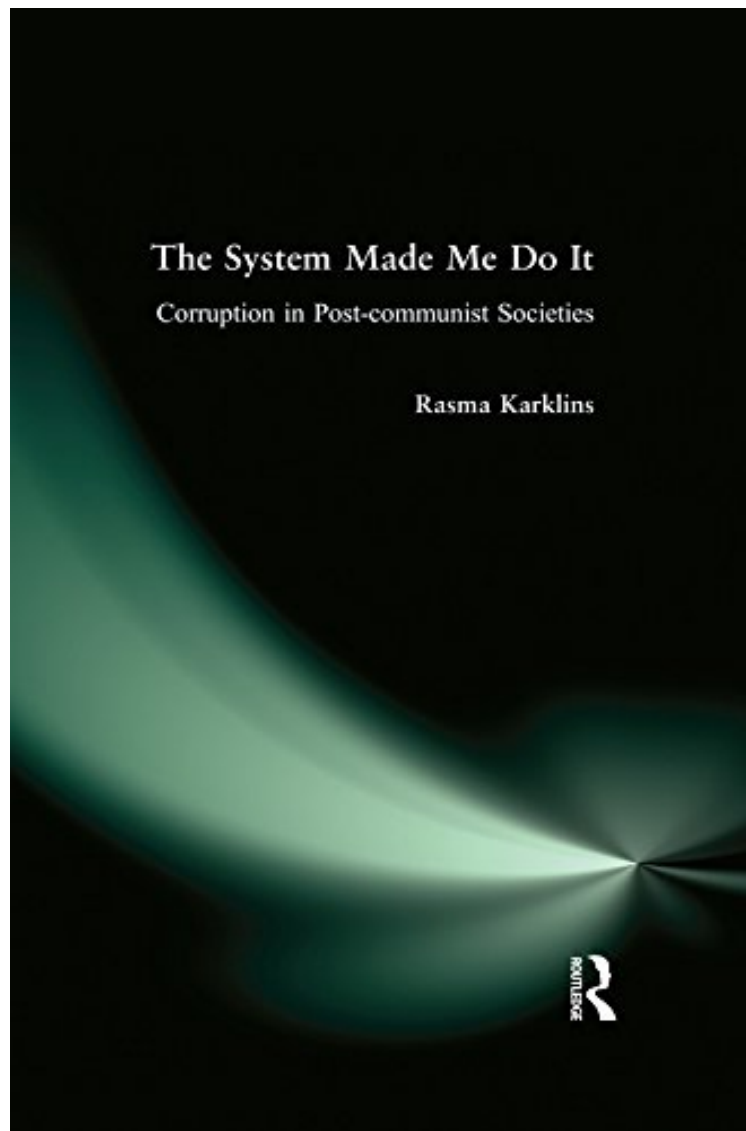


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Rasma Karklins

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Strike up a conversation with a citizen from the post-communist region and invariably the talk will turn to the topic of corruption - the misuse of public power for private gain. People are sure that corruption is widespread, whether from their own experiences or stories they have heard from others. They feel frustrated that there seems to be nothing they can do about it, that they are helpless, and that they are being played for fools. And many are cynical: they feel that they, too, have to play the game because "the system" compels them to do so. But what system exactly? What are the structures and mechanisms of corruption in post-communist societies? "The System Made Me Do It" is the first comprehensive study of the origin, nature, and consequences of corruption in post-communist societies. While international actors decry corruption as a major impediment to democracy building and economic development, the problem is not well understood. This book fills that gap, and suggests innovative and practical institutional strategies for containing corruption. It achieves a rare and perfect balance of disciplined analysis, practicality, and passion.

From the Inside Flap "Rasma Karklins masterfully blends general scholarship on corruption and democracy with an overview of the special case of countries making the transition from communism. She combines a neo-institutionalist approach with first-hand knowledge of the transition process to produce a book that should be of interest both to reformers in the region and to those interested in corruption's impact on democracy worldwide." -- Susan Rose-Ackerman, Yale Law School "The System Made Me Do It breaks new ground in its comprehensive and empirical analysis of the phenomenon of corruption -- a very difficult topic to research, given that corruption is so hidden. The book will be of interest to anyone seeking to come to grips with what is arguably the most important obstacle to the creation of viable democratic regimes and capitalist economies in the post-communist countries." -- Mark Beissinger, University of Wisconsin "Rasma Karklins shows us why corruption matters and how it can be realistically mitigated. She mixes theory with specific examples ... to provide insights that challenge conventional wisdoms. This book will change the way we think about the role of the press, non-governmental organizations, and culture in deterring individuals from acquiescing to corrupt practices." -- Roger Petersen, Massachusetts Institute of Technology