

## Pretty Curious with Jonathan Van Ness & Elizabeth Block

JVN: Hey, curious people. Welcome back to Pretty Curious, our podcast on all things beauty. I'm Jonathan Van Ness. On this special episode of Pretty Curious, we're giving you a little Getting Curious meets Pretty Curious hybrid. You know, I love a good hybrid. In this episode, we're talking with Elizabeth Block from the Met Museum. Elizabeth has a new book out called *Beyond Vanity: The History and Power of Hairdressing*. It's all about the history of hair during the gilded age. So I have to learn about how hair was done in the gilded age. So that's what we're doing today. It's such a good episode. Um but before our conversation with Elizabeth, it's time to get ready with me. I don't know if you saw me breaking the internet on the Creative Arts Emmys, but my extensions were I just think gorgeous. My friend Alexis did it and she did my hair and my makeup and I just felt so gorgeous as always Ali B did my styling and we did this like Rick Owens dress with a shoe that is like a sustainable upcycled shoe. I've had it for 10,000 years and I love it. It's um it was the shoe that I wore during the VMA's to present in 2019. And it's got these red lightning bolts on it and I just felt so gorgeous and I loved my look and we were doing clip-ins. They were really easy to put in and out. I love a clip-in hair extension. I think it's a really good, it's kind of giving me like gateway to extensions. It's kind of nice to try. It's, it's, you know, lower commitment and lower maintenance than like um you know, more permanent extensions. So I loved it. I, what I like to do is I like to back comb little that I like to back comb the area of hair and then apply like hairspray and then clip the clip into that little like pillow to secure it. Um, and you want to make sure that you're placing the extensions low enough or have enough volume to hide the clips. So that's like a little pro tip and not to get political before we go into our gorgeous um our gorgeous interview. But can I just say, um re the debates because I haven't talked about it with you guys yet? What was happening with that like bronzer lip cheese, the, the way that the spit and the bronzer foundation mixed together on our former president's uh lip was truly outside of the outlandish policy and his draconian views on, you know, being so divisive in America, um that lip cheese I feel like was disqualifying from the race. You wanna have the nuclear codes and you have bronzer mixed with spit like that. Um so that's that, uh let's get into a listener question really quick and then we're going to get into the interview.

Uh this listener asks, I just got my hair colored and I absolutely hate it. It's nothing like I asked for and I was too afraid to say anything in the chair. How long do I really have to wait to get it re-colored? I'm a natural brunette and I went platinum and want to go back. Um, so what you would do is I think if it's within a short enough time, I, I, if you really have a problem with your color, you need to go in, I would say in the first, like 1 to 5 business days afterwards, if it gets to be maybe two, maybe within two weeks, I, I don't want to be too harsh, but once you've been out of the salon for too long, once you've like washed your hair a lot or put your hair through a lot of stuff, it's like, it's kind of not necessarily the hairdresser's fault if you know, because color things can happen. Like, so I would say the sooner, the better that you can tell the person who did it, that you're not happy with it and it's, if it is close to what you guys talked about previously, then maybe you could talk to her about just being like, look, it's really, I'm just so not happy with it. I, it's, I know that it's close to what we talked about, but I just don't like it on me. Um, that's one thing. Uh, it's nothing like I asked. Well, if it's nothing like what you asked for though and you're too afraid to say anything in the chair, I think just as soon as possible, I go back and say, you know, I'm just really not happy. I know you did your best, but if we could just, you know, go darker or just try

to kind of restore me closer to what we had before, um that would be the best thing to do. But I def but colorists wanna know when you're unhappy with something, colorists wanna make their clients happy. So I think just voicing your concern and saying that it's not what your ear is not happy with it. Doing that as soon as possible would be really helpful. Um OK, so thank you so much for your question. We love Pretty Curious. We don't love Monday sometimes, but I do hope that this makes your Monday a little bit better. So we'll go back in time. We're going on a journey to the past, into the gilded age and it's time for us to get to our conversation with Elizabeth Block.

