

Shmanners 251: Jane Bolin

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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: That was buttery smooth!

Teresa: Oh, yeah?

Travis: I think the best we've done the intro in a while, or at least for me.

Teresa: [laughing] For you.

Travis: Yeah, for me, I didn't have any hiccups.

Teresa: I'm always golden.

Travis: Okay. I mean, yeah.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: It's just that, you know, when we succeed, we succeed together, and when we fail, I fail on my own.

Teresa: [laughs louder] And I'll drink to that!

Travis: Okay. We're having—it's another *Shmanners*, after d—I was about to say, "after dark," but it's kind of like, *Shmanners: Dusk*. Uh, because one child is in bed and the other one, you may hear quietly in the background, jumping on her trampoline.

And we're here to bring you another amazing biography episode of a piece of history that perhaps you've never heard about before.

Teresa: But you should have. And I know we've been doing a lot of biographies lately...

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: ... and that's not because we don't enjoy taking questions. It's because these people are necessary.

Travis: Right.

Teresa: They are people that I didn't know about and I want everyone else to know about, so that you can know about them.

Travis: Right. Sometimes, *Shmanners* is about going on an in-depth dive of like, a piece of, you know, manners or culture that we take for granted.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And sometimes it's about, like, expanding the—expanding the understanding...

Teresa: Yeah!

Travis: ... of culture.

Teresa: Ooh, I like it.

Travis: Thank you.

Teresa: "Expand the understanding."

Travis: Expanding the understanding

Teresa: Nice.

Travis: Um, and so, we've got another biography of someone you, I'm going to bet, haven't heard of, because *I* have not heard of them. I'm very excited. Once more, can I tell you another thing?

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: I love these biographies, 'cause I usually get a little bit emotional by the end.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: And I learn about somebody cool that I didn't know about before.

Teresa: Indeed. So we are taking today about Jane Bolin.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: When I first read this name—

Travis: You thought of Anne Boleyn.

Teresa: I thought of Anne Jane Seymour.

Travis: Oh.

Teresa: And I was like, what?

Travis: And you just combined the two.

Teresa: These are two different white ladies. I don't know anything about a Jane Bolin.

Travis: I thought of this woman I knew named Jane Monalin who did community theater with me back in Huntington, and I thought it's probably not her, right?

Teresa: Probably not.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: The first Black female judge in the United States!

Travis: Wow!

Teresa: Jane Bolin.

Travis: Okay. Now, here's a tricky game. This is a dangerous game I'm going to play.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: I'm going to guess what year she was born.

Teresa: Okay.

Travis: With the only piece of information being that she was the first female Black judge in the United States.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: I'm going to say that she was born in 1895.

Teresa: Ooh. No.

Travis: Oh, boy. What was it?

Teresa: A little later. Just a little later.

Travis: 1910.

Teresa: Little earlier.

Travis: 1905?

Teresa: 1908.

Travis: Okay! I wasn't that far off. I was so afraid it was gonna be like, no, it was 1953 or something.

Teresa: [laughs] Uh, so, Jane Matilda Bolin was born on April 11th, 1908, to Matilda Ingram Emery and Gaius C. Bolin.

Travis: Those are both incredible names.

Teresa: And they were an interracial couple.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: Living in Poughkeepsie, New York. And—

Travis: That is one of those city names, by the way, that I love where all the letters in it don't look like they should sound like they do.

Teresa: It's one of the ones you need to know.

Travis: Yeah. You get a lot of those, uh, in England. We don't have as many here. Poughkeepsie is one.

Teresa: Definitely. The "sheers" and the "shires" and the—

Travis: Albuquerque. Albuquerque's a fun one. Doesn't look—there's a great line in *Titanic: The Musical* where she says, "alber-cue-kyare."

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: It's just wonderful. Anyways.

Teresa: Worcester, also.

Travis: Worcester, mm-hmm.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: "Hurricane" [hurra-cun] in West Virginia.

Teresa: Let's just name some, really, right now.

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: [giggles] Okay, um. And it has been argued that she was born a lawyer.

Travis: That would be incredible! Little barrister wig, little gavel.

Teresa: [laughs] They don't wear barrister wigs in the U.S. Not even in 1908.

