

## Shmanners 247: Shirley Chisholm

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[theme music plays]

**Travis:** Hello, internet! I'm your husband host, Travis McElroy.

**Teresa:** And I'm your wife host, Teresa McElroy.

**Travis:** And you're listening to Shmanners!

**Teresa:** It's extraordinary etiquette...

**Travis:** For ordinary occasions! Hello, my dove.

**Teresa:** Hello, dear.

**Travis:** How are you?

**Teresa:** Oh, I'm a little lower this week. I'm not sitting—I'm sitting on the tiny chair, but I forgot—

**Travis:** You say that like it's a punishment I made you do—

**Teresa:** No, no, no, no! I was—

**Travis:** —like I was, "[imperiously] Get you to the tiny chair!"

**Teresa:** [laughs] I forgot the meditation pillow, so I'm back down.

**Travis:** What a bougie life we lead, huh?

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** "[posh voice] I'm sitting on a tiny chair without my meditation pillow!"

**Teresa:** Well, you're sitting in a swivel office chair.

**Travis:** Listen. There's not enough room in my... recording... pain box—

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** —for us both to have comfy chairs! So what are we gonna do? *Me* sit in the tiny chair? No! [posh voice] Have you seen me? I'm quite large!

**Teresa:** I mean... I suppose.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** How—how's the weather up there?

**Travis:** Oh my God. Okay.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Listen, we're doing another biography, um, and we have once again entered into a realm that we have fallen into quite often, in which I know absolutely zero about the person we're talking about. In fact, I'm realizing right now, I don't know who we're talking about. Who are we talking about? What is happening?

**Teresa:** Okay, okay. Calm down. Wait.

**Travis:** [simultaneously] Where am I?! Ahh!

**Teresa:** Wait a minute. Take a breath.

**Travis:** [breathing heavily] [Tim Allen grunt???

**Teresa:** So, last week we talked about George Washington Carver.

**Travis:** Uh-huh.

**Teresa:** And we were like, "Hey, this is a cool dude."

**Travis:** Yeah, definitely.

**Teresa:** And Alex was like, "Hey, let's talk about a lady!"

**Travis:** Always fair.

**Teresa:** And I was like, "Yes, let's do that. What's good for the goose is good for the gander."

**Travis:** S—sure. Yeah, okay, great.

**Teresa:** Right. Yeah? That's right.

**Travis:** I can't reme—I think goose is—okay, it's not important.

**Teresa:** Idiom.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** I think, right? Yes.

**Travis:** I mean, it's an idiom, but it's a pretty transparent one, right?

**Teresa:** [laughs] But why geese?

**Travis:** Okay, I guess that's true. Add that to the list. Okay, so who—what is the name of this mystery person?

**Teresa:** It is Shirley Chisholm.

**Travis:** Shirley Chisholm. And she... [holding back laughter] did some pretty cool stuff, I bet! [wheezes]

**Teresa:** Yes! Yes.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Um, okay. So, much more recently than George Washington Carver, in fact, Shirley was born in... 1924.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Uh, served seven terms in Congress, and—

**Travis:** What?!

**Teresa:** —and died in the 21st century.

**Travis:** And this is the shortest episode we've ever done.

**Teresa:** [laughs] No, no, no.

**Travis:** Oh, okay.

**Teresa:** I just—I'm—I'm talking about just, like—normally we're like, "[posh voice] Mmm, just after Queen Victoria's reign." So—

**Travis:** You're setting the table here.

**Teresa:** I'm setting the table here and saying, "Look at how recently this person lived, and you and I didn't know about it."

**Travis:** Okay. So this is in the last century.

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** Uh, she served *seven* terms?

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Seven terms. That's 28 years!

**Teresa:** Yeah!

**Travis:** Oh boy. Okay. How do we not know about this person, Teresa?

**Teresa:** Uh, well, because the history of an entire race of people is not represented very well in public school systems! [laughs]

**Travis:** Ohh, okay.

**Teresa:** So, uh—

**Travis:** So Shirley was a woman of color.

**Teresa:** Indeed.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Um, like I said, she was born in 1924. Her parents were immigrants. They lived in Brooklyn, New York.

