



Future Babble: Why Expert Predictions Are Next to Worthless, and You Can Do Better

Daniel Gardner

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An award-winning journalist uses landmark research to debunk the whole expert prediction industry, and explores the psychology of our obsession with future history.

In 2008, experts predicted gas would hit \$20 a gallon; it peaked at \$4.10. In 1967, they said the USSR would be the world's fastest-growing economy by 2000; by 2000, the USSR no longer existed. In 1908, it was pronounced that there would be no more wars in Europe; we all know how that turned out. Face it, experts are about as accurate as dart-throwing monkeys. And yet every day we ask them to predict the future—everything from the weather to the likelihood of a terrorist attack. *Future Babble* is the first book to examine this phenomenon, showing why our brains yearn for certainty about the future, why we are attracted to those who predict it confidently, and why it's so easy for us to ignore the trail of outrageously wrong forecasts.

In this fast-paced, example-packed, sometimes darkly hilarious book, journalist Dan Gardner shows how seminal research by UC Berkeley professor Philip Tetlock proved that the more famous a pundit is, the more likely he is to be right about as often as a stopped watch. Gardner also draws on current research in cognitive psychology, political science, and behavioral economics to discover something quite reassuring: The future is always uncertain, but the end is not always near.

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