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[00:01:01] <Music>

Annie: Hi friends, welcome to another episode of That Sounds Fun. I'm your host Annie F. Downs, and I'm really happy to be here with you today. We've got a great show in store for you. Throughout this month, we've been sharing on That Sounds Fun Tour, live conversations, if you weren't able to hear them in person. We did save some of the interview just for the live audience, but you will hear most of it here, and today is the last of the live shows from June that we recorded on tour. But it is not the last of That Sounds Fun Podcasts or shows friends that's right.

Today, we are announcing that on October 1st, we are taking the, That Sounds Fun Podcast tour to my hometown of Marietta, Georgia. We'll be in this Strand Theater, which is this beautiful historic theater in my hometown, I cannot wait, right there in downtown Marietta, on the square. Tickets are on sale right now, and there's a very good chance that this one will sell out because everyone from Atlanta and the surrounding areas, yelled at me when we didn't have you on the original list. I know it's because we always had the Strand coming in October.

So grab a ticket today, it's going to be such a fun show with comedy, fun coaching, a live podcast recording with a special guest, and so much more. The only thing that will make it more fun is if you're there. So just go to anniefdowns.com/events to get your tickets. And if you're not in the Atlanta area or you don't want to travel to the Atlanta area on October 1st, stay tuned for some more fun news coming your way very soon. But today on the show we have

Sharon McMahon. Sharon is a former high school Government and Law teacher who earned a reputation as "America's Government Teacher" amidst the historic 2020 election proceedings for her viral effort on Instagram, to educate the general public on political misinformation.

Her mission is to share non-partisan information about democracy, and in the process, she's amassed hundreds of thousands of followers online, including me, affectionately called the governerds who are doing some pretty cool things in the world. You're going to hear all of that in this conversation. So let's just jump into my episode with my friend, one of your favorites, and finishing out our live tour episode Sharon McMahon.

[00:03:21] <Music>

And now will you please join me in welcoming our guest, America's Government Teacher, Sharon McMahon. Yay, thank you, thank you, thank you. Come on! How many of you saw Sharon picking what to wear yesterday on her Insta Story? Yeah, me too. It was very behind the scenes, I liked it.

Sharon: This got the most votes.

Annie: Yes.

Sharon: So this is what I wore.

Annie: Understandably, it's lovely.

Sharon: Thank you.

Annie: Okay. I need you to explain this whole thing to me. Because suddenly you have 700,000 Instagram followers, and you're talking about The Constitution.

Sharon: It is a mystery.

Annie: It is a mystery.

Sharon: It is.

Annie: A modern-day mystery.

Sharon: It is a mystery. I have the same questions as you. Who knew?

Annie: Who knew, right?

- Sharon:** Truly. Who knew that this was like something that people were interested in? I didn't. I'm over here talking about like babies and stuff that I thought people would find interesting, and apparently what the world is missing is the First Amendments.
- Annie:** Right. Right. Exactly. So, I mean, you were just running your normal Instagram life. What triggered you to start going, "I actually know all of this, I should start telling people so they aren't dumb anymore?"
- Sharon:** Yeah. I mean, that is a big motivation, like let's make people less dumb.
- Annie:** Let's make...
- Sharon:** Less dumb with Sharon
- Annie:** ...with Sharon and Annie, here to make people less dumb.
- Sharon:** So there was actually a specific moment, where I was scrolling Facebook.
- Annie:** Yeah, I'm sorry to hear that.
- Sharon:** I know. It really is like my least favorite place. Scrolling Facebook, and I saw a conversation that one of my friends was having with one of her friends, and I didn't know the other person that she was conversing with. And I was internally like that is, 100% wrong.
- Annie:** Oh, really?
- Sharon:** Like everything they were saying was super wrong.
- Annie:** Yeah.
- Sharon:** And in that moment, I made the decision, I'm not going to argue with strangers on the internet. Because that doesn't ever end well, right?
- Annie:** It doesn't.
- Sharon:** Right? Nobody is ever, like, "I have seen the light."
- Annie:** Yeah. Thank you for yelling at me with all caps, I've changed my mind.

Sharon: That's correct, you've convinced me. So I decided what I was going to do is just start making some little videos, like explaining here's how the Electoral College works. Here's what blah, blah, blah. That people could refer back to, and that they could drop a link into their own comments sections, instead of me arguing with 500,000 strangers.

Annie: When was this? When did this start?

Sharon: September of 2020.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Annie: So less than a year, you've gained half a million Instagram followers. That's insane.

Sharon: It's fascinating.

Annie: Yeah. What do your real life friends think now?

Sharon: You know, it's mixed. Some of them are, I have a couple that are like, "I don't even understand what this is." And some people who are like, "I'm just the most proud of you."

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: "Please don't forget me."

Annie: You're like, "I'm in my house on my phone, I can't forget my friend really."

Sharon: Right.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: Most of them are just super supportive.

Annie: Were you already done teaching public school?

Sharon: Yes.

Annie: So last year did you have another job and this is like taken over?

Sharon: Yeah. I mean, before the pandemic, I've been a professional photographer for a long time.

Annie: That's right. That's right. I knew that.

Sharon: So I've been working, taking pictures of babies.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: which is, I've loved having that as a career, it's been a fantastic career. And then obviously COVID changed a lot for a lot of people. And this COVID gave me the time to do this.

Annie: Right.