**Travis:** I've heard of it, yes.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm. Her mother was a seamstress from Barbados, and her father was a factory worker from Ghana. And here's the thing, right? Um, immigrants in Brooklyn at that time, and... now, also, uh, had a challenging time providing for their families, and they often had to work several jobs to make their ends meet, right? Um, so her dad worked in a factory and also as a baker's helper, and her mother worked as a seamstress and also a domestic worker. So—

**Travis:** And had at least one kid.

**Teresa:** Yes. So here's the thing. They wanted to actually, like, live a somewhat, you know, pleasant existence, so they wanted to—

**Travis:** The American dream!

**Teresa:** [holding back laughter] The American dream.

**Travis:** A somewhat pleasant existence.

**Teresa:** They wanted to save up money for a real home, right? And to live in a home. And they did eventually buy a brownstone, but in order to, you know, work enough to pay the bills, Shirley and her sisters were sent back to Barbados to live with their grandmother.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** There's no, like, problems with that, because her grandmother was a lovely lady.

**Travis:** Okay. I always worry whenever there's a biography of anybody, not just on this show, and it's like, "And then they were sent to live with someone else."

And it's like, "Oh, no, man. I've seen Disney movies. [through laughter] I know what happens now."

**Teresa:** No.

**Travis:** But it's fine! Everything's fine, I guess.

**Teresa:** Uh, and she lived there from 1929 to 1934, so she had a lot of schooling.

**Travis:** So, like, five to fourteen—no. Five to ten?

**Teresa:** 34. Yeah.

**Travis:** Okay, five to ten.

**Teresa:** Um, so she had some pretty formative schooling years in Barbados, which is actually pretty cool, because they do a real, like, um, British style school in Barbados, you know, where it's, uh, very—

**Travis:** They call everything aluminium—

**Teresa:** No.

**Travis:** —they have biscuits instead of cookies.

**Teresa:** It's very strict and traditional.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Uh, there's no, like, kindergarten or whatever. You just...

**Travis:** I would not have done well there, is what you're saying.

**Teresa:** No, no, not at all.

**Travis:** Okay, no, no. Okay, great, great, great, great, great.

**Teresa:** Not at all. Uh, and she said that "Granny gave me strength, dignity, and love. I learned from an early age that I was somebody. I didn't need to Black revolution to tell me that."

**Travis:** Cool.

**Teresa:** Yeah! Um, so back in New York, Grisham, you know, continued to—

**Travis:** Chisholm.

**Teresa:** Chisholm, you're right. Not Grisham. [laughs quietly]

**Travis:** No. Grisham was busy writing novels at this point.

**Teresa:** And being a CSI in... Ne—

**Travis:** That was—wait, hold on.

**Teresa:** —Nevada?

**Travis:** [emphatically] Gil Grissom!

**Teresa:** Oh!

**Travis:** [wheezes] Oh my God, why do I know that?

**Teresa:** [laughs] Well, because CSI is, like, a huge part of our adolescence.

**Travis:** I watched a lot of episodes.

**Teresa:** We did.

**Travis:** You know what's sad?

**Teresa:** As we were growing up.

**Travis:** Not to divert from Shirley Chisholm, who is already an incredible figure, but I never watched any of the episodes with Ted Danson on it from that show.

**Teresa:** [whispering] Wait a minute.

**Travis:** And I loved—[deep voice] Yeah.

**Teresa:** Ted Danson was on that show?

**Travis:** [deep voice] Yeahh.

**Teresa:** Which CSI?

**Travis:** He was on CSI original, and wen—

**Teresa:** That's the one in Las Vegas, right?

**Travis:** —yeah. It went Gil Grissom, and then Lawrence Fishburne, and then Ted Danson.

**Teresa:** Really?

**Travis:** Yeah!

**Teresa:** Huh.

**Travis:** And I stopped watching when Gil Grissom left, and I don't know why. I think maybe that was when I moved out of the house and away from my dad's Tivo.