Travis: I live here too, you know that. But I guess I could have said a little briefcase, that would have been better. A little briefcase, a little gavel. Little rubber gavel that squeaks when you hit stuff.

Teresa: Lawyers don't have the gavels.

Travis: Aw, man!

Teresa: [laughs] Okay. Her father was a Black lawyer who headed the Dutchess County Bar Association, who Bolin spent a lot of time with in his office, especially after her mother passed away, when she was young.

Travis: [sadly] Oh.

Teresa: Yeah. And, so, here's the thing. I would say that he is described as being honest with her about the pain he felt in his line of work. He never really shied away from the upsetting matters of the world, and there are a lot of upsetting matters in the world. And—

Travis: I would have to imagine especially in super early 1900s for a young Black girl from an interracial family.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: It has to be a lot of pains in the world.

Teresa: Yeah. He wanted to spare her some of this pain, and even discouraged her from pursuing a law career, uh, because he didn't want his daughter to deal with, quote, "the most unpleasant and sometimes grossest kind of human behavior."

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: Buuut she did anyway. Because, I mean obviously, he was great at his job, right? And it's so inspiring as a young person to see their parents, like, be there in the room.

Travis: Mm-hmm.

Teresa: And I know that you and your father, you butt heads against going to, uh—

Travis: Going into radio?

Teresa: No, no, no. The, um. What's it called where you would go someplace and do—oh, remote.

Travis: Remote, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Teresa: Yeah. You tell those stories about how he always wanted to do that and you were like, "I don't wanna go!"

Travis: It wasn't—it's not because my dad wasn't good at remotes. A remote is where you go and broadcast live from somewhere. It's because they are incredibly boring.

Teresa: Ohh.

Travis: You go and sit at, like, a car lot or some car dealership, and you sit there at a table and people come and go, "You givin' away that new Tim McGraw?" And then, maybe there's free hotdogs or something, but nothing, literally nothing happens. It's usually the—

Teresa: But do you feel like perhaps you were inspired?

Travis: I was inspired by my dad for the actual job that he did, not remotes. But like, when he—when radio was, um, he did the morning show. It was like a four hour, and this is like, uh, like late '80s, early '90s, where the morning show that he did was like, comedy sketches and character work and parody songs that they wrote.

Teresa: And live, right? Most of it live.

Travis: Yeah, and call-in games and all that stuff, not just like, I'm gonna play 10 songs and then talk for 30 seconds, then play 10 songs. And so I, actually, grew up, for a long time, saying I wasn't gonna do radio.

Specifically not because I didn't like what my dad did, but because I saw what my dad did being phased out, and I was like, "I don't wanna just be someone who sits and presses go on a board. I wanna—

Teresa: It's video killed the radio star.

Travis: And then internet killed the radio star.

Teresa: No, it killed—

Travis: And then movies killed the radio star, and—

Teresa: Oh, okay!

Travis: Yeah, everything just kept killing the radio star over and over again.

Teresa: Right. But she did follow in her father's footsteps. Bolin was known to be an incredible student. Um, even managing to graduating high school when she was just 15 years old.

Travis: Whoa!

Teresa: That's awesome, that's like some Doogie Howser stuff, right?

Travis: That is some Doogie Howser stuff.

Teresa: That was a good show, right? Anyway...

Travis: I don't know, I don't think I ever watched it.

Teresa: Really?

Travis: Yeah. We're taking a lot of tangents, I wanna focus on Jane.

Teresa: Sorry, sorry. She went on to enroll at Wellesley College as a young Black woman in the '20s.

Travis: I think it's Well—

Travis and Teresa: Wellesley?

Travis: I don't know.

Teresa: No, you're right. It's Wellesley.

Travis: Wellesley. Another one, doesn't look like it sounds. Okay, go on.

Teresa: Anyway, her experience was really not that great.

Travis: Yeah, yeah. I was kind of expecting that.

Teresa: Yeah. So there were only two other Black students at the college. They were made to room together and forced to live off-campus.

Travis: Oh, boy.

Teresa: She would later say of this time as, quote, "My college days were, for the most part, evoke sad and lonely personal memories." In fact, she talked about a time where she told one of her advisors that she wanted to be a lawyer, and his response was that she should give up.

