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“Voting for Populist Presidential Candidates: a Multi-level analysis of Latin  
America, 2002-2012”

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## *I. Intro*

In 1982 political scientist Paul Drake, regarding Latin America, wrote “Perhaps a wave of studies of populism is upon us because historians like to analyze things that are dead. Although a funeral oration for populism may be premature, such movements clearly faded in the 1970s (1982: 21).” However, populism in the continent perseveres. Since 1985, charismatic leaders who eschew traditional political institutions and deliver passionate speeches against elites to arouse support among the masses have dotted the political landscape in Peru, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, and more recently Bolivia, Ecuador, and Paraguay. While populist presidents have a long history of electoral success, they have often divided society by antagonizing their political and economic enemies, and have had deleterious economic effects for many countries in the region (Conniff 1999, 2; Dornbusch and Edwards 1991). Some (Castañeda 2006; Rodríguez 2008) have even argued that populist presidents are a direct threat to liberal democracy. The re-emergence demonstrates the phenomenon’s resilience and its importance in understanding political developments in Latin America, especially the consolidation and quality of democracy in the region. In some countries populists have had mixed success, while in many countries populist candidates have been absent from the political arena. In this paper I ask: *Why do some citizens vote for populist candidates?*

Like other concepts in political science, populism’s definition is widely contested because of a general lack of consensus exists on who constitutes a populist leader. Scholars have attempted to define populism or classify actors as populist for more than half a century and the only constant has been disagreement. The lack of commonly accepted definitions and categorization undermines the ability of researchers to consistently compare cases, to share insights and knowledge, and to further the general knowledge on populism (Mudde 2007: 12).

Not surprisingly, the lack of conceptual agreement contributes to extensive scholarly debate and disagreement about the causes and conditions which facilitate the emergence of populist political actors.

Beyond conceptual disagreement, past scholarship on populism has significant shortcomings. In most comparative edited volumes (Conniff et al. 1999, 2012; Drake et al. 1982; Mudde and Kaltwasser 2012) and recent cross-national studies (Carreras 2012; Doyle 2011; Madrid 2008) the authors examine only positive cases (Weyland 1999:380). As a consequence, there is a lack of research on countries with an absence of populism. In my paper, I allow the dependent variable to fully vary. Examining the full range of cases in my outcome of interest will likely lead to improved theory-testing (Geddes 1991, 133; Goertz and Mahoney 2003, 668) and better answer the question of why populism emerges in a specific country or context. Additionally, most studies on populism examine why and how the electorate voted and then how populists have governed. However, to understand why populists are able to win electoral contests and why they may govern the way they have, it is important to understand why they emerged in the first place. The processes of emergence, electoral breakthrough, and governance are distinct, and may not have the same explanations (Mudde 2007; 202). Last, scholars tend to focus on “demand-side explanations” and do not consider the motivations or hindrances for populist candidates to enter the race.

The study of populist political actors contributes to broader debates in political science, namely the evolving role of political parties, the (alleged) perils of presidentialism, and the quality of democracy. Populist leaders tend to be at the helm of vertical (top-down) political institutions and offer an alternative to traditional forms of interest representation (political parties). Successful populists are able to capitalize on low levels of citizen support for and trust

in political parties (Doyle 2011; Hawkins 2010). Some (Roberts 1996, 2003; Weyland 1999) scholars argue that the continental shift to neoliberal economic policies—and the resultant structural transformations—in the 1990s severed the institutional linkages (mostly labor unions) between citizens and politicians, and have greatly weakened the role of parties in Latin American societies. However, other scholars (Dalton et al. 2011; Hug 2001; Katz and Mair 1994) remind us that parties have not really declined in importance but rather have adapted to major structural changes in politics. The study of populist emergence will inform an understanding of how political parties have evolved in the region.

Populist presidents may also affect the quality of democracy in the region. They tend to centralize power in the executive which may limit government accountability and threaten the traditional notions of liberal democracy (Plattner 2009); their alleged manipulation of the masses may distort citizen participation in politics and their attacks on political parties and, more generally, the political system may weaken democratic institutions (Weyland 1999, 189). However, others (Mudde and Kaltwasser 2012; Roberts 2012) argue that populists may increase the degree of popular *participation* in the political system. An assessment of the ambiguous relationship between populism and democracy has practical importance for the region.

The paper progresses in the following manner. Section II provides my definition of populism and describes my case selection; Section III offers a literature review that develops hypotheses aimed at explaining why citizens may vote for populist candidates, and why populists may contest the election; Section IV includes a quantitative analysis of survey responses and descriptive findings across cases of electoral systems; Section V concludes with the empirical and theoretical implications of my study.

## *II. Defining Populism and Case Selection*

In this section I provide my definition of populism, developed from both Weyland (2001) and Roberts (2007), and my case selection of populist presidential candidates, adopted from Doyle (2011).

### *A) Defining populism*

From the 1960s to the 1980s Latin American scholars assessed the characteristics and defining features of the continent's populist leaders that emerged from the 1930s to the 1960s (Conniff 1982: 14; Drake 1982: 218). These early researchers labeled the leaders "classical" populists and advanced definitions that included the following elements as pertaining to populism: a political style that featured a charismatic leader who employed rhetoric aimed at inspiring people; a reformist economic agenda that promoted development through state activism; and a movement with a heterogeneous social coalition and policies that targeted the working classes (Drake 1982:218). Ideologically speaking, these leaders were inconsistent and changed course in order to maximize support (Conniff 1982: 14). These early definitions mostly concern the behavior of leaders *while in office*. The result is that the degree of state involvement in the economy, the beneficiaries of socioeconomic policies, and ideological consistency can be analyzed only after a leader has governed, not before.

After an interlude of "antipopulist governments" (authoritarian regimes) in the 1960s and 1970s, populist leaders re-emerged in the 1980s and 1990s (Conniff 1999: 12) and in very different socioeconomic environments than the classical populists. These new leaders *reached office* by using classical populist political strategies—appeals to the masses, inspirational rhetoric, and promises of redistributionist economic policies (Drake 1991, 36). However, a

marked difference occurred while these leaders *were in office* as they initiated neoliberal economic reforms. Labeled “neopopulists”, these presidents implemented radically different economic policies from their predecessors (Roberts 1995; Weyland 1996, 1999; Knight 1998) and, for most leaders; their campaign promises (Stokes 2001). Further, the neoliberal reforms they implemented in office drastically altered (compared to the classical populists) the socioeconomic characteristics of their support base—from the organized working class to the unorganized masses (Knight 1998; Roberts 1996; Weyland 1999, 2003).

