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AN EXAMINATION OF POLITICAL ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR USING
REGULATORY FOCUS THEORY

by

Kristen D. Deppe

A DISSERTATION

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AN EXAMINATION OF POLITICAL ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR USING
REGULATORY FOCUS THEORY

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University of Nebraska, 2017

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Using Regulatory Focus Theory (RFT, Higgins 1997), I take a broad look at the manner in which political behaviors and attitudes are impacted by the promotion and prevention motivational systems. I first look at how behavior in life generally and political life specifically are similar in terms of regulatory focus. Second, I look at how RFT is related to political attitudes. Specifically, I look at whether there is a connection between regulatory focus and ideological attitudes, whether there is a relationship between policy context and motivational systems, and whether the status quo of a policy leads to a relationship between focus and issue attitudes. Finally, I look at how regulatory fit impacts the intention to vote as well as attitudes related to casting a ballot. I look at process based regulatory fit by interacting a person's chronic regulatory focus and how they behave in political life. I also analyze outcome based fit by manipulating focus and the content of a Get Out the Vote message. I examine these topics by using three separate studies – two surveys and one experiment. I show people generally use either eager or vigilant strategies across both every day and political life. I also show that people who use eager strategies vote for their preferred candidate while those using vigilant strategies are more likely to blackball disliked candidates. My findings show a much stronger connection between a general proclivity to use eager strategies and holding a promotion orientation than prevention focus and using vigilant strategies. In addition, I find that the environment in which people are politically active impacts attitudes. For example, the current status quo of a policy impacts how regulatory

focus is related to issue attitudes. Also, under certain conditions, the combination of focus and strategy use can increase external efficacy and positive attitudes related to voting.

Overall, people's motivational systems color their view of the political world and how they relate to it.

For Riley and Levi.

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CHAPTER 1 Introduction

“I just wanted to know why I should remain a loyal fan when the owners and the players have personally done nothing for me.”

–Jackie, Green Bay Packer fan (NPR Aug. 1, 2011)

Jackie perceives that she in fact matters to the Green Bay Packers organization and that her refusal to support the team following the NFL lockout will negatively impact the team. Her goal is to support the team and she expects the organization to see her contribution to this goal as important. Does this same perception of being important and influential spill over into the political world? Does the perception of a goal and how it is met matter in a citizen’s relationship to the political world? The answer to these questions is, as with many questions asked in social science, it depends.

Goals offer a framework of human behavior by providing motivation to direct, engage, and sustain actions and these goals represent the desire to reach a positive state and avoid a negative one (Austin & Vancouver 1996; Dweck & Leggett 1998). Within the political world government officials have reelection goals, citizens obtain information, construct beliefs, and choose to participate or not. However, people perceive these goals differently, and in effect, move towards them differently and experience the path from current to end state differently. I propose taking a deep dive into how motivational orientation affects political behavior – how political goals are seen and acted upon differently based on Regulatory Focus Theory.

1.1 Regulatory Focus

Regulatory Focus Theory (RFT) states there are two distinct motivation systems – promotion and prevention – based on pursuing nurturance or security needs (Higgins 1997). Needs perceived as related to advancement and ideals are met with a promotion

focus, using eager strategies highlighted by a sensitivity to gains. Security related needs, oughts, are met with a prevention focus – emphasizing duty and obligation – using vigilant strategies emphasizing the avoidance of losses (Higgins 1997). Not only can *different* goals reflect either concern, but people may perceive the *same* goal with a promotion or a prevention lens. In each case, whether regulatory focus is examined as a personality trait or induced by the environment, goal pursuit is characterized as approaching a desired end-state (Higgins 1997; Higgins & Silberman 1997).

The overarching research question in this project uses RFT to examine political behavior by asking, **how does goal perception affect political attitudes and behavior differently under a promotion or prevention focus?** If Jackie is prevention focused she is more likely to root harder for the defense to stop the opposing team's drive and a win by the Packers equals security in the league's standing. She is also more likely to use anti-Trump bumper stickers to show support for Hillary Clinton. If Jackie is promotion oriented she will cheer harder for Rodgers to make a touchdown pass to Jones because a win will get the Packers closer to the Super Bowl and cheer harder for Rodgers to make a touchdown pass to Jones. She will also show support for the Democrat Party's advancement to power with a pro-Clinton bumper sticker.

While these behaviors may seem like two sides of the same coin, they are intrinsically different. Large differences in goal pursuit, emotions, decision-making, and information processing occur across the two (Higgins 1997; for review see, Forster & Werth 2009; Molden, Lee, Higgins, Shah, & Gardner 2008). Promotion focused individuals prefer positive information and are attuned to positive reinforcement, have a global processing style, and display a risky bias. Prevention dominance is associated with preferences for negative information, higher responsiveness to negative stimuli, using a local processing

style, and a conservative risk bias (Higgins 1997; Higgins, Roney, Crowe, & Hymes 1994; Crowe & Higgins 1997).

Regulatory focus can be a valuable lens to view political behavior because of the wide ranging effects it has on people's lives, ranging from optimism (Grant & Higgins 2003) to driving behaviors (Hamstra, Bolderdijk, & Veldstra 2011) to in- and out-group relations (Shah, Brazy, & Higgins 2004) to self-identity (Lee, Aaker, & Gardner 2000). People with a promotion focus hold an entirely different worldview compared to people with a strong prevention focus. These differences are reflected in the cognitive style of each, connecting the individual to the social world (Higgins 1996; Strauman & Wilson 2013). Seeing the world differently and processing what is in it in distinct manners makes it probable that each regulatory orientation influences behavior not only a people's everyday life, but also their view and behavior within the political world. I explore regulatory focus as a psychological and environmental variable throughout this project to examine motivation and its connection to political attitudes and behavior.

1.2 Regulatory Fit

People may or may not meet goals using strategies that match their goal orientation, such as using strategic eagerness (vigilance) for those that have a stronger promotion (prevention) orientation. Individuals may, consciously or not, pursue goals in ways that match the current regulatory focus. In other cases, the environment may be conducive to using either an eager or vigilant strategy or induce regulatory fit itself (Higgins 2000). When there is a match between regulatory orientation and goal pursuit means, a "feeling of right" occurs. This misattribution increases motivation towards a goal and the perceived value in their performance or a target object, as well as raises their confidence in their choice

(Cesario, Grant, & Higgins 2004; Higgins 2000; Higgins, Idson, Freitas, Spiegel, & Molden 2003; Idson and Higgins 2000).

These postulates regarding regulatory fit leads to my second broad research question, **how does regulatory fit affect attitudes toward one's perception of political activity?**

Going back to Jackie, the Green Bay fan, if she is promotion (prevention) oriented and uses eager (vigilant) strategies to meet her political goals, regulatory fit is likely to occur and she will be more motivated to pursue opportunities to engage in the political world and see more value in her participation. Jackie's strong attitude about her importance as a Packer fan could be tied to how she pursues goals as a sports fan. If this is true, does it also work within the political world?

1.3 Outline

In the remainder of this dissertation, I provide an answer to these main research questions as well as several smaller ones nested within the notion that regulatory focus and fit impact political behavior. I do this across four empirical chapters that are bookended by one chapter on the theoretical underpinnings of RFT and a concluding chapter on the findings and implication of motivational orientation on political attitudes and behavior. I offer a broad analysis of how RFT fits into political psychology looking not only at ideology and attitudinal direction, but also participation and attitudes towards government pertinent to a democratic system.

Prior to the empirical investigation, I examine previous literature on regulatory focus in Chapter 2, focusing on where RFT and political behavior intersect. The chapter brings in much of the research from social psychology, the home of RFT literature, as well as business, physiological psychology, and political science. In addition, I give an overview of

the methodology behind the empirical investigation of regulatory focus and political behavior use in the subsequent chapters.

In the first empirical section, Chapter 3, I examine the connection between behaviors both inside and outside of politics in relation to regulatory focus. I answer the question, Do people act differently than they do in everyday life when political power is at stake? In addition, Chapter 3 examines how regulatory focus directs specific behaviors and motivations behind vote choice. Here, I focus on understanding whether vote choice is based on the candidate that is the lesser of two evils versus the most preferred nominee.

I shift to policy attitudes and ideological differences in Chapter 4. Specifically, I test three possibilities in which regulatory focus and attitudes may intersect. First, I test the hypothesis that promotion focus individuals are dominantly liberal while prevention focus is connected to conservatism. Second, I ask if the association between RFT and attitudes is due to the content of the policy under examination. Last, I examine the impact of the policy environment on the association between policy attitudes and RFT. In this case, whether or not the status quo matches someone's policy position may determine if promotion or prevention strength is connected to specific attitudes.

In the final two empirical chapters, Chapters 5 and 6, I examine how regulatory fit correlates and impacts political behavior. Chapter 5 examines the interaction between an individual's chronic regulatory focus and how they strategically meet goals. I test whether the experience of having corresponding goal perceptions and strategies to meet them are related to stronger external efficacy attitudes and motivation to vote.

Finally, in Chapter 6, I manipulate regulatory fit, rather than measuring it, to examine possible causal mechanisms between motivation and political attitudes and behavior. The treatment involves inducing either a promotion or prevention focus and manipulating Get-

Out-the-Vote (GOTV) messages to be more vigilant or eager. These final two chapters will help answer the question posed above about Jackie. When Jackie experiences regulatory fit, she ought to feel as though her political participation matters more and motivated to act as a political agent than when non-fit is experienced.

In the concluding chapter, I provide an overview of the findings and major conclusions that can be drawn from this project. In addition, I reflect on potential pragmatic actions, in accordance with the implications of regulatory focus on the political world. Last, I discuss the limitations and directions for future research.

CHAPTER 2 Exploring Regulatory Focus as a Holistic View of Political Behavior

Goals are inherently tied to political behavior, ranging from the adoption of policy attitudes to political participation and perceptions of political representation. Examination of political behavior requires attention to goals because, ultimately, behavior inside and outside of the political world is a function of attempts to reach a desired end-state or avoid an undesirable one. Goals are considered internal, cognitive representations of desired end states that link a person's needs, motives, and beliefs to the social world (for a review see, Austin and Vancouver 1996; Fishbach & Ferguson 2013). Motivation, whether conscious or not, is guided by both superordinate goals, such as those involved in ideological beliefs, and routine goals, concerning the choice between reading the latest news on an election or a blockbuster movie.

Motivation and goals are not uncommon in political science literature and, often times, they are found at the forefront of research agendas. For example, self-interest motivations (Downs 1957; Riker & Ordeshook 1973) and pro-social goals (Gerber, Green, & Larimer 2008; Panagopoulos 2010) are thought to drive political behavior. Information biases and attitude updating is affected by the motivation to be accurate or hold correct beliefs (Taber, Lodge, & Glathar 2001). Psychological needs and universal values motivate ideological attitudes (Duckitt 2002; Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway 2003; Barnea & Schwartz 1998). While the latter research utilizes a more fundamental concept of motivation than the previous examples, none of these paradigms examine behavior holistically. Regulatory Focus Theory (RFT) provides the structure in which overall political behavior, not just one aspect of it, can be viewed as being driven by a person's motivational orientation, the environment, and the interaction of the two.

Individuals must meet the basic needs of security and nurturance to survive the physical and social world. RFT is premised upon the notion that these needs are met by distinct regulatory systems – a prevention system and a promotion system, respectively (Higgins, 1987; Higgins et al. 1994; Higgins 1997). These regulatory systems, at the systemic level, work with the basic notion of approaching desired states and avoiding undesired ones. However, what distinguishes the promotion and prevention system is how goals are perceived and pursued at the strategic level – the pattern of approach and avoidance motivations that direct specific goal-directed behavior (Cornwell & Higgins 2015; Higgins 1998; Scholer & Higgins 2008). Consistent use of the promotion or prevention system makes the regulatory focus system more accessible, making the motivational orientation a piece of a person’s personality. In addition, the environment has the capability to activate a regulatory state (Higgins 1997). This not only allows for unique predictions in the way individuals within the political environment are likely to behave, but also functions as a broader theory of personality that takes into account variance in the person and the environment (Higgins 2008; Higgins & Scholer 2008).

The environment not only acts independently to activate one focus over another, but also interacts with an individual’s regulatory focus, impacting motivation and associated outcomes. Regulatory fit, an extension of RFT, examines how the combination of an individual’s current focus and the situational or structural environment influences attitudes and behaviors (Higgins 2000; Freitas & Higgins 2002). Under conditions of regulatory fit, where the situation or mode of goal attainment matches an individual’s current or chronic focus, a “feeling of right” occurs leading to increased persuasion or use of heuristics, additional value placed on a target object or behavior, and motivational strength compared to when regulatory unfit is experienced (Cesario et al. 2004; Higgins 2000; Idson, Liberman,

& Higgins 2004). Essentially, regulatory fit has the ability to intensify motivation as well as its correlates and outcomes.

RFT has a strong presence within the psychology literature and use of the theory has spilled over into other areas such as advertising and public health research, but has only had a limited introduction into political science (e.g, Boldero & Higgins 2011; Jost et al. 2003). I begin the chapter with an overview of RFT, emphasizing where motivational orientation is expected to drive political behavior. Following this, I review the broad methodological strategy used throughout the project. I test the hypotheses using two surveys and an experiment. Within the methodological outline, I discuss the common data collection procedures and variables across the three studies.

2.1 Regulatory Focus Theory

RFT is a socio-cognitive theory of motivation with origins in a self-regulatory perspective. People regulate their movement towards meeting basic needs with two distinct motivational systems – a promotion focus concerns nurturance needs and a prevention focus concerns security needs (Higgins 1997). Based on Higgins early work on self-discrepancy theory, these needs are associated with distinct, desirable end states: 1) the ideal self, encompassing hopes, wishes, and aspirations; and, 2) the ought self, consisting of obligations, duties, and responsibilities. Pursuing nurturance needs develops the strength and importance of the ideal self and seeking security is associated with the development of the ought self, which is associated with security needs (Higgins 1987; 1997). Specifically, goals within a promotion focus concern ideals, which emphasize accomplishment, growth and nurturance needs, while goals under a prevention focus are represented as oughts, which emphasize responsibility, safety, and security needs (Higgins 1996; 1997; 1998).

The representation of goals differs significantly within each focus. For instance, within a promotion focus, nurturance needs are considered a type of maximal goal, indicating an aspiration but not necessarily a requirement. On the other hand, prevention focus goals concerning security are considered a type of minimal goal, indicating a requirement (Brendl & Higgins 1996). In line with this, pursuing promotion goals involves maximizing positive outcomes, or gains, to obtain an accomplishment. Pursuing prevention goals involves concentrating on minimizing negative outcomes, or losses, in order to achieve safety (Higgins 1997; 1998). Promotion goals are met with an eager strategy, in which case the preferred strategy is to approach matches to the end state. Approaching the desired end state within a prevention focus involves the adoption of a vigilant strategy – emphasizing the avoidance of goal mismatches (Crowe & Higgins 1997; Higgins 1997). It is important to emphasize that both regulatory states involve *approaching* a desired end state with either strategy. For example, two citizens may see the goal of voting quite differently based on their regulatory orientation; Citizen A perceives voting as meeting a basic civic duty while Citizen B views voting as an opportunity to become an ideal citizen.

The differences that occur in the pursuit of advancement or security are fundamental, creating distinct perceptions and experiences. Promotion and prevention motivations result in differences in how information is evaluated, decisions and judgments are made, goals are perceived and pursued, and affective responses to successes and failures (Forster & Werth 2009; Higgins 1997; Molden et al. 2008). These differences can be either a state or trait, but in either case, it drives human behavior.

2.2.1 Chronic Regulatory Focus as a Personality Trait

Political psychology has embraced the trait approach to personality (e.g. Mondak 2010) and promotion and prevention focus is related to facets of the Big 5 (Higgins 2008;

Manczak, Zapata-Gietl, & McAdams 2014; Vaughn, Baumann, & Klemann 2008). However, RFT is a theory of motivation from a social psychology background. It goes beyond describing behavior but explains where behavior is derived. Personality can be described as a set of “motivated preferences and biases in the ways that people see the world and cope in the world” (Higgins & Scholer 2008, 183). This takes a motivated cognition approach to personality where each system becomes cognitively accessible, coloring the way someone sees the world and preferences for strategies to use within the world they see (Higgins 2008; Higgins & Scholer 2008, 2010).

Self-regulation is the system used by people to compare current to future states and this creates the motivation to behave – motivation explains how and why people take certain actions (Carver & Sheier 1998). People strive to meet their ideal or ought self-guide which begin to develop in early childhood from parental influence and temperament and form the basis for a chronic motivational orientation (Higgins 1997; 1998; 2002; Higgins & Silberman 1998; Higgins et al. 2004; Keller 2008; Manian, Papadakis, Strauman, & Essex 2006). The promotion and prevention system to meet goals becomes cognitively accessible to different degrees. However, one is often stronger than the other, a person’s view of the world and their response preferences (Higgins 2008; Higgins & Scholer 2008; Scholer & Higgins 2010).

The accessibility of either the promotion or prevention system is developed early in life. Children learn self-regulatory strategies – how goals are perceived and how to meet them – through caretaker interactions. These interactions include a combination of positive and negative consequences and an emphasis on safety or growth, which molds goal perception and behavior. Encouragement and positive reinforcements are related to a promotion system and focusing on danger and negative reinforcements develops a stronger prevention system. While people hold some degree of promotion and prevention focus, the

socialization process often leads to one being stronger and more cognitively accessible (Higgins 1997; Higgins & Silberman 1998).

Empirical work has corroborated the theoretical argument, showing that the caretaker-child socialization process creates individual differences in regulatory focus in children and adults (Keller 2008; Manian et al. 2006). In addition, there has been some evidence of stability in dominant focus over a three-year period in which regulatory focus predicts the selection and pursuit strategy of goals (Strauman 1996). Socialization, through learning what behaviors obtain the child's desired result – the presence of rewards and positive outcomes for ideals and the absence of punishment and negative outcomes for oughts – allows for a strong perception of goals and the associated regulatory focus.

Physiological differences between regulatory focus systems demonstrate how regulatory focus guides behavior at the biological level. Neurological studies show how people enter situations in a “pre-goal” state, already primed to bias the perception of a goal (Strauman et al. 2013). Chronic promotion focus is associated with an increased left frontal cortex, which is also previously been associated with approach and gain motivations, while chronic prevention individuals have an increased baseline on the left, which previously has been tied to loss and avoidance motivations (Amodio, Shah, Sigelman, Brazy, & Harmon-Jones 2004; Eddington, Dolcos, Cabeza, R. Krishnan, & Strauman 2007). Other studies have shown that neural activation in relation to focal stimuli follows a similar structural pattern to those previously seen when someone is thinking about desired self-outcomes and self-referential thinking (Strauman et al. 2013; Touryan et al. 2007). These neural activation patterns correspond with studies that show preconscious goals influence behavior regarding strategy choice (Forster, Higgins, & Idson 1998), as well as subsequent preconscious attention related to approaching an incomplete goal (Moskowitz 2002). These findings

correspond with Higgins (1996) initial theoretical argument that regulatory focus represents different worldviews.

One example of the distinct worldviews between promotion and prevention oriented people is how the environment is perceived. Promotion individuals utilize a more global perspective versus a more local perspective used by prevention oriented people (Forster & Higgins 2005; Pham & Chang 2010). Considering that an individual's chronic promotion or prevention focus colors goal-directed behavior, both at the conscious and pre-conscious levels, strategy use based on one's chronic regulatory focus in everyday and political life should be correlated.

Regulatory focus is an integral piece of personality, expressing itself traits, goals, and life stories (Manczak, et al. 2014). Promotion and prevention focus has also been shown to be related to other personality traits and enduring predispositions. For example, facets of the Big 5 are correlated with one's chronic regulatory focus (Higgins 2008; Maczak et al. 2014; Vaughn et al. 2008). Basic values, which also provide a dispositional motivation structure to guide behavior, are associated with focus (Leikas, Lonnqvist, Verkassalo, & Lindeman 2009). While regulatory focus correlates with other personality variables, it is distinct and offers a new way of looking at political behavior.

Motivation, at its core, is about approaching desired end states and avoiding undesired ones (Carver & Sheier 1998; Elliot & Thrash 2002; Gray 1970). Regulatory focus is associated with the behavioral activation system (BAS) and the behavioral inhibition system (BIS) (Higgins et al. 2001). It's important to note that while RFT is similar to the theoretical underpinnings of BIS/BAS, it is theoretically distinct and has been shown to be empirically separate (Eddington et al. 2007; Forster et al. 1998; Higgins 1996; Higgins, Harlow, Idson, Ayduk, & Taylor 2001; Strauman & Wilson 2010). Neurological activation

patterns have shown that regulatory focus is more abstract and connected to the sense of self than the BIS/BAS (Stauman et al. 2013). Because people tend to develop a chronic motivational style that is either promotion or prevention oriented, political behavior is likely shaped by dispositional focus in accordance with tendencies within general life.

Personality in political science has embraced the trait approach and has found connections across a wide variety of political attitudes and behavior (e.g. Mondak 2010). In addition, promotion and prevention focus is related to facets of the Big 5 (Higgins 2008; Manczak et al. 2014; Vaughn et al. 2008). However, RFT takes a motivated cognition approach to personality where the promotion and prevention systems become accessible, coloring the way someone sees the world and preferences for strategies to use within the world they see (Higgins 2008; Higgins & Scholer 2008; Scholer & Higgins 2010). The trait approach, such as the Big 5, is often criticized as being descriptive rather than explanatory and atheoretical (Block 1995; Mischel & Shoda 1994; Pervin 1994). On the other hand, many social psychologists define personality as an interaction between cognitive and affective inner processes and the outside world (Bandura 1991; Dweck & Leggett 1988; Mischel & Shoda 1995). Fleeson and Jayawickreme (2015) argue that the two should be combined to better understand personality; while still using the observed behavior from traits to describe people, these traits serve as the need to meet goals. For example, extraversion serves the goal of having fun and fostering relationships (McCabe & Fleeson 2012). At the systematic level, regulatory focus represents the set of higher order goals held by a person that influences behavior through an interaction of the self and social world (Higgins 1996; Strauman 1996; Strauman & Wilson 2010). Chapter 3 examines how behaviors within the political arena correspond with behavior in other areas of life based on one's chronic focus. The main

question concerns if the concept of regulatory focus as a personality trait translate into seeing similar strategic behaviors in general and political life.

2.1.2 Eager and Vigilant Strategies

The specific strategy used for each motivation system is derived from the different goals being pursued. Both goal types are adaptive and concern a positive end-state and both sets of strategies involve effective and purposive action towards that end; one system or strategy is not necessarily better than the other (Forster & Werth 2009; Higgins 1996). End states under a promotion focus are about achievement and accomplishment versus non-fulfillment. On the other hand, end states for prevention concerns are about responsibility and safety versus threat (Crowe & Higgins 1997; Higgins 1997; 1998; Higgins et al. 1994). Success for promotion focus involves the presence of a positive outcome and failure is the absence of a positive result, putting the focus of end states as gains or non-gains. On the other hand, success under prevention is the absence of a negative outcome and failure is its presence, therefore end-states are viewed as non-losses and losses (Crowe & Higgins 1997; Higgins et al. 1994). The way goals and their outcomes are perceived leads to differences in the choice of behavior used to reach the desired end state.

Ideal goals met by the promotion system involve eager strategies. The importance of reaching an ideal state leads to the attempt to approach matches to the goal in order to get a positive outcome. Successfully obtaining security requires the absence of a negative outcome, therefore the strategic focus is on avoiding mismatches to the desired goal by the prevention system. Attempts to attain ought goals involve the use of a vigilant strategy. By approaching matches to the desired state with an eager strategy, gains are maximized and non-gains minimized. On the other hand, vigilant strategies are able to maximize non-losses

and minimize losses by avoiding mismatches to the desired state (Crowe & Higgins 1997; Higgins 1996, 1997; Higgins et al. 1994; Molden et al. 2008).

Where regulatory focus concerns an overall approach behavior at the systematic level, in which goals are approached and undesired states are avoided, strategic eagerness and vigilance encompasses a second level of emotion. At this strategic level, approach and avoidance motivation are performed within a general, consistent pattern under each regulatory orientation (Crowe & Higgins 1997; Higgins 1997). Chapter 3 examines if promotion and prevention is associated with a general strategic pattern of behaviors within general and political life. In addition, does regulatory focus connect to the general strategic pattern used within both the everyday and political world lead to how vote decisions are made?

Beyond the systematic and strategic levels of motivation is the tactical level, which direct either an approach or avoidance behavior based on the situation; tactics include the specific behavior used to ensure vigilance in meeting obligations and security or eagerness to reach an accomplishment or growth (Cornwell & Higgins 2015; Scholer & Higgins 2008; Scholer, Stroessner, & Higgins 2008). These three levels of motivation work together during goal-pursuit, with the lowest level encompassing aspects of the environment more so than the higher ordered motivations. Because of this, under certain conditions a prevention dominance may be associated using an approach tactic or promotion dominance with an avoidance tactic (Scholer et al. 2008; Scholer, Zou, Fujita, Stroessner, & Higgins 2010). This notion becomes important when examining behavior and attitudes within the political arena because the environment is different for different people. For example, when President Obama was in office, the Democrats would have preferred maintaining the status quo within the presidential office while Republicans were likely to prefer a change to the status quo. In

this case, a stronger promotion focus may be connected with avoidance or behavioral inhibition – which would be contrary to traditionally expected eagerness. This notion is further explored in examining efficacious attitudes in Chapter 5 when some people are trying to maintain the status quo and others change it.

Regulatory focus and subsequent strategy choice, based on whether the absence or presence of positive versus negative outcomes is emphasized, leads to a number of differences between individuals with a chronic or activated promotion or prevention focus. These differences include what information is influential and used, how decisions and judgments are made, and goal pursuit behaviors, which are all aspects of behavior pertinent to understanding political behavior.

2.1.3 Regulatory Focus Outcomes

First, promotion and prevention focus, are sensitive to certain aspects of information, including the valence and novelty. For example, promotion is associated with using and being more motivated following positive feedback involving previous success while prevention is tied to closely attending to negative feedback associated with failures and being more motivated from it (Forster, Grant, Idson, & Higgins 2001). This corresponds with a general proclivity for prevention focused individuals to seek out and use information that is negative or matches their own schema. On the other hand, promotion focused individuals rely more so on positive and novel information (Forster, Friedman, & Liberman 2004; Forster, Higgins, & Bianco 2003; Higgins & Tykocinski 2004; Liberman, Idson, Camacho, & Higgins 1999; Seibt & Forster 2004). These asymmetrical information biases have been found in memory tasks (Higgins & Tykocinski 1992), attributions to ambiguous social stimuli (Strachman & Gable 2006), and learning about novel attitude targets (Fazio, Eiser, & Shook 2004). In addition to novelty and valence, information regarding

advancement is more influential with a promotion orientation or security for a prevention orientation (Aaker & Lee 2001; Freitas, Gollwitzer, & Trope 2004). Information asymmetries reflect the emphasis of each focus; the eager strategy used to meet ideal goals directs attention to positive information and anything that may lead to the pleasurable outcome while ought goals require vigilance to negative information and conserving resources to ensure a negative outcome does not occur.

Within the area of decision-making, the distinct strategies used under promotion and prevention focus are often exemplified through Signal Detection Theory (SDT) terms. Under the SDT framework, in which participants identify whether a target has previously been shown within an earlier portion of the task, there are four possible outcomes: 1) a hit or “yes” response when the target had been presented; 2) a miss or a “no” response when the target had been presented; 3) a false alarm or a “yes” response when the target signal had not been presented; and, 4) a correct rejection or a “no” response when the target had not been presented. Eager strategies emphasize approaching hits and avoiding errors of omission – emphasizing the desire to obtain all positive outcomes without skipping over any – often taking a risky bias. A vigilant strategy approaches mismatches to negative targets through correct rejections and not making a mistake. By doing so, avoiding errors of commission are emphasized, ensuring against negative outcomes without letting one slip in – taking on a more conservative bias (Crowe & Higgins 1997; Forster, et al. 2003; Liberman et al. 1999; Liberman, Molden, Idson, & Higgins 2001; Liberman, Idson, & Higgins 2005).

The results of the specific decision strategies include promotion focus individuals making quick decisions that may suffer from accuracy problems and prevention focus being associated with slower, but more accurate decisions (Crowe & Higgins 1997; Forster, et al. 2003). The promotion and risky versus prevention and conservative relationships have also

been found in real-world behaviors regarding driving and investment choices (Hamstra, et al. 2011; Zhou & Pham 2004). Also, when thinking about counterfactuals, eager strategies include adding actions not previously performed in the attempt to fix an error of omission. On the other hand, vigilance requires concentrating on removing actions from the situation in the attempt fix any error of commission (Roese, Hur, & Pennington 1999). In addition, prevention focused individuals have been found to repeat prior decisions, even if they did not provide a positive hedonic experience or were unethical, reflecting the safety in behaving consistently and maintaining the status quo (Higgins 2005, 2012; Zhang, Cornwell, & Higgins 2014). Overall, the use of an eager strategy often presents a risky bias while vigilant strategies reflect a conservative bias.

Associated with how regulatory focus is distinguished by behaviors based on a SDT framework, the eagerness strategic concern with gains and non-gains and losses and non-losses for vigilance also impacts decisions and behavior (Idson, Liberman, & Higgins 2000; Lee & Aaker 2004; for reviews see, see Molden, et al. 2008; Forster & Werth 2009). Under Kahneman and Tversky's (1979) Loss Aversion (LA) theory, an "S-shaped" curve represents how people perceive a gain, +1, and a loss, -1, from a specific reference point, 0. Within LA, the "S-shaped" curve consists of a steeper drop from 0 to -1, representing losses and non-losses than from 0 to +1, representing gain and non-gains. Therefore, losses and non-losses are perceived as greater and more negative than gains and non-gains and their positivity (Kahneman & Tversky 1979). However, these postulates may not be as previously universal as described because of the different sensitivities between promotion and prevention.

Liberman, Idson, & Higgins (2005), find that the first principle of LA, that losses are rated as more negatively than non-gains does occur. However, contrary to LA, Liberman and colleagues show that gains are perceived as more positive than non-losses. The researchers

argue that prevention focus, which is more sensitive to negative outcomes and avoiding losses, the area from -1 to 0 in the S-curve, is associated with the traditional LA principles. However, the promotion system is sensitive to positive outcomes and attaining gains, the 0 to +1 area of the S-curve, which leads to an opposing perception than predicted by LA. Kluger, Stephan, Ganzach, & Hershkovitz (2004) also find that prospect theory is only accurate for prevention focused individuals when making assessments concerning weighted probabilities. The connection with between emphasis on gains and losses within LA theory demonstrates differences in what success means under each regulatory system. A promotion focus desires a movement above the reference point or status quo. However, the prevention system perceives success as getting back to or maintaining the status quo or reference point (Liberman et al. 1999; Molden & Higgins 2011).

Eagerness to obtain hits and gains as well as vigilance in ensuring against losses and mistakes is associated with different thresholds people employ in making choices. Because vigilance is used to obtain security by attending to what may be threatening or negative within the environment, the conservative bias ensures mistakes are not made. On the other hand, eagerness works towards advancement by being willing to take a risk so that all possible opportunities are attempted. Therefore thresholds as to what can and cannot be included within a category, judgment, or decision is different under each orientation.

One of the ways in which a different sized threshold includes the range of possibilities created when making choices or judgments. For example, when creating alternative hypotheses or categorizing objects under a prevention focus a high threshold is set for potential considerations, only looking into what is certain to fit within a category or a correct accounting of a situation or behavior. On the other hand, under a promotion focus, the set threshold is lower, allowing for more possibilities both in potential alternatives to

explain behavior or situation given credence and in the ways items could be grouped (Crowe & Higgins 1997; Friedman & Forster 2000, 2001; Pham & Chang 2010). Liberman, Molden, Idson, and Higgins (2001) find that a stronger promotion focus is positively correlated with how many reasons are offered to explain a person's helpful behavior compared to prevention focus.

Strategic differences and goal representations impact other characteristics of an individual that are also associated with how and what criteria are used to make decisions. For example, promotion strength is associated with being more cognitively flexible, creative, and preferring abstract language where prevention strength is associated with less flexibility, creativeness, and preferring concrete language (Baas, de Dreu, & Nijstad 2008; Bittner & Heidemeier 2013; Friedman & Forster 2000, 2001; Liberman et al. 1999; Semin, Higgins, de Montes, Estourget, & Valencia 2005). However, Baas et al. (2011) did find creativity levels were similar across promotion and prevention when ought goals had not been met. What is seen as a potential alternative can have wide repercussions within the political world. For example, policy preferences may be impacted by the extent an issue is placed within a larger context or the range of solutions to a problem considered. In addition, political compromise may also be impacted by how alternatives are created, such that an increase in potential alternatives are used and discussed or seen as viable leads to a higher likelihood of reaching an agreement.

The informational sensitivities and decision-making strategy differences between promotion and prevention focused individuals reflect the cognitive side of how RFT effects behavior within the social world, tied not only to a person's general life but political also. These more cognitive distinctions potentially impact how information and judgments are made in the political world, not just within general life activities. However, regulatory focus

also has an affective component that is likely to affect goal pursuit in the political world, especially when it comes to whether one succeeds or fails at meeting desired outcomes such as having a desired candidate win an election. Political behavior has repeatedly been shown partially rooted in emotion (Brader 2006; Lodge & Taber 2013; Marcus, Neuman, & MacKuen 2000). Looking at emotional outcomes based on regulatory focus adds to the value in being able to understand an ongoing range of political behaviors and attitudes.

2.1.4 Differential Emotions Arising from Promotion and Prevention Focus

Not only does RFT posit differences in cognitions and behavior associated with goals, but also between the emotions that arise when a person succeeds or fails at meeting a goal under a promotion or prevention focus. The specific emotions arise even if the outcome is only anticipated (Idson et al. 2000). Success for promotion focus results in happiness, whereas success within the prevention focus is calming. Failure under a promotion focus results in feelings of dejection and with a prevention focus, failure leads to agitation-related emotions (Higgins 1987; Higgins, Shah, & Friedman 1997). Therefore, either strategy can be associated with positive and negative emotions, but the strength of each discreet emotion varies in intensity.

Liberman, et al. (2005) argue that emotional outcomes are based on the principles of loss aversion (Kahneman & Tversky 1979). Findings in three studies show losses (prevention focus) were more negatively perceived and resulted in negative feelings that were stronger than the perceptions and feelings of non-gains (promotion focus). On the other hand, gains (promotion focus) were rated more positively than non-losses (prevention focus) and were associated with more positive feelings. While the decision was made within a manipulated hypothetical situation in the Liberman et al. (2005) study rather than inducing

or measuring regulatory focus, the findings correspond with other research that does look specifically at motivational orientation. For example, Idson and colleagues (2000; 2004) find that under a promotion focus, gaining points is considered more positive than not losing points and anticipating a positive outcome is emotionally more intense while the opposite is true for a prevention focus.

These emotional differences based on outcome are likely to come up in relation to political attitudes. When a person's preferred candidate loses an election, the result is an undesired outcome or failure to meet the goal of having one's preference in office. Losing elections has been known for worsening attitudes about government (Anderson & Tverdova 2001), reducing trust (Anderson & LoTempio 2002), and lowering efficacy (Clarke & Acock 1989), but the causal mechanism has yet to be established. Understanding that attitudes are summaries of a variety of information (e.g. Fazio 2007) the emotional response of winning and losing composes a portion of the affective aspect of efficacious attitudes. Therefore, the differences in emotions that occur, based on the dominant regulatory focus at the time, feeds into the evaluation of the attitude. While the emotions themselves do not create external efficacy, a loss resulting in a stronger negative emotion under a dominant prevention focus may push the attitude lower and a win resulting in a stronger positive emotion with a promotion focus may increase the level of efficacy relative to losing under a promotion focus or winning under a prevention focus. This notion will be further discussed and tested in Chapter 5.

Regulatory focus, both momentarily induced or as a personality trait, can have profound effects in such things as decision-making, goal representation, and emotional reactions. In particular, RFT creates a lens that colors the environment and how actors navigate the political world based on whether goals are seen as ideals and eagerly pursued or

oughts sought with vigilance. For example, take the two people with the strong desire to be a good, democratic citizen described above. Citizen A holds a prevention focus and perceives voting as a civic duty and Citizen B, with a promotion focus, sees it as being the ideal community member. In both cases, voting is a positive end-state and both are highly motivated. However, Citizen A uses a vigilant strategy by checking that her id matches the state's voter identification requirements to make sure the poll workers will not turn her away while Citizen B, being eager, looks up her polling location the night before to make sure she knows where to go. In this case Citizen A is avoiding a mismatch to the goal of voting and Citizen B is approaching a match. Promotion and prevention focus not only affects participation, but it also can be associated with political attitudes.

2.2 Regulatory Focus and Ideological Differences

The differences between promotion and prevention individuals and corresponding behavior reflected through strategy are similar to many ideological-based cognitive and psychological differences. Similar behavior across the two concepts includes aspects of learning and attitude formation with conservatives behaving similar to prevention orientation through participation in the BeanFest game (Fazio et al. 2004; Shook & Fazio 2011). Also, the emphasis conservatives place on negative information (Dodd et al. 2012; Hibbing, Smith, & Alford 2014; Oxley et al. 2008; Carraro, Castelli, & Macchiella 2011) corresponds with the larger emphasis on negative information and reinforcement displayed by the prevention focus orientation (Higgins 1997; Higgins & Tykocinski 1992; Strachman & Gable 2006). The negative information asymmetry between conservatives/liberals and prevention/promotion focus is evident in the study by Choma, Busseri, and Sadava (2009) finding that life satisfaction between liberals and conservatives is not different but what

feeds into the self-reported happiness ratings is, with positive affect scores being associated with liberalism and negative affect with conservatism.

Beyond the similarity in information biases among the ideological and regulatory focus differences, are the differences between decision making strategies and holding a risky or conservative bias. Liberman et al. (1999) find that promotion focus individuals were more likely to be open to changing a course of action or trade an object where prevention focus was more likely to prefer stability by not wanting to change tasks and a higher willingness to keep an object rather than trade it. These findings match up with conflict response patterns of conservatives within the go/no-go task (Amodio, Jost, Master, & Yee 2007) as well as the connection between openness to experience and promotion focus (Vaughn et al. 2008). Last, the Amodio study finds a higher likelihood of liberals committing errors of commission, which is also more likely to occur for promotion focus individuals (Crowe & Higgins 1997). Although many of these studies are not combining regulatory focus and ideology (see Liberman et al. 1999 for exception), the liberal-conservative and promotion-prevention differences align on similar behavioral patterns, and are suggestive a connection among regulatory focus and ideology. The possible congruency between ideology and chronic regulatory focus will be examined in Chapter 4.

2.3 Regulatory Fit

The emphasis up to this point has been regulatory focus as a stable personality characteristic or invoked by the environment, but an interaction between regulatory focus and the environment impacts behavior and attitudes as well. An important extension to RFT, is the notion of regulatory fit which hypothesizes that when the dominant focus at the time matches the goal-meeting behaviors being used or if the focus and the end state have a regulatory focal match, a type of misattribution occurs through a feeling that things are

“right” (Higgins 2000; Cesario, Higgins, & Scholer 2008). Under a condition of regulatory fit, there is an increase in ongoing motivation and prospective motivation (Higgins, et al. 2003; Idson, et al. 2004). A feeling of “rightness” leads individuals to place higher value in what they are doing, towards a target object, or attitude, as well as having heightened emotions that occur in relation to the success or failure of goal pursuit (Cesario, et al. 2004; Cesario & Higgins 2008; Freitas & Higgins 2002; Higgins 2000, 2005). This same effect that has been found within everyday behavior should also translate into the political world. When the strategies used in participating in politics match the orientation of an individual’s regulatory focus, motivation to and value in participation should increase, specifically external efficacy.

Regulatory fit occurs through an interaction with a person’s dominant focus at the time and how a decision is made – process based fit – or how the outcome is framed – outcome based fit (Aaker & Lee 2006). In each case, people are more inclined to pursue goals where regulatory fit is more likely to occur (Crowe & Higgins 1997; Higgins et al. 1994). Because people do not have control over the political environment they find themselves regulatory fit can come from the person’s own behaviors – a process based fit. Individuals are either likely to make decisions on how they participate in accordance with their dominant focus or in contrast with their focus. Therefore, the focus here is on process-based fit the examination of how regulatory fit affects efficacious attitudes.

Misattribution is the culprit in producing the effects of regulatory fit. The emotional feeling that something is “right” about an action, judgment, or choice is transferred to the target attitude or object without conscious awareness (Higgins 2000; 2002; 2005). When made aware of the misattribution the effect dissipates or goes away entirely (Cesario et al. 2004; Higgins et al. 2003). Therefore, when a promotion focused person makes a voting

decision based on candidate preference, the perception that it is a good decision is stronger than had it been made based on the least disliked candidate.

Regulatory fit influences behavior and attitudes in a number of ways including an increase in motivation to move towards a goal and the enjoyment of doing so (Avnet & Higgins 2003; Forster, et al. 1998; Freitas & Higgins 2002; Higgins 2002; Shah, Higgins, & Friedman 1998). Increased motivation and enjoyment will strengthen the inclination to participate in politics and the value in it. In addition, when regulatory fit occurs, the intensity of feelings towards the decision and the positive evaluations of it are stronger (Cesario, et al. 2004; Higgins 2002; Idson, et al. 2004, 2000). Therefore, matching motivational orientation to political decision making and activity choices will lead to a higher perception of being effective in the political system and stronger emotional reactions towards the importance of participation. The sense that the citizen is impacting politics, external efficacy, increases under regulatory fit. However, the heightened emotional reaction may backfire. If a citizen loses – the goal is not met – the negative emotions are also stronger under regulatory fit (Aaker & Lee 2001; Cesario et al. 2004).

Most importantly to the issue at hand, the misattribution under regulatory fit leads people to assign a higher value to the choice (Avnet & Higgins 2003; Cesario, et al. 2004; Higgins 2000; 2002; 2005; Lee & Aaker 2004). For example, in one study by Higgins et al. (2003) participants could choose a pen or coffee mug and reported either what would be “gained” or “lost”. Participants in the regulatory fit conditions (“gain” and promotion or “lose” and prevention) placed a higher value on the object than those in the non-fit conditions. In addition, the increased value when experiencing regulatory fit is independent of the efficacy of the decision and how it is made. For example, Higgins et al. (2003, Study 4) were able to show that under regulatory fit, induced independent of the task, participants

rated how good-natured a dog in a picture as more positive than participants in non-fit conditions. The transfer of value caused by misattribution when experiencing regulatory fit should not only occur in these types of lab tasks but also within the social world, and in particular, political participation as well.

Three studies indicate the power that regulatory fit can have in the political realm. First, Dolinski & Drogosz (2011) show that being able to “blackball” a candidate on a ballot increases participation among those who are prevention dominant. Therefore, the imaginary context offering a way for a prevention oriented person to participate in a way that matches his focus leads to reporting more value in and motivation to vote. Second, Lavine et al. (1999) find authoritarians are more likely to be persuaded to vote under frames using threat rather than frames depicting voting as rewarding. Third, Mannetti, Brizi, Giacomantonio, & Higgins (2013) find that when a message on nuclear power was framed in avoidance terms and the person had been primed into a promotion condition – creating regulatory nonfit – attitudes towards nuclear power were significantly lowered. Mannetti et al. (2013, Study 2) also found that approach frames on immigration increases the positive evaluation of the candidate giving the speech and increased voting intentions only for those induced into a promotion focus. These studies demonstrate that under regulatory fit, someone can be more motivated to vote and have an increased sense of value in participation and their ability to influence the political world.

The transfer of value in what someone is doing should also occur in the political world. Specifically, if the two citizens described above meet the goal of voting using strategies that match his or her chronic focus, an increased sense of having influence in the process should be felt relative to if strategy choice is counter one or both of their motivational orientation. However, the political world itself may create an environment that

matches to mismatches a citizen's regulatory focus, which could lead to an increase in efficacious attitudes for some but not for others. These potential effects from regulatory fit are further discussed in Chapter 5 and 6.

2.3.1 Regulatory Fit and Persuasion

A large amount of research has gone into how regulatory fit impacts attempts to persuade audiences. The “rightness” of regulatory fit or “wrongness” of unfit has been found to increase or decrease the effectiveness of a message or advertisement in changing attitudes and behavior. Persuasion based on regulatory fit is evident in choices made by participants as well as reports of increased fluency, engagement, and effectiveness of a message (Lee & Aaker 2004; Cesario et al. 2004; Evans & Petty 2003).

Three arguments have been used to explain the relationship between regulatory fit and persuasion. First, Evans and Petty (2003) argue that the regulatory fit effect on persuasion is most likely due to increased elaboration based on the differences between stronger versus weak frames and increased cognitive responses. Second, Lee and Aaker (2004) claim the feeling of “rightness” under fit increases the perceived fluency of the message. However, Pham and Avnet (2004) argue persuasion is caused by an affective response for those in a promotion focus but in a prevention focus it is the content of the message. This argument emphasizes the different information that is used between those with a promotion or prevention focus as a result of what goal meeting strategies are utilized – risk averse prevention oriented people use information that can be proven or justified and seen as safe but promotion orientation leads to the use of internal information and inferences. While the specific mechanism in which attitudes towards voting change due to regulatory fit is not the primary goal of the present study, it is important to keep in mind that there may be differential effects based on these because peripheral and heuristic causes of

change are supposed to be less stable than changes resulting from the systematic and central route (e.g. Petty & Cacioppo 1986). If regulatory fit is induced within the promotion focus, the effects may be less substantial or long lasting because it is based on an affective change rather than fit within a prevention focus leading to attitude change through cognitive processing of the information.

Just as regulatory fit has shown to increase persuasion in other areas, political messages are likely to benefit from an examination of matching messages to people's psychological orientations. In essence, political messages mirror advertisements in their goal and methods, with the exception being that the attitude target is not a brand or product, but a political candidate, election, or policy. Specifically examined in Chapter 6, motivation to vote and participation-related attitudes should increase when Get-Out-the-Vote messages match a person's activated regulatory system.

2.4 Measuring and Manipulating Regulatory Focus

Regulatory focus is both, a chronic, individual difference variable, and an environmental variable, allowing it to be measured and manipulated. Manipulations into a state of promotion or prevention include subliminal priming (Mannetti et al. 2013), framing task instructions or vignettes (Freitas & Higgins 2002; Freitas, Liberman, & Higgins 2000; Higgins et al. 2003; Idson et al. 2000; Lee & Aaker 2004; Roese et al. 1999; Vaughn et al. 2008), having participants list goals or write an essay (Freitas & Higgins 2000; Freitas et al. 2002; Higgins et al. 1994), or performing a maze prior to a task in which you get the mouse to a piece of cheese or save it from a bird (Shah et al. 1998). Measuring regulatory focus has been done a variety of ways as well. These include proxies such as the BIS/BAS scale (Dholakia, Gopinath, & Bagozzi 2005; Dholakia, Gopinath, Bagozzi, & Natarajan 2006) and the Schwartz Values Survey (Kluger et al. 2004; Lucas & Molden 2011; Van-Dijk &

Kluger 2004). There have been a number of instruments created specifically to measure regulatory focus. Higgins and his colleagues (1997) introduced the Self-Guide Strength, which is a reaction time measure of ideal and ought self-guide accessibility, as well as the Regulatory Focus Questionnaire (RFQ; Higgins et al. 2001). Other researchers have also developed their own surveys including the General Regulatory Focus Measure (Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda 2002), the Regulatory Focus Scale (Fellner, Holler, Krichler, & Schabmann 2007), and the Composite Regulatory Focus Scale (Haws, Dholakia, & Bearden 2010). The way regulatory focus should be measured has been examined several times and each has its pros and cons.

This project utilizes the RFQ, created by Higgins and colleagues (2001), to measure chronic focus. The 11-question RFQ is a measure of a person's previous experience with successfully meeting goals using promotion-eager means (6 items) and prevention-vigilant means (5 items). The questions involve experiences from childhood as well as items that tap more recent experience. The underlining expectation is that previous success under one set of means leads to the inclination to use the same when facing a new task or making a new goal (Higgins et al. 2001). Therefore, correlations between the RFQ and different behaviors can be expected even if the person has not specifically performed the activity before – it builds upon the notion that what type of thing has worked with other tasks should work for this one as well.

There have been questions regarding how well the RFQ and other instruments measure the theoretical components of RFT. However, when the RFQ is compared to other measures, the results suggest it to be the better option. Often times the RFQ is not correlated with the other focus measures, has better re-test reliability, and is correlated with theoretically similar psychological measures in a more meaningful pattern than the other

measures (Haws et al. 2010; Keller & Bless 2006; Summerville & Roese 2008). The RFQ sub-scales are independent and have shown to be a much better measure of trait level promotion and prevention (Grant & Higgins 2003; Haws et al. 2010; Keller & Bless 2006). While there have been questions on the RFQ, it appears to be the most reliable measure at this point. The RFQ is used in Chapter 3 looking at how regulatory focus guides general life and political behavior, Chapter 4 in looking at ideological differences based on chronic regulatory focus, and Chapter 5 when looking at how regulatory fit can impact efficacious attitudes.

In addition to looking at chronic promotion and prevention, the survey methodology also uses a unique way of measuring specific tactical strategies tied to promotion and prevention. Scholer et al. (2008; Cornwell & Higgins 2015) delineate a difference between the conceptual vigilant and eager strategies and the specific tactics people use, stating that the tactics, “actualize a contextualized strategy.” This is seen in various pieces of research. For example, Higgins et al. (1994) finds that one of the most common strategies to keep a friend is to avoid losing touch among participants with a high prevention focus. However, the way in which to do so is to “stay in touch”, demonstrating that the vigilant strategy is one of avoidance, but tactic is one of action. One portion of the survey methodology used in the current project seeks to examine different strategic tactics related to promotion and prevention both inside and outside of the political world. Within this unique survey, participants are asked about how they meet ten specific goals within everyday life and ten within political life in order to examine the connection between chronic regulatory focus and behavior across environments in Chapter 3 and how using goal meeting strategies that correspond with one’s chronic focus impacts efficacy in Chapter 5.

2.4.1 Regulatory Fit Measurements and Manipulations

As previously discussed, regulatory fit occurs when the goal meeting strategies match the motivational orientation of the person, either because the person is choosing the strategy best suited for how the goal is perceived or because the environment fosters the correct strategy (Cesario et al. 2008; Higgins 2000). One way to examine regulatory fit within the political environment is to determine if the strategies used to meet political goals correspond with the individual's chronic focus. In order to determine whether regulatory fit occurs or not in the political world, the RFQ is used to measure people's chronic promotion and prevention focus scores and the extent to which they use vigilant or eager strategies are also measured. With both individual dominant focus and strategy use measured, the extent that the person experiences regulatory fit within the political world can be determined and the impact this has on political attitudes examined. The measure of regulatory fit in this way is done in Chapter 5, looking at the impact of regulatory fit and non-fit on external efficacy attitudes.

Another way to examine the role of regulatory fit on political attitudes is to experimentally manipulate participants into a state of fit versus non-fit. Integral manipulations manipulate fit within the task and incidental manipulations activate fit or non-fit through a task separate from the target attitude or stimulus (Cesario et al. 2008). Integral manipulations include ones that combine a manipulation of regulatory focus and strategy within the same task or message (Cesario, et al. 2004; Cesario & Higgins 2008; Lee & Aaker 2004). These types of manipulations often involve framing a target participant as related to promotion or prevention goals and then also have the message focus on gains (non-gains) or losses (non-losses). In addition, fit and non-fit can be induced incidentally, with a

manipulation not tied to the target attitude or behavior, and indirectly affect the persuasiveness of a message (Koenig, Cesario, Molden, Kosloff, & Higgins 2009).

Another method to induce regulatory fit is to take aspects of integral and incidental manipulation. Under this strategy regulatory fit or non-fit is induced by first, incidentally manipulating the participant's regulatory focus, and then, providing an integral manipulation with the target message. Mannetti et al. (2013) use this type of methodology by subliminally priming participants into a promotion or prevention focus state and then altering a political message's regulatory language, but not substantive content before examining the effect of fit on attitudes and evaluation of the speaker. Manipulating regulatory focus and strategy independently has two benefits. First, it offers a clear distinction between focus and strategy rather than mixing the two so that it is known that the participant engaged in both. And, second, all four combinations that can exist across the two manipulations may be examined to understand any differences that may occur between motivational orientation and strategy. This strategy, incidentally manipulating focus and then using promotion-eager versus prevention-vigilant wording in a target message, is used in Chapter 6 to examine regulatory fit in connection with Get-Out-the-Vote arguments.

2.5 Overview of Methodology

I examine three broad questions within the next four substantive chapters. First, how does regulatory focus connect behavior between everyday and political life? Second, how is ideology and political attitudes affected by regulatory focus? Third, how does the experience of regulatory fit impact attitudes towards political participation? I examine these three questions within three separate studies, each with their own set of participants – two surveys and one experiment. The first survey, referred to as the “Regulatory Focus, General, and Political Life Survey”, is used in Chapter 3 and Chapter 5 to answer the first and third

questions above. The separate survey, using a different sample, referred to as the “Regulatory Focus and Ideology Survey” is used in Chapter 4 to answer the second question. I examine the third question using an experiment, referred to as “Regulatory Fit and GOTV”, in Chapter 6. Table 2.1 provides a brief overview of the three studies, including what chapter they will be used and what specific measures are used for each. I go into the methodology of each in more detail below and in the following chapters.

	Regulatory Focus, General, and Political Life Survey		Regulatory Focus and Ideology Survey	Regulatory Fit and GOTV Study
Where Used in Current Project	Chapter 3	Chapter 5	Chapter 4	Chapter 6
<u>Variables used within Chapters</u>				
Regulatory Focus	RFQ (Higgins 2001)		RFQ (Higgins 2001)	Manipulated (Freitas and Higgins 2005)
Political Life Strategies	yes	yes	no	no
General Life Strategies	yes	no	no	no
External Efficacy	no	yes	no	yes
Political Activity Efficacy	no	yes	no	no
Ideology and Partisanship	yes	yes	yes	no
Vote Choice	yes	yes	no	no
Demographics	yes	yes	yes	no

2.5.1 Procedure and Participants

All of the data collection utilized participants from Amazon’s Mechanical Turk platform (AMT), where people, known as Workers, sign up through Amazon and receive compensation for performing Human Intelligence Tasks (HITs) placed on the platform by Requestors. A unique number created by Amazon identifies workers so researchers have no access to participants’ identifying information. While there have been questions regarding AMT’s external validity, several studies have shown that in many cases, samples are representative of the general population and other samples used in research (Berinsky, Huber, and Lenz, 2012; Goodman, Cryder, and Cheema, 2013; Paolacci, Chandler, and Ipeirotis, 2010).

For each study, participants were recruited by placing a HIT on the AMT platform under the UNL Political Behavior Lab Requestor Account. Each HIT briefly described the project, the amount paid for participation (\$1.00 for each survey and \$0.50 for the experiment), and the length of time it would take (about 20 minutes for the surveys and 15 minutes for the experiment). The HIT was limited to Workers located in the United States that had previously completed more than 1,000 other HITs with a success rate of 95 percent or more. The HIT directed participants to Qualtrics, where the surveys and experiments were programmed. Within the Qualtrics platform, the first screen for each study was the Informed Consent form with the options: agree to participate and decline to continue. After agreeing to participate, participants moved on to the study. The final Qualtrics screen gave the Worker a randomized number that the participant typed into the original AMT HIT to record completion of the survey.

