TOWARD A MORE HOLISTIC UNDERSTANDING OF
CAUDILLO LEADERSHIP

Taylor A. Landrie

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Research Honors Program in the Department of Leadership

Marietta College

Marietta, Ohio

April 28, 2013
This Research Honors thesis has been approved for the Department of Leadership and the Honors and Investigative Studies Committee by

[Signature]
4/17/13

Faculty thesis advisor

[Signature]
4/17/13

Date

Thesis committee member

[Signature]
4/17/13

Date

Thesis committee member
Introduction

Thesis Statement

The term caudillo is used to describe Latin American leaders with military backgrounds who are charismatic and authoritarian. However, the concept of caudillo leadership involves more than a leader with certain traits. Caudillo leadership, as a phenomenon, is holistic and occurs only when specific criteria are met by the leader, followers, and the cultural values and norms that shape the environment in which the leader and followers interact.

Overview

Historians and political scientists have noted the frequency of military dictators in Latin America since the revolutions that liberated much of the continent in the early 1800s. The “Caudillo” is an authoritarian leader with a background in the military who attracts a following through his or her charismatic personality. Frank Tannenbaum describes the caudillo as, “the leader…who governs because he can, not because he was elected” and applies this definition to both democratically elected caudillo leaders and leaders who came to power during a coup d’état or through other forceful means (Tannenbaum 497). One assumes a caudillo acts to promote his or her self-interest and holds a position of power through force, both in cases of traditional, dictatorial caudillos and modern, elected caudillos. The elected caudillos of recent years are described by Alberto Nickerson as:

Simply the current adaptation of traditional caudillismo to electoral politics.

Whereas traditional caudillos used force in order to govern, electoral caud-
ills operate within the confines of an electoral democracy and opt to employ other methods of influence and control...Additional tools of intimidation include tax audits, court cases, inspections, and license reviews.

(Nickerson 182)

However, there is more to the concept of caudillo leadership than the caudillo leader. Frequently, theories raised to explain the proclivity of caudillo leaders in Latin America oversimplify and overgeneralize the cultures of many nations that are connected primarily by geographical proximity. Instead of providing insight into this unique phenomenon, these theories impress scholars with a notion of Latin America and Latin American political culture that is dated and shaded with perceptions held over from an era of imperialism. These notions are expressed in John Martz’ writing: “The Caudillo, for better or worse, is seen as epitomizing Hispanic cultural values and bearing a major responsibility for events ranging from heroic self-abnegation to indulgent excesses committed in the interests of power and wealth” (Martz 21).

An emphasis on followers and the values and norms of the environment when considering the prominence of caudillo leaders could allow for a deeper understanding of the acceptance of caudillo leaders throughout history in many parts of Latin America. Furthermore, if the concept of leadership is expanded to include the common goals formed by leaders and followers it allows a view of caudillismo that is more specific and defined. A caudillo figure in power is not necessarily a leader if he or she does not work toward a common goal with his or her followers. Expanding leadership to include this criterion will ensure there is no confusion between leaders and tyrants.
Rationale

The importance of recognizing the differences between a type of leader and a type of leadership has been presented by R. J. House, who studied follower reactions and environmental conditions in situations where charismatic leaders thrived (Bass 581-3). Before researchers like House analyzed the phenomenon of charismatic leadership from a multi-dimensional perspective the common assumption was that some leaders just possessed charisma and in possessing it were often capable of attaining a cult-like following. House’s study recognized prerequisite characteristics of the charismatic leader as well as of followers of charismatic leaders and elements of the group culture and environment that were all present together in situations where charismatic leadership was prevalent (Bass 581-603). Beyond the traits or actions of the leader, a holistic approach to leadership that emphasizes interactions among leaders and followers and the importance of situational circumstances and actions toward a common goal can explain patterns that emerge in greater depth. The McDonough model of leadership provides a good basis of understanding leadership as a phenomenon larger than the personality or actions of a leader. The McDonough model argues that “Leadership is the process by which leaders and followers develop a relationship and work together toward a goal (or goals) within an environmental context shaped by cultural values and norms” (“Intragenerational Leadership” 83). Approaching caudillismo with a theory that encapsulates the characteristics of both leaders and followers working toward a common goal gives a new perspective to caudillo leadership theory. Additionally, studying the influence of values and norms on leadership may help explain the propensity for caudillismo in Latin American nations.
Though caudillo leadership, or caudillismo, is referenced often in Latin American history and political science, it is underrepresented in the field of leadership studies. Current fragmented theories on caudillismo have prompted this study of Latin American leaders that have employed caudillismo to determine if a more comprehensive understanding of caudillo leadership can develop.

**Methods, Procedures, and Materials**

To understand the traits, actions, and intentions of caudillo leaders as well as the responses of their followers, this project will use rhetorical analysis to explore three different primary sources by three separate caudillo regimes.

Rhetorical analysis is defined by Sonja Foss in *Rhetorical Criticism: Exploration and Practice* as a “qualitative research method that is designed for the systematic investigation and explanation of symbolic acts and artifacts for the purpose of understanding rhetorical processes” (Foss 6). Foss continues by saying, “Knowledge of the operation of rhetoric also can help us make more sophisticated audience members for messages” (Foss 8). This study will use rhetorical criticism as a method of close reading rather than using it to advance a specific type of methodology or criticism. Foss has developed a nine-step process for more generative analysis which will be adapted for a close reading of these primary texts (Foss 411-30). The process for analyzing the primary sources is as follows:

1) Formulating a research question

2) Coding the texts; Foss describes this step as noticing and interpreting major features of the artifacts—in this case the primary sources from Bolívar, Perón, and Chávez (Foss 413)
3) Searching for an explanation and creating an explanatory schema; Foss states that this is the point in the process of rhetorical analysis where existing explanations are considered and new or evolved explanations are created (Foss 417-23)

4) Coding the artifacts in detail; in this step I will apply the McDonough Model to the texts

5) Framing the study and writing the essay

A close reading of these three primary texts within their contexts will provide a clearer picture of the leadership situation. Kathleen Turner uses a similar method in Doing Rhetorical History, Concepts and Cases. Turner describes rhetorical history as being built upon rhetorical criticism’s “message centered focus” but also applying a contextual construction (Turner 2-3). Whereas Turner has adapted rhetorical criticism to encompass contextual construction so that it may further understanding of rhetoric in history, this project will be using rhetorical criticism to examine texts for leadership implications. For this reason I believe a rhetorical analysis will serve as the most effective method of discovering information about caudillo leaders, their goals, their followers, and the cultural context in which they interact.

This project will analyze three examples of caudillismo. First, Simón Bolívar, often described as one of the earliest caudillos, will be examined through “An Address of Bolívar at the Congress of Angostura”, transcribed in February 1819. The copy of the address that will be analyzed for this project has been translated into English. It will present information on Bolívar, his course of action, and his goals. Other secondary sources will provide necessary context and offer details on the response of his followers and the cultural and environmental conditions of South America while Bolívar was gain-
ing and maintaining his power. The second source that will be analyzed in this project is Eva Perón’s publication, *Evita by Evita*, printed in 1953. The copy used for this project will be an English translation of Eva’s original work. Juan and Eva Perón, working together as one caudillo government, is an example of more modern caudillismo. Juan Perón is sometimes described as a populist, though a close examination of his and Eva’s leadership draws many parallels with the leadership of Bolívar and other more typical caudillos. The final primary source studied in this project is a broadcast of Hugo Chávez’s *Alo Presidente*, a series of televised speeches to the people of Venezuela. This episode containing the speech I will be analyzing was filmed in Spanish during January, 2012. The project will use both the video footage and the transcript from the episode to analyze Chávez’s leadership.

Simón Bolívar, Juan and Eva Perón, and Hugo Chávez represent the development of caudillo leadership over time. They serve as archetypal examples of caudillismo throughout Latin American history and geography. These four leaders were chosen as topics of study less for their similarities than for their differences. This is so that an analysis of caudillo leadership theory is inclusive.

Carlos Balladares analyzes Simón Rodriguez’s 1830 *Defense of Bolívar* and puts its complicated and lengthy argument into simplified terms. Balladares argues that Bolívar is seen as a special kind of leader—an exceptional force of authority that built institutions (Balladares 121). While Rodriguez does not use the term caudillo frequently in his writings, Balladares concludes that the regular usage of the masculine form of ‘boss’ to describe Bolívar proves Rodriguez, and many of his contemporaries, viewed Bolívar as a caudillo (Balladares 123-4, Rodriguez 30-88). Bolívar’s leadership will be analyzed,
therefore, because he represents the traits frequently ascribed to caudillo leaders both during his era and in the present. His “Address at Angostura” is a prime example of his rhetoric, occurring as it did during a time of transition for Latin America.

The primary text for analysis of Juan and Eva Perón’s leadership is Evita by Evita. Though sometimes called Evita’s autobiography, this book actually focuses on Perón as a leader and the descamisados of Argentina as followers. This may be the most informative text written by either of the Peróns during Juan Perón’s first presidency. This text will serve as a foundation for analysis and will be contrasted with other documents from the Perónist era in an effort to reach conclusions on the Peróns’ caudillo leadership as well as to apply their actions and the reactions of their followers to the McDonough model of leadership.

Hugo Chávez is the most modern caudillo leader included in this project. Chávez has been described by many reporters, politicians, and scholars as a caudillo. Chávez may bend the mold of caudillismo, however. Javier Corrales writes, “Chávez may be a caudillo...but unlike other caudillos Chávez approximates a bona fide Robin Hood...Chávez has addressed the spiritual and material needs of Venezuela’s poor...” (Corrales 35). Chávez is the final leader that will be analyzed in this study because he represents the modern caudillo. His actions may not wholly reflect those of historic caudillo leaders, but a close look at his rhetoric identifies him as such a leader. The Alo Presidente videos showcase both Chávez’s scripted and impromptu rhetoric. This will illuminate aspects of his leadership style in a way that is stronger and more comprehensive than his published writings.
This project is organized into six chapters. The first chapter is an introduction that examines the methods and procedures of the project. The second chapter encompasses a description of key terms that will be used often in the following writing as well as a literature review that will express theories and notions of caudillos and caudillo leadership gathered from history and political science texts, as well as leadership theories based on Latin American culture. The third chapter focuses on Simón Bolívar, analyzing characteristics of his personality and action, the people he led, the goals they wanted to reach, and the environment in which he led, as impacted by cultural values and norms. The fourth and fifth chapters will be organized in a similar fashion to analyze caudillismo in Perónist Argentina and Chávez’s Venezuela. The final chapter produces conclusions based on the analysis of the primary texts and the application of the McDonough model of leadership to the analyzed texts. This chapter will strive to build on current theories of caudillismo and fill some of the gaps that current theories have by approaching caudillo leadership holistically.

Through rhetorical analysis of primary sources and extensive research on current theories of caudillos in a variety of academic fields, including history, political science, Latin American studies, and leadership studies, this study attempts to develop a more comprehensive approach to caudillo leadership. The application of the McDonough model of leadership assists in examining caudillismo from many angles and furthering the study of caudillo leaders and their role in Latin American culture.
Key Terms

In an effort to provide clarity to the following study of caudillo leadership, some key terms commonly used in leadership theories—as well as in studies of Latin America and Latin American history—must be defined. These definitions will be used primarily to illuminate traits and tactics of caudillos, their followers, and the environment in which they interact. Some terms may also lend themselves to an explanation of common goals among leaders and followers and the values and norms that permeate the environment of historical and modern Latin America.

Leadership Tactics and Patterns:

Some terms frequently used in leadership theory, especially in the context of caudillismo, are difficult to define. Because these terms are not easily measured or dissected, they lack a central definitive interpretation. The term caudillo is not included in this set of definitions because it is described in some depth in the following chapters.

Personalismo

Personalismo, as defined by Juana Bordas, is the way in which Latino leaders “relate on a people and personal level first, focusing on the individual, the family, where people are from, and personal preferences” (Bordas 17). Bordas describes personalismo in a positive way that suggests its ability to strengthen relationships in communities. There can be a darker side to personalismo, however. The personalismo strategy can be used to develop a cult of personality and mask ineffective action by governments. It can also lead to clientelism and corruption. Strong personal relationships between a leader and his follower or followers has the potential to be used to create posi-
tive change, but it can also promote an unhealthy dependence on a leader that can quickly escalate into authoritarianism.

*Paternalism*

For the purposes of this study of caudillismo, paternalism is the behavior of a leader or leaders that imitates the relationship between a father and child. The leader takes action that is protective and reduces the autonomy of followers. Paternalistic leaders might truly believe that they are saving their innocent or underdeveloped followers from harm, or they may be using paternalism as a front to gain greater power. Just as a child does not question the authority of his father—perhaps because of lack of information as well as filial respect—the follower of a paternalistic leader does not question the decisions the leader and his or her regime make. Paternalism is a set of behaviors often used by authoritarian regimes, and many scholars suggest that caudillos rely heavily on paternalism to gain and retain a following.

*Dualism*

While paternalism is a tactic used by many caudillo leaders, dualism is a pattern in Latin American society that can be exploited by leaders. Dualism is most appropriately defined by Glen Caudill Dealy when he notes that the close relationships Latin Americans might foster among in-group members of friends and family do not necessarily correlate to their interactions with persons that may be defined as out-group or untrustworthy. A society of dualist followers might be more likely to accept a leader who has open dualist tendencies. An acceptance of violence, corruption, and immorality in a leader who also attends religious services and creates programs for the poor does not seem contradictory and may not even seem reproachable in a dualist society.
**Populism**

As with dualism, populism is a pattern that seems to arise frequently in Latin American political leadership. The most basic definition of populism is a political movement or ideology that attempts to represent the masses of a nation. Populism often appears to arise as a response to oligarchies and aristocracies when the largest socio-economic group in a state feels underrepresented. It is not, however, connected with socialist or communist movements—although some rhetoric may seem similar, as populists emphasize the power of the working class and often suggest revolutionary action to produce a more equal or fair society.

**Latin American Culture and Social Structure:**

In addition to tactics and patterns of leadership that will be noted frequently in this study of caudillismo, it is also important to define terms specific to Latin American culture and history. These terms are significant both when addressing a leadership case like Bolívar’s where the terms were used to identify various groups in society, and when analyzing more current leadership cases like Chávez’s, especially given the manner in which the social structure of the past continues to influence the way that people interact in Latin America.

**Creole**

The creole, or criollo in Spanish, is a person of Iberian European descent born in Latin America. Historically, creoles felt underrepresented in the New World because much of the power in running the new nation fell in the hands of peninsulares, or Iberian Europeans born in Europe. Thus, during the Latin American revolutions, members of the creole population were often instigators of independence movements; they had the
most to gain by shirking the influence of Europe. The social hierarchy of Latin America was created based on one’s percentage of European ancestry, and after European-born *penisulares*, creoles held the highest social status and received the greatest economic and social privilege. In modern day Latin America, some inequality is still visible. The privilege traditionally allotted to people of European descent affects interactions among citizens of Latin American nations and assumptions about leadership traits and qualities in Latin American cultures.

*Pardo*

Like creole, the term pardo was developed in the early years of colonization to denote the social caste of a person who has a multi-ethnic background. The word pardo is used more in Venezuela than in other Spanish speaking states and appears to be nearly synonymous with the more common word mulatto. Pardo, therefore, describes someone of primarily African and European descent. It seems possible that the term could also encompass peoples who had African, European, and indigenous backgrounds rather than wholly African and European, as is often the definition of mulatto.

