To Survive and Thrive: A Self-Determination Perspective of Political Motivation

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Thesis submitted to the faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
Political Science

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31 August 2005
Alexandria, Virginia

Keywords: self-determination, political motivation, political psychology
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Abstract

Political scientists concentrate on the concept of political activity as social cooperation motivated to meet two goals: biological survival and accumulation of extrinsic rewards such as power, wealth, or territory. Self-determination research in the field of human motivation reveals a different motivator in the form of innate psychological needs. This literature review and theoretical analysis offers an alternative cause for political activity in light of recent empirical work completed by psychologists in the study of Self-Determination Theory. The findings suggest that humans act politically to secure satisfaction of their psychological needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence.
# Table of Contents

Abstract........................................................................................................................................ ii  
Table of Contents....................................................................................................................... iii  
List of Multimedia Objects ...................................................................................................... iv  
Acknowledgements.................................................................................................................. v  
Introduction.................................................................................................................................. 1  
Chapter 1: Building a Foundation for Self-Determination Theory in Politics....................... 6  
  Motivation................................................................................................................................. 9  
  Meta-Theories of SDT ............................................................................................................. 10  
  Basic Needs............................................................................................................................. 15  
  Areas of Caution..................................................................................................................... 18  
  Future Explorations............................................................................................................... 20  
  Conclusion............................................................................................................................... 25  
Chapter 2: Current Theories of Political Motivation............................................................... 27  
  Rational Choice...................................................................................................................... 28  
  Lasswell ................................................................................................................................. 32  
  Maslow and Davies............................................................................................................... 36  
  Transformational Theory....................................................................................................... 42  
  Conclusion............................................................................................................................... 44  
Chapter 3: Developing Motivated Political Participants........................................................ 48  
  King’s Example ....................................................................................................................... 48  
  SDT in Political Science......................................................................................................... 54  
  Comparing and Contrasting Current Trends to SDT.......................................................... 60  
Chapter 4: A Proposed Study of Political Campaign Volunteers............................................ 63  
  Literature Review................................................................................................................... 63  
  Research Question................................................................................................................ 70  
  Data Collection...................................................................................................................... 71  
  Scoring Information............................................................................................................... 79  
  Research Design.................................................................................................................. 81  
  Conclusion............................................................................................................................... 84  
Bibliography............................................................................................................................... 87  
Curriculum Vitae........................................................................................................................ 102
List of Multimedia Objects

Table 1-1. Self-Determination Continuum ................................................................. 14
Table 2-1. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs .................................................................. 38
Table 2-2. Davies’ Hierarchy of Political Constructs .................................................. 41
Table 4-1 Questionnaire ............................................................................................ 74
Table 4-2. Abbreviated Codebook ............................................................................ 79
Table 4-3 Projected Hours Volunteered According to Political Regulation Style ........... 82
Acknowledgements

A title page is inadequate when naming the author of a thesis. It is often the work of many collaborators. I am indebted to several supporters. First, this thesis is dedicated to my husband Marine Major Jason Chad Drake, commander of our Expeditionary Family Group. He listened to me talk about the purpose of government and autonomy support for so many years that he now finds himself thinking and talking in those terms. Second, my parents Wayne and Nancy Kiser and my in-laws Ann and Jean Drake, who encouraged me to grow intellectually during the precious years when my children were young and I was their at-home mom.

I am indebted to the political science faculty at Virginia Tech for offering a master’s degree online. It allowed me to attain my master’s degree while living the life I choose. As the mom of preschoolers and the wife of a Marine, I could not have completed my degree in residence. From the time I applied to Virginia Tech until I finished my degree, I moved four times. The online master’s program was invaluable to me personally, professionally, and academically. It kept me mentally challenged when feeding schedules and household budgeting threatened to overwhelm me. It bridged the mommy gap on my resume and opened several opportunities to work from home.

Academically, I am especially grateful to Dr. Timothy Luke, Dr. Jeffery Seifert, and Dr. Georgeta Pourchot, who each served on my thesis committee and encouraged me to bring Self-Determination Theory to political science. They suggested many insightful sources and focused my efforts to a manageable size. A special thanks to Dr. Paul Baard of Fordham University, who took time between teaching at the business school,
consulting with corporate clients, and taking care of the family he cherishes to encourage me and to serve on my thesis committee. I am humbled by the time and attention these intelligent people gave to me and to my work.

In a category all her own is Ginny Sinclair, my editor extraordinaire and Marine wife mentor par excellence. She made this paper coherent and grammatically correct by wielding an ink pen in her heavy-handed way. Any remaining inadequacies in this text are mine alone. Ginny welcomed me into her home in 1994 when I was a new college graduate with an engagement ring from a young man reporting for Marine basic training. Since then, she has been a light of sanity for me as I learned to be a wife to my husband in his life calling, to be a professional woman in my own stead, and to be a mother to my own Marine children. I am blessed to have such a capable editor and supportive friend.
Introduction

This master’s thesis is a theoretical work about Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and the potential it holds for the study of political science. Contemporary political motivation theory evaluates political activity as social cooperation motivated by the biological human desire to survive and the psychological desire to accumulate extrinsic rewards including power, wealth, and territory. SDT research conceptualizes human motivation as the biological need to survive in conjunction with the psychological need to thrive. This literature review and theoretical analysis contends that humans act politically for two reasons: to survive by securing access to biological needs and to thrive by creating an environment that supports satisfaction of their psychological needs for autonomy, relatedness, and competence. This work is an attempt to bring SDT to political science so that the concept of basic psychological needs can be brought to bear as a common denominator amongst people in both national and international contexts.

I first read *The Handbook of Self-Determination Research* edited by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan, while researching autonomy for a class on global conflicts. I was immediately enthralled by the documented research and decades of work within that reference book. The publication confirmed my instincts—human beings are engineered to thrive, not just survive. Development, mental achievements, and physical well-being suffer when innate needs are thwarted. I was already disenchanted with much of what political science offered on the topic of human motivation. The political participants I knew did not seem to act on mere cause and effect expectations. (If Candidate A wins,
the voter expects to receive X in return for a supportive vote.) Nor were they solely
motivated by rational determination of what ends they could expect from a given means.
(If elected Official B supports Agenda Y, then desired outcome Z will occur.) Anecdotal
evidence suggests American citizens activate a complex mix of emotion, history, and
judgment, when making election decisions. Current political motivation theories seem to
deride average political participants as the masses to be led. They concentrate on leaders
as agenda setters who affect outcomes. Documented psychological approaches to
political participation do not fully account for the development of opinions and the
decision to take action. SDT evaluates motivation based on the internalization of one’s
regulation style. It searches for an intention to act and evaluates the reasons for action. It
acknowledges the influence of convictions and pleasure and assesses the social support
for relationships, self-determination, and competence.

SDT research is available on the internet (www.psych.rochester.edu/SDT/) and in
notable periodicals such as the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology and
Motivation and Emotion. The plethora of published empirical findings and theoretical
works buoyed my enthusiasm. I decided that my master’s thesis would reexamine SDT
and political science. After examining the body of literature, I attended the Self-
Determination Theory, Second International Conference at the University of Ottawa in
May 2004. I cannot imagine an academic community more supportive than the SDT
community. They are a group that—to use a cliché—practices what it preaches; and
living it out is the challenging part, when one’s sermons are on autonomy support.

I love SDT. Like many love affairs there are moments of intense passion and
others when commitment is what holds the relationship together. Reading SDT has been
an exciting journey. The work of writing about it in a clear and insightful manner is more daunting. I want to do justice to the work of Dr. Edward L. Deci, Dr. Richard M. Ryan, and SDT theorists, while branching out in a bold direction for political science. I am humbled that I am introducing SDT and political science to each other. The relationship holds much promise in theory and policy applications. Gaetan F. Losier and Richard Koestner applied SDT to psychological work about voters and political motivation (Koestner et al 1996, Losier et al 1999, Losier at al 2001). Paul Baard, one of my thesis committee members, has explored the motivation of those who donate money to political causes. These works encouraged me to begin. I endeavor to explain SDT for political scientists. I want to suggest ways SDT and political science can cooperate to bring self-determination to the forefront of American politics.

SDT is a leading motivational theory in use by doctors, educators, employers, and coaches to encourage others to pursue optimal health and performance by engaging in personally valuable or enjoyable activities. All of Chapter (1) will focus on explaining the tenets of SDT and the characteristics of motivation exhibited by humans. It will discuss the connection between the type of motivation a person uses to complete a task and the likelihood that one will pursue the activity again. Then the reader will be introduced to the psychological needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence and the effects satisfaction and frustration of those needs have on motivation. Lastly, the chapter will give a brief overview of the types of research SDT theorists have conducted demonstrating the applicability of the theory across the time and cultural divides of human experience.
The cross-cultural and historical applications of SDT are perhaps two of the most exciting advancements the theory brings to the study of political motivation. Chapter (2) is dedicated to the current study of political motivation, which in large part focuses on the ends a person or people expect to gain for a particular course of action. Many influential theories of political motivation evaluate what a person expects to gain by taking a certain political action. Theorists argue people are motivated to act politically by the promise of accumulated rewards such as power, wealth, prestige, and territory. The current study will explore rational choice theory. In addition, Harold D. Lasswell will represent the Freudian political motivation theories currently in favor among political scientists. James Chowning Davies’ work will represent the Maslow theory that explores political actions as an attempt to fill psychological needs. Transformational political psychology will represent recent attempts to account for the interconnection between politics and other aspects of the human experience.

SDT brings to politics an array of empirical findings and a cross-cultural. The current motivational theories in political science argue human behavior is controlled by its environment or by the desire to accumulate extrinsic rewards. By focusing on the purpose of politics, leadership, and political participants, Chapter (3) applies SDT to political science in contrast to the theories of political motivation prevalent today. SDT suggests people participate in politics not to garner external rewards but rather to work towards an environment that secures access to their needs.

The final chapter is a hypothetical SDT research proposal in the political science arena. It looks at the role leadership plays in the types of motivation activated by political campaigns. The hypothesis is that leaders who tap into certain innate psychological needs
of participants are more likely to inspire political action in the form of volunteer hours workers give to the campaign than leaders whose campaign message taps into more extrinsic, less self-determined motivations.
Chapter 1: Building a Foundation for Self-Determination Theory in Politics

Self-determination is a concept with application to the lives of individuals and nations. For individuals it is the innate need to continuously grow and develop psychologically by mastering new skills and internalizing all experiences in preparation for the next event. When well supported, self-determined behavior leads to optimum well-being both physically and psychologically. Doctors begin to track this phenomenon at the birth of their patients. Physicians evaluate basic physiological progress such as weight gain, height increase, and widening head circumference. In addition, a physician evaluates the mental development through motor skills and social interaction. Physiological and psychological criteria are used to determine if the child is thriving, growing, and developing vigorously. Failure to thrive is evidenced in “decelerated or arrested physical growth” such as when height and weight measurements drop below average or sharply decline from previous patterns. It is associated with poor developmental and emotional functioning (University of Virginia Health System, 2004). Failure to thrive can be caused by medical problems or lack of proper care and nurturing. The important consideration for the current work is the assumption that an infant given proper care and nurturing will tend to grow and develop without additional inducements or rewards.

Eventually, a human will mature and evidence of self-determination will appear when there is an ability to make decisions affecting one’s own course of action, to establish one’s self as an individual with unique abilities, and to connect with others. One’s interests, values, or needs and lead to well-being spawn self-determined actions.
Extrinsically motivated behavior is controlled by the expectations or preferences of others and degrades well-being. Often self-determination is the perceived difference between taking action because one finds it to be interesting, enjoyable, or important and taking action because one feels compelled to do so in order to avoid punishment or garner a reward.

For groups of people self-determination can be the combination of individual self-determined action as the group works towards common goals, such as lobbyists brought together by their mutual interest in a political issue. Political groups may be as small as community organizations spawned by a single issue or as large as multinational organizations overseeing a plethora of interactions. Perhaps one of the most established lexicons to define self-determination is one developed by the United Nations (UN). One of the stated aims of the international body is to develop peaceful and productive relations among nations based on equal rights and self-determination of peoples (UN, 1945). Self-determination, according to the UN, is a collective right of people who decide their own membership and is a prohibition against outside interference of internal dialogue (UN, 1970). It is not a one-time exercise nor merely encased in elections. It connotes a voice for minorities and full participation. It can mean independence or a decision to be the territory of another (UN, 2001). Self-determination predicates the well-being of the inhabitants and is an “essential condition for the effective guarantee and observance of individual human rights and for the promotion and strengthening of those rights” (UN, 1984). When supported, self-determination promotes progress, development, cooperation, and respect economically, socially, physically, and culturally for all genders, races, languages, and religions (UN, 1945).
To Survive and Thrive: A Self-Determination Perspective of Political Motivation

Self-determination is an innate need in newborns and continues over lifetimes as humans seek autonomy within their environment. Behaviorists led by B.F. Skinner in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s dismissed the phenomenon of innate desire to grow and develop. A behavior, according to Skinner, is rewarded or punished and is continued or discontinued accordingly. This approach fails to explain the human tendency to persist at actions that are neither rewarded nor punished. Cognitive and humanistic psychologists attempt to explain the human experience more fully through studies of how human brains work and of the roles self and experience play in behavior. Robert White in 1959 proposed the innate need of efficacy that leads a person to seek out challenges in mastery of one’s surroundings. Out of his ideas and the supporting research of others grew the concepts of basic human psychological needs and intrinsic motivation (Harter, 1983; Deci, 1975; Deci and Ryan 1985b). These concepts form the basis for this chapter on Self-Determination Theory (SDT).