2.5.2 Regulatory Focus, General, and Political Life Survey Procedure

The Regulatory Focus, General, and Political Life Survey consists of a number of different item sets. The first set of questions asks participants about ten activities that reflect general experiences in everyday life and ten common political activities. Four questions are asked for each activity. First, participants are asked if they had ever participated in the particular activity or experienced the situation using a dichotomous yes or no response. For example, “Have you ever placed a political bumper sticker on your car?” Next, two sets of questions ask how likely participants are to use a particular strategy when making a decision regarding the target behavior or when engaged in the activity – one framed as strategic vigilance and another as eagerness. The two bumper sticker follow-up questions are: 1) “When you put a political bumper sticker on your car, how likely are you to have one that is positive about a candidate or issue you support?” representing a promotion related, eager

strategy; and, 2) “When you put a political bumper sticker on your car, how likely are you to have one that is negative about a candidate or issue you do not support?” representing a prevention related, vigilant strategy. The final question for each activity and situation concerns the perception that the behavior impacted or influenced others. This question is used to tap external efficacy specific to each activity. All three follow-up questions are asked whether or not the person indicated previously engaging in the targeted behavior.

Following these questions, participants completed the 11-item RFQ, to measure their strength of promotion and prevention foci. This was followed by questions on participation within the 2012 Presidential election and other political attitudes, including interest in politics, partisanship, and ideology. In addition, the survey includes five items commonly used to measure internal political efficacy and five used to measure external political efficacy. The final set of questions includes basic demographic items including their gender, age, race, income, and education. An attention item designed to gauge the participant’s investment in their responses is the final item of the survey. All survey items are in Appendix A.

Participants. A total of 681 individuals self-selected to participate in the Regulatory Focus, General, and Political Life survey. The average time for completing the survey was 20 minutes and 44 seconds, leading to an average hourly rate of \$2.89, which is in the standard range, if not higher, for AMT workers (Paolacci et al. 2010). Forty-three, of the 681 participants that began the survey, failed to finish, leaving a majority of the necessary items for analysis unanswered, and were therefore dropped. In addition, ten failed to correctly answer the attention question at the end of the survey. Therefore, a total of 628 participants (357 males, 57%) comprise the final sample used in the analyses. The mean age was just under 35 years ($M = 34.73$, $SD = 11.24$), a majority of participants were white, not Hispanic (493; 78%), the modal income level was \$20,000 to \$40,000, and modal education level was

college graduate. The sample was more liberal ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 1.63$) than the U.S. population with just under 60 percent identifying as leaning or being liberal and half identified with or leaned towards the Democrat Party ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 1.66$). The heavy tilt towards being liberal and a Democrat is not uncommon in AMT samples (Berinsky et al. 2012).

2.5.3 Regulatory Focus and Ideology Survey Procedure

The second survey I use includes several sets of questions focusing on regulatory focus, ideology, and political attitudes. A different set of AMT workers were recruited for this, second survey. Participants first completed the RFQ (Higgins et al. 2001) to measure promotion and prevention focus. Following this, participants self-reported their ideology on a left-right continuum, partisan identification, and interest in politics. Following these basic political questions, participants report a variety of political issue positions using the American National Election Study (ANES) format. Participants then reported attitudes toward four policy issues – gun rights, abortion, border security, and business regulation – in which information on the current state of the issue was given. Last each participant answers questions about their political participation, political knowledge, and demographics.

Appendix A lists the specific wording for each question in the survey.

Participants. A total of 873 participants were recruited through the HIT. Of these, 699 participants (39.3% female) completed the survey. A majority of the participants were white (78.8%) and the mean age was 33.7 ($SD = 33.47$). The modal level of education was college graduate (37.2%) and modal income level was between \$20,000 and \$40,000 a year. AMT workers tend to be more liberal and identify with the Democratic Party (Berinsky, et al. 2012). The sample is consistent with the trend with 53.4 percent of the participants reporting

being a strong Democrat, Democrat, or lean Democrat while 19.1 percent report being a strong Republican, Republican, or lean Republican ($M = 3.32$, $SD = 1.45$).

2.5.4 Regulatory Fit and GOTV Study

The experiment for the Regulatory Fit and GOTV Study utilizes a 2 (prime: promotion or prevention) by 2 (message frame: eager or vigilant) design, with the focus of the analysis being participants in the regulatory fit conditions (promotion prime with eager frame/prevention prime with vigilant frame) versus those in the non-fit conditions (promotion prime with vigilant frame/prevention prime with eager frame).

The study involves three parts. First, participants are randomly assigned to either complete the prime to activate a promotion or prevention focus. The task is a widely used regulatory focus manipulation where participants list three goals framed as either “hopes and aspirations” – to activate promotion – or “duties and obligations” – to activate prevention (Freitas & Higgins 2002). Immediately following the regulatory focus manipulation, a second random assignment exposes participants to a GOTV message written with either promotion-eager or prevention-vigilant related language. Following the message, each participant responded to a number of items gauging how likely they are to vote in an upcoming election, how valuable voting is seen as a participatory act, external efficacy, and the persuasiveness of the message.

Participants. A total of 715 participants were recruited through MTurk over two days in March 2014. One hundred and four participants were dropped for not completing the protocol, did not perform the regulatory focus manipulation, or participated multiple times. In addition, 3 other participants were removed for spending over 791 seconds on the GOTV message screen. This left a total of 611 participants. After random assignment, 312 participants were primed into a promotion focus and 299 into a prevention focus. In

addition, the second random assignment resulted in 302 participants being exposed to the promotion-eager GOTV message and 308 participants were assigned to the prevention-vigilant GOTV message.

2.5.5 Measures Used Across the Studies

The main independent variables across the studies are regulatory focus and regulatory fit. In the surveys, regulatory focus is measured using the RFQ (Higgins et al. 2001), measuring previous use and experience of a promotion and prevention focus. In addition to regulatory focus and fit, each survey provides unique measures for answering the specific questions within the project. The Regulatory Focus, General Life, and Political Life study involves items tapping into specific strategies used throughout life, political orientations, and efficacious attitudes. The Regulatory Focus and Ideology study includes sets of items to get a broad sense of each participant's ideological leanings and political attitudes. The Regulatory Fit and GOTV study includes items tapping attitudes towards voting and external efficacy. Also, each study includes a set of common demographic questions. Following is a brief discussion and study-specific statistics for the measures used within various portions of the project.

Regulatory Focus

The Regulatory Focus, General, and Political Life survey used the RFQ, consisting of six promotion and five prevention focus items. These items were subjected to a factor analysis with Varimax rotation, resulting in the two expected subscales. The items for each were averaged together to obtain a *promotion* score ($M = 3.47, SD = .65$) and a *prevention* score ($M = 3.54, SD = .78$). Examination of the scale scores shows 268 (43.5%) participants reported higher promotion scores compared to their prevention scores, 329 (53.3%)

reported higher prevention scores, and 20 (3.2%) reported equal scores across both subscales. Promotion and prevention scores are positively correlated ($r = .16, p < .001$).

The RFQ was also used in the Regulatory Focus and Ideology Survey. Factor analysis, again using Varimax rotation, produced two orthogonal dimensions with the prevention focus items loading on the first ($\alpha = .86$) and promotion items loading on the second dimension ($\alpha = .76$), explaining 55.56% of the variance. The items for each dimension were averaged to obtain an individual's promotion ($M = 3.37, SD = .64$) and prevention ($M = 3.50, SD = .75$) score, which were positively correlated ($r = .10, p = .004$). A slight majority of the participants reported higher prevention focus scores than promotion scores (55.4%).

Comparing the RFQ to other studies utilizing the measure brings up two potential problems. Higgins et al. (2001), reporting the first use of the RFQ, find a much higher proportion of their participants being more chronic promotion dominant, with as much as 90 percent of the sample being so. However, more participants in both of my samples have a higher prevention score, which is opposite of what Higgins and his colleagues report. In addition, promotion and prevention are positively correlated in both studies, which has been reported in other studies, but is not common (Haaga, Friedman-Wheeler, McIntosh, & Ahrens 2008; Haws et al. 2010; Higgins 2001; Grant & Higgins 2003).

Neither of these may be a problem as the sample was more closely split among those with a stronger chronic regulatory focus than previously described and the correlation between the two foci is small. However, one thing to note is that prevention concerns are regarded as minimal goals where the value by expectancy relationship does not work as theory would predict. Rather than motivation increasing with an increase in the extent to which a goal matters or the ability to meet it (which is observed for promotion related goals),

goals under a prevention focus – obligations that must be met – do not show an increase in motivation with higher expectancy perceptions (Brendl & Higgins 1996; Freitas & Higgins 2002; Idson et al. 2000). Therefore, the momentary focus of the environment or chronic focus of the individual may impact findings based on motivation. If political participation is seen as an obligation, motivation should not increase or decrease based upon prevention scores but could be based on promotion scores. On the other hand, the political environment may induce the view that participation is necessary, also dampening the impact of a motivation effect.

Regulatory Focus as a Categorical Variable

Regulatory focus research often categorizes participants as promotion or prevention using a dummy code created by subtracting the individual's prevention score from the promotion score and performing a median split. This would indicate that participants above the mean are relatively more promotion and below the mean are relatively more prevention oriented. However, theoretically this poses a problem because the two measures are orthogonal, not one-dimensional (Higgins 2002). In addition, it does not take into account nuances that may be hidden within different configurations of RFQ scores. For example, someone may have higher mean RFQ scores for both promotion and prevention or lower than mean scores on both dimensions. Rather than coding promotion and prevention in this, dichotomous way, throughout the dissertation I categorize participants into four groups. To create the RFQ category variable, participants were divided based on whether or not their subscale scores were higher or lower than the overall mean for the sample on each foci. The RFQ category differentiates participants with promotion scores above the sample mean (and prevention scores below the mean), those with prevention scores above the sample mean (and promotion scores below the mean), those with scores above the sample

mean on both promotion and prevention, and those with scores below the sample mean on both dimensions.

		RFT Dummy Coding		
		<u>Promotion</u>	<u>Prevention</u>	<u>Total</u>
Category	High Promotion	140	0	140
Based on	High Prevention	0	121	121
Both RFQ	High on Both	54	126	180
Subscales	Low on Both	74	82	156
Total		268	329	

Table 2.2 displays the number of participants categorized as promotion and prevention dominant using the traditional, dichotomous variable and the four categories based on a combination of both scores relative to the sample mean for both surveys used in the following chapters. The table shows dichotomizing regulatory focus may be miscategorizing people. More than half of the participants were neither truly dominant promotion nor prevention focused – both of their RFQ subscale scores were higher or lower than the sample mean for each. In addition, the distribution is not even with 39 percent of participants categorized as prevention under the two-category method having high promotion scores too but only 18 percent of promotion categorized participants also having high prevention scores. In addition, 26 percent of the sample has lower mean prevention and promotion scores. If participants are not oriented to meet goals with either particular focus – or feels successful in previously goal directed behavior through either – there should be differences between these people and the remaining sample that reports motivation and success from one or both methods. I use this category variable throughout chapters 3 and 5 to examine any effects that occur within different combinations of promotion and prevention strength.

Regulatory Strategy

The Regulatory Focus, General, and Political Life survey includes a unique battery of questions that tap into goal-directed behavior in general and political life. As previously discussed, these items are designed to gauge the extent that people use tactics related to an eager strategy and vigilant strategy across real-world life. Ten of the activities ask about goals common to the political world and ten refer to common day-to-day activities.

Political Life Strategies. I Examine behavior in the political world using two questions related to ten common political activities and situations. These items include: being a member of a political party, voting in a primary election, voting in a general election, placing a bumper sticker on your car, volunteering for a campaign, donating money to a campaign, attending a rally or other political event, contacting a government official, following a campaign through the media, and discussing political candidates. Out of the ten possible actions, participants reported being engaged in less than half of them ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 2.28$), with 39 participants reporting having done zero of the political activities before and seven reporting having performed all ten. Engagement in each activity ranged from 82 percent having previously voted in a general election to only 11 percent reporting placing a bumper sticker on their car.

I created two indices using the strategy items, which asked how they met each goal using eager and vigilant behaviors. The first averaged participant's responses to the vigilant tactic questions across all activities, creating the *vigilant political strategy* scale ($M = 3.90$, $SD = .89$). The second averaged responses to the promotion related, eager tactical questions, creating the *eager political strategy* scale ($M = 5.05$, $SD = 1.00$). The vigilant political strategy scale results in a fairly low reliability coefficient ($\alpha = .69$), but the political eager strategy scale shows much higher consistency ($\alpha = .83$). Higher consistency with the promotion related

political strategies might be reflective of the main activity within the U.S. political system, voting – requiring a choice of support for a candidate – which is more consistent with eager strategies. Previous research has documented strong goal-means connections within a cognitive framework (Sengupta & Zhou 2007; Shah 2003; Shah & Kruglanski 2003). Therefore, thinking about the political system potentially activates a promotion orientation and/or eager means related to voting, and if this is the case, a consistent pattern of promotion related, eager strategies would be expected.

General Life Strategies. I also asked participants to respond to ten sets of questions related to common activities and situations within every day life. These items mirrored the political life strategy ones and included: being a fan of a professional sports team, performing a ritual to help your team win (strategy questions did not follow this item), pray or talking to a higher power, having a skill or hobby, leaving comments for a business, being employed, voting for reality show contestants, leaving online reviews, playing video games, participating in group projects, and trying new recipes. Participants reported having engaged in roughly half of the activities ($M = 5.62$, $SD = 1.92$), with two participants reporting “no” to all the activities and one reporting “yes” to all. Percentages of participants engaged with the situations ranged from 85 percent having participated in a group project to 13 percent previously voting in a reality television show competition.

Again, I created two indices with these items, mirroring the political strategies. I averaged the participants’ responses to the prevention related, vigilant tactic questions across the situations, creating the *vigilant general life strategy* scale ($M = 4.52$, $SD = .77$). The second averaged all responses to the eager tactical questions, creating the *eager general life strategy* scale ($M = 5.37$, $SD = .76$). Neither general life strategy scales have a high level of reliability (eager, $\alpha = .65$; vigilant, $\alpha = .53$). This is likely due to the relative breadth of different

activities participants responded to across everyday life, from playing video games to participation in group projects.

External Efficacy

I use external efficacy as the main dependent variable in Chapters 5 and 6 to test how regulatory fit impacts a person's perception that his or her political activity means something. Chapter 5 examines external efficacy in two ways – using traditional external efficacy measures and using activity-specific questions regarding the same goals found in the strategy scales. I included these two measures in the Regulatory Focus, General, and Political Life survey. Chapter 6 also examines external efficacy, but within an experimental procedure in the Regulatory Fit and GOTV study. I only use the traditional external efficacy measure in the experiment.

Traditional Efficacy Measure. I used four questions to measure external efficacy that are often found in research and national surveys. These include items include thoughts concerning the ideas that Congressmen “lose touch” with the electorate pretty quickly, similar people “don't have any say” in what happens in government, that parties “are only interested in people's votes”, and officials don't “care much what people like me think”. Participants responded to each item on a scale, ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (7). I recoded each so that higher scores indicate a stronger sense of external efficacy and averaged them to create one *external efficacy* scale. Participants within the Regulatory Focus, General, and Political Life study ($M = 2.24$, $SD = .86$) and the Regulatory Focus and GOTV study ($M = 2.87$, $SD = 1.23$) have quite low but similar external efficacy scores.

Political Activity Efficacy. In addition to the traditional efficacy items described above, I included activity-specific efficacy items in the Regulatory Focus, General, and Political Life

survey. For nine of the ten sets of political behavior question sets described above, I also included an efficacy question. The efficacy questions are designed to tap into the external, rather than internal efficacy, component of behavior by emphasizing the participant's perception on how influential their actions are on others. For example, the question regarding monetary contributions to a political campaign asks, "Thinking about when you have given money to a political campaign, how likely was your contribution influential?" Response options range from "very unlikely" (1) to "very likely" (7). I averaged the nine items together to create the *political activity efficacy* scale ($M = 3.13$, $SD = 1.09$). The activity specific scale is slightly higher than the traditional efficacy scale, but still well below the possible mean.

Political Orientation Items

I include several items related to political attitudes and participation in both surveys. The Regulatory Focus and Ideology Survey used for Chapter 4, which looks specifically at the connection between ideology and regulatory focus, contains more items regarding political attitudes and will be more fully discussed within the chapter.

Ideology and Partisanship. In addition to partisanship, I asked participants to self-report their ideological orientation on a 7-point scale, ranging from "Strong Liberal" (1) to "Strong Conservative" (7). In addition, partisan identification was measured on a scale ranging from "Strong Democrat" (1) to "Strong Republican" (7) with an option for "other", which included the option to name a different political party. The means and standard deviations for these variables are above in the participant section above.

Vote Choice. Two questions in the Regulatory Focus, General, and Political Life Survey concerned participation in the 2012 election. I first asked, "Did you vote in the presidential election of 2012?" was asked with, "yes", "no", or "Not applicable/Don't know", as

response options. Participants reporting having voted were then asked, “Who did you vote for: President Barack Obama (the Democrat candidate), Mitt Romney (the Republican candidate), or somebody else?” with an option to type in the candidate or party. A total of 450 participants (71.7%) reported voting in the 2012 election, while 167 (26.6%) reported not voting, and 11 (1.8%) reported “not knowing/not applicable”. Of the participants reporting participation in the 2012 election, 69.9 percent voted for Barack Obama ($n = 314$), 16.1 percent voted for Mitt Romney ($n = 101$), and 5.4 percent voted for a third-party candidate ($n = 34$).

Control Variables

Last, I collected basic demographic information for each participant. I had participants report their *age* in years and *gender* (male = 1 and female = 0). I measured *education* using a categorical variable ranging from having less than a high school degree to professional degree. In addition, I use a categorical variable to measure income with six, \$20,000 increments starting at less than \$20,000 and ending with over \$100,000. The final demographic variable asked was race, where participants reporting having Hispanic origins or not and a follow-up question asking for the specific race(s) s/he identifies. I combine these two items to create the variable, *race*, is dichotomized for the analyses with white, non-Hispanic participants coded as 1 and all others coded as 0. The means and standard deviations of the demographic variables are also within the participant section above.

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I introduced the theory of regulatory focus, including how regulatory focus develops, the consequences of chronic and momentary promotion and prevention focus, as well as connections to political attitudes and behavior. From here, I build upon the basic understanding of regulatory focus and go deeper into how the theory informs specific

political attitudes and behavior. Overall, the premise of regulatory focus theory includes the notion that there are distinct differences in how people meet the hedonic principle, approaching pleasure and avoiding pain, based on the perception of goals and the needs they meet.

It is this focus on goals that distinguishes explanations of political behavior based on regulatory focus versus personality-based approaches, such as the five-factor model. Studies of personality correlates are able to pick out under what circumstances a person may vote, but they do not get at what the vote means. Is a vote for a Democrat always a vote for a Democrat? Or is it sometimes a vote against a Republican? Regulatory focus puts the goal at the forefront of the research, not the behavior or person, allowing a deeper understanding of political behavior.

In addition, motivational orientation is about individual differences that lead to alternative perceptions of the current and desired states, but regulatory focus also explains how environments shape those perceptions too. For example, voting behavior can be affected by the extent a person is promotion focused and the extent that the electoral context operates within a realm of promotion. By emphasizing goals, regulatory focus offers an understanding of not just the presence or absence of certain behaviors but also a deeper understanding of them that is driven by both individual perceptions and the environment.

Other research looking into motivations and goals of citizens within the political process is often focused on narrow, less fundamental motivations and goals. As Simon (1985) stated in his address to the discipline regarding rational choice within political science, there needs to be an emphasis on the perception of the actor with a deep understanding of the situation and goals of him/her. While rational choice embeds self-interest as the motivation behind political decisions, it does not offer a broad understanding of the

relationship between goals and political behavior. The narrow motivational basis of self-interest is more about making one choice with the goal of maximizing utility (Downs 1957). The empirical findings have shown the lack in this lower-level motivation to be helpful in understanding political behavior (Bartels 2006; Sears & Funk 1991).

A promotion and prevention focus represents superordinate goals based on surviving the social world, coloring perceptions of the environment and the interaction within it, ultimately making regulatory focus a component of self-identity (Higgins 1997; Manczak et al. 2014; Manian, Strauman, & Denney 1998; Strauman et al. 2013). Goals pursued within the promotion and prevention systems create distinct views of the world through the connection between cognitive, emotional, and social processes.

CHAPTER 3 Regulatory Focus as the Common Denominator of General and Political Life

Personality traits, cognitive style, and motivational orientation lead to stable patterns of behavior, but different circumstances and environments can lead people to act outside of their usual characteristics. Aunt Mary Belle might be a very sweet woman, often described as warm and caring by others until her favorite baseball team, the Astros, starts losing or a commercial for a Republican candidate comes on air. In these instances, she converts into a more hostile and cold person. Overall, behavior often fluctuates, revolving around a set of central dispositions. Differences arising within the political environment from regular social situations may or may not lead to distinct variations in people's behavior.

Much of political science research states or implies that citizens approach political goals with complete rationality, or as rationally as possible given inherent individual and systemic limitations (Aldrich 1993, 1995; Downs 1957; Fiorina 1976; Poole & Rosenthal 1984; Popkin 1994; Riker & Ordeshook 1968; Simon 1955). However, research demonstrating the impact emotions, personality, biology, and slight environmental cues have on political behavior and attitudes suggests that citizens are not rational when it comes to politics (Alford, Funk, & Hibbing 2005; Inbar, Pizarro, Iyer, & Haidt 2012; Inbar, Pizarro, Knobe, & Bloom 2009; Lodge and Taber 2005, 2013; Marcus, et al. 2000; Mondak 2010; Oxley et al. 2008). The former implies the same aspects of a person that guides behavior within the general, social world drive behavior in the political arena. Specifically, promotion and prevention strength leads to particular patterns of behavior in a person's everyday life, which is mirrored by political activity. In turn, strategic eagerness and vigilance imposes a certain structure on making the decision to support a particular candidate – by picking the most desired candidate or choosing the better of two evils.

3.1 Regulatory Focus, General Life, and Political Behavior

Motivational orientation is one source of behavioral consistency across different environments. As previously discussed, chronic regulatory focus leads to differences in cognitive style reflective of superordinate goals (Higgins 2006; Strauman 1996; Strauman et al. 2013). The postulates and empirical findings regarding RFT suggest that motivations to meet political goals and make political decisions differ depending on whether a citizen has developed a stronger promotion or prevention focus. In addition, goal related behaviors should show consistency across everyday and political situations. While certain environments can activate a momentary promotion or prevention focus, people tend to initially approach goals with their chronic focus activated, leading to consistent patterns of strategic behavior (Strauman et al. 2013).

My first set of hypotheses tests the extent to which regulatory focus explains behavior inside and outside of politics. My general expectation is that an individual will meet goals across the two domains in a consistent manner, characteristic of their dominant focus. An individual with a stronger chronic prevention focus will be more likely to root harder when their favorite sports team is on defense and make sure that previous mistakes are avoided, as well as choose to support candidates, both in terms of money and time, that appears the least disagreeable. On the other hand, a person holding a stronger chronic promotion focus will rely on previous successes when making decisions, prefer to cheer on their team's offense, as well as give money and time to politicians found to be the most desirable.

H_{3,1}: Promotion focus scores on the RFQ will be positively associated with being more likely to use strategic eagerness in general and political life.

H_{3,2}: Prevention focus scores on the RFQ will be positively associated with being more likely to use strategic vigilance in general and political life.

H_{3,3}: The likelihood of using eager strategies in general and political life will be positively correlated and the likelihood of using vigilant strategies in general and political life will be positively correlated.

3.2 Regulatory Focus and Motivations Behind Vote Choices

Motivational orientation, based on regulatory focus, is associated with distinct goal representations. For example, choosing to support a candidate within a promotion focus can be viewed as a way to endorse democratic values and advancing social ideals. Or, under a prevention focus, the same goal is thought of as an obligation and a necessity to maintain democratic values. The variation in goal perception is then associated with distinct means used during goal pursuit. Promotion concerns are pursued with strategic eagerness by focusing on maximizing gain-related opportunities, which signify goal success when met. On the other hand, strategic vigilance is used for prevention concerns, where success equates to a non-loss through avoidance of obstacles that may impede goal completion (Crowe & Higgins 1997; Higgins 1997, 1998; Shah, et al. 1998). Variation in goal perception strongly impacts information processing and decision-making.

Decisions regarding vote choice within a promotion focus should emphasize gains and positive information and reflect the extent to which the chosen candidate is preferred over other candidates. On the other hand, within a prevention focus, the sensitivity to losses and emphasis on negative information in judgments should be reflected in a vote choice underscored by a dislike of the opposing candidate. While voting against a candidate is not an institutionalized option, vote choice decisions are still capable of encompassing a blackball strategy. Previous work by Dolinski and Drogosz (2010) shows interest in blackball strategies, with prevention focused individuals reporting a higher likelihood of voting if they could vote against a party, rather than only being able to support a party for office. The

Dolinski and Drogosz study looked at the prospect of being able to blackball a candidate or party, but not the informal use of this tactic by voters when choosing to support a candidate or party. The second set of hypotheses tests whether people with a stronger prevention focus or those more likely to use vigilant strategies use a blackball-type tactic when deciding for whom to vote.

H_{3,4}: Higher promotion scores are associated with a higher likelihood of voting for a candidate based on preference for him and his policies, mediated by use of eager strategies in general and political life.

H_{3,5}: Higher prevention scores are associated with a higher likelihood of voting for a candidate based on disliking the opposing candidate and his policies, mediated by use of vigilant strategies in general and political life.

The first set of hypotheses concern the extent promotion and prevention dispositions guide goal pursuit within general and political life as well as the correlation of behavior across social domains. My general focus is to examine the extent motivational orientation results in similar behavior across general and political activities or if the political environment creates variation in behavior different from what occurs throughout daily life. The second set of hypotheses are an extension of the first, examining how behavior within general and political life, guided by chronic regulatory focus, affects a specific decision commonly confronted within the political sphere – the act of choosing a candidate.

3.3 Examining the Connection between Everyday and Political Behavior through a Regulatory Focus Lens

Data from the Regulatory Focus, General, and Political Life Survey, discussed in the previous chapter, is used to test the connection between chronic motivational orientation, goal-directed strategies, and political behavior. This survey includes the items concerning how people go about meeting a variety of goals within their everyday and political world –

the strategy scales – as well as the Regulatory Focus Questionnaire, measuring chronic promotion and prevention (RFQ; Higgins et al. 2001). These scales are used to examine the connection between motivational orientation and behavior as a test the first set of hypotheses.

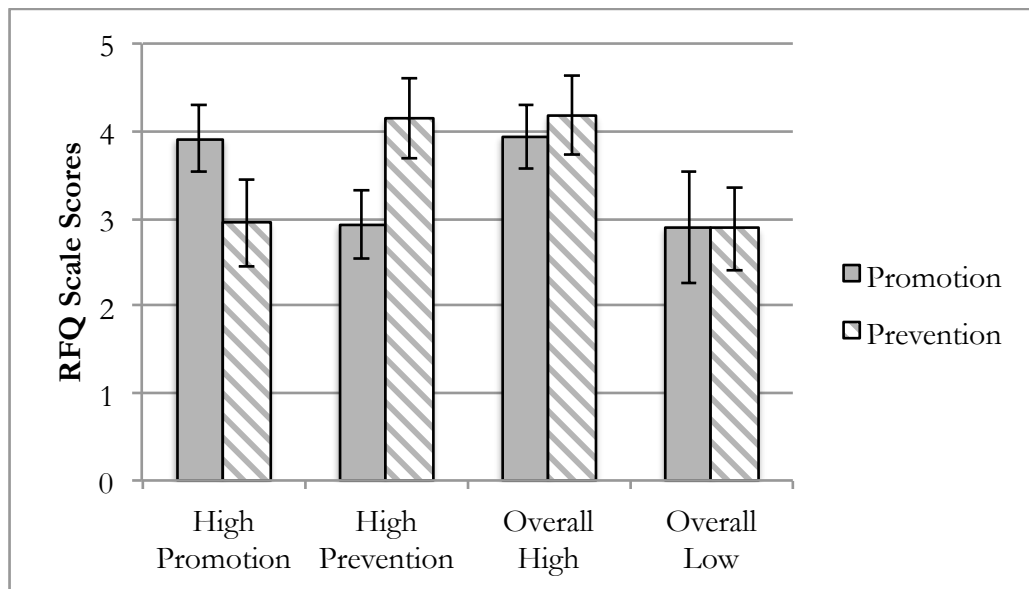
I extend the examination between regulatory focus and strategic behavior in a more holistic fashion along with looking at how the two affect the process of making a vote choice in the second set of hypotheses. *Vote motivation* is measured using one item concerning the 2012 presidential election asked in the Regulatory Focus, General, and Political Life Survey. Participants indicated whether or not they voted in the 2012 election and which candidate they supported. Participants were then asked, “Using the following scale, which of the following better describes your reasoning for your vote choice: because you like President Barack Obama [Mitt Romney/your party’s candidate] and his policies or because you dislike Mitt Romney [President Obama/President Obama and Mitt Romney] and his policies?” The question was specific to the vote choice indicated by the participant and response options were anchored by “I like President Obama [Mitt Romney/my party’s candidate] and his policies” (1) and “I dislike...Mitt Romney [President Obama/the other party’s candidate]” (10). Therefore, higher scores on the vote motivation variable represent a more vigilant tactic and lower scores an eager one in the process of making a vote choice.

Participants who voted for Obama based their choice on a more eager reasoning process ($M = 3.52, SD = 2.48$). As for Romney voters, their reports place them just slightly on the eager side of the median of the scale, which is 5.5 ($M = 5.39; SD = 3.42$). Third party voters were also more likely to have eager/promotion reasons for their vote choice ($M = 4.18, SD = 3.45$). Response options across the three types of voters were combined into one measure, *vote motivation* ($M = 3.99, SD = 2.89$).

3.3.1 Initial Look at the RFQ and Strategy Scales

The two subscales of the RFQ (Higgins et al. 2001) were used to measure promotion ($M = 3.47, SD = .65$) and prevention ($M = 3.54, SD = .78$), which are positively correlated ($r = .16, p < .001$). Figure 3.1 displays the means and standard deviations of promotion and prevention scores broken down based on which regulatory focus group the participants were categorized based the combination of promotion and prevention strength held by each. While it is obvious that the group categorized as High Promotion or High Prevention would have stronger scores within their respective category, the figure is used more to differentiate the scores for the two groups not commonly differentiated – the Overall Low and High groups. Mean promotion ($M = 2.90, SD = .64$) and prevention scores ($M = 2.88, SD = .48$) are equal for participants in the Low Overall group. Participants in the High Overall group have a slightly higher mean prevention ($M = 4.18, SD = .45$) than promotion score ($M = 3.94, SD = .37$).

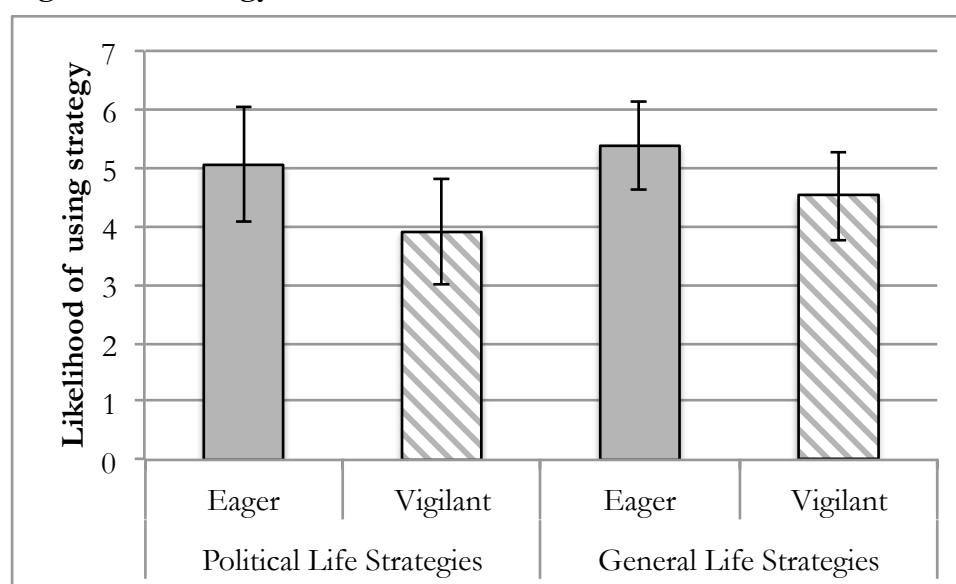
Figure 3.1. Mean (SD) RFQ Scores for Each Regulatory Focus Category



Note. $N = 620$.

Participants reported the likelihood of pursuing ten general and political life activities using strategic eagerness and vigilance, independently. Figure 3.2 displays the means and standard deviations of the scales created from the strategy items. Overall, the mean use of eager strategies was higher than the mean likelihood of using strategic vigilance in the political arena ($t(627) = 27.31, p < .001$) and in general life ($t(627) = 25.39, p < .001$). In addition, the two types of strategies are positively correlated within the political ($r = .27, p < .001$) and general life domains ($r = .38, p < .001$).

Figure 3.2. Strategy Scale Means and Standard Deviations



Note. N = 628.

The distribution of regulatory focus strength and the correlation among the likelihood of using eager and vigilant strategies between and across both domains demonstrate three emerging trends. First, strategic eagerness is used more frequently than vigilance in both domains. However, more participants have higher prevention subscale scores compared to their promotion scores. This lack of correspondence may reflect an issue involving social desirability, with a hesitation in not wanting to report using minimal effort at work or report enjoying the negative side of politics.

The second trend includes the positive correlation between pursuing goals using opposing strategies within each domain – increased use of eager strategies is associated with an increase in strategic vigilance and vice versa. This could pose a problem further in the analysis if variance in goal pursuit behaviors is based on having a general degree of motivation rather than the specific regulatory focus.

Third, strategy use, overall, is higher within general life compared to political life, indicating political goals are less likely to be pursued either due to less interest or exposure to the specific environment. The general question of whether or not the specificity of the political environment leads to differences in behavior is only observed, at this point, with the finding that strategic vigilance is least likely used in the political domain. This may be due to the structural elements of a political environment that, in general, encourages strategic eagerness through electoral rules and level of abstractness. Prior to looking in more detail at the different social domains, I evaluate the connections across individual attributes and regulatory focus and goal pursuit strategies.

3.3.2 Regulatory Focus and Strategy Use: Demographic and Political Profiles

Previous research has not focused on the relationship between promotion and prevention focus strength and demographic variables. However, demographic variables have a long-standing position of being connected to political behavior. Therefore, examining how demographic and basic political tendencies are connected to regulatory focus and the related strategies could help in understanding the connection among goal perceptions, pursuit, and political behavior. Table 3.1 displays partial correlations between regulatory focus or strategy use and the profile items, controlling for the opposing focus or strategy within each environment.

Table 3.1. Partial correlations between RFQ scores and Strategy Scales with Demographic and Political Profile Variables

Demographic Profile	Regulatory Focus		General Life Strategies		Political Life Strategies	
	Promotion	Prevention	Eager	Vigilant	Eager	Vigilant
Age	.15***	.07 [^]	.21***	-.16***	.24***	-.03
Education	.10*	.08 [^]	.04	.01	.04	-.05
Income	.23***	.01	.14***	-.03	.08*	-.05
White	-.01	-.08 [^]	.01	-.07	.09*	-.01
Male	-.02	-.07 [^]	-.13**	.03	-.07 [^]	.02
Gen. Activity	.28***	-.03	.32***	.02	.18***	.06
Political Profile	Regulatory Focus		General Life Strategies		Political Life Strategies	
	Promotion	Prevention	Eager	Vigilant	Eager	Vigilant
Pol. Interest	.19***	-.04	.22***	-.06	.32***	.19***
Partisanship	.03	-.03	-.05	.03	-.10*	-.09*
Ideology	.06	-.03	-.02	.10*	-.06	-.05
Register	.11**	.02	.18***	-.05	.17***	.002
Vote	.13***	.05	.22***	-.08 [^]	.26***	-.03
Pol. Activity	.16***	.01	.24***	-.05	.38***	.14***

Notes. Register is coded so that 1 indicates subject is a registered voter and 0 indicates lack of registration. Vote is coded so that 1 indicates having voted in the 2012 election and 0 as abstaining.

[^] $p \leq .10$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$

Promotion and Prevention Profiles

The left hand columns in Table 3.1 look at the relationship between basic demographic variables and RFQ scores. An increased orientation to promotion, controlling for prevention scores, is associated with being older, having a higher socioeconomic status, and performing a larger variety of the general activities asked within the survey. Prevention orientation, controlling for promotion scores, shows a similar pattern regarding age and education, but is only marginally significant. Prevention is not associated with previous performance across the general life activities.

As for the political profile variables, there is no connection to basic tendencies and chronic prevention scores, controlling for promotion. However, a stronger promotion focus, while controlling for prevention strength, is associated with increased political activity, overall. Increasingly higher promotion scores are associated with being more interested in politics, previously performing more political activities, being a registered voter, and having

voted in the 2012 election. RFQ scores are not associated with ideological attitudes and partisanship, but this relationship will be further explored in Chapter 4.

Strategy Scale Profiles

The relationship between strategic eagerness in goal pursuit and the political and demographic profile items follow the pattern witnessed for promotion focus. Strategic eagerness is positively related with variables indicating a higher socioeconomic status and a higher frequency of participation. On the other hand, strategic vigilance is not associated with a clear demographic profile, similar to the weak relationship with prevention focus and the same variables.

Two different explanations exist for the connection between higher participation rates and chronic promotion and eager strategy scores. The first is the connection of both to higher socioeconomic status, which has historically been tied to higher political participation (Lewis-Beck, Jacoby, Norpoth, & Weisberg 2008; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady 1995; Wolfinger & Rosenstone 1980). The second explanation is based on personality characteristics associated with a stronger promotion focus, specifically relationship between promotion focus and increased levels of optimism and generalized trust (Grant & Higgins 2003; Keller, Mayo, Greifeneder, & Pfattheicher 2015). The political world requires future thinking, resilience, and optimism given the low likelihood of having one's vote matter and delayed gratification of seeing desired policies take action.

As for strategic vigilance, increasingly higher use of this tactic within political behavior, but not in general life, is associated with an increased interest in politics and a wider degree of participation. Political information often has a negativity bias, campaigns use us-versus-them rhetoric, and there is an emphasis on where candidates stand in opinion polls, which are more likely to align with strategic vigilance in creating a negative reference

point and a need to obtain a previous status quo (Cappella & Jamieson 1997; Druckman, Kifer, & Parkin 2009; Geer 2006; Hibbing & Theiss-Morse 1995; Jerit 2004; Patterson 1994). In addition, high dissatisfaction with the current political situation may be associated with the perception that there are only bad options to choose from or a feeling that the political environment needs to return to a previous status quo, presumably one with preferred policies, government officials, or economic situation. The environment itself, or the perception of the current state, may induce participation that aligns with vigilant strategies even if a person does not hold a strong prevention orientation.

3.3.3 Connections Within and Across General and Political Life

With an initial understanding of regulatory focus and behavior, as well as a partial look into broad demographic connections with both, my next step is to test the first three hypotheses in a more rigorous fashion. The first two hypotheses concern the connection between regulatory focus and corresponding strategies – promotion strength should be positively associated with the use of eager strategies in everyday and political life ($H_{3,1}$) and prevention focus is expected to be positively correlated with the use of strategic vigilance in political and general life ($H_{3,2}$). Last, $H_{3,3}$ only concerns strategies – individuals more likely to use eager (vigilant) strategies in general life will rely on the same goal-directed behaviors in political life.

Regulatory Focus and Strategy Relationships

Prior to looking at the full OLS models, coefficients for partial correlations between regulatory focus and strategy within each domain are displayed in the top of Table 3.2. The middle section of Table 3.2 contains the partial correlations between general life strategies, controlling for the opposing strategy, and each political strategy scale. The bottom section

correlates each political strategy, controlling for the opposing tactical scale, with the general life strategy scales.

Table 3.2. Partial correlations between Strategy Scales and Regulatory Focus				
	General Life Strategies		Political Life Strategies	
	Eager	Vigilant	Eager	Vigilant
Partial Correlations Controlling for Opposing Regulatory Focus				
Promotion	.27***	-.15***	.23***	.03
Prevention	.15***	-.07 [^]	.05	-.04
Partial Correlations Controlling for Opposing General Life Strategy				
Gen. Eager Strategies	-----	-----	.63***	.09*
Gen. Vigilant Strategies	-----	-----	.02	.33***
Partial Correlations Controlling for Opposing Political Life Strategy				
Pol. Eager Strategies	.64***	.14***	-----	-----
Pol. Vigilant Strategies	-.04	.31***	-----	-----

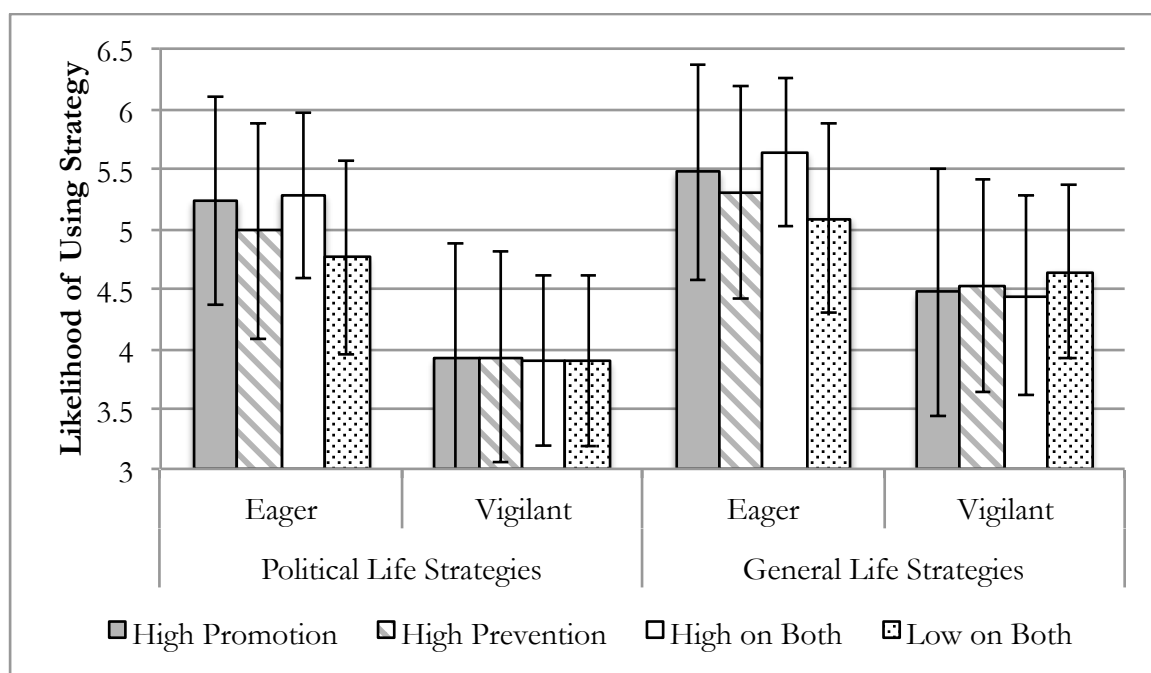
[^] $p \leq .10$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$

Table 3.2 shows support for the first hypothesis, but not the second. Increases in promotion scores are related to an increase in eager strategies in both general and political life, as well as a decrease in strategic vigilance in general life. However, increases in prevention scores correlate with an increase of using eager strategies in general life and a marginally significant decrease in vigilance. In addition, chronic prevention is not associated with either life strategy scale. These initial correlations continue to show a strong connection between promotion and pursuing goals with strategic eagerness that is lacking with the prevention-strategic vigilance connection.

The third hypothesis, behavior is similar across the domains, is supported. When people increasingly use strategic eagerness or vigilance in one domain, they are also more likely to use the same goal pursuit method in the other domain. In addition, the use of strategic vigilance decreases with an increased use of strategic eagerness, however the opposite is not seen. Overall, participants report behavioral patterns that transcend environments based on relied upon goal-directed actions.

The above partial correlations show that increasingly strong promotion scores are associated with an increase in using strategic vigilance in general life but not in political life. However, a subset of the sample has high prevention and promotion scores. This subset of participants may have high prevention scores, but still use strategic eagerness more often because of their high promotion scores, dampening the prevention-strategic vigilance relationship. In order to examine this possibility, Figure 3.3 displays the likelihood of using both strategies within each domain broken down by the regulatory focus categories.

Figure 3.3. Regulatory Focus Group Strategy Scale Means (*SD*)



Note. $N = 620$.

The mean likelihood of using eager strategies in political ($F(3, 626) = 12.11$, $MSE = .89$, $p < .001$) and general life ($F(3, 626) = 20.51$, $MSE = .52$, $p < .001$) differs depending on the combination of a participant's RFQ scores. People with higher promotion scores are more likely to use eager strategies than those with lower promotion scores, however post hoc tests show the differences are based on having a strong motivational orientation rather than specifically having a stronger promotion focus. Participants in the High Promotion

group are equally likely to use strategic eagerness in general life as those in the High Prevention ($p = .211$) and High Overall group ($p = .178$) and participants in the Low Overall group use strategic eagerness less than all other groups. People with a promotion or prevention orientation pursue goals using strategic eagerness, and participants with both orientations are slightly more likely to use this strategy.

In a similar fashion to general life, mean strategic eagerness in political life is distinguished between participants with one or both motivational orientations versus those that lack one. People in the High Promotion group are just as likely to use strategic eagerness as those in the High Overall ($p = .981$) and High Prevention groups ($p = .116$). In addition, the High Overall group is more likely than the High Prevention and Low Overall groups ($p < .001$) to eagerly meet political goals. Whereas people who lack a strong motivation orientation were less likely to use eagerness in general life compared to people in the High Prevention group, these two groups are equally likely to use strategic eagerness in the political world ($p = .206$). As before, holding one type of motivational orientation is associated with using eager strategies more often, but people who only hold a strong prevention focus are more similar than participants who lack a strong regulatory focus in the political world.

Mean strategic vigilance across each regulatory group is only marginally significant within general life activities ($F(3, 616) = 2.32, MSE = .58, p = .075$) and there is no variation across the groups within political activity ($F(3, 616) = .06, MSE = .79, p = .980$). The only distinction across both domains is that the Low Overall group is more likely to use strategic vigilance to pursue general life goals compared to people in the High Overall group ($p = .048$). The slight differentiation in strategic vigilance is due to differences between people who lean towards one or both motivational systems versus those that do not. This again

points towards a distinction in methods of meeting goals based on having a motivational orientation versus not having a strong goal-mean structure.

At his point, goal pursuit methods appear to be based on the extent that a motivational system is actively engaged, which indicates that the political environment only needs to motivate people in one way or another to create active participants – the message content in terms of relaying a promotion or prevention goal may not matter. If either promotion or prevention is activated, people are more likely to pursue goals with strategic eagerness rather than vigilance. Strategic vigilance appears have less variability based on regulatory focus strength, especially within the political world.

The data also suggests that the promotion-eagerness connection is stronger in terms of a coherent goal-strategy relationship as well as to other personal aspects. Promotion strength and higher use of eager strategies is related to variables that suggest a more active and motivated person, such as higher socioeconomic status and more involvement in a variety of daily life activities, whereas prevention strength is not. Both, civic activity and socioeconomic status have a strong, positive connection to political participation (Lewis-Beck et al. 2008; Putnam 1993, 2000; Verba et al. 1995). Therefore, highlighting eagerness within political activity, which in turn activates a promotion focus, may increase participation rates more than emphasizing vigilance.

One caveat of emphasizing promotion and/or strategic eagerness is the role of prevention and vigilance. Prevention concerns are viewed as obligations that can be perceived as necessary goals. Therefore, these goals can lack the choice of whether or not they should be pursued and, subsequently, met. On the other hand, promotion concerns are ideals, or notions of what state a person would like to reach – these goals represent a choice as to whether or not energy and time should be directed towards them (Freitas & Higgins

2002; Shah & Higgins 1997). Because voting in the U.S. context is an opt-in system, prevention-focused people are less likely to participate unless political activity is perceived as necessary. Associated with this notion, increasing the use of vigilance in political activities was positively correlated with interest and participatory variety in the political world. This indicates a possible connection between vigilance and perceiving political participation as an obligation. Therefore, emphasizing prevention and vigilance in messages, especially highlighting the responsibility associated with being a democratic citizen could increase participation for prevention oriented individuals.

Regulatory Focus and Eager Strategies

I continue to expand the analysis with OLS models beginning with Table 3.3, which displays the coefficients for the models that include eager strategies as the dependent variable. Table 3.4 holds the model results for strategic vigilance. I examine the frequency of using strategic eagerness in general life in Models 1 and 2 of Table 3.3 and Models 3 and 4 contain the findings regarding political life. Models 1 and 3 include promotion and prevention scores and within-domain vigilant strategy scores (strategic vigilance in general life is used in Model 1 and political life in Model 3) as the main independent variables. The second and fourth models include the addition of the eager and vigilant scores from the opposing domain – both political strategy use scores are added in Model 2 and general life strategies in Model 4. The same model structure is used for strategic vigilance in the next section.

Models 1 and 3 show support for $H_{3.1}$, an increase in promotion strength is associated with an increase in using strategic eagerness. An increase in promotion strength is positively related to a higher frequency in the use of strategic eagerness in general life, Model 1, and political life, Model 3, while controlling for vigilance scores in each domain. However,

prevention scores are also positively associated with increased levels of strategic eagerness in everyday activities and marginally, positively related within the political domain. When strategy scores within the opposing domain are added, Models 2 and 4, promotion strength continues to be positively associated with using eager strategies more often in general life, but the relationship is lost in the political realm.

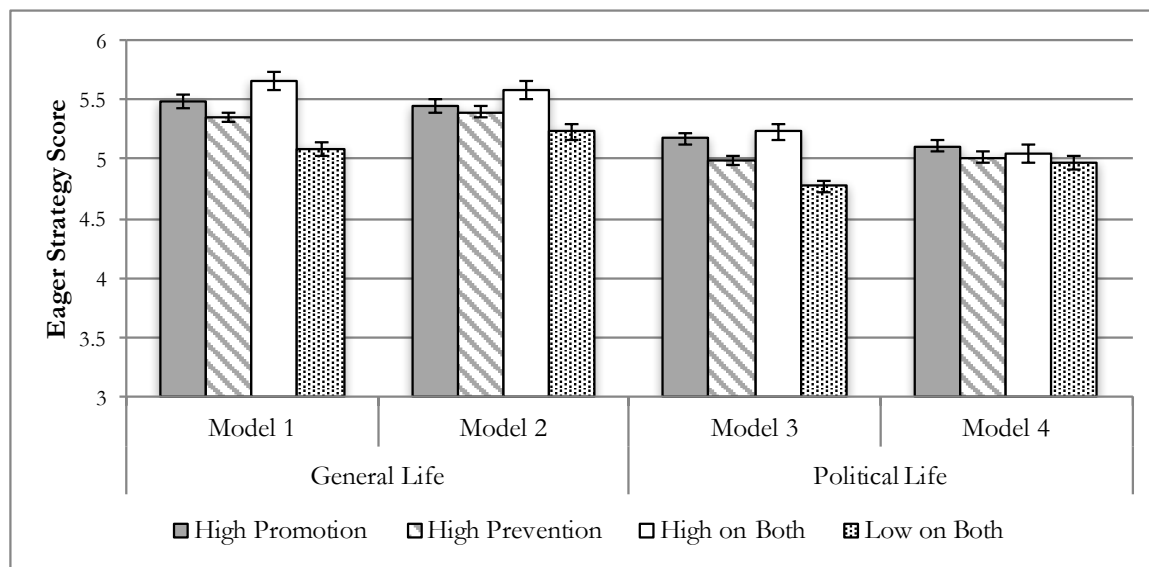
	<u>General Life</u>		<u>Political Life</u>	
	<u>Model 1</u>	<u>Model 2</u>	<u>Model 3</u>	<u>Model 4</u>
<u>Focus</u>				
Promotion	.34 (.04)***	.20 (.04)***	.28 (.06)***	.07 (.05)
Prevention	.16 (.03)***	.12 (.03)***	.08 (.05)^	-.03 (.04)
<u>Strategies</u>				
Gen. Life Eager	-----	-----	-----	.76 (.05)***
Gen. Life Vigilant	.43 (.03)***	.30 (.03)***	-----	-.03 (.05)
Pol. Life Eager	-----	.42 (.03)***	-----	-----
Pol. Life Vigilant	-----	-.09 (.03)***	.37 (.04)***	.26 (.03)***
<u>Controls</u>				
Age	.01 (.002)***	.001 (.002)	.02 (.003)***	.01 (.003)***
Education	-.01 (.02)	-.01 (.02)	-.003 (.03)	-.002 (.02)
Income	.03 (.02)	.02 (.02)	.02 (.02)	-.01 (.02)
White	.02 (.06)	-.06 (.05)	.15 (.08)^	.17 (.07)*
Male	-.13 (.05)**	-.10 (.04)*	-.09 (.07)	.03 (.06)
<u>Constant</u>				
	1.49 (.27)***	1.20 (.23)***	1.77 (.32)***	-.47 (.31)
<i>F</i>	34.68***	67.88***	22.37***	59.34***
<i>N</i>	620	620	620	620
<i>R</i> ²	.315	.530	.229	.497

^ $p \leq .10$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$.

Figure 3.4 displays the estimated means across the different classifications of regulatory focus based on Generalized Linear Models (GLM). These models reflect the same ones from Table 3.3 swapping out the continuous RFQ scores for the categorical regulatory

focus group variable previously used. Looking at variation in strategy use based regulatory focus categories adds insight into how different combination of promotion and prevention strength affects goal pursuit.

Figure 3.4. Mean (SE) Eager Strategy Scores Based on Table 3.3



Models 1 and 3 examine the relationship between regulatory focus and strategic eagerness controlling for the use of vigilant strategies within the same domain (general life for Model 1 and political for Model 3). Participants in the High Overall group (represented by the white bars) are more likely to use eager strategies in general life than all other groups in Model 1. In addition, this same group uses eager strategies in political life more than the High Prevention and the Low Overall groups in Model 3. On the other hand, the Low Overall group (the polka-dotted bar) is less likely to use eager strategies in both domains.

There are slight changes in mean strategic eagerness scores when tactics used in the opposing domain are added in Model 2 for general life and Model 4 for political life. Participants in the High Overall group are more likely to use eager strategies in everyday life and the Low Overall group is the less likely to use this strategy compared to all other groups.

The distinction in how often people use strategic eagerness is based on having strong promotion scores *and* prevention scores versus having low scores on both.

In regard to the political environment, once general life strategies are added in Model 4, the differences in how likely people use eager strategies disappears. The relationship between regulatory focus and political behavior appears to be fragile. This may indicate that people's pattern of behavior in daily life mediates the relationship between regulatory focus and political behavior, which is less often experienced.

My hypothesis that behavior will be consistent across domains ($H_{3.3}$), can also be examined in Models 2 and 4. The data supports the hypothesis; as the frequency of eager strategies in general life increases, people also increase the same goal pursuit method in their political activities, and vice versa. In addition, the connections across domains and strategies provide further support that participants continuously use the same strategy in different social domains. As strategic vigilance in political life is used more frequently, the use of strategic eagerness in general life decreases. In addition, variation in general life vigilance does not affect the frequency of political eagerness when the latter is the dependent variable. Overall, goal-pursuit strategy transcends domains – differences between daily and political life do not lead to variation in the frequency of using strategic eagerness.

