

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CAMBRIDGE**  
**UNIVERSITY PRESS**

32 Avenue of the Americas  
New York, NY 10013-2473  
USA

Telephone 212-924-3900  
Fax 212-691-3239  
Web site [www.cambridge.org/us](http://www.cambridge.org/us)

# MANAGING STRATEGIC SURPRISE

*Lessons from Risk Management and Risk Assessment*

Edited by Paul Bracken, Ian Bremmer, and David Gordon

Cambridge University Press | October 9, 2008 | ISBN: 978-0-521-70960-6

---

*“Politicians tell us it is a dangerous world but promise absolute security. Responsible policymakers, however, have to move beyond platitudes and learn to cope with risk and uncertainty. This volume forces the reader to think - and ought to be required reading for the next administration.”*

**–Nikolas K. Gvosdev, Editor, *The National Interest***

In recent years, those tasked with national security concerns are left in a difficult situation: planning for low-probability, high-risk events. The tools to address risk have found applications expanding over the past decade, stretching beyond banks and corporations to many areas of public management, including NASA and the Centers for Disease Control. Why, then, have risk management and assessment techniques largely failed to penetrate national security policy?

In **MANAGING STRATEGIC SURPRISE: *Lessons from Risk Management and Risk Assessment*** (Cambridge University Press; October 9, 2008) **Paul Bracken, Ian Bremmer and David Gordon** breach this gap, applying lessons from risk management to topics such as warning systems, intelligence, nuclear proliferation, defense planning and failed states. Cutting across a swath of disciplines, **Bracken, Bremmer and Gordon** have assembled top thinkers in the field, and task them with re-evaluating the way policymakers should think about post-9/11 security.

The resulting arguments are surprising:

- Information collection may be a better investment than information analysis
- Epidemiology and vector studies is an ideal way of approaching nuclear proliferation, and current non-proliferation norms may not be able to stop its spread
- The precautionary principle of environmentalism may be effective against terrorism
- An examination of failed states in Africa benefits most from a look at the varied range of countries, not the average performance of the whole

The timing couldn't be better for a book on risk management and international affairs. Risks from weapons of mass destruction proliferation, terrorism, energy availability, failed states, and from other sources are growing. The failure to anticipate major risks in the Iraq war has had enormous consequences, to say the least. And the continuing debate about how the intelligence community and the executive branch of government assess risk make it central to any discussion of foreign and defense policy. **MANAGING STRATEGIC SURPRISE** is a valuable new tool, giving effective methods for analyzing risks and dangers from diverse sources.

---

**Paul Bracken** is author of *Fire in the East: The Rise of Asian Military Power and the Second Nuclear Age*. He is Professor of Management and Political Science at Yale University.

**Ian Bremmer** is author of *The J Curve: A New Way to Understand Why Nations Rise and Fall*. He is President of the Eurasia Group.

**David Gordon** is Director of Policy Planning, US State Department. He has served as Vice Chairman of the National Intelligence Council and as Director of the CIA's Office of Transnational Issues.

---

To schedule an interview with the editors, or for more information, please contact:

Jonathan Gaugler, Academic Publicist | (212) 337-6569 | [jgaugler@cambridge.org](mailto:jgaugler@cambridge.org)

MANAGING STRATEGIC SURPRISE  
*Lessons from Risk Management and Risk Assessment*  
will be published by Cambridge University Press on October 9, 2008  
\$29.99 | 336 Pages | ISBN: 978-0-521-70960-6