SDT assumes first that humans have an innate tendency to develop a more elaborate and unified self and second that social contexts can support or hinder this growth (Deci and Ryan, 2002). This chapter seeks to define the precepts of SDT so that they can be contrasted with current theories of political motivation in Chapter (2), applied to the field of political science in Chapters (3), and employed to develop a political science research proposal in Chapter (4). This chapter starts by identifying the types of motivation and the basic human psychological needs from which motivation springs. Second, the four meta-theories of SDT will be used to show the intellectual process that has led to the development of the theory’s current form and application. Third, the refinement of SDT concepts will be traced from its genesis in psychology to its growth
into a variety of academic fields and will include cross-cultural validations of the theory. Finally, several areas of caution will be raised with SDT and some of the limitations of scope, which constrain this study.

Motivation

SDT begins with psychology and the assumption that a person is innately drawn toward growth and integration of experiences. The theory recognizes that social environments can influence one to act in ways that are contrary to one’s best interests or even counter to one’s true self. To account for the in-born desire to grow and develop and the counter-productive behavior one may display, SDT delineates between two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is the most autonomous form of motivation and spawns action because the act itself is enjoyable. Extrinsic motivation leads to action that is experienced as necessary for a specific outcome. Extrinsic motivation ranges from autonomous behavior one believes is important to controlled behavior to avoid punishment or shame. The lack of any intent to act purposely is amotivation.

Intrinsic behaviors are behaviors individuals find interesting and would do in the absence of inducements or punishments (Deci and Ryan, 2000). The concept developed out of Robert White’s (1959) suggestion that humans need to perceive themselves as capable and to present themselves with new and ever increasing challenges. The need for competence combined with Richard deCharm’s (1968) assertion that people prefer to experience themselves as the primary causal agents of their actions and led Edward Deci (1975) to theorize that intrinsically motivated behaviors are based on people’s needs to
feel competent and self-determined. In his initial experiments Deci recruited subjects to work on puzzles. One half of the participants were financially compensated for their time, and the other half were retained on a volunteer basis. The two groups performed equally well on the assigned tasks but showed a distinct difference during breaks between puzzle sessions. Those who had been paid engaged in other activities during waiting periods, while the volunteers tended to continue working on the puzzles even seeking more difficult ones to master. The extrinsic reward of money tended to thwart the intrinsic motivation of the participants to master the puzzles, whereas verbal praise or positive feedback increased intrinsic motivation. The experience led to the development of the first of four meta-theories that compose SDT.

**Meta-Theories of SDT**

SDT encompasses four meta-theories: Cognitive Evaluation Theory, Organismic Integration Theory, Causality Orientation Theory, and Basic Needs Theory. Cognitive Evaluation Theory, the first meta-theory of SDT, hypothesizes that competence and self-determination are key to intrinsic motivation and that external contexts such as positive feedback or reward can either support or hinder intrinsic motivation depending on how a person perceives the extrinsic involvement (Ryan and Deci, 2002). If the social context is experienced as supportive of a person’s autonomy and competence, then the experience is expected to support intrinsic motivation. However, if the person perceives that the environment hinders either one’s ability to choose one’s own course of action or thwarts one’s attempts to master ever increasing challenges, then the experience is expected to discourage intrinsic motivation.
Intrinsic motivation research has focused primarily on the negative effects of such controlling events as deadlines (Amabile, DeJong, and Lepper, 1976), losing (Vansteenkiste and Deci, 2003), and parental voice tones (Deci, Driver, Hotchkiss, Robbins, and Wilson, 1993). However, recent studies have found positive effects of supporting intrinsic motivation in predicting which military recruits will complete basic training (Duda, 2004), in increasing student performance through the positive influence of a teacher’s intrinsic interest in a subject (Wild, Enzle, Nix, and Deci, 1997; Wild, Enzle, and Hawkins, 1992), and in improving student performance through perceived support of autonomy and competence (Lewalter, 2004). Cognitive Evaluation Theory focuses on the effects social-environmental conditions can have on intrinsic motivation, as in Deci’s first experiment with paid and volunteer puzzle solvers.

The second meta-theory, Organismic Integration Theory, investigates methods of prompting behaviors that may not be enjoyable yet are important (Deci and Ryan, 1985b). Measuring motivation on a continuum ranging from amotivation through extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation, the meta-theory seeks to identify forms of motivation and establish causes for variations in expressed self-determination (See Table 1-1.). Beginning on the lower end of the continuum, amotivation is the lack of intent to act. The next level of motivation is extrinsic motivation ranging from external regulation, which requires the threat of punishment or promise of reward in order to act, to integrated regulation, which recognizes and believes in the importance of the behavior even if it is not enjoyable. The most self-determined form of motivation on the scale is intrinsic motivation, covering those activities done out of interest and inherent satisfaction.
The forms of extrinsic motivation vary with the autonomy experienced in the behavior (Deci and Ryan, 2002). External regulation is being motivated to earn a reward or to avoid a punishment. It is the least autonomous form of motivation because the causal agent is perceived as external to the subject. Introjected regulation is a mildly internalized motivation so that an action is taken to avoid guilt or shame or in order to gain an ego-boost. The causal agent remains external to the subject because the shame or ego-boost is based on the anticipated response of others. Identified regulation places value on the behavior as personally important. Integrated regulation motivates a person to act in order to attain a personally important outcome, rather than for the sheer enjoyment of the activity. It is the most self-determined expression of extrinsic motivation.

The motivation continuum is not a developmental chart with stages through which a person passes. A behavior can score at any point of the continuum and even increase or decrease in autonomous control while in process. Organismic Integration Theory has led to interesting studies on internalization of socio-environmental feedback in a variety of fields. It has been used to study the effect of election results on voters (Koestner, Losier, Vallerand, and Carducci, 1996), teeth brushing habits of dental patients (Halvari, 2004), the performance of elite athletes (Treasure, 2004), and the likelihood children will adopt their parents’ religious convictions (Ryan, Rigby, and King, 1993). In each case Organismic Integration Theory looks at the environment’s effect on extrinsic motivation, where Cognitive Evaluation Theory studies the effects on intrinsic motivation.

The third meta-theory, Causality Orientations Theory, returns to the self and how prior experiences have been internalized to determine the type of motivation a person will have under certain conditions. Built on the General Causality Orientations Scale
developed by Deci and Ryan (1985a), Causality Orientations Theory measures the extent to which a person’s prior experiences affect the way a new event is perceived. The scale
Table 1-1. Self-Determination Continuum
Drawn from Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Deci (2000)

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<td>Congruence, Awareness, Synthesis, Personal Interest, Enjoyment</td>
<td>Congruence, Awareness, Synthesis, Personal Interest, Enjoyment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
breaks down three causality orientations. Autonomy orientation regulates behavior as enjoyable or recognizes it as important to the person. Controlled orientation looks for direction about how a person should behave from external sources. Impersonal orientation, similar to amotivation, lacks an intention to act. The scale allows researchers to evaluate the motivation effects of an experience relative to the motivational orientation a person presented prior to the event. Researchers have used the scale to investigate the bedside manner medical students developed in school (Williams and Deci, 1996), the effect of goals on interpersonal leadership styles (McKoskey, 1999), the real and perceived effects of alcohol on college students (Neighbors, Walker, & Larimer, 2003), and exercise regimentation (Rose, Markland, and Parfitt, 2001).

**Basic Needs**

Each of the meta-theories discussed evaluates motivation. The fourth one, Basic Needs Theory, seeks to refine understanding of the innate psychological needs upon which motivation is built. Needs in SDT are “innate psychological nutrients that are essential for ongoing psychological growth, integrity, and well-being” (Deci and Ryan, 2000 pg. 229). To be considered a basic need it must be both universal across cultures and developmental stages and it must be necessary for growth and well-being. Only three needs have been identified. The basic psychological needs are relatedness, competence, and autonomy. When the social environment is experienced as supportive of these needs, motivation is expected to be more self-determined. More self-determined behavior is more likely to be repeated and to produce positive internalization of the experience. It also tends to produce behaviors that are in union with the person’s self, goals, values, and
needs. A less supportive or more controlling environment thwarts autonomous motivation and decreases the likelihood that a behavior will be repeated. A person tends to focus on the external inducements to act such as rewards and punishments, when faced with a controlling environment. The conflict between the environment and a person’s self-determination can cause negative internalization and is where fracturing of the self can begin. SDT leaves open the possibility of other basic needs that meet the universal and necessity requirements, but no needs other than competence, autonomy, and relatedness are generally accepted at this time.

SDT explores the positive development tendencies of humans but also seeks to evaluate the social conditions that may be antagonistic toward these tendencies. White’s early work on effectance led to the determination of the first basic human psychological need of competence. Competence “refers to feeling effective in one’s ongoing interactions with the social environment and experiencing opportunities to exercise and express one’s capacities” (Deci and Ryan, 2002 pg. 7). It leads people to seek challenges that are optimal for their skills and to maintain or improve those skills. It is not an attained skill but a feeling of confidence in effective action.

The second defined human need is self-determination, or autonomy. Deci and Ryan define autonomy as “being the perceived origin or source of one’s own behavior.” It is “acting from interest and integrated values.” (Deci and Ryan, 2002 pg. 8). Autonomy is exercised when an individual acts as an expression of the self. It is not the same as independence because an individual can be both dependent and autonomous. Autonomy is not compliance or conformity nor does it imply permissiveness. It connotes operating in an environment and of having influence in that environment. The critical distinction of
autonomous action is that the person experiences the action as one with which the individual concurs and which the individual endorses.

The third basic psychological need is relatedness. Often a person will take extrinsically motivated actions because one has seen people who are personally important model or recommend such behavior. The need to feel a sense of belonging or connection is central to internalizing motivation. SDT calls this identified human need relatedness, the need to feel connected to others, to care for, and be cared for by those others, to have a sense of belonging both with other individuals and with one’s community (Deci and Ryan, 2002). It is not a title such as wife or lover as much as it is a relationship. It is a sense of secure community and entails a mutual reliance.

Each basic need has been evaluated separately and as part of the motivation continuum. The overarching finding is that all three are basic needs and that the thwarting of one is detrimental to well-being, even when the other two are fully supported.

“Accumulated research now suggests that the commitment and authenticity reflected in intrinsic motivation and integrated extrinsic motivation are most likely to be evident when individuals experience supports for competence, autonomy, and relatedness.” (Ryan and Deci, 2002 pg. 74). To draw a parallel with physiological needs: a human needs food, water, shelter, and physical health. The absence of one requirement has an effect on the overall well-being of the person, even when the other needs are supplied.

Ryan and Deci continue:

“We maintain that by failing to provide supports for competence, autonomy, and relatedness, not only of children but also of students, employees, patients, and athletes, socializing agents and organizations contribute to alienation and ill-being. The fact that psychological-need deprivation appears to be a principal
source of human distress suggests that assessments and interventions would do well to target these primary foundations of mental health” (pg. 74).

A theory of basic human needs shared by all cultures does not diminish the differences evidenced among those cultures. Rather the cultures themselves are expected to affect the form of expression given to values and goals. Ironically research has shown that autonomy can be more supported in a communal arrangement than in individualistic ones (Kim, Butzel, and Ryan, 1998). Specific goals are culturally influenced. In reporting higher well-being for attainment of intrinsically motivated goals, researchers focused on the internalization of the goal rather than the goal itself (Sheldon and Kasser, 1998). It is the internalized motivation that is measured, not a specific goal across cultures.

**Areas of Caution**

SDT is not a theory to replace the work of prior political thinkers such as Aristotle or Hans Morgenthau. Rather SDT offers a new perspective on politics, a point of view that offers to evaluate humans and their political activities based on the common denominators of basic needs. Political theorists may tend to assume political query is built on the least common denominators of human nature such as power, greed, and selfishness. SDT offers a viewpoint from which behavior and personality can be defined according to the internalization of support or frustration experienced in the quest for autonomy, relatedness, and competence. SDT does not replace the existing framework of political study. It can be a new portal through which politics can be observed, measured, and constructed.

SDT and its political applications is a marriage in the early stages of arrangement. First, operationally SDT researchers are trying to break out of their dependency upon
self-reporting. Much of the tests conducted on SDT have been limited to questionnaires filled out by the subjects being studied. The veracity of the work rests on the truthfulness of individuals being asked to reveal themselves in answers to questions about why they do what they do. For numerous reasons they may be unwilling or unable to provide the forthright information so critical to mathematical analysis. Second, several steps are necessary to bring SDT fully into political science. This thesis is the first of three logical and identifiable steps towards full application of SDT concepts to political situations. The primary step is to make a case to political scientists that basic psychological needs exist and they affect political activity of individuals. This paper sets out to build the argument for self-determined political motivation. The next step will be to apply SDT to the internal political activity of individual nations, showing the affect culture and political construct have on shaping national character. Once political scientists are engaged in the concepts of basic needs and political environments as supporting or thwarting those needs, the final step will be to apply SDT to international relations. The idea that nations can discuss contentions and cooperatives in terms of supporting the autonomy, competence, and relatedness of their respective citizenry is exciting.

