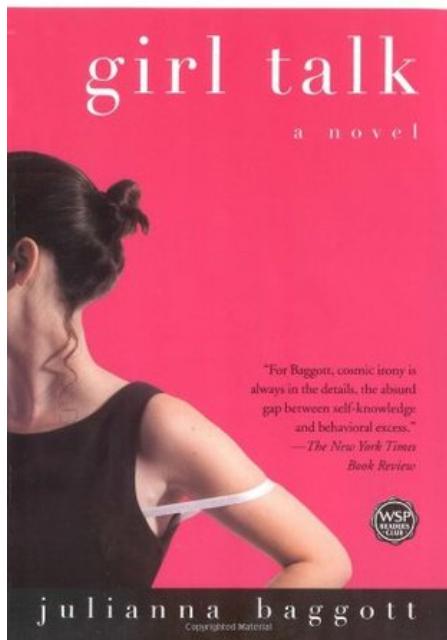


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Girl Talk

Julianna Baggott

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Lissy Jablonski was fifteen during the summer of 1985. That was the summer her father, a soft-spoken gynecologist, up and left her mother for a redhead bank teller. The same summer Lissy and her mother disappeared from their quiet New Hampshire lives to have an adventure of their own amid a cast of unlikely characters, including a Valium-addicted ex-debutante and a suspected mobster. The summer the reliably comforting "girl talks" with her mother began to reveal startling secrets.

Now an almost-thirty-year-old advertising executive in Manhattan, faced with her father's imminent death and newly pregnant by her married ex-lover, an unmoored Lissy finds herself looking back across the years. Contending with her affections for an old flame and his doomed marriage to a Korean stripper named Kitty Hawk, as well as the tangible legacies of that unmentionable summer with her mother, she realizes that she has become more like her mother than she ever could have imagined.

Girl Talk Details

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From Reader Review Girl Talk for online ebook

Cassandra Dumont says

I rarely give out five stars.

This is not my genre of choice.

That's all you need to know.

Emily says

A pretty good read I would say.

Kristyn says

This book reads like a writer learning how to write a novel, which it is. Ms. Baggott has written about how she tricked herself into writing this first novel of hers by telling herself it was just 50 pages. The second half of the book interested me more than the first--the 1960s, advertising, the idea of truth. I heard echoes of DeLillo, if not in style then in content. A decent attempt, but ultimately not what I'd expected.

Lindsay says

Not a fan of this book. It started out interesting but by the time I was half way through I was still waiting for the main point of the story, and when I was almost finished with the book I felt like I was expecting much more! I didn't care for how the book jumped around from past time to current and everywhere in between; just as I felt I was getting into it, the time period changed and the story went off on another tangent. One story would almost come full circle but not quite make a significant connection and then a whole new story would start. I think I would read another book by this author, I just didn't care for this one ?

Karo says

I gave Girl Talk a whirl, having heard about it here and there, and I must say that I was disappointed. Not because I had had particularly high expectations of the novel, because I hadn't. I was disappointed simply because I felt that Girl Talk COULD have been great. It had all the right elements -- interesting characters, an intriguing plot. But for whatever reason, people involved in the book's publication obviously didn't do their jobs as well as they should have.

First of all, and I know that this is a minor gripe, there are a few words of Polish sprinkled throughout the novel. Great, I think, throwing those in there will make the grandmother seem more real, better fleshed out.

The problem, however, is that I speak Polish, and the few words thrown into the book were, well, NOT. Almost every Polish word in the book was misspelled, and strange accents were thrown in where they didn't belong. But ok, I know very few people are going to notice that. However, there were a few more editing gaffes. For example, there is a character in the book with a prosthetic leg. Lissy uses the exact same metaphor to describe the book twice in the novel -- it's like a lover waiting for her. I'm almost certain that the author did not mean to repeat herself -- she simply had the same good idea twice and no one caught it.

