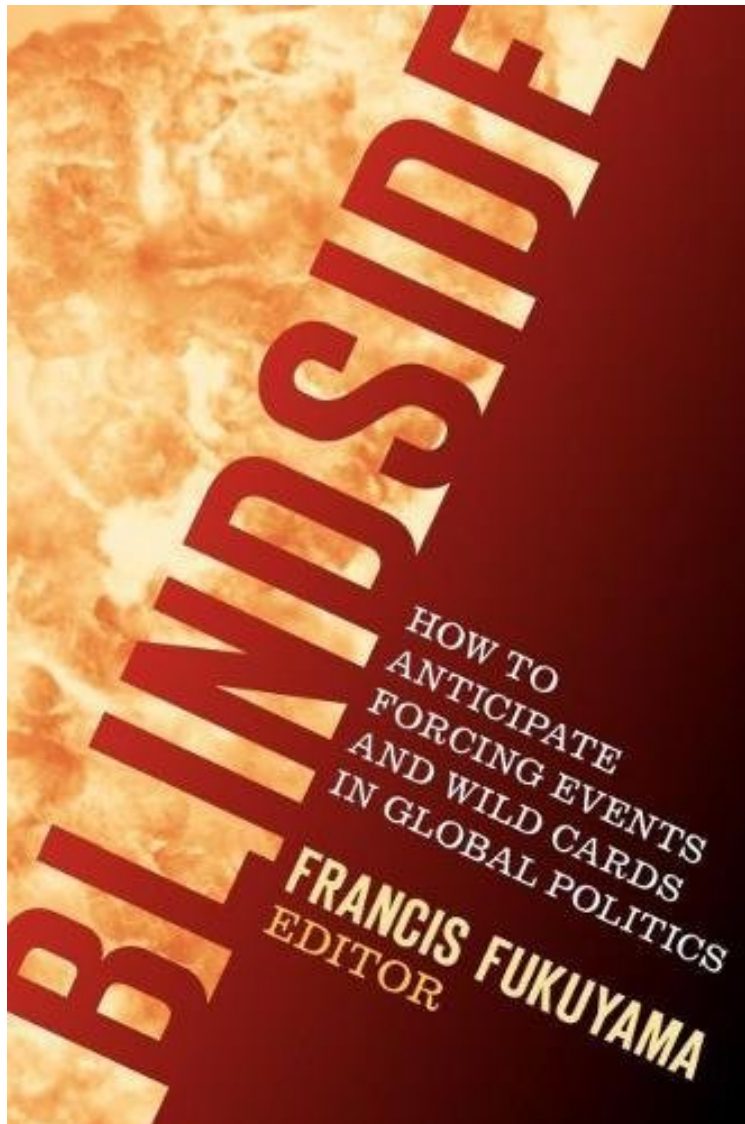


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(American Interest Books)

## **Blindside: How to Anticipate Forcing Events and Wild Cards in Global Politics (American Interest Books)**

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**From Brand: Brookings Insti Press : Blindside: How to Anticipate Forcing Events and Wild Cards in Global Politics (American Interest Books)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised **Blindside: How to Anticipate Forcing Events and Wild Cards in Global Politics (American Interest Books)**:

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Good Material, Not So Good WritingBy D. ChapmanIf you want a good book on this subject, read one of Nassim Taleb's books.He covers much of the same material, and he writes better.---After reading this book, I am convinced that truly unexpected eventsare very rare: What is mostly going on is that decision makers ignoreobvious trends and fail to make contingency plans for low-probabilityevents. Then, they say stuff like:"No one could have foreseen the attacks of 9/11", or"It was not possible to anticipate the financial crisis".(Tom Clancy was writing books about 9/11-type events 20 yearsbefore it happened, and lots of people on Wall Street were talkingabout the financial crisis before the news media noticed.Meredith Whitney comes to mind.)I think that the real problem in creating policy with regardto low-probability events is that the public allows incompetentpeople to say "Golly Gosh, NOBODY could POSSIBLY have predictedthat" and get away with it.Anyway, I cannot recommend this book, on the grounds of poor writing style.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Outstanding collectionBy Eternal StudentThis compilation by Francis Fukuyama, is an excellent compilation of the work of several up and coming authors. They approach the subject of national security in a unique and thought provoking manner. While some positions are debatable, it nevertheless makes excellent reading and stimulation g mind gymnastics. Recommended0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Thomas E. Chasegreat book

A host of catastrophes, natural and otherwise, as well as some pleasant surpriseslike the sudden end of the cold war without a shot being firedhave caught governments and societies unprepared many times in recent decades. September 11 is only the most obvious recent example among many unforeseen events that have changed, even redefined our lives. We have every reason to expect more such events in future. Several kinds of unanticipated scenariosparticularly those of low probability and high impacthave the potential to escalate into systemic crises. Even positive surprises can be major policy challenges. Anticipating and managing low-probability events is a critically important challenge to contemporary policymakers, who increasingly recognize that they lack the analytical tools to do so. Developing such tools is the focus of this insightful and perceptive volume, edited by renowned author Francis Fukuyama and sponsored by The American Interest magazine. BI indside is organized into four main sections. "Thinking about Strategic Surprise" addresses the psychological and institutional obstacles that prevent leaders from planning for low-probability tragedies and allocating the necessary resources to deal with them. The following two sections pinpoint the failuresinstitutional as well as personalthat allowed key historical events to take leaders by surprise, and examine the philosophies and methodologies of forecasting. In "Pollyana vs. Cassandra," for example, James Kurth and Gregg Easterbrook debate the future state of the world going forward. Mitchell Waldrop explores why technology forecasting is so poor and why that is likely to remain the case. In the book's final section, "What Could Be," internationally renowned authorities discuss low probability, high-impact contingencies in their area of expertise. For example, Scott Barrett looks at emerging infectious diseases, while Gal Luft and Anne Korin discuss energy security. How can we avoid being blindsided by unforeseen events? There is no easy or obvious answer. But it is essential that we understand the obstacles that prevent us first from seeing the future clearly and then from acting appropriately on our insights. This readable and fascinating book is an important step in that direction.

"Fukuyama offers creative thinking about the future." ForeWord Magazine, 11/1/2007About the AuthorFrancis Fukuyama is the Bernard L. Schwartz Professor of International Political Economy at the Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies. Among his many successful books are America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power, and the Neoconservative Legacy (Yale, 2007), and The End of History and the Last Man (Free Press, 2nd paperback ed., 2006). He is a member of the executive committee and editorial board chairman of The American Interest.