



# **It's Not That I'm Bitter . . .: Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying About Visible Panty Lines and Conquered the World**

*Gina Barreca*

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In a world where eye cream is made from placenta, Gina Barreca is the lone voice calling out “But wait, whose placenta is it?” She asks the crucial questions: Why is there no King Charming? Why does no bra ever fit? Why are there no tutus in XL? Why do more intelligent women have trusted psychics than have trusted financial advisors? While she definitely wants everyone to know that she's not bitter, Gina does want to know why no one realizes that Anne Bancroft was only thirty-six when she played Mrs. Robinson, the quintessential cougar. In *It's Not That I'm Bitter*. . . Gina shouts out her message to women everywhere: “You are smart enough to conquer the world, so please stop weeping when you try on bathing suits at T.J. Maxx.” As Gina declares “The world lies to us and we want to believe. We want to believe that, if we wear a pair of palazzo pants with a latex escape hatch built into the stomach area, we’ll appear five pounds slimmer instantly... We torture ourselves, even though we are smart broads.”

In deliciously quotable essays on the ability of both chin hairs and tweezers to affect your life, the reason every woman believes she’s crazy, the possibility that the “glass ceiling” may just be a thick layer of men, and thoughts on intimate conversations she’d have with Michelle Obama, Hillary Clinton, Cindy McCain and Sarah Palin, Barreca gleefully rejects the emotional torture, embraces the limitless laughter, and shows other women how they can conquer the world with a sharp wit, good shoes and not a single worry about VPLs.

## It's Not That I'm Bitter . . . : Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying About Visible Panty Lines and Conquered the World Details

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Author : Gina Barreca

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# **From Reader Review It's Not That I'm Bitter . . .: Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying About Visible Panty Lines and Conquered the World for online ebook**

**Jeanette "Astute Crabbist" says**

*January 26, 2012 I made a quick second run through this before passing it on to a friend. Barreca goes beyond a breath of fresh air. She's a right bracing breeze.*

This was the perfect choice for whiling away a dreary Sunday afternoon. With a title like that I thought it would be all lighthearted silliness, but she also shares some surprisingly profound wisdom about life in general and societal attitudes toward women. I'm always impressed by and a little envious of people who can put into just the right words what we've all observed about ourselves and those around us. Barreca does this with great wit but also with compassion for her fellow women and the pressures they face (beauty, perfection, people-pleasing, not speaking up for oneself).

Much of the humor is subtle, but there were a few times I had to put down the book and gasp with laughter.

A sampling of her wit and wisdom:

On PMS:

"Worrying about retaining water is important only if you are a boat."

On reincarnation:

"I've decided to remake my will---I'm going to leave everything to myself."

On dating:

"If you think you are 'too much' for a guy to handle, weigh carefully the possibility that *he's* simply 'not enough' for *you*."

A gentle suggestion for Hillary Clinton:

"Do you think you could stop referring to women in power as 'cracks' in the glass ceiling? It's such an infelicitous metaphor, don't you think?"

On sex:

"I lost my virginity, but I still have the box it came in."

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**Nicole Fraser says**

I just heard about Gina Barreca from colleagues and am so happy to have discovered her work. She's an instant favorite for me with her wit, fast pace, laser wisdom and heart.

Barreca and I are fifty-something women, simpatico in attitudes and experiences. I haven't laughed this hard since Ellen DeGeneres tried to read *Fifty Shades of Gray* for an audiobook.

High points include Barreca's essays "How Much of a Crazy Astronaut Lady Are You?" and "Introduction to My Girlish Way of Looking at Things," and this quote: "You have to admit that life is a riot once you start paying attention."

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### **John says**

I got this one from the New Books shelf at the library thinking it might be funny after flipping through it; at the same time, I was leery of an author whose occupation is shown as "Professor of English and Feminist Theory". Overall, the book is quite humorous, concentrating upon the many ways that women of a certain age ("between work-study and cremation") beat up on themselves, for lack of a better term. I didn't find her perspective so much anti-male, but that she makes generalizations about men with which I disagree. Highly recommended

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### **Rebecca says**

Although this book is probably geared more towards women in their 40's and 50's, I (at 28) still found this book hilarious, relevant, and engaging. Barreca has a way with words that not only disarms the reader but then charms the pants off of them. The book is essentially a series of essays on what it's like to be a woman in this day and age, many including our acceptance of bizarre fashion rituals and societal expectations (just wait until you read the essay on the 'rogue hair,' ladies know what I'm talking about). Despite the superficial appearance of the book and Barreca's light, funny way of writing, she brings up issues of agism, sexism, and marital strife with grace and wit. If you are looking for a humorous take on the life and trials of the average American woman, sit down with Barreca and get ready to laugh!

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### **Shelley says**

Funny, funny, funny! This is a must read for any woman over the age of 40. Witty, sarcastic, and everything you've always wanted to say to the world. It's not that I'm bitter is the kind of book women should leave on the coffee table as a conversation starter!

