

How Insurgency Begins

How and why do rebel groups initially form? Prevailing scholarship has attributed the emergence of armed rebellion to the explosion of pre-mobilized political or ethnic hostilities. However, this book finds both uncertainty and secrecy shrouding the start of insurgency in weak states. Examining why only some incipient armed rebellions succeed in becoming viable challengers to governments, *How Insurgency Begins* shows that rumors circulating in places where rebel groups form can influence civilians' perceptions of both rebels and the state. By revealing the connections between villagers' trusted network structures and local ethnic demography, Janet I. Lewis shows how ethnic networks facilitate the spread of pro-rebel rumors. This in-depth analysis of conflicts in Uganda and neighboring states speaks to scholars and policymakers seeking to understand the motives and actions of those initiating armed rebellion, those witnessing the process in their community, and those trying to stop it.

Janet I. Lewis is Assistant Professor of Political Science at George Washington University. Her research and teaching focus is on political violence, ethnic conflict, and state formation, especially in Africa. Her work has received several honors, including awards for Best Article published in 2017 in *Comparative Political Studies*, Best Article published in 2017 in the *American Journal of Political Science*, and Best Article or Chapter using qualitative methods published in 2018 from the Qualitative and Multi-Methods Section of the American Political Science Association.

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-108-47966-0 — How Insurgency Begins
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How Insurgency Begins

Rebel Group Formation in Uganda and Beyond

JANET I. LEWIS



Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-47966-0 — How Insurgency Begins
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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
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79 Anson Road, #06-04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.
It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of
education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108479660
DOI: 10.1017/9781108855969

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First published 2020

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-108-47966-0 Hardback
ISBN 978-1-108-79047-5 Paperback

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Acknowledgments

This project benefitted from the generosity of numerous people and institutions. I gratefully acknowledge this assistance and my great fortune to receive it.

First and foremost, I thank the hundreds of Ugandans – villagers, military officers, journalists, civil servants, and others – who generously shared their time with me. Ugandans have a well-deserved reputation for their warmth, and I am honored that so many trusted me to use their recollections and insights in a manner that would advance knowledge. I owe special thanks to Gerald Tushabe, Mo Adiga, and Richard Karemire for their guidance and friendship. I am also grateful to those who lent their expertise in identifying contacts and linguistic and/or political expertise in interpreting what I was hearing throughout Uganda, in particular Julius Okwana in Acholi; Hippo Rashid in West Nile; Abraham Odeke in Tororo; Albert Wabudia in Busia; James Tweny in Lango; and Richard Otim and Francis Akoiro in Teso. Innovations for Poverty Action's Uganda office – especially Vianney Mbonigaba and Charity Komujurizi – provided excellent advice on the field experiment and helped me identify my fantastic enumeration team in Teso, which was led by Juliet Ajilong, Edmund Emulu, and Moses Olich. I benefitted from research affiliations with Uganda's Center for Basic Research and the Makerere Institute for Social Research and thank the Uganda Bureau of Statistics for sharing their data with me. Thanks also to Randy Harris, "Duke" Ellington, and Jeremy Lebowitz, who lent their deep experience in Uganda to help guide my fieldwork.

The seeds of my interest in identity-based conflict were planted during my undergraduate experience at Stanford. For their teaching and

Acknowledgments

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important advice as I started down the path of studying political science, I thank Byron Bland, Susan Okin, and Judy Goldstein. For helping me begin to understand the craft of fieldwork, research, and academic writing, I thank Steve Stedman. During these formative years, my host family – the Coetzees – in Belhar, South Africa, and the community at Seeds of Peace taught me up close about the painful realities of violent, identity-based conflict and the potential for reconciliation. I'm glad that many friends from Seeds of Peace have stayed close, sustaining me personally and professionally. Finally, I am so grateful to Emile Bruneau, who entered my life during these years first as my rugby coach, then as a dear friend and fellow scholar of conflict and peace. Our conversations have made deep imprints in me about the potential for science and human connection to make the world a more peaceful place, and about how to live courageously. I hope that my contributions will emulate, in a small way, Emile's extraordinary legacy of bringing light and knowledge where they had not previously shone.

This book grew out of my dissertation work in Harvard's Government Department. I owe my deepest intellectual debt to my dissertation committee: Robert Bates, Nahomi Ichino, Steve Levitsky, and Monica Toft. Their formidable talents and wide-ranging perspectives taught me to strive to ask important questions and answer them in a deeply informed, rigorous way. I greatly appreciate Nahomi and Steve's broader professional mentorship as well. During graduate school, an excellent group of graduate students supported me personally and professionally: Nichole Argo, Jen Bachner, Brett Carter, Amy Catalinac, Andrew Coe, Sheena Greitens, Andy Harris, Cat Kelly, Elena Llaudet, Kristen Looney, Brenna Powell, Chris Rhodes, Claire Schwartz, Sarah Shehabuddin, Omar Wasow, and Sarah Zukerman-Daly. The structure of this book's empirical chapters is owed to thoughtful feedback from Brett.

