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978-0-521-88529-4 - Governing after Crisis: The Politics of Investigation, Accountability and Learning
Edited by Arjen Boin, Allan McConnell and Paul 't Hart
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Governing after Crisis

The constant threat of crises such as disasters, riots and terrorist attacks poses a frightening challenge to western societies and governments. Although the causes and dynamics of these events have been widely studied, little is known about what happens following their containment and the restoration of stability. This volume explores "postcrisis politics", examining how crises give birth to longer-term dynamic processes of accountability and learning characterised by official investigations, blame games, political manoeuvering, media scrutiny and crisis exploitation. Drawing from a wide range of contemporary crises, including Hurricane Katrina, 9/11, the Madrid train bombings, the Walkerton water contamination, the destruction of the space shuttles *Challenger* and *Columbia* and the Boxing Day Asian tsunami, this groundbreaking volume addresses the longer-term impact of crisis-induced politics. Competing pressures for stability and change mean that policies, institutions and leaders may occasionally be uprooted but often survive largely intact. This volume explores why and under what conditions preservation trumps reform in the wake of crisis.

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The Politics of Investigation, Accountability and Learning

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Dedicated to our children,
Charlotte, Désanne, Kim, Lalla, Naomi, Paul,
Sarah and Steven

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"Too many are unprepared to handle crisis; still more are ignorant of postcrisis dynamics. This book allows us to understand the issues involved and to choose the appropriate roadmaps in the postevent phase. Do not miss these illuminating case studies: they could – tonight or tomorrow – tip the balance between fiasco and success".
– *Patrick Lagadec*
Director of Research, École Polytechnique, Paris

"This volume laudably focuses on a relatively neglected topic, the specially political dimensions of crises and disasters. The authors also make a good case that political elites and organizations more than citizens have to be held accountable for their behavior, since they are the locus of precrisis policy decisions. Another worthwhile emphasis is on the differential effects of crisis management on politicians and public officials".
– *E. L. Quarantelli*
Emeritus Professor of Sociology, University of Delaware

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