

## Shmanners 280: Voting Rights

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**Travis:** All in favor say "It's *Shmanners*."

**Teresa:** It's *Shmanners*.

**Travis:** And the podcast passes!

[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:** Doin' okay!

**Travis:** You have very cute vintage-y, pinup-y hair today.

**Teresa:** Thank you. I tried out some, uh, TikTok viral sock curls last night.

**Travis:** A lot of words there. Some of 'em I understand.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** But you're not on TikTok. Wait a minute!

**Teresa:** I mean, I—

**Travis:** Are you secretly on TikTok and you didn't tell me?

**Teresa:** I'm not. I peruse Instagram Reels, and a lot of those are TikToks as well.

**Travis:** Do you think that that is, like, the Mr. Pibb to TikTok's Dr. Pepper?

**Teresa:** [laughs] Maybe.

**Travis:** It's just that I'm, uh, heavy on TikTok, and I send you TikToks all the time. And then I'll be like, "Did you watch that great TikTok I sent you with that funny puppy?"

And you're like, "No."

**Teresa:** Well, s—

**Travis:** And I'm like, "What were you doing?"

And you're like, "I was taking care of the children."

**Teresa:** [laughs] I really only get to, uh— to scroll ad nauseum in the evenings—

**Travis:** This is true.

**Teresa:** —when the children are asleep. Uh, so you send me TikToks during the day, when I *thought* you were working?

**Travis:** No, most of the time, not to get blue, I'm in the water closet.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** The loo. I've gone to the toilet.

**Teresa:** I see.

**Travis:** Um, but none of that is what we're talking about.

**Teresa:** It's not.

**Travis:** Can I tell you, easily best form of voting? Dropping a folded piece of paper in a hat anonymously. It's the best!

**Teresa:** Oh, okay.

**Travis:** Or— and it doesn't have to be a hat. [laughs] Let me be clear: doesn't have to be hat. It can be anything, right? But a folded piece of paper? Ooh. Ooh [crosstalk]—

**Teresa:** Charades-style voting. [laughs]

**Travis:** Yes, yes, yes. Little piece of paper. Oh! Whoop! Eh! Pull it out of a box? Oh. Tribal council? Oh, love it.

**Teresa:** Did— did you— we're doing voter registration. Did we say that?

**Travis:** Yeah, voting, yeah.

**Teresa:** Voting. Um, did you, as a high schooler or middle schooler, practice vote? Did you guys hold, like, like, Presidential elections in your school?

**Travis:** Oh, def— we must have. I— you ask me this question, baby. That was at *least* 20 years ago.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Oh my goodness gracious. Saying it out loud is a shock. I don't remember... period.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Uh, and I— I mean, we must have.

**Teresa:** I remember getting to cast my vote for... was it Ross Perot? Or, uh, or George W. Right?

**Travis:** George H. W.

**Teresa:** George H. W.

**Travis:** It would've been Ross Perot, George H. W, or... Dukakis? No.

**Teresa:** We did, like, a— like, a practice one. Um, while I was in— was that middle school or... I think it was called junior high then.

**Travis:** The first actual Presidential election I was able to vote in was, uh... let's see. It would've been... 2000... wait.

**Teresa:** Oh no. [wheezes]

**Travis:** How old am I?

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Uh, so 2004, because in 2000 I was not old enough. I was only 17 at the time.

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** Um, so it would've been 2004.

**Teresa:** And me as well.

**Travis:** And I believe that was, uh, John Kerry and George W for his second term.

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

**Travis:** Um, and—

**Teresa:** The Pepsi wars, it felt like. Wasn't that— there was a whole thing where, like... no?

**Travis:** I'm— I'm gonna let this die on the vine—

**Teresa:** Okay. [laughs]

**Travis:** —'cause I have no idea what you're talking about.

**Teresa:** John Kerry was related to Pret— Plets— Prets— blegh!  
[stammers]

**Travis:** You mean the Koch Brothers?! They're kind of like Pepsi, I guess.

**Teresa:** No. No, Pepsi— he was like, "I'm a Pepsi drinker," or something. I don't know. Anyway, he was—

**Travis:** Oh, okay. A candidate you could really have a Pepsi with.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** I do reme— one of my memories from this was, uh, coming— it was voting day. Um, and my mom's mom, who Bebe is named after, Barbara, uh, who I called Granny, we called Granny, uh, was at our house. And at that time I didn't know much about her, right? I'm, what, 19? Could that be true? Whatever.

