

**Audio Title: Rebekah “Bex” Borucki - The Story of Row House + Community, Responsibility, Equity and Disruption**

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**Transcript**

**Rebekah Borucki:** Hello, friend! I heard you were looking for our spot. I got you.

So, you’re going to go past the corner bodega and down the block from the fresh cuts barbershop, and there you’ll find a brick row house at the intersection of Literature Place and Social Justice Blvd. That’s the stoop.

Amanda, Amanda Lytle, she will be there to welcome you to the conversation. The Book Stoop, that’s the name of the spot. We got the hottest takes on book culture, nerd culture, current events, with best-selling authors, change-makers, and risk-takers, the best kinds of folks.

Oh, me? I’m Rebekah Borucki, President of Row House Publishing, and this is our podcast. I am so glad you’re here.

Now, I’m going to let you get to Amanda.

**Amanda Lytle:** Thanks, Bex. But the mic is coming right back to you shortly. First, hey friend, let me be the second to welcome you to our spot, *The Book Stoop*. I feel incredibly honored to be the host of this podcast and I’m so grateful to have you here.

Today on *The Book Stoop*, I am speaking with – you guessed it! Rebekah “Bex” Borucki and I can’t wait for you to hear this chat. Today, Bex shares the back story to Row House Publishing and the way that Row House is breaking traditional norms in the publishing world. She talks about the business structure and the pillars of Row House’s CRED commitment, community, responsibility, equity, and disruption and what each pillar means to hear.

Bex also opens up about Row House and how the experiences over the past year have far exceeded anything she could have ever dreamed of and elaborates on the investment opportunities available for supporting Row House. We start our chats on *The Book Stoop* with a rather fitting question and I made sure to throw this one at Bex too.

So Bex, what are you reading these days?

**Rebekah Borucki:** Well, what’s on my book stand, that’s a whole different question. There are probably literally 15 books on my book stand because our practice at bedtime with me and my little ones, the ten and the seven-year-old usually fall asleep in bed with me. But almost every

night the seven-year-old and I just wasn't having any of my own time for myself to read or listen to a podcast or whatever.

So, I started reading my books to her. So, she has read *Stony the Road* by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. She has read *They Were Her Property*. She has read *Mary Magdalene Revealed*. We did *The Clan Of The Cave Bear*. I'm not sure why that was a choice. There were a lot of parts I had to censor.

So anyway, long story, we have a bunch of children's books. We have a lot of different books that we stop and start ranging from African icons which by Tracey Baptiste that we just picked up. We just ready constantly. So, there are so many different books. *Seasons of the Witch* is another book for kids and it's about witchcraft and folklore and mythical and iconic figures through all cultures. I'm reading 47 books right now. I got five in the mail yesterday.

**Amanda Lytle:** Oh, shit.

**Rebekah Borucki:** I just read.

**Amanda Lytle:** Yeah.

**Rebekah Borucki:** So, the only thing more impressive than my custom Chuck Taylor collection is my bookmark collection because I'm very particular about what I put in my books because I have about a hundred at least going right now and I'm not exaggerating. Like there's a hundred books.

**Amanda Lytle:** OK. So how does a bookmark make the cut?

**Rebekah Borucki:** I have a set of bookmarks that I just got from Read With Mocha Books. That's one of my favorite online Instagram book shops, Read With Mocha Books, black woman owned, and it's a set of bookmarks. It has Jean-Michel Basquiat. It has Lauryn Hill. I have a Malcolm X one, Toni Morrison. It's just a really great collection of these characters in kind of like illustrated forms. So, I have those bookmarks.

I have ones that are inspirational. I have ones that mean things. Like they belong to my mother, or it might be my mother's favorite. Sometimes I use feathers that I find on the ground. I just – but they all have meaning.

