

1: The Growth of Populism [www.enganchecubano.com]

The first wave of Latin American populism began at the start of the Great Depression in and last until the end of the s. In various countries.

Margaret Canovan on how the term populism was used, [2] The term populism is a vague and contested term that has been used in reference to a diverse variety of phenomena. Have people the right, in a democracy, to hold an opinion? If that is the case, then yes, I am a populist. The ideational definition of populism used by Mudde and Kaltwasser [16] A common approach to defining populism is known as the ideational approach. It thus differs from the "thick-centred" or "full" ideologies such as fascism, liberalism, and socialism, which provide more far-reaching ideas about social transformation. As a thin-centred ideology, populism is therefore attached to a thick-ideology by populist politicians. The existence of two homogeneous units of analysis: The antagonistic relationship between the people and the elite. The idea of popular sovereignty. The ideational definition of populism used by Ben Stanley [21] As a result of the various different ideologies which populism can be paired with, the forms that populism can take vary widely, [16] and populism itself cannot be positioned on the left-right political spectrum. For populists, on the other hand, the consciousness of the people, generally referred to as common sense, is the basis of all good politics. Political scientist Cas Mudde [28] In simplifying the complexities of reality, the concept of "the people" is vague and flexible, [29] with this plasticity benefitting populists who are thus able to "expand or contract" the concept "to suit the chosen criteria of inclusion or exclusion" at any given time. In such a framework, all individuals regarded as being "native" to a particular state, either by birth or by ethnicity, could be considered part of "the people". For instance, in Britain, the centre-right Conservative Party conceived of "Middle England" as its heartland, while the far-right British National Party conceived of the "native British people" as its heartland. Because of that its judgement is pure, its will is strong, and none can corrupt or even threaten it. Rather than choosing laws for themselves, these citizens are only mobilized for elections in which their only option is to select their representatives rather than taking a more direct role in legislation and governance. Responding to this critique, Mudde and Kaltwasser argued that the ideational definition did allow for a "non-populism" in the form of both elitism and pluralism. Whereas populists regard the elites as bad and the common people as good, elitists view "the people" as being vulgar, immoral, and dangerous and "the elites" as being morally, culturally, and intellectually superior. In this context, diversity is seen not as a weakness but a strength. Pluralists encourage governance through compromise and consensus in order to reflect the interests of as many of these groups as possible. In this understanding, populism is usually perceived as a positive factor in the mobilization of the populace to develop a communitarian form of democracy. He regarded it as a positive force for emancipatory change in society The Laclauan definition of populism, so called after the Argentinian political theorist Ernesto Laclau who developed it, uses the term in reference to what proponents regard as an emancipatory force that is the essence of politics. Australia is my home and the Australian people are my children. Populist leaders are sometimes also characterised as strongmen or "in Latin American countries" as caudillos. Populists are not generally opposed to political representation, but merely want their own representatives, those of "the people", in power.

2: Populist Movement | Definition & Goals | www.enganchecubano.com

Two strands of populism have long thrived in American politics, both purporting to champion the interests of ordinary people. One shoots upward, at nefarious elites; the other—Trump's tradition—shoots both up and down, targeting outsiders at the bottom of the ladder as well.