*Mestizo*

In addition to the terms creole and pardo, mestizo is a commonly used word to describe a group of people in Latin America. Mestizo means mixed race and typically refers to a person or persons who have indigenous South or Meso-American and European ancestry. Historically, a mestizo was more powerful than members of many other socio-ethnic groups, though they still lacked the legitimized authority of a creole.
Literature Review

Caudillo leadership is largely defined in the fields of history, political science, and Latin American cultural studies by simply describing a leader or group of leaders that have once been termed caudillos. To develop a more holistic understanding of caudillo leadership, texts on cross-cultural leadership have been studied to understand the environment of caudillismo and create a primary appreciation for the values and norms of cultures that foster caudillos. Additionally, sources on caudillismo from political and historical perspectives and Latin American leadership theory have been consulted. Further references specific to each caudillismo case analyzed will be included in subsequent chapters.

Cross-cultural Studies in Leadership

Concepts of time, distance between a leader and followers, and communication patterns are all deeply influenced by culture. Cross-cultural studies in the field of leadership illuminate how culture impacts leadership and accepted leadership behavior. Scholars in the field provide a lens through which to view leadership outside of one’s own culture.

*The Silent Language, Edward Hall.*

Hall provides an early introduction to cross-cultural studies. While he offers some specific information on Latin American culture, his text is more valuable as an examination of how culture exists and the ways it affects people and interactions. Hall emphasizes culture in North American communities and points to the way other nations are different or similar in response to time, interactions, learning, and many other aspects of life. Hall provides the foundation in cross-cultural studies that is necessary to understand the Latin American context in which caudillos flourish.
Hofstede, like Hall, developed a theory of culture that created a clearer view of what elements constitute culture and how culture influences patterns of interaction. He focused on dimensions of culture including power distance and uncertainty avoidance, as well as continuums of individualism and collectivism, masculinity and femininity, and long- versus short-term orientation. These early studies were seminal in the field of cross-cultural scholarship. Hofstede and his contemporaries continue to challenge and update the assumptions they develop regarding different cultures. In conjunction with Hofstede’s early publication of *Culture’s Consequences*, his most current web articles have been consulted.

The value of Hofstede’s work to the study of caudillo leadership is exemplified in the power distance scores of South American countries. Hofstede suggests that the Latin American nations that have fostered the leadership of Bolívar, Chávez, and the Peróns have a moderate to high power distance. Argentina’s European immigrant influence may be the cause of their relatively low power distance score. However, the score still suggests that presentation of power and wealth are valuable in the nation (Hofstede n.pag). Venezuela, the home of Hugo Chávez and a state liberated by Simón Bolívar, has a much higher power distance score, which Hofstede suggests would indicate an acceptance of inequality among the people. Hofstede implies that Venezuelans believe that some people are fated to hold power and some are simply born to follow (Hofstede n.pag).
Caudillo Leadership Theory

The nature of caudillismo is summarized most often as a direct result of Latin America’s revolutions in the 1800s and the culture derived from that shared history. Many authors suggest that the revolutions left a leadership gap in already-weak states, in turn making power available to the strongmen that have defined politics in Latin America. The following texts on caudillismo have been published primarily in the fields of history and political science.

*Francois Chevalier, The Roots of Caudillismo.*

Chevalier argues that personalismo and caudillismo developed from nations that lacked well-defined institutional structures. Before the first wave of revolutions to sweep Latin America the physical distance from the peninsula created a sense of weakness of state. After the revolutions, Chevalier says, middle- and working-class men seized opportunities to hold power. However, because they lacked the experience in leadership roles that their upper-class counterparts may have had, they felt they had to affirm their power by any and all means necessary (Chevalier 31). The weakness of the state after the initial hour of revolution reduced the potency of written law across the continent. Chevalier points to caudillismo being a consequence of weakened states when he writes, “Ties of blood and personal bonds are the only ones which have a real importance in societies where written contracts, if they exist at all, play a limited role; where the typical relations of modern societies, and even of certain traditional communities, are found only in the embryonic state” (Chevalier 28).
**William Beezley, Caudillismo: An Interpretive Note.**

Beezley, like Chevalier, postulates that caudillismo is the result of the cultural heritage of Latin America’s colonial period. He describes a dual-government system that left a gap between theory and practice in Latin American nations. Beezley looks beyond the birth of caudillismo to indicate certain tactics that a caudillo leader could use to increase levels of personalismo. One such caudillo tactic is establishing relationships at various times with the church, the army, large landholders, and ideological political factions in an effort to garner support (Beezley 349). He further states that opportunities for acquisition of power developed after the revolutions left Latin Americans without a common loyalty, and that the era of caudillismo was ended by an increase in nationalism and institutionalization of the military. At the time of publication an end to caudillismo may have seemed all but certain. Beezley clearly did not expect the recent renaissance of caudillo leadership fronted by leaders such as Hugo Chávez.

**Frank Tannenbaum, The Political Dilemma in Latin America.**

Six years before Beezley announced that the age of the caudillo was over, Tannenbaum wrote that caudillismo was one of few constants in the changing political scene of Latin America. His definitive statement that the caudillo leader “...governs because he can, not because he was elected” serves as the summary of his text (Tannenbaum 497). Caudillismo, he suggests, is the consequence of limited options for politicians. Governance through violence has created a cycle that is difficult to break. Developing legitimacy without a universally accepted head of state and without violence, he argues, would be almost impossible. He also cites weak political parties and lack of national unity as causes of authoritarian government—frequently in the form of caudillismo. Tan-
nebaum’s description of the caudillo implies that a caudillo leader does not use legitimate power, opting instead to use coercion to hold on to all power while severely limiting delegation in his regime.

_Ruben Zorrilla, Estructura Social y Caudillismo [Caudillismo and Social Structure]._

Zorrilla’s writing on caudillismo and the social structure of nineteenth century Argentina is most valuable for its description of caudillo leadership traits. Like Tannenbaum, Zorrilla suggests that a caudillo uses coercive power through developing a paternalistic relationship with his followers. He also capitalizes on localism; the caudillo may speak negatively about foreign peoples and powers while emphasizing the strength of his community. His ideas on caudillo leadership appear motivated by Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, a president of Argentina, and early critic of caudillismo. While Zorrilla also emphasizes geographical, economic, and militaristic factors that he suggests explain the caudillo phenomenon, he does so while describing early rural caudillismo. Thus, while his findings on caudillo leadership offer an interesting look into early perspectives of caudillismo, his other information may strike a modern reader as less constructive.

_Eric R. Wolf and Edward C. Hansen, Caudillo Politics: A Structural Analysis._

Social class structure is cited as a major cause of early caudillismo in Wolf and Hansen’s article. Conflict between the recently empowered criollo class and rising mestizo class induced a sense that collecting wealth through violence and arms bearing was

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1 Sarmiento authored an early account of caudillismo, _Civilization and Barbarism_, which documented the life of Juan Facundo Quiroga. This early text provides the base for many scholars’ understanding of caudillismo and the guacho in early rural Argentina.

righteous in many Latin American populations. Characteristics of caudillaje, or the political system of caudillos, is defined by four key factors:

1. the repeated emergence of armed patron-client sets, cemented by personal ties of dominance and submission and by a common desire to obtain wealth by force of arms,
2. the lack of institutionalized means for succession to offices,
3. the use of violence in political competition, and
4. the repeated failures of incumbent leaders to guarantee their tenures as chieftains. (Wolf 169)

Wolf and Hansen also describe traits of the caudillo which include machismo, generosity among family, friends, and allies, a sense of business acumen and access to increasing wealth, and higher degree of comfort with violent means.

**Latin American Leadership and Culture**

The amount of information available on caudillo leadership is relatively limited. In order to have the more holistic view on caudillismo that this project is trying to achieve, information on Latin American culture and leadership from other fields is being included to strengthen the project and its outcomes.

*Glen Caudill Dealy, Two Cultures and Political Behavior in Latin America.*

This excerpt of Dealy’s work focuses on the idea that Latin America is a dualistic society. Dealy describes in some depth the personal relationships that Latin Americans develop, saying they exude warmth and shelter from the outside world to a degree that is unmatched in North America (Dealy 51). He states that Latin Americans expect to see a display of virtues in the public sphere similar to those of classical civilizations. A dualist perspective may make an affectionate, doting father at home into a hardened, unaf-
fected politician in public. Dealy makes a contestable argument that this dualism is a consequence of the heavy influence of Catholicism in the region. To support his argument Dealy references many military officers during Argentina’s Dirty War who tortured thousands of victims while still devoutly attending church (Dealy 59). These dualities in Latin American culture may cause citizens to be more open to leaders who are formalized or stylized in their language, guarded or sometimes dishonest, and willing to engage in immoral activity in the public sphere.  

*Charles Wagley, The Latin American Tradition.*

Wagley wrote the essays in this collection between the years of 1951 and 1964, and thus provides an early interpretation of modern Latin American culture. Wagley appears to promote popular North American stereotypes of Latin Americans. However, the information on race relations in Latin American nations is relevant and valuable in understanding the political atmosphere that appears to cultivate caudillismo. Wagley argues that the terms used to describe peoples of various ancestral backgrounds—including people of multicultural backgrounds (i.e. mestizos, mulattos, etc.)—provides clear insight into race relations and societal factions in nations. The multitude of racial designations in Latin America, Wagley notes, helped create and complicate a social hierarchy where the most important criterion of rank was racial appearance (Wagley 159).

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This article provides a more recent view of leadership in the context of Latin America. Conclusions are made on good leaders and anti-leaders in political leadership positions based on Latin American leadership theories. Positive characteristics of a leader include respect for self and others, a sense of vision for the future, and the ability to communicate. Leaders who attempt to make large changes are typically described as using personalismo to help achieve their goals. A leader, by the article’s definition, must be able to inspire and influence the society in which he or she works and lives. These characteristics appear to describe a charismatic leader, and perhaps lay the groundwork for a society’s acceptance of a caudillo leader.

*Eric Romero, Latin American Leadership: El Patrón y El Líder Moderno.*

Romero describes the way that Latin American culture helps to define leadership archetypes for the region. Romero postulates that there are two different archetypes for leaders: the patron, a traditional Latin American leader who is autocratic, assertive, and infrequently delegates or works in teams, and the modern leader, or *líder moderno,* is participative, team oriented, and focused on cooperation (Romero 30-2). It is suggested that leaders in communities that have had more international interaction, greater economic growth, and stronger presence of women in leadership roles will be more attracted to the modern leader prototype. The description of traditional and modern leaders seems to align with other texts on Latin American culture. However, the suggestion

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3 Title, “Cómo es el liderazgo de América Latina”, translated by author. Literal translation: How is the leadership of Latin America [What is Latin American leadership like].

4 *Patrón* is typically translated to boss or master, *líder moderno* literally translates to modern leader.
that a community would be more modern because of better economic status and more international interaction seems to have a North American cultural bias.
Bolívar Leadership Analysis

A colorful and dramatic picture of Simón Bolívar’s life and leadership is painted by many authors of history books and biographies. The Liberator, as Bolívar’s followers called him, has become more than a man. He represents for many the ideals of independence, heroism, and equality. Identifying what made Bolívar a source of inspiration for generations will clarify what made him a caudillo leader. By observing his actions as a leader, the responses of his followers, their shared goals, and recognizing the conditions of his environment and the values and norms of his culture, the rise and fall of Bolívar as an early caudillo leader will offer insight into caudillismo as a leadership theory.

To analyze Bolívar’s leadership, his address at the Inauguration of the Second National Congress of Venezuela in Angostura, sometimes called his “Angostura Address”, will be examined. This address, from February 15, 1819, was chosen to represent Bolívar because of the transitory nature of his environment at the time of his speech and because of the clarity in which he expresses his goals during the address. Bolívar is remembered for his visionary language, which is well represented in this text. Finally, the “Angostura Address” highlights Bolívar’s vacillation between democracy and authoritarianism and displays him as a leader who speaks of ideals and values but does not act upon them. While this text is a speech by Bolívar without documented responses from followers, it is possible to infer Bolívar’s opinion on his followers from the “Angostura Address” and compare this to historical sources.
Bolívar: An Early Caudillo

In a time in Latin American history when populations were strictly divided by race and status, Bolívar was born into a wealthy creole family. His influence, greater than many but paling in comparison to the Spanish-born of the Iberian Peninsula, may have been a major cause of distress and was quite likely a factor in his choice to use revolutionary action to liberate parts of Latin America from Spanish rule. Thus, this inequality was an indirect cause of his subsequent attainment of power and caudillismo.

Bolívar’s Broadening Perspective

Bolívar spent a brief time in the military as a young man before studying in Europe, where his ideas were influenced by the Enlightenment and the words of Rousseau (Lynch 18). His worldly educational background does not appear to make him a likely candidate for caudillismo. However, when Bolívar returned to Latin America his view of colonialism had changed dramatically, and he decided to lead South Americans in a fight for independence.

Bolívar notes during his “Angostura Address”, “The period in the history of the Republic over which I presided was not one of mere political storm; nor was it simply a bloody war or merely popular anarchy. It was, indeed, the culmination of every disruptive force” (Bolívar 173). This disruptive force was the catalyst for a young academic to serve as a military leader, and Bolívar’s military background was the vehicle for his political success.

Bolívar’s experience in the military suggests caudillismo for two reasons: first, it is typical for caudillos to begin acquiring power during their military careers. Second, Bolívar’s military career existed almost entirely to fight a revolution. Wolf and Hansen
argue that caudillismo erupted after revolutions because the creole class felt newly empowered and threatened and took to using extreme measures of force to create stability (Wolf).

The Caudillo at Angostura

Perhaps more compelling evidence of caudillismo than Bolívar’s experience in the military is his rhetoric at Angostura. While Bolívar is impressed with the idea of democracy, he tells his legislators, “All should not be left to chance and the outcome of elections. The people are more easily deceived than is Nature perfected by art...”5 (Bolívar 186). He is very overt with his distaste for elections—this could imply that he felt comfortable and secure in his ability to influence the Congress. It seems that he would have used more subtle language if he were trying to persuade the legislators without losing his power. Immediately after telling the legislators that voting would ruin the nation he references nature; this may be a nod to his study of the Enlightenment. John Lynch writes that “Bolívar and other leading creoles were familiar with theories of natural rights and social contract and their application”, but while Bolívar owned an extensive library of texts from European authors concerning theories of natural rights and social contract, he adapted these theories and may have also applied concepts of Francisco Suárez’s doctrinas populistas to create a set of ideals that valued natural rights to a certain degree (Lynch 32).

Bolívar makes another statement that suggests he relies on caudillismo: “Furthermore, the liberators of Venezuela are entitled to occupy forever a high rank in the Re-

5 Nature in this sentence of the transcribed speech is capitalized. It is unclear whether that was a stylistic decision by the editor or a preference of Bolívar's. Other cases arise in the Address where nouns are capitalized. It is possible that Bolívar meant to refer to nature as he would a person (a modern example might be references to Mother Nature).
public that they have brought into existence” (Bolívar 186). Caudillos are typically delineated by their use of brute force and constitutional amendments to continue to hold power. This follows Ruben Zorilla’s description of caudillos and assumption and retention of power (Zorilla). Bolívar, as a liberator of Venezuela, recommends to the legislators of the new nation that he should always hold a rank and be sought out as a source of wisdom and knowledge.

A Better Caudillo

Alvaro Vargas Llosa recognizes the bias of many historians regarding Simón Bolívar. While Bolívar fits the criteria of a caudillo, many scholars avoid the term because of his continued following to the present day. In fact it is difficult to attain critical, realistic accounts of any aspect of Bolívar and his leadership; much is distorted by the legends created around the man. Vargas Llosa writes:

Bolívar was certainly a much better caudillo than the others—more strategic, more visionary, more learned. But he, too, belongs in the annals of the caudillos of Latin America, and caudillismo is still the heart of the Latin American problem. Bolívar would have deserved more sympathy if he had struggled and failed to establish liberal republics and promote social mobility and foster integration from below—rather than concentrating power in the name of social order and devoting his time to grandiose schemes of supranational integration from the top down among precarious South American states fabricated over highly stratified societies. (Vargas Llosa 29)
This tendency toward a heroic bias must be evaluated in all writings on Bolívar, his followers, and their goals, environment, and culture.