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### **Rachel says**

I liked this enough to buy it, and then my boyfriend read it after me. He liked it too, and admitted he learned about women from the book. Regina is a really smart gal, not just funny. She's out to help other women feel good about themselves and laugh at the stupid things we worry about. Remember, objects in the mirror are cuter than they appear!! :)

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### **Sarah says**

Gina's new book is smart, funny, provocative, and weirdly acute about the most frustrating, embarrassing,

and bizarre parts of being a woman in the world these days. My favorite bits? Chapter 5: "Why do Women Worry about Everything While Men Worry about Nothing." There's a part of that story having to do with environmental temperature and gender difference that made me laugh so hard I had to dig out my inhaler from the back of the medicine cabinet. Seriously. In short: if you ladies have any plans for summer reading, get *\_It's Not That I'm Bitter\_*. It doesn't solve the ills of the world, necessarily, but it helps you laugh like hell at them!

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### **Chris says**

I'm spoiled by essays. See, I expect everything to be as funny as Jen Lancaster or David Sedaris, and when they aren't I'm slightly disappointed, and may judge a perfectly good book of essays too harshly. I may have begun to do that with this book, and then made myself enjoy it on its own merits and it was quite entertaining. Lots of stuff about the crazy things that women do and think. Very relatable

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### **Joanne says**

I have seen Gina Barreca live twice this year and she is FUNNY! Very entertaining and tells it like it is – growing up in an Italian household, funny women stories of bonding, shopping and body issues and I could relate since as she starts off her session with what every woman wants to know – how old is she and how much does she weighs. Okay she's just a few years old than me and a little heavier, but she's also taller! That said I expected the book to be really funny. This collection of short stories on a variety of subject was entertaining, but also infused with women's theory and more of a psychological aspect which highlights her educational degrees. It's a good read and entertaining – like many books with little short stories some are better than others. But overall a good short entertaining read.

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### **Christina says**

I'm now reading this book for the second time because I like it so much. It feels like a conversation with my best friend: hilarious, intelligent, and reassuring. I understand the target audience is a little older than I am, but any woman with an honest eye and half a brain would enjoy this read. Furthermore, any man with the desire to better understand women might also want to check it out.

I never realized I was irreverent until I became an adult and suddenly people found my behavior and opinions odd. Gina Barreca reminds me that although I may be odd, I'm neither wrong nor alone. She makes insightful observations about women, men, and everything between the two. I enjoyed the amusing stories throughout, particularly the ones about Tallulah Bankhead and Liz Carpenter. *It's Not That I'm Bitter...* is "for Fay Weldon" and Barreca includes a quote from her: "Gina, you must write books that people will read." This is not only great advice for writers, but also obvious inspiration: Gina Barreca writes for readers, which

means she makes every detail interesting. Most books I read feel like too much investment and not enough payout, but Barreca is an economical writer: little investment, great payout. As for the claim that her writing leaves anything to be desired, I completely disagree and would challenge such critics to cite specific examples. If you like your truth with a side of wit and humor, you'll like this.

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### **Eliza Fayle says**

Reading *It's Not That I'm Bitter ...* is like watching a stand up comedy routine, without being subjected to the inevitable annoying heckler in the audience. Unless you count my Siamese if I happen to be reading during his treat time.

The great thing about stand up comics is that they are simply stating facts about everyday life. They just happen to point out what nobody else is willing to, or they put a fantastic spin on the facts.

Gina Barreca has this down to a science when it comes to the daily life of the us over forty gals.

To read the full review visit <http://silverandgrace.com/book-review...>

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### **Bookprgirl says**

Amy Bloom says it best:

"Some people are funny in an acid-edged cocktail lounge, like Dorothy Parker, in a smoky French cafe, like David Sedaris, or in a crazy English country house, like P.G. Wodehouse. Gina is funny in your kitchen, in the ladies' room of your favorite restaurant, in the awful dressing room with forty-seven ugly bathing suits around you. Gina Barreca is funny, for real."

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### **yoli says**

It's not that I'm a cynic but in making this a mass-market and not solely academic novel, I think Barreca had to self-deprecate and de-fang some of her arguments--so they'd sell. And part of me is indignant both for her and against her because her "girly way of looking at things" is every bit as valid as someone's "womanly" or "manly" or "boyish" way of doing it and she ought to feel no shame in it. Coyness in a book with a chapter posturing against it is rather, well, stereotypically woman isn't it? We don't fight directly, apparently, and Barreca thinks it's an issue but not enough of one for her to be radically redefining the means of debate. She's right: feminism's big problem is that we're at a pile-up right now, not moving forward or backwards and just stuck looking around going "now what?" And this book is narrating that dialogue.

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I like it better now that I'm fully done, and have seen some other people's opinions. It IS humor and that has exaggerations and whatnot, which I find problematic, but at the same time it is funny and readable! And sometimes it's better to get everyone thinking a little than to get a few people thinking a lot.

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**Eden says**

This book was at turns thought-provoking and outright funny, but always relateable. My favorite parts were those regarding "incidental mothering" (that's part of my job, too!) and Chapter 21: "Will This Shroud Make Me Look Fat?" Anyone who experiences anxiety over decisions she's made, things she's said, or wants reassurance that she's not alone will enjoy this quick read.

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**Sherry says**

Gina Barreca offers the unique kind of wit and wisdom that makes me simultaneously nod my head in empathy and laugh out loud. After having the pleasure of seeing her speak in person, I could mentally hear her relaying each of these stories in her own gifted voice and words. I am only bitter I cannot write like this author. Five stars and two thumbs-up. Barreca is a treasure.

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