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Participation and Representation: Does Risk Acceptance Influence the Decision Making of Political Actors?

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PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION: DOES RISK ACCEPTANCE INFLUENCE THE DECISION MAKING OF POLITICAL ACTORS?

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ABSTRACT

Are political actors influenced by their acceptance of risk? By political actors I mean individuals in society or government that have an influence on political outcomes. By risk acceptance I mean the degree to which an individual is comfortable with uncertainty and willing to challenge the status quo. The purpose of the present dissertation is to further enhance scholarly understanding of the causal psychological mechanisms that influence political behavior by considering individual risk acceptance.

Kam's (2012) theoretical framework suggests that risk-accepting individuals are more likely to participate in politics because they seek out exciting and novel activities. She does not, however, find any evidence that the risk accepting are any more likely to vote. I argue that enforced compulsory sanctions provide exciting opportunities for the highly risk accepting to abstain from compulsory elections, but also create higher levels of uncertainty for those with low levels of risk acceptance, which leads to a greater likelihood of voting for the latter but not the former. If you are a risk acceptor, you may be willing to violate the compulsory voting requirement.

I also expand Kam's (2012) theoretical framework in Chapter 5 by considering how risk acceptance influences the decision to protest. I argue that because nondemocracies are more repressive than democracies, the risk accepting may be more likely to protest in non-democratic countries than their less risk-accepting counterparts. On the other hand, low risk-accepting individuals may be more hesitant in their willingness to risk life and limb by challenging the status quo of non-democratic regimes because non-democratic countries are more likely to repress political detractors.

Finally, political scholars theorize that legislators are hesitant to make risky decisions in office, yet they provide surprisingly little empirical evidence that risk acceptance influences

legislative decision making. In Chapter 6 I use a novel theoretical framework and measure of risk acceptance to predict legislative decision making in the United States House of Representatives.

CHAPTER 1. AN INTRODUCTION TO RISK ACCEPTANCE AND POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

If I ask you to think of a risky activity you may think of driving without a seatbelt, smoking cigarettes, or jumping out of an airplane. Making political decisions is probably not top of mind. Although politics may not be as risky as skydiving per se, there are several political decisions that may have risky consequences and negative outcomes. For example, if citizens abstain in compulsory voting countries, they may receive fines from the government (Panagopoulos, 2008; Singh, 2011). Citizens who protest take the risk of being socially ostracized or physically harmed (Norris, Walgrave, & Van Aelst, 2005). Even legislators run the risk of losing office by not following the preferences of their constituents (Canes-Wrone, Brady, & Cogan, 2002). It does not strain credulity to expect some members of the population to be more likely to incur the costs of abstaining, protesting, or ignoring constituents compared to others.

The purpose of this dissertation is to determine whether political actors are influenced by their acceptance of risk. By political actors I mean citizens and elected elites. By risk acceptance I mean the degree to which an individual seeks out risky behaviors and uncertain outcomes (Ehrlich & Maestas, 2010; Weber, Blais, & Betz, 2002). The risk accepting are generally comfortable with uncertainty (Ehrlich & Maestas, 2010; Levy, 2003) and more likely to challenge the status quo compared to other members of society (Kam, 2012). In the chapters that follow I argue individuals may be predisposed by their personality to make political decisions based on their individual acceptance of risk.

Risk acceptance is a relatively new line of scholarly inquiry in political science. Kam (2012) finds evidence that risk-accepting citizens are more likely to attend political meetings, rallies, and sign petitions. However, she finds no evidence that risk acceptance influences the decision to vote. Even fewer studies consider how risk acceptance influences political elite

behavior. Rohde (1979), Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde (1987), and Maestas et al. (2006) find that risk-accepting legislators are more likely to seek higher office. Other scholars consider how risk acceptance influences the decision making of state legislators (Nyhan & Reifler, 2015). Besides these seminal pieces, few empirical studies and further theoretical advancements have been made by scholars regarding how risk acceptance influences the political behavior of citizens and elected elites.

If risk acceptance influences how citizens participate in politics then it is reasonable that political elites, who are elected by citizens, are also influenced by their acceptance of risk. Likewise, if political elites and citizens are both influenced by risk acceptance, then risk acceptance may have a general effect on political decision making. By looking at citizen and legislator risk acceptance we can determine whether political actors are comfortable making risky decisions or if they prefer to choose the safe alternative.

In the first half of the dissertation I use comparative analyses with American theoretical frameworks to predict participation. Why the comparative setting? The first half of the dissertation builds on Kam's (2012) seminal analyses of risk acceptance and political participation. She finds no evidence that risk acceptance influences voting in the United States. In Chapter 4 I argue that the insignificant voting results are a function of the low costs of American elections. The potential costs that voters and abstainers may incur in American elections are very low (Downs, 1957). Indeed, while registration requirements in the United States add an additional barrier to voting not seen in other Western democracies, the act of voting on Election Day is relatively costless (Rosenstone & Wolfinger, 1978). Analyzing voting behavior at the international-level allows us to consider voting and abstaining in compulsory voting countries, where the costs and uncertainty are much higher. Abstaining in these countries may result in social, economic, or political costs.

By looking at voting in countries with higher costs, we may observe effects of risk acceptance on voting that previous scholars have not found. By looking at risk acceptance and voting at the international level we can explore institutional differences that do not vary within the United States. Further, we should expect that citizens in other democratic countries will act the same way as they do in the U.S. While risk acceptance rates do vary by country, the behavior of the risk accepting should only vary by the institutional changes in each country.[1]

I also consider the effects of risk acceptance on protesting in a comparative setting by considering the differences between democratic and non-democratic countries. Kam (2012) finds very strong evidence that risk acceptance influences participation in American politics, but her analyses do not consider political protests and boycotts due to data limitations.[2] By looking at protesting and boycotting at the international-level we can further Kam's (2012) theoretical framework of risk acceptance and participation while at the same time consider additional relevant factors that may influence the decision to protest, such as a countries system of government.

Psychophysical Risk-Return and Sensation Seeking Model: A Theory of Rational Choice

There are two main theoretical frameworks that study risk behavior in economics and psychology. The first, known as the psychophysical risk-return model (Weber, Blais, and Betz, 2002), assumes that individuals make decisions based on perceived benefits, perceived costs, and one's disposition to tradeoff between the two. The rational choice model is often used in economic lab experiments to demonstrate differences in possibility and probability (Kahneman and Tversky,

[1] See the World Values Survey for a breakdown of risk acceptance levels between countries.
[2] Kam (2012) finds that the risk accepting are more likely to attend political rallies and meetings, sign paper and online petitions, and hand out political literature to fellow citizens.

1979; Tversky and Kahneman 1981). This approach is similar to the seminal Downsian models of participation in political science (Downs, 1957).

In these rational choice models, it assumed that humans make decisions to maximize their utility based on a defined number of choices. The preferences of individuals will determine the behavior, or outcome (Aldrich, 1993). In this scenario, the risk accepting make decisions to maximize gains and the risk averse make decisions to minimize losses (Kahneman and Tversky, 1979; Tversky and Kahneman 1981). If we apply rational choice theory to risk taking, then we are assuming that individuals make decisions not because it is inherent in their personality, but because it is a conscious decision made in an attempt to maximize one's utility outcome.

Whereas rational choice scholars would argue that we can determine the behavior of the risk accepting by considering their preferences for risk taking, the sensation seeking model argues that the behavior of the risk accepting is biological. Sensation seeking is "a trait defined by the seeking of varied, novel, complex, and intense sensations and experiences, and the willingness to take physical, social, legal, and financial risks for the sake of such experience" (Zuckerman 1994, p. 27). Sensation seeking assumes that individuals are psychologically predisposed to make decisions. In other words, humans make risky decisions not because of a rational calculus between costs and benefits, but because risk taking is an innate part of their personality.

The difference between the two theoretical approaches involves the cause, or preferences, of the decision making rather than the outcome of making the decision. In other words, *how* the individual came to making the decision rather than *why* the decision was made. The outcome for the risk accepting in the rational choice model is to maximize gains (utility). In the sensation seeking model it is to maximize sensations and experiences. I borrow from both schools of thought for the present project. I consider that although some humans may be predisposed to make risky

decisions, they will still make some decisions based on the perceived costs and benefits of an action.

Citizen-Level Evidence: Section I

The purpose of the first half of this dissertation is two-fold. First, I add to theories of political participation. By political participation I mean citizens participating or abstaining in compulsory elections and political protests. In Chapter 4 I expand on compulsory voting theories by Panagopoulos (2008) and Singh (2011) by considering the risk acceptance of voters. Compulsory voting scholars argue that increased sanctions and enforcement of voting sanctions lead to an increase in voter turnout (Singh, 2011). While this is true in the aggregate, individual risk acceptance may influence the decision to vote or abstain in countries where voting is compulsory. Previous work finds little evidence that voting decisions are influenced by risk acceptance because the decision to vote is the fulfillment of civic duty (Kam, 2012). I consider the distinction between compulsory and voluntary voting systems. In compulsory voting systems the failure to vote may lead to financial or social sanctions that voluntary systems do not legislate. Because the risk accepting are more comfortable with uncertainty, enforced sanctions may reduce the effectiveness of compelling risk-accepting citizens to vote.

Second, I look at how risk acceptance influences the decision to protest. Kam (2012) finds strong evidence that the risk accepting are more likely to participate in politics because they find it exciting. She also argues that the risk accepting are more likely to participate in politics because they are more comfortable with uncertainty compared to low risk-accepting individuals. In Chapter 5 I add to her theoretical framework by considering how the decision to protest may be influenced by risk acceptance and regime type. By regime type I mean democratic and non-democratic countries. Democracies provide more concessions than nondemocracies. Indeed, nondemocracies

are more likely to repress political protests. Therefore, the risk accepting may be more likely to protest compared to their less risk-accepting counterparts in non-democratic countries.

I look at the relationship between risk acceptance, compulsory voting, and protesting for several reasons. First, Kam (2012) finds no evidence that risk acceptance influences the decision to vote. I argue that the lack of evidence may be attributable to the low cost and uncertainty of voting in U.S. elections. Conversely, when elections are compulsory the uncertainty and costs of abstaining are increased. Given that Kam (2012) only considers noncompulsory voting elections, compulsory elections may result in observable differences between high and low risk-accepting individuals. Second, although scholars have considered the role of risk acceptance on petitioning and attending political rallies, there is a lack of empirical evidence that risk acceptance influences more extreme and costly forms of political participation such as protesting, demonstrating, and boycotting. Likewise, there is little evidence to suggest systematic differences in protest behavior in democratic versus non-democratic countries between high and low risk-accepting individuals. Finally, by looking at different forms of political participation scholars will have a better understanding of the contextual effects of risk acceptance. For example, on the one hand the risk accepting may contribute to democratic principles by protesting, demonstrating, and boycotting at higher rates than low risk-accepting individuals. On the other hand, the risk accepting may subtract from democratic principles by abstaining from voting at higher rates in compulsory elections.

The findings support these assumptions. The highly risk accepting are less likely to vote in compulsory countries and more likely to protest in nondemocracies compared to those with low levels of risk acceptance. Risk acceptance decreases the probability of voting by 4.5 percentage points when voting is compulsory. Although compulsory voting affectively increases voter turnout in the aggregate, compulsory voting is not as effective of increasing turnout among the risk

accepting. This is a relatively modest substantive effect, but the findings do indicate risk acceptance influences voting behavior.

This has important theoretical implications for how scholars understand participation. If risk acceptance decreases the likelihood of participating when voting is compulsory, then compulsory voting may be less effective in countries with high risk-accepting populations. Likewise, countries would be wise to consider the types and extremity of sanctions to account for the risk accepting. Otherwise, full participation may remain elusive in these countries. I do not dispute the effectiveness of compulsory voting in this dissertation. Instead, I find evidence that the effects of compulsory voting may be weaker than previous scholars predict (Panagopoulos, 2008; Singh, 2011).

The risk accepting are also much more likely to protest compared to their low risk-accepting counterparts, an impressive factor of 2 to 1. The risk accepting report a much higher probability of demonstrating (47.6%) and boycotting (43.8%) compared to other members of society. This is a very strong substantive impact on protesting behavior. Given that protestors are often successful in achieving their intended goals (Celestino & Gleditsch, 2013; Stephan & Chenoweth, 2008), the risk accepting may be the catalysts for political change in non-democratic countries. Non-democratic leaders in countries with large risk-accepting populations may grant more concessions to their citizens. By contrast, non-democratic leaders in countries with low risk-accepting populations may be more repressive in their policies. Likewise, leaders in countries with low risk-accepting populations may prolong their tenure in government and do so with impunity.

Together these findings suggest that we can be confident risk acceptance has a robust and important role in the decision-making process of political participation for citizens. Indeed, scholars would do well to consider future political participation studies with risk acceptance as a

predictive factor. While on the one hand risk acceptance may increase protest participation, it may also decrease voter turnout in compulsory countries.

Elite-Level Evidence: Section II

The purpose of the second half of this dissertation is two-fold. First, I develop a novel measure of risk acceptance for political elites in Chapter 3 because scholars currently do not have an additive index for political elites. A more reliable and valid way to measure risk acceptance would be to issue questionnaires to members of the United States House of Representatives. The costs and logistics of such a measure unfortunately are currently too great to draw empirical inferences. Instead, a common measure of legislator risk acceptance is Rohde's (1979) binary measure. This measure is limited in two ways. First, individuals in the Rohde measure are not classified as low risk acceptors, rather individuals are only coded as having a preference for accepting risk (1) or otherwise (0). Second, a dichotomous variable does not reflect the distribution of risk acceptance in society and reduces the reliability of the risk acceptance measure.

I address these deficiencies by creating a scaled measure of risk acceptance using predicted probabilities from a regression analysis that predicts the likelihood of a candidate winning their first race to congress. I argue that if the goal of running for office is to win then it is much riskier a proposition to run for a seat that you are unlikely to win than it is to run for a seat you are more likely to win. Legislators who are willing to run for a seat that they have a small probability of winning are much more accepting of a risky scenario than legislators who run for a seat with a high probability of winning. This measure provides scholars with a scaled range of risk acceptance rather than only a binary measure of acceptance of risk.

The second purpose of Section II is to add to theories of risk acceptance and legislative decision making. By legislative decision making I mean the extent to which legislators are willing

to support the preferences of their political party and their constituents. I argue that there are contexts which may lead a legislator to deviate from their constituents' preferences as well as from their party's preferences. Deviation of party preferences can occur in many forms such as ideology, roll-call voting, or bill sponsorship. Constituent divergence is when legislators deviate from the preferences of their electoral district. Furthermore, deviation of constituent preferences occurs when legislators vote for bills that are ideologically dissimilar from their elected district. When legislators behave in a manner counterintuitive to the preferences of their political party or constituents, then they are considered ideologically divergent.

In chapter 6 I argue that legislative decision making is a function of risk acceptance that leads to systematic changes in representation because risk-accepting legislators feel more empowered to represent their constituents in a manner that challenges the political status quo (Kam & Simas, 2012), while also making political decisions that are systematically different (Abramson, Aldrich, & Rhode, 1987) to low risk-accepting legislators. When legislators vote their conscience as trustees they are taking electoral risks by potentially challenging the preferences of voters. If legislative decision making is a factor of predispositions to risk, then the risk accepting should theoretically demonstrate personal preferences more in line with trustee theories of representation and the low risk accepting should demonstrate constituency preferences more in line with delegate theories of representation. This is especially true if the preferences of the legislator and constituency are in opposition.

I identify three decisions where risk acceptance may influence legislative decision making in the 109th-111th United States Congresses. The first scenario is the willingness of a legislator to support his or her political party. This is often gauged as ideological divergence, or the gap between a legislator's ideology and that of another political actor or constituent. A low risk-accepting

legislator may be more likely to support their party because lower support can result in losing access to leadership positions and resources that parties provide to help with reelection campaigns. Similarly, diverging from constituent preferences is a risk-accepting behavior with important potential costs. For example, when legislators vote against the preferences of constituents, voters may punish legislators with a lower vote share in the next election (Brady, Canes-Wrone & Cogan, 2000; Canes-Wrone, Brady, & Cogan, 2002; Erikson & Wright, 2000). I argue that legislators will be cautious to deviate too far from their party or base.

I also consider whether risk-accepting legislators deviate from the ideological mean of their party. Theories of citizen behavior suggest that the risk accepting are less ideologically conservative and less likely to identify as Republican compared to low risk-accepting individuals (Kam, 2012; Kam & Simas, 2012). Therefore, higher levels of risk acceptance should result in lower ideological conservatism. Finally, are risk-accepting legislators more likely to shirk, or skip, roll-call votes? When they shirk their vote, legislators risk reprisal from constituents, as well as challengers who can use their absence to mount political attacks (Figlio, 2000; Wright, 1993), but voting the wrong way can lead to electoral defeat (Nyhan et al., 2012). Indeed, Mayhew (1974) argues that is always better for a legislator to be on the losing rather than the wrong side of a vote. I hypothesize that low risk-accepting legislators are more likely to shirk their votes and are less likely to diverge from the policy preferences of their party and their district compared to risk-accepting legislators.

I look at the relationship between risk acceptance and decision making in the United States House of Representatives for several reasons. First, theories of representation assume that legislators are hesitant to make risky decisions, but little empirical evidence has been offered by political scholars. If scholars want to make theoretical claims about the influence of risk on

legislative decision making, then we need empirical evidence and measures of individual risk acceptance for political elites. Given that scholars have ignored the role of individual risk acceptance for political elites, it is plausible that theories of representation are empirically inaccurate.

I find that legislator behavior in the U.S. House of Representatives is based on risk acceptance –and not just experience or money-which influences legislative decision making in the U.S. Congress. Highly risk-accepting legislators follow the preferences of their district and are less ideologically conservative than low risk-accepting legislators. I find no evidence that the risk accepting ignore constituent preferences or shirk their vote differently than low risk-accepting legislators. Modern theories of representation, partisanship, and sub-constituencies are reinforced by the empirical evidence in this dissertation. Indeed, it seems that political decisions are a factor of risk acceptance.

The Plan of the Dissertation

The dissertation proceeds as follows. In Chapter 2 I lay out a theoretical framework for why we should expect observable effects of risk acceptance on citizen participation and legislator representation. In Chapter 3 I review previous measures of risk acceptance in the literature. Data sources range from survey data at the international level and observational data at the American level. I demonstrate that measures of risk acceptance are neither uniform nor easily accessible. In Chapter 4 I analyze the effect of risk acceptance on voter turnout in compulsory voting countries. I find that high levels of risk acceptance decrease the likelihood of voting in compulsory voting countries. In Chapter 5 I consider how risk acceptance influences the decision to protest. I find that the highly risk accepting are twice as likely to protest compared to other members of society. In Chapter 6 I look at the role of risk acceptance on legislator decision making in the United States

House of Representatives. I find that the risk accepting are more likely to follow party preferences and they are less conservative than their colleagues in the House.

Over the chapters that follow, I conclude that risk acceptance has a broad and substantive effect on the decision making of political actors. Not only are citizens influenced by their acceptance of risk, but political elites make decisions based on their personal risk acceptance. The findings indicate that risk acceptance can predict whether citizens participate in politics and how political elites represent their constituents.