The deviation in economic policies and support bases from prior populists presented a conceptual challenge to scholars. As one may expect, scholars disagreed about how to classify the new personalistic leaders who enacted market reforms. Some refused to classify the neopopulists as populists and retained state-led economic policies and redistributionist social spending as definitional requirements (Dornbusch and Edwards volume 1991; Nun 1994; Vilas 1992, 1995). Others (Weyland 1996; Knight 1998) argued the emphasis on the inclusion of economic attributes failed to consider the variation in the economic policies of classical populists. Some leaders (Perón, Vargas, Haya de la Torre, Ibarra and Bucaram) switched from expansionary to orthodox policies, (Weyland 2003) some diverged from the implementation of Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI) policies (Knight 1998: 238), and other “non-populist” leaders like Salvador Allende and José Sarney initiated state-led economic policies (Weyland 1999: 381). Thus, economic definitional components of populism, in general, are murkier than what they seemed in earlier work, and, subsequently, tend to feature less prominently in scholarly work. Again, I contend that both leaders’ economic policies and support bases tend to vary across the campaign and governing periods and should not be an integral definition feature.

Most authors now view populism in strictly political-organizational terms. Among these researchers, Weyland (2001) has defined populism as “a political strategy through which a personalistic leader seeks or exercises government power based on direct, unmediated, uninstitutionalized support from large numbers of mostly unorganized followers (14).” Many subsequent scholars initially utilized (Barr 2003; Ellner 2003; Hellinger 2005) and continue to utilize (Arnson and de la Torre et al. 2013; Conniff et al. 2012) variations of his “minimal procedural” definition. Additionally, Roberts (2007, 5) provides a similar definition, that populism “refers to the top-down political mobilization of mass constituencies by personalistic leaders who challenge elite groups on behalf of an ill-defined *pueblo*, or ‘the people.’” In sum, for the purposes of this paper I will refer to populism as a top-down political mobilization strategy in which personalistic leaders seek to gain support from the “people”.

### *B) Case Selection*

So who are the populists? An attempt to list all possible populist political actors far exceeds the purpose and limitations of this paper. I rely on Doyle (2011)<sup>1</sup> for my case selection of populist candidates and select the time period 2000-2010 because of survey data availability. Table 1 below illustrates the cases of populist candidates in Latin American presidential elections between 2000 and 2010. One thing to note is that I have included only leaders in Latin America who have won at least 5% of the vote in a presidential election. Table 1 also demonstrates that populists have not won national office in most Latin American countries.

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<sup>1</sup> Doyle uses the Roberts (2007) definition for the coding of his cases.

Table 1: Populist Candidates in Latin American Presidential Elections, 2000-2010				
Country	Leader	Year (s) of Election	Political Party	Vote Share
Argentina	Néstor Kirchner*	2003	FPV	21.99
Bolivia	Johnny Fernandez	2002	UCS	5.51
Bolivia	Evo Morales*	2005, 2009	MAS	53.74
Colombia	Alvaro Uribe*	2002, 2006	Primero Colombia	53.05, 62.35
Ecuador	Jacobo Bucaram	2002	PRE	11.86
Ecuador	Rafael Correa*	2006, 2009	PAIS	22.84, 51.79
Guatemala	Otto Molino	2007	Partido Patriota	23.51
Mexico	Andrés Manuel López	2006	Coalición por el Bien de Todos	35.33
Paraguay	Guillermo Sánchez	2003	Unión Nacional de Ciudadanos Éticos	13.5
Paraguay	Fernando Lugo*	2008	Alianza Patriótica para el Cambio	40.9
Peru	Ollanta Humala	2006	Union por el Perú	25.69
Venezuela	Hugo Chávez*	1998, 2000, 2006	MVR	56.2, 60.3

*Source: Doyle (2011, 1458). Candidates' vote share are taken both from Doyle 2011 and from International Foundation for Electoral Systems' website [<http://www.electionguide.org/>]. \*represents that the candidate won the election.*

### *III. Explaining Populist Candidates' Vote Share*

Below, I review past explanations (both supply-side and demand-side) for why populist candidates may win an election and develop testable hypotheses; I discuss the shortcomings, mainly the neglect of a systematic examination of negative cases, of past scholarship; for each explanation, I review the logic for and develop hypotheses at both the macro (country) and micro (individual) levels.

#### *A. Demand-side explanations*

I use the term demand-side to group explanations that center on the conditions that may entice the populace to consider a political alternative to the traditional and incumbent political actors. I assess some of these factors—the role of corruption, low citizen trust in public institutions, low levels of societal institutionalization, and poor socioeconomic performances by government.

#### D) Corruption

Corruption has long been a feature of Latin American societies. Most countries (with the exceptions of Chile, Costa Rica and Uruguay) score poorly on International Governmental Organizations' (IGOs) annual rankings (Transparency International's annual corruption perceptions indices and the World Bank's World Governance Indicators).<sup>2</sup> More broadly, Weyland (1998) demonstrated that corruption in Latin America has increased since the shift from military to democratic rule; while Seligson (2002, 2006) persuasively argues that citizens' experience with corruption has decreased the legitimacy of political systems in some Latin American countries.<sup>3</sup> Amid corruption scandals and negative IGO reports painting national governments in a bad light, political actors are increasingly likely to act in a populist fashion. In essence, in part as a result of corruption, citizens in Latin America have lower levels of trust in democracy which could lead them to seek political alternatives to traditional political representation. One alternative may be populist candidates who often practice the politics of "anti-politics" (Roberts 1995:13) in that they relentlessly critique the inefficiency of the political status quo and go to great lengths to portray themselves as political outsiders who will restore

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<sup>2</sup> Using the World Bank's "control of corruption" measure, only Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica and Uruguay score in the top 50 percentile of countries in the world from 1996-2011 ([http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/mc\\_chart.asp](http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/mc_chart.asp), accessed 5/30/2013).

<sup>3</sup> Seligson (2002) conducted interviews in Bolivia, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Panama. In his 2006 article, he added Ecuador to the analysis.

democratic order to political institutions. Additionally, the populist narrative emphasizes that popular government has been subverted by a conspiring minority who seek to advance their own personal interests at the disadvantage of the community (Hawkins 2010).

At the individual level, citizens who *perceive* corruption to be rampant and worsening are more likely to cast ballots for political outsiders who critique the status quo and pledge to reform and “clean up” political institutions if elected. In line with the above, I posit:

*Hypothesis 1a: citizens are more likely to vote for populist candidates when they perceive corruption to have increased;*

*Hypothesis 1b: citizens are more likely to vote for populist candidates when country levels of actual corruption are higher.*

A few things should be considered. First, there may be a disconnect between actual (country-level) and perceived (individuals) levels of corruption. Individual-level survey data may depart from IGO databases that heavily rely on expert (mostly from the business world) opinions. To provide one example; in the 2001 TI report the authors found that a higher percentage of Chileans (71%) than Mexicans (61%) considered corruption to be “very serious” although Chile scored significantly better than Mexico at the country level (Transparency International 2001, 227). Thus, it is important to examine how macro- and micro factors may interact. Second, although citizens may be dissatisfied with corrupt government officials and also perceive corruption to be widespread, the issue may not be the most pressing to citizens. Past studies on the influence of corruption (Seligson 2002, 2006; Weyland 1998) have failed to consider that citizens may view corruption as mundane and commonplace and not prioritize it among the most pressing problems of the country. In the annual Latinobarómetro survey, when asked about what the most pressing problem facing their country is, crime, unemployment, the

economy, poverty, and education tend to rank above corruption. Therefore, I will consider other relevant performance variables that citizens may deem more pressing than corruption.

