THE FOURTH TURNING IS HERE

What the Seasons of History Tell Us about How and When This Crisis Will End

NEIL HOWE

CHART 2-1

The Modern Saeculum of War and Politics

	FIRST QUARTER	SECOND QUARTER	THIRD QUARTER	FOURTH QUARTER
Wright (1942)	Peace	Minor Wars	Peace	Major Wars
Toynbee (1954)	Breathing Space	Supplementary Wars	General Peace	General War
Rosecrance (1973)	Decreased Involvement	Power Vacuums	Increased Involvement	War
Farrar (1977)	Probing Wars	Adjusting Wars	Probing Wars	Hegemonic Wars
Hopkins-Wallerstein (1982)	Hegemonic Maturity	Declining Hegemony	Ascending Hegemony	Hegemonic Victory
Modelski (1987) & Thompson (2020)	World Power	Delegitimization	Deconcentration	Global War
NATURE	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter

CHART 2-2

The Anglo-American Saeculum

SAECULUM	Time from Climax of Crisis to Climax of Awakening (climax year) AWAKENING *(full era)*	Time from Climax of Awakening to Climax of Crisis (climax year) CRISIS *(full era)*	Time from one Crisis Climax to next Crisis Climax
LATE MEDIEVAL		**(1485)** War of the Roses *(1455–1487)*	
TUDOR	52 years → **(1537)** Protestant Reformation *(1525–1551)*	51 years → **(1588)** Armada Crisis *(1569–1597)*	**103 years**
NEW WORLD	52 years → **(1640)** Puritan Awakening *(1621–1649)*	51 years → **(1691)** Glorious Revolution *(1675–1706)*	**103 years**
REVOLUTIONARY	50 years → **(1741)** Great Awakening *(1727–1746)*	47 years → **(1788)** American Revolution *(1773–1794)*	**97 years**
CIVIL WAR	43 years → **(1831)** Transcendental Awakening *(1822–1844)*	33 years → **(1864)** Civil War *(1860–1865)*	**76 years**
GREAT POWER	32 years → **(1896)** Third Great Awakening *(1886–1908)*	48 years → **(1944)** Great Depression—World War II *(1929–1946)*	**80 years**
MILLENNIAL	36 years → **(1980)** Consciousness Revolution *(1964–1984)*	50 years? → **(2030?)** Millennial Crisis *(2008–2033?)*	**86 years?**

CHART 3-1

American Generations and World War II

GENERATION	Birth Years	Famous Member	Generational Connection to World War II
Progressive	1843–1859	Woodrow Wilson	*Prewar Elders (Unsuccessful Multilateralists)*
Missionary	1860–1882	Franklin Roosevelt	**Elder Leaders:** Principled Visionaries
Lost	1883–1900	Dwight Eisenhower	**Midlife Generals:** Pragmatic Managers
G.I.	1901–1924	John F. Kennedy	**Rising-Adult Soldiers:** Can-Do Heroes
Silent	1925–1942	Michael Dukakis	**Sheltered Children:** Deferential Helpmates
Boom	1943–1960	Bill Clinton	*Postwar Children (Victory Babies)*
Gen X	1961–1981	Barack Obama	*Postwar Children (Symbol of Lost Direction)*
Millennial	1982–2005?	Pete Buttigieg	*Postwar Children (Last Adult Memory of G.I.s)*
Homeland	2006?–?	Priah Ferguson	*Postwar Children (History Only)*

CHART 3-2

Recent Generations and Their Locations in History

ERA	1908–1929	1929–1946	1946–1964	1964–1984	1984–2008
		(CRISIS)		(AWAKENING)	
KEY EVENTS	Four Freedoms World War I Prohibition Scopes Trial	Crash of '29 New Deal Pearl Harbor D-Day	Levittown McCarthyism "Affluent Society" Little Rock	Woodstock Kent State Watergate Tax Revolt	Perestroika Culture Wars Dotcom Bubble 9/11 Wars
Entering ELDERHOOD Age 63–83	**Progressive** *Woodrow Wilson* *John Dewey*	**Missionary** *Franklin Roosevelt* *Douglas MacArthur*	**Lost** *Dwight Eisenhower* *Norman Rockwell*	**G.I.** *Lyndon Johnson* *Ronald Reagan*	**Silent** *Nancy Pelosi* *Colin Powell*
Entering MIDLIFE 42–62	**Missionary** *Herbert Hoover* *Andrew Volstead*	**Lost** *George Patton* *Humphrey Bogart*	**G.I.** *John Kennedy* *Walt Disney*	**Silent** *Ralph Nader* *Woody Allen*	**Boom** *G. W. Bush* *Oprah Winfrey*
Entering RISING ADULTHOOD Age 21–41	**Lost** *Al Capone* *F. Scott Fitzgerald*	**G.I.** *Robert Oppenheimer* *Jimmy Stewart*	**Silent** *Martin L. King, Jr.* *Elvis Presley*	**Boom** *Angela Davis* *Jim Morrison*	**Gen X** *Michael Dell* *Kurt Cobain*
Entering YOUTH Age 0–20	**G.I.** *Jackie Cooper* *"Pollyanna"*	**Silent** *Shirley Temple* *"Little Rascals"*	**Boom** *Jerry Mathers* *"Dr. Spock Babies"*	**Gen X** *Tatum O'Neal* *"Rosemary's Baby"*	**Millennial** *Hilary Duff* *"Barney's Gang"*