**Amanda Lytle:** Totally.

**Rebekah Borucki:** This is the most boring podcast segment that was ever recorded.

**Amanda Lytle:** No. It's a bit of an insight into Bex.

**Rebekah Borucki:** It's like let me tell – well, I mean I think that people should know just starting off that I wear this badge proudly as a president of a publishing company who has

autism. So, I identify as *neuro-riotous* because that's what it feels like to live in my body and a riot in all the awesome punk rock ways and a riot and sometimes totally-chaotic-I-need-to-lie-down ways. Like I-can't-function ways but I really love it about myself. So, you will get into conversations with me about bookmarks. Like that's going to happen. It's something that I will do, and I will reveal my many quirks throughout this podcast episode, I'm sure.

**Amanda Lytle:** Yeah. Well, this is what we love about you Bex. We love how you just show up as you are every single time.

**Rebekah Borucki:** Thank you.

**Amanda Lytle:** That's actually a really great segue as the president of – well, so many things. But primarily I would love to talk about Row House and a little bit about the back story. So, for anyone who is new to this space, let's ...

**Rebekah Borucki:** Wait a minute. I have to interrupt because you said the president of many things. Like I'm also the president of Albania.

**Amanda Lytle:** Your household.

**Rebekah Borucki:** Like ...

**Amanda Lytle:** We've talked about this.

**Rebekah Borucki:** Moonlights as the president of another country. I'm just the president of Row House. I'm just the president of Row House now and I have a little non-profit. But anyway, the beginning of Row House, I mean I could say that it started with my wellness journey when I shoplifted *Be Here Now* from a used bookstore. I could say it started when I had to come to the decision to leave my former publisher for what I would very, you know, unapologetically categorize as racist behavior and white supremacist behavior. But, you know, I was an author for years. I have two books with Hay House, *You Have 4 Minutes to Change Your Life* and *Managing the Motherload*.

I have another with Quarto book group, *Calm and Clear Meditation Kits*. It's cute. I'm looking at it over there. It was so great for me because you need clay while you meditate. That was the method that I was teaching which is so – you know, I'm such a tactile person and fidgety person.

But anyway, I have four children's books in the Zara's Big Messy Collection. So Big Messy Day, Bedtime, Playdate and Goodbye and then I have this sweet little picture book for adults called *Gray* and it's probably the favorite thing I've ever published.

But that was my writing career. So, I was with Hay House, really working with them. I was on their Diverse Wisdom Initiative, and I do want to make a long story short because it isn't fun to talk about. But collectively as a society, we have been suffering through a pandemic together. Collectively as a black and brown community that I am part of, we have been suffering and

trying to navigate seeing so many black and brown people being brutalized and murdered on television by people who swore to protect us.

There's this collective trauma that has always been urgent and, you know, I come from activists, pacifists, people that were really outspoken about their views, about politics and other things.

So, it has always been urgent for me. But it has become particularly urgent, and I think that no matter who you are, whether you're a CEO or a mail person or whatever you should be speaking up about, racism, white supremacy in your spaces and working to dismantle the colonial constructs that we live within the United States.

It had become urgent when 5 of the 12 members of the Disinformation Dozen, which is 12 people on social media or online platforms that are responsible for the majority of disinformation around COVID, very much tied into QAnon. Five of the twelve of those were Hay House authors.

So, I went to the leadership, and we already had this tense situation because I had been working with them to bring in more black and brown voices over a two-year period and I feel like they were really not stepping up to the plate and investing in any real energetic or financial way.

So, it was already tense. But when this happened and they told me there was nothing they could do about it, that was just – I mean in that conversation, it was my cue to leave. So, I ended up resigning as a mentor on the initiative and then also pulling my contract for my children's series and walking away, which really sucked. It was like leaving a family. But very soon after, I realized that I have a lot of true found family out there because Juliet Diaz, one of Hay House's top-selling authors, Meggan Waterson, a white woman, and an author there – she wrote *Mary Magdalene Revealed* that I mentioned before and my friend Kristen McGuinness all were like, "Hey, we're here in solidarity. And what can we do and how can we move this forward?" So, Kristen and I decided – she made me – she forced me to – she convinced me, talked me into starting my own publishing house and Juliet Diaz said, "I want to be your first author."