Sharon: I was a very busy professional photographer. I had probably shot 400 sessions a year.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Sharon: And I would have never had the time to be like, "Let me make some videos about the Electoral College" before.

Annie: Right.

Sharon: Especially knowing that I had clients waiting for me to edit their pictures.

Annie: Yes.

Sharon: Right?

Annie: Yes. Because that's if you're shooting 400 sessions, you're editing 400 sessions.

Sharon: Correct. Plus, like 20 weddings a year, which have a thousand pictures in each of them. So I always felt-

Annie: I don't understand you. How did you do that? Did you ever sleep?

Sharon: Minimal asleep.

Annie: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sharon: Minimal sleep.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: So yes, COVID gave me the time to do it.

Annie: Do your kids, they don't love when you cry on the internet?

Sharon: No.

Annie: Yeah. They don't love that, which is understandable, teenagers are allowed to have feelings. What do they think about the rest of this? What does your husband think about the rest of this?

Sharon: They think it's, my teenagers are like, "It's weird."

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: You know, it's weird to them. Especially because nobody else's mom is as weird as me. Like, "Why can't you just be a normal mom that works at a bank and doesn't cry on the internet and doesn't try on clothes on the internet. Why can't you work at a bank and just come home like other people's moms?"

But, I will say that my son who is in college, the president of his university apparently is very like, "Can you get your mom to come talk here?" And so he thinks like now that he's getting a little bit of clout.

Annie: Yes.

Sharon: Like, that now it's more interesting to him.

Annie: Now things are different.

Sharon: Mh-hmm.

Annie: Are you going to start doing that, are you going to start speaking and stuff?

Sharon: Probably.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: Yeah, probably.

Annie: That's a great idea.

Sharon: Yeah.

Annie: Okay. Like this, I mean, I guess I did get you out of your house.

Sharon: I know.

Annie: Are you going to start going in public?

Sharon: That's weird?

Annie: What an idea? One of the things I love what you teach us about government, and I want us to talk about it, but I think the actual thing you're an expert at is building community. That's what makes everybody stick around is not just how much you love whales, and not just how you use-

Sharon: It is the whales.

Annie: It is the whales.

Sharon: It's the whales,

Annie: Those videos though, are so sweet. Also, no way did that guy get swallowed by a whale?

Sharon: Mh, there were a lot of people who were real mad that I was questioning his whale story.

Annie: Did y'all see this news story a couple of weeks ago? Will you just recap it? And then I'll ask you this community question, I won't forget.

Sharon: It's a story where a man who's like diving for lobster, claims that a humpback whale swallowed him, and he couldn't see anything, and then it spit him out.

Annie: Yes. Like weeks ago, not Jonah.

Sharon: Right. Yeah. Which, maybe it happened, I wasn't there, but I'll leave room for the possibility.

Annie: Sure.

Sharon: But also if it's pitch black inside a whale's mouth, how were you able to say, "It was a humpback." Really?

Annie: Detective Sharon.

Sharon: Yeah. Like, oh, also this is 50-foot long animal.

Annie: Yes.

Sharon: That weighs hundreds of thousands of pounds, and you didn't hear it? You didn't see it?

Annie: You said in your story, you said, "You could see the lobster-"

Sharon: Yeah, there were lobsters down there.

Annie: "But you couldn't see the whale?"

Sharon: But you did not see the 300,000-pound animal? But there's a lobster, that is this big.

Annie: No.

Sharon: It just doesn't equate.

Annie: No.

Sharon: You know, whatever, I'm leaving room for the possibility that it really happened.

Annie: And you also taught us very early in all this, facts don't care about our feelings.

Sharon: No.

Annie: Facts don't care about our feelings. And the fact is that's a hard story to swallow.

Sharon: That's a hard sell.

Annie: It's a hard sell, yeah.

Sharon: It's a hard sell to me.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: Yeah.

Annie: Okay. So you're just very good at making us all feel like we know each other. I mean, your followers are called governerds. You gave us a name.

Sharon: Yap. Somebody else came up with the name.

Annie: Which is a big deal about how you build community. That someone else wanted to have a name for the thing you were building.

Sharon: Yeah.

Annie: How'd you do that? How'd you learn how to build community like this?

Sharon: I'm just walking through the open doors Annie, that is what I am doing.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: There was no master plan of like, "And now let's execute step 17 of the community building." You're ascribing too much credit to me.

Annie: I don't believe it, but I hear you.

Sharon: You know some of it, I do think some of it is the fact that I have been a teacher. And one of the things that you do in a classroom is you build community in that classroom.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: That classroom community is extremely important. And when your classroom community goes off the rails, like anybody who's been a teacher knows how challenging that is.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: And so the culture building, community building, from the very beginning is crucial when you're a teacher. So, I mean, maybe I drew from some of that experience, but I certainly have not had the experience in like, "Let's just all, all of us get along."

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: Like that's, I don't have any experience with that.

Annie: Yeah. I actually really like that you don't make us all get along. I like when there'll be times, and y'all have seen it, but there'll be times where she'll say, "Okay, if you

lean left, tell me how you feel about this? Now, if you lean right tell me how you feel about this?" And then you'll post both.

Sharon: Mh-hmm. Yeah, you don't have to have the same opinion to be able to enjoy each other.

Annie: Which is a lost art.

Sharon: It really is.

Annie: To enjoy someone who does not share your opinions.

Sharon: Right. Right now in America, we have a standard for friendship is check all the boxes of like, "How do you feel about this, this, this, and this." And if we are not in alignment, then we are not friends.

