

Generational Survival Guide - *Chapter 3: From Slambook to Facebook*

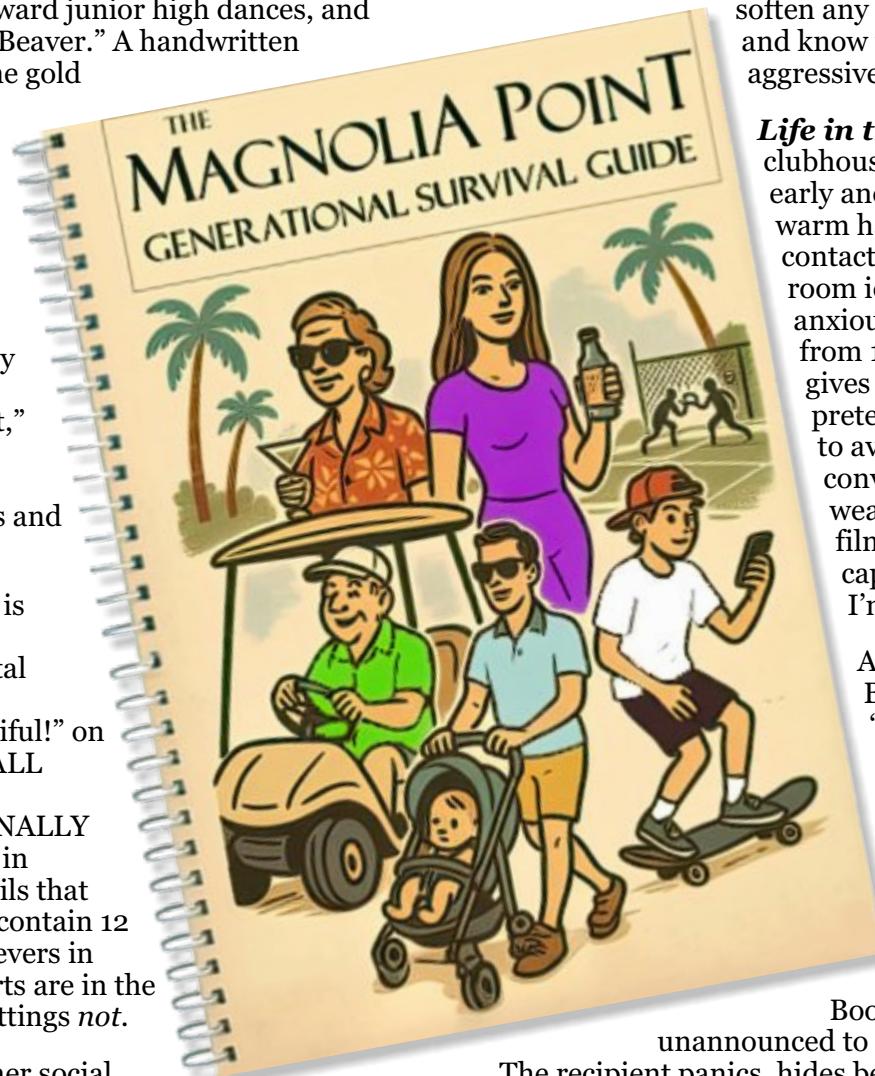
Boomers: Social graces for Boomers were learned from Emily Post, awkward junior high dances, and reruns of “Leave It to Beaver.” A handwritten thank-you note was the gold standard of class, and “dropping by unannounced” was considered not rude, but friendly. They regard phone calls as both efficient and polite, often leaving voicemails so long they require snacks. If you mention a “group chat,” they may think it’s something held at the clubhouse with snacks and a whiteboard.

Their online presence is robust but puzzling: Facebook is their digital front porch. Expect comments like “Beautiful!” on unrelated posts, and ALL CAPS updates like “TOMATOES ARE FINALLY IN!” They still believe in forwarding chain emails that promise good luck or contain 12 JPEGs of golden retrievers in sunglasses. Their hearts are in the right place, privacy settings *not*.