CHAPTER 2. A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF RISK ACCEPTANCE

For the purposes of this dissertation, I borrow from Kam's (2012) definition of risk acceptance (p. 817). I define risk acceptance as the extent to which an individual is comfortable with uncertain outcomes and willing to challenge the status quo. Until recently, scholars often neglected the role of risk acceptance in politics. For example, Rohde (1979) finds that risk-accepting legislators are more likely to seek higher office and Kam (2012) finds evidence that risk-accepting citizens are more likely to attend political meetings, rallies, and sign petitions. However, since these seminal pieces, few empirical studies and theoretical advancements have been made by scholars regarding how risk acceptance influences political behavior. In this chapter I lay out a theoretical framework for how risk acceptance may influence political participation of citizens and representation by political elites. I build on Kam's (2012) theory of risk acceptance and political participation and Rohde's (1979) theory about risk acceptance and legislator decision making.

I add to the literature by considering two political decisions where participation, or the lack thereof, may lead to increased uncertainty that challenges the status quo. The first decision is abstaining in compulsory voting countries. Kam (2012) finds no evidence that risk acceptance influences the decision to vote because, as she concludes, the act of voting in the United States provides participants with neither excitement nor uncertainty. In other words, individuals can abstain from U.S. elections without any legal or financial consequences. Indeed, Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1972) argue that voting in the United States, rather than abstaining, is the costlier activity. Therefore, rational individuals will abstain from American elections because the costs are higher than the benefits. Individuals vote not because they find it exciting, but because it fulfills their civic duty. However, abstaining in compulsory countries with enforced sanctions can result

in legal, financial, or social sanctions. These enforced sanctions increase the uncertainty of abstention compared to voluntary voting systems in countries such as the United States.

The second decision is whether to protest. Protesting involves more severe costs than other traditional forms of political participation. Recent protests in the Arab Spring led to imprisonment, fines, and fatalities for individuals who participated and the racial protests in Ferguson and Baltimore ended with individuals arrested and injured, businesses suffering damage, and curfews enforced against the mass public. These outcomes would suggest that the consequences of protesting are more uncertain than other forms of political participation such as voting in the United States. I argue that risk-accepting individuals may be more likely to abstain from voting in compulsory elections but more likely to participate in political protests because they are more likely to challenge the status quo and are more comfortable with uncertain outcomes compared to the low risk accepting.

I also consider how risk acceptance may influence political representation. If risk acceptance influences how citizens participate in politics (Kam, 2012; Kam & Simas, 2012), then it is reasonable that political elites, who are elected by citizens, are also influenced by their acceptance of risk. One of the few scholars to consider the risk acceptance of political actors, Rhode (1979), finds that risk-accepting legislators in the House of Representatives are more likely to pursue higher office. Scholars have given the role of risk acceptance on the political decision making of political actors relatively little consideration. Risk-accepting legislators may be more ambitious for higher office (Abramson, Aldrich, & Rohde, 1987; Rohde, 1979), but further evidence about legislative decision making is lacking.

For the purposes of this dissertation, I consider three political decisions that all legislators must make while in office: following the preferences of constituents or their party and whether to

shirk or skip their roll call vote. Each of these activities have potential consequences that can either end a legislator's career or hinder their chance of promotion by leadership within their party.

If political elites and citizens are both influenced by their acceptance of risk, then risk acceptance may have a general effect on political decision making. However, risk acceptance may not influence legislator decision making to the degree that it influences citizen participation given that political elites are influenced by many factors such as their party (Kingdon, 1989), institutional constructs (Carey et al., 2006), and personal preferences (Clinton, 2006). I argue that low risk-accepting legislators may be more likely to follow the preferences of their political party and constituents, more likely to shirk their vote, and more likely to have conservative ideologies because they are less likely to challenge the status quo and are less comfortable with uncertain outcomes compared to the risk accepting.

In this chapter I first look at the role of risk acceptance on political participation. By political participation I mean the extent to which risk acceptance influences voting in compulsory countries and protesting. In the second section I look at the role of risk acceptance on political representation. By political representation I mean the extent to which risk acceptance influences legislators to follow the preferences of their party and their constituents.

Section I: Risk Acceptance and Political Participation

Voting is arguably the foundation for successful democratic representation. Higher voter turnout leads to better communication between elected officials and constituents (Mansbridge, 1994) while providing citizens with more political equality (Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993) and higher levels of democratic satisfaction (Anderson et al., 2005; Blais & Gélineau, 2007). Given the benefits of voting, it is surprising that voter participation is not higher in some countries. Some governments implement compulsory voting laws to respond to these anemic voting rates.

Compulsory voting involves a sanction, or punishment, and enforcement, or pursuing retribution, for not voting. Compulsory voting sanctions come in many forms. Economic sanctions include fines in Switzerland, Austria, Cyprus, Argentina, and Peru, and failure to pay the fines can result in prison sentences. The presence of substantial fines for abstaining makes it "paradoxical *not* to vote" (Singh, 2011, p. 96). Social sanctions include disenfranchisement in Belgium and Singapore, a loss of public services and goods in Peru, losing access to banks in Bolivia, and difficulty finding daycare in Italy and Mexico (IDEA 2001). Enforcement also varies by country. Some countries strictly enforce the sanctions while others are compulsory in name alone. The costlier the sanction and the more stringent the enforcement, the less likely individuals will abstain from voting (Panagopoulos, 2008; Fornos, Power, and Garand, 2004; Singh, 2011). Yet some citizens in countries where voting is compulsory are still willing to abstain from elections, even when faced with strong sanctions. How might risk acceptance influence the decision to vote in compulsory systems?

The decision to vote may differ between the high and low risk accepting when voting is compulsory because the higher risk accepting have (1) lower levels of risk avoidance, meaning less concern about the potential uncertain negative consequences of not voting; and (2) may be more likely to challenge the status quo of fulfilling one's civic duty. In other words, risk-accepting individuals may be more comfortable with the prospect of incurring the costs of abstention and more likely to believe they will avoid the sanction altogether.

I look beyond U.S. elections and add to the literature by considering the effect of risk acceptance on voting in countries where the outcomes for abstaining are more uncertain because of compulsory sanctions, unlike countries such as the United States where voting is voluntary. While in democratic countries the status quo is to vote because it is the citizens duty (Downs,

1957), in compulsory voting countries the status quo is to fulfill one's civic duty *and* avoid the sanction for abstaining. Sanctions and enforcement increase participation rates by an average of 10 percentage points in compulsory voting systems because citizens want to avoid fines for abstention (Panagopoulos, 2008; Singh, 2011). However, the risk accepting are more comfortable with uncertainty. While the low risk accepting will vote to avoid the potential sanction, the risk accepting may be more willing to accept the uncertainty of abstaining and therefore more willing to accept the sanction. The threat of sanctions may be less effective of motivating turnout for risk-accepting individuals. In Chapter 4 I test the following hypothesis. Hypothesis 4.1: There is a negative relationship between risk acceptance and turnout in compulsory voting countries.

Protest Participation

In this section I consider the role of risk acceptance on protest participation and build on the logic from compulsory voting. The probability that an individual will bring about change to the political system is miniscule and an established paradox in the literature (Aldrich, 1993; Downs, 1957). This sentiment has led protest scholars to argue that participation is a factor of dissatisfaction or alienation with traditional representative channels such as voting or contacting political elites (Gurr, 1970), often because these individuals lack other resources to bring about political change (Tarrow, 1995). Political change can only occur when individuals are willing to participate in politics, and many often do so out of a sense of civic pride or duty (Downs, 1957). Recent literature suggests that protests are a function of civic expression, or simply another means to a political end (Inglehart, 1977; 1997), and scholars argue that individuals participate in protests to have their voices heard by the government (Norris, Walgrave, & Van Aelst, 2005).

Protests create untraditional channels of communication with political elites that are often harder to ignore than more traditional forms of participation. For example, protests allow citizens

to convey important policy preferences to Members of Parliament (Hooghe & Marien, 2014), protests increase legitimacy to political elites (Gilljam, Persson, & Karlsson, 2012), and protests communicate desires for social justice (Gillion, 2012). When individuals participate in these untraditional channels of communication they are often effective in bringing about policy and other systemic changes (Gamson, 1990; Rochon & Mazmamian, 1993; Schumaker, 1975).

For citizens to have successful communication with political elites using protests, individuals may incur greater costs and be exposed to greater levels of uncertainty than traditional methods of political participation. The consequences of participating in protests are much greater than traditional methods of participation such as voting or contacting representatives. When individuals participate in protests they may risk uncertain legal and financial sanctions for themselves and the surrounding community. The recent protests in Ferguson and Baltimore in the United States and the Arab Spring in the Middle East are examples of the negative consequences that can occur in extreme situations. Several of the recent global protests have ended with the loss of life. This is not to suggest that all protests are dangerous or uncertain. However, in many circumstances protests are not for the faint-of-heart. Protests can involve public displays of emotion that are oftentimes loud and motivated by anger and typically involve large groups of people.

Risk acceptance is the degree to which individuals seek out risky behaviors or uncertain outcomes. Low risk-accepting individuals prefer to avoid activities with potential negative consequences and they seek higher levels of security and certainty compared to those who are risk accepting (Neumann & Politser, 1992). Given that protesting is a riskier activity with greater uncertainty and lower levels of security than voting, it is reasonable that the low risk accepting may likely to protest compared to high risk-accepting individuals. In addition to being more

comfortable with uncertain outcomes, risk-accepting individuals are also more likely to pursue exciting and novel activities (Zuckerman, 1979; 2007). Kam (2012) finds that risk acceptance has a general effect on political participation due to "novelty seeking and excitement seeking" (817). She concludes that general political activities are exciting and entice risk-accepting individuals to participate. The excitement and uncertainty of protests may also make the risk accepting more likely to participate compared to other members of society.

Non-democratic Protests

Protestors achieve their goals through large masses imposing threats on the government by disrupting the political environment to change the status quo (DeNardo, 1985; Piven & Cloward, 1977). Governments have four potential responses to these attempts: (1) they can concede to the demands of challengers without repression, (2) repress the challengers without concessions, (3) tolerate the challenge without concession or repression, or (4) repress the challenges but grant concessions (Franklin, 2009). Concessions are achieved when governments concede to the demands and goals of the participants. Repressions are the negative consequences that governments enact in response to protesters.

The uncertainty of achieving concessions or receiving repression are not equal across political systems. The consequences of protesting in non-democratic countries are more severe than in established democracies because elected political elites are constrained by democratic principles that unelected leaders do not follow. Democratic leaders are restrained from repression due to future political backlash (Gartner & Regan, 1996). Political scholars find strong evidence to suggest that higher levels of democracy leads to lower levels of political repression and higher levels of government concession (Davenport, 1995; Henderson, 1991; Poe & Tate, 1994). This would suggest that protesting in non-democratic countries has much higher uncertainty compared

to democracies for two reasons. First, non-democratic leaders are less likely to grant concessions to citizens compared to democracies. Second, non-democratic governments are more likely to implement repression towards participating citizens compared to democracies. Therefore, in non-democratic countries, not only does protesting involve higher potential for failure, but the failure might also result in more negative consequences than what existed prior to the movement.

I test the following hypotheses in Chapter 5 regarding the extent to which risk-accepting individuals will protest in nondemocracies compared to low risk-accepting individuals. Hypothesis 5.1: There is a positive relationship between risk acceptance and protest activity in non-democratic countries. Hypothesis 5.2**:** Risk acceptance has a weaker positive relationship on protest activity in democratic countries.

Section II: Risk Acceptance and Political Representation

In this section I consider the extent to which legislators are willing to support the preferences of their political party and their constituents. The concepts and causal mechanisms are similar for political elites and the mass public. As the previous sections demonstrated, risk acceptance is the extent to which one is willing to challenge the status quo and accept uncertain outcomes. Given that risk acceptance influences how citizens participate in politics it is reasonable that political elites, who are elected by citizens, are also influenced by their acceptance of risk. By considering individual risk acceptance this will give scholars a better understanding of why some legislators make hazardous political decisions. If legislative decision making is a function of risk acceptance then risk-accepting legislators may be more likely to challenge the political status quo (Kam & Simas, 2012) while also making political decisions that are systematically different to low risk-accepting legislators (Abramson, Aldrich, & Rohde, 1987).

I consider three choices where risky decision making may lead to electoral defeat for legislators. The first choice is aligning with the preferences of the party. I expect low risk-accepting legislators may be more likely to support their party compared to the high risk accepting because parties provide leadership positions and resources that help with reelection campaigns (Cox & McCubbins, 1993; Heberlig, Hetherington, & Larson, 2006). In this context, ignoring the party is a challenge to the status quo and an increase in the uncertainty of reelection.

The second choice is aligning with the preferences of constituents. I expect that low risk-accepting legislators may be more likely to follow the preferences of constituents compared to the risk accepting because ignoring constituent preferences may result in a lower vote share in the next election (Brady, Canes-Wrone & Cogan, 2000; Canes-Wrone, Brady, & Cogan, 2002; Erikson & Wright, 2000). In this context, ignoring the preferences of constituents results in a challenge to the status quo and increases the uncertainty of reelection.

The third choice is shirking their roll-call vote. I expect that low risk-accepting legislators may be more likely to shirk, or skip, roll-call votes compared to the risk accepting. Although skipping votes may lead to reprisals from constituents and challengers may use their absence to mount political attacks (Figlio, 2000; Wright, 1993), legislators need shielding from controversial votes because even one vote out of step with constituents can end a legislator's career (Nyhan et al., 2012). In this context, shirking roll-call votes maintains the status quo and decreases the uncertainty of reelection. These three choices are similar in that they all involve a degree of risk, have the potential to challenge the status quo, and may increase the uncertainty of outcomes. Legislators may be punished for challenging the status quo if they make the wrong decision. In the sections that follow I lay out a theoretical framework to better understand why political elites make hazardous decisions.

Party Preferences

Legislators make decisions every day in office. Sometimes they listen to the opinions of their constituents while other times they follow the preferences of interest groups, party leaders, or their self (Cox & McCubbins, 1993; Kingdon, 1989; Nyhan et al., 2012). Sometimes the preferences of these factions are aligned, other times they are in opposition. A legislator must decide which factions to lend their support and weigh the potential negative consequences of making the wrong decision with the potential benefits of making the right decision (Canes-Wrone, Brady, & Cogan, 2002).

Literature suggests that legislators are influenced by their party (Kingdon, 1989; Matthews & Stimson, 1975; Ray, 1982; Songer et al., 1986), unsurprising given that parties provide several benefits that are hard for legislators to ignore. Parties shield legislators from their constituents on controversial votes (Aldrich & Rohde, 1997), provide media and campaign management assistance (Adamany, 1984; Herrnson, 1986; 1987), and money (Ansolabehere & Snyder, 2000; Leyden & Borrelli, 1990; Parker, 2008). Legislators need money because political campaigns are more expensive and uncertain than in the past. The greater uncertainty and cost of elections in turn makes more financial resources from the party a necessity to stay in office (Jacobson, 2004). Parties also provide numerous institutional organizations to expedite fundraising from party leaders (Wright, 2000) and they increase redistributed funds from fellow legislators (Bedlington & Malbin, 2003; Heberlig & Larson, 2006) to combat the higher costs and uncertainty of elections.

Parties provide help to their members beyond campaign contributions. Following the party may lead to attaining higher office or promotion to leadership positions (Canes-Wrone, Brady, & Cogan, 2002; Heberlig, Hetherington, & Larson, 2006; Smith, 2000). Simply put, parties are more likely to reward legislators with leadership positions that are more loyal to party interests (Cox &

McCubbins, 1993). Heberlig, Hetherington, and Larson (2006) find that party leaders are more likely to reward legislators that are "ideologically like-minded members" rather than "those of ideologically dissimilar members" (p. 992). The evidence of legislator long-term career benefits by following the preferences of their party is quite striking. For example, legislators will sometimes follow the preferences of their party even when there is a threat of losing office (Aldrich, 1995; Cox & McCubbins, 1993; Rohde, 1991; Snyder & Groseclose, 2000). Given these benefits, why would legislators stray from the preferences of their party?

Following the party in some ways may decrease electoral uncertainty but it can also lead to unease with constituents. For example, "voters are not punishing elected representatives for being too ideological; they are punishing them for being too partisan" (Carson et al., 2010, p. 598). Although other factions may be able to withdraw or lend vital resources for reelection, constituents ultimately have the unique power to decide who stays in office and who goes. Indeed, voting out of step with voters can have catastrophic consequences that ends a legislator's career (Canes-Wrone et al., 2002; Carson et al., 2010). Ultimately, legislators may stray from the preferences of their party to avoid electoral defeat (Hutchings, 2003). Because the risk accepting are more comfortable with uncertainty and more likely to challenge the status quo, we should expect their decision making to vary compared to the low risk accepting. This leads to the first hypothesis for Chapter 6. Hypothesis 6.1: There is a positive relationship between risk acceptance and ignoring party preferences.

Risk Acceptance and Ideology

I also consider how a legislator's ideology may influence their decision to follow party preferences. Are risk-accepting legislators less conservative than their party mean? Previous studies find the risk accepting are less likely to identify as Republicans and have a conservative

political ideology (Kam, 2012; Kam & Simas, 2010). Although these studies focus on citizen ideology, we should expect a similar relationship for members of Congress. Under this theoretical framework we should expect highly risk-accepting legislators to be less ideologically conservative than their risk-accepting counterparts. This may explain why ideological moderates are less likely to run for office in the modern Congress (Thomsen, 2014). This leads to the second hypothesis for Chapter 6. Hypothesis 6.2: There is a negative relationship between risk acceptance and ideological conservatism.

Constituent Preferences

Downs' (1957) spatial theory suggests that a voter has an ideal policy preference point and policies that are further from this preference point are less preferred than policies closer to the ideal point. When legislators move further from the preference point of the median district voter they are taking electoral risks because voters will punish legislators who ignore their preferences (Abramowitz, 1988; Johannes & McAdams, 1981; McAdams & Johannes, 1987; 1988; Whitby & Bledsoe, 1986). Therefore, it does not strain credulity that legislators are going to follow the preferences of their district to reduce their reelection uncertainty. Indeed, incumbents often lose office if they deviate too far from the preferences of their constituents (Miller & Stokes, 1963). This relationship is further exaggerated when the issues are salient. Legislators will pay particularly close attention to the preferences of their constituents on highly salient votes (Bianco, 1994; Jackson & Kingdon, 1992; Matthews & Stimson, 1975) because even one vote out of touch with constituents can end a legislator's career (Nyhan et al., 2012). Legislators who are willing to vote out of step with their district are accepting greater potential for electoral defeat. And yet some legislators are willing to ignore the preferences of their constituents. Why do legislators stray from the preferences of their district?

It may seem counterintuitive for legislators to stray from the preferences of the district given the power of constituents to choose who stays and who leaves office. However, legislators do not always follow the preferences of their district. This indicates that there are determinants of voting behavior other than electoral consequences (Kingdon, 1989), such as personal (Bianco, Spence, & Wilkerson, 1996) or party preferences (Cox & McCubbins, 2005; Cox & Poole, 2001). The trustee-delegate dichotomy argues that some districts entrust their legislator to make decisions on their behalf with little concern about electoral accountability (Fearon, 1999). Trustees are given relatively strong autonomy to make decisions for their district. In turn, legislators may follow the preferences of other factions. Legislators are also more likely to stray from the preferences of their district when they are no longer concerned with reelection (Herrick et al., 1994). For example, Carey et al. (2006) find that "term-limited legislators become less beholden to the constituents in their geographical districts and more attentive to other concerns" (p. 105). Other scholars find that legislators who leave office are more likely to follow the preferences of other political actors (Rothenberg & Sanders, 2000). Without the threat of reelection scholars may stray from the preferences of their district.

