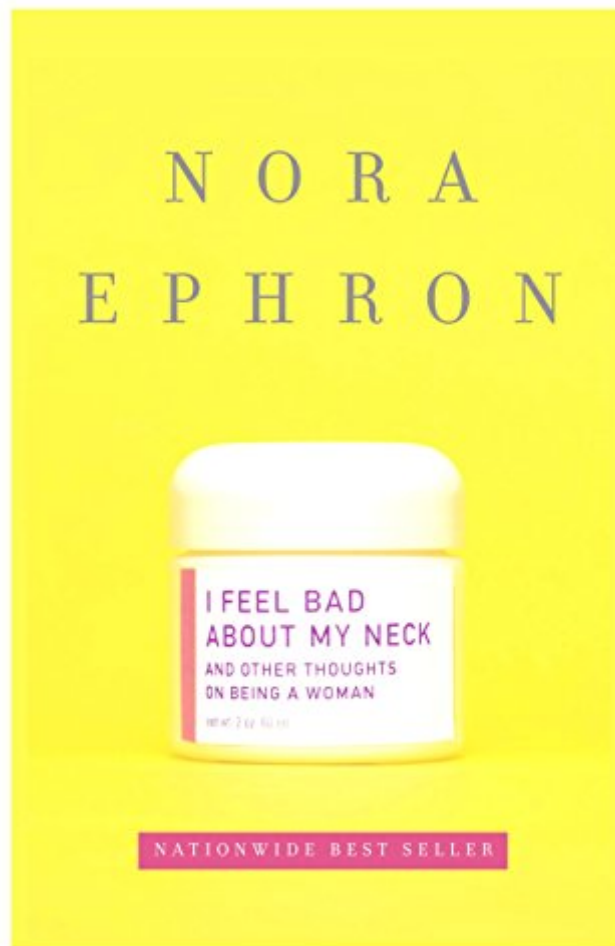




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I Feel Bad About My Neck



Synopsis

With her disarming, intimate, completely accessible voice, and dry sense of humor, Nora Ephron shares with us her ups and downs in *I Feel Bad About My Neck*, a candid, hilarious look at women who are getting older and dealing with the tribulations of maintenance, menopause, empty nests, and life itself. Ephron chronicles her life as an obsessed cook, passionate city dweller, and hapless parent. But mostly she speaks frankly and uproariously about life as a woman of a certain age. Utterly courageous, uproariously funny, and unexpectedly moving in its truth telling, *I Feel Bad About My Neck* is a scrumptious, irresistible treat of a book, full of truths, laugh out loud moments that will appeal to readers of all ages. From the Trade Paperback edition.

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Customer Reviews

I think Nora Ephron could write about the telephone book and make it entertaining (one brief section in this book about parenting proves the point). Here's an example. Most writers don't want to think about aging. If they do, they want to prescribe "solutions." Nora Ephron has a different idea: Simply describe aging as something we foolishly try to stave off (pretty unsuccessfully) by sharing her own

experiences. That concept is best captured by her essay "On Maintenance" that describes in detail the time, money, and effort she puts into trying to look as good as she can. I'm reminded of a conversation I had with my cousin (who in her more naive days was a beauty queen) who always looks terrific. When I complimented my cousin on her appearance once, she replied, "You have no idea how much more effort it takes every year." Now, I do! The essay "I Feel Bad About My Neck" is very funny. I don't think I ever look at women's necks . . . but now I know that some women do. Apparently it's all downhill after 43. The essay ends with the irony that Ms. Ephron cannot do anything about her neck without a facelift, and she's not a good candidate for a facelift. I also liked her essays about how we fall in love with concepts, places, and people . . . for no particularly good reason. But that temporary embrace is soon replaced by another one that will probably be even more satisfying. Although not described that way, you get a sense that she views her prior two marriages much in the same way.

Never mind the grammatically horrendous title, this is one entertaining book of essays on the subject of aging, most especially as it applies to women. Whether it would be as funny to either: a). men, or b). people too young to know what aging really feels like, is debatable, but I can only say I found it a very deep, thoughtful and quick read. It's also one that kept me laughing, that is, when I didn't feel like crying. Ephron doesn't sugar-coat, though she does pour on the humor. She lets out her true feelings on the topic of aging, which feels an awful lot like grief in some of her essays. That would make sense, though, to mourn the passing of youth as you'd mourn just about anything you've had and lost. Though she couches things in humor, she's brutally honest. She's at her most poignant while speaking about the loss of her best friend, who died all too soon after discovering she had cancer. One day they were talking about the fickle and finite nature of life, and the next they were struggling to find a way to make sense of things, and to figure out how to say goodbye. Really wrenching stuff, but the uplift is Ephron's unfailing sense of humor. The optimism of that may be real or faked, but there's enough padding there that the reader can still come away with a feeling things aren't SO bad, about her neck or other, bigger things like death and dying. This is partly a book about fighting the aging process, but not entirely. All the creams and surgical procedures are mentioned, and Ephron will tell you what she's done and what she hasn't, but that isn't the main point of the book. The point is aging isn't a walk in the park.

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