

# “ TWITTER MADE ME A celebrity ”

When Kelly Oxford started a Twitter account, she had no idea it would score her a massive book deal and propel her into a world of Hollywood celebs. With Jessica Alba tipped to play her in a TV show based on her life, she invites *Cosmo* into her amazing world...



You can follow Kelly Oxford at [Twitter.com/Kellyoxford](https://twitter.com/Kellyoxford)

When *Cosmo* arrives at Kelly Oxford's beautiful wooden-panelled house in Calgary, Canada, the pretty 33-year-old is washing up in front of a view of the Rocky Mountains. She taps a quick tweet into her iPhone as the dishes drip dry: "I'd be less introverted if the conversations in my head weren't better than the conversations I have with other people" she types, and the missive is quickly "retweeted" by many of her 130,000-plus followers. Oxford is not your normal social-network addict – she's a genuine Twitter celebrity.

## Writing roots

"It takes no time at all to tweet," explains Oxford, who lives with her husband James and their three young children. "So I just write things that I've said to someone, or thought of while I'm cooking." But those "things" attracted enough of a following that she's now set to become the female version of the runaway Twitter sensation "Sh\*t My Dad Says". That feed was started by unknown writer Justin Halpern, who shared his father's salty comments online. Within three months, Halpern had signed a book deal with HarperCollins. A year later, *Sh\*t My Dad Says* was a prime time US comedy starring William Shatner. And now Oxford's next in line.

"I always dreamt of being a writer," Oxford says. "When I was six, I created a fictitious neighbourhood newspaper and

would report on fake murders, missing pets and stolen cars. I'd photocopy them and pass them out." Oxford also wrote poems, stories and songs but admits, "I gave up on writing lyrics after penning the song, *Work, Brain, Work*. I realised my instinct to put the word 'brain' in a song was gross and wrong." When Oxford makes a joke, *Cosmo* can't help but imagine a studio audience breaking into laughter. Perhaps it won't be long.

## Big break

Oxford started blogging in 1997; when Twitter came along, she tweeted daily, building up to 6000 followers who retweeted her one-liners. In early 2010, she got a phone call asking her to take part in the charity event A Night of 140 Tweets. Organised to raise money for the Haiti earthquake disaster, the idea was for a host of celebrities to gather and "read aloud" one of their tweets. Demi Moore and Ashton Kutcher were lined up; so was the previously unknown writer Kelly Oxford.

"I was nervous as hell going on stage," she recalls. "The thing I remember the most was that Will Ferrell was in my group and I kept thinking, 'Please don't let him go before me!' Then I found out he was after me and I was thrilled. Only, at the same time, I realised I was carrying my purse and was about to go on stage, so I turned to him all crazy-like and said, 'Do you think someone will steal my purse if I leave it in here?' and he totally looked at me with that Will Ferrell face and said, 'I don't know. I don't know if you can leave it here,' and he said, 'That might be OK. I'll keep an eye on it for you.'"

And so with Will Ferrell watching her purse, Oxford went on stage and read out one of her tweets to the live audience. Soon after, top US film critic Roger Ebert retweeted something funny she had written, and her followers skyrocketed. When Ebert later said in an interview that Oxford was one of his top-five tweeters, her followers doubled. That same week, John Mayer retweeted one of her funnies and her followers suddenly leapt to 18,000. She was officially the first "normal" female blogger to have more followers than some celebrities.

## Hollywood hit

And celebs couldn't get enough of Oxford, either. Her Twitter followers began to include the likes of Pete Wentz, who retweeted such lines as, "I had my son's hearing tested because he's always yelling. Turns out he's just an asshole." When actor Kevin Nealon tweeted that Oxford "should get a book deal", others agreed, and soon she had admirers in high places. Renowned Hollywood comedy writer Jhoni Marchinko, who wrote *Will & Grace*, offered to mentor Oxford and help her write a TV pilot.

Oxford shows *Cosmo* the quiet desk, tucked away in her bedroom, where she does her writing. There, she works on the TV show that will be loosely based on her life and Twitter feed. She talks excitedly about the script: "I called it *Mother of All Something*. I really wanted it to be a throwback to the great family sitcoms of the Eighties, like *Roseanne*," she reveals. One of her celebrity Twitter followers, Jessica Alba, has even been attached to the project as an executive producer, though internet rumours suggest she'll play the lead. "Jessica and I have hung out," says Oxford. "She's fun. You know, when you strip away our jobs and titles, we're all just people trying to connect with each other." **Jeff Maysh** □



## Kelly's most retweeted lines

"It's cute that they still said the for 'richer/poorer' thing." – Tweeted during the #royalwedding broadcast.

"If you see a dad running errands with kids, it's because his wife promised him a blowjob."

"I like to imagine that braille on random public signs often says: 'How did you know this was here?'"

"It's very telling that no matter how much you love someone, you always love them more when you see them asleep."