How might risk acceptance influence legislator decisions to follow the preferences of constituents? The risk accepting are comfortable with uncertainty. When legislators ignore the preferences of their constituents they increase the uncertainty of reelection (Canes-Wrone, Brady, & Cogan, 2002). Therefore, we should expect low risk-accepting legislators to follow the preferences of their constituents because they do not want to increase the uncertainty of electoral defeat. On the other hand, the risk accepting may be less inclined to follow their constituents in favor of other political actors. This is not to suggest that risk-accepting legislators ignore constituent preferences frivolously. Rather, the risk accepting may be more comfortable with the

uncertain negative consequences of ignoring constituent preferences compared to the low risk accepting. Or, the risk accepting may be more inclined to challenge the status quo and follow the preferences of political actors other than their constituents compared to the low risk accepting. This leads to the third hypothesis for Chapter 6. Hypothesis 6.3: There is a positive relationship between risk acceptance and ignoring district preferences.

Legislative Shirking

Some legislators rarely miss a roll call vote while a select few are hardly ever present. Legislators are tasked with committee assignments, dealing with the press, and constituent requests among many other responsibilities daily. Most members of Congress vote on almost all roll calls (Cohen & Noll, 1991), but campaigning and dealing with the demands of political actors occupies a legislator's time that can potentially detract from roll call voting. Indeed, party leaders are more likely to miss votes compared to the rank-and-file members (Rothenberg & Sanders, 1999), presumably because they have more responsibilities than the rank-and-file, or they only vote on very important matters. Why do legislators shirk their vote?

Scholars argue that legislators are more likely to shirk their vote when constituents have opposing views on issues or when legislators are trying to maintain their chances of reelection (Fiorina, 1974; Mayhew, 1974). Part of Mayhew's (1974a) electoral connection hypothesis is that it is better for legislators to be on the losing side of a vote rather than taking the wrong position on a vote. In other words, sometimes vote shirking is safer than position taking. This is not to suggest that vote shirking increases reelection certainty. Shirking can also lead to representative issues with constituents who feel they are not represented. Indeed, constituents respond negatively to vote shirking (Wright, 1993).

How might risk acceptance influence legislator decisions to shirk their vote? On the one hand, we should expect low risk-accepting legislators not to shirk their vote because of the potential electoral consequences and attacks by challengers that may increase electoral uncertainty. On the other hand, legislators may need to shirk their vote when the preferences of the district are unknown. I argue that risk-accepting legislators are less likely to shirk their vote to safeguard against controversial votes that constituents may find unfavorable. Thus, the less risky behavior is to abstain from roll call votes to reduce electoral consequences when the preferences of the district are unknown, or the vote is controversial. Therefore, we should expect risk-accepting legislators to shirk their votes at lower rates than low risk-accepting legislators. This leads to the final hypothesis for Chapter 6. Hypothesis 6.4: There is a negative relationship between risk acceptance and vote shirking. Table 2.1 below provides all proposed hypotheses and their corresponding direction.

Table 2.1 Proposed Hypotheses

HYPOTHESES	HYPOTHESIZED DIRECTION	RISK
Hypothesis 4.1: There is a negative relationship between risk acceptance and turnout in compulsory voting countries.	(-)	Sanctions
Hypothesis 5.1: There is a positive relationship between risk acceptance and protest activity in non-democratic countries.	(+)	Repression
Hypothesis 5.2: Risk acceptance has a weaker positive relationship on protest activity in democratic countries.	(+)	Repression
Hypothesis 6.1: There is a positive relationship between risk acceptance and ignoring party preferences.	(+)	Electoral Uncertainty
Hypothesis 6.2: There is a negative relationship between risk acceptance and ideological conservatism.	(-)	Ideology
Hypothesis 6.3: There is a positive relationship between risk acceptance and ignoring district preferences.	(+)	Electoral Uncertainty
Hypothesis 6.4: There is a negative relationship between risk acceptance and vote shirking.	(-)	Electoral Uncertainty

Theoretical Importance

These hypotheses will enhance scholarly understanding of important questions regarding participation and representation. Perhaps citizens are motivated and affected by risk acceptance differently than political elites. Consider for example on the one hand, the risk accepting may contribute to a better represented constituency and overall healthier democracy by protesting perceived political and social injustices. On the other hand, the risk accepting may harm democratic principles by abstaining from voting more than the low risk accepting.

Scholars find strong evidence that compulsory voting increases voter turnout (Panagopoulos, 2008; Singh, 2011). While this may be true in the aggregate, if the risk accepting are less likely to vote in compulsory systems, then compulsory voting laws may be less effective in countries with large risk-accepting populations. Some countries have a larger risk-accepting population than others. Consider that countries such as the Netherlands (64.0), Japan (64.4), and Egypt, (67.2) have populations whose risk acceptance levels are at least one standard deviation *above* the risk acceptance mean. Therefore, compulsory voting laws may be less effective in the Netherlands, Japan, and Egypt. There are also cultural considerations that come into play when making comparisons at the international level. Some countries may have higher voter turnout due to social or cultural norms that encourage participation. Likewise, culture may influence the interpretation of risk altogether. Whereas some countries may find taking financial risks a risk-accepting activity, others may consider small fines for abstention to be inconsequential.

If low risk-accepting individuals are less likely to protest, then countries with a small risk-accepting population may be more susceptible to government overreach. By contrast, countries with large risk-accepting populations may be more likely to grant concessions to their citizens. Governments with small risk-accepting populations may grant fewer concessions to their citizens,

instead enacting more repressive policies. In turn this may lead to less democratic principles. Consider that large segments of the Indonesian (40.2), Indian (44.7), and Ghana (51.8) populations have risk acceptance levels that are at least one standard deviation *below* the risk acceptance mean. Therefore, the governments of Indonesia, India, and Ghana may be less likely to grant political concessions compared to other more risk-accepting countries. These are potentially important theoretical implications given that protests lead to political change and allow for citizens to express their policy preferences to political elites (Celestino & Gleditsch, 2013; Hooghe & Marien, 2014; Stephan & Chenoweth, 2008), while voting provides citizens with more political equality (Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993) and leads to higher levels of democratic satisfaction (Anderson et al., 2005; Blais & Gélineau, 2007).

If democracy is the normatively preferred system of government, then risk acceptance may help scholars better understand why citizens participate or abstain from politics. This in turn changes the political landscape because the balance of power is susceptible to which factions are present and which are absent. If the risk accepting are more, or less, likely to abstain from politics, then political elites must tailor their message and behavior so that it provides the highest level of support for their preferences over the opposition. Ultimately, who wins office determines the policies enacted by the government and the direction of society. Therefore, the potential findings will also enhance scholarly understanding of political elites and representation.

A common foundation of representative democracy is that citizens elect leaders to represent their concerns. If, however, the risk accepting are more likely to ignore the preferences of their constituents then risk acceptance may influence the representative nature of government. This in turn may lead to lower vote shares in future elections (Hogan, 2008) or more elite polarization and political conflict. Additionally, if legislators are more likely to shirk their vote

when leaving office, then risk acceptance may help scholars better predict which political elites are more likely to be citizen politicians and which are more likely to be professional politicians. On a more basic level risk acceptance may influence the policy positions of legislators. If legislators are influenced by their acceptance of risk, then policy outcomes might be susceptible to psychological factors such as risk in addition to political factors such as party or ideology.

Because all human decisions involve a degree of risk, and political decisions have potentially severe consequences when those decisions are made in error, it is important for scholars to better understand the role that risk acceptance has on political decision making for the mass public and political elites. Together, these hypotheses will help scholars better understand why some individuals are more willing to make systematically hazardous political decisions and why some individuals prefer to challenge the status quo rather than prefer a more guaranteed and safer alternative.

CHAPTER 3. MEASURING RISK ACCEPTANCE

The purpose of the present chapter is two-fold. First, I review previous measures of risk acceptance for citizens and political elites. Measures of risk acceptance for the mass public have increased in quality and quantity because of survey instruments. I follow this synthesis of previous literature by discussing the measure of citizen risk acceptance I use in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. The World Values Survey provides a strong measure of risk acceptance that allows us to be confident in the results for the mass public.

The second purpose of Chapter 3 provides a greater challenge to scholars. At issue is how to measure risk acceptance for political elites at the federal level, which is currently lacking in the literature while also increasing measurement error. Scholars can increase reliability and validity with self-reported questionnaires to members of congress. However, unfortunately current such measures do not exist because as Rohde (1979) states, the costs "would be great and such a course would be impossible with the timespan with which we are dealing" (p. 14). Due to the lack of survey data, scholars currently use Rohde's (1979) binary measure of risk acceptance for legislators at the federal level. Rohde's proxy measure of risk acceptance further decreases validity and reliability for scholars. This is not to suggest that Rohde's measure of risk acceptance is invalid. Maestas and Pollock (2010) find that single measures of risk acceptance have strong levels of validity and reliability. However, scholars can improve the reliability and validity of risk acceptance using multiple item indices.

I lay out a theoretical argument for how and why the present measure of risk acceptance is valid and reliable. Throughout the second half of Chapter 3 I argue legislators who run for office when they have little chance of winning are taking much greater risks than legislators who have a good chance of winning. I do this by estimating the probability of legislators winning their first

election to the U.S. House. Legislators with a high probability of *losing* are considered to have a high level of risk acceptance. I include multiple tests of validity and reliability with strong results. Although the risk acceptance measure in the present dissertation for political elites is a proxy measure of risk, the strong correlations provided below provide scholars with a more accurate and reliable measure than previously established in the literature.

Previous Measures of Risk Acceptance

Measures of risk acceptance vary in the literature depending on the research question scholars ask. Scholars who study citizen behavior often use several-item scaled indexes from survey questionnaires (Kam, 2012; Kam & Simas, 2010; Kam & Simas, 2012). Kam (2012) measures risk acceptance as a 7-item index with questions such as “I like new and exciting experiences, even if I have to break the rules”, “I prefer friends who are exciting and unpredictable”, and “In general, how easy or difficult is it for you to accept taking risks?” Individuals who most strongly agree with these questions are highly risk accepting. Several-item indexes are most desirable because they increase the validity and reliability of the risk acceptance measure. Fortunately, direct citizen risk acceptance measures are becoming more common in large surveys. The same cannot be said for political elites.

Scholars tend to use financial measures of risk acceptance for political elites when self-reported measures of risk are unavailable. For example, Maestas et al. (2006) measure risk acceptance as the comfort level of state legislators making financial or career risky decisions. State legislators who report that they are "very comfortable" or "somewhat comfortable" making risky financial or career decisions are considered risk accepting (pg. 201). This index of risk acceptance increases measurement error and reduces the validity and reliability of risk acceptance because

rather than being a direct measure of self-reported preferences, risk acceptance begins to resemble a proxy measure of risk.

Rohde's (1979) binary measure of risk acceptance defines risk-accepting legislators as those who ran for political office against an incumbent in their first election to Congress or if candidates ran in seats that were historically occupied by members of the opposite party, defined as 57% of the vote or more. The logic behind using this measure of risk acceptance is straightforward, "the risk of running against an incumbent is a good deal greater than the risk of running if there is no incumbent in the race" (Rohde, 1979, p. 8). This measure is limited in that only individuals who are coded a 1 are classified as having a risk preference. This is problematic because as Rohde (1979) acknowledges "we do not know that they would not have run if the previous incumbent had been running" and therefore we only determine their level of risk acceptance (p. 15). A dichotomous variable also does not reflect the distribution of risk acceptance in society and reduces the reliability of the risk acceptance measure.

A Measure of Risk Acceptance for Citizen Voting and Protesting

The World Values Survey asks citizens self-reported measures of risk acceptance at the international level. I model risk acceptance in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 after several scholars who use comparable questions from the World Values Survey (WVS) and other large surveys to measure risk acceptance of citizens (Berinsky & Lewis, 2007; Freese, 2004; Hoyle et al., 2002; Kam, 2012; Miller, 2000; Morgenstern & Zechmeister, 2001). The WVS asks respondents whether "Adventure and taking risks are important to this person; to have an exciting life." Individuals who most strongly agree with this question are considered risk accepting. Therefore, *Risk Acceptance* is measured using a 6-point scale from one question in the WVS that ranges from 1-6, where 1 is

low risk acceptance and 6 is high risk acceptance. Although I only include one measure of risk acceptance in the model, Maestas and Pollock (2010) demonstrate that single-item measures of risk are valid and reliable.[3] I use this measure of risk acceptance for the analysis of compulsory voting and protesting.

The structural correlates of *Risk Acceptance* with *Age* (-.25, p< .001), *Sex* (-.13, p< .001), and *Education* (.08, p< .001) are statistically significant and in the expected direction for the compulsory voting analysis in Chapter 4. Older individuals and women are less accepting of risk but higher educated individuals are more likely to take risks (Weber, Blais, & Betz, 2002; Zuckerman & Kuhlman, 2000). The structural correlates of *Risk Acceptance* with *Age* (-.23, p< .001), *Sex* (-.13, p< .001), and *Education* (.07, p< .001) are also statistically significant and in the expected direction for the protesting analysis in Chapter 5.

We can further test the reliability and validity of *Risk Acceptance* by correlating it with voter turnout. An important part of Kam's (2012) conclusion is that risk acceptance has no effect on voter turnout because, as she states, "Given that voting is most characterized as fulfillment of duty, and given that duty least motivates risk seekers, we can see why, in the relationship between risk attitudes and political participation, the act of voting is the exception, not the rule" (p. 829). Therefore, we should find a null result between *Risk Acceptance* and *Voting*. I include a binary logit regression of risk acceptance on voting and signing petitions in Table 3.1 below.[4] *Risk Acceptance* is neither statistically significant for *Voting* (-0.0362, p= 0.14) nor *Petitioning* (-

[3] See: Maestas, Cherie D and Pollock, William M., Measuring Generalized Risk Orientation with a Single Survey Item (May 3, 2010). Available at SSRN: http://ssrn.com/abstract=1599867 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1599867.

[4] I include signing petitions as a proxy for other forms of participation. Kam (2012) finds strong evidence that risk acceptance influences political participation such as attending rallies and meetings, signing paper petitions, and influencing others to vote.

0.0021, p=0.89). These results suggest we can be confident that *Risk Acceptance* provides scholars with a scaled measure of risk acceptance at the international level for the mass public that is valid and reliable like previously established measures in the literature.

Table 3.1 Binary Logit of The Effect of Risk Acceptance on Voting and Petitioning 2006-2008

	Voting	Petitioning
Risk Acceptance	-0.0362	-0.0047
	(0.0217)	(0.0312)
Social Structure		
Age	0.0369***	0.0005
	(0.0040)	(0.0042)
Sex	-0.0950	0.0055
	(0.0564)	(0.0572)
Education	0.6212	0.0860*
	(0.0264)	(0.0384)
Employment	0.6212***	0.2084
	(0.0801)	(0.1262)
Religiosity	0.0982***	-0.0671
	(0.0259)	(0.0416)
Motivational Attitudes		
Political Interest	0.3858***	0.3240***
	(0.0547)	(0.0855)
Systems Support		
Government Confidence	0.1438**	-0.2399*
	(0.0523)	(0.1217)
Social Trust	0.1480	0.2102
	(0.1079)	(0.1552)
Political Behavior		
Party Member	0.7079***	0.2905
	(0.1268)	(0.1517)
Labor Member	0.1910*	0.4846***
	(0.0887)	(0.1250)
Constant	-1.1444	-0.2761
N	33,011	33,576

Table Entry is the binary logit regression coefficient with Clustered Standard Errors presented in parentheses.
Year variables are excluded for brevity, excluded year is 2008. ***p<.001; **p<.01; *p<.05; #p<.10, two-tailed.

A New Measure of Risk Acceptance for Political Elites

I expand Rohde's (1979) reasoning to create a measure of legislator risk acceptance. I argue that, if the goal of running for office is to win, then running for a seat that you are likely to lose is riskier than running for a seat you are likely to win. I use this simple logic for the current risk measure. Legislators who are willing to run for a seat that they have a small probability of winning are much more accepting of risk than legislators who run for a seat with a high probability of winning. To that end, I define risk acceptance as the extent to which legislators are willing to run for seats they are likely to lose. Therefore, individuals with a high probability of *losing* are considered more risk accepting than those with a high probability of winning. The current measure of risk acceptance is intended to estimate a legislator's electoral chance. Other factors that predict a legislator's chance of winning may not be included in the present analysis. However, it should logically follow that individuals who run when the likelihood of winning is low are more accepting of risk than individuals who run when the likelihood of winning is high.

To generate the predictive values of winning office I use a binary logistic regression for the two highest vote getters in their first election to Congress from 1970 through 2010 using a data set that was graciously provided by Gary Jacobson.[5] The purpose of the generated predicted values is to estimate the probability of winning office. The literature identifies several important factors that explain why candidates win office such as the prior presidential vote, prior incumbent district vote, whether they're facing an incumbent or an open seat, money spent campaigning, and the presence of a primary challenge (Born, 1981; Hogan, 2008; Jacobson, 2006).

Expenditures are the amount of money spent campaigning in 2007 real dollars by each candidate. I also include year and region dummy variables to provide a more accurate electoral

[5] This excludes redistricted and unchallenged seats.

landscape to account for the differences between years and regions. I include a dummy variable for Southern Democrats in 1970 and 1974 to account for evolving party identification.[6]

I include a control variable to account for legislators who ran in safe districts with a high probability of winning the general election but who may have faced strong competition in the primary. In these districts the primary election is the main election to determine the winner. Without controlling for the primary election, the probability of winning the seat in these races would be over reported. Born (1981) finds that candidates who receive a higher percentage of the primary vote are more likely to win in the general election.

Finally, I account for "strategic behavior" candidates who are more likely to run in the primary, even though their chances of winning the general election are minimal, because these candidates are more likely to be their party's nominee since fewer candidates enter the primary (Banks & Kiewiet, 1989).[7] By including primary vote totals, the measure provides a strong representation of a candidate's chance of winning. The measure of risk acceptance I propose is still limited because, like Rohde (1979), I do not know if a candidate would run in a previous election if given the opportunity. However, even though methodologically the variance in the risk measure may not determine the full range of risk acceptance, logically one is a much greater risk taker if their probability of winning office is only 0.36% compared to 99.88%. Formally, I estimate the following model for each race to Congress from 1970 to 2010 as:

[6] None of the legislators in the proceeding analyses fall into this category. Only Charles Rangel and C. W. Bill Young ran in elections prior to 1974.
[7] They find that only ~5% of candidates fall into this "strategic behavior" category.

Democratic Win = β_0 + β_1 Prior Democrat Presidential Vote (In District Coded by Democrat) + β_2 Prior District Vote (Coded by Party) + β_3 Democrat Incumbent + β_4 Democrat Open Seat + β_5 Expenditures + β_6 Primary Vote Percent + β_7 Southern Democrat + β_8 Northeast + β_9 West + β_{10} Midwest + β_{11} South + β_{12} Year… + ε

Excluding uncontested and redistricted seats from 1970 to 2010, the sample yields 9,623 observations.[8] The results for the regression model are in Table 3.2. *Prior Democrat Presidential Vote* (b=0.12, p<.001), *Prior District Vote* (b= 0.05, p<.001), *Democrat Incumbent* (b= 2.76, p< .001), *Democrat Open Seat* (b= 2.06, p< .001), *Expenditures* (b= 3.34e-07, p <.001), *Primary Vote Percent* (b= 0.004, p< .01), and *Southern Democrat* (b= 4.02, p< .001) reach conventional levels of statistical significance.