Or I had voted maybe in, like, a state election at that point. Anyways— and I just knew her as, like, kind of an old Kentucky woman, and she—

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm. Chain smoker.

**Travis:** Chain smo— ah, chain smoker. Loved soap operas.

**Teresa:** Sassy.

**Travis:** And all the candy in her house tasted like an ashtray.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** She was kind of sassy. And she said, "Your mom— your mom—" let me see if I can do my Granny impression.

"[shakily] Your mom told me you voted for the first time today."

And I said, "Yes, Granny."

And she goes, "And she tells me you voted Democrat."

And I said, "Yes I did." At this point, no idea where this is going.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** And she goes, "I'm so proud of you," and gave me a big hug. And I was like, "[gasps] Okay!" And that was why, years later, when I introduced Granny to Teresa I said—

**Teresa:** Ugh, this again.

**Travis:** —I said, "This is my girlfriend, Teresa. We're living in sin." And Granny laughed, didn't she? She laughed!

**Teresa:** She laughed.

**Travis:** She loved that joke. It was great. Never saw that woman in a church, so I wasn't worried about the joke. Anyhoo...

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** I'll tell you the worst kind of voting. Public, having to say it out loud, say "Aye?" Ugh.

**Teresa:** Oh, say the ayes, the nays, yeah.

**Travis:** I am on a board for a thing, and at the beginning of any board meeting we have to approve the minutes from the previous board meeting, and they always say, like, "All approve say aye, and all approve say nay."

And during the nays, everybody looks around like, "Are you gonna...? Are you—" I don't know why anyone would be like, "I oppose the meeting—the meeting minutes!"

**Teresa:** Wait a second. So you're supposed to vote on whether or not...

**Travis:** They enter the record, I guess. Like, you approve the mi— I guess we're supposed to review 'em and be like, "Wait a minute! Bob didn't say that," or whatever. I don't know.

**Teresa:** Who's taking the minutes?

**Travis:** I don't know! I'm just there to be the young, pretty one! I'm not—

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** I don't know what I'm doing!

**Teresa:** Alright.

**Travis:** I'm just there to engage the young vote, [laughs] I guess.

**Teresa:** I guess.

**Travis:** So, speaking of voting...

**Teresa:** Voting.

**Travis:** Did— ooh, I have another one.

**Teresa:** Oh, okay.

**Travis:** Another question. Did you ever run for any kind of student body, like, office?

**Teresa:** Um, not student body, no, but I did run for, uh, Historian of the Thespian Society in our Thespian... Society group... troop, thing. Whatever they call it.

**Travis:** I ran for many, many things.

**Teresa:** Uh, I can imagine that you did.

**Travis:** Yes. Uh, when I was in ele—

**Teresa:** I was unopposed, by the way. I was— I—

**Travis:** [holding back laughter] Uh, did you win?

**Teresa:** They allowed me to be historian. [laughs]

**Travis:** I can't believe there wasn't more competition for that coveted spot. Uh, when I was in elementary school I ran for the Vice President of,

I guess, the student body. [sighs heavily] And my dad helped me construct a bit of a jingle for myself, 'cause my name is Travis Patrick McElroy, and it went like this.

"[singing] Vote TPM to be your VPM—" which was Vice President of Miller, which was my elementary school. "Vote TPM to be your VPM, Travis Patrick McElroy—" er, vote Travis McElroy, something like that. And then it was many, many years before I kissed a person.

**Teresa:** [laughs loudly]

**Travis:** So... I don't know that the two are necessarily connected, but they're not inherently disconnected!

**Teresa:** Oh, boy.

**Travis:** Um, I also— all the— uh, so in high school...

**Teresa:** Listen, you're a late bloomer. It's okay.

**Travis:** I'm still bloomin'. You know what I mean?

**Teresa:** Still bloomin'!

**Travis:** I'm still bloomin' here. Um, I, uh, in high school I ran for— I think it was junior class... treasur— I don't know, something. One of those where it's just like, "I'm pretty sure I know what that does." But I didn't do anything.

**Teresa:** Nope. Nope. Mm-mm.

**Travis:** And, uh, I was running unopposed. And what— we had, like, a closed circuit TV— I promise we'll get to the actual episode in a second.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** But there was a closed circuit, like, TV news thing that we used, and they would do, like, every Friday morning there was a news class, right? And so they had us do, like, on-air kind of like three minute debates, but if you were unopposed you were just supposed to step up and say, "Hello, my name is Travis McElroy. I'm running for Junior Class Pres— er, Junior Class Vice President," or whatever, unopposed, and then step out.