When the Soviet Union fell, Hamiltonians responded by doubling down on the creation of a global liberal order, understood primarily in economic terms. Wilsonians, meanwhile, also believed that the creation of a global liberal order was a vital U. Seeing corrupt and authoritarian regimes abroad as a leading cause of conflict and violence, Wilsonians sought peace through the promotion of human rights, democratic governance, and the rule of law. The disputes between and among these factions were intense and consequential, but they took place within a common commitment to a common project of global order. As that project came under increasing strain in recent decades, however, the unquestioned grip of the globalists on U. More nationalist, less globally minded voices began to be heard, and a public increasingly disenchanted with what it saw as the costly failures the global order-building project began to challenge what the foreign policy establishment was preaching. The Jeffersonian and Jacksonian schools of thought, prominent before World War II but out of favor during the heyday of the liberal order, have come back with a vengeance. They seek to define U. Both Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky and Senator Ted Cruz of Texas seemed to think that they could surf the rising tide of Jeffersonian thinking during the Republican presidential primary. But Donald Trump sensed something that his political rivals failed to grasp: It was Jacksonian populist nationalism. Rather, it is the nation-state of the American people, and its chief business lies at home. The role of the U. Jacksonian populism is only intermittently concerned with foreign policy, and indeed it is only intermittently engaged with politics more generally. It took a particular combination of forces and trends to mobilize it this election cycle, and most of those were domestically focused. In seeking to explain the Jacksonian surge, commentators have looked to factors such as wage stagnation, the loss of good jobs for unskilled workers, the hollowing out of civic life, a rise in drug use—conditions many associate with life in blighted inner cities that have spread across much of the country. But this is a partial and incomplete view. Identity and culture have historically played a major role in American politics, and was no exception. Jacksonian America felt itself to be under siege, with its values under attack and its future under threat. Trump—flawed as many Jacksonians themselves believed him to be—seemed the only candidate willing to help fight for its survival. For Jacksonian America, certain events galvanize intense interest and political engagement, however brief. The most powerful driver of Jacksonian political engagement in domestic politics, similarly, is the perception that Jacksonians are being attacked by internal enemies, such as an elite cabal or immigrants from different backgrounds. Jacksonians worry about the U. They are not obsessed with corruption, seeing it as an ineradicable part of politics. But they care deeply about what they see as perversion—when politicians try to use the government to oppress the people rather than protect them. And that is what many Jacksonians came to feel was happening in recent years, with powerful forces in the American elite, including the political establishments of both major parties, in cahoots against them. And they were not wholly wrong, by their lights. Many Americans with cosmopolitan sympathies see their main ethical imperative as working for the betterment of humanity in general. Jacksonians locate their moral community closer to home, in fellow citizens who share a common national bond. If the cosmopolitans see Jacksonians as backward and chauvinistic, Jacksonians return the favor by seeing the cosmopolitan elite as near treasonous—people who think it is morally questionable to put their own country, and its citizens, first. The contemporary American scene is filled with civic, political, and academic movements celebrating various ethnic, racial, gender, and religious identities. Elites have gradually welcomed demands for cultural recognition by African Americans, Hispanics, women, the lgbtq community, Native Americans, Muslim Americans. Whites who organize around their specific European ethnic roots can do so with little pushback; Italian Americans and Irish Americans, for example, have long and storied traditions in the parade of American identity groups. But increasingly, those older ethnic identities have faded, and there are taboos against claiming a generic European American or white

identity. Many white Americans thus find themselves in a society that talks constantly about the importance of identity, that values ethnic authenticity, that offers economic benefits and social advantages based on identity—for everybody but them. There are many reasons for this, rooted in a complex process of intellectual reflection over U. People constantly told that they are racist for thinking in positive terms about what they see as their identity, however, may decide that racist is what they are, and that they might as well make the best of it. The rise of the so-called alt-right is at least partly rooted in this dynamic. Jacksonians instinctively support the police, just as they instinctively support the military. Those on the frontlines protecting society sometimes make mistakes, in this view, but mistakes are inevitable in the heat of combat, or in the face of crime. It is unfair and even immoral, many Jacksonians believe, to ask soldiers or police officers to put their lives on the line and face great risks and stress, only to have their choices second-guessed by armchair critics. Protests that many Americans saw as a quest for justice, therefore, often struck Jacksonians as attacks on law enforcement and public order. Gun control and immigration were two other issues that crystallized the perception among many voters that the political establishments of both parties had grown hostile to core national values. Non-Jacksonians often find it difficult to grasp the depth of the feelings these issues stir up and how proposals for gun control and immigration reform reinforce suspicions about elite control and cosmopolitanism. The right to bear arms plays a unique and hallowed role in Jacksonian political culture, and many Jacksonians consider the Second Amendment to be the most important in the Constitution. These Americans see the right of revolution, enshrined in the Declaration of Independence, as the last resort of a free people to defend themselves against tyranny—and see that right as unenforceable without the possibility of bearing arms. Jacksonians have become increasingly concerned that Democrats and centrist Republicans will try to disarm them, which is one reason why mass shootings and subsequent calls for gun control spur spikes in gun sales, even as crime more generally has fallen. As for immigration, here, too, most non-Jacksonians misread the source and nature of Jacksonian concern. There has been much discussion about the impact of immigration on the wages of low-skilled workers and some talk about xenophobia and Islamophobia. But Jacksonians in saw immigration as part of a deliberate and conscious attempt to marginalize them in their own country. They see an elite out to banish them from power—politically, culturally, demographically. The recent spate of dramatic random terrorist attacks, finally, fused the immigration and personal security issues into a single toxic whole. In short, in November, many Americans voted their lack of confidence—not in a particular party but in the governing classes more generally and their associated global cosmopolitan ideology. Many Trump voters were less concerned with pushing a specific program than with stopping what appeared to be the inexorable movement of their country toward catastrophe. Many previous presidents have had to revise their ideas substantially after reaching the Oval Office; Trump may be no exception. Nor is it clear just what the results would be of trying to put his unorthodox policies into practice. Jacksonians can become disappointed with failure and turn away from even former heroes they once embraced; this happened to President George W. Bush, and it could happen to Trump, too. Most Jacksonians are not foreign policy experts and do not ever expect to become experts. For them, leadership is necessarily a matter of trust. If they believe in a leader or a political movement, they are prepared to accept policies that seem counter-intuitive and difficult. They no longer have such trust in the American establishment, and unless and until it can be restored, they will keep Washington on a short leash. To paraphrase what the neoconservative intellectual Irving Kristol wrote about Senator Joseph McCarthy in , there is one thing that Jacksonians know about Trump—that he is unequivocally on their side. The right to bear arms plays a unique and hallowed role in Jacksonian political culture. Over the past quarter century, Western policymakers became infatuated with some dangerously oversimplified ideas. They believed capitalism had been tamed and would no longer generate economic, social, or political upheavals. Time and the normal processes of history would solve the problem; constructing a liberal world order was simply a matter of working out the details. It is increasingly clear that globalization and automation have helped break up the socioeconomic model that undergirded postwar prosperity and domestic social peace, and that the next stage of capitalist development will challenge the very foundations of both the global liberal order and many of its national pillars. In this new world disorder, the power of identity politics can no longer be denied. Western elites believed that in the

