being loved and experiencing pleasure and all of these sorts of things. Right?

Hannah McGregor 51:18

I also find the gender dynamic really interesting, because for all that we have discussed how Hagrid does not perform traditional masculinity in many ways and our sibling podcast, The Gayly Prophet reads Hagrid very strictly as a beautiful trans woman. And also, I think that kind of model of fatness, which is a kind of expansive and jovial fatness that includes taking up a lot of space, does tend to be a fat stereotype that is more acceptable for men. Because it does have this like, yeah, sure, like he's taking up a lot of space, but like, he's taking it up usefully. Like he does strong guy things. He's strong fat.

Aubrey Gordon 52:00

Again, like available for service.

Hannah McGregor 52:02

Available for service. Yeah, yeah. Hand in hand with that, I think, is the way that as our sort of big three protagonists get older, rather than seeing Hagrid as an increasingly complex figure with an increasingly rich inner life, they just become progressively more embarrassed of him and spend less and less time with him. Everytime I think about it, it makes me so sad. The book where Hagrid is like, you guys never come see me anymore. I'm like, ahh no!

Aubrey Gordon 52:39

I mean, listen, Hagrid and Molly Weasley both, I think are like two of the most absolutely lovable, fat characters in this whole shebang. I have deep fondness for both of them. And I feel like my critiques of both of those characters are just that they aren't allowed to like, be set free, fly free, go have a plotline, go have some adventures. Right? But that we sort of get these like, very limited glimpses into their lives. And those limited glimpses are, you know, territory that is pretty well trod in depictions of fat characters.

Hannah McGregor 53:18

Yeah. On the topic of Molly Weasley, as I was thinking about her, I found myself returning to what was for me a very formative, early text of fat cultural criticism, which is Stacey Bias's, Good Fatties Archetypes.

Aubrey Gordon 53:35

Which one do you think Molly Weasley is?

Hannah McGregor 53:39

I think she's the Maternal Hen Archetype.

Aubrey Gordon 53:41

Correct! *[Aubrey laughs]* I agree.

Hannah McGregor 53:42

Yeah. Yeah. So it's a set of archetypes of the way that fat people are both represented in culture, but also often are sort of framed in interpersonal relationships or even understand ourselves, which includes, it's the good fatty archetype. So it's like how you can be fat and sort of perceived as a good person at the same time. And they usually have to do with sort of providing some kind of service of some variety, or like, proving that you're allowed to be fat. Like one of them is the fat unicorn, who's like, Yeah, I'm fat, but everything about my health is good. I'm completely healthy. I'm perfectly healthy. And then there's the fat athlete. There's the dead fattie, is one of them. And the last one, which is the one that the first time I was ever reading it, I was like, oh, burn, Stacy. Because the last one is like the radical fatty who's like, fuck you. I'm eating a doughnut. And I was like, goddamnit. *[Marcelle laughs]*

Aubrey Gordon 54:48

That was 100% me at the time that I read that as well. Was I considering a “live fat, die young” tattoo at that point? I certainly was. Yeah.

Marcelle Kosman 54:59

So Molly Weasley then embodies the maternal hen archetype because she takes the role of feeding all the children very seriously Right? Like, she makes like, I think like six bacon sandwiches per child. And this, I think, was the same. I think this is book four. I think this is in contrast to Dudley's cottage cheese and quarter of a grapefruit diet. And so it was just like, oh, so some kinds of moms are allowed to give their children lots of food, like half a dozen bacon sandwiches per child, whereas other moms are not.

Aubrey Gordon 55:41

It's wild because six bacon sandwiches is absolutely the anti-fat imagination of what fat people are eating constantly, just like an endless pile of bacon and bread, I guess. Do you eat a whole cake?

Hannah McGregor 55:56

I mean, listen, it's what I had for breakfast. So I get it. I think it's really interesting. I'm sure this is a point I've made before but, who knows, that Molly feeds her children as enthusiastically as Petunia does. And Molly is a good parent because her children remain thin. Despite the fact that the amount of food that Dudley has access to is

framed as part of his being missparented. It makes it clear when you contrast the Dursley household with the Weasleys, it makes it clear that the issue is not the food itself, which does reinforce this idea that if you're a good person, then you can eat as much as you want and remain thin. If you become fat, by virtue of eating, it's probably because of your bad fat attitude.

