



## What Do You Do All Day?

*Amy Scheibe*

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Bright, witty, and covered in homemade play-dough, Jennifer Bradley has traded her fabulous job at a New York auction house for the life of a stay-at-home mom. No one said it would be easy. Between the alpha moms all around her and a backstabbing mother-in-law, there's little hope that maternal instinct alone will save her. And perhaps it was less than helpful of her husband, Thom, to suddenly take off on business to Singapore for the next who-knows-how-long, leaving behind the faint scent of an extramarital affair. And this may not be the best time for Jennifer's old flame, a former child star, to show up on her doorstep, looking to patch things up.

*What Do You Do All Day?* is a sparkling story of love, lust, and the joys of modern motherhood.

## What Do You Do All Day? Details

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Author : Amy Scheibe

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## **From Reader Review What Do You Do All Day? for online ebook**

### **Amy says**

I found this book SO frustrating! It really should have a higher score. I thought the writing was good--at least I was interested in the issues Jennifer is struggling with and I thought individual paragraphs and ideas flowed, but the novel as a whole just never came together for me. I know first hand that a SAHM's days can be tedious, but the first half of the book FELT like a day in the life of a SAHM, i.e. moments of something interesting sprinkled amongst HOURS of meandering boredom. There was no plot to speak of until about 3/4 of the way through the book, and then it felt like she woke up and said "Wait! something should actually HAPPEN in this book" so she threw together the stuff about Bjorn and the "affair" and her job opportunity in one big blob at the end. It was just so disappointing because there is something there. Maybe Jennifer is just too unlikable. I'm sorry but the trailer trash backstory doesn't soften the fact that she is a privileged white woman in an expensive NYC loft with an existential crisis. I get it, motherhood is always an existential crisis but I mostly wanted to slap her even as I am struggling with many of the issues she is. And I'd love to hear what black women have to say about the character of Angie. She seemed a bit too much of the "Sassy balck friend" stereotype to me.

Sorry to be so harsh. If this is her first novel maybe she has grown since then because she can definitely write, if only she had better structure .

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### **Shannan says**

Reminded me a lot of Emily Giffin's books combined with the Sophie Kinsella chick lit genre. Right now as I recover from giving birth a fifth time and adjusting to four kids at home, I find that easy chick lit books with funny, smart likable characters are the best reads for me right now. I'm a SAHM, so this book was somewhat relatable although not entirely because I'm a suburban mid-thiry child education major in Oregon and the main character in this book is a forty antiquities dealer living in Manhattan who has to file pages long applications for kindergarten and has friends whose personal finances rank in the multi-millions.

Still a great beach read (or if you are a SAHM like me, a great backyard or couch read while your children destroy your house and you pray for the time to pass even more quickly for when they go back to school)

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### **Janssen says**

I read several books early last year that were similar to this one and "What Do You Do All Day" is far superior to any of them. Jennifer Bradley is a much more solid and multi-dimensional character, who seems desperately real. It seems to me that books like this often have heroines that are either terribly angry or depressed or happy or organized. Jennifer, rather, was an excellent mix of all characters, acting just the way you generally would expect. Also, it seemed like a lot of women in these books are either workaholics mourning missing their babies or stay-at-homes longing to not be. Jennifer, rather, clearly sees the pros and cons of both lifestyles and definitely cherishes the opportunity to spend time with her children, while missing aspects of her old career.

Additionally, there are a number of other really great characters, none of them falling into the stereotypes so common among this kind of book. Rather, the book takes a great deal of care to analyze Jennifer's decisions in career, family, mothering, friendship, and love, how she relates to those around her, and how she views herself and feels others view her.

All in all, the book seemed so much less cliche than others in the same genre. Still not masterful fiction, by any means, but an obvious front-runner of the genre.

Read my full review at: <http://everydayreading.blogspot.com/2011/05/what-do-you-do-all-day.html>

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### **Stephy says**

I am so stealing someone else's review on this book as she said it perfectly

If you work, work part-time, ever worked...and then became a mom, READ THIS:) It is hilarious! I thought it was going to be really annoying about yet another NYC family with unreal spending habits, but that's not the story...the story is navigating parenthood, your own identity, your marriage and oh yeah, making sure someone is paying the bills. Very quick read.