Annie: Yes.

Sharon: And that is not how it is supposed to be.

Annie: No.

Sharon: Humans are actually, not meant to get along that well.

Annie: Mh-hmm.

Sharon: You know, like that is kind of by design. Because if we all get along perfectly and agree on everything, there's no growth opportunity.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: If it's too easy, you're not growing.

Annie: And if you cut everyone out who doesn't agree with you, you will stop growing.

Sharon: Yes.

Annie: Or you'll just grow in a circle.

Sharon: The growth comes from the discomfort.

Annie: Mh-hmm.

Sharon: And we are excising the discomfort too often from our lives. And we are excising the opportunity for growth when do that.

Annie: How do we find people to follow that we don't agree with, but don't make us furious? Or is it okay if they make us furious?

Sharon: You know, that's completely up to you. And I think it is important to know your own mental health. It's important to know, like, "What are my boundaries? What can I tolerate?" Some people like me have a very high tolerance for differing opinions. Like, don't be a high school government teacher, if you can't listen to some really stupid things.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: You know what I mean?

Annie: Big opinion from 14-year olds.

Sharon: Yes. So like I have a high tolerance for it. It doesn't offend me if you feel differently than I do, I don't need to get worked up about it. But some people, their personality is such, they don't have the innate personality characteristics that allow them to gross over it in the same way.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: So some of it is knowing your own limitations, what you can handle. And if you're somebody who's very sensitive to it, like one small encounter will knock you off kilter, then find somebody who is maybe slightly to the right or left of where you are, but who is gentle about it?

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: You know, like dip your toes into it. It doesn't mean that in an effort to grow that you need to follow all of the most inflammatory pundits.

Annie: Right. Right.

Sharon: Like protect your own mental health.

Annie: Protect your own mental health, without excising growth. That's right.

Sharon: That's the trick.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: Right. I don't personally follow any pundits on the left or right, I'm not interested in being screamed at.

Annie: Yes.

Sharon: Like, I get screamed at by enough other humans in the world.

Annie: You do get screamed at so much, don't you?

Sharon: I have four children.

Annie: Well, I also meant the internet, I didn't mean your children-

Sharon: From the internet. So when listen to people who are on cable news, that to me is far more challenging to listen to. Because a lot of them are saying things that are just simply not factual, and I don't appreciate it.

Annie: That makes me so mad. I want to be able to watch TV and believe them.

Sharon: Right.

Annie: But I can't.

Sharon: I know.

Annie: That's infuriating

Sharon: It is infuriating.

Annie: Yeah. And one of the accounts you share a lot is AllSides, is that what's called? They really kind of help us see, I mean, when they post the same news story. And in the central say here's what the center says. Here's how the left titled it, here's how the right titled it I think I'm going to pass out. Because I'm like, "I can't trust anyone on this planet."

Sharon: See, there's a difference though, between bias and lie and I think that is where a lot of people get hung up. Is that being biased, we're all biased, doesn't mean that you are lying. So you can have a set of facts about something, you know, like this building burned down. These are the set of facts surrounding it. And then there are a variety of ways to interpret those facts.

And we all take our own lenses, our own experiences, and apply them to a set of facts. Like for example, the building that recently collapsed in Miami, you know the condo building?

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: If you look at the news stories about it, so like the building collapsed, that is the fact.

Annie: Yes.

Sharon: If you look at the news stories about it, on the one half of the political spectrum, you have people talking about how we've dug up all of these code violations. There have been people who have said this building is in danger for multiple years. And on the other side, you have, "This is a conspiracy." John McAfee, who was a tech genius, owned something in this building. And there's some kind of secret something that's going on with it."

So you have these set of facts, and so people interpret them in different ways. And whether he owned a condo there or not, I don't know. But, anyway, bias is not the same as lie.

Annie: How can we sort out a bias in a news story? Like what's some filters that you use that help you figure it out? I mean, is it just always going to all-sides, and seeing what if you're reading these five sites they're leaning left. If you're in these five sites they're leaning right, how do you sort it out?

Sharon: A lot of it is the adjectives that are used. Like I obviously know what the bias leaning of various websites are, whereas news organizations are. But a lot of it is the adjectives. So for example, just to give you something that happened recently, when the Stimulus Bill was recently passed.

Annie: Yep.

Sharon: Some news organizations characterize it, they said, "Monster bill was jammed through Congress."

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: And other people were like, "Help is on the way." So and that's not even an exaggeration.

Annie: Right. That's exactly what they said.

Sharon: That actually happened. But yet the fact is the bill passed.

Annie: Yes.

Sharon: Right?

Annie: Yes.

Sharon: So those two ways of looking at the bill indicate the bias of the news organization.

[00:19:37] <Music>

Annie: Hey friends just interrupted this conversation with Sharon really quick, to tell you about another one of our incredible partners, Olive & June. Listen, y'all know this about me. You've seen my Annie's Fun List video on YouTube with glitter nail polish. You've seen my Insta Stories about my ombre method of extending a manicure, I love having my nails painted. The challenge is that I would definitely call myself an amateur at painting my own nails. I mean, I try really, I do my best, but they end up looking so messy and chipping like within a day.

And then the alternative is all the dollar signs involved, and getting regular salon manis. Olive & June's Manis system is here to save the day, y'all, I love Olive & June so much. Now we know that DIY manis that looks salon perfect, and last seven plus days are actually possible. Olive & June's Manis system comes with everything you need, for beautiful DIY manis all in one box it's only five-steps y'all.

