

The Menopause Manifesto: Own Your Health with Facts and Feminism

Jen Gunter

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Jen Gunter's *The Menopause Manifesto* is a self-help guide through menopause for all women of a certain age.

Menopause is commonplace and complicated at the same time. Shrouded in myth and peppered with prejudice, it is not often spoken of, even among women experiencing it, but Gunter is eager to set things straight. Through a combination of personal anecdotes, hard science, and medical advice, she breaks menopause down into its component parts, robbing it of its shame and secrecy. The biological mechanisms behind menopause are revealed as matters of fact, as are the different phases of menopause and their various symptoms—including the fact that some women barely notice that their bodies are changing, while others are affected physically and mentally.

Gunter notes that patriarchal social structures mean that a woman's worth is weighed based on her youth and fertility, and that gender and racial bias in the medical profession also increase the risk of women with symptoms of menopause being dismissed. Further, because hard facts are difficult to find, women are without the tools they need to stand up for themselves and demand help. As a counter, she discusses medical statistics in an easy-to-understand way, showing how they factor in to how women experience menopause, and how medical professionals treat them in the process. Her simple yet effective rhetorical device of gender flipping helps to further expose the hypocrisy that surrounds this natural biological process.

The book is organized in a way that makes it possible to pick and choose what to read based on need and curiosity. Each chapter ends with a useful summary, and diagrams help to illustrate the book's statistics. Additional material toward the book's end delves further into medications and science.

The Menopause Manifesto is practical as it reclaims menopause from myths, educating and empowering its audience in equal measure.

ERIKA HARLITZ KERN (May / June 2021)

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