ForeWord Reviews

SOCIAL SCIENCES

Millenial Momentum: How a New Generation Is Remaking America

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"Which path the United States ultimately takes will be determined by the Millennial Generation's willingness to engage in a vast civic endeavor to remake America and its institutions and the willingness of the rest of the country to follow its lead." This bold statement opens *Millennial Momentum*, the follow up to *Millennial Makeover*, which successfully predicted the political potential of the "Me" generation—Americans born between 1982 and 2003—to effect change in the 2008 election. That title was included in the *New York Times'* ten favorite books that year.

Co-authors Morley Winograd and Michael D. Hais are both fellows with NDN, a Washington, DC-based think tank, and the New Policy Institute. Due to their accurate prediction of the Millennials to mobilize and affect the election of Barack Obama in 2008, Winograd and Hais have become the leading authorities on predicting the potential of what they call the next "civic generation" in America.

Embracing the theory of generational cycles developed by social historians William Strauss and Neil Howe, the authors use compelling demographic survey data to predict that Millennials are poised to "be the country's next great generation." It is refreshing that the authors acknowledge a viewpoint counter to mainstream media voices like Tom Brokaw and Stephen Bannon, whose assessments do not embrace the same optimism.

Hais and Winograd's methodology includes survey data, personal interviews, and popular texts, and most convincingly, an astute and well-presented analysis of generational trends situated in an impressive framework of US political history. Within this history, readers can identify their "generational type"—idealist or reactive, civic or adaptive—and trace their contribution to the forty-year "turnings" the author's identify as generation-driven socio-economic movements.

Their claim that the Millennials will lead us into a new "civic ethos" is convincing, largely due to the fact that by 2020 they will represent one of every three adults. Additional

compelling data on Millennials includes examples of volunteerism, community service, and entrepreneurship supported by the success of such programs as Teach for America and the 8,000-person-strong Roosevelt Institute Campus Network, a group of forward-thinking Millennials who launched the Think 2040 project in 2010. If the Think 2040 project's core values—"a deeply held concern for equity, respect for the individual and society, and a belief in community empowerment and self-determination"—are representative of politically active Millennials, as Winograd and Hais argue, surely many older Americans might align with the younger visionaries, as these values represent the core of what many voters had hoped for after the 2008 election.

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