So I, being me, and a complete butthole, stepped up and said, "Hi, I'm Travis McElroy, and I'm running unopposed for Junior Class Treasurer. That means I won't lose, no matter what. I'm gonna tell you right now, I'm gonna miss a lot of meetings. I don't even know what a treasurer

does, but there's nothing you can do to stop me. I'm still gonna win! No one else is running! There's nothing you can do. Ha ha ha!" And then walked off.

**Teresa:** [laughs] Whoa!

**Travis:** Yeah. And it was very funny, I'm not gonna lie.

**Teresa:** [wheezes]

**Travis:** But it was just the kind of person I am.

**Teresa:** [laughs] Oh, man.

**Travis:** Yeah. You wouldn't have liked me in high school.

**Teresa:** I don't think I would've.

**Teresa:** We've talked about this. You would not have dated— you would've been like, "That butthole? No way!"

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** Anyhoo.

**Teresa:** Can we say that on *Shmanners*?

**Travis:** I think we can say... I'm not gonna say it a third time.

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** I think three times is too much.

**Teresa:** Too much, okay.

**Travis:** Yeah. That's how you keep your PG rating.

**Teresa:** Uh, let's— let's talk about... voting.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Um, so in the grand zeitgeist of things, America is kind of, like, all about the voting rights, Declaration of Independence—

**Travis:** Oh, sure, sure.

**Teresa:** —we do democracy right.

**Travis:** That's kind of— yeah, uh—



**Teresa:** Yeah. [hums doubtfully]

**Travis:** Eh.

**Teresa:** Eh. Eh.

**Travis:** *Raison d'être*, would you say?

**Teresa:** Yeah, maybe.

**Travis:** This is the thing. I was actually— ugh. This is weird, but I was listening to a podcast today called *Finding Drago* about—[stammers]—in many parts about *Rocky IV*. And they talk about how in that movie Russia and America are compared to each other, and they talk about in it how much it's forced that, like, America is, like, all about individual freedoms.

And it's like, yeah... kind of. [laughs] That, like— that's kind of a propaganda thing about America.

**Teresa:** Um, so, last year on August 18th, 2020, the US celebrated 100 years of voting rights to commemorate the 19th Amendment, uh, which gave some women the right to vote.

**Travis:** Yeah. White— white women.

**Teresa:** White women.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Here's the thing, right? It's always been kind of, like... an elitist versus populist ideal, right?

**Travis:** And in many ways still is.

**Teresa:** Still is. Um, the idea that the— the common, the rabble, although we want to serve them, they are not—

**Travis:** They don't know!

**Teresa:** —smart enough to pick the people—

**Travis:** [posh voice] "They don't know what's good for them!"  
[unintelligible grumbling] Blegh.

**Teresa:** So. Um, voting was restricted. You know, the great American experiment. Voting was restricted to landholding white men.

**Travis:** Yes. Of— of age.

**Teresa:** Of age.

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** Indeed, indeed. Um, and later it was extended to all white men, but women had to wait until the 1920's. And, uh—

**Travis:** You know, I've never really thought about it until you said that, but how different would this country be— you know that idea of, like, not knowing what's good for them, right?

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** There are many, like, 10 and 12-year-olds out there that in many ways understand issues that are going on in this country better than, like, most 50-year-olds I know. How much different do you think the political landscape would be if— if we just, like, opened up voting to be like, "Tell me. And without your parents telling you. Who's running? Okay, yeah, you're— get in there. Do it."

**Teresa:** [laughs] Uh, but of course, um, indigenous people, Asian-American people had to wait a long time, people of color. You know, there was a lot of missteps, and there is still, you know, continued attempts to suppress people, uh, as far as their voting rights go.

**Travis:** And there are— we still— America— the United States still has, like, non-state holdings.

**Teresa:** Yes.

**Travis:** Um, that don't get the vote.

**Teresa:** Indeed.

**Travis:** Pretty messed up, here in 2021.

**Teresa:** Um, so let's go way back. The earliest pilgrim settlers brought the concept of voting with them from England. Um, which—

**Travis:** When they said, "What do you guys wanna have for dinner tonight? Hands raised. Corn? Corn? Okay."

**Teresa:** [laughs] Uh, but the concept was that only freeholding, meaning landowning, taxpaying men could cast votes in their community. And before 1776, the only people who could vote were white male landowners who were Christian and over 21.