Elizabeth Block is an art historian and a senior editor in the publications and editorial department at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York *\*dog barks in background\** Elton. You naughty boy. Come here. You bad boy. That was so ornery. Wow. I was doing such my good reporter voice. She holds a phd in art history from the graduate center at the City University of New York and a master's in American Studies from Columbia University. She is the author of *Dressing Up the women who influenced French fashion* and her new book *Beyond Vanity, The History and Power of Hairdressing* is out now. Welcome to Pretty Curious, how are you?!

ELIZABETH BLOCK: I'm so great. It's like a moment here.

JVN: And where are you coming to us from?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: I'm in New York City on the Upper East Side. Walking distance to all the action.

JVN: Oh my God, because that makes sense because you literally are like you because don't you work at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, or the MET?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: I do work at the MET right here on Fifth Avenue and I'm a senior book editor there. So I edit uh exhibition catalogs and also our academic journal.

JVN: OK, so OK, take us back first of all, gilded age. When, when are we talking about when we talk about the gilded age?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Gilded age, we're talking about the late 19th century. So about 1870 to 1900.

JVN: What was the salon culture like? Was there a salon culture? Did people go to salons? Was it barber and salon? Was it Sweeney Todd. Like, what did a salon look like back then?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Exactly. So you had barbershops and there's a very rich history of barbershop. So for my work right now and for my book *Beyond Vanity*, I focus on women's hair and women's salons and Hair spaces. And so at the time, there were these kind of proto salons. So they might have been called saloons or hair rooms where women would provide hair services. They would rent out a room or two in like a walk up building site in downtown Manhattan. But we can call them salons for all intents and purposes. And they were social spaces. They were places of self care before we called it self care. And um the interiors were just extraordinary. There's some very rare images of the interiors of salons and they are very familiar to us of how we think of salons today.

JVN: So were they segregated by gender like and race?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: The truth is that we may have thought that these spaces were more segregated by gender than originally thought. And that's one of the like aha moments of my research for this book is that I found that hair spaces were not as gendered as we previously thought. So you do have barbershops which were mostly male run and for men. However, I have evidence that women would sometimes go to male run barbershops to get their hair trimmed or cut. So like say those split ends came in, they could go and get them cut from a male barber. And there was no stigma attached to that. I also found evidence that there were some women barbers who were serving men, cutting men's hair. So it is like not nearly as binary or drawn down the middle as we may once have thought.

JVN: So was the reason for this kind of salon boom from the 18, like from 1870 to 1900 was that really because of this like increased wealth because of like the railroads and papers and like that was like the internet of the 1870's basically like railroads and newspapers. Was there any? Oh and like was there anything? Oh, like phones?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Yeah, so you have all of that technology happening. So industrialization just booms after the civil war, civil war ends in 1865. And then you get this um explosion of manufacturing, real estate, building real estate deals happening, steel production, um mining, silver, mining in the west. So all of this is feeding into an increased wealth in um you know, this is going to be the top less than 1% of the country that is benefiting from this. But these are the women that we have a lot of documentation for and a lot of imagery for. So we can see how they were using this um wealth that their families earned and putting it back into the economy.

JVN: Was there like a um like an indication in like magazines on like, was it like the younger girls were supposed to wear their hair down and like older women should wear it up, like, and what was the age around that? Like, what were the rules around? How like women were supposed to wear their hair?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: If you picture Gladys, the young girl in the *Gilded Age*, the daughter where she has her hair down. Ok. So, um, also it drives me nuts. Her hair is so dry in the show. It's like just like a little product. Um but girls would wear their hair down. Yes, until they were out in society. So they would have a coming out party around the age of like 16, 17, 18 where they were on the marriage market. Basically, you could wear your hair down until about that age once you hit your late teens and you were in the marriage market. And certainly when you got married, your hair was expected to be tied up. So it would be um fastened up into a hairdo in more of a contained style than the loose waves that a young girl could wear. You'll see images, especially in children's books of um young girls with their hair like kind of like down and loose and wild or you know, up in a demure ribbon. There were so many ribbons that are really sweet of that time and um certainly like long braids or two double braids.