Regulatory Focus and Vigilant Strategies

I examine the relationship between vigilant strategy scores and regulatory focus in the same way as I examined eager strategies to test $H_{3.2}$ and $H_{3.3}$. I expect increased prevention strength is associated with using vigilant strategies more often in general and political life and that people are consistent in goal pursuit across general life and political life. Models 1 and 2 in Table 3.4 look at strategic vigilance in general life while Models 3 and 4 examine political vigilant strategies.

Table 3.4. General and Political Life Vigilant Strategy Scores as a Function of Regulatory Focus and Goal Pursuit Means Within and Across Domains

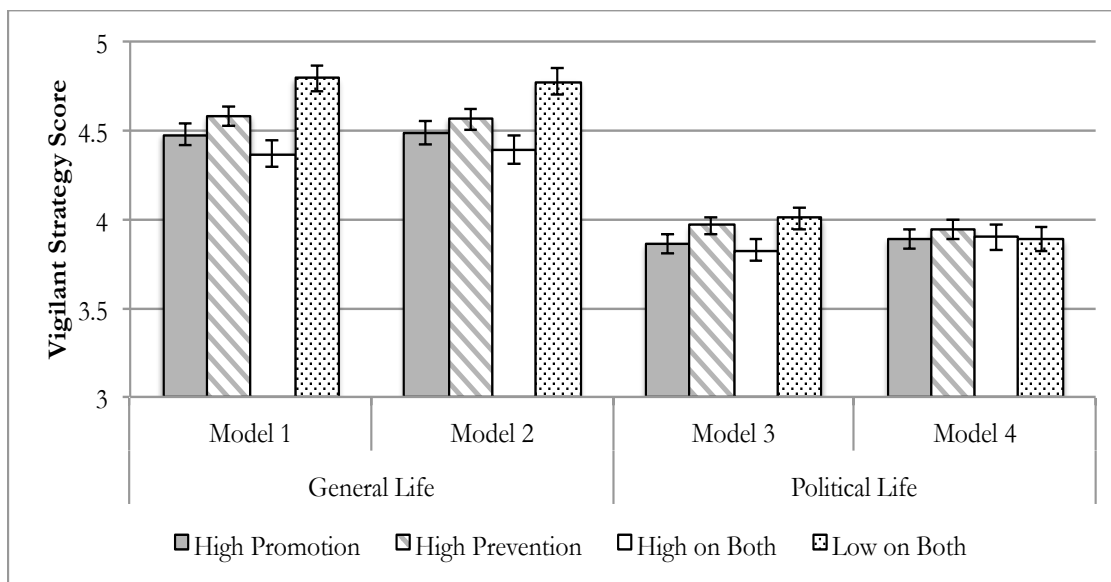
	<u>General Life</u>		<u>Political Life</u>	
	<u>Model 1</u>	<u>Model 2</u>	<u>Model 3</u>	<u>Model 4</u>
<u>Focus</u>				
Promotion	-.31 (.05)***	-.30 (.04)***	-.08 (.06)	.06 (.06)
Prevention	-.14 (.04)***	-.12 (.03)***	-.07 (.04)	-.01 (.04)
<u>Strategies</u>				
Gen. Life Eager	.49 (.04)***	.44 (.05)***	-----	-.21 (.06)***
Gen. Life Vigilant	-----	-----	-----	.44 (.05)***
Pol. Life Eager	-----	-.03 (.04)	.36 (.04)***	.33 (.04)***
Pol. Life Vigilant	-----	.28 (.03)***	-----	-----
<u>Controls</u>				
Age	-.01 (.002)**	-.01 (.002)***	-.001 (.003)	.002 (.003)
Education	.03 (.02)	.03 (.02)^	-.02 (.03)	-.03 (.02)
Income	.01 (.02)	.01 (.02)	-.01 (.02)	-.01 (.02)
White	-.09 (.07)	-.09 (.06)	-.03 (.08)	.01 (.08)
Male	.02 (.06)	.02 (.05)	.01 (.07)	-.001 (.07)
<u>Constant</u>				
	3.59 (.26)***	2.79 (.26)***	2.82 (.30)***	1.30 (.35)***
<i>F</i>	24.39***	30.94***	12.26***	19.36***
<i>N</i>	620	620	620	620
<i>R</i> ²	.244	.340	.140	.244

^ $p \leq .10$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$.

As Table 3.4 shows, the hypothesis for prevention scores is not supported. An increase in prevention strength is associated with a decrease in the frequency people use vigilant strategies in daily activities within both, Model 1, which controls for strategic eagerness in general life, and Model 2, which adds political eager and vigilant strategies to the first model. Buttressing the previous findings regarding promotion and strategy choice, as promotion strength increases, people are also less likely to use vigilant strategies in everyday life. In addition, there is no association between RFQ scores and strategic vigilance in the political arena. The pattern between regulatory focus and goal pursuit strategies continues to show the eager-promotion connection but not the vigilant-prevention connection.

Figure 3.5 displays the estimated means from GLMs using the regulatory focus group variable. Participants with low promotion and prevention scores, the Low Overall group (polka-dotted bar), have a higher mean likelihood of using vigilant strategies in general life when controlling for eager strategies, Model 1, and when political strategies are added, Model 2. Political vigilance, Models 3 and 4, does not vary based on which regulatory group people are categorized. These results do not reflect a relationship between being either promotion or prevention oriented and strategy selection; rather, the models demonstrate that distinctions in strategy use is based on participants having a regulatory focus orientation or not having one. Holding a strong leaning towards one or both regulatory foci is associated with using eagerness more frequently and having weak orientations towards both foci is associated with using vigilance more often, at least within the general life domain. Less motivated people may be more likely to use vigilant strategies because many of the items, using prevention related framing, emphasize minimal effort or a more negative approach to life, which may appeal more to these types of people.

Figure 3.5. Mean (*SE*) Vigilant Strategy Scores Based on Models in Table 3.4



Moving to the second half of connecting strategy use across domains, the third hypothesis is again supported by the data. Increased use of vigilant strategies in everyday life corresponds with an increase in vigilance for political activities. In addition, political vigilance but not eagerness is associated with an increase in using strategic vigilance in everyday life activities. While the RFQ scales are not related to political behavior, the types of actions performed in general life are correlated with political goal pursuit. Given the notion that there is much more experience in daily activities compared to the more novel, or at the least, infrequent exposure to the political environment, general life goal pursuit methods may mediate the relationship between regulatory focus and political activity. Previous experience under one regulatory focus and using the related strategy, especially having successful outcomes, leads people to repeat past behaviors (Higgins 1997, 1998; Higgins et al. 2001). Therefore, the increased opportunity to pursue daily goals provides a guide to navigating less frequently activated political goals. Although the data does not show a prevention focus-vigilant strategy connection, people who rely on strategic vigilance tend to stick with it across social environments.

3.3.4 Discussion

Several trends have emerged in looking at the connection between regulatory focus and the associated strategies based on the hypotheses. First, the frequency strategies are used to meet goals appears to be based on the extent a person has some sort of motivational orientation, not based on a specific regulatory focus. Strategic eagerness in general life is used less frequently by people with weak regulatory focus orientations, but strategic vigilance is more likely to be used by the same group of people. When looking at promotion and prevention scores independently rather than within the categorical groups, both strong promotion and strong prevention is associated with increasing use of strategic eagerness.

Activating either or, even better, both motivation systems – representing goals as ideals and oughts – within the political system should spur participation by increasing eager goal pursuit strategies. However, it may also be that people are inherently motivated or not and players within the political arena have little to no ability to persuade people with weak motivation systems to participate.

The second trend suggests the focus should be on relating political participation to promotion goals and strategic eagerness. Even though the relationship is fragile within the political environment, there is much more consistency in the promotion-eager relationship compared to the connection between prevention strength and vigilant strategies. Maintaining a consistent goal-strategy message is important because regulatory fit can be induced, leading to increased motivation and positive attitudes towards the goal (Freitas & Higgins 2002; Higgins 2000, 2002; Idson et al. 2000). In this case, it may be fruitful for campaigns to focus on participation as an ideal goal of citizens and how to eagerly meet democratic goals to increase participation through regulatory fit.

However, this strategy would be less successful for people with a strong prevention focus or without a strong regulatory orientation overall. Theoretically, prevention orientated individuals are less likely to be motivated by ideal-framed goal messages or use strategic eagerness. In addition, the models show increased strategic eagerness is associated with using vigilance less often and a positive relationship between vigilance and a lack of motivational orientation. Together, these findings suggest that targeting political activity in strategic avoidance of an undesirable outcome can increase participation for less motivated citizens, those least likely to get involved without an intervention.

The third trend is that increased use of one strategy, either eager or vigilant, in general life is associated with an increased likelihood of using the same when confronted

with a political situation. The evidence suggests that perceiving the political world as a distinct environment, where individuals become more rationalistic or alter their normal patterns of behavior, may be erroneous – decisions and actions regarding politics do not substantially vary from behavior found in normal routines. In addition, the weakening of relationships between regulatory focus scores and strategy use when examining the political environment, especially when controlling for everyday behavior in the models, suggests that goal pursuit in general life mediates the relationship between motivational orientation and how political goals are pursued.

3.4 Examining Motivations Behind Vote Choice

The next step in examining how regulatory focus, strategy use, and the combination of the two plays out is to examine their relation to what motivates a person's vote choice, which is the most salient political activity within the United States. General goal pursuit is expected to create differences in why specific candidates are supported – whether a citizen bases the decision on the extent the candidate is liked or the opposition is disliked. Specifically, increased promotion strength leads to a higher likelihood of using eager strategies in everyday and political life, resulting in voting for the 2012 presidential candidate who is most desired. On the other hand, stronger prevention focused individuals, increasingly use vigilant strategies across the two domains, and couch their 2012 vote choice in terms of oppositional distaste.

3.4.1 Focus, Strategy, and Vote Motivation Regression Models

Table 3.5 displays regression coefficients for OLS models examining vote motivation. Model 1 includes promotion, prevention, and standard demographic controls regressed on vote motivation. Vote motivation is coded so that higher scores indicate

choosing a candidate based on distaste for the opposition while lower scores reflect a choice based on how much the candidate is liked.

This model shows a lack of relationship between vote motivation and regulatory focus, which is likely due to a disconnect between their places in the conceptual hierarchy of motivation within the regulatory focus framework. While regulatory focus is, overall, concerned with approaching desired end-states and avoiding undesired ones, strategic eagerness and vigilance provide an overall pattern associated with approaching matches to goals under a promotion focus and avoiding mismatches to desired end states within a prevention focus. However, the lowest rank in the hierarchy is the tactical level, in which behaviors reflect how best to meet goals based on the current environment and general strategic inclinations; sometimes vigilance requires risk and eagerness requires conservative behavior (Cornwell & Higgins 2015; Scholer et al. 2008; Zou, Scholer, & Higgins 2014). For example, vigilance requires avoiding mismatches to safety and responsibilities. However, there are times when this requires an active, more approach oriented behavior to ensure a threat is not overlooked or to get back to a certain status quo. While vote motivation may be too far removed within the hierarchy of regulatory motivation to have a direct connection with focus scores, promotion and prevention orientation directs general goal pursuit tendencies, which guide a specific tactic within one context.

Model 2 in Table 3.5 adds general life strategy scales to the model and shows support for the hypothesis concerning the connection between strategy use and vote motivation. Increased use of eager strategies is associated with a decrease in vote motivation scores, while strategic vigilance is positively associated with vote motivation. Coefficients for Model 3 include the addition of political strategies. Strategic eagerness within the political domain is negatively related and strategic vigilance positively related to vote motivation. In addition,

general life eager strategy use is no longer associated with vote motivation and general life vigilant strategy use is now only marginally significant.

	<u>RF Only</u>	<u>RF and Gen. Life</u>	<u>RF, Gen., and Pol. Life</u>
Promotion	-.15 (.23)	.13 (.24)	.27 (.23)
Prevention	-.01 (.18)	.11 (.19)	-.003 (.18)
Gen. Life Eager		-.68 (.23)**	.06 (.27)
Gen. Life Vigilant		.59 (.20)**	.37 (.20)^
Pol. Life Eager			-1.11 (.21)***
Pol. Life Vigilant			.72 (.17)***
age	.03 (.01)*	.03 (.01)**	.04 (.01)***
education	.00 (.11)	-.01 (.11)	-.01 (.10)
income	.03 (.10)	.02 (.10)	.01 (.09)
white	.56 (.34)^	.58 (.33)^	.68 (.32)*
male	.58 (.28)*	.52 (.28)^	.53 (.27)*
Constant	2.71 (1.17)*	2.21 (1.57)	1.76 (1.54)
F	1.74^	2.74**	5.80***
N	438	438	438
MSE	8.17	7.98	7.38
R ² change		.03**	.08***
R ² change F (df)		6.11 (2, 429)	18.57 (2, 427)
R ²	.027	.054	.130

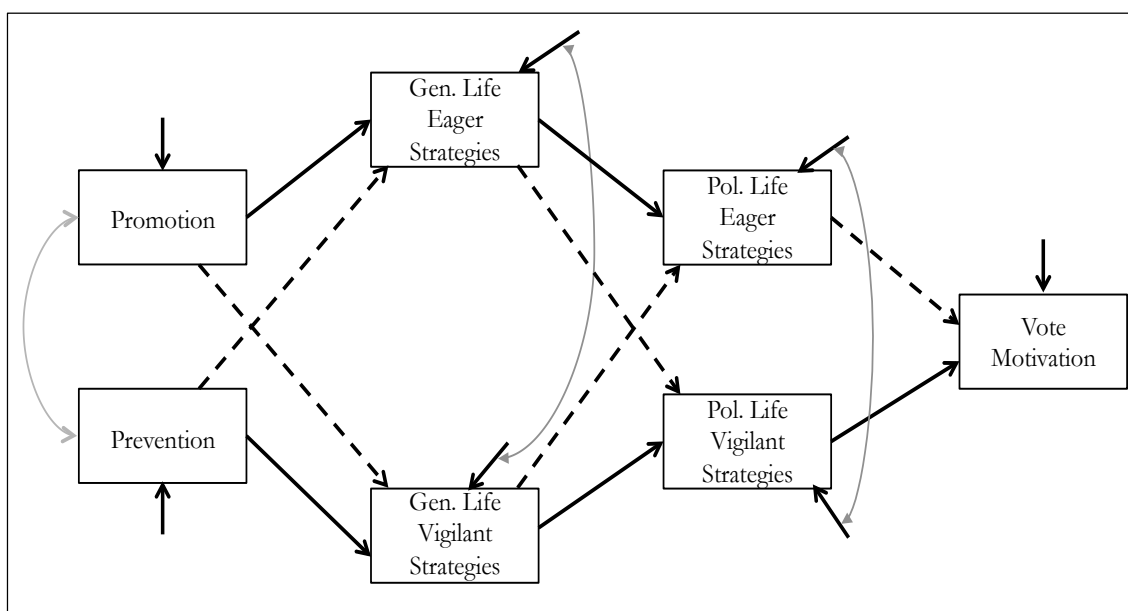
^ p ≤ .10; * p ≤ .05; ** p ≤ .01; *** p ≤ .001

These findings support the assumption that the relationship between regulatory focus and vote choice motivation, based on preference or blackballing, works through goal meeting strategies in general life and, subsequently, political life. As the connection between general and political strategy use in the previous analyses suggest, behavior in general life continues to appear to be a mediator between motivational orientation and political behavior. These models expand upon the goal-mean interconnections by showing that general patterns of strategic behavior in the political domain mediates the relationship between daily life activities and tactics used in deciding which candidate to support.

3.4.2 Regulatory Focus, Strategy, and Vote Motivation Path Model

Based on the previous models and conceptual hierarchy of motivation, the assumption is that regulatory focus indirectly influences voting strategy through the general goal pursuit process used in daily and political life. In order to fully examine the relationships between regulatory orientation, behavior, and vote motivation, a structural model is used. Figure 3.6 displays the hypothesized relationships, with solid lines representing positive associations and dashed lines represent negative ones. The model uses chronic regulatory focus scores as exogenous variables, as the first set of variables in the sequence of the model, based on the association between chronic promotion and prevention and cognitive differences that make-up a person's personality (Higgins 1996; Higgins et al. 2001; Manczak et al. 2014; Manian et al. 2006). Since people are more likely to make decisions and meet goals throughout daily life prior to and more often than political objectives, general eager and vigilant strategy scales immediately follow promotion and prevention in the model. Frequency in using strategic eagerness and vigilance are third within the sequence. Both general and political life strategies represent the middle level of the regulatory focus hierarchy. Vote motivation, the extent people use available candidate information to vote in support for a preferred nominee or to oppose a disliked nominee in the 2012 election, is the final variable within the path sequence, representing the tactical level within the motivational hierarchy.

Figure 3.6. Hypothesized Path Model for Vote Motivation



Note. $N = 440$

Only participants reporting voting in the 2012 election are used for the analysis, leaving a total sample of 440 for the path analysis. Table 3.6 displays the covariance matrix, along with skew and kurtosis index values.¹ In order to account for the slight non-normality, robust standard errors are used and the model fit statistics utilize Satorra-Bentler corrections (Kline 2011).

Model Identification and Parameters

The hypothesized model has seven observed variables, which allows for 28 parameter estimates. A total of 20 parameters are freely estimated: a) two exogenous variances – promotion and prevention; b) one covariance between the exogenous variables;

¹ The kurtosis of several variables is out of normal range, but the multivariate residuals are normal. Using the square root of the all the variables or just for the vote motivation variable in order to reduce the variance to align with the other variables does not change the parameter coefficients or standard errors. Given the lack of difference, the original values rather than normalized ones are used in the analyses.

c) five residual variances for the endogenous variables – eager and vigilant general life strategies, eager and vigilant political life strategies, and intention to vote; d) two residual covariances - one between the eager and vigilant general life strategies and one between the eager and vigilant political life strategies; and, e) ten path coefficients. The residual covariances for each set of strategies are estimated because the eager and vigilant strategy scales concern identical target behaviors, leading to likely commonalities in measurement error and/or associated non-measured variables.

Table 3.6. Variance and Covariances Across Variables in Path Models

	<u>Promotion</u>	<u>Prevention</u>	<u>Gen. Life Eager</u>	<u>Gen. Life Vigilant</u>	<u>Pol. Life Eager</u>	<u>Pol. Life Vigilant</u>	<u>Vote Motivation</u>
Promotion	.41						
Prevention	.07	.58					
Gen. Life Eager	.14	.09	.50				
Gen. Life Vigilant	-.06	-.06	.19	.59			
Pol. Life Eager	.14	-.01	.38	.18	.74		
Pol. Life Vigilant	-.02	-.04	.12	.27	.25	.77	
Vote motivation	-.03	-.05	-.18	.17	-.43	.39	8.31
Skewness	-.18	-.16	-.65	-.05	-1.08	.06	1.44
Kurtosis	3.58	2.70	4.08	3.17	5.05	3.17	2.61

[^]p ≤ .10; * p ≤ .05; ** p ≤ .01; *** p ≤ .001

The general pattern of strategic behavior used in everyday and political life can partially or fully mediate the regulatory focus and vote motivation relationship within each step of the proposed sequence. Therefore, partial mediation is examined by comparing three additional models to the hypothesized one. The first alternative model examines if general life strategies fully mediate the relationship between focus and meeting political goals, which includes four additional pathways: promotion focus scores to 1) political eager and 2) vigilant strategies; and, prevention to 3) political eager and 4) vigilant strategies. The second alternative model tests the extent political strategies mediate the relationship between goal pursuit in general life and vote motivation with two additional paths: 1) general life eager and 2) vigilant strategies to vote motivation. The final alternative model examines the extent strategies within both domains mediate the relationship between RFQ scores and vote

motivation with two additional paths: 1) promotion and 2) prevention scores to vote motivation. Table 3.7 displays the specific paths used in each alternative model. Model fit tests are used to compare the expected model against the alternative ones. The expected model is nested within each alternative model, so model fit tests are used to make fit comparisons.

Table 3.7. Estimated Pathways for the Hypothesized and Alternative Mediation Models

<u>Parameter</u>		<u>Model</u>			
<u>Causal Variable</u>	<u>Endogenous Variable</u>	<u>Hyp.</u>	<u>Alt. 1</u>	<u>Alt. 2</u>	<u>Alt. 3</u>
Regulatory Focus	Gen. Life Strategies	X	X	X	X
	Political Life Strategies		X		
	Vote Choice				X
Gen. Life Strategies	Pol. Life Strategies	X	X	X	X
	Vote Choice			X	
Pol. Life Strategies	Vote Choice	X	X	X	X

3.4.3 Path Model Results

Maximum likelihood estimation with robust standard errors using the Lavaan package in R was used to estimate all models (Rosseel 2012). Each model terminated normally and the residuals did not show a large problem with the model structure. Table 3.8 displays the fit indices as well as the chi-square difference test between the hypothesized and alternative models and the RMSEA-based power of each model using the R-code from Preacher and Coffman (2006). According to the Hu and Bentler (1999) criteria, the hypothesized model does an adequate, although not great, job representing the data. The chi square coefficient is significant, pointing towards a significant difference between the observed and estimated covariance matrices, but the approximate fit indices – Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Standardized Root Mean Residual (SRMR) – are all within the expected range for a well-fitting model. According to the chi-square difference tests, the first alternative model fits the data better

than the hypothesized one. The second and third alternative models fit the data as well as the hypothesized model. However, the power of each model is lower than the traditional .80 necessary to be confident in adequately rejecting the null hypothesis.

	<u>Hyp.</u>	<u>Alt. 1</u>	<u>Alt. 2</u>	<u>Alt. 3</u>
χ^2	18.150	3.709	17.206	15.786
df	8	4	6	6
p	.020	.447	.009	.015
Correction Scaling Factor	1.082	1.09	1.04	1.125
CFI	.976	1.00	.974	.977
RMSEA	.054	.000	.065	.061
90% CI RMSEA	.022 - .085	.000 -.067	.031 - .101	.027 - .096
RMSEA \leq .05	.379	.844	.206	.262
SRMR	.026	.014	.024	.026
Power	.486	.313	.212	.211
Δdf	-----	4	2	2
$\Delta \chi^2$	-----	14.523**	1.447	1.9723
Δ Power	-----	.728	.438	.466

Note. N = 440.

\wedge p \leq .10; * p \leq .05; ** p \leq .01; *** p \leq .001.

In addition to the fit indices, the normal probability plots and histograms of the residuals show normal distributions. Residual correlations for the hypothesized model, as well as the second and third alternative models, show insufficient modeling of the relationship between prevention and the political eager strategy scale ($r_{resid.corr.} = -.109$). All other residual correlations were within the $\pm .10$ range. Normalized residuals also showed inadequate modeling of this relationship ($resid. cov. = -.375$). All other residual covariances were within the ± 1.96 threshold. Normalized residuals and the residual correlations for Alternative Model 1 show this model is a better fit across all relationships, including between prevention and political eagerness. Based on the residuals and fit indices, the first alternative

mediation model, which includes parameters between regulatory focus and political strategies, is a better fit to the data compared to the hypothesized and other alternative models. Therefore, general life behavior partially, rather than fully, mediates the relationship between regulatory focus and political strategies.

How Regulatory Focus Affects Vote Motivation

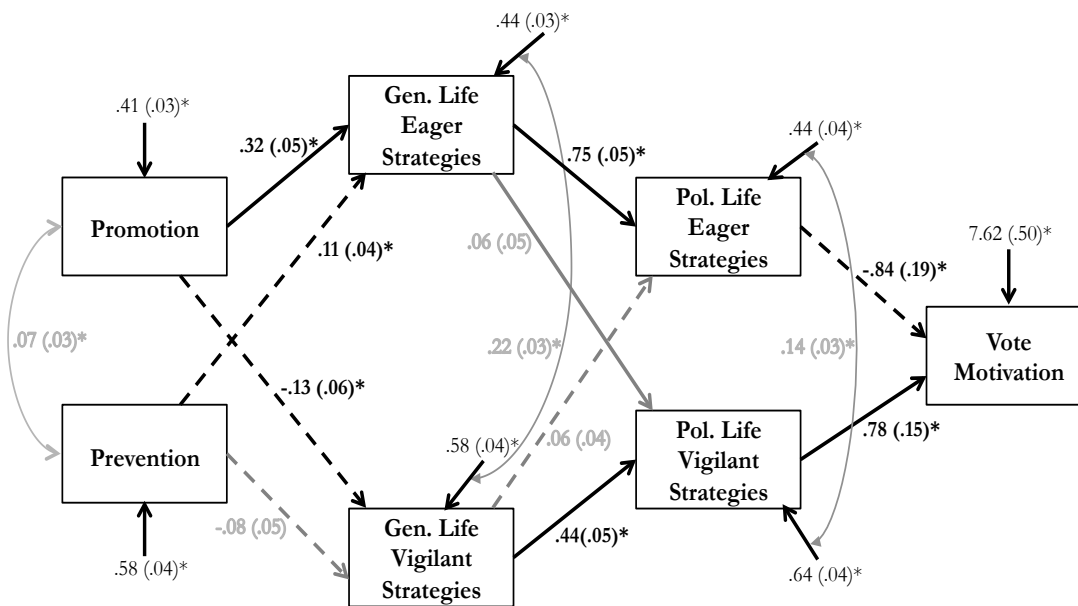
Results of the hypothesized model are in Figure 3.7, which includes the unstandardized coefficients and error terms.² Non-significant paths and covariances are grayed out in the figure and solid lines represent positive relationships and broken lines delineate negative relationships. The model predicts eight percent of the variance of vote choice, the extent to which the participant's 2012 presidential vote choice was based on how much the candidate and his platform was liked (1) versus how much the opposing candidate and his platform is disliked (10). The structural model findings mirror the trends from the previous regression models, including: 1) promotion scores and strategic eagerness is positively related; 2) prevention lacks an association with vigilant strategy; and, 3) general and political strategies are strongly connected.

First, looking at the paths from regulatory focus to general life strategies, there is a positive path coefficient between promotion and eager life strategies as well as a negative coefficient with general vigilant strategies. Therefore, increasingly higher promotion strength, with keeping prevention scores constant, is associated with an increase in using strategic eagerness in everyday life and a decrease in reliance on vigilant strategies. In addition, and contrary to the expectations, the effect of prevention strength mimics the pattern of

² Table B.1 holds the results of the model. The table includes the unstandardized coefficients and standard errors, standardized coefficients, 95 percent confidence boundaries, and R² for each parameter estimated.

promotion scores but the decrease in vigilance is only marginally significant. As before, promotion is found to be positively associated with eager strategies but there is a lack of association between prevention and vigilant strategies.

Figure 3.7. Unstandardized (SE) Coefficients for Vote Motivation Path Model



Note. * $p \leq .05$.

Moving to the right within the sequence, the positive relationships between general and political life strategies show that people use the same goal pursuit methods in both domains. An increase in the use of eager strategies in everyday life, holding vigilance constant, correlates with an increase in the use of strategic eagerness in political life. Participants reporting a higher reliance on vigilant strategies in general life, are more likely to rely on the same strategies in the political world. In addition, there is no relationship between opposing strategies across the domains – increased use of eager (vigilant) strategies in daily life does not lead to a decrease or increase in people’s use of strategic vigilance (eagerness) in the political world.

The final step in the model’s sequence is the connection between political life strategies and vote motivation. Both parameters are significant and show that vote

motivation is positively associated with political vigilant strategy use and negatively related to political life eager strategy scores, aligning with the hypothesized relationships. For each increase in political vigilance, there is a .84 increase in emphasizing the extent the opposition is disliked – picking the better of two evils. On the other hand, for each increase in eager strategy frequency, there is a .78 increase in choosing a candidate motivated by how much he is liked.

The model better explains strategic eagerness ($R^2 = .401$) and vigilance ($R^2 = .164$) in the political world compared to how likely people are to use eager ($R^2 = .111$) and vigilant ($R^2 = .022$) strategies in general life. The larger level of variance explained for political strategies re-emphasizes the connection between behavior in daily life and political life, in which people are likely to base political goal pursuit on how they successfully reach desired end states within normal routines.

Overall, how regulatory focus guides general goal pursuit strategies partially explains the specific tactic used to decide which candidate to support in the 2012 election. As promotion strengthens, people also increasingly use eager strategies, ultimately leading to candidate choice motivated by preferring him and his policies. The role of prevention is less clear because prevention strength does not increase the likelihood people use vigilant strategies. However, using vigilant strategies in everyday scenarios does lead to candidate support motivated by distaste of the opposition – a blackball strategy. In addition to the path parameters, the significant and positive residual covariances between strategy scores within each domain support the existence of common measurement error or an unmeasured variable across the two strategies.

Indirect Effects within the Regulatory Focus and Vote Motivation Model

The indirect effects for the hypothesized model are in Table 3.9, breaking down the separate pathways in which promotion, prevention, and general life strategies affect the reasoning behind a vote choice. The starting point of each indirect effect path is in the first column of Table 3.9 and the mediating variables, general and political life strategies, that each path passes through to vote motivation are in second and third columns. Overall, indirect effects show support for the hypotheses concerning promotion and life strategies but not prevention.

Table 3.9. Indirect Effects for Hypothesized Model in Figure 3.5

Causal Variable	Mediated by		Unstandardized (SE)	Standardized Coefficient	95% Confidence Intervals	
	General Life	Political Life				
Promotion	Eager	Eager	-.20 (.06)***	-.05	-.32	-.10
	Eager	Vigilant	.02 (.01)	.00	-.01	.05
	Vigilant	Vigilant	.04 (.02)*	.01	.01	.08
	Vigilant	Eager	-.01 (.00)	.00	-.02	.00
	Total Indirect Effect (Promotion)			-.15 (.06)**	-.03	-.27
Prevention	Vigilant	Vigilant	-.03 (.02)	-.01	-.07	.01
	Vigilant	Eager	.00 (.00)	.00	.00	.01
	Eager	Eager	.08 (.04)*	.02	.01	.17
	Eager	Vigilant	-.01 (.01)	.00	-.02	.01
	Total Indirect Effect (Prevention)			.05 (.04)	.01	-.02
Gen. Eager		Eager	-.63 (.14)***	-.15	-.91	-.35
		Vigilant	.05 (.04)	.01	-.03	.13
	Total Indirect Effect (Gen. Life Eager)			-.58 (.14)***	-.14	-.86
Gen. Vigilant		Vigilant	.34 (.08)***	.09	.19	.49
		Eager	-.05 (.03)	-.01	-.13	.01
	Total Indirect Effect (Gen. Life Vigilant)			.29 (.08)***	.08	.14

^ p ≤ .10; * p ≤ .05; ** p ≤ .01; *** p ≤ .001.

There is mixed evidence for H₄ and H₅, as evidenced by the indirect pathways highlighted in bold in Table 3.9. Promotion shows a negative indirect effect on vote motivation, indicating people with stronger promotion scores are more likely to be motivated to vote for a preferred candidate. The specific expectation is that this relationship is due to how people utilize strategic eagerness to meet goals. The path from promotion,

through both eager strategy scales, to vote motivation is negative and significant, providing support for H_{3.4}. However, there is also a positive effect of promotion on vote choice through vigilant strategy use in general and political life. This indicates that as promotion orientation becomes stronger, there is an increasingly likelihood that a vote choice emphasizes oppositional dislike based on how often vigilant strategies are used. In this case, tactics used to meet goals influence vote motivation contrary to the expectations of having a stronger promotion focus. Although this contrary finding exists, the expected relationship regarding eager strategies has a larger effect than vigilant strategies.

The total indirect effect of prevention is positive, which is the expected direction, indicating motivations behind vote choice is a dislike for the opposing candidate, but is not significant. In addition, the specific indirect effect from H_{3.5}, that the relationship between prevention and vote motivation is mediated by strategic vigilance, is not significant. The only significant indirect effect regarding prevention strength shows that variance in how people use eager strategies in general and political life mediate the relationship between focus and vote motivation. Here, a person performs based on the expectations of regulatory focus, but not strategy use.

Goal pursuit strategies within general life have a stronger indirect effect on vote motivation compared to regulatory focus. The eager general life strategy scale has a negative, significant, indirect effect on vote motivation while the vigilant general life strategy scale has a positive indirect effect. People who are more likely to use eager strategies in general life vote for a specific candidate because they like him. On the other hand, when people increasingly rely on vigilant strategies in general life, motivation behind candidate choice is more about opposition to other nominees. The overall effects support H_{3.3}, as well as the specific indirect effects that drive the relationship. Therefore, people meet goals in a similar

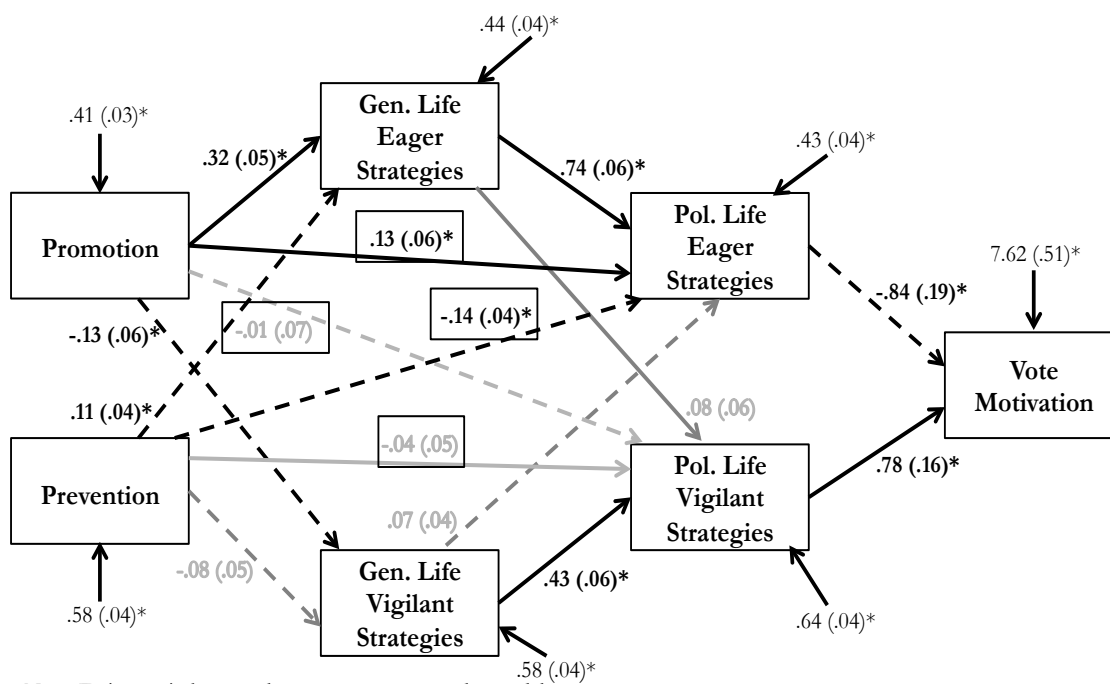
fashion across general and political life and broad patterns of goal pursuit affect motivations behind the specific tactic in vote choice.

Examining Alternative Mediation Effects between Regulatory Focus and Vote Motivation

In order to examine the extent to which strategies mediate the different relationships within the model several alternative analyses were performed. As previously stated, the first alternative tests the mediation effect of life strategies between regulatory focus and political strategies. The second looks at the extent political strategies mediate the relationship between general life goal pursuit and vote motivation. The final alternative model examines whether strategies across both domains fully mediate the relationship between regulatory focus and vote motivation. The previously discussed Table 3.7 summarizes the paths in each model and Table 3.8 provides the fit statistics for each.

The parameter coefficients and indirect effects across the alternative models do not substantially change from the coefficients in the hypothesized model. Therefore, attention will be placed on the degree general and political life strategies mediate the regulatory focus and vote motivation relationship by focusing on the previously absent pathways in each alternative model. Figure 3.8 displays the results, using the unstandardized parameter estimates and standard errors, of this first alternative mediation model. As done with the hypothesized model results, solid lines indicate positive relationships and negative ones are marked by broken lines and non-significant relationships are in grey. In addition, the covariances are removed for clarity and the new parameter estimates, which were absent in the hypothesized model, are in boxes.

Figure 3.8. Partial Mediation Model for Vote Motivation (Alternative Model I)



The previous parameter estimates from the hypothesized model do not substantially change in the partial mediation model depicted in Figure 3.8. However, there is evidence that general life strategies only partially, rather than fully, mediate the relationship between the RFQ and political life strategy scale scores. An increase in promotion strength leads to an increase in the use of eager strategies in political life. In addition, an increase in prevention strength leads to a decrease in using eager strategies in political decisions and activities – general life strategies only partially mediate the relationship between regulatory focus and strategic eagerness when confronted with political goals. However, there is no connection between prevention and vigilant political strategies.

Prior analyses showed that prevention strength was associated with an increase in strategic eagerness in general life and no relation with political activities. Within the structural model, however, prevention scores are significantly related to political eager strategies in the expected direction – increased prevention strength leads to a decrease in the

frequency of strategic eagerness. This finding continues to show how strategic eagerness consistently plays a larger role than vigilance within the relationship between regulatory focus and pursuing goals, both in general and political life. Perceiving political activity within the context of hopes and dreams or frequently meeting political goals with eagerness correlates with more consistent motivation and action by citizens.

Table 3.10. Indirect Effects for Alternative Mediation Model in Figure 3.6

Paths From	Mediated by		Unstandardized (SE)	Standardized Coefficient	95% Confidence Intervals	
	General Life	Political Life				
Promotion	-----	Eager	-.11 (.05)*	-.02	-.23	-.01
	-----	Vigilant	-.01 (.06)	.00	-.12	.11
	Total Indirect Effect (Promotion)		-0.26 (.09)**	-.06	-.45	-.10
Prevention	-----	Vigilant	-.03 (.04)	-.01	-.12	.05
	-----	Eager	.11 (.05)*	.03	.04	.22
	Total Indirect Effect (Prevention)		.14 (.08)^	.03	-.01	.28

^ p ≤ .10; * p ≤ .05; ** p ≤ .01; *** p ≤ .001.

The indirect effects of the alternative mediation model reflect the same pattern of effects as the hypothesized model, so only the simple indirect effects of the new parameters are displayed in Table 3.10. The additional indirect effect of promotion on vote motivation, mediated by strategic eagerness in the political domain only (skipping over general life) is negative, as expected. As promotion scores increase, eager strategy use leads to being motivated to vote for a preferred candidate.

Looking at prevention orientation, the overall indirect effect is marginally significant and in the hypothesized direction, indicating vote choices made by people with a stronger prevention orientation are motivated more so by a dislike of the opposition. However, the hypothesis is not supported because the frequency of eager, rather than vigilant, strategies in the political domain is the significant indirect effect driving the relationship. Contrary to expectations, informally blackballing candidates increases based on the frequency eager strategies are used, not vigilant ones.

Results of the second and third alternative models are in Appendix B. Neither of which demonstrate significant changes in parameter estimates compared to what has been reported. The second alternative model shows that political strategies mediate the relationship between goal pursuit in everyday life and vote motivation. The additional direct path from the general life eager strategy scale to vote motivation is not significant, ($B = .12$, $SE = .28$, $CI = -.44 - .67$), and neither is the pathway from general vigilant strategies ($B = .21$, $SE = .22$, $CI = -.21 - .63$).

The third alternative model supports the notion that the relationship between regulatory focus and vote motivation is mediated by what strategies people use in both the general and political world. The parameter estimates between regulatory focus and vote choice are insignificant. Neither promotion ($B = .29$, $SE = .22$, $CI = -.12 - .75$) nor prevention ($B = -.07$ ($SE = .17$, $CI = -.40 - .25$)) have a direct effect on vote choice. Therefore, within the motivational hierarchy based on regulatory focus, the broad strategies used to meet goals direct specific tactics used when people make the decision of which candidate to support.

3.5 Discussion: How Regulatory Focus Impacts Candidate Choice

Just as in general life, political life can be represented as an attempt to reach a set of goals. RFT posits people develop a motivational orientation where goals are represented as either ideal or ought concerns, creating distinct goal-mean cognitive structures that help shape people's worldview and personality. Ideal goals, which activate a promotion focus, are pursued with strategic eagerness. On the other hand, ought goals are reflected under a prevention focus and vigilance is the main mechanism pursued (Higgins 1997). Based on these tenants, I expected that increased levels of chronic promotion correlate with utilizing

eager strategies across everyday and political life while prevention strength increases a preference for vigilant strategies within both ($H_{3.1}$ and $H_{3.2}$) and that goal pursuit strategy would be the same between general and political life ($H_{3.3}$). I then expected that these general patterns of goal pursuit, based on chronic regulatory focus, would dictate motivations behind supporting particular candidates within the 2012 presidential election ($H_{3.4}$ and $H_{3.5}$).

Promotion focus strength is associated with behavior within people's everyday life as well as when they enter the political environment. The general pattern of increased use of strategic eagerness by promotion-focused people was also associated with making a vote choice based on liking the chosen candidate. On the other hand, prevention strength was not found to have a relationship with vigilant strategies. Rather, people without a strong motivational focus report behavior associated with ought goals and vigilant strategies. However, being strategically vigilant in daily activities was associated with using the same goal directed behavior in political; this, ultimately is tied to using a tactic based on the dislike of the opposition.

Following these findings, the looming question concerns why a promotion-eager relationship exists and not a prevention-vigilant one. Stronger promotion scores are associated with strategic eagerness in both daily and political life. And, while vigilant strategies in general life beget vigilance in the political arena, their use is not tied to a person's prevention strength. One reason for the imbalance of the two foci may be due to the survey. The vigilant items reflect aspects associated with viewing goals as minimal, as avoiding doing more than what will maintain a status quo or minimum qualifications, and a pronounced negativity bias based on the literature surrounding regulatory focus. While these behaviors are not as sensitive as issues of race and illicit drug use, social desirability effects are well known in survey research (Berinsky 1999, 2002; Streb, Burrell, Frederick, &

Genovese 2008; Tourangeau & Yan 2007). Therefore, reporting a negativity bias or low effort may lead to social desirability effects

In addition to social desirability related to the strategy items, characteristics between the regulatory systems likely play a role in the disparate findings. Promotion strength activates an eager strategy that is based on a general tendency to approach a desired end-state. This results in a broader degree of categorization regarding people and their behavior, including one's actions to endorse a broader range of behaviors for both themselves and others, as well as their own under a promotion compared to prevention focus (Crowe & Higgins 1997; Liberman et al. 2001; Molden & Higgins 2004, 2008). Therefore, people with a stronger promotion score may be using broader category boundaries in reflecting back on their goal directed activities compared to people with a stronger prevention focus. The overall lower scores in both general and political life vigilant strategy scales demonstrate the possibility of these two issues being present.

3.5.1 Moving from Daily Life to the Political World

Political behavior often mirrors social behavior and the same is true in how goals are pursued. Daily life and political ends are met with a sense of being either eager or vigilant. However, much of the research into personality not only examines direct connections between traits and characteristics, but what behaviors are expected based on interactions with particular contexts. This is also the case with regulatory focus – momentary focus and the environment often play into people's behavior within the goal pursuit process. Within the context of U.S. politics, especially regarding elections, different aspects are likely to activate a promotion-eager or prevention-vigilant goal representation and pursuit strategies.

Structural characteristics of the political environment align with a promotion-eager regulatory focus and strategy combination. The main activity people pursue within the

political world is voting by selecting the candidate one desires, which aligns with strategic eagerness. This notion is corroborated by a poll by Pew Research Center (2015) showing about two-thirds of people prefer to choose a candidate based on issue correspondence rather than electability. When choosing a candidate, the decision incorporates abstract information and ideas of the proper structure for society and government. Promotion goals are abstract versus prevention ones which are more concrete. Therefore, many times, this should lead to a stronger connection between promotion and interest in politics (Forster & Higgins 2005; Semin et al. 2005).

In addition to the structural aspects of politics, campaigns, themselves, invoke eagerness. Many campaign slogans often reflect promotion concerns, the most obvious being President Obama using “Hope”. Opinion polls ask about enthusiasm towards candidates, which is supposed to indicate momentum, as well as favorability ratings as a way to gauge electability. These aspects of the political environment are conducive to viewing political goals as promotion concerns and using strategic eagerness to pursue them. The findings above show the strong connection between promotion and eager strategies within the political arena.

Campaigns also reflect strategic vigilance, such as when candidates use messages concerning how s/he will fight against the establishment and that voting for him or her will put government back in the hands of the people, President Donald Trump’s slogan, “Make American Great Again” is a prime example of this. These messages reflect two notions dealing with prevention concerns: 1) success is equated to reaching a previous status quo; and, 2) representing the goal in reference to a negative state. Strategic vigilance is highlighted also by the extent of the negativity in President Trump’s campaign.

Beyond campaigns, there are also contexts where prevention goals and vigilant strategies exist within the political world. For example, a third of the population is willing to select a candidate that is likely to win rather than one that better matches their own policy preferences (Pew Research Center 2015). The preference to blackball and/or focus on electability is characteristic of vigilant strategies – and while people can informally do this, the election rules are more of a promotion-eager strategy. These decision strategies are not formally instilled within the electoral rules, but people still use them. While I expected prevention oriented people would use these tactics, people with little motivation did so.

Growing negative attitudes towards government have been the trend for a number of years may be connected to the low motivational and vigilant political behavior. Welzel (2007; Welzel and Inglehart 2010) argues that when economic circumstances are bad, the prevention focus strength of society grows and predicts political preferences. Low opinion and trust may lead to a societal effect similar to the finding that economic conditions alter goal-mean structures at the societal level. The negativity may create cynical views and actions but it might get a person motivated to participate.

The 2016 election between Hillary Clinton and President Donald Trump may be one signal of an increase in a prevention centric political environment and reliance on vigilance. About half of Republican and Democratic candidate supporters report that their vote reflects a choice against the other candidate (Pew Research Center 2015). As the election got closer, the negativity of the electorate increased. Another Pew Poll in 2016 found that over 60 percent of Republicans and Democrats identify with their own party because they believe the opposing party's policies are bad for the country. As for independents, over half had negatively oriented motivations behind their vote choice; independent leaners reported that their vote choice was made because the other party's policies were perceived as bad (Pew

Research Center 2016). Last, 25 percent of registered voters that did not cast a ballot gave the reason that they disliked the candidates (Lopez & Flores 2017). The electorate appeared to have swung more than usual towards prevention motivations for candidate support and abstaining.

Campaigns also appeared to take on a more prevention orientation. While many aspects of his campaign are not necessarily new, such as his slogan mentioned above and the negative tone of the campaign he has been seen as taking these aspects to the extreme. The New York Times even has been tracking his insults and updates a blog post with the list of who and what Trump has insulted on Twitter (Lee & Quealy 2017).

Donald Trump was continuously connected with getting non-voters to participate because his rhetoric and platform emphasizing the anger and disenfranchisement felt by a sect of the population, mainly white males and the less educated. Trump's rhetoric very much highlights strategic vigilance in his policy stances focused on protecting U.S. citizens from different ethnic groups, in his slogan, and in the extent he portrayed other candidates negatively. Strategic vigilance may be the driving force in the ability for Trump to increase interest in the election by people who are habitual non-voters.

There was a large amount of anti-Trump activity, which focused on doing anything to not get him elected – essentially trying to get voters to blackball him. Not only were anti-Trump sentiments coming from Hillary Clinton, the Democratic nominee, but also from Republicans during the primary season. Several super PACs, such as Keep America Great and Not Who We Are, have formed with the only goal of blocking the election of Donald (Dovere 2016; Narayanswamy 2016). These aspects of the 2016 election created a prevention related and vigilant environment which could have invigorated people not traditionally motivated to participate become active participants in the 2016 election.

3.5.2 Conclusion

People meet goals, within both political and everyday activities, in similar fashions. Eagerly meeting general life goals coincides with using eager strategies in political life; strategic vigilance in daily life corresponds with an increasing use of vigilance in political acts. Promotion induces eagerness, but prevention does not equate to an increase in strategic vigilance. Different aspects of the political world's structure and current environment affect the connections between regulatory focus, strategy, and political behavior. The interaction of motivational orientation and the environment are further explored in later chapters.

Aunt MaryBelle may very well display variation in personality when it comes to politics, but these variations are likely reflected in other daily life situations, such as when the Astros are playing the Texas Rangers or making a judgment about a new restaurant. If she is likely to eagerly meet goals, using previous success as a guide and focusing on approaching end-states, Aunt MaryBelle is more inclined to vote for the candidate she likes the most. On the other hand, if the hostility to Republicans reflects an increased reliance on strategic vigilance, with a focus on avoiding past mistakes and ensuring against a loss, her vote choice is more likely impacted by dislike of the opposition.

CHAPTER 4 Promotion and Prevention: Ideological and Issue Attitude Differences

Recent studies have begun to question whether ideological differences coincide with regulatory focus orientation. However, the results and underlining logic of these studies are contradictory. Whereas some researchers argue that there is a direct relationship between ideology and regulatory focus, another set of researchers argue that the relationship is not about the individual but the type of policy under question. While these hypotheses are both valid and situated well within the literature, there is a third possible way in which regulatory focus and political attitudes are related that has yet to be tested. In contrast to the connection between an individual or policy content driving the relationship, the third possibility is that that the policy environment relates regulatory focus and political attitudes. Specifically, whether or not the status quo of a policy may be a deciding factor in whether promotion or prevention focus corresponds with political attitudes.

I will test the relationship between issue attitudes, ideology, and regulatory focus using the Regulatory Focus and Ideology Survey introduced in Chapter 2. First, I examine the direct correlation between ideology and regulatory focus based on common psychological profiles associated with liberals (conservatives) and promotion (prevention focus), as suggested by Jost and his colleagues (2003). Second, I test the competing hypothesis provided by Lucas and Molden (2011), that promotion scores and policies with a growth-related goal will correlate, while prevention strength is associated with security-related policies. Finally, I test the implication that a policy's status quo affects the connection between regulatory focus and political attitudes by giving participants background information about an issue prior to asking for their policy attitude.

4.1 Ideology and Regulatory Focus

Ideology, in the past, has often been described as a consistent set of attitude beliefs (Campbell, Converse, Miller, & Stokes 1960; Converse 1964). However, the definition of ideology has expanded beyond a set of policy preferences and many researchers look at it as, at least partially, derived from numerous psychological constructs (Jost et al. 2003; Mondak 2010; Smith, Oxley, Hibbing, Alford, & Hibbing 2011). There is a widening range of research that looks at the underlining construction of ideology stemming partially from genetics (Alford, et al. 2005; Fowler, Baker, & Dawes 2008; Settle, Dawes, Christakis, & Fowler 2010), personality (Carney, Jost, Gosling, & Potter 2008; Gerber, Huber, Doherty, Dowling, & Ha 2010; Mondak 2010; Mondak, Hibbing, Canache, Seligson, & Anderson 2010), cognitive differences (Deppe, et al. 2015; Dodd et al. 2012; Skitka, Mullen, Griffin, Hutchinson, & Chamberlin 2002), moral predispositions (Graham, Haidt, and Nosek 2009; Janoff-Bulman 2009), and psychological needs towards uncertainty and threat (Jost et al. 2003; Thorisdottir, Jost, Liviatan, & Shrouf 2007), all of which demonstrates a cleavage between those with conservative and liberal positions.

4.1.1 Direct Relationship between Ideology and Regulatory Orientation

Many of the same psychological constructs that covary with ideology also relate to regulatory focus orientation. The psychological aspects of liberals parallel those of promotion focus individuals and those of conservatives are similar to those having a dominant prevention focus. These differences include: information processing, sensitivity to negative stimuli, personality traits, and moral predispositions.

Information processing across both regulatory foci is similar to differences in processing differences among the ideological spectrum. The cognitive flexibility that has been associated more so with liberals compared to the rigidity of conservatives (Amodio et

al. 2004; Rock & Janoff-Bulman 2010) has also been associated with promotion and prevention focus (Friedman & Forster 2000). For example, when asked to perform tasks while pressing down on the top of a table (promotion) versus pushing up on the bottom (prevention), more cognitive flexibility was displayed and more alternatives were generated (Friedman & Forster 2000, 2001). In addition, prevention focus is associated with having an inclination for negative information (Fazio et al. 2004; Forster et al. 2001; Lockwood, et al. 2002), which is also more prevalent for conservatives (Carraro, et al. 2011; Dodd, et al. 2012; Hetherington & Suhay 2011; for review, see Hibbing, et al. 2014).

The way in which people explore and what information is used to learn is similar across regulatory focus and ideological differences. Fazio et al. (2004) used a computer game, Bean Fest, in order to examine how people use negative versus positive information about an unknown, target object to learn and create an attitude towards it. Prevention focus was associated with learning through negative reinforcement where the opposite was true for promotion focused individuals. In a similar study Shook and Fazio (2009), using the Bean Fest game, looked at differences in learning behavior between liberals and conservatives. The results indicate that conservatives had a similar learning style observed under a prevention focus, with increased learning of negative over positive valenced beans.

These cognitive similarities – the salience of negative information and lower-effort preferences – may be what ties prevention to conservatism and promotion with liberalism. Recently, Hodson (2014) in a commentary addressing the negativity bias in relation to conservatism argued that the cognitive ability and style of conservatives leads to heightened awareness to threats. In turn, this leads to a prominent prevention focus, and ultimately a preference for social conservative attitudes. Certain thinking styles, such as cognitive rigidity and uneasiness with uncertainty (e.g. Jost et al. 2003) along with the higher use of low effort

thinking (e.g. Eidelman, Crandall, Goodman, & Blanchard 2012; Deppe et al. 2014; Skitka et al. 2002) create the foundation to be sensitive to negative information, requiring an adoption, to some degree, of a prevention focus behavioral system over a promotion one in order to deal with a threatening world-view. Within this adoption, then socially conservative policies triumph, but at the same time create a feedback loop where they become more attuned to any sort of social threat within the environment. While many studies have correlated the psychological underpinnings associated with ideology and regulatory focus, Hodson (2014) offers an initial model hypothesizing the mechanisms of how these are related with cognitive style and abilities leading to conservatism through a heightened prevention focus. In addition, Rock and Janoff-Bulman (2010) showed that conservatives' mental rigidity was mediated by avoidance motivation, which supports Hodson's model.

Studies examining personality correlates of each regulatory focus also align with trait differences between liberals and conservative. Promotion focus is associated with the Big 5 trait of openness (Vaughn, et al. 2008) and conscientiousness is associated with locomotion, which is behaviorally similar to prevention focus (Higgins 2008). Liberman et al. (1999) argue that it is the aspect of openness to new experiences that leads to promotion focused individual to be willing to take a new object or change tasks in studies on endowment effects and task substitution. These align with the personality correlates of conservatives and liberals with liberals being more likely to score higher on openness of the Big 5 and conservatives to have higher conscientiousness scores (Carney et al. 2008; Gerber et al. 2010; Mondak 2010; Mondak et al. 2010). Creativity has also been associated with promotion focus (Friedman & Forster 2001), which also correlates with liberal attitudes and conservatives being less creative or mentally flexible (Carney et al. 2008; Dollinger 2007; Jost et al. 2003). Therefore, both in terms of personality characteristics, information processing and learning strategies,

the psychological characteristics between prevention and conservatism and between liberalism and promotion seem to align.