**Teresa:** Yeah, I think—

**Travis:** That might be why I stopped watching.

**Teresa:** —that's probably it. I think that's when I stopped paying for cable.

**Travis:** Okay. Back to [holding back laughter] the very important story.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Of Shirley Chisholm.

**Teresa:** We got off topic, but it's okay.

**Travis:** A little bit.

**Teresa:** Uh, because she did not get off topic.



**Travis:** Ooh! Okay.

**Teresa:** Uh, she continued her education, always excelling academically. Uh, earned several debate trophies and awards, went to Brooklyn College, got a Bachelor of Arts, was a member of the Delta Sigma Theta sorority, and the Harriet Tubman Society! So—

**Travis:** Okay. Accomplished already. Accomplished at a young age, one might say.

**Teresa:** Absolutely. So she took her work with the Harriet Tubman Society particularly seriously, and advocated for Black soldiers in the military during World War II, fought for more African-American history courses, and more women in Brooklyn College's student government, which I think is a really great way of foreshadowing...

**Travis:** Indeed!

**Teresa:** ... her career.

**Travis:** Indeed! Fought for women in government, you say? Hmm!

**Teresa:** Hmm!

**Travis:** Hmm!

**Teresa:** Although, although, at the time she professed to not really being interested in politics at large, saying that she had a double handicap, because she was both Black and a woman. Uh, so she thought that it would be very difficult for her to make—make her way into those spaces.

**Travis:** So perhaps not that the interest wasn't there, but rather that the expectation was, "Even if I wanted to, I wouldn't be able to. It would be so difficult to do that perhaps it is not worth it."

**Teresa:** Perhaps.

**Travis:** Okay. I don't want to put words in Shirley's mouth.

**Teresa:** Of course not. Okay, so... in 1949, she married Conrad Q. Chisholm, who was a private investigator, and—

**Travis:** I always—man. TV and movies have ruined that for me, 'cause I hear that and it seems immediately so glamorous to me. And I know in real life it is not. But in my head I'm like, "Ooh, solving murders!" [laughs] And, like, naw, man. I don't think... that's probably not it.

**Teresa:** Probably not. I imagine there's a lot of just kind of, like, hurry up and wait, where you gotta get somewhere to see somebody do something, and then you have to stay there and watch them while they do it.

**Travis:** And I assume a lot of photographing people doing inappropriate things.

**Teresa:** Or just things that they lied about.

**Travis:** Yeah. I would—that's inappropriate. I mean, lying is.

**Teresa:** We're—we're off topic once again.

**Travis:** Again, yep, yep. Yep-yep-yep.

**Teresa:** We're very chatty today.

**Travis:** Yep-yep-yep. Well, I haven't seen you in three weeks, so—no, that's not true!

**Teresa:** [laughs] Although sometimes you do live in your office. Um, okay, anyway. Being married did not slow her down, as is often the case. Uh, but she earned her Master's degree in Early Childhood Education from Columbia University, worked as a teacher's aide in Harlem—she was the director—in 1953 to 1959, she was the director of the Friends Day Nursery in Brownsville, Brooklyn, and also of the Hamilton-Madison Childcare Center in Lower Manhattan. So by 1960, she has a lot of credentials under her belt, and she becomes the consultant to the New York City Division of Day Care.

**Travis:** So at this point, uh, you said 1960?

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** So she would be... 36 years old.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** Okay, got it.

**Teresa:** That's awesome.

**Travis:** Got it. You know, it's so weird to have hit a point in my life now where when I hear the age 36, I... don't know... if that feels old or young to me, because I am 37. And so I hear 36 and I'm like, "Yeah, but... is that... late in life?" [wheezes] I don't know anymore!

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** And you know what? Let's take a moment to think about it, and to write a thank you note for our sponsors.