twenty-first century, cosmopolitanism and globalism would triumph over atavism and tribal loyalties. They failed to understand the deep roots of identity politics in the human psyche and the necessity for those roots to find political expression in both foreign and domestic policy arenas. And they failed to understand that the very forces of economic and social development that cosmopolitanism and globalization fostered would generate turbulence and eventually resistance, as Gemeinschaft community fought back against the onrushing Gesellschaft market society, in the classic terms sociologists favored a century ago. International order needs to rest not just on elite consensus and balances of power and policy but also on the free choices of national communities—communities that need to feel protected from the outside world as much as they want to benefit from engaging with it.

3: Populism - Wikipedia

American populism is an impulse, rooted in Jeffersonian individualism and animated by a conviction that something essential in our culture is under siege by powerful currents in the wider world.

The Growth of Populism The Grange borrowed heavily from the Freemasons, employing complex rituals and regalia. Like the oppressed laboring classes of the East, it was only a matter of time before Western farmers would attempt to use their numbers to effect positive change. Farmers Organize In , the first such national organization was formed. Led by Oliver Kelley, the Patrons of Husbandry, also known as the Grange, organized to address the social isolation of farm life. Like other secret societies, such as the Masons, Grangers had local chapters with secret passwords and rituals. The local Grange sponsored dances and gatherings to attack the doldrums of daily life. It was only natural that politics and economics were discussed in these settings, and the Grangers soon realized that their individual problems were common. Identifying the railroads as the chief villains, Grangers lobbied state legislatures for regulation of the industry. By , several states passed the Granger Laws, establishing maximum shipping rates. Grangers also pooled their resources to buy grain elevators of their own so that members could enjoy a break on grain storage. Members of these alliances won seats in state legislatures across the Great Plains to strengthen the agrarian voice in politics. Creating Inflation What did all the farmers seem to have in common? The answer was simple: As of , Congress declared that all federal money must be backed by gold. The farmers wanted to create inflation. Inflation actually helps debtors. The economics are simple. To create inflation, farmers suggested that the money supply be expanded to include dollars not backed by gold. The first strategy farmers attempted was to encourage Congress to print greenback dollars like the ones issued during the Civil War. Since the greenbacks were not backed by gold, more dollars could be printed, creating an inflationary effect. The Greenback Party and the Greenback-Labor Party each ran candidates for President in , , and under this platform. No candidate was able to muster national support for the idea, and soon farmers chose another strategy. Inflation could also be created by printing money that was backed by silver as well as gold. This idea was more popular because people were more confident in their money if they knew it was backed by something of value. Also, America had a tradition of coining silver money until Many believe that The Wizard of Oz was written as an allegory of the age of Populism. In addition to demanding the free coinage of silver, the Populists called for a host of other reforms. They demanded a graduated income tax, whereby individuals earning a higher income paid a higher percentage in taxes. They wanted political reforms as well. At this point, United States Senators were still not elected by the people directly; they were instead chosen by state legislatures. The Populists demanded a constitutional amendment allowing for the direct election of Senators. They demanded democratic reforms such as the initiative, where citizens could directly introduce debate on a topic in the legislatures. The referendum would allow citizens " rather than their representatives " to vote a bill. They also called for the secret ballot and a one-term limit for the President. In , the Populists ran James Weaver for President on this ambitious platform. He polled over a million popular votes and 22 electoral votes. Although he came far short of victory, Populist ideas were now being discussed at the national level. When the Panic of hit the following year, an increased number of unemployed and dispossessed Americans gave momentum to the Populist movement. A great showdown was in place for

4: American Populism: A Social History - Robert C. McMath, Jr. - Google Books

For a few balmy months in the summer of , the U.S. presidential election was beginning to look like a contest that would lead either to the second coming of President Clinton or to a third.