CHART 3-3

American Generations Coming of Age

GENERATION COMING OF AGE	YEAR WHEN GENERATION WAS FIRST NOTICED
Awakener	1734: Edwards's Northampton Revival
Liberty	1755: Washington at Battle of the Monongahela
Republican	1776: Jefferson's Declaration of Independence
Compromiser	1804: Lewis and Clark Expedition
Transcendental	1831: Turner's Rebellion & Garrison's *Liberator*
Gilded	1849: California Gold Rush
Progressive	1876: Edison & Westinghouse star at Centennial Expo
Missionary	1896: William Jennings Bryan's populist crusade
Lost	1918: Doughboys and literati in Paris
G.I.	1935: CCC & WPA youth teams
Silent	1951: Korean War–era young adults dubbed "Silent"
Boom	1967: Hippies celebrate Summer of Love
Generation X	1991: Publication of Coupland's sardonic *Generation X*
Millennial	2013: *Time* cover features recession-era "Millennial" youth

CHART 3-4

24 Anglo-American Generations

GENERATION	Birth Years	Famous Member (Man)	Famous Member (Woman)	Era in Which Members Came of Age	Archetype
Arthurian	1433–1460	King Henry VII	Elizabeth Woodville	War of the Roses Crisis	Hero
Humanist	1461–1482	Thomas More	Elizabeth of York	—	Artist
Reformation	1483–1511	William Tyndale	Anne Boleyn	Reformation Awakening	Prophet
Reprisal	1512–1540	Francis Drake	Queen Elizabeth I	—	Nomad
Elizabethan	1541–1565	William Shakespeare	Mary Herbert	Armada Crisis	Hero
Parliamentary	1566–1587	William Laud	Anne of Denmark	—	Artist
Puritan	1588–1617	John Winthrop	Anne Hutchinson	Puritan Awakening	Prophet
Cavalier	1618–1647	Nathaniel Bacon	Martha Corey	—	Nomad
Glorious	1648–1673	"King" Carter	Hannah Dustin	Glorious Revolution Crisis	Hero
Enlightenment	1674–1700	Cadwallader Colden	Mary Musgrove	—	Artist
Awakening	1701–1723	Jonathan Edwards	Eliza Lucas Pinckney	Great Awakening	Prophet
Liberty	1724–1741	George Washington	Mercy Warren	—	Nomad
Republican	1742–1766	Thomas Jefferson	"Molly Pitcher"	American Revolution Crisis	Hero
Compromise	1767–1791	Andrew Jackson	Dolley Madison	—	Artist
Transcendental	1792–1821	Abraham Lincoln	Elizabeth Cady Stanton	Transcendental Awakening	Prophet
Gilded	1822–1842	Ulysses Grant	Louisa May Alcott	Civil War Crisis	Nomad
Progressive	1843–1859	Woodrow Wilson	Mary Cassatt	—	Artist
Missionary	1860–1882	Franklin Roosevelt	Emma Goldman	Third Great Awakening	Prophet
Lost	1883–1900	Harry Truman	Dorothy Parker	—	Nomad
G.I.	1901–1924	John Kennedy	Katharine Hepburn	Depression–WWII Crisis	Hero
Silent	1925–1942	Joe Biden	Sandra Day O'Connor	—	Artist
Boom	1943–1960	Newt Gingrich	Hillary Clinton	Consciousness Revolution	Prophet
Generation X	1961–1981	Jeff Bezos	Kamala Harris	—	Nomad
Millennial	1982–2005?	Mark Zuckerberg	Taylor Swift	Millennial Crisis	Hero
Homeland	2006?–?	Jacob Tremblay	Gianna Bryant	—	Artist