**Teresa:** Alright!

[theme music plays]

**Travis:** First, we want to write a thank you note to Function of Beauty. What is the function of beauty, you might ask? Well, for me, it makes me feel powerful, honestly. Like, doing—

**Teresa:** Being beautiful or choosing your beauty products?

**Travis:** You know what? Both.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Um, I—

**Teresa:** I was hoping that you would say that.

**Travis:** Yeah. I find part of self-care for me—and this is—I'm not gonna say this'll work for everybody, but for me, it's being invested in myself, right? Thinking about myself making choices for myself and thinking about things that

are not only utilitarian for me but make me feel special. Like, that is good self-care for me.

**Teresa:** Sure!

**Travis:** And so with Function of Beauty, the thing I really like is that you have so many choices, and you can really specialize the formulas of the beauty products for your, like, specific needs and tastes, right?

**Teresa:** Very cool.

**Travis:** Yeah. So as you go through, like, uh, you can customize how the shampoo and conditioner smells. Like, you can even go so far as to, like, aesthetically choose the color of the shampoo, 'cause it comes in, like, clear bottles, right?

**Teresa:** Oh yeah!

**Travis:** So I have a purple and a pink one that are really cute together, uh, and I also got some, like, leave-in conditioner that I love and some, like—like, uh, you know, hair treatment stuff that I love. Uh, it smells great, it works well with my dry scalp, it works well with my hair type, all of these things because I went through, I did a quick but thorough quiz. And there are over 54 trillion possible formulations of this stuff that they can make for you, and one of my favorite things—and it's really silly—but you can choose, like, what it says on the side, and so mine says Function of Travis.

**Teresa:** [through laughter] Of course it does.

**Travis:** And it makes me really happy. Every ingredient Function of Beauty uses is vegan and cruelty-free, and they never, ever use sulfates or parabens, and you can also go completely silicon-free if you want to. I'm a big fan. Love the way it smells, love the way it works for my hair. Never buy off the shelf again just to be disappointed. Go to [functionofbeauty.com/shmatters](https://functionofbeauty.com/shmatters) to take your quiz and save 20% on your first order. That applies to their full range of customized hair, skin, and body products. Go to [functionofbeauty.com/shmatters](https://functionofbeauty.com/shmatters) to let them know you heard about it from our show and get 20% off your order. That's [functionofbeauty.com/shmatters](https://functionofbeauty.com/shmatters).

**Teresa:** Shmanners is also sponsored in part this week by Sunbasket! Okay. So, here is... the skinny on this.

**Travis:** Aw, lay it down!

**Teresa:** Sunbasket now has fresh and ready meals—

**Travis:** What?!

**Teresa:** —starting at just 8.99.

**Travis:** Get out of the town.

**Teresa:** Uh, these are Michelin awarded, James Beard awarded chefs, and it's really great, because they are prepped and they are ready and you can heat them up in just six minutes!

**Travis:** What?!

**Teresa:** Check out some of these... awesome meals.

**Travis:** Okay. Lay it on me.

**Teresa:** Butter chicken with basami—bas—basmati, there it is. [laughs] Rice pilaf.

**Travis:** Uh-huh.

**Teresa:** Beef chili with cheddar and Greek yogurt.

**Travis:** Okay, that sounds great. I wanna eat that right now.

**Teresa:** Creamy mushroom penne with baby spinach and almonds.

**Travis:** I wanna eat all of this.

**Teresa:** I do too.

**Travis:** Now, it did for a second sound like you put a comma between baby and spinach.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** So it sounded like "With baby, spinach, and almonds." I think—I don't think that's what you meant.

**Teresa:** No, I was just trying to get in the mood. [low voice] Baby spinach and almonds.

**Travis:** Oh, okay. Spinach. Okay. Okay, it's clear now. Doesn't—no baby included. Got it. Okay.

**Teresa:** And right now, Sunbasket is offering 35 dollars off your order when you go right now to [sunbasket.com/shmanners](https://sunbasket.com/shmanners) and enter the promo code "shmanners" at checkout. Again, that's [sunbasket.com/shmanners](https://sunbasket.com/shmanners), and enter promo code "shmanners" at checkout for 35 dollars off your order. [quietly] [Sunbasket.com/shmanners](https://sunbasket.com/shmanners). Promo code "shmanners." Don't forget it!