Continue to article content Is Donald Trump the Perfect Populist, one with broader appeal to the right and the center than his predecessors in recent American political history—so much so it could put him in the White House? Trump, in fact, has more appeal to the center than the conservative populists of the last half century. Yet none of these past figures had broad enough appeal to hope to win the White House. Despite his folksy demeanor, Perot was more of a technocrat than a populist and did poorly in traditionally populist areas of the South and Midwest, where Trump is doing well. Nor has Trump alienated large sections of the electorate by casting his lot with Old Right isolationism, as Buchanan did, or by adopting the religious right social agenda of Robertson. What conservative apparatchiks hate about Trump—his insufficient conservatism—may be his greatest strength in the general election. His populism cuts across party lines like few others before him. Like his fans, Trump is indifferent to the issues of sexual orientation that animate the declining religious right, even to the point of defending Planned Parenthood. In , Wallace, running as candidate of the American Independent Party, won By receiving 45 electoral votes plus an additional electoral vote from a dissenting elector, he came close to throwing the three-way race between him, Democratic candidate Hubert Humphrey and Republican candidate Richard Nixon into the House of Representatives, which would have chosen the president if no candidate received an electoral vote majority. In the late s, Wallace asked for forgiveness for his earlier segregationist stance and he won some black votes in his successful third race for governor in he died in While Wallace failed to win the White House, his version of conservative populism changed the country: But its conservative components have always limited the appeal of conservative populism, as the political career of Pat Buchanan shows. Buchanan, a former Nixon aide and conservative journalist, ran unsuccessfully for the Republican presidential nomination in and was awarded with a prime-time speech at the Republican National Convention that nominated George Herbert Walker Bush for a second term in the White House. Buchanan, in a recent interview , characterized Trump as his populist heir. Trump even competed briefly with Buchanan for the presidential nomination. In his manifesto *The America We Deserve*, Trump proposed a platform that included universal employer-based health insurance, gays in the military and a one-time In his press release announcing his withdrawal from the race for the presidential nomination of the Reform Party, Trump wrote: So the Reform Party now includes a Klansman—Mr. Buchanan, and a Communist—Ms. This is not company I wish to keep. So was another Pat, the Reverend Pat Robertson, television evangelist, founder of the Christian Coalition, and, like Buchanan, a failed candidate for the Republican presidential nomination. But while the mainstream conservative movement marginalized Buchanan, it embraced Robertson and other evangelical Protestant leaders like Jerry Falwell and James Dobson of Focus on the Family. On social issues like abortion and gay rights, Buchanan shared the agenda of the religious right. Unlike Buchanan, Robertson and other religious right leaders did not deviate from the Republican Party line on trade, immigration, or tax cuts for the rich. Many of the rank-and-file members of the religious right shared the traditional populist suspicion of bankers and big business. But in the s there was a tacit understanding that religious right activists would focus on issues of sex and reproduction and school prayer, leaving economics to free-marketers. In foreign policy, the Christian Zionism of many Protestant evangelicals made them reliable allies of neoconservatives with close ties to Israel and supportive of the Iraq War and other U. But even before the unexpected success of Trump in the Republican primary race beginning in , there were signs that this generation-old bargain was coming undone. Hostility to both illegal immigration and high levels of legal immigration, a position which free-market conservatives had fought to marginalize, has moved very quickly from heresy to orthodoxy in the GOP. The opposition of populist conservatives killed comprehensive immigration reform under George W. Bush in and also killed the Gang of Eight immigration reform effort led in part by Senator Marco Rubio in There were other signs of populist discontent with establishment conservative orthodoxy, for those who paid attention. And a Republican-controlled Congress

passed Medicare Part D in 2003 — the biggest expansion of a universal middle-class entitlement between the creation of Medicare in 1965 and the passage of the Affordable Care Act in 2010. Blue collar Republican voters applauded, as libertarian think-tankers raged.

But populism, during the farmers' revolt of the s, was also a cultural insurgencyâ€”a kind of self-administered political wake for the beleaguered middle American Protestant soul, newly.