Aubrey Gordon 56:57

There is something there about like you're only allowed to eat if people think you don't. Right? Or if you have earned-

Hannah McGregor 57:06

You're only allowed to have food if you don't enjoy it.

Aubrey Gordon 57:08

Yeah! Absolutely. Or if you have like, quote unquote earned it through being thin enough, like that is an absolutely bananas approach to food to look at someone and be like, have your little Robocop dossier of like, brrrr, you can eat, brrrr, no you can't. Right like it is, it's really wild. And I think that's an outstanding insight into this book. I think that's exactly right. Petunia is terrible. And Molly is great. And that is a result not of their own bodies but of the bodies of their children. Yeah.

Hannah McGregor 57:43

Which is also misogynist, which is fun.

Marcelle Kosman 57:47

Yeah. I know, shocker. *[Hannah laughs]* Can we talk a little bit about a threshold character who is personally one of my favorites, but I think not an objectively maternal hen type, like Molly and Hagrid, but maybe more complex, and it's Slughorn. I want to talk about Slughorn.

Aubrey Gordon 58:09

Yeah. Where do you want to start with Slughorn?

Marcelle Kosman 58:11

I want to start with the dinners. I want to start with the fact that he invites students to private dinners with him.

Hannah McGregor 58:19

I'm with you, Marcelle. He is my favorite vision of fatness in the books because I too would like to dress in velvet and preside over a luxurious meal. And also he's like, easily bribed and manipulated by his students by virtue of being given candy.

Marcelle Kosman 58:36

Candies pineapple, specifically.

Hannah McGregor 58:37

Candied pineapple, which you know what, it does slap, so, I get it. But also, right, he's like a collector, he hoards things. He's selfish, like he's got this kind of version of gluttony that is not always only food, but it's like a whole lifestyle.

Marcelle Kosman 58:57

Even when he's on the run from the Death Eaters. There's something about the fact that he makes his home in Muggle houses. So like the Muggles aren't there and he just sort of, he just sort of goes in and uses their stuff. *[Marcelle laughs]*

Aubrey Gordon 59:13

Yeah, Yeah. Squatters rights for Slughorn.

Marcelle Kosman 59:14

Squatters rights. *[Marcelle laughs]*

Aubrey Gordon 59:17

Yeah, there is this sort of trope at play with Slughorn and with Dudley, both, which is the ceiling for what fat people can achieve is how much we're willing to not eat. Right? That's like being bribed by candied pineapple, first of all, please everyone bribe me with candied pineapple. Sounds great. That sounds great. But like there's this idea that fat people can be outwitted at any turn if you just have a tasty little morsel to offer them, right? It's like distracting a dog with a raw steak like that kind of old, cartoony thing, right?

Hannah McGregor 59:54

It's literally how Tom Riddle gets him to explain how Horcruxes work.

Marcelle Kosman 1:00:01

Pineapple. He gives him a treat.

Aubrey Gordon 1:00:02

Like a dog. Boy boy. Yeah, I mean, like, there are a lot of ways in which this series feels like anti-fat tropes greatest hits. Like, now that's what I call anti-fatness, we've got the fat friend, we've got the mom, we've got that mean fat bully, right? Like, and this is another one, which is like, the guy who will do anything for a good meal. Including, like, you know, give an absolute villain the keys to the kingdom sort of moves, right? Like, it's a real situation.

Hannah McGregor 1:00:36

Okay, I've got I've got one last question for us. Here's my kind of galaxy brain meta question, which is, what can we say about cultural circulations of fat phobia like this beyond that they suck? **[Aubrey laughs]** And like, they are bad and perpetuate stereotypes? Because my sense that like, you know, oh, we're making some progress, people are paying a little bit more attention. Really got sort of wind knocked out of it when *The Whale* won an Oscar in 2023, for putting Brendan Fraser in a fucking fat suit. I was like, you know, what's the function of this kind of critique? When we point it out does it do anything?

Aubrey Gordon 1:01:27

I mean, listen, this is the thesis statement of my career. **[Marcelle laughs]** We'll find out TBD. I mean, I think my hope is, if we're thinking about how social, cultural, and political change happens, there's this model in organizing called the crest of the wave. And the idea is that a policy change, like a public policy change, is the very last thing that happens in sort of change work, right? That the first things that happen are social and cultural, and those build the momentum to allow us to crest into some kind of policy change. And I think of this work as being part of that momentum building, so that like, listen, as we have mentioned, there is this sort of idea that body size is a hierarchy and a meritocracy. Right? And my hope, certainly and again, question mark on effectiveness, is that folks will use this as like a little bit of a media literacy guide, right, and we'll start to see anti-fatness, more like fat folks see it, more readily when it pops up.

