

Why We Can't Sleep: Women's New Midlife Crisis

by Ada Calhoun

Coming January 7, 2020 from Grove Atlantic and Audible

A generation-defining exploration of the new midlife crisis facing Gen X women and the unique circumstances that have brought them to this point, *Why We Can't Sleep* is a lively successor to *Passages* by Gail Sheehy and *The Deadline Decade* by Meg Jay

When Ada Calhoun found herself in the throes of a midlife crisis, she thought that she had no right to complain. She was married with children and a good career. So why did she feel miserable? And why did it seem that other Generation X women were miserable, too?

Calhoun decided to find some answers. She looked into housing costs, HR trends, credit card debt averages, and divorce data. At every turn, she saw a pattern: sandwiched between the Boomers and the Millennials, Gen X women were facing new problems as they entered middle age, problems that were being largely overlooked.

Speaking with women across America about their experiences as the generation raised to “have it all,” Calhoun found that most were exhausted, terrified about money, under-employed, and overwhelmed. Instead of their issues being heard, they were told instead to lean in, take “me-time,” or make a chore chart to get their lives and homes in order.

In *Why We Can't Sleep*, Calhoun opens up the cultural and political contexts of Gen X's predicament and offers solutions for how to pull oneself out of the abyss—and keep the next generation of women from falling in. The result is reassuring, empowering, and essential reading for all middle-aged women, and anyone who hopes to understand them.

Author Bio:

ADA CALHOUN is the author of the memoir *Wedding Toasts I'll Never Give*, named an Amazon Book of the Month and one of the top ten memoirs of 2017 by *W* magazine; and the history *St. Marks Is Dead*, one of the best books of 2015, according to *Kirkus* and the *Boston Globe*. She has collaborated on several *New York Times* bestsellers, and written for the *New York Times*, *New York*, and *The New Republic*.

Advance Praise:

“Ada Calhoun's soulful investigation into the complex landscape women in midlife face today is downright stunning. Calhoun has captured the voices—some broken, some resilient, many barely staying afloat—of over 200 women from around the country and in doing so, shown us how much we share in divisive times. You will recognize yourself in these pages, breathe a sigh of relief, and think, *I'm not alone.*”—**Susannah Cahalan, author of the *New York Times* bestselling *Brain on Fire***

“Helping women realize that some difficulty, some confusion, is not just all in their mind is probably one of your more feminist acts, and the impressive amount of research Ada Calhoun did on the very specific forces, past and present, that are bedeviling Gen X women as they face the strange period that is midlife is just that kind of gift. But the other gift is that she writes with clear sight, compassion, and hope about our very specific talents and tenacity. Which means: this book is a thousand times more healing than a jadeite egg!” — **Carlene Bauer, author of *Not That Kind of Girl and Frances and Bernard***

“It’s difficult to grapple with the immense anxiety and fear so many women go through alone, but Ada Calhoun’s artistry as a writer makes her the perfect guide through the rough business of middle age.” — **Kathleen Hanna of Bikini Kill**

“This is the book of our generation. Ada Calhoun brilliantly encapsulates the struggle and confusion that is the Gen X woman’s experience in middle age. And by placing this condition into the context of the generations coming before and after, she makes sense of how it is that we’re so surprised that we have failed at having it all. Heavily researched, expertly paced, and seamlessly woven together, *Why We Can’t Sleep* provides an ‘aha’ moment that at once validates our experience and establishes a sense of community and hope.” — **Janet Krone Kennedy, PhD, Clinical Psychologist, author of *The Good Sleeper: The Essential Guide to Sleep for Your Baby (and You)* and founder of NYC Sleep Doctor**

“I love Ada Calhoun’s writing. *Why We Can’t Sleep* just took me to school, laughing all the way there.” — **Adam Horovitz of the Beastie Boys**