That's how Row House was born. It was November of 2020 that we registered or yeah, 2020 that we registered the corporation and the trade name and so we're just at a year and we will talk about it more. But we have 10 signed authors now with the Row House imprint. We just started a new imprint that I'm probably going to be announcing for the first time here on this podcast called Spirit Bound and it is – yeah, and it's going to be run by Juliet Diaz and it's going to have magical and spiritual works, yeah, for adults and children. I'm really, really excited. So, Spirit Bound and they just signed their first author which we have not announced yet and I will wait for her to do it.

We are just – we have this incredible partnership with Simon and Schuster and this – you know, for sales and distribution, we have like the most badass publicists working with us and everybody is just really, really cool. So – and we've raised \$660,000 I think so far towards our \$900,000 goal. So, this is community-funded really. I mean that \$660,000 is stretched over nearly 600 investors and donors. So yeah. I just went on a whole rant about my stuff.

**Amanda Lytle:** I love it.

**Rebekah Borucki:** I know. But it's so boring to listen to.

**Amanda Lytle:** No, I think it's really ...

**Rebekah Borucki:** Do like a little sound effect. Like a zing, zing or something like ding, ding, ding, or something – I don't know. If I were producing a podcast.

**Amanda Lytle:** It would have all the sounds.

**Rebekah Borucki:** I would have all the sounds. Ding, ding, ding!

**Amanda Lytle:** No. Honestly Bex, I think this is so beautiful. I think that this is really important. So, you've said a couple of things. Like I mean one year, so many incredible successes with the 10 signed authors. You know, *Spirit Bound*, now this is so exciting also. I cannot wait to hear more about this. The community-funded aspect of this. I would love for you to elaborate a little bit more on the structure of what Row House is and why it's breaking molds.

**Rebekah Borucki:** Sure. So, we didn't want another publishing house, traditional publishing house and I say traditional in the sense including indies, about the way the structure is and how authors get paid because the world doesn't need that.

I mean I know there's a lot of talk out there. Like but the world needs you and your unique stamp on it and yes, and also how are we actually going to serve up or show up and serve and do something different. So, Kristen and I both being authors, she being an editor and someone that worked in publishing, she started it, I think Simon and Schuster 20 years ago, and has since gone on her own as a ghost writer and all those great things.

So, we said, "How do we build something new and equitable and inclusive and that really feels like a safe space for authors from the ground up? Like what are our values?" and I pull that from Trudi Lebron's teaching. She has our second book, *The Antiracist Business Book*. What are your values and how does that show up in business and who are you really serving? So, who's your customer and then who are you in service to and are those necessarily the same people, right? And I think that that really is a – one of the foundational things that we built off of with Row House. Like whom do we want to serve? But then who are we selling to?

So, our books, they come from all different genres, but they are all written through the lens of social justice, every single one of them. So, we have *Tarot for Pregnancy* and you're like, "How are we going to write about social justice there?" and it's like birth is one of the places where inequality, especially in America, shows up the most. So, she's going to be addressing all of those things in addition to tarot. Brittany Carmona-Holt, the most brilliant tarot reader. I love her.

So, there's that. So, it's like what are we writing about and then who do we want to write the books? So, the most marginalized among us and also people who are fighting for the most marginalized among us. So, we do have the sprinkling of white authors in our author catalog, and we truly are diverse, and we want all kinds of voices.

But again, through that social justice lens and then, you know, the biggest thing that – you know, the revolutionary thing, the thing that like Bloomberg calls about and Yahoo Finance and Business Insider call about is our 40-40 contract and that is inspired. Well then for me as a person of faith and someone that puts a lot of meaning on symbolism and I love to have fun with all of those things. Forty is a very special number to me. So, from a spiritual point of view but then also it's in tribute to or inspired by the 40 acres and a mule that were promised to black Americans by the government and then it was – the promise was rescinded.

So, this 40-40 contract is an effort for restoration, for repair. The first 40 represents a \$40,000 advance that goes to every author regardless of the size of their platform. If their content is good, we believe in them and we want to support them. So, we give everyone the same \$40,000 advance and some people will say, well, equal doesn't mean equitable and we talked about that.