The application of SDT to power driven individuals and revolutions is beyond the scope of this paper. However, that is not to say that SDT cannot address these topics in political science. SDT is a theory of motivation on which this thesis is built. SDT is also a theory of personality. Future endeavors of SDT in the political arena may well evaluate the psyches of Nero, Joseph Stalin, or Adolph Hitler or shed new light on the democratic revolutions of the United States or Poland. That is a work for another day. First, SDT must win an audience among political scientists.
Future Explorations

Further research combining SDT with political science investigations will benefit both studies. SDT offers a new set of tools to evaluate political motivation including statistical models, questionnaires, and a theoretical foundation. Political scientists offer SDT their expertise in an area of study that is important in evaluating how citizens become active political participants and how policies can most effectively be structured to incubate self-determined practices. SDT political scientists have much room to apply the theory and its measurement tools to political research questions. Many basic tools and data sets have not been tapped because political scientists have not yet applied the theory.

Broader samples. The political work completed by self-determination researchers has centered around Canadian college student subjects voting on national issues. Initial work suggests that introjected regulation and identified regulation are better predictors of political action than intrinsic motivation is. Intrinsic motivation and amotivation were unreliable predictors of voting. A person may follow politics out of interest yet lack the motivation to vote. Conversely, a person may not seek out information or pay attention to politics yet may vote. Similar studies to those conducted by Losier and Koestner are needed with sample sets that represent a wider range of voters. Use of Losier and Koestner’s statistical models with sample sets of eligible voters from a variety of ages and educational backgrounds could confirm SDT findings while strengthening the validity of those findings with similar results from a wider variety of people. Addition, there are data sources untapped by Losier’s and Koestner’s early work applying SDT measurements to political variables in small samples garnered from
Canadian college students. Their work may have validated the scale, but it is too small to be a basis for system wide action.

**Beyond voters.** Self-determination research has focused on the motivation of voters in national referendums and the effect election results had on them. The psychologists who completed the research worked in an area that was readily accessible to them and more easily operationalized than other areas of political study. The students attended the same colleges where the professors taught and met the definition of a sample group that could be recollected after the event because classes met again after the election. Votes are easily computed in statistical models. Either one voted, or one did not vote. One can vocalize the decision-making process as fact-based, other-based, reward-based, or nonexistent.

Exploration could range from domestic elections to internal affairs and include the following questions: What effect does candidate leadership style play in voter motivation? Does a charismatic leader activate more participants than a reserved leader? Is a candidate who voices a principle-based platform more likely to activate voters than one who bases a campaign on why his competitor is not right for the job? Is it possible to participate in nation building without requiring the host country to adopt democratic, free-market principles? What forms of enticement/motivation work best to motivate allied cooperation? Does the thwarting of basic needs lead to state weakness?

**New statistical models.** Many of the statistical models developed for self-determination research can be structured for use in political research. Political scientists could adapt SDT models rather than creating new models. The extension of SDT into political science will be welcome by the SDT community, which will benefit by having
their tools tested and validated by another area of academia. Political scientists can tap into the resources available through SDT. Established questionnaires measure a range of SDT concepts from causality orientation, self-regulation, and general needs, to motivator’s orientation (SDT 2005). Early validation of the Self-Determination Scale of Political Motivation (Losier 2001) needs to be strengthened by work of political scientists familiar with democratic processes and the nuances of empirical testing in that field.

**Beyond self-reporting.** SDT work has been constrained by heavy reliance on self-reporting measures. Subjects answering questions about themselves or their perceptions of others fill out questionnaires. Throughout the field of self-determination work, a need to expand beyond self-reporting is recognized (Deci, 2004). Political science may offer one of the first areas of study to provide a way to escape a dependency on self-reporting. Candidate motivations can be evaluated through date book entries accounting for time spent in certain endeavors or through content analysis of speeches and news interviews. Historical evaluation of political indices such as economic measurements, voter turnout, and state autonomy-support could estimate the effect of needs satisfaction and frustration on overall state strength and duration.

A critical vulnerability in the current methodology of SDT is that one’s attitudes do not accurately predict one’s behavior. The attitude a person reports on a questionnaire may not match the individual’s behavior (LaPiere, 1934). Social pressures can force conformity. A person may answer what the questioners want to hear. Circular population samples may be the first step away from the inadequacies of self-reporting. The technique depends upon questionnaire responses completed by many people in close association with one another. They are asked to reveal information about themselves and their
perception of the others. In a work environment, the questionnaire gathers information about the individual and one’s perception of coworkers and supervisor, while the supervisor and coworkers fill out similar forms about themselves and the others in the office (Baard et al, 2004). This approach allows for reporting on several dependent variables and conditions. The perceptions of others can be compared with the internalized thinking of the individual and contrasts the individuals’ perceptions with the self-reports of the others. It also allows the effect of external conditions including supervisory methods and external rewards to be factored into a model.

Darren Treasure uses this approach in his research with elite swimmers and their coaches (Treasure, 2004). Elite swimmers include Olympians and top-level collegiate athletes. Treasure has the swimmers and their coaches complete questionnaires about their relationship and work schedule. In addition, Treasure collects direct observations by attending swim practice and competitions and factors in interview responses from counseling sessions with the athletes. His methodology allows for three perspectives (researcher, coach, and swimmer) on the same variables (swimmer motivation, coaching techniques, and swimmer performance). His findings show that swimmer performance remained consistently high regardless of the swimmer’s reasons for competing or the coach’s methodology. Individual motivation and coaching methods affected the amount of time the swimmer was healthy enough to compete. Injuries and illnesses occurred at a much higher rate among athletes who felt controlled or forced to participate by others. Athletes with more autonomous motivation supported by their coaches tended to have more healthy days for practice and competition. Cross tabulating perceptions of
participants with observations of outsiders permits a more intricate picture of the interpersonal dynamics and their affects on outcomes.

Steven Kelman uses SDT in part of his measurement of the reorganization of the American federal procurement system initiated during the 1990s. He oversaw the process as the senior government procurement policy official from 1993 to 1997. He uses an ordinary least-squares regression model to test interaction of “reform attitude, attitude strength, individual-level performance-promoting personality, demographic traits, and organizational influences on behavior change” (Kelman, 2005 pg. 169). His research shows the motivation of government procurement workers was intricately affected by the attitudes of their bosses and coworkers, their own perceptions of reform policy and adoption methods, and internalization of financial rewards and verbal feedbacks. In keeping with SDT, Kelman finds extrinsic rewards such as monetary bonuses decrease the intrinsic motivation of reform supporter. Bonuses were more effective for garnering support from initial critics of procurement reform, as long as the bonuses were perceived as indication of the person’s competence. For workers who were not reform supporters, the attitude of their supervisor was key to determining the attitude of the employees. If a supervisor supported reform efforts, the extrinsically motivated employees would behave accordingly. If the boss was a critic of reform efforts, extrinsically motivated employees followed one’s example.

The circular methodology Kelman uses indicates a positive trend away from dependency upon the veracity of sample participants towards a operationalizing motivation hypothesis within groups so that each member of the group provides information about one’s own experiences and perceptions to be countermeasured against
the responses of others in the same group. In the multiplicity of the respondents researchers are able to measure the motivational affects of the social environment on the whole, rather than depending upon the accurate reporting of the individual. Complete rejection of self-reporting may not be possible for SDT because a key attribute of the theory is the belief that “people who are more able to take charge of their lives generate more behavioral results than those less able to do so” (Kelman, 2005 pg. 164). Research confirms that feeling in control, effective, and part of a team (autonomous, competent, and relatedness) is critically important to the success of procurement reform. Without autonomy the individual felt controlled and pressured and was less likely to conform to acquisition reform. Without competence feedback, initiative floundered. Without relatedness, the individual acted too individualistically and failed to productively participate.

**Conclusion**

Self-determination and autonomy are key concepts in contemporary international relations and individual care. SDT brings well-documented and compelling insights on human behavior to the world at large and to political science in particular. The research endeavors to encourage autonomous behavior by evaluating the motivation spurring action and the effect needs support and hindrance have on well-being. The next chapter will trace the development of political motivation theory from its roots in the work of Aristotle through the offshoots of Sigmund Freud to the most recent blooms of transformational theory. Autonomy is a highly valued concept in political science, and the empirical research completed by SDT may prove valuable to the understanding of political participation and to the development of effective public policy. Its approach to
innate human nature, cross-cultural experimentation, and historical application holds
great promise towards serious and productive work for the improvement of the human
experience.
Chapter 2: Current Theories of Political Motivation

Humans act politically. Establishing leadership and cooperative roles to address joint problems marks all human groups from the earliest family groups in which fathers hunt and mothers nurture children through the modern nation-state regime. As populations increase and family groups enlarge to tribes and clans, the political instinct evolves, as does the role of leader and participant. Increasing numbers within the tribe and more numerous groups around them require leaders who can accommodate growing demands within the group and who can coordinate interaction with outsiders. Politics becomes a necessary activity for the internal and external success of the group.

The motivation to act politically is not settled among political scientists. Aristotle asserts all humans are *zoon politikon* (political animals). His blanket definition of all humans as political creatures assumes an innate inclination to act politically. Rational choice theorists since Thomas Hobbes build an approach to political motivation that assumes people who are fully informed will make rational choices. If there is more to be gained by participation than the action will cost, then a person will act. If the cost is more than the expected gain, a person will abstain. Harold Lasswell, a leader of modern political psychology, argues some humans are *homo politicus* (political persons). His definition assumes few people have a political personality predisposed to value power and motivated to act politically. Lasswell’s student James Chowning Davies retranslates Aristotle’s words *zoon politikon* to mean “social animals who sometimes act politically” (1959 pg. 410). He reasons, any person will act politically when one needs to do so.
Davies’s definition accepts political activity as an innate activity performed out of interest, enjoyment, or biological compulsion for few people. He evaluates political action as a tool most humans use to satisfy needs. Advocates of transformational politics define political activity as a social expression of the spiritual and the personal. They hope political activity is part of human potential beyond the individual (Woolpert et al, 1998). When perfectly practiced in full democratic participation, it can empower citizens to fulfill their individual and collective potential. This chapter will briefly explain each of these schools of thought.

Political science theory has focused on power and the powerful for the last one hundred years. Contemporary political motivation theory focuses on the ends a person or people expect for a particular course of action. It assumes a calculated measurement of power expended or collected in each political action. Many influential theories of political motivation follow the expectation theory of motivation that evaluates what a person expects in order to account for the behavior a person pursues. The theory leads political scientists to see politics as a means to accumulate rewards such as power, wealth, prestige, and territory.

**Rational Choice**

The cause of human political actions interests great thinkers. Aristotle in ancient Greece says man is a *zoon politikon*, a political animal. Nicolo Machiavelli describes people as players of the deadly serious game of politics, which they win by dominating (1513). Thomas Hobbes writes about politics as a way to restrain men’s violent, selfish tendencies with a God-given leader (1651). *Rex lex*. The king is law. Hobbes sees the nature of man as savage and power-seeking that requires a divinely appointed authority to
rule as a father rules his family and as God dominates creation in order to restrain man’s natural evil. He assumes natural law and natural right work against humans, precluding the possibility of self-rule. John Locke challenges the monarchy’s claim to divine right (1690). Human understanding permits government as a necessary judiciary to establish and protect individual rights. Political authority comes from the consent of the governed because reason expressed in a defensible legal code can restrain human nature. Jean-Jacques Rousseau aspires to political activity that can be enlightened with reason and allow individual freedoms before it disintegrates into anarchy (Rousseau, 1778). *Lex rex.*

The law is king. Thomas Paine denounces hereditary rule and argues man uses representative government to balance conflicting interests without anarchy (1775, 1781).

The strong faith in reason and natural order of the previously mentioned writers seems romantic, especially when contrasted with the concept of political activity put forth by modernists. Earlier work deals in the descriptive reality of human nature and the political behavior that naturally flows from it when not restrained. Modern and contemporary thinkers work within the prescriptive realm of what should be. Hans J. Morgenthau, the cupbearer of political realism, provides a transition between the two approaches by describing politics as it is then advocating improvements. He begins his political study, like Locke, with the premise that humans are rational actors participating in politics to accumulate self-interests that are attainable only with cooperation. The first motivation for political activity is survival of the state. The second is accumulation of power, defined as interest. He flatly rejects attempts to force the thought processes of other realms onto the political realm (1948). Politics is about the accumulation of a commodity unique to the political realm---political power. Political power refers to a
reciprocal psychological relationship of control between holders of public authority and the people at large. The mutual relation is a balance of power. A variety of voices echo Morgenthau, evaluating political activity as a way to accumulate power, wealth, territory, business, and a variety of external commodities. C. Wright Mills sees politics can be an activity of manipulators, who use the consent of the governed to induce changes the people neither understand nor necessarily want (1959). A robot is perfectly rational, he points out, but that is not a desirable outcome for human life. Increased reason does not necessarily make for increased freedom. Nor do all humans have equal influence in their political activity. Some adapt to their environment rather than confronting or changing it. To act optimally, people must be fully informed.