Travis: [flatly] Cool. Great. Great, great, great. Great, great. Good. Good work, advisor.

Teresa: But she persevered. She applied to Yale. I mean, in secret, because obviously her advisors were not, like, into it, right?

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Um, and, in 1928, with a Bachelor of Arts degree with an academic recognition as well...

Travis: Ooh.

Teresa: ... uh, she was named a Wellesley Scholar and given the distinction of being in the top 20 students in her class.

Travis: Nice! Okay.

Teresa: And shortly after graduating, she applied and was accepted to Yale Law School, which again was unheard of for a Black woman in the '20s, '30s.

Travis: Okay. Must have been uber qualified, huh?

Teresa: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. So awesome. She, again, was one of three women studying in the *whole institution*.

Travis: Boy.

Teresa: There's probably a lot of people in the Yale Law School.

Travis: Oh, yeah. At least, I would say, at least 10.

Teresa: Yeah, more than that.

Travis: Maybe even 15.

Teresa: Um, and she was the only Black woman. And so, one of the things, uh, that Alex very painfully details in her research, was that it became the norm for people at the school to taunt her by slamming classroom doors right in her face.

Travis: Oh, man.

Teresa: Can you, like, this is probably not a surprise to anyone that there isn't a lot of records and like, research that you can do for this kind of, um, immense achievement by a Black woman. But to have that be, like, one of the defining characteristics of their law school—

Travis: Literally doors being slammed in her face.

Teresa: Literally doors. That's—it's heartbreaking.

Travis: It's something I think about a lot, stuff like that. When people would talk about like, "You know, bullying's just a part of like, school experience or whatever." No, but it doesn't need to be, because someone could have stepped in and said, "Hey, don't do that."

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: "If you do that again, you don't get to go to school here anymore."

Teresa: And so, despite the bullying, she graduated from Yale in 1931, thus becoming the first African-American woman to earn a law degree from that institution.

Travis: At 23. At 23!

Teresa: That's amazing. And because these things come back to haunt people...

Travis: ... she then bought Yale!

Teresa: No, one of the people that used to slam doors in her face became an active member of the American Bar Association, and actually reached out to her later in life to see if she could speak before his Bar group, and she told him to not let the door hit him on the way out.

Travis: Nice. [emphatically] Nice!

Teresa: Yeah. Good for her.

Travis: We're gonna talk more about this, but first, a thank you note for our sponsor.

[theme music plays]

Travis: First, we want to write a thank you note to She's Birdie. Before you leave the house, you do the checklist for your phone, keys, wallet, and it's

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This is especially amazing now when, you know, we still are not safe going out, hanging out with people, and I miss the library so much! Especially with a kid in the house, now two kids in the house. We used to go to the library all the time and gosh darn it, do we miss it.

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You all should check out – this is me, Travis, now – check out the album Digital Bonfire by Decouplr, D-E-C-O-U-P-L-R, no E. It's available on Spotify, Apple Music, and all streaming platforms now. Make sure you check it out. One more time, Decouplr, without an E. Or you can go get it all at DecouplrMusic.com.

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Adam: A show for nerds? On Maximum Fun? Devil, you say!

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Adam: Hey, *Star Trek*! My daughter enjoys that program.

Ben: Well, if she enjoys that and she enjoys humor of the flatulent variety, might I recommend she subscribe to *The Greatest Generation*?

Adam: Hey, are you calling my kid a nerd? Why I oughta...

Ben: Well, gotta go! Become a Friend of DeSoto by subscribing to *The Greatest Generation* on MaximumFun.org today!

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Travis: Now, she has her law degree.

Teresa: Right.

Travis: She's 23.

Teresa: Yes.

Travis: She's got her degree at 23.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Now what?

Teresa: Well, she's still a woman in society, so...

Travis: She's got her degree at 23, but she's still a woman in society.

Teresa: Oh!

Travis: I'm a regular Linjamen Manuel Miranda.

Teresa: [laughs] So, she moved back home and clerked at her father's law practice, passing the Bar exam for New York in 1932, and then she married a fellow attorney, Ralph E. Mizelle, and the couple relocated to New York City.

Travis: New York City?