Here, a brief primer on populism. Throughout American history, movements based on anti-elitism have repeatedly sprung up on both the left and right, often stoked by charismatic firebrands who harnessed the resentment of marginalized people. Today, both the Democratic and Republican parties have been splintered by populist movements. Bernie Sanders, a self-described "democratic socialist" who rails against income inequality and the billionaire class, is mounting a serious challenge to Democratic frontrunner Hillary Clinton. The Republican race, meanwhile, has been roiled by the right-wing populist campaign of real estate mogul Donald Trump, who vows to deport all immigrants. Sanders has picked up where the late-19th-century Populist Party left off, and as former Texas Gov. Rick Perry recently observed, "Donald Trump is the modern-day incarnation of the Know-Nothing movement. They were a xenophobic political movement that arose in the 1850s, in reaction to a huge influx of Irish Catholic and German immigrants. The Know-Nothings began as secret societies â€” asked about their ties to these groups, members were instructed to say they "knew nothing. Later, a rift between anti-slavery and pro-slavery factions fatally splintered their movement, but nativism has flared anew with every successive wave of immigration. What about left-wing populism? The first movement of this kind was started in the 1840s, by farmers who were suffering because of plummeting cotton prices in the South and a drought in the Great Plains. As farmers sank deeper into debt, their simmering resentments of Eastern elites were ignited, especially by bankers charging exorbitant lending rates and railroad barons charging high prices. The Populists wanted to nationalize railroads, break up big trusts, and get rid of the gold standard, which restricted the money supply. In 1896, Populist presidential candidate James B. Weaver lost to Republican William McKinley, however â€” and went on to lose two more. But Bryan left a lasting Populist legacy. He "was the first leader of a major party to argue for permanently expanding the power of the federal government to serve the welfare of ordinary Americans," says biographer Michael Kazin. What became of the Populists? More radical versions also sprang up during the Depression, which saw the meteoric rise of Huey P. Long. But during the Cold War, anti-elitism "began to slip its liberal moorings," Kazin says. After controlling federal power for a generation, liberals were the elite â€” and populism took a hard right turn. The anti-Communist crusade of Sen. Joseph McCarthy trained its rhetoric mostly on left-leaning academics, Ivy League-educated officials, and Hollywood actors and producers. In the 1950s, segregationist Alabama Gov. George Wallace played the working-class hero, snarling at "pointy-headed bureaucrats" and liberals. His third-party presidential bid in 1964 drew a million votes. Conservatism has had a strain of anti-elitist populism ever since, most recently and effectively in the Tea Party. Why has populism returned? The financial crisis sparked an explosion of anger against Wall Street and Washington. In 2016, Sanders' left-wing populism comes full circle â€” his stump speeches would have played well in the 1890s. Trump has taken the old nativist message, added a big dose of narcissism, and turned his movement into a cult of personality. But throughout history, populists from left to right have had something in common besides anti-elitism. The majority of voters reject "their Us versus Them mentality," says columnist David Brooks, making the history of populism "generally a history of defeat. The pugnacious country boy called himself The Kingfish, and was a sworn enemy of oligarchs and corporate interests and boasted of buying legislators "like sacks of potatoes. As governor, Long built thousands of miles of roads and improved education, but was also notoriously corrupt and dictatorial. Franklin Roosevelt called him one of the most dangerous men in America, with good reason: The Kingfish was widely considered a viable dark-horse candidate to defeat FDR in 1936. But he was assassinated by the relative of a political foe.

6: The Jacksonian Revolt - by Walter Russell Mead

American Populism, from its beginnings to the present moment, is an expression of hostility to state power and those who exercise it or seek to exercise it.