Contemporary practitioners of rational choice theory are skilled statisticians. They take the theories and ideas of Aristotle through Morgenthau and attempt to apply numbers to measure and predict outcomes. First, rational theory assumes people act in one’s own self-interest. Second, rational choice theorists assume people act rationally. A rational person will compute the cost of an action and compare it to the expected gain to be garnered. If the cost is less than the expected gain, one will act. If the cost is more than the expected gain, one will not act. Applying this theory to voting is best represented by the calculus of voting, which expects rational voters to chose an action with maximum utility (Riker and Ordeshook, 1968). A vote is an investment in a preferred outcome (Fiorina, 1976). Minimax regret theory also expects voters to seek maximum utility from their actions, yet it anticipates a rational voter will act so as to limit the amount of potential regret experienced (Ferejohn and Fiorina, 1976). A voter may want Candidate A to win but will vote for Candidate C because C is more likely to win and because
Candidate B is an undesirable outcome. The voter will regret less voting for one’s second choice; than one will regret wasting a vote on one’s first choice. Game theory is also part of rational choice theory. Like the calculus of voting, it assumes voting is a collective action in which individual participate to achieve expected outcomes. It also predicts voter turnout increases indirect relation to the perceived decisiveness of the vote (Aldrich, 1992). If a voter expects to cast the tie-breaking vote, one is very likely to vote. The concept of efficacy is key to rational choice theory. A citizen will participate politically in as much as one expects the action to increase the chances of attaining a preferred outcome. Yet in accounting for the human need to make effective actions, rational choice theory can not account for values, beliefs, attitudes, or other preferences on which human behavior is based (Aldrich 1993). Some voters chose not to participate because no one in a large electorate expects to cast a deciding vote. Rationally there is no reason to participate, but many people do. Some voters participate because they believe in democracy and because they perceive the act of voting as important. Some voters are intrinsically interested in politics. These are the types of affects for which rational choice theory cannot account.

Rational choice can measure the correlation between specific factors. For example, they can calculate the relationship between voting and a variety of factors including age, gender, educational attainment, and interest. They can also tie voter turnout to partisanship, political efficacy, and newspaper readership (Cassel and Luskin, 1988). In linking these factors to each other, however, they are only able to account for a percentage of likely voters. By necessity the theory requires a trimming of potential variables to a mathematically manageable number, potentially cutting out key factors.
Lasswell

Psychopolitics looks at psychological predictors of political behavior. It evaluates why people take certain steps and accounts for the influences of national character, ideology, public opinion, and public attitudes (Pettman, 1975). The use of psychology in political science intends to discover why people act politically. Political scientists working on the psychology of politics tend to settle into one of three theoretical assumptions. All three recognize central needs or goals. The first group, which Lasswell dominates, understands needs as Freud does---life and libido. The second, which Davies advocates, builds from Maslow’s Need Hierarchy and Darwin’s evolutionary theory. The third and most recent foray into political psychology attempts to tie the political to the intricacies of the human experience including the spiritual.

Lasswell’s chief concern is the achievement of worldwide dignity. His approach to political purpose and political motivation of leaders and participants divides into two distinct parts: what is and what ought to be. Politics is about influence and the influential but ought to be about shared decision-making and human dignity. Political leadership is provided by deference-craving individuals but ought to be a democratic process. Participants are seeking human goals in the form of cultural values. They are often frustrated by authoritarian hindrances and ought to be supported in their self-determination and decision-making. He believes a democratic approach to politics, especially political policies and practices enlightened by the studies of psychology and psychiatry, can best explain political participation. The central focus of the work of Harold D. Lasswell is the democratic assumption that humans have a basic preference for
dignity based on individual merit rather than birth, and the goal of his political work is the grandest possible realization of human dignity (1951).

Lasswell builds on Sigmund Freud’s work by expanding the basic needs list Freud developed of two needs (love/libido and life) to eight goal values shared across the human experience, regardless of culture or historical era. He defines a goal/value as wants, desires, preferences, expectations, or beliefs. Though the list is not intended to be exhaustive, it is thoroughly built on the concepts of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness that the American founders declare. Humans, according to Lasswell, are motivated to work towards human dignity by power, wealth, well-being, skill, enlightenment, affection, rectitude, and respect. He expects these goals values to be cross-cultural and cross-historical period, yet he stops short of claiming they are innate human characteristics: He does not look for values as innate characteristics springing from genes or chromosomes, though he leaves open the possibility that empirical study may connect genetic predisposition to choice of roles in society (1951). Goal values motivate political activity; in fact, they can necessitate political action in certain people. Politics, as any social process, is the pursuit of goal values though institutions based on resources. All people seek these goal values through social processes, but only certain humans chose to pursue them through a political process. The people who chose the political process for goal value pursuit are those with a political personality, marked by a desire for power. Research into the process can lead to predictions about future trends as well as extrapolation of past conditions. Lasswell strongly asserts that predictions are not inevitable because humans can alter their conduct or change their understanding of the context through enlightenment.
To Survive and Thrive: A Self-Determination Perspective of Political Motivation

The goals Lasswell enumerates are the individual ends humans seek through the social means of politics (1951). These human goals are considered cross-cultural and timeless. The values placed on them and the means of expression, however, are not genetic. They are part of the social process that feeds political behavior as humans work through institutions to affect resources (Lasswell 1948). Power is a voice in making decisions, the ability to make, affect, or participate in decisions. Power is part of the right to liberty and is pursued through the social institution of government. Wealth is access to goods and services. Part of the pursuit of happiness is recognizable in the social institution of business. Well-being is physical and mental health. Humans pursue bodily and psychic integrity—part of the right to life—in the social institutions of hospitals and clinics. Skill is the opportunity to acquire and exercise latent talent. The acquisition and use of dexterities is part of the pursuit of happiness, recognizable in the processes of occupation. Shared values in wealth, well-being, and skill are expected to bring security. Enlightenment is the finding and spreading of knowledge through research, education, and information. It provides an opportunity for humans to change their conduct or their understanding of the context in order to alter future trends. Rational choices depend upon such access to information and comment in order for people to secure liberty. Affection concerns congenial human relations, friendship, and sexual intimacy. The pursuit of affection is part of the pursuit of happiness and is conducted through the social institutions of family, friends, and intimacy. Rectitude is morality or the common standards of responsibility and irresponsibility. Part of the pursuit of liberty, rectitude encompasses the distinction between what one should do because it is valued and what one must do because a higher authority requires it. It is the compliance to a code of
conduct the self endorses, as opposed to conformity motivated by consequences. The social institutions of church and home most are where a person learns the norms to which the self demands adherence. Respect is evident, operationally, in the social classes that reflect this value of status. Respect as a goal value is the absence of discrimination on grounds other than merit. It is part of the pursuit of happiness.

In explaining leadership motivation, Lasswell shows his Freudian roots. The intense and unsatisfied cravings for affection, sex, and biological control to which Freud attributed abnormal behavior serve as a theoretical basis for Lasswell’s work in political psychology, especially in explaining the development of leaders. These Machiavellian-style leaders are made through parental influence, tension-inducing deprivation or indulgence, and an instinctive desire for independence. Political leadership, he writes, is provided by people with a political personality “characterized by an intense and ungratified craving for deference” (1948 pg. 38). Nature and nurture predispose some people to “find satisfaction in playing particular roles on the stage of politics” (Lasswell, 1936 pg. 15).

Lasswell advocates unshackling leadership from its past as a position for power-hungry individuals. Power is decision making. The more power, or decision making, one shares, the more power one has. Just as authoritarian psychiatric care fails to improve patient well-being, Lasswell suggests power concentrations in a democratic system undermine and hinder the well-being and self determination of citizens. One advocates a democratic leadership style that depends upon the support of the community. Rational decisions should be informed by sciences and decision-makers’ own humanity to guard against destructive impulses and practices.
Maslow and Davies

Davies agrees with his former teacher Lasswell that human politics is a need based endeavor. However, he uses Maslow’s needs hierarchy rather than Freud’s life and love compulsions. He establishes the advancements in human political constructs on the evolutionary principles of Charles Darwin, rather than on a belief in the innate goodness of humans. Politics is a tool, according to Davies, to fully realize the individual. Politics is a social endeavor to help the person gain an optimal existence. Davies sees political activity as an issue of self-actualization, not of survival. Every human has basic needs that an individual will pursue “for their own sake in his lifelong process of behaving as a human being” (Maslow 1959 pg. 123). Physiological needs for water, food, health, or housing are matters of survival. Political activity is only possible when those basic needs are met and when humans are ready to move up the hierarchy of needs towards self-actualization. Politics, Davies thinks, is a tool humans use to thrive. When access to their biological needs is secure, humans begin seeking fulfillment of higher needs such as relationships and self-actualization. Inadequate physiological need fulfillment prohibits political activity as human energy is directed to securing access to the more immediate needs of biological sustenance.

Davies believes humans function according to the needs hierarchy asserted by Abraham H. Maslow (Maslow, 1943). The needs are ordered in a hierarchy beginning with physiological needs and moving up to security. Security, food, water, and shelter are necessary for survival. Once access to these life needs is secure and sustainable an individual can move up the hierarchy of needs towards optimal existence. These next needs, when satisfied, enable a human to thrive. The higher basic needs, as defined by
Maslow, are the desire for relationships, seeking self-esteem, and ultimately searching for self-actualization (See Table 2-1. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs).

Davies built his political theory on Maslow’s work in psychology. Davies translates Maslow’s hierarchy into a predictor of political activity, arguing that humans are intrinsically social but not necessarily political. They will not act politically when their physiological needs are unmet. It is only after the human needs for food, water, shelter, and health are satisfied and secured for the foreseeable future that an individual can move into the next realm of needs on the hierarchy where political activity is possible. As a person seeks relationships, self-esteem, and self-actualization one will act politically, Davies finds. The transitions occurs under one of two conditions. First, one will act politically if access to needs satisfaction is threatened and one must act politically to secure it. Second, a person will act politically if one has a predisposition to be good at politics and one’s participation in politics is part of self-actualization:

“People generally do not turn to politics to satisfy hunger and to gain love, self-esteem, and self-actualization; they go to the food market, pursue members of the opposite sex, show friends what they have done, and lose themselves in handicrafts, fishing, or contemplation---with rarely a thought about politics. If achievement of these goals is threatened by other individuals or groups too powerful to be dealt with privately, people then turn to politics to secure these ends” (Davies, 1963 pg. 10).
Table 2-1. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs.
Derived from discussions in Maslow’s *Theory of Human Motivation* (1943)
Davies’ approach to political motivation is a progressive flow of need satisfaction and higher goals. If physical needs are deprived, political apathy follows. If physical needs are satisfied, relationship needs are pursued. Satisfaction of relational needs builds a sense of community and lays the foundation for political activity. Relationships lead to a value of equality and establish a sense of individual worth, enabling the political concepts of life and liberty. Those concepts inform the development of political causes. At the highest level of the basic needs hierarchy (self-actualization) a person participates in politics to fight government interference in one’s pursuit of the full self or to express the self through an active role as a political leader (Davies, 1963).

Davies’ approach to political constructs assumes that politics is a social construct and that historical development follows an evolutionary process. Democracy is a sign of a more highly evolved populace than those that form tribes or kingdoms (See Table 2-2. Davies Hierarchy of Political Constructs.) He predicts the iteration to follow democracy will be civilized anarchy, the product of highly evolved people living in Marx’s utopia.

Political leaders, according to Davies, are people highly involved in politics. Their physical security and need for belonging are satiated and access to satisfaction is secure for the foreseeable future (Davies, 1959). The secure access they have to all levels of basic needs enables them to focus on self-actualization through politics. Their motivation is part of their personality, and demonstrated competence leads them to politics. “The only factor which appears to be a reasonable postulate for common motivation of intense political participation is the need for self-actualization” (Davies, 1963 pg. 59). U.S. political leaders, he estimates, account for only 1 to 2 percent of the population. Most are
wealthy, skilled, and educated. They intensely participate because they experience an inherent pleasure in statecraft.

