



START THE PRESSES!

Boca Raton Alum – and *Simply the Best* veteran! –
Jeremy Murphy Spills the Ink in the new Humor Book
“F-- Off, Chloe: Surviving the OMGs and FMLs in Your Media Career”

By Adam Morgan | Photos by Mark Grgurich

W

hen *Simply the Best* launched in 1999, Jeremy Murphy — then a reporter at the Boca Raton News — was one of the first writers to join its masthead. He started writing about luxury and travel as “The Travel Snob,” and 22 years later he still contributes, despite a career that has taken him around the world and into the upper echelons of media. He spent 14 years at CBS as a vice president and company spokesperson, and then launched a new firm called 360bespoke, representing clients in luxury, travel, beauty, fashion, and the arts.

Along the way he’s won many fans, including his mentor Cathie Black, the legendary chairwoman of Hearst Magazines who started Oprah’s O magazine.

“It has been very exciting to see Jeremy grow his company from just an idea to a successful enterprise,” said Black. “It’s very different from working for a big network but he has survived, thrived and learned, all the while utilizing his many creative talents. And being a charming, funny, and self-deprecating person is what sets him apart.”

Though he now oversees a prospering New York firm, Murphy never quite put down that pen. This winter, the writer will release his first book, “F--- Off, Chloe: Surviving the OMGs and FMLs in your Media Career” (Skyhorse Publishing), a searing, laugh-at-loud spoof of media, PR and millennials chock full of lists (“Reasons Why PR People Drink,” How to be Woke,” “How to Interview with Anna”), charts and illustrations by renowned fashion illustrator Darren Greenblatt. The book, he says, is an “anti-woke smoke break or third round for people tired of Shared-Google-Doc-Drive Box-Zoom-Slam-Boom action items. Enough!”

Murphy is a native of South Florida, having grown up in both Coral Springs and Boca Raton. He attended Florida Atlantic University, where he graduated with a BA in Communications in 1998 and worked as a writer at the Boca Raton News.

Simply the Best caught up with our proud alumnae as he prepares to unleash his customary snark, unapologetic observations, and sage advice to those who want to work in media. “Run. Run far. Run as far as you can,” he says.

Q: What kind of book is “F*ck Off, Chloe: Surviving the OMGs and FMLs in Your Media Career?”

Jeremy Murphy: It’s intended as a book of humor about media. I’ve taken everything I know about this profession and boiled it down into a series of profane and offensive lists, charts, matching games and illustrations. Because we’re just that busy.

Q: How did you come up with this?

Murphy: I was feeling particularly salty one night and started making a list of everything that annoyed me. And then I posted it to a private Facebook group I’m a part of, Marketing and PR Czars, and got an instant response. My grievances struck a chord with members of this community, so I just keep doing it. Clearly, I’m a very annoyed person. It just spilled out of me. On one of the lists, I made a joke about working with millennials and I ended it with, “F- Off, Chloe!” — they all seemed to be named Chloe. That particular line got



a great response. Gradually, people suggested I had the makings of a book and I started to agree but had no idea what kind of book or even how to do it. I just knew I’d use “F- Off, Chloe” as the title.

Q: Who is Chloe?

Murphy: Chloe is the embodiment of every entitled twentysomething who enters the media world and want a trophy for coming to work. Raised to believe she is a superstar, Chloe wants the corner office on day one, raise by the end of the week, and your job in a year. Self-centered, vain, indifferent to work and “so over everything,” she

“can’t even” whatever the task is in front of her. In media, we are besieged with this creature. What better lens to write about media than through this insipid species?

Q: Who is this book intended for?

Murphy: Anyone who works in media and has a healthy sense of humor.

Q: Did you intend the book to be so politically incorrect?

Murphy: No. That came naturally. I started with just a list of things that annoy me, and when it became a book, I asked myself, “What annoys me most?” And that is the “woke” culture. And Chloe is a product of that. She has been brought up to believe everyone is special. And every sensitivity should be tended to. Calling HR is now a natural reflex. Canceling someone whose perspective and views do not conform to today’s cause du jour is grounds for can-

up, for sure. It's a different vibe. Even between communities. Coral Springs and Boca Raton could not be more different. I much prefer Boca; it's not a landlocked community planned by developers. It has character, attitude, history.

Q: Did you enjoy your time at FAU?