While the then-front-runners were favored by donors and the party establishment, the prospect of a dynastic clash had unsettling undertones: Many of their key appointees at the departments of state and defense and within the inner circle of the White House have dominated Washington politics even longer, and have circulated through high government posts since the Nixon administration of the early s. Beltway elites persisted through the periodic swings of the electoral pendulum. The prospect of prolonged dynasties seems hard to square with the ideal of a democracy "of the people, by the people and for the people. American politics has long been dominated by an elite that has successfully insulated itself against the whims and tides of public opinion. During the first American presidential election in , seven of the 13 original colonies did not even allow a popular vote but simply appointed delegates to the Electoral College. Political parties did not yet exist. Indeed, the founding fathers were distrustful enough of organized parties that they expunged any mention of them from the draft of the Constitution. When parties first entered the American political landscape in , they served as lobbying groups for the presidential bids of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, not as vehicles of mass expression. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Since those early days, political participation has often remained a minority phenomenon: After peaking in the 19th century, voter turnout rates have hovered around 55 percent for presidential elections at around 40 percent for midterm elections for much of the 20th century. Party affiliation is at an all-time low. The expansion of the franchise and the introduction of the primary system have changed the ostensible procedures of democracy, but have retained the influence of party elites in the form of super delegates and through control of the allocation of campaign funds. Elite politics -- prominently derided by Walt Whitman as the "never-ending audacity of elected persons" -- is a feature of the American political system, not a bug. Voters seem to have tolerated this system with a slightly disgruntled shrug: Congressional approval rates are notoriously low, and have stayed well under 40 percent for many of the last 40 years. Almost as persistent as elite democracy is the debate over its merits. In , the German sociologist Robert Michels posited what has become known as the "iron law of oligarchy. As the size and complexity of an organization increase, power becomes concentrated within a core group of leaders. But instead of acting as "servants of the masses," these bureaucratic and political elites establish monopolies of information, and dominate over the apathetic rank-and-file. Several decades later, the Austrian economist Joseph Schumpeter had an even more dire view of politics: The typical citizen drops down to a lower level of mental performance as soon as he enters the political field. He argues and analyzes in a way which he would readily recognize as infantile within the field of his real interests. He becomes a primitive again. For Schumpeter, the significance of elite politics was found not in its inevitability but in its necessity: Only through the considered judgment of elites could the "unintelligent and irresponsible" proclivities of the masses be contained. Schumpeter had witnessed the dark and anti-Semitic underbelly of mass fervor in Austria and Germany in the s and s, and had come to embrace rule by an enlightened elite as the best guarantor of political and economic liberalism. In the United States, his concerns were echoed by the likes of Walter Lippmann, who dismissed public opinion as the consequence of emotional infatuation and stereotypes, and argued that complex decisions and calculations were best left to a trained professional elite. The world of mass politics was to remain separated from the world of governance. The tragedy of democracy, Lippmann argued, was the pretense of popular participation: By positing a direct and intimate link between people and politicians, it misconstrued how the system worked in practice. Only in the s did the tide begin to shift. Building on the work of American progressives like John Dewey -- who had famously declared that "democracy and the one, ultimate, ethical ideal of humanity are to my mind synonymous" -- C. Wright Mills rose to public and intellectual prominence by deriding the presence of a "power elite" in American politics. By turning politics from a matter of public engagement into a practice of rational administration, Mills argued that this elite had not only begun to wield unprecedented power but had also corrupted the basic operations of

democracy in America. The significance of elite politics was found not in its inevitability but in its necessity. Only against this background of elite democracy is it possible to disentangle the meaning and significance of the specter that is haunting the current primary season: They proceed through the drawing of boundaries, the building of alliances and the kindling of the imagination, and thus constitute a political project rather than an individualistic reaction to injustice or destitution. Populism gathers steam when discontent becomes the spark of political mobilization, when individual grievances are revealed as shared frustrations and when the dispersed energies of the street are cajoled and channeled into collective action. Populism, like other social movements, gathers steam when discontent becomes the spark of political mobilization, when individual grievances are revealed as shared frustrations, and when the dispersed energies of the street are cajoled and channeled into collective action. The populist strength is not of a military or financial kind, but is instead rooted in the combination of plentiful bodies and powerful rhetoric. We know all this because populism, like elite politics, has a long history in the United States. Soon, rural activists were calling for the nationalization of railroads, agricultural debt relief and the establishment of cooperative stores. Those stores, they argued, could function outside the regular market economy and thus escape the predatory grasp of East Coast financiers and remedy the regulatory lethargy of East Coast politicians. Populist state politicians and congressmen soon broadened the scope of their arguments, and began to link calls for agrarian revival to condemnations of the gold standard and the Federal Reserve. But their influence was temporary. By the early 20th century, agrarian populist energies had dissipated or had sometimes taken ugly turns. The scum of creation has been dumped on us. Some of our principal cities are more foreign than American. The most dangerous and corrupting hordes of the Old World have invaded us. The vice and crime which they have planted in our midst are sickening and terrifying. Who was to blame for this preponderance of vice? It includes as much as it excludes. Theodore Roosevelt speaking at a convention hall in Chicago in the early s Library of Congress. This is why any attempt to associate populism with a particular conservative or progressive tradition -- and thus to condemn it in partisan fashion -- is bound to falter: The logic and rhetoric of populism have been harnessed by diverse groups for different ends. It constitutes, in the words of the recently deceased political theorist Ernesto Laclau, the "political logic" of the modern nation-state: By outlining and reinforcing the boundaries of who constitutes "the people" and by articulating their sovereignty, populism can serve as the midwife of democracy, the language of demagoguery and as the antidote to elite politics. Thus, not all populisms are created equal. For Tocqueville, the prospect of populism lay in its link to participatory institutions, and thus in the possibility of cultivating the " habits of the heart " that underpinned popular sovereignty. By contrast, the third-party presidential campaigns of Ross Perot in the s and of Ralph Nader in the s had a distinct populist rhetoric but were ultimately rooted in the logic of reformism, not in a rejection of Washington politics. They are populist insofar as they have sparked the imagination and galvanized the Democratic electorate. In most European countries, similar proposals have long registered as common sense. Democrats are fighting over the political direction of the party, but Republicans are fighting over the direction of the political system. Yet this particular strand of populism seems profoundly different from the populist debate that is rocking the Republican Party and has largely sidelined establishment candidates. Democrats are fighting over the political direction of the party, but Republicans are fighting over the direction of the political system and the boundaries of political discourse.