**Travis:** Lot of restrictions!

**Teresa:** A lot of restrictions.

**Travis:** For the home of the free.

**Teresa:** So, uh, regardless of that, that means that roughly 6% of those people who resided in the early United States were eligible to vote.

**Travis:** That's not a lot.

**Teresa:** No, it's not.

**Travis:** That's not a lot, you know?

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

**Travis:** That's like saying, "Hey, we got a class of 100 here. Let's choose what we want for lunch. Well, six of you said that you want, like, boiled shoes. Done!"

**Teresa:** [laughs] So by the time 1783 rolls around and we are done with the Revolutionary War, um, it was decided that states had control of who was eligible for voting rights.

**Travis:** Okay. Okay.

**Teresa:** Um, and so... fast forward, uh, [laughs] to—

**Travis:** [fast-forwarding noise]

**Teresa:** —to 1848.

**Travis:** Big fast forward. Yes, okay.

**Teresa:** Big fast forward. Um, there was a convention held in Seneca Falls, New York.

**Travis:** A comic convention?

**Teresa:** No, a voting convention.

**Travis:** That— oh, was there cosplay?

**Teresa:** No.

**Travis:** Oh.

**Teresa:** But there were prominent abolitionists.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** And early women's suffrage advocates, and this was where the women's suffrage movement was born. Suffrage means voting rights. Um, big names on the guest list included Susan B. Anthony.

**Travis:** Heard of her.

**Teresa:** Frederick Douglass.

**Travis:** Heard of him.

**Teresa:** Lucretia Mott.

**Travis:** Heard of her.

**Teresa:** And Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

**Travis:** Heard of her? [pause] Heard of her.

**Teresa:** Heard of her, yeah.

**Travis:** Now I've said "Heard of her" too many times.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** That's just what— heard of her?

**Teresa:** Uh, they signed a document. Everyone at the convention, not just, you know, the VIPs. They signed a document called the Declaration of Sentiments. Now, what does that sound a little bit like?

**Travis:** The Declaration of Independence, where the secret map is!

**Teresa:** Yes and no. No— there's no secret map.

**Travis:** Well, no. You're gonna say that 'cause it's secret.

**Teresa:** Okay...

**Travis:** If you knew— Bebe— baby?

**Teresa:** Oop!

**Travis:** Teresa.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** If you knew about it, it wouldn't be secret.

**Teresa:** I see. Uh, like the Declaration—

**Travis:** [simultaneously] That's 101.

**Teresa:** —of Independence, the Declaration of Sentiments was a listing of grievances.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Talking about how demanding greater voting rights for women how, you know, women have the right to organize and have greater property and economic equality, and of course the right to vote, right?

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** Um, and, uh, included a famous line. "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal." They wrote that before Lin Manuel did.

**Travis:** Oh, I see.

**Teresa:** Yeah.

**Travis:** Also before everyone understood the gender universe.

**Teresa:** Right, yes. Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Travis:** The full scope of the gender universe.

**Teresa:** Full scope. Uh, 1856, they passed a new voting law... for more white men.

**Travis:** Okay. Uh-huh.

**Teresa:** Um, and that was the year—

**Travis:** "Listen, we hear you. We— you want voting to be made available to more people. You've got it! The rest of you white guys!"

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** "Get in here."

**Teresa:** "Get in here." That was the year that North Carolina became the last state to remove property ownership as a requirement, which is a good step, right?

**Travis:** Sure, yeah.

**Teresa:** Uh, but still male. Still had to be male, even if you didn't own property. You could vote, if you were white, but not if you were...

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** ... the others. It— you know.

**Travis:** Anyone else.

**Teresa:** Anyone else.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Next, the 14th Amendment was passed in 1868, granting citizenship to Black Americans as well.

**Travis:** There we go. Okay.

**Teresa:** Only citizenship, though.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Bet— better not try to vote.

**Travis:** Man, baby steps, huh!

**Teresa:** I know. Real— real baby steps.

**Travis:** From some real babies. [laughs quietly]

**Teresa:** Two years later, they were able to get the right to vote, so it was very incremental. Um, the 15th Amendment prevented federal or state governments from denying someone a right to vote based on their race, but it didn't, like, spell out, "Don't do this, this, and this as forms of voter suppression," right?