Beyond psychological correlates, the predisposition to hold certain moral beliefs are tied to regulatory focus and connects to policy goals and ideological beliefs. Janoff-Bulman, Sheikh, and Hepp (2009) examine the underlining goals of policy and equates them to promotion and prevention focus. Their work argues that the motivations with promotion focus are tied to prescriptive policies where positive force by the government are more preferred in order to obtain social justice (see also, Janoff-Bulman 2009; Janoff-Bulman, Sheikh, & Baldacci 2008; Janoff-Bulman and Carnes 2013). On the other hand, prevention focus is tied to prescriptive policies where the focus is about what government should be inhibited from doing and negative actions by government. Another study by Janoff-Bulman, et al. (2008) shows that conservatives score higher on avoidance morals, which leads to a preference for policies that reflect self-restraint and social order and a positive relationship with Right Wing Authoritarianism (RWA). On the other hand, liberals have moral motivations which are approach based, focusing on self-reliance and social justice, ultimately leading to a negative relationship with Social Dominance Orientation (SDO).

More recently, Cornwell and Higgins (2013) found the relationship between regulatory focus and ideological attitudes is mediated by the extent to which one uses each of the five moral foundations (Graham, et al. 2009). The study shows that prevention focus individuals are more likely to prescribe to the binding foundations, ingroup/loyalty, authority/respect, and purity/sanctity, which partially mediates the relationship between conservatism and regulatory focus. Promotion focus is negatively related to the same binding morals, which leads to lower levels of conservatism. The moral motivations and values

associated with promotion and prevention focus seem to connect regulatory focus and ideology.

In terms of more direct evidence, Dolinski and Drogosz (2011) do not specifically look at ideological differences but do find them. Polish citizens voting for the liberal party had higher promotion scores than prevention scores. In addition, binding moral foundations only partially mediated the relationship between regulatory focus and conservatism in the Cornwell and Higgins (2013) study. There was a direct, negative relationship between promotion and conservatism and a direct, positive relationship between prevention focus scores and conservatism.

Based upon research showing similarities between psychological profile differences of the two regulatory foci and ideological leanings, along with the patterns of moral motivation and foundations, the following hypotheses will be tested.

H_{4,1}: Conservatives will have a higher mean prevention RFQ scores than liberals and liberals will have a higher mean promotion RFQ score than conservatives.

H_{4,2}: Self-reported ideology and issue attitudes, with higher scores indicating stronger conservatism, will be positively associated with prevention focus scores and negatively related to promotion focus scores.

4.1.2 Not Ideology, but Issues ...

Lucas and Molden (2011) argue that rather than looking at the psychological correlates, the main focus should be on the common motivations between regulatory foci and political policies. Some policies reflect a broad motivation for personal security and public safety while others reflect an underlying motivation to create opportunities for a community to grow. Just as regulatory focus is concerned with how individuals perceive goals and their motivational style, many political policies can be categorized as advancing the community while others protect it (Lucas & Molden 2011). Therefore, higher promotion

focus scores should show support for policies that create opportunities for growth such as school funding and healthcare. Prevention focus should then correlate positively with policies that have safety as the goal, such as strong military and protecting the environment.

This argument is similar to the one made by Janoff-Bulman and colleagues (Janoff-Bulmann 2009; Janoff-Bulman and Carnes 2013; Janoff-Bulman, et al. 2008, 2009). Their research argues that prevention and promotion lead to a preference for certain policies based on those policies' goals. Promotion focus, in its association with approach, aligns with a higher likelihood of supporting social justice morals, leading to a higher desire for liberal, prescriptive policies that focus on helping the group advance. On the other hand prevention focus, in its association with avoidance, is related to conservative, prescriptive policies that focus on ensuring the group's safety and social order.

Just as the work of Janoff-Bulman and colleagues make the connection between regulatory focus and political attitudes about the ultimate, overarching goal of the policy, so does Lucas and Molden. However, there is a large difference between the two. Lucas and Molden argue that ideology has nothing to do with it and show no relationship between regulatory focus and ideology and all of their models control for ideology. On the other hand, Janoff-Bulman's work, in taking into account different policy goals, argues that these goals create a line between conservatives and liberals. In order for Lucas and Molden's argument to stand, the issues that are associated with growth versus security cannot group into those supported by liberals and conservatives, respectively.

Based on the argument of the Lucas and Molden piece, I attempt to replicate their findings with additional policies. The first two hypotheses below reflect their findings and the third questions whether this relationship is moderated by ideology, integrating the view that there is a common psychological profile between regulatory focus and political attitudes.

Examination of the interaction between self-reported ideology with promotion and prevention focus scores to see what happens if one – either ideology or regulatory focus – would be expected to contradict the other. For example, while higher prevention scores should be associated with an increased preference for environmental protection policies because it has a security related goal. However, based on the direct relationship argument, environmental protection should be positively associated with promotion focus scores because these policies tend to be supported by liberals rather than conservatives. In this case does one trump the other in terms of influence on policy preferences? If both regulatory focus and ideology arguments parallel one another, for instance both would expect prevention to be positively associated with a preference for increased border security, what does the relationship look like?

H_{4.3}: Issues related to security (coded so preference for more government intervention is higher) will be positively correlated with prevention RFQ scores and have no significant relationship with promotion RFQ scores.

H_{4.4}: Growth-related issue attitudes (coded so preference for more government intervention is higher) will be positively correlated with promotion RFQ scores, but not significantly related to prevention RFQ scores.

H_{4.5}: Ideology moderates the relationship between promotion and prevention scores and issue positions.

4.1.3 ... Or Policy Environment

Public policy does not work in a vacuum, but rather within a certain environment. In this case, the environment is the status quo of an issue, even if that status quo involves no government action. In a broad sense, the current status of a policy either corresponds to or contradicts an individual's preference. The political environment has been shown to influence how psychological characteristics correlate to political attitudes (Kossowska & VanHiel 2003). For example, Thorisdottir et al. (2007) found that the need for security was

positively related to right-wing attitudes in Western Europe but positively associated with left-wing attitudes in Eastern Europe due to the historical differences between the two. Also, openness was positively associated with left leaning attitudes in the west and with right leaning attitudes in the east.

The last hypothesized relationship between regulatory focus and political attitudes takes into account the policy environment. In this case, the context is defined as the status quo of a policy in relation to the person's political preference. Research examining how promotion versus prevention focus dominance leads to different behaviors and attitudes based on the status quo offers a novel way to examine the relationship between policy attitudes and regulatory focus.

At face value, promotion focus tends to be associated with higher risk behaviors, including moving away from the status quo, whereas prevention focus strength is associated with less risk taking and a preference for the familiar (Crowe & Higgins 1997; Hamstra, et al. 2011; Liberman et al. 1999; Scholer et al. 2010). This has been demonstrated in the political arena with the Boldero and Higgins (2011) finding that given hypothetical economic policies, people who are have a prevention orientation or are induced into one preferred the status quo and those with naturally higher promotion focus scores or induced into a promotion state preferred a change to the status quo. Under this notion, prevention focus individuals would prefer to maintain policies in existence at all times. However, in real life this is most likely not the case. If a policy's status quo is incongruent with an individual's preference, then it would not be rational to prefer the policy position just because it was the status quo.

The negativity bias of those in a prevention focus will lead to risky behavior under certain circumstances, such as when required to classify negative stimuli in a signal detection task (Scholer, et al. 2008). In addition, Scholer et al. (2010) argues and finds in four studies

that going below the status quo does not affect those with a higher promotion focus because their attention is on gains (everything above the status quo or what is between 0 and 1).

However, higher prevention focus leads people to be sensitive to losses and, therefore, pay attention when a situation is below the status quo – everything between -1 and 0. In order to remove a threat to their security, prevention focus individuals will make a risky choice when in a state of loss if that option will get them back to the status quo. When the risky option is the only way to get one out of a loss situation and the conservative option will not, those with a higher prevention focus are motivated to choose the risky choice because it is the lesser of the two evils (Scholer et al. 2010).

The deciding factor in whether or not regulatory focus is associated with a political attitude may depend on whether one's issue preference is the policy status quo or if it is not. For instance, if the status quo of a policy is not what an individual favors, even though they are high on prevention focus, they may be more willing to take a risk on trying to change the policy. On the other hand, having a policy status quo different from one's own preference may not be related to someone's promotion focus scores simply because being in a point of loss does not reach their attention to the extent as it does for a prevention dominant person. However, promotion focus should be tied to policy preferences for people who have a preference for the policy status quo that exists. This would indicate that that they may be able to move even further in their policy preference pursuit – move from the status quo to positive one.

Using the theoretical arguments and current empirical research on regulatory focus, loss aversion, and risk, the following hypotheses are tested:

H_{4,6}: If the status quo of an issue is in an opposing direction than the participant's own preference, there will be a positive relationship between prevention focus and attitude strength.

H_{4.7}: If the status quo of an issue is in the same direction as the participant's own preference, there will be a positive relationship between promotion focus and attitude strength.

4.2 Testing the Connection between Political Attitudes and Regulatory Focus

I test the connection between regulatory focus and political orientation using the Regulatory Focus and Ideology Survey. This survey is distinct from the one used in the previous chapter, using a different MTurk sample. Regulatory orientation, the main independent variable, is measured with the RFQ (Higgins et al. 2001). Ideology, partisanship, and demographic measures previously discussed in Chapter 2 are also used in the models. Prior to the analysis, I discuss the issue battery and status quo policy items, which are unique to this chapter.

4.2.1 Policy Attitudes

The Regulatory Focus and Ideology Survey included 20 political issue attitudes stretching across a variety of topics. These items include both foreign and domestic issues, with ten having to do with societal growth and ten with the security of it in order to test Lucas and Molden's argument. Security topics include: 1) the War on Terror; 2) citizenship for undocumented immigrants; 3) government spending to stop crime; 4) border security; 5) the death penalty; 6) regulating business; 7) gun control; 8) strong military; 9) environmental protection; and, 10) abstinence only education. Growth-related policies include: 1) universal healthcare; 2) prescription drug coverage for seniors; 3) government spending on social security; 4) government spending on the poor; 5) foreign aid; 6) same-sex marriage; 7) government spending on infrastructure; 8) government spending on research; 9) the right to have an abortion; and, 10) government funding for public schools. All issue questions utilize a format adapted from many of the ANES issue items with the stem, "How much do you

favor or oppose _____?” and response options ranged from “favor a great deal” (7) to “oppose a great deal” (1). These items are used twice. First, the responses are coded so that higher scores indicate stronger attitudes towards security or growth, regardless of ideological direction, to test the connection between policy content and regulatory focus. Second, the direct relationship between political attitudes and regulatory focus is tested by recoding the items based on their ideological direction and correlating them, individually and as a scale, with regulatory focus.

The means and standard deviations for each issue policy, ideology, and RFQ scores can be found in Table 4.1. Correlations between each issue and ideology are in the expected direction, with higher ideological scores indicating a more conservative position. In order to examine the connection between ideology and regulatory focus by looking at an overall conservative issue preference, all items were recoded so that higher scores indicate a more conservative policy stance and averaged together ($\alpha = .88$). The sample, which is skewed towards liberal in self-reported ideology is also skewed liberal on specific policy preferences ($M = 2.97, SD = .93$).

In order to test whether security or growth policies are related to regulatory focus all issue items were coded so that higher scores indicated a more favorable position towards the issue, regardless of ideological direction. Analyses were performed on each issue individually as well as an index of each category of policy by averaging the scores for the growth policies ($M = 5.35, SD = 1.02$) and the security policies ($M = 4.39, SD = .70$).

Table 4.1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations for Promotion, Prevention, and Political Attitudes

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
1. Ideology	1																							
2. Promotion	.10**	1																						
3. Prevention	.06	.11**	1																					
4. Citizenship	.50***	-.004	.02	1																				
5. Crime	.10**	-.08*	-.10**	.03	1																			
6. Business Regulation	.56***	.05	.07^	.34***	.21***	1																		
7. Gun control	.53***	.03	-.09*	.41***	.27***	.45***	1																	
8. Environmental Protection	.47***	-.05	.03	.32***	.24***	.43***	.33***	1																
9. Healthcare	.70***	.10*	.04	.48***	.19***	.57***	.50***	.48***	1															
10. Prescription drugs	.36***	-.06^	-.10*	.19***	.24***	.37***	.27***	.40***	.45***	1														
11. Social Security	.40***	.01	-.03	.20***	.27***	.45***	.30***	.40***	.51***	.63***	1													
12. Welfare	.56***	.04	-.03	.43***	.27***	.50***	.46***	.42***	.63***	.52***	.58***	1												
13. Foreign Aid	.30***	.01	-.06	.41***	.17***	.25***	.32***	.28***	.35***	.22***	.28***	.39***	1											
14. Gay Marriage	.54***	.08*	.14***	.44***	.03	.37***	.31***	.37***	.49***	.19***	.18***	.34***	.20***	1										
15. Roads	.28***	-.06	-.02	.16***	.23***	.37***	.15***	.39***	.35***	.42***	.42***	.36***	.17***	.21***	1									
16. Research	.41***	-.05	.04	.33***	.27***	.41***	.29***	.46***	.47***	.39***	.38***	.43***	.28***	.37***	.46***	1								
17. Abortion Rights	.54***	.08*	.10*	.38***	.03	.33***	.30***	.39***	.45***	.22***	.21***	.32***	.16***	.68***	.23***	.37***	1							
18. Public Education	.44***	-.06^	-.01	.28***	.32***	.42***	.36***	.40***	.50***	.48***	.46***	.52***	.27***	.33***	.42***	.50***	.32***	1						
19. War on Terror	.30***	.07*	.10*	.25***	-.26***	.19***	.03	.13***	.22***	-.002	-.03	.12**	-.03	.29***	.04	.16***	.25***	.06	1					
20. Death Penalty	.40***	.04	.03	.38***	-.13***	.24***	.24***	.23***	.32***	.20***	.18***	.32***	.25***	.23***	.14***	.20***	.13***	.16***	.38***	1				
21. Strong Military	.39***	.12**	.08*	.30***	.28***	.21***	.13***	.10**	.26***	-.01	-.04	.20***	.05	.31***	-.08*	.09*	.28***	.06	.62***	.40***	1			
22. Abstinence Only Education	.41***	.07^	.12**	.30***	-.08*	.32***	.13***	.27***	.30***	.11**	.11**	.19***	.06^	.58***	.21***	.30***	.54***	.23***	.37***	.23***	.35***	1		
23. Border Security	.38***	.09*	.08*	.57***	-.23***	.21***	.22***	.09*	.30***	-.04	-.04	.20***	.21***	.37***	-.09*	.11**	.31***	.08*	.47***	.39***	.61***	.39***	1	
Mean	3.24	3.37	3.50	3.79	2.95	2.99	3.48	2.18	2.79	2.25	2.63	2.63	4.10	2.53	2.21	2.41	2.69	2.26	3.47	3.83	4.55	2.63	4.80	
Standard Deviation	1.59	0.64	.75	1.92	1.29	1.57	2.05	1.26	1.99	1.22	1.39	1.51	1.58	2.01	1.11	1.36	1.88	1.30	1.88	2.00	1.70	1.79	1.67	

Note. ^p ≤ .10; *p ≤ .05; **p ≤ .01; ***p ≤ .001

Note. All political variables coded so that higher scores indicate a more conservative attitude.

In the previous chapter I found a difference in overall motivation between people with higher promotion versus prevention scores. With this in mind, I folded self-reported ideology, making it have a range of 1 to 4, with higher values indicate a more extreme position ($M = 2.45$, $SD = 1.00$). In addition, I folded each individual policy position as well and calculated the mean to obtain a measure of overall issue attitude strength ranging from 1 to 4, with higher values indicating stronger attitudes ($M = 2.78$, $SD = .52$). I use these two variables to test whether regulatory focus strength is associated with a tendency to have stronger versus more moderate attitudes.

4.2.2 Status quo policy information

In addition to the basic issue battery, I gave all participants a set of items dealing with four policies. The items included a description of the current policy situation along with information about a possible change to the status quo of each. Two of these issues showed a liberal status quo position, border security and abortion, and two issues held a conservative status quo, business regulation and gun control. After being given the policy information, participants were asked three questions: 1) which of the following three options they would prefer to do: have the government take a more liberal position, a more conservative position, or do nothing and maintain the status quo; 2) the strength of preference for each of the three options; 3) whether their decision encompassed a vigilant or eager strategy, with wording adopted from Boldero and Higgins (2011).

For example, gun policy was described as relaxed and favoring the 2nd Amendment right to possess firearms. Then information demonstrated a risk to this status quo by describing a push by some politicians to restrict the right to possess firearms by wanting more in-depth background checks, banning certain weapons, and reducing the amount of ammunition cartridges can hold. Participants were asked whether they preferred, “restricting

the rights of gun owners”, “extending the rights of gun owners”, or “maintaining the status quo”. The second set of items asked, “How strongly do you prefer or oppose laws restricting gun rights [extending gun rights/doing nothing]?” Attitude strength for each of the three directions was asked using a 5-point scale ranging from “strongly prefer” to “strongly oppose”. Finally, participants were asked if they “were being enthusiastic and thinking about maximizing America’ future” and if they were being “careful or thinking about what was necessary” when making the decision on gun policy. Responses for the final two items ranged from “not at all” (1) to “very” (5). The specific wording for each of the four policies is in Appendix A.

Gun Policy. When given the initial information on gun laws, 47.8 percent of the participants reported a preference for restricting the rights of gun owners, 19.5 percent desired extending gun rights, and 32.8 percent preferred maintaining the status quo. The means and standard deviations for strength of each preference towards gun policy, as well as the other three issues, are found in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Mean (SD) Self-Reported Attitudes towards Issues Used in Testing Significance of Policy Status Quo

	Strength of Preference		
	Restrict gun rights	Extend gun rights	Status Quo
Gun Control	3.21 (1.43)	2.62 (1.27)	3.07 (1.12)
Border Security	Increase spending	Decrease spending	Status Quo
	3.00 (1.29)	2.80 (1.26)	3.03 (1.04)
Abortion	Pro-choice	Pro-life	Status Quo
	3.75 (1.36)	2.34 (1.39)	2.97 (1.00)
Business Regulation	Deregulation	Strong Regulation	Status Quo
	2.57 (1.17)	3.44 (1.17)	2.91 (.92)

Note. All items are coded so that higher scores indicate a stronger preference for target attitude on a 5-point scale.

Border Security Policy. The second set of policy questions concerned attitudes towards government spending on border security. Once given initial information on the status quo of

the policy, 37.2 percent of participants indicated a preference for increasing spending on border security, 26.8 percent preferred decreasing the money spent on border security, and 36 percent wanted to maintain the status quo.

Abortion Policy. The third status quo policy issue concerned abortion rights. A majority, 61.4 percent, indicated an initial preference for stronger pro-choice laws, 19.2 percent indicated they preferred stronger pro-life laws, and another 19.2 percent indicated a preference to maintain the status quo.

Business Regulation Policy. The final issue topic concerned business regulation. Following information given the status quo of regulatory policy, 15.9 percent of participants indicated a preference for increasing deregulation of business, 51.5 percent preferred creating strong business regulations, and the remaining 32.6 percent indicating they would prefer the current laws.

4.3 Analysis of Regulatory Focus, Policy Positions, and Ideology

The analyses are broken down based on my three sets of hypotheses. I first examine whether or not there is a direct relationship between regulatory focus and ideology. The second set of analyses look at how regulatory focus and issue attitudes are related based on common motivations between the two. The final set of analyses examine the connection between what the current status quo of the policy is in relation to a person's preferred policy stance and how, together, these connect to motivational systems.

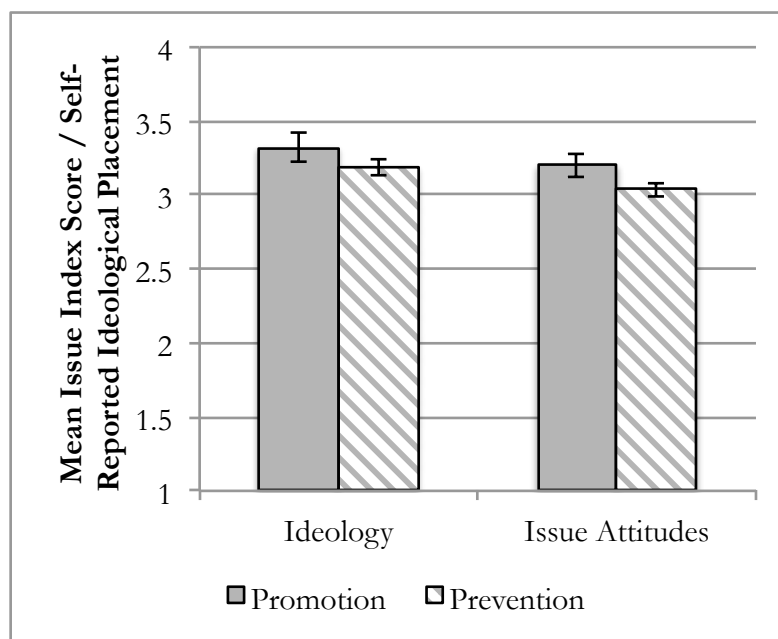
4.3.1 Direct Connection Between Attitudes and Regulatory Focus

The first hypothesis suggests that there is a direct connection between regulatory focus and ideology. Specifically, the hypothesis states that conservatives should be more prevention focused and liberals more promotion focused. In order to test this hypothesis, I

look at the relationship between self-reported ideology and issue attitude preferences, all coded so that higher scores indicate a more conservative issue stance, and RFQ scores.

First, looking at self-reported ideology and the political issue attitude scale, participants were divided based on whether they had stronger promotion or prevention RFQ scores. Figure 4.1 displays the mean ideological placement and issue attitude score broken down by those categorized as promotion or prevention dominant. There were not significant ideological ($F(1,676) = 1.083, p = .298, MSE = 2.541$) or issue attitude ($F(1,620) = .014, p = .906, MSE = .842$) differences based on being considered promotion or prevention oriented.

Figure 4.1. Mean (SE) Issue Attitudes and Self-Reported Ideological Placement Across Regulatory Focus

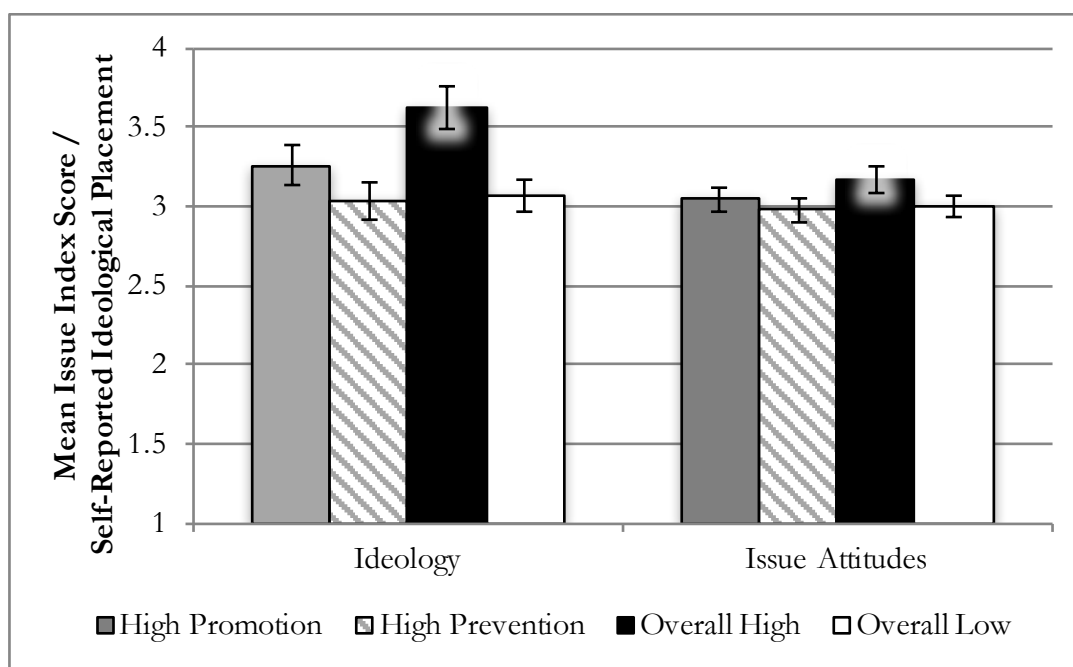


Note. Ideology N = 677; Issue Attitudes N = 621.

I also looked at ideology and motivational orientation using the four regulatory focus categories – High Promotion, High Prevention, High Overall, and Low Overall. Participants were placed into each category based on the method discussed in Chapter 2. Mean ideological and issue attitude scores, with higher scores indicating a more conservative attitude, for each regulatory group is in Figure 4.2. The breakdown into four groups offers a

little more discrimination in regard to ideological attitudes. Participants in the High Overall group are ideologically more conservative than participants in the Prevention and Low Overall groups ($F(3, 690) = 4.896, p = .002, MSE = 2.492$). Looking at issue scores, there is no mean policy attitude differences across the four groups ($F(3, 695) = .856, p = .464, MSE = .860$). Overall, the hypothesis that conservatism is related to prevention focus and liberalism is associated with promotion is not found.

Figure 4.2 Mean (SE) Ideology and Issue Attitude Score Based on Regulatory Focus Category



In addition, correlations from Table 4.1 show the direction and strength of the relationship between self-reported ideology and promotion focus scores ($r = .10, p = .009$) and prevention ($r = .06, p = .15$). The bivariate correlations do not corroborate the expected pattern that promotion is negatively correlated with political attitudes and prevention positively related. Table 4.1 also does not show a strong pattern among the individual issue items and regulatory focus. Promotion scores are significantly related to three issues in the expected direction, including spending to stop crime, public education, and prescription

drugs for seniors. There is a slightly more consistent pattern for prevention strength and political attitudes, with positive correlations for five of the individual issue items. Overall, eight of the twenty items show the expected relationship between political attitudes and regulatory motivations.

Regression results that have promotion and prevention scores, as well as demographic controls, can be found in Table 4.3. The overall model for self-reported ideology is only marginally significant and promotion focus ($b = .22, p = .03$) is positively related to conservatism, which is opposite of the expectation. However, based on the analysis of group differences, this relationship is being driven by participants who have higher promotion *and* prevention scores. In addition, prevention focus scores are not significantly related to ideology. Neither promotion nor prevention are related to the issue attitude index.

Table 4.3. OLS Regression Coefficients (SE)
for Self-Reported Ideology and Issue Attitudes

	SR Ideology	Issue Attitude
Promotion	.21 (.48)*	.07 (.06)
Prevention	.11 (.08)	.05 (.05)
Age	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Male	.04 (.13)	>05 (.07)
White	.35 (.15)*	.05 (.09)
Education	.03 (.04)	-.03 (.03)
Income	-.01 (.04)	.02 (.03)
Constant	1.68 (.48)*	2.60 (.28)*
R²	.02	.01
F (df)	1.96 (7, 657) [^]	.81 (7, 683)
N	665	691

Note. [^]p<.10; *p<.05. All attitudes are coded so that higher scores indicate a more conservative issue attitude.

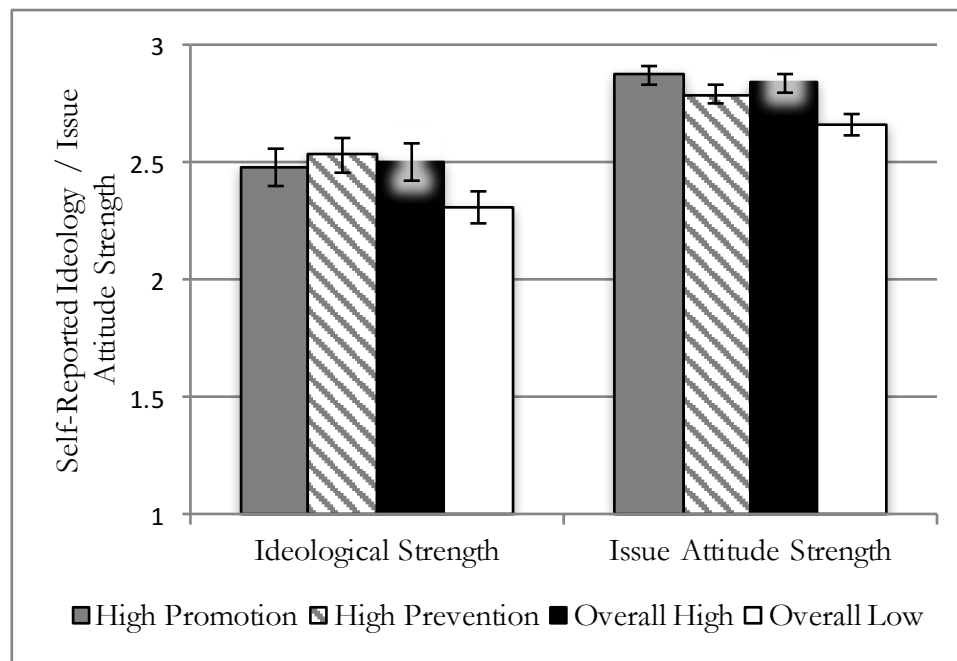
Overall, the analyses do not correspond with the hypothesis that prevention is related to conservatism and promotion with liberalism. However, when looking at how the subscales work together, the findings based on the regulatory focus categories show that the promotion-conservatism relationship may be characterized as one of having high motivation overall rather than strictly related to promotion focus. To test this notion, I folded the ideology and issue attitude scales and examine if attitude strength, rather than direction, is related to regulatory focus.

Correlations between promotion, prevention, and the attitude strength measures show mixed results. Promotion is positively associated with stronger issue attitudes ($r = .12$, $p = .003$), but not with ideological strength ($r = .05$, $p = .230$). On the other hand, prevention is positively associated with a stronger ideological stance ($r = .08$, $p = .034$), but not to issue attitude strength ($r = .03$, $p = .499$). The same pattern exists in a more complete OLS model using promotion and prevention as well as control variables. The promotion coefficient is positive in the ideological strength model ($b = .10$, $SE = .03$, $p = .002$), but not significant in the issue attitude scale model ($b = .04$, $SE = .06$, $p = .502$). In addition, prevention strength is positively related to issue strength, although it is marginally significant ($b = .09$, $SE = .05$, $p = .084$) and not related to ideological strength ($b = .01$, $SE = .03$, $p = .716$).

I also examined the relationship between strength using the categorical regulatory focus variable. There were no mean ideological strength differences across the regulatory focus categories ($F(3, 690) = 1.79$, $MSE = 1.00$, $p = .149$). However, there are significant mean differences among the regulatory focus groups in issue attitude strength ($F(3, 630) = 5.48$, $MSE = .266$, $p = .001$). The mean and standard errors for each group are in Figure 4.3 and shows participants with low promotion and prevention scores tend to also have more

moderate attitudes. Participants in the Low Overall regulatory group have the lowest scores on the issue strength scale. This pattern corresponds with the previous chapter's findings demonstrating a lower degree of engagement in general and political life for people without a sense of regulatory orientation.

Figure 4.2. Mean (SE) Ideological and Issue Attitude Strength Across Regulatory Focus Categories



People lacking a strong regulatory orientation tend to be less extreme in their political attitudes. However, a correlation between regulatory focus and political attitudes is missing in the present data. Beyond attitude strength, several studies have alluded to or shown that the relationship between attitudes and regulatory focus is mediated by other constructs, such as a negativity bias or moral foundations (Cornwell & Higgins 2013, 2015; Hodson 2014). Therefore, the models looking at a direct correlation between regulatory focus and political attitudes may be too simplistic to capture the way in which the two correspond with each other.

4.3.2 Growth versus Security Related Issues

The second set of hypotheses relate back to the work of Lucas and Molden (2011) who argued that regulatory focus relates to political attitudes based on a policy issue's broad domain. Specifically, growth related policies should be positively associated with promotion focus scores and security related policies positively related to prevention scores.

In order to test this hypothesis, I ran OLS models on each individual policy issue, coded so that higher scores indicated a stronger preference for the policy regardless of ideological direction. Each model was run with promotion and prevention as the main independent variables and standard demographic variables as controls. Table 4.4 presents the coefficients for promotion and prevention focus for each security issue.

	Promotion	Prevention	R ²	F	N
Death Penalty	.13 (.12)	.06 (.12)	.01	.83	693
Strong Military	.30 (.10)**	.14 (.09)	.04	3.50**	689
Crime	.13 (.08)*	.12 (.07)*	.04	3.71**	691
Business Regulation	-.13 (.10)	-.14 (.08)*	.01	1.38	690
Environment	.11 (.08)	-.07 (.07)	.01	1.01	687
Border Security	.22 (.10)**	.14 (.09)	.03	3.10**	692
War on Terror	.15 (.11)	.21 (.10)**	.04	4.42**	693
Abstinence Only Education	.21 (.11)**	.22 (.09)**	.05	4.85**	688
Gun Control	-.19 (.12)	.20 (.10)*	.04	4.02**	690
Immigration	.03 (.12)	-.06 (.10)	.02	1.79*	693

Note.*p≤.10; **p≤.05. Models include controls for age, education, and income set at the mean and race (white = 1) and gender (male = 1).

The overall pattern shows that prevention scores and promotion scores are both positively related to stronger attitudes towards security related policies. This corresponds with previous findings that show a connection between motivational orientation strength in general and increased attitude strength. As for the specific hypothesis, prevention scores, controlling for promotion and demographics, are positively associated with four of the ten

individual policies: spending on crime, the War on Terror, abstinence only education, and gun control. Contrary to the hypothesis, promotion focus scores, controlling for demographic variables and prevention focus, is positively correlated with three of the ten security issues. As for the composite security issue variable, prevention focus is positively associated with stronger attitudes towards security issues overall. However, promotion focus is also associated with stronger attitudes for security, although it is only marginally significant. Increased prevention is associated with a stronger preference for security related policies, supporting the hypothesis.

Moving to growth related policies, with the OLS results in Table 4.5, there is little evidence of the expected relationship, that promotion focus is positively associated with these types of policies and prevention focus not related. As expected, promotion focus is positively associated with an increased preference for spending on prescription drug coverage for seniors, but only marginally, and increased prevention scores are related to lower preferences for abortion and same-sex marriage policies. However, promotion focus is negatively associated with three attitudes towards growth-related issues and prevention focus scores are positively associated with one. Looking at the composite of growth policies, neither promotion nor prevention scores are associated with these types of issues overall.

Table 4.5. OLS Coefficients (SE) Predicting Growth Policy Preferences

	Promotion	Prevention	R ²	F	N
Welfare	-.06 (.09)	.06 (.08)	.03	2.93**	688
Research	.09 (.08)	-.07 (.07)	.02	2.21**	693
Social Security	.01 (.08)	.05 (.07)	.05	5.01**	691
Public Schools	.12 (.08)	-.02 (.07)	.01	1.01	692
Roads and Highways	.10 (.07)	.04 (.06)	.01	1.34	693
Foreign Aid	-.08 (.10)	.10 (.08)	.02	1.97*	689
Healthcare	-.24 (.12)**	-.11 (.10)	.03	2.95**	693
Abortion	-.23 (.12)**	-.23 (.10)**	.02	1.81**	683
Same Sex Marriage	-.25 (.12)**	-.33 (.10)**	.04	4.17**	692
Drug Coverage	.12 (.07)*	.14 (.06)**	.06	6.30**	689

Note. * $p \leq .10$; ** $p \leq .05$. Models include controls for age, education, and income set at the mean and race (white = 1) and gender (male = 1).

Interacting Ideology with Regulatory Focus

The final hypothesis regarding policy content is that ideology interacts with promotion and prevention focus to create a more nuanced relationship between growth and security related issues and regulatory focus. In order to test this hypothesis, I ran OLS regression models on all 20 of the issues, similar to the models above. However, this time ideology was added to the model, as well as the interaction between ideology and promotion and prevention focus scores.

I use the interactions between regulatory focus and ideology to try and tease out the relationship between ideological preferences and policy content that Lucas and Molden do not fully address in their models. Issues hold a broad policy goal that can be associated with promotion or prevention and be categorized as ideologically liberal or conservative. These two goals could match or contradict each other and the interactions are needed to explain these circumstances.

First, looking at the general pattern of results found in Table 4.5, as promotion or prevention strength increases, preference towards security policy increases as well. However,

at mean regulatory focus strength, ideology is mixed in how it relates to the security policies – it is positively and negatively related to these types of policies. The main focus is the interaction coefficients though; these examine what happens when regulatory focus and ideological goals within a policy coincide or contradict each other.

The model for how much participants prefer the government to spend more money on combatting crime shows a significant interaction between prevention and ideology. At mean levels of promotion and ideology, an increase in prevention RFQ scores is associated with an increased preference for government spending to stop crime. This is expected given the connection between safety needs and prevention focus. In addition, at mean levels of promotion and prevention, increased conservatism is associated with a decrease in government spending on crime. However, these trends may not be descriptive based on the interaction term. The pattern of the interaction is shown in Figure 4.4, with fit lines representing the sample's mean ideology, more conservative ideological stances (one standard deviation above the mean), and more liberal placement (one standard deviation below the mean).

Table 4.6. OLS Coefficients (SE) Predicting Security Policy Preferences with Interaction Between Regulatory Focus and Ideology

	Promotion		Prevention		Ideology		Interaction		R ²	F	N
	X Ideology	Y	X Ideology	Y	X Ideology	Y	X Ideology	Y			
Death Penalty	.02 (.11)	.01 (.10)	.51 (.05)**	-.06 (.06)	-.07 (.06)				.17	13.67**	690
Strong Military	.21 (.10)**	.09 (.08)	.42 (.04)**	-.05 (.05)	-.01 (.05)				.18	14.86**	686
Crime	.16 (.08)*	.12 (.07)**	-.10 (.03)**	.02 (.04)	.10 (.04)**				.06	4.14**	690
Business Regulation	-.01 (.08)	-.08 (.07)	-.54 (.03)**	-.05 (.05)	-.03 (.04)				.33	32.58**	688
Environment	.20 (.07)**	-.02 (.06)	-.38 (.03)**	-.02 (.04)	-.01 (.04)				.24	20.77**	685
Border Security	.13 (.09)	.09 (.08)	.39 (.04)**	-.01 (.05)	-.03 (.05)				.17	13.49**	690
War on Terror	.08 (.11)	.16 (.09)*	.35 (.04)**	.03 (.06)	-.03 (.06)				.13	9.94**	690
Abstinence Only Education	.10 (.10)	.17 (.08)**	.46 (.04)**	-.02 (.06)	.09 (.05)*				.23	19.58**	686
Gun Control	-.04 (.11)	.28 (.09)**	-.68 (.04)**	-.04 (.06)	.04 (.05)				.31	30.97**	688
Immigration	.16 (.10)	.02 (.09)	-.60 (.04)**	-.08 (.06)	.03 (.05)				.26	24.43**	690

Note. *p≤.10; **p≤.05. Models include controls for age, education, and income set at the mean and race (white = 1) and gender (male = 1).

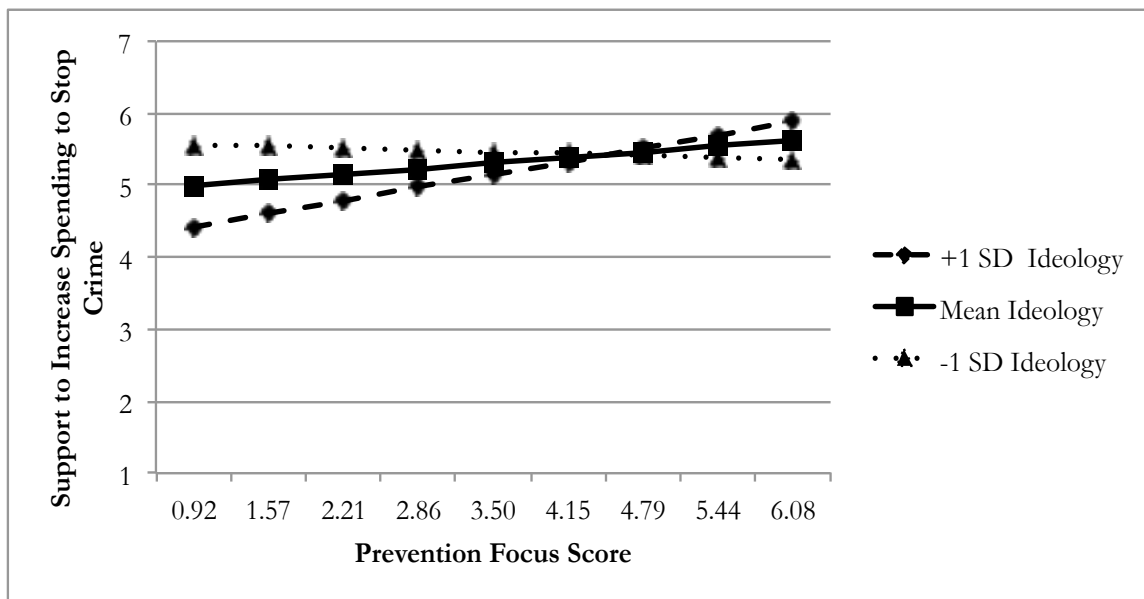
Table 4.7. OLS Coefficients (SE) Predicting Growth Policy Preferences with Interaction Between Regulatory Focus and Ideology

	Promotion		Prevention		Ideology		Promotion X Ideology		Prevention X Ideology		R ²	F	N
	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE	Coefficient	SE			
Welfare	.06 (.08)		.12 (.08)*		-.54 (.03)**		-.02 (.04)		.04 (.04)		.35	35.53**	686
Research	.17 (.08)**		-.03 (.06)		-.37 (.03)**		.05 (.04)		.04 (.04)		.20	16.72**	690
Social Security	.09 (.08)		.09 (.06)		-.37 (.03)**		.01 (.04)		.05 (.04)		.22	18.75**	689
Public Schools	.21 (.07)**		.01 (.06)		-.38 (.03)**		.09 (.04)**		.05 (.04)		.22	19.30**	690
Roads and Highways	.15 (.07)**		.06 (.06)		-.21 (.03)**		.05 (.04)		.02 (.03)		.10	7.70**	690
Foreign Aid	-.02 (.09)		.15 (.08)*		-.30 (.04)**		-.06 (.05)		.03 (.05)		.11	8.52**	687
Healthcare	-.05 (.09)		-.004 (.07)		-.86 (.04)**		-.04 (.05)		.01 (.05)		.50	67.15**	690
Abortion	-.07 (.10)		-.17 (.08)**		-.64 (.04)**		.10 (.06)*		-.11 (.05)**		.32	30.79**	681
Same Sex Marriage	-.07 (.10)		-.26 (.09)**		-.68 (.04)		.07 (.06)		-.19 (.05)**		.35	36.57**	690
Drug Coverage	.18 (.07)**		.17 (.06)**		-.30 (.03)**		.05 (.04)		.05 (.04)		.21	17.70**	687

Note: *p≤.10; **p≤.05. Models include controls for age, education, and income set at the mean and race (white = 1) and gender (male = 1).

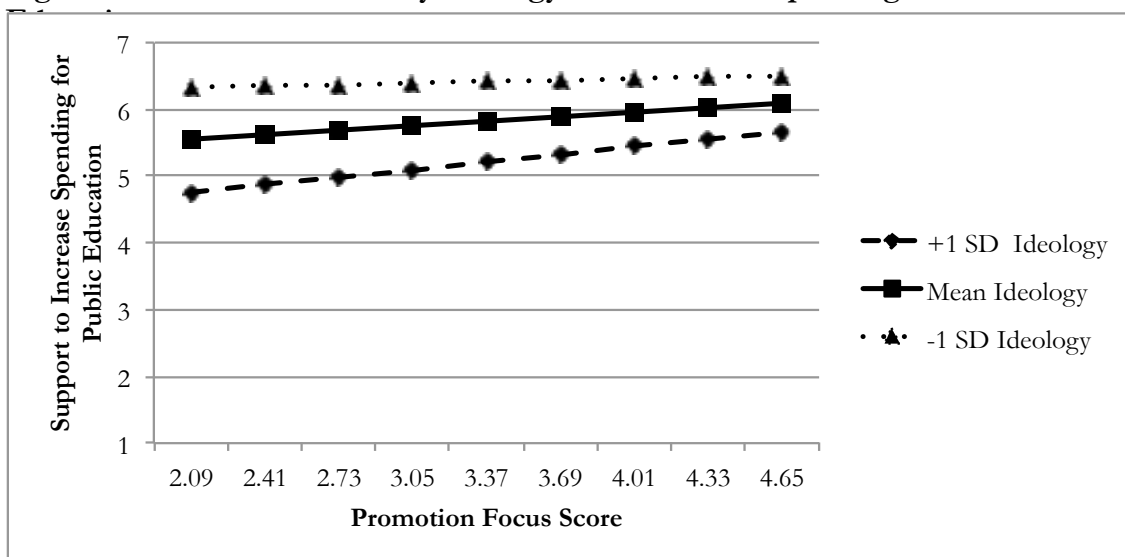
As Figure 4.4 shows, when self-reported ideological attitudes are at the mean or lean conservative, each increase in prevention focus is associated with an increase in support for government spending to stop crime. On the other hand, more liberal participants show a decrease in support for spending on crime with each increase in prevention strength. This highlights the tension between regulatory and ideological goals. Conservatives are likely to prefer policies that stop crime and when this same group of people also has a stronger regulatory focus that is sensitive to security needs, policy preferences become even stronger. On the other hand, liberals do not increase their preference for spending to stop crime even if their motivational orientation is associated with being concerned about safety. Prevention strength moves liberals and conservatives differently; conservatives match the hypothesis proposed by Lucas and Molden, but liberals do not. Regulatory focus appears to exasperate the inclinations to meet safety needs for conservatives without having the same effect on liberals.

Figure 4.4. Interaction between Prevention and Ideology for Spending on Crime



As for growth related policies, Table 4.7 shows that there is a significant interaction between promotion and ideology when looking at government funding for public schools. As seen in Figure 4.5, participants reporting ideological attitudes that are moderate or lean conservative are more likely to support funding for public education with each increase in promotion scores on the RFQ. However, this relationship is not significant for participants reporting more liberal attitudes. Again, conservatives align with the expectations of Lucas and Molden, so that promotion strength and support for public education, a growth-related policy, are positively related. Liberals, on the other hand, do not show this pattern, but this may be due to a ceiling effect based on the strong preference for public education held by this group.

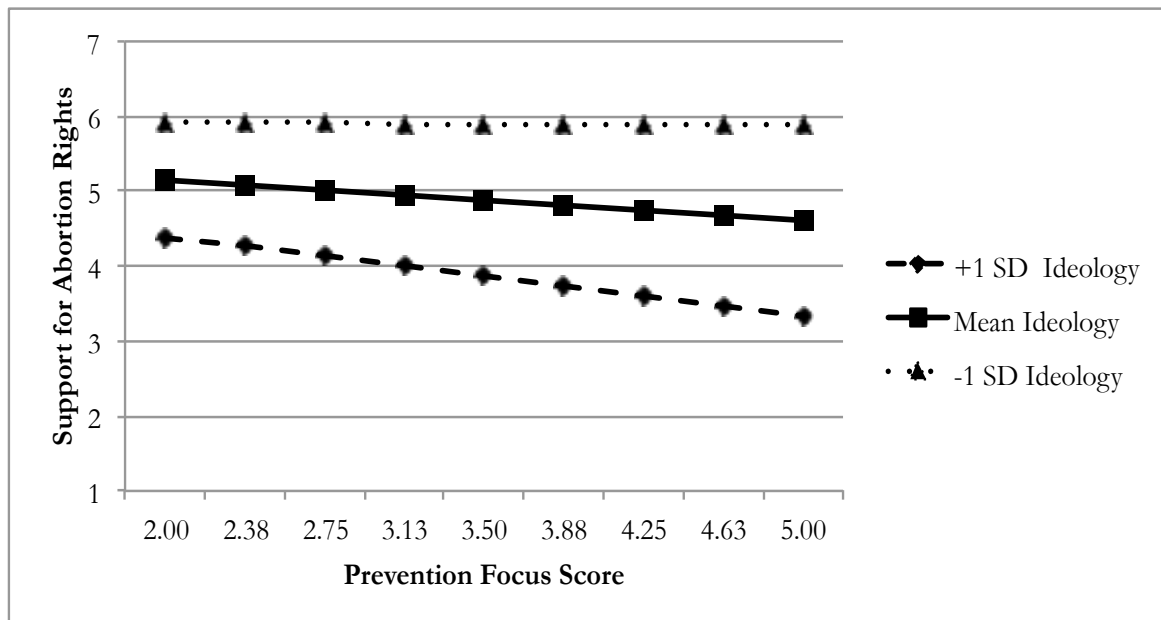
Figure 4.5. Promotion Focus by Ideology Interaction for Spending on Public



In addition to the hypothesized interactions discussed above, there is a significant interaction between prevention scores and ideology in the models examining abortion (see Figure 4.6) and same-sex marriage policy (see Figure 4.7). Both interactions have similar patterns. Participants reporting mean or conservative ideological attitudes decrease abortion rights support with each increase in prevention strength. The relationship between regulatory

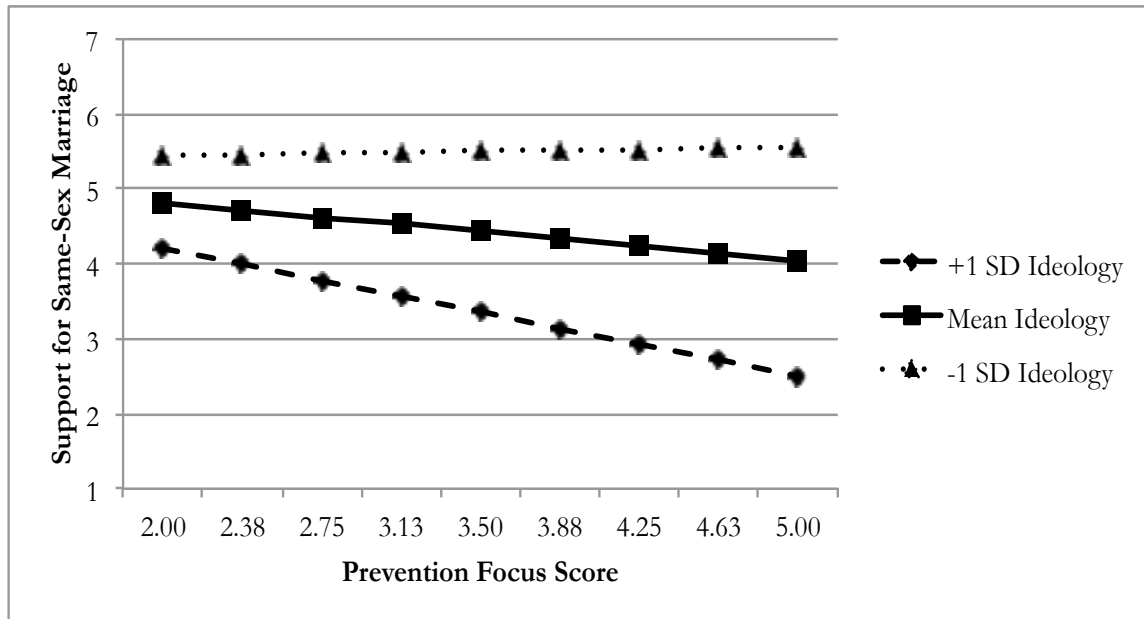
focus and abortion attitudes is not significant for more liberal participants. Again, conservative attitudes are altered based on prevention scores but liberal ones are not.

Figure 4.6. Interaction between Prevention and Ideology for Abortion Rights



While the pattern is similar between support for abortion rights and gay marriage, there are differences in the relationship between policy attitudes and prevention. Figure 4.7 displays the interaction for same-sex marriage attitudes. Just as for abortion, participants with moderate and more conservative ideological stances lower their support for gay marriage as prevention strength increases. However, increased prevention strength increases support for gay marriage among participants who report a more liberal orientation. The decrease for support of abortion and gay marriage with a rising prevention strength by participants with more conservative attitudes may be due to the perception that traditional attitudes towards society means that its safety requires these types of policies to be blocked. On the other hand, the increased support for gay marriage as prevention increases for liberals may be due a sense of providing security for civil rights.

Figure 4.7. Prevention Focus and Ideology Interaction for Same-Sex Marriage



Lucas and Molden argue that the relationship between policy attitudes and regulatory orientation is driven by common goals; promotion focus scores should be positively related to growth-related policies and prevention focus scores positively related to preferences towards security related policies. The analyses do show limited support for these hypotheses. Prevention focus is positively related to a stronger preference for security related policies, those towards the War on Terror and abstinence only education. However, promotion scores are negatively related towards a preference on three growth related policies - universal healthcare, abortion, and same-sex marriage.

Addition of the interaction term between regulatory focus scores and self-reported ideology into the models was used to determine what happens when regulatory focus and ideological goals conflict or converge. While there was no consistent pattern or relationship between regulatory focus and political attitudes, the interactions that were positive show that regulatory focus scores seem to effect policy attitude for people who are more conservative but not for those that are on the liberal side of the spectrum. Promotion scores increased

policy preferences regarding public education and prevention scores increased the support for crime prevention. In addition, prevention strength lowered support for abortion and same-sex marriage policies.

This asymmetric finding between liberal and conservative participants may be due to an artifact of the sample. The sample is skewed to the liberal side of the spectrum and the findings that regulatory focus disproportionately impacts attitudes for conservatives may be due to this. While 40 percent of the sample identify as liberal or strong liberal, only 10 percent identify as conservative or strong conservative. Therefore, it may not be conservatives per se that are more likely to show a regulatory effect, but people who are ideologically moderate.

4.3.3 Status Quo versus Change

The final set of hypotheses reflect the notion that the relationship between political attitudes and regulatory focus is not about a direct relationship between any specific political attitude, but more about whether the current policy is one that the person prefers or if it is contrary to his/her preference. The final set of analyses seeks to test my last two hypotheses: 1) prevention scores are tied to a stronger preference for a change in policy when the status quo of the policy is undesirable; and, on the other hand, 2) when the status quo of the policy is desirable to the individual, promotion scores will be positively associated with a stronger preference for change.

In order to test the hypotheses, the extent participants prefer and oppose movement from the status quo in both policy directions are averaged to create the dependent variable for each model. Higher values indicate a stronger preference to move past the current policy state in the same direction of the status quo. For example, abortion policy environment is described as leaning towards pro-choice so the dependent variable is coded so that higher

values indicate a stronger pro-choice attitude. Each model includes promotion and prevention scores, the person's initial preference, as well as the interaction of both, along with standard demographic control variables. Participant's initial preference includes three categories – maintaining the status quo, a preference corresponding with the current policy direction, and a position opposing the current direction. Results of each Model are in Table 4.8, using participants who oppose the status quo as the comparison group. For example, the comparison group for the abortion attitude model is pro-life participants.

The expectations for the models are derived from movement in the policy environment in reference to the status quo. Participants initially desiring policy in the same direction of the status quo are interested in a change that represents a move from 0 to 1, which is tied to the promotion system. Therefore, promotion strength should have a positive relationship with attitude strength for people who want to move beyond the status quo. On the other hand, participants with attitudes in the opposing direction as the status quo should show a correlation between the attitude and prevention scores. This is due to a concern about moving from an undesired policy environment, -1, towards a neutral point, 0, which is tied to prevention concerns. The latter should be negative because the dependent variables are coded so that lower scores indicate a stronger attitude that is opposite of the current policy direction.