CHART 3-5

Temperaments and Archetypes

CLASSICAL TEMPERAMENT	***Sanguineus*** (outer-driven, optimistic)	***Cholericus*** (emotionally expressive)	***Melancholia*** (inner-driven, pessimistic)	***Phlegmaticus*** (emotionally reserved)
Associated Deity	Prometheus	Dionysus	Apollo	Epimetheus
Associated Season	Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
Heraclitan Quaternity	Wet	Hot	Dry	Cold
Cardinal Virtue	*Temperentia*	*Prudentia*	*Iusticia*	*Fortitudo*
Adickes World Views	Traditional	Agnostic	Dogmatic	Innovative
Spranger Life Type	Theoretical	Aesthetic	Religious	Economic
Kretschmer Temperament	Anesthetic	Hyperesthetic	Melancholic	Hypomanic
Jungian Function	Reason	Intuition	Feeling	Sensation
Myers-Briggs Personality Type	Intuitive-Thinking	Sensation-Perception	Intuitive-Feeling	Sensation-Judging
Thompson Social Function	Headman (King)	Clown (Artist)	Shaman (Priest)	Hunter (Soldier)
Moore-Gillette Male Type	King	Lover	Magician	Warrior
GENERATIONAL ARCHETYPE	*Hero*	*Artist*	*Prophet*	*Nomad*

CHART 3-6

Seasons of Life and Time

ERA	Year 0–20	Year 21–41 (CRISIS)	Year 42–62	Year 63–83 (AWAKENING)	Year 84–
Entering **ELDERHOOD** Age 63–83	Artist	Prophet	Nomad	Hero	Artist
Entering **MIDLIFE** Age 42–62	Prophet	Nomad	Hero	Artist	Prophet
Entering **RISING ADULTHOOD** Age 21–41	Nomad	Hero	Artist	Prophet	Nomad
Entering **YOUTH** Age 0–20	Hero	Artist	Prophet	Nomad	Hero

CHART 3-7

Recent Generations and Their Archetypes

ERA	1908–1929	1929–1946 (CRISIS)	1946–1964	1964–1984 (AWAKENING)	1984–2008
KEY EVENTS	Four Freedoms World War I Prohibition Scopes Trial	Crash of '29 New Deal Pearl Harbor D-Day	Levittown McCarthyism "Affluent Society" Little Rock	Woodstock Kent State Watergate Tax Revolt	Perestroika Culture Wars Dotcom Bubble 9/11 Wars
Entering ELDERHOOD Age 63–83	**Progressive** (Artist) *empathic*	**Missionary** (Prophet) *visionary*	**Lost** (Nomad) *tough*	**G.I.** (Hero) *powerful*	**Silent** (Artist) *empathic*
Entering MIDLIFE Age 42–62	**Missionary** (Prophet) *moralistic*	**Lost** (Nomad) *pragmatic*	**G.I.** (Hero) *confident*	**Silent** (Artist) *indecisive*	**Boom** (Prophet) *moralistic*
Entering RISING ADULTHOOD Age 21–41	**Lost** (Nomad) *alienated*	**G.I.** (Hero) *team-playing*	**Silent** (Artist) *sensitive*	**Boom** (Prophet) *defiant*	**Gen X** (Nomad) *alienated*
Entering YOUTH Age 0–20	**G.I.** (Hero) *protected*	**Silent** (Artist) *suffocated*	**Boom** (Prophet) *indulged*	**Gen X** (Nomad) *abandoned*	**Millennial** (Hero) *protected*

CHART 3-8

Four-Type Generational Cycles

	PROPHET	NOMAD	HERO	ARTIST
Old Testament	Moses (prophetic)	Golden Calf (faithless)	Joshua (heroic)	Judges (administrative)
Homer	Nestor (sagacious)	Agamemnon (accursed)	Odysseus (hubristic)	Telemachus (deferential)
Polybius	populist	anarchic	kingly	aristocratic
Ibn Khaldun	ignoring	despising	founding	admiring
Ferrari	revolutionary	reactionary	harmonizing	preparatory
Wechssler	organic (myth, circle)	personal (epic, spiral)	mechanical (science, pyramid)	mathematical (rhetoric, cone)
Toynbee	war-declaring	too old to fight	war-fighting	too young to fight
Marías	reflective	anti-custom	initiating	conformist
Parsons	moral suasion	commerce	political power	reputation
Huntington	moralizing	cynical	institutionalizing	hypocritical
Modelski	normative	competitive	constructive	adaptive