**The Leader**

This hero bias is evident in descriptions of Bolívar from both historic and contemporary accounts of his life. Michel Vaucaire, a French writer who published *Bolívar the Liberator* in 1929, described Bolívar as a man who “...Put everyone else in the shade, wherever he went he attracted all eyes.” Vaucaire continued to say, “[Bolívar was] elegant, full of spirit, he could tell Creole stories, legends that pleased the young ladies; he danced well and was invited everywhere” (Vaucaire 7). This dramatic report of Bolívar suggests a man who was vibrant, handsome, and perhaps impulsive. However, the image of Bolívar that arises from his address at Angostura is decisive, idealistic, and humble.

**The Humble Hero**

Bolívar presented himself at Angostura as a humble servant of South America. His language implies that his leadership in the military and government of the new nation was burdensome and a cause of great anxiety. He initiates the speech by stating that he is glad to pass on the responsibility of the state to able legislators. “Upon the fulfillment of this grateful obligation,” Bolívar states, “I shall be released from the immense authority with which I have been so heavily burdened upon my slender resources” (Bolívar 173). In fact, he laments his responsibility to the state of Venezuela profusely, telling his legislators:

> Only the force of necessity, coupled with the imperious will of the people, compelled me to assume the fearful and dangerous post of Dictator
and Supreme Chief of the Republic. But now I can breathe more freely, for I am returning to you this authority which I have succeeded in maintaining at the price of so much danger, hardship, and suffering, amidst the worst tribulations suffered by any society. (Bolívar 173)

While Bolívar continues to emphasize the burden of his service he also praises himself as a success at maintaining the nation in the face of challenge.

Bolívar creates a dual perspective of himself: he is both the humble servant and the fearless hero. In this way he relays to his followers that he is all-knowing, almost god-like; he fills all requirements. This suits a more paternalistic type of leadership.

The Leader of Progress

While Bolívar’s use of paternalism seems like a traditional strategy for leadership in Latin America, the Liberator is remembered by many for his highly progressive ideals. Bolívar states in his address at Angostura, “Slavery is the daughter of Darkness: an ignorant people is a blind instrument of its own destruction” (Bolívar 176). A newly independent nation in 1819 might not have been enthusiastic about losing the free labor force that was created by the colonizers. However, Bolívar was adamant and passionate that Venezuela and the rest of what was called Gran Colombia would not succeed if slavery existed. Bolívar alludes to his study of the Enlightenment in this metaphor as well. Darkness, as he uses the word, means a lack of knowledge and awareness. Bolívar recognized early in history that ignoring the human element would lead to ruination.
Bolívar argues that Latin American acceptance of slavery was directly caused by colonialism:

Subject to the threefold yoke of ignorance, tyranny, and vice, the American people ⁶ have been unable to acquire knowledge, power, or [civic] virtue. The lessons we received and the models we studied, as pupils of such pernicious teachers, were most destructive. We have been ruled more by deceit than by force and we have been degraded more by vice than by superstition. (Bolívar 176)

Bolívar suggests in this portion of his speech that the fault for any shortcomings or failings of the recently independent states of South America are the responsibility of the Spanish. His statement that Latin Americans have been “...degraded more by vice than superstition” could be interpreted in a number of ways (Bolívar 176). While Bolívar recognizes the deleterious effects of both vice and superstition, he believes vice is worse. If Bolívar supposes that superstition is the outcome of a sense of mysticism that developed in Latin America from African and indigenous peoples and that vice is the result of Spanish greed, then he may be indicating that the influence of the Spanish in this multicultural society is both the strongest and the most negative.

The Authoritarian Advisor

Bolívar had progressive and nationalist ideals that might suggest to some followers that he would support democracy. However, Bolívar argued against democracy when addressing the second national congress. His argument against democracy is seeded in

⁶ “American people” here refers to citizens of Latin America; Bolívar typically refers to citizens of the United States as “North Americans” and does not recognize similarities among residents of the two American continents.
the theme of Spanish vice: Venezuela needed to develop beyond colonial corruption before its citizens would be able to handle the responsibility of democracy. Bolívar tells the legislators, “Liberty, says Rousseau, is a succulent morsel, but one difficult to digest. Our weak fellow-citizens will have to strengthen their spirit greatly before they can digest the wholesome nutriment of freedom” (Bolívar 177). This further emphasizes Bolívar’s role as a paternalistic leader. Bolívar seems to believe that the citizens of South America are too inexperienced and immature to manage democracy. Additionally, his rationalization might lead followers to believe that they will achieve democracy after a period of development led by Bolívar or another dictator. Bolívar may have used this argument because it was his true ideology or because he believed it would allow him to remain popular with the people of Venezuela while retaining almost complete control over the government.

The Followers

Bolívar is currently idolized in many regions of Latin America. During his lifetime he was first widely followed and later exiled from the nations that he helped build. It is ineffective to observe caudillismo in Bolívar’s case without recognizing the role that followers play in the success of Bolívar’s leadership.

The Congress at Angostura is an interesting piece to apply to the understanding of Bolívar’s followers because, while it does not record interactions between Bolívar and followers or the reactions of followers to Bolívar’s speech, it provides an outline of the typical Venezuelan and the motivations he or she might have.
A Diverse Population

Venezuela and other states in Bolívar’s Gran Colombia were divided in 1819 by the strict social castes organized by race in the nation. Bolívar realizes this internal conflict and its potential to damage the strength of the new nation of Venezuela. Bolívar says to the legislators:

Permit me to call the attention of the Congress to a matter that may be of vital importance. We must keep in mind that our people are neither European nor North American; rather, they are a mixture of African and the Americans who originated in Europe. Even Spain herself has ceased to be European because of her African blood, her institutions, and her character.

(Bolívar 181)

The diversity that marked Latin American culture in 1819 and continues to do so today is the result of the combination of Iberian, African, and indigenous South and Meso-American societies. Creoles felt entitled to power during the revolution, but Bolívar appears to have suspected that pardos, or people of multi-ethnic descent, would organize a revolt in a period of instability if not recognized as full and equal citizens of the new nation. Bolívar also implies that the values Venezuela adopted from Spanish colonizers are not insular European values. Instead Venezuela has received the influence of Afri-

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7 Bolívar is using the word American to mean a creole in South American culture; a person of European descent who was born in the Americas but does not have Native American ancestry.

8 Typically the word pardo, which is used primarily in Venezuela, is synonymous to mulatto and connotes a person of African and European descent. Many South American societies differentiated people of more than one race by percentage—mulatto is a term used to describe a person with one African parent and one European parent; pardo, however, can mean a person of any combination of African and European ancestry and sometimes is also used to describe someone with indigenous South American ancestry as well.
can culture both from slave populations and from colonizers. Bolivar continues on in this strain:

It is impossible to determine with any degree of accuracy where we belong in the human family...While we have all been born of the same mother, our fathers, different in origin and in blood, are foreigners, and all differ visibly as to the color of their skin: a dissimilarity which places upon us an obligation of the greatest importance. (Bolivar 181)

The language Bolívar uses here suggests that he wants the nation’s diverse populations to work together and recognize their similarities. He may also be implying that Venezuela has no stable, consistent father figure. This indicates that he believes his followers need a paternalistic leader to provide unity and stability in the nation.

Bolivar might have felt that the people of Latin America needed him to be the leader that diffused their disagreements, much as a father does among siblings. It is difficult to develop a deeper understanding of Bolivar’s perceptions of his followers because he contradicts himself in his address. He believes at once that followers are a household of step-children who require constant observation and regulation to learn to work together, and that followers are ready to hold more responsibility for their own future. This is exemplified by his final words in the address at Angostura: “I pray you, Legislators, receive with indulgence this profession of my political faith...which, on behalf of the people, I venture to place before you....Gentlemen: you may begin your labors, I have finished mine” (Bolívar 197).
A Zeal for Liberty

Bolivar’s concern for the unity of his followers influenced his decision to talk about diversity at Angostura, and it also influenced another topic of his speech: the political activism of followers. While Bolívar had suggested that Venezuelans were not yet ready for the responsibility of democracy, he did believe they needed to constantly question their ruling government and strive for freedom and equality. Bolívar says, “A just zeal is the guarantee of republican liberty. Our citizens must with good reason learn to fear lest the magistrate who has governed them long will govern them forever”, which implies the need for citizen action (Bolívar 175). It also connotes that followers in Venezuela had the capacity to question their government and make change.

It is challenging to understand from Bolívar’s speech the actual capacity for change that followers held in Venezuela during 1819. He states that the nation is not prepared for a democracy and that followers would be easily misled by persuasive or charismatic candidates. In essence, Bolívar says that followers are not mature enough to handle the responsibility of the nation’s welfare. However, Bolívar contradicts himself by saying that followers need to zealously question the role of their leaders. To the legislators he says, “I deliver into your hands the supreme rule of Venezuela. Yours is now the august duty of consecrating yourselves to the achievement of felicity of the Republic; your hands hold the scales of our destiny, the measure of our glory” (Bolívar 174). This and similar remarks imply that citizens of Venezuela will have sovereign rule of the nation, and the use of words such as “scales of our destiny” makes the task of developing a new nation seem like a quest. It seems then that Bolívar is using democratic language to deter citizens from popular government. It is as if Bolívar has said that he wants Venezuelans to
govern themselves, but knows it is impossible and that such a responsibility is only appropriate for a hero.

Perruci describes how followers may sometimes elevate their leader to a superhuman or meta-human level (“Great Leaders” 6-9). Bolívar propagates an image of himself as the hero or superhuman, and indicates that no ordinary person would be capable of addressing the needs of the newly liberated Latin America; in this way he creates a leader image that makes him seem extraordinary (“Great Leaders” 4). In response his followers appear to accept this power differential based in part on characteristics that Bolívar has and the situation in which he acquired power, creating compliance and emotional commitment (“Great Leaders” 5).

**The Goals**

Bolívar’s paternalistic leadership patterns and relationship with followers may explain why he was popular as a leader, but the goals he shared with his followers and his ability to attain those goals is what determines his effectiveness as a leader. When Bolívar addressed the legislators at Angostura he had already led a number of achievements for the new nation, most notably independence from Spain. However, his speech will be analyzed here to determine his success in leading South Americans as a political figure after the revolution.

*Stability in a New State*

One of the goals that Bolívar espouses in his address is stability for Venezuela. He connects this to his argument that colonizers damaged Venezuelans’ ability to carry the responsibility of a democratic government. Venezuela had briefly entertained a different, underdeveloped congress before a skirmish and movement to the second congress
which Bolívar addresses in this speech (Lynch 5-10). To the second congress he says, “The task of correcting the work of our first legislators is yours. I should like to say that it is your duty to cloak some of the charms that are displayed in our political code; for not every heart is capable of admiring all beauty, nor are all eyes able to gaze upon the heavenly light of perfection” (Bolívar 181). Bolívar’s statement implies two things. First, it is clear that he and the legislators at Angostura want to see a stable government that can survive better than the first congress—which ultimately serves as an early prototype. Second, he suggests that the legislators need to slowly introduce democratic ideals to the people instead of springing a new form of order on the nation immediately. The acceptance of this order by the legislators and the public body is evidence that Bolívar’s followers agreed with his priorities: stability first, personal freedoms later.

Bolívar develops a vision for Venezuela that involves a political system similar to that of England. To persuade his followers he argues, “I only refer to [England’s] republican features; and, indeed, can a political system be labeled a monarchy when it recognizes popular sovereignty, division and balance of powers, civil liberty, freedom of conscience and of press, and all that is politically sublime? Can there be more liberty in any other type of republic? Can more be asked of any society?” (Bolívar 185). While it is apparent that Bolívar wants a republic similar to England’s, the response of the followers is up to interpretation. It seems possible that Bolívar’s goal differs here from the vision held by many of his followers. Bolívar attempts to be highly persuasive in this portion of his argument, even speculating that no better government can exist, which might indicate that he expected an adverse reaction. Other scholars may support the existence of a mis-alignment of goals. Alvaro Vargas Llosa maintains that Bolívar never actually tried to es-
tablish the laws that he champions in this speech, which one might assume is connected to popular dissonance (Vargas Llosa 30).

**Peaceful Diversity**

It is difficult to know if Bolivar’s goal for state stability through an English-style republic was supported by followers, and it is equally difficult to discern the popular support of Bolivar’s other main goal as determined by his address at Angostura: peaceful diversity. In both of these cases a lack of popular support defines Bolívar not as a leader but as an oppressor—even when his intentions appear to be good.

Bolívar deeply defends the need for political equality of men of all races at Angostura and throughout his political career. His argument, it seems, is summarized by one dramatic statement: “Our hands are now free, but our hearts still suffer the ills of slavery. When a man loses freedom, said Homer, he loses half his spirit” (Bolívar 183). Extracted from its context, this sentence depicts a man who is driven by his morals and a goal based on the value of equality. However, a deeper analysis of Bolívar’s goal of equality suggests less idealistic motives. Observing these motives will shine light on Bolívar’s ability to reach common goals and follower variance on the goal of diversity.

Bolívar substantiates the need for a nondemocratic government and applies it to racial equality by telling the legislators, “The diversity of racial origin will require an infinitely firm hand and great tactfulness in order to manage this heterogeneous society, whose complicated mechanism is easily damaged, separated, and disintegrated by the slightest controversy” (Bolívar 182). Placed in historical context, this can be interpreted as signifying a deep fear of the pardo and black classes of Venezuela that Bolívar
shared with the white elites of the new nation. Aline Helg writes about Bolívar’s fear of a pardo revolution:

No leader was more concerned with mulatto power than Simón Bolívar. Bolívar’s apprehension dated back to his first-hand experience of the racial violence of the troops of pardos as well as manumitted and fugitive slaves under the royalist José Tomás Boves against the Venenzuelan white creoles in 1814, during the first phase of the anticolonial struggle, often referred to as a race war. (Helg 450)

Through this lens Bolívar does not seem invested in equality from an idealistic standpoint, despite what his passionate statements might suggest. Instead, he is afraid of an uprising that would damage his seat in power and the structure of the Venezuelan state. He wants to persuade the legislators to provide equal rights for African and pardo citizens so that they would not mobilize a revolution similar to the Africans of Haiti (Helg 455).

White elites, many who could be considered caudillos in their regions, would not have supported Bolivar’s attempt for peaceful diversity through equal rights—such measures would limit their own power. However, this would benefit Bolívar both by limiting the power of regional strongmen and by deflating revolutionary movements from the pardo class. The pardos and Africans of Venezuela supported Bolívar’s goal for racial equality and this may have given Bolívar the popular support he needed to continue to influence the nation. While this could justify racial equality as a common goal, Bolivar’s polluted motivation brings into question his effectiveness as a leader.
Bolívar’s Goal Attainment

Consideration of the level of support Bolívar received for the goals he envisioned for the new Venezuela helps to acknowledge his efficacy at attaining goals; this provides insight into his role as a caudillo and his abilities as a leader in Venezuela. Bolívar proposed his English-inspired republic in the “Angostura Address” and did not receive approval from legislators. He later introduced the same idea in three other political spheres in Latin America, all but once to rejection by local governments. When his policy ideals did get accepted in Peru, they were to the detriment of the nation (Vargas Llosa 30). Bolívar’s insistence on the same structure even when it failed to pass or failed in practice is a sign of his inflexibility and thus indicates inefficiency.

Similarly, Bolívar attempted to abolish slavery for years before he addressed legislators at Angostura. He offered slaves their freedom in exchange for military service. John Lynch documents the backlash: “The response was negative. The Venezuelan aristocracy did not embrace the republican cause in order to divest themselves of property, while the slaves were not interested in fighting the creole’s war” (Lynch 7).

