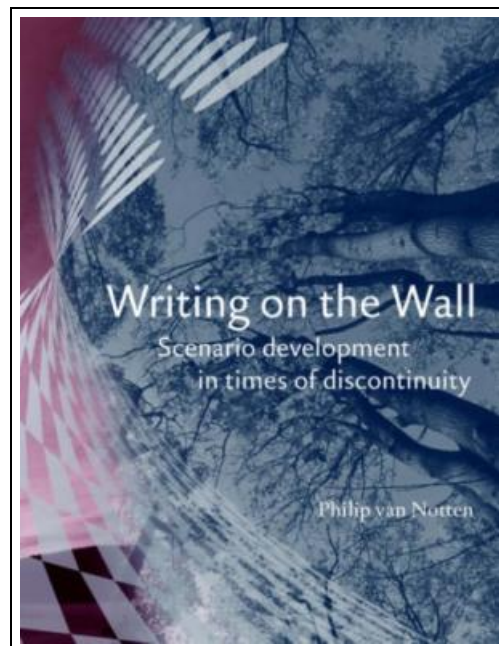


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DISSERTATION.COM, United States, 2005. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.Although the significance of 9/11 is subject to debate, it is symbolic of a general sentiment of discontinuity whereby society is vulnerable to undefined and highly disruptive events. Recent catalysts of this sentiment are eye-catching developments such as the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) and bird flu outbreaks, the Enron and Parmalat scandals, political assassinations in Sweden and the Netherlands, regime changes in Iraq and Afghanistan, and terrorist attacks in Bali, Istanbul, Madrid, and various parts of the Middle East. However, recent discontinuities should not be seen as evidence that discontinuities occur more frequently now than they did before. Looking back in history we see that disruptive processes are common. For example, 25 years ago few Europeans would have predicted the upcoming upheavals on their own continent: the collapse of communism, Berlin as the capital of a reunited Germany, the wars in the former Yugoslavia, the single European currency, and the near doubling of the number of European Union member states. Changes elsewhere have been no less discontinuous and unforeseen: the fall of the Asian tigers, the emergence of the Internet and mobile telecommunication, and the presidency of Nelson Mandela. Societal discontinuity is a relatively new area of concern in policy development. Since the 1970s the consideration of change and discontinuity has gained some ground over predictive forecasting, which tended to reason from continuous developments and linear processes. Rather than making forecasting the future, it has become popular to use scenarios as a manner to consider several possible futures. Scenarios are coherent descriptions of alternative hypothetical futures that reflect different perspectives on past, present, and future developments, which can serve as a basis for action. Scenario development aims to combine analytical knowledge with...

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