JVN: What happened before salons or was there always a salon?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: So in the middle of the century, so mid century, like before, let's say before 1860 you – women were mostly doing their hair at home. So you were either styling your hair on your own, which is difficult. Most likely you would have help from a sister or a friend or your mother. If you could afford it, you would have your hair styled at home by your ladies maid. And that was sort of like really nice because you, you know, these washings would take forever. You have this really long hair to have someone help you with. The

shampoo was really, really nice because you were shampooing your hair maybe once every two weeks, maybe once every three weeks, depending. And so wash day was a big deal and to have a helper was really, was really nice. In fact, I found evidence that some women in this moment had shampoo parties where they would um get together and shampoo their hair outdoors and like help each other and, and sundry outside. Like how fun is that?

JVN: What was like the, do you, did you learn about like what the formulas of shampoos and conditioners were like back then? Like were people washing their hair with lye or something or was like it? OK? Like was it similar or super?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: There are a lot of sketchy ingredients that are going into the shampoos there, especially the packaged ones. So the bottle shampoos have a really high percentage of alcohol in them. And then I, like, love reading labels for these old shampoo bottles and these tonics and these renews and these restorers. And so a lot of alcohol, um, a lot of like tinctures, but I'm not totally clear on what they were, but one was a ground up, um, like beetle, beetle bodies. I'm not sure what that one was doing, but I think it might have been toxic. And then there were a couple that had kerosene in them so not entirely safe. Um but the ones that I think like the women who were doing the shampoo parties, they were mixing those in their own kitchens and the type of shampoo that was really popular was egg yolk shampoo. So we're talking like three egg yolks, um a tablespoon of castor oil or olive oil and then water mixing that up, putting that in your hair, leaving it in and then washing it out with water. And that the egg yolks were thought to bring in like a real gloss and shine and to keep the scalp moist.

JVN: But then they didn't like was shit with soap after that. They just like put it in and then rinsed it out?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Mmmhmm.

JVN: Damn.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: They were, they were rinsing that out and then there wasn't really conditioner. I think what they were probably doing was putting what these bottled restorers were promising to do and they put like this restorer on top, which was a high percentage of alcohol.

JVN: When was the first like shampoo like sudsing shampoo.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: So I think shampoo comes, I mean though, as we think of it is gonna come toward the turn of the century, turn of the night turn of 1900 like so after 1900 but like the word shampoo is coming from over from India from early in the 19th century. But like the package like lathering at there was not a lot of lathering happening in this period.

JVN: I, and, but then like in *Downton Abbey*, like, um, Mary gets her little Bob in the twenties and like those Bobs do become like that, like, don't Bobs become a thing in the twenties and that was before Sassoon.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Yeah. So bobs become a thing in the twenties with the flapper look and it was really scandalous because it was thought to be too Manish, so, too much like of a boyish or Manish look on a woman was thought to be, um, was thought to be, um, first of all, non respectable, but also to be a threat to, um, manlihood for the men –

JVN: And for like male superiority –

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Thank you.

JVN: Because they've been so busy shoving eugenics down everybody's throat for, you know, since Galton that they were probably just like, no, you're not us, we're very different. Like you're supposed to stay at home and bear children.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Exactly. But think about how wonderful it must have been to cut your hair short after like having these long locks of –

JVN: Oh I bet! The freedom.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: The freedom of that.