The Values and Norms of Independent Venezuela

Bolivar’s apparent inability to attain the goals he expressed at Angostura indicates dissonance between leader and followers. This could be because of differing values and norms within Bolivar’s immediate environment: the newly independent nation of

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9 These include: Cúcuta convention, Bolivian constitution, Peruvian constitution (Vargas Llosa 30)

10 While the McDonough Model indicates that leadership is a process involving a leader and followers working toward a common goal, within an environmental context shaped by cultural values and norms, the immediate environment will not be addressed specifically in this study of caudillismo. The environment will instead be explored more throughout the sections regarding values and norms. Combining information specific to the environment with information regarding the greater cultural context of the situation in which caudillismo is occurring will simplify the project and show the direct ties between the current environment and the factors that shape it.
Venezuela and the surrounding independent nations that Bolívar would classify as *Gran Colombia*.

*An Unripe Nation*

It seems that it was accepted by all Venezuelan citizens in 1819 that the nation was new and lacking maturity. The Spanish word for *verde* can either describe the color green or the unripened nature of something. Venezuela was still *verde*, still unready for many of the challenges it would have to face, and Bolívar and his followers all accepted this. Bolívar says of the nation’s new, independent values:

“We were not prepared for such good, for good, like evil, results in death when it is sudden and excessive. Our moral fibre did not then possess the stability necessary to derive benefits from a wholly representative government, a government so sublime, in fact, that it might more nearly befit a republic of saints. (Bolívar 181)

Bolívar intimates with this rhetoric that the values and norms of Venezuela as an independent society had not developed yet. If this belief was held to be true by many people in 1819, it could explain the nation’s complacency regarding Bolívar’s slow regression into authoritarianism. Bolívar and his followers also appear to believe that the cause of their limited societal values and norms was their colonization by Spain.

Bolívar criticizes Spanish rule for its inhibition of Venezuelan sovereign government and values when he says, “In brief, Gentlemen, we were deliberately kept in ignorance and cut off from the world in all matters relating to the science of government” (176). He continues by tying this back to his determination to abolish slavery; the threefold yolk of ignorance, tyranny, and vice that he believes has restrained Venezuelan culture was a
popular conception of colonial rule in Spanish America during the years of revolution (Bolívar 176).

*The Spanish Inheritance*

While Bolívar and others in 1819 believed that Spanish colonial rule was a detriment to budding societies, much of the values and norms of the newly independent Venezuela stemmed from European imperialism. Bolívar references Europe multiple times during his speech and even compares Venezuela to European civilizations: “America,” he says, “in separating from the Spanish monarchy, found herself in a situation similar to that of the Roman Empire when its enormous framework fell to pieces in the mist of the ancient world” (Bolívar 174).

The Enlightenment was a source of influence for many creole elite, including Bolívar himself. This is apparent in Bolívar’s ideological arguments for racial equality—while these arguments were perhaps a veil of Bolívar’s true motivation they suggest that he was appealing to a group of followers who would have been attracted to an ideology of equality—as well as the very concept of self-governance in South America. His application of social engineering based in reason is also an example of the value of enlightened thought and European influence (Vargas Llosa 29). Bolívar paraphrases Rousseau and Homer at various points in his speech—this points to an audience that is well read in European authors, both of early history and the modern era.

It seems that Venezuelans accepted Spanish influence as a norm more comfortably when the influence was born out of the passion of the revolution. Bolívar appears to rally the legislators when he says, “Do you wish to know who is responsible for the events of the past and the present? Consult the annals of Spain, of America, and of
Venezuela; examine the Laws of the Indies, the one time system of mandatarios...11 implying that the nation was in its current independent state in part because of the consequences of Spanish monarchic action (Bolívar 174).

*The Influence of the Land*

Venezuelan values and norms were heavily influenced by Iberian culture, but some aspects of life were molded by the culture of the land. Indigenous and African cultures impacted Venezuela and may have been the cause of a heightened sense of fatalism and connection with nature, as well a nationalist pride that grew after the revolutions.

Fatalism and the importance of a natural or instinctual way of living that cannot be overcome are emphasized in Bolívar’s speech. Bolívar uses the belief that human nature is unchangeable to recognize both the good and bad traits he sees in his followers: “Nature, in truth, endows us at birth with the instinctive desire for freedom; but be it laziness or some tendency inherent in humanity, it is obvious that mankind rests unconcerned and accepts things as they are, even though it is bound forcibly in fetters” (Bolívar 177-8). He also defines Venezuela’s independence and growth as a consequence of fate. He tells the legislators, “In returning to the representatives of the people of Venezuela in this august Congress, the source of legitimate authority, the custodian of the sovereign will, and the arbiter of the Nation’s destiny” (Bolívar 173). Bolívar is literally telling the legislators that he is stepping down from power when he says this, but he implies that all steps he takes concerning the state of the nation are in line with fate.

Perruci expands on this idea to explain that Latin Americans may be more inclined to expect a large power differential between leaders and followers that is immutable. The

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11 *mandatarios* translates to English as *mandates*. The translators likely left the word in Spanish to emphasize the specific list of mandates specific to Colonial Latin American political administration.
value of power distance and the acceptance of a sense of natural order may be so strong in Latin American culture that followers may be more inclined to support leaders who are bold, charismatic, and who hold large amounts of power (Perruci n.pag). Leaders expect followers to be submissive, and accepting of the power differential. Bolívar used these norms and values to attain power and maintain it for a time.

**Conclusion**

Simón Bolívar is considered by some to be the first political caudillo. After liberating much of Latin America from Spanish colonization, he promoted the ideals of a democratic republic but slowly slipped into a dictatorship. Bolívar’s caudillismo appears to be effected not only by aspects of his character, but also by the composition of his followers, and the goals they were working toward and the level of leader-follower cohesion in these efforts. The environment in which Bolívar was leading, influenced by the values and norms of post-revolutionary Latin America, also had an impact on the caudillismo that developed.

It appears in Bolívar’s approach to leadership, as analyzed through his “Address at Angostura”, caudillo leadership is a process. Some factors that may increase the likelihood of this process occurring might include a leader who relies on paternalism, followers who accept dualism – in this case, contradictory language in Bolívar’s speech as well as actions that did not support his rhetoric – and a goal that is not clearly common among all followers and the leader. The cultural values and norms of this environment, specifically an acceptance of natural order and an expectation of a large power distance made it easier for Bolívar to use caudillo leadership.
These factors are revealed even more in Argentina during the 1950s when Juan and Eva Perón adapted caudillismo to encompass a leadership process with more than one person in power.
Perón Leadership Analysis

Caudillo leadership appears to be dominated by men. In fact, the term itself can be translated to mean *strongman*. However, Argentina in the 1940’s saw a new type of caudillo come to power. Eva Perón, also known as Evita, the second wife of dictator Juan Perón, was a caudillo in her own right. Her legacy as an agent for social change may be more memorable globally than the leadership of her husband. Juan and Eva Perón seemed to create the ultimate political couple—ruling in separate spheres but with equal amounts of power and influence. Eva attained a following in Argentina through deference to her husband and populist propaganda. Analyzing her publication *Evita by Evita*, the English translation of *La Razón de Mi Vida*, provides insight into an unusual vessel of caudillismo. While the typical caudillo can be defined as coercive, paternalistic, and militaristic, Evita commanded the attention of Argentina and the world as a young, petite woman with a background in acting (Zorilla).

Eva Perón’s acting history becomes apparent in the theatrical language she uses in *Evita by Evita*, a book comprised of her thoughts on Perón, the Perónist movement, and the *descamisados*, or working class citizens of Argentina. This text was chosen because of the topics it covers and also because it was the last text Evita published before her death in 1952. Though often described as an autobiography, *Evita by Evita* does not include any information about the First Lady before her first meeting with Juan Perón. The absence of such autobiographical information from Evita’s early years is, in itself, perhaps indicative of how Eva wanted to be perceived, and also how she harnessed the

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12 If the title were translated more precisely, it might be *My Life’s Calling*, as the literal translation is *The Reason of My Life*. **
following of so many Argentines as a caudillo. *Evita by Evita* was published in 1953, after Eva Perón had died, though the book was likely written primarily during the early years of her struggle with cervical cancer.

*Evita by Evita* offers an opportunity to analyze the leadership of Eva Perón as well as the leadership of Juan Perón. Eva writes about Juan with such frequency in her book and purports to rely so heavily on his influence and power that it seems difficult to analyze her as a caudillo without also analyzing Juan Perón’s leadership. The two worked diligently as a pair, and so their leadership is intertwined. To truly understand caudillismo as a type of leadership process used by the couple, Juan Perón’s leadership in the years after Evita’s death will not be analyzed. *Evita by Evita* provides information on both Juan and Eva as leaders, their followers, the goals they shared, the environment in which they led, and the values and norms of that environment. When all of these elements are examined together they can illuminate the caudillismo used by Eva as well as by her husband in Argentina.

**Evita and Perón: The Caudillo Couple**

Eva’s publication amply describes herself as a humble working-class sparrow and her husband as a powerful condor and savior of the people (Perón v). While many caudillos rely on paternalism to gain legitimacy, Evita takes a dualistic approach and defines Juan Perón paternalistically while projecting her own leadership as more maternalistic. She portrays both herself and Juan Perón as charismatic and deeply dedicated to revolutionary change. Though not explicit in *Evita by Evita*, Juan Perón also came to power through the military and his dictatorship was the result of a coup d’état. These
were the violent beginnings to a regime led by the famous caudillo couple: Juan and Eva Perón.

**Evita: The Compassionate Caudillo**

Eva Perón portrays herself in *Evita by Evita* as a loving and nurturing woman of the people from her earliest step into the political spotlight with Juan Perón. The first impression of Evita created in this book is of a caring woman, not a ruthless caudillo. However, her dramatic and affectionate rhetoric subtly indicate that the perception she crafts of herself is just one facet of her caudillistic approach to leadership.

Eva Perón depicts herself as the matriarch of the nation when she writes, “When a street-urchin calls me ‘Evita,’ I feel as though I were the mother of all the urchins, and of all the weak and the humble of my land” (Perón 62). She continues to say:

> I feel myself responsible for the humble as though I were the mother of all of them; I fight shoulder to shoulder with the workers as though I were another of their companions from the workshop or factory; in front of the women who trust in me, I consider myself something like an elder sister, responsible to a certain degree for the destiny of all of them who have placed their hopes in me. And certainly I do not deem this an honor but a responsibility. (Perón 62)

This maternalism appears to be a new interpretation of the paternalistic leadership of many caudillos. It is still relational and utilizes *personalismo,* but in a way that is more

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13 *Personalismo* as defined by Juana Bordas is the connection a leader shares with his or her followers by relating with them on personal levels; this includes showing interest in a follower’s family, background, and personal experience primarily through oral tradition (Bordas 116-7).
muted and still adheres to the socially acceptable roles of women in Argentina during the 1940s and 1950s.

Evita is also very charismatic and appears to draw upon her background as a radio and theatrical actress in her language. When she writes of her role as the leader of the women’s movement she chooses superfluous language and embraces the stereotype of women as illogical and driven by infatuations.

When people wish to attribute “intuition” to women as a mysterious virtue, they forget we have to look in a special way at things, at persons and at life. We feel, and we suffer from love, more than men. Our intelligence develops in the shelter of the heart, and that is why our intelligence is not evident except through the glasses of love...Men do not feel or suffer so much through love as women. This requires no proof. In them intelligence grows freely. And because of that they see everything by cold logic, almost mathematically, and the more coldly and mathematically the less they have felt, or suffered from love. (Perón 49-50)

Instead of choosing to write about women’s suffrage or validating the women’s movement through a more socially accepted means such as a different but equal argument, Evita wrote multiple paragraphs on the wills of a woman’s heart to draw upon her soap opera following, which had developed because of her charisma and effervescent attitude (Barnes 19-24). Similar examples of the First Lady evoking her charismatic acting days pepper the text.

Eva Perón writes primarily of the ideas and actions of her husband in Evita by Evita. This seeming humility does not necessarily suggest caudillismo. However, each time
she is self-effacing, she propagates Juan Perón and the Perónist movement. She promotes the major changes that the Perón regime has proposed. In this way, because her rhetoric is still being used to strengthen the authority of her and her husband, her servility is still indicative of caudillo leadership.

*Juan Perón: The Caudillo and the Father*

Evita writes extensively about Juan Perón in *Evita by Evita*. She does not include information about his rise to power and writes only vaguely about his policies and definitive plans for economic and social improvement in Argentina. Instead, she describes him as a father of the nation, a soaring condor, and a dedicated agent of change in the lives of the Argentine poor (Perón 3-11, 22).

References to Perón’s paternalism riddle *Evita by Evita*. This may be most clear in an early statement about Perón’s meetings with union workers and *descamisados*: “In the great family consisting of the nation, the requests presented to the President, who is the common father, are also infinite” (Perón 55). Perón, as a caudillo, uses paternalism extensively to gather followers who look to him for instruction and validation. In fact, Evita suggests that Perón did not simply direct the citizens of Argentina in matters of politics, but in all aspects of their lives. Perón as described in *Evita by Evita* effectively teaches Argentines how to exist. This is clear when Eva writes, “I do not aspire to be a prophet, but I am firmly convinced that, when this century is over, men will remember Perón’s name with affection, and they will bless him for having taught them how to live”
Through his paternalistic leadership Perón also relies heavily on personalismo, a characteristic used to define caudillos by many scholars. Perón’s image as a larger-than-life leader may also define him as a caudillo. Eva writes on the first page of her prologue, “But Perón was, and is, a gigantic condor that flies high and sure among the summits and near to God. If it had not been for him...I would never have known what a condor is like...” The condor is a bird revered in many Latin American indigenous cultures because of its strength as a bird of prey and its often-enormous wingspan. Evita uses the analogy of a condor to define Perón as the largest, most powerful man of his kind, close in thought and action to God. In the words of Frank Tannenbaum, he leads “because he can, not because he was elected”.

It appears that Eva Perón attempts to soften the powerful image she creates of Juan Perón as the condor by also depicting him as an advocate for social justice and the welfare of poor Argentines. Evita writes that his passion for the descamisados eclipses his love for her, his young wife. “I –I confess it honestly– searched in all his letters for a word that would tell me of his love”, Eva writes, “Instead, he hardly spoke of anything but his ‘workers’ whom at that time the oligarchy, at large in the streets, began to call descamisados” (Perón 28). It is possible that Perón worked passionately to create social change in Argentina. This could indicate use of localism and populist tactics to increase power and popularity. It is also possible that Juan and Eva Perón chose to use language to convince the public that they were fighting for the rights of the working

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14 Chevallier, *The Roots of Caudillismo*; Beezley, *Caudillismo: An Interpretive Note*; Perruci, personal interview.
class—something that previous oligarchic governments may have avoided—in an effort to assume greater amounts of power without suffering a coup d’état and regime change.

*Evita by Evita* depicts Juan and Eva Perón as caudillo leaders that use paternalism and maternalism, as well as feminine charisma and humility mirrored by masculine superhuman appearances and populist tactics to lead their nation. The book also makes it clear that neither Juan nor Eva Perón could control Argentina using caudillismo individually. In this uncommon leadership situation, caudillismo is harnessed by a couple.

**The Leaders**

A more thorough understanding of Juan and Eva Perón as caudillos requires an application of the McDonough Model. The first elements of the leadership equation to study are the qualities of the leaders, Juan and Evita.

*Evita: From the Pampas to Perónism*

Evita was born Eva Duarte, an illegitimate child of a married man and the daughter of a poor, working woman in the rural pampas of Argentina (Barnes 13). As an illegitimate child Eva would have received some assistance from her father, but would not have the rights that his legitimate children would have been granted. Without any legally binding commitment between her mother and father, Eva’s financial security would be unstable. This may have given the young Eva reason to believe that relationships are typically fickle and short-lived; an apparent creed she followed as a young woman upon entering the acting business, but eschewed after meeting Perón.