## II) Mistrust in public institutions

Since democratization, many publics across Latin America have lost faith in their political institutions—political parties and the different branches of national governments. Similar, and likely correlated, to corruption, widespread loss of faith and confidence in these institutions create a fertile environment for politicians, eyeing an upcoming election, to publicly denounce and distance themselves from these organizations. To win elections, populist candidates need to appeal to voters and convince them that they offer a different avenue than the political mainstream and are more likely to represent the common peoples' interests (Roberts 1995, Barr 2003). This task is much easier when levels of public trust in public institutions are lower and fiery rhetoric is likely to resonate much more with publics that have lost confidence, if not complete faith, in public institutions. In an examination of 18 Latin American countries between 1996 and 2008, Doyle (2011) finds significant support for this hypothesis—that higher levels of distrust in the traditional political institutions of liberal democracy in a given country increases the probability of support for populist candidates during a given election. In line with the above arguments, I posit that:

*Hypothesis 2: citizens are more likely to vote for populist candidates when they have lower levels of trust in public institutions.*

Doyle (2011) constructs an index of citizen trust in the national parliament/congress, in political parties, and the judiciary. In my analysis, I run each of these institutions separately in my models to see whether any one institution has a stronger effect than the other two.

## III) Low levels of societal institutionalization

By societal institutionalization I am referring to citizen membership in various associations that may play a political mobilization role. The 1980s debt crisis that afflicted most of Latin America bankrupted and undermined state-led economic models. The long period of economic torpidity also discredited the major forms of institutionalized political representation: labor unions and political parties (Roberts 2003: 36). Labor union memberships and political party identifications have declined significantly in the last few decades in Latin America (Wibbels and Roberts 1999; Roberts 2003). The severing of these political representation linkages create a “political vacuum” that allows populist candidates to exploit and capitalize on the situation in their attempt to come to power (Roberts 1995; Barr 2003). This opening presents the opportunity for charismatic leaders to establish vertical, unmediated relationships with the unorganized, largely poor masses in the informal sector of society who may feel excluded or marginalized by their current political system (Weyland 1996). In line with the above, I posit:

The deinstitutionalization of traditional political representation bodies may provide an opportunity for new political actors, especially those with no political history or formal association with any of the traditional political parties. Nonetheless, to be electorally successful, populists have to convincingly frame a narrative that attracts considerable support and persuades voters that they are a more beneficial option than other non-incumbent competitors. Their discourse needs to center on the perception that the marginalized masses in the country are victims of privileged groups (specifically the political establishment) and that there is a need to transform or replace the underperforming and inefficient institutions (Barr 2003). In line with the above, I posit that:

*Hypothesis 3: citizens are more likely to vote for populist candidates when they have lower levels of identification with established political parties.*

Past scholarship has neglected to consider how traditional political parties respond and react to their own failures or why they have not been able to maintain their electoral base. Surely political incumbents do everything in their power to avoid electoral defeat and a comprehensive examination of populism should examine varying levels of party identification.

#### IV) Poor socioeconomic performance by governments

A prominent and recurring explanation in the literature for the electoral success of populist leaders is that they capitalize politically on periods of great socioeconomic inequality and abysmal economic conditions (Dornbusch and Edwards 1991, Weyland 1999). Latin America is a region that for the past few decades has been the most unequal in the world (Weyland 2003), constantly suffers through economic disasters and continues to be beset by high levels of poverty. Large swaths of the population perceive that traditional political parties and institutions insufficiently address, let alone fulfill, the socioeconomic needs of their constituents (Carrion 2009). During these times political actors are, again, likely to strongly criticize and distance themselves from the political establishment.

Periods of great socioeconomic turmoil tend to generate an enormous need for a national savior. The argument is that populist leaders are likely to win elections when countries face a socioeconomic crisis. But scholars have been unclear about what exactly constitutes a socioeconomic “crisis”. Some researchers have talked about “inflationary crises”. They argue that the poorest sectors of the population are most likely to experience direct consequences of a very high inflation rate, or hyperinflation (Barr 2003, 1163). Hyperinflation is a problem that necessitates immediate action because it destabilizes the predictability people have in planning their daily lives, and the consequences stemming from this uncertainty disproportionately affect

the poor (Weyland 2003, 1099). Weyland (1999, 395), in a cross-regional analysis of Eastern Europe and Latin America, argues that severe inflationary crises are a necessary condition for neoliberal populists to emerge. High levels of inflation turned many Polish and Russian citizens against the established political class, and disgruntled voters voted for populist outsiders who promised to save their countries: Lech Walesa (Poland) in 1989 and Boris Yeltsin (Russia) in 1991.

Hyperinflation may be the most immediate concern but high levels of poverty, unemployment and extended periods of negative growth are also pressing problems afflicting most Latin American societies, facilitating popular mobilization (Barr 2003, 1174; Weyland 2003). Stokes (2001) demonstrates that poor economic growth weighs heavily in the minds of voters when they evaluate both challengers' economic policy proposals and the economic performance of incumbent executives. In line with the above arguments, I posit:

*Hypothesis 4a: citizens are more likely to vote for populist candidates when country economic performance is poor;*

*Hypothesis 4b: citizens are more likely to vote for populist candidates when they perceive economic performance to be poor.*

Again, it is important to think about the interaction of economic factors at the country and individual levels. For instance, one could imagine a citizen who lost her job prior to the election in a richer (higher per capita GDP) country being more inclined to vote for a populist contender than an employed worker who received a wage in a lesser developed nation.<sup>4</sup> Also, citizen perceptions of economic performance of their country and their individual situations could have different affects on their voting behavior. A lively and extensive debate exists on whether

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<sup>4</sup> There are a multitude of permutations between country and individual economic situations.

economic voting is retrospective or prospective, sociotropic or pocketbook (Echegaray 2005; Remmer 1993).