Teresa: I'm not saying that obviously, this woman, she could make it on her own. There is no doubt, but having the constraints of society at the time, [through laughter] I'll forgive that went home and got married.

Travis: Well, you know, you can have it all. Um—

Teresa: No. All is a myth.

Travis: Okay, you can have everything you want?

Teresa: [doubtful] Mm...

Travis: You can have some of what you want without having to give up all of what you want, how's that?

Teresa: Okay, alright. There we go.

Travis: I also think, you know, probably, maybe—I will say this, as someone who appreciates the support I get at home, probably hard-going out there...

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: ... and it's nice to have somebody in your corner, you know?

Teresa: So, she and her new husband, both hit the ground running in New York City. They opened their own law practice, and as the '30s wore on, she worked a lot. She campaigned for a state assembly seat, but when that didn't work out, she took on an assistant corporate counsel work for New York City.

Again, breaking another barrier, because in 1937, her official title was "assistant corporation counsel for the City of New York, serving on the domestic relation court," and she was the first Black woman to hold that position. So many firsts for this great lady!

Travis: Yeah. Okay, what I'm about to say is so silly and obvious, but I still need to say it, right? Because it's something I think about, especially now, I mean, even nowadays, right? Where we still haven't had our first female president, you know what I mean? Like, that kind of thing, where I think about if you're the first at something, how many times throughout your life must you have encountered someone who goes, "I don't even think that's possible." Like—

Teresa: Exactly!

Travis: Not like, you, specific person, can't do it, but like... I don't think it's possible for that to happen. Not that you aren't qualified, not that you aren't smart enough, not that you aren't good enough, but I don't even know that anybody is, because nobody's done it before.

Teresa: It is simply not done.

Travis: Right. And then to think like, "No, no, no. I will."

Teresa: "I will."

Travis: It's, it's—"Don't worry!" Like, it's just so amazing to me.

Teresa: Um, so, in this position, she was to represent petitioners who could not afford their own lawyer. Um, so, obviously, like, she took on some pretty heartbreaking cases.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Right? Side note, domestic relation court is now known as family court, right?

Travis: Oh, yeah. That's got to be a tough one, huh?

Teresa: Yeah, yeah. It's not easy. And so, in 1939, Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia...

Travis: I recognize the name; he built the airport, or the airport's named after him.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: That was his house.

Teresa: Oh, was it?

Travis: And then when he died, they said—they already have the runways.

Teresa: "This must be the new airport, LaGuardia."

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: He actually asked to meet her at the World's Fair on July 22nd. Now, if you were asked by the mayor to meet them at a specific place, at a specific time, on a specific day, what would you think was happening?

Travis: Uh, what would I, Travis McElroy think was happening?

Teresa: Sure, sure. What would you, Travis McElroy, think was happening?

Travis: See, here's the sad thing. I immediately thought I was going to be assassinated.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: That's probably not it.

Teresa: It's probably not it, but she did think she was gonna be fired from her city job.

Travis: Oh. I guess it—I think if my boss was gonna fire me and basically said, "Let's go to the carnival," that'd be a weird way to do it.

Teresa: I— I suppose.

Travis: Unless it was like, they're stepping onto the Ferris wheel as they fire you. Like, "You're fired, bye!" And then suddenly they're up in the air, so they don't have to see you anymore.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: I actually would do that. Now that I've said that out loud, that's not a bad plan.

Teresa: It's not a bad plan?

Travis: "You're fired. But! Here's some..."

Travis and Teresa: "... cotton candy!"

Travis: Okay.

Teresa: But no, no. No, no. Not being fired. In fact, he was there to give her a high honor. So he wanted her there to appoint her publicly as a judge for the domestic relation court.

Travis: [gasps]

Teresa: So, before, she had been assistant corporation counsel for the City of New York, and now she became the first African-American woman judge. Judge. First African-American woman judge in the history of the United States. Wow. And she was only 31 years old.

Travis: Wow! [emphatically] Wow!

Teresa: This is the part where, um, insert Teresa's rage of not knowing any of this.

Travis: Right.

Teresa: Why? That's not—it's just not fair.

Travis: Why aren't there, like, five thousand things named after her?

Teresa: I know, right?