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15 *Superhuman* leadership in the Latin American context, a theory developed in Gama Perruci’s “The Study of ‘Great’ Leaders in Latin America”, suggests that leaders appeal to followers by appearing larger-than-life and heroic.
Evita speaks of the poor, rural areas of Argentina with a sense of urgency that may have resulted from her experience as a youth: “At least I have frequently heard it said [in conversation among the upper class] that there are ‘picturesque’ districts. And to me this seemed the most sordid and perverse expression of the egoism of the rich...‘Picturesqueness’ to them is men and women, old people and children, entire families, who have to live in homes worse than the sepulchers of any of the rich, even the moderately rich!” (Perón 108). While one can make assumptions about the catalyst for her passionate speech on impoverished districts, Evita never discloses information about her own past. Her book and her history do not come to life until she has met Juan Perón at a fundraiser party—a fundraiser that she attended because of the influence of her previous boyfriend (Barnes 25). The destitute Eva has been extinguished. Evita, the beautiful and enigmatic First Lady, is the only image the public is permitted to see.

As the wife of Juan Perón, Eva frequently wore expensive dresses and jewelry during her daily activities, including her meetings with the poor. An article written in *Time* shortly after her death states, “Society was scandalized at the new First Lady of the Pink House...Her answer to society was to acquire more gowns, furs and jewels than any other Argentine woman and to build the splashiest giveaway machine the world ever saw” (“Cinderella” n.pag). It may seem unusual that union leaders, farmers, and laborers with little money or resources would be supportive of a woman who addresses them in a wardrobe that cost $40,000,17 (“Cinderella” n.pag) but Evita seemed able to tap into the underlying desire that many Argentines had of overcoming their socio-

16 “The Pink House” is a literal translation of the *Casa Rosada*, the home of the Peróns and the nucleus of government activity, similar to the White House in the United States.

17 Number not adjusted for inflation.
economic class. She speaks of herself as if she is still a part of the working class and describes herself as humble and lowly (Perón 28), though her attire is lavish.

*The Elements of Evita*

The dualism demonstrated in Eva’s self-defined humility and immoderate clothing and lifestyle is only one example of her ability to act in two roles at the same time. Though Evita implies that she is the matriarch of Argentina, she also describes herself as the young and naive student of Perón. This naivety combined with the age difference between Perón and Eva—the relationship begins when Perón is 48 and Evita is 24—suggests a relationship that is more similar to that of a father and daughter than of a husband and wife. Eva is not solely the mother of Argentina, she is also the daughter of the nation. It is possible that these dual roles, the mother and the daughter of Perónist Argentina, garnered support for Evita from followers. She is one of them.

In addition to carrying the roles of mother and daughter, Evita was also both a student and a teacher. The book, *Evita by Evita*, was printed to give insight into her life in order for her followers to more properly emulate her. It was also a strong source of propaganda to compel more Argentines to blindly follow the lead of Juan Perón. In this way she is teaching the people of Argentina. However, in *Evita by Evita*, she idealizes Perón as her teacher and distinguishes his influence on her way of thinking: “I think (with Perón’s vision and judgement to inspire me) that the people are almost always better represented today by trade-union organizations than by political parties” (Perón 72). Perón also taught Evita to fly as though she were a condor, the values of an egalitarian economic system, and to rely less on plans (4, 47, 104). Frequent references to lessons Evita learns exemplify her role as student. The dual roles may delegitimize
Eva’s power as a leader of Argentina in the eyes of some followers. However, it seems that for many descamisados, her place in both realms makes her appear more relatable, humble, and trustworthy.

Eva herself perhaps recognizes the dualities in her personality and role. She writes, “I was not only the wife of the President of the Republic, I was also the wife of the Leader of the Argentines. I had to have a double personality” (Perón 58). She continues by writing about how Juan Perón holds both the position of president and the position of Leader, a word that she capitalizes consistently throughout the text. His dual roles compel her to hold dual roles as well; “one, Eva Perón, wife of the President, whose work is simple and agreeable, a holiday job of receiving honors, of gala performances; the other, ‘Evita,’ wife of the Leader of a people who have placed all their faith in him, all their hope and all their love” (Perón 58).

Perón: The Rise of a Condor

The lasting impressions of Evita, like her roles in Argentina, are binary. However, Juan Domingo Perón is represented consistently throughout history. Though not regarded as the most successful president of the Argentinian nation, his significance is recognized by all. According to Frederick Turner, “Juan Perón was far more than the most important leader of Argentina in the twentieth century. In many ways, he was a prototypical figure of this century” (Turner 3). Evita writes that Perón is an enormous condor and tells of multiple situations when “his vigorous personality as Leader came into contract with the people” (Perón 71). These, she writes, were times when “he convinced his first disciples...he enjoyed his first successes...he reaffirmed his irrevocable decision to serve the people with all his energies and above all sacrifice!” (71).
Juan Perón began his flight upward as an army officer and leader of the coup d’état that overthrew Ramón Castillo’s regime in 1943. He began to rise in rank as a political official within the new regime with the support of labor unions. He was imprisoned in 1945, an occurrence that Eva mentions briefly in *Evita by Evita* but was released after a great show of support from protesting workers. He was elected president by a large majority in 1946 ("Juan Domingo Perón" n.pag). Evita describes his ascension to power as the consequence of his diligent work. Surprisingly, she abandons the fatalism that many caudillos seem to rely on to explain their hold on power. Instead she writes, “It is not chance that puts men and women at the head of great causes. On the contrary, it seems as though great causes prepare the souls of the men and women who are to lead them. This may be, in part, vocation, but there is evidently something else which we cannot explain and which is not subject to the luck of chance” (Perón 32).

After he is elected, Perón’s presence becomes larger than life. He is compared to prominent leaders in history including Alexander the Great (171). Evita even suggests a comparison between Perón and Jesus Christ:

Nobody, absolutely nobody in history has received so much delirious and fanatical affection as Perón receives...I think that Perón resembles more another class of geniuses, those who created new philosophies and new religions...I will not commit the heresy of comparing him with Christ...but I am sure that, imitating Christ, Perón feels a profound love for humanity, and that it is this, more than any other thing, which makes him great, magnificently great. (Perón 172)
Perón’s popularity as a leader in Argentina grew from this belief in his superhuman qualities. He was portrayed and accepted as a leader of destinies and an agent of change in many aspects of Argentine life. *Evita by Evita* succinctly describes the way Perón’s superhuman leadership was perceived to solve issues: “When my resources are exhausted, then we have recourse to the supreme resource, which is Perón’s fullness of power—he in whose hands all hope, even though it be but a forlorn hope, is transformed into reality” (Perón 82). Perruci suggests that Latin American leaders are often elevated to super- or meta-human levels and that followers raise their leaders above the human level in part because of a leader’s personal characteristics and in part because of factors of the situation (“Great Leaders” 7-9). Evita, when she propagates the image of Perón as the “supreme resource”, is both espousing his character and also attempting to control the situational factors by spreading a skewed view of him (Perón 82).

**A Man of The People**

In addition to espousing his strengths, Evita spends many of the pages of *Evita by Evita* discussing Perón’s ability to relate to the working-class peoples of Argentina. To Eva, he was a man of the *descamisados* and dedicated himself unconditionally to the development of the Perónist movement. Evita writes about the way Perón was greeted by citizens of Argentina as an example of his accessibility: “I like to hear the cries with which people greet Perón. They are *descamisado* greetings. ‘Good-by, old man!’ they cry. ‘Good-by Peróngito!’ ‘God grant you never die, Perón!’ ‘Good-by Juancito!’” (Perón 126). It is challenging to conceive of a highly paternalistic leader communicating on such personal levels with his followers. One might typically assume that the power dis-
tance between Perón and the descamisados would dictate more formal language and fewer opportunities for such types of discourse. It is difficult to know based on Evita by Evita how frequently Perón actually made himself available to individual members of the working class in Argentina. It is possible that Evita exaggerates the congenial interactions between Perón and the citizens of Argentina in order to portray him as a softer, more approachable leader.

Tying into the image of Perón as a man of the people, Eva dedicates time to describing his commitment to the movement. She suggests that Perón’s thoughts were constantly on the descamisados and the Perónist movement. She begins the topic of her love for her husband by recounting a conversation they once had:

I remember one afternoon when, after I had been talking to him for a long time of...of what would I be speaking to him except of himself, of his dreams, of his achievements, of his doctrine, of his triumphs? ...he interrupted to me to say: ‘You talk to me so much about Perón that I shall end by hating him.’ So anyone who searches in these pages for my portrait should not be surprised instead to find the figure of Perón. (Perón 39)

Generally, husbands and wives discuss topics more varied than solely one partner’s own ambitions and achievements, so Eva’s question, “...Of what would I be speaking to him except of himself...?” indicates an unrelenting zeal for the Perónist movement from Juan Perón. Evita’s aim may be to present this zeal as a positive trait for Argentina’s leader, but under the veil of propaganda emerges an image of a man preoccupied with his own power and a woman preoccupied with her husband.
A profile of Juan and Eva Perón as a greater-than-human leader consumed with thoughts of his movement, on the one hand, and a matriarch who is equal parts student and teacher, on the other, come to light through *Evita by Evita*. The characteristics and actions of these two leaders are one aspect of the process of leadership that generates caudillismo.

**The Followers**

To analyze the process of leadership in Perónist Argentina, the relationship between Juan and Eva Perón and their followers must be examined. *Evita by Evita* depicts all citizens as either devout Perónist *descamisados* or ruthless oligarchs who do not deserve the attention or rights of other, truer followers. Conflicting ideals between the upper and working classes appear to be a major defining factor in Perónist Argentine followership. Additionally, the maternalism and paternalism of the Perón leadership is visible when observing followers and the remarks that Eva makes about them.

**A Conflicted Country**

The atmosphere in communities of the working poor before Perón was elected was typically politically charged. Most urban workers were either second-generation Argentines or migrants from the countryside (Alexander 181). Robert Alexander writes that the “second-generation workers were receptive to a native Argentine radicalism” while “migrants from the countryside were politically illiterate” (Alexander 181). Many labor unions existed, some of which were quite large and organized, while others were small and unstructured. Unions were typically supporting socialist or communist movements in Argentina and working to create social security and services in the city of Buenos Aires (Alexander 185).
When Perón began his political career he developed a political party that mirrored the goals and values of the organized unions. This is how he garnered enough support to win the election. Eva references labor union leaders frequently in *Evita by Evita* and also creates a distinction between the true labor union leaders—those who support Perón—and the false labor union leaders, men who were supporters of communism. She introduces the concept of this faction, “But it is not of these false labor leaders, now definitely allied to the oligarchy, that I wish to speak. It is the others, those of good faith and true trade-union spirit about whom I want to write a bit more” (Perón 77).

Greater, however, than the dissension between communist and populist union groups is the faction between the working and upper classes. Evita incites even more expansive disunity among followers by writing, “Our people have lived under more than a century of oligarchical governments whose principal task was not to attend to the people but rather to the interests of a privileged minority [the upper class of Argentine society], refined and cultured perhaps, but sordidly egotistic” (Perón 53). Her word choice when writing about the upper class implies that this portion of Argentine society is unnecessarily advantaged, self-seeking, and wholly lacking in empathy for members of even their own socio-economic group, much less Argentines from other such groups.

Later, she writes again about the relationship between the working and upperclass. After commenting on the challenges of the poor she states, “When [the upper class] read these pages they will remark with smiling self-sufficiency that ‘this is too melodramatic.’...‘Yes! Of course it is melodramatic! Everything in the life of the humble is melodramatic. The sorrow of the poor is not stage melodrama, vulgar melodrama, cheap and ridiculous to the average and selfish man. Because the poor do not invent
suffering...they endure it!” (Perón 118-9). In this way, *Evita by Evita* strengthens the sense of factionalism among citizens of Argentina and creates a sense of a looming internal enemy. An *us versus them* mentality exists within groups of followers in Perónist Argentina.

This division among followers is also visible when Eva Perón writes about the sense of belonging that a *descamisado* should have:

That is why to me a *descamisado* is *he who feels himself of the people*. What is important is this: that he feel himself to be one of the people, that he love and suffer and enjoy with the people—even if he does not dress the part, for that is of no consequence. (Perón 80)

The suggestion here is that *descamisados* had not previously felt themselves a part of the larger Argentine society. Evita attempts to reassure the working class that they belong, and in doing so indicates that a sense of factionalism in Argentina had existed consistently in recent history.

*The Children of Argentina*

Evita makes her preference for the *descamisados* known, despite the fact that as leaders of the nation Juan and Eva Perón were responsible for the upperclass and disdient citizens as much as they were responsible for the poor. The relationship that develops between the *descamisados* and Juan and Eva becomes shockingly paternalistic, and the working class followers that forward the Perónist movement seem to accept and enjoy this type of connection. Eva writes, “Among the hopes of the *descamisados* were many little illusions which they brought to Perón just as children do to their parents” (Perón 55). This statement emasculates the *descamisados*, a group which typically
thrives on its image of resilience and strong work ethic. The working class in fact is sometimes viewed as having a sense of toughness or fortitude, and Evita literally likens them to children. In other instances Eva implies that the poor of Argentina have a child-like innocence and lack refinement: “They are simple men; that is so,” she writes, “they say things crudely, I agree. They do not hedge about to say what they think, for they have not yet learned to lie. When I have not made good on some occasion they have even told me so, and they have known how to say it without offending me” (Perón 86).

Followers did not seem to respond negatively to Eva’s comments about their child-ishness. The book was published postmortem and the mourning of Evita’s death in Argentina was expressed across the state. It seems that followers were comfortable with the parent-child relationship that the Peróns instituted. While it is possible to postulate why a community would be so open to this level of paternalism, there are certainly a great number of potential causes. Regardless of the cause, it is valuable to recognize that the Perónists of the working class regarded Juan and Eva Perón with the filial respect that would be expected from a child towards a parent.

The Hidden Opposition

Though Eva emphasizes the wonders of the *descamisados* with motherly affection, her remarks about the opposition are limited to a caricature of the privileged and heartless wealthy members of society. In reality, a number of small opposition movements existed in Perónist Argentina at the time when Eva was writing *Evita by Evita*; these dissidents were apparently more of a concern to the Peróns than Evita suggested. Joseph Page writes in his biography of Juan Perón that “At first blush it is hard to imagine why Perón paid such heed to his enemies. Weak and divided, they posed no real threat to
his grip upon the nation...[however] it was very much in his interest to keep the public aware of their existence and their challenge to him” (Page 207).

Some opposition leaders were in fact members of the upperclass, but more often opposition emerged in radical parties, communist parties, and other progressive political movements. In 1948, laws enacted in congress made dissent and opposition potential criminal offenses. This includes the law of disrespect which Page writes “evidenced the degree to which the cultural value attached to personal dignity outweighed Argentine society’s commitment to free speech” (Page 209). This law made it illegal to offend the dignity of any public official relating to the exercise of public functions.

The laws to suppress dissidence and the lack of information in *Evita by Evita* on followers who did not fit the mold of the *descamisado* suggests that not all followers were viewed as equal, and that many followers became voiceless during the Perónist regime.

**The Common Goal**

Leadership is the process of a leader working with followers to reach a common goal. While it seems that the Peróns neglected major facets of the Argentine public, they certainly had some followers with whom they created common goals. The Peróns interacted with the *descamisados* to construct an economic climate that favored the working class and the underrepresented portions of Argentine society, including women.

