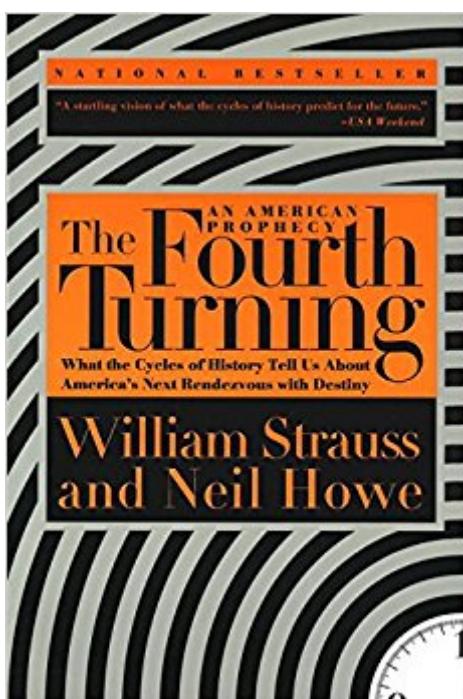


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# The Fourth Turning: An American Prophecy - What The Cycles Of History Tell Us About America's Next Rendezvous With Destiny



## Synopsis

This astonishing book will change the way you see the world -- and your place in it. With startling originality, *The Fourth Turning* illuminates the past, explains the present, and reimagines the future. Most remarkably, it offers an utterly persuasive prophecy about a new American era that will begin just after the millennium. William Strauss and Neil Howe base this vision on a provocative new theory of American history. The authors look back five hundred years and uncover a distinct pattern: Modern history moves in cycles, each one lasting about the length of a long human life, each composed of four eras--or "turnings"--that last about twenty years and that always arrive in the same order. First comes a High, a period of confident expansion as a new order takes root after the old has been swept away. Next comes an Awakening, a time of spiritual exploration and rebellion against the now-established order. Then comes an Unraveling, an increasingly troubled era in which individualism triumphs over crumbling institutions. Last comes a Crisis--the Fourth Turning--when society passes through a great and perilous gate in history. Together, the four turnings comprise history's seasonal rhythm of growth, maturation, entropy, and rebirth. Strauss and Howe locate today's America as midway through an Unraveling, roughly a decade away from the next era of Crisis. In a brilliant analysis of the post-World War II period, they show how generational dynamics are the key to understanding the cycles of American history. They draw vivid portraits of all the modern generations: the can-do G.I.s, the mediating Silent, the values-absorbed Boomers, the pragmatic 13ers, and the child Millennials. Placed in the context of history's long rhythms, the persona and role of each generation become clear--as does the inevitability of the coming Crisis. Whatever your stage of life, *The Fourth Turning* offers bold predictions about how all of us can prepare, individually and collectively, for America's next rendezvous with destiny.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The Fourth Turning continues the project of mapping out the place of generations in history, a project begun in the authors' earlier books *Generations* and *13th Gen*. If millennial fever takes hold, The Fourth Turning may be only the first of an impending wave of pseudo-scholarly tracts prognosticating future (but imminent!) doom as we collectively close the books on this millennium. Those expecting a serious or dry tome might be put off by the authors' taste for bulleted text and catchy phrasings, but can you blame these guys for wanting to make impending peril as exciting as possible? After all, they think we are headed toward "events on par with the Revolution, the Civil War, or World War II" in the next 20 years. Mixing solid understanding of present generational divisions, with some fairly broad generalizations, Strauss and Howe promise to move from history to prophecy. Fans of *Future Shock*, *Megatrends*, or *Powershift* will be familiar with the authors' style of writing and not at all put off by the book's reach or style. Their take on history provides an intriguing (if not always reliable) lens through which to view the past, present, and maybe even the future.

--This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

After researching historical patterns, the authors (*Generations: The History of America's Future*, Morrow, 1991) conclude that America is on the verge of crisis. They substantiate their hypothesis by identifying and tracing a repetitive, four-stage historical cycle that, throughout recorded time, started on a high note and ended in hardship. Narrator Michael Tilford's polished, convincing voice and steady pacing lend an air of legitimacy to the authors' assertions. A brief question-and-answer session between the narrator and the authors at program's end provides an interactive quality that enhances the sometimes methodical drone of the historical analysis. Like other works of prophecy, The Fourth Turning should circulate well in public libraries. --Mark P. Tierney, The World Bank, Washington, D.C. Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is the kind of book I should ordinarily despise. It contains a broad arc of history viewed internally and is epic in the worst way possible. And yet, it is incredibly compelling for two reasons: (i) there is something to be said for viewing history from the perspective of generational change and

(ii) the prediction made in the book (written in 1998) that we will enter a time of crisis around 2005 give or take a few years was spot on. In addition, minor points should be given for turning the spotlight on the financial world as the catalyst for the crisis of 2008. In a nutshell, the book advances the view that history roughly repeats itself every 80 years. Further, every 80 year period is characterized by the arrival of Artists (silent generation in this cycle), Prophets (boomers), Nomads (Gen Xers) and Heroes (millennials). Previous incarnations of this cycle ended with the war of independence, the civil war and world war II. This naturally sets up the denouement for this cycle which the authors expect to occur in the 2025 time frame. Each cycle is divided into turnings: the present one is characterized by First (High: 1946-1964), Second (Awakening: 1964-1984), Third (Unraveling: 1984-2008) and Fourth (Crisis: 2008-202X). From the book's perspective and Neil Howe's subsequent blog posts, we entered the Fourth Turning in 2008. There's nothing spooky or mystical about these cycles and turnings: instead the authors stress that human nature and culture seem to have these rhythms and that Anglo-American history is stable enough to be characterized in this manner. Other cultures may either be too stable or too chaotic to follow this type of pattern. Prior to the arrival of Donald Trump and despite the eerie portend of the financial crisis, I would have dismissed this book. Now, it looks positively prophetic. Is there any doubt now that the combination of (i) income inequality, (ii) the economic problems of the white working class, (iii) the culture wars, (iv) multiculturalism and globalism, (v) the ravages of identity politics and postmodernism and (vi) terrorism is not going to be a combustible mix over the next decade? And that these will simultaneously distract us from combating global warming - the clear threat of the next era? While I find it hard to buy into the notion that the US will face an existential crisis (as predicted by the book), there's definitely merit in the view that the next ten years will probably have the capability of shocking us however jaded we may be at the present time.

Good book, interesting material, a bit difficult to read as there is too much detailed history info...indeed that is the aim of this reading!

Very interesting. Still reading it.

Still reading it, but so far, so good!

liked generations better read this one first then the 4th turning makes more sense then

Time to digest the future....who has time for that, a very thoughtful reading.

Thought provoking read. Many predictions have already come true.

This book is absolutely enlightening, it is for anybody who seeks to understand our society as it is and where it is heading. A completely, exhaustive and compelling description of why events happen, how the people in them are predisposed to enact their individual and respective parts in combination with those older and younger. I have studied relationships for now several years and this book drew all other books together in ways I could not begin to fathom. It was a book recommended in a reading list from "A Thomas Jefferson Education for Teens" which I received of a subscription I subscribe to in regard to leadership and life significance.

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