And it comes with Poppy, this brush handle, that you can change out on all of the bottles of polish. It's comfortable to grip, so it steadies your hand, it makes it so much easier to paint with both hands, y'all. It means both hands end up with smooth, perfect, manicured nails instead of one looking great and one, well, not as much.

The mani system with six polishes breaks down to \$2 a manicure. I mean, y'all, I used to spend well, like more than \$30, just for one jar of manicure, and Olive & June polishes are amazing, y'all, I love the color options. Yes, they have glitter options and their polish is so shiny, and it looks just like gel, and it does not chip, it lasts a week, y'all, I couldn't believe it. This never happens with polish and my nails look great and I did them myself.

The Olive & June Mani system is the secret behind the salon-perfect nails at home, all-in-one, no guessing, no messy nails, no salon price tag. And as my friend, you can get 20% off your first mani system at oliveandjune.com. Just use the code; THATSOUNDSFUN. Your new nail life is here, my friends, get 20% off your first mani system, when you use promo code; THATSOUNDSFUN at

oliveandjune.com. We're done with expensive, bad manis. Okay this is the new us now, all right, oliveandjune.com, and the promo code is THATSOUNDSFUN.

[00:21:53] <Music>

Talk to me about the anger you get back from people. Because I think it's really interesting, you'll share, you're very good at being neutral. And the way we know that is that people from the left scream at you, that you're clearly on the right. And people from the right scream at you, that you're clearly on the left. What has that done to your soul to not only gain this many followers in a year, but to also gain a good collection of trolls in a year too.

Sharon: The gift that nobody wants.

Annie: Right.

Sharon: Is the trolls.

Annie: Right.

Sharon: You know, the random strangers, again, I taught high school for a long time. Like if you don't like me, I don't really care that much.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: You know what I mean? So there's that aspect of it. But what is more interesting to me is the people that have a blue-check behind their name. And what goes on behind the scenes of some people, that you all know, nobody that is in this room.

Annie: I was like, "With me?" [Inaudible 00:23:07] I'm scared.

Sharon: Not you, not you at all. But you would absolutely know them and you would be shocked at how-

Annie: At how unkind they're to you?

Sharon: ...at how absolutely rude they are, and they're incredibly mean behind the scenes. People of renown in the faith community, with the blue-checks behind their name-

Annie: You better tell me later.

Sharon: Who're the meanest people, like the meanest people.

Annie: You're lying?

Sharon: I'm not at all. I wish I was.

Annie: And they just like DM you trash?

Sharon: Absolute trash.

Annie: Sharon?

Sharon: And I have let them continue to follow me, because I think it's telling that this is exactly, like to be able to see it. "Oh, this is what is actually happening behind the scenes." That's interesting. That's interesting.

Annie: I'm so mad.

Sharon: Isn't that interesting?

Annie: Yeah. That I don't know where to go, I'm so angry. I just, we will be talking about this later. You are all going to see me say some things on the internet, in the very near future. Why don't you quit?

Sharon: I love it. I truly love it. I know that I am right now doing what I'm supposed to be doing. I am using the gifts that I have.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: I'm using the knowledge that I have spent many decades acquiring.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: And I feel like what I'm doing is making a difference.

Annie: Yeah, it is. I am so much smarter because of you. Like significantly, it's surprising.

Sharon: Thank you.

Annie: Yeah, we're all there? They are there too, really. Why do you love The Constitution so much?

Sharon: Well, there are things about it that, I mean, I think everybody who has spent a long time studying, there are things where you'd be like, "I wish it said this instead." You know what I mean?

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: Like there, everyone has those things. But overall I just love how enduring it has been.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: I really enjoy thinking about what went into it.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: I enjoy thinking about where the people who wrote it had come from in life, and what it took to get it to that point. We like to think that it's like eight dudes, and like a quill.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: Like thinking about all the best ideas in the world. And in reality it was like a room of arguing people who hated each other in many ways. They were in fact sometimes meaner to each other than we are today.

Annie: Oh wow.

Sharon: Like would hire a writer to do nothing but write hate pieces in newspapers, on their enemies.

Annie: Oh my gosh.

Sharon: In which they called each other horrific names.

Annie: Wow.

Sharon: So that's it's just fascinating.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: And so I love that this group of humans, who was like "You are hideously ugly, and your mom is horrible." And like all of the things that, you can look up some

of the insults they threw at each other. That they came up with something that has never existed in the world.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: And had still has never existed in the world.

Annie: Yeah. That has never existed in the world. I've never thought about that. You said a couple of weeks ago on Insta Story, that we were meant to have a constitutional convention repeatedly. That's when they wrote it, they thought we would edit it over and over.

Sharon: We're going to revisit this.

Annie: Interesting.

Sharon: We're going to revisit this. Thomas Jefferson's proposal was we'll revisit this, every 19 years.

Annie: He's such a weirdo.

Sharon: He's a big weirdo.

Annie: Big weirdo.

Sharon: Big weirdo

Annie: Big weirdo.

Sharon: His vision was we'll revisit this, every 19 years and we never have.

Annie: Because why?

Sharon: Because why, why would we do that? Ridiculous.

Annie: And I think, I didn't realize until this election, until January 6th, is that The Constitution is very safe. It really protects us in so many ways.