*Economic Fairness*

The goal most often espoused in *Evita by Evita* is economic fairness. Economic fairness as Evita presents it is not the same as economic equality. Instead this concept of fairness or justice in the economy is built primarily around Perónist support of labor union members and other *descamisados*. Thus, creating economic fairness has more to
do with establishing more work opportunities and aid for descamisados and preventing the growth of wealth in the upperclass. Evita recounts a conversation with Perón that identifies his goal for the economy: “As he went on explaining his purposes to me (and his purposes were nothing less than changing an entire economic capitalistic system into one more worthy and more human, and thus more just), my forebodings were confirmed: the struggle would be long and difficult!” (Perón 104).

*Evita by Evita* gives some evidence that points toward a change in economic standards in the nation as a goal of many followers as well. One example is the trade union leaders that were working under the Perónist government to improve working conditions and wages—changes that would develop what the Peróns would consider a more fair economic climate. Regarding trade union workers, Eva writes:

> Thus, for example, in addition to their efforts to better wages and working conditions, they build sanatoriums, hospitals, organize their co-operative and mutual-benefit societies, their trade-union qualifying schools, their libraries, their clubs, etc., and feel themselves happy when they can take to him who has shown them the way the results of having listened to his counsel as friend and as Leader. (Perón 91)

This portion of *Evita by Evita* does exemplify a common goal among the caudillo leaders, Juan and Eva Perón, and their followers, the descamisados and members of the Perónist party. The reason that some question is raised about the effectiveness of the Peróns’ leadership is that not all citizens in Argentina were politically aligned with Perónist doctrine. For these followers, the radical alterations to social and economic life in Argentina was an unexpected and unwelcome change.
Reaching the goal of a more fair economic environment appears to be a high priority in *Evita by Evita*. One interpretation of the text would suggest that Eva was spending much of her time assisting the poor every day. She writes that audiences with the poor of Argentina relax her and reduce her stress (Perón 117) and that her day is filled almost entirely with work regarding the *descamisados*; “Attending to the workers takes up almost all the time I give to audiences and to my work at the Secretariat. This is a natural requirement of the Perónista movement...” (Perón 72). Eva notes in *Evita by Evita* that her social work is not charity. She speaks passionately about her actions as “strict social justice” rather than alms or benevolence (Perón 121). Eva was revered for what followers would call her dedication to the poor and working class Argentines. It seems that her popularity is an indication that many Argentines advocated for and supported her goals.

*The Advent of Women’s Suffrage*

Juan and Eva built Perónism on the position that the government needed to advocate for the working man. However, the couple also recognized a need to advocate for the working woman. Eva Perón was integral to the women’s suffrage movement in Argentina, which her book calls the Perónista Feminist Movement (Perón 46). The goals publicized by the Peróns for the rights of women were radical. Eva writes, “I think one should commence by fixing a small monthly allowance for every woman who gets married, from the day of her marriage...That allowance could be, for a start, half the average national salary, and thus the woman, housekeeper, mistress of the home, would have an income of her own apart from what the man wishes to give her” (Perón 186).

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18 Perónista is often used interchangeably with Perónist, as both words describe a movement or person ascribing to the values of Perónism. The translator chose to use Perónista in *Evita by Evita*. 
Though Evita expresses support for extreme changes, the actual goal of the Perónist party appears to simply be to allow women the right to vote, and ensure that they all turn out to vote for Perón. Eva suggests that the women of the working class were dedicated to the Perónist party when she states, “The women who work with me, social service helpers, visitors, nurses, do not know what fatigue and sacrifice mean. Some have already fallen carrying out their duties, as when they went to Ecuador taking help to brethren in that country affected by the earthquake” (Perón 168). Though Evita does not specifically say that the women she works with were sacrificing for the party, her language in this statement and others throughout Evita by Evita can lead to that assumption.

It is impossible to grasp the response of the people to a movement toward women’s suffrage solely by reading Eva’s text. However, the Perónista Feminine Movement spread across the nation of Argentina, and in the 1951 election, 3,816,460 women voted, almost 65% of them for the Perón ticket (Navarro 27). It seems that at least the female population of Argentina felt that they were working in solidarity with Eva Perón to attain the right to vote and voice their opinions and needs.

While the Peróns did establish some very public campaigns for the working class and for women, the large-scale effectiveness of their goals has always been held to scrutiny.

The Values and Norms of Perónist Argentina
The common goals of Argentines and the Peróns were influenced by the cultural values and norms of Argentina during the time of the Perónist regime. Understanding this culture and the language and actions that were accepted as normal in the nation will give more insight into the caudillismo of Juan and Eva Perón.

_Luck, Providence, and Choice_

Eva uses somewhat conflicting language to describe the cause of Perón’s ascension to power, which may indicate that the nation was in a point of transition regarding beliefs surrounding the roles of luck, providence, and choice. She first states that chance is not the cause of great leaders coming to power, but rather the result of choices a leader makes and intense dedication (Perón 32). However, it appears that these choices are not necessarily predetermined. Eva mentions advice that Perón had given her about planning: “He has taught me that to achieve things it is not necessary, as the majority of people think, to make great plans. If the plans exist, so much the better; but if not, the important thing is to commence the work and then make the plans” (Perón 47). Eva’s emphasis on personal choice as a catalyst for leadership and changes in the nation seems contrary to the fatalistic views often seen in Latin American cultures (Gillin 388). In fact, while Perón apparently attained his role as president through personal choice, his paternalistic leadership greatly reduced the amount of choice the typical Argentine was able to use.

While Evita argues that choice is a more significant factor in future success than fate, she also believes that destiny and God’s natural order play a role:

> If luck and chance governed the world, all would be chaos; and we could not live in such a grotesque scene. No, luck does not govern the destiny of
the world, nor yet of men. Fortunately, thank God, things happen in another way – in another way which some call Destiny and some call Providence, and which nearly all of us attribute to God. (Perón 31)

This paragraph in *Evita by Evita* could be Eva’s way of avoiding potential criticism on a matter that is deeply contested by citizens of Argentina. It could also be her way of buttressing the support of the Perónist movement by appealing to the primarily Catholic population (Wagley 63). At times Evita suggests that Perón was chosen to lead the nation by God, at other times her language may intimate that Perón was a god himself.

When describing the future of *descamisados*, Evita relies much less heavily on language of choice and providence. The *descamisados* have their future decided by Perón. Evita mentions Perón’s control over the destiny of his people first after recounting some of his many skills and qualities. “...I think that in this lies a great part of the secret of Perón’s success in the governing of the destinies of his people” (Perón 91). Later she makes a similar implication: “I feel, like them, that I am the head of a home, much larger, it is true, than those they have made, but in the final count a home: the prosperous home of this country of mine which Perón is leading toward its very highest destinies” (Perón 205).

In essence Eva writes that Perón used skill, calculation, and perhaps divine inspiration to reach his position as a leader of Argentina. However, the working class will not be led to their future through choice. Instead, the working class will follow Perón to their future, which will undoubtedly be better than their current lives. This suggests that the people of Argentina were undergoing an identity crisis. They may have felt that they did not know if they resonated more with the fatalistic belief that one’s destiny is predeter-
mined, or if they were more invested in the concept of having the individual ability to change one’s future. Evita tries to assuage this uncertain crowd by saying that Perón is the ultimate factor in the development of a citizen’s life. She also writes of Perón as though he were above the accepted norms of society that dictate that one’s fate is un-controllable. Perón, unlike the masses, decides his future for himself. Perón’s independent decisiveness appears to be typical of caudillo leaders.

*The Inherent Differences of Men and Women*

An identity crisis in Argentina existed over the amount of control one could have over his own destiny. However, it seems that the public was much more certain about another aspect of their culture: gender roles. Juan and Eva Perón were responsible for women’s suffrage in Argentina, but Evita makes it perfectly clear in *Evita by Evita* that the feminist movement still requires feminine charm. Eva writes, “The truth, logical and reasonable, is that feminism cannot be separated from the very nature of woman. And it is natural for woman to give herself, to surrender herself, for love; for in that surrender is her glory, her salvation, her eternity” (Perón 40). The nation’s acceptance of separate roles for men and women creates a challenging environment for a female leader such as Evita. A woman who surrenders herself to love for her husband or family might not have the decision-making abilities necessary in the leader of a nation. However, Eva combats this by exaggerating her role as the matriarch of the nation and creates an image of herself that corresponds to the values of *marianismo*. As the complement to the Latin American concept of *machismo*, *marianismo* is a set of cultural values that indicate a woman’s need to emulate the actions of the Virgin Mary. In other words, a woman must be pure, passive, vulnerable, and dedicated to her family (Vanden 116). Although
Evita’s history was littered with generous boyfriends\textsuperscript{19}, her persona in Evita by Evita is of a woman who was only and entirely dependent on her husband. She writes, “That is why I am and shall be Perónista until my dying day: because Perón’s cause exalts me, and because its productiveness will continue forever in the works I perform for him and live in posterity after I am gone” (Perón 41). In an environment where the separation of gender roles is the norm, and the value of a woman is determined by her ability to adhere to the principles of marianismo, Eva develops a following of massive proportion. She aligns her views with those of the citizens of Argentina and in doing so establishes a framework for her actions as a leader. She writes, “A man of action is one who triumphs over all the rest. A woman of action is one who triumphs for the rest. Isn’t this a great difference?” (Perón 199).

Evita by Evita provides insight into the values and norms of Perónist Argentina. A fatalist perspective was both embraced and eschewed at various points in the book, which indicates that the people were not unified in their cultural identity, specifically in future orientation. It also indicates that Evita wanted to appeal to as many readers as possible. Additionally, Eva writes extensively on the role of women, and her writing reveals her intent to define herself by the standards of marianismo. The norms of Argentine society created a separate-sphere structure for men and women, and it is surprising that Evita was able to overcome those norms to hold a leadership position—especially by using the tactics of a caudillo.

\textsuperscript{19} In fact Perón is an example of Eva’s advantageous relationships: he provided her financial support for a time before their marriage, and the couple scandalized their neighborhood by moving in together.
Conclusion

Originally, caudillismo was a concept applied only to individual men. Simón Bolívar is an example of an early caudillo: a military leader with revolutionary ideals that changed history and developed a following that lasted long after his death. However, *Evita* by *Evita* indicates that caudillismo is not limited to strongmen. It also encompasses strongwomen, like Eva Perón, who use maternalism and charisma to appeal to the masses. Caudillo leadership can also apply to leaders working together, as *Evita* by *Evita* illuminates. Juan and Eva may have both been influential independently, but their partnership made caudillismo possible. Along with the characteristics of Juan and Evita, the factionalized and underrepresented followers and the radical common goals of economic fairness and women’s suffrage made Perónist Argentina an easy target for caudillo leadership. The environment of Argentina in the 1940s and 1950s valued a power distance between leaders and followers that supported a concept of choice as a means of success in leadership roles but destiny as a means of success in followers. This, combined with the nation’s acceptance and promotion of distinct traditional gender roles, influenced the type of leadership process used by the Peróns.

The evolution of the caudillo did not end with the Peróns, however. Hugo Chávez exemplifies the modern caudillo, adapting the strategies and goals of past caudillos to attain and hold power in Venezuela.
Hugo Chávez Leadership Analysis

Hugo Chávez was elected president of Venezuela in December of 1998 and has maintained power for the past twelve years. He was recently re-elected to serve as president for an additional four years. Though currently in ailing health, Chávez still controls the nation and receives support from a strong following of Venezuelans called chavistas. Chávez communicates to the chavistas and the rest of the Venezuelan population through regular airings of his televised speeches, called Aló Presidente. These speeches are often partially or wholly unscripted and are not regularly scheduled or prerecorded. Aló Presidente episodes, therefore, give insight into Chávez’s leadership style, interactions with followers, and goals for his nation in a medium that is organic and uncensored. This uncensored medium of Chávez’s leadership may be most apparent in the episode analyzed here: number 377 from January 2009. This episode is the most recent one available on Chávez’s website. It was chosen partly because it is the most current video accessible and partly for its content; Chávez outlines his plan for moving toward socialism in this video, which provides insight into both his formulation of goals and his process of goal actualization. This episode highlights Chávez’s interactions with advisors and representatives, as well as his commentary on the working class citizens of Venezuela. In this way the episode appears to be an indicator of his typical rhetoric—or at least the perception of himself that he creates for the public—as well as a glimpse into his decision-making tactics and follower motivation.

20 At the time of writing, Chávez was still reported to be alive and recovering. He was pronounced dead on March 5, 2013.
This episode specifically features Chávez sitting at the center of a round table surrounded by advisors and representatives from various regions and departments of his government. Chávez makes a semi-scripted speech on the Bolivarian socialist movement and peppers in references to his goal of a united Latin America. Video and conference calls are interspersed in the episode. Factory workers, farmers, and children all speak to the camera about the values of socialism and the Chávez regime. Chávez’s enthusiasm does not wane throughout the episode. Rather, he appears just as interested in socialist development as he does in lessons from his grandmother and baseball games, both topics that he brings up as they occur to him during the episode. The tone of the episode resembles a conversation among friends or family as much as it does a professional meeting. Chávez repeatedly interrupts other speakers, makes jokes, and tells stories. His rhetoric is dramatic and expressive. This episode of Aló Presidente provides insight into his designation as a caudillo, as well as his personality and leadership style, his interaction with followers, his goals for Venezuela and his government, the environment in which he is leading, and the goals and values of that environment.

The Modern Caudillo

A holistic view of Chávez’s leadership illuminates his role as a caudillo in the twenty-first century. The caudillo leader is typically defined as a strongman who has come to power through military rule and who uses paternalism\(^2\), personalismo\(^2\), and charisma to appeal to the masses (Chevalier). Most often caudillos are described as men who

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\(^{21}\) Paternalism here meaning leadership that is parent-like in authority and encourages a sense of filial loyalty from followers. See description of terms for more information.

\(^{22}\) Juana Bordas describes personalismo as a focus on the individual, the family, and personal preferences before tasks. She also writes that personalismo emphasizes conversation, story telling, and relating personal experience to others (Bordas 117). Literally personalismo translates to personalism though the terms are not absolute synonyms.
use coercive power and severely limit the responsibilities that they delegate (Tannenbaum). While some scholars use the term caudillo to refer to leaders in a specific historical timeframe, here the term applies to modern leaders as well. Modern caudillos typically use coercion and intimidation within the confines of the law (Nickerson 182).

Chávez’s ability to rise to power and retain it is typical of the modern caudillo leader. Chávez was raised in a low-income household before attending military school, where he excelled in his studies and matured his interests in Marxism and socialism (Post 2-3). Like many caudillo leaders, Chávez gained his political power through a military coup d’état, although his situation was unique. The coup ended in failure and imprisonment for the young Chávez; however, the public learned his name and the failed coup was the catalyst for his political career. Three years after his release from prison, Chávez successfully ran for president (Post 4).

Chávez is also described as a caudillo by many because of his use of paternalism and personalismo. His personalismo is made apparent by observing his most ardent followers, the chavistas. By naming themselves after Chávez and his movement, they have made it apparent that his regime is built by and around him and emphasizes the value of the president more than law and constitution (Perruci). A group of political followers named after a leader is typical of populist regimes. Thus, it is important to recall that populist leaders commonly have the traits of caudillos (Corrales 33-40).

Finally, Chávez has rewritten the constitution in Venezuela during his time as president, a step taken by many authoritarian leaders to conceal increased individual power
in the executive with language that is typically associated with democracy. He eliminated the Senate and filled new positions in the Supreme Court with chavistas. These are some of the ways that Nickerson suggests caudillos can exist in modern politics.

**The Leader**

Understanding caudillismo through Hugo Chávez’s leadership in Venezuela first requires an analysis of Chávez: his background, his personality, and his leadership style. Examining Chávez’s personality through a public presentation of his character proves challenging, because it is impossible to know how much his television persona reflects his true self. However, the way he displays himself in the public light—and thus, the way he wants to be perceived by his nation—is equally valuable to understanding his leadership. One might also argue that the semi-unscripted nature of his show, Aló Presidente, gives the appearance that his speech and actions are indicative of his natural disposition.