[music plays]

**Tre'Veil:** Hey there, beautiful people. Did you hear that good, good news?

**Jarrett:** Something about the baby Jesus?

**Tre'Veil:** Mm-hmm, he's coming back!

**Jarrett:** Or—

**Tre'Veil:** [laughs]

**Jarrett:** —do you mean the fact that Apple Podcasts has named *FANTI* one of the best shows of 2020?

**Tre'Veil:** I mean, we already knew that we was hot stuff, but a little external validation never hurts, okay?

**Jarrett:** Hosted by me, writer and journalist Jarrett Hill.

**Tre'Veil:** And me, the ebony enchantress myself—

**Jarrett:** [laughs]

**Tre'Veil:** —Tre'Veil Anderson.

**Jarrett:** *FANTI* is your home for complex conversations about the grey areas in our lives: the people, places, and things we're huge fans of, but got some anti feelings toward.

**Tre'Veil:** You name it, we *FANTI*. Nobody's off limits.

**Jarrett:** Check us out every Thursday on Maximumfun.org, or wherever you get your slay-worthy audio.

[music and advertisement end]

**Travis:** When last we left off... [pause] you were telling me about Shirley Chisholm.

**Teresa:** [laughs] I was waiting for something...

**Travis:** Okay. She got appointed to a very important job as a daycare adviser—

**Teresa:** Yes, yes, yes.

**Travis:** —in 1960.

**Teresa:** Indeed. Um, one would say that she was at the top of her professional game.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** And this is when—this decade, the 50's and 60's, is when she begins to work as a volunteer for different candidates. She volunteers for organizations, political clubs like the Brooklyn Democratic Clubs, and the League of Women Voters.

**Travis:** Okay!

**Teresa:** And this must have kept her very busy.

**Travis:** Oh yeah.

**Teresa:** Is all I can say.

**Travis:** So this is when she's kind of starting to, like, almost sidestep into politics, right?

**Teresa:** Yeah!

**Travis:** By getting involved in these clubs. It's not like she is setting out to achieve political office herself, but she is definitely becoming involved in politics at this point. Okay, got it.

**Teresa:** Exactly. And she goes all in, with some of her favorite groups being The Unity Democratic Club, which is run by former Elect Flagg member, Thomas R. Jones.

**Travis:** Okay

**Teresa:** This group is exactly like what I feel like the American dream, like, aspires to be. It's very middle class, it's racially integrated, and women are included in leadership roles.

**Travis:** Nice.

**Teresa:** Imagine that.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** I don't know why that was directed at me, but...

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** ... okay. You know what? As the straight white male cis representative here, I will apologize to you. [laughs quietly]

**Teresa:** Okay, thanks.

**Travis:** Okay, great.



**Teresa:** Love it. So, she campaigned for Jones, but they lost the election in 1960, and ran again two years later and won!

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Probably with her help, is what I'm saying. Is what I'm saying.

**Travis:** Okay. I don't doubt that. I agree with you.

**Teresa:** [laughs quietly] I don't know why I'm being so hostile. I just—

**Travis:** No, I totally understand why!

**Teresa:** Here's—I—I feel like—here it is. I'm gonna lay it on the line.

**Travis:** Please.

**Teresa:** I'm angry that nobody told me about this. I'm angry that it did not—it was not included in the history that I was taught in school. I'm angry that it had, like, completely slipped the radar of the political era that I'm currently in, and I feel like it's a huge disservice. So, I'm sorry that I'm taking that out on you when really I guess I need to go back in time to middle school and high school and take it out on... the curriculum writers?

**Travis:** You can take it out on me. It's okay.

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** You can—it's okay.