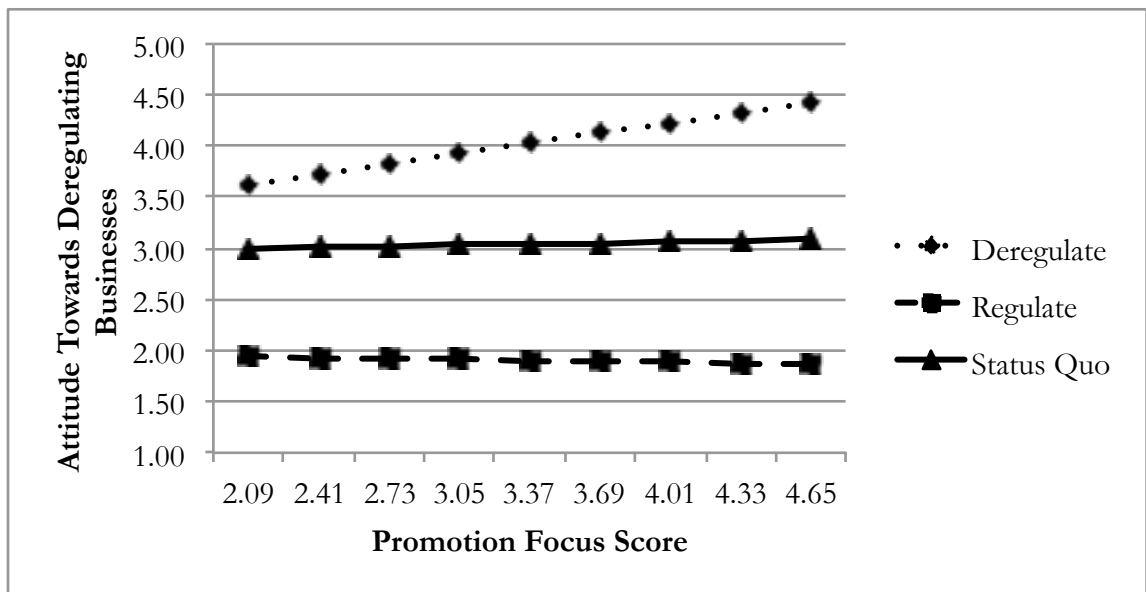
Deregulation of Business	Decreasing Border Security Spending	Pro-choice Abortion Policies	Extending Gun Rights
Promotion .32 (.11)*	Promotion .13 (.07)^	Promotion -.02 (.06)	Promotion .26 (.11)*
Prevention .24 (.09)*	Prevention .01 (.01)^	Prevention .05 (.05)	Prevention -.02 (.08)
Increase Regulation -2.12 (.08)*	Increase Spending -2.52 (.06)*	Pro-life -2.70 (.07)*	Restrict Gun Rights -2.58 (.08)*
Status Quo -.98 (.09)*	Status Quo -1.14 (.06)*	Status Quo -1.24 (.07)*	Status Quo -1.03 (.08)*
Promotion X Inc. Regulation -35 (.13)*	Promotion X Increase -22 (.09)*	Promotion X Pro-life -.14 (.10)	Promotion X Restrict -.30 (.12)*
Promotion X Status Quo -28 (.14)*	Promotion X Status Quo -.13 (.09)	Promotion X Status Quo -.03 (.13)	Promotion X Status Quo -.13 (.13)
Prevention X Inc. Regulation -28 (.05)*	Prevention X Increase -.14 (.08)^	Prevention X Pro-life -.31 (.10)*	Prevention X Restrict -.01 (.09)
Prevention X Status Quo -26 (.12)*	Prevention X Status Quo -.09 (.08)	Prevention X Status Quo .01 (.10)	Prevention X Status Quo .05 (.10)
White -.01 (.07)	White .02 (.06)	White .10 (.07)	White .03 (.07)
Male -.02 (.06)	Male .12 (.05)*	Male -.02 (.06)	Male .05 (.06)
Education -.01 (.02)	Education .03 (.02)	Education .01 (.02)	Education .01 (.02)
Income .00 (.02)	Income -.02 (.02)	Income .02 (.02)	Income -.00 (.02)
Age .00 (.00)	Age -.00 (.00)	Age .00 (.00)	Age -.00 (.00)
Constant 4.02 (.16)*	Constant 4.07 (.12)*	Constant 4.28 (.14)*	Constant 4.20 (.14)*
F 61.49*	F 143.5*	F 120.9	F 119.2
N 686	N 684	N 689	N 688
R ² .54	R ² .74	R ² .70	R ² .70

Note. ^p<.10; *p<.05. All attitudes are coded so that higher scores indicate a stronger attitude in the same direction as the status quo.

Business Regulation Attitudes

The first model in Table 4.8 concerns the policy preference for business regulation. Attitudes towards regulation and deregulation are highly correlated ($r = .79, p < .001$) and averaged together to create the dependent variable. Deregulation was given as the policy environment so there should be a positive relationship between regulatory attitudes and promotion for people who prefer deregulation. As the first column of Table 4.8 shows, the promotion by increasing regulation interaction is negative, indicating the relationship between promotion focus and business regulation attitudes for people who prefer deregulation is more positive than it is for those preferring increasing regulations. The pattern of the interaction is broken down in Figure 4.8 and supports the expectation that attitudes associated with moving to a more positive policy environment, going from 0 to 1, is related to promotion focus strength.

Figure 4.8. Interaction between Initial Business Regulation and Promotion Focus



On the other hand, the prevention focus by regulatory preference interaction should be negative for participants who prefer more regulation. This would indicate that increases in

prevention strength correspond with an increasingly stronger preference for more regulation, which, at a minimum, moves from an oppositional policy environment to a neutral one – a move from -1 to 0. While the interaction between prevention and preferring regulations is negative in Table 4.8, the slope for prevention is not significant for this group ($b = -.05$, $SE = .05$, $p = .331$). In addition, the relationship between prevention focus and regulatory attitudes is positive for those preferring deregulation, which does not correspond with the hypothesis. The hypothesis for the connection between people who want to deregulate is supported – their attitude is tied to promotion focus, but the hypothesis is not supported for the connection between prevention and regulatory attitudes for people who prefer to have more regulation. Promotion focus is associated with a stronger motivation to push deregulation policy farther from where it is currently – moving from 0 to +1.

Border Security Attitudes

The model in the second column in Table 4.8 concerns attitudes towards border security with the limited spending on the issue as the status quo description. The dependent variable is coded so that higher scores indicate a stronger preference for decreasing the amount of spending by taking the mean of people's preference to decreasing and increasing spending ($r = .71$, $p < .001$).

I expected to find a more negative relationship between prevention and border security attitudes for people who initially report interest in increasing border security as well as a positive relationship between promotion and policy attitudes for those who initially stated a preference for decreasing spending on border security. As Table 4.8 shows, there is a positive, marginally significant relationship between promotion and attitude strength for people who want to decrease spending, which is in line with expectations. In addition, the promotion by increase spending interaction is negative. The model provides support for the

hypothesis concerning promotion focus and border security attitudes. When border security policy is already in a person's preferred direction, attitudes towards providing additional security strengthen with increases in promotion strength. Again, promotion motivation is tied to the desire to move from 0 to +1.

While the prevention coefficient for people initially preferring more spending is negative, recoding using people who want to increase border security as the comparison group shows that there is no relationship between prevention and attitude strength ($b = -.04$, $SE = .05$, $p = .458$). The model shows little evidence to support the hypothesis relating prevention focus and attitudes towards border security as a function of the current policy environment.

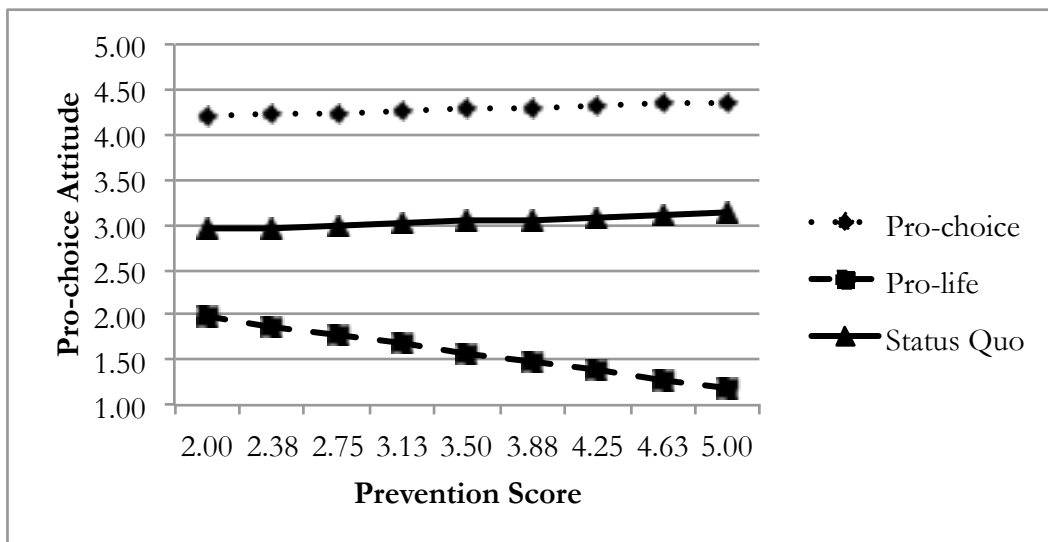
Abortion Attitudes

The third policy area I explored is abortion, with results in the third column of Table 4.8. The dependent variable is composed of attitudes towards making laws more pro-choice and more pro-life ($r = .78$, $p < .001$). Higher values on the dependent variable indicate a stronger pro-choice attitude, which is in the same direction of how the status quo was described.

Contrary to expectations, promotion is not positively related to attitudes towards pro-choice abortion policy for people with this initial attitude. However, the prevention by pro-life attitude interaction is negative and significant. The pattern of the interaction is in Figure 4.9. While prevention scores are not connected to attitudes for abortion policy for the pro-choice and status quo group, as prevention scores increase, participants reporting a preference for pro-life policies have an increasingly stronger attitude ($b = -.26$, $SE = .08$, $p = .002$). Prevention motivation strengthens a person's desire to move from a negative state towards a desirable status quo – from -1 to 0 – by strengthening their original attitude. While

the previous two attitudes connected promotion focus to attitudes based on a reference to the status quo, abortion attitudes are related to prevention strength in relation to the current policy environment.

Figure 4.9. Interaction between Prevention Strength and Initial Attitude for Abortion Policy



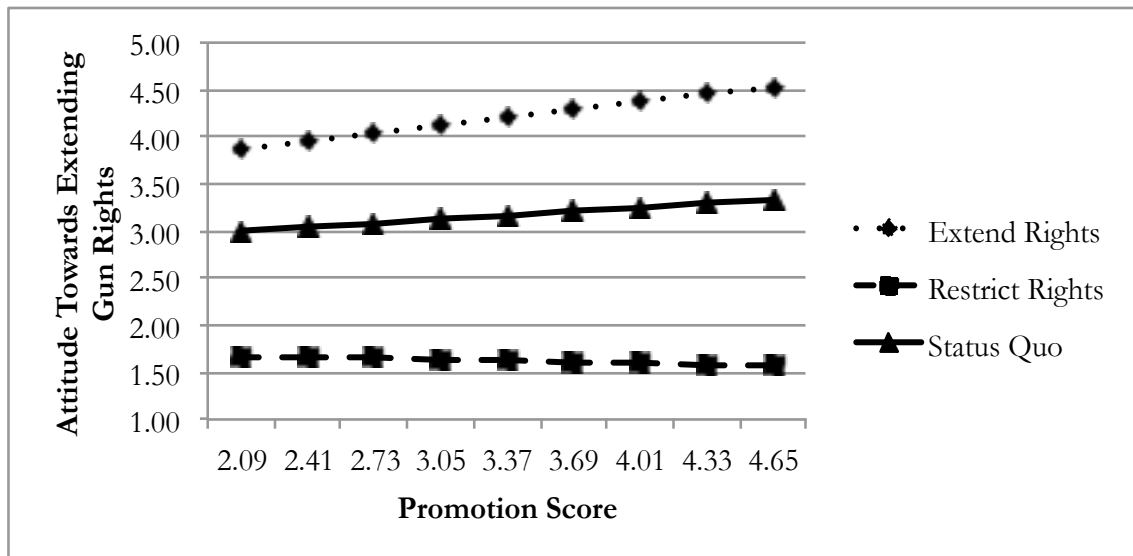
Gun Rights

The final policy I examine within these models is gun rights. The items asking participants how strongly they opposed/preferred extending and restricting gun rights were recoded so that higher values indicate a stronger preference in the same direction as the status quo, extension of gun rights, were strongly correlated ($r = .71, p < .001$) and were averaged together to create the dependent variable. Again, expectations are that promotion is positively associated with attitudes for people who prefer extending gun rights and prevention negatively associated with attitudes for people who want more restrictive policies.

The findings, using participants who desire an extension of gun rights as the comparison group, are in the right-hand column of Table 4.8. Promotion scores are positively related to attitudes towards extending gun rights for participants with a preference

to do so. In addition, the promotion by restricting gun right preference is negative. The pattern of the promotion by attitude interaction is in Figure 4.10. While there is a positive slope between participants who wish to extend gun rights, there is no relationship between promotion and attitudes for participants with a desire to restrict gun rights. However, the prevention score by initial attitude interactions are not significant. Again, the examination shows the expected pattern for promotion scores but does not demonstrate any correlations between prevention scores and attitudes based on the current policy environment.

Figure 4.10. Interaction between Promotion and Initial Attitudes for Gun Rights



The hypotheses are partially confirmed across the four issues looking at how motivational orientation affects attitudes in relation to the status quo. In the abortion right model, prevention scores correlate with attitude strength for participants whose policy preference was in the opposite direction of the current policy. An increase in prevention strength is associated with a stronger attitude for people who are pro-life. When the frame of reference involves a need to move from an undesired starting point to a desirable one – going from -1 to 0 – the motivation comes from a prevention focus. In this case, people

who prefer pro-life policies had a positive relationship with attitude strength and prevention scores.

In three of the four cases, when the status quo and participant's direction of policy coincided, promotion scores were related to attitude strength. In these cases, participants whose policy attitude was in the same direction as the status quo and desired the policy to continue in the same manner, a move from 0 to +1, attitude strength was related to their promotion scores. This supports the hypothesis, based on the work of RFT and signal detection, that moving beyond the status quo is related to promotion, but not prevention. Promotion focus involves motivation to go beyond an already positive status quo.

4.4 Discussion

I examined the relationship between political attitudes and regulatory foci in three separate ways. I first tested whether there was a direct connection between ideology and regulatory focus – whether liberalism was related to higher promotion scores and conservatism related to higher prevention scores. These hypotheses, looking both at self-reported ideology and issue positions, were not confirmed. Second, the connection between type of issue attitude and regulatory focus was examined. Here, growth- and advancement-related policies were suggested to be positively associated with promotion while security-related policies were expected to be tied with higher prevention focus scores. These hypotheses were not confirmed either. Third, the link between the status quo of a policy in concert with a person's policy preference was expected to be related to regulatory foci. Here, prevention focus scores were hypothesized to be related to a person's issue preference when there is an undesired status quo whereas promotion focus scores were suggested to be related to issue attitudes when the status quo is desired policy. This relationship was

supported by the data in regard to the expectations with promotion but less so with prevention.

The data does not demonstrate that the similar behavior patterns across distinct ideological backgrounds and dominant focus discussed earlier equates to a direct connection between the two. This contradicts the research that has suggested the two are connected (Janoff-Bulman 2009; Jost et al. 2003). This may be due to a missing moderator, such as the propensity to focus on negative aspects within the environment, as suggested by Hodson (2014). While the direct relationship was not found, people who hold onto one or both regulatory orientations have stronger attitudes than those that have low promotion and prevention levels. Having a motivational compass, in general rather than a specific one, appears to drive attitude strength.

The findings of the Lucas and Molden study confirm their hypotheses about prevention and promotion across several issue attitudes in two studies. However, the results of the present study question their conclusions. Their first study uses a previously used measure of regulatory focus but is done on an undergraduate sample with a very limited number of issues, specifically the response to Hurricane Katrina, protection of the environment, the economy, the War in Iraq, and law enforcement for security related policies and only one item on whether the government should do more to encourage artistic and cultural events for a growth-related policy.

As for the second study, Lucas and Molden (2011), measure regulatory focus with a proxy consisting of several sub-indices from the Schwartz Value Survey (SVS; Schwartz 1992). However, the correlation between the three values used for prevention – tradition, security, and conformity – and promotion – stimulation, hedonism, and self-direction – positive and somewhat high ($r = .24$), which is not what other measures of regulatory focus

find. It is also not to be expected based on the work of the SVS because these sets of values are on opposing sides of the circular structure. The reason for this may be the lack of creating proportional sum variables to control for the participants' use of the scale, which was used by Kluger et al. (2004) and recommended in the SVS manual (Schwartz 2009). This error in scale creation makes their findings suspect, especially given the inability to replicate in this sample.

4.4.1 Negativity bias

In the present study I did not show that regulatory focus and political attitudes are directly related to each other. However, the best way to represent their connection may be to model it through the negativity bias. The sensitivity to negative information is a key component to differentiating between those of different regulatory dominant foci as well as those who are on different sides of the left-right ideological spectrum.

While people generally have a negativity bias, research has pointed out that it is heightened in conservatives and those with prevention dominant focus. Many researchers speculate and have found a correlation between conservatism and a stronger negativity bias, environments inducing negative emotions shift attitudes to the right, and conservatives tend to use negative information more so than liberals when forming attitudes (Castelli & Carraro 2011; Dodd et al. 2012; Huddy, Feldman, Taber, & Lahav 2005; Inbar, Pizarro, and Bloom 2009; Inbar et al. 2009; Nail, McGregor, Drinkwater, Steele, & Thompson 2009; Oxly et al. 2008; Shook & Fazio 2009). People with a stronger prevention focus also display a larger negativity bias compared to those with a stronger promotion orientation (Fazio et al. 2004; Higgins & Tykocinski 1992; Seibt & Forster 2004).

Regulatory focus is believed to develop in childhood, as a result of the caretaker-child relationship. A caretaker who focuses on negative reinforcement will likely lead to a

child that is prevention focus and one that uses positive reinforcement is likely to yield a promotion focused individual (Higgins 1987, 1989, 1991; Higgins & Silberman 1998; Keller 2008). Related to this, Block and Block (2006) find that children who show fearful tendencies, which is an indication of a negativity bias, tend to grow up to be more conservative. Regulatory focus and ideology potentially influence one another from early on or the development of each may stem from a common underlining attribute.

The similarities between regulatory focus and ideology in terms of negativity bias as well as the potential for both developing and/or being influenced at similar times in life indicate this as the most likely place to continue research. Recently, Hodson (2014) created a conceptual model of how the negativity bias seen in conservatives is mediated by prevention focus. While the present project did not find a direct correlation, looking empirically into a mediational model similar to what Hodson (2014) conceptualized may be more fruitful. The similarity in conditioning towards negative information and emotions across both prevention and conservatism lends itself to being the most likely place to find a relationship.

4.4.2 Establishing the Status Quo as a Reference Point

Looking at the status quo versus the participants' issue preferences in relation to the regulatory focus-attitude connection has not been examined before this point. However, taking into account a reference point shows the most consistent pattern of how political attitudes and regulatory focus correlate. Promotion orientation is associated with attitude strength for participants who agree with the current policy environment. In addition, in regards to abortion, prevention scores correlate with attitudes for people who prefer policy to move in the opposite direction than where the current policy stands.

For each issue, participants were given a quick overview of the four issues with the intention of providing a current status quo of the policy. However, even with the

description, the perceptions of the participants may compete with the given information. If this is the case, the reference point assumed to be used by the participant being the policy description could be erroneous. This may be especially true for policies that are in disagreement already with the participant's own preference. For instance, a participant that prefers restricting gun rights may perceive the policy on the extreme side of gun owners and believe that merely increasing restrictions would not create a policy neutral environment. According to Scholer et al. (2010), in order for prevention focus to lead to a risky choice that option must be able to get them back to the status quo. Some people may not perceive that government action would get them to a desirable status quo, in which there would be no relationship between prevention and gun control attitudes. Further examination of how perceptions of policies and the possibilities in changing may shed light on if there is a time when the status quo of a policy matters differently for prevention versus promotion focused individuals.

4.4.2 Conclusion

While a couple of papers have argued that there is a connection between regulatory focus and political attitudes (Jost et al. 2003; Janoff-Bulman 2009) and several have found a connection to political attitudes (Boldero & Higgins 2011; Cornwell & Higgins 2013; Dolinski & Drogosz 2011; Lucas & Molden 2011; Janoff-Bulman, et al. 2008), the present study did not find a connection in the traditional sense. Promotion was not connected to self-reported liberalism or liberal policy issues nor was it associated growth-related policies. Prevention was not found to be associated with self-reported conservatism or conservative policy preferences or security related policies. However, the policy environment, whether the status quo was desirable or not, appears to matter in how regulatory focus, at least promotion focus, is associated with political attitudes.

Further examination of regulatory focus and political attitudes should include emphasizing the negativity bias of conservatism and prevention or taking in a person's perception of the policy environment. Regarding the connection between regulatory focus and political attitudes, the next step may be to examine perceptions of a policy's status quo and what it would take to make a policy match a person's preference. In attempting to set up a direct connection between regulatory focus and political attitudes, the negativity bias seems to be the best lens to use considering it seems to be a strong common denominator between both.

CHAPTER 5 Regulatory Fit and External Efficacy

Jackie, introduced in the first chapter, believed that her support meant something to the Green Bay Packers, her favorite sports team; the team needed her to accomplish their goal of winning the Super Bowl. Just as Jackie holds a perception of how much of an impact she has on the Packers, she holds a similar attitude about the political world. Specifically, political efficacy, the knowledge needed to participate in the political process and ability to influence government, is similar to that of Jackie's attitude about her relation to her favorite team. Does she have the ability to make a difference in the Packer's and electoral systems? Do these similar attitudes correspond with each other?

Efficacious attitudes are influenced by how goal-directed activities are performed in specific ways. For example, if Jackie is promotion focused she should be more inclined to participate in politics using eager strategies. She votes for a Democratic candidate because she likes his policy platform. If she does this, regulatory fit will induce a sense of what she is doing feels right, subsequently increasing the positivity of her actions, including how much of an impact her participation has on government. However, if Jackie goes through the political world using vigilant strategies, such as deciding to vote Democratic because she really dislikes the Republican candidate, those same attitudes will not have the same positive, emotional boost.

Given the impact regulatory fit has on making decisions and the subsequent increases in value, enjoyment, and motivation to everyday objects and tasks, these spillover effects should also occur with political decisions and activities too. Within this chapter, I examine the effect of regulatory fit on external efficacy by looking at the combination of chronic regulatory focus strength and goal-directed behavior in the political world and how they correlate with attitudes towards participation. I use the Regulatory Focus, General, and

Political Life Survey to determine if people who meet political goals in a way that matches their dominant regulatory orientation have increased levels of external efficacy compared to those who do not.

5.1 Regulatory Fit, Attitudes, and Behavior

As previously discussed, RFT posits people perceive goals as related to security or nurturance needs, creating qualitatively different motivational orientations. Promotion focused individuals, seeing goals as ideals and aspirations, and prevention focused people who see goals as obligations and responsibilities behave differently, are attuned to different types of information, and see end states and the outcomes of their actions differently (Higgins 1997). An extension of this concept, regulatory fit, is the experience of feeling right that occurs when the dominant focus matches the current environment or the person's current goal-directed activities. Regulatory fit increases motivation towards the goal, the value of the targeted goal or object, and the subsequent emotional outcomes (Cesario et al. 2004; Frietas & Higgins 2002; Higgins 2000; Hong & Lee 2008; Idson et al. 2000).

5.1.1 External Efficacy and Regulatory Fit

It is important to look at what attitudes associated with voting and participation may be affected under regulatory fit, as these attitudes either increase or decrease the desire to participate. Again, previous work has shown behavior towards the target changes under regulatory fit, but attitudes toward the behavior and target itself are also intensified. Political efficacy is the attitude regarding the ability to influence government and the assessment of the likelihood government will respond to attempts of influence (Campbell, et al. 1954; Lane 1959; Madsen 1987; Craig, Niemi, and Silver 1990). External efficacy, the perception that government will respond to one's demands, is a necessary condition for participation (Pateman 1970) and high levels are beneficial for both the individual and society (Balch

1974). Therefore, it is imperative to understand how the association between the environment and a citizen impacts external efficacy. If regulatory fit increases external efficacy through the emotional boost of making participation feel “right”, future political activity could be increased.

While the distinction between external and internal efficacy was made early on in the research (Lane 1959), understanding variation in external efficacy is limited. Instead, research on efficacy has looked almost entirely at environmental or group aspects of variance (i.e., Anderson 2010) and places heavy emphasis on internal efficacy (e.g. Caprara, Vecchione, Capanna, & Mebane 2009). Chamberlain (2012) recently attempted to understand efficacy at the aggregate level using presidential approval and the consumer sentiments index, but with little success. It may be more profitable to focus on psychological aspects that potentially influence external efficacy, such as the motivation.

The theoretical and empirical literature surrounding external efficacy somewhat contradicts itself. Madsen (1987) claims efficacy attitudes are derived from socialization. In addition, dominant and higher educated groups have larger amounts of efficacy presumably because they psychologically transfer their effectiveness from private to political life (Lane 1959; Converse 1972). Stemming from this argument, Converse (1972) postulates that the decrease in efficacy for the highly educated in the 1960s was due to blaming the system for not responding to their demands. The less educated, on the other hand, blamed themselves for their inadequacies (which also is tied to their status in private life). However, Campbell, Gurin, and Miller (1954) argues efficacy is a motivational variable, dealing with a person’s psychological background, finding it not associated with socioeconomic status.

Other researchers claim aspects of the political environment influence perceived efficacy and attitudes toward the government, such as having one’s own party win an

election (Anderson & LoTempio 2002; Anderson & Tverdova 2001; Clarke & Acock 1989; Finkel 1985, 1987; Iyengar 1980) or government officials that pursue the individual's policy preferences (Weissberg 1975). In addition, having women candidates increases external efficacy among women (Burns, Schlozman, and Verba 2001). However, other aspects of the political environment, such as party composition within a person's district, does not seem to effect efficacy levels (Weissberg 1975).

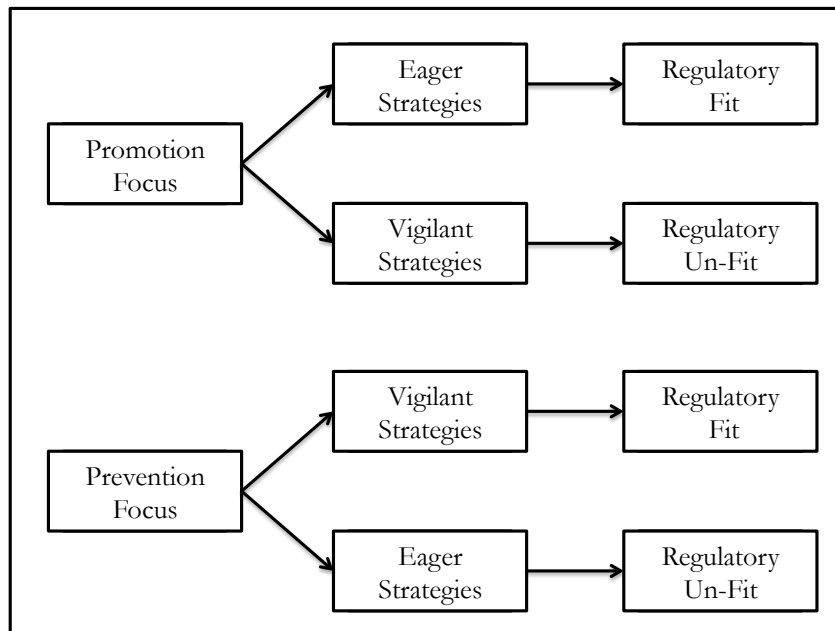
These different accounts of political efficacy may not be mutually exclusive. There may be a baseline level of efficaciousness held by a citizen that is developed from socialization and status. However, there may be intra-individual movement around this baseline based on the current political environment and motivation and recent experiences within the political world. One example of why a person's efficacy varies is how the individual pursues political goals. A promotion or prevention oriented person feeling right about how s/he participates is likely to see an increase in efficacy versus one who lacks that emotional and motivational boost stemming from regulatory fit.

5.2 Overview of Study and Hypothesis

RFT offers an avenue to understand why some people feel very important to government while others do not. If one is experiencing the "rightness" from regulatory fit by using participatory strategies that match their regulatory orientation (promotion-eager or prevention-vigilant), the individual should sense a stronger ability to influence government. Figure 5.1 depicts the ways in which regulatory fit and nonfit occur. The top half depicts promotion focus. For those dominant in promotion focus, when eager strategies are used regulatory fit occurs. Here, motivation increases, as well as external efficacy. However, when vigilant strategies are used, regulatory nonfit occurs. In addition, the bottom half depicts the outcomes for a dominant prevention focus. Here, a person using vigilant strategies will

experience regulatory fit while a person using eager strategies will experience regulatory non-fit. Within the nonfit circumstances, the “feeling of rightness” is absent as well as the boost to motivation and efficacy.

Figure 5.1. Regulatory Fit Between Focus and Strategy



My main hypotheses for this chapter examine external efficacy and regulatory fit. I use survey data to assess the correlation between regulatory fit – based on self-reported behavior and decision making in the political world – and external efficacy scores. Each hypothesis reflects looking at regulatory fit as an interaction variable between regulatory focus and strategy use and as categorical variable.

$H_{5.1a}$: As promotion strength and use of eager strategies increase together, external and political activity efficacy scores will become more positive.

$H_{5.1b}$: Use of eager strategies will be positively associated with external and political activity efficacy scores for participants with high promotion *and* low prevention scores.

$H_{5.2a}$: As prevention strength and use of vigilant strategies increase together, external and political activity efficacy scores will become more positive.

H_{5.2b}: Use of vigilant strategies will be positively associated with higher external and political activity efficacy scores for participants with high prevention *and* low promotion scores.

I look into the correlation between the extent participants create regulatory fit by participating in the political world in ways that coincide with their regulatory orientation. While the environment certainly induces a type of orientation, people can also experience regulatory fit by making decisions and seeking to meet goals in particular ways (Aaker & Lee 2006; Higgins 2000). In the case of political participation, and especially voting, the goal is often assumed to get one's preferred set of policy issues into law or candidate into office. However, this may not be the case. As Dolinski and Drogoz (2011) found, some people – those who are more prevention oriented – would rather vote against someone. And, as demonstrated in the third chapter, people who use vigilant strategies participate based on which candidate they dislike. My main question at hand is whether people who navigate the political world utilizing strategies that coincide with their dominant focus is correlated with the perception that their participation means more, even if it goes against the common assumption of what voting means.

5.2.1 Differences between Experiencing Electoral Success versus Failure

“Losing feels worse than winning feels good.”
-Vin Scully

The most basic political act within the American political system is choosing a candidate for office, and even more so, electing the President. The winner-take-all system present in the United States is inherently one oriented towards a promotion focus perspective or environment. Voters decide who they want in office, not who they wish to see out of office.

With this as the environment in which much of the political activity takes place, having a strong promotion focus or frequently using eager strategies gives people an advantage, at least in regard to feeling right about their political participation. As previously mentioned, there are two ways in which regulatory fit is created: 1) process-based in which someone chooses a tactic to meet a goal that matches their regulatory focus at the time; or, 2) outcome-based where the environment creates a fit through framing (Aaker & Lee 2006). I focus on the former in the above hypotheses, but the latter may also be a factor.

Regulatory fit can be beneficial in that it increases goal directed behavior, motivation, and value towards the target. In conjunction, emotional reactions to the outcome intensify under regulatory fit and evaluations of the behavior and outcome, both positive and negative, are more polarized (Cesario, et al. 2004; Frietas & Higgins 2002; Higgins et al. 2003; Idson, et al. 2004). While intensified emotions related to regulatory fit would be good for those who succeed, these can backfire for those who fail at meeting political goals.

While there is some controversy as to whether efficacy is stable or dependent on the current political situation, there have been several studies documenting variance in efficacy based on whether someone's preferred candidate won or lost a recent election (Finkel 1985; Iyengar 1980; Valentino, Gregorowicz, and Groenendyk 2009; Weissberg 1975). However, there has been a lack of attention towards the underlying cause for success or failure leading to variation in external efficacy. Emotions likely play a role in this relationship considering partisans show increased anxiety when the electoral outcome is unknown (Britt 2003) and that losing decreases happiness (Pierce, Rogers, & Snyder 2016; Stanton, Beehner, Saini, Kuhn, & LaBar 2009) and increases stress at the biological level (Stanton, LaBar, Saini, Kuhn, & Beehner 2010).

Based on this, I expect that emotions stemming from success and failure, which are boosted under regulatory fit may be tied to efficacious attitudes. The following hypotheses were developed based on, both, the connection between political outcomes and external efficacy attitudes, and the connection between regulatory fit and emotions experienced regarding goal success or failure. The hypotheses include my expectations for people who voted for Obama in 2012 – indicating political success – and for people who did not – political failure. They are also broken up by when I expect regulatory fit *and* non-fit to increase efficacious attitudes.

H_{5.3a}: Participants with high promotion and low prevention scores will have a positive relationship between the increased use of political eager strategies and higher political efficacy scores *if* they experienced electoral success in 2012. (regulatory fit)

H_{5.3b}: Participants with high prevention and low promotion scores will have a positive relationship between the increased use of political eager strategies and higher political efficacy scores *if* they experienced political failure in 2012. (regulatory non-fit)

H_{5.4a}: Participants with high prevention and low promotion scores will have a positive relationship between the increased use of political vigilant strategies and higher political efficacy scores *if* they experienced political success in 2012. (regulatory fit)

H_{5.4b}: Participants with high promotion scores and low prevention scores will have a positive relationship between the increased use of political vigilant strategies and higher political efficacy scores *if* they experienced political failure in the 2012 election. (regulatory non-fit)

If a citizen is operating within regulatory fit and succeeds, the positive feelings associated with meeting a goal increases. These feelings are then transferred to the related values and attitudes of participation. On the other hand, if a citizen working under regulatory fit voted for the losing candidate, the negative emotions and evaluation of performance are intensified, including a potential reduction in efficacy. However, the negativity and lower efficacy associated with experiencing political failure may be mediated by regulatory non-fit.

Under non-fit conditions, electoral failure does not necessarily lead to intensifying negative emotions.

5.3 Methodology

I use several items from the Regulatory Focus, General, and Political Life Survey to test the previous hypotheses. The RFQ (Higgins et al. 2001), the Political Life Strategy Items, external efficacy, self-reported participation in the 2012 Presidential election, and demographic items were previously discussed in Chapter 2. In addition to these, traditional internal efficacy is also used to control for the connection between both forms of efficacious attitudes.

5.3.1 Measures

My main interest in the analyses is to examine how external efficacy is affected by regulatory fit and non-fit. I measure external efficacy in two ways in order to test the affect regulatory fit has on political attitudes. The first involves items traditionally used to measure external efficacy and the second includes the extent that people feel their involvement in the political activities used in the Regulatory Focus, General, and Political Life Survey.

In addition, I asked four questions commonly used to measure *internal efficacy*. These include items about whether the person considers him/herself to be qualified to participate, how much s/he understands political issues, that s/he could do a good job in public office, and how informed the s/he is compared to others. I averaged these items together and used the measure to control for the correlation between internal and external efficacy ($M = 3.23$, $SD = .03$).

In order to see if political success or failure affects how regulatory fit relates to external efficacy, participants were categorized as electoral winners or losers based on their 2012 vote. A dummy code was created separating out those voting for President Obama (n

= 313; coded as 1) and those voting for Romney ($n = 101$) or a third party ($n = 34$), both coded as zero³.

All models include the RFQ (Higgins et al. 2001) measuring promotion and prevention focus strength. The regulatory focus group measure, discussed in Chapter 2 and used in the previous analyses, is also used based on the combination of participants' regulatory orientation. In addition, demographic variables are used in the models, including age, education, income, gender, and race.

5.3.2 Modeling Regulatory Fit and External Efficacy

The hypotheses predict that there is a positive relationship between regulatory fit and feeling more politically efficacious. OLS models with two different dependent variables – the traditional external efficacy scale and the scale developed from the efficacious attitudes towards each political action are used to test the main hypothesis. The correlation between the traditional external efficacy scale and the political life efficacy scale is moderately strong and positive ($r = .57, p < .001$), suggesting that the two are tapping similar, but different, constructs.

The two coefficients of interest in both models represent regulatory fit – the interaction between promotion and the use of eager strategies as well as the interaction between prevention and use of vigilant strategies. One of the two regulatory focus sub-scales is interacted with one of the two political life strategy scales so that two interaction terms represent regulatory fit – promotion focus/eager strategies and prevention focus/vigilant

³ In order to ensure that the results examining election winners and losers are not being driven by ideology since the measure only uses one election, the models were also run with ideology. When ideology is used instead of the election winner dummy variable none of the three way interactions between regulatory focus group, eager and vigilant strategy use, and ideology are significant.

strategies – and two represent regulatory non-fit – promotion focus/vigilant strategies, and prevention focus/eager strategies. Both models include standard demographic controls, including age, gender, education, income, and race. In addition, internal efficacy is included in each model to control for its correlation with external efficacy.

The first set of analyses look at the interactions between focus and strategy scores, maintaining their status as continuous variables to test $H_{5.1a}$ and $H_{5.2a}$. Follow-up analyses for the first two models include re-centering the promotion and prevention variables to one standard deviation above and below the original mean in order to examine the simple effects of the interaction, specifically determining the direction and significance of the strategy-*efficacy slopes at the different levels of regulatory focus.*

The second sets of analyses create regulatory focus categories in order to further explore the relationship between regulatory focus orientation, use of eager and vigilant strategies, and efficacy, testing $H_{5.1b}$ and $H_{5.2b}$. Because regulatory focus is theoretically two orthogonal dimensions, a person may be high on both, low on both, or high on one and low on the other. Each of the four regulatory focus categories (previously described in Chapter 2 and 3) is interacted with the vigilant and eager political strategy scales and OLS models are used to examine the effects of regulatory fit and non-fit on external efficacy. In order to examine the complete set of results, additional models were run with each regulatory focus category as the comparison group.

The third set of hypotheses adds an additional term to the model indicating whether the participant experienced electoral success or failure. This dichotomous variable is included in a three-way interaction with regulatory focus category and political strategy scales. Therefore, the models testing $H_{5.3}$ and $H_{5.4}$ include two three-way interaction coefficients: 1) regulatory focus category, election winner versus loser, and political eager

strategy scale; and, 2) regulatory focus category, election winner versus loser, and political vigilant strategy scale. A general linear model is used to test the differences between regulatory fit and external efficacy based on electoral outcome.

5.4 How Regulatory Fit Connects to External Efficacy

Table 5.1 shows an initial look into how regulatory focus is associated with external and political activity efficacy. The table consists of OLS regression coefficients with both promotion and prevention scores as the independent variables. Promotion scores are positively associated with both efficacy scales and prevention scores correlate with the traditional external efficacy scale. In addition, the bottom of Table 5.1 displays the results of how people behave and make decisions in the political world, by either being more likely to use eager and vigilant strategies regressed onto both efficacy variables. The use of eager strategies is positively correlated with both efficacy scales. The use of vigilant strategies is only positively associated with the political life efficacy scale. As reported in Chapter 3, people are more likely to use eager strategies, and as seen in Table 5.1, the increased use of this type of goal-directed behavior is related to a higher sense of holding influence in a more consistent manner compared to the frequency vigilance is used.

Table 5.1. OLS Standardized Regression Coefficients Looking at Direct Correlations between Regulatory Focus and Strategies with Efficacy

	Promotion	Prevention	Constant	F (df)	R ²
External Efficacy	.24 (.05)**	.09 (.04)*	1.06 (.22)**	15.18 (2, 636)**	.05
Political Life Efficacy	.40 (.07)**	.02 (.05)	1.69 (.28)**	19.04 (2, 636)**	.06
	Eager Strategies	Vigilant Strategies	Constant	F (df)	R ²
External Efficacy	.09 (.04)*	.04 (.04)	1.63 (.20)**	4.93 (2, 636)*	.02
Political Life Efficacy	.29 (.04)**	.16 (.05)**	1.00 (.24)**	42.53 (2, 636)**	.12

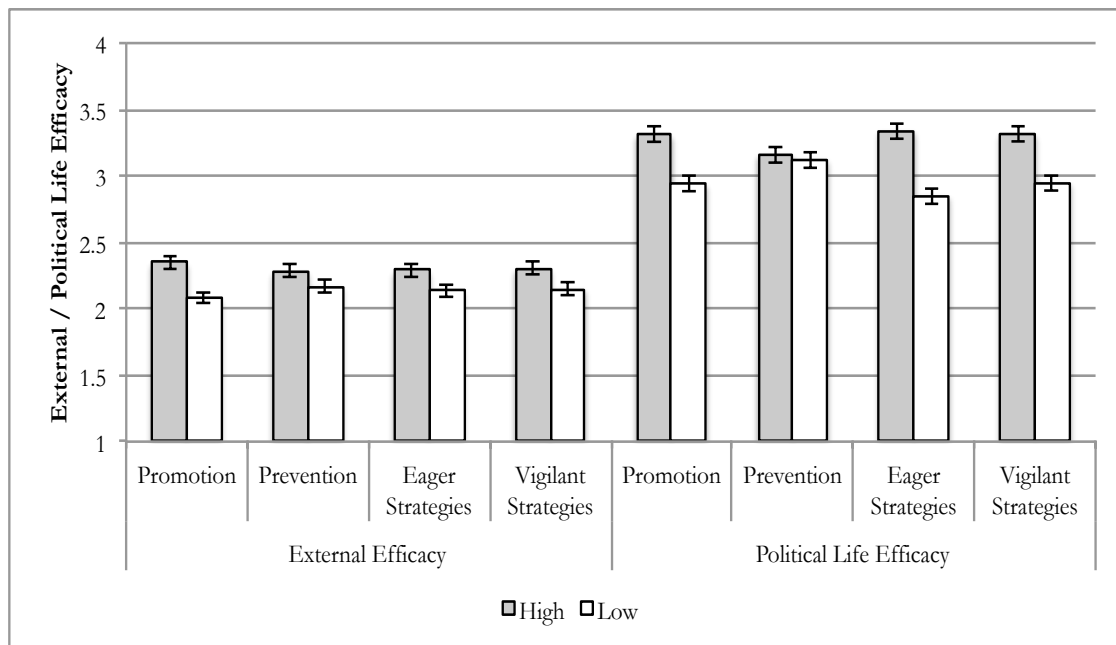
Note. [^] $p \leq .10$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .001$

To further illustrate the initial correlations between focus and strategy with efficacy, Figure 5.2 provides the means for external efficacy based on whether someone was above or

below the mean for each focus and strategy scale. First, looking at the traditional efficacy measure on the left hand side of the figure, people with a stronger promotion orientation ($F(1, 628) = 16.88, MSE = .72, p < .001$) and people with a stronger prevention focus ($F(1, 628) = 2.74, MSE = .74, p = .098$) have higher mean external efficacy. In addition, as participants using eager strategies ($F(1, 628) = 4.84, MSE = .74, p = .028$) and vigilant tactics ($F(1, 628) = 4.51, MSE = .74, p = .034$) more frequently also have higher mean external efficacy scores.

A similar pattern is seen regarding efficacy towards individual political behaviors for all four variables, except prevention. Mean political activity efficacy is higher for participants with a stronger promotion focus ($F(1, 628) = 18.25, MSE = .74, p < .001$), but there is no difference between the high versus low prevention categories ($F(1, 628) = .19, MSE = 1.20, p = .663$). In addition, participants more likely to use eager strategies ($F(1, 628) = 32.01, MSE = 1.14, p < .001$) and vigilant strategies have stronger political activity efficacy ($F(1, 628) = 17.96, MSE = 1.17, p = .000$).

Figure 5.2. Efficacy Means for High and Low Focus and Strategy Use



At this point, without looking at the combination of regulatory focus and strategies, the data suggests using eager strategies are more often observed in the political world and these are consistently correlated with increased feelings of efficaciousness. On the other hand, based on the findings in Chapter 3, using vigilant strategies is not dependent on regulatory orientation, however choosing these tactics is also associated with increased efficacy. As for focus, high promotion scores are associated with increased efficacy, whereas this is not necessarily the case for prevention. Therefore, the effects of regulatory fit may matter more so for prevention focused individuals than promotion focused individuals.

The larger impact of eager strategies and promotion is not necessarily surprising given the political environment. As previously discussed, democratic systems in general, and specifically in the US, electing officials is more aligned with a promotion orientation and eager strategy use because the ultimate goal is to select a candidate for office rather than blocking a candidate from obtaining an elected office. However, dissatisfaction with both political parties is tied to a lack of participation and political alienation (Adams, Dow, & Merrill 2006; Plane & Gershtenson 2004; Ragsdale & Rusk 1993). Dissatisfaction and alienation may be associated with a mismatch between regulatory focus and goal directed behavior. In this case, the negative attitudes directed at the political institutions lead some people to make electoral decisions based on the candidates and policies that are least disliked, which goes against the more promotion and eager oriented environment. If this is the case regulatory non-fit may arise and abstention from voting may be, at least in part, due to lower levels of efficacy coming from a lack of regulatory fit. In addition, because the environment is more consistent with a promotion focus, high prevention oriented people may feel a disconnection between the goal and their preference for meeting the goal. Dolinski and Drogosz (2011) offer some evidence that this may happen. Their findings show

that offering an option to blackball a party increases voting intentions for prevention-oriented individuals, likely due to the sense of regulatory fit negative voting offers these individuals.

In addition to the environment creating a bias towards a stronger relationship between promotion and/or eager strategies is the emotional profile differences between the regulatory foci. The positive, cheerfulness-related emotions that correspond with reaching a goal under promotion are stronger than those under prevention, which are more acquiescent. On the other hand, the negative, agitation-related emotions of not meeting a goal under prevention are stronger than under promotion, which are dejection related (Idson & Higgins 2000; Idson, et al. 2000, 2004). Therefore, under a promotion orientation success feels very good and failure feels somewhat bad but under a prevention orientation failure feels very bad and success feels only somewhat good.

Given that winning and losing on the political battlefield effects people's emotions, regulatory focus may be a partial driving force in how people feel after electoral success and failure and the efficacious feelings that go along too. In addition, these emotions are increased under conditions of regulatory fit – making success feel even better and failure feel worse (Frijtas & Higgins 2000; Idson, et al. 2000; Cesario, et al. 2004). Based on the emotional experiences and political environment, promotion and eager strategies have the upper hand in the ability to increase efficacy over prevention and vigilant strategies.

5.4.1 Examining Regulatory Fit Based on Focus and Strategy Scores

While the direct connection between regulatory focus and strategy use with external efficacy is important, my main hypotheses deal with how the two interact. Table 5.2 displays the results for $H_{5.1a}$ and $H_{5.2a}$ using external efficacy (Model 1) and political activity efficacy (Model 2) as dependent variables. The hypothesized relationship is that an increase in both

promotion strength and the use of eager strategies or an increase in both prevention strength and the use of vigilant strategies is associated with a higher sense of external efficacy.

Therefore, support for the hypothesis would be positive coefficients for these two interaction terms.

First, looking at the main effects of regulatory focus, both models show promotion is positively associated with higher efficacy scores and prevention is not. In addition, higher use of eager strategies is associated with higher efficacy scores in both models, although it's marginal for external efficacy. Increased use of vigilant strategies is associated with higher efficacy scores in both models. The mixed results of prevention and the positive association between promotion and eager strategies with efficacy correspond with the earlier results looking at each individually. However, the interaction terms suggest that these main effects may not be completely descriptive.

Table 5.2. OLS Coefficients (SE) for the Relationship between Regulatory Fit and External Efficacy

	Model 1	Model 2
Promotion	.23 (.06)**	.26 (.07)**
Prevention	.07 (.04)	-.01 (.05)
Eager Strategies	.07 (.04)^	.29 (.05)**
Vigilant Strategies	.09 (.04)*	.18 (.05)**
<u>Regulatory Fit</u>		
Promotion X Eager Strategy	.11 (.06)^	.05 (.07)
Prevention X Vigilant Strategy	-.03 (.05)	-.16 (.06)**
<u>Regulatory Un-fit</u>		
Promotion X Vigilant Strategy	.003 (.06)	.15 (.07)*
Prevention X Eager Strategy	.07 (.05)	.09 (.06)
<u>Controls</u>		
White	-.15 (.08)	-.35 (.10)**
Male	.03 (.07)	-.16 (.08)^
Education	.07 (.03)*	-.06 (.03)^
Income	-.02 (.02)	.02 (.03)
Age	-.01 (.003)	-.01 (.004)*
Internal Efficacy	-.08 (.04)^	.08 (.05)
<u>Constant</u>	2.42 (.21)**	3.77 (.25)**
<i>F</i> (<i>df</i>)	4.21 (606)**	11.54 (606)**
<i>N</i>	621	621
<i>R</i>²	.09	.21

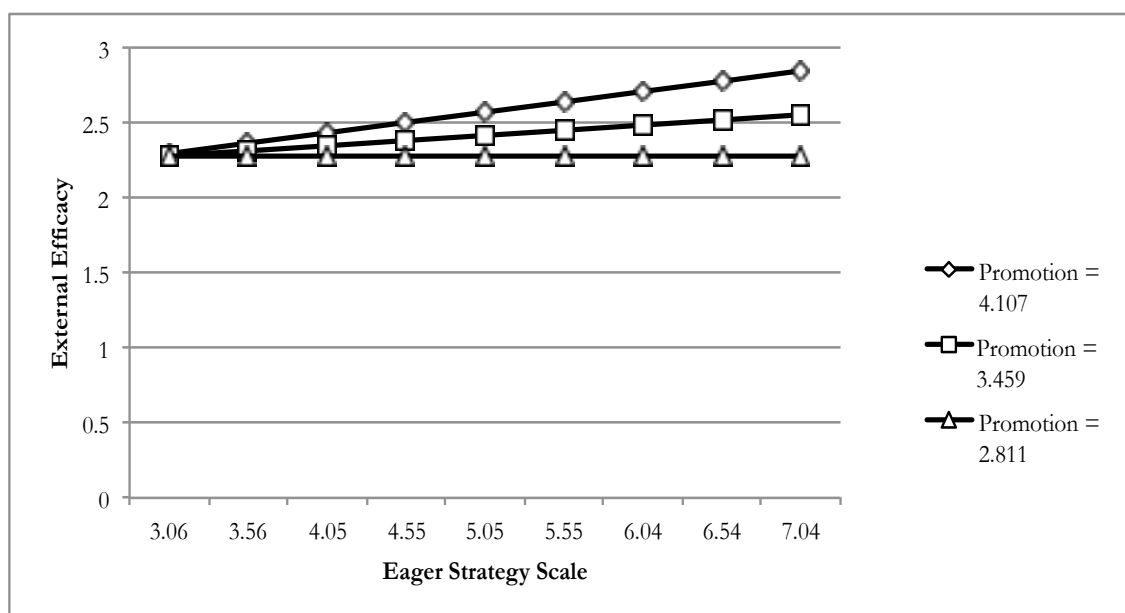
Note. ^ $p \leq .10$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .001$

Promotion Focus Results

The interaction terms provide mixed support for $H_{5.1a}$. Figure 5.3 displays the interaction between promotion and the use of eager strategies for Model 1, looking at external efficacy. At high levels of promotion focus, there is a positive relationship between using eager strategies more frequently and increased external efficacy ($b = .14$, $SE = .06$, $p = .02$), but this relationship does not exist at low levels of promotion ($b = -.003$, $SE = .05$, $p =$

.95) and is marginal when promotion scores are at the mean ($b = .07, SE = .04, p = .07$)⁴. In addition, there is a positive relationship between the use of vigilant tactics and external efficacy at mean levels of promotion ($b = .09, SE = .04, p = .02$), and marginally positive for those on the high end of promotion ($b = .10, SE = .06, p = .08$), but this relationship is absent for people with low promotion scores ($b = .09, SE = .06, p = .12$). Promotion strength is associated with increased efficacy regardless of how one chooses to participate – either with eager or vigilant strategies – but the relationship is stronger under regulatory fit.

Figure 5.3. Interaction Between Promotion and Eager Strategy Scores



As for Model 2, political activity efficacy, the relationship between eager strategy use and efficacy is positive and significant at low ($b = .26, SE = .06, p < .001$), mean ($b = .29, SE = .05, p < .001$), and high levels of promotion ($b = .26, SE = .06, p < .001$). The main effect

⁴The OLS coefficients reported in this section are for the eager strategy and vigilant strategy variables in models where the promotion score has been re-centered to one standard deviation below or above the mean. In addition, in the prevention section, the OLS coefficients reported are for each strategy in models where prevention has been re-centered at one standard deviation above and below the mean. These represent the slopes of the relationship between strategy and efficacy at where promotion or prevention was centered.

of promotion is descriptive – eager strategy scores are positively associated with political activity efficacy.

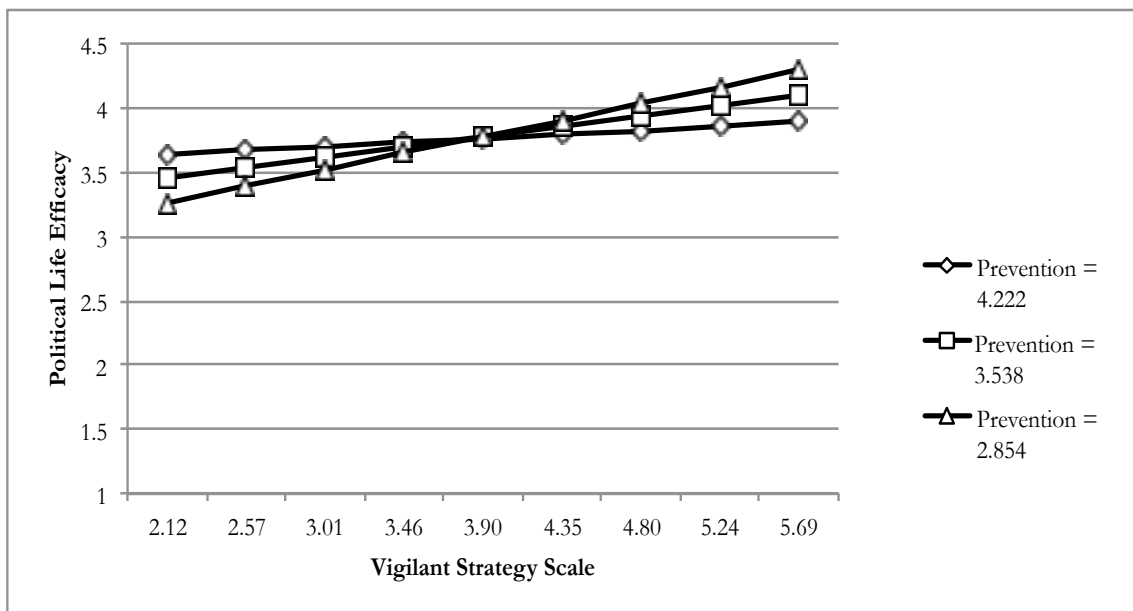
In addition, there is a positive interaction term in Model 2 for promotion and the use of vigilant strategies. The pattern mirrors the one in Figure 5.3, with a positive relationship between vigilant strategies and political activity efficacy when people hold a strong ($b = .27$, $SE = .07$, $p < .001$) or mean ($b = .18$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$) level of promotion focus, but not for people with low promotion scores ($b = .08$, $SE = .07$, $p = .24$). Therefore, contrary to the hypothesis, when higher promotion scores correspond with a more frequent choice to use vigilant tactics in the political world, there is a corresponding increase in efficacy. Overall, the data shows that having average or higher promotion scores is associated with larger efficacious attitudes the more often any strategy is used – regardless of regulatory fit. However, for people with low promotion scores, on average, use of either strategy does not impact efficacious attitudes.