**Chávez, En Vivo**

It is apparent in episode 377 that Chávez has notecards on the table in front of him from which to read a predetermined speech. However, he frequently discards his script to digress on subjects ranging from his family life to regional sports teams. Chávez slips into one such deviation when he stops discussing the Armed Forces to recount words of wisdom from his youth:

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23 Examples might include use of words and phrases such as democracy, republic, elected government, and term in office. Chávez changed the constitution to allow a President to run for unlimited terms in office; this change did not apparently eliminate the power of citizens but did give him more authority as president.
When it would rain we would all grumble because the rain stopped us from playing a ball game. But son, what happens is always for the best, you could have hit the ball, sure, or you could have lost; you could have lost the game. (Chávez 3)

This sudden shift to baseball inspired Chávez to briefly recount recent events in the realm of Venezuelan baseball before returning to the proposed purpose of the episode and discussing what he calls “The Grand Mission of Knowledge and Work” (Chávez 3). Chávez’s divergence from matters of business during his episodes may invite his followers to view him as light-hearted and conversational. This starkly contrasts with the specific plans he outlines throughout the speech to move the nation and its neighbors toward socialism. It is challenging to determine if these digressions are unintentional and simply indicative of Chávez’s flighty, unfocused personality, or a calculated decision to soften his image as a radical revolutionary and increase a sense that his leadership is cultivated from the values of the people.

Harnessing the Power of Predecessors

Throughout both scripted and unscripted portions of episode 377, Chávez references Simón Bolívar. Bolívar, the Liberator of Latin America, has been a constant source of inspiration for Chávez. In his first change to the constitution, Chávez renamed his nation the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and has continued to use the legend of Bolívar as a theme in his rhetoric for the length of his presidency.

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24 Translated by author.
Chávez emphasizes the importance of Bolívar during this episode when he references the book, *The National Simón Bolívar Project*. Chávez tells the camera that “This [book] is one that I have read, reread, macerated...” (Chávez 3). He may be using such references to Bolívar to increase his legitimate power. Because he initially acquired power from the aftermath of a coup d’état and he continued to hold power by changing the constitution, he may feel that his legitimate power is insecure. This possibility aligns with Chevalier’s account of caudillismo. Chevalier writes that when a caudillo leader emerges from the people, “he is in urgent need to affirm his power...and at the same time to distinguish himself from the common man” (Chevalier 31). Chávez has quickly discovered that referencing Simón Bolívar and drawing connections between himself and the Liberator can act as his affirmation of power and his manner of distinguishing himself.

It is not surprising, then, that while the typical populist leader erects statues of himself, has portraits painted of himself, and names new buildings and organizations meant to help the people of his nation after himself—Juan and Eva Perón are shining examples of this—Hugo Chávez instead frequently uses the name and image of Simón Bolívar. This provides insight both because it removes Chávez from populism and because it illuminates his tactics for success through his predecessor. It is unclear if Chávez sees Bolívar as an idol, an earlier incarnation of himself, or if he is simply incit-

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25 Translated by author; in Spanish *Proyecto Nacional Simón Bolívar*

26 Translated by author from *Aló Presidente* episode 377 transcripts and video; in Spanish “...*Esto hay que leerlo, releerlo, macerarlo...*” macerar literally means to macerate, or break something up. This could be interpreted rather literally as breaking the spine of a book or more figuratively as analyzing or absorbing the text.

27 Chevalier is most likely referring to the working class, perhaps specifically mestizos and mulattos.
ing a sense of urgency for change in his followers by describing a bygone era, recalled now as a time of independence, heroic deeds, and the birth of the nation.

*The Magic of Sabaneta*

In addition to gaining credibility by comparing himself to Bolívar, Chávez has increased his influence in the nation by embracing a sense of magical realism in his speech. Magical realism in literature and art is a genre in which surreal elements exist in otherwise realistic or naturalistic environments. Chávez tells stories during his speeches that are delicately infused with elements of fantasy. Perhaps this alludes to the animist traditions that influence many Venezuelans today. When Chávez speaks of the city of his birth, Sabaneta, he openly discusses how magical realism exists in the city and the magic that fuels the Bolivarian revolution:

> We have sugar cane in Sabaneta, my friend, that produces—look—in Sabaneta we achieved nearly 200 tons per hectare. What do you think about that? Magical realism. A cane whose stem looked like the trunk of a Samán. You don’t want to talk about magical realism though [laughs], but what I said about the production is true...Isis just laughed but the production of sugar cane in Sabaneta has beaten all of the records. You know this. Loyo isn’t here, but Elías you went to the Ministry of Agriculture, ah, that’s in Sabaneta. Because we went to pass through there to go to the Ezequiel Zamora Center for Sugar. And how many tons did we get?

> Nearly 100. Nearly 100 tons. Fidel, even when sugar in Cuba was most

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28 Samán is a common name in Venezuela for the tree species *Albizia saman*. This family of trees typically has large, broad leaves and small pods. Sometimes referred to in English as rain tree, monkey pod, or cow tamarind. Related distantly to the Tamarind trees common in the American Southwest. These trees are a source of pride for Venezuelans.
productive only achieved 100 tons of sugar cane but...you see this is it: magical realism...this is so. Yes, because this is a magical revolution²⁹.

(Chávez 12)

This expression of myth by Chávez makes him seem more connected to and proud of the indigenous and Pardo³⁰ heritage of Venezuela. It also allows him to develop an image of himself as magical or superhuman because he was born and raised in this surreal town with sugar cane the size of an enormous tree trunk. Chávez’s laugh is genuine, but he stands true to his statement that the Bolivarian revolution is in some way magical or touched by destiny. A connection between Latin American leaders and super- or meta-human qualities as addressed by Gama Perruci substantiates the assumption that Chávez has created an appearance of superhuman leadership. Perruci describes Latin American leaders through analysis levels of human, superhuman, and meta- human (“Great Leaders” 1-13). Chávez uses storytelling to portray himself as superhuman by describing “extraordinary deeds that elevate [him] above ordinary life” (“Great Leaders” 8). While Perruci notes that leaders typically have to die before being promoted to the meta-human level, one might argue that Chávez’s use of the Sabaneta sugarcane story as a myth of his origin is his attempt to elevate his image to god-like status³¹.

Though Hugo Chávez may be attempting to promote his image to meta-human, his actions as a leader are spontaneous and perhaps even impulsive. His digressions dur-

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²⁹ Translated by author

³⁰ Similar to mestizo, commonly referring to peoples of African and indigenous Venezuelan descent.

³¹ The concept of Chávez as a meta-human leader in Venezuela postmortem has not been studied here because his death occurred after this research on caudillismo had already begun. A study of this concept in the future would benefit the holistic understanding of caudillo leadership.
ing episode 377 may make him either appear light-hearted or disorganized. Chávez seeks legitimacy in his role by comparing himself to Simón Bolivar, a national figure of freedom and equality. He employs magical realism in his rhetoric to appeal to followers and exhibit himself as extraordinary.

**The Followers**

A holistic approach to caudillismo requires more than just an analysis of the caudillo. Chávez’s success in attaining and retaining power is directly related to his followers. As the president of the nation, Chávez is the leader both to his strong supporters, the chavistas, and the rest of the Venezuelan population, who respond negatively or with indifference to his presidency. While episode 377 of Aló Presidente has a limited, scripted amount of follower commentary, there are still clues within the episode about chavista and nonchavista followers in Venezuela and their role in caudillismo.

**The Namesakes**

It is not uncommon for the name of a Latin American leader to be adopted as the name of his or her regime and the name of his or her followers. Thus, Hugo Chávez’s regime and specific political process is sometimes called chavismo, and his followers are referred to as chavistas. In the U.S., most people self-identify as either a Democrat or a Republican. In Venezuela, the population is more likely to align with the name of a leader than with a set of party ideals.

Cristóbal Valencia Ramírez wrote in an article for *Latin American Perspectives* that chavistas were highly organized and dedicated members of Venezuelan society, visible in all socio-economic classes who listed their support as first to the Bolivarian revolution and second to Hugo Chávez (Ramírez 95). This is supported by the interviews of
chavistas in episode 377. One interview was with a twelve-year-old boy named Reinaldo Gil. Reinaldo spoke into the microphone at Chávez and the room full of representatives, saying:

Good afternoon, Mr. President. We meet in the Natural Sciences laboratory, President, like everyone who is viewing us can observe. Today at the inauguration [of the Natural Sciences laboratory] I want to say thank you for this Technical School located here in the Acevedo municipality...So as you can see here, all of you, we have all of these things thanks to our President; thanks to you we have a personal maintenance worker, administrators and teachers unlike any other institution... (Chávez 53).

Reinaldo, though a child, presents a similar view of Chávez and his regime as many chavistas of all ages. Chávez, he believes, has helped him in the quest to better himself through new infrastructure like technical schools. Statistics show a different story of Chávez’s ability to help his followers with new infrastructure and assistance programs, but the principle concept is that chavistas believe that Chávez is working to make life in Venezuela better and easier. Chávez’s response to Reinaldo furthers a sense of paternalism between leader and follower, “Oh it’s nothing, little friend. Reinaldo Gil, well, who came here to talk but a little chavito!” (Chávez 53). Chávez uses the familiar and casual language that one might expect to hear in an exchange between father and son.

32 Jon Lee Anderson’s article “Slumlord” and Francisco Rodríguez’s “An Empty Revolution: The Unfulfilled Promises of Hugo Chávez” both note massive failings in assistance programs, economic development, and crime reduction in Venezuela since Chávez began his reign as President.

33 Translated by author; chavito being a commonly used expression that might be translated as “little man”.
Additionally, Reinaldo is portrayed as modeling himself on Chávez, emulating his language and vision in an attempt to be more like Chávez, the father figure.

**Chavista Values**

It appears that *chavistas* appreciate paternalism from their leaders. Representatives and other attendants at the meeting filmed for episode 377 were not uncomfortable with being interrupted or talked over by Chávez. No one appeared to take it as an affront, but rather seemed enthused by Chávez’s new wave of thought. While *chavistas* accepting interruptions from their president is not necessarily parallel to follower subservience, these interactions imply that *chavistas* believe Chávez knows best in all situations.

*Chavistas* also use language expressing their desire of and gratitude for Chávez’s approval during their interviews. One example is a representative featured in this episode, Francisco Díaz. Díaz says on camera, “Thanks to God, and my Commander, and all of the members of this political group, we have achieved, for the first time in history...a great industry...And on this very day our lives have been changed, our lives have changed just now because we now have a means of mobilizing ourselves...” (Chávez 31). Additionally, Nelson Zapata, a worker interviewed in episode 377, states that his dreams have been made true by speaking to Chávez. Zapata’s deference is absolute.

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34 Commander or *Commandante* in Spanish is a term used to refer to President Chávez.

35 Díaz writes “...*ya tenemos en qué movilizarnos*...” This can be translated in a variety of ways. The word *ya* can be translated to mean something has just recently occurred, similar to *already*; it can also sometimes be used to mean something just occurring, so that *now* is an accurate translation.
Zapata says to Chávez:

Well, my Commander, I greet you, first in the name of God, the name of the workers, producers and the communal council. Truly my Commander, let me say that your dream [of a Bolivarian Republic] has become reality, and I say as well that my dream has also become reality, because on two different occasions I have dreamt that I have talked to you, well, and I tell you that this is one of the realities that God has made for me, that I could talk with you over this medium of communication... (Chávez 33).

Zapata goes as far as to suggest that his opportunity to speak via telephone on Aló Presidente with Chávez was a work of God. This heightened level of affection and need for approval in the examples of Zapata and Díaz is paired with an indifference to frequent interruption from all chavistas on the program, giving chavistas the appearance of accepting and wanting paternalistic leadership.

The chavistas also appear to value socialist ideals. At the time of this episode’s filming, communal factories were developing around the nation. Bhaskar Sunkara writes that while Chávez initiated many of the movements toward socialism—including the development of communal work environments—he and his government have struggled to keep up with the enthusiasm of the people of Venezuela (Sunkara 22-4). Chavistas interviewed in episode 377 expressed this enthusiasm by calling the capitalist system

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36 Zapata says in Spanish le saludo, which is commonly translated to “I greet you” but more literally means “I salute you.” Chávez apparently promotes the use of militaristic language, so it seems possible that the phrase was meant to have the connotation of respect and acknowledgement of a superior. However, because of the popular association of the phrase with greeting or welcoming it was translated as “I greet you.”
black and fatal, describing the socialist movement as a blessing, and constantly affirming their support and belief in Chávez’s leadership. This must not be considered the view of all citizens of Venezuela, but one might assume that all committed chavistas believe in the power of socialism. Chávez’s government has emphasized their work for the poor, and this message seems to be one that the Venezuelan people receive and accept.

Finally, chavistas may also be more willing to accept the unknown in the political sphere of their lives. While Venezuela has a relatively free and unbiased press, there are many details about the government that are kept quiet. Recently, Chávez has been suffering from some form of cancer and has required multiple surgeries. The Venezuelan public and the chavistas who work to promote Chávez’s agenda do not know what type of cancer ails Chávez, or how he is being treated during his sojourns to Cuba (Ghitis n.pag). The most recent information on Chávez’s health leaves followers completely in the dark. Government representatives suggest that his health is improving, but there have been no sightings of him in months. Some dissidents and foreign journalists have announced him dead. While marches have erupted in demand of information about Chávez’s health, they have remained relatively small and impulsive. This indicates that the population is relatively comfortable living without knowing if their president is dead or alive (Castillo n.pag). In episode 377, with a similar acceptance of the unknown, assistants and representatives accept Chávez’s digressions and lack of organization. Chávez could introduce any subject at any time, regardless of the scripted speech that had been developed and approved. Guests on the episode do not appear surprised or perturbed during these deviations, but respond to them genuinely and on the spot.
The Invisible Population

*Chavistas*, a group of Venezuelans who support Chávez and his government, value paternalism and socialism while accepting uncertainty from Chávez’s regime. However, there are citizens in Venezuela who do not identify as *chavistas*. These citizens represent both the opposition to Chávez and the politically uninvolved or indifferent. Chávez’s government intentionally only interviews highly dedicated *chavistas* for *Aló Presidente*. The omission of non-*chavista* citizens in the episode most likely indicates that Chávez feels threatened by his opposition and the questions they would ask. The opposing and indifferent Venezuelans are, in this way, the invisible population.

Non-*chavistas* exist in all socio-economic levels. Many are urban poor who had faith in Chávez to improve living standards and create jobs and were disillusioned after Chávez had been in office for years without making many visible changes (Venezuela Review, n.pag), and some statistics indicate that over 30% of the working poor in Venezuela do not support Chávez (Corrales 35). The voice of the invisible population may be unheard, but that does not mean they are not being watched. Javier Corrales suggests that Chávez’s regime has many ways of identifying citizens who support opposition. “By compiling and posting on the Internet lists of voters and their political tendencies – including whether they signed a petition of a recall referendum in 2004—Venezuela has achieved reverse accountability” Corrales writes, “The state is watching and punishing citizens for political actions it disapproves of rather than the other way around” (Corrales 34-5).

37 This referendum was designed to recall Chávez from his role as president and was signed by over 3 million Venezuelan citizens. Chávez won the referendum and stayed in power (Corrales 35).
The Invisible Coup d’état

The non-chavista population of Venezuela attempted to end this reverse accountability through marches and a failed coup between the years of 2001 and 2004. Rodríguez notes that Chávez successfully resumed power in Venezuela by blaming the weak opposition parties that overthrew him for Venezuela’s recession (Rodríguez 60). In fact, the cause of the recession was a series of economic decisions Chávez made as president. These poor decisions included reducing the oil revenue budget for social programs and purportedly allowing corruption to contaminate the wealth redistribution system of the nation (Rodríguez 49-62). However, his argument was persuasive, and chavistas and non-chavistas alike accepted his increased power in the state after the unsuccessful coup (Rodríguez 60). In effect, the result of an opposition movement from the invisible population was an increase in power and support for Chávez.

