



Press Release

BROCK UNIVERSITY MEDIA ADVISORY

R00066

19 Aug. 2014
Communications & Public Affairs
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Brock prof pens new book on the politics of Peter Kormos

Brock Labour Studies professor Larry Savage has written a new political biography detailing the life and activism of longtime NDP and Welland MPP Peter Kormos.

The book, *Socialist Cowboy: The Politics of Peter Kormos*, begins in 1968 when, as student council president, Kormos led a student strike at Eastdale Secondary School in Welland, Ont. and ends with his death in 2012.

The book details Kormos' political trajectory from his early years as a student radical to his rise in provincial politics in the 80s and his 23-year career as a member of the Ontario legislature.

In describing Kormos' early political development, Savage notes, "The one thing that's consistent is the idea that he had a very clear independent streak and a very clear anti-authoritarian streak. Two things he carried throughout his entire political career."

Savage met Kormos while in high school and worked on his 1996 Ontario NDP leadership campaign. He also interned in his constituency office as an undergraduate political science student at Brock and later worked for Kormos part-time.

"He always fascinated me as a politician," says Savage. "In one sense he was viewed as sort of a trigger-happy political loner who impulsively shot from the hip. But Kormos himself effectively used this cowboy imagery to present himself as an imposing never-back down champion of blue collar common sense."

"This is, in part, what inspires the title of the book, this idea of the socialist cowboy," he explains. "It is designed to capture that political paradox that was Peter Kormos."

The book charts Kormos' political development through interviews and archival research. It is published by Rosewood/Fernwood and is available in local bookstores, including Brock's Campus Store.

Author royalties for the book will also be donated to the Peter Kormos Memorial Bursary, which was established to support students in Brock's Labour Studies program who are in financial need and have demonstrated commitment to social justice activism. The first bursary will be awarded this fall.

Savage is also presenting a couple of upcoming public readings of *Socialist Cowboy*:

- Thursday, Sept. 11, 7 p.m., at the Welland Public Library
- Friday, Sept. 19, 7 p.m., at the Niagara Artists Centre (NAC) in St. Catharines

For more info: <http://fernwoodpublishing.ca/book/socialist-cowboy>

* Larry Savage, associate professor and director, Centre for Labour Studies, Brock University, lsavage@brocku.ca

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