Prevention Focus Results

The effect of using vigilant strategies and efficacy based on the extent a person holds a prevention focus is contrary to the expectation of $H_{5.2a}$ that there is a positive relationship between vigilant strategies and efficacy. Findings show non-fit for those with higher prevention focus is associated with higher external efficacy, because the relationship is due to increased use of eager, rather than vigilant, strategies. While the interaction terms in the first model are not significant, re-centering prevention to examine the relationship between strategy and efficacy reveals similar patterns for both dependent variables. As for Model 1, using the traditional efficacy scale, increased use of vigilant strategies is associated with an increase in efficacy when prevention scores are set at one standard deviation below the mean ($b = .12$, $SE = .07$, $p < .001$) and at the mean ($b = .09$, $SE = .04$, $p = .02$), but not for those

one standard deviation above the mean ($b = .07, SE = .06, p = .21$). In addition, higher use of eager strategies is associated with higher efficacy scores when prevention is set at one standard deviation above the mean ($b = .12, SE = .05, p = .03$) and at the mean ($b = .07, SE = .04, p = .07$), but not when set one standard deviation below the mean ($b = .02, SE = .06, p = .73$). Participants with high prevention scores have a positive relationship between eager strategy use and efficacy, an indication of regulatory non-fit, but not with vigilant strategies where regulatory fit should occur.

Figure 5.4. Political Life Efficacy Based on Prevention and Vigilant Strategy Scores



Model 2 looks at the same effects with political life efficacy as the dependent variable, but this time the interaction between prevention and vigilant strategies is significant. However, contrary to expectations, the coefficient is negative. Figure 5.4 displays the pattern of the interaction, which mirrors that of the traditional efficacy score. The positive relationship between use of vigilant strategies and political life efficacy exists for participants who report having prevention scores one standard deviation below the mean ($b = .30, SE = .07, p < .001$) and at the mean ($b = .18, SE = .05, p < .001$), but not for those reporting a

high prevention orientation ($b = .06$, $SE = .07$, $p = .41$). In addition, the main effect for using eager strategies is descriptive with higher scores being associated with higher political activity efficacy reports for those with prevention scores below the mean ($b = .22$, $SE = .07$, $p = .001$), at the mean ($b = .29$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$), and above the mean ($b = .36$, $SE = .06$, $p < .001$). Again, eager strategies increase efficacy scores and vigilant ones do not for those with a higher prevention orientation.

Overall, the results show using vigilant strategies increase efficacy only for those with average or lower prevention scores. However, even with high levels of prevention, utilizing eager strategies within the political environment is associated with higher efficacy. The effect of using eager strategies in the political world overcomes the effect of having higher prevention scores by creating an outcome-based fit between strategy and the how the political environment frames the goals of participation. Whereas strategy selection does not appear to matter for those with higher promotion focus scores, it does for those high on prevention. Use of vigilant tactics by those with higher prevention scores decreases efficacy whereas using more eager ones increases efficacy. Both regulatory fit and non-fit is associated with increases in efficacy for citizens with a stronger promotion focus, regulatory non-fit increases efficacy for higher prevention oriented ones.

5.4.2 Examining Regulatory Fit and Efficacy using Regulatory Focus Categories

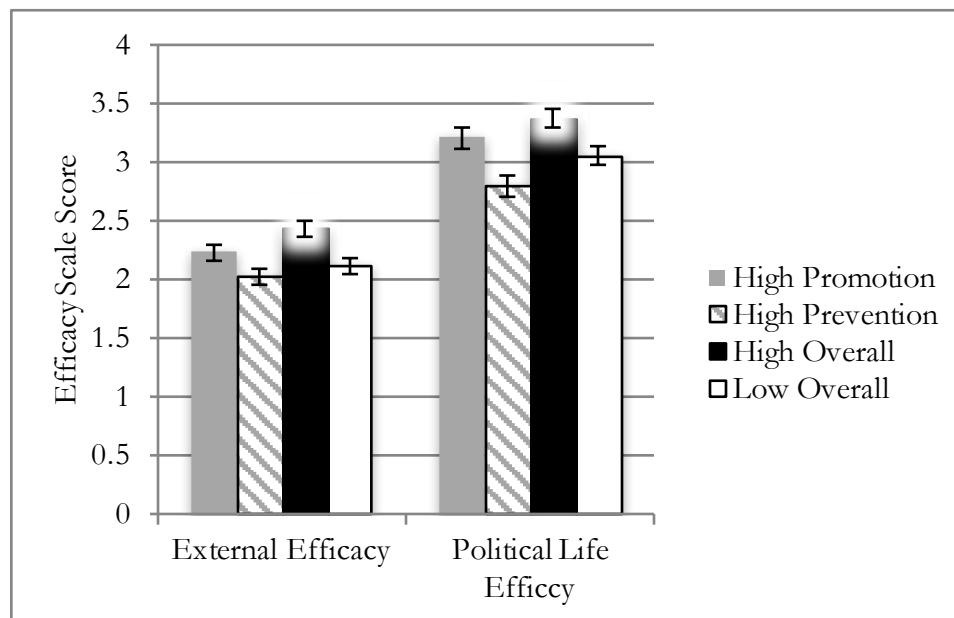
Promotion and prevention scores are orthogonal (Higgins 1986; Scholer et al. 2010). Therefore, an individual may be high on both, low on both, or high on one and low on the other. The combination of promotion and prevention in which a person stands may lead to different results than what is given in the previous analysis. Specifically, it may give insight into the findings regarding prevention focus, where eager but not vigilant strategies increase efficacy. Under regulatory fit, the effect of strategy selection should be larger for those high

on promotion (prevention) and low on prevention (promotion) versus those who are low or high on both.

In order to test $H_{5.1b}$ and $H_{5.2b}$, that the effect of regulatory fit should be more pronounced among those who have either a high promotion or high prevention focus, the categorical regulatory focus variable discussed in Chapter 2 is used. While each group is considered in the analysis, the main focus is on the High Promotion and High Prevention groups, which emphasize the distinction between those who only have a high promotion or high prevention orientation.

Figure 5.5 displays the means across the groups for external efficacy and political activity efficacy. External efficacy scores were highest among those in the High Overall group. In addition, mean efficacy scores for the High Promotion group are more positive compared to the High Prevention group ($F(3, 625) = 7.36, MSE = .70, p < .001, lsd_{mmd} = .19$). As for the political activity efficacy scale, the High Prevention group has the lowest mean scores. The High Overall and High Promotion groups do not significantly differ. In addition, the mean score for the High Overall group has higher activity efficacy scores compared to the Low Overall group ($F(3, 625) = 8.25, MSE = 1.12, p < .001, lsd_{mmd} = .24$). Based on just looking at regulatory focus and efficacy, a strong promotion orientation is associated with high efficacy scores. Holding a strong prevention focus or having no strong regulatory orientation is associated with lower efficacy scores.

Figure 3.5. External and Political Life Efficacy by Regulatory Focus Category



The previous results have shown that high promotion and more use of eager or vigilant strategies are associated with increased efficacy but high prevention scores are only shown to be associated with increases in efficacy with the use of eager strategies. By looking at regulatory fit using a categorical variable the interaction between motivational focus, behavior, and efficacy may be teased out further. Specifically, I want to focus on the High Promotion and High Prevention groups – those who have high scores on one focus and low scores on the other. Based on the hypotheses, I expect the following two findings: 1) a positive relationship between efficacy and the use of eager strategies for those in the High Promotion group and for the use of vigilant strategies for people categorized as High Prevention; and, 2) the slope for eager strategy is expected to be more positive for the High Promotion group than the remaining groups and the slope for using vigilant strategy is expected to be most positive for the High Prevention group.

Table 5.3 displays four regression models looking at the interaction of strategy by regulatory group. The two models on the left use the High Promotion group as the comparison for both external (Model 1) and political activity (Model 2) efficacy. The right two columns use the High Prevention group as the comparison. This allows comparison of the other groups in relation to the two main regulatory foci groups and gives a direct test of the strategy and efficacy relationship for both. Looking at the main effects, increased use of eager strategies is associated with higher efficacy scores in each model for both High Promotion and High Prevention groups. In addition, the only significant effect for vigilant strategies is the positive association between their use and political life efficacy for those in the High Promotion group. However, there are significant interactions in both models, indicating that these main effects may be misleading.

Eager Strategy Results

There is a positive relationship between eager strategy use and external efficacy, for the most part, across the regulatory focus categories. However, as people in the Low Overall group increase their use of eager strategies, external efficacy scores become lower, as seen in Figure 5.6. As previously discussed, there are two ways in which regulatory fit can manifest. First, regulatory fit may occur when someone participates and makes decisions using the strategies that match their own orientation. Here, promotion oriented individuals who are more likely to use eager strategies experience regulatory fit and there is an associated increase in external efficacy. Second, fit can also occur when the strategies used match the regulatory orientation of the environment, such as using eager strategies when meeting political goals, which often are couched within promotion concerns. Therefore, even if people have high preventions scores, regulatory fit may be in effect because people are using eager strategies that match the environment, leading to increased external efficacious attitudes. However, if

someone does not have a go-to regulatory orientation, regulatory fit cannot exist. The lack of a strong motivation mechanism for the Low Overall group may be leading to an inability for any participatory strategy to effect efficacy through regulatory fit.

Table 5.3. OLS Coefficients (SE) for Regulatory Focus Groups and Strategy Interactions with High Promotion and High Prevention as Comparison Groups

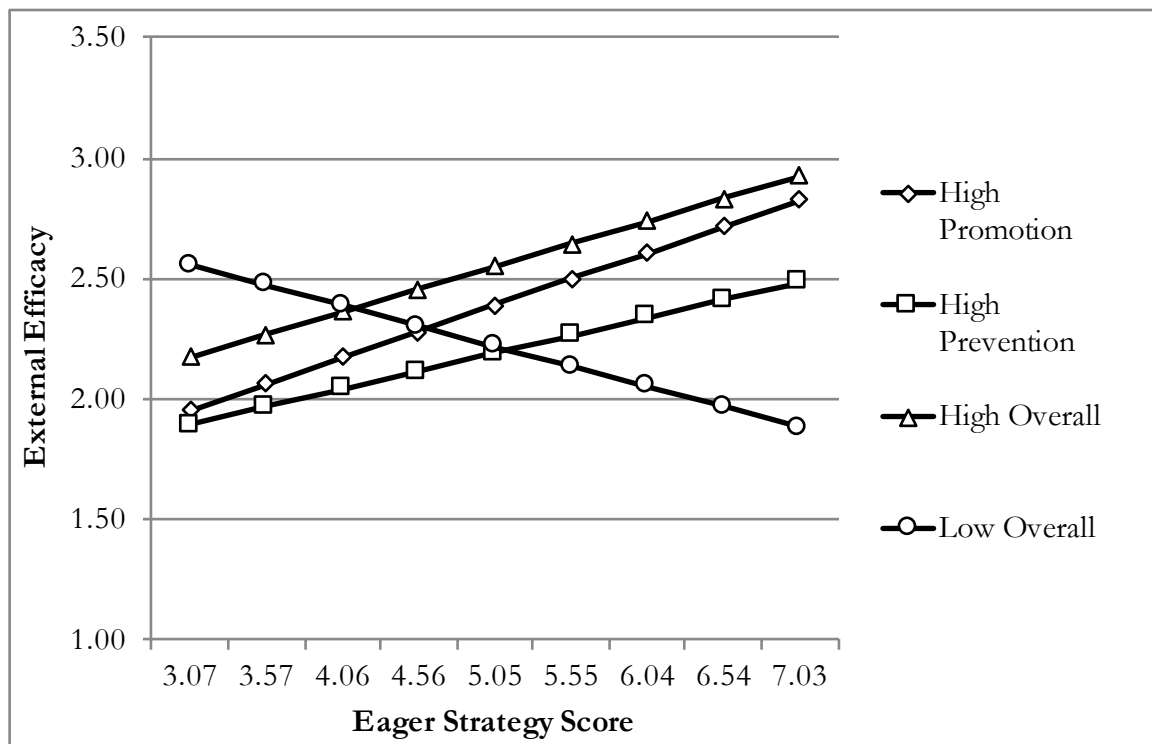
	High Promotion as Comparison		High Prevention as Comparison	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
<u>Main Effects</u>				
Eager Strategies	.22 (.09)*	.34 (.10)**	.15 (.08)^	.39 (.10)**
Vigilant Strategies	-.03 (.09)	.22 (.10)*	-.05 (.09)	-.16 (.11)
High Promotion	----	----	.20 (.10)^	.34 (.12)**
High Prevention	-.20 (.10)^	-.34 (.12)**	----	----
High Overall	.16 (.09)^	.12 (.11)	.37 (.10)**	.46 (.12)**
Low Overall	-.17 (.10)^	-.04 (.12)	.03 (.10)	.31 (.12)**
<u>Eager Strategy Interactions</u>				
High Promotion	----	----	.07 (.12)	-.05 (.14)
High Prevention	-.07 (.12)	.05 (.14)	----	----
High Overall	-.03 (.11)	-.01 (.13)	.04 (.11)	-.06 (.13)
Low Overall	-.39 (.11)**	-.16 (.13)	-.32 (.11)**	-.20 (.13)
<u>Vigilant Strategy Interactions</u>				
High Promotion	----	----	.02 (.12)	.38 (.15)*
High Prevention	-.02 (.12)	-.38 (.15)*	----	----
High Overall	.18 (.11)	.04 (.13)	.20 (.11)^	.42 (.14)**
Low Overall	.25 (.12)*	.03 (.14)	.27 (.12)*	.41 (.14)**
<u>Controls</u>				
White	-.18 (.08)*	-.37 (.10)**	-.18 (.08)*	-.37 (.10)**
Male	-.02 (.07)	-.19 (.08)*	-.02 (.07)	-.19 (.08)*
Education	.07 (.02)**	-.06 (.03)*	.07 (.02)**	-.06 (.03)*
Income	-.01 (.02)	.03 (.03)	-.01 (.02)	.03 (.03)
Age	-.004 (.003)	-.01 (.004)*	-.004 (.003)	-.01 (.004)*
Internal Efficacy	-.06 (.02)	.11 (.05)*	-.06 (.04)	.11 (.05)*
<u>Constant</u>				
<i>F (df)</i>	4.14 (603)**	9.44 (603)**	4.14 (603)**	9.44 (603)**
<i>N</i>	621	621	621	621
<i>R</i> ²	.11	.21	.11	.21

Note. Model 1 DV is External Efficacy and Model 2 DV is Political Life Efficacy

^ $p \leq .10$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$

As far as the specific expectations of Model 1 based on the hypothesis, high promotion is associated with a positive relationship between using eager strategies and external efficacy. In addition, the eager strategy-focus group interaction coefficients show that the eager strategy and efficacy relationship for the High Promotion group is more positive than the one for the Low Overall group. However, this relationship is equal to the one for the High Prevention and the Overall High. Therefore, the hypothesis ($H_{5.1b}$) is not fully supported. Using eager strategies more often is beneficial for efficacy attitudes for people who hold one or both regulatory orientations but not for people who have no strong motivational direction.

Figure 5.4. External Efficacy and Eager Strategy Use by Regulatory Focus Category



Moving on to Model 2, with political life efficacy as the dependent, all groups have a positive relationship between eager strategy use and efficacy. In addition, none of the interactions for regulatory group by strategy are significant – the slopes for eager strategy use and efficacy do not differ between the regulatory categories. While the High Promotion

group does show the relationship between strategy use and efficacy characteristic of regulatory fit, where increased use of eager political strategies is related to increased efficacy, it is not unique to this particular regulatory profile. External efficacy directed at specific attitudes is positively affected by a more frequent use of eager strategies for people across all regulatory focus categories.

These findings somewhat correspond with the previous findings using focus scores as continuous variable; low mean promotion or prevention scores and using eager strategies was not associated with a boost in efficacy scores. However, by grouping the sample, the Low Overall group is singled out as the only one that does not have a positive relationship between using eager strategies and external efficacy. As long as someone has a strong promotion *or* prevention score, eagerness is associated with higher levels of efficacy.

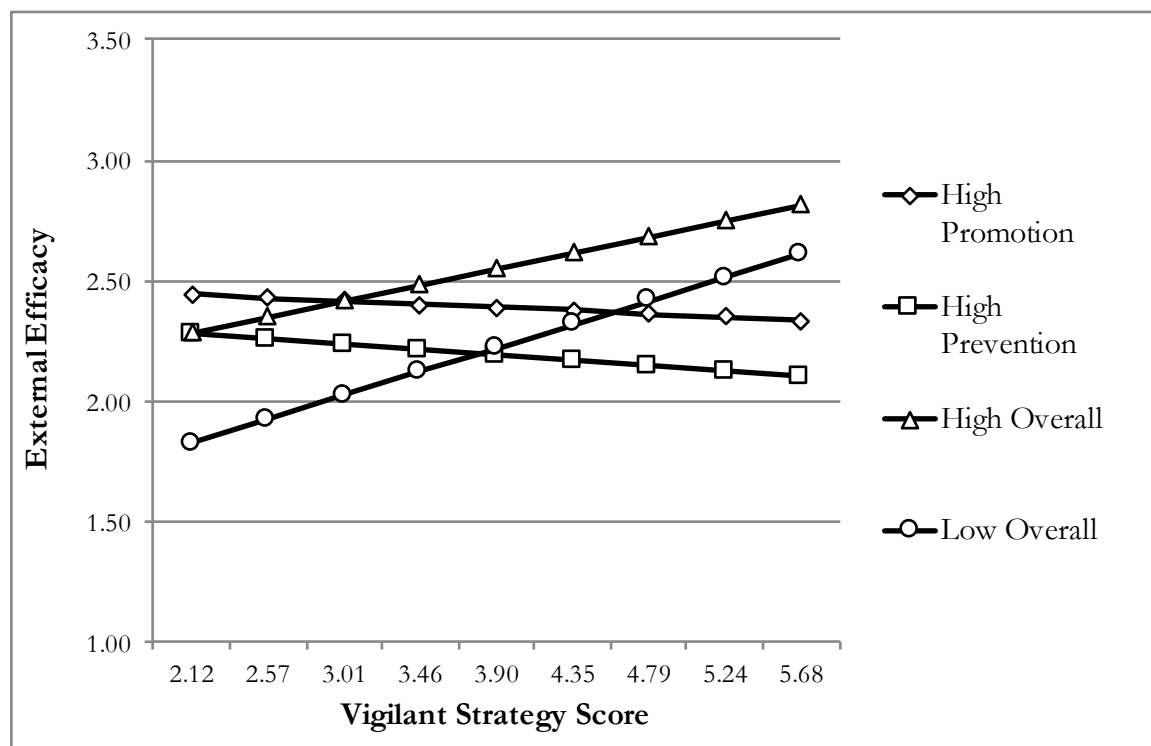
As previously stated, the assumption behind the hypothesis on regulatory fit was a process-based one where it is created or not based on the strategy chosen by someone matches or mismatches his dominant regulatory focus. However, because much of the political environment is geared towards a promotion focus – getting one's candidate in office – using eager strategies may be creating an outcome-based regulatory fit effect. Rather than people meeting goals based on their orientation, the fit comes from meeting goals that match how the environment is oriented and frames the outcome. Therefore, it does not matter which regulatory focus orientation a citizen holds as long as they have at least a solid stance on one way of seeking goals in general *if* they use eager strategies. If this is the case, then the only people who do not benefit from regulatory fit would be those who do not have a go-to orientation for meeting goals – those with low promotion and low prevention scores.

Vigilant Strategy Results

Moving on to the effect of regulatory fit by using vigilant strategies ($H_{5.2b}$), participants in the High Prevention group do not show a positive relationship between these strategies and external efficacy. Rather, people in the Low and High Overall groups have higher efficacy levels as vigilant strategies are more often used. These findings are displayed in Figure 5.7, showing the interaction between regulatory focus category and vigilant strategy for Model 1 (external efficacy). As for Model 2, with political activity efficacy as the dependent variable, efficacious attitudes strengthen with each increase in vigilant strategy for participants in the High Promotion, the High Overall, and the Low Overall Groups, but not for the High Prevention group. Whereas, promotion does not benefit those without a clear motivational orientation, vigilant strategies do increase efficacious attitudes among this group of participants.

Specifically looking at the tests of $H_{5.2b}$ – the High Prevention group has increasing efficacy scores corresponding with higher vigilant strategy use – the right hand side of Table 5.3 shows that the hypothesis is not confirmed. The relationship between vigilant strategy use and efficacy attitudes for people in the high prevention group is not significant for either the traditional external efficacy or the political life efficacy model. Vigilant strategy use and external efficacy is positively related for the High and Low Overall groups. In addition, political activity efficacy and vigilant strategy use is positive for the other three regulatory focus groups but not the High Prevention group. Overall, using vigilant strategies is not associated with increases in efficacy for people who are only prevention orientated.

Figure 5.5. External Efficacy and Vigilant Strategy Use by Regulatory Focus Category



Whereas using eager strategies may create regulatory fit for all because it corresponds with the political environment, at least in the most basic form of American politics – electing candidates, this opportunity does not exist with using vigilant strategies. In both models, the Low Overall and High Overall regulatory groups showed a pattern where using vigilant strategies increased efficacy. The High Overall group may be experiencing some process-based fit effects by choosing a strategy to participate that matches a stronger regulatory orientation that overcomes the outcome based non-fit of the political environment, however, the Low Overall group does not have this possibility. Therefore, it still remains a question of why using vigilant strategies for people who lack a strong regulatory orientation benefits efficacious attitudes.

5.4.3 Differences between Electoral Success and Failure and Efficacy

So far, there are two trends that have emerged from the data. First, increased promotion focus is associated with higher efficacy regardless of which strategy is used. In accordance, increasing the use of eager strategies is associated with increases in political activity and external efficacy for every regulatory focus group except the Overall Low group. This suggests eagerly meeting goals or holding a more promotion orientation is beneficial for attitudes concerning one's role as an effective political agent. The final set of hypotheses focus on what happens with the relationship between regulatory fit and efficacy depending on if a person experiences electoral success or failure. According to the argument, efficacy should increase when regulatory fit exists and the person meets their political goal. On the other hand, failure under the experience of regulatory fit may decrease efficacy because negative emotions are heightened. In addition, not meeting the political goal under regulatory non-fit conditions should not be associated with feeling less efficacious and may even increase efficacious attitudes to some extent.

Prior to looking at the full models, Table 5.4 shows the means and F-tests for ANOVA models looking at differences in promotion, prevention, eager strategy, or vigilant strategy scores between participants who experienced electoral success versus failure. The only significant mean difference shows that people who were election losers in 2012 reported using vigilant strategies more frequently than those who voted for the winner. In addition, the bottom of Table 5.4 shows mean differences across the groups for the two main dependent variables, external and political activity efficacy. In both cases, mean efficacy scores were lower for those who voted for a losing candidate. Given the connections between efficacy and electoral success, this is not surprising and suggests there is room for effects related to regulatory fit.

Table 5.4. ANOVA Results for Group Mean Differences for Election Winners and Elections Losers

Promotion Scores	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Electoral Success	313	3.51	.62
Electoral Failure	135	3.49	.67
$F(1, 446) = .073, MSE = .40, p = .786$			
Prevention Scores			
Electoral Success	313	3.60	.78
Electoral Failure	135	3.55	.74
$F(1, 446) = .45, MSE = .59, p = .504$			
Eager Political Strategy			
Electoral Success	313	5.25	.86
Electoral Failure	135	5.14	.93
$F(1, 446) = 1.57, MSE = .78, p = .211$			
Vigilant Political Strategy			
Electoral Success	313	4.02	.85
Electoral Failure	135	3.75	.89
$F(1, 446) = 8.64, MSE = .75, p = .003$			
External Efficacy			
Electoral Success	313	2.33	.84
Electoral Failure	135	2.14	.89
$F(1, 446) = 4.86, MSE = .73, p = .028$			
Political Activity Efficacy			
Electoral Success	313	3.29	1.07
Electoral Failure	135	3.05	1.04
$F(1, 446) = 4.85, MSE = 1.13, p = .028$			

The question at hand is how does electoral success or failure affect the relationship between regulatory fit and efficacy. The previous findings showed, for the most part, that using eager strategies increases efficacy for all participants but there is a less consistent pattern when examining the frequency vigilant strategies are used. Taking into account that increased positive emotions and attitudes result from regulatory fit under goal success and increased negativity with goal failure, there should be differences in efficacious attitudes based on regulatory focus group and strategy use.

Each model in Table 5.5 contains six three-way interactions, the product term for eager and vigilant strategy use and electoral outcome for three of the regulatory focus groups (one group is used as a comparison). These interactions test whether being successful or not in meeting the political goal of having your supported candidate win an election affects the relationship between regulatory fit and efficacy. Table 5.5 displays the unstandardized coefficients for the models, with the left hand side using the High Promotion group as the comparison and the right hand side uses High Prevention participants as the comparison. In this way, the main effects of the two main groups can be examined as well as the interaction effects, showing any differences in the relationship between regulatory fit and efficacy.

None of the three-way interactions within the political activity efficacy is significant, and will not be explored any further. This is not surprising given the election winner variable is really concerned with the outcome of a recent election, which has been shown to effect efficacious attitudes (Finkel 1985; Iyengar 1980; Valentino, et al. 2009; Weissberg 1975). While the political activity efficacy variable does include items related to voting, it takes into account a wide variety of political activities and asked participants how their actions towards each specific behavior had an effect on others. Therefore, the traditional external efficacy scale is more likely to be effected by success or failure at meeting the goal of supporting the winning candidate. As the models show, there are significant three-way interactions between regulatory focus group, strategy use, and election outcome for external efficacy.

Table 5.5. OLS Model Coefficients with Interactions between Electoral Outcome, Regulatory Focus Group, and Political Strategies

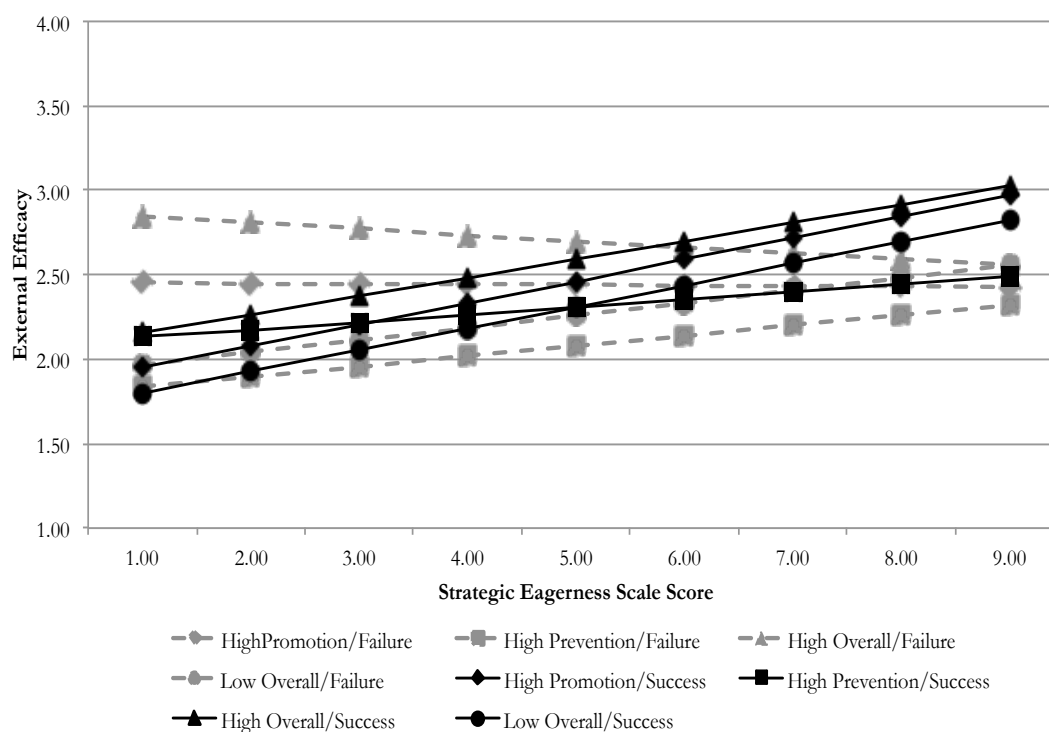
		Comparison Group = High Promotion		Comparison Group = High Prevention			
		Ext. Efficacy	Pol. Activity Efficacy	Ext. Efficacy	Pol. Activity Efficacy		
Main Effects	Eager Strategies	-.01 (.21)	.00 (.25)	.19 (.18)	.53 (.22)*		
	Vigilant Strategies	.63 (.23)**	.74 (.28)**	-.04 (.20)	.05 (.24)		
	High Promotion	-----	-----	.36 (.24)	.41 (.28)		
	High Prevention	-.36 (.24)	-.41 (.28)	-----	-----		
	High Overall	.26 (.20)	.32 (.24)	.62 (.22)**	.73 (.26)**		
	Low Overall	-.18 (.21)	.08 (.25)	.18 (.22)	.49 (.26)*		
	Electoral Success	.02 (.19)	.27 (.23)	.18 (.21)	.22 (.25)		
Two-Way Interactions	<u>Eager Strategy Interactions</u>						
		High Promotion	-----	-----	-.20 (.28)	-.53 (.33)	
		High Prevention	.20 (.28)	.53 (.33)	-----	-----	
		High Overall	-.10 (.26)	.44 (.30)	-.31 (.23)	-.09 (.28)	
		Low Overall	.24 (.27)	-.04 (.32)	-.45 (.24)^	-.57 (.29)*	
		Electoral Success	.41 (.26)	.33 (.31)	-.05 (.22)	-.16 (.26)	
		<u>Vigilant Strategy Interactions</u>					
		High Promotion	-----	-----	.68 (.31)*	.70 (.36)^	
		High Prevention	-.68 (.31)*	-.70 (.36)^	-----	-----	
		High Overall	-.22 (.27)	-.46 (.32)	.46 (.24)^	.24 (.29)	
		Low Overall	-.37 (.29)	-.63(.34)^	.31 (.26)	.07 (.31)	
		Electoral Success	-.81 (.26)**	-.44 (.31)	.01 (.24)	-.13 (.28)	
		<u>Electoral Outcome Interactions</u>					
		High Promotion	-----	-----	-.21 (.29)	-.02 (.34)	
		High Prevention	.21 (.29)	.02 (.34)	-----	-----	
	High Overall	-.13 (.25)	-.28 (.30)	-.34 (.26)	-.30 (.31)		
	Low Overall	.03 (.26)	-.19 (.38)	-.19 (.27)	-.21 (.32)		
Three-Way Interactions	<u>Eager Strategy Interactions</u>						
		High Promotion & Electoral Success	-----	-----	.46 (.34)	.50 (.41)	
		High Prevention & Electoral Success	-.46 (.34)	-.50 (.41)	-----	-----	
		High Overall & Electoral Success	.04 (.32)	-.37 (.38)	.49 (.28)^	.12 (.34)	
		Low Overall & Electoral Success	-.24 (.33)	-.16 (.40)	.21 (.30)	.33 (.36)	
		<u>Vigilant Strategy Interactions</u>					
		High Promotion & Electoral Success	-----	-----	-.83 (.35)*	-.30 (.42)	
	High Prevention & Electoral Success	.83 (.35)*	.30 (.42)	-----	-----		
	High Overall & Electoral Success	.38 (.31)	.32 (.37)	-.44 (.29)	.02 (.35)		
	Low Overall & Electoral Success	.80 (.34)*	.65 (.41)	-.03 (.32)	.35 (.38)		
Controls	White	-.10 (.10)	-.35 (.12)**	-.10 (.10)	-.35 (.12)**		
	Male	-.01 (.08)	-.15 (.10)	-.01 (.08)	-.15 (.10)		
	Education	.07 (.03)*	-.05 (.04)	.07 (.03)*	-.05 (.04)		
	Income	-.02 (.03)	-.01 (.03)	-.02 (.03)	-.01 (.03)		
	Age	-.01 (.004)	-.01 (.004)	-.01 (.004)	-.01 (.004)		
	Internal Efficacy	-.08 (.05)	.08 (.06)	-.08 (.05)	.08 (.06)		
	Constant	2.44 (.33)***	3.74 (.39)***	2.08 (.32)***	3.33 (.37)***		
<i>F</i> (<i>df</i>)	2.56***	4.38***	2.56***	4.38***			
<i>N</i>	446	446	446	446			
<i>R</i> ²	.15	.23	.15	.23			

^ p ≤ .10; * p ≤ .05; ** p ≤ .01

Figure 5.8 displays the pattern of the interaction between regulatory focus group, participants experiencing electoral success (black lines) or failure (grey lines), and the frequency eager strategies are used. The expectations are that two groups of people should have a positive relationship between eager strategy use and external efficacy: 1) people with high promotion scores that experience electoral success; and, 2) people with a strong prevention focus and experienced failure. On the other hand, negative relationships between eager strategy and efficacy should exist for high promotion oriented people who experienced failure due to emotional intensities regarding regulatory fit for success and failure.

While there is no relationship between the frequency of eagerly meeting political goals and efficacy across all regulatory focus groups when participants experienced failure, electorally successful people in the High Promotion and High Overall group do show a positive relationship between strategic eagerness and efficacy. However, only for participants in the High Overall group is the relationship between eagerness and efficacy more positive under electoral success versus failure. The analysis tempers the basic pattern seen up to this point regarding using eager strategies and efficacy by demonstrating the positive relationship between the two is more prominent for those who have recently been successful in meeting their political goals. Specifically, the positive association between eager strategies and efficacy for people with high promotion scores is partially dependent on whether or not a person's preferred candidate sits in office. This finding provides some explanation for why efficacy rises when a supported candidate wins an election – positive emotions arise from regulatory fit and is transferred onto the associated attitudes of political participation.

Figure 5.8. Relationship between Strategic Eagerness and Efficacy based on Regulatory Focus Category and Electoral Success versus Failure

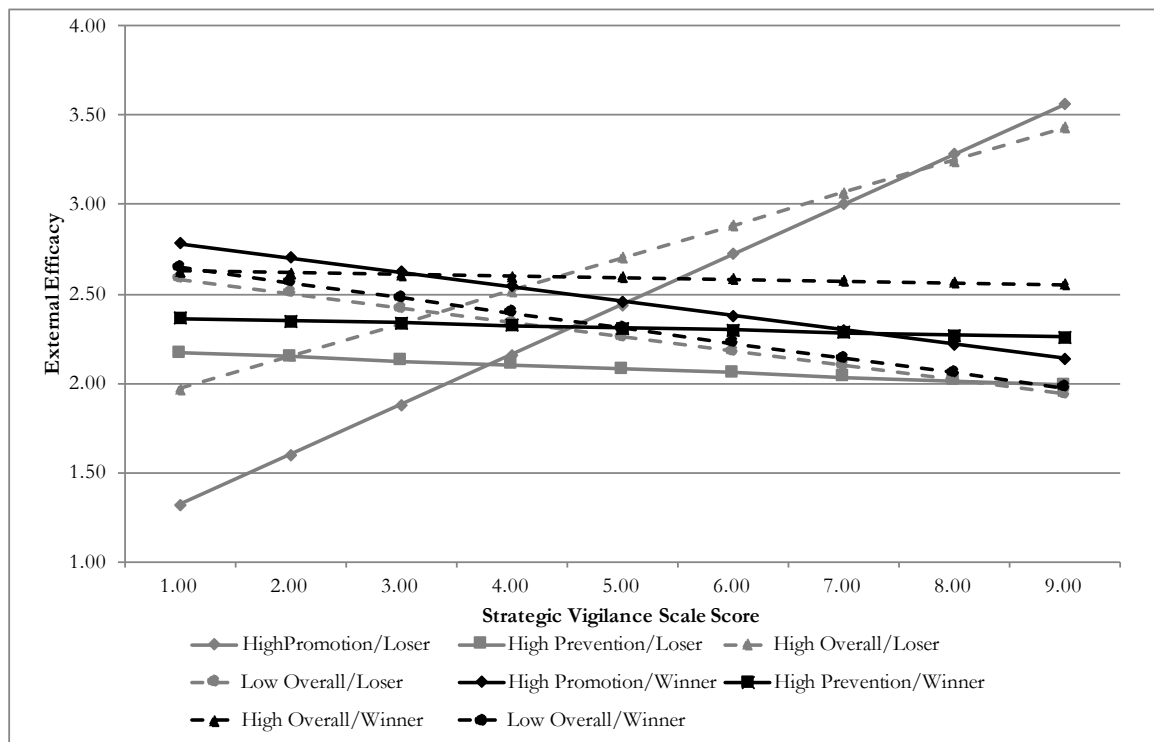


Moving on to the role of vigilance in regulatory fit, again the expectations are that there will be a positive relationship between using strategic vigilance and higher external efficacy scores for two groups: 1) high prevention focused people who experience success; and, 2) high promotion oriented people who experience failure. In addition, highly prevention oriented people who experience electoral failure should show a negative relationship between using strategic vigilance and external efficacy. Figure 5.9 displays the three-way interaction, based on the model in Table 5.5, between vigilance, regulatory focus group, and electoral outcome. The figure is organized in the same way as the previous one, with grey bars representing participants who experienced electoral failure and the black lines representing electoral success.

Again, there is some support for the hypotheses, but it is not overwhelming. As for the High Prevention group, there are no significant relationships between vigilant behavior

and efficacy scores. The only group with a positive relationship between vigilance and efficacy are participants who were electorally successful in Low Overall group. As for those who experienced failure, participants in the High Promotion and High Overall groups show a positive relationship between strategic vigilance and increased efficacy. This relationship is significantly more positive for those experiencing electoral failure compared to those experiencing success. In addition, it shows that the negative effect of failing to meet a goal can be dampened when behavior is inconsistent with a person's motivational orientation.

Figure 5.9. Relationship Between Strategic Vigilance and Efficacy Based on Regulatory Focus Category and Electoral Outcome



While complicated, the three-way interactions show important effects for people with a strong promotion orientation. First, political success is associated with an increase in external efficacy as the use of eager strategies rises. This represents a regulatory fit effect so that goal directed behavior that matches one's chronic motivational orientation increases the

positive effects when a goal is met. Second, these same high promotion individuals who fail to meet a political goal see a reverse of the negative effects when political behavior is contrary to one's orientation. External efficacy increases with a rise of strategic vigilance if the promotion oriented person voted for the losing candidate. While efficacy generally decreases if a citizen has recently supported a losing candidate, this negative effect is reversed when promotion oriented people experience a state of non-fit by meeting goals in a way that contradicts their regulatory orientation. This is because the negative emotion of a failed outcome is dampened by regulatory nonfit.

The initial analysis, showed that eager strategies were associated with a positive increase in efficacy for all groups except Low Overall. However, adding whether or not someone's desired candidate has recently won or not changes this pattern. For those who experienced failure, who did not vote for President Obama, increasing the use of eager strategies does not coincide with an increase in efficacy for any group. Following success, eager strategies are associated with higher efficacy, but only for those with high promotion scores – the High Overall and High Promotion groups. As expected, regulatory fit increases efficacy for those experiencing electoral success, however, the opposite was not true in this case. Efficacy neither increased or decreased among the High Prevention group that failed.

As for vigilant strategies, prior analysis for external efficacy showed a positive relationship between the two for the High Overall and Low Overall groups. Figure 5.9 displays the breakdown of vigilant strategy use between the regulatory focus groups based on whether political failure or success was experienced. The only group where using vigilant strategies is positively related to efficacy under electoral success is the Low Overall one, and this is only marginal. However, if the High Overall and the High Promotion groups experience failure, use of vigilant strategies is associated with an increase in efficacy. Again,

with vigilant strategies, there is not a regulatory fit effect for those in the High Prevention group. However, this time the opposite relationship exists – those categorized as High Promotion have higher levels of efficacy if they experienced failure using vigilant strategies. In this case regulatory nonfit is associated with increased efficacy by dampening the negative feedback from electoral failure for those in the High Promotion group.

Promotion oriented people have higher efficacy scores under success when the amount of eager strategies used increases and failure when vigilant strategies are used. In addition, the eager strategy and efficacy relationship is more positive for those who succeed versus those who fail to meet their political goal. The “feeling of right” that occurs under regulatory fit increases positive evaluations and attitudes towards participation, including efficacious attitudes, more so for those who succeed versus those who fail, but only if they have a high promotion focus. In addition, whereas that feeling from regulatory fit can strengthen negative evaluations when a goal is not met – electoral failure – experiencing non-fit can ease the pain and increase efficacy, but, again, only for those with a high promotion focus.

On the other hand, prevention focused individuals do not seem to increase efficacy no matter what strategy is used and if they politically succeed or not. Again, there is no regulatory fit effect. Those with neither a predominant promotion or prevention focus only show increased efficacy if they use vigilant strategies and succeed, although this is marginal. While I have been able to show when and where promotion dominant people have a relationship between regulatory fit and efficacy, the models do not help explain the same relationship for individuals who do not have a high level of promotion.

5.5. Conclusion: When and Why Regulatory Fit Increases Efficacy

The focus of the hypotheses was that individuals would create regulatory fit by selecting different strategies in how they participate and make decisions in the political world – a process-based fit. I expected this to increase efficacy. However, based on the data, it appears that the political environment, having an relatively eager framed goal of choosing the desired person for office, an outcome-based regulatory fit is pervasive. People who rely on eager strategies in the political world are more likely to experience higher efficacious attitudes. In addition, promotion focus dominant people also have stonger attitudes of efficacy, most likely due to the match between their motivational orientation and the environment.

However, this does not seem to always work. The connection between eagerness and efficacy is only seen when people have recently succeeded in meeting their political goals – when their chosen candidate is in office. For those who have recently failed, using eager strategies does not lead to increases in efficacy. In addition, while high promotion focused people do not display a relationship between using vigilant strategies and efficacy when they succeed, the association is positive if they have recently failed. High promotion people who succeed benefit from regulatory fit and those who fail benefit from nonfit.

As for prevention dominant citizens, there is no clear pattern throughout the data. The two main reasons for this may be: 1) the political goal of electing a candidate is not conducive to vigilant strategies overall, which does not allow for a process-based regulatory fit effect; and, 2) the profile of those who are prevention focused (or at least not promotion oriented) consist of demographic and political variables associated with low efficacy and participation, generally. The causal order of the lack of increased efficacy for prevention focus is not clear. It may be that this type of person is inherently not one who enjoys politics

or participates much. Or, it may be that the environment does not foster a way in which they “feel right” about how they have to participate and make decisions within the political arena leading to apathy.

As Dolinski and Drogosz (2010) find, being able to blackball a candidate would be favorable to prevention dominant people and they report being more likely to vote if this was an option. Further research should explore the connection between the political environment and prevention. The examination of aspects within politics that are conducive to creating regulatory fit for prevention focused citizens should include such things as negative advertising and information consumption. In addition, research should focus on determining if the profile of people with low promotion orientations do not participate because they have become apathetic over time or if the lack of efficacy and participation is due to a common underlying variable.

One of the main arguments for why regulatory fit should increase efficacy and, especially for those who succeed is based on emotions and their increased intensity under goal success. However, these emotions were not examined in the current study. Future work should open the black box of regulatory fit and efficacy to determine the underlining mechanism, especially among promotion oriented people, that is driving the relationship. Measuring the positive emotions of happiness and negative ones of dejection for promotion focused individuals and calmness and anger for those who are prevention focused would help shed light on whether these discrete emotions mediate the relationship between regulatory focus and efficacy, especially when dividing groups into those who experience political success and failure.

CHAPTER 6 Making Voting “Feel Right”: The Role of Regulatory Fit in GOTV Messages

Beginning in 2004, the Democrat and Republican parties changed their tactics from a focus on persuading undecided voters to mobilizing their own partisans using get-out-the-vote (GOTV) campaigns (Green & Gerber 2008). The new emphasis was evident in the public with over half reporting being contacted by a campaign in 2004 compared to just under 28 percent in 1988. This number jumps to almost 70 percent for those living in battleground states (Bergen, Gerber, Green, & Panagopoulos 2005). Since 2004 GOTV research has boomed looking at such variables as professional versus amateur phone banks, type of message, and social versus traditional media (for review, see Green & Gerber 2008). At the heart of all these campaigns is the attempt to persuade citizens, not to vote a certain way or to switch allegiances, but to get to the polls on Election Day. How can campaigns best maximize their mobilization strategies?

Qualities of the source, receiver, and message all matter when it comes to persuasion. One persuasion tactic concerns the matching hypothesis, using a message that parallels the individual's psychological or attitude orientation. For example, emotional (affective) appeals are more likely to be successful persuading an individual with an affect (emotional) based attitude (Edwards 1990; Fabrigar & Petty 1999) or if the person has a higher need for affect (emotion) (Haddock, Maio, Arnold, & Huskinson 2008). Mayer and Tormala (2010) find simply swapping “feel” and “think” increases the possibility of attitude change for people with a high need for affect or cognition, respectively.

With the amount of resources used towards voter mobilization, it is important to understand what message qualities affect turnout. This chapter focuses on whether GOTV

messages that match a person's regulatory focus are more likely to persuade someone to vote. Based on the matching hypothesis, I expect that perceptions regarding the value of voting as a form of participation and voter turnout will increase when the message matches the person's regulatory focus versus when it goes against the motivational orientation of the citizen.

Based on Regulatory Focus Theory (RFT), people are inclined to view and seek outcomes or goals differently based on whether a goal does, or is perceived to, meet a nurturance or security need (Higgins 1997). In addition, if the environment or message aligns with a person's orientation to outcomes and subsequent goal-directed behavior, a condition of regulatory fit ensues. Regulatory fit increases ongoing and prospective motivation and a feeling of "rightness" occurs, leading to a higher value placed on the target behavior or object (Cesario, et al. 2008; Higgins 2000; Higgins, et al. 2003; Idson, et al. 2004). In essence, regulatory fit creates a type of matching paradigm that leads to attitude change.

The previous chapter tested the effect of regulatory fit on certain attitudes associated with voting. In this chapter, the relationship between regulatory fit and self-reported voting intentions and associated attitudes are examined within an experimental setting. The experiment manipulates regulatory fit using a regulatory focus induction and different GOTV campaign frames to examine how regulatory fit effects the intention to vote and associated attitudes.

6.1 Regulatory Focus, Fit, and Voting

Regulatory fit, an extension of RFT, discussed in Chapter 2 and the previous chapter, occurs when goal perceptions and behavior align (Higgins 2000; Cesario et al. 2008). Under a condition of regulatory fit, there is an increase in ongoing motivation and prospective motivation. In addition, the ensuing feeling of "rightness" increases the perceived value in

pursuing the goal, the target object or attitude, and the emotions that occur in relation to the success or failure of goal pursuit (Cesario, et al. 2004; Cesario & Higgins 2008; Freitas & Higgins 2002; Higgins 2000, 2005; Higgins et al. 2003; Idson, et al. 2004). As previously found, regulatory fit, in some circumstances, affects attitudes associated with participation. Given the previous findings regarding efficacy, regulatory fit could increase motivation to vote and its perceived value as a form of participation.

The wording of campaign messages influences regulatory fit so it is important to note the different ways various words and information are associated with each regulatory focus. Altering the wording of the GOTV message can make it more agreeable, persuasive, or self-relevant to promotion or prevention oriented citizens. The chances of mobilization increase when the message successfully induces a state of regulatory fit. A prevention orientation is more compatible with framing goals as responsibilities, loss/non-loss information, negative information, vigilant strategies, and anger/acquiescence related information. On the other hand, promotion orientation is more compatible with framing messages as hopes, gain/non-gain information, positive information, eagerness, or with elated/dejected emotional words (Cesario & Higgins 2008; Forster, et al. 2001; Liberman et al. 1999; Shah et al. 1998; Tykocinski, Higgins, & Chaiken 1994). Language within the environment that matches a person's dominant or induced orientation can induce process based regulatory fit.

In the current case, looking at regulatory focus and GOTV language, the "D term" in Downsian models of voting may be better translated into duty *or* advancement (Downs 1957; Riker & Ordeshook 1973). Prevention should be associated with increased motivation and positive attitudes towards voting when the message conveys voting as a duty or obligation. On the other side, messages describing voting as a way to advance the individual

or society ought to increase participation and corresponding attitudes when combined with a promotion focus.

In addition to matching language with an individual's regulatory focus, messages can be matched to the environment. In this case voting is about choosing a candidate for office, the instructional frame of the electoral goal is promotion oriented. Based on the results of the previous chapter, outcome based regulatory fit appears to be a factor in altering attitudes associated with voting. With this in mind, messages using language associated with promotion and eager strategies may be more effective than ones using vigilant and prevention language.

6.2 Regulatory Fit, Persuasion, and Get-Out-the-Vote Appeals

Just as the misattribution effect under regulatory fit increases the value of a target and attitude, it can also be used as a persuasion tactic. Such things as source credibility, attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise impact a message's persuasiveness, especially for those who have lower motivation to process the information (Chaiken 1980; Clark, Wegener, Habashi, & Evans 2012; Petty, Cacioppo, & Goldman 1981). In addition, the strength and number of arguments given (Chaiken 1980; Petty & Cacioppo 1982), and the mood, goal, and involvement of the receiver (Legal, Chappe, Coiffard, & Villard-Forest 2012; Petty & Cacioppo 1979) all influence persuasiveness. Another powerful tool used to persuade people is matching a message to people's psychological traits.

The matching hypothesis, or congruency hypothesis, argues that persuasiveness increases if the message parallels the person's sense of self or the need served by the target attitude (Lavine & Snyder 1996; Petty, Wheeler, Bizer, Maio, & Olson 2000; Snyder & DeBono 1985). This phenomenon has been documented in numerous studies including framing the message to fit a person's sense of self, such as using language related to

extraversion (Wheeler, Petty, & Bizer 2005), using legal versus religious arguments on a policy issue (Cacioppo, Petty, & Sidera 1982), or using different racial and ethnic sources (Grier & Deshpande 2001).

Connecting a message to a person's self-schema or matching characteristics of the message or source that relate to the receiver based on their psychological orientation makes the message much more persuasive (DeBono & Harnish 1988; DeBono & Snyder 1989; Snyder & DeBono 1985). For example, Evans and Clark (2012) find that low-self monitors, who act consistently in social interactions based on their own preferences, showed increases in persuasion and confidence in their attitude following an expert-given message while high-self monitors, who adapt to the social circumstance they are in, were more persuaded by a message given by an attractive source. This same functional-matching approach was found to exert an influence on voting behavior, so that when a message was matched to a person's amount of self-monitoring, attitudes towards voting were more positive and voting behavior increased (Lavine & Snyder 1996). Matching messages with other aspects of a person also influences persuasion. For instance, matching affective messages for those who have a higher need for affect and cognitive ones for those with a higher need for cognition increases persuasion (Haddock et al. 2008; Mayer & Tormala 2010). Research that looks at matching arguments has continuously demonstrated the effect that modest alterations to a message based on psychological orientations of a person can impact attitudes and behavior, both inside and outside of politics.

One way to use the matching hypothesis to increase attitude change is to parallel the motivational style of an individual with a message (Hevey & Dolan 2013). Updegraff, Sherman, Taylor, and Mann (2007) found that matching messages to a person's motivational style, based on approach and avoidance, increases persuasion. Although similar, regulatory

focus is theoretically different than the distinction between approach and avoidant behavior. It has been theorized and empirically demonstrated that regulatory focus systems are independent of valence (Crowe & Higgins 1997) with both orientations involving approach behaviors to reach desired end states and avoidance behaviors to stay away from undesirable ones (Haws, et al. 2010; Higgins 1997; Ouschan, Boldero, Kashima, Wakimoto, & Kashima 2007; Summerville & Roese 2008). Just as matching to one's tendency to use approaching or avoiding behaviors, matching to a person's regulatory focus should also impact the persuasiveness of an argument.

6.2.1 Are GOTV Messages Missing Half the Audience (and Effects)?

GOTV campaigns attempt to persuade participation on Election Day. But what if one type of message does not work on all people? While it would not be feasible to survey every American and get their regulatory orientation in order to cater messages to single individuals, it is not above reason to attempt to persuade broad swaths of people. This is especially so if a message only needs to be tailored in two ways – one for individuals who are predominately promotion focused and one for people with a predominate prevention focus. Or, if the message itself can create regulatory fit, persuasion should increase, driving more people to the polls. As described above, creating regulatory fit increases the persuasiveness of a message, ultimately leading to a more successful GOTV campaign.

GOTV campaigns have received lots of attention since Gerber and Green (2000) came out with the first published field experiment showing phone banks were not effective at increasing voter turnout. Both, *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* and *Political Behavior* have devoted entire issues to research dealing with GOTV in addition to the much cited books by Green and Gerber (2008, 2004) that discuss the relevant research on increasing turnout.

Although there is a large swath of literature on GOTV messages and effects, a majority of it excludes how characteristics of an individual impact the success of campaign pleas. Research has looked into the impact of partisan versus non-partisan messages (Cardy 2005; McNulty 2005; Nickerson, Friedrichs, & King 2006), different types of messages (Arceneaux 2007; Arceneaux & Nickerson 2010; Gerber, Green, & Larimer 2010), the medium of contact (Ashworth & Clinton 2007; Nickerson 2008; Panagopoulos & Green 2008; Ramirez 2005), and extent or level of contact (Ha & Karlan 2009) among other message and transmitter variables.

In addition, much of the research focuses on three types of motivators used in GOTV messages: the civic duty treatment, the social pressure treatment, and the instrumental benefits treatment (Green & Gerber 2008). All three of these are geared towards a prevention focus. Civic duty frames emphasize voting as a responsibility; social pressure is negative; and, instrumental benefits is about minimizing a loss. I advocate for a different treatment – one that frames a message to be relevant to an individual that holds a promotion focus, or uses eager strategies to meet their goals. Without this, prevention focused individuals, using vigilant strategies, are much more likely to be affected by GOTV campaigns while promotion focused individuals are left to be self-motivated. In addition, my previous findings have demonstrated the importance of promotion focus and using eager strategies in political behavior and attitudes over those of prevention focus and vigilant strategies. GOTV messages geared toward a more promotion focus may be beneficial or detrimental to high prevention focused people.

Not only do the common GOTV messages in the research appeal more to a prevention oriented person, they do not match the frame of the goal. Participation in the electoral arena inherently lies within a promotion oriented context – select a candidate for

office. Just as process based fit increases persuasion when the message matches the way in which a person perceives a goal or corresponds with his goal directed behavior, outcome based fit can increase persuasion too. Under outcome based fit, the message should match the orientation of the goal, which in the case of US elections requires a message to use promotion or eager strategy frames. Messages with this type of language are not prevalent in the literature on GOTV but may substantively increase turnout.

Very few studies have turned towards aspects of the receiver to examine how GOTV messages differentially affect various groups of people. Bennion (2005) found that canvassing using civic duty and instrumental benefit messages increased turnout for citizens younger than 30 years old but not for older voters. In addition, Gerber, Huber, Doherty, Dowling, and Panagopoulos (2013) examined the role of personality, using the Big 5, in the ability of the three main treatment effects to persuade voters to turn out. Their findings suggest people high in openness and emotional stability are roughly 20 percent more likely to turnout following a social pressure treatment if they are living in a one-person household. Looking at the receiver can shed light on when and why GOTV messages work.

Without looking at aspects of the receiver, many current studies may be missing crucial aspects that could explain their findings or lack of effects. Arceneaux and Nickerson (2010) examine the tone of the GOTV strategy, finding that negative and positive messages do not have differential affects on turnout. Their field experiment shows a positive, weak, non-significant difference when the message critiqued a candidate or focused on the costs and losses of an issue. However, their findings may be hiding an interaction effect. Based on RFT, promotion focused individuals are more attuned and persuaded by positive information and prevention orientated people are sensitive to negative information. Therefore, while the effect of the positive messages was not any better than negative ones at

getting people to the poll, it may very well be that they were motivating different kinds of people.