JVN: So how does hairdressing start to evolve in the 19th century? So like what's happening in like the US and Europe? Like as we come into like the turn of the century?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: so turn of the century. So 1900 is when we're gonna get – start to get into those shorter styles because women are working, they're working in department stores, they're doing philanthropic work. They're exercising, they are riding bicycles, they're playing um, badminton, you name it, I mean, they're working out in gyms. You see these incredible photographs and so the hair gets more practical and it gets shorter and that's where more cutting comes in. And then you start to see more advertisements for women's hair cutting rather than just women's hairstyling.

JVN: What were like the tools and apparatuses that you would see in salons then? Like, did they have curling irons, blow dryers? Like when did the hood dryer come about?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Yes, there's so many curling tongs. So like heated tongs for curling hair. I mean, there are a million and one patents for hot tongs to curl and wave the hair. Um so yeah, curling irons, curling tongs, heated tongs. Um and then you have like all kinds of combs that are on the market, all kinds of brushes with, made out of all different materials with different bristle types for different textures of hair. And you have, you have, ok, so you asked about hair, hair dryers the first –

JVN: Yeah.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Hair dryer comes around 1890 it's this massive piece of equipment. But I love it so much because there's a couple of um, there, well, there's a French salon by Len Terry that has one of the earliest, um, earliest hair dryers. And we have a really wonderful newspaper illustration of it. So it's this like huge metal like piece with a blower at the end and it was on wheels. So you would wheel this hair, massive hair dryer over to your client. And then you could do like workstation, Workstation, Workstation to dry your client's hair one by one. And it's, it's just like, you know, after imagine like taking, you know, sometimes my own hair doesn't dry after three hours. But you know, if you were like waiting for your hair to dry four or five hours, air dry in the sun outside, then up comes, comes along this hair dryer, like think of all the free time that you had after that, but it would have been pretty expensive. So only the elite salons would have had it in the early years.

JVN: What were old ladies supposed to do? Like, were they just supposed to keep it up or could you take it back down?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Ok. So older women, I love this. So women with white hair, they called it white, um white was des was very desirable or if you had gray hair, older women were

styling their hair up. So yes, it contained so close to the head. But also there wasn't a huge stigma with um aging hair, which I love. And I also think there's a lot more research to do there. But in the book, I saw this incredible um beautifully painted miniature um watercolor on, on porcelain. It was this miniature portrait. It's of an older woman who hasn't been identified and the light source is coming in, the painter had it come in from the upper right. And it's just um just vibrantly illuminating her beautiful white hair. It's so beautiful and you know, as much as these products would promise to get rid of gray for younger women, um older women, you know, power to them were wearing their, their white, their silver hair with pride. And when I was researching the raw hair market, I found that for hair pieces and for um for tie ins and everything for sew ins. That white hair was the most valuable because apparently it would hold the dye more easily if you needed to dye it brown or black. Does that sound right?

JVN: Yeah, yeah.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Ok. Ok. So it would, so white hair was the most expensive and then red hair of course.

JVN: Interest interest. Also, you could make an argument that it'd be more resistant to taking the color, but maybe it just, maybe the color that they had back then was just more staining. So it was like good for like that white ass hair.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: I think that must be what was happening because they were charging big time for the white hair.

JVN: Did you ever see that movie about madam CJ Walker?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Yes.

JVN: And then so that's true, right? Like her whole story is true?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Right, so that was um getting made, what was it called self made, self made? And it was um a docuseries, I think, or was it, it was like a movie or doc –

JVN: Oh yeah, yeah it was like a self made and it's, it's self made. I believe it was a movie and it had Octavia Spencer.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Yes. So Octavia Spencer plays madam CJ Walker and madam CJ Walker comes on the scene. She's a Black woman who puts out her own products and makes, she's known to have made, you know, the first million dollar, first millionaire um Black woman in the United States. And I think that that story as portrayed is really fairly accurate and it's based on a book that was written by a descendant of madam CJ Walker. But as they show in um *Beyond Vanity*, there were women who um were the antecedents to um madam CJ Walker. And one of them was Christiana Carto Banister, who's one of the heroes of this book. And um I can tell you a little bit about it about her.