Davies constructs a criterion of political motivation in a hierarchy structure much like Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (1959). One assumes politics is an instrument for most people, not an intrinsic interest pursued for its own enjoyment. Thus most humans are apolitical until politics affects their security or social belonging. Political participants come to the process because they must use politics to secure access to need satisfaction or to work towards self-actualization. Extreme deprivation of biological needs will prohibit a people from political participation. Starvation, plague, dehydration, and homelessness prevent people from engaging in politics. “Misery laden people form a manipulable mass” (Davies, 1963 pg. 25). However, lesser forms of need frustration, such as limited access to a water or food that was once freely available, can ignite political activism. The other causes of political motivation include seeking security, establishing a sense of belonging, or defending values. Most people act politically when a person or group--too powerful for the individual to successfully confront alone---restricts access to goal satisfaction. The specific causes of political motivation are as numerous as the individuals who evidence them, he predicts, and thus defy quantitative analysis (Davies, 1959). Revolution, according to Davies, is most likely when the people are relatively well off. An attempt to overhaul the government occurs, he finds, when a sharp reversal of fortunes follows a prolonged period of economic and social development (Davies, 1962).
Table 2-2. Davies’ Hierarchy of Political Constructs
Based on Davies’ *Human Nature in Political Behavior: The Dynamics of Political Behavior* (1963)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Primitive Anarchy</strong></th>
<th><strong>Anomic Anarchy</strong></th>
<th><strong>Oligarchy</strong></th>
<th><strong>Democracy</strong></th>
<th><strong>Civilized Anarchy</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Defining Characteristics</strong></td>
<td>Few political rules exist, internalized over centuries. Decision-making process and conditions are static.</td>
<td>Transition polity away from tradition caused by intrusive modernizing influences.</td>
<td>Inhabitants surrender control to strong government in order to cope with threat of anomic anarchy lawlessness.</td>
<td>Groups in society exercise political power to place checks on the government.</td>
<td>Return to internalized rules but this time they are numerous and complex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inhabitants Preoccupation</strong></td>
<td>Survival</td>
<td>Lawless survival</td>
<td>Safety, security</td>
<td>Power</td>
<td>Individual fulfillment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examples</strong></td>
<td>Hunting gathering societies, feudalities, haciendas in contemporary Latin America.</td>
<td>Hobbesian society; ghettos and slums of big, modern cities.</td>
<td>Developing nations</td>
<td>Ancient Athens, American revolution, French revolution</td>
<td>Utopian societies of Marx and Engels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Davies extends his theory of political motivation from explaining individual participation as leaders and collective participants to deciphering political development for entire societies (1963). The stages of political development laid out by Davies demonstrate the transformation that occurs in political evolution from one form of government to the next. One begins the progression at primitive anarchy developing through anomic anarchy, oligarchy, and democracy to the unattained iteration of civilized anarchy. His point is that government progresses over time and changes to satisfy needs of the people. Between each iteration are smaller developmental corrections taken to make the current form work a little longer until eventually those incremental refinements
pave the way to monumental overhauls. The change comes through action that is intuitive and that is in response to innate desire to satisfy needs.

**Transformational Theory**

Transformational political scientists seek to unlock human potential beyond the individual to perfect social processes. A direct descendent of rational choice and first cousin to basic needs theory, transformational theory expands the requirements of a fully informed electorate beyond knowledge of political issues to encompass an accounting of all potential causes or effects of political action. While rational choice theories attempt to cull down variables to the minimum necessary to predict an outcome, transformational theorists attempt to account for all possible influences. Transformational theory advocates creation of a political environment that will permit people to seek fulfillment of their own needs, while making rational choices about how to productively cooperate on both micro (individual psyche, spirit, autonomy) and macro (environment, religion, culture) levels. The foundational principle assumes people, when fully informed about the impact their actions have on the world around them, will make rational choices to live at harmony with themselves, other people, other groups, and their habitat.

A paradigm change is inevitable, and transformational theorists intend to make it peaceful. They believe that a new paradigm in political science will embrace the interdependence of life as humans and as participants of the ecological system (Slaton et al, 1998). The ideal political system will recognize that interdependence, partnership, flexibility, diversity, and sustainability exist and should be embraced. Humans are inextricably linked to Earth for the satisfaction of biological needs such as food, water, and oxygen. In the way humans are connected to their physical surroundings,
transformational political scientists recognize a link between the personal and the political and between the spiritual and the political. The latter interconnections “provide inspiration, guidance, and a sense of meaning and purpose that propels us and many political actors beyond the self-interest and self-centeredness of the politics-as-usual world” (Slaton et al., 1998 pg. xxii). Politics is less about government than about the impact it has on lives.

Leadership is a communal experience in transformational politics. Rather than choosing representatives or following a leader, the new paradigm rules by consensus with participants seeking common ground. The motivation for politics focuses on community, cohesion. Transformational theory is open to chaos theory, advocating an open, fluid system that allows the individual to act on society rather than be controlled and constricted by it (Knight, 1998). The political system, similar to a direct democracy, permits participants to create the common good by interacting with one another and constructing a shared purpose (Woolpert, 1998). When a leader arises, the person is expected to represent the purest intent of the community, not to seek power for oneself (Gilbert, 1998).

Political participants are to experience empowerment in a transformational regime. Humans can fulfill their needs for self-esteem, self-efficacy, knowledge, skill, political awareness, rights, and responsibilities by gaining mastery over themselves and their environment (Schwerin, 1998). The crux of transformational politics lies on fully informed participants. Well-prepared participants who are educated about the issues without spin are crucial. Fully informing humans enables them to deliberately change their environment, one that is ripe for revolution. Easing participants into a more
empowered role is expected to ease the tension caused by a controlling environment and allow for a peaceful regime change.

**Conclusion**

Political motivation is a social expression of the human compulsion to satisfy needs. Romantics from Aristotle to Thomas Paine anticipate political motivation to be satiated by a state that secures life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Modern thinkers beginning with Morgenthau recognize that life preservation and power become central to political activity even in representative democracies. Lasswell attempts to redirect attention to the support of human dignity but is constrained by the human tendency to address one’s own needs before attending to the needs of others. Davies redefines one’s own needs and attempts to link their satisfaction to the political circumstances of others. Yet by labeling forms of government that pre-date democracy as lower evolved societies, one prevents unison of his work with Lasswell’s concern for equal human dignity.

Transformational theorists work on equality for all by recognizing the interconnection of all people and all aspects of life, but their work remains fluid and unrefined. Their goals are lofty and their scope wide, but much work is required to apply their ideals to empirical study and policy. Each of these theorists touches on the idea of political activity as motivated by innate human needs. Yet their lists separate political participants into only two groups: those who are motivated to act and those who are not motivated to act. Self-determination theory offers a refined segmentation of motivation based on a simplified definition of basic needs and the degree of internalization a person has with the reasons for an action.
The three political motivation theories we have examined (rational choice, needs hierarchy, and transformational political science) share a common approach to political activity as a social phenomenon. Humans interact politically because humans are innately social. Cooperation is necessary to advance interests for the individual and the group. Theses theories take separate paths to account for how humans decide to act politically. Rational choice argues for a decision based on a cost-benefit analysis. If the gains are worth more than the costs, an action will be taken. Otherwise a person will abstain from action. Needs hierarchy theorist take a more mechanistic approach, which predicts human activity based on the satisfaction of lower level needs before higher level needs can activate political activity. If a person is hungry, he can be kept in political servitude. A person will act politically only after one’s biological needs are met and one can concentrate on relationships with one’s family and community. Then one will begin to act politically, as the need arises. Transformational theorists, still in the early stages of congealing their ideas, search for a way to account for the massive scope of influences from which political activity springs. Once they can enumerate the causes and effects, they intend to use their understanding to fully inform humans for more rational choices.

Yet each one of these approaches evidences key weaknesses that can be better served by an organismic approach to political activity that accounts for uninformed and non-rational activities as well as the informed and rational.

Rational choice and needs hierarchy theorists openly advocate democracy as a preferred environment for the attainment of their goals. The assumption of a fully informed and rational electorate is key to a democratic government of the people, yet historically and culturally democracy is not the only form of government and may not be
the preferred state structure for all people. Transformational theorists have openly supported democratic approaches, while maintaining an expectation that political constructs are due for an overhaul. Democracy, however, is a political construct not experienced by the vast majority of humans throughout history. The absence of democratic principles does not cancel the motivation to act politically. Tribes, fiefdoms, and empires are evidence of political arrangements that predate democracy, as do guilds, revolutions, and diplomacy. There is a need for a theory of political motivation that can predict the outcomes in a democracy and account for the political decisions of other times and cultures.

Operationalizing rational choice theory is advanced with several sub-theories including calculus of rational choice, minimax regret, and game theories. Despite extensive mathematics of probability, rational choice limits the number of variables for which it can account. In limiting its scope, it may remove the factors that are influencing the exact variables it attempts to measure. Rational choice theory, in its current form, can account for only part of the motivation to act. Compilation and computation limits restrict the scope from which rational choice can pull answers. Needs hierarchy is a theoretical approach based on observations. It has not yet been operationalized with computable numbers and measurements. It is more of a feeling about the fullness of human experience and an attempt to adapt that perception into a theoretical framework. Based loosely on psychiatric clinical observations and scientific theory of evolution, it has suggested values and goals on which policy can be based but offered no statistics to back up those intuitive arguments. Transformational theory has not developed enough from the theoretical stage to begin work on operationalization. There is a need to formulate a
theory of political motivation that will meet the modern need for numerical measurements and that will maintain its veracity in the face of non-democratic and non-American experiences. Chapter (3) will begin the work of showing how it better meets the needs of political motivation theory than the current contenders.
Chapter 3: Developing Motivated Political Participants

“Our problem today is that we have allowed the internal to become lost in the external. We have allowed the means by which we live to outdistance the ends for which we live.”
—Martin Luther King, Jr. in Nobel Lecture 1964

King’s Example

In 1963 the Civil Rights Movement in the United States was at a political stalemate. Nine years earlier in 1954 the Supreme Court ruled segregated schools to be inherently disparate, yet many schools systems continued to claim the segregated schools were separate but equal. Following Rosa Parks’ lead in 1956, the black community of Montgomery, Alabama boycotted the bus system and ended segregation of public transportation. In 1957 federal troops and National Guardsmen intervened on behalf of nine Little Rock, Arkansas high school students attending a formerly all white high school. In 1960 four black students staged a sit-in at a Woolworth’s counter in Greensboro, North Carolina where they were refused service. Their example led to similar non-violent protests elsewhere. In May 1963 police in Birmingham, Alabama used fire hoses and police dogs against civil rights protesters. The images played on national network news and shocked many Americans, but by 1963 relatively few Americans were involved in the civil rights movement. Racial equality was not a widely accepted principle.

The issue of civil rights had won legal support from the Supreme Court but had not been fully implemented by the political institutions of the country. Despite these milestones, amotivation about equal rights was rampant among most Americans. The majority of citizens lacked any intention to act purposefully on the issue. Jim Crow laws
in the South blocked African Americans from political participation, while elected officials implemented policies preventing blacks from equal access to public institutions. In the North the vast majority of blacks lived in ghettos and inner cities with incomes below the regional average. Voting districts were drawn to prevent African Americans from influencing elections. Social practices served to enforce discrimination, even where laws mandated inclusion.

The efforts to affect full and equal civil rights for minorities seemed to be fruitless. Despite the legal and moral legitimacy of their claims, civil rights leaders were unable to motivate an influential number of Americans to support their efforts. Few Americans intended to act in support of civil rights. This is the stage as it was set August 28, 1963, when Martin Luther King, Jr. stood behind a podium at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC facing the reflecting pool and 250,000 marchers. The participants had come to Washington, DC by bus, by foot, by car, and by train. Some protestors had faced police brutality and discrimination by hotel owners who only saw the color of their skin.

Yet the very next year in 1964, the poll tax, which had prevented poor black Southerners from voting, was repealed. King was named man of the year by *Time* magazine and awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for leading a non-violent, civil rights movement. President Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, federally requiring desegregation. The four black men who sat at the Woolworth’s in protest returned to the spot and were served lunch. The following year, the Voting Rights Act eased voter registration requirements, which had been used to deny registration to black voters. Affirmative action was instituted for federal contractors, requiring assertive efforts in employing minorities.
These remarkable changes happened because King’s “I Have A Dream Speech” ignited political motivation. King’s speech included the famous words, “I have a dream today.” A full reference to his speech will help show how it became a rallying cry of the Civil Rights Movement and a turning point in the political motivation that won great strides in the effort to garner equal rights and access for all Americans. In his speech, King appealed to the human needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence as identified by Self-Determination Theory (SDT) to move Americans from political apathy into political action in the cause of civil rights. The conclusion of his speech lays out a promising future in which these human needs are met regardless of a citizen’s race. King claimed the promise of self-determination written into America’s founding documents as promissory note to which all Americans, not just whites, were beneficiaries.

In waging an honorable fight, King encouraged participants to act morally rather than to allow the actions of others to control them. It was a call to a higher form of motivation that was to be autonomous because it was in accordance with principles and moral codes the participants valued and believed:

In the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force (King, 1968).

King appealed to his listeners need for relatedness. One connected the promise of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness to white and black Americans equally. It is their joint political inheritance and birthright. The battle for rights was not just a campaign of self-interest for better housing or higher wages. It was a fight for a better future, a victory
to benefit all Americans. King said, “We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their selfhood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating ‘for whites only.’”

King appealed to the human need of competence. It was a need that had been thwarted, “We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes one has nothing for which to vote.” The fight for civil rights was a campaign Americans were capable of waging and winning. Each person had a responsibility to act because each person had the ability to act. Autonomous action was a right and within their ability and duty to perform. Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness were not to be gathered gradually but were due in full. The unrest of the 1960s was a way of action that could and would continue until black Americans won full citizenship rights. In the future King saw success in a nation that judges his children “by the content of their character” rather than “by the color of their skin.”

King appealed to the human needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence to motivate autonomous action. The struggle was not to be inherently enjoyable. One was not calling for intrinsic motivation. The people would need autonomous motivation that demonstrated purposeful action on behalf of a cause that was valuable. The fight for civil rights was worth making. The future held freedom for all, if Americans worked together:

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together…With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

The dramatic change in the Civil Rights Movement seems to swing on King’s “I Have a Dream” speech. The failures and minor advances of the previous years preceded a
year of almost overwhelming advancement and recognition for the cause. A critical analysis of the speech’s text in light of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) suggests that the momentum gained was due in large part to the motivation spawned by King’s leadership message. One appealed to the human needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence both in the work to be done and in the rewards to be attained through the Civil Rights Movement. His call to action ignited autonomous motivation, as one built a case demonstrating the importance of civil rights for the lives of all Americans.

