
Argentina's Peronist movement remains a central issue for analysts of the politics of that troubled country. Lars Schoultz's short but elegant monograph on the topic is a useful contribution to the substantial literature on Peronism, placing it in the context of Latin American populism.

In the first part of his work, Schoultz reviews the literature on populism, with particular emphasis on the work of Di Tella and Deutsch. He then reviews the "populist challenge and liberal response" in Argentina, providing a concise overview of recent Argentine history that makes effective use of the major secondary sources.

The primary contributions of the book lie in the following two sections, which respectively offer a multivariate analysis of Peronist electoral support and an explanation of changes in that support over time. The multivariate analysis concludes that industrial growth and increases in the size of working-class populations directly contributed to the Peronist vote. The analysis of changes over time in the Peronist vote, using what Schoultz calls an index of "fluidity," suggests that the Peronist vote has been highly volatile, calling into question the loyalty of the Peronist following.

In an effective summary, Schoultz concludes that neither the populist nor the liberal coalitions that have dominated Argentine politics in recent decades are likely to provide a stable basis for national decision-making. Argentina's future will be a recycling of past conflicts. Schoultz's monograph may not be the first to arrive at this depressing forecast, but it is cogently presented and will be of value to students of populism and of Argentine politics.

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