**Travis:** Mm-hmm.

**Teresa:** There's a lot of stuff, um, especially during the post-Civil War reconstruction era. Uh, where there were lots of things, like literacy tests and, you know, pay to cast a ballot, and white-only Democratic party, like, caucuses, and, you know, all of that stuff.

**Travis:** BS. Just BS stuff.

**Teresa:** Lots— lots of stuff. And, you know, *today* this has continued in the form of redlining, and other voter submission tactics. Uh—

**Travis:** Stuff with proof of identity and— yeah.

**Teresa:** Exactly, exactly. Um, and, you know, check out the ACLU. They do great work to reduce voter suppression in Black communities particularly. And, you know, Stacey Abrams also. Um, we're gonna put their pages in our source list.

**Travis:** And we're gonna be right back to talk more about the history of voting here in the United States. But first... a thank you note for our sponsor.

**Teresa:** Alright.

[theme music plays]

**Travis:** We wanna say thank you this week in part to Curology. Listen, it's not hard to believe that achieving your skin goals can be unattainable. For a long time, I didn't think I could get cleaner, clearer, better skin. That makes it sound like I found better skin somewhere. That's not what I mean. I mean that by working with Curology's dermatology provider team, I was able to find a solution, a combination, a formula, if you will, to help with my skin concerns. You know, things like clogged pores, dry skin, all of that stuff. They helped me find a prescription formula with three active ingredients picked just for me to tackle my skincare needs. Curology matches you with a licensed dermatology provider who gets to know your skin, and if it's a good fit you'll get a customized prescription cream to address your acne, fine lines, dark spots, whatever, right? All shipped to your door.

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We're also sponsored in part this week by Zola! When it comes to weddings, there are moments you'll always remember, and there are moments you wish you could forget. [sighs] You know, like for us, it was trying to get everybody to respond to RSVPs, you know, trying to organize all the details in one place. You know, we had some relatives

that maybe weren't as tech-savvy, uh, that it was hard to say, like, "Oh, click this thing, and then click these links, and go to all these places, and do all these things." Hoo, boy. But... the thing that I wish we had had at the time, that I'm able to give to you now, is Zola. Whatever kind of wedding you're planning, zola.com is the one place to start. They've got your back for all your wedding needs. Looking for a wedding venue? Zola will give you personalized recommendations. Zola can even help you create stunning save-the-dates, invites, and a matching wedding website. And all their planning tools are completely free to use, like a free wedding website that's home to your gift registry— which, by the way, comes with free shipping and returns!

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[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 gray areas in our lives: the people, places, and things we're huge fans of, but got some anti feelings toward.



**Tre'Vell:** 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:** Okay. So, where were— 15th Amendment I think was the last amendment.

**Teresa:** That was the last one. Um—

**Travis:** Next will be the 16th, [through laughter] if I am not mistaken.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** And then the 17th.

**Teresa:** It does seem to go in order that way. Um, okay. So, 1872, Susie— Susan B. Anthony—

**Travis:** Susie B.!

**Teresa:** Susie B. and, uh, Sojourner Truth, and 15 other activists were arrested for trying to vote in the 1872 Presidential election.

**Travis:** Uh-huh.

**Teresa:** This was a great catalyst for the suffrage movement and, you know, would bring all kinds of people together to participate in marching, and lobbying, and hunger strikes.

**Travis:** Demonstrations, all kinds of demonstrations.

**Teresa:** Demonstrations. And in 1890, Wyoming became the first state in the US to grant women the right to vote.

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** After that, 18 other states followed suit. Uh, mostly western states. Can you maybe guess why?

**Travis:** Western states. Uh, because... there weren't a lot of people there?

**Teresa:** Yeah. So, they were very sparsely populated, and were trying to entice people, especially women, to move there, right? So that, you know— so, "Hey, move to Wyoming! We've got votes for women."

**Travis:** I— I mean, listen. I don't think that's incredibly— I mean, listen. They did what they did for the reasons they did it, but I have said for a long time as a native West Virginian that West Virginia has seen, you know, a bleeding of young talent and people who, you know, graduate from college or high school or whatever in West Virginia, talented people, and they go somewhere else because they don't feel that West Virginia is welcoming to them. That West Virginia should just get over it and just start legalizing stuff left and right. And saying, like, "Yeah, we're cool with this, and that's fine. Yeah, whatever." So that, like, people will want to move there and do business there and make it their home. It's not a bad publicity move, if you're a state that needs people to come and do stuff in your state.