Table 2: Demand-side Explanations and Their Expected Effects on Voting Behavior		
Explanation	Level	Expected Effect
Corruption (actual)	Country	Likely to could condition individual voting behavior
Corruption (perception)	Individual	Higher levels of perception are likely to increase vote share for populist(s)
Mistrust of Public Institutions	Individual	Lower trust is likely to increase vote share for populist(s)
Societal Institutionalization	Individual	Lower levels of affiliation are likely to increase vote share for populist(s)
Economic Situation (actual)	Country	Higher levels of growth and lower levels of inflation are likely to increase vote share for populist(s)
Economic Situation (perceived)	Individual	Lower levels of satisfaction with the economy are likely to increase vote share for populist(s)

Table 2 above provides an overview of the demand-side explanations for populist electoral success. Populist candidates are likely to have a window of opportunity when societies experience (actual and/or perceived) higher levels of corruption, there is widespread public discontent with political institutions, levels of societal institutionalization are lower, and governments' socioeconomic policies perform poorly. A key consideration to note is that these explanations naturally interact with one another. For instance, poor economic performances and repeated corruption scandals may have a profound delegitimizing effect on political officials.

### *C) Supply-side explanations*

I use the term supply-side to categorize factors that, in general, influence mostly the availability or ability of populist candidates to enter the political arena in the first place. Some of these explanations may also feed into the ability of candidates to attract votes in an election. Demand-side explanations identify conditions that would motivate both political actors to behave in a populist fashion and citizens to vote for populist candidates. A comprehensive explanation of populist electoral success will also need to focus on the motivations of political actors to enter the political arena. Below, I review some explanations that may influence individual candidates' decisions and ability to *enter* a presidential race and launch a populist campaign. Thus, in relation to my dependent variable, the following explanations account only for the motivations of political actors, not individual voters, and should account only for the amount of populist actors during the campaign period. The factors include institutional features (electoral system and electoral rules) and party organization (candidate selection procedures).

#### I) Plurality vs Majority Run-off elections

There is considerable variation in the way presidents are elected in Latin America. Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, and Venezuela employ a first past-the-the-post procedure; all other countries have some form of majority run-off system (Siavelis and Morgenstern 2006; 26).<sup>5</sup> Jones (1995) finds that a simple plurality is likely to lead to fewer candidates contesting the election. This tends to favor candidates from the traditional and more institutionalized parties. In turn, Siavelis and Morgenstern (2006; 26) contend that this enhances the power of parties to designate candidates which reinforces candidate loyalty to parties. In a more recent study, Carreras (2012, 1470) argues that plurality systems do not necessarily

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<sup>5</sup> Argentina, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua all have a first-round threshold (less than a majority) that if not met requires a second round.

decrease the number of candidates. Rather, volatile electoral environments may diminish if not eliminate the advantage traditional parties are thought to have. The disagreement among scholars necessitates further research. Borrowing from the literature on electoral systems I posit:

*Hypothesis 5a: a country is likely to have fewer populist actors contest the presidential race if it has a simple plurality electoral system.*

Conversely, a simple runoff method is likely to lead to more candidates because aspirants without substantial backing know that a top two finish in the first round extends their run for presidency. Following Siavelis and Morgenstern, a runoff lessens the need to be backed by a major political party. Although the above logic is likely to apply in general, the voting system could be irrelevant when specific candidates are highly popular and consistently poll well above 50 percent among likely voters, decreasing the incentive for lesser known candidates to enter. The relationship should be strongest when the incumbent's approval rating is low or no clear early favorite emerges in pre-campaign polls. The increased frequency and sophistication of public opinion polls in Latin America provide ample knowledge of the popularity of incumbents and challengers. In line with the above argument, I posit that:

*Hypothesis 5b: a country is likely to have more populist actors contest the presidential race if it has a majority runoff electoral system.*

## II) Election concurrence

Another electoral rule which may affect the kind of candidates that enter a presidential race is whether the election for legislative seats occurs on the same day as the presidential election. Both Shugart (1995) and Jones (1995) find that when executive and legislative elections are held concurrently it tends to enhance the electability of candidates tied to the traditional and institutionalized parties because these parties will be able to also field legislative candidates. This may decrease the likelihood that outsider candidates would enter the race as they make a

calculation that it is not worth their time and resources to pursue an electoral dead end. It may also affect the ability of candidates to compete for votes. Carreras (2012, 1470) finds that concurrent elections tend to be dominated by institutionalized parties who field candidates in races throughout the country. The ability to have colleagues on ballots in as many localities as possible seems to garner benefits of name recognition and institutional presence. On the other hand, nonconcurrent elections decrease the importance of party connections and increase the incentives for political outsiders and party dissidents to contest the race. I posit:

*Hypothesis 5c: a country is likely to have fewer populist candidates contest the presidential race if it holds presidential and legislative elections concurrently.*

### III) Reelection possible

In Latin America, 14 of the 18 countries allow for re-election, but do so with differing conditions.<sup>6</sup> In six countries,<sup>7</sup> one consecutive re-election is allowed; in seven others,<sup>8</sup> leaders can be re-elected only after they sit out one or two electoral cycles; and Venezuela allows for indefinite re-election (Zovatto 2013). Although there is a spirited debate on whether reelection in Latin America promotes good or bad candidates, there is little work on how the possibility of re-election may affect what kinds of candidates throw their hat in the ring. Siavelis and Morgenstern (2006) reason that if candidates are banned from reelection then they are less likely to be loyal to their own party because they view their political horizon as limited, and may deviate from party positions or position themselves as an outsider. This expectation is likely to play out during the campaign *after* candidates have been nominated or selected. Whereas these authors focus on traditional candidates' behavior and motivations vis-à-vis their parties, Carreras (2012) examines how electoral rules influence outsiders' strategic calculations to *enter* the

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<sup>6</sup> Four countries ban re-election: Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and Paraguay.

<sup>7</sup> These countries are: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Nicaragua.

<sup>8</sup> These countries include: Chile, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Panama, Peru, and Uruguay.

electoral contest. He finds that the possibility of incumbent re-election discourages outsiders from competing because they cannot keep pace with the benefits of the incumbency advantage (access to media, potential for clientelistic practices). Although these authors explain decisions taken at different times, they both apply directly to the campaign period. I posit that:

*Hypothesis 5d: a country is likely to have more populist actors contest the presidential race if it has fewer restrictions on re-election.*

Table 3 below provides a recap of the supply-side explanations developed above:

Table 3: Supply-side Explanations and Their Expected Effects on Political Behavior	
Explanations	Expected Effect
Simple plurality electoral system	Fewer populist actors contest the election
Majority Runoff electoral system	More populist actors as it incentivizes entry into the race
Concurrent elections	Fewer populist actors contest the election
Re-election allowed	More populist actors contest the election

#### *D) Shortcomings in Previous Cross-National Research*

In this final sub-section, I discuss shortcomings prevalent in the Latin American populism literature. I argue that most comparative studies have not fully addressed the question of why populists emerge because scholars lack a concern for the “negative” cases—when populist candidates do not emerge and/or when they do emerge yet fail to achieve any electoral success. Further, researchers have largely selected their cases on the dependent variable, most studies focus on a single country, and conceptual disagreement continues.