Next, I estimate the probability of winning for each legislator who faced a challenger in the 109th through the 111th Congresses using the results from Table 3.2.[9] Because the default values are the probability of a Democrat winning office, we must convert the values for Republicans. I do this by measuring the absolute value of the Democrats' predicted probabilities of winning from 100. The predicted values are converted so that *Risk Acceptance* is congruent between Republicans and Democrats. We must also reverse code the measure from the probability of winning to the probability of losing. This is also done by measuring the absolute value of winning from 100 for

[8] Although I exclude all current uncontested seats from the model, it is possible that the prior vote percentage in the district was 100% and is still included to determine the safety of the district for the party from the *previous* election. Candidates who received 100% of their primary election are included.

[9] This excludes races where two incumbents challenged one another because of redistricting. This also excludes races where the incumbent was unchallenged, defined as receiving 100% of the vote. In the case of an unchallenged district, the probability of a challenger winning is automatically 0 because there was no challenge. Therefore, only challenged races are included in the analysis.

all legislators. Therefore, higher values represent higher probabilities of losing, or higher risk acceptance. The descriptive statistics for *Risk Acceptance* are as follows: N= 593, M= 43, s.d.= 35. A detailed description of the summary statistics for *Risk Acceptance* is available in Table 3.3.

Table 3.2 Binary Logit Regression of Electoral Factors for Democratic Win 1970-2010

VARIABLES	B	Z
Prior Democrat Presidential Vote	0.1157	32.33***
Prior District Vote	0.0528	22.89***
Democrat Incumbent	2.7612	21.05***
Democrat Open Seat	2.0627	14.02***
Expenditures	3.34e-07	6.67***
Primary Vote Percent	0.0045	2.61**
Southern Democrat	4.0156	11.29***
Northeast	-0.5822	-2.58***
West	-0.4664	-2.07*
Midwest	-0.7582	-3.39***
South	-0.4103	-1.83
Year 1966	-2.1273	-12.30***
Year 1968	-2.2551	-16.96***
Year 1970	-0.7927	-4.89***
Year 1974	2.9601	14.73***
Year 1976	3.3838	17.15***
Year 1978	1.6314	8.87***
Year 1986	2.4177	12.95***
Year 1988	2.3752	12.75***
Year 1990	1.8958	10.41***
Year 1996	1.5425	9.27***
Year 1998	0.4705	2.72***
Year 2000	0.1626	0.94
Year 2006	1.0348	6.08***
Year 2008	1.4273	8.38***
Constant	-13.0518	-32.35***
Chi^2	5503.88***	
Pseudo R^2	0.4665	
N	9,623	
PRE	0=93%, 1=67%	

Notes: # p<.10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 Entries for 1966, 1968, and 1970 are from separate model with expenditure excluded.

Table 3.3 Summary Statistics of Risk Acceptance

	N
Democrats	354
Republicans	239
Different Legislators	277
States	45
Female Observations	90
Racial Minorities	63

Validity and reliability are of utmost concern in any proxy measure. The first step in assessing these traits in the measure I propose is to test *Risk Acceptance* against the well-established and accepted Rohde (1979) binary measure of risk acceptance. I test the independence of the two variables by recoding *Risk Acceptance* into a binary measure where 1 are legislators who fall above the mean (43) and 0 otherwise. The Chi-Square Test of Independence between *Risk Acceptance* and the Rohde measure is 92.28 ($p< .05$). That number indicates that the variables are related, or not independent of each other. I measure the strength of the relationship with the Yule's Q test. The Yule's Q of -0.72 is at the high end of moderate, almost strong relationship. I also include a Two-Sample T-Test between *Risk Acceptance* and the Rohde measure. The results indicate there is a statistically significant difference between the mean risk acceptance score for those Rohde codes as risk accepting and those who are not risk accepting ($t= -13.62$, $p<.0000$). In other words, the Rohde risk accepting (individuals scored a 1) have a statistically significantly higher mean *Risk Acceptance* score (67.3) than those who are not risk accepting (31.29). See the Kernel Density plot between risk acceptance and the Rohde measure in Figure 3.1 below for more detail.

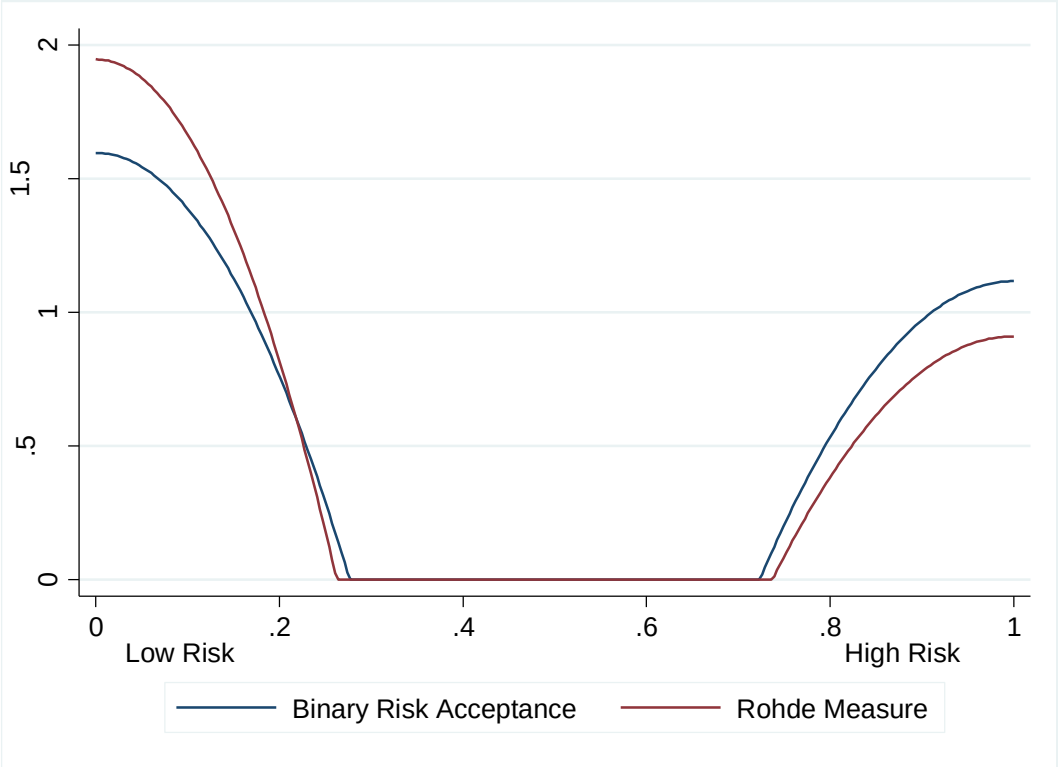

Figure 3.1 Kernel Density Plot Between Binary Risk Acceptance and Rohde Measure of Risk

Returning to the full scale, *Risk Acceptance* moderately correlates with Rohde's risk acceptance measure at .47, is statistically significant ($p<.001$), and in the expected direction.[10] This indicates that risk-accepting legislators are more likely to run against an incumbent or for a seat that has been held by a member of the opposite party for at least two election cycles with 57% or more of the vote. These tests indicate strong evidence that *Risk Acceptance* and the Rohde measure are highly correlated and dependent upon one another. Therefore, we can conclude *Risk Acceptance* meets a high level of validity and reliability with the Rohde measure.

To further test the validity and reliability, I include several additional analyses to test the effect of *Risk Acceptance* with various known factors in the literature. First, a *Risk Acceptance*

[10] While a .47 correlation is considered moderately correlated, a high correlation between the two risk measures would eliminate the need for a new measure altogether.

mean of 43 indicates that legislators are slightly biased towards lower levels of risk acceptance.[11] This is important given that most individuals are not risk accepting (Kahneman and Tversky 1979). A second test correlates *Risk Acceptance* with legislator ideology, party, and demographics. Scholars find that liberals, Democrats, females, people with lower education levels, and Caucasians identify as risk accepting (Kam, 2012; Kam & Simas, 2010). I use Poole and Rosenthal (1997) DW Nominate scores for legislator ideology. The structural correlates for risk acceptance are in Table 3.3. Legislators with a conservative ideology are less accepting of risk ($p < .001$) and Democrats are more accepting ($p < .001$). The correlates also indicate that *Risk Acceptance* has a stronger correlation than the Rohde measure of risk.

A final test examines the legislators who are considered to have the highest and lowest levels of risk acceptance. With a score of 99.88, Christopher P. "Chris" Carney from Pennsylvania's 10th congressional district is considered the most risk-accepting Democrat. When Carney initially entered the race in 2006, he was considered an extreme underdog given that Republicans had controlled the seat continuously since 1961. Scandals by the Republican incumbent would eventually make the race a tossup. The least risk-accepting Democrat is Jose' Serrano in New York's 16th congressional district. He took over the densely populated majority Hispanic district in 1990 with 92% of the vote in what is considered one of the safest congressional seats in the country. The most risk-accepting Republican is Robert Aderholt, who ran in Alabama's 4th congressional district during the 1996 elections. Democrats had held the seat since 1967, and the highly competitive race garnered direct support from then-Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich. The least risk-accepting Republican is Bill Cassidy from Louisiana's 6th congressional district, who beat incumbent Democratic Congressman Don Cazayoux. Republicans had safely

[11] 58% of the observations are at or below the mean

held the seat for over 40 years until Cazayoux served a one-year term following a special-election victory. Republicans have held the seat since.

Table 3.4 Structural Correlates of Risk Acceptance

	Risk Acceptance	Rohde Measure
Conservative Ideology	-0.45***	-0.13**
Democrat	0.54***	0.21***
Female	-0.06	-0.06
Caucasian	0.19***	0.11**
Higher Education	-0.06	0.01
Rohde Measure	0.47***	----------

Table entry is partial correlation coefficient. ***p<.001, **p<.01

CHAPTER 4. RISK ACCEPTANCE AND VOTER PARTICIPATION IN COMPULSORY VOTING COUNTRIES

Over the next two chapters I consider how risk acceptance influences the decision to participate in politics. I build on the work of Kam (2012), who finds that risk acceptance increases the likelihood of protesting but has no effect on voting. I further this line of inquiry in two ways. In the following chapter I consider the potential differences of protesting behavior between the risk accepting in democratic and non-democratic countries. In the present chapter I consider the potential differences of voting behavior between the risk accepting in voluntary and compulsory voting countries. I expect that risk acceptance will increase protesting but decrease voting participation.

An Introduction to Risk and Compulsory Voting

Scholars spend considerable resources to better understand why citizens vote. This is unsurprising given that voting is arguably the foundation for successful representation in democratic societies. When voter turnout is high elected officials have better communication with constituents (Mansbridge, 1994), democracies perform better (Powell, 1980), individuals have more political equality (Rosenstone & Hansen 1993), and citizens report higher levels of democratic satisfaction (Anderson et al., 2005; Blais & Gélineau, 2007). Yet, some individuals still abstain from the voting process. A well-established premise in the literature is that voting is a function of education (Leighley & Verdlitz, 1999), age (Sanchez, 2006), partisanship (Lien, 1994), race (Ghitza & Gelman, 2013; Leighley & Verdlitz, 1999; Lien, 1994), and institutions (Panagopoulos, 2008; Powell, 1980; Singh 2011). One of the leading explanations is that individuals will vote when the perceived benefits outweigh the perceived costs (Downs, 1957).

The purpose of the present chapter is to test whether a psychological predisposition to risk acceptance influences voting behavior, and whether it can be detected amid other factors citizens consider when deciding to vote. To understand risk acceptance in the decision-making process empirically, scholars need to consider citizens' acceptance of risk. Risk acceptance is the extent to which individuals are willing to challenge the status quo and how comfortable they are with uncertainty (Ehrlich & Maestas, 2010; Kam, 2012; Levy, 2003). The risk accepting make systematically different decisions than the low risk accepting. The risk accepting are generally comfortable with uncertainty, more likely to challenge the status quo, and willing to accept potential losses (Abramson, Aldrich, & Rohde, 1987; Ehrlich & Maestas, 2010; Kam, 2012; Kahneman & Tversky, 1979; Kam & Simas, 2012).

Until recently, political scholars neglected how individuals' acceptance of risk may influence political participation. Kam (2012) finds risk-accepting citizens are more likely to attend political meetings, rallies, and sign petitions because they find participation exciting and novel. However, she finds little evidence that risk acceptance influences voting behavior because voting is the fulfillment of one's civic duty rather than an exciting and novel activity (Kam, 2012). Although the act of voting may not be exciting and novel, there are instances where abstaining might be.

I distinguish this chapter from previous work by considering the sanctions and uncertainty of abstaining in compulsory voting systems compared to voluntary countries. By sanctions I mean when the government pursues some form of retribution for not voting. The sanctions can be social, such as disenfranchisement or losing access to public goods, or economic, such as fines. By uncertainty I mean the lack of knowledge that voters have about the sanctions. Compulsory voting laws are in place to compel citizens to vote (Massicottee, Blais, & Yoshinaka, 2004). Regardless

of the specific legislation, countries with obligatory voting policies share the same goal: to safeguard their political infrastructure from anemic participation rates (Blais, 2000), and previous research has borne out this premise (Franklin, 2001; Jackman, 1987; Lijphart, 1997; Panagopoulos, 2008; Powell. 1980; Singh, 2011). Simply put, when voting is compulsory, turnout increases (Panagopoulos, 2008; Singh, 2011). Indeed, the presence of substantial fines for abstaining makes it "paradoxical *not* to vote" (Singh, 2011, p. 96). However, some citizens in countries where voting is compulsory are still willing to abstain from elections, even when faced with strong sanctions.

I consider the possibility that full turnout remains elusive in compulsory voting countries because risk-accepting individuals are undeterred by the sanctions that these countries impose for abstaining. Compulsory sanctions may not be enough to elicit voters to the ballot box because the risk accepting are willing to accept uncertainty and challenge the status quo. I use the World Values Survey (WVS) from 2006 to 2008 to test the theoretical framework. I find evidence that although compulsory voting increases voter turnout in the aggregate, the effects are much weaker for risk-accepting individuals. The findings indicate the risk accepting are less likely to vote in compulsory systems compared to other members of society.

A common foundation of compulsory voting theories is that it stimulates higher turnout (Fornos, Power, & Garand, 2004; Panagopoulos, 2008; Singh, 2011). If, however, the risk accepting are less likely to vote then full participation will remain elusive. Countries with high risk-accepting populations should expect their compulsory sanctions to be less effective than countries with low risk-accepting populations.

Although compulsory voting does increase voter turnout in the aggregate, it is modestly ineffective in increasing voter turnout for all segments of the population equally. Countries that implement compulsory voting should consider their risk-accepting populations when deciding

which financial and social sanctions governments impose for abstaining. Finally, if the risk accepting are less likely to vote then governments may enjoy even greater incumbent advantages (Kam & Simas, 2010) in compulsory systems.

Participation in Voluntary and Compulsory Systems

The likelihood that a single vote will influence the outcome of an election is an established paradox in the literature. It is unsurprising then that large segments of the population vote because it is the fulfillment of civic duty (Downs, 1957). Vote overreporting studies argue that individuals will claim to vote at rates higher than authenticated because of social desirability effects, or the desire to conform to societal norms (Karp & Brockington, 2005; Silver, Anderson, & Abramson, 1986). In other words, voting is the status quo in democratic systems and individuals who do not vote are in the minority. Countries vary in their level of voter turnout, and compulsory systems may experience higher turnout than voluntary systems, but most citizens vote in most democratic countries.[12]

Risk acceptance is motivated by uncertainty, excitement, and novelty and "such motivations are not well tied to the act of voting" because voting is "most characterized as fulfillment of civic duty" (Kam, 2012, p.829). There is, however, an important systematic difference between voter incentives in democratic countries with compulsory voting and those that

[12] See the World Values Survey for a breakdown of self-reported voting rates by country (2005-2006): Argentina 77.3%, Australia 94%, Brazil 87.6%, Bulgaria 62.3%, Canada 72.9%, Chile 72.7%, Taiwan 71.9%, Cyprus 84.2%, Finland 76.1%, France 74.4%, Germany 77.4%, Italy 83.9%, Japan 74.5%, South Korea 74.8%, Mexico 64.2%, Netherlands 74%, Norway 83%, Poland 66.6%, Sweden 85.8%, Switzerland 66.2%, Turkey 75.2%, United Kingdom 68.1%, United States 71.3%.

are voluntary. Although compulsory and voluntary systems both provide voters with a fulfillment of civic duty, only compulsory systems punish nonvoters. Abstainers in compulsory systems may face sanctions that nonvoters in voluntary systems do not have to worry about. Abstaining in a voluntary system may lead to a lack of psychological benefits such as fulfilling one's civic duty, but abstaining in some compulsory systems may lead to a lack of psychological benefits *and* an increase in material costs such as fines. Voters do not face penalties for abstaining when voting is voluntary. Whereas in voluntary systems it is fulfillment of civic duty that causes one to vote, the sanctions in compulsory systems, at least in part, are the causal mechanisms for higher turnout.

Compulsory Voting

The consensus among scholars is that compulsory voting increases turnout. Compulsory voting systems punish abstainers in many forms. Economic sanctions include fines in Switzerland, Austria, Cyprus, Argentina, and Peru, and failure to pay the fines can result in prison sentences. Social sanctions include disenfranchisement in Belgium and Singapore, a loss of public services and goods in Peru, losing access to banks in Bolivia, and difficulty finding daycare in Italy and Mexico (IDEA 2001). Compulsory voting rates are higher than voluntary voting rates because citizens do not want to lose resources, be it social, economic, or otherwise, and these compulsory voting laws are highly effective in compelling citizens to vote (Fornos, Power, & Garand, 2004; Franklin, 2001; Jackman, 1987; Lijphart, 1997; Massicottee, Blais, & Yoshinaka, 2004; Panagopoulos, 2008; Powell, 1980; Singh, 2011). The costlier abstention becomes, the less likely individuals will abstain from the voting process (Panagopoulos, 2008; Singh, 2011). However, it is not enough for governments to only sanction nonvoters, they must also enforce the sanctions.

The lack of enforcement is the leading explanation among institutionalist scholars to explain why individuals still abstain in compulsory systems. Institutionalists argue that individuals will continue to abstain when governments do not adequately enforce compulsory voting sanctions (Fornos, Power, & Garand, 2004; Panagopoulos, 2008; Singh, 2011), because without enforcement the sanction has no substantive influence on abstainers. The sanction is compulsory in name alone. Without enforcement individuals can stay home on Election Day without fearing a response from the government (Singh, 2011). While institutionalists find strong evidence for this claim, individuals continue to abstain when the sanctions are enforced. This leads one to conclude that either the sanctions are not tough enough to illicit full participation or segments of the population are motivated by factors other than punishment. Although the fines for abstaining are relatively minor in most countries, economic scholars show that small financial losses motivate individuals to change their behavior (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979). This explains why twenty-dollar fines have increased voting rates by as much as 10 percentage points (Panagopoulos, 2008). Simply put, people hate to lose stuff. It does not, however, explain why individuals continue to abstain. How might risk acceptance influence the decision to vote in compulsory systems?

Risk Acceptance in Compulsory Systems

Previous scholars find that voting is not a motivating factor for the risk accepting because voting is the fulfillment of civic duty, and civic duty does not provide participants with excitement or novelty (Kam, 2012). Although this may be the case in voluntary systems, in compulsory systems the risk accepting may still face a sanction for abstaining. Even though the risk accepting may not be motivated by civic duty, they may be motivated by potential sanctions. The fundamental difference between voluntary and compulsory systems is the enforcement of

sanctions. Individuals vote in voluntary systems to fulfill their civic duty (Downs, 1957; Kam, 2012). Individuals vote in compulsory systems to avoid sanctions (Panagopoulos, 2008; Singh, 2011).