**Teresa:** Alright. We're up to 19, the 19th—

**Travis:** And also—

**Teresa:** Oh.

**Travis:** —to be cool, you know.

**Teresa:** Yeah, be cool.

**Travis:** 'Cause it's the right thing to do and all that as well.

**Teresa:** We're up to the 19th Amendment in 1920, uh, which gave women the right to vote on a national level, but...

**Travis:** What?

**Teresa:** ... it still excluded Native American and Asian-American women.

**Travis:** Okay. So, what about that thing back in history about not excluding people based on their race, huh?

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

**Travis:** Yeah.

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

**Travis:** Okay.

**Teresa:** Uh, it took four years, 1924, um, when Native Americans were granted full citizenship and the right to vote.

**Travis:** That's a deep topic to get into—

**Teresa:** Sure is.

**Travis:** —but I think we can all agree that's BS.

**Teresa:** Again, they faced different disenfranchisement techniques used earlier on Black Americans. But then, we continue to expand the right to vote to everyone who is of age, over and over and over again. [laughs] Uh, in 1952, the McCarran-Walter Act granted Asian-Americans the right to become citizens and vote, but regardless of how many times and how many amendments and how many, you know, acts are passed, it seems that there's always some way to exclude a group of people, right?

**Travis:** Mm-hmm.

**Teresa:** Um, even as late as 1965, there were still different acts being passed. You know, the Voting Rights Act was passed then, which explicitly outlined, uh, the different, like, discriminatory barriers that kept people of color from voting. And even, like I said, today, there are still practices that encourage one grouping of people to vote over another group, um, and, you know, it's not cool. Um—

**Travis:** It's also worth noting that currently Guam and Puerto Rico both don't— aren't able to vote in federal elections, so... [sighs]

**Teresa:** So. In 1971 came the last, like, sweeping legislation, uh, where the voting age was officially lowered from 21 to 18 because of the Vietnam War. Uh, people argued—

**Travis:** If they can be drafted, then they should vote.

**Teresa:** Exactly, exactly. If they're mature enough to fight, they are mature enough to make the decision on legislation and things like that.

**Travis:** You know, I wonder if that same logic will be used soon to lower it to 16, because most if not all states, right, can get their driver's license at 16. So why can't they vote?

**Teresa:** I don't know, maybe! So, as of 2020, 133 million American citizens were registered to vote. That's a lot! It's not all of them.

**Travis:** No. And that's not even including the ones who— well, I mean, that's registration. Voter turnout is even lower than that.

**Teresa:** Is lower.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Indeed. Um, so now, once again, let me say that you should go to ACLU website, and I'm gonna mention several other organizations that are very helpful. Um, also go to Stacey Abram's site, fairfight.com. And election day this year is November 2nd!

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** So, let's get it.

**Travis:** And listen, a lot of people only think about elections during the Presidential election cycles, right? But there's always state elections, there's Congress, there's Governor, there's local, there's city, there's district, there's all kinds of things happening all the time.

Uh, this year we've got Governor elections in New Jersey and Virginia, uh, state legislature elections, there's citizen initiatives, mayoral races, there's a couple special elections happening for the state House of Representatives. There's a lot of things going on, so don't just wait every four years to care about elections, because it always— especially— hey, I'm just gonna throw this out. Especially if you're the type of person who, when those Presidential elections roll around you're like, "There should be a third party!"

Well, if you want that to happen, that has to start at the very local level and grow from there, and not the other way around. Uh, so get registered, go vote, uh... and, you know, fight for change. [laughs]

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** I— I mean that, even though it sounded like I said it like that.

**Teresa:** Okay. So—

**Travis:** It just sounded like a sincere thing [through laughter] from an insincere person. Ugh.

**Teresa:** Let's— let's talk about actionable things, right? So, it is very easy these days to get registered to vote. Go to [vote.gov](http://vote.gov), and it will outline a very simple step-by-step process, but you do need to know what the deadline is for voter registration in your area. Um, and so that will depend on where you live, right?

**Travis:** Indeed.

**Teresa:** Whether or not you'll be eligible in the next election, or the one after that, or what-have-you. Um—

**Travis:** But even if— if you go there and you've missed a deadline for the November 2nd one, go ahead and do it.

**Teresa:** Yeah, yeah.

**Travis:** And then you'll be there for 2022, and you won't have to worry about the deadlines anymore. You'll just go down on election day.