In most comparative edited volumes (Arnston and de la Torre 2013; Conniff 1999, 2012; Drake et al. 1982; Mudde and Kaltwasser 2012) and recent cross-national studies (Carreras 2012;

Doyle 2011; Madrid 2008) the authors define populism and its component parts, and then examine only positive cases (Weyland 1999:380). There is a lack of variation on the dependent variable.<sup>9</sup> This may lead to flawed inferences because scholars assume that a relationship between variables in the chosen cases is representative of the entire population (Geddes 1990, 133). Conditions and causes that are identified in the cases under examination may also be present in the cases where the outcome has not occurred, raising doubt on the validity of explanations (Geddes 1990, 149; Mudde 2007). Thus, research can be vastly improved and findings made more robust if scholars are to test existing explanations across a more complete set of cases, especially in countries with an absence of populism (Geddes 1990; Mahoney and Goertz 2004).

Scant attention is paid to countries in which populism has not emerged. In Latin America, Drake (1999, 74) and Weyland (1999) argued that populism would likely not take root in Chile, Colombia and Uruguay because of their strong party systems. Few studies have vindicated these assumptions, and these countries have not received any mention in major edited volumes on populism (Arnston and de la Torre 2013; Conniff et al 1999, 2012; Levitsky and Roberts 2011).<sup>10</sup>

Another limitation in past studies is that researchers look at voting behavior in an aggregate fashion. Both Carreras (2012) and Doyle (2011) measure their dependent variables as the percentages of vote share at the country-level that each candidate receives. Explaining outcomes in an aggregated function leads Doyle (2011) to have a small number of cases in his

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<sup>9</sup> One exception includes Hawkins (2010) who has considerable variation in his dependent variable (scores range from 0 to 4 with a higher score indicative of a leader who employs populist rhetoric more frequently).

<sup>10</sup> An exception to this is the chapter on Colombia in Arnston and de la Torre (2013).

statistical models.<sup>11</sup> In this paper, I use readily available survey data that asks individual respondents how they voted in the past presidential election. In examining individual voting behavior, I am able to analyze how both country-level and individual-level factors affect individuals' political behavior. In sum, past scholarship on populism in Latin America suffers from shortcomings. These include truncating the dependent variable and failing to examine countries with an absence of populism, the lack of comprehensive cross-national comparisons, and the lack of systematic analysis.

#### *IV. Assessing Explanations for the Vote Share of Populist Candidates*

In this section I examine available evidence to test the hypotheses I formulated in section three above to explain why citizens would vote for populist candidates. I conduct a quantitative analysis of survey data; continue with a discussion of my findings; and end with my analysis.

##### **Data**

In this section, I use quantitative methods to test the hypotheses that citizens are more likely to vote for populist presidential candidates when they perceive corruption to be widespread, their countries experience high levels of corruption, they have lower levels of trust in political institutions, they have lower levels of party identification, their countries experience economic hardship, and when citizens perceive their economic situation (both country and individual) to be poor. I rely on survey data publicly available from the Americasbarometer Project to examine which factors influence popular support for populist candidates. My dependent variable is *vote for the populist candidate(s)*. I use the survey question “*For whom did you vote for President in*

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<sup>11</sup> Doyle examines 46 cases.

*the last presidential elections?*”<sup>12</sup> and score it as a dichotomous variable (1=populist/s, 0=non-populists). I use a logit regression model to estimate the odds that survey respondents will be more likely to support populist contenders in the elections detailed above.<sup>13</sup>

My quantitative analysis is based on the Americasbarometer survey and the unit of analysis is at the individual level. A few comments about the nature of the surveys are necessary. There is variation in when the surveys were conducted in relation to the elections. For each country and election I use the most recent survey that immediately follows the presidential election. I acknowledge that the temporal disconnect between when the elections occurred and when the surveys were conducted is problematic but I expect that voting in elections is a significant event and individuals should not easily forget who they voted for. For reasons discussed below, I run a series of models for elections in which populist candidates participated, and for elections in which no populist competed.

In sum, in the first series I examine 8 of the elections discussed in table 1 for which data are available and it was the first election the populist contested. I do not look at any of the successful populist re-elections because the hypotheses were formulated considering voting behavior for a populist challenger, not incumbent. The elections include: Bolivia 2005, Ecuador 2006, Guatemala 2007, Mexico 2006, Paraguay 2003 and 2008, and Peru 2006.

## **Operationalization and Measurement**

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<sup>12</sup> For the in text discussion I translate the questions into English. The original survey question asks, “¿Por quien votó para Presidente en las últimas elecciones presidenciales de....?”

<sup>13</sup> I use the statistical software package R to run the regressions. Also, I employ logistic regression code provided by Professor Daniel Gillen from the Statistics department at the University of California-Irvine. His code is publicly available at his website: [http://www.ics.uci.edu/~dgillen/STAT111\\_202/Statistics\\_111\\_202.html](http://www.ics.uci.edu/~dgillen/STAT111_202/Statistics_111_202.html).

In testing the hypotheses I include both macro-level and individual-level measurements to discern relationships between explanatory variables and support for incumbent presidents or parties among survey respondents. In pooling the responses I conduct a country-level analysis which some scholars have argued yields better inferences about what affects individual-level decision-making in the electoral context (Baker and Greene 2011, Doyle 2011).

### *Aggregate-level Measurements*

In testing the economic success hypotheses I consider two measures: GDP per capita and inflation. In measuring GDP per capita, I follow Hawkins (2010: 135) and consider the mean annual percentage change (either increase or decrease) of the country's GDP for the two years prior to the election at the end of the incumbent political actor's first term.<sup>14</sup> Hawkins (2010: 135) contends that existing theories are unclear as to how long economic decline or success have to last in order to bolster or undermine support for political institutions but asserts that short declines do matter. Similarly for inflation, I measure the mean annual percentage change for the two-year period before the election.<sup>15</sup> Lastly, I include the country-level corruption score average for the two years prior to each election.<sup>16</sup>

### *Individual-level Measurements*

To test citizens' perceptions of corruption hypothesis, I include responses for questions asking respondents whether they believe corruption among public officials to be widespread (I code 4 for very widespread, 3 for widespread, 2 for a little widespread, and use the response "not

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<sup>14</sup> I use data available from the World Bank's website and use the current US dollar measure. The data are in raw numbers so I calculate the annual percentage changes.

<sup>15</sup> For inflation data I also used World Bank figures. These measures are recorded as percentages and are publicly available on the organization's website.

