



## Gina Barreca

### Topics

Best Selling and Award Winning Authors, Humor, Pop Culture and Entertainment, Women's Interests

### Travels From

Connecticut

### Bio

Gina has been called “smart and funny” by *People* magazine and “Very, very funny. For a woman,” by Dave Barry. She was deemed a “feminist humor maven” by *Ms.* magazine and author Wally Lamb said, “Barreca’s prose, in equal measures, is hilarious and humane.” Barreca has delivered keynotes on this topic at universities from Yale and Harvard to Princeton and Perth. Her greatest strength, however, is connecting with her large and growing audience. She has delivered, often as a repeat guest, keynotes at major events organized by Chautauqua, The American Library Association, The Erma Bombeck Writers Workshop, the National Writers Workshop, the Women’s Campaign School at Yale and the National Association of Independent Schools, The Chicago Humanities Festival, Women In Federal Law Enforcement, Chautauqua, and The Smithsonian--to name a few. She has authored numerous books, many of which have been translated into several languages including Chinese, Spanish, Japanese, and German. Her most recent book, *"If You Lean In, Will Men Just Look Down Your Blouse?"* was published by St. Martin's Press in 2016. Gina, whose weekly columns from *The Hartford Courant* are now

distributed nationally by the McClatchy-Tribune Syndicate, is a Professor of English and Feminist Theory at the University of Connecticut. She won UConn's highest award for excellence in teaching and has lectured worldwide as the authority on gender difference in humor. Her B.A. is from Dartmouth College, where she was the first woman to be named Alumni Scholar, her M.A. is from Cambridge University, where she was a Reynold's Fellow, and her Ph.D. is from the City University of New York, where she lived close to a good delicatessen. As a columnist and blogger, Gina writes regularly for *Psychology Today*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, and *The Huffington Post*; she has also written for *The New York Times*, *The Independent of London*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *The Harvard Business Review*. A member of the Friars' Club, a "Voices and Visions" honoree of the Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame and the first female graduate of Dartmouth College invited to have her personal papers requested by the Rauner Special Collections Library, Gina can be found in the Library of Congress or in the make-up aisle of Walgreens.

## SPEECHES

### **Why The Bad Girl Always Gets The Last Laugh: How Sex, Power, and Humor Work Together**

Excessive, playful, blasphemous, indulgent, insurgent, and fiercely courageous, great humorists have one crucial thing in common: they know humor is the shortest line between two people. They set about connecting the wires so the rest of us could hear the noise inside their heads. To them, nothing is sacred. Nothing scares them. The only thing they have to fear is the grim, tight-lipped, earnest specter of humorlessness itself. What's our role in this spectacle? We laugh while we watch their antics and we change - because they make us think and create our own best responses.

### **Harass is One Word: Laughter, Feminism, and the Importance of Making Yourself Heard**

We need laughter in our lives. We choose laughter at moments of crisis because the other alternatives are, as woman after woman put it, crying or throwing up and neither of those makes you look good. The stories we tell ourselves and the ones we tell each other give us a way to rattle the cage door sometimes, sometimes we can rattle it hard enough to allow for escape, sometimes we rattle it so hard its confines fall away altogether. Laughing together is as close as you can get to another person without touching, and sometimes it represents a closer tie than touching ever could. The freedom that laughter echoes and hints at is the freedom to embrace pleasure, perspective, and finally, love.

**Humor and Stress** Laughter is essential in terms of being able to cope with the stresses of short-term and long-term pressure for both patient and caregiver, individually as well as together, for the following reasons: humor helps to establish and reinforce a shared sense of community; it enhances a sense of self-esteem within a new or established community; humor helps everyone to deal effectively with change. — How can we promote and encourage a healthy, de-stressing (as opposed to distressing) use of humor?

**Benefits of Humor** Being able to joke and being able to understand how others' humor operates indicates the ability to envision a situation from a number of perspectives as well as suggesting an attractively creative, inventive, and flexible approach to complex situations, difficult decisions, and nearly impossible tasks - in other words, what we face every day when dealing with illness. How can we enrich our abilities to create and deal with humor created by others -especially on those occasions when the humor initiated by others in more powerful positions seems to be mean-spirited or inappropriate?

**Humor as a Means of Social Bonding** Humor allows for and even permits a kind of informal interaction between groups of people not otherwise part of a shared circle; humor allows for an important and perhaps unparalleled mobility between groups divided by hierarchy, gender, ethnicity, class, or status. How can these interactions be encouraged? What contexts need to be established and understood? What kind of humor should stay private? What usually "private" kinds of humor can be used in a public setting in order to encourage intimacy (of a limited sort) and informality in order to create a healthy exchange of ideas?

**Not Just One of the Boys: How Women Lead** Imagine hearing the phrase: "Wow, you're just like one of the boys!" Then imagine hearing the phrase: "Wow, you're just like every other woman!" Now decide which phrase is a compliment. That didn't take long, did it? Daring and courage have to be learned, especially when those qualities haven't been rewarded in childhood. Ambition and decisiveness are crucial aspects of leadership because they're essential in creating and sustaining vision and invention. Until the reaction to hearing "You're just like a woman" is "You mean I'm clever, creative, flexible, dynamic, and empathetic?" we still have some work to do. This workshop will get us started.