**Teresa:** This is when she decides that she would run for his seat in the New York State Assembly.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** After Jones chose a judicial appointment instead of running for reelection.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** There was a bit of resistance to this.

**Travis:** I can imagine.

**Teresa:** Right, considering the timing, considering that she's Black, all this stuff. Anyway, no matter. She was not able to get the UDC to support her as a female candidate, which meant that the group she had been supporting for years left her high and dry.

**Travis:** Bummer.

**Teresa:** Again, I'm giving you dagger eyes, but it's not your fault.

**Travis:** [simultaneously] No, it's okay!

**Teresa:** I'm so sorry. [laughs quietly]

**Travis:** Hey, it's okay. As the representative of the establishment/patriarchy, I will happily take those daggers. I understand. You don't have to apologize to me.

**Teresa:** So Chisholm chose to appeal directly to women voters, using her role as the Brooklyn Branch President of Key Women of America, which was another one of those societies she belonged to, to mobilize female voters. So, she won the Democratic primary in June of 1964, and she went on to win the seat... with over 18,000 votes.

**Travis:** Nice.

**Teresa:** To give you a little bit of perspective here, several of the other candidates in the race got 1900 votes.

**Travis:** Oh, okay. So, a landslide, one might say.

**Teresa:** Indeed!

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Alright. She served as a member of the New York State Assembly from 1965 to 1968. Um, and by 1965 she had already made a name for herself there.

She was honored at a Salute to Women Doers event in New York, but she was always ready to do the work, always going for it.

So what she would say is that because a person functions better in his native language is no sign that a person is illiterate. And she led a push for Black representation on key committees, working with a state-wide Council of Elected Negro Democrats. This was a really great thing for her. But she's not done yet.

**Travis:** Boy, what? Go on.

**Teresa:** In January of 1968, Chisholm announced her candidacy for Congress.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** And her campaign was super cool. It was “Unbought and unbossed,” which would later become the, uh—what do we—on the headstone, what do you—

**Travis:** Epitaph?

**Teresa:** Epitaph, which I think is awesome.

**Travis:** Very cool slogan, B-T-dubs.

**Teresa:** Oh, absolutely, absolutely. Because it was absolutely true. She was in charge of it, and she did not accept any, like, uh, corporate fund—what is it? Corporate—

**Travis:** Funding?

**Teresa:** —funding?

**Travis:** Mm-hmm.

**Teresa:** It was all grassroots organized. Chisholm was initially assigned to the House Agriculture Committee, which is kind of like...

**Travis:** Oh, I gue—yeah, I guess, spoilers, she won. Right? [laughs] She went to Congress-

**Teresa:** Oh, yeah, totally!

**Travis:** —yeah, she won. Okay.

**Teresa:** Yeah, yeah, we said that, right?

**Travis:** Okay, okay, she won.

**Teresa:** She served seven terms.

**Travis:** She served sevens time there—she won. Okay, great, great, great, great.

**Teresa:** Um, but I want you to think about the House Agriculture Committee, and she is from Brooklyn.

**Travis:** Yes, an interesting... fit.

**Teresa:** It does feel a little insulting.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Given her urban district.

**Travis:** Especially considering that it seems like her background is in, like, education, and—yeah.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm. Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Kinda feels like maybe they might've just tucked her away somewhere.

**Teresa:** But she did the best she could with what she had, and she did a really great thing for the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children. Um, which if you don't know, the WIC program provides federal grants to states for supplemental food, healthcare referrals, and nutrition education for low income, pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding people, as well as children under five.

**Travis:** Okay, cool!

**Teresa:** Yeah! So, that especially I think would be useful to her district, but also to... the country? [laughs]

**Travis:** Yeah, the country at large.

**Teresa:** Indeed, indeed. And one of the main things that I think categorizes her terms is that she continues to fight for equality, right? She only hired Black women to work in her office—no, sorry. She only hired women, and half of those women were Black. Um, and she—even though she faced incredible discrimination, she thought that it probably wasn't due to the color of her skin, but probably because she was a woman.

