No actual numbers exist for the same, but I could easily believe that car ownership rates are proportionally lower than previous generations. As a millennial, I can give you the very simple answer to the "why" question.

No, it's not because we're so environmentally conscious we're electing to go carless in order to save the world. I love my car and can vouch for the convenience that comes with owning a car . I'd need to be Lance Armstrong to get through day-to-day life without a car.

And it's also not because we're spoiled brats who want our parents to chauffeur us everywhere, as part and parcel of never growing up, never learning any responsibility, never getting a job, and living at home forever. Very few people of any age want to live like that, despite the popular myth that everyone my age wants to live like that.

There's no big, inscrutable philosophical shift that's gone on. It really comes down to two very simple things.

**Lots of us don't need cars.** Many of us are moving to where the jobs are -- big cities. So, many of us live in places where a car is unnecessary or even a liability. Even in places where public transportation isn't an option, carshare services like Zipcar and rideshare services like Lyft and Uber make it easier than ever to use a car only when you need one, and not worry about it when you don't. Shopping online can bring almost any good imaginable straight to our doorsteps. We used to have to go out somewhere to hang out with friends; technological advances now make it possible to hang out with friends on opposite sides of the world from the comfort of our own homes. (By the way, this is exactly why your teenager doesn't want a car as badly as you did: twenty years ago, the only way to get adult-free privacy with your friends was to leave your parents' house, and you needed a car in order to do that whenever you wanted. No longer -- now all you have to do is pull out your smartphone.)

**Lots of us can't afford cars.** Most of us are underemployed, if we're employed at all. Many of us who went to college are drowning under huge student loan payments. The dollars we do earn don't go as far as they would have gone even ten years ago. A significant proportion of us simply don't have the money to take on the cost of buying a car outright or making a car payment, plus gas, insurance, maintenance, and repairs.

As with so many other things -- it's the economy. You used to need your own car to do almost anything, but no longer, thanks to innovations in goods and services. And, cars cost a lot of money in a time when money is harder to come by and doesn't go as far as it used to go. That's all there is to it. Many of us still happily buy and drive cars, but now that there are viable alternatives, many of us simply choose to do otherwise.