If voting is the status quo in democratic countries, and the risk accepting are generally comfortable with uncertainty and more likely to challenge the status quo (Ehrlich & Maestas, 2010; Kam, 2012; Levy, 2003), then conforming to societal norms (i.e. fulfilling one's civic duty) may be less likely for the risk accepting. Likewise, while in the aggregate compulsory voting laws increase voter turnout, individuals willing to challenge the status quo of avoiding sanctions for abstaining may be less likely to vote. If you are a risk taker, you may be willing to violate the compulsory voting requirement. I expect risk-accepting individuals will be more likely to accept the consequences of abstaining in compulsory systems, even when severe sanctions like imprisonment are possible, because they are comfortable with the uncertainty of potentially incurring voting sanctions and are more likely to challenge the status quo of fulfilling one's civic duty. This leads to the following hypothesis. Hypothesis 4.1: There is a negative relationship between risk acceptance and turnout in compulsory voting countries.

Data and Method of Analysis

To conduct the following analyses, I first need a survey data set with a diversity of countries to estimate the joint effects of risk acceptance and compulsory voting on voter turnout, but I also need a measure of risk acceptance which few surveys provide. I test the hypothesis guiding this chapter using data from the World Values Survey (WVS). The WVS has a large sample size (N= 61,615) collected between 2005 and 2008 and includes data from 42 countries representing a variety of political systems (presidential systems= 19; parliamentary systems= 23), geographic

regions, and a measure of risk acceptance. The WVS includes similar countries to those Panagopoulos (2008) examines which facilitates testing of the current hypothesis. The WVS has more recent years available, for instance through 2014, but those years either did not include questions on whether one voted, risk acceptance, or both and are excluded from the present analysis.[13]

Another data limitation is using self-reported voting measures. Self-reported voting measures are susceptible to overreporting errors that are common in large surveys. Although this is a concern, scholars have demonstrated that overreporting is commonly due to social desirability biases in surveys at the U.S. (Ansolabehere & Hersh, 2012; Silver, Anderson, & Abramson, 1986) and international level (Karp & Brockington, 2005). Although overreporting should not invalidate the current findings, it is possible that risk-accepting individuals could be more (less) likely to overreport voting even if he or she did not. Although the World Values Survey does have limitations, to my knowledge the WVS provides the best opportunity to test the theoretical framework. The main dependent variable is *Turnout* which is a dichotomous variable that measures whether an individual voted, coded 1 if respondent reported voting and 0 otherwise. Because *Turnout* is a dichotomous dependent variable I use a binary logistic regression.

Risk Acceptance Variable

I model risk acceptance after several scholars who use comparable questions from the WVS and other large surveys (Berinsky & Lewis, 2007; Freese, 2004; Hoyle et al., 2002; Kam, 2012;

[13] For example, the years 1990 and 1995 ask similar questions about risk, but they are limited only to "One should be cautious about making major changes in life" and "You will never achieve much unless you act boldly." The WVS also asks the question in Wave 6 from 2010 to 2014 "How often do you vote in national elections?" not whether one voted in the most recent election.

Miller, 2000; Morgenstern & Zechmeister, 2001). *Risk* is measured using a 6-point scale from one question in the WVS that ranges from 1-6, where 1 is low risk acceptance and 6 is high risk acceptance.[14] The question asks respondents whether "Adventure and taking risks are important to this person; to have an exciting life." [15] Although I only include one measure of risk acceptance in the model, Maestas and Pollock (2010) demonstrate that single-item measures of risk are valid and reliable.[16] This question is also similar to questions used by Kam (2012).[17] For a more detailed list of variable coding please see Chapter 3 and Table A4.1 in the Appendix.

Country-Level Variables

To code compulsory voting laws I follow Singh (2011) and Panagopoulos's (2008) coding from the IDEA for the following variables: *Compulsory*, *Sanctions*, *Enforcement*, and *Severity*.[18] I include several theoretically important control variables from the WVS, Polity IV, and Freedom House Index. The model includes country- and individual-level variables from the literature that influence voting such as age, employment, education, and political interest among others (Blais,

[14] Scholars have coded risk in various ways in the political science literature. For example, Rohde (1979) and Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde (1987) code risk acceptance of legislators as a binary variable of whether they ran for higher office against an incumbent or in an open seat. Additionally, Maestas et al. (2006) code risk using survey questions about financial security and career options.

[15] Older individuals (Weber, Blais, & Betz, 2002) and women (Zuckerman & Kuhlman, 2000) are less risk accepting but higher educated individuals are more likely to take risks (Cagney et al., 2002).

[16] See: Maestas, Cherie D and Pollock, William M., Measuring Generalized Risk Orientation with a Single Survey Item (May 3, 2010). Available at SSRN: http://ssrn.com/abstract=1599867 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1599867.

[17] For example, she uses the following questions in her risk scale "I like new and exciting experiences, even if I have to break the rules", "I prefer friends who are exciting and unpredictable", and "In general, how easy or difficult is it for you to accept taking risks?"

[18] Data about compulsory voting enforcement and sanctions are available from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA). http://www.idea.int/vt/compulsory_voting.cfm

2006; Kam, 2012; Lijphart, 2012; Panagopoulos, 2008; Singh, 2011). *Compulsory* is a dichotomous variable coded 1 if the country has compulsory voting and 0 otherwise. *Sanctions* is a four-point scale where 0 indicates the absence of sanctions, 1 minimal sanctions, 2 moderate sanctions, and 3 high sanctions. This variable measures the strength of compulsory sanctions. *Enforcement* is a four-point scale coded 0 for countries without enforcement laws, 1 low enforcement, 2 weak enforcement or 3 strict enforcement. This variable measures the strength of compulsory enforcement. S*everity* is a four-point scale coded 0 for countries without compulsory laws (i.e. United States), 1 if sanctions and enforcement are both low (i.e. Italy), 2 if sanctions and enforcement are weak (i.e. Brazil), and 3 if a country has high sanctions or strict enforcement (i.e. Australia).[19] This variable combines the strength of Sanctions *and* Enforcement into a single measure.[20]

Findings

I first consider the role of compulsory voting on voter turnout in Table 4.1 without any risk acceptance interaction terms to test the validity and reliability of the compulsory voting measures used by previous scholars. I find that *Severity* (b=0.283, p<.01) is positively correlated to voter turnout consistent with Singh's (2011) findings. The only substantive difference between the current study and the work of previous scholars is that I find a statistically insignificant

[19] Unfortunately, data limitations from the WVS do not provide countries with both high sanctions *and* high enforcement (i.e. Belgium). The *Severity* variable does still allow for testing countries with sanctions and enforcement but both mechanisms are weak or low. The presence of countries with high enforcement and high sanctions should only strengthen the theoretical framework given the findings below.

[20] There are other combinations of severity than what are measured in the present dissertation. For example, a country could have low sanctions but high enforcement or high sanctions but weak enforcement. However, data limitations do not allow for testing all possible combinations.

independent effect of compulsory voting on voter turnout when using clustered standard errors.[21] Moving from the lowest level to the highest level of severity, the probability of voting increases from 79 to 89 percent ($p<.05$). A 10-percentage point increase in the probability of voting associated with a shift toward stringent compulsory voting laws is consistent with previous literature (Franklin, 2001; Jackman, 1987; Lijphart, 1997; Powell, 1980).

[21] When I use robust standard errors I find similar results to Singh (2011).

Table 4.1 Binary Logit Estimates for Voting Sanctions and Voter Turnout

VARIABLES	Compulsory	Sanctions Enforcement	Severity
Compulsory	0.143	---------	--------
	(0.265)		
Severity	---------	---------	0.2830***
			(0.0827)
Sanctions	---------	0.00781	---------
		(0.2330)	
Enforcement	--------	0.3320	---------
		(0.2670)	
Freedom	0.0990	0.0236	0.0208
	(0.0636)	(0.0493)	(0.0486)
Parliament	0.233	0.0826	0.0959
	(0.206)	(0.1890)	(0.1880)
Bicameral	-0.393	-0.3040	-0.2930
	(0.257)	(0.2140)	(0.2140)
President Election	0.401	-0.4070	-0.3710
	(0.483)	(0.3450)	(0.3930)
GDP	-1.79e-05	-2.03e-05**	-1.93e-05**
	(1.13e-05)	(9.14e-06)	(8.84e-06)
Population Density	-0.0003	0.00057	0.0005
	(0.0006)	(0.00045)	(0.0004)
Political Interest	0.452***	0.4900***	0.4900***
	(0.0407)	(0.0329)	(0.0328)
Employed	0.391***	0.3350***	0.3320***
	(0.0649)	(0.0528)	(0.0529)
Education	0.0703***	0.0520**	0.0538**
	(0.0215)	(0.0222)	(0.0232)
Age	0.133***	0.1470***	0.1480***
	(0.0175)	(0.0158)	(0.0159)
Age^2	-0.00107***	-0.00119***	-0.0012***
	(0.00017)	(0.00015)	(0.0001)
Sex	0.0204	0.1070***	0.1070***
	(0.0725)	(0.0356)	(0.0353)
Constant	-4.485***	-2.276***	-3.037***
	(0.643)	(0.608)	(0.531)
N	56,654	53,619	53,619

Source: World Values Survey 2005-2008. Notes: Clustered Standard Errors included by country. Year dummy variables excluded for brevity, excluded year is 2008. #p<.10 *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001, two-tailed.

Risk Acceptance and Voting

I use the same multivariate model in Table 4.2 as in Table 4.1, but in Table 4.2 I include a series of interaction variables to capture the effects of risk on the relationship between compulsory voting (and its variants) and turnout; moreover, I exclude the control variables from the table for the sake of brevity. Model 1 in Table 4.2 shows the base equation without interaction terms for *Risk* (b= -0.0195, p= 0.242), and Model 2 includes the interaction between *Risk* and *Compulsory Voting* (b= 0.0735, p= 0.127). In both models risk acceptance has no effect on voting. Model 3 shows *Risk* (b= -0.0311, p< .05) has a negative and significant effect on voter turnout when controlling for *Sanctions* and *Enforcement*. Once again, neither the coefficients for *Sanctions* (b= -0.0282, p= 0.905) nor the coefficients for *Enforcement* (b= 0.338, p=.194) are statistically significant predictors of voting. Model 4 includes the interaction *Risk* x *Sanctions* (b= -.0011, p= 0.956) and *Risk* x *Enforcement* (b= -.0279, p= 0.134). Neither of the interaction terms reaches conventional levels of statistical significance. However, *Risk* (b= -.0766, p< .001) is statistically significant independent of the sanction and enforcement interaction terms when the coefficients for *Sanctions* and *Enforcement* both equal 0. Model 5 shows *Risk* (b= -0.0307, p< .05) and *Severity* (b= 0.264, p< .01) have a positive and statistically significant independent effect on the probability of voting. The final column, Model 6, depicts a different story. The interaction term *Risk x Severity* is statically significant and indicates a negative directional effect suggesting that as the level of risk and severity increases the probability of voting decreases (b= -.0241, p< .05). Because the coefficients of interaction terms in nonlinear models are not directly interpretable I discuss the substantive results of Model 6 below with predicted probabilities and 95% confidence intervals with all other variables set to their mean.

Table 4.2 Binary Logit Estimates for Voting Sanctions on Risk Acceptance and Voter Turnout

VARIABLES	Model-1	Model-2	Model-3	Model-4	Model-5	Model-6
Risk	-0.0195	-0.042	-0.0311**	-0.0766***	-0.0307**	-0.0184
	(0.0167)	(0.0240)	(0.0148)	(0.0174)	(0.0149)	(0.0180)
Compulsory	0.1170	-0.0335	--------	--------	--------	--------
	(0.262)	(0.312)				
Risk x Compulsory	---------	0.0735	--------	--------	--------	--------
		(0.0480)				
Sanction	---------	--------	-0.0282	-0.0319	--------	--------
			(0.2360)	(0.2500)		
Enforcement	---------	--------	0.3380	0.4070	--------	--------
			(0.260)	(0.2630)		
Risk x Sanction	---------	--------	--------	-0.0011	--------	--------
				(0.0210)		
Risk x Enforce	---------	--------	--------	-0.0279	--------	--------
				(0.0186)		
Sanction x Enforce	---------	--------	--------	-0.0698	--------	--------
				(0.1464)		
Severity	--------	--------	--------	--------	0.264***	0.318***
					(0.0830)	(0.0858)
Risk x Severity	--------	--------	--------	--------	--------	-0.0242**
						(0.00966)
Constant	-5.087***	-5.011***	-2.915***	-2.810***	-3.635***	-3.665***
	(0.533)	(0.526)	(0.514)	(0.515)	(0.425)	(0.425)
Observations	49,643	49,643	46,632	46,632	46,632	46,632

Source: World Values Survey 2005-2008
Notes: Clustered Standard Errors included at country level of analysis. Table includes all control variables from Table 4.1.
#p<.10 *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001, two-tailed.

In Figure 4.1 I graph the probability of voting as a function of compulsory voting severity conditioned by risk acceptance. Moving from the lowest level of risk acceptance (1) to the highest level of risk acceptance (6) decreases the probability of voting by 1.5 percentage points in countries without compulsory voting, 3 percentage points in countries with low severity, 3.9 percentage points in countries with medium severity, and 4.4 percentage points in countries with high severity.

Higher levels of compulsory voting severity still increase voter turnout consistent with previous findings in the literature. However, the slope of the line decreases in magnitude as the level of risk acceptance increases. For example, individuals with the lowest level of risk acceptance (1) have a 91.1% probability of voting in countries with high severity but individuals with the highest level of risk acceptance (6) only have an 86.7% probability of voting in countries with high severity ($p<.05$). To put this in perspective, the results indicate that highly risk-accepting individuals with a score of 6 who live in countries with high severity sanctions have the same probability of voting as low risk-accepting individuals living in countries with low severity sanctions and enforcement.

To test the institutional differences between countries I classified countries as old or new democracies consistent with the work of Pippa Norris. One advantage of classifying democracies as old or new allows us to further isolate institutional differences that may be driving the results above. However, this drops the number of country observations from 42 to 28 because only democratic countries are included in the model. It is important to note that the theoretical framework is not limited to only democratic countries. In Table 4.3 *Risk Acceptance* is statistically significant in new democracies ($p< .05$, one-tailed; $p=.097$, two-tailed) but has no statistically significant effect on old democracies ($p= .200$, two-tailed). While these results weaken the strength of risk acceptance on compulsory voting, the results provide more evidence that the results are a function of personality, albeit only in newer democracies.

The reduction in the probability of voting by ~4.5 percentage points for risk-accepting individuals lowers the effectiveness of compulsory voting by almost one-half of the 10-percentage point gain from implementing compulsory voting (Franklin, 2001; Jackman, 1987; Lijphart, 1997; Powell, 1980). These results suggest that the effectiveness of compulsory voting as a universally

applicable mobilization tool is debatable and may not be as robust as initially thought once we consider individual acceptance of risk.

Table 4.3 Binary Logit Estimates for Voting Severity on Risk Acceptance and Voter Turnout by New and Old Democracies

VARIABLES	New Democracy	Old Democracy
Risk Acceptance	-0.0518#	-0.0183
	(0.0312)	(0.0142)
Severity	-0.1605#	0.4049***
	(0.0870)	(0.0529)
Risk x Severity	0.0046	-0.0157
	(0.0179)	(0.0133)
Freedom	0.3396***	0.9220***
	(0.1067)	(0.2756)
Parliament	-0.7441**	-0.1335
	(0.2607)	(0.1790)
Bicameral	-0.0673	-0.1633
	(0.1774)	(0.2222)
Presidential Election	0.3566**	----------
	(0.1271)	----------
GDP	-0.0001***	7.46e-06
	(0.0000)	(0.00002)
Population Density	0.0025***	0.0007**
	(0.0006)	(0.0003)
Political Interest	0.3279***	0.6611***
	(0.0495)	(0.0556)
Employment	0.3044***	0.3820***
	(0.0736)	(0.0731)
Education	0.0353	0.1462***
	(0.0246)	(0.0201)
Age	0.1871***	0.0986***
	(0.0231)	(0.0137)
Age^2	-0.0017***	-0.0006***
	(0.0002)	(0.0001)

Table Cont'd

VARIABLES	New Democracy	Old Democracy
Sex	0.0276	0.1940*
	(0.0541)	(0.0782)
Year05	-1.6104***	0.3801#
	(0.2630)	(0.2008)
Year06	-1.2662***	----------
	(0.2151)	----------
Year07	-3.2298***	----------
	(0.4314)	----------
Constant	-3.8000***	-14.9432***
	(0.9322)	(2.8587)
Observations	18,617	13,412

Source: World Values Survey 2005-2008
Notes: Clustered Standard Errors included at country level of analysis. #p<.10 *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001, two-tailed.