Still, women are very underrepresented in Congress. Um, and, you know, we keep fighting that good fight.

You know, here's the thing.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Alex put in this really—ugh. I get so flustered, because I am—I have a lot of issues that are not yet resolved regarding the patriarchy. She includes this story that I think is important, even though it's frustrating.

Every single day, there was a representative that would come up to her and say, "42.5," in reference to their 42,500 dollar salary, which they made as representatives. Even in that time, not a ton of money, but... she said, "One day, he said too much, and I said two things. I said, 'First of all, since you can't stand the idea of my making 42.5 like you, when you see me coming into this chamber every day, vanish. Vanish until I take my seat so you won't have to confront me with this 42.5.' And I said, 'Secondly, you must remember that I'm paving the road for a lot of other people looking like me to make 42.5'"

**Travis:** Nice.

**Teresa:** Whoo! I'm gettin' all—I'm...

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** It's not just warm in here. I'm getting a little hot under the collar about this. Let us take the next echelon.

**Travis:** Please, yes, please.

**Teresa:** In July of 1971, Chisholm began exploring the possibility of Presidential candidacy.

**Travis:** Ooh!

**Teresa:** I know, right? She formally announced her bid on January 25th, 1972, at a Baptist Church in her Brooklyn district. That's amazing. Why did we not know about this? I mean, I feel like I heard, like, whispers and rumors about these sorts of things when Hillary ran for President. There was like, little, "Oh well, she's not exactly the first," and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, right? But I think this is a really important point, that the public school system, at least in Ohio, where I was raised, don't talk about.

And you're being very quiet, and I'm sorry. [laughs]

**Travis:** No! I—listen, this is the kind of thing where I'm just super interested. I'm just listening as hard as I can, so that I don't miss a single word.

**Teresa:** Okay. Here is her candidacy announcement.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** "I am not the candidate of Black America," she proclaims. "Although I am Black and proud. I am not the candidate of the women's movement of this country, although I am a woman, and equally proud of that. I am the candidate of the people, and my presence before you symbolizes a new era in American political history."

**Travis:** That's really great.

**Teresa:** I got goosebumps!

**Travis:** That's really great.

**Teresa:** Mmm, so good! Alright. I don't have to tell you that she did not win.

**Travis:** Mm-hmm.

**Teresa:** Uh, she did not receive the Democratic nomination. I believe she placed 6th. She wasn't able to scrounge up the funds.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Um, and I think that even now, it really just takes so much money to get to the head of the line of these things.

**Travis:** Yeah. You're paying so much for, like, name—it has nothing to do with, like, how good your policies are, sometimes. Sometimes it's just, like, how many people know your name.

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** And that takes money.

**Teresa:** Yeah. Um, she at that time only spent 300,000 dollars in total, pretty much, for advertising and speaking engagements and all that kind of stuff.

**Travis:** Which sounds like a lot, but for a Presidential campaign, it's not.

**Teresa:** It's really not. I feel like—didn't—wasn't Bernie Sanders talking about how he needed to raise, like, a million dollars by January or something last year? Anyway, anyway.

Security was a major concern for her on the campaign trail. She received three confirmed death threats, to which point her husband served as her bodyguard until she was able to receive protection from the Secret Service in May of 1972.

She continued, she persevered. She won 20 to 30 delegates, but, you know, here's the thing, right? She was not able to secure the nomination, but it's not that she didn't make an impact. Uh, because she continued to push against the war in Vietnam. She wanted voters from every corner of the country to be able to feel like they had a voice. And in the end, she spoke to her campaign team afterwards, saying that:

"I am not downheartened. I am not disillusioned. I am not bitter. The only thing that I continue to regret in this course is that we didn't have the moolah."