<sup>16</sup> Country corruption scores are available on Transparency International's website. A lower score illustrates that a country is more corrupt.

at all widespread” as my models’ reference group). For the trust in political institutions hypothesis, I use a question that asks citizens to what extent they have trust in the various institutions (the judiciary, the national congress/parliament, and political parties). The question is scored from 1 to 7, and I code responses 1 and 2 as “a little” (reference group), 3, 4, 5 as “some”, and 6 and 7 as “a lot”.<sup>17</sup> For the party affiliation hypothesis, I use a question that asks whether the respondent sympathizes with any political party. The question is scored dichotomously (“no” or “yes”) and I use the “yes” scores as my reference group.

In testing the economic success hypotheses, I consider two survey questions: one that asks the survey respondent whether she believes the economic situation of the country has improved in the last 12 months, and whether she believes her individual economic situation has improved during the same period.<sup>18</sup> The responses include “better”, “the same”, and “worse” and I exclude the responses “don’t know” and “no answer” from the analysis.<sup>19</sup> Thus each variable is a factored ordinal measure with three levels of satisfaction and I use the “worse” group as the reference group in my models. Lastly, I include control variables to account for variation in the gender, education, and income of survey respondents.<sup>20</sup>

## **Findings**

Table 4 gives the pooled logit regression results for surveys in the seven country elections which featured populist candidates and survey data are available. In this sub-section, for the sake of interpretability, I discuss my findings using the exponentiated values from my models and

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<sup>17</sup> In my models, I run only one institution in each model to account for the correlation among these values. Across the institutions, the level of trust in one institution is highly (all above 0.45) correlated with other trust levels.

<sup>18</sup> These and all full survey questions are available in the Appendix C.

<sup>19</sup> This was repeated for each variable throughout the analysis.

<sup>20</sup> For gender, “male” serves as the reference group; for education, 0-6 years; for income, self-identification as very low (the lowest quintile) serves as the reference group.

provide an overview of the estimated log-odds ratios, or the increase or decrease in the estimated odds that a respondent voted for the populist candidate, compared to the likelihood of those in the baseline or reference group.

In model 1, I include one macro-level economic variable (the two-year GDP percentage change average prior to the election), the micro-level variables (excluding country-level economic perceptions and levels of trust in other national institutions) and all control variables. I do not include other macro-level variables because I seek to keep my country-level variable to cases ratio relatively small (Gelman and Hill, 2006). At the macro-level, I find considerable support that GDP growth prior to an election has a strong correlation with public support for populist candidates. When one exponentiates the value, an increase of one percentage in GDP growth increases the estimated odds of a respondent supporting a populist candidate by 10.4 percent. At the micro-level, those respondents who have a lot of trust in the judiciary are 39.8 percent less likely to support populist candidates than those who have very little trust in this institution (baseline group). Those respondents who have no sympathy for any political party are 32.9 percent more likely to support populists. Compared to survey respondents who perceived their own economic situation to have worsened (baseline group), those who perceived their own situation to be better were 19.8 percent more likely to be supportive of populists. Lastly, I find that those with higher incomes are less supportive of populists—those in the high category are 46.6% less likely to vote for these candidates. I find no statistical support for the citizens' perceptions of corruption hypothesis, or that either education or gender have an effect.

In model 2, I observe many of the same trends. I include a country-level corruption score, all the micro-level variables (excluding individual-level corruption perceptions) and control variables. At the macro-level, I find considerable support more corruption (a lower score) is

correlated with increased likelihood to vote for populists. A one point increase in corruption country score (less corruption) decreases the odds of support by 73 percent. At the micro-level, compared to survey respondents who perceived the country-level economic situation to have worsened (baseline group), those who perceived the country economy to have improved were 74 percent more likely to support the incumbent. Again, I find considerable support that respondents who have high levels of trust in political institutions (the national congress in this model) are 50.1 percent less likely to have voted for the populist than those who have very little trust (baseline group). I find no evidence to support that gender and education are associated with voting behavior for populist candidates.

In my last model, again, I find considerable support that higher inflation is correlated with lower populist support. At the micro-level, I find that lower levels of trust in political parties, a lack of political party sympathy, perceptions that the individual economy has improved, and lower levels of income increase the odds of voting for populists. Most notably, those respondents who have high levels of trust in political parties, when compared to those who with lower levels, are 49.5 percent less likely to have voted for the populist contender. When examining all three models, within the context of populist candidates contesting the election, economic performance and country corruption level both provide considerable explanatory weight at the macro-level. At the micro-level, perceptions (both sociotropic and pocketbook) of economic performance, whether or not the respondent sympathizes with a party, and whether someone trust political institutions explain extensive variation in respondents' voting behavior. In regard to the control variables, higher income levels depress likelihood to vote for populists, whereas the associations between gender and education with support for populists are unclear.

**Table 4: Logistic Analysis of Support for Populist Presidential Candidates in Latin America, 2000-2010**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<i>Country-level variables</i>			
Corruption		-1.285 (0.061)**	
GDP (2-year average)	0.098 (0.008)***		
Inflation			-0.072 (0.012)***
<i>Individual-level variables</i>			
Corruption (a little widespread)	-0.114 (0.192)		-0.212 (0.191)
Corruption (widespread)	0.099 (0.182)		0.041 (0.181)
Corruption (very widespread)	0.051 (0.179)		0.027 (0.178)
Trust in the judiciary (some)	-0.142 (0.062)*		
Trust in the judiciary (a lot)	-0.506 (0.099)***		
Trust in national Congress (some)		-0.490 (0.062)***	
Trust in national Congress (a lot)		-0.694 (0.103)***	
Trust in political parties (some)			-0.493 (0.06)***
Trust in political parties (a lot)			-0.684 (0.11)***
Party affiliation (no)	0.285 (0.063)***	0.008 (0.065)	0.137 (0.062)*
Country Economy (same)		-0.001 (0.653)***	
Country Economy (better)		0.550 (0.091)***	
Individual Economy (same)	-0.043 (0.068)	-0.040 (0.069)	0.051 (0.067)
Individual Economy (better)	0.181 (0.087)*	0.201 (0.089)*	0.346 (0.086)***
<i>Control variables</i>			
Education (medium)	0.056 (0.068)	0.157 (0.071)*	-0.039 (0.069)
Education (high)	0.047 (0.084)	0.163 (0.088)	-0.076 (0.085)
Education (very high)	-0.824 (0.467)	-0.459 (0.474)	0.396 (0.462)
Gender (female)	-0.063 (0.057)	0.005 (0.059)	0.066 (0.083)
Income (medium)	0.055 (0.066)	0.153 (0.068)*	0.063 (0.066)
Income (high)	-0.627 (0.097)***	-0.272 (0.098)**	-0.279 (0.095)**
Constant	-1.160 (0.217)***	3.872 (0.191)***	0.539 (0.203)**
N=	5290	5429	5302

\*P &lt; .05, \*\*P &lt; .01, \*\*\*P &lt; 0.001

### *Voting for non-populists*

One of my central contentions in this paper is that past work on populism has examined only positive cases of populism. Existing theories have developed around case studies and (limited) statistical work on voting behavior for successful populists. However, very little work has been done to empirically verify that citizens behave differently when a populist contests the presidential race than they would voting for a non-incumbent political challenger. Do voters behave differently? Or do non-incumbent voters have similar grievances and motivations to those who voted for populists? Table 5 below provides an illustration of eight elections in which data are available and no populist contested the election. For my analysis I examine survey data for respondents who voted for the highest vote-receiving non-incumbents.