During graduate school, I was also fortunate to develop collaborations and friendships with Guy Grossman and Jennifer Larson. Our conversations made me a much better scholar and led to several insights about politics that inform this book. Jenn's incisive contributions to our joint work strengthened several of this book's components. For example, she built a formal model, which is also presented in our 2018 coauthored article in *International Organization*, that undergirds a key piece of the theory in Chapter 2. We also collaborated intensively on the field experiment discussed briefly in Chapter 5; we present the design and findings from that experiment more fully in our 2017 coauthored article in the *American Journal of Political Science*.

My year at Yale's Program on Order, Conflict, and Violence allowed me to develop this project and to join an inspiring community of scholars dedicated to the study of conflict. I thank Stathis Kalyvas for building that program, for making that year possible, and for his advice and intellectual inspiration then and since. I am also grateful to Elisabeth Wood and Keith Darden for helpful conversations and to Ana Arjona, Gina Bateson, Ellie Powell, Pia Raffler, and Jessica Trisko Darden for their feedback and friendship that year at Yale. Finally, a hearty thanks to Evgeny Finkel and Sarah Parkinson for their great insights and laughter then in New Haven and now in Washington, DC.

Numerous people have provided excellent feedback on pieces of this manuscript. At a manuscript workshop hosted by Harvard in 2013, Fotini Christia, David Cunningham, Mai Hassan, Rich Nielsen, Roger Petersen, Kara Ross Camarena, and Scott Straus generously read the full manuscript and provided crucial, constructive comments. Participants at Uppsala University's Peace and Conflict Research Department Speaker Series, the Olympia Summer Academy, George Washington University's Comparative Politics Workshop, Temple University's Comparative Politics Colloquium, and Duke University's Security, Peace, and Conflict Seminar Series also provided helpful feedback on pieces of the project. I owe thanks to Sean Yom for the connection between my theory and a line from T. S. Eliot's "Hollow Men" at the start of Chapter 4. At these and other venues, several scholars provided helpful comments: David Art, Laia Balcels, Leore Ben-Chorin, Mark Berlin, Nathaniel Cogley, Jangai Jap, Peter Krause, Michael Gilligan, Reyko Huang, Nelson Kasfir, Peter Kingstone, Matthew Lange, Theo McLauchlin, Stephen Rangazas, Nicholas Sambanis, Hillel Soifer, Paul Staniland, Livia Schubiger, Prerna Singh, Chris Sullivan, Jessica Stanton, and Peter Von Doepp.

The Department of Political Science at the United States Naval Academy (USNA) provided an inspiring environment as I developed this manuscript, as teaching midshipmen reminded me daily to consider the broader implications of my research. My colleagues at USNA – especially Mike Kellermann, Brendan Doherty, Matt Testerman, Stephen Wrage, Evelyn Lunasin, Susan Margulies, Joan Shifflett, and Elizabeth Yates – provided friendship and support that made the completion of this manuscript possible. During those years, while not directly affiliated with USNA, Jenny Hamilton and Andy Marshall provided excellent research assistance on the dataset on rebel group formation in eastern and central Africa. My thanks also go to Robert Lee, Bliss Leonard, Abi Mariam, and Sean Reilly for their helpful research assistance. In my final

Acknowledgments

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months of revising this manuscript, I moved to an excellent intellectual home for doing so: the Department of Political Science at George Washington University. Thank you to my colleagues there for believing in the promise of this project.

My sincere thanks also go to several institutions that provided grants to make this work possible. I received funding to conduct early fieldwork from Harvard's Committee on African Studies and Weatherhead Center for International Affairs. The Weatherhead Center also served as an excellent intellectual community during graduate school and funded my book workshop. My fieldwork in Uganda was supported by grants from the Smith Richardson Foundation, the National Science Foundation, and the US Institute for Peace. Analysis and writing for this project were supported by a Hartley R. Rodgers Merit fellowship at Harvard, a grant from the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, and a residential fellowship at Yale's Program on Order, Conflict, and Violence (OCV). USNA provided summer funding for revising this manuscript and related articles, and the Minerva Research for Defense Education Faculty program funded building the dataset on rebel group formation in eastern and central Africa.

My deepest gratitude goes to my family, whose support made this project possible at every stage: my mother, Doris; my father, Fred; my sister, Joanna; and especially my husband, Simon. He deserves a medal for the steady stream of patience, support, and fresh bread he provided, and for helping me find fulfillment and joy along the way – especially after the birth of our daughters, Aliza and Ariel, as I completed this book.

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