A host of catastrophes, natural and otherwise, as well as some pleasant surprises--such as the sudden end of the cold war--have caught governments and societies unprepared in recent decades. September 11 is only the most obvious example among many unforeseen events that have changed, even redefined, our lives. We have every reason to expect more surprises in future.

Certain kinds of unanticipated scenarios--particularly those of low probability and high impact--have the potential to escalate into systemic crises. Even positive surprises can pose major policy challenges. Contemporary policymakers, however, lack the understanding and the tools they need to manage low-probability, high-impact events. Refining our understanding and developing such tools are the twin foci of this insightful and perceptive volume, edited by renowned author Francis Fukuyama and sponsored by The American Interest magazine.

Organized into five sections, Blindside addresses the psychological and institutional obstacles that prevent leaders from planning for negative low-probability events and allocating the necessary resources to deal with them. Case studies pinpoint the failures--institutional as well as personal--that allowed key historical events to take leaders by surprise, and other chapters examine the philosophies and methodologies of forecasting. The books final section offers a debate and two discussions with internationally prominent authorities who assess how individuals, communities, and local and national governments have handled low-probability, high-impact contingencies. They suggest what these entities can do to move forward in a period of heightened concern about both man-made and natural disasters.
How can we avoid being blindsided by unforeseen events? There is no easy or obvious answer. But we first must understand the obstacles that prevent us from seeing the future clearly and then from acting appropriately. This readable and fascinating book is an important step in that direction.

Features:
* Notes:

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