The fact that King’s speech predates a formal construction and defense of SDT does not weaken the ties of each to the other. The time difference suggests that SDT is defining what has been a human experience all along. Just as human needs for food, water, and certain nutrients existed before those needs were recognized by and published in academic study, the psychological needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence have existed throughout history and across cultures. That timeless applicability is precisely what makes SDT a strong, cooperative ally with political science theory and research. SDT offers a frame through which to view the human experience in a variety of fields including medicine, education, family relationships, and political activity. SDT offers an opportunity to cross pollinate the study of politics with advancements and discoveries from other social science endeavors, while also holding firm to a center of precepts that is at once broad across the human experience and simple in the operative terms one must master to use it.

This paper restarts an evaluation of political activity as a means people use to secure access to need satisfaction and also as an end to itself for people who establish self-actualization in political participation. People cooperate to secure a steady supply of
their needs. When their physical needs are secured, they naturally move on to psychological need fulfillment. Findings on human motivation in other fields of study can aid the understanding of human cooperation in government formation, maintenance, and continuance. This chapter will further explore the potential for SDT in political science. First, the current state of SDT political motivation theory will be detailed including the application of voter internalization of election results and a statistical model for measuring political motivation. Second, SDT and the political motivation concepts of Harold D. Lasswell and James Chowning Davies will be compared and contrasted. Several cross cultural studies designed by SDT theorists will be highlighted that support the theory’s assertions of basic psychological needs and the implications those results have on political science. Third, several future directions for SDT-based research in political science will be suggested to show the breadth of endeavor open for exploration and application. The real test for any political theory is in its applicability. This paper will use cross-cultural studies from Europe, Asia, and Israel in addition to American work to reveal a foundation for political motivation that is timeless and cross-cultural. The SDT of political motivation will underscore the possibility of political activity as an expression of human needs, values, and goals.

This paper concentrates on the empirical findings and theoretical projections of SDT, advocated by Edward Deci and Richard Ryan. SDT work includes theoretical explanations, clinical experiments, and case studies in the field. The work of SDT scientists offers empirical analysis on human nature that the political community will find valuable in discerning political motivations. According to the theory, human needs are separated into physiological needs and at least three psychological needs: autonomy,
relatedness, and competence. This paper uses the theory to identify political cooperation as one tool humans use to secure need satisfaction for themselves and their communities.

**SDT in Political Science**

To date self-determination researchers have assumed that in a democracy active participation is necessary for the political structure to function effectively (Koestner et all, 1996; Losier and Koestner, 1999; Losier et al 2001). However, the theory holds much promise beyond identifying voter behavior. SDT may serve as a tool to bring political science back from the brink of tragedy, a self-inflicted wound in which great thinkers are few and in which political study and practical experience are rare companions (Ricci 1984). SDT promises a unique yet simplified frame of reference through which researchers can explore *historical leadership* successes like King’s “I Have a Dream” speech or failures like the misjudgments of King George II and Prime Minister William Pitt of the American Revolution. By narrowing the responsibility of leadership to that of support of basic needs and by evaluating leaders’ motivations according to the motivation continuum, researchers may gain useable information applicable to contemporary issues.

Explaining the basis of leader behavior and predicting its effects is a key interest of researchers. More importantly a practical evaluation of the causes and effects of leader behavior could have application to the functioning of political constructs from family tribes to multinational confederations. SDT holds promise as a tool for use in evaluating politics in a *variety of cultures*. Psychologists, business persons, teachers, and coaches in Western nation-states, post-Communist countries, Pacific nations, and Israel have already applied SDT. The empirical work indicates that the satisfaction of psychological needs leads to higher forms of motivation and well-being in all humans regardless of race,
gender, culture, creed, socio-economic status, or any other differentiating category. SDT offers an approach to political science that establishes humans as equals in ways that former theories could not. It seems to identify political science, as a tool humans use to secure basic needs. The shared language and conceptual understanding necessary to operate in a SDT framework begins with exploring self-determination definitions in the light of political science. Politics and culture are both part of the human experience. They may exert pressure on the individual and on which the individual may exert pressure. There is a call to formulate the theory that will link these two aspects of human existence to one another (Geertz 1973). SDT offers one avenue through which the needs that motivate human behavior can be linked to the political constructs humans build to secure access to those needs.

**Definitions. Basic needs.** Autonomy, relatedness, and competence mean the same in political science as they do in psychology. Autonomy is the desire to experience effectual control over one’s own decisions. It is acting from interest or integrated values as an expression of true self. Outside influence is agreed with and the person feels initiative and value. Relatedness is the need to feel a mutual connection with others. It is often experienced politically as one’s nationality or cultural identity group. Competence is the impression that the work one does is important and is done well. Politically, it is participation in the system that gives a citizen a sense that his voice is heard and that his actions have a positive effect on the community. Competence is thwarted when any part of the environment inhibits effective participation. These needs have always existed in humans and are empirically supported by research completed in the last forty years.
Self determination research has shown that satisfaction of the basic human needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence affect motivation and well-being, regardless of political constructs, economic structures, and value systems (Deci et al, 2001; Chirkov and Ryan, 2001; Lewalter, 2004; Kim, 2004). Perceived autonomy support in the workplace or classroom affects need satisfaction, task engagement, self-esteem, and well-being. These hypothetical precepts have been validated by tests with American samples inside a democratic, free-market system with high individualism. They are confirmed by studies completed in other cultures including Bulgaria, Russia, Korea, and Israel.

The human needs are the same in all historical eras and cultures. However, the institutions or practices used to meet these needs may vary. Autonomy in some cultures may be synonymous with independence, while other cultures experience autonomy within communal settings. Relatedness may be met through nuclear families in one culture and multigenerational cohabitation in another. Competence may be valued in the form of economic-based endeavors in a culture, while another culture values longevity and wisdom.

*Intrinsic* motivation is participating for the enjoyment or interest in doing so. In political science an intrinsically motivated person may follow politics or an issue closely just for interest or enjoyment. Though such a person enjoys politics, one is not more likely to vote. In political leadership, an intrinsically motivated candidate or public official is expected to experience self-actualization in the tasks related to a position. One would perceive a sense of being or becoming more in line with the self because of the activities related to political involvement.
Integrated regulation is the basis for action that is fully integrated with the self as important and valuable. Participation is based on full awareness of the act and it fully agrees or corresponds with the self. These are the actions that are not inherently interesting or enjoyable but are part of who the person is. For example, the polling place worker who volunteers every year to oversee the election process because the democratic practice is part of her understanding of self as a free person in a democracy is demonstrating integrated regulation. In political leadership, character, values, and goals play roles in decision-making, as the actions are an expression of the self. Actions based on integrated regulation are outgrowths of the core values of the individual.

Discerning between integrated regulation and the next level of motivation on the continuum can be difficult because the distinction between full congruence of integration and the personal importance of identification are based in the person’s perception. Identified motivation is exemplified by acting because an activity is considered important to one’s personal values and goals. An identified participant acts politically because participation itself or a specific issue at hand is considered important to the individual. A leader operating on identified motivation is expected to cite principles and deeply held convictions when explaining reasons for actions.

Introjected motivation is based on an internalization of other’s expectations and values rather than one’s own interests or values. An introjected political participant may speak of and act on the political values and opinions held by significant people in one’s life, rather than one’s own values and opinion. The person who votes for the candidates recommended by a parent or co-worker is operating on introjected motivation. A
representative who votes based on constituent popular opinion is also functioning on this level of motivation.

External regulation is compliance based on expected external rewards or punishments. On the SDT motivation continuum, external motivation is the lowest form of motivation that spawns action and is the least likely to motivate repeated action or successful internalization of the behavior. A person who donates money to a candidate in order to win favor with the person once one is an elected official demonstrates external regulation. Likewise, an elected official who is swayed to act against public interest in order to avoid negative personal consequences is also exhibiting external regulation. In foreign relations, the carrot-and-stick approach in which a nation promises rewards for compliance with favorable actions by another nation is a use of external regulation.

Amotivation is the lack of the purposeful intent to act. An amotivated citizen may vote. However, political participation by an amotivated individual would be marked as unintentional and not based on values. The voter who wanders into a polling place by coincidence on Election Day and then randomly casts votes is an example of amotivation. Passive treatment of proposed legislation can also been an example of amotivation when procrastination and delay are accidental rather than an effort to kill a bill without a vote. Amotivation may show signs of incompetence and lack of personal control in life. In foreign relations, the lack of a concerted policy can be an example of amotivation.

The various levels of motivation have been operationalized in Losier’s Scale of Political Motivation (Koestner et al, 1996; Losier et al, 1999, 2001). Gaetan Losier and Richard Koestner have used the scale among Canadian college students to quantify the tie between political motivation, voter participation, and reaction to election results. Their
work with small samples of college students indicates that amotivation and intrinsic motivation are the least reliable predictors of voter turnout. Surprisingly, eligible voters who showed no interest in political campaigns and their intrinsically motivated classmates who followed politics for fun were equally as likely to show up at the polls to vote. A better predictor of voter turnout was distinguished between introjected voters and identified voters. Introjected voters were those who voted because they felt they should or ought to do so. They were more affected by persuasion of political debates as well as the influence of significant others in their lives and were more likely to experience conflicted emotions after an election unsure if the right side won even when they voted for the winning side. Identified voters, on the other hand, voted because it was personally important to them to do so. They were the most likely to vote and were marked by actively seeking political information and acting on sophisticated political values. They felt pleased when their side won but were not as vulnerable to strong emotional responses as their introjected peers were.

The Self-Determination Scale of Political Motivation was designed to measure the connection between the way a person follows politics and the participation one demonstrates in a referendum or election process. Participants were given two questionnaires: one several weeks before they voted and the second in the week after they voted. Information sought by the first questionnaire included the methods used to follow politics, the frequency at which information was sought, the emotional reactions expected in relation to actual voting results, and the reasons a person followed the specific issue on which the vote was built. Researchers expected identified voters to be more likely to vote.
Comparing and Contrasting Current Trends to SDT

Purpose. The purpose of any human social activity, according to SDT, is the satisfaction of the basic needs for autonomy, relatedness, and competence. SDT can bring specificity to Harold Lasswell’s call for human dignity by enumerating the aspects that constitute self-determination. Lasswell’s concern with metaphysical questions about the essence of human nature and the unredeemable qualities of it is beyond the scope of SDT. It is not intended to address highly abstract ideas like existence or time. Rather SDT is an approach to human motivation and personality based on the innate human tendency to seek certain nutrients in the environment and to build and act on a concept of the world based on the internalization of need satisfaction or deprivation. Lasswell, Davies, and transformational political scientists suggest political activity should reflect full participation in decision-making. Lasswell expects this to take a democratic form. Davies anticipates civilized anarchy. Transformational political scientists vaguely forecast a new construct yet seem hesitant to refute democracy. Rather than prescribing a defined form of government, SDT offers a method by which political constructs and practices can be evaluated based on the well-being of the people. The political support or control provided for autonomy, relatedness, and competence can be studied regardless of state form.

Leadership. People seek leadership roles, according to SDT, in areas in which they perceive themselves to be competent or in which they consider their participation to be important. This idea is in keeping with Davies observation that political leaders tended to be people who experienced success in the political arena or who felt obligated to perform public service because of successes experienced in other areas. For political leaders, Davies says participation is about self-actualization. SDT agrees, if the leader
inherently enjoys the activity or believes participation is important to one’s values or self-awareness. If the leader’s motivation is more extrinsic and less autonomous, participation may be based on an ego-trip, compulsion, or rewards. The best leaders, according to SDT, are autonomy supportive. They use their position to support the self-determination of others, often sharing decision-making powers. This is in keeping with Lasswell’s work in psychiatry that found doctors who supported their patients’ desires to improve their own well-being were more effective physicians than authoritarian doctors who dictated behavioral treatment and changes. For Lasswell, the more power one shares, the more power one has. SDT agrees.

Participants. Most political participants, however, are not motivated by inherent interest or enjoyment. Political activity is often experienced in the must or should phase of motivation, which Deci and Ryan call extrinsic motivation. People participate in politics because they believe they ought to do so or because they must do so in order to protect access to need satisfaction. This assertion agrees with Davies’ and Lasswell’s assertions that most people are not political until they feel politics is the tool by which they can garner their desired ends. Politics is an inherent outlet for competence in the case of people with an interest and ability. Politics is often an activity engaged in because it is necessary, relates to personal values, or aids in self-actualization. A person will act politically when it is necessary to secure access to basic physiological and psychological needs or when politically activity is part of self-identification.

Political motivation springs from human motivation. Most political theorists build their theories of political motivation on the concept that human nature is malleable to the influences of culture. Self-determination assumes that the experience of any individual is
the integration of human nature and the culture within which it develops. SDT argues that
the satisfaction or thwarting of basic human needs and its integration by an individual
explains differences in motivation, behavior, culture, and well-being. Thus the motivation
used to spawn action or inaction in other areas of life including relationships, work,
school, and hobbies are the same activators in the political arena. The research conducted
in other realms can build a basis for understanding political behavior and developing
policies.