Sharon: It says what it says.

Annie: Yes. It says what it says, yes.

Sharon: Mh-hmm.

Annie: And so people, I'll just say some things, like you and I have all these ideas of what could happen. And you keep saying The Constitution-

Sharon: How about you read it?

Annie: ...wouldn't let that happen.

Sharon: How about you read it?

Annie: Right.

Sharon: That's, it says what it says. How about you just read? It's actually not that long.

Annie: Right.

Sharon: You know, we think that it's like a worn piece, or like a Shakespearian tragedy.

Annie: At times I do think it's long. One time I saw it in D.C., it was very big.

Sharon: Yeah. No. It's actually not that long. Some of the amendments are one sentence long.

Annie: Uh.

Sharon: So I mean, I'm not saying it's the summer beach read. Like it's not a page turner.

Annie: Right.

Sharon: But it's very, people are like, "Well, how would I even..." I mean, it's very easy to look up, like what does the 12th Amendment say?

Annie: Yes.

Sharon: Like it's very easy to find that information.

Annie: I'm sure if we googled The Constitution, we can read the whole thing.

Sharon: Quite easily.

Annie: I would think so.

Sharon: I mean it exists on many websites.

Annie: Why should we? Why does it matter that Americans read The Constitution?

Sharon: I don't think that anybody needs to memorize it. I just think is-

Annie: I wondered if you had it memorized, do you?

Sharon: I don't have the whole thing memorized. I have some of it memorized.

Annie: People don't believe you. Sorry. You don't think we need to memorize it.

Sharon: You don't need to memorize it, but it helps to know what's in it.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: Just like your favorite book. You don't memorize your favorite book, but if you were to say, "And are there dinosaurs in this book."

Annie: Right.

Sharon: You should be able to know that like "Yes or no." Right?

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: Like we should know if there's dinosaurs in The Constitution. So you don't have to memorize it, but it just like read it and be like, then you can know. You know, I thought I read something about that in like, "Okay, what is the 19th Amendment?" You can refresh your memory, but it's just good to know what's in it and what's not in it.

Annie: Yes.

Sharon: Like women, not in The Constitution. Education, healthcare, not in The Constitution. So a lot of things that we like to be like, "well, that's unconstitutional." Is it though?

Annie: You're like, it could be a lot of other things.

Sharon: Yeah.

Annie: But The Constitution doesn't mention it.

Sharon: That's right. It can be illegal.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: Because there are other laws beside The Constitution.

Annie: Right.

Sharon: But there's most things, in fact, are not in The Constitution.

Annie: Right. Yeah, I guess that's true, most things aren't in The Constitution.

Sharon: Most things are not.

Annie: This is a dumb question, I'm sorry for asking a dumb question.

Sharon: No.

Annie: Can we still add more amendments? Do people do that a lot?

Sharon: Yeah. We absolutely can. You can change it anytime you want.

Annie: Okay. But every 19 years.

Sharon: You can absolutely amend The Constitution, it's a long process and it's a big hurdle to overcome. You'll like to have 2/3 of both Houses of Congress, plus, 3/4 of the state legislatures to agree-

Annie: All 50-state legislatures?

Sharon: 3/4 of them.

Annie: Wow.

Sharon: Yes. So it's a big hurdle.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: But there's, they obviously intended for it to be amended, because the instructions for how to amend it are written in The Constitution.

Annie: Right.

Sharon: So it's not like they didn't foresee a time, when we would need, these were not stupid humans, right? They knew that they had no idea what was going to happen 300 years in the future. And that this one thing maybe was not going to serve every single thing that may ever happen, and you might want to make changes to it. So here's how you would do that, if you want to change it.

Annie: Who's your favorite politician?

Sharon: See everybody says Abraham Lincoln, right? Like everybody says him. And so, because I don't like bandwagons, I'm not going to say Abraham Lincoln.

Annie: I didn't know everybody said Abraham Lincoln, that's news.

Sharon: I think most people do.

Annie: Okay.

Sharon: Yeah.

Annie: Fair.

Sharon: Most people do.

Annie: He did a lot.

Sharon: He did a lot of good things.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: I have always had a soft spot for John Adams.

Annie: I knew you were going to say John Adams.

Sharon: I always. Yeah.

Annie: He's so boring.

Sharon: He's so boring.

Annie: He's so boring.

Sharon: He's so boring.

Annie: I watched that dumb TV show because you told me to. And it's-

Sharon: Did you hate it?

Annie: ...a snooze fest, dude. I finished it, but it was a snooze fest.

Sharon: What?

Annie: He was in a bed in Paris, sick for like two and a half episodes, I could not-

Sharon: [Crosstalk 00:31:53] I'll forward this stage.

Annie: ...I could not. But I did it because I like you, I did. Why, what is it about him? What do you love about John Adams? The first one not the Quincy.

Sharon: Not the Quincy.

Annie: No. I bet he's more interesting. But I'm not watching that show, lesson learned.

Sharon: He was the first precedent to ever be photographed. The Quincy was.

Annie: Was he?

Sharon: Mh-hmm.

Annie: To be photographed?

Sharon: Mh-hmm.

Annie: That's cool.

Sharon: And he looked like, whatever the dude's name is, that is the-

Annie: Who's back here you are suggesting? The guy back in your cabinet,

Sharon: Whatever the dude's name is, that is, that works at the bank at Hogwarts. I cannot remember what it is, what his name is.