**Travis:** [laughs]

**Teresa:** But her legacy still exists. For the rest of her career, she continued her crusade for equality. She worked on several bills, including one to give domestic workers the right to minimum wage. During Jimmy Carter's administration, she called for better treatment of the Haitian refugees. Her first marriage took a toll, because I imagine that she was pretty busy.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** And then she married, in 1978 she married again. Another former New York State assemblyman, which I think is cool. Man, she... she finally got a little bit of rest, but then her husband was injured in a car accident, and so she retired from Congress in 1982 to take care of him. Um, and I wouldn't say that then she retired from public life, but she went back to doing things like volunteering and speaking at colleges, and she did campaign for Jesse Jackson in 1990, and she, like, completely retired in 1991 in Florida. She was called up for service again in 1993 by Bill Clinton, um, when he nominated her to be the United States Ambassador to Jamaica, but she, by that time, was in poor health. She was nominated that same year to the National Women's Hall of Fame, and she passed away in 2005. And, like I said, her vault read "Unbought and unbossed."

**Travis:** She sounds very, very cool.

**Teresa:** Totally!

**Travis:** And I am also now mad that I did not learn about her in school. Especially—like, when you get to things of, like, 1990 and 2005—

**Teresa:** Yeah!

**Travis:** —and I'm thinking, "Huh! That's definitely a time when I was very aware of the world, but apparently not aware enough!"

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** And that's—that's not great! Uh, that's why it's important to tell these stories, and to talk about these people, until the schools and the history books get it right.



**Teresa:** Now, in Brooklyn there are some really great tributes to her. There's the Shirley Chisholm Project on Brooklyn Women's Activism, and that still exists today at Brooklyn Colleges. It promotes projects and programs for women in works to preserve her legacy.

In January of 2018, Governor Andrew Cuomo announced his plan to build a state park in her name, and that was opened and dedicated on July 2nd, 2019. So there's a beautiful mural of her right at the entrance of the park, and there's another one, another monument, hopefully, to be located at the entrance of Prospect Park. And in 2015, Barack Obama posthumously awarded her the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

**Travis:** Well, that is amazing, and thank you everybody for joining us for this episode. Thank you, of course, to Alex for suggesting that we talk about Shirley Chisholm.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm, and if you want to find out more, there's a documentary on Amazon. There are several biographies, multiple movies and miniseries that have been dedicated to her. There are merely an internet search away. Thank you, Alex.

**Travis:** Yes, go check that out. Thank you to Alex for helping us with our research. We would not be able to make this show without your help. Thank you to everybody for listening. Thank you to everybody who sends in topic suggestions to our email. Uh, [shmatterscast@gmail.com](mailto:shmatterscast@gmail.com). You can also find us on Twitter @shmatterscast, and that is where we will put up calls for questions when we have actionable kind of questiony episodes, which the next one should be. Um, and we want to say thank you to Maximumfun.org, our podcasting home. What else? Who else do we thank?

**Teresa:** We always thank Brent "brentalfloss" Black for writing our theme music, which is available as a ringtone where those are found. Thank you to Kayla M. Wasil for our Twitter thumbnail art, again @shmatterscast.

Thank you to Bruja Betty Pinup Photography for the cover picture of our fan-run Facebook group, Shmatters Fanners. Go ahead and join that group if you love to give and get excellent advice from other fans!

**Travis:** And that's gonna do it for us, so join us again next week.

**Teresa:** No RSVP required!

**Travis:** You've been listening to Shmanners...

**Teresa:** Manners, Shmanners. Get it!

[theme music plays]

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**Jesse:** I'm Jesse Thorn! on the next *Bullseye*, we've got the one and only Ted Danson. We'll talk about his new show, *Mr. Mayor*, about *Cheers*, and about the secret to success in comedy.

I mean, I feel like one of your signature comedic moves at this point in your career is gazing. Uh, you do a lot of interesting gazing.

**Ted:** [laughs] I also love this! Gazing! I love that. And if I'm not, I'm gonna start, 'cause that's great.

**Jesse:** That's *Bullseye*! Find it on Maximumfun.org, NPR.org, and wherever you get podcasts.

[music and advertisement end]