Travis: I don't understand.

Teresa: [sighs] So.

Travis: This is at 31!

Teresa: At 31.

Travis: Blowing my mind. The time left to accomplish things is blowing my mind.

Teresa: Indeed. So, let's—let's paint this picture a little bit.

Travis: Paint it for me, baby.

Teresa: In 1939, in this point in American history, women had only been legally allowed to vote for 20 years. And that was just white women.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Right? Some Black women could vote, but things like voter suppression and violence often met them if they tried. And Asian citizens would not be allowed to vote for 13 more years.

Travis: Wow.

Teresa: I'm blown away, really. At this point, you'd think that she could just, like...

Travis: Do some laurel resting?

Teresa: [laughs] Put her feet up and be like, "I'm the judge." Right?

Travis: Rest on your laurels. That's another one, that's another idiom.

Teresa: Yes. That's an idiom, for sure.

Travis: *That's* an idiom, folks!

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: I—listen, I know idioms, at this point. Okay.

Teresa: But she was great at her job. She was so great. She was an incredible judge for family court, often speaking directly to the victims, who are often children. And she kind of, like, pioneered this idea that the judge should be, like, approachable as an advocate for justice.

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: And so she didn't wear traditional judge robes, she wore normal clothes to try and make sure that the people who were in her court room were comfortable.

Travis: Yeah, to humanize yourself. That's great, you know?

Teresa: Exactly. Exactly.

Travis: I've only ever once had to appear before a judge.

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: And it was for a noise violation fine. And he was so mean to me and yelled at me. I was 21 years old and all I could think was, "This guy really is enjoying having all of this power over me and yelling at me." And, like, it was not very nice, it made me very sad, I was very scared at the time, and he very clearly was having a great time.

I watched him also grill this woman before me because she had, like, this huge fine, um, for like, serving someone underage alcohol at a restaurant. And she was like, "They had an ID, I checked the ID, the ID was fake, I didn't know." And like, he was really very much enjoying cracking down on her and making her sweat and being mean to her.

It was just... ugh. Having this idea of an approachable judge would have been nice.

Teresa: Yeah, it would have been nice. So, not only was she an advocate for these children, especially, um, this wasn't the only place where she made a difference. Uh, she was the legal advisor to the National Council of Negro Women, as well as serving on the boards of the NAACP, the National Urban League, and the Child Welfare League.

So, she would receive honorary degrees from Tuskegee, Williams College, Hampton University, Western College for Women, and Morgan State University.

Travis: Wow!

Teresa: Her work with children and her community was so prolific that she caught the attention of Lady Eleanor Roosevelt.

Travis: I've heard of her, yes!

Teresa: The two collaborated to provide support for the Wiltwyck School, which was a comprehensive, holistic program designed to help young men. The goal was to eradicate juvenile crime by showing young men an alternative way to build their lives.

Travis: Okay!

Teresa: Did I mention that she was also a single mom at this point?

Travis: What? What happened to—

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: What?

Teresa: Well, unfortunately, her husband passed away in 1943, four years after Bolin's judicial appointment, and two years after the birth of their son, Yorke.

Travis: [sadly] Oh.

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Well, that is, uh, sad. But also, another impressive thing. Once again, you don't need to do these things to be impressive. I want to make that clear.

Teresa: Yes, of course.

Travis: She is clearly impressive in her own right in a lot of different ways, right? You don't need to keep adding things, you don't need to prove strength of character, in order to be impressive. That said, as you add elements in, it makes the story—I think it makes the story, uh, more frustrating that we haven't heard about it, right?

Teresa: Exactly.

Travis: Because here's this, clearly, this pillar of like, the things that can be done and the things that were done in the face of adversity.

Teresa: Experiencing her own challenges.

Travis: Yeah, and it not being hailed as a story worth being told to young people.

Teresa: Okay, so...

Travis: I'm sitting here and I'm inspired by it, and I am neither a woman, I am not a person of color, I have no law aspirations whatsoever, and I'm sitting here inspired. So imagine what an impact this would have on young women of color who had aspirations for—ugh.

Teresa: I know. I know. Bolin served four executive terms as a judge and reached her term limit. Um, and she was reluctant to retire, but again, who could contain her activism, right?