Looking at the recall election in California in 2003, McNulty (2005) targeted Democrats, using scripts with vigilant related words, such as “threatened” and “prevent” in the GOTV message. While Chapter 4 was unable to make a connection between ideological tendencies and regulatory focus, others have shown that liberals are more likely to be promotion focused (Cornwell & Higgins 2013; Janoff-Bulman 2009). Given that McNulty’s study targeted Democrats, these messages may not have aligned with their motivational tendencies resulting in a lack of increased participation. Out of McNulty’s three studies, the only positive effect in turnout came from the non-partisan scripts that used the word, “encourage,” although the increase was marginal. However, this one positive effect may be due to a slight, incidental regulatory fit induction.

Gerber, et al. (2010) examine whether priming pride versus shame would increase turnout within the social pressure paradigm. The method included sending a notecard with a civic duty message along with voting records of the targeted individual. These records either showed that the participant had abstained (the shaming condition) or voted in a recent election (the pride condition). The findings show a larger treatment effect for the shaming condition. However, it may not be shame itself driving the findings, the negative information tied to language of responsibility and duty are both associated with prevention focus and vigilant strategies. The language used may have created a regulatory fit effect within the shame, but not pride, condition.

Based on the ability of regulatory fit to increase message persuasiveness, voter turnout should increase when GOTV campaigns are able to create this effect. Prevention oriented people would benefit from messages that highlight participating as a responsibility

or duty. However, promotion oriented people should be more persuaded by pleas that include the ability of voting to advance the ideals of democracy. While the former are common in GOTV research the latter are, for the most part, ignored. The goal of the experiment is to test whether applying the matching hypothesis to regulatory focus, can impact the likelihood of voting and corresponding attitudes.

6.3 Hypotheses Regarding GOTV Messages and Regulatory Fit

The previous chapter demonstrated the conditional effect of regulatory fit on efficacy. Specifically, people with a higher promotion orientation were more likely to have higher efficacy regardless of strategy used. Not only does regulatory fit increase positive attitudes associated with a goal, specifically voting in this case, the experience should also increase the motivation to do so. Drawing from the matching or congruency effect and regulatory fit literature, GOTV messages should be seen as more or less persuasive and differentially motivate people to vote. The following hypotheses are based on matching GOTV messages to a person's regulatory focus to increase the persuasive appeal and motivation to vote and learn about campaigns.

$H_{6.1}$: When the GOTV message matches the induced focus of the participant (regulatory fit), the message will be perceived to be more persuasive than when the GOTV message does not match the induced focus (regulatory non-fit).

In addition to a GOTV message being more persuasive under regulatory fit, related attitudes to voting should also be more positive. The value of voting can be looked at in two ways with each offering a glimpse into some of the underlining mechanisms that affect the likelihood of participating. The first is to look at external efficacy, or the perception that a person can influence the political system. The correlation between efficacy and regulatory fit was examined in the previous chapter, but with an experimental protocol may shed more

light on this relationship. While external efficacy is a common variable in political science, it is uncommon to examine the value of voting in a more general sense. Therefore, a second dependent variable is based on questions that tap into how the perception of voting as a valuable component of democracy, not just the influence of their participation.

H_{6.2}: Participants who receive a GOTV message that matches the induced regulatory focus (regulatory fit) will report higher external efficacy scores compared to participants receiving a GOTV message that does not match the induced focus (regulatory nonfit).

H_{6.3}: Participants who receive a GOTV message that matches the induced regulatory focus (regulatory fit) will report higher perceived value towards voting as a form of political participation compared to participants receiving a GOTV message that does not match the induced focus (regulatory nonfit).

The final hypothesis tests the correlation between regulatory fit and likelihood to vote using the experimental protocol. This again allows for the examination of a possible causal mechanism between regulatory fit and increased participation in the electoral environment.

H_{6.4}: Participants who receive a GOTV message that matches the induced regulatory focus (regulatory fit) will be more likely to report an intention to vote in the next election compared to those receiving a GOTV message that does not match the induced focus (regulatory nonfit).

In order to test whether regulatory fit increases the persuasiveness of a GOTV message, attitudes associated with voting, and the intention to vote, I utilize an experimental design. In the experiment, both regulatory focus and the framing of a GOTV message were independently manipulated in order to create groups of people who either experienced regulatory fit or did not. Therefore, four groups were created. Participants induced into a promotion focus and then receive an eager strategy framed GOTV message and participants induced into a prevention focus and then receive a vigilant strategy framed message are classified as being in a state of regulatory fit. In addition, one set of participants received a

promotion focus treatment and vigilant strategy GOTV message and another received a prevention focus induction and eager strategy framed message, classifying these groups as in a state of regulatory non-fit.

6.4 Experimental Methods and Analysis Overview

The Regulatory Fit and GOTV Study I introduced in Chapter 2 is used to test the hypotheses – a GOTV message will be viewed as more persuasive, external efficacy and perceived value in voting will be increased, and the motivation to vote will be stronger under regulatory fit. I utilize a 2 (prime: promotion or prevention) by 2 (message frame: eager or vigilant) experimental design, with the analyses focusing on the contrast between the regulatory fit conditions (promotion prime with eager frame/prevention prime with vigilant frame) and the non-fit conditions (promotion prime with vigilant frame/prevention prime with eager frame).

There are several reasons for the two manipulations. First, it provides a distinction between induced focus and strategy, requiring the participant to engage in both. It creates a clean separation of the two. Second, manipulating both ensures an even distribution of promotion and prevention induced participants. As was pointed out in previous chapters, people can have strong promotion and prevention scores or low on both. By manipulating focus the goal is to level the field across the board on the regulatory focus variable.

6.4.1 Experimental Manipulations

Regulatory Focus Manipulation

I used a widely applied regulatory focus manipulation to prime promotion or prevention (Freitas & Higgins 2002). Participants were instructed to list three current “hopes and aspirations” for the promotion condition and those in the prevention condition were instructed to list three “current duties and obligations”. After listing their goals, participants

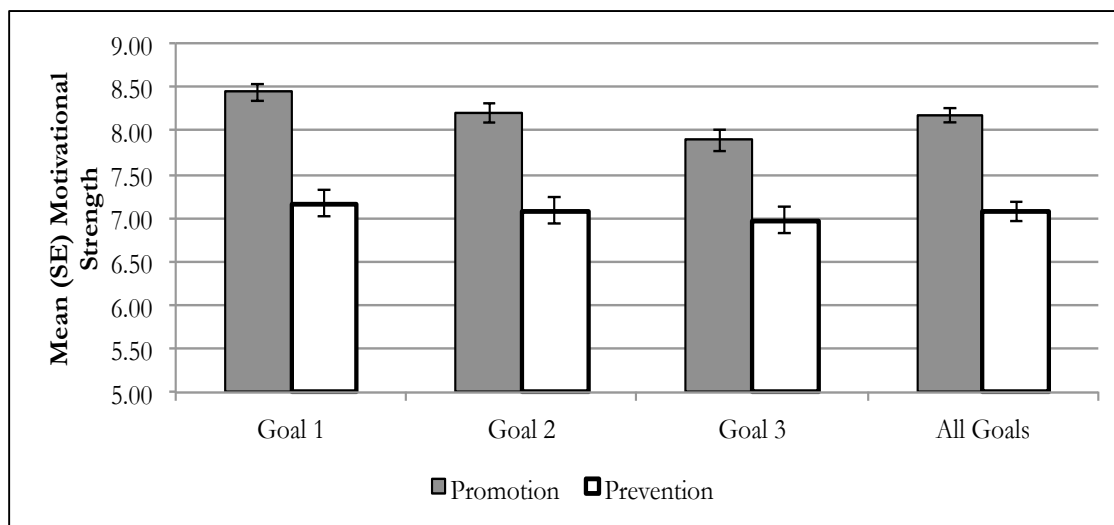
were prompted to report their level of motivation to each listed goal. For each, participants were asked, “You wrote down [goal] as your first (second/third) goal. How motivated are you to meet the first (second/third) goal you wrote down?” Response options ranged from 1, “not at all motivated”, to 10, “extremely motivated”.

Participants in the promotion condition reported higher motivation for the first goal ($M = 8.44$, $SD = 1.74$) than the second ($M = 8.19$, $SD = 1.79$) and third goals listed ($M = 7.89$, $SD = 2.09$). In addition, higher motivation was reported for the second goal compared to the third ($F(2, 594) = 8.63$, $MSE = 2.56$, $p < .001$). All three items were averaged to create the *promotion strength scale* ($\alpha = .53$, $M = 8.17$, $SD = 1.35$). Figure 6.1 displays the means and standard errors for each goal and the composite index.

In the prevention condition, there were no mean differences between the motivation to meet the first ($M = 7.17$, $SD = 2.74$), second ($M = 7.08$, $SD = 2.60$), or third ($M = 6.97$, $SD = 2.73$) goals ($F(2, 620) = .66$, $MSE = 4.52$, $p = .516$). I averaged the three together, creating a *prevention strength scale* ($\alpha = .64$, $M = 7.07$, $SD = 2.05$). Both strength scales were placed into one variable, *regulatory focus strength* ($M = 7.61$, $SD = 1.83$), in order to perform additional analyses based on the level of motivation each participant held towards the self-selected goals listed in the manipulation.

Figure 6.1 demonstrates the difference between motivational strength between people given the promotion versus prevention manipulation. Participants exposed to the promotion prime reported a higher mean motivation level towards all three self-reported goals compared to participants in the prevention condition. The difference across the means is significant for the first ($F(1, 609) = 47.07$, $MSE = 5.30$, $p > .001$), second ($F(1, 608) = 37.74$, $MSE = 5.02$, $p > .001$), and third goal ($F(1, 608) = 21.51$, $MSE = 5.94$, $p > .001$), in addition to the regulatory focus strength scale ($F(1, 607) = 60.69$, $MSE = 3.05$, $p > .001$).

Figure 6.1. Mean (SE) Goal Strength Ratings Based on Regulatory Focus Manipulation



Note. N = 610

The heightened motivation towards goals within the promotion manipulation compared to that of the prevention manipulation may pose a problem on two fronts. First, the influence of motivational strength may be a problem within the experimental design. If one manipulation is associated with a higher self-reported motivation towards meeting the goals used to activate regulatory focus, the entire design may be at risk. As previously reported, people within a promotion focus are more motivated in general and the previous findings have questioned whether the results are an artifact of a general strength of motivation rather than regulatory focus. The motivation strength discrepancies here show that an experimental protocol will not be able to provide an answer as to whether the findings are due to regulatory focus or general motivation.

Second, and perhaps more important, the motivational unbalance may pose a problem in reality. If some people are prevention oriented, the motivation to meet goals that are relevant to their personal lives is lower. If personal goals are less motivating, there is

likely even less incentive to meet political goals that are often seen as abstract and not personally relevant. Prevention oriented people may be completely lost to the potential pool of political participators without strong interventions.

GOTV Message Manipulation

Following the induction into a specific regulatory focus, participants were randomly assigned, independent of the first assignment, to one of the following two messages. The prevention GOTV message used language associated with civic duty and responsibility, while the promotion GOTV message used language dealing with advancing as a citizen. I adapted the messages from previous GOTV research, which focus only on using civic duty arguments to encourage participation (Gerber & Green 2000; Arceneaux, Gerber, & Green 2006). The first message below is the prevention oriented script, using language associated with a vigilant strategy, and the second is the promotion oriented script, using eager strategy language.

Vote 2013 is a nonpartisan effort working to **ensure** citizens vote. We just wanted to remind you that elections are being held on Tuesday. We want to **ensure** everyone does their **civic duty** and remembers their **responsibility** to vote. Democracy depends on our country having **responsible** citizens who vote. We hope you'll come out and vote this Tuesday. Can we count on you to vote next Tuesday?
(Vigilant Strategy)

Vote 2013 is a nonpartisan effort working to **encourage** citizens to vote. We just wanted to remind you that elections are being held this Tuesday. We want to **encourage** everyone to help **advance** democracy and remember this is an **opportunity to grow** as a citizen. Democracy is **advanced** when there are **aspiring** citizens who vote. We hope you'll come out and vote this Thursday. Can we count on you to vote next Tuesday? (Eager Strategy)

Table 6.1 displays the breakdown of participants into the four potential conditions based on the 2x2, between groups design, with participants independently assigned to the

regulatory focus and GOTV conditions. These conditions are referenced as: 1) promotion fit (promotion focus induction and eager GOTV message exposure); 2) prevention fit (prevention focus induction and vigilant GOTV message exposure); 3) promotion nonfit (promotion induction and vigilant GOTV); and, 4) prevention nonfit (prevention induction and eager GOTV). There was not a significant difference between the distribution of participants between the four conditions ($X^2(1) = 1.30, p = .222$).

GOTV Condition	Regulatory Focus Condition		Total
	Promotion	Prevention	
Eager GOTV	Promotion Fit n = 140	Prevention Nonfit n = 162	302
Vigilant GOTV	Promotion Nonfit n = 158	Prevention Fit n = 150	308
Total	298	312	610

Note. Bold entries represent Regulatory Fit combinations.

6.4.2 Dependent Measures

Voting Intention

Following exposure to the GOTV message, participants were directed to another screen and asked, “How likely are you to consider voting after receiving the message on the previous page?” Response options were on a 7-point scale, ranging from “very unlikely” (1) to very likely (7). Intention to vote was slightly skewed towards being very likely to vote in the upcoming election ($M = 4.81, SD = 1.68$).

Value in Voting

To examine the differences in how much individuals value voting, three additional questions were asked. Participants recorded attitudes towards how favorable or unfavorable, good or bad, and positive or negative regarding voting as a method of political participation. Each item was anchored with the following options: very unfavorable (1)/very favorable (7), very negative (1)/very positive (7), and very bad (1)/very good (7), respectively.

Mean ratings for the voting as good versus bad item ($M = 5.77$, $SD = 1.31$) were higher than the favorable versus not item ($M = 5.63$, $SD = 1.30$) and the positive versus negative question ($M = 5.51$, $SD = 1.39$). Ratings for the favorability item were significantly higher than positive versus negative self-reports ($F(2, 1215) = 31.24$, $MSE = .32$, $p < .001$). All three questions were averaged to create the *vote value index* ($\alpha = .93$, $M = 5.63$, $SD = 1.25$).

Persuasiveness of the GOTV message

I asked two questions about how persuasive the GOTV message was viewed. The first asked participants, “How believable was the message?” with response options ranging from “very unbelievable” (1) to “very believable” (7). The second asked, “How persuasive was this message?” with seven response options ranging from “very unpersuasive” (1) to “very persuasive” (7).

Participants reported higher believability ($M = 5.48$, $SD = 1.33$) than persuasiveness ($M = 4.34$, $SD = 1.54$) towards the GOTV messages ($F(1, 610) = 477.16$, $MSE = .83$, $p < .001$). I averaged these two items to create the *persuasion* variable ($\alpha = .75$, $M = 5.20$, $SD = .96$).

6.4.1 Overview of the Analyses

I predict that there will be a positive relationship between experiencing regulatory fit and increased persuasion of the GOTV message, value placed on voting as a form of political participation, external efficacy, and the intention to vote. Initial examination of the hypotheses utilize between-group ANOVAs, comparing participants placed into a state of regulatory fit – the promotion and prevention fit conditions – compared to participants within a state of regulatory nonfit – the promotion and prevention nonfit conditions. A dummy variable, *regulatory fit*, coded so “1” represents participants induced into a regulatory fit state and “0” representing participants in the nonfit conditions to compare mean scores between the two groups across each dependent variable.

The second set of analyses looks into the relationship between the dependent variables and each specific combination of the two manipulations. These conditions were referenced earlier in Table 6.1. Within this set of analyses, I perform ANOVAs for each dependent variable, using post hoc tests (LSD pairwise comparisons), to compare the four conditions. Based on the findings from the previous chapter, looking at the specific conditions may reveal differences between how regulatory fit is built – whether it is based on a promotion or prevention focus – and attitudes towards voting.

6.5 GOTV Messages, Regulatory Fit, and Voting Results

The four main dependent variables include persuasiveness of the GOTV message, motivation to vote following the GOTV message, the value placed on voting as a participatory act, and external efficacy. As seen in Table 6.2, the dependent variables are positively correlated with each other. In addition, regulatory focus strength is positively related to persuasion, the intention to vote, and the perceived value of voting, but is not related to external efficacy.

Table 6.2 Correlations between Continuous Variables

	Persuasion	Intent to Vote	Vote Value Index	External Efficacy	RF Strength
Persuasion	1				
Intent to Vote	.632***	1			
Vote Value Index	.439***	.545***	1		
External Efficacy	.178***	.179***	.274***	1	
Regulatory Focus Strength	.164***	.118**	.126**	.060	1

[^] $p \leq .10$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$.

Prior to examining the dependent variables based on regulatory fit, I look at the mean differences for each, independently as a function of each experimental manipulation. Model results for the one-way ANOVA comparing regulatory focus conditions are in the top of Table 6.3. Participants in the promotion condition are marginally more likely to report a higher intention to vote compared to participants in the prevention condition. In addition, mean voting value reports are higher for participants in the promotion condition than ones in the prevention condition. As displayed in the bottom of Table 6.3, none of the dependent variable scores differ based on GOTV condition. As previously reported, promotion, not prevention, is associated with more positive attitudes towards participation.

Table 6.3 Mean (Std. Dev) and ANOVA results for DVs for each manipulation

	Regulatory Focus Condition		<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MSE</i>
	Promotion	Prevention			
Intent	4.94 (1.63)	4.68 (1.72)	3.78 [^]	1, 610	2.80
Voting Value	5.78 (1.13)	5.50 (1.34)	7.59 **	1, 607	1.54
Efficacy	2.85 (1.22)	2.89 (1.23)	.17	1, 607	1.51
Persuasion	4.99 (1.22)	4.83 (1.25)	2.16	1, 610	2.16
GOTV Condition					
	Eager	Vigilant			
Intent	4.78 (1.64)	4.82 (1.72)	.09	1, 609	2.83
Voting Value	5.63 (1.25)	5.64 (1.25)	.01	1, 606	1.56
Efficacy	2.92 (1.24)	2.82 (1.21)	1.05	1, 606	1.50
Persuasion	4.94 (1.22)	4.88 (1.35)	.39	1, 609	1.67

[^] $p \leq .10$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$.

6.5.1 Examining the Impact of Regulatory Fit on Voting Attitudes

My main hypothesis predicts that participants induced into a regulatory fit state will report increased persuasiveness of the GOTV message, more positive attitudes concerning voting, and a higher likelihood of intending to vote in the upcoming election. I categorized the participants as being induced into a state of regulatory fit or nonfit to examine mean differences between the groups.

	Regulatory Fit	Regulatory Nonfit	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MSE</i>
Intent	4.70 (1.75)	4.90 (1.61)	2.31	1, 609	2.82
Voting Value	5.63 (1.32)	5.64 (1.18)	.02	1, 606	1.56
Efficacy	2.91 (1.23)	2.84 (1.22)	.60	1, 606	1.50
Persuasion	4.85 (1.36)	4.97 (1.22)	1.22	1, 609	1.66

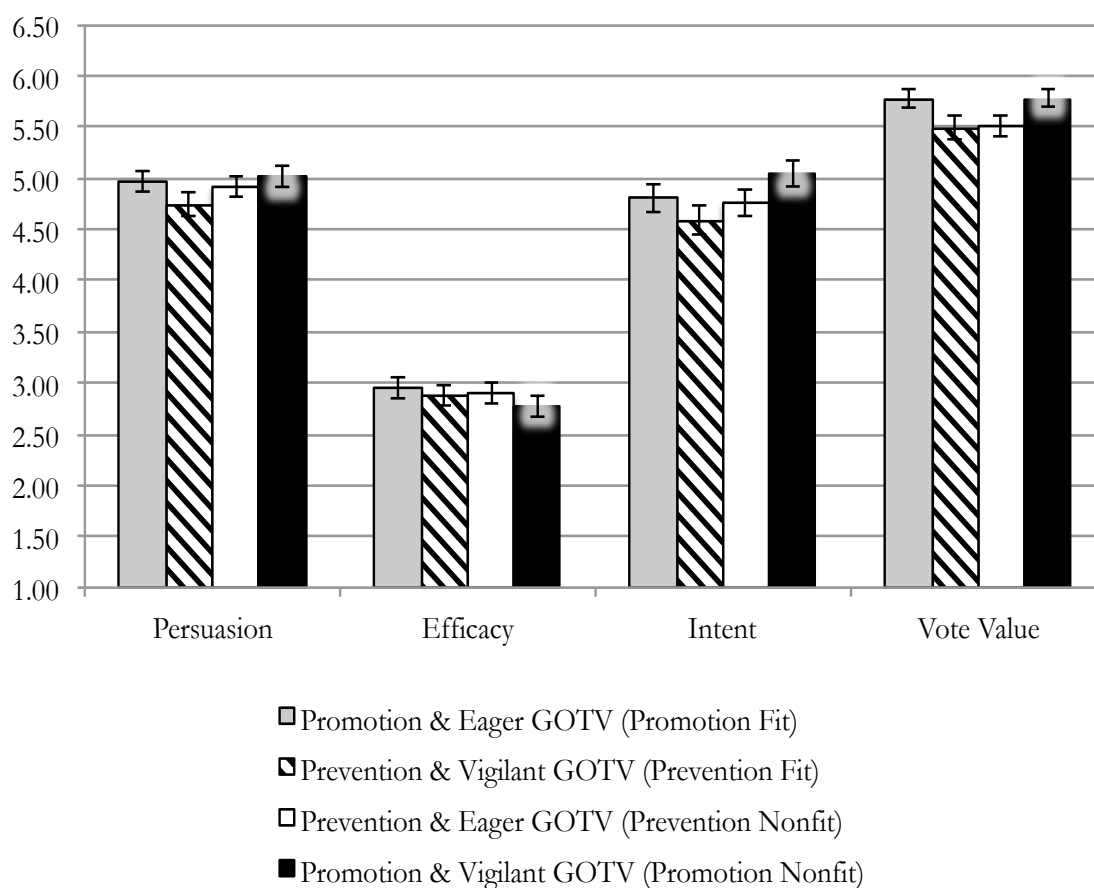
[^] $p \leq .10$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$.

As Table 6.4 shows, there are no mean differences for participants in the Regulatory Fit and Nonfit conditions in their attitudes towards the GOTV message or voting intentions and attitudes. However, there may be hidden differences between how regulatory fit and nonfit is configured within the experimental manipulations. In order to examine this possibility, another between-group ANOVA, with follow-up, pairwise analyses, is performed with a dummy variable denoting each of the four possible configurations – promotion fit, prevention fit, promotion nonfit, and prevention nonfit – to examine mean differences for each dependent variable. Figure 6.2 depicts the means for each condition on the four dependent variables.

People exposed to a plea to mobilize consistent with their induced focus should feel as though the message is more persuasive. This does not appear to be the case when looking at the full model, which is not significant ($F(3, 609) = 1.28$, $MSE = 1.66$, $p = .620$). Looking at Figure 6.1, all means are similar but participants in the Promotion Nonfit condition report

slightly higher persuasiveness than those in the prevention fit condition ($p = .067$). The difference is marginal and goes against the expected relationship between persuasiveness and regulatory fit.

Figure 6.2. Variable Means (SE) Across Conditions



In regard to external efficacy, there are no mean differences across the four conditions ($F(3, 606) = .59, MSEI = 1.51, p = .620$). Attitudes concerning one's influence in the political world do not differ based on condition. However, the value that voting holds as a political act does differ based on condition ($F(3, 606) = 2.59, MSE = 1.55, p = .052$). These differences are driven by which regulatory state has been activated, the promotion versus prevention system. Participants in the Promotion Fit condition report a higher voting

value than those in the Prevention Fit ($p = .051$) and Prevention Nonfit conditions ($p = .061$). In addition, participants in the Promotion Nonfit condition report higher perceptions of voting than participants in the Prevention Fit ($p = .040$) and Nonfit conditions ($p = .048$). These findings, distinguishing across promotion versus prevention, align with previous ones showing the connection between political activity and democratic values with promotion and prevention. The prevention system seems to stymie activity and positive attitudes.

The attitudes examined so far should ultimately tie into the decision to vote or abstain. Regulatory fit is expected to increase the intention to vote compared to regulatory nonfit because of the boost in feelings and attitudes. The overall model for the vote value index is not significant ($F(3, 609) = 2.02, MSE = 2.81, p = .109$). However, pairwise comparisons show that participants in the Promotion Nonfit condition report stronger intentions compared to participants in the Prevention Fit condition ($p = .015$). This result does not correspond with expectations but matches the previous distinctions in activity level between people with a promotion versus prevention orientation.

None of the hypotheses are supported with the current data; findings show a lack of relationship between regulatory fit and increased persuasion, positive attitudes towards voting, and the intention to vote. However, there is some evidence that being induced into a promotion state versus prevention one is associated with increased positivity towards voting. This corresponds with findings in Chapter 5, where levels of promotion rather than prevention had stronger, more consistent effects regarding efficacy. The results may be due to an increased motivation in general for people induced into a promotion focus based on the higher motivation to meet goals within the manipulation task.

On the other hand, this may be due to the nature of the electoral system in the United States where the goal is inherently based within a promotional or eager strategy

framework. The experimental effect on prevention-oriented participants may be too small to wipe out any previous understanding and association participants have with the electoral system. If this is the case, regulatory fit manipulations may not be strong enough to overturn previous nonfit experiences with the political system.

6.5.2 Effects Based on Motivation Strength and GOTV Message Persuasiveness

The connection between regulatory fit and voting intentions and related attitudes may differ based on the level of motivation or the perceived persuasiveness of the message. Regulatory fit increases the value and positivity of a target object or attitude because people misattribute the good feeling that occurs from working within a state that matches the current or chronic regulatory focus onto the outcome or process. When this occurs, motivation, attitudes, and emotions are elevated (Higgins 2002). Therefore, when initial motivation is high, the effects of regulatory fit may be increased. In addition, the extent that the message is seen as persuasive may also elevate the effect of regulatory fit on attitudes and intentions to vote.

Regulatory Focus Strength

As I found in Chapter 5, the strength of motivation under a promotion or prevention focus can impact the relationship between regulatory fit and political attitudes. In the present case, self-reported motivation to meet the goals listed in the regulatory focus manipulation may affect the degree to which the regulatory fit affected subsequent attitudes. Or, as been hinted at previously, there may just be higher motivation to meet goals within a promotion focus versus prevention focus. Therefore, regulatory focus strength will be interacted with the experimental conditions to examine the connection between regulatory fit, level of motivation, and voting attitudes and intention.

Table 6.5. OLS Coefficients (SE) for Regulatory Fit by Motivation Strength Interaction Models

	Persuasion	Efficacy	Vote Value	Vote Intent
Regulatory Fit	-.10 (.10)	.08 (.10)	-.01 (.10)	-.19 (.14)
Motivation Strength	.09 (.04)*	.04 (.04)	.07 (.04)^	.09 (.05)^
Regulatory Focus x Motivation Strength	.06 (.06)	-.00 (.05)	.04 (.06)	.04 (.07)
Constant	4.96 (.07)***	2.83 (.07)***	5.64 (.07)***	4.90 (.09)***
<i>F</i>	6.26 ***	.96	3.44*	3.58*
<i>N</i>	608	605	605	608
<i>R</i> ²	.03	.005	.02	.02

^ $p \leq .10$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$.

Table 6.5 shows the models containing the interaction between motivational strength and a dummy variable indicating whether the participant was assigned into a regulatory fit or nonfit condition. None of the interaction coefficients are significant, indicating that the relationship between perceived persuasiveness of the GOTV message and motivation strength does not differ across the two states. However, as motivation strength increases, participants are more likely to see the message as persuasive. As I previously broke down the models into type of fit and nonfat condition, Table 6.6 shows the same models using dummy variables for each condition.

Overall, Table 6.6⁵ does not show much evidence of an interaction between condition and regulatory focus strength regarding attitudes and behavior towards voting. All of the groups except the Promotion Nonfit condition have a positive relationship between regulatory focus strength and persuasion. People in the Prevention Nonfit condition have a stronger positive relationship between motivational strength and message persuasiveness

⁵ Each model looking at the moderators was run four times, using each condition as the comparison, in order to obtain the full set of results. The results for the models using promotion fit, prevention fit, and prevention nonfit conditions as the comparison condition can be found in Appendix C.

compared to people in the Promotion Nonfit condition, but this difference is only marginally significant.

Table 6.6. OLS Coefficients (SE) for Regulatory Focus Strength by Condition Interactions (Promotion Nonfit is the comparison condition)

Main Effects	Persuasion	Efficacy	Vote Index	Intent
Promotion Fit	-.048 (.15)	.01 (.15)	.23 (.15)	-.03 (.20)
Prevention Fit	-.14 (.15)	-.03 (.15)	.04 (.15)	-.13 (.20)
Prevention Nonfit	-.08 (.16)	-.17 (.15)	.19 (.15)	.15 (.20)
Regulatory Focus Strength	.05 (.05)	.07 (.05)	.02 (.05)	.03 (.06)
RF Strength Interactions				
Promotion Fit	.12 (.09)	-.05 (.09)	.05 (.09)	.12 (.12)
Prevention Fit	.07 (.07)	-.03 (.07)	.08 (.07)	.07 (.13)
Prevention Nonfit	.16 (.10) [^]	-.06 (.09)	.10 (.09)	.15 (.13)
Constant	4.95 (.10) ^{***}	2.93 (.10) ^{***}	5.51 (.10) ^{***}	4.78 (.14) ^{***}
<i>F</i>	3.15 ^{**}	.75	2.23 [*]	1.96 [^]
<i>N</i>	609	606	606	609
<i>R</i> ²	.035	.009	.025	.022

[^] $p \leq .10$; ^{*} $p \leq .05$; ^{**} $p \leq .01$; ^{***} $p \leq .001$.

There is no relationship with motivational strength and efficacy across all conditions. In addition, the Prevention Fit condition is the only group that has a significant, positive relationship between motivational strength and perceived value in voting. Last, the Prevention Nonfit condition is the only group of participants who have a positive relationship between motivational strength and a higher intention to vote. While these two main effects come out of the models, none of the interactions between regulatory fit and strength are significant across the models – looking at efficacy, vote value, and vote intention. Therefore, strength does not appear to affect the relationship between experiencing regulatory fit and voting behavior and attitudes.

Whereas, strength of regulatory focus impacted the connection between strategy and efficacy in the previous chapter, this is not the case in the experimental setting. Contrary to expectations, people in the regulatory fit conditions did not have a stronger sense of efficacy

as motivation increased. On the plus side, even though participants in the promotion focus condition reported stronger motivation to meet their listed goals, this does not appear to affect the relationship between regulatory fit and voting behavior and attitudes.

Persuasiveness

Second, under regulatory fit, the extent the GOTV message is perceived as persuasive should impact voting behavior and attitudes. As the perceived message persuasiveness strengthens under regulatory fit, intentions to vote should rise and attitudes should be more positive. I interacted each condition with the persuasiveness variable and ran a set of models looking at the three main dependent variables - voting intention, vote value index, and efficacy - to determine if the effects of regulatory fit versus nonfit vary based on the perceived strength of the GOTV message.

Table 6.7 examines this relationship using the dummy variable indicating whether participants were in a condition activating regulatory fit or nonfit. While persuasion is associated with more positive attitudes and a higher intention to vote, the interactions are not significant; persuasiveness of the GOTV message does not affect the relationship between regulatory fit and attitudes.

	Efficacy	Vote Value	Vote Intent
Regulatory Fit	.10 (.10)	.04 (.09)	-.11 (.11)
Persuasiveness	.17 (.06)**	.42 (.05)***	.88 (.06)***
Regulatory Focus x Persuasiveness	-.01 (.08)	.01 (.07)	-.12 (.09)
Constant	2.83 (.07)***	5.62 (.06)***	4.85 (.07)***
<i>F</i>	6.90***	48.11	136.30***
<i>N</i>	607	607	610
<i>R</i> ²	.03	.19	.40

[^] p ≤ .10; * p ≤ .05; ** p ≤ .01; *** p ≤ .001.

Table 6.8 repeats the analyses but looks at the interactions between each condition and message persuasiveness. Overall, as the GOTV message persuasiveness increases, people report perceiving voting as more valuable and more likely to do so. The relationship between persuasion and efficacy is also positive for all conditions but, this relationship is only marginally significant for the Promotion Fit condition).

Table 6.8. OLS Coefficients (SE) for Persuasion by Condition Interactions (Promotion Nonfit is the comparison condition)

Main Effects	Efficacy	Vote Index	Intent
Promotion Fit	.05 (.14)	.24 (.13) [^]	.001 (.15)
Prevention Fit	.02 (.14)	.07 (.13)	-.06 (.15)
Prevention Nonfit	-.14 (.14)	.23 (.13) [^]	.20 (.15)
Persuasion	.20 (.08)*	.54 (.07)***	.94 (.09)***
Persuasion Interactions			
Promotion Fit	-.06 (.12)	-.20 (.11) [^]	-.15 (.12)
Prevention Fit	-.01 (.10)	-.06 (.10)	-.20 (.11) [^]
Prevention Nonfit	-.04 (.11)	-.24 (.10)*	-.13 (.12)
Constant	2.91 (.10)***	5.56 (.09)***	4.86 (.10)***
<i>F</i>	3.19**	22.93***	58.96***
<i>N</i>	608	608	610
<i>R</i> ²	.036	.211	.406

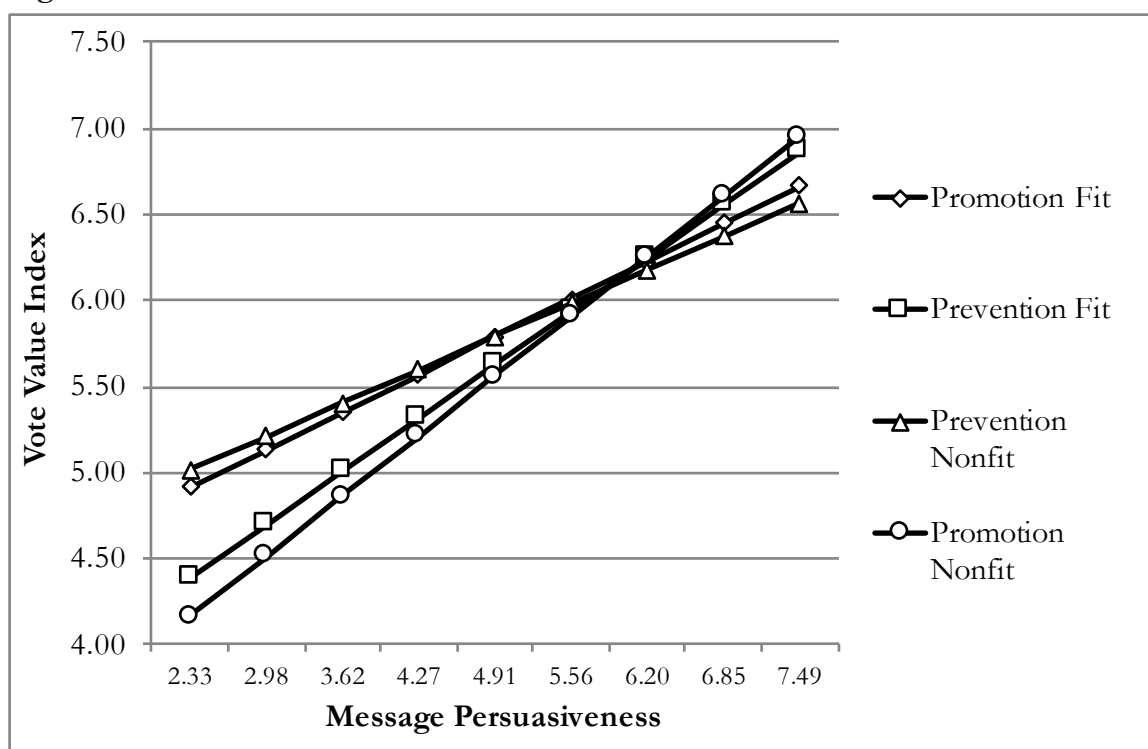
[^] $p \leq .10$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$.

As Table 6.8 shows, there is little evidence that the relationship between perceived persuasiveness and voting attitudes differs across the four conditions. None of the interactions are significant for the efficacy models – all groups show a similar, positive relationship between GOTV message persuasiveness and efficacy.

There is somewhat more evidence, based on the interactions, that persuasiveness impacts the relationship with regulatory fit and seeing value in voting. While all conditions show a positive relationship between persuasion and reports on the value of voting, this relationship somewhat differs based on condition. Figure 6.3 shows the patten of the interaction between persuasiveness and condition on the value of voting. The relationship

between persuasiveness and vote value is more positive for people in the Promotion Nonfit condition compared to the Promotion Fit and Prevention Nonfit conditions. Also, the Prevention Fit group has a more positive relationship compared to the Prevention Nonfit participants. People in the prevention condition meet the expectation that increased persuasiveness is associated with a more positive attitude, people in the promotion condition do not show the relationship.

Figure 6.3. Interaction Between Persuasion and Condition for the Vote Value Index



The last set of models in Table 6.8 concerns the intention to vote. Participants in all conditions report a higher intention to vote as perceived persuasiveness increases. There is little evidence within the interactions that this relationship differs based on condition. Promotion Nonfit participants report slightly higher intentions to vote as persuasiveness increases compared to participants in the Prevention Fit condition. Overall, the expectation

was not found, perceived persuasiveness of the GOTV message does not increase voting intentions for people in a state of regulatory fit.

6.6 Discussion

Regulatory fit was expected to increase positive attitudes and motivation towards political participation through misattribution by making participation “feel right”. Chapter 5 looked at regulatory fit as a process-based fit between a participant’s dominant regulatory focus and how the person participates and makes decisions within the political world. I used an outcome-based approach in this chapter to look at the effect of regulatory fit by inducing a regulatory focus state and, subsequently, altering the framing of the political context through a GOTV message. In both cases, there is little evidence in the existence of a relationship between regulatory fit and political attitudes and behavior; the few significant findings are more complicated than a simple, direct effect of fit increasing attitudes.

The findings for this chapter show that participants induced into a promotion focus reported a marginally higher intention to vote and more positive perceptions of the value to vote compared to participants induced into a prevention focus. There were no effects seen between participants who received the eager or vigilant GOTV message. In regard to the main hypotheses, regulatory fit did not increase the perceived persuasiveness of the GOTV message, external efficacy, perceived value of voting, or the intention to vote.

Using the four individual conditions rather than the dichotomous fit versus nonfit measure did expose some differences. Main effects highlight the previous findings regarding more positive attitudes under a promotion focus versus prevention focus. Participants in the Promotion Fit (marginally) and Nonfit (significantly) reported higher mean attitudes concerning voting as a valuable form of participation compared to those in the Prevention Fit and Nonfit conditions. As for the interaction terms, looking at the individual conditions

did not substantiate the hypotheses. Promotion focus induced participants have higher evaluations of voting.

Since a direct effect of regulatory fit was absent in the main analyses, I examined the impact motivational strength and persuasiveness of the GOTV message on the relationship between regulatory fit and voting behavior and attitudes. Contrary to the expectation, regulatory strength had little affect on the relationship between regulatory fit and the dependent variables. Second, in all cases, increases in persuasiveness also led to an increase in positive attitudes and intention to vote. However, the people in the Prevention Fit condition had a stronger relationship between persuasiveness and voting value perceptions than the Prevention Nonfit participants.

The previous chapter discussed how research should examine ways the political atmosphere may increase positivity towards participation for those who do not hold a high level of promotion focus. The results, here, show exposure to a strong GOTV message that has a vigilant underlining increases perceptions of voting as a valuable form of participation for those in a prevention state. This may be a first signal in being able to determine how to increase positive perceptions of working within the political system for those with a prevention focus. Promotion focused individuals are already more likely to participate and have positive attitudes regarding political participation, so the exposure to a persuasive pro-participation message may not be needed to increase positive attitudes or participation. However, strong, vigilant or prevention framed pro-participatory messages may be more effective for those who do not have a predisposition towards these attitudes and behaviors.

6.6.1 GOTV Messages and Persuasion

The argument above suggested that GOTV message research is missing out on effects based on the notion that a majority of the current scripts utilize language associated

with prevention focus. The findings, overall, do not show that an eager framed message, geared towards promotion focus individuals would lead to differences in findings.

Participants in the Promotion Fit condition did have marginally higher perceptions of voting as valuable compared to participants in the Prevention Fit and Nonfit conditions but this pattern is not consistent across all of the voting attitude variables. It appears that promotion oriented people are more likely to have more positive attitudes regardless of the type of persuasive technique used.

There are many instances in which persuasion techniques work better at changing attitudes. One argument, the matching hypothesis, states that a message consistent with a person's psychological traits is more persuasive (Lavine & Snyder 1996; Petty, et al. 2000; DeBono & Snyder 1989). Based on this principle, I hypothesized that a message matching the regulatory focus of a participant would be more persuasive. However, the findings do not show an increase in the persuasiveness of the GOTV between the regulatory fit and nonfit conditions.

However, the positive relationship between how message persuasiveness and the value in voting was stronger for those in the Prevention Fit and Promotion Nonfit conditions. Emotional reactions trigger an attitude change for promotion focused people while cognitive elaboration is used within prevention focus (Lee & Aaker 2004). The emotional based attitude change occurring within the promotion fit condition is weaker (e.g. Petty & Cacioppo 1986), leading to lower impacts on voting attitudes. This would indicate that people in the Prevention Fit and the Promotion Nonfit conditions relied more on cognitive deliberation. This would explain the increase in vote value for both groups – cognitive deliberations lead to stronger attitude changes that are more likely to be linked to each other. Further research should explore the mechanism in which the change is occurring and

consequences of regulatory fit regarding messages; persuasion through regulatory fit may lead to more attitude change for prevention but not promotion.

6.7 Conclusion

Using an experimental design, I manipulated regulatory focus and a GOTV message, independently, to test the effect of regulatory fit on message persuasiveness, external efficacy, the value of voting as a form of participation, and the intention to vote. My findings demonstrate no clear evidence that regulatory fit increases these attitudes and behaviors versus a state of nonfit. However, differences in the relationships among attitudes towards voting emerge based on being in a state of promotion or prevention fit and nonfit.

The evidence suggests that in some cases, there is a stronger relationship between voting attitudes within a prevention fit condition. This is important in that these relationships are ultimately tied to a person's decision to turnout on Election Day. In addition, the findings offer an initial glimpse into how the political atmosphere may encourage participation amongst those with a higher prevention and lower promotion focus, which was brought up in the previous chapter.

Further research should continue exploring how to increase the motivation to and positive attitudes about political participation for prevention focused citizens. In addition, different types of messages should be explored in the examination of regulatory fit and voting attitudes and behavior. The political world is filled with all kinds of persuasive messages, ranging from GOTV campaigns, to candidate appeals, to policy arguments. Regulatory fit may impact any or all of these attempts to change the minds of citizens.

CHAPTER 7 Conclusion: The Motivation Behind Political Attitudes and Behavior

Why should political scientists care about regulatory focus? The short answer is because it affects behavior. The field is familiar with the trait approach to personality, such as the Big 5 (i.e. Mondak 2010). However, RFT approaches personality as a process of motivated cognition; personality is about how people perceive goals and go about reaching them (Higgins 2008; Higgins & Scholer 2008; Scholer & Higgins 2010). This has powerful implications on people's behavior, including how they act within the political world.

Political acts, whether taking a position on an issue or voting, begin with a goal. When and how that goal is met depends on a person's motivational system, in this case, whether the person is promotion or prevention oriented. Promotion focus is associated with using eager strategies to meet goals. On the other hand, prevention oriented people use vigilant strategies (Higgins 1997). Implications of this range from information processing to emotional outcomes of either goal attainment or failure (Forster & Werth 2009; Higgins 1997; Molden et al. 2008).

As I have previously discussed, there is no strict barrier separating the political from the social world. Many scholars, media personnel, and lay people like to believe that when it comes to the political world, people are rational. However, time and time again, attitudes and behavior are influenced by the same biases, irrationality, and error displayed in everyday life (Alford, et al. 2005; Inbar et al. 2009, 2012; Lodge & Taber 2005, 2013; Marcus, et al. 2000; Mondak 2010; Oxley et al. 2008). As I have shown, regulatory focus also affects how people relate and work within the political world.

7.1 Regulatory Focus as the Intersection of General and Political Life

By far my most comprehensive finding throughout the project is the congruence between everyday and political behavior based on RFT tenants in Chapter 3. People who use eager strategies to meet goals within their everyday life also use these tactics in the political world. In addition, people who use vigilant strategies across general life activities met political goals in the same way. Going back to Jackie from the introduction, if she roots for Rogers to throw a touchdown pass to Jordy Nelson, she is likely to put a pro-candidate bumper sticker on her car; if she roots for the defense to sack the Vikings quarterback, she is likely to put an anti-candidate bumper sticker on her car.

What is new about the current project is that it really looks into people's motivations behind their vote choice rather than looking at why people vote a certain way versus another. Prevention orientation is associated with a higher desire to vote against a candidate, which is not how the U.S. system is set up (Dolinski & Drogosz 2011). However, I showed that some people are informally voting against candidates rather than picking the most preferred candidate. While people who use eager strategies in everyday life do decide who their favorite is and vote for him/her, people who use vigilant strategies base their vote on who they dislike the most and then vote for the other candidate.

While strategies were clearly connected across social domains, the role of a person's chronic regulatory focus was not so clear. Promotion focus was associated with using eager strategies to meet a range of general life goals as well as political ones. However, I did not find the expected connection between prevention focus and vigilant strategies. The question remains why was I able to find a strong promotion and eager strategy connection but not one between prevention and vigilant strategies.

One answer is that not only does RFT explain the motivation orientation of a person, but also the environment (Higgins 1997). As I previously expressed, the political environment, especially elections, can best be described as promotion orientated. More research should look into the connection between promotion and prevention within the realm of primary elections. Primary elections may be able to distinguish the strategies between regulatory foci. General elections are always going to have people that will vote for their party's candidate without much thinking. On the other hand, primary elections have people choosing intra-party and motivation systems are likely to play a larger part in understanding why a person chose a certain candidate.

In addition, research should look into the current social and political environment. Different societies have distinct balances of regulatory foci and economic circumstances can alter the balance (Higgins 2008; Lee, et al. 2000; Welzel 2007; Welzel & Inglehart 2010). The election between President Trump and Hillary Clinton may prove to be an interesting avenue to examine regulatory focus and political attitudes. As previously stated, the number of vigilant aspects of the campaign, both within the formal campaigns and the citizenry, was much stronger than previous elections. For example, the number of people choosing to vote one way or another because of their dislike for the opposition was much larger than in previous years. In addition, the number of people choosing to abstain because of dislike for both candidates was much larger than in previous years (Lopez & Flores 2017; Pew Research Center 2016). Whereas the political environment traditionally fits more with a promotion-eager orientation, political unrest and alienation may invite a more prevention-vigilant orientation.

7.2 Regulatory Focus and Political Attitudes

After looking at broad behavior across life domains, I turned to political attitudes. Many of the same differences found between conservatives and liberals align with differences between promotion and prevention focused people. For example, liberalism and promotion focus is associated with being more cognitively flexible and attuned to positive information, while conservatism and prevention focus show connections with using negative information and being more rigid (Amodio, et al. 2004; Carraro, et al. 2011; Dodd, et al. 2012; Fazio, et al. 2004; Forster, et al. 2001; Friedman & Forster 2000; Hetherington & Suhay 2011; Hibbing et al. 2014; Lockwood et al. 2002; Rock & Janoff-Bulman 2010; Shook & Fazio 2009). In addition, researchers have argued and shown liberalism and promotion orientation is connected while conservatives are more likely to be prevention focused (Jost, et al. 2003). My findings dispel the notion that there is a direct connection between ideological attitudes and regulatory focus.

The link between regulatory focus and ideology may be more complicated. As just mentioned, both ideological predispositions and regulatory orientations, align with the propensity to direct attention, learn, and act based on the valence of information and the environment. Future research should focus on this aspect. Rather than looking at a direct connection, emphasis should be placed on the mediating effect of the sensitivity towards negative stimuli driving the relationship between policy and ideological attitudes with regulatory focus.

In contrast to the ideological direction, Lucas and Molden (2011) argued regulatory focus and policy attitudes connect based on issue content – growth policies correlate with promotion and security ones with prevention. I did not find any solid evidence of this with the issues I examined. Interactions between focus and self-reported ideology did not help in

providing a solid connection between attitudes and motivational orientation. If this agenda is going to continue it must take into account how people perceive the policy. Some people may support gay rights because it secures civil rights. Others may oppose gay rights because they want to secure traditional values. In this case prevention scores could correlate with both sides of the policy issue.

In the final examination of issue attitudes, I took a different look at the connection with regulatory focus by emphasizing the policy environment. People who are promotion or prevention oriented move towards goals differently based on the status quo. A state of promotion is concerned with moving past the status quo to a more positive end state – going from 0 to +1. On the other hand, a state of prevention leads to a more concern that the outcome is not worse than the status quo or getting back to a certain point – moving from -1 to 0 (Scholer et al. 2008, 2010). By providing some guidance of the current policy issue I was able to show a strong connection between attitude strength and promotion in three of the four issues. People with a stronger promotion system were more likely to prefer policies that move the issue beyond the current state.

RFT is based not only on a person's motivational orientation, but also on how the environment creates a goal and motivation structure. Because of this, research should focus on the interaction of the environment and regulatory focus. Researchers should attempt to understand how people perceive the policy environment and connect these perceptions with regulatory focus and policy attitudes.

Beyond research, policy activists and government officials should understand the effect of how regulatory focus creates policy environments. Framing is not a new thing in politics and has strong effects on people's attitudes (Chong & Druckman 2007; Entman 2004; Iyengar 1991; Nelson, Clawson, & Oxley 1997). Regulatory focus should be

considered an important variable in these studies. If you want to convince people that a policy does not go far enough, the message should be based on promotion and eager strategies to get there; this emphasizes from going beyond the status quo. On the other hand, if an activist wants to emphasize how a policy oversteps, a frame encompassing prevention and vigilant strategies should be used – basing the argument that the policy will drop below the preferred reference point. Again, the person by environment interaction should be emphasized when looking at political issue attitudes and regulatory focus.

7.3 Regulatory Fit and Political Attitudes and Behavior

The final two chapters emphasize just the issue I was discussing – the combined impact of regulatory focus and the environment – by looking at regulatory fit effects. Regulatory fit occurs when the environment matches a person’s regulatory state or when a person uses the strategies to meet a goal that correspond with their regulatory state (Aaker & Lee 2006; Higgins 2000). Regulatory fit can have large effects on people’s feeling towards their attempts to meet a goal and their success or failure at doing so. In addition, regulatory fit increases the value of a target object and confidence in the decisions (Cesario et al. 2004; Frietas & Higgins 2002; Higgins 2000; Hong & Lee 2008; Idson et al. 2000).

I first looked at the role of regulatory fit on external efficacy – people’s behavior impacts government officials and others’ actions (Campbell, et al. 1954; Lane 1959; Madsen 1987; Craig, et al. 1990) – by examining how people use strategies that either correspond or contradict their chronic regulatory focus. Does Jackie, from the introduction, think she has a larger impact if she experiences regulatory fit within the political world?

My findings showed that if Jackie is more likely to use eager strategies and has any strong sense of motivational orientation she will also have an increase in external efficacy attitudes. While this may seem counterintuitive, I argue that eager strategies match the

political environment more so than vigilant ones. Therefore, even if someone is prevention oriented, the environment and eager strategy create regulatory fit, increases the value in pursuing political goals.

Using vigilant strategies was associated with an increase in efficacy for people with low levels of prevention and promotion. This may be due to the minimal nature of vigilant strategies. People that are apathetic in the general, social world may also be politically apathetic. Then, regulatory fit may occur when they act against the parts of the political world that they do not like – or maybe they dislike all to some extent. As I discussed with the case of Donald Trump's election, vigilant tactics may be rewarding for people with very negative attitudes already – they feel as though they need to get from the current state to a neutral point or a previous status quo.

However, I also expected goal success and failure to impact the relationship between fit and efficacy. One hallmark of regulatory fit is that winning can feel really good for people in a promotion state but losing feels really bad for those with a prevention focus (Cesario, et al. 2004; Frietas & Higgins 2000; Higgins et al. 2003; Idson, et al. 2004). Goal success or failure, in terms of voting for a winning or losing candidate, affects efficacious attitudes (Finkel 1985; Iyengar 1980; Valentino, et al. 2009; Weissberg 1975). Regulatory fit can exacerbate the feelings associated with how a citizen's does in the election.

My findings show that people with a strong promotion orientation who use eager strategies have increased efficacy when their candidate wins. However, if these same people use vigilant tactics and fail to vote for the winning candidate, efficacious attitudes increase as well. This exemplifies the effect between regulatory focus and the political environment – regulatory fit can increase the positive value of winning and regulatory nonfit can inhibit the negative effect of losing.

This finding offers a great avenue to examine the more affective attitudes towards the political world. Little research has examined psychological underpinnings of external efficacy, but it likely has an affective component based on research looking at emotions and election outcomes (Britt 2003; Pierce, et al. 2015; Stanton et al. 2009, 2010). In order to really understand how regulatory fit and unfit connect to being electorally successful or not should examine the strength of emotional reactions towards winning and losing. Promotion focus people should experience elation under success and dejection under failure; on the other side, prevention focused people should feel agitated after failure and calm after success (Higgins et al. 1986, 1997; Idosn et al. 2000; Liberman et al. 2005). These emotional outcomes change how people feel about their political participation.

These findings may be helpful to lawmakers and others interested in maintaining an active citizenry following an election. If you can boost people's emotional reactions following electoral success, they may be more inclined to continue to participate. On the other hand, sending messages that emphasize regulatory unfit to citizens who just experienced goal failure may increase the motivation to participate again by increasing people's perception of effectiveness. For example, Democrats should send out messages to supporters that reflect a combination of promotion and vigilant facets of the 2016 election, but Republicans should send ones that create regulatory fit, in order to boost efficacy attitudes and hopefully maintain or increase participation levels.

Prior to an election, messages that create regulatory fit can energize people to vote. In the final study, I examined how GOTV messages, differing in emphasizing promotion-eager related prevention-vigilant related words, increase efficacy and motivation to vote for people that are in a promotion versus prevention state, respectively. Most GOTV messages use a more prevention-vigilant tone – strategies include peer pressure, civic duty messages,

or instrumental benefits emphasizing minimizing losses (Green & Gerber 2008). While these may motivate prevention oriented people or, as in my previous findings, those less inclined to have a strong regulatory system, these messages may dampen the vote motivation for people with a strong promotion focus.

When looking at regulatory fit through GOTV messages, I examined the traditional efficacy scale as well as a new scale focusing on how valuable people perceive voting as a form of participation. I was unable to find evidence that the GOTV messages affected either of these attitudes based on their regulatory fit state. I did find evidence that matches my previous findings. People induced into a promotion state were more likely to report that voting as more valuable and a higher intention to vote. In addition, I looked at the relationship between regulatory fit and motivation strength and message persuasiveness with efficacy, vote value, and vote intention. These interaction terms did little to understand the relationship between regulatory fit and GOTV message.

Efficacy is an important component of democracy and should continue to be studied by researchers. Because promotion and the use of eager strategies has a larger connection with participation and coincides with the general goal of an election, these types of messages should be pursued further. While the “d” term represents civic duty as a motivator for political behavior (Downs 1957; Riker & Ordeshook 1973), it is not the only reason people may be inclined to vote. Messages heralding the pro-social aspect of voting and how voting grows a sense of American identity may entice promotion focused people more than the civic duty and peer pressure messages.