Back in the day, Boomer social media was ‘Slambooks’, notebooks passed around in class, each page labeled with a person’s name or a topic, and left open for anonymous “feedback.” Think of them as analog Facebook walls, but with more glitter pen drama and a guaranteed teacher confiscation. Unlike today’s curated profiles, Slambooks were chaotic, brutal, and wildly off-topic (“She wears too much Love’s Baby Soft” was a common grievance). The original burn book, but with worse handwriting.

The Rest of Y’all: You were raised on AIM, MySpace, and a healthy distrust of anyone over 30 online. Your social decorum includes ghosting someone kindly and crafting the perfect “seen at 10:04 pm” reply delay. Your thank-you note is a well-timed GIF, and your RSVP a “maybe” emoji with an ironic GIF of Nicolas Cage. Phone calls are for emergencies, or your mother.

Your digital life is fragmented across group texts, Discords, Slack channels, and an archipelago of apps none of which your Boomer relatives can pronounce. Your Facebook account exists only to see if Aunt Carol has posted more cryptic minion memes. You



understand the complex etiquette of typing “LOL” to soften any vaguely serious sentence and know that the passive-aggressive “K” is the nuclear option.

Life in the Wild: Picture the clubhouse social. A Boomer arrives early and greets everyone with a warm handshake and full eye contact, unaware that 67% of the room identifies as socially anxious and would prefer to nod from 14 feet away. A Millennial gives a tight-lipped smile and pretends to look at their phone to avoid a spontaneous conversation about the weather. A Gen Z-er is busy filming a 12-second video captioned “Me Pretending I’m Not Here.”

At the HOA meeting, a Boomer politely offers to “reply all” with meeting notes, triggering a group-wide existential crisis among younger members, who immediately create a secret Slack called “Operation: Email Containment.” Later, a Boomer neighbor swings by unannounced to drop off banana bread. The recipient panics, hides behind the couch, and texts, “*why is she here. help*”

Your Survival Play: Should a Boomer attempt a surprise visit, respond with the sacred words: “I’d love to catch up, can we schedule something next week?” This preserves civility while reasserting your deeply held boundary of “not now.” Compliment their graciousness while gently guiding them toward asynchronous communication, e.g., “*Your email was so thoughtful! I saw it in my promotions folder!*”

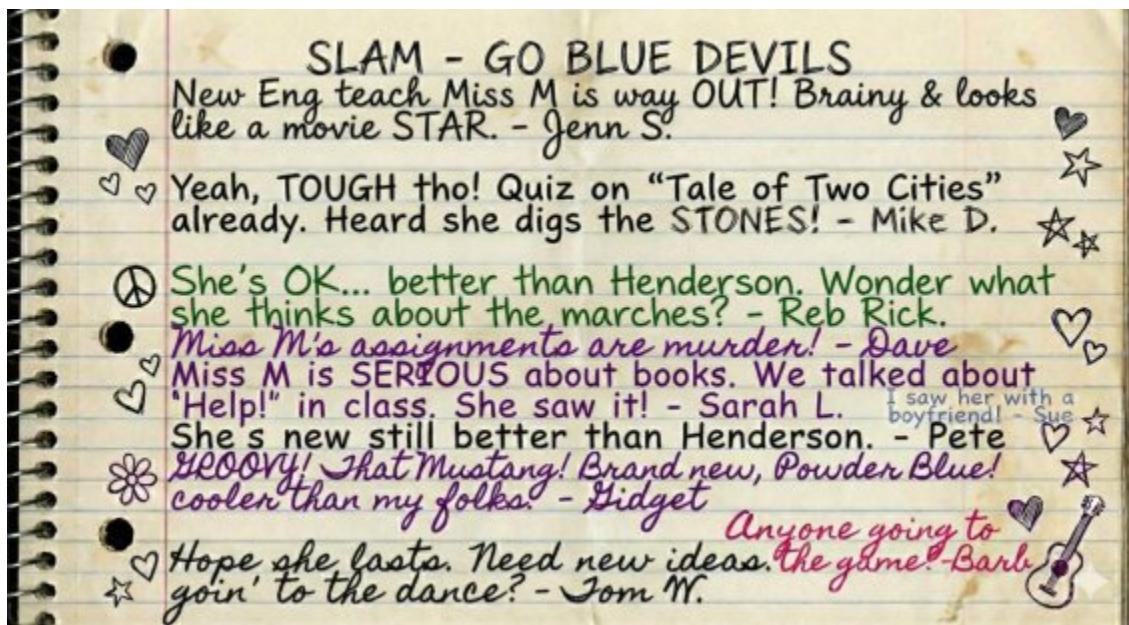
If a Facebook comment appears from a Boomer on your 2012 vacation photo (“*You look great here, hope your foot healed!*”), respond with a heart emoji and nothing else. This shows respect while signaling the limits of public digital discourse.