The Common Goal

The McDonough Model reasons that leadership is not simply a description of a leader and his or her followers. It also requires a common goal and the efforts taken to reach that goal. This standard of leadership may be the most difficult for caudillismo to reach. Caudillos like Chávez apparently focus only on personal goals; without goal commonality with followers this relationship is in essence simple authoritarianism. However, a deeper analysis of Chávez’s actions and rhetoric through Aló Presidente episode 377 reveals both Chávez’s own goals and the goals he shares, or appears to share, with his followers.
The Bolivarian Republic

The Bolivarian Republic serves two purposes in Venezuela. For the people of the nation it is a means to reach an end: greater infrastructure, higher education and literacy, decreased poverty. For Chávez, the Bolivarian Republic is the end, and it represents a nation or community of nations where he is revered as a leader and a legend. Chávez quite apparently supports the goals of his followers for greater development, but likely sees these goals as stepping stones to the final objective of Bolivarianismo. A complicated relationship between Chávez’s means and ends and the means and ends of the Venezuelan populace may not reflect the definition of common goal as the McDonough Model intends but nonetheless serves to validate caudillismo as leadership in this context.

Chávez’s language in episode 377 exposes his passion for a Bolivarian revolution in Venezuela. He states:

[T]he socialist ethic and socialist values are in a permanent battle against the values of capitalists, the values of selfishness, violence, hatred, corruption, anti-nationalism, etc.; the new ethic that must follow works only with much strength, in all levels, in all spaces, in every single minute\(^{38}\).

(Chávez 4)

This statement defines Chávez’s want for socialism and his willingness to make sacrifices and expect sacrifices from his followers to allow socialism to flourish. Chávez speaks later in the episode about the necessity of politics as a basic human need:

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\(^{38}\) Translated by author; the word fuerza has been translated here as strength though it could also be translated as force.
[There are] fundamentals in the satisfaction of human needs, and these needs are not just, for example, the needs of animals. No? Here we are, here we are perfectly enlightened and we include in our needs politics, culture, and creative leisure activities. This is life; life does not simply mean eating, dressing yourself, and having a roof above your head...no, necessities here are objectives and human needs...services for health, transportation, and other personal needs...and finally social, cultural and political needs...created by the action and function of national development.39 (Chávez 7)

One cannot assume that Chávez supports this revolution because of his faith in socialist ideals, nor assume that his support comes from a need for greater unchecked power. His rhetoric supports the first assumption while his actions support the second. Regardless of the cause of his dedication, his ultimate goal is apparent.

Venezuelans, both chavistas and non-chavistas, appear to value infrastructure and development more than Bolivarian ideals. While chavistas are described as being very dedicated to the Bolivarian movement and socialism, according to Ramírez, it would not be difficult to imagine that their support is driven from a want for development instead of dedication to ideology (Ramírez 79-96). A member of the Venezuelan working poor might hear Chávez’s statement about the nation providing satisfaction of human need and be drawn to both the promises Chávez makes and his inspiring language.

39 Translated by author.
Bolivarian Values, Modern Media

While one might argue that Chávez and his followers do not have the same goals for the Bolivarian revolution, there is one thing that both Chávez and followers agree on: a delicate balance between the Bolivarian values and identity of Venezuela, and modern, western-born social media. Traditionally Chávez and chavistas have supported revolutionary values and movements while eschewing Western culture, specifically the influence of the United States of America. However, Chávez enthusiastically spends time during episode 377 to respond to tweets from his followers (Chávez 38). Twitter is a form of social media that captured the interest of Chávez and chavistas, and it appears that both the Chávez government and many members of Venezuelan society would like to see increased availability of such forms of social media.

Twitter, headquartered in San Francisco, California, embodies the values of the U.S.: it enables individual users to speak directly to celebrities, politicians, corporations, and reporters. It is known across the world for being instrumental in citizen-led coups (Twitter n.pag). It has the potential to give voice to members of the invisible population of Venezuela while protecting the anonymity and location of such citizens.

This may compel Chávez and chavistas to continuously strive for a balance between burgeoning social media and the now-aging values of the revolution. Non-chavistas, too, may want a balance of new media and technology, and an identity that is more traditional for Venezuela. Even if these citizens have a distaste for the Chávez regime, they likely still have a sense of nationalism and pride in their history that would compel reservation toward a complete westernization of Venezuelan culture.
Measures of Success

Chávez’s success in reaching these common goals is debatable. Outside observers paint a picture of Chávez as a man of empty promises. Francisco Rodríguez worked on the National Assembly in Venezuela; regarding his experience with Chávez’s regime he writes, “...Through a combination of luck and manipulation of the political system, Chávez has faced elections at times of strong economic growth, currently driven by an oil boom bigger than any since the 1970s” (Rodríguez 51). He continues to argue that there is little evidence of any redistribution of wealth or increased social gains from Chávez’s political movement. While GDP increased from 2003 to 2007, Rodríguez attributes the rise entirely to an increase in oil prices, and he points to an increased Gini coefficient for a similar time period. Rodríguez argues that Chávez’s efforts to create a greater sense of equality for citizens of Venezuela has made the nation less equal and placed new oil wealth in the hands of only a few Venezuelans (Rodríguez 52-3). This seems to be more evidence of the disconnect between leader and followers regarding the Bolivarian revolution. For followers who recognize development as the end and revolution as the means, Chávez has been ineffective. Chávez, who apparently sees the revolution as an end and development as a means, might believe himself to be reaching goals at an efficient rate.

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40 In addition to Rodríguez, authors including Javier Corrales and Bhaskar Sunkara make compelling arguments against the Chávez government, suggesting that the nation has regressed economically and socially since Chávez’s first term in office.

41 The Gini Coefficient is a measure of equality within nations. A score of zero indicates perfect economic equality (everyone would have the exact same income) and a score of one indicates perfect inequality.
The Values and Norms of Contemporary Venezuela

To understand why this political disconnect and ineffectiveness in government is relatively accepted in Chávez’s Venezuela, the nation’s values and norms must be evaluated. An examination of the values and norms of the environment in which Chávez leads will also generate a clearer interpretation of caudillismo.

Strength in Family and Community

Venezuelans appear to greatly value relationships and personal connections. Within moments of the opening of episode 377, Chávez references his grandmother as a source of wisdom and an object of respect. With such a reference, Chávez represents a national culture that views familial relationships as a source of knowledge and prudence. He also presents the elderly as embodying mysticism and sagacity. One might postulate that such a view of the elderly has developed from the influence of the early indigenous and African animist religions that continue to impact Catholicism in Venezuela.

Chávez interrupts his script to discuss his family multiple times in episode 377. In one instance an interview with a chavista compels him to tell a story. He begins by saying, “...I have a cousin there in Sabaneta named Adrián, Adrián Frías well, the son of my aunt Joaquina, there [in Sabaneta] is Joaquina de las Frías, the sister of my mother” and continues to tell a story of how his cousin Adrián insists to everyone who will listen that one time when he and Chávez were boys they played baseball in front of their grandmother’s house after a large pit or well of water had accumulated in the yard. Frías maintains that Chávez, in order to continue playing baseball, ran into the water to a point where it was chest-deep and nearly sank completely into the pit to retrieve the
ball. In the story Chávez then pointedly tells his cousin and friends, “Boys, one day I will be President” (Chávez 37). This prolonged relation of a childhood tall tale expresses a man’s affection for his extended family and Venezuela’s convention of super-nuclear families.

The value of relationships extends beyond the family. The affectionate use of diminutive names and the use of phrases such as “big Bolivarian revolutionary hugs to you” in statements of parting indicate a level of closeness among chavistas and Chávez that would not be perceivable in the U.S. Connections between people are so highly valued that fostering relationships might often be prioritized over accomplishing a task in Venezuelan organizations.

The respect and affection required in Venezuelan relationships sets a foundation for paternalistic leadership in which a leader is expected to cultivate and protect power, and followers are expected to be entirely powerless and loyal (Perruci).

*Perspective of Duality*

In addition to valuing extended family and developing close relationships, Venezuelans may have a positive perception of duality. Glen Caudill Dealy argues that Latin Americans might demonstrate unparalleled levels of affection among family and close friends, while maintaining a calculated and unemotional approach to politics and interactions with opposing parties (Dealy 51). The influence of a positive perspective of duality on Venezuelan society might cause followers to see nothing wrong with a leader who speaks passionately and affectionately to close companions and colleagues, but is harsh or impassive in other crowds. Followers might also find no conspicuity in a leader who consistently attends Mass and also immerses himself in corruption. This leads to
an acceptance of leaders who are self-serving and deceiving. Evidence of this perception of duality is not explicit in episode 377. Rather, it becomes discernible when Chávez’s speech and the response of followers in the episode are given the context of Venezuelan political reality.

**Necessary Power Differentials**

Perruci argues that the shared history of Latin Americans has produced a cultural proclivity toward large power differentials between leaders and followers. This he describes through the analogy of a speech from a balcony. Venezuelans expect their leader, Chávez, to stand alone, unencumbered by the opinions and recommendations of his many followers. There is an expectation that Chávez will stand on the balcony and look down upon his adoring—and perhaps helpless—followers (Perruci). This expectation of a power differential may make Venezuelan citizens seem unaffected by the artifacts of power that would concern citizens in the US. Chávez’s common use of the title Commander and long-term relationship with the military42 may be so common of leaders throughout Venezuelan and Latin American history that chavistas and non-chavistas intuitively recognize them as signs of a capable, efficient leader, and do not connect it with nondemocratic regimes as do followers in other nations.

The attraction that may exist among Venezuelans to balcony leaders is rooted in Iberian colonial culture and a series of revolutions throughout Latin America that erupted in an effort to promote more conservative leadership (Perruci). Unlike the American Revolution, which introduced a new and radical system of government, many Latin American countries devised revolutions to remove themselves form the rule of transitioning Euro-

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42 Perruci suggests that creation or promulgation of titles, strong relationships with the military, and actions or constitutional reforms developed to remove balance of power structures are artifacts of power.
pean control. While leaders in Venezuela have not been monarchs in name, elected leaders have been more authoritarian and powerful than one would expect in a democratic republic.

**Conclusion**

Chávez’s leadership is an example of caudillismo in the present. His popularity with the *chavistas* may be influenced in part by his adaptation of caudillismo used in the past by leaders like Simón Bolívar and Juan and Eva Perón. It is clear that the models of these previous leaders have impacted his political ideology. Caudillismo in Chávez’s Venezuela appears to be influenced by characteristics of Chávez’s personality and actions, specifically his image as an unscripted, spontaneous leader, and his emphasis on the era of the Liberator. The process of caudillo leadership is also affected by *chavistas* and other followers, especially their acceptance and appreciation of paternalism and the unknown. Chávez’s goals, which could arguably not be the goals of his followers, also set the stage for caudillismo. The values and norms of family connectedness, duality in leaders, and power differentials may encourage caudillismo in modern Venezuela.
Conclusions

Theories of caudillo leadership frequently focus solely on the actions, language and characteristics of caudillos. However, it appears that caudillismo may be effected as much by features of the followers, the type and commonality of the goal or goals, and elements of the immediate environment, including the impact of cultural values and norms.

Throughout history, Latin America has seen the emergence of many caudillo leaders. Simón Bolívar, Juan and Eva Perón, and Hugo Chávez are only a few examples. It may be easy to assume this leadership phenomenon is simply a regional problem; a culture that likes being commanded, or a continent that cultivates men and women who are power hungry. However, by analyzing caudillismo as a process that is greater than any one of its elements, it becomes more apparent that caudillo leaders stem from complex situations, influenced but not determined by the reverberations of Spanish colonization and the culture that grew from the post-revolutionary power vacuum.

Simón Bolívar, an early caudillo of Latin America, attained power in part because of his personal characteristics. He was deeply influenced by his education in Europe and adapted the concepts of the Enlightenment to apply to Latin America. His support of equal rights for Venezuelans of all ethnic backgrounds helped him amass support. Bolívar used rhetoric that indicated he wanted to step down from his role in power but contradicted himself by suggesting that his followers could only be led by a leader with superhero qualities. The social castes of Venezuela created factions among followers.
This may have made it easier for Bolívar to use caudillismo to obtain power. The goals that Bolívar shared with his followers included creating a stable new state, and a nation of peaceful diversity. It is difficult to assert Bolívar’s ability to attain these common goals. Many people still revere Bolívar as a hero, but it seems that he did not reach the goals that he espoused at the “Angostura Address.” The culture that developed from the newly liberated nation of Venezuela, and the influence of Iberian, African and indigenous American peoples created an immediate environment that fostered the strongman leadership that Bolívar employed.

Like Bolívar, Juan and Eva Perón were able to use caudillo leadership because of elements of their personalities and choices as well as the traits of their followers, the common goal, and their environment. Juan and Eva relied heavily on paternalism and maternalism to attract followers. Similar to Bolívar’s followers, the Argentines of the 1940s and 1950s were deeply divided, and Evita by Evita appears to be used as a medium to strengthen those divisions. Eva suggested that Juan Perón had superhuman qualities that made him the only appropriate leader of Argentina, and described followers as if they were inexperienced children. The progressive goals of the Perónist regime, including economic assistance for the poor and suffrage for women, attracted support for Perón and Eva, but the success of the leaders is challenged. A fatalist approach to leadership was the norm of the working class and this, in conjunction with specific and separate gender roles, allowed the Peróns to acquire power as a couple in Argentina.

It seems that Hugo Chávez gained popularity in part because he adapted earlier caudillo tactics to suit the present Venezuelan population. As a leader he was
expressive, dramatic, and perhaps spontaneous. His most supportive followers, the *chavistas*, were deeply dedicated to him and his ideals, including the concept of Bolivarianism. However, dissenting followers – those in political groups that did not support Chávez, were underrepresented. These invisible followers may suggest more factionalism within the Venezuelan population than Chávez presented in *Aló Presidente*. Common goals in Chávez’s Venezuela included a shift to a Bolivarian Republic and modernization through media including Twitter. It appears that Chávez was not successful in reaching the common goals of his nation. However, he remained in a state of power and continued to get reelected. The value of family and community and acceptance of duality in leadership in Venezuelan culture assisted Chávez in gaining power and staying popular even as he consistently underperformed.

Each of these examples indicate that caudillismo is more than a list of leader traits. Rather, caudillismo is a process that involves followers with common goals in an environment with certain values and norms.

To understand caudillo leadership more fully, further research in the effectiveness of caudillos and their interactions with non-supportive followers could be examined. One route of study might be based in the effectiveness of the Peróns, which is still contested by many. A comparison of rhetoric and action by both Peróns could bring to light the level of goal attainment in their regime and might offer insight into the importance of goals and goal attainment in caudillismo.

One might also choose to research more deeply the continued support of caudillo leaders such as the Peróns and Bolívar. These leaders are held up in Argentina and
Venezuela as heros and this could be applied to Perruci’s discussion of the super- and meta-human.

Additionally, a deeper study of Hugo Chávez as a leader and the response of his followers to his terminal illness could strengthen the conclusions of this investigation of caudillismo. More of his episodes of _Aló Presidente_ could be analyzed, and a study of his followers in more depth, especially through a rhetorical analysis of speeches, writings, and demonstrations by opposition groups, could identify more characteristics of caudillo followership. Chávez, as a modern caudillo, offers many different opportunities for further study. A study of his successor, the process of election that occurred after his death, and his continued influence on the nation of Venezuela could also offer insight into his role as a super- or meta-human leader and the role that caudillismo plays in his role postmortem.

Further research into caudillo leaders would strengthen and fortify the findings of this research and aid the understanding that scholars have of leadership as a human phenomenon.
Works Cited