That folks will start to have a little bit of, you know, like, no need to leave your favorite properties, no need to stop watching your favorite movies or reading your favorite books. But clocking how those things treat their fat characters feels like a really important part of building folks' lenses. So that when we get to the point of advocating for more concrete social change, folks have more of a sense of just how pervasive this stuff is, just how insidious it is, right? All of that kind of stuff, and how it is not necessarily again, the work of like ill intent all the time.

In some cases, as with my own reading of Harry Potter, it is just sort of like, these are the tropes that we deal with in young adult literature. These are the kinds of characters we're used to seeing. So we reproduce them. It's kind of boilerplate in some ways, right? That there would be like a jolly fat guy. You know, like a mom who's got all the food and like a mean bully, right? That, like all of that stuff, once you see it here My hope is that folks will then go back to whatever else you like to watch and are sort of taking note of how those things treat fat folks. What do you think the end game is?

Hannah McGregor 1:04:08

Oh no, that was perfect. **[Aubrey laughs]** It's gonna end right there. Absolutely perfect summary of like, the ideal of what we hope critical reading might accomplish.

Aubrey Gordon 1:04:18

I love it!

Marcelle Kosman 1:04:19

Crushed it!

(Witch, Please Theme Music plays)

Hannah McGregor 1:04:32

Thank you, witches, for joining us for another episode of *Witch, Please*. If you have questions, comments, concerns, or praise – especially praise – come hang out with us at @ohwitchplease on Instagram or Twitter. We're also on Patreon at patreon.com/ohwitchplease, where you can get all kinds of exclusive perks including a sneak peek, *already available, right now*, of our new podcast. Been feeling anxious about what's going to happen when we're done with Harry Potter? Be anxious no more! Patreon has your answers! How was that?

Aubrey Gordon 1:05:13

As a listener, I'm excited. I don't feel like I'm a listener surrogate now and I'm like, okay, I'll go to Patreon. That sounds great.

Hannah McGregor 1:05:20

Good! Aubrey, if people want more of your work, where can they find it?

Aubrey Gordon 1:05:25

You can listen to Maintenance Phase where we sort of debunk and decode a bunch of weight loss and wellness trends wherever you listen to podcasts and you can get both of my books wherever you buy books, wherever you listen to audiobooks, wherever you find ebooks, all of those things and I'm @YrFatfriend sort of across platforms so.

Marcelle Kosman 1:05:48

Witch, Please is, shockingly, a *Witch, Please* Production, and is distributed by Acast. You can find the rest of our episodes—and soon, the rest of our *podcasts*—plural- on Acast or at ohwitchplease.ca. Here are some other things you can do at ohwitchplease.ca: you can sign up for our amazing monthly newsletter, the Monthly Hoot. You can access our transcripts. You can give us your money. I mean buy merch, you can buy our merch, you can find reading lists for our episodes. There's just so much.

Hannah McGregor 1:06:26

Yeah, yeah, it's hot. Special thanks to everyone on the witch please team including our digital projects coordinator, Gaby Iori [**Soundbite of a fake "BOING"**], our social media manager and marketing designer Zoe Mix [**Soundbite of a record rewinding**]. Our sound engineer Eric Magnus [**Soundbite of chimes**]. And last but not the opposite of least, the most, our executive producer Hannah Rehak, aka Coach! [**Soundbite of a sports whistle**]

Marcelle Kosman 1:06:53

At the end of every episode we shout-out everyone who left us a 5-star review on Apple Podcasts, so you've gotta review us if you want to hear me *hop off the plane at LAX with a dream and my cardigan*.

Thanks this week to: Hsgirlie, SamEM53, Amelia the mountain goat, ElsavdW, Sada 7686, Conradad, Valeriusjka, cakeontheroof, Postmodernpeach, KatieA2k14, and david'sbowie.

Hannah McGregor 1:07:39

We'll be back next episode to append another appendix. But until then...

Aubrey Gordon 1:07:45

Later, witches!

(*Witch, Please* Theme Music plays)