

Tulane University New Orleans Symposium
 Venezuela from the Neutral Ground
 January 28, 2011
 Stibbs Conference Room 203
 LBC Building 2nd Floor, Tulane University

SCHEDULE

8:30-9:00 Welcome and Opening Remarks

Tom Reese, Executive Director, Stone Center for Latin American Studies

9:00-10:00 Session 1

Steve Ellner Universidad de Oriente, Venezuela

The Models of Radical Democracy and Social-Based Democracy in the Venezuela of Hugo Chávez

Two models underpin the Venezuelan government of Hugo Chávez. Radical democracy emphasizes majority rule and direct participation of the general population in decision making. Along these lines, a record number of elections, including referendum and recall elections, have been held since 1998. Social-based democracy refers to the participation and incorporation of popular, non-privileged sectors, which in Venezuela has been quantitatively and qualitatively different from past welfare-state and socialist governments of the past. The Chávez government and movement have promoted the mass mobilization of non-privileged sectors and their participation in organizations and social programs in the areas of education, employment and community affairs, in accordance with social-based democracy. Nevertheless, social programs have not always been cost-effective or institutionally sound.

Daniel Levine University of Michigan

The Logic of Bolivarian Democracy in Venezuela

The logic of "Bolivarian Democracy" in Venezuela can be understood by drawing on three source: the basic documents of the system, including the Constitution and proposed reforms defeated in 2007, the series of domestic and international alliances and connections and a consistent pattern of shedding alliances and avoiding institutionalization, and continuities with the past including the critical role of the military and of petroleum income. The kind of democracy favored in Bolivarian Republic scorns representation and favors arrangements for direct popular participation. The autonomy of these is in question, and the regime is best understood as a case of movement politics which hinge on the relation of the leader to the unorganized people.

10:00-10:15 Coffee Break

10:15-11:45 Session 2

Ángel Álvarez University of Notre Dame, Universidad Central de Venezuela

Electoral Authoritarianism and Dilemmas of the Opposition Parties in the Venezuela of Hugo Chávez

Manuel Alcántara Universidad de Salamanca, University of Notre Dame

Venezuela's 2010 Legislative Elections in Comparative Perspective

Margarita López Universidad Central de Venezuela

Maya *Venezuela's Populism and its Tendencies*

11:45-12:45

Session 3

Michael Albertus

Stanford University

A Revolution for Whom? Measuring Political Bias in the Venezuelan Land Reform Using Maisanta

Empirical studies of clientelism typically use district-level data to analyze within-district voter targeting. Such analyses ignore how local politicians can impact the distribution of benefits, and can mistake core voter strategies for swing strategies and vice versa. This paper presents the first analysis of a distributive program - a Venezuelan land reform initiative known as Mission Zamora - at the individual level using data on revealed voter preferences and the receipt of particularistic benefits. Using data from a list of millions of voters that signed petitions to recall President Chavez, I match information on all recent land grant applicants to petition signers to measure the effect of political preferences on the likelihood of applying for land, receiving land, and being effectively rejected. I find evidence for both strategic core voter targeting and punishment of opposition voters, although both of these effects are modified by local political actors.

Noam Lupu

Princeton University

The Changing Chavista Electoral Coalition

The class composition of the electoral coalition backing Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez has undergone significant changes over the course of his twelve years in office. Using survey data from each of Chávez's elections, I find that he was initially elected with disproportionate support among the poor, those worst hit by the economic crises of the 1990s. Subsequently, and for much of his time in office, Chávez attracted a multiclass electoral coalition through a mix of targeted clientelistic social programs and broader statist developmental policies. The attraction of those policies seems to have declined as inflation and crime became growing concerns for middle-class Venezuelans. More recent surveys suggest that the chavista coalition has returned to its disproportionate reliance on poor voters, but this support is now conditioned by voters' receipt of state benefits.

12:45-1:45

Lunch

1:45 – 3:15

Session 4

Jennifer McCoy

Georgia State University

Role of the Media in a Polarized Society

Eugenio

Universidad Monteavila Law School, Venezuela

Hernández Bretón

The Government's (Tense) Relationship with the Academic and Professional Sectors

This paper will explore the government's ongoing conflicts (and cooptation) with the academic and professional sectors in Venezuela, especially in the context of the onset of 21st Century Socialism.

María Teresa
Romero

Universidad Central de Venezuela

The Radicalization of Venezuelan Foreign Policy: Current Developments and Perspectives for the Coming Years

During 2010, Chavez's foreign policy has radicalized. This process has generated a strong rejection in Venezuela and abroad, and has contributed to bring the expansion of 21st Century Socialism to a halt – especially in Latin

America. This radical strategy will continue in the next two years for a variety of reasons, including the deep economic crisis that Venezuela is currently facing; mounting discontent with the government's mismanagement; the growing gains of the opposition at the subnational level, and the lack of willingness among elite Chavista political actors to rectify course. In this paper, I analyze the motivations and consequences of the key bilateral and multilateral radical actions carried out in 2010, and evaluate the potential consequences in the international arena, in the context of the run-up to the 2012 presidential elections.

3:15 – 4:30 Session 5

Daniel Hellinger College of Wooster
"Socoilism in Venezuela." A Look at the Advantages and Disadvantages of Oil for Construction of Socialism

Javier Corrales Amherst College
Varieties of Statism: Oil policies (and outcomes) in Venezuela and Brazil Compared

David Smilde University of Georgia
Venezuela's Actually Existing Socialism

4:30 – 4:45 Coffee Break

4:45 – 6:00 Session 6

Ángel Eduardo Cárdenas University of Toronto
Venezuela and the Global Recession: Persistence and Change

Mark Weisbrot Center for Economic and Policy Research, Washington DC
Venezuela: Growth, Recession, and Recovery

This paper provides an overview of the performance of the Venezuelan economy during the Chavez years, including growth, employment, inflation, and macro-economic policy (fiscal, monetary, and exchange rate policy). It finds that the economy did reasonably well after the government got control over the oil industry, with significant gains in employment and a sharp reduction in poverty (as measured by cash income). The most important policy error was the use of pro-cyclical fiscal policy surrounding the recession of 2009, which prolonged a recession that could probably have been avoided altogether. Longer term problems include an overvalued fixed exchange rate, which appreciated sharply in real terms due to high inflation over the last five years; the resulting harm to tradable goods sectors; and a failure to diversify away from oil.

José Manuel Puente Instituto de Estudios Superiores de Administración, IESA, Venezuela
The Venezuelan Economy and Oil Rentism

6:00 – 6:30 Final Session - Closing Remarks

Michael Coppedge University of Notre Dame
Closing Remarks

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