

Questions from The Fourth Turning by William Strauss and Neil Howe
Pages 106 - 115, 136 - 137, 272 - 302, charts on 61, 83, 98, 105, 138

Rhythms in History

- * Historical cycles describe a stable, systematic world, and yet Strauss and Howe's cycles are characterized by catastrophe. What is the role of chaos in cycles?
- * What does cycle theory predict current university campus attitudes should be characterized by, and does that inform our perception of them?
- * The study of history is said to be searching for "how it was." Do the gross statistics upon which cycle theory is based tell us about the gestalt of the times?

Politics

- * Where are we in the politic cycle? Is it different in different regions of the country? Do different politicians reflect different points on that cycle? Are we now in a one-party political system?
- * Government is designed to be stable, and self-supporting, but Strauss and Howe claim that it never has been. What factors in a liberal society would motivate the return of authoritative government?

Family and Society

- * Why do gender roles solidify during a crisis? How can it be said that they did, when in the United States, the last crisis resulted in huge influxes of women into the workforce?
- * Was the family structure strong or weak during your youth? What aspects of that would you prefer to maintain for your children, and which change?

Culture

- * How "civilized" are you? Does culture advance over time?

Archetypes in History Chart

- * Which of these archetypes seem "best"?
- * What is the right way to raise a child?

Moods of the Four Turnings Chart

- * How would you describe the current mood for each category-- gender roles, ideals, social motivation, worldview, etc.?

A Fourth Turning Prophecy

- * Was 9/11 the crisis of our cycle? If so, why did it temporarily reinforce the standing order?
- * What is our fourth turning prophecy, knowing how things have developed so far?
- * The internet seems to exemplify the ideals of an unraveling. What will happen to it during the crisis?
- * What is our new political constellation? Do Boomers have the wisdom to lead us?
- * Will there be a great war this crisis? What and when? Will it involve the use of nuclear weapons?
- * Predict the climax of the crisis. Where will the post-crisis solution come from?
- * What does cycle theory tell us about the fate of social security?
- * How does the 13th gen description compare to the popular media understanding of generation X?
- * Explain the statement on 289, "They will widen the continuing dispersions of technology and culture-- yet will vote for politicians who promise to reverse it."
- * How does Obama reflect the 13th gen traits (and how did McCain reflect the Silent generation and Clinton the Boomers)?
- * How have the millennials changed MIT?
- * Would your generation go to war?
- * Now that we understand the extremes of the cycle (for example, the stifling that Artist youth are subjected to), can and should we change it?

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