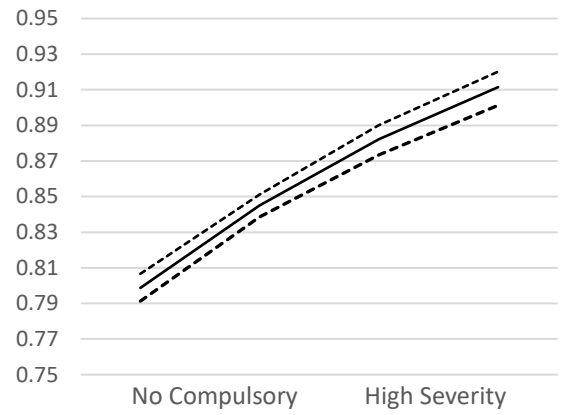

Figure 4.1 Predicted Probability of Voting For Individuals with a Risk Score of (1)

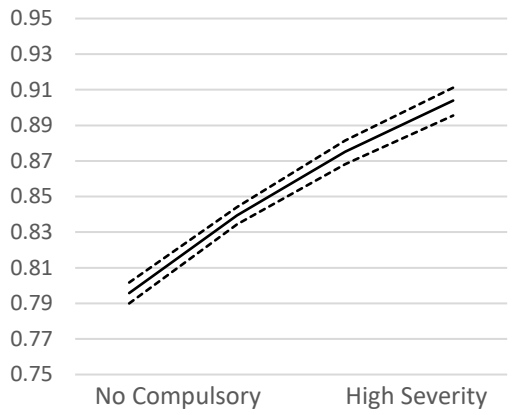

Figure 4.2 Predicted Probability of Voting For Individuals with a Risk Score of (2)

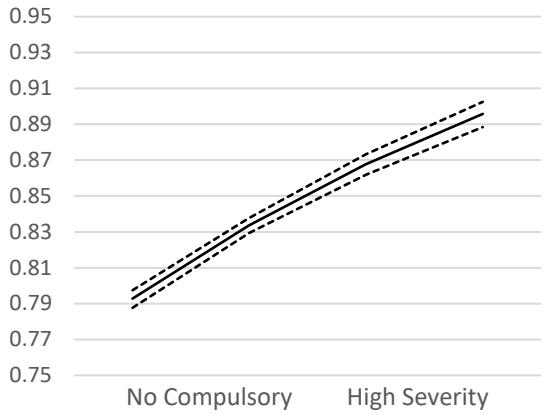

Figure 4.3 Predicted Probability of Voting For Individuals with a Risk Score of (3)

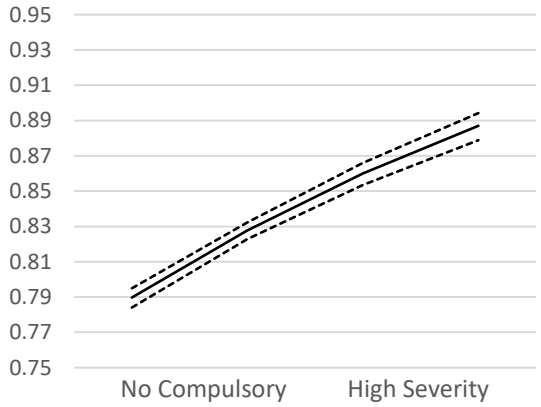

Figure 4.4 Predicted Probability of Voting For Individuals with a Risk Score of (4)

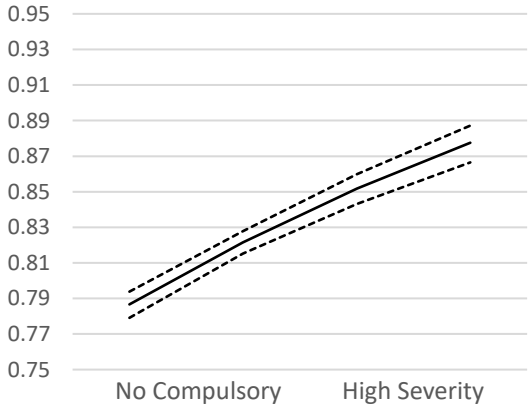

Figure 4.5 Predicted Probability of Voting For Individuals with a Risk Score of (5)

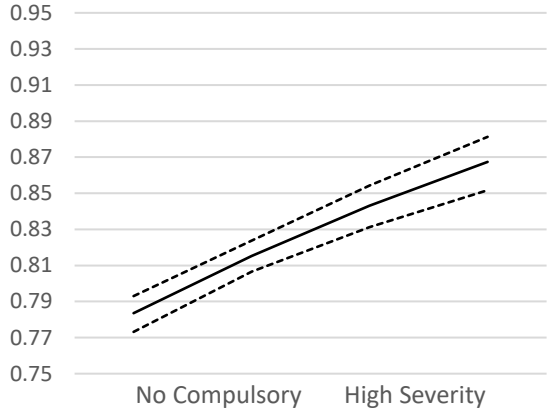

Figure 4.6 Predicted Probability of Voting For Individuals with a Risk Score of (6)

Chapter Conclusion

Why are some individuals more likely to vote than others? Previous studies argue that voter participation is correlated with race, income, education, ideology, and political interest among many other factors (Ghitza & Gelman, 2013; Leighley & Verdlitz, 1999; Rosenstone & Wolfinger, 1978). Perhaps the most common explanation why people vote is attributed to the costs and benefits of voting (Downs, 1957). This chapter argues that risk acceptance can also help scholars better understand why individuals vote. Scholars use risk acceptance to predict many individual behaviors. For example, risk acceptance influences which candidate voters prefer (Kam & Simas, 2012; Tomz & van Houweling, 2009), attitudes toward foreign policy (Eckles & Schaffner, 2011) and free trade (Ehrlich & Maestas, 2010), and political policies with uncertain outcomes (Kam & Simas, 2010). Previous studies have even considered how risk acceptance influences voting (Kam, 2012), but the findings were not statistically significant.

The voting literature is important because higher voter turnout rates suggest a healthy democracy and enables citizens to signal preferences to political elites (Mansbridge, 1994; Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993). The findings in the present chapter indicate compulsory voting laws decrease voter turnout for the risk accepting. Jackman (1987) claims "mandatory voting laws produce a disincentive to not vote" (p. 405). However, this chapter adds to the voting literature by providing evidence that compulsory voting laws can indeed incentivize individuals to abstain. Large segments of the Indonesian (40.2), Indian (44.7), and Ghana (51.8) populations have risk acceptance levels that are at least one standard deviation *above* the mean. Other countries, such as the Netherlands (64.0), Japan (64.4), and Egypt, (67.2) have populations whose risk acceptance levels are at least one standard deviation *below* the mean. If higher levels of risk acceptance lead

to lower levels of voter turnout, then it is reasonable to conclude that compulsory voting may be less effective in countries with large risk-accepting populations.

This chapter highlights limitations to compulsory voting that have otherwise been unknown to scholars. A reduction of 4.5 percentage points for the risk-accepting population may lead to more low risk-accepting voters participating, which in turn may lead to fewer risk-accepting policies. Indeed, governments may be incentivized to implement compulsory voting laws to maintain their power, rather than to make voting more representative and democratic. This has real political and representational consequences. Consider that theoretically, the findings indicate incumbent governments could benefit from decreased voter turnout in compulsory voting systems.

Kam and Simas (2010) find evidence that risk-accepting individuals are more likely to vote for the challenger rather than the incumbent. The evidence in this chapter indicates that compulsory voting leads to a decline in the probability of voting for risk-accepting individuals while those who are low risk accepting have a significantly higher probability of voting. This would indicate favorable biases for the incumbent government and the low risk-accepting voters. If compulsory voting leads to a decrease in votes for the risk accepting, then (1) risk-accepting individuals may be underrepresented by political elites and (2) governments with compulsory voting may receive even greater incumbent advantages compared to political challengers.

CHAPTER 5. RISK ACCEPTANCE AND PROTEST PARTICIPATION

I continue the investigation from Chapter 4 about how risk acceptance influences political participation in the present chapter by considering the influence of risk acceptance on protesting behavior in democratic and non-democratic countries. Although the theoretical argument in the present chapter is similar to the previous, the expected outcomes are different. I argued in the previous chapter that the risk accepting would be *less* likely to vote (i.e. participate in politics), because abstaining provided an opportunity for the risk accepting to challenge the status quo of voting social norms. In this chapter, however, we should expect the risk accepting to be *more* likely to participate in politics because protesting provides an opportunity to challenge the status quo of perceived political and social injustices. Likewise, protests are uncertain, costly, and may lead to physical or financial harm that may deter participation by less risk-accepting members of society but encourage participation by the most risk accepting.

An Introduction to Risk and Protesting

Why do some members of society participate in protests while others passively turn a blind eye? Theories of protesting behavior argue that individuals protest when other institutional mechanisms have failed or to right perceived political and social injustices. Seminal studies argue that protesting is a function of alienation from traditional representative channels (Gurr, 1970), a way to civically express oneself (Inglehart, 1977; 1997), and the context of the political environment. More recent work has considered psychological explanations of protesting behavior such as an individual's acceptance of risk. Kam (2012) finds strong evidence that risk-accepting individuals in the United States are more likely to report a willingness to protest than the low risk accepting. According to Kam (2012) the risk accepting participate in politics because they find it exciting.

In this chapter I build on Kam's (2012) model of political participation as a function of risk acceptance and consider how protest behavior may vary in different political systems. Does the willingness to participate in protests vary in democratic and non-democratic countries? To understand risk acceptance in the decision-making process to protest, scholars need to consider legislators' acceptance of risk. Risk acceptance is the extent to which individuals seek out risky behaviors and uncertain outcomes (Ehrlich & Maestas, 2010; Weber, Blais, & Betz, 2002). Risk-accepting individuals are generally comfortable with uncertainty (Ehrlich & Maestas, 2010; Levy, 2003) and they are more likely to pursue exciting activities (Zuckerman, 1979; 2007). If the risk accepting are comfortable with uncertainty and more likely to pursue exciting activities, then they may be more likely to participate in protests compared to other members of society.

Protests are uncertain because participants may be subject to bodily harm, citations, imprisonment, or death. Many of the recent protests in Baltimore in the United States and the Arab Spring ended with property damage and the loss of life. While these are extreme examples of protesting, they are oftentimes a likely outcome. There is also uncertainty as to whether the government will grant concessions to the demands of protestors. Although protestors are often successful in achieving their goals (Celestino & Gleditsch, 2013; Stephan & Chenoweth, 2008), there is no guarantee the government will concede. The lack of participation from the general public is unsurprising when one considers the potential for harm and the uncertainty of achieving the intended goals during a protest (Norris, Walgrave, & Van Aelst, 2005). Indeed, protest scholars argue that the preferred choice of the general public is to free ride (Chong, 1994).

I examine the theoretical framework using World Values Survey data from 2006 to 2008. The findings indicate that risk acceptance is a robust predictor of protest activity in nondemocracies. Highly risk-accepting individuals are much more likely than their less risk-

accepting counterparts to participate in protests in non-democratic countries. When citizens participate in politics they report. This has important political implications for non-democratic citizens given that protests often achieve their intended goals (Celestino & Gleditsch, 2013; Stephan & Chenoweth, 2008) and that protestors report higher democratic satisfaction (Anderson et al., 2005; Blais & Gélineau, 2007) and political equality (Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993). One implication is that countries with large risk-accepting populations are probably more likely to achieve concessions from their non-democratic government. Countries have large variations in risk-accepting populations around the world. Consider that large segments of the Indonesian (40.2), Indian (44.7), and Ghanaian (51.8) populations have risk acceptance levels that are at least one standard deviation below the mean. Other countries, such as the Netherlands (64.0), Japan (64.4), and Egypt, (67.2) have populations whose risk acceptance levels are at least one standard deviation above the mean. We should expect more protesting in the latter group than the former. Second, the hesitation to participate in protests by countries with low risk-accepting populations may provide non-democratic regimes with more political stability. Without internal pressure by the risk accepting, nondemocracies may continue to harbor undemocratic principles or, at a minimum, quell any such rebellion beforehand with impunity.

Why do People Protest?

Scholars spend considerable time to better understand why individuals participate in politics. Previous studies argue that participation is correlated with race, income, education, ideology, and political interest among many other factors (Ghitza & Gelman, 2013; Leighley & Verdlitz, 1999; Rosenstone & Wolfinger, 1978). Perhaps the most common explanation why people participate in politics is attributed to the perceived costs and benefits of participation

(Downs, 1957). However, the probability that an individual will bring about change to the political system is miniscule and an established paradox in the literature (Aldrich, 1993; Downs, 1957). This sentiment has led protest scholars to argue that participation is a factor of dissatisfaction or alienation with traditional representative channels such as voting or contacting political elites (Gurr, 1970), often because these individuals lack other resources to bring about political change (Tarrow, 1995).

Political change can only occur when individuals are willing to participate in politics, and many often do so out of a sense of civic pride or duty (Downs, 1957). Likewise, recent literature suggests that protests are a function of civic expression, or simply another means to a political end (Inglehart, 1977; 1997), and scholars argue that individuals participate in protests to have their voices heard by the government (Norris, Walgrave, & Van Aelst, 2005). Protests create untraditional channels of communication with political elites that are often harder to ignore than more traditional forms of participation. For example, protests allow citizens to convey important policy preferences to Members of Parliament (Hooghe & Marien, 2014), protests increase legitimacy to political elites (Gilljam, Persson, & Karlsson, 2012), and protests communicate desires for social justice (Gillion, 2012). When individuals participate in these untraditional channels of communication they are often effective in bringing about policy and other systemic changes (Gamson, 1990; Rochon & Mazmamian, 1993; Schumaker, 1975).

However, for citizens to have successful communication with political elites using protests, individuals must be willing to incur greater costs and accept greater levels of uncertainty than traditional methods of political participation. Unlike other forms of political participation such as voting, protests are in public view rather than in the privacy of a voting booth, they allow individuals to create social networks and produce a sense of community instead of casting a ballot

or signing a petition alone, and they are untraditional forms of expression rather than ritualistic exercises performed every few years. The consequences of participating in protests are much greater than traditional methods of participation such as voting or contacting representatives. When individuals participate in protests they risk uncertain legal and financial sanctions for themselves and the surrounding community. The recent protests in Ferguson and Baltimore in the United States and the Arab Spring in the Middle East are examples of the negative consequences that can occur in extreme situations. Several of the recent global protests has ended with the loss of life.

This is not to suggest that all protests are dangerous or uncertain. However, in many circumstances protests are not for the faint-of-heart. Protests can involve public displays of emotion that are oftentimes loud and motivated by anger and typically involve large groups of people. According to sociology scholars these groups are considered expressive crowds. An expressive crowd is when "the audience also wants to be a member of the crowd, and participate in crowd behavior-to scream, shout, cheer, clap, and stomp their feet" (Goode, 1992, p.23). This type of behavior is common at political rallies, street demonstrations, and public protests. Protests provide an exciting opportunity for individuals to express their emotions for a political cause and to do so as an assembly rather than as an individual. The audible and visual stimulation of protests creates an exciting environment that is unique compared to other forms of political participation. One eye-witness to the London anti-austerity protests reported saying that "It's been quite exciting: if I was a bit younger and had a bit more inclination I would have joined in."[22]

The scholarly evidence also indicates that fewer individuals are likely to participate in protests compared to other forms of political participation. Norris, Walgrave, & Van Aelst (2005) find that only 39 percent of the population have participated in a demonstration, 32 percent have

[22] http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/london-anti-austerity-protest-recap-updates-5772950

boycotted, and 7 percent have joined a strike. These participation rates are quite low compared to individuals who have reported voting (97%) or signing a petition (76%). The large gap between voter turnout and protesting rates suggests that there are systematic differences between *who* engages in the former activity but not the latter. Individuals in the latter group are willing to accept greater potential negative consequences that stem from protesting.

Risk Acceptance and Non-Democratic Countries

Protestors achieve their goals by making threats against the government and disrupting the political environment to change the status quo (DeNardo, 1985; Piven & Cloward, 1977). Governments have four potential responses to protests. They can: (1) concede to the demands of challengers without repression, (2) repress the challengers without concessions, (3) tolerate the challenge without concession or repression, or (4) repress the challenges but grant concessions (Franklin, 2009). Protesters win concessions when governments concede to their demands and goals, while repressions are the negative consequences governments enact in response to protests. I focus on the theoretical implications of concessions and repressions on the decision to protest.

Scholars find that higher levels of democracy lead to lower levels of political repression and higher levels of government concession (Davenport, 1995; Henderson, 1991). Conversely, non-democratic regimes are more likely to "subjugate citizens to prevent any kind of threat" (Regan & Henderson, 2002, p. 3). Democracies inherently respond to the wishes of its citizens, while non-democratic regimes provide fewer rights and are less beholden to institutional constraints (Davenport, 1999; Poe et al., 1999), which enables their leaders to repress impending threats. Despite potential consequences for engaging in protest activities, particularly in non-democratic countries, people continue to participate. Risk acceptance may help explain why.

Since risk-accepting individuals are generally comfortable with uncertainty (Ehrlich & Maestas, 2010; Levy, 2003), they may be more likely to challenge the status quo and accept losses that may arise from protesting in non-democracies (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979). In non-democratic countries, the risk accepting (1) may overestimate the chance of protests achieving their goal and (2) have greater confidence that the government will not respond with negative consequences. Their higher willingness to challenge the status quo and accept losses, and their comfortability with uncertainty suggest the risk accepting may protest at higher rates than other members of society. This leads to the first hypothesis. Hypothesis 5.1: There is a positive relationship between risk acceptance and protest activity in non-democratic countries.

Elected political elites are constrained by democratic principles that unelected leaders need not follow, so the consequences of protesting in non-democratic countries are more severe. Voters who are part of protest movements in democratic societies may punish elected leaders in future elections (Gartner & Regan, 1996). This suggests greater uncertainty when protesting in non-democratic countries, as non-democratic leaders are less likely to grant concessions to their citizens and more likely to repress those who engage in protests (Davenport, 1995; Henderson, 1991). Indeed, protests are far more likely to take place in democracies than authoritarian countries (Przeworski et al., 2000), in part because democracies "allow their citizens greater freedoms of expression" (Vanhuysse, 2006, p. 1).

Democratic citizens possess numerous avenues to influence their government that non-democratic citizens do not have, such as voting, petitioning, attending rallies and meetings, and writing letters. These measures minimize the use of violent methods by citizens against the government (Regan & Henderson, 2002). Therefore, we should expect a weaker relationship between risk acceptance and protesting in democracies. This leads to the second hypothesis.

Hypothesis 5.2: Risk acceptance has a weaker positive relationship on protest activity in democratic countries.

Data and Method of Analysis

I test the hypotheses using 2006-2008 data from the World Values Survey (WVS), which has a large sample size (N= 70,500) over multiple years and includes a measure of risk acceptance. The WVS has data available through 2014, but those years either do not include questions about risk acceptance, protest behavior, or both. The WVS contains a variety of political systems, geographic regions, and control variables that scholars find influence protest behavior (Blais, 2006; Kam, 2012; Lijphart, 2012; Norris, Walgrave, & Van Aelst, 2005).

The WVS asks respondents "Have you ever participated in a demonstration?" and "Have you ever participated in a boycott?"[23] Although I make no hypotheses differentiating between boycotts and demonstrations, the literature indicates substantive differences between the two activities (Norris, Walgrave, & Van Aelst, 2005). We should expect individuals who report having boycotted do so at different rates than those who report having demonstrated, and the inclusion of *Risk Acceptance* may further exaggerate the differences. *Demonstrate* and *Boycott* are three-point scales coded 0 if respondents said they would "never do this," 1 if they "might do this," and 2 if they "have done this." I analyze the dependent variables using multinomial logit with clustered standard errors set at the country-level of analysis. A hierarchical multinomial logit regression with fixed-effects is available in the Appendix (See: Table A5.9).

[23] Respondents can choose from "I would never do this" (boycott= 61.35%, demonstrate= 47.25%), "I might do this" (boycott= 28.74%, demonstrate= 34.39%), or "I have done this" (boycott= 9.91%, demonstrate= 18.36%).

I measure risk acceptance using a similar approach to that used previously by other scholars (Berinsky & Lewis, 2007; Freese, 2004; Hoyle et al., 2002; Kam, 2012; Miller, 2000). For example, Kam (2012) uses the following statements in her risk scale: "I like new and exciting experiences, even if I have to break the rules" and "In general, how easy or difficult is it for you to accept taking risks?" Similarly, the WVS asks respondents whether "Adventure and taking risks are important to this person; to have an exciting life." Responses range from "very much like me" to "not at all like me." I code *Risk Acceptance* as a 6-point index where 0 is "not at all like me" and 5 is "very much like me"[24] and higher values represent a greater acceptance of risk. The WVS provides a 10-question index of risk attitudes and behavior, but for the sake of brevity and ease of interpretation, I include only the 6-point scale. Analyses with the 10-question index's 45-point scale, which is correlated with the 6-point scale at .60, is available in Figure A5.1 in the appendix.[25]

I correlate risk acceptance with *Age* (-.23, p< .001), *Sex* (-.13, p< .001), and *Education* (.07, p< .001) as an initial test of the validity and reliability of the current measure. The correlations are statistically significant and in the expected direction. The older and female populations are less likely to identify as risk accepting, while the higher educated are more likely (Weber, Blais, & Betz, 2002). To test the validity and reliability of *Risk Acceptance* further, I correlate risk acceptance on private and safer political activities such as voting and petitioning (See Table A5.2 in the Appendix). The insignificant relationship between risk acceptance, voting, and petitioning in Table A5.2 is consistent with Kam's (2012) expectation that the relationships between risk acceptance and voting will be statistically insignificant because "voting is most characterized as

[24] Political scholars have coded risk in various ways in the literature. For example, Maestas et al. (2006) code risk using survey questions about financial security and career options.
[25] The results between Table 5.1 and Table A5.9 are similar. One major difference is the lack of a statistically significant effect for those who reported "Have Done" a boycott.

fulfillment of duty, and given that duty least motivates risk seekers…the act of voting is the exception, not the rule" (pg. 829). Together these findings provide strong evidence that the current measure of risk acceptance meets the criteria of validity and reliability.