Country	Leader	Year of Election	Party	Vote Share
Brazil	José Serra	2010	PSDB	43.95
Chile	Sebastian Piñera*	2009/2010	RN	51.61
Colombia	Antanas Mockus	2010	PVC	21.51
Costa Rica	Ottón Solís	2010	PAC	25.15
Dominican Republic	Miguel Vargas Maldonado	2008	PRD	40.48
El Salvador	Mauricio Funes*	2009	FMLN	51.32
Panama	Ricardo Martinelli*	2009	APC	60.03
Uruguay	Luis Alberto Lacalle	2009	PN	44.28

Source: IFES election guide. \*represents that the challenger won the election

Table 6 below provides pooled logistic regression results for the above elections. The key difference between when populists are present and when there are not, is that levels of trust in political institutions have no statistically significant effect on voting behavior in support of non-incumbent contenders. Similar to models when populists contest the election, I find ample support at the macro-level that economic growth and lower levels of inflation have positive

associations with vote share. At the micro-level, again, I find extensive statistical evidence that poorer perceptions of the economy, and a lack of sympathy with a party is positively correlated with vote share for the non-incumbent. I find higher education levels to be positively associated with non-incumbent vote, while higher income levels lower vote share for the non-incumbent.

**Table 6: Logistic Analysis of Support for Non-Populist Presidential Challengers in Latin America, 2005-2010**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<i>Country-level variables</i>			
Corruption		-0.02 (0.018)	
GDP (2-year average)	0.013 (0.004)***		
Inflation			-0.085 (0.019)***
<i>Individual-level variables</i>			
Corruption (a little widespread)	-0.054 (0.14)		-0.09 (0.148)
Corruption (widespread)	0.004 (0.131)		0.031 (0.137)
Corruption (very widespread)	0.054 (0.131)		0.006 (0.136)
Trust in the judiciary (some)	0.105 (0.068)		
Trust in the judiciary (a lot)	0.168 (0.083)*		
Trust in national Congress (some)		0.077 (0.067)	
Trust in national Congress (a lot)		0.055 (0.081)	
Trust in political parties (some)			-0.021 (0.062)
Trust in political parties (a lot)			-0.027 (0.098)
Party affiliation (no)	0.543 (0.056)***	0.467 (0.054)***	0.393 (0.058)***
Country Economy (same)		0.177 (0.073)*	
Country Economy (worse)		0.274 (0.082)***	
Individual Economy (same)	0.333 (0.065)***	0.273 (0.068)***	0.267 (0.068)***
Individual Economy (worse)	0.326 (0.077)***	0.240(0.081)**	0.337 (0.080)***
<i>Control variables</i>			
Education (medium)	0.238 (0.063)***	0.229 (0.062)***	0.212 (0.068)**
Education (high)	0.432 (0.079)***	0.438 (0.078)***	0.430 (0.084)***
Gender (female)	-0.026 (0.052)	-0.018 (0.052)	-0.049 (0.056)
Income (medium)	-0.039 (0.069)	-0.022 (0.069)	-0.061 (0.074)
Income (high)	-0.331 (0.066)***	-0.319 (0.066)***	-0.37 (0.070)***
Constant	-1.667(0.162)***	-1.46 (0.13)***	-0.75 (0.201)***
N=	6957	7020	6218

\*P < .05, \*\*P < .01, \*\*\*P<0.001

*Analysis: demand-side factors*

In examining the macro-level factors, I find scant support for the corruption hypothesis and some counter-intuitive findings for the economic variables. I find support only in the model for populists that corruption matters, whereas, populists and non-incumbents both do better when the economy grows and inflation is higher. A closer look at the macro-levels below in table 7 provides an overview of conditions in all the countries examined in this paper. Consistent with the statistical models above, populists are surprisingly successful when their countries' economies grow and corruption is worse (lower score). This indicates that economic motivations are not central to explaining why citizens vote for populists. When compared to elections in which no populists ran, it is more likely that populists will contest and be successful in countries in which corruption at the country level is much worse (a lower score).

**Table 7: Macro-level Conditions and Electoral Results in Latin America**

Election Result	GDP (2-year average)	GDP (5-year average)	Inflation	Corruption
<i>Populists</i>				
Won	14.27%	5.65%	6.15%	2.4
Lost	4.18%	1.88%	5.93%	2.9
<i>Non-incumbent Non-Populists</i>				
Won	10.97%	12.05%	6.70%	5.2
Lost	7.03%	11.90%	7.09%	3.8

Source: World Bank

Similar to the macro-level, at the micro-level, across contexts, I do not find any support for earlier arguments that citizen perceptions of corruption affect voting behavior for either populists or non-populists. I ran numerous additional models in which I removed variables which I expect to be correlated with corruption—the various levels of trust in the political institutions—

and did not find any significant results. When looking at the data for the elections featuring populists, I found that most citizens perceive corruption to be very widespread (46.7%) or widespread (33.6%). Future research should thus examine two things: whether corruption is a pressing issue for citizens (in relation to other items), and, if it is, do voters rather reward the traditional non-incumbent in the race? More work would be needed to examine the tenor and focus of candidates' campaigns to see to what extent each candidate employed an anti-corruption platform.

In assessing the economic perceptions of respondents, the findings seem to be somewhat counter-intuitive for the elections that featured populists. Across the models, those respondents who believe the economy has improved in the past year were more likely to support populists in the election. One possible interpretation of these results would be that these citizens perceived the economy to have been worse under the former government and at that time were more likely to have voted for the non-incumbent populist.

Most importantly for this paper, I find that whether respondents have some political party affiliation and income levels matter in both contexts. When a populist competes in the presidential election, it seems that voters lacking sympathy for a specific political party are more likely to select the populist; similarly, when there is no populist contesting the election, those citizens lacking an affiliation are more likely to cast their votes for the traditional party non-incumbent candidate.