Murphy: Immensely. The question is, did they enjoy me? I was a bit of a wild card: editor of the college newspaper but a troublemaker. I'll leave it at that. But, 12 years after graduating they inducted me into the Alumni Hall of Fame so I guess all is forgiven?

Q: What were some of the things you did for fun?

Murphy: I don't think you have enough space! While "attending" FAU, and I say that loosely because I don't remember ever attending classes, I convinced three other friends to share an apartment in Mizner Park vs. living in the dorms. I don't know what idiot approved that lease, but we had so much fun. We lived in the main tower on the 6th floor, and the building had a doorman, penthouse, and pool on the roof. We had the craziest parties and pretty much

at like 3am and they all looked like super models. One of them had a white Nissan 300 ZX when it was the hottest thing on the road; this guy looked so cool getting into that car, I went out and leased the same one — literally! I drove home the next day with the same car, just not nearly as attractive a driver. On the other side of the plaza was Ruby Tuesday's, which had a cheaper menu, and Liberties, a high-end bookstore before the age of Amazon and big chains. It was such a formative time of my life. Sometimes I wish I could go back knowing what I know so I could enjoy it even more. If that's possible! I'm still in touch with my roommates — one went on to work for President Obama in the White House; another is a top editor at CBS; and finally, a happily married family man who is still in South Florida.

Q: What was the Boca Raton News like during those years?

Murphy: I caught the tail end of the "glory years," if you can call them that. The longtime owner, Knight Ridder, decided to sell it to some crappy community newspaper chain just as I started. So, overnight you saw a mass exodus of great editors and journal-

Q: How did you get involved with *Simply the Best*?

Murphy: Adam (Goodkin) had just started it, and my colleague Maxine Hakimi — who worked under me at the FAU newspaper — was hired as its editor. Maxine needed writers, and I was available. We worked very close those first two years — I was constantly giving her reviews, features, interviews: basically, stories I was supposed to write for other magazines that I would give to her instead. Once she got the magazine off the ground, she replied in kind and asked me what I wanted to do. I said travel, and out of that came "The Travel Snob," which I did for 15 years. Maxine passed away a few years after the magazine launched, but she and Adam had built such a great brand. Jenny Lemoine, who worked under Maxine, took over and put her own stamp on the magazine, which is what you see today: sophisticated, fun, aspirational, optimistic, colorful, and engaging. I'm incredibly proud of my association with *Simply the Best*.

Q: When did you go to CBS?

Murphy: There were definitely a few years in between, but the lure of a higher paying job and a more normal life proved appealing. Boy was I wrong! There was nothing normal about my 14 years working in television. That will be my next book.

Q: What advice do you have to those just starting out?

Murphy: Don't? Just kidding! This is a hard question to answer because I don't know what it's like to start out now. Everything is completely different — there was no Internet when I began! I know that makes me sound ancient, but that was only 23 years ago. What I will say is this: don't let your life become your job, or your job become your life. Keep them separated. I "lived" my position for 14 years at CBS and let it become my identity. And then when I left to start my company, I suddenly had a new one, and not as fancy. That was a culture shock. Also, unless you are in a war zone or investigating the next Watergate, take a breath. Don't flatter yourself. We're not curing cancer. You should also drink, and often. A glass (err ... bottle) of wine every night makes life much easier. Finally, enjoy life. Laugh. Eat. Dance. Dream. Don't wait until you're my age and have become a pissy media bitch! **stb**

*"F--- Off, Chloe: Surviving the OMGs and FMLs in your Media Career" is now on pre-sale at https://www.simonandschuster.com/books/F*ck-Off-Chloe/Jeremy-Murphy/9781510770300*



treated the restaurants like our kitchen. I was at Max's Grille every night! There was also a Max's Coffee Shop next door, which wasn't a coffee shop but a more casual, hipper diner with the best hamburger you ever had in your life. Across from the fountain was Baci, where the mid 90s "nouveau riche" crowd went for \$30 cocktails. It was insanely expensive, and the wait staff were all incredibly attractive. We would stand on our terrace at night and watch them leave

ists, and it just never stopped. The company ruined this incredible newspaper that had such great history and connection to the community. But the resilience of those of us who stayed created such great friendships. We would stay until presses rolled at midnight, then get hammered at Flannigan's down the street. In between shifts we went across the street to Boca Pizzeria, which was in this little cottage like building on Federal Highway, or Dairy Queen.