So, there are going to be authors that don't need a \$40,000 advance or could go somewhere else and get 10 times that. We have those authors already. But \$40,000 can be life-changing to someone that doesn't have a lot in the bank, right?

But then on the other side of it, there's the 40 percent royalty share and that's 4 times industry average, which is 10 percent. So, our authors are going to be able to take four times as much money from their royalties and that's in perpetuity, right? As long as the book is selling, which is a really beautiful thing and that really like levels the playing field for a lot of people.

So that's super, super, super exciting and this attracts authors that are brand new, that want that break. We don't require our authors to be agented. So, it means you can come in without an agent and that's not true of the majority of traditional and indie publishers.

So, we have open submissions. We tried to remove like all of those barriers to entry and all those barriers to success. So, we have open submissions and then once they come in, that 40 percent royalty is based on more of the gross proceeds. So, we are only charging our authors for literal production, like printing the book, shipping the book, storing the book and then we give them marketing, publicity, design, like editorial assistance from the beginning, like developmental assistance.

So, there's so much that the author is getting but we in turn feel like the relationships that we're making with the authors and being in real partnership with them, true partnership, is going to make for better profits for us, right? Because like our authors love to be here and they not only love promoting their own books, but they love sharing Row House's mission and they love sharing each other's missions.

It's just this really beautiful family and that's intentional. You know, we build. We have a CRED commitment. It's Kirsten, my business partner Kristen McGuinness who's a genius and she's also very corny and I love that about her and she's like, "How about since we're doing like the Row House, and we have the block party fundraiser? Why don't we have like street CRED as our mission statement? Like we have CRED."

So, CRED is community, responsibility, equity, and disruption. So, the community part is really foundational. It's why Row House is called Row House. I grew up in a row house in a small town in South Jersey across from Philadelphia, just south of Trenton and row houses are a very unique style of architecture of at home specific to like working class, working for in the cities like Trenton, Baltimore, these Mid-Atlantic cities, Philadelphia, Washington DC, New York.

So, you have to just say, "Bex, take a breath. You're going to get it all in," because these are short podcasts.

**Amanda Lytle:** No, it's totally –

**Rebekah Borucki:** No, it's not going to be 45 minutes.

**Amanda Lytle:** It's not going to be 45 minutes. Don't worry. I'm on it. We're 16 minutes in. I'm watching.

**Rebekah Borucki:** And you can't cut any of this because people need to know that I even get sick of my own ramblings. So, you can ...

**Amanda Lytle:** I can leave it in just for you.

**Rebekah Borucki:** Just for me, just for me. Maybe we should cut it for the investors though because the investors are like, "Wow, she does a lot."

**Amanda Lytle:** No, no. Authenticity is what people want these days more than anything.

**Rebekah Borucki:** That's True.

Hey friend. We are coming straight back to *The Book Stoop* after a quick break.

I think authenticity. Authenticity but more than authenticity because I really don't need to hear from anybody that is trying to like plan an insurgence or not get vaccinated or all that kind of stuff. That's another thing. We do wear our politics on our sleeves here. I personally wear my politics on my chest because I'm always wearing a T-shirt that has some kind of message on it. It's just how I move in the world, and I really think it's important for businesses to talk about their values and that can include their politics or whatever.

For the consumer, the consumer should be allowed to know who they're giving money to, and I think that it's just important today for people – like if you do have values that you feel strongly in

and – or you have causes that you believe in, you should be speaking on them. Like these are the things that we should be talking about.

So community is so important to us because I believe that it is the antithesis of white supremacy because white supremacy, what it aims to do for all populations is to pull apart, to pull apart these structures that support you, to make you separate, to turn you into a hyper individual, which really can't survive or make you believe that hyper individualism is the key, therefore making you dependent upon the power structures that seek to control you.