Travis: Indeed.

Teresa: Um, she officially retired in 1979 when she was 70, but was not done at all being, like you said, a pillar of her community. Uh, she volunteered as a reading instructor for NYC public schools. She did that for a couple years, and then she served on the State Board of Regents as a reviewer for disciplinary cases.

She continued to work for the NAACP and the National Urban League and the Child Welfare League to ensure the safety of children, no matter their ethnic background.

Travis: Incredible.

Teresa: I know, right? She was 70 years old when she was like, embarking on her second career, right?

Travis: There is just something about somebody who's like, "I'm not done. I think I'm just gonna keep doing stuff." And here's what I really love, the thing that got me in there was "as a reading instructor."

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: Because, like, when you go from being like, a certain court judge, um, and having what I imagine is a very illustrious career, and you feel like you could make a ton on like, lectures circuit, you could, like, just kind of go speak at any college you want to.

You could be a pillar of society, as you said. And it's like, "What do you want to do?" And it's like, "I want to help kids learn to read."

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: And that just...

Teresa: Aww.

Travis: ... the idea of that, she sounds very amazing.

Teresa: Yes. After a lifetime of groundbreaking achievements and community service, she passed away on Monday, January 8th, 2007 in New York City. She was 98 years old...

Travis: [amazed] What?!

Teresa: ... and left behind her loving son, and a granddaughter, and a great-granddaughter.

Travis: She was a—what!? 2007?!

Teresa: Yeah, 2007.

Travis: What?!

Teresa: I know.

Travis: I never would have guessed that in a million years. I—okay. I was not way off on her birthday, but when you were like, "Yeah, 1969, when she was retiring," I was like, "Oh, okay. We're nearing..."

Teresa: I told you! Her second career, basically.

Travis: And it's like, no, no, no. It went, like, another 28 years!

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Wow.

Teresa: Her obituary did appear in the New York Times, and it really is lovely. Please go look it up, it is—it's just a great tribute, um, to not only, like, her community service which we've mentioned, but also the type of person that she was. It mentioned, uh, that she was frequently in the news for her fashion, her hats, her pearls. Her general regal way of carrying herself.

Travis: [dramatic] Ooh!

Teresa: It also covers her tenacity and constant work for social change, um, including in her own hometown, apparently. One time, she was visiting in 1944, and you know, think about it. She was already a judge at this point, right?

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: Uh, and she started fighting for desegregation of schools, and help from the government, and for hospitals in her hometown. Then, she's quoted in the Poughkeepsie New Yorker saying, "Poughkeepsie is fascist to

the extent of deluding itself, that there is superiority among human beings by reasons solely of color, race, or religion."

Travis: Boom! Boom!

Teresa: Yep. That's a lady who knows what's right.

Travis: That just made me tear up again. That was just great.

Teresa: You're gonna need to drink some water, you're gonna get dehydrated.

Travis: I'm just—you know, the world is... This is a somewhat universal thing, right? And it's that scary, bad stuff sells papers, right? For lack of a better thing, right? And so, it's wild to me that when you have a story like this, and a story that we have come across many, many times now in *Shmanners*. Where it's like, "Here's a story you have not heard."

And it's like, yeah. "Hey, this is something that would make people feel good about the possibility for change and growth and the ability to rise above." And then you don't hear about it.

Teresa: Yeah. You don't hear about it.

Travis: It's very frustrating.

Teresa: Uh, she did not, uh, drift away into obscurity. Today, she and her father are featured prominently in a mural at the Duches County Courthouse in Poughkeepsie, which is the same place where she and her father spent most of their time as she was a young girl.

Also, the school district named a building for her, and countless Black and female judges have cited her as the inspiration for their careers.

Travis: Amazing.

Teresa: There was a 2017 bill introduced to New York state assembly to rename the Queen's Midtown Tunnel as the Jane Bolin Tunnel. Um, and in 2011, a biography was published on her career titled, *Daughter of the Empire State: The Life of Judge Jane Bolin* by Jacqueline A. McLeod for the University of Illinois Press.