On the other hand, I have repeatedly found low participation levels and attitudes for people with a high prevention focus or no strong regulatory system. Messages need to also look to boost attitudes and participation among these types of people. People with little

motivation may never be persuaded to participate, but my previous findings show that they are more inclined to use vigilant strategies. Perhaps a very strong message utilizing a vigilant tone could persuade even the most apathetic.

Last, messages using regulator fit do not have to only involve campaigns. As I mentioned before, framing is common in the political world. Given the ability of using regulatory fit has to persuade people (Lee & Aaker 2004; Cesario et al. 2004; Evans & Petty 2003; Pham & Avnet 2004), policy arguments could benefit from taking RFT into account. Messages utilizing the concepts from regulatory fit could make policy arguments stronger. This could be done by priming both a regulatory focus and related strategy within the same argument. For example, a message could introduce an issue using promotion or prevention language and then using strategic eager or vigilant language terms to describe how the policy meets the specific policy goal. Regulatory fit within the message would increase persuasion and motivation to act on the issue. Not only do people create regulatory fit by meeting goals in accordance with their regulatory state, but the environment can create regulatory fit.

7.4 Limitations

No research project is perfect and mine is no different in having several shortcomings. First, across all studies, I recruited participants using Amazon's Mechanical Turk (AMT). One problem is that this means the surveys and experiment were all done online without knowing how distracted people were while working on the survey and experiment. I attempted to mitigate this problem by using attention items and programming the experiment so that participants had to spend a certain amount of time on the GOTV message before being able to move on to the experiment. I also limited who could participate – requiring the AMT worker to have a U.S. IP address and had completed 1,000 projects with at least a 95 percent success rate. In addition, my sample was skewed to the

liberal side, which has been previously reported (Paolacci et al. 2010). While not a random sample, AMT workers have been shown to pay more attention and act comparably to off-line samples (Antoun, Zhang, Conrad, & Schober 2016; Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling 2011; Paolacci et al. 2010). While the lack of random sampling is a limitation on the validity of my projects, the research on AMT shows that it is an adequate way to obtain a sample.

The second limitation has to do with the surveys. In the quest to examine how behavior crosses life domains, I created a unique instrument – the Regulatory Focus, General, and Political Life survey. Items asked about a large range of behaviors people may encounter in everyday life and a number of political activities. People were asked how they acted when performing the behavior and how they felt about their impact. Even if people had not previously performed the behavior, I still had them answer all the questions as if they would complete the action. Removing responses from people that had not performed the actions would have drastically cut my Ns or the number of items used in the scales – only 13 percent reported previously voting for a reality competition contestant and only 11 percent reported putting a political bumper sticker on their car. People may err in reporting how they would behave or they would feel about their actions. This may have caused some problems in looking at behavior in Chapter 3 and Chapter 5.

The second issue with the survey concerns the low level of vigilant strategy reports in the Regulatory Focus, General, and Political Life survey. The strategy items were created with the common themes associated with promotion and prevention. The vigilant items reflect aspects associated with viewing goals as minimal, avoidance of going beyond the minimum qualifications, and a pronounced negativity bias based on the literature surrounding regulatory focus. These may produce social desirability effects, which are common in survey research (Berinsky 1999, 2002; Streb et al. 2008; Tourangeau & Yan

2007). The lower reported levels of using vigilant strategies, especially in the political domain, is likely due to the unwillingness to report minimal performances and enjoying the negative side of politics. In addition, promotion focus is associated with using a broader categorization scheme (Crowe & Higgins 1997; Liberman et al. 2001; Molden & Higgins 2004, 2008). Participants with a stronger promotion focus may perceive that they would or had used a wider range of behaviors compared to people with a prevention focus leading to the divergent levels between eager and vigilant strategies.

Even with these two shortcomings with the main survey, I filled a large void in the literature on political behavior. To my knowledge, there is no research comparing concrete behaviors between general and political life. Future iterations should use a larger number of activities and attempt to obtain a sample with more experience seeking the specific goals.

The final shortcoming has to do with the experiment in Chapter 6 looking at regulatory fit and GOTV messages. I independently manipulated both regulatory focus and the message to create a 2 x 2 design. This may have created problems, especially for people that have a strong prevention system who have been shown to be less affected by primes (Haws et al. 2012; Lisjack, Molden, & Lee 2012). However, I manipulated focus in order to ensure a balance between conditions of regulatory fit and unfit groups. In addition, I wanted to ensure that participants had either regulatory system activated at the time in order to make a causal argument. Due to the lack of findings, the experiment should be repeated but by using a measure of chronic focus and only manipulating the GOTV message.

7.5 Final Thoughts

There are two main conclusions that I have repeated throughout the project. First, political behavior is not special. This is not to say that the field of political science should be abandoned, it is distinct in the topics it covers. However, nor should it ignore what governs

behavior in people's everyday life. Goals matter; behavior requires goals (Austin and Vancouver 1996). Regulatory focus, as a motivational theory, offers a singular source of information concerning the origins of political behavior from both the person and the environment.

Regulatory focus posits personality is based on a person's motivational systems and how they bias people's view of the social world and the strategies used to approach goals within it (Higgins 1997, 2008; Higgins & Scholer 2008; Scholer & Higgins 2010). Promotion focus sees goals as ideals and their pursuit reflects an eager strategy – approaching possible opportunities to reach a desired end state. Prevention focus perceives goals as obligations and are met through vigilance – avoiding obstacles to reaching the preferred outcome (Crowe & Higgins 1997; Higgins 1996, 1997; Higgins et al. 1994; Molden et al. 2008). These systems matter for political behavior. People that reach goals in everyday life using eager or vigilant strategies do the same in pursuit of political aims.

The second thought is the importance of examining the interaction of the environment and person through a regulatory focus lens. I explicitly looked at this interaction in the final two chapters looking at regulatory fit and political attitudes and behavior. When a person's goal pursuit matches their motivational state a “feeling of right” occurs and this is passed on to attitudes about their behavior and the outcomes of it (Cesario, et al. 2004; Cesario & Higgins 2008; Freitas & Higgins 2002; Higgins 2000, 2005; Idson, et al. 2004).

Environment-person interactions are also important because the political world imposes regulatory focus onto the environment. For example, elections require people to choose their most preferred candidate, which frames the system as promotion oriented. On the other hand, campaigns are framed using negative references such as how the candidate is

going to take back Washington. How the political environment is structured can impact how people interact – or their choice to not participate – based on the regulatory structure imposed.

In closing, I have taken a broad stroke in examining how regulatory focus is associated with political behavior and attitudes. Motivational systems matter in how people relate to politicians, issues, and their own political behavior. Future research should continue to examine the impact of regulatory focus on these issues.

CHAPTER 8 Appendix A: Survey and Experiment Items

A.1 Regulatory Focus, General and Political Life Survey

Participation, efficacy and promotion/prevention strategy in life and politics questions

NOTE: For each set of questions, the first asks if the person participates in the area the behavior is involved. The next question, labeled “a”, asks about efficacy when the behavior is performed. The second set of questions, labeled “b”, ask about the regulatory strategy used. The questions are phrased differently based on whether someone is involved in the behavior or not. The responses listed for the first question are the same for all.

1 (Sports Team). Are you a fan of any professional sports teams?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

1a. (If yes) Thinking about your favorite team, how likely is the organization to take your views, as a fan, into account when making decisions?

- 1 Very Unlikely
- 2 Unlikely
- 3 Somewhat unlikely
- 4 Undecided
- 5 Somewhat likely
- 6 Likely
- 7 Very Likely

(If yes) Thinking about a time when you performed a ritual to help your team win, how likely is it that the ritual actually helped?

- 1 Very Unlikely
- 2 Unlikely
- 3 Somewhat unlikely
- 4 Undecided
- 5 Somewhat likely
- 6 Likely
- 7 Very Likely

(If no) If you were a fan of a team, how likely would the organization be to take your views, as a fan, into account when making decisions?

- 1 Very Unlikely
- 2 Unlikely
- 3 Somewhat unlikely
- 4 Undecided
- 5 Somewhat likely
- 6 Likely
- 7 Very Likely

(If no) If you were a fan of a sports team, how likely would a ritual performed to help your team win actually help?

- 1 Very Unlikely

- 2 Unlikely
- 3 Somewhat unlikely
- 4 Somewhat likely
- 5 Undecided
- 6 Likely
- 7 Very Likely

1b. (If yes) When watching your favorite sports team, how likely are you to cheer for the team's offense more than the defense?

- 1 Very Unlikely
- 2 Unlikely
- 3 Somewhat Unlikely
- 4 Undecided
- 5 Somewhat Likely
- 6 Likely
- 7 Very Likely

(If yes) When watching your favorite sports team, how likely are you to cheer for the team's defense more than the offense?

- 1 Very Unlikely
- 2 Unlikely
- 3 Somewhat Unlikely
- 4 Undecided
- 5 Somewhat Likely
- 6 Likely
- 7 Very Likely

(If no) If you were to watch a team in a sports competition, how likely would you be to cheer for the offense more than the defense?

- 1 Very Unlikely
- 2 Unlikely
- 3 Somewhat Unlikely
- 4 Undecided
- 5 Somewhat Likely
- 6 Likely
- 7 Very Likely

(If no) If you were to watch a team in a sports competition, how likely would you be to cheer for the defense more than the offense?

- 1 Very Unlikely
- 2 Unlikely
- 3 Somewhat Unlikely
- 4 Undecided
- 5 Somewhat Likely
- 6 Likely
- 7 Very Likely

2. (PRAY) Do you pray or talk to a higher power?

2a. (If yes) Thinking about a time when you prayed or spoke with a higher power, how likely did the higher power you talk with see what you have to say as important?

(If no) If you were to talk with a higher power, how likely would it see that what you have to say as important?

2b. (If yes) When you pray or talk with a higher power, how likely are you to request that something good happen?

(If yes) When you pray or talk with a higher power, how likely are you to request that something bad does not happen?

(If no) If you were to pray or talk with a higher power, how likely would you be to request that something good happen?

(If no) If you were to pray or talk with a higher power, how likely would you be to request that something bad does not happen?

3. (SKILL) Do you have a skill, hobby, or talent that your friends and/or family know about?

3a. (If yes) Thinking about a time when someone asked your advice concerning a skill, hobby or talent you have, how likely is it that the person used the information you give them?

(If no) If you did have a skill, hobby, or talent and someone asked your advice concerning it, how likely would the person be to use the information you gave them?

3b. (If yes) If you are engaged in that task regarding a particular skill, hobby or talent that you have, how likely are you to try and repeat what you have done before that was successful?

(If yes) If you are engaged in that task regarding a particular skill, hobby or talent that you have, how likely are you to try and avoid what you have done in before that led to failure?

(If no) If you were to do a task regarding a particular skill, hobby or talent, how likely would you be to try and repeat what you have done before that was successful?

(If no) If you were to do a task regarding a particular skill, hobby or talent, how likely would you be to try and avoid what you have done in before that led to failure?

4. (COMMENT) Do you ever leave comments about places of business, such as restaurants or stores, either online or at the business?

4a. (If yes) Thinking about a comment you have made as a customer, how likely were your views taken into account by the management and/or owners of the business?

(If no) If you were to make a comment as a customer, how likely would your views be taken into account by the management and/or owners of the business?

4b. (If yes) When leaving a comment about a place of business such as a restaurant, how likely are you to tell them how to make your next visit more enjoyable?

4b. (If yes) When leaving a comment about a place of business such as a restaurant, how likely are you tell them why you are never coming back?

(If no) If you were to leave a comment about a place of business such as a restaurant, how likely would you be to tell them how to make your next visit more enjoyable?

(If no) If you were to leave a comment about a place of business such as a restaurant, how likely would you be to tell them why you are never coming back?

5. (JOB) Do you have a job?

5a. (If yes) Thinking about your job, how likely is your boss to think your comments about the job or company are important?

(If no) If you had a job, how likely would your boss think that your comments about the job or company are important?

5b. (If yes) When working, how likely is your job performance based on getting strong evaluations?

5b. (If yes) When working, how likely is your job performance based on avoiding getting in trouble?

(If no) If you were working, how likely would you base your job performance on getting strong evaluations?

(If no) If you were working, how likely would your job performance be on avoiding getting into trouble?

6. (REALITY) Do you vote in any reality competition shows on television where the audience decides who goes on in the competition, such as American Idol, So You Think You Can Dance, X factor, etc?

6a. (If yes) Thinking about a time when you voted for a contestant, how likely did your vote(s) matters in determining who stayed in the competition and who left?

(If no) If you were to vote for a contestant in a reality competition show, how likely would your vote(s) matters in determining who stayed in the competition and who left?

6b. (If yes) When you vote for a reality contestant, how likely are you to pick out your favorite contestant and vote for him/her?

(If yes) When you vote for a reality contestant, how likely are you to pick out your least favorite contestant and vote for someone else?

6b. (If no) If you were to vote for a reality contestant, how likely would you be to pick out your favorite contestant and vote for him/her?

(If no) If you were to vote for a reality contestant, how likely would you be to pick out your least favorite contestant and vote for someone else?

7. (REVIEW) After purchasing an item, do you ever leave a review of it online?

7a. (If yes) Thinking about an online review you have made, how likely were other people to take your review into account when deciding whether or not to purchase the product?

(If no) If you were to leave a comment online, how likely would other people take your review into account when deciding whether or not to purchase the product?

7b. (If yes) When you leave a review of a product online, how likely are you to review a product because you are happy about the choice to buy it?

(If yes) When you leave a review of a product online, how likely are you to review a product because you are angry about the choice to buy it?

(If no) If you purchased a product, how likely would you be to leave a review of it online because you were happy about the choice to buy the product?

(If no) If you purchased a product, how likely would you be to leave a review of it online because you were angry about the choice to buy it?

8. (EVALS) Have you ever filled out detailed evaluations of a course at the university?

8a. (If yes) When thinking about previous evaluations you have filled out, how likely does the professor use your evaluations of the class to improve it the next time (s)he teaches it?

(If no) If you were to fill out class evaluations, how likely would the professor use your evaluations of the class to improve it the next time (s)he teaches it?

8b. (If yes) When filling out a class evaluation, how likely are you to write a lot in the sections asking about what you liked about the course?

(If yes) When filling out a class evaluation, how likely are you to write a lot in the sections asking about what you did not like about the class?

(If no) If you were to fill out a class evaluation, how likely would you be to write a lot in the sections asking about what you liked about the course?

(If no) If you were to fill out a class evaluation, how likely would you be to write a lot in the sections asking about what you did not like about the class?

9. (GAMES) Do you play video games?

9a. (If yes) Thinking about a time when you talked about a video game, how likely did the other person think that your opinion on the game matter?

(If no) If you were to play a video game, how likely would another person think that your opinion on the game matter?

9b. (If yes) When playing a video game, how likely are you to attempt to get as many points as possible in each level?

(If yes) When playing a video game, how likely are you to just try to finish the level without dying?

(If no) If you were to play a video game, how likely would you be to attempt to get as many points as possible in each level?

(If no) If you were to play a video game, how likely would you be to just try to finish the level without dying?

10. (GRP PROJ) Have you had to do any group projects for a class or work?

10a. (If yes) Thinking about a group project you have participated in, how likely was it that your peers respected your views on the assignment and try to integrate them into the project?

(If no) Thinking about what would happen if you participated in a group project, how likely would your peers respect your views on the assignment and try to integrate them into the project?

10b. (If yes) When you participate in a group project, how likely are you to do as much work as possible to make sure that the outcome is viewed as good?

(If yes) When you participate in a group project, how likely are you to only do enough work so that the outcome is not viewed as poor?

(If no) If you were to participate in a group project, how likely would you be to do as much work as possible to make sure that the outcome is viewed as good?

(If no) If you were to participate in a group project, how likely would you be to only do enough work so that the outcome is not viewed as bad?

11. (RECIPE) Have you ever tried a new recipe you found online and left a review of it?

11a. (If yes) Thinking about a recipe you have tried, how likely would you be reviews you have left online, how often do other people searching for a recipe, use your comments to help them decide whether or not to try the recipe?

(If no) If you were to leave a review of a recipe online, how often would other people searching for a recipe use your review to decide whether or not to try the recipe?

11b. (If yes) When using a new recipe, how likely are you to use the recipe as a guide and add/remove ingredients in order to make it taste better?

(If yes) When using a new recipe, how likely are you to be careful to stick closely, or as closely as you can, to the recipe?

(If no) If you were to use a new recipe, how likely would you use the recipe as a guide and add/remove ingredients in order to make it taste better?

(If no) If you were to use a new recipe, how likely would you be careful to stick closely, or as closely as you can, to the recipe?

12. (GROUP) Are you a member of any organized groups or clubs?

12a. (If yes) Thinking about a club or group you are involved in, how likely do other members consider your opinion about the club's activities when making decisions?

(If no) If you were to be a member of a club or group, how likely would other members consider your opinion about the club's activities when making decisions?

12b. (If yes) As a member of your club or group, how likely are you to participate in as many ways as you can?

(If yes) As a member of your club or group, how likely are you to only participate as much as required?

(If no) If you were to be a member of a club or group, how likely would you participate in as many ways as you can?

(If no) If you were to be a member of a club or group, how likely would you to only participate as much as required?

13. (PARTY) Do you consider yourself a member of a political party?

13a. (If yes) As a member of the political party, how likely are party officials to listen and consider your policy ideas important?

(If no) If you were a member of a political party, how likely would party officials listen to and consider your policy ideas as important?

3b. (If yes) When discussing politics, how likely are you to talk about how your political party has the right ideas?

(If yes) When discussing politics, how likely are you to talk about how the opposing party has the wrong ideas?

(If no) If you were to discuss politics, how likely would you talk about how your political party has the right ideas?

(If no) If you were to discuss politics, how likely would you talk about how the opposing party has the wrong ideas?

14. (PRIMARY) Have you ever voted in a primary election?

14a. (If yes) Thinking about when you have voted in a primary election, how likely did your vote matter?

(If no) If you were to vote in a primary election, how likely would your vote matter?

14b. (If yes) When you vote in a primary, how likely are you to vote for the candidate you like the most even if he might lose the general election?

(If yes) When you vote in a primary, how likely are you to vote for the candidate you think can win the general election even if (s)he is not your favorite?

(If no) If you were to vote in a primary, how likely would you vote for the candidate you like the most even if he might lose the general election?

(If no) If you were to vote in a primary, how likely would you vote for the candidate you think can win the general election even if (s)he is not your favorite?

15. (GENERAL) Have you voted in a general elections?

15a. (If yes) Thinking about when you have voted in general elections, how likely was your vote in determining who wins the election?

(If no) If you were to vote in a general election, how likely would your vote determine who wins the election?

15b. (If yes) When voting in a general election, how likely are you to vote for a party because you believe in its platform?

(If yes) When voting in a general election, how likely are you to vote for a party because you oppose the other party's platform?

(If no) If you were to vote in a general election, how likely would you vote for a party because you believe in its platform?

(If no) If you were to vote in a general election, how likely would you vote for a party because you oppose the other party's platform?

16. (BUMP STICK) Have you ever placed a political bumper sticker on your car?

16a. (If yes) Thinking about when you have displayed a political bumper sticker on your car, how likely did it influence other people's opinions?

(If no) If you were to display a political bumper sticker on your car, how likely would it influence other people's opinions?

16b. (If yes) When you put a political bumper sticker on your car, how likely are you to place a bumper sticker that shows your support for a candidate you like?

(If yes) When you put a political bumper sticker on your car, how likely are you to place a bumper sticker that shows that you do not support a candidate you dislike?

(If no) If you were to put a political bumper sticker on your car, how likely would you be to place a bumper sticker that shows your support for a candidate you like?

(If no) If you were to put a political bumper sticker on your car, how likely would you be to place a bumper sticker that shows that you do not support a candidate you dislike?

17. (VOLUNTEER) Have you ever volunteered for a political campaign?

17a. (If yes) Thinking about a time you volunteered for a campaign, how likely did your work impact the outcome of the election?

(If no) If you were to volunteer for a campaign, how likely would your work impact the outcome of the election?

17b. (If yes) When deciding to volunteer for a campaign, how likely are you to volunteer because you want to see the candidate win?

(If yes) When deciding to volunteer for a campaign, how likely are you to volunteer because you want to see the opposing candidate lose?

(If no) If you were to volunteer for a campaign, how likely would you be to volunteer because you want to see the candidate win?

(If no) If you were to volunteer for a campaign, how likely would you be to volunteer because you want to see the opposing candidate lose?

18. (MONEY) Have you ever given money to a political campaign?

18a. (If yes) Thinking about when you have given money to a political campaign, how likely was your contribution influential to the candidate?

(If no) If you were to give money to a political campaign, how likely would your contribution be influential to the candidate?

18b. (If yes) When you decide to give money to a campaign, how likely are you to give money because the candidate makes you happy?

(If yes) When you decide to give money to a campaign, how likely are you to give money because the opposing candidate makes you angry?

(If no) If you were to give money to a campaign, how likely would you be to give money because the candidate makes you happy?

(If no) If you were to give money to a campaign, how likely would you be to give money because the opposing candidate makes you angry?

19. (RALLY) Have you ever attended a political rally or event?

19a. (If yes) Thinking about when you attended a political rally or event, how likely was your presence seen as important for the politician(s) at the event?

(If no) If you were to attend a political rally or event, how likely would your presence be seen as important for the politician(s) at the event?

19b. (If yes) When deciding to attend a political rally or event, how likely are you to attend to provide support for the politician or issue?

(If yes) When deciding to attend a political rally or event, how likely are you to attend to oppose the politician or issue?

(If no) If you were to attend a political rally or event, how likely would you attend to provide support for the politician or issue?

(If no) If you were to attend a political rally or event, how likely you attend to oppose the politician or issue?

20. (CONTACT) Have you ever contacted a representative in government at the local, state or, national level?

20a. (If yes) Thinking about when you contacted a representative in government, how likely did they use what you said to make policy decisions?

(If no) If you were to contact a representative in government, how likely would they use what you say to make policy decisions?

20b. (If yes) When you contact a representative in government, how likely are you to tell the representative about bills you support?

(If yes) When you contact a representative in government, how likely are you to tell the representative about bills you oppose?

(If no) If you were to contact a representative in government, how likely would you tell the representative about bills you support?

(If no) If you were to contact a representative in government, how likely would you tell the representative about bills you oppose?

21. (ADVERTISE) When you support a politician, do you follow his campaign in the media, including political advertisements?

21b. (If yes) When you see a campaign advertisement in the media, how likely are you to get worked up when you see a positive advertisement about a politician you support?

(If yes) When you see a campaign advertisement in the media, how likely are you to get worked up when you see a negative advertisement about a politician you oppose?

(If no) If you were to see a campaign advertisement in the media, how likely would you be to get worked up when you see a positive advertisement about a politician you support?

(If no) If you were to see a campaign advertisement in the media, how likely would you be to get worked up when you see a negative advertisement about a politician you oppose?

22. (INFO) Do you use the internet to look up political information and discuss it with others?

22a. (If yes) Thinking about when you have had a political discussion, how likely are others to be persuaded by what you say?

(If no) If you were to have had a political discussion, how likely are others to be persuaded by what you say?

22b. (If yes) When you use the media to look for political information, how likely are you to look for positive information about a politician or policy you support?

(If yes) When you use the media to look for political information, how likely are you to look for negative information about a politician or policy you don't support?

(If no) If you were to use the internet to look for political information, how likely would you be to look for positive information about a politician and policy you support?

(If no) If you were to use the internet to look for political information, how likely would you be to look for negative information about a politician and policy you don't support?

Political Attitudes

In general, do you consider yourself liberal, conservative, or something in between?

- 1 Strongly liberal
- 2 Liberal
- 3 Leaning liberal
- 4 Moderate
- 5 Leaning conservative
- 6 Conservative
- 7 Strongly conservative

In general, do you consider yourself a Democrat, a Republican, or an Independent?

- 1 Strong Democrat
- 2 Democrat
- 3 Lean Democrat
- 4 Independent
- 5 Lean Republican
- 6 Republican
- 7 Strong Republican
- 8 Other

How interested are you in politics and public affairs?

- 1 Not at all interested
- 2 Not very interested
- 3 Somewhat interested
- 4 Interested
- 5 Very interested

2012 Election Participation Questions

Are you currently registered to vote?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 3 Not applicable

Did you vote in the presidential election of 2012?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 3 Not applicable/Don't know

If you weren't eligible to vote in the last presidential election, would you have voted if you could have?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

Who did you vote for, President Barack Obama, Mitt Romney, or somebody else?

- 1 Barack Obama
- 2 The Republican nominee
- 3 Other (specify _____)

(If Obama is selected) Using the following scale, which of the following better describes your reasoning to vote for President Obama, because you like President Obama and his policies or because you dislike Mitt Romney and his policies?

- 1 Like President Obama and his policies
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Dislike Mitt Romney and his policies

(If Romney is selected) Using the following scale, which of the following better describes your reasoning to vote for Mitt Romney, because you like Mitt Romney and his policies or because you dislike President Obama and his policies?

- 1 Like Mitt Romney and his policies
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Dislike President Obama and his policies

(If Other is selected) Using the following scale, which of the following better describes your reasoning to vote for a third party candidate, because you like the party's candidate and his policies or because you dislike Mitt Romney and President Obama and their policies?

- 1 Like the Selected Party's candidate
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 Dislike Mitt Romney and President Obama

Political efficacy questions

Using the following scale, with 1 being strongly agree and 5 being strongly disagree, please indicate how much you agree/disagree with the following statements. (1=Strongly Agree; 2=Agree; 3=Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4=Disagree; 5=Strongly Disagree)

1. Generally speaking those we elect to Congress in Washington lose touch with the people pretty quickly.
2. People like me don't have any say in what government does.
3. I don't think public officials care much what people like me think.
4. I consider myself to be well qualified to participate in politics.
5. I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues facing our country.
6. I feel that I could do as good a job in public office as most other people.
7. I think that I am better informed about politics and government than most people.
8. I consider myself to be well qualified to participate in politics.
9. Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can't really understand what's going on.
10. Parties are only interested in people's votes but not in their opinions.

Regulatory Focus Questionnaire (Higgins et al. 2001)

Instructions: This set of questions asks you HOW FREQUENTLY specific events actually occur or have occurred in your life. Please indicate your answer to each question by clicking on the bubble next to it.

Response options for each question are: (1) never or seldom; (2) rarely; (3) sometimes; (4) often; (5) very often

1. Compared to most people, are you typically unable to get what you want out of life.
2. Growing up, would you ever “cross the line” by doing things that your parents would not tolerate?
3. How often have you accomplished things that got you “psyched” to work even harder?
4. Did you get on your parents’ nerves often when you were growing up?
5. How often did you obey rules and regulations that were established by your parents?
6. Growing up, did you ever act in ways that your parents thought were objectionable?
7. Do you often do well at different things that you try?
8. Not being careful enough has gotten me into trouble at times.
9. When it comes to achieving things that are important to me, I find that I don’t perform as well as I ideally would like to do.
10. I feel like I have made progress toward being successful in my life.
11. I have found very few hobbies or activities in my life that capture my interest or motivate me to put effort into them.

Demographic Questions

Are you male or female [Male, Female]

In what year were you born?

Are you, yourself, of Hispanic origin or descent, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or other Spanish background?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

What race or races do you consider yourself?

- 1 American Indian/Native American
- 2 Asian
- 3 African American or Black
- 4 Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Chicano/Chicana
- 5 White/Caucasian
- 6 Other (specify _____)

What is the highest level of school you have completed?

- 1 Less than high school
- 2 Some high school
- 3 High school graduate
- 4 Technical school graduate
- 5 Some college
- 6 College graduate
- 7 Some graduate school
- 8 Master’s degree
- 9 Professional degree (J.D., M.D., Ph.D., etc.)

Please indicate in which category your family annual income currently falls.

- 1 Below \$20,000
- 2 \$20,000 to \$40,000
- 3 \$40,001 to \$60,000

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| 4 | \$60,001 to \$80,000 |
| 5 | \$80,001 to \$100,000 |
| 6 | Over \$100,000 |

A.2 Regulatory Focus and Ideology Survey

Regulatory Focus Questionnaire (Higgins et al. 2001)

[See individual items are above.]

Political Attitudes

In general, do you consider yourself liberal, conservative, or something in between?

[See items above for response options.]

In general, do you consider yourself a Democrat, a Republican, or an Independent?

[See items above for response options.]

How interested are you in politics and public affairs?

[See items above for response options.]

Here is a list of policy positions. Please indicate how much you favor or oppose each one. Indicate your answer by clicking on the bubble next to your response.

[Response options are: (1) oppose a great deal; (2) oppose; (3) oppose a little; (4) neither favor nor oppose; (5) favor a little; (6) favor; (7) favor a great deal]

1. The War on Terror
2. Citizenship for illegal immigrants
3. Increasing spending to stop crime
4. Increasing the security of our borders
5. The death penalty
6. Regulation of businesses
7. Gun Control
8. Strengthening the military
9. Protecting the environment
10. Abstinence only education
11. Universal healthcare
12. Prescription drug coverage for seniors
13. Increasing spending on social security
14. Increasing spending on the poor
15. Increasing spending on foreign aid
16. Same-sex marriage
17. Increasing spending on building and repairing roads and highways
18. Increasing spending on research
19. Abortion rights
20. Increasing funding for public schools

Status Quo v. Government Action Policy Preferences

1a. “Current regulations on gun ownership are considered very relaxed. There are some people that are trying to restrict gun rights by expanding background checks, banning certain weapons, and limiting the amount of ammunition a clip can hold. Do you prefer to more restrictions on gun rights, extending the rights of gun owners, or maintaining the laws in place now?”

- a. Restricting the rights of gun owners
- b. Extending rights of gun owners
- c. Maintaining the status quo

1b. How strongly do you prefer or oppose laws restricting gun rights [extending gun rights/doing nothing]?

Response options: [1 (strongly prefer); 2 (prefer); 3 (neither prefer nor oppose); 4 (oppose); 5 (strongly oppose)]

1c. When you were making your decision on what to do on gun policy, were you being enthusiastic and thinking about maximizing America’s future?

When you were making your decision on what to do on gun policy, were you being careful or thinking about what was necessary to ensure America’s future?

Response options: [1(not at all); 5(very)]

2a. Current border security is low. However, many people are trying to increase border security by building a fence between the US and Mexico, increasing the number of border patrol agents, and using unmanned aircraft for surveillance. Do you prefer laws that increase spending border security, laws that decrease spending on border security, or maintaining the current level of spending for border security?

- a. Increasing spending on border control
- b. Decreasing spending on border control
- c. Maintaining the current level of spending on border security

2b. How strongly do you prefer or oppose increasing spending for border control [decrease spending/maintaining the current level]?

Response options: [1 (strongly prefer); 2 (prefer); 3 (neither prefer nor oppose); 4 (oppose); 5 (strongly oppose)]

2c. When you were making your decision on border security, were you being enthusiastic and thinking about maximizing America’s future?

When you were making your decision on border security, were you being careful or thinking about what was necessary to ensure America’s future?

Response options: [1(not at all); 5(very)]

3a. Current laws on abortion are considered more so of a pro-choice stance. However, many people are trying to restrict abortion rights by requiring wait time, ultrasounds, and increased regulations of who can perform abortions and where. Do you prefer laws that are making the current laws more pro-choice, making the laws more pro-life, or maintaining the status quo?

- a. Making laws more pro-choice
- b. Making laws more pro-life
- c. Maintaining the status quo

3b. How strongly do you prefer or oppose making abortion laws more pro-choice [more pro-life/maintaining the status quo]?

Response options: [1 (strongly prefer); 2 (prefer); 3 (neither prefer nor oppose); 4 (oppose); 5 (strongly oppose)]

3c. When you were making your decision on abortion policy, were you being enthusiastic and thinking about maximizing America's future?

When you were making your decision on abortion policy, were you being careful or thinking about what was necessary to ensure America's future?

Response options: [1(not at all); 5(very)]

4a. Deregulation has occurred in the airline, telecommunications, the financial, and energy industry. However, there has been a recent push for increasing regulations to protect consumers, employees, and communities. Do you prefer laws increasing the deregulation of businesses, laws creating strong business regulations, or maintain the status quo?

- a. Increasing deregulation of businesses
- b. Creating strong business regulation
- c. Maintaining the status quo

4b. How strongly do you prefer or oppose increasing the deregulation of businesses [strong business regulations/maintaining the status quo]?

Response options: [1 (strongly prefer); 2 (prefer); 3 (neither prefer nor oppose); 4 (oppose); 5 (strongly oppose)]

4c. When you were making your decision about business regulation, were you being enthusiastic and thinking about maximizing America's future?

When you were making your decision about business regulation, were you being careful or thinking about what was necessary to ensure America's future?

Response options: [1(not at all); 5(very)]

Demographic Questions

[See above for individual items.]

A.3 Regulatory Fit and GOTV Experiment

Regulatory Focus Induction (Freitas & Higgins 2002)

Participants were randomly assigned to the promotion or prevention condition. Each subject typed three goals.

Promotion:

Please think about something you ideally would like to do. In other words, think about three hopes or aspirations that you currently have. Please list the hopes or aspirations below.

Prevention:

Please think about something you think you ought to do. In other words, think about three duties or obligations that you currently have. Please list the duties or obligations below.

Following listing each goal, subjects answered the following for each one listed.

You wrote [goal] as your first [second/third] goal. How motivated are you to meet the first [second/third] goal you wrote down?

- 1 Not at all Motivated (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)
- 8 (8)
- 9 (9)
- 10 Extremely motivated (10)

GOTV Manipulation

Instructions: For the second task please read the following get-out-the-vote message that is being tested to determine if it should be used for the upcoming 2014 Midterm election. You can move on to the next page after 30 seconds has passed.

Promotion:

Hi, this is XXXX from Vote 2014, Vote 2014 is a nonpartisan effort working to encourage citizens to vote. We just wanted to remind you that elections are being held this Tuesday. We want to encourage everyone to help advance democracy and remember this is an opportunity to grow as a citizen. Democracy is only advanced when aspiring citizens go out and vote. We hope you'll come out and vote this Tuesday. Can we count on you to vote next Tuesday?

Prevention:

Hi, this is XXXX from Vote 2014, Vote 2014 is a nonpartisan effort working to ensure citizens vote. We just wanted to remind you that elections are being held on Tuesday. We want to ensure everyone does their civic duty and remembers it is their responsibility to vote. Democracy requires that responsible citizens go out and vote. We want you to come out and vote on Tuesday. Can we count on you to vote next Tuesday?

Survey Items

How likely are you to consider voting after receiving the message on the previous page?

- 1 Very Unlikely
- 2 Unlikely
- 3 Somewhat Unlikely
- 4 Undecided
- 5 Somewhat Likely
- 6 Likely
- 7 Very Likely

How favorable or unfavorable do think voting is as a form of political participation?

- 1 Very Unfavorable
- 2 Unfavorable
- 3 Somewhat Unfavorable
- 4 Neither Favorable nor Unfavorable
- 5 Somewhat Favorable
- 6 Favorable
- 7 Very Favorable

How positive or negative do you feel about voting as a form of political participation?

- 1 Very Negative
- 2 Negative
- 3 Somewhat Negative
- 4 Neither Positive nor Negative
- 5 Somewhat Positive
- 6 Positive
- 7 Very Positive

How good or bad is voting as a form of political participation?

- 1 Very Bad
- 2 Bad
- 3 Poor
- 4 Neither Good nor Bad
- 5 Fair
- 6 Good
- 7 Very Good

How believable was the message?

- 1 Very Unbelievable
- 2 Unbelievable
- 3 Somewhat Unbelievable
- 4 Not Sure
- 5 Somewhat Believable
- 6 Believable
- 7 Very Believable

How persuasive was the message?

- 1 Very Unpersuasive
- 2 Unpersuasive
- 3 Somewhat Unpersuasive
- 4 Neither Persuasive nor Unpersuasive
- 5 Somewhat Persuasive
- 6 Persuasive
- 7 Very Persuasive

Demographic Questions

[See above for individual items.]

CHAPTER 9 Appendix B: Structural Models for Chapter 3

Table B.1. Hypothesized Model Results Presented in Figure 3.7

Parameter			Unstandardized (SE)	Standardized Coefficient	95% Confidence Intervals	R ²
Paths						
Promotion	→	Gen. Eager	.32 (.05)***	.29	.22 - .42	
	→	Gen. Vigilant	-.13 (.06)*	-.11	.93 - .20	
Prevention	→	Gen. Eager	.11 (.04)**	.12	-.25 - -.02	
	→	Gen. Vigilant	-.08 (.05)^	-.08	-.18 - .01	
Gen. Eager	→	Pol. Eager	.75 (.05)***	.61	.65 - .85	
	→	Pol. Vigilant	.06 (.05)	.05	-.04 - .17	
Gen. Vigilant	→	Pol. Eager	.06 (.04)	.06	-.01 - .14	
	→	Pol. Vigilant	.44 (.05)***	.38	.33 - .54	
Pol. Eager	→	Vote Motivation	-.84 (.19)***	-.25	-1.21 - -.47	
Pol. Vigilant	→	Vote Motivation	.78 (.15)***	.24	.48 - 1.08	
Variances						
		Gen. Eager	.44 (.03)***	.89	.37 - .51	.111
		Gen. Vigilant	.58 (.04)***	.98	.50 - .66	.022
		Pol. Eager	.44 (.04)***	.60	.36 - .53	.401
		Pol. Vigilant	.64 (.04)***	.84	.56 - .72	.164
		Vote Motivation	7.62(.50)***	.92	6.64 - 8.61	.080
		Promotion	.41 (.03)***	1.00	.35 - .47	
		Prevention	.58 (.04)***	1.00	.51 - .65	
Covariance						
geneager	↔	genvigilant	.22 (.03)***	.43	.15 - .28	
poleager	↔	polvigilant	.14 (.03)***	.27	.08 - .21	
promotion	↔	prevention	.07 (.03)**	.14	.02 - .12	

Note. N= 440, $\chi^2(8) = 19.64$, $p = .012$, CFI = .978, RMSEA = .057, SRMR = .029

^ $p \leq .10$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$.

Table B.2. Alternative Model 1 Results (Adds Direct Paths between RF and Political Strategies)

Parameter		Unstandardized (SE)	Standardized Coefficient	95% Confidence Intervals	R ²
Paths					
Promotion	→ Gen. Eager	.32 (.05)***	.29	.22 - .42	
	→ Gen. Vigilant	-.13 (.06)*	-.11	-.25 - -.02	
	→ Pol. Eager	.13 (.06)*	.09	.01 - .24	
	→ Pol. Vigilant	-.01 (.07)	-.01	-.15 - .14	
Prevention	→ Gen. Eager	.11 (.04)**	.12	.03 - .19	
	→ Gen. Vigilant	-.08 (.05)	-.08	-.18 - .01	
	→ Pol. Eager	-.14 (.04)**	-.12	-.22 - -.04	
	→ Pol. Vigilant	-.04 (.05)	-.04	-.14 - .06	
Gen. Eager	→ Pol. Eager	.74 (.06)***	.60	.62 - .86	
	→ Pol. Vigilant	.08 (.06)	.06	-.05 - .19	
Gen. Vigilant	→ Pol. Eager	.07 (.04)	.06	-.02 - .15	
	→ Pol. Vigilant	.43 (.06)***	.38	.31 - .54	
Pol Eager	→ Vote Motivation	-.84 (.19) ***	-.25	-1.21 - -.47	
Pol. Vigilant	→ Vote Motivation	.78 (.16) ***	.24	.46 - 1.08	
Variances					
	Gen. Eager	.44 (.04)***	.89	.38 - .52	.111
	Gen. Vigilant	.58 (.04)***	.98	.50 - .67	.022
	Pol. Eager	.43 (.04)***	.58	.36 - .52	.401
	Pol. Vigilant	.64 (.04)***	.83	.56 - .73	.164
	Vote Motivation	7.62(.51)***	.92	6.64 - 8.61	.080
	Promotion	.41 (.03)***	1.00	.36 - .48	
	Prevention	.58 (.04)***	1.00	.51 - .65	
Covariance					
geneager	↔ genvigilant	.22 (.03)***	.43	.16 - .29	
poleager	↔ polvigilant	.14 (.03)***	.27	.09 - .21	
promotion	↔ prevention	.07 (.03)**	.14	.02 - .12	

Note. N = 440, $\chi^2(4) = 4.04$, $p = .400$, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .005, SRMR = .015

^ p ≤ .10; * p ≤ .05; ** p ≤ .01; *** p ≤ .001.

Table B.3. Alternative Model 2 (Adds Direct Paths from General Life Strategies to Vote Motivation)

Parameter		Unstandardized (SE)	Standardized Coefficient	95% Confidence Intervals	R ²
Paths					
Promotion	→ Gen. Eager	.32 (.05)***	.29	.22 - .42	
	→ Gen. Vigilant	-.13 (.06)*	-.11	-.25 - -.02	
Prevention	→ Gen. Eager	.11 (.04)**	.12	.03 - .19	
	→ Gen. Vigilant	-.08 (.05)^	-.08	-.18 - .01	
Gen. Eager	→ Pol. Eager	.74 (.06)***	.61	.65 - .85	
	→ Pol. Vigilant	.06 (.05)	.05	-.04 - .17	
	→ Vote Motivation	.12 (.28)	.03	-.44 - .67	
Gen. Vigilant	→ Pol. Eager	.07 (.04)	.06	-.02 - .15	
	→ Pol. Vigilant	.43 (.06)***	.38	.31 - .54	
	→ Vote Motivation	.21 (.22)	.06	-.21 - .63	
Pol. Eager	→ Vote Motivation	-.94 (.23)***	-.28	-.14 - -.47	
Pol. Vigilant	→ Vote Motivation	.72 (.16)***	.22	.39 - 1.01	
Variances					
	Gen. Eager	.44 (.04)***	.89	.38 - .52	.111
	Gen. Vigilant	.58 (.04)***	.98	.50 - .67	.022
	Pol. Eager	.43 (.04)***	.58	.36 - .52	.401
	Pol. Vigilant	.64 (.04)***	.83	.56 - .73	.164
	Vote Motivation	7.59 (.50)***	.92	6.72 - 8.59	.084
	Promotion	.41 (.03)***	1.00	.36 - .48	
	Prevention	.58 (.04)***	1.00	.51 - .65	
Covariance					
geneager	↔ genvigilant	.22 (.03)***	.43	.16 - .29	
poleager	↔ polvigilant	.14 (.03)***	.27	.09 - .21	
promotion	↔ prevention	.07 (.03)**	.14	.02 - .12	

Note. N = 440, $\chi^2(4) = 4.04$, $p = .400$, CFI = 1.00, RMSEA = .005, SRMR = .015

^ $p \leq .10$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$.

Table B.4. Indirect Effects for Alternative Model 2 in Table B.3

Paths From	Mediated by		Unstandardized (SE)	Standardized Coefficient	95% Confidence Intervals	
	General Life	Political Life				
Promotion	Eager	Eager	-.22 (.07)**	-.05	-.38	-.10
	Eager	Vigilant	.02 (.02)	.00	-.01	.06
	Vigilant	Vigilant	.03 (.02)*	.01	.01	.08
	Vigilant	Eager	-.01 (.01)	.00	-.02	.00
	-----	Eager	-.11 (.06)*	-.03	-.25	-.02
	-----	Vigilant	-.01 (.05)	.00	-.11	.11
	Eager	-----	.04 (.09)	.01	-.14	.23
	Vigilant	-----	.02 (.03)	.01	-.02	.10
Total Indirect Effect (Promotion)			-.24 (.10)*	-.05	-.44	-.04
Prevention	Vigilant	Vigilant	-.02 (.02)	-.01	-.06	.00
	Vigilant	Eager	.01 (.00)	.00	.00	.02
	Eager	Eager	.09 (.05)^	.02	.02	.23
	Eager	Vigilant	-.01 (.01)	.00	-.03	.00
	-----	Vigilant	-.03 (.04)	-.01	-.12	.04
	-----	Eager	.13 (.06)*	.03	.04	.27
	Vigilant	-----	-.02 (.02)	.00	-.09	.01
	Eager	-----	-.02 (.05)	.00	-.13	.05
Total Indirect Effect (Prevention)			.13 (.08)	.03	-.02	.30
Gen. Eager		Eager	-.69 (.18)***	-.17	-1.06	-.33
		Vigilant	.06 (.05)	.01	-.03	.15
Total Indirect Effect (Gen. Life Eager)			-.63 (.18)***	-.15	-.96	-.28
Total Effect (Gen. Life Eager)			-.51 (.22)*	-.12	-.92	-.03
Gen. Vigilant		Vigilant	.31 (.08)***	.08	.17	.49
		Eager	-.06 (.04)	-.02	-.16	.01
Total Indirect Effect (Gen. Life Vigilant)			.24 (.08)**	.07	.10	.41
Total Effect (Gen. Life Vigilant)			.45 (.21)*	.12	.01	.83

Note. N = 440

^ p ≤ .10; * p ≤ .05; ** p ≤ .01; *** p ≤ .001.

Table B.5. Alternative Model 3 (Adds Direct Paths from Regulatory Focus to Vote Motivation)

Parameter		Unstandardized (SE)	Standardized Coefficient	95% Confidence Intervals		R ²
Paths						
Promotion	→ Gen. Eager	.32 (.05)***	.29	.23	-.43	
	→ Gen. Vigilant	-.13 (.06)*	-.11	-.25	-.02	
	→ Vote Motivation	.29 (.22)	.06	-.11	.70	
Prevention	→ Gen. Eager	.11 (.04)**	.12	.03	.20	
	→ Gen. Vigilant	-.08 (.05)^	-.08	-.17	.01	
	→ Vote Motivation	-.07 (.17)	-.02	-.40	.25	
Gen. Eager	→ Pol. Eager	.74 (.05)***	.61	.65	.84	
	→ Pol. Vigilant	.06 (.06)	.05	-.05	.16	
Gen. Vigilant	→ Pol. Eager	.06 (.04)	.06	-.01	.15	
	→ Pol. Vigilant	.44 (.05)***	.38	.33	.54	
Pol. Eager	→ Vote Motivation	-.91 (.19)***	-.27	-.13	-.53	
Pol. Vigilant	→ Vote Motivation	.80 (.16)***	.24	.50	1.11	
Variances						
	Gen. Eager	.44 (.03)***	.89	.38	.52	.111
	Gen. Vigilant	.58 (.04)***	.98	.50	.67	.022
	Pol. Eager	.44 (.04)***	.60	.37	.56	.401
	Pol. Vigilant	.64 (.04)***	.84	.57	.73	.164
	Vote Motivation	7.59 (.48)***	.91	6.74	8.57	.088
	Promotion	.41 (.03)***	1.00	.36	.48	
	Prevention	.58 (.04)***	1.00	.51	.66	
Covariance						
geneager	↔	genvigilant	.22 (.03)***	.43	.16	.30
poleager	↔	polvigilant	.14 (.03)***	.27	.09	.22
promotion	↔	prevention	.07 (.03)**	.14	.02	.12

Note. N= 440, $\chi^2(6) = 15.79$, $p = .015$, CFI = .977, RMSEA = .061, SRMR = .026

^ $p \leq .10$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$.

Table B.6. Indirect Effects for Alternative Model 3 in Table B.5.

Paths From	Mediated by		Unstandardized (SE)	Standardized Coefficient	95% Confidence Intervals	
	General Life	Political Life				
Promotion	Eager	Eager	-.22 (.06)***	-.05	-.34	-.10
	Eager	Vigilant	.02 (.02)	.00	-.01	.05
	Vigilant	Vigilant	-.05 (.02)*	-.01	-.09	.00
	Vigilant	Eager	.01 (.01)	.00	.00	.02
	Total Indirect Effect (Promotion)			-.24 (.06)***	-.05	-.35
Total Effect (Promotion)			.05 (.21)	.01	-.36	.46
Prevention	Vigilant	Vigilant	-.03 (.02)	-.01	-.06	.01
	Vigilant	Eager	.00 (.00)	.00	.00	.01
	Eager	Eager	-.08 (.03)*	-.02	-.14	-.01
	Eager	Vigilant	.01 (.01)	.00	.00	.02
	Total Indirect Effect (Prevention)			-.10 (.03)***	-.03	-.15
Total Effect (Prevention)			-.17 (.16)	-.05	-.49	.15
Gen. Eager		Eager	-.68 (.15)***	-.17	-.97	-.39
		Vigilant	.05 (.05)	.01	-.04	.15
Total Indirect Effect (Gen. Life Eager)			-.63 (.15)***	-.15	-.91	-.34
Gen. Vigilant		Vigilant	.35 (.08)***	.09	.21	.51
		Eager	-.06 (.04)	-.02	-.13	.01
Total Indirect Effect (Gen. Life Vigilant)			.29 (.08)***	.08	.14	.47

Note. N = 440.

^ p ≤ .10; * p ≤ .05; ** p ≤ .01; *** p ≤ .001.

CHAPTER 10 Appendix C: Comparison Models for Chapter 6

Table C.1. OLS Coefficients (SE) for Regulatory Focus Strength by Condition Interactions (Promotion Fit is the comparison condition)

Main Effects	Intent	Vote Index	Efficacy	Persuasion
Prevention Fit	-.11 (.20)	-.19 (.15)	-.02 (.15)	-.08 (.16)
Prevention Nonfit	.18 (.21)	-.04 (.16)	-.17 (.16)	-.03 (.16)
Promotion Nonfit	.03 (.20)	-.22 (.15)	.01 (.15)	.06 (.15)
Regulatory Focus Strength	.16 (.10)	.07 (.07)	.02 (.07)	.17 (.07)*
RE Strength Interactions				
Prevention Fit	-.06 (.12)	.03 (.09)	.02 (.09)	-.05 (.09)
Prevention Nonfit	.02 (.15)	.05 (.11)	-.01 (.11)	.04 (.11)
Promotion Nonfit	-.13 (.12)	-.05 (.09)	.05 (.09)	-.12 (.09)
Constant	4.75 (.15)***	5.74 (.11)***	2.93 (.11)***	4.89 (.11)***
<i>F</i>	1.97 [^]	2.19*	.75	3.17**
<i>N</i>	609	606	606	609
<i>R</i> ²	.022	.025	.009	.036

[^] $p \leq .10$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$.

Table C.2. OLS Coefficients (SE) for Regulatory Focus Strength by Condition Interactions (Prevention Nonfit is the comparison condition)

Main Effects	Intent	Vote Index	Efficacy	Persuasion
Promotion Fit	-.18 (.21)	.06 (.16)	.20 (.16)	.03 (.16)
Prevention Fit	-.28 (.21)	-.14 (.15)	.16 (.15)	-.05 (.16)
Promotion Nonfit	-.15 (.20)	-.17 (.15)	.19 (.15)	.08 (.16)
Regulatory Focus Strength	.18 (.11) [^]	.12 (.08)	.02 (.08)	.21 (.08)**
RE Strength Interactions				
Promotion Fit	-.03 (.15)	-.05 (.11)	.001 (.11)	-.04 (.11)
Prevention Fit	-.08 (.13)	-.02 (.10)	.03 (.09)	-.09 (.10)
Promotion Nonfit	-.15 (.13)	-.10 (.09)	.05 (.09)	-.16 (.10) [^]
Prevention Nonfit	-----	-----	-----	-----
Constant	4.93 (.15)***	5.69 (.11)***	2.75 (.11)***	4.86 (.12)***
<i>F</i>	1.98 [^]	2.19	.80	3.17**
<i>N</i>	616	613	613	616
<i>R</i> ²	.023	.025	.009	.036

[^] $p \leq .10$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$.

Table C.3. OLS Coefficients (SE) for Regulatory Focus Strengthby Condition Interactions (Prevention Fit is the comparison condition)

Main Effects	Intent	Vote Index	Efficacy	Persuasion
Promotion Fit	.10 (.20)	.20 (.15)	.05 (.15)	.09 (.16)
Promotion Nonfit	.13 (.20)	-.03 (.15)	.05 (.14)	.14 (.15)
Prevention Nonfit	.28 (.21)	.16 (.15)	-.14 (.15)	.06 (.16)
Regulatory Focus Strength	.10 (.07)	.10 (.05)*	.04 (.05)	.12 (.05)*
RF Strength Interactions				
Promotion Fit	.05 (.12)	-.03 (.09)	-.02 (.09)	.04 (.09)
Promotion Nonfit	-.07 (.09)	-.08 (.07)	.03 (.07)	-.08 (.07)
Prevention Nonfit	.08 (.13)	.02 (.10)	-.03 (.09)	.09 (.10)
Constant	4.65 (.14)***	5.54 (.11)***	2.89 (.10)***	4.81 (.11)***
<i>F</i>	1.96 [^]	2.22*	.76	3.17**
<i>N</i>	609	606	606	609
<i>R</i> ²	.022	.025	.009	.036

[^] $p \leq .10$; * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$.

Table C.4. OLS Coefficients (SE) for Persuasion by Condition Interactions

Main Effects	Comparison = Prevention Nonfit			Comparison = Prevention Fit			Comparison = Promotion Fit		
	Intent	Vote Index	Efficacy	Intent	Vote Index	Efficacy	Intent	Vote Index	Efficacy
Promotion Fit	-.21 (.15)	.01 (.13)	.20 (.14)	.06 (.15)	.18 (.13)	.04 (.14)	----	----	----
Prevention Fit	-.27 (.15)^	-.16 (.13)	.17 (.14)	----	----	----	-.07 (.15)	-.16 (.13)	-.02 (.14)
Prevention Nonfit	----	----	----	.26 (.15)^	.17 (.13)	-.15 (.14)	.20 (.15)	-.002 (.13)	-.18 (.14)
Promotion Nonfit	-.21 (.15)	-.22 (.13)^	.16 (.14)	.05 (.15)	-.06 (.13)	-.001 (.14)	-.01 (.15)	-.23 (.13)^	-.03 (.14)
Persuasion	.81 (.09)***	.29 (.07)***	.16 (.08)*	.74 (.07)***	.48 (.06)***	.19 (.07)**	.80 (.09)***	.34 (.08)***	.14 (.08)^
RF Strength Interactions									
Promotion Fit	-.02 (.12)	.05 (.11)	-.03 (.12)	.05 (.12)	-.14 (.10)	-.05 (.11)	----	----	----
Prevention Fit	-.07 (.11)	.19 (.10)^	.03 (.10)	----	----	----	-.05 (.12)	.14 (.10)	.05 (.11)
Prevention Nonfit	----	----	----	.07 (.11)	-.18 (.10)^	-.03 (.10)	.02 (.12)	-.04 (.11)	.02 (.12)
Promotion Nonfit	.13 (.12)	.25 (.10)*	.04 (.11)	.20 (.11)^	.06 (.10)	.01 (.10)	.15 (.12)	.20 (.11)^	.06 (.12)
Constant	5.06 (.10)***	5.78 (.09)***	2.76 (.10)***	4.80 (.11)***	5.62 (.09)***	2.92 (.10)***	4.86 (.11)***	5.79 (.09)***	2.95 (.10)***
<i>F</i>	59.00***	22.90***	3.22**	58.96***	22.93***	3.18**	58.97***	22.90***	3.17**
<i>N</i>	610	607	607	610	607	607	610	607	607
<i>R</i> ²	.406	.211	.036	.406	.211	.036	.406	.211	.036

^ p ≤ .10; * p ≤ .05; ** p ≤ .01; *** p ≤ .001.

CHAPTER 11 Bibliography

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