**Teresa:** And if you don't know, uh, what your, you know, your registration qualifications are, there's another site you can go to, which is a nonprofit site, vote.org. Okay? Vote.gov is the government site to register. Vote.org has a lot of great information regarding, you know, the different polling locations and things like that, right?

**Travis:** And also to see if you're still registered.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Uh, you know, if you move to a different district, if you do a bunch of things. You— there's— always check. And they also will sometimes just, like, uh, you know, quote, unquote, "clean out," uh, voter registration stuff to be like, "Oh, we're pretty sure all these are old." Right? And then you find out, like, "Oh, my registration was expunged."

**Teresa:** Right. Uh, because you may not know this if you haven't voted yet, you can't just go to any voting site.

**Travis:** Yes. There are specific polling places that you are supposed to go to, and then there are also differing, like, things you have to bring with you.

**Teresa:** Right.

**Travis:** Like, so—[sighs] it's— listen. We understand. There's a lot of hoops sometimes that you have to jump through, but it's all worth it to make sure that your vote— and listen. The people who tell you that a single vote doesn't matter? Those people are either jaded or wrong.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** And it really does. It all adds up.

**Teresa:** So, once you get there, here are some, uh, hints and tricks? [laughs quietly] No, not tricks, just hints.

**Travis:** "Hey, hey, here's how you get 'em!"

**Teresa:** [laughs] Um, you should be quiet and polite while waiting in line. Um, it's a good idea to bring a book if you have heard that the lines are long. Um, because—"

**Travis:** Speaking of— there's also— sorry, very specific laws about how close to a polling site people can campaign.

**Teresa:** Yes, I was gonna— it's 100 feet.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Cannot be close— and not supposed to, like, yell at people. Um, so, let's see. Most polling places don't really like you to have your phones. They're not gonna take 'em from you. You can have 'em on your person, but if you have your phone out, that's just another excuse for someone to, um, to harass you.

Uh, don't wear any articles of clothing, accessories, or signs that have particular candidates on it. Again, it's not— you know, it's not illegal to express the person that you want to vote for, but it's another way that people could turn you away.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** Um, or ask you to turn your shirt inside out, or remove your buttons, or— or whatever it is. Um, let's say— yeah, 100-foot free zone where you are required to be back from campaigning during a polling place. Um—

**Travis:** A lot of, by the way, uh, we had a question that I'm going to pull up right now. But the question is about, like, "What if you haven't had a chance to, like, research thoroughly in depth all of the candidates and stuff?"

Uh, a lot of places, uh, you will be able to find the local chapter of whatever party you are registered with.

**Teresa:** I like to check the League of Women Voters here in Cincinnati. I also like to check the Democratic Party endorsements. Um, I don't always go with either of those, but there are, um, different, like, papers and magazines in the area. Cincinnati Inquirer. Uh, they always run, like, a voter guide.

**Travis:** Always especially helpful too whenever there's, like, any kind of, like, ballot issues.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Where it's just like, "Oh, this is, like, forever many pages." and it's like, okay, great. Here's a summary of what this thing is about. Right?

**Teresa:** Right. Um, and if you do find that you are having trouble with voting, you can always ask a poll worker how to execute your vote. Um, obviously they can't— they don't, like, you know...

**Travis:** Tell you how to vote.

**Teresa:** ... tell you how to vote.

**Travis:** Like, which candidate to vote for.

**Teresa:** And you can't— you can't ask about, like, how many people have voted so far, or how many people have even been there, or anything like that. That's all confidential. But, I mean, the process. If you're like, "I don't know where to put my pen" type stuff, or "This is cut in half," or whatever it is, they can definitely help you on how to execute your own vote.

**Travis:** Um, so Maggie had asked the question about finding out who was on the ballot, and this is especially important for people who have not voted before, because some elected officials, it's not by party.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** So I think, like, judges for example. Um, that kind of thing. So if you are interested in, like, how does this person's, like, belief system align with mine? It's not gonna say on the ballot which party they belong to, so that's definitely something you want to research ahead of time to find out, 'cause those are very important positions, and to find out, like, you know, what kind of, like, track record they have as far as things that they have ruled against and ruled for and stuff like that.