JVN: I want to know all about her! Yes.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: OK! She's amazing. She's amazing. So Christiana Carte Banister was a hairdresser, hair entrepreneur starting in the 1860's. This is so early. She's in Boston and Providence Rhode Island. She is dressing hairstyling hair um making wigs. She is selling hair restorers out of her hair rooms that she rented and provided services out of in Boston and Providence Rhode Island. She's a woman of mixed descent. She's um she has Black

heritage and she has a African heritage and native heritage. She's married to Edward Mitchell Banister who was a Black man who um was a landscape artist who had a good amount of success. And so how do we learn about people like Christiana Carto Banister? While often times we're working backwards and how I found her was through uh my art history background. I was researching Edward Mitchell Banister because, you know, I liked his landscapes and I found out that before in his biography, before he became a landscape artist, what was he? He was a barber and how did, how was he able to leave barbering and go into his passion of painting landscapes? Because of his wife Christiana Carto who was making money in the hairdressing world who could fund his artistic ventures. So she is hustling. She's got her businesses in two different states. You can see these in the Liberator newspaper advertisements. Liberator was a newspaper um and big on um promoting emancipation at the time and rights for um Black and mixed race people. You see her advertising relentlessly in a good way. So she's telling her clients in Boston when she's gonna be in Boston and then she tells them when she's leaving to go to her salon in Providence and when she's going to be back in town and when she can take appointments again, it's incredible. Her products were all natural. She has a restorer that was made with um as she says, um tree bark and, and with um natural roots from the forest is how she advertises it. And so talk about like, you know what's old is new again? Like all of her products are natural. All of them said that they would –

JVN: We have a bark extract, we have a bark extract and our Blowout Milk!

ELIZABETH BLOCK: What?! In the Blowout Milk?

JVN: Yeah, because it, yeah, because it preserves the length of the blow. Try it like creates this kind of almost like flexible panty hose like over the hair if you could think about it like that. So it's like if you have really curly hair and you're setting it straight or if you have really straight hair and you're setting it like on a curling iron, it just doesn't like to hold shape. It'll help it like hold its shape without making it like crunchy or gel. Like it's like a soft hold heat activated um ingredient. It's really cool.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Incredible. Incredible. So she had this in her like hair restorer, her tonics –

JVN: It's black spruce bark extract.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Black spruce bark extract. Ok. So I think she might have had a little bit of that.

JVN: But whatever bark it was, that's so interesting. Isn't that fascinating?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Yeah. So she did really well with her products. She's selling them. She probably made tens of thousands of dollars over the course of her career, which would be the equivalent of hundreds of thousands today.

JVN: What did your research teach you about the intersection of um racism and hair culture in the gilded age?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: you know, as with all aspects of culture, American culture at the time, racism was rampant in the world of hair. You see it in, especially in the language that was used around Black women's hair and mixed race women's hair. So I tracked, you know, keywords um that were used and you, you know what we would call, I guess four C, you

know, it's called kinky hair. So kinky um you get unfortunate words that are um like wool or wooly hair is one of the most common. And what I'm tracking now though is how um Black and mixed race women um reclaimed those terms and were using the term wool or wooly for their own hair and kinky for their own hair with pride. And one of the products that I'm really interested –

JVN: Because I love all three of these textures. Like I love kind of like a puffy airy texture. I also love a kinky texture. Like I just never met a hair texture that I didn't like.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Exactly. I love it. I love it. Um so taking back those terms. Exactly and using them to make money, you know, why not? So there's one product called Kink Out which was probably supposed to like soften your curls –

JVN: When was that from?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: So Kink Out is going to come after the turn of the century. So that's going to be right after 1900 but that's one of my favorite names. Um you get a ton of hair straighteners that are on the market. Um, products that will promise to straighten Black women's hair or to um get rid of quote wooly texture.