In addition, SDT’s emphasis on human motivation and basic needs allows great
thinkers to concentrate on the quality rather than quantity. In the predominate theory of
elected choice, political theorists have assumed people make rational choices based on
the ends they desire and the means they discern to be most effective to achieve those
ends. The predisposition to equate human political behavior with a human tendency to
maximize effect has downplayed or ignored the essence of human existence and
experience that escapes quantification. Intangibles such as emotions, perceptions, skill,
wisdom, and personal connections are decisive characteristics of human life. SDT
suggests humans need to perceive themselves as the causal agent of their behaviors in
order to experience optimal well-being. A person wants to experience control over his life
rather than feeling controlled by outside forces. Key to internal causation is autonomy to
and the mutual intimate connections with other people that support competence and
autonomy.
Chapter 4: A Proposed Study of Political Campaign

Volunteers

Political elections are built upon a candidate. The person running for office may form the campaign with stands on issues, personal recommendations, experience, and party affiliation. The campaign, however, does not gain momentum until the candidate can motivate eligible voters to become supporters of the campaign. This is a hypothetical research proposal, which could be undertaken in an effort to apply Self-Determination Theory to political participation. It hypothesizes campaign volunteers tend to be more numerous and to do more for the campaign when they perceive the candidate to be working for a mutually supported cause. Activated supporters are less motivated when they perceive a campaign to be based on external purposes such as personal advancement of the candidate or preventing the election of a rival candidate. The proposed research is based on aggregate data from self-reported questionnaires to be completed by Democratic and Republican campaign volunteers and their supervisors in Virginia from the Presidential campaign of 2008.

Literature Review

An informed and active populace is a necessary element for representative government in which voters chose their government officials. Yet only half of eligible voters participate in Presidential elections (Seppa, 1996). Participation can drop to single digits for state primaries (Commonwealth of Virginia, 2005). When an active citizenry is critical to government function, why do some voters actively participate in elections by voting, campaigning for a favorite candidate, and discussing election news with others, and other
voters do not vote or pay attention to political news? Can the variance in political motivation be explained? Why do some people run for office, yet others cannot name their elected representatives?

Prevailing wisdom suggests that political interest spawns a search for political knowledge. Political knowledge then leads to political sophistication and increased interest. The assumption is that the more a person knows about politics, the more likely one is to be interested in politics. The more interested one is in politics, the more likely one will seek information about politics. British longitudinal studies suggest that political interest and political knowledge are only anecdotally connected, caused by some other unidentified variable (Tilley et al, 2001).

Political knowledge affects voting behavior. The extent to which a voter is informed can change one’s vote. Lack of knowledge among voters in an American presidential election can swing the election towards the incumbent by 10 percentage points and towards a Democrat by two percentage points (Bartels, 1996). For certain demographic groups including Catholics and women being informed changed voting patterns. Fully informed Catholics were more likely to vote Republican, while their uninformed counterparts voted Democratic. Fully informed women tended to vote Democrat. Their less-informed counterparts leaned towards the Republican candidate.

The disheartening wrinkle is that a person intrinsically interested in politics is not more likely to act than their less motivated counterparts (Koestner 1996). This finding is counterintuitive. Expectations are that a person interested in politics is more likely to seek information about issues and to vote. An informed electorate is considered necessary in
representative government. But what if the most informed eligible voters are not the most likely voters? How can voters be motivated to be informed and to cast their votes?

National polls indicate in presidential elections that the electorate opinions change almost on a daily basis with each new campaign event. This is not accurate. Most of the change in polls is due to change in perception of how the campaigns reflect the voters’ core values and not a change of the voters core values themselves (Gelman, 1993). Part of the difference may be semantics. The difference between thinking about party affiliation and feeling a party affiliation changes self-identification of voters slightly in women (Burden, 2005). When asked to “think” of their party affiliation 36 percent of women said they were Republican. The number increased to 48 percent when they were asked to “feel” their party identification.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci and Ryan 1985, 1991, 2000) works to qualify motivation and explain demonstrated variances through innate tendencies. SDT is built on the precepts that humans have innate psychological needs and an intrinsic habit of internalizing the satisfaction or frustration of those needs in their experiences. When basic needs are supported, a human experiences optimal well-being. Rarely are all basic needs met in all experiences. When basic needs are not met, humans internalize the experience and their perception of the experience according to regulatory styles placed on a motivation continuum. The extreme ends of the motivation continuum are amotivation, the lack of intent to act purposefully, and intrinsic motivation, the intent to act because an activity is inherently enjoyable or interesting. An amotivated citizen may vote but will do so by happenstance rather than deliberate action. An intrinsically motivated voter enjoys following or
participating in politics for its own sake because it is inherently interesting. Between the two extremes lie varying degrees of self-determined action, based on a person’s perception of why political activity is to be done. External regulation is acting out of compliance in expectation of rewards or in order to avoid punishment. The person who votes the party line in order to avoid the wrath of a union boss is acting on external regulation. Introjected regulation is a slightly less external form of regulation in which a person is acting with expectations of reward or punishment. The act involves an expectation of an ego boost or the avoidance of shame. A person who votes based solely on the recommendation of parents or other significant others is demonstrating introjected regulation. Next on the continuum moving towards more self-determined behavior is identified regulation in which a person makes a conscious choice about the importance of a behavior. A person who votes based on the value of an active citizenry demonstrates identified regulation. Integrated regulation is the most self-determined form of motivation short of intrinsic. Activities are motivated by integrated regulation when performed by a fully aware person in synthesis with the self. The activity may not be inherently interesting or enjoyable but it is important to the person and to the person’s concept of self. An active and informed citizen casting a vote is demonstrating integrated regulation.

SDT supports the concept of integration. A person innately takes one’s experiences and makes them part of one’s future regulation style. The success or failure of the action is less influential than the perceptions a person takes away from the experience. A person is more likely to repeat an action that was met with support or that fulfilled basic needs for autonomy, relatedness, and competence. An action that is experienced as controlled or forces
and thwarts rather than satisfies a basic need is less likely to be repeated. When accounting for a person’s motivational style, the relative autonomy of internalization is more predictive of well-being than the specific action. People from different cultures internalize different cultural practices (Chirkov et al, 2003). A culture may be individualistic or collective. It may have a strong sense of hierarchy or concentrate on the equality of all members. The values themselves are not predictive of well-being. The internalization of those values is. When members have adopted cultural practices as part of their own goals and values, then they perceive the culture to be autonomy supportive. The perception is indicative of well-being. Motivation regulation can change and become more or less autonomous depending upon the support or control experienced in the environment and an individual’s internalization of the support or control. Thereby, an individual may initial demonstrate introjected motivation and later exhibit more autonomy in identified motivation when participating in the same activity. People can transform controlled motives into autonomous motives and experience well-being and goal success by doing so (Berg et al, 2001). The key seems to be an internalization of appreciation or gratitude for the activity and the connections it fortifies with other people or one’s values.

What causes variations in a voter’s motivation is beyond the scope of this research proposal. The purpose of this work is to define a voter’s political motivation and likelihood to vote. In better defining the motivational style of likely voters, one can refine election polls to be more accurate predictors of voting results, political science can suggest methods to raise motivation levels of less self-determined voters, and the role candidates play in motivating voters can be evaluated. SDT suggest that autonomously motivated participants
are most likely to be politically active. This research could be used to build evidence to support that hypothesis. If the hypothesis proves true, then political scientists have a fresh approach from which to pursue development of an active citizenry.

The various levels of motivation have been operationalized in Losier’s Scale of Political Motivation (Koestner et al, 1996; Losier et al, 1999, 2001). Gaetan Losier and Richard Koestner have used the scale among Canadian college students to quantify the interactions among political motivation, voter participation, and reaction to election results. Their work with small samples of college students indicates that amotivation and intrinsic motivation are the least reliable predictors of voter turnout. Surprisingly, eligible voters who showed no interest in political campaigns and their intrinsically motivated classmates who followed politics for fun were equally as likely to show up at the polls to vote. A better predictor of voter turnout was distinguished between introjected voters and identified voters. Introjected voters were those who voted because they felt they should or ought to do so. They were more affected by persuasion of political debates as well as the influence of significant others in their lives and were more likely to experience conflicted emotions after an election unsure if the right side won even when they voted for the winning side. Identified voters, on the other hand, voted because it was personally important to them to do so. They were the most likely to vote and were marked by actively seeking political information and acting on sophisticated political values.

Losier and Koestner’s early work applying SDT measurements to political variables in small samples garnered from Canadian college students leaves broader samples untapped. Their work may have validated the scale, but it is too small to be a basis for system wide
action. However, their work on the scale could be applied to a significant sample of the American electorate by mining the data gathered by the National Election Survey (NES) in every Presidential and midterm election since 1948. Its longitudinal construct allows researchers to look at answers to the same set of foundational questions over the last five decades. The developers of the survey would welcome review of the questions and wording in light of SDT, if they were convinced that more insight could be gained about public opinion and political participation by doing so.

The first step to altering the NES would be evaluating its past work in light of SDT scales. In the first section of the NES questionnaire for 2004 there are several questions, which seek the same information Losier and Koestner found to be important in discerning political motivation and voting habits. NES 2004 asks people to qualify their interest in political campaigns on a four-point scale from “very much interested” to “not much interested” (NES, 2004). They are also asked about the candidate they voted for, the one they voted against, and how much attention they give news on a weekly basis. Results from the NES could be plugged into Losier’s established scale and compare voter motivational styles to voter turn out at the last fifty years of national elections.

However, this study intends to sample citizens who exceed minimum participation levels set by the expectation of voting. This study intends to define the motivation style of active political participants because exploring their political regulation styles will give insight on the development of highly motivated political participants, rather than further exploring the current participation levels of the average voter. Finding out more about the
motivated voter may well teach us how to increase the number of voters who meet the standard of an informed and active electorate.

**Research Question**

Formulating a theory for this work is based on the assumption that those who volunteer their services for political campaigns demonstrate a higher level of self-determined political motivation than the average voter. Given prior research about political motivation styles, voters with an identified regulation, those who are motivated by issues or a commitment to elect the candidate for whom they work, are expected to constitute the largest group of campaign workers, to be more regular workers, to put in more hours, and to work more frequently throughout the course of the campaign. Intrinsic workers, those motivated by an interest and enjoyment in politics and campaigns, are expected to be the second largest group though they may work fewer hours and less often than their identified counterparts. Introjected campaign staffers, those motivated by social pressure or who are working to prevent the election of the rival candidate, are expected to constitute the third largest group. Their motivation source may lead them to spikes in activity putting in many hours in a short span of time rather than consistent levels of work. The smallest group is expected to be amotivated campaign staffers, those who just haphazardly participate by chance rather than intention. Voters activated by issues and the perception that the candidate shares their convictions are more likely to be informed and active in the political process. Voters activated by social pressure or by distaste for opposing candidates are less likely to participate and when they do volunteer are less likely to be reliable sources of help.
Data Collection

The Sample. Volunteers in Virginia for the 2008 Presidential campaign will compose the sample for this project. Republican and Democrat volunteers will be requested to fill out a short questionnaire prior to Election Day and then will be contacted again after the election results are known for a follow-up questionnaire. The sample will be drawn equally from the state’s four regions Northern Virginia, Tidewater, Piedmont, and the Mountains and will provide equal representation for respondents from large metropolitan areas, cities, towns, and rural districts.

Campaign volunteers are non-paid workers who are working through the campaign’s local party office for a major party presidential candidate. They may be providing a number of free services to the campaign including but not limited to telephone calling, stuffing envelopes, door-to-door handouts, scheduling, hosting parties, giving speeches, and overseeing local party offices. Our sample will be limited to volunteers over 18 years of age eligible to vote in the election. A distinction will be drawn between registered and non-registered voters to catch an aspect of intrinsic motivation which may lead a person to participate in the activities of elections and campaigns which are inherently interesting yet may not motivate a person to complete the uninteresting requirements such as registering to vote.

Both Republican and Democrat offices throughout the state will be contacted to arrange access to the volunteers working with their offices. In Northern Virginia coordination will be with offices in Alexandria (population 128,283), a part of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan; and the town of Front Royal (population 13,589) (U.S. Census, 2000).
Tidewater, the sample will be drawn from the metropolis region of Hampton Roads
represented by Virginia Beach (population 425,257), the town of West Point (population
2,866), and the rural Eastern Shore village of Cape Charles (population 1,134). In the
Piedmont, the respondents will be culled from the metropolis of Richmond (population
197,790) and the rural town of Orange (population 4,123). In the Mountains, the sample will
be drawn from the region’s largest city Roanoke (population 94,911) and the college town of
Staunton (population 23,853).

Questionnaires will be distributed to volunteers at the local campaign offices and
campaign events in the second and third weeks of September. The participants will be asked
to fill out the three-page questionnaire and hand it back in at the same time. The last item on
the questionnaire requests permission to contact the participant for a follow-up questionnaire
after the election and permits the respondent to indicate the method by which one would
prefer to be contacted: via telephone, email, or postal service.