And so, I— [sighs] Here's the thing, right? Alex made a special mention that in researching this topic, there really isn't a lot, right? Just like Ada McKinley, right? And so please, *Shmanners*, read her obituary, and her biography, and tell your friends, and make a YouTube video, and like—

Travis: Yeah.

Teresa: You know, like, tell anyone who will listen about the amazing things this person did with their life.

Travis: That is—I will say that that is kind of the, uh, silver lining upshot of being frustrated that these stories have not been told up 'till now. We live in an unprecedented time of access to creating your own content, so we are able to talk about these stories on *Shmanners*.

You can talk about these stories in whatever venue. You don't need to have a publisher, you don't need to have a production company, you don't need to have these things to be able to tell people these stories. That is the upshot, I think, of all this. And that being said, I just want to say thank you to everybody who listens to our show...

Teresa: Mm-hmm.

Travis: ... when we talk about these things, I get pretty passionate hearing them. Hopefully you feel the same way, and go out and tell other people about them. Um, we want to see—

Teresa: Because these people shape our world.

Travis: Right.

Teresa: Right? That's the thing. That's why—

Travis: And if we ignore the impact, if we ignore their contributions, that's how we backslide into things going back to being worse.

Teresa: And we feel comfortable talking about biographies like this because this is the world we live in and that's what manners are about, right?

Travis: Right, right.

Teresa: So, that's why do it.

Travis: Think about how different the world would be without Jane Bolin, right? Like, just thinking about having a judge who wants to be humanized to help the people, right? Somebody who breaks barrier after barrier when she easily could have stopped, somebody who when she could have been done, said, "I want to teach kids how to read."

Teresa: Yeah.

Travis: Right? How different would the world be without her, right? And it's a name that we should know.

Teresa: We should.

Travis: Um, I want to say thank you to Maximum Fun, our podcast home. Thank you to you, MaxFun supporters and our listeners.

I'm very excited to say, so, we do a thing for McElroy Family where every month we do a special pin, pin of the month, and then the proceeds from that, selling that on our merch store, benefit a charitable cause or an organization. So the pin this month is a *Shmanners* pin.

Teresa: Woo-hoo!

Travis: Uh, "It's sausage to me." And it's really cute and it benefits Feeding Texas, the largest hunger relief organization in Texas and currently their network is supporting warming shelters for the unhoused as well as those without power and water in addition to replacing perished food and feeding Texans in need. So make sure you check that out.

There's also an Empty Bowl pin there, designed by Samuel Rardin. Uh, Teresa's a big fan of *The Empty Bowl*, so we'll probably have to get one of those.

Teresa: [laughs]

Travis: Uh, and a 20 Big Dog Run pin designed by Mel Westfall. 20 Big Dog Run is the nickname Justin, Griffin, and I gave 2021. 2021, 20 Big Dog Run. See, it rhymes. Okay.

Teresa: Yeah, yeah, yeah. We get it!

Travis: We're doing an *Adventure Zone* live show today, on the fifth at nine P.M. eastern time. It's virtual and interactive which means there will become moments when you all will get to decide what the players do. You can get tickets for that at live.themcelroy.family.

Oh, and we're playing Honey Heist with special guest Erika Ishii. Uh, I started a Twitch channel? So if you're, like, interested in that, it's twitch.tv/thetravismcelroy. It's pretty chill and very nice.

Teresa: Lots of chill pickles.

Travis: Lots of chill pickles. Um, and if you're a fan of *The Adventure Zone*, uh, you can go preorder *The Adventure Zone: Crystal Kingdom*. It's our next installment in our graphic novel series. It's gonna come out July 13th, but you can preorder now at theadventurezonecomic.com. Who else do we thank?

Teresa: We want to thank Alex for her tireless uncovering of these obscure topics that we want to highlight. Thank you, Alex.

Travis: Indeed, indeed.

Teresa: We also always thank Brent "Brental Floss" Black for writing our theme music which is available as a ringtone where those are found. We also thank Kayla M. Wasil for our Twitter thumbnail art that is @shmannerstcast, and when we take questions for specific topics, that's where we get them from. So, go ahead and follow us there.

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

Please continue to submit your topics and your idioms to shmannerscast@gmail.com. That's where we get them all, and Alex reads every one. Let's see... that's it for me.

Travis: I think that's it. 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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