Annie: I wonder if they built the Hogwarts guy after John Quincy Adams?

Sharon: He looks like him.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: What is, anybody know what his name?

Audience: Griphook.

Sharon: Girphook.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: He, look it up.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: Do it side by side.

Annie: Not right now, it will mess up with security don't do it right now

Sharon: Do it side by side.

Annie: Yeah. Okay.

Sharon: He looks like Griphook.

Annie: Now go back and tell us why you love John Adams.

Sharon: Okay.

Annie: Second president?

Sharon: Yeah, he was George Washington's vice president. I love first of all, how plain-spoken he was. When he was the vice president, he was like, "This is the worst job that has ever been."

Annie: Right.

Sharon: He even said in his letters like "My country could not conceive of a worse job than the vice president." And that amuses me.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: It amuses me, that he's not like "I love being the vice president."

Annie: That's so fun, this awesome, and he's like, "I'm bored."

Sharon: No, he's like, "This the worst job." I love his commitment to his principles, even though it was not politically expedient. Even though he lost the election and people were like, "You suck."

Annie: Right.

Sharon: He had principles.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: And do I like everything he had to say, of course not. But I have to admire a politician who sticks to their principles, and doesn't just do what is going to win them political points.

Annie: Yeah.

[00:33:59] <Music>

Hey friends, just taken one quick last break, to hear from one of our amazing partners, [IF: Lead](#). IF: Lead is coming up on August 7th, you guys, you don't want to miss it. You've all heard me talk about my friends, [IF: Gathering](#), before, and you know how much I love their founder, my friend, Jennie Allen. But this time I'm going to be live in Dallas, Texas hosting and I want you to be there too.

It's a virtual conference for women and it is our chance to pour into you as a leader. We know you're tired, and we know you've been through a lot over the last year and a half, and we want IF: Lead to be a chance for you to reset for the fall.

Some of my favorite Bible teachers are going to be there. So grab a couple of friends, watch it from your living room. It'll be the perfect refresher you need to be encouraged as you move forward. You can get your digital pass at IF: Lead 2021, like I-F-L-E-A-D-2-0-2-1.com and they start at just \$29. Again that's iflead2021.com and I'll see you there.

[00:34:59] <Music>

What do you think about what Hamilton the Musical has done for American government?

Sharon: I am a Hamilton fan, I love Hamilton.

Annie: Same.

Sharon: Yeah.

Annie: Same. I can do "Guns and Ships," I won't do it now, but I can, I can.

Sharon: That's impressive.

Annie: Thank you. Well-

Annie: That's impressive.

Annie: ...I should say I can do that, I'm not as good at the French part, but the American part, nailing it.

Sharon: It's impressive.

Annie: Thank you.

Sharon: That's more like one of my top favorite songs today, Hamilton.

Annie: Hamilton?

Sharon: Yes. I love it. I mean, I love that it has reignited people's interest in the revolution, which is one of my favorite historic-time periods. I love that it has brought light to some historic characters, that have been underappreciated. He obviously, "You'll never gon' be president now."

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: Right?

Annie: Yeah. "You'll never gon-

Sharon: So-

Annie: I didn't know what the Reynolds Pamphlet was since seventh grade, and now I'm like, "Oh, you want to hear about the Reynolds Pamphlet?" I'm like, "No, no."

Sharon: Mh-hmm.

Annie: Right.

Sharon: Yeah. I mean, anything that ignites people's interest in History and Government," I'm a fan.

Annie: Is most of it true to the story from what you know? Like did they do a nice job of retelling history or are we like memorizing songs and facts that are just not even real?

Sharon: A lot of it is very close to history. Some of it isn't, like the rapping is not in the history.

Annie: You know what, good point, that's a good point.

Sharon: Not in the history. But, so for example, there's a few, like when he meets Angelica Schuyler

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: She was already married.

Annie: Excuse me.

Sharon: Yep. She was already married.

Annie: Also, that last name does not look like Schuyler and that makes me insane. Wait-

Sharon: German.

Annie: ...she was already married?

Sharon: She was already married in real life. Yes. And there's a few other things where-

Annie: You're not going to finish that story for me, what happened? Did she get divorced?

Sharon: No. She says met her husband sailing off to England. He's met a wealthy husband-

Annie: Yeah, yeah. Okay, that's fine.

Sharon: ...he's not very interesting, et cetera. At some point during the show she gets married and-

Annie: Got it.

Sharon: ...leaves.

Annie: Okay, that makes sense.

Sharon: And she was already married, had not moved away, but was already married when he met her.

Annie: Okay. Fascinating. Wow. Okay. The other thing you've done, well, first of all talk about your favorite time period in American History for just a second. Is it the Revolution?

Sharon: That's one of them. I mean, I love the Revolution because it is, I mean, there's what's not to love, frankly.

Annie: What's that? The American Revolution, what's not to love?

Sharon: What's not to love? One of the things that I think about frequently is how difficult life was, for people. How difficult it was and what kind of obstacles people have overcome.

Annie: Yes.

Sharon: And just thinking about Hamilton's life, you don't see his childhood, obviously, in the show." But you know that his mother dies. His mother was, they continually referenced the fact that his mother was a woman of ill repute. And at the time it was very, very difficult to move yourself out of that situation. And so his mother dies. He's put in the care of a cousin who commits suicide, but he's so bright and he sails across the ocean, and it's just like, "I'm here now."