So, I think community is the greatest response, the greatest dismantler of white supremacy. Because when you get together and you support each other and you help each other rise up and really have each other's backs no matter what, it's like who can take you out? Nobody.

**Amanda Lytle:** The next one was responsibility. I love this one.

**Rebekah Borucki:** Responsibility really is kind of a – it's like a repetition of community but to the extent that not only should we be in community but we really – we have a responsibility to show up for each other and it's not something – like I don't know how people say things like, "It's my decision and it doesn't affect everybody else." Well, every decision affects other people. Every single decision and it could affect someone obviously in good ways, obviously in bad ways, and I think that that should be considered.

So, when doing business, when we're making our decisions, it's like what impact does this have, good, bad, neutral on our community, on the people that we serve, on the people that we aim to serve? So, yeah, responsibility is a big one and then equity, you know, is I think self-explanatory. We do that through our contracts. We do that through giving our authors ownership. We have 20 percent of the equity in the company allotted to faith investors. We have four that are four women of color. They are authors. They each have a five percent equity stake and they serve on what we call our Publishing Council, and they advise us on everything from our mission statement to our acquisition processes.

It's just this panel of accountability partners basically and then disruption is another one. Burn it all down. That's what we aim to do. You know, the goal of Row House, the mission statement of Row House beyond just putting out really amazing books is to force the industry's hand, especially when it comes to paying their authors, especially when it comes to making their books more diverse, especially when it comes to putting more black and brown, disabled and queer folks in leadership.

So, when we do what we do, we do it transparently and that's so that other people can see exactly how it can be done, how you could be profitable and take care of people. You could be profitable and do good business. So yeah, disruption is like a big one for us and it's not a – what would you call it? A ...

**Amanda Lytle:** Buzzword.



**Rebekah Borucki:** Not just a buzzword. We're actually trying to disrupt, yeah.

**Amanda Lytle:** Yeah.

**Rebekah Borucki:** Yeah.

**Amanda Lytle:** OK. So, for anyone who is really interested in the investing aspect of it, what does investing in Row House look like?

**Rebekah Borucki:** That's another thing I'm so proud of. I really do love talking about every aspect of this business because there isn't one single part that isn't touched, influenced foundationally, social justice oriented.

So, our fundraising partner seat at the table is a black and brown funded and founded equity crowd funding portal. So, what they have allowed us to do, what they have supported us in doing is putting through an entire program with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission this 94-page application that turned out to be to apply to allow people that aren't accredited investors and that means someone that's a high wealth individual. You have to register and prove that you have this wealth, and it was done I guess to protect poor people who also aren't intelligent enough to manage their money.

You know, like that's what really – that's really what it's about and gatekeep and not allow, you know, people with not a lot of money to build wealth. But anyway, they've allowed us to use this Obama ARRA Policy to have investors come in at as little as \$300. So, people can have a piece of Row House for \$300 by going to our website, RowHousePublishing.com, clicking on the "Invest" button.

All the information is there. It's very transparent. We are regulated by a government agency, and it can go all the way up to \$100,000 that people can invest. It's just a really, really beautiful thing. It gives access to so many people who otherwise would not be able to grow their wealth. But also, it just allows people to be part of something great.

You know, not everyone can go out and march. Not everyone wants to be on stage and speaking to large audiences or even speaking up on Facebook could be very intimidating or unsafe. But the people with means can say, you know what, this is the – I want to support someone else that's doing something good in the world and that's just a really, really cool thing.

**Amanda Lytle:** So, when it comes to the last year, I mean huge congrats on this and congrats to all of the authors and all of the community members because this is huge. As someone that's able to kind of witness this magic and this growth and this hard work and this grit, thinking inwards, I mean has this met expectations? Has this exceeded expectations? Like where are you at?

**Rebekah Borucki:** Well, first of all, it would have been possible to meet my expectations because I really didn't have them. I had dreams. I had ideas about what it could be and

“exceeded” isn’t quite the right word either. What has happened the past year has existed completely outside of any kind of expectation.

