

Latin American Populism in Comparative Perspective (IA 190W)

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Spring, 2009  
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Office: Phillips 313  
Hours: tu/thr 2-3

DESCRIPTION

Populism has once again re-emerged as a regime type throughout Latin America as a reaction to the failure of globalization, neo-liberalism and democratization to improve the region's chronic unemployment or raise the standard of living of the majority population. However one may view this trend, populism in Latin America has a long and storied tradition dating back to Juan and Eva Peron in Argentina (1946-1955) and most recently to Hugo Chavez in Venezuela (1999- ). A complex political typology, populism has undergone numerous variations from country to country during this time AND alterations in its most recent iteration since the 1980s as "neo-populism." Social scientists have been analyzing populism systematically since the 1960s, so that the scholarly literature on the subject is broad and deep—constituting an important body of theoretical knowledge unique to Latin America. In the course of the semester we will examine these theories and interpretations as they pertain to the origins, process and outcomes of Populism generally on the continent and specifically in a couple of characteristic regimes (Peron, and Cardenas in the Classical period (1930-1960) and (Chavez, Menem, and Fujimori) in the Neo Populist period (1980 to present). In consultation with the instructor students will select a country specific regime (see below) for their specific research paper for the course.

REQUIRED READINGS

Skidmore, Thomas and Peter Smith, Modern Latin America (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005) (Background Reading- History Dept. Reserve, Phillips 3<sup>rd</sup> fl)

Conniff, Michael (ed), Populism in Latin America (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999).

Torre, Carlos de la, Populist Seduction in Latin America (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000).

Jones, Bart, Hugo: the Hugo Chavez Story from Mud Hut to Perpetual Revolution (Hanover, NH, 2007)

Kozloff, Nikolas, Revolution: South America and the Rise of the New Left (Palgrave, 2008)

ARTICLES ON HISTORY DEPARTMENT RESERVE (on Blackboard)

Vargas Llosa, Alvaro, "The Return of the Idiot," Foreign Policy (May-June, 2007)

Knight, Alan, "Populism & Neo-Populism in Latin America, especially Mexico," Journal of Latin American Studies (JLAS), 1998 (JSTOR)

\_\_\_\_\_. "Cardenismo: Juggernaut or Jalopy?" JLAS, 1994 (JSTOR)

"Special Issue: Old & New Populism," Bulletin of Latin American Studies (BLAR), April, 2000

Arnsion, Cynthia et al, The New Left & Democratic Governance in LA (The Wilson Center, 2007), [www.wilsoncenter.org/lap](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/lap)

Shifter, Michael, "In Search of Hugo Chavez," Foreign Affairs (May-June, 2006)

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There are NO EXAMS in this course. To facilitate discussion, students will prepare a 2-3 page (word processed, double spaced) response paper each week that briefly summarizes the main points made in the assigned readings as well as making any comments and/or questions they may have on the material. In addition, one or two students will be assigned as discussants for each class session to lead off the discussion by summarizing the assigned readings and then raising questions or making comments/opinions for the class to respond to. A final 20 page case study research paper on a specific populist regime or comparison of two such regimes will be due at the end of the semester. The paper should strive to be both analytical and descriptive and endeavor to apply the various theories on populism to the case study selected (see list of possible regimes below). Finally, students will also make oral presentations in class on their ongoing project towards the end of the semester.

Students will be graded according to how well their papers follow this format as well as how well they present their ideas and evidence to support their particular point of view or hypothesis on their populist regime (more guidelines on this later). The course breakdown on grading will be: final paper and oral presentation 50%: class discussion, including discussant role 25% and Response Papers (25%). Students will be required to meet with the instructor at least once at his office hours during the semester to discuss his or her topic and any other questions related to the course subject matter.

### CLASS SCHEDULE/TOPICS

- 1 Jan 12 INTRODUCTION & ORGANIZATION
- 2 Jan 19 NO CLASS (MLK holiday)
- 3 Jan 26 DEFINITIONS & ORGINS

Assignment: Conniff Ch 1; Smith & Skidmore ch 2

- 4 Feb 2 THEORIES, INTERPRETATIONS & AMBIGUITIES  
Assignment: de la Torre, ch 1-4
- 5 Feb 9 ELECTRONIC & OTHER SOURCES (special meeting with David Ettinger, Gelman librarian); 2-3 page precise on topic for research paper due
- 6 Feb 16 NO CLASS (Presidents' Day)
- 7 Feb 23 ARGENTINA, PERON & PERONISM  
Assignment: Conniff, ch 2; S & S ch 3; Guillermprieto, "Little Evita," (Blackboard) video: the Perons
- 8 March 2 MEXICO, CARDENAS & THE PRI (video: Cardenas)  
Assignment: Conniff, ch 5; S & S, ch 8; Knight, "Cardenismo: Juggernaut or Jalopy," JLAS (1994) JSTOR
- 9 March 9 DECLINE, ASSESSMENT & CRITIQUE  
Assignment: Conniff, epilogue; Knight, "Populism & Neo Populism in LA, Especially Mexico," JLAS, 1998 (JSTOR): DEBATE
- 10 March 16 SPRING BREAK
- 11 March 30 REVIVAL: NEO POPULISM  
Assignment: Conniff, ch 10; Kozloff, intro +chs 1-5
- 12 April 6 CHAVEZ' BOLIVARIAN REVOLUTION & OTHER NEO POPULISTS  
Assignment: Conniff, ch 7; Kozloff, ch 4; Bart, HUGO; Shifter, "In Search of Hugo Chavez," Foreign Affairs (May-June, 2006) Blackboard Kozloff, chs 6-9+conclusion; A. Vargas Llosa, "Return of the Idiot," Foreign Policy, May-June, 2007 Blackboard
- 13 April 13 STUDENT PRESENTATIONS
- 14 April 20 STUDENT PRESENTATIONS
- 15 April 27 STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

NOTE: For an excellent guide for sources on your Research Paper go to the University of California, Irvine-- where I was a Visiting Professor last year- home page [www.uci.edu](http://www.uci.edu) click on libraries and go to On Line Resources and click on subject guides, scroll down and click on Latin American Studies.

Here is a list of populist and neo-populist regimes from which to chose your RESEARCH PAPER topic.

1930s-60s

Juan & Eva Peron in Argentina  
Getulio Vargas in Brazil  
Haya de la Torre's APRA in Peru  
Lazaro Cardenas in Mexico  
Velasco Ibarra in Ecuador  
Arevalo & Arbenz in Guatemala  
Paz Estensorro in Bolivia  
Ibanez in Chile  
Munoz Marin in Puerto Rico

60s-80s

Echeverria and Lopez Portillo in Mexico  
Torrijos in Panama  
Velasco in Peru  
Garcia in Peru  
Goulart in Brazil  
Perez in Venezuela

Neo-Populists 90s-2000s

Menem in Argentina  
Fujimori in Peru  
Bucaram in Ecuador  
Chavez in Venezuela  
Evo Morales in Bolivia  
Lula da Silva in Brazil?  
Corrales in Ecuador

There may be others that I have overlooked.