CHART 4-1

Archetypes in History

ARCHETYPE	HERO	ARTIST	PROPHET	NOMAD
Generations	**Arthurian Elizabethan Glorious Republican — G.I. Millennial**	**Humanist Parliamentary Enlightenment Compromise Progressive Silent Homelander**	**Reformation Puritan Awakening Transcendental Missionary Boom**	**Reprisal Cavalier Liberty Gilded Lost Gen X**
Reputation as Child	good	placid	spirited	bad
Coming-of-Age	empowering	unfulfilling	sanctifying	alienating
Primary Focus Coming-of-Age	outer world	inter-dependency	inner world	self-sufficiency
Young Adulthood	building	improving	reflecting	competing
Transition in Midlife	achieving to confident	conformist to experimental	detached to judgmental	risk-taking to exhausted
Leadership Style Entering Elderhood	collegial, expansive	pluralistic, indecisive	principled, judgmental	solitary, pragmatic
Reputation as Elder	powerful	sensitive	visionary	tough
Treatment as Elder	rewarded	liked	respected	abandoned
How It Is Nurtured	tightening	overprotective	relaxing	underprotective
How It Nurtures	relaxing	underprotective	tightening	overprotective
Positive Reputation	rational, selfless, competent	expert, open-minded, caring	principled, resolute, creative	perceptive, practical, effective
Negative Reputation	unreflective, duteous, hubristic	conformist, complicating, indecisive	narcissistic, willful, unyielding	desperate, uncultured, reckless
Endowments	community, affluence, technology	arts & letters, expertise, due process	values, vision, religion	survival, honor, liberty

CHART 4-2

Turnings in the Anglo-American Saeculum

	FIRST TURNING (High)	SECOND TURNING (Awakening)	THIRD TURNING (Unraveling)	FOURTH TURNING (Crisis)
GENERATION ENTERING				
Elderhood	*Nomad*	*Hero*	*Artist*	*Prophet*
Midlife	*Hero*	*Artist*	*Prophet*	*Nomad*
Young Adulthood	*Artist*	*Prophet*	*Nomad*	*Hero*
Childhood	*Prophet*	*Nomad*	*Hero*	*Artist*
SAECULUM				
LATE MEDIEVAL			Retreat from France *(1435–1455)*	War of the Roses *(1455–1487)*
TUDOR	Tudor Renaissance *(1487–1525)*	Protestant Reformation *(1525–1551)*	Intolerance & Martyrdom *(1551–1569)*	Armada Crisis *(1569–1597)*
NEW WORLD	Merrie England *(1597–1621)*	Puritan Awakening *(1621–1649)*	Reaction & Restoration *(1649–1675)*	Glorious Revolution *(1675–1706)*
REVOLUTIONARY	Augustan Age of Empire *(1706–1727)*	Great Awakening *(1727–1746)*	French & Indian Wars *(1746–1773)*	American Revolution *(1773–1794)*
CIVIL WAR	Era of Good Feelings *(1794–1822)*	Transcendental Awakening *(1822–1844)*	Mexican War & Sectionalism *(1844–1860)*	Civil War *(1860–1865)*
GREAT POWER	Reconstruction & Gilded Age *(1865–1886)*	Third Great Awakening *(1886–1908)*	World War I & Prohibition *(1908–1929)*	Great Depression & World War II *(1929–1946)*
MILLENNIAL	American High *(1946–1964)*	Consciousness Revolution *(1964–1984)*	Culture Wars *(1984–2008)*	Millennial Crisis *(2008–2033?)*

CHART 4-3

Four Turnings, by Social Mood

TURNING	FIRST (High)	SECOND (Awakening)	THIRD (Unraveling)	FOURTH (Crisis)
Families	strong	weakening	weak	strengthening
Child Nurture	loosening	underprotective	tightening	overprotective
Gap Between Gender Roles	maximum	narrowing	minimum	widening
Ideals	settled	discovered	debated	championed
Institutions	reinforced	attacked	eroded	founded
Culture	innocent	passionate	cynical	practical
Social Structure	unified	splintering	diversified	gravitating
Worldview	simple	complicating	complex	simplifying
Social Priority	maximum community	rising individualism	maximum individualism	rising community
Social Motivator	shame	conscience	guilt	stigma
Sense of Greatest Need	do what works	fix inner world	do what feels right	fix outer world
Vision of Future	brightening	euphoric	darkening	urgent
Supply of Social Order	rising	high	falling	low
Demand for Social Order	high	falling	low	rising
Wars	restorative	controversial	inconclusive	total

CHART 4-4

Wars and Turnings*

FIRST TURNINGS	SECOND TURNINGS	THIRD TURNINGS	FOURTH TURNINGS
Queen Anne's War	*English Civil Wars*	French & Indian War	*Wars of the Roses*
War of 1812	Pequot War	Mexican War	*Anglo-Spanish War (Armada)*
Korean War	King George's War	World War I	King Philip's War
	Second Seminole War	Operation Desert Storm	Bacon's Rebellion
	Spanish-American War	Wars in Iraq/Afghanistan	King William's War
	Philippine Insurrection		Glorious Revolution
	Vietnam War		American Revolution
			American Civil War
			World War II

* After 1675, American wars only, and with estimated total deaths exceeding 1,500; before 1675 (in italics), English wars only, and with estimated military deaths exceeding 25,000.