If caught in a group convo about etiquette, nod solemnly and mutter, “People just don’t write thank-you notes anymore,” which will earn the respect of all generations, despite the fact that you sent yours via Bitmoji.

Continued



Chapter 3: From Slambook to Facebook (cont'd.)



Part of a page from an actual Slambook from Clay High, circa 1965

What Happened to Them?

How things worked out for the 'Clay High Six', Jenn, Mike, Reb, Sarah, Gidget and Tom:

Jenn "The Dreamer"

Jenn chased Miss Murdoch's glamour straight to the skies as a Pan Am stewardess, where her greatest triumph wasn't seeing Rome, but charming a hijacker into surrender with a rum and coke in 1974. Though a messy divorce from a pilot who was Henry VIII in Cary Grant's skin left her grounded, she reinvented herself as Jacksonville's sharpest realtor. She refuses to check the mailbox without lipstick and proving that while her "Jet Set" era ended, her class never did.

Mike D. "The Rocker"

Mike's life took a sharp turn from the Rolling Stones to the draft board, sending him to Vietnam where artillery fire stole his hearing and dreams of rock stardom. After a "lost decade" haunting the local marina, he found his rhythm again by opening "Vinyl Countdown," a beloved vintage record store in Orange Park. He spent his later years fronting a dad-band called "The Retreads" and is currently riding the wave of vinyl record revival.

"Rebel" Rick "The Activist"

Rick traded his picket signs for a briefcase when the reality of a mortgage hit, shaving his beard to become a Public Defender in Clay County. He eventually found his revolution within the system, famously winning a landmark case against a river-polluting chemical company in '98. At the reunions, he's the only one who still fits into his original denim jacket, secretly blasting Creedence Clearwater Revival in his Volvo as a quiet nod to the boy who once questioned everything.

Sarah L. "The Intellectual"

Inspired by Miss Murdoch, Sarah moved to New York to write the Great American Novel, spending years proofreading toaster oven manuals while her dense modernist tragedy was rejected by everyone. She returned South to become a beloved community college professor, finding success writing a trashy, best-selling mystery series under a pseudonym. With her royalties, she bought a beach condo, happily accepting that the "low brow" fiction she once critiqued paid for the view.

"Gidget" Barb "The Trendsetter"

Barb married the high school quarterback immediately after graduation, but the fairy tale faded as his hairline receded and the domestic trap of three car seats replaced her convertible dreams. Following a mid-life crisis involving a disco phase and a perm, she channeled her energy into a booming landscaping business. She got a powder blue Mustang at age 58, terrorizing her grandchildren by driving top-down and blasting the Beach Boys, reclaiming the "cool" she had put on pause.

Tom W. "The Organizer"

Tom stayed behind to run his father's hardware store, living a life of "almosts"—almost moving away, almost investing in Apple, and almost asking Miss Murdoch for a drink years later. However, when his store burned down in '92 and the whole town rallied to help him rebuild, he realized his life of stability was actually one of deep, essential connection. He became the eternal keeper of the flame, organizing every single class reunion for fifty years, creating name tags that everyone complained about but secretly cherished.

- STORY, ART: EDITOR

