citizens provide the agency with legitimacy, sympathetic state-level response, and critically needed resources on the ground for program implementation. Ecosystem-restorative efforts organized on a watershed basis were pioneering in this approach. Community-based work extended to Superfund and environmental justice programs, and disseminated within the agency through cross-fertilization over time as leading figures moved from position to position.

One risk for changed ways of doing things is that innovations are regarded as “add-ons,” not “must-haves,” when times get tough. Though the author is gentle with those who were not supporters, he makes clear that budget shortages and leadership or staffing changes slowed or seriously threatened the collaborative governance initiatives described. It is less clear that the national-level initiatives he recommends, including an executive order directing greater focus in executive agencies on the “civic mission” and the creation of a White House Office of Collaborative Government, will overcome these problems in an era of pandemic state and local fiscal crisis.

Finally, when does citizen engagement—worthy and essential—become citizen mobilization, more the province of political parties or organized interests than of government agencies? The demarcation may not always be clear. But there is an important distinction between the two, one that ought to be honored.

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Insurgent movements worldwide exhibit a wide range of conduct. Their behavior toward civilian populations under their control ranges from brutal to benevolent. Such variation poses a problem for theories of insurgency, and of how to counter it. How can any single theory account for such major differences in how insurgent groups treat noncombatants?

Differences are apparent not only between groups but also in the behavior of any one group over time. It is this latter type of variation on which Claire Metelits has focused in explaining insurgent treatment of civilians. Relating changes in that treatment to changes in a group’s fortunes and circumstances makes it possible for the study of even a single group to suggest explanations for insurgent behavior. Metelits has studied three groups: the Sudan People’s Liberation Army, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, and the Kurdistan Workers’ Party. Her study has included extensive field research, including numerous interviews with individuals associated with each group.

Chapters on each of these organizations trace the evolution of their strategies and, specifically, their handling of civilian populations. The case studies lead Metelits to propound a theory of insurgent behavior that centers on the
concept of competition for resources. Metelits defines resources very broadly to include not only material items such as guns, food, and money but also non-material goods such as popular support. Her core idea is that insurgent groups change their behavior toward civilians according to whether they face active rivalry. A rival—a competitor for resources—could be another insurgent or opposition group, or it could be a state. When there is little or no competition for resources, an insurgent group can afford to establish “contractual” rather than coercive relations with the locals, basically because this is a more efficient way over the long term of gaining whatever the civilians have to offer. If faced with an active rival, however, a group’s priorities shift to short-term survival, with necessary reliance on coercive methods.

The correlation implied by this theory is largely borne out by the history of conduct that Metelits recounts with each of her three cases. Her concept invites further questions and explanations, however, that she does not explore. An alternative logic, for example, based on the idea that insurgencies need popular support to thrive, might posit that insurgents would need to be all the more solicitous of civilian populations when their groups’ fortunes are bleak. What keeps insurgent leaders from thinking that way?

The wide variation that lies behind the concepts of insurgents, resources, and rivals also probably is important for how noncombatants are treated. The ideology of an insurgent group, including the political end state it hopes to establish—and not just the exigencies of winning a war—surely affects whether it treats a subject population democratically and liberally or harshly and in an authoritarian manner. Lumping competing insurgent groups with states under the label of “rivals” also obscures important distinctions. Although Metelits writes of states “choosing” to compete (p. 167), states do not really have a choice comparable to that of opposition movements in deciding whether to wage an insurgency.

Even though her theoretical perspective may provide only a partial explanation of the behavior in question, Metelits’s book is a very useful contribution to understanding why insurgent groups act as they do. Her first-hand research also will provide grist for further efforts to explain the strategies and tactics of insurgencies.

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Few developments in European party politics over the last several decades have received more attention from scholars, as well as journalists and concerned citizens, than the rise of right-wing populism. Yet as Simon Bornschier reminds