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: Literally he has no connections like "I'm here." And the idea that you could come from that and beyond our money.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: That interesting to me.

Annie: Yes.

Sharon: I also think about the people who immigrated to let's say Georgia and South Carolina, a lot of them were from Scotland.

Annie: Yes.

Sharon: Where it's breezy, and cool, and rainy, and then they moved George.

Annie: To Georgia. Where I was born.

Sharon: Where you are wearing multiple layers of wool and there's no air conditioning. I mean, I am a Minnesotan, and so that idea of like, "I'm going to live where there's no air conditioning and wear multiple layers of wool." Like even that it's like, "Hmm, I'm out."

Annie: Yeah. I think the same about, I love wild west, I love pioneers, I love that whole story. Because I think they gave up everything for this one thing they believed. That it was going to be better there than it was here. I mean, the challenge of it, and we have no idea. I'm like get mad if I run out of toilet paper.

Sharon: Right.

Annie: And they like gave up everything and lived in a wagon.

Sharon: People ask me all the time, like, "Has it ever been as bad as it is now?" And I'm like, "Aha!"

Annie: Yeah, yeah. A 100%, yeah.

Sharon: Aha! How much time do you have? The idea that you have a reasonable expectation of living to old age now, like even that right there.

Annie: And in your children.

Sharon: And you have a reasonable expectation that your children will grow up. You have the ability to vote and lead as a woman, like how much time do you have for me? You know, like you're not in, we no longer legally enslave millions of people.

Annie: Right.

Sharon: How much time do you have for me, to tell you how much worse it used to be?

Annie: Yes. Yes. Because of Mary Poppins and the "Sister Suffragette" song.

Sharon: Yes.

Annie: I mean-

Sharon: Yes, I love Mary Poppins.

Annie: Same with me.

Sharon: I love Mary Poppins.

Annie: I sing that little song to myself every time I vote and it makes me teary.

Sharon: Yes

Annie: Because I'm like, there are women, not three generations before me, who never got to have a vote.

Sharon: Yes.

Annie: White women who never got to have a vote.

Sharon: Cast on the shackles of yesterday.

Annie: Yes, yes

Sharon: Yes. Yes. Yes.

Annie: Thank you. Oh, it just moves me. It moves me. I love it.

Sharon: My favorite line from that song though is, "Though we adore men individually-"

Annie: Keep going.

Sharon: ..."We agree that as a group they're rather stupid."

Annie: Yeah, that's the line, that's the line. But they say it, "They're rather stupid." I like guys, so it's good. The other amazing thing you do, and with your community, is you rally us to give away everything. We give away our money. We give away our blood. We give away letters.

Sharon: Our blood. Literal blood.

Annie: It's unbelievable. I mean, talk about the medical debt forgiveness. You said to us, if we give a little bit of money, this company will release a lot of medical debt. How much did the governerds end up releasing of medical debt?

Sharon: \$147 million.

Annie: \$147 million. That is unbelievable.

Sharon: Over 74,000 people got a letter in the mail, saying, "Your debt has been paid."

Annie: Can you imagine getting that letter? No, that is unreal. And then will you talk about speaking of letters, will you talk about after January 6th, you said to us send letters.

Sharon: Watching what happened, and then seeing what the condition of the Capitol was after that happened. And everybody was up late, we're all glued to the TV, like what is going to happen? Are they going to take a recess for the rest of the day? And they decided they weren't going to, they were going to finish what they started.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: And I remember seeing a story on the news, where somebody said, "The Capitol is now being cleaned so that Congress can return." And that phrase just struck me. Like it is somebody's whole job to clean up this mess, through no fault of their own. They are the people, and if you read about what went on, in terms of like the stuff that was smeared everywhere, and it was not, we're not just talking about sweeping, okay?

Annie: Right.

Sharon: It was not cute. It was not cute at all. Somebody's job to do that, so that we could have democracy.

Annie: Yeah,

Sharon: Literally it is somebody's job to clean, so that democracy can continue. So to me, that was just like this whole situation hinged on people being willing. Like nobody was thinking, "I'm going to get an emergency janitorial call."

Annie: Right?

Sharon: You know what I mean? Like there's no janitor emergency.

Annie: Right.

Sharon: But to call everybody back in, after some of their own had just been shot, wounded, hundreds of people were injured. They had just essentially suffered a workplace shooting.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: And had to go back and do this very thankless job. You know, they're not the people on television.

Annie: Right.

Sharon: Nobody is giving them medals. I just felt like that is worth celebrating.

Annie: And so you said to everyone, just write a letter-

Sharon: How about you just write a "Thank you," note.

Annie: And send it to the Capitol.

Sharon: Yeah.

Annie: Do you have any idea how many went?

Sharon: It was over 25,000 letters?

Annie: 25,000 letters. To the janitors of the Capitol

Sharon: They published, so the Capitol staff has a staff magazine, that they publish quarterly. And so they put out a special edition of their magazine-

Annie: That's adorable.

Sharon: ...and mailed it to all of the people that work there.

Annie: Oh my gosh!

Sharon: That had a lot of like pictures of the notes, that there were a lot of teachers who had their like second grade classes and stuff like that.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: So they put those together in a book and sent those out.

Annie: That's incredible. You do such important work.

Sharon: Thank you.

Annie: I mean, not only teaching us, but teaching us, I do not watch Insta Stories because I'm on a book deadline, and it's one of my rules. So I don't really watch Insta Stories, but I don't miss yours. Because I love learning.