JVN: Yeah, because even when we know now about like the Crown Act, like, I mean, the way that people talk about like locks or just wearing your textured hair, they, I mean, people will say that that can like, I feel like it's getting better but like the whole idea of like, you know, unkempt or like unruly or unprofessional or something like that. Did you see that sort of writing around it? That it was just, it wasn't like a desired result? So it was like change your natural hair. Is that what you found or was it like? Not so much that?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Yeah, so, I mean, the Crown Act power to it. Let's go. I think it's past 24 states so far –

JVN: Yes.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: But the fact that it even needs to be legislation is abominable. Um but you know that like, let's go with that, let's get this, you know, passed in every state.

JVN: Are you seeing any *Gilded Age* trends coming into like our current hairstyles? Are you seeing any hearkening to like old school hair anywhere in men's or women's or queer hairdressing, non binary or gender queer herder thing.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: So I just saw this article in a beauty magazine like yesterday talking about how the prof is coming back for women's hair. So kind of like the snooki bump it –

JVN: Yes!

ELIZABETH BLOCK: And um so of course, like when I look at images of like current hairstyles, I just X ray in on like what I see from the 19th century and I'm like that really has that pompadour poof in front and you know, I love that volume up there.

JVN: It's fun! It's just like, I, I like that too. Um OK. And then what would be a product that a gilded age hair stylist would always have in their bag?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Combs, combs, combs like multiple combs and then for a product probably an invigorated or a restorer. Um and there was an invigorated called Lucky Seven. So maybe a bottle of Lucky Seven.



JVN: Do they have mousse or hairspray back then?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: I don't see hairspray or mousse because they didn't have like the sprays that I think they would want it. But I really think that some of the alcohol in these products was supposed to hold the hair like a spray would.

JVN: Oh And then what about gel? Did they have like a gel

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Pomades.

JVN: Because then also because like for waves because like for like for finger waves and, but I guess that still was later like that was like that setting lotion which was like that runny. I mean, we even had that, which, I mean, I, you had to have that to make a finger or, but maybe their finger waves were heat, maybe they did like thermal finger waves, which is totally a thing.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: I think that's, I think they went thermal thermal waves and for products to hold that, I think they went with like a light slick of a pomade

JVN: Interest. Ok. Ok. Now this is going to be our, uh, this is going to be our This or That. This is our final bit. Um and then we are and then you're going to be, then you are good to go continue on your research. So this going to be This or That *Gilded age* versus *Downton Abbey*. Now, you are a fan of both, right?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Oooh, I am multiple watchings, yes.

JVN: Rapid fire this or that *Gilded age* versus *Downton Abbey*. Lady Mary Crawley or Marian Brook?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Lady Crawley.

JVN: Thomas Barrow or Larry Russell?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Oh, Barrow.

JVN: Morgan Specter or Robert Crowley?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Um, controversial choice. Um Crowley, my friends are gonna kill me, they love Morgan Spectra.

JVN: I'm totally going for Morgan Specter. He just, he is so hot and I love his like he is just so fucking hot. I cannot get over it. His shirtless scene takes my breath away and I would say I know this is this or that, but I am curious about like body types of the time because I feel like his body is actually like more muscly and perfect than what you saw then. Like, I feel like they had like a different body ideal and he really gives me like 2024 like perfect man body. But that's, you know, neither here nor there. I think he's a perfect Mr. Russell.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: He is a perfect Mr Russell and a lot of those wealthy guys were hanging out in their men's clubs eating like really heavy lunches. So I think you're right about that.

JVN: But he's just so fucking hot. I can't get over it. Ok? Agnes Van Ryan or the Dowager Countess? This one is hard.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Dowager Countess.

JVN: I'm there too with you. But I love Agnes Van Ryan. Edith Crowley or Ada Brook?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Ada. Ada all day long.

