

Acid Indigestion Eyes: Collected Essays and Musings on Generation X

Wayne Lockwood

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Americans born between the mid-1960s and early 1980s are often characterized—some would say stereotyped—by their resistance to established norms, as well as a general reluctance to be categorized. Wayne Lockwood's *Acid Indigestion Eyes: Collected Essays and Musings on Generation X* illustrates much of the Generation X worldview, employing a personal style that maintains and celebrates that independent spirit.

Lockwood is a longtime journalist, having worked at several major newspapers. The essays in his book date from the 1990s, when Lockwood, in his twenties at the time, authored a regular column on Generation X. His essays show remarkable maturity for a young writer, and he utilizes a casual, convivial style that makes it feel like he's talking to the reader. He discusses urban legends, music, and Slurpees, in addition to weightier subjects like the demise of the nuclear family, addiction, and "hand-me-down racism." "I'm a racist. Not by choice. Not by education. By accidental osmosis. Bet you are too, at least to a degree."

Such attention-grabbing statements are backed up with thoughtful writing about personal experiences that any reader, not just those born within the Generation X birth range, can appreciate. Lockwood sprinkles humor amid serious discussions, and he elevates the not-so-serious ones with vivid imagery, as when he challenges those who would spoil Halloween: "If you eradicate Halloween, you're just shaking pennies out of your kids' precious memory banks."

The book succeeds as a collection. While there are references to Nirvana and Beavis and Butt-Head, among other Generation X cultural touchstones, *Acid Indigestion Eyes* is a personal narrative that happens to echo the experience of the author's contemporaries; it is not an attempt to encapsulate the worldview of a typical member of Generation X. Because of this, *Acid Indigestion Eyes* stands proudly with the works of Douglas Coupland and other Generation X authors. Lockwood's book is many things, but it's certainly no slacker.

PETER DABBENE (May 3, 2012)

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