Sharon: Thank you.

Annie: And you teach us really generously and honestly.

Sharon: Thank you.

Annie: But I also love learning through how you lead and it really impacts me.

Sharon: Thank you.

Annie: It really matters. Tell us a couple of things where we can keep up with you. Sharon Says So on Instagram.

Sharon: Yep.

Annie: You have your classes we can take.

Sharon: Yep.

Annie: And you're starting a podcast.

Sharon: I have a podcast coming out.

Annie: Yes.

Sharon: Yes. I have a podcast coming out in the next couple of weeks. I already have so many episodes recorded.

Annie: Excellent.

Sharon: So that will be exciting. Yeah.

Annie: How do we keep up with all of it? sharonsaysso.com? Sharon McMahon-

Sharon: sharonmcmahon.com.

Annie: Okay. It's all there.

Sharon: Yeah.

Annie: Our time flew by. Is there anything we didn't talk about that you want to make sure we cover?

Sharon: Oh my gosh! How is it already over?

Annie: I don't know. I think it's because we're very good at this. Making people less dumb since 2021, that's Annie and Sharon.

Sharon: It's a worthy goal. It's a worthy goal.

Annie: It is. The last question we always, because the show is called, That Sounds Fun, tell me what sounds fun to you.

Sharon: Well, I always love to laugh.

Annie: Yes.

Sharon: You know, like that is always, I love to laugh at myself.

Annie: Aha.

Sharon: And I just love laughing in general.

Annie: Yes.

Sharon: And what sounds really fun though, is like a latte looking at the Alps.

Annie: Okay.

Sharon: Mh-hmm. That sounds really fun.

Annie: She went for the laughter too, a latte, and the Alps.

Sharon: Yeah.

Annie: It's fine. It's fine.

Sharon: Like sitting, and just like taking in, the Swiss Alps with my fancy coffee.

Annie: Have you been there before?

Sharon: No.

Annie: No. Okay. So you just imagined-

Sharon: Well, in my mind,

Annie: ...what it might

Sharon: That sounds fun.

Annie: That is all I care about.

Sharon: In my mind it does. That's right.

Annie: What sounds fun in your mind, that's all I care about.

Sharon: In my mind. Yeah.

Annie: The Alps-

Sharon: There might be goats.

Annie: I bet you're right.

Sharon: With like a bell.

Annie: A bell, okay?

Sharon: Like a bell around their neck.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: Some kind of a yodel will be good.

Annie: In the goat or just another person?

Sharon: No. A human.

Annie: A human yodeling.

Sharon: Yeah.

Annie: Like those big Alpine horns, that they use, that they call their cows with?

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: I like those. That also would be really fun.

Annie: I think if I just keep waiting, you're going to keep adding to the story, and we're really here for it. So we started with laughter, great.

Sharon: Yeah.

Annie: And then we Alps, latte sitting.

Sharon: Yep. Notice there's no strenuous mountain climbing of any kind. I don't want to, mountain bike in the mountains? No. I don't like things that are dangerous. I have enough blue-check marked, religious leaders that are attacking me. That's dangerous enough.

Annie: That's enough. That's right. Are you okay if, while you're sitting with your latte, and your goat, and your horn, if you can see hikers or "I only want to see them doing it?"

Sharon: No, that's fine.

Annie: Okay.

Sharon: Other people can enjoy the view.

Annie: Okay.

Sharon: It's fine. Maybe there'd be a massage later? I don't know.

Annie: Okay. Before lunch or after lunch?

Sharon: Well before lunch, and then I would have, I mean, like right after lunch, then I'd have time to go like change for dinner. And then there would be like a fancy dinner.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: In which I would look nice, and the food would be delicious.

Annie: Okay.

Sharon: That is my idea of a good day.

Annie: Yeah.

Sharon: Yeah.

Annie: Yeah. We received that, and we like it.

Sharon: Yeah. Yap.

Annie: Friends, if you are not already following Sharon Says So, I hope it will be the first thing you do when you get in your car, before you start driving, we don't do that and drive. But will you please join me in thanking Sharon McMahon for joining us.

[00:49:09] <Music>

Oh, friends, don't you just love her? Oh, gosh, I love Sharon so much and listen, you need to go watch her Sister Suffragette Insta Story that she did over the weekend. I mean, she's just incredible it's a highlight on her Instagram. If you aren't already following Sharon McMahon, which I'm guessing you are. Be sure to give her a follow [@SharonSaysSo](#), if you're not following her already, so you can tell her thanks for being on the show.

And she just started a new podcast it's called [Sharon Says So](#), which I highly recommend, be sure to check that out as well. And don't forget to hop over to [anniefdowns.com/events](#) to grab your tickets for the October 1st, show at the Strand Theater in Marietta, Georgia, and be on the lookout for some other fun news coming at you very soon.

If you need anything else from me, you know I'm embarrassingly easy to find, Annie F. Downs on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), all the places you may need me, that is how you can find me. And I'm thinking about TikTok, do I need to do it you guys? I need to know your thoughts. I think that's it from me today friends, go out or stay home and do something that sounds fun to you, I'll do the same.

Have a great weekend, and we'll see you back here on Monday, with, oh my gosh y'all, y'all are going to be embarrassed how fun goes on these guys. But Monday, we go Shane and Shane. Shane and Shane, two of my favorite worship leaders, y'all join us on Monday. See you there.

[00:50:26] <Music>