JVN: I have – that is probably our strongest disagreement just because we had Edith on the podcast and we, we had Laura on the podcast. I'm obsessed with her and I just felt like her character really got wronged. And I also feel like I want her to have her own Downton spin off where she's running the magazine in London in the twenties –

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Yes! We need it.

JVN: And I don't understand why they haven't done that yet because her running a magazine in fucking central London in 1920 is what is up like that is what is up and everyone knows it. Ok, Cora Crawley or Bertha Russell?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Bertha Russell.

JVN: Yeah, I'm there too. I mean, I loved Cora but like, although I do when, when, after Sybil died and she was so mad at Mr. Crawley. I did really like that. I thought she was really good at that acting.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: I liked that too.

JVN: I just that, yeah, that was really good. Um, Anna Smith or Peggy Scott?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Peggy Scott.

JVN: I got, and because you know what Anna got her Emmy and so she won an Emmy and I'm full Peggy Scott. I love Peggy. But I also, I love them both and also just have to make a disclaimer. We're obsessed with all 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 with all 14 people. Like we would walk over coal for these 14 people. So we're obsessed with all 14. We just need you to know. Um queen, Liz, if people are just obsessed with you in your work and they want to follow along, where are you most active? Where can people follow?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: You can follow and find me on Instagram, Elizabeth L Block and my website ElizabethLBlock.com. And I'm on book tour for *Beyond Vanity* and I would love to see you at events and those dates will be on my website. So please come see me.

JVN: Um, and when is *Beyond* is *Beyond Vanity* out now?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: I have an advance copy I wanted to show you. So this is me and *Vanity*, the history and power of hairdressing and it is out September 10th and please everyone grab your copy and tell me how you like it!

JVN: So is it out now?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: It's out now! And I have it in front of me. I wanted to show you this is *Beyond Vanity*, *The History and Power of Hairdressing* and I hope you all love it. Please grab your coffee and send me a note. Tell me what you think.

JVN: Congratulations!

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Thank you.

JVN: Was this and this wasn't. Was this your first full book? No, second, third?

ELIZABETH BLOCK: This is my, this is my second book. My first book is on gilded age, women's fashion and that is just like all gilded age all the time. So Aunt Ada, Aunt Agnes talking about wealthy women in the gilded age who are buying French fashion girl.

JVN: Congratulations on your second book. That's so major.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Thank you.

JVN: Now, it's the time of the podcast where I tell you that I think that you should get on TikTok because you didn't mention it and all of these amazing pictures in your research, you could make that be your green screen and then you could be like, hi, I'm Liz Block historian phd. Like um like I work at the MET um I'm going to tell you a little bit about ah and then you could like show that come on the green screen, show the fucking people. That would be so interesting.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Thank you. I will, I will build up my confidence and I will do that.

JVN: Or you can even do it on Instagram. But I feel like you've got so much good, interesting things to say and the girls love the history.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: I will do that. Thank you for the vote of confidence.

JVN: I think you'd be really good, Liz.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Thank you.

JVN: Thank you so much for coming on Pretty Curious. We love you so much. Thank you for your work.

ELIZABETH BLOCK: Thank you, Jonathan. Bye!

JVN: You've been listening to Pretty Curious with me, Jonathan Van Ness. You can learn more about this week's guest in the episode description and follow us on Instagram and TikTok @CuriouswithJVN. Pretty Curious drops every Monday wherever you get your podcasts and make sure to tune in every Wednesday for Getting Curious. Still can't get enough? Honey, you're insatiable! Subscribe to Extra Curious on Apple Podcasts for commercial free listening and our subscription only show, Ask JVN, where we're talking all about sex, relationships, or really just whatever's on my mind that week. Our theme music is composed by Nathanael McClure. Come on Nathanael! Our editor and engineer is also Nathanael McClure, yes! Getting Curious is produced by me, Chris McClure with production support from Julie Carrillo, Anne Currie and Chad Hall.