In *What Do You Do All Day*, first time novelist Amy Scheibe chronicles the pains, pleasures, and play-dates of a stay-at-home-mother who's struggling to be the best parent on the block while retaining some sliver of sanity. The fast-paced, spirited story--a sort of *Bridget Jones* for the modern mother--answers the title question easily. Jennifer Bradley has a miles-long list of daily duties (compounded by the absence of her loving but always traveling husband), including urging one-year-old Max to crawl in her presence and handling precocious four-year-old Georgia (whose response to being bathed with her brother is, "I'm not down with this, Jen"). But the question Jennifer can't seem to answer is whether what she does all day really matters. Scheibe crafts a well-rounded, realistic character in Jennifer--a thinking mother who is brutally honest about her ambivalence. Some days she wants to spend hours just staring at her kids, but on others, she yearns for her old job as an antiquities dealer. And what about that biography of Hannibal she's always wanted to write? Jennifer's constant worry that her "hard-earned identity of career woman/neofeminist" has been "thrown out with the baby's bathwater" brings a manic, amusing energy to the story, and propels her pell-mell down the brambly path of motherhood. --Brangien Davis

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### **Alisee says**

Brioso e leggero, *Bridget Jones* è diventata mamma

Per riprendere uno dei commenti del libro, "Bridget Jones è diventata mamma". Direi che è piuttosto azzeccato. Dimenticatevi le paranoie sul peso di Bridget e la sua fissa per gli uomini, qui Jennifer se ne infischia abbastanza dell'essere sovrappeso e le sue preoccupazioni sono diverse, ma abbastanza originali e simpatiche, varie e mai eccessive, soprattutto esposte con un senso dello humor e un'autoironia simile a *Bridget Jones*. Jennifer è una mamma che adora i suoi bambini, nonostante li veda anche scherzosamente per quello che sono (e questi aspetti sono davvero divertenti), cerca di ritrovare un equilibrio tra una vita a casa che ormai non le dà più abbastanza stimoli, nonostante sia intensa, il nuovo ruolo di mamma di figlia che va

a scuola, un marito che se va a lavorare lontano, la ricerca di amicizie adulte con cui poter parlare, la suocera da manuale, i genitori "particolari" ... e in mezzo a tutto questo la ricerca di ritrovare la sua dimensione di donna che non sia solo madre.

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### **Cheryl says**

I would have given this book one star, but went with two because it did provide a few chuckles. I couldn't relate to the characters at all, though, because I've never been to (or heard of) a children's party where iPods and designer handbags were given to guests in goody bags, and once I grew up and had children, I never hung around druggies. (Ok, I never did that before kids either.) The only shred I could find in common with this main character is the mommy guilt and comparing my kids to others. Most of the book annoyed me, though, because of its predictability and ridiculousness (I mean, what almost-40 couple calls them "rubbers," for Pete's sake?), and I was glad I hadn't paid money for the book.

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### **Susy Emiliani says**

Mi aspettavo qualcosa di più divertente. Magari la descrizione di situazioni particolari vissute con i bambini e invece è incentrato, soprattutto, sulle paturnie della protagonista. Mette molta carne al fuoco ma poi non approfondisce gli argomenti.

P.S. Jennifer non è assolutamente Bridget Jones diventata mamma.

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### **M says**

I'm afraid I won't remember everything I hate about this book but I will try my best.

What Do You Do All Day, as you can assume from the title, is a cheap knock off of 'I Don't Know How She Does It,' ie, the rant of the young mom. However, this one fell short of it's original in just about every way possible.

Jennifer is a stay at home mom whose burning conflict seems to be that she is not like the other moms. Either they work, and she is jealous, or they are better moms, and she is jealous. She recognizes that she is of the more selfish, disturbing moms who, she even admits, can understand Munchausen by Proxy because of great it is to be needed by your kids. She frets over not sewing the costumes well enough as well as the inevitable day that her kids will - gasp - actually become their own people.

SO issue number one - stop whining and get the heck over yourself. She vacillates from being a helicopter mom to a resentful mom and the pendulum swings are dizzying and irritating.

As if that weren't bad enough, the characters in this book are all cartoons. Vera, evil mother in law, who can't even be funny because she is so over the top obnoxious; all the other rich mommies who are either falling apart or also downright obnoxious and living out the nightmare sort of lives you read about in tabloids; the overall rich culture (why this couldn't be an honest book about frustrated mommies who DON'T have fancy apartments in tribeca and yet somehow can be interesting in their own right, rather than the cliche beyond cliche fast paced east side track baffles me) which seems to forget that five year olds would not actually speak the way they do in this book (referring to their moms by name, begging their mothers not to humiliate

them if the right brand of goody bag isn't purchased for the party, where the kids will all expect ipods); the husband who at first is cast as a thoughtless jerk only to then emerge as actually rather perfect.

THen we have the plot 'twists' each of which was completely predictable and each of which was again, super over the top. Let's plunge these implausible people into a noir mystery filled with dark encounters and obscure fragments of conversation while main character still goes about her stupid day, occasionally musing about the big secrets her husband seems to be keeping from her.

We have terrible dialog that is trite and rambling. We have whole chapters of J's stream of consciousness that made this more like a blog I wouldn't read than a novel I was trying to. We have a style of writing that involves so many thoughts mashed into its sentences that half the time I didn't even understand what was being said.