I code *Non-Democracy* as a dichotomous variable where nondemocracies are coded as 1 and 0 otherwise using the Freedom House Index. Democracies are countries with "a score of 7 or better in the Electoral Process subcategory and an overall political rights score of 20 or better" (p. 3).[26] Table A5.3 in the Appendix includes a detailed listing of each country used in the analysis by regime type. I also include an interaction term in Table A5.4 in the Appendix between *Freedom House* and *Risk Acceptance*, which includes more detailed measures of civil rights and liberties.[27] Risk-accepting individuals are far more likely to report a willingness to "might do" a protest and boycott.

I also include theoretically important control variables in the models. These factors are *social structures, motivational attitudes, government support*, and *political behaviors*. The protest literature often finds that *Education, Employment, Political Interest, Social Trust, Party Member, and Labor Member* have a positive effect on protesting, and that *Age, Sex, Religiosity, Ideology, and Government Confidence* have a negative effect (Norris, Walgrave, & Van Aelst, 2005). Detailed coding of the control variables is available in Appendix Table A5.5.

[26] A detailed breakdown of the scores are available here: https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/Methodology_FIW_2015.pdf

[27] The *Freedom House* variable is coded 1 for countries with low liberties to 16 for countries with high liberties.

Findings

The effects of risk acceptance on demonstrating and boycotting without interaction terms are consistent with Kam's findings (2012).[28] In Table 5.1 I report the multinomial logit results of risk acceptance and non-democracy on protesting with "never do" as the baseline (comparison) group. The coefficient for *Risk Acceptance* is the effect of risk acceptance on the dependent variable for democracies (i.e., when *Non-Democracy* is equal to 0), while the interaction tells us the differences in the effects of risk acceptance for non-democratic and democratic countries. *Risk Acceptance x Non-Democracy* reaches conventional levels of statistical significance for individuals who "have done" (b= 0.2476, p<.01) and "might do" (b= 0.2895, p<.001) a demonstration compared to individuals who would never participate, controlling for all other factors in the model. Table 5.1 also shows *Risk Acceptance x Non-Democracy* reaches conventional levels of statistical significance for individuals who "have done" (b= 0.1878, p<.01) and "might do" (b= 0.2778, p<.001) a boycott compared to individuals who would never participate. This shows strong initial evidence for the first hypothesis. The risk accepting are very likely to report having participated, or being willing to participate, in non-democratic protests.[29]

I report the marginal probability of demonstrating by risk acceptance and system of government in Figures 5.1 and 5.2 with 95% confidence intervals and all other factors set to their mean. As individuals' level of risk acceptance increases, the likelihood they will report a willingness to participate in a demonstration also increases while the likelihood of reporting a willingness to never participate decreases. Moving from the lowest (0) to the highest level of risk acceptance (5), the probability of participation increases from 23.8% to 47.6% for individuals in

[28] The risk accepting are much more likely to protest. For the sake of brevity this analysis is not included in the present chapter. Findings available in Table A5.6.
[29] Findings with full 10-question risk scale available in Table A5.7

nondemocracies who reported they might demonstrate ($p < .05$). This represents a two-fold increase in the likelihood of participating. There is, however, no statistically significant difference when moving from the lowest (0) to the highest level (5) of risk acceptance for individuals in democracies who report they might demonstrate (41.0% to 47.6%).

Figures 5.3 and 5.4 paint a similar picture. Moving from the lowest (0) to the highest level of risk acceptance (5), the probability of participation increases from 4% to 9% for individuals in nondemocracies who reported they might boycott ($p<.05$). Individuals with the highest risk-accepting score are more than twice as likely to report a willingness to boycott compared to those with the lowest score. Again, there is no statistically significant difference when moving from the lowest (0) to the highest level (5) of risk acceptance for individuals in democracies who report they might boycott (8% to 12%).

Table 5.1 Multinomial Logit of the Effect of Risk Acceptance on Protest Politics by System of Government 2006-2008

	Demonstrate		Boycott	
	Might Do	Have Done	Might Do	Have Done
Risk Acceptance x Non-Democracy	0.2895***	0.2476**	0.2778***	0.1878**
	(0.0408)	(0.0890)	(0.0415)	(0.0665)
Non-Democracy	-1.0184	-0.9817	-0.9792#	-1.0633
	(0.7622)	(0.9951)	(0.6209)	(0.7866)
Risk Acceptance	-0.0087**	0.0163*	0.0207	0.0924**
	(0.0031)	(0.0071)	(0.0141)	(0.0337)
Social Structure				
Age	-0.0161***	-0.0070***	-0.0078*	0.0035
	(0.0011)	(0.0001)	(0.0034)	(0.0031)
Sex	-0.0736	-0.0747	-0.1107***	-0.0914
	(0.0750)	(0.0920)	(0.0228)	(0.0756)
Education	0.07850***	0.1914***	0.0907***	0.2251***
	(0.0170)	(0.0190)	(0.0105)	(0.0036)
Employment	0.0066	0.0390	0.0960#	0.2866#
	(0.0735)	(0.0561)	(0.0511)	(0.1474)
Religiosity	-0.0248	-0.0528	-0.0609***	-0.0725***
	(0.0182)	(0.0414)	(0.0046)	(0.0218)
Motivational Attitudes				
Ideology	-0.0861***	-0.2141***	-0.0886***	-0.1598***
	(0.0253)	(0.0158)	(0.0199)	(0.0057)
Political Interest	0.2717**	0.5386***	0.3153***	0.6019***
	(0.1059)	(0.1382)	(0.0529)	(0.0796)
Systems Support				
Government Confidence	-0.0779	-0.2287#	-0.1128	-0.2456#
	(0.0807)	(0.1445)	(0.0839)	(0.1476)
Social Trust	0.0679	0.1163	0.3007#	0.4836**
	(0.1226)	(0.1085)	(0.1645)	(0.1737)
Political Behavior				
Party Member	0.1882	0.5589***	0.1144	0.4857**
	(0.1271)	(0.1321)	(0.1185)	(0.1087)
Labor Member	0.1370	0.7966***	0.2232*	0.8175***
	(0.1010)	(0.0976)	(0.0932)	(0.0130)
Constant	0.7813***	-0.1508	-0.4850#	-2.9924***
N	26,775	26,775	26,435	26,435

Table Entry is the multinomial regression coefficient with Clustered Standard Errors presented in parentheses. Year variables are excluded for brevity, excluded year is 2008. Dependent variable is scaled as 0 (Never Do); 1 (Might Do); 2 (Have Done) with baseline category "Never Do." ***p<.001; **p<.01; *p<.05; #p<.10, two-tailed.

Risk acceptance seems to have a much stronger effect on protest behavior in nondemocracies compared to democracies. The risk accepting in non-democratic countries report a higher likelihood of "might do" and a lower level of "never do" compared to the risk accepting in democracies. Although risk acceptance increases the likelihood of protesting in democracies, the effect is weaker than in non-democratic countries.

To test the relationship further, I include an interaction between *Risk Acceptance* and *Freedom* in Table 5.2 with "never do" as the baseline (comparison) group. Although the substantive results are weaker than Table 5.1, there is still evidence to suggest that the level of political freedom influences the willingness to protest. *Risk Acceptance x Freedom* reaches conventional levels of statistical significance for individuals who "might do" (b= 0.0218, $p< .05$) a demonstration compared to individuals who would never participate, controlling for all other factors in the model. Table 5.2 shows *Risk Acceptance x Freedom* almost reaches conventional levels of statistical significance for individuals who "might do" (b= 0.0229, $p<.10$) a boycott compared to individuals who would never participate.

I report the marginal probability of demonstrating by risk acceptance and level of freedom in Figures 5.5 and 5.6 with 95% confidence intervals and all other factors set to their mean. There is a stark contrast between the willingness to demonstrate between low freedom and high freedom countries. In high freedom countries, the most risk accepting report a 72% likelihood of never demonstrating (see Figure 5.5). The most risk accepting in low freedom countries report only a 25% likelihood of never demonstrating (see Figure 5.6). In other words, highly risk-accepting individuals in countries with high freedoms are three times more likely to report a willingness to never demonstrate than highly risk-accepting individuals in countries with low freedoms.

The results are similar for boycotting. In high freedom countries, the most risk accepting report an 80% likelihood of never demonstrating (see Figure 5.7). The most risk accepting in low freedom countries report only a 36% likelihood of never demonstrating (see Figure 5.8).

Table 5.2 Multinomial Logit of the Effect of Risk Acceptance on Protest Politics by Freedom House Scores 2006-2008

	Demonstrate		Boycott	
	Might Do	Have Done	Might Do	Have Done
Risk Acceptance x Freedom	0.0218*	0.0078	0.0229#	0.0148
	(0.0131)	(0.0104)	(0.0157)	(0.0095)
Freedom	-0.2361***	-0.2378***	-0.2281***	-0.2974***
	(0.0387)	(0.0229)	(0.0329)	(0.0605)
Risk Acceptance	-0.0651	0.0093	-0.0388	0.0549
	(0.0564)	(0.0549)	(0.0637)	(0.0726)
Social Structure				
Age	-0.0209***	-0.0123***	-0.0119***	-0.0019
	(0.0020)	(0.0030)	(0.0020)	(0.0022)
Sex	-0.0929*	-0.0964#	-0.1313***	-0.1194
	(0.0470)	(0.0582)	(0.0351)	(0.0888)
Education	0.0639***	0.1703***	0.0730***	0.2061***
	(0.0181)	(0.0279)	(0.0215)	(0.0290)
Employment	0.0260	0.0551	0.1133#	0.3094***
	(0.0972)	(0.1159)	(0.0594)	(0.0873)
Religiosity	-0.0012	-0.0185	-0.0352*	-0.0296
	(0.0178)	(0.0277)	(0.0163)	(0.0270)
Motivational Attitudes				
Ideology	-0.0475*	-0.1766***	-0.0557***	-0.1276***
	(0.0191)	(0.0325)	(0.0145)	(0.0225)
Political Interest	0.3373***	0.6011***	0.3658***	0.6471***
	(0.0423)	(0.0519)	(0.0356)	(0.0516)
Systems Support				
Government Confidence	-0.0411	-0.20297*	-0.0896#	-0.2400**
	(0.0577)	(0.0796)	(0.0465)	(0.0884)
Social Trust	0.0504	0.0730	0.2739***	0.4180***
	(0.0850)	(0.1273)	(0.0721)	(0.1241)
Political Behavior				
Party Member	0.1597	0.5345***	0.0967	0.4706***
	(0.1357)	(0.1470)	(0.1384)	(0.1342)
Labor Member	0.1617#	0.8203***	0.2431**	0.8430***
	(0.0949)	(0.0952)	(0.0769)	(0.1173)
Constant	1.6157***	0.7246	0.2939	-1.9343***
N	26,775	26,775	26,435	26,435

Table Entry is the multinomial regression coefficient with Clustered Standard Errors presented in parentheses with the excluded year set to 2008. Dependent variable is scaled as 0 (Never Do); 1 (Might Do); 2 (Have Done) with baseline category "Never Do." ***p<.001; **p<.01; *p<.05; #p<.10, one-tailed.

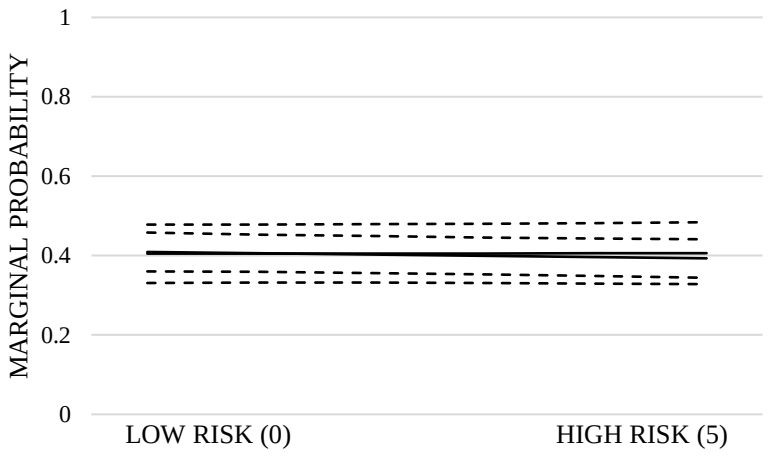

Figure 5.1 MARGINAL PROBABILITY OF DEMONSTRATING IN DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES BY RISK ACCEPTANCE

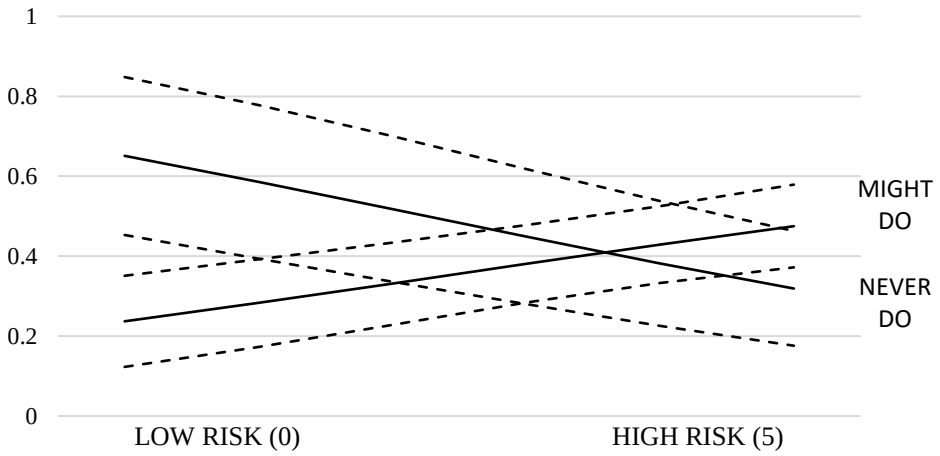

Figure 5.2 MARGINAL PROBABILITY OF DEMONSTRATING IN NON-DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES BY RISK ACCEPTANCE

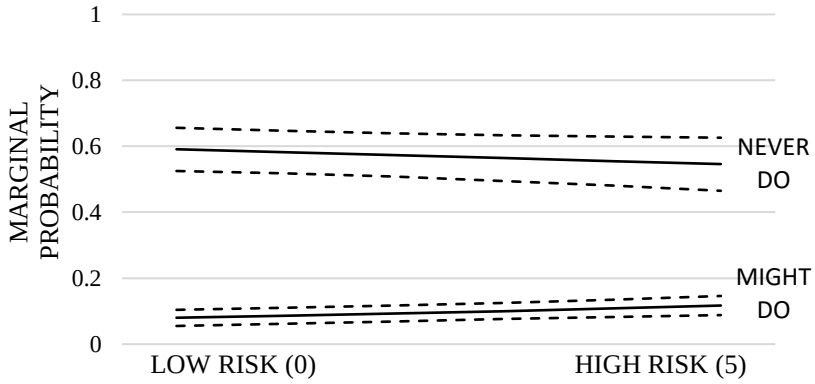

Figure 5.3 MARGINAL PROBABILITY OF BOYCOTTING IN DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES BY RISK ACCEPTANCE

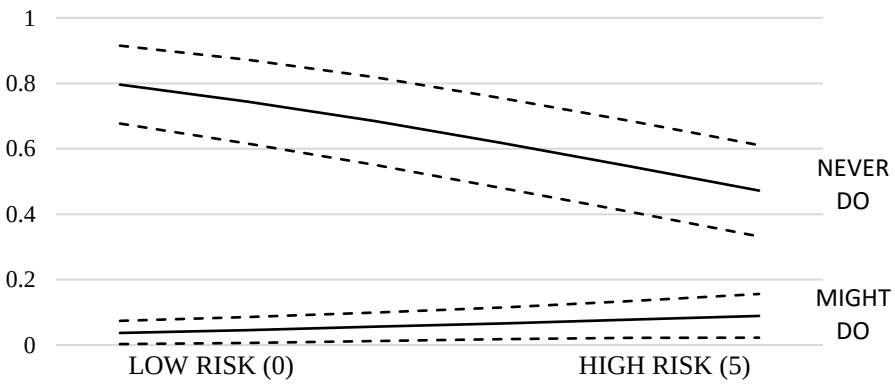

Figure 5.4 MARGINAL PROBABILITY OF BOYCOTTING IN NON-DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES BY RISK ACCEPTANCE

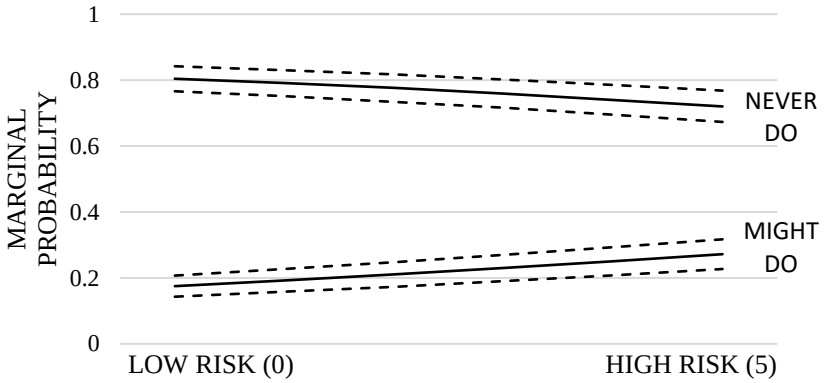

Figure 5.5 MARGINAL PROBABILITY OF DEMONSTRATING IN HIGH FREEDOM COUNTRIES BY RISK ACCEPTANCE

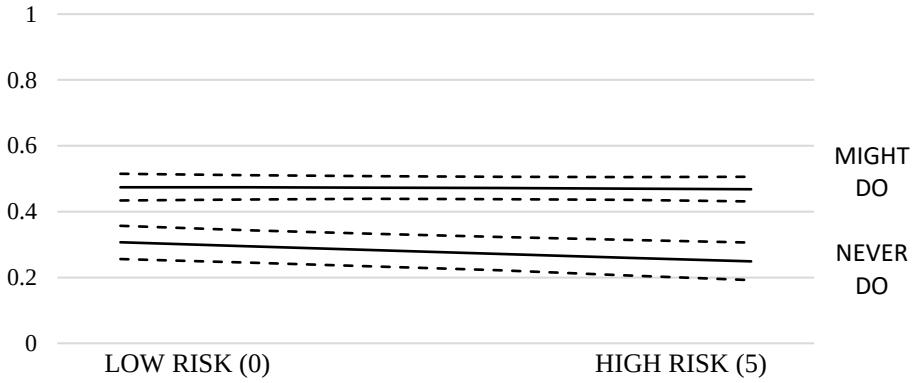

Figure 5.6 MARGINAL PROBABILITY OF DEMONSTRATING IN LOW FREEDOM COUNTRIES BY RISK ACCEPTANCE

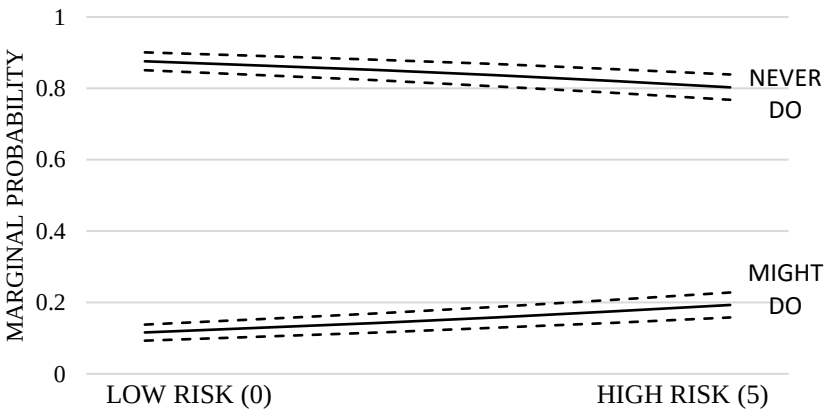

Figure 5.7 MARGINAL PROBABILITY OF BOYCOTTING IN HIGH FREEDOM COUNTRIES BY RISK ACCEPTANCE

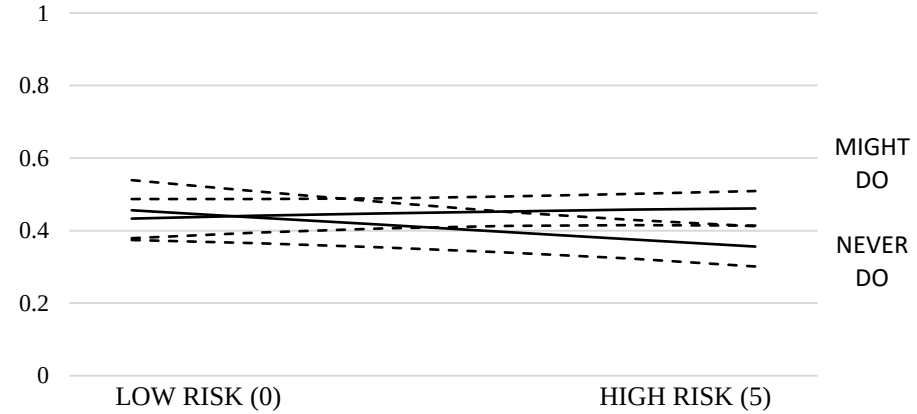

Figure 5.8 MARGINAL PROBABILITY OF BOYCOTTING IN LOW FREEDOM COUNTRIES BY RISK ACCEPTANCE

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter builds on previous literature by considering how risk acceptance and system of government influence individuals' decision to protest. I find that the risk accepting are much more likely to report a willingness to protest in non-democracies, a ratio of 2:1 for the most risk accepting, and more likely to report protesting in the past. Whereas the least risk accepting among us are highly unlikely to challenge the status quo of a non-democratic regime, the most risk accepting are willing to sacrifice life and limb to rectify perceived political injustices. Whether motivated by uncertainty or excitement, risk-accepting individuals receive a psychological payoff from challenging their government.