**Teresa:** Mm-hmm.

**Travis:** Um, now, we had a bunch of questions. Let me get your take on this.

**Teresa:** Okay.

**Travis:** Is it bad *Shmanners*... to, one, ask somebody or discuss with somebody who they voted for or what they voted for in an election? We'll start there.

**Teresa:** Um, so, it is about, um, the— you know, read the room.

**Travis:** Yeah.

**Teresa:** And don't just, like, randomly ask people. I mean, I guess if you're doing, like, a sampling poll or whatever it is. Um, it needs to have some kind of context is where it becomes whether or not it's polite, right?

**Travis:** I think I would probably... I'm not always for the, like, hedging, you know, of a thing, but this is where I think I would say, like, "Are you comfortable if I ask you who you voted for?" Right? So that way that they are saying, like, "I'd rather not talk about it," and leave it there, instead of saying, "Who did you vote for?" And them having to say, "I'd rather not talk about it."

**Teresa:** Well, because, you know, it's— it's your right as a— you know, as a voter to keep it to yourself. You don't have to discuss it with anyone you don't want to.

**Travis:** Yes. And I think it's saying, "Would you be comfortable with, or is it okay if I ask you—" it acknowledges— it gives them the opening, that you're saying, "I acknowledge that it is okay if you don't wanna talk about this."

**Teresa:** Right. Right.

**Travis:** In that same way, we also had people ask, "Is it okay then, number two, to say to someone, 'I don't wanna talk about this'?"

**Teresa:** Absolutely it is. Uh, in fact it's one of your rights as a voter. Um, that you don't have to disclose your right to anyone. It is a private ballot. One of the— the newer tips I would like to have out there is, along with your phone in line, you— don't take a selfie.

**Travis:** Hmm!

**Teresa:** With your ballot, right? Wait til you get outside to take a picture of your sticker or whatever it is. Um, once you're in the voting room, don't take any pictures at all. Uh, because again, this is a privacy issue. Um, if you got somebody else inadvertently in there, or, you know, there— you know, there are places where taking a picture inside the voting place results in jail time or fines. So, don't do it.

**Travis:** Don't do it. Uh, so that's gonna do it for us. Uh, and thank you so much for joining us. Thank you to our researcher, Alex, without whom we would not be able to make this show. Uh, same— by the same turn, thank you to our editor Rachel, without whom we would not be able to make this show. And thank you for you for listening, because we would be able to make this show without you, but why?

**Teresa:** [laughs loudly]



**Travis:** Um, thank you to Maximumfun.org, our podcast home. Uh, if you want to check out all the other amazing shows Max Fun does, you go to Maximumfun.org. They're all there. You can also go to mcelroy.family to check out all the other McElroy projects. What else, Teresa?

**Teresa:** Uh, before I do my regular spiel, we're back on that Bake On train.

**Travis:** Yeah we are!

**Teresa:** Yeahh! Look that up. That's on mcelroyfamily.org— .com— er, no.

**Travis:** [simultaneously] Yes, if you wanna hear Ter—

**Teresa:** No. Mcelroy.family.

**Travis:** Dot family.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** You can hear us talk about *The Great British Bake-Off*, the new season.

**Teresa:** And we always thank Brent "brentalfloss" 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, @shmannerscast, which is where we got our listener-submitted questions for this episode. Also, thank you to Bruja Betty Pinup Photography for our cover picture of our fan-run Facebook group. If you love to give and get excellent from other fans, do join that group. Um, and—

**Travis:** Speaking of which, you reminded me.

**Teresa:** Yeah?

**Travis:** Our next week— next week's episode is going to be about bonfires.

**Teresa:** Oooh!

**Travis:** So if you have any—

**Teresa:** Bonfire night.

**Travis:** Yes.

**Teresa:** So cozy.

**Travis:** If you have any questions about, I guess the etiquette and manners of a bonfire, planning one, throwing one, attending one, if you have any questions about, I don't know— probably don't ask about the building of one, 'cause I don't know how much we're gonna focus on that.

**Teresa:** [laughs]

**Travis:** But you can, uh, on Monday I'll put out a tweet from the *Shmanners* account asking for questions, and you can submit them there.

**Teresa:** Great! And you can also submit your topic suggestions, [shmannerscast@gmail.com](mailto:shmannerscast@gmail.com). Alex reads every single one, so make sure to say thanks and hi to Alex.

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

**Teresa:** No RSVP required.

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

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

[theme music plays]

[chord]

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