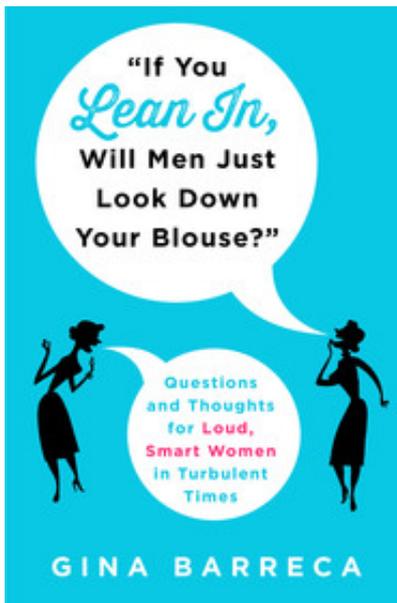
### **How Many Medical Professionals Does It Take to Change a Lightbulb?**

**You want to hear Gina Barreca speak because:**

1. She brings the party with her,
2. She has ZERO shame,
3. Men appreciate her humor as much as women do—and they fall in love with her because she reminds them of their mother AND their first girlfriend,
4. She combines a Brooklyn sense of straight-from-the hip humor with a professor's sense of erudite, articulate sophistication,
5. With previous books translated into eight languages, multiple appearances on Oprah, The Today Show, and 20/20, as well as speeches delivered around the world, Barreca knows how to delight a wide range of readers, listeners, and viewers,
6. She doesn't work from notes or scripts—she works with her interviewer and with her audience; Gina is a widely-respected commentator because she's ironic yet upbeat, fast-talking yet thoughtful, and inevitably provocative even when she is most charming,
7. She says out loud what everybody else is thinking—watch "Bathing Suit Season at T.J. Maxx."

She's actually NOT bitter: Gina is one of America's most celebratory, witty, engaging writers. Her audiences love her and so will you.

## **BOOKS**

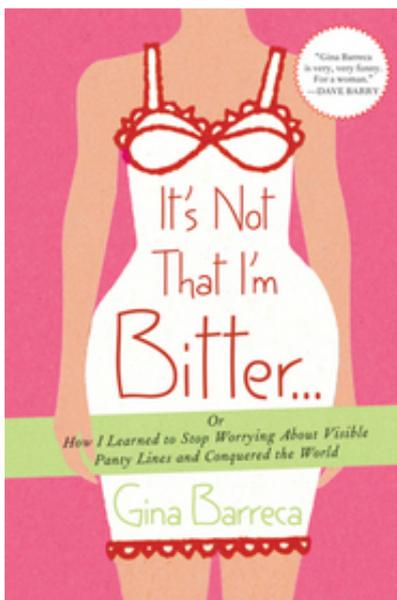


["If You Lean In, Will Men Just Look Down Your Blouse?"](#) Questions and Thoughts for Loud, Smart Women in Turbulent Times

St. Martin's Press

Here are tips, lessons, and bold confessions about bad boyfriends at any age, about friends we love and ones we can't stand anymore, about waist size and wasted time, about panic, placebos, placentas, and certain kinds of not-so adorable paternalism attached to certain kinds of politicians.

Hardcover



Paperback

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

St. Martin's Griffin

Barreca packs a hilarious punch while gleefully rejecting emotional torture, embracing limitless

laughter, and showing women how they can conquer the world with good friends ("It's not that diamonds are a girl's best friend, but a girl's best friends are diamonds"), sharp wit, great shoes, and not a single worry about VPLs.

REVIEWS: "There isn't a tougher audience anywhere than a ballroom full of 1,700 professional speakers, many of whom are humorists. Gina Barreca provoked, entertained and stretched our thinking...and made us all raving fans."

-National Speakers Association and member of the Speakers Hall of Fame.

"Dr. Barreca is a brilliant and provocative whirlwind who left our attendees exhausted from laughter."

-Women's Campaign School at Yale University

"At the National Speakers Association convention, Dr. Barreca had the audience rollicking and reflecting — two difficult things for a group of 1500 professional speakers to do. Her presentation was filled with stories, insights, and humor — something very few full-time speakers can accomplish, let alone an academic. But she was so skillful; she even had the anti-feminists eating out of her hand."

-Rebecca Morgan, CSP, CMC

"Gina's talk was the highlight of entire fall lineup and certainly the most attended. Her huge audience was immensely entertained. People left raving that it had been a fabulous, wonderful evening."

-Mary McLaughlin, The Smithsonian Associates

"Gina is a fantastic speaker. She is funny and direct. I was so happy that she came and talked about how important humor is, and how we can use it every day in every manner. My group is made up of physicians...they loved her. As did I."

-Jillian Wood, New Haven County Medical Association