*The Questionnaire.* The questionnaire is based on the Self-Determination Political
Motivation Scale (Losier et al, 2001; Losier et al, 1999; and Koestner et al, 1996) with
refinements in wording and scoring from the self-regulation questionnaire for religion (Ryan
et al, 1993). The basic format and questions from previous tests of the scale remain with the
addition of several questions intended to tease out the influences of candidates, campaign
leadership, and opponents may play in political motivation demonstrated by individual
volunteers. The standard for passive reliance on others remains though in future studies
evaluation should be made to distinguish between passive reliance on others and the seeking
of advise from others in making political decisions because many active political participants
to include elected officials may use the input of others in establishing their political opinions. Losier and Koestner score as passive reliance on others any activity at which a voter seeks the input of other people in order to establish a political stance. They measure active information seeking in time spent consuming news as the counterbalance activity. For our survey we have injected trial questions that emphasize the personal perception of causation as the determinant among regulation styles, yet the questionnaire format proven by Losier and Koestner’s research remains intact. The additional experimental questions have been added to the basic structure to allow separation of the data during scoring and computing. A person who perceived one’s activity as important or enjoyable will score more self-determined, while a person who perceived their activity as necessitated to block the other candidate or by social pressures to participate will score less-self-determined.

Losier and Koestner examine the correlation between the reasons a person follows politics and the way they participated in a referendum or election process (1996). They look at the information gathered, anticipated emotional response to election results, actual emotional response to election results, the reasons an individual gave for following the political event, and actual voting behavior (1999). This proposed study addresses the political motivation of active campaign volunteers. In addition to the purposes studied by the scale previously developed for self-determined political motivation, this research investigates the influences of leadership, personality, and values communication on the political activity of American voters.
Table 4-1 Questionnaire

Note to participants:
This questionnaire is confidential. All the personal information gathered for statistical computation purposes only. The individual information on questionnaires will not be made public but rather used to compile statistical abstracts about campaign volunteers for an academic study in the field of political science. Individual questionnaires, like individual school records, will not be released and will be handled in a manner than insures anonymity for participants and their responses. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. If you have any concerns or questions, please contact the research director Jessica Drake at (757) 925-0073.

**Are you registered to vote?**
Yes  No

**Will you vote in the 2008 Presidential election?**
Yes  No

**Age**

**In what city do you volunteer for a Presidential campaign?**
(“Volunteer” means you receive no pay for the hours or work that you complete for the campaign.)

**When did you begin volunteering for the campaign?**

month  date  year

**How many hours of your time have you given to the campaign?**
Total ________ hours
Average ________ hours per week
Please respond to the following questions by rating the given answers on a scale from 1 to 7. 1 means you do not agree and 7 meaning you strongly agree. This questionnaire has five statements, each of which is followed by four or five possible responses. Please read the first statement, and then consider each response. Indicate how true each response is for you, using the following scale.

1. I vote because…
   a. I enjoy voting.
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   b. I believe it is important to vote.
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   c. Americans should vote.
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   d. I do not vote.
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. I volunteer for a political campaign because…
   a. I enjoy volunteering in a political campaign.
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   b. I believe it is important to volunteer for a political campaign.
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   c. Others will approve of me if I volunteer for a political campaign.
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   d. I do not know why I volunteer for a political campaign.
      1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. In general, I want to do what most people who are important to me think I should do concerning voting for President.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. I find that I can think better about political issues when I have the advice of others.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. I would feel lost roaming around without political guidance.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. I have tried to think things over carefully and reflect on all aspects of the candidates?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. I read the newspapers and watch the news carefully so that I can understand the details of the campaign.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. I have spoken to a lot of people about the Presidential election and what it means.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

9. Figuring out how I would vote has been a slow process that has taken a long time.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

10. I have had to reconsider my position several times in the past month as new information came out about the candidates and their stance on issues.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

11. I support my candidate for President because…
   a. I find my favorite candidate’s perspective to be interesting.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   b. I share my favorite candidate’s core values.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   c. My family and friends support my favorite candidate.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   d. I do not want my candidate’s opponent to become President.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   e. I do not know.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

12. My favorite candidate is seeking the Presidency because…
   a. The candidate enjoys politics and public service.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   b. The candidate believes it is important to work towards the ideals expressed in the campaign platform.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   c. The candidate seeks power, wealth, and prestige.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   d. The candidate wants to prevent his opponent from becoming President.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   e. The candidate does not have a reason to run for President.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13. The person I work for at the local campaign office participates in the campaign because…
   a. The person enjoys politics and public service.
      1  2  3  4  5  6  7
   b. The person believes in the party platform.
      1  2  3  4  5  6  7
   c. The person seeks a higher position in politics.
      1  2  3  4  5  6  7
   d. The person wants to prevent the other candidate from becoming President.
      1  2  3  4  5  6  7
   e. The person does not have a reason for working in the local office.
      1  2  3  4  5  6  7

On the following list of emotions please indicate how you will feel if your preferred candidate is elected President. Please respond by rating the given emotions on a scale from 1 to 7. 1 means you expect to feel no emotion and 7 means you expect to feel the emotion strongly.

14. Contentment
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

15. Love
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

16. Friendliness
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

17. Affection
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

18. Happiness
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

19. Relief
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

20. Fear
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

21. Anger
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7

22. Disgust
   1  2  3  4  5  6  7
23. Regret
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
24. Sadness
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
25. Worry
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
26. Irritation
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
27. Depression
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
28. Anxiety
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

May we contact you for a follow-up questionnaire after the election?
Yes
No

How would you prefer that we contact you?
Telephone Phone number (____) - ___________
Email email address_____________(a)__________
Mail Mailing address __________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
Scoring Information.

Calculate scores for regulation styles by averaging the items within those subscales: Intrinsic Motivation (all a’s), Identified Regulation (all b’s), Introjected Regulation (all c’s, 11d, 12d, and 13d), and Amotivation (1d, 2d, 11e, 12e, and 13e). Questions 3 through 10 are imitations of Losier and Koestner’s scale (1996) alternated to reflect an American Presidential election rather than Canadian referendum vote. Questions 3 through 5 combine to form a summary measure called Passive Reliance on Others. Questions 6 through 10 combine to form a summary measure called Active Information Seeking. Questions 14 through 28 are also copied from Koestner and Losier’s questionnaire but are based on Diener’s Daily Affect Survey (1991). They are used to calculate the means of pleasant emotions (Questions 14 through 19) and unpleasant emotions (Questions 20 through 28).

Table 4-2. Abbreviated Codebook.

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<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>Q10</td>
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<td>Q13 Perceived supervisor motivation</td>
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<td>64</td>
<td>Q16</td>
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Research Design

The questionnaires will be delivered to volunteers and their supervisors at the local campaign office where the campaign work is coordinated. Student research assistants will conduct delivery and collection of the questionnaire data in the month prior to the election. Coordination through the political science instructors at regional community colleges will facilitate the collection of a statewide sample while also providing research assistance experience to faculty-recommended students. Campaign volunteers will be asked to participate in an academic study investigating campaign volunteer motivation. The goal will be to collect completed questionnaires from twenty-five percent of the volunteers and 100 percent of their supervisors, either through face to face contact or phone calls.

Once the data is collected, it will be encoded and entered into a Microsoft Excel format for statistical evaluation. The data will first be used to identify the political motivation styles of the campaign volunteers, looking for the most prominent group in number and in hours worked for the campaign. The goal of the study is to collect a statistically significant
coefficient of association between political motivation and hours worked for the campaign. A secondary link between the perceived motivation of the candidate or the local campaign manager and the repetitive tendency of volunteers to report for volunteer assignments is also expected. The statistics will be cross-evaluated for links beyond the hypothesis to include the influence geographical region and age may influence volunteer commitment. The results will be broken down into a basic bar graph comparing total hours volunteered and average hours worked per week among the four political motivation styles.

Table 4-3 Projected Hours Volunteered According to Political Regulation Style

Plausible alternative/rival hypothesis. Local campaign leadership can have an effect on volunteer numbers and frequency of work. In fact, the Presidential candidate and his stance on issues may bring volunteers to the campaign, but the local manager determines whether they stay to work repeatedly. To evaluate this possibility Questions 3 and 4 ask volunteers to share their perceptions of the motivation of the local manager as well as the
national candidate. In addition, the people supervising/coordinate
ing volunteer work at each office will be surveyed as well to provide
circular data to compare perceptions and
internalized motivation for volunteers and their bosses. This data will be
crosschecked for statistical influence against regulation styles as a predictor
of work frequency and duration. SDT assumes that political motivation
styles are unrelated to party affiliation. That assumption will also be
tested in this work by searching for a predictor
quality between regulation style and party affiliation. There is expected to be zero connection
between motivation style and party affiliation. However, a weak party candidate who
fails to generate enthusiasm among the ranks could be expected to recruit a higher percentage of
identified volunteers whose party loyalty brings them to work, regardless of their lukewarm
enthusiasm for the candidate. Identified volunteers may also be more numerous in this situation because
they are working to defeat the opponent more than they are working for issues or for a
candidate with a shared value system.

*Timeline of work.*

September 2005  Finalization of research proposal for presentation to potential funding
sources.

Begin recruitment of college professors and students.

January 2005  Find funding source for research. Potential sources are Roper Public

August 2007  Initial recruitment of political science professors at community
colleges in geographically proximity to data collection sites.
September 2007  Initial contact with local campaign coordinators about access to volunteers for research. Introductions through state party volunteer coordinators.

September 2008  Recruitment and training of community college students through participating faculty.

October 2008  Collection of completed questionnaires

November 2008  Encoding of data

December 2008  Statistical evaluation of data

January 2008  Initial findings preparation. Request review of findings by Self-Determination Theorists including Dr. Paul Baard, Dr. Edward L. Deci, Dr. Gaetan Losier, and Dr. Richard Koestner. Request review by political science professors who participated in data collection.

April 2008  Include SDT feedback and political scientist refinements. Present paper for publication and possible presentation at SDT conference and/or political science conference. May also find interest from pollsters and professional campaign staffs. Report findings to funding source.

**Conclusion**

SDT suggests political participants are most likely to act when they identify with the issues or candidates involved in a political event. The potential for relatedness is self-evident in the political process, which by nature is a collective social action. The need for autonomy is activated by an important cause in line with personally held goals or values. The sense of
competence is stroked by a perception of personal efficacy, confirmation that one’s actions have an effect on the preferred outcome.

The purpose of this proposed research, if completed, would be to confirm SDT’s assumption that most active political participants are interested in politics or concerned about issues. Active participants are intrinsically fascinated by politics and enjoy participating. Or they believe in a value/goal expressed in a political outcome and are motivated to achieve the preferred outcome through participation. This research improves upon prior SDT political studies because the survey sample is drawn from political volunteers throughout Virginia, rather than just from college students. The volunteers are expected to be more diverse in age, educational attainment, socio-economic status, and political experience than previous samples. Their motivation style will be deciphered based on self-reported questionnaires filled out by individuals, others in the same group, and the local volunteer leadership. The aggregate data is expected to corroborate the self-reported motivational cues. If the research finds highly autonomous motivation among political volunteers, then the research will strength validation support for the Self-Determination Scale of Political Motivation designed by Losier and Koestner. The use of a larger, more diverse sample group and aggregate data should corroborate the findings based on self-reporting.

Strengthening of the Self-Determination Scale of Political Motivation and evidential support of SDT’s hypothesis could build a foundation from which other researchers can build a more intricate understanding of self-determination in political activity. If active political participants are highly autonomous in motivation style, then political scientists can delve into the formation of active participants. The knowledge garnered about why they are
autonomously motivated to act politically could be used to infuse key aspects of
development, culture, leadership, and environment with autonomous supports that will
increase political participation in numbers of participants and quality of participation.
Bibliography
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Colorado, Boulder.

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organizations: A study of church growth and participation. *Consulting Psychology


Baard, P.P. (2002). Intrinsic need satisfaction in organizations: A motivational basis of
success in for-profit and not-for-profit settings. In *Handbook of Self-


*American Political Science Review*, 69, 920-925.


Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press.


Curriculum Vitae

Jessica K. Drake

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<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>2004 to present</th>
<th>Freelance/Self-employed</th>
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<td>Writer/Editor</td>
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<td>Read and edit graduate-level papers for Marine Corps School of Expeditionary Warfare at Quantico, Va. throughout academic year.</td>
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<td>Senior contributor to Military Spouse magazine.</td>
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<th>2000 to 2002</th>
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<td>Newsletter editor</td>
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<td>Developed quarterly newsletter for international business executives.</td>
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<td>Coordinated efforts of other writers and oversaw editing of final product for layout and Internet posting.</td>
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<td>Pentagon reporter</td>
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<td>Covered all aspects of military aviation and aerospace programs including bombs, missiles, aircraft, and satellites for trade newsletter.</td>
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<td>Wrote two to three 500-word articles a day.</td>
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<td>Associate Editor</td>
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<td>Researched and wrote three 2,000-word feature articles and a small business column each month for defense industry magazine.</td>
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<td>Compiled and edited 47-page annual meetings guide. Increased advertising revenues developing special issue highlighting small business innovations.</td>
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<td>Teacher</td>
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<td>Taught developmental and technical writing and reading to adult learners.</td>
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<td>Developed technical communications syllabus for trade school students.</td>
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