So. I'll most likely read Ms. Baggott's next attempt, if only to see if she lives up to her promise. As for this book, it's largely skip-able. I'd recommend Amy and Isbaelle for a mother-daughter book, or My Year of Meats perhaps.

Kyla says

First novel written by a friend in Delaware-- really enjoyed it, and don't regret a minute I spent with it. Quick read, enjoyable.

Tracy says

Sometimes I really liked what this author wrote, and barked out loud. But, then I would shake my head because it wasn't quite right. You know, when you open a present someone is so excited to give you, but they've missed the mark. And, you're left looking down at a mustard polyester leisure suit with a bemused look on your face. Oh, well. Maybe the poems are better.

Amanda says

Good chick lit

Laura says

I read this. I get the whole "my life is topsy-turvy and also folks are dying" genre and I have totally been there. Not super keen on this one, but it might be for you. :)

Heather Leipart says

I only gave this book 2 stars and yet I was interested enough to see it all the way through. Everytime I kept feeling like being done with it and just setting it down I found I could not. I had to keep reading. Honestly, there was nothing particularly interesting within the storyline. The thing that kept me reading was her writing style and word choice. That is what I enjoyed. She had a lot of neat little quips that make ya go, "hmm" if you know what I mean. Forgetable, but not an entire waste of time.

Jes says

So right around the middle of this book, I realized that I had, in fact, read this before. Sad that it took me 100 pages to figure that out.

I find this book interesting, as Baggott explores the idea that not only do daughters follow their mother's footprints sub-consciously, but might actually be purposefully choosing to execute details in their lives after them.

I don't find it believable that a mother of a 15 year old would sit up late, confessing her sex secrets from before she was married. That seems inappropriate and crass. But maybe some mothers do that. I wouldn't know.

Dino and Ruby seem to be 1-dimensional characters. They are Italian. That's pretty much the only backhistory we get for them, as if it answers all their actions throughout the book. But I like Ruby for taking Dotty and Lissy in during a difficult time for Dotty.

Not that the ending was at all a conclusion, or any kind of consolation, but the book ends at a natural exhale. Of course, it'd be great to have Lissy tell SOMEONE she's pregnant. But, I think Baggott was trying to reach a conclusion in Lissy's brain, not necessarily with the plot. What mattered most was for Lissy to get her own identity. We expect her to run off with Church, but she doesn't. She becomes herself, not her mother, not her father, not a fictional character, but her own person making her own decisions.

Kristal says

Lissy is 30, never married & just found out that she is pregnant by her married ex-lover. Wondering where her life is heading, she gets an unexpected knock on her door from a childhood friend who just happens to be the same boy she lost her virginity to the summer that she was fifteen. It was the same summer that her father ran off with a redhead bank teller & her mother decided to share all of her secrets with Lissy while they were having their mother-daughter 'girl talks'. Unsure of what to do, Lissy's mother, Dotty, decides that the two of them will stay with friends until everything is worked out. So begins the adventures of "the summer that never happened" in which she met Church, the boy she lost her virginity to & possibly her heart. With the news that she herself will soon be a mother, Lissy realizes that as much as she's tried not to be like her own mother & grandmother, she is exactly like them. And the hard lesson that she learned that summer from her mother, that sometimes a lie isn't a lie if there is some glimmer of truth to it, has been a lesson she has learned well.

Melinda says

A book about a girl who grows up to realize she is just like her mom. Except that her mom is boring and she is boring and I skimmed half the book because it was boring and I was tired of the F-bomb. Why did I continue reading? Because even when I hate a book I have to know how it ends.

Don't read it.

Sheila Judson says

A fast paced book about a truly dysfunctional family. Lissy is the main character who finds herself pregnant after breaking up with her married boyfriend. As she tells her story she inevitably tells the story of her mother, whose life she is destined to repeat whether she wants to or not. The summer that never happened is about her mother's great love that did not become happily ever after and how she settled for a version of love. Lissy finds that her mothers story defines who she is and who her mother really is. A quick summer read without too much to invest in.

Melissa says

Big nope on this one!
