

POLS/ECON 409 · *Democratic Responsiveness & Economic Change* (3)

1. How does Müller define populism? Why is it hard to define? Is populism a coherent concept? (How could you tell?) Is it an ideology? (How could you tell?)
2. What is the relationship between populism and pluralism? Between populism and representative democracy? Between populism and deliberative democracy? Between populism and postdemocracy? How do the ideals, practices, and limitations of democracy invite populist campaigns against representative institutions?
3. For Müller, is populism a feature of political leaders, masses, or both? How do populist leaders think, speak, and govern? Why do their voters support them? Is Donald Trump a populist under Müller's definition? Are the other members of his administration populists? Are his supporters populists? What might Gest or Vance say?
4. Does populism require a broad sense of economic resentment or decline to build mass support? What explains populism's "moment" in the US and Europe today? If Müller's arguments about the nature of populism are correct, why hasn't it been an effective political force throughout the history of modern democracy?
5. Where is race in today's readings? Where is it overlooked? Can we understand populism – in the US or in Europe – without a central focus on race or immigration? Are racial and economic resentment competing, complementary, or unnecessary causes of populism?
6. Do populist leaders need to produce tangible results to survive, or is it enough to voice resentment against elites? What paradoxes does populism-in-office produce, and how are they worked out in practice? Who wins when populism is on the rise? Who loses?
7. How has Youngstown's economy changed over the last century, and with what effects on Youngstowners? Drawing on Gest and Vance, how do Youngstowners and the white working class of the Rust Belt conceptualize their current options and future prospects, and how are their ideas about the economy and politics shaped by history and social forces? *Some candidate forces to consider: technological*

change, globalization, labor unions, organized crime, race and ethnicity, education, migration, aging, geography, socially-constructed identity, culture, trust, agency, and the various forms of capital – physical, human, and social.

8. Mahoning County, home of Youngstown, voted for Barack Obama over Mitt Romney by 28 points in 2012. Hillary Clinton won Mahoning by just 3 points in 2016: a 25 percent Republican swing, the largest of any of the 285 counties in the United States with more than 100,000 total votes cast (Table 1 on following page).¹ For context, King County, home of Seattle, swung 10 percent towards the *Democrats* compared to 2012, for 252nd out of 285 counties. Is Youngstown a useful case for understanding the changing political environment that put Donald Trump in office or an unusual outlier? Can you think of other examples that either support or contradict the Youngstown case? What can we learn from Youngstown's history about the likely outcomes of the Trump presidency?
9. Whether populism withers or persists, Gest and Vance seem to imply challenges for class-based political mobilization in the context of economic transition. Can you elaborate on these difficulties, and what it would take to see broader class-based political movements? To make this concrete, it may help to draw on the contrasting trajectories of Seattle and Youngstown and the varied experiences and worlds of Seattlites and Youngstowners.
10. Youngstown and Pittsburgh are neighboring metro areas with markedly different paths out of the industrial age. Do you think technological change will make more Youngtowns, more Pittsburghs, or something else? Imagine a debate involving Goldin & Katz, Galbraith, Gest, and Vance. Where might they disagree about the future of political cleavages, the democratic process, and economic policy?

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¹ My calculations using data scraped by Tony McGovern from *Townhall.com* and *The Guardian* and stored at https://github.com/tonmcg/County_Level_Election_Results_12-16, accessed 14 May 2017. An R script to reproduce this result can be found at <http://faculty.washington.edu/cadolph/409/mahoning.R>.

Table 1. Partisan swing, 2012–2016, in counties with 100,000+ votes for president

County	State	Largest conurbation	Democratic margin (%)		Swing (%)	Rank
			2012	2016		
Mahoning	OH	Youngstown	27.7	3.0	-24.7	1
Luzerne	PA	Wilkes-Barre	4.9	-19.6	-24.5	2
Lackawanna	PA	Scranton	27.4	3.4	-24.0	3
Jefferson	MO	Arnold	-12.7	-35.3	-22.6	4
Erie	PA	Erie	16.9	-2.0	-18.9	5
Genesee	MI	Flint	28.2	9.5	-18.7	6
Saint Louis	MN	Duluth	29.6	11.8	-17.8	7
Richmond	NY	Staten Island	0.8	-16.8	-17.6	8
Stark	OH	Canton	-0.4	-17.4	-17.1	9
Ocean	NJ	Jersey Shore	-17.7	-34.0	-16.3	10
⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮
King	WA	Seattle	39.9	50.4	10.5	252
⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮
Fairfax	VA	DC Suburbs	19.8	36.2	16.4	281
Arlington	VA	DC Suburbs	39.9	60.1	20.2	282
Salt Lake	UT	Salt Lake City	-19.3	10.2	29.6	283
Davis	UT	Salt Lake City	-61.8	-23.3	38.5	284
Utah	UT	Provo	-78.5	-37.3	41.2	285