7: Illinois During the Gilded Age | Northern Illinois University Digital Library

He describes Populism's important regional components, and he places the crusade in a larger context as he compares it to parallel movements in the Great Plains and Canada in the s and s. American Populism is an impressive book about a major social, cultural, and political movement.

Although American "populism" has changed in its specific political views over time, the term has often been used to describe popular movements of anger against elites who are regarded as stoking the struggles of ordinary Americans. Photo by Luke X. The Populists are back! But who are they, exactly? And what does the label actually mean? And how has the meaning changed over the centuries? This month historian Marc Horger looks at the history of the term to put the current crop of populists in historical perspective. Readers may also be interested in these recent Origins articles about current events in the United States: On February 11, , the late Washington Post political columnist David Broder puzzled and amused left-leaning portions of the political blogosphere with a column praising the strategic savvy and tactical competence of abdicated Alaska governor Sarah Palin. During the question-and-answer session, she checks the notes written on the palm of her hand. But that was beside his point; Broder was more interested in "the skill with which she drew a self-portrait that fit not just the wishes of the immediate audience but the mood of a significant slice of the broader electorate". Is it a useful description of the political reality represented by any of these figures? Does the label "populist" help us understand Sarah Palin, or the group of people she addressed that night in Nashville? Does it matter that she had notes written on the palm of her hand? The Original Populists From its first appearance in the political vernacular, "populist" has been an adjective expressing an attitude—a popular anger against elites perceived as distant from and antagonistic to the struggles of ordinary Americans—more than delineating a coherent set of political beliefs. These original Populists were largely farmers from the cotton, wheat, and corn belts. And they were responding to recent economic changes which simultaneously depressed the value of their commodities and plunged them into ruinous debt at the hands of banks, mortgage companies, and furnishing merchants. Their policy demands were statist. They demanded 1 inflationary monetary policy, 2 state-run, state-subsidized systems of commodity credit and storage, and 3 state regulation of the transportation network through which their commodities flowed to market. They wanted the government to print paper money, monetize silver, store their crops, and aggressively regulate—some Populists went so far as to say nationalize—the railroad and telegraph networks. They also sought direct election of Senators and a national income tax. In other words, these original Populists saw large-scale government intervention as the solution to their economic problems. They were regarded at the time as dangerous radicals, particularly by the traditional machine politicians they sought to upend, and by the laissez-faire bankers and businessmen they identified as their economic enemies. Nevertheless, many of their "radical" demands had come to pass by or so. But the original Populists were also making an argument about their own centrality to American life, and they were doing so at more or less the exact historical moment it was no longer true. The insurgents had a reasonable grasp of what was happening to them economically, but for complex cultural reasons they believed that it could only be happening to them as the result of conspiratorial action taken at great physical and moral distance from themselves. They were farmers; they were producers; they were the People; they lived in a democracy; they ruled. They could only be losing as a result of subterfuge and blackguardism perpetrated by villains from the East Coast. It described the demonetization of silver—largely unnoticed and uncontroversial at the time—as the "Crime of ," and argued that only the full and unlimited re-monetization of silver at traditional fixed ratios could reverse the conspiracy against producers. Its titular hero made the case by tutoring a classroom of economists, bankers, newspaper editors, and other gold-bug city slickers in the unassailable logic of bimetallism. The milk buckets had dollar signs on the side. This self-image was deeply shaped by the Jeffersonian agrarian romanticism which permeated their politics, and indeed their lives. Jefferson told them that, as farmers, landowners, and producers, they were the backbone of the nation. So did Cyclone Davis, and most of their other political leaders, and their newspaper editors, and their school primers. Everything in their experience told them they