Here's the lesson - when the Brits do it (and they generally do it right), don't even try.

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### **Amanda says**

DNF'd on page 68. The main character is the type of person I tend to avoid in real life.

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### **Beckie says**

this book affected me more than any book has in a look time. at some points it actually stressed me out, not much and not in a bad way, but enough that i noticed a difference in my mood after reading. i related to many things in this book, and other things i had no clue about. it's about a stay-at-home mom with two kids, but she used to have an awesome job. her husband travels a lot so she manages everything by herself kids-wise. she is almost 40 and doesn't know if she made the right decision staying home. her daughter is enrolled in some seriously high-class school (she is 4) that is turning her into quite a snot and her son is a little over 1, and doesn't crawl or talk yet. they live in the NYC area. i can relate to being a stay-at-home mom, i am 40, my son is almost 3, i know i made the right decision staying home, i used to have an awesome job but it was very stressful, and my husband comes home every night but i still have to manage everything kid-wise. i didn't understand some of the acronyms used (i figured out what SAHM is...stay-at-home mom) so that made relating to the story a little hard. i guess the writer figured we are all on the same page. i also can't believe that there are people who send their kids to the best of the best schools at such a young age just because it is impossible to get into and looks good on paper or when you talk about it. well, yes, i can believe it, i just don't get it. i didn't think that NYC was that much different from chicago, but maybe i need to watch sex & the city to understand the 'ladies who lunch' references, among others. i was stressed from reading about racial issues, mother-in-laws who are so mean, little girls who are having birthday parties at american girl (thank God i have a boy), nannies, to work or not work, affairs, and most of all, the unbelievable use of the F word. now don't get me wrong, i swear, under my breath, a lot some days, but these people just swear whenever and then say things like 'oops, i didn't know he could talk'. anyway...i did like reading about horrific births that ended up in just as horrific c-sections...i am not alone...you can't make that stuff up...and i don't care what women try to tell you, you will NOT forget the pain when it takes over 50 hours to deliver a baby. there was a cool part about to nurse or not-to-nurse, (i nursed for 31 months). i also liked reading about a woman who had a cool life before kids...just like i did. what really made me want to read this book was the title, as i have been asked this question many times, like i need to justify every moment of my day. isn't it enough that my son is healthy, safe, and smart as a whip? (in my opinion...he really does know a lot of things that most kids his age don't, but i am not a bragger) that stuff doesn't happen on its own. i am not peggy bundy, sitting on the couch watching tv and eating bon bons. i don't even watch tv unless my son can watch

the show, too. anyway...i have said enough. i am not sure what book to get next, but i think it needs to be like a mystery or something less emotional!

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### **Sarah says**

I really enjoyed the 1st half of this book, which is about a stay at home mom who is grappling with the whole concept of staying at home with kids, missing work, feeling as if she is missing life but also loving her children and trying to figure out how to connect to others in the world of stay at home-ness. Halfway through the book shifts gears and becomes a completely different book, and it becomes a bit less likeable and less fluid. It does not make total sense as it gets closer to the end and with this book, just like the last book I reviewed, (Beach House) the happy ending just did not sit right with me. As I grapple with the working mom life, and am amazed at the stay at home mom life, I love reading these kind of books to see "how the other half lives", but this one was not among the best. Would have given it 2.5 stars if I could have, but not an option!

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### **Kate says**

This is a quick beach read. I picked it up because as a stay at home mom I get this question a lot. The main character is nuts but sweet and i have to admit there are times i laughed out loud. Despite my differences with the main character (unfortunlity i don't live in a huge loft in NY, there are some things in the book that she experiences with her kids that I have experienced with jack.

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### **Rebekah says**

SAHM Computer speak for Stay At Home Moms. As one myself, I could really relate to this one. Leaving a job in which you are respected, drawing your own paycheck, having lunches and colleagues to commiserate with, these are the things you leave to be a "hands- on" parent. Now your kife revolves around play dates, nursery schools, keeping the Darlings fed, clean and healthy, leaving little time for the mother's ego to be stroked at any time. These are 24 hr jobs, yet there is no end of year review, no pay increase, no vacation time and no sick leave and little recognition. We've all heard it before but Scheibe takes it to a new level with her adjustments in New York, a Power City with her leaving the power the loop but the competition now lived through one's children. The humor she puts into her struggles, crises and victories keeps the reader involved. There is a bit a mystery, new circumstances to adjust to,in-law conflict, an absentee husband and sexual intrigue which addresses the issues but keeps it light and has the reader smiling and thinking "I can relate to that!"

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### **Jane says**

Four words: rich white girl problems. A fun read about amped-up Manhattan mommy madness, with an amusingly snarky narrator.

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**Karla Winick-Ford says**

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nothing too extraordinary about this one but not so bad either. just numbing... not a great plot

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