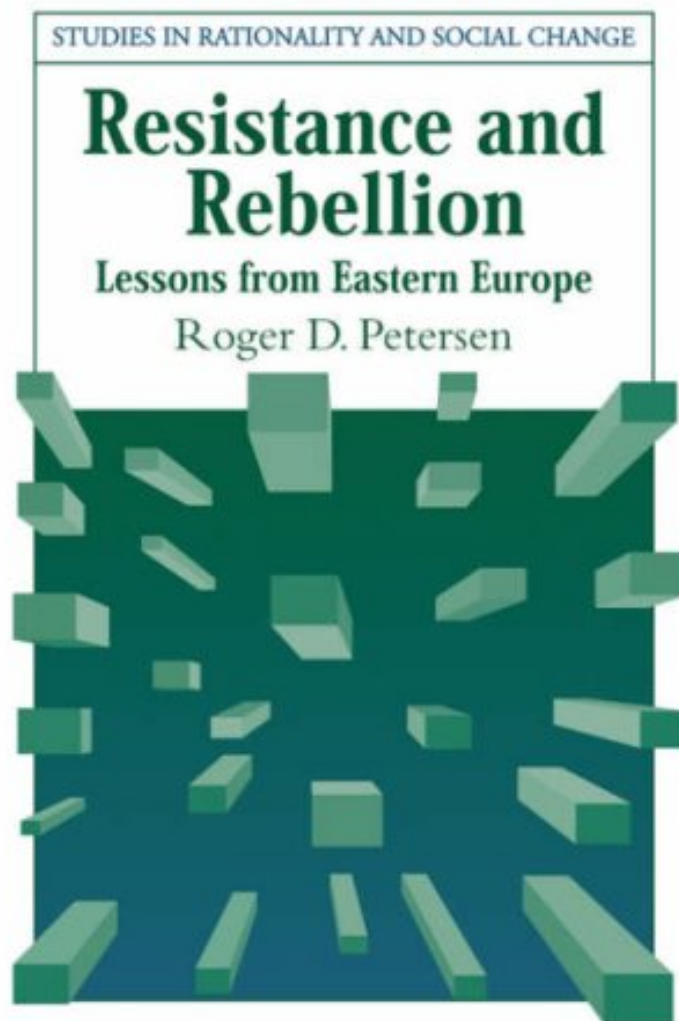


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Resistance and Rebellion: Lessons from Eastern Europe (Studies in Rationality and Social Change)

Roger D. Petersen

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Roger D. Petersen : Resistance and Rebellion: Lessons from Eastern Europe (Studies in Rationality and Social Change) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Resistance and Rebellion: Lessons from Eastern Europe (Studies in Rationality and Social Change):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating Look at How Resistance Movements and Rebellions Get Started By C.P.M. One of the defining features of Post-World War II history has been the increased number of resistance movements and rebellions against colonial powers or foreign occupiers. While the history of these movements has been well documented, no one has been able to give a solid answer as to how resistance movements and rebellions get started. That is, until now. In this fine work that combines historical rigor with social science inquiry, Mr. Petersen has developed a sound theory of how resistance movements and rebellions get started. Key factors such as resentment formation, focal-point mechanisms, status reward mechanisms, and cultural norms among those with low risk thresholds signal to more risk adverse citizens that an oppressive or foreign institution is weak and ready to fall. For those who have read [author:Malcolm Gladwell|13153163]'s book [book:The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference|2612], you'll recognize this as the theory of tipping games: as more people signal their willingness to resist oppression whether by humming nationalist songs on buses or graffiting public areas with nationalist phrases and slogans, and the more a regime fails to address this, the more people will begin to join them until things reach a tipping point into community based resistance or organized rebellion. However, this book was written a year before Mr. Gladwell's book and looks specifically at the case of Lithuanian resistance to Soviet and Nazi German occupation. It is filled with both intriguing historical facts and social science theories, all of them backed by interviews the author did with 40 people in Lithuania plus his own extensive research on and knowledge of the region. It is absolutely fascinating and I could see how applicable it was to America's occupation of Iraq and how that country fell into chaos in the immediate aftermath of the 2003 invasion based on the theories of this book. However, while this book is fascinating, it can be a tough slog at times. This is a book written by a social scientist for social scientists. The longest chapter, chapter 2, contains the most vital details of the author's theory, but it is also the toughest one to get through. While I think this book is a great read, those with but a passing interest in social science may want to pick up Mr. Gladwell's book instead. However, if you want to get into the nuts and bolts of tipping game theories, I highly recommend this book to you. 3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Useful, but --By R. L. Huffl have no problem with the author's basic theory, as far as it goes. Resistance networks are like any other in that they overlap in membership. This stands to reason in local areas where the given population for any activity is limited. Families, political parties, occupation networks, fraternal organizations are all dipping into the same human well for everyday purposes as well as extraordinary times. But I don't think this theory adequately explains the combustible nature of Lithuania or the Soviet borderlands in general in their see-saw between Hitler and Stalin. First, these societies were not particularly violent in normal daily life. There is no Balkan or Caucasian cult of personal honor and blood revenge. It was the occupation that created the conditions of violence by kicking over the established states, institutions, and routines that hedged people's behavior. They resisted, in short, because they paradoxically had the freedom and opportunity, as well as the necessity, of resistance. Secondly, the resistance wasn't (and never is) as universal as its participants wish to believe. There are always large segments of the native population who don't want to get involved in resistance violence, whether from principal or timidity. As Alexander Statiev presented in "The Soviet Counter-Insurgency in the Western Borderlands," much of the partisans' time and effort went into policing the locals and purging their own ranks as in resisting the enemy, with often counter-productive results that the occupiers turned to advantage. As I said, a good work with a good analysis but doesn't go far enough, in my opinion, in analyzing its subject.

Resistance and Rebellion: Lessons from Eastern Europe explains how ordinary people become involved in resistance and rebellion against powerful regimes. The book provides a detailed theoretical treatment of the process that pushes and pulls individuals into risk-laden roles. It also reconstructs Lithuanian social networks of the 1940s, through extensive interviews, to illustrate and test the argument. The work conducts comparisons with several other Eastern European nations to show the breadth and depth of the approach. The book contributes to both the general literature on political violence, as well as the theoretical literature on collective action.

"Resistance and Rebellion is an immensely rewarding and inspiring work." American Political Science "...a good building block in development of a general approach to an important subject and contains a comprehensive bibliography." CHOICE "...the book's contributions should be of interest to a wide audience of scholars concerned with collective action and comparative methodology." Contemporary Sociology "This book presents an innovative attempt to examine how and why, at certain times, ordinary people decide to incur grave risks by rebelling against overwhelmingly powerful oppressors. . . . The substantive findings reported in Resistance and Rebellion should be of great relevance both to area specialists and to social movement experts. Petersen's impressive methodology, moreover, will stand as an illuminating example of research design for many researchers in positive political science and sociology across various sub-fields." Social Movement Studies