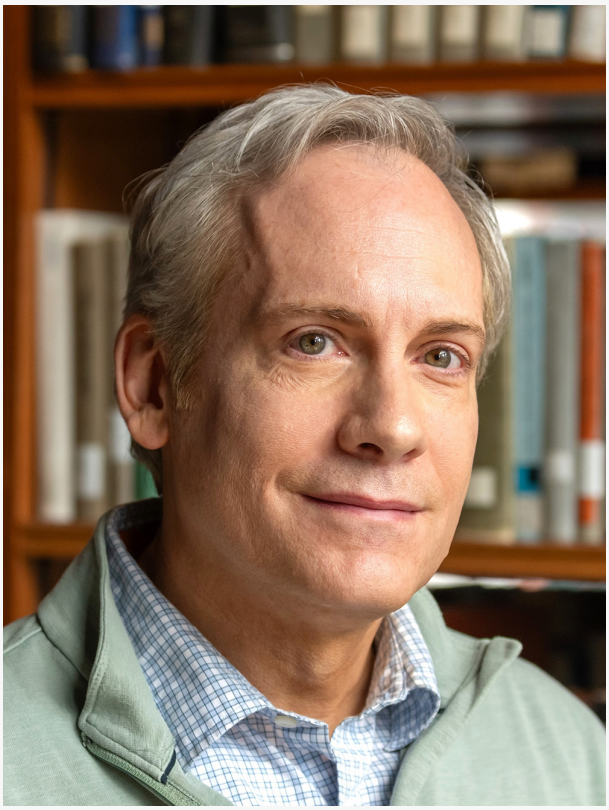
As Students Kick Off a Phone-Free School Year, New Novel Series Explores the Analog High School Experience of the 1980s

As New York students return to phone-free schools, Chris Orcutt's novel series Bodaciously True & Totally Awesome explores 1980s analog teen life.


Photo: Karl Rabe

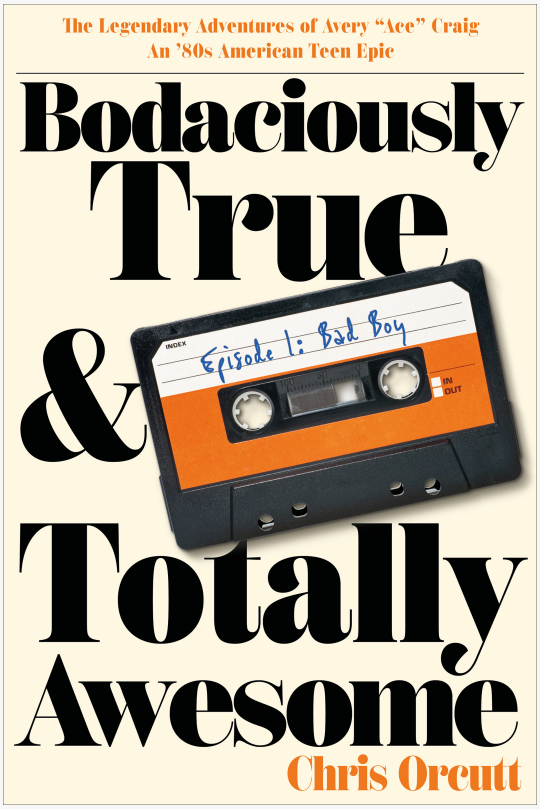
HUDSON VALLEY, NY, UNITED STATES, September 7, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As students in New York State go back to school for a fully phone-free academic year (following last year's statewide ban), novelist and former high school teacher Chris Orcutt offers readers a nostalgic time machine back to an era when classrooms were naturally tech-free. Orcutt's new nine-book series, Bodaciously True & Totally Awesome, captures the unplugged, present-oriented essence of 1980's suburban American teen life.

Orcutt, a former high school American studies teacher and college English professor, is familiar with the educational landscape on both sides of the digital divide. While today's educators grapple with enforcing boundaries around smartphones, the students in Orcutt's series navigate adolescence with nothing but handwritten notes, landline telephones, and MTV.

"As a former teacher and professor, I've seen firsthand how constant connectivity deteriorates a student's attention span and interpersonal communication skills," Orcutt said. "When I started teaching in 1996, there were no distractions in the classroom—not even landline telephones. Smartphones have made students more impatient and stressed because they're barraged with unlimited information, they're distracted by social media, and they're under surveillance by their parents, friends and romantic partners."

Set in the suburban Hudson Valley, the Bodaciously series follows Avery "Ace" Craig and his peers as they face the timeless challenges of teen romance, sexual awakening, and high school life in a

pre-digital teenage world shaped by shared cultural experiences like television, music and movies. The series also explores the difficulties of coming of age in an era without adult guidance.



Bodaciously True & Totally Awesome Episode I

"I think the phone-free initiatives will give the younger generation a taste of the Gen X experience, but with the added support that my generation never got," Orcutt said. "Readers of Bodaciously are seeing how teens in the 1980s responded to and coped with events like the Challenger explosion and the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. My generation wasn't sheltered from tragedies, and in fact most of us had to process events alone or with our peers. Our parents generally were unavailable and didn't have answers or comfort to offer."

Orcutt, a professional writer with more than thirty years of experience and over a dozen novels to his name, lives in New York's Hudson Valley. A former journalist and teacher, he wrote Bodaciously offline, drafting early versions using pencils and vintage typewriters. For over a decade, Orcutt immersed himself in '80s teen culture and shunned the internet in monastic devotion to his magnum opus. The series is a perfect back-to-school read for those yearning for a simpler—albeit equally dramatic—time in American education.

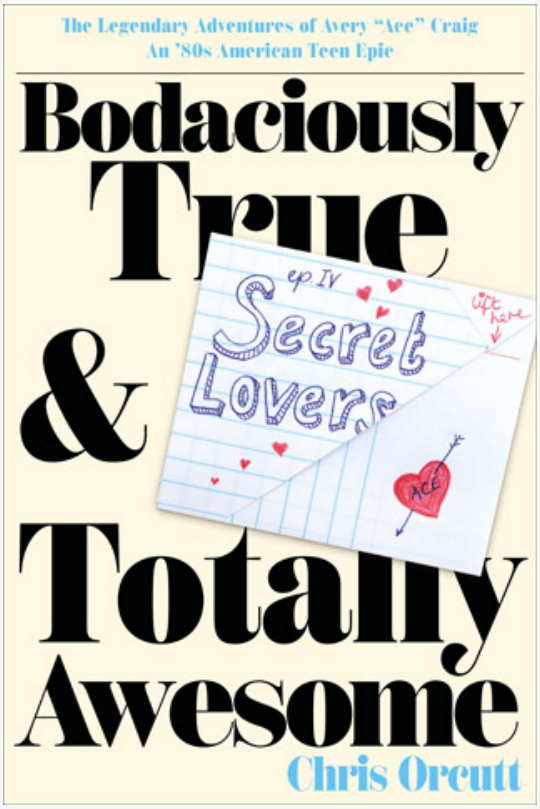
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> *Chris Orcutt*

Since the series debuted in January, reviewers have responded to its "time machine" quality, scope and originality. A starred review from BlueInk Review calls Episode I "awesome," and Midwest Book Review describes it as "a different coming-of-age novel that simmers with discovery." While Foreword Clarion praises its immersive nostalgia and cultural detail, Kirkus Reviews calls it "a light-hearted, swift adventure."

Bodaciously True & Totally Awesome: Episode IV, Secret Lovers will be released October 20, 2026. Episodes I through III are available now.

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Bodaciously True & Totally Awesome Episode IV

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