It has – it’s another universe. Did I think I would be on Bloomberg in a T-shirt made by black women, with earrings made by a black mother and daughter team talking about disrupting the entire [0:25:01] *[Indiscernible]* industry with these amazing – I mean our authors are just the most incredible people. Every day I’m pitching myself that they said yes to me, that they had the faith in me.

I’ve never seen \$650,000 in my life and to think that nearly 600 people just sent it to me, invested in me. I mean truly like this is a group, this is a community effort. This is something that I’m building with a team of beautiful people. But when it comes down to it, like this is my thing. This is my thing that people are signing up for and I don’t say that with ego or bravado. I say that with like a lot of trembling and a lot of gratitude because this is what I came here to do and I didn’t know it, I didn’t know it and I – you know, I had a lot of love in my life growing up.

But that doesn’t mean that there wasn’t also neglect, there wasn’t poverty, there wasn’t mental illness, there wasn’t fear, there wasn’t homelessness, hunger. You know, all of that and I didn’t think that I would live past 25. I didn’t think I would ever leave my abusive marriage. I didn’t think that I would ever heal the relationship with my parents. I didn’t – you know, there are so many things that were not even in the realm of possibility for me and then for all of that to happen and for me to have a successful business when I never even knew anyone that went to college, you know, it’s like I didn’t even graduate high school because I had to go out and work.

So, it’s this life, this happening, this miracle that is happening completely outside of anything that I could have imagined and at the same time, it’s the realest thing I’ve ever taken part of. I feel ownership of it. I feel responsibility for it, and I have so much love for it. I get up every day exhausted. A little bit weepy, a lot scared and feeling 100 percent blessed. This is the best life ever because I get to witness the making of other people’s dreams in not a corny way.

Like I never need to write another book again. Ushering authors through this process and guiding them and being there to witness their joy, it’s like it’s better than writing my own book. It’s better than seeing my book on the shelves at Barnes and Noble. It really, really is.

And I know that every investor that has said yes and come into that feels that. They feel that for themselves too. They feel a sense of ownership and responsibility and they’re witnessing it. It’s really one of the only things that makes me emotional these days because I can’t believe I get to do this. I can’t believe this is my life.

**Amanda Lytle:** Especially when you’re looking at where you were at a year ago just with these dreams. So, I clung on the word “dreams” there for a moment just because number one, it’s so beautiful. The entire journey has just been incredible to witness. But when it comes to dreams, I remember seeing a screenshot of a text between you and Kristen where it started – you know, where it’s almost like it started off as like a tongue-in-cheek. Yeah, OK.

**Rebekah Borucki:** Yeah.

**Amanda Lytle:** To now.

**Rebekah Borucki:** Kristen texted me. It was the week that I was having the meeting with Hay House. I was really scared. She texted me and she was like, “Hey, why don’t you just start your own Hay House?” and I said, “Sure, let’s make it Bey House,” because I’m trying to tell a joke and the white woman did not get it. She was like, “I don’t under ...”

So, she left me alone for a minute and then I think I followed up the next day and said, “Yeah, you know what, let’s talk about this. Let’s see what it would even look like,” and we couldn’t have known. Thank goodness that we’re just – I think that we’re intelligent and responsible women. We’re businesswomen. We’re mothers. We run households but I think that we lost it a little bit that week. I think that we really got caught up in our own excitement and didn’t know what we were saying yes to.

But thank goodness we did and again we are privileged to have such beautiful people around us that stepped up and said, “We want to help.” I mean our attorney came on pro bono and she has worked for us completely free from the beginning and I mean I can’t even imagine the number that I would have to put on that if I was paying someone else. But – so we have just – it has been blessed from many different angles and yeah, it is a dream. It’s a dream.

**Amanda Lytle:** So, what does moving forward look like, getting like investors, people are jumping in for as low as \$300? But as like a call to action, what is something that anyone listening can do to support Row House?