### *Analysis: supply-side factors*

Below I assess the four electoral system variables: plurality vs majority vote, the use of a majority runoff, concurrent elections, and whether a re-election is allowed. I find some support

that populist candidates are more likely to win the election when the system calls for either a majority or has an electoral threshold with a specified winning margin. There is considerable variation in the electoral system for all candidates, so it seems as if the winning vote threshold is not a significant factor in the motivation of candidates to *enter* the race. In terms of majority runoff, the table illustrates a pattern opposite to what I theoretically expected—populist candidates are just as likely to appear in systems without a majority runoff as with one, and in no successful election did a majority runoff occur. Again, the table demonstrates a finding contrary

Country	Simple Plurality or Majority	Majority Runoff	Concurrent Elections	Re-election Allowed
<b>Argentina 2003</b>	45% or 40% of vote with 10% win margin, or runoff	Qualified: see the left cell	Yes	Yes, 1 consecutive term
<b>Bolivia 2002, 2005</b>	Majority or Congress majority vote for candidate	No	Yes	Yes, 1 consecutive term
<b>Colombia 2002</b>	Majority (50 + 1%)	No	No (Legislative 3 months before)	No (not until 2005)
<b>Ecuador 2002, 2006</b>	Qualified: 40% vote with a 10% win margin, or runoff	Qualified: see the left cell	Yes	No
Guatemala 2007	Majority (50 + 1%)	Yes	Yes	No
Mexico 2006	Plurality	No	Yes	No
<b>Paraguay 2003, 2008</b>	Plurality	No	Yes	No
Peru 2006	Majority (50 + 1%)	Yes	Yes	Yes, but have to sit out 1 cycle
<b>Venezuela 1998</b>	Plurality	No	No (Legislative 1 month before)	No

*Sources: Georgetown's Political Database of the Americas, Country Constitutions; IFES project<sup>21</sup>. Bold indicates an electoral victory for the candidate*

<sup>21</sup> Argentina: 1994 Constitution, Article 97; Bolivia: 1967 Constitution, with reforms up to 2005, Articles 86-90

to the theoretical expectation derived from the literature—that concurrent elections are employed in all cases except for Colombia and Venezuela. However, in both of these countries, the legislative elections occurred extremely close to (and before) the presidential election and it is likely that parties should have been able to capitalize on momentum they sustained in the prior non-executive contests. Lastly, there is no discernible pattern across cases, whether one concerns the decision to enter the race or electoral outcome, on the effect that a potential re-election has.

## *V. Conclusion*

In this paper I have reviewed past and current theoretical explanations for why populist actors may emerge, and I have provided survey evidence to suggest that future comparative research should examine countries where populists do not achieve electoral success.

Although populist political leaders have won office consistently since democratic elections were restored and, in some countries, introduced to Latin America, more often than not these leaders do not win elections and most elections do not feature a populist candidate. Populist leaders denounce elites, criticize existing political institutions and detail politicians' perceived ineptitude to solve issues that afflict citizens. These rhetorical appeals are likely to translate into electoral success when the following conditions are met: traditional political representation linkages are severed, citizens have low trust in public institutions combined with high levels of country corruption, and governments perform poorly in their handling of the economy. In elections with no populists, citizens are more likely to support the non-incumbent when citizens

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Colombia: 1991 Constitution, Article 190; Ecuador: 1998 Constitution, Article 165; Guatemala: 1993 Constitution, Articles 184, 187; Mexico: 1917 Constitution with reforms up to 2000, Article 83, Paraguay: 1992 Constitution, Article 229; Peru: 1993 Constitution with reforms to 2005, Articles 111, 112; Venezuela: IFES. Country constitutions are publicly available at: <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/Constitutions/Bolivia/bolivia.html>

lack any sympathy or affiliation to parties, they perceive the economy to be performing worse, they are more educated and are from the lower economic strata of society.

The survey evidence that I present in this paper leads me to conclude that existing theoretical explanations will have to be refined to explain why, given similar conditions, populists have not achieved emerged, let alone achieved electoral success, in more countries across the continent. Specifically, scholars should ask why populists have not entered presidential races in countries where citizens have low levels of trust in political institutions, are dissatisfied with the economy, and perceive corruption to be widespread. How have the traditional political parties maintained political support although they are quite unpopular? Is there perhaps a tipping point or threshold that needs to be reached before political outsiders may obtain electoral success?

I have mostly focused on demand-side explanations in the paper but my findings should emphasize the need to re-examine the theoretical expectations I derived from the literature involving supply-side factors. A comprehensive explanation of populist electoral success will also need to focus on the motivations of political actors to enter the political arena. Specifically, what affects the availability or ability of populist candidates to enter the political arena in the first place? Why have we seen populists contest elections and have success in electoral systems that hold executive and legislative elections concurrently, while the use of a plurality or majority runoff system has no discernible effect?

In closing, populism is a phenomenon that is not confined to a specific country or time period. The potential exists for fascinating discovery if scholars broaden the pool of possible cases to examine, specifically the negative cases, and to assess both demand-side and supply-side

factors. This will allow for improved theory-testing and better answer the question of why populism emerges in a specific country, continent, or context.

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## APPENDIX

### **Survey questions used (Americasbarometer surveys, 2004-2010):**

#### **I. Dependent variable (vote share):**

VB3. ¿Por quién votó para Presidente en las últimas elecciones presidenciales de XXXX?

#### **II. Independent variable (corruption perceptions):**

EXC7. Teniendo en cuenta su experiencia o lo que ha oído mencionar, ¿la corrupción de los funcionarios públicos está:

[LEER] (1) Muy generalizada (2) Algo generalizada (3) Poco generalizada (8) NS/NR

#### **III. Independent variable (trust in political institutions):**

B10A. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza en el sistema de justicia?

B13. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza usted en el Congreso Nacional?

B21. ¿Hasta qué punto tiene confianza usted en los partidos políticos?

#### **IV. Independent variable (sympathy for a political party):**

VB10. ¿En este momento, simpatiza con algún partido político?

(1) Sí [Siga]

(2) No [Pase a POL1]

(8) NS/NR [Pase a POL1]

#### **V. Independent variable (economic perceptions):**

SOCT2. ¿Considera usted que la situación económica actual del país es mejor, igual o peor que hace doce meses?

(1) Mejor (2) Igual (3) Peor (8) NS/NR

IDIO2. ¿Considera usted que su situación económica actual es mejor, igual o peor que la de hace doce meses?

(1) Mejor (2) Igual (3) Peor (8) NS/NR

#### **VI. Control variables (education), (gender), (income):**

ED. ¿Cuál fue el último año de enseñanza que usted completó o aprobó?

\_\_\_\_\_ Año de \_\_\_\_\_ (primaria, secundaria, universitaria, superior no  
universitaria) = \_\_\_\_\_

años total [Usar tabla abajo para código]

Q1. Género (anotar, no pregunte): (1) Hombre (2) Mujer

Q10. ¿En cuál de los siguientes rangos se encuentran los ingresos familiares mensuales de este hogar, incluyendo la ayuda económica del exterior y el ingreso de todos los adultos e hijos que trabajan? [Si no entiende, pregunte: ¿Cuánto dinero entra en total a su casa por mes?]