were the People, and were the "real" America. They were nevertheless living through the historical moment at which industrialization, urbanization, and immigration began to knock rural producers out of the center of American culture. America, as historian Arthur Meier Schlesinger famously wrote, was born in the country and moved to the city. He was referring to the s and s. The United States may not have been moving as the result of a conspiracy, but small farmers in the south and west were not wrong to perceive the country was moving away from them economically and politically. Though "populists" and "populism" have subsequently come in many flavors, a few generalizations characteristic of the original Populists have usually remained true. First and foremost, contemporary use of the term assumes there is anger somewhere in the room. This anger may be justified or irrational; organic or ginned-up; economic, racial, cultural, or regional; but without palpable anger and resentment, most observers would probably choose different terminology. Second of all, populism is generally construed as a strategy or technique of political persuasion rather than a matrix of beliefs. It is a method of identifying a villain and shaking a fist. This is so even if it also reflects real policy choices. Finally, populist political labeling usually implies someone is deliberately creating or highlighting a perception of status differential. This is a partial consequence of defining an in-group not just against an out-group, but against an "elite. But a populist politics stipulates a people against a plutocracy, or defends "real Americans" from condescension, or condemns a haughty elite looking down its collective nose in contempt at ordinary folks. Populism and the Great Depression During the Great Depression of the s, a number of public figures revived the combination of anti-elite animus, visceral distaste for banking and corporate finance, and bold demands for government action on behalf of ordinary people which had been characteristic of the original Populists. One of them, of course, was Franklin Roosevelt, whose New Deal programs intervened aggressively in wide swaths of American economic life and rearranged national political coalitions for a generation or more. Roosevelt defended the New Deal with increasingly anti-elitist political language, particularly after or so, when he began to welcome the hatred of "government by organized money" and sharpen his rhetorical attacks on "economic royalists. Several contemporary critics of Roosevelt, however, threatened to build new mass movements of their own by combining anti-elite rhetorical tropes and demands for economic relief with conspiratorial hyperbole, appeals to status anxiety, and attacks on Roosevelt and the New Deal. One was the colorful and charismatic Huey Long, who built a powerful political machine around himself as governor and then Senator from Louisiana. A Democrat, he supported Roosevelt in , but turned on the Administration almost immediately upon reaching Washington in He began building a national following for himself by declaring "Every Man a King" and founding a series of "Share Our Wealth" societies around the country in support of his aggressively redistributionist economic schemesand, most contemporary observers believed, his own Presidential aspirations. He was assassinated in before these ambitions could be tested, but he was nevertheless regarded by Time magazine and others as a potential dictator and demagogue. So was Father Charles Coughlin, a Catholic priest from a working-class suburb of Detroit who used a radio network to build a national following. Like Huey Long, he had initially supported Roosevelt and then changed his mind; like Long, he spoke to many of the same people Roosevelt was trying to bundle into the New Deal coalition; like Long, he struck some observers as a potentially dangerous force. His attacks on communism and international banking grew more conspiratorial, and more anti-Semitic, as the s progressed. By the end of the decade, he was republishing portions of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion in his national newsletter. He was finally pulled off the air by the Archbishop of Detroit in He has subsequently become synonymous with political demagoguery via mass media. From an economic and demographic standpoint, Long and Coughlin spoke to many of the same political constituencies Roosevelt did, and about many of the same things: The original Populists had spoken this way. And like the original Populistsbut unlike the largely upbeat and optimistic RooseveltLong and Coughlin spoke in discontented and conspiratorial tones. Richard Hofstadter and the Paranoid Critique of Populism Liberal intellectuals, who have rather well-rationalized systems of political beliefs, tend to expect that the masses of people, whose actions at certain moments in history coincide with some of these beliefs, will share their other convictions as a matter of logic and principle. Intellectuals, moreover, suffer from a sense of isolation which they usually seek to surmount by finding ways of getting in rapport with the people, and they readily succumb to a tendency to sentimentalize the folk. The Great

Depression, World War II, and Cold War generated a completely new set of intellectual contexts within which mass movements built from anger and resentment were compared to one another. The basic irrationality at the root of the inter-war European political regimes that triggered World War II, and the near moral insanity of the war itself, caused many postwar historians and political scientists to consider the possibility that politics was best understood psychologically rather than economically.

8: How Donald Trump Fits Into the History of American Populism | HuffPost

American populism is back - on both sides of the aisle. Populism is back. It may not lead to bipartisan cooperation, but it could herald a new focus in American politics.

9: Donald Trump, the Perfect Populist - POLITICO Magazine

Editor's Note. The Populists are back! Since the late 19th century, 'populist' is the name we've given to any American political movement that challenged either of the two major parties.

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