**Rebekah Borucki:** Well, my goodness. I believe so much in the collective. So right now, our books – we have two available for pre-order. *The Antiracist Business Book* and *The Altar Within*, but that’s all we got right now. So, what I would love for you all to do as a call to action is to Google, look up your local black-owned bookstore, queer bookstore. Look it up. Spend some dollars there and I love this challenge, this call to action. Make it an entire year where you only buy books written by authors with marginalized voices.

Black, brown, disabled, queer. Like do that. You will just expand your world. So that’s with folks that are not in the game. So, I realized we have a lot of like white listeners out there. But for those of you who fit those categories and aspire to write, number one, write. Two, reach out to us. Tell us what you’re up to. Let us follow you. Let us follow along with your journey. Let me support you. I know people get on me because they’re like, “You give away so much of your time.” Don’t be ...

But there is no greater joy. I mean this morning I got off the call with a black woman and a young mother and I got to say, “Hey, I want to offer you a deal,” and it’s just like – I mean it’s really a selfish offer because I just – it’s like why I doula for people, why I love to be there when babies are born because I just want to hold babies. It’s not for them. It’s for me.

But yeah, I just – I love bringing people’s babies into the world, and I love helping people do that, so, yeah.

**Amanda Lytle:** It’s incredible Bex. I feel so grateful to be in this position that we get to hang out and chat all the time. I love what you’re doing. I just appreciate you so, so much.

**Rebekah Borucki:** Can I show you something? Can I show you something that’s funny?

**Amanda Lytle:** Yes, please. I’m all about the funny ...

**Rebekah Borucki:** I’m going to describe it for people that are listening, and I want you to understand me as an entrepreneur and like how I really want to show up in the world. I started this interview talking about autism and I have a lot of things that I do for my anxiety and different coping things that I do and a lot of it has to do with art. So, my littlest, my seven-year-old Annie and I do a lot of these fuse beads They’re like Perler beads where you put the plastic beads down and you melt them into a design and I wanted – I was having a particularly bad night and it was like a Row House thing and I was like, “No one is going to invest in us. No one cares about what we’re doing.”

I made a sign for my Big Messy Book series and it’s sitting behind me. It’s made completely of Perler beads, and I finished. I spent three hours on it. I’m so excited about it. You’re going to have to put this in the show notes or something. I was so excited about it, and I showed my kid, the 10-year-old when he came home, and he’s like, “Mom, did you mean to put three Os in books?”

**Amanda Lytle:** Oh, I see.

**Rebekah Borucki:** It’s this big messy “boooks” and it could not – this I think more than anything not only describes me, but it describes the whole culture of what we’re trying to do here because I did not throw out the sign. It is displayed proudly on my wall, and I will tell you that that’s what we want. We want to see your big messy “boooks”. We want to see all of you, and we want the world to see all of our messes and our beauty and the things that make us different and wonderful but also me.

**Amanda Lytle:** Heck, yes. Yeah. You are so worthy of celebration, Bex.

**Rebekah Borucki:** Oh my gosh. Can you believe this?

**Amanda Lytle:** I love it.

**Rebekah Borucki:** It took three hours, and it says, “Big Messy Boooks”.

**Amanda Lytle:** Well, on the day of this release, that will be all over socials so that people can come and see that beautiful sign.

**Rebekah Borucki:** Yeah, yeah.

**Amanda Lytle:** Well, I feel so dang honored to be in the space that I am. So, thank you.

**Rebekah Borucki:** Always. You are my favorite podcast host in the whole universe, and I will tell you, I had a little bit of bias, a little bit of preconceived notions about Canadians, you know, being from Jersey and all. It was like, no, they're so nice and they talk so slow, and they have this weird accent like I don't, right?

And I just find you to be the most generous, curious, brilliant, funny, sincere people and I love your accent and every single time you say, "Row House," I just want to cuddle you.

**Amanda Lytle:** Oh, well, thanks. Thank you so much for being with us. We hope you loved the conversation, and we will be back again soon. Please be sure to follow us on your podcast app and leave a rating where you're able to do so. Writing a written review helps reach more listeners too. Check out all of the show notes for the links and share *The Book Stoop* with your friends. Talk soon.

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