Narrative and the Making of US National Security

Dominant narratives – from the Cold War consensus to the War on Terror – have often served as the foundation for debates over national security. Weaving current challenges, past failures and triumphs, and potential futures into a coherent tale, with well-defined characters and plot lines, these narratives impart meaning to global events, define the boundaries of legitimate politics, and thereby shape national security policy. However, we know little about why or how such narratives rise and fall. Drawing on insights from diverse fields, *Narrative and the Making of US National Security* offers novel arguments about where these dominant narratives come from, how they become dominant, and when they collapse. It evaluates these arguments carefully against evidence drawn from US debates over national security from the 1930s to the 2000s, and shows how these narrative dynamics have shaped the policies pursued by the United States.

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# Narrative and the Making of US National Security

RONALD R. KREBS





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To my children – our future

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But they cannot challenge dominant narratives if they are not even aware of how they structure our politics, how they rise to dominance, and how they fall from that exalted position. That's where this book comes in.