These findings have far-reaching theoretical and practical implications. Low risk-accepting individuals may be hesitant to challenge their government using nontraditional political participation techniques, but the risk accepting are more than willing to take their place. On the one hand, countries with small risk-accepting populations may provide non-democratic governments more flexibility and stability to enact repressive policies because most individuals choose to avoid risk (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979). It should come as little surprise, then, that non-democratic governments enforce repressive policies with impunity given that the effectiveness of protesting is contingent upon citizen participation. On the other hand, countries with large risk-accepting populations may be more resilient in their pursuit of government accountability. Governments in countries with highly risk-accepting populations are likely less repressive and grant more concessions to their citizens because protests are often successful in achieving their intended goals (Celestino & Gleditsch, 2013; Stephan & Chenoweth, 2008).

This chapter adds to an important line of protest literature, but more questions remain. Which non-democratic institutions, such as political rights and freedoms, influence the behavior

of risk-accepting individuals? Does freedom of speech, freedom to protest, severity of repression, or other liberties influence whether the risk accepting participate in protests? Additionally, scholars should consider whether and how immigration of risk-accepting individuals from non-democracies to democratic countries influences participation.

CHAPTER 6. RISK ACCEPTANCE AND REPRESENTATION IN THE U.S. HOUSE

In the previous two chapters I laid out a theoretical framework for how risk acceptance may influence the decision to participate in politics. The weak findings in Chapter 4 suggested that high levels of risk acceptance decrease the likelihood of voting in compulsory voting countries relative to their less risk-accepting counterparts by 4.5 percentage points. I also found strong evidence in Chapter 5 that the highly risk accepting are twice as likely to participate in political protests in non-democratic countries, though this effect was much weaker in democracies, relative to their less risk-accepting counterparts. In this chapter I continue the investigation of risk acceptance's effect on political actors by considering how risk acceptance influences the behavior of political elites at the federal level. The lack of reliable survey data at the federal level makes this a daunting but fruitful investigation. Indeed, the lack of risk acceptance and political elite scholarly work makes the present chapter even more profitable if not challenging.

An Introduction to Risk and Representation

Theories of legislator decision making argue that political elites make decisions to reduce their electoral risks and other potential costs. When the costs are low legislators tend to make riskier political decisions (Abramson, Aldrich, & Rohde, 1987; Rohde, 1979). Legislator decision making is a strategically risk- and cost-avoiding process. However, there is surprisingly little empirical evidence, despite wide theoretical acceptance, that considers a legislator's acceptance of risk. Seminal studies argue that legislative decision making is a function of personal characteristics (Ansolabehere, Snyder, & Stewart, 2001; Cox & Poole, 2001; Hogan, 2008; Levitt, 1996; Snyder & Ting, 2003; Wright & Schaffner, 2002), institutional constructs (Carey et al., 2006; Wright, 2007), and personal preferences (Clinton, 2006; Gerber & Lewis, 2004; Snyder, 1996) among

many other factors. Perhaps the most famous explanation for legislative decision making can be attributed to Mayhew (1974a), who argues that legislators are focused solely on reelection and that all other motivations are secondary.

The purpose of the present chapter is to test whether a psychological predisposition to risk acceptance influences legislative decision making, and whether it can be detected amid other factors legislators consider when making political decisions. Risk acceptance is the extent to which an individual seeks out risky behaviors and is comfortable with uncertain outcomes (Ehrlich and Maestas 2010; Weber, Blais, and Betz 2002). Risk-accepting legislators make decisions that are systematically different to their less risk-accepting colleagues (Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde 1987). The risk acceptance are generally comfortable with uncertainty, more likely to challenge the status quo, and willing to accept potential losses (Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde 1987; Ehrlich and Maestas 2010; Kam 2012; Kahneman and Tversky 1979; Kam and Simas 2012).

Until recently, political scholars neglected the role of individuals' acceptance of risk. There have been few empirical studies or theoretical advancements regarding how risk acceptance influences elected elites' political behavior since Rohde's (1979) findings that risk-accepting legislators are more likely to seek higher office. More recent scholarly work focuses primarily on citizen behavior.[30] Kam (2012), for instance, finds risk-accepting citizens are more likely to attend political meetings, rallies, and sign petitions because they find participation exciting and novel.

I find that the risk accepting are less likely to vote in compulsory countries in Chapter 4 and that they are more likely to protest in nondemocracies in Chapter 5. Risk acceptance, then, may have a general effect on political decision making. By looking at legislator acceptance of risk

[30] Exceptions include: Maestas et al. (2006) and Nyhan and Reifler (2015).

we can determine whether legislators are comfortable making risky decisions, similar to citizens, or if they prefer to choose a safe alternative.

I consider three decisions where risk acceptance may influence legislator behavior: (1) alignment with party preferences, (2) alignment with constituent preferences, and (3) shirking, or skipping, their roll-call vote. I expect low risk-accepting legislators may be more likely to support their party because parties provide leadership positions and resources that help with reelection campaigns (Cox & McCubbins, 1993; Heberlig, Hetherington, & Larson, 2006). In this context, ignoring the party is a challenge to the status quo and increases electoral uncertainty. I also expect low risk-accepting legislators may be more likely to follow their constituents' preferences. Ignoring constituent preferences is a challenge to the status quo and may jeopardize future vote share (Brady, Canes-Wrone & Cogan, 2000; Canes-Wrone, Brady, & Cogan, 2002; Erikson & Wright, 2000). Either scenario involves a degree of risk, has the potential to challenge the status quo, and may increase the uncertainty of reelection. Finally, I consider whether and how legislator preferences impact their ideology. That is, are low risk-accepting legislators more ideologically conservative? Theories of citizen behavior suggest the risk low risk accepting are more likely to be ideologically conservative and identify as Republican, while the risk accepting are more liberal and aligned with the Democratic Party (Kam, 2012; Kam & Simas, 2012). Can we expect legislators to exhibit a similar relationship?

I test the role of risk on legislative decision making with a novel measure of risk acceptance. I develop a novel measure of risk for political elites that, unlike existing measures, is focused on an additive index of risk acceptance and is not limited to binary measures (Abramson, Aldrich, & Rohde, 1987; Kam, 2012; Rohde, 1979). I use the measure to predict legislative decision making in the 109th-111th United States Congresses. I demonstrate that House members'

decision making is based not only on factors like experience and money, which is shown to impact their behavior (Canes-Wrone, Brady, & Cogan, 2002; Carey et al., 2006; Heberlig & Larson, 2005; Mayhew, 1974a; Munger, 1988), but also on their acceptance of risk. I find that risk-accepting legislators are less ideologically conservative than the mean of their party and more likely to follow the preferences of their party. I find no evidence to suggest risk acceptance influences following constituent preferences or vote-shirking.

A common foundation of representative democracy is that citizens elect leaders to represent their concerns (Fenno, 1978). If, however, the low risk accepting are more likely to ignore the preferences of their constituents, then risk acceptance may influence the representative nature of government. By ignoring the preferences of their constituents, low risk-accepting legislators in turn may have lower vote shares in future elections or contribute to more elite polarization and political conflict. The findings indicate that not only may risk acceptance influence the policies proposed, but also the cooperation between the parties.

Party Preferences

Legislators make decisions every day in office. Sometimes they listen to the opinions of their constituents while other times they follow the preferences of interest groups, party leaders, or their self (Cox & McCubbins, 1993; Kingdon, 1989; Nyhan et al., 2012). Sometimes the preferences of these factions are aligned, other times they are in opposition. A legislator must decide which factions to lend their support and weigh the potential negative consequences of making the wrong decision with the potential benefits of making the right decision (Canes-Wrone, Brady, & Cogan, 2002).

Literature suggests that legislators are influenced by their party (Kingdon, 1989; Matthews & Stimson, 1975; Ray, 1982; Songer et al., 1986). Constituents punish legislators who vote against their preferences (Nyhan et al., 2012), and parties in turn shield legislators from electoral fallout when they cast controversial votes (Aldrich & Rohde, 1997). Parties give legislators critical monetary support to combat increasing reelection costs and electoral uncertainty (Jacobson, 2004). Party leaders provide access to fundraising networks (Wright, 2000) and increase redistributed funds from fellow legislators (Heberlig & Larson, 2005). Parties also help their members beyond campaign resources. For example, following party preferences may lead to committee appointments or leadership positions (Canes-Wrone, Brady, & Cogan, 2002; Heberlig, Hetherington, & Larson, 2006; Hogan, 2008; Smith, 2000). Ambitious legislators will also benefit from good standing with the party when they run for higher office. Simply put, parties reward loyalty (Cox & McCubbins, 1993). Heberlig, Hetherington, and Larson (2006) find party leaders are more likely to reward legislators who are "ideologically like-minded members" rather than "ideologically dissimilar members" (p. 992). Legislators sometimes follow the preferences of their party even when doing so threatens their reelection (Aldrich, 1995; Cox & McCubbins, 1993; Rohde, 1991). Despite the advantages of party alignment, legislators will sometimes stray from their party.

Following the party in some ways may decrease electoral uncertainty but it can also lead to unease with constituents. For example, "voters are not punishing elected representatives for being too ideological; they are punishing them for being too partisan" (Carson et al., 2010, p. 598). Although other factions may be able to withdraw or lend vital resources for reelection, constituents ultimately have the unique power to decide who stays in office and who goes. Indeed, voting out of step with the district can have catastrophic consequences that ends a legislator's career (Canes-

Wrone, Brady, & Cogan, 2002; Carson et al., 2010). Ultimately, legislators may stray from the preferences of their party to avoid electoral defeat (Hutchings, 2003). Because the risk accepting are comfortable with uncertainty and more likely to challenge the status quo, we should expect their decision making to vary compared to other members of Congress. This leads to the first hypothesis. Hypothesis 6.1: There is a positive relationship between risk acceptance and ignoring party preferences.

I also consider how a legislator's risk acceptance may influence their political ideology. Previous studies find risk-accepting citizens tend to have a liberal ideology and identify as Democrats (Kam, 2012; Kam & Simas, 2010). Although these studies focus on citizen ideology, we should expect a similar relationship for members of Congress. Under this theoretical framework we should expect risk-accepting legislators to be less ideologically conservative and identify as Republicans. This may explain why ideological moderates are less likely to run for office in the modern Congress (Thomsen, 2014). This leads to the second hypothesis. Hypothesis 6.2: There is a negative relationship between risk acceptance and ideological conservatism.

District Preferences

Parties are not the only political actors that provide benefits to legislators. Unsurprisingly, legislators are willing to abandon their party for constituent support (Mayhew, 1974a; Fenno, 1978). The consequences of ignoring constituent preferences are vast. Legislators lose a greater electoral vote share the more ideologically partisan their roll-call vote (Brady, Canes-Wrone & Cogan, 2000; Canes-Wrone, Brady, & Cogan, 2002; Erikson & Wright, 2000), challengers are more likely to appear as the incumbent becomes more extreme (Bond, Covington, & Fleisher,

1985; Jacobson, 2004), and higher-quality challengers are more likely to enter the electoral race when legislators ignore the preferences of their district (Jacobson & Kernell, 1983).

Downs' (1957) spatial theory argues that a voter has an ideal policy preference point and policies that are further from this point are less preferred than policies closer to the ideal point. When legislators move further from the preference point of constituents they are taking electoral risks because voters will punish legislators who ignore their preferences (Abramowitz, 1988; Johannes & McAdams, 1981; McAdams & Johannes, 1987; 1988; Whitby & Bledsoe, 1986). Therefore, it does not strain credulity that legislators are going to follow the preferences of their district to reduce their reelection uncertainty. Indeed, incumbents often lose office if they deviate too far from the preferences of their constituents (Miller & Stokes, 1963). This relationship is further exaggerated when constituent preferences are salient. Legislators will pay particularly close attention to the preferences of their constituents on highly salient votes (Bianco, 1994; Jackson & Kingdon, 1992; Matthews & Stimson, 1975) to avoid constituent discontent (Nyhan et al., 2012). Legislators who are willing to vote out of step with their district are accepting greater potential for electoral defeat. Why do some legislators stray from the preferences of their district?

It may seem counterintuitive for legislators to stray from the preferences of the district given the power of constituents to choose who stays and who leaves office. However, there are determinants of roll-call voting behavior other than electoral consequences (Kingdon, 1989), such as personal (Bianco, Spence, & Wilkerson, 1996) or party preferences (Cox & McCubbins, 2005; Cox & Poole, 2002). For example, the trustee-delegate dichotomy argues that some districts entrust their legislator to make decisions on their behalf with little concern about electoral accountability (Fearon, 1999). Trustees are given relatively strong autonomy to make decisions for their district and in turn may follow the preferences of other factions. Additionally, legislators are more likely

to stray from the preferences of their district when they are no longer concerned with reelection (Herrick et al., 1994). Carey et al. (2006) find that "term-limited legislators become less beholden to the constituents in their geographical districts and more attentive to other concerns" (p. 105). Without the threat of reelection legislators may stray from the preferences of their district. When legislators stray from the preferences of their constituents they increase the uncertainty of reelection (Canes-Wrone, Brady, & Cogan, 2002). Therefore, we should expect risk-accepting legislators to ignore the preferences of their constituents at higher rates because they are comfortable increasing electoral uncertainty. This leads to the third hypothesis. Hypothesis 6.3: There is a positive relationship between risk acceptance and ignoring district preferences.

Vote Shirking

The third choice is shirking their roll-call vote. I expect that risk-accepting legislators may be less likely to shirk, or skip, roll-call votes. On the one hand skipping votes may lead to reprisals from constituents and challengers may use their absence to mount political attacks (Figlio, 2000; Wright, 1993). Missing roll-call votes can potentially increase the electoral uncertainty of legislators because challengers are quick to let constituents know when their legislator is absent. In the recent Republican Presidential debate, candidate Jeb Bush attacked the voting record of Florida Senator Marco Rubio saying, "You should be showing up to work."

On the other hand, shirking one's vote allows legislators to avoid uncertainty that may come from controversial legislation. Legislators who vote on controversial bills are willing to accept potentially negative consequences from their constituents and increase electoral uncertainty. Therefore, we should expect risk-accepting legislators to shirk their votes at lower

rates. This leads to the fourth and final hypothesis. Hypothesis 6.4: There is a negative relationship between risk acceptance and vote shirking.

I include aggregated and separate models for Republicans and Democrats in the analyses that follow. I do not expect different relationships between Democrats and Republicans given that risk acceptance lowers ideological conservatism and increases liberalism. However, the substantive effects may vary by party. For instance, highly risk-accepting Republicans may show more liberalism than low risk-accepting Democrats.

Data and Method of Analysis

I use the measure of risk acceptance outlined in chapter 3 as the main predictive variable: *Risk Acceptance*. Recall that *Risk Acceptance* is measured as the predicted values of a legislator winning their first election to Congress. Therefore, legislators with a high probability of *losing* their first election are considered risk accepting. I create a new measure of risk acceptance because political scholars currently do not have an additive index of risk acceptance for political elites and current measures of risk are limited to binary measures (Abramson, Aldrich, & Rohde, 1987; Kam, 2012; Rohde, 1979).

To test hypothesis 6.1 and 6.2, I use the Poole and Rosenthal (1997) DW-Nominate Scores (DW-NOM). The DW-NOM provide a commonly used measure to examine the effects of legislator ideology on district gerrymandering (McCarty, Poole, & Rosenthal, 2009) and legislator policy preferences (McCarty, Poole, & Rosenthal, 2013). More importantly, scholars use the absolute value of DW-NOM as a measure of party loyalty (Carson et al., 2010). I adapt a similar approach by considering the difference of DW-NOM, which provides the distance of legislator ideology relative to the party mean to test hypothesis 6.1. To test hypothesis 6.2, I use the absolute

value of DW-NOM, which provides the direction of legislator ideology relative to the party mean to test the second hypothesis.

I use DW-NOM to create three dependent variables: *Ignore Party Preferences* (Hypothesis 6.1), *Ideological Conservatism* (Hypothesis 6.2), and *Legislator Ideology* (Hypothesis 6.3). *Ignore Party Preferences* is the absolute value between a legislator's party mean DW-NOM and his or her DW-NOM, but all negative numbers are multiplied by -1 to eliminate direction. Therefore, larger values represent greater deviation from the party mean, or ignoring mean party preferences, not the ideological preference of the legislator. Values range from a low of 0 to a high of 0.61with a mean score of 0.12, where a score of 0 means the legislator is perfectly aligned with his or her party preferences.

To test the ideological preference of legislators I include a second dependent variable, *Ideological Conservatism*, which is the absolute value between the legislators' mean party DW-NOM and their DW-NOM. Larger positive numbers indicate legislators' ideological conservatism is higher than the party mean and larger negative numbers indicate legislators' ideological liberalism is higher than the party mean. Values range from a low of -0.61 to a high of 0.56 with a mean score of 0. In other words, legislators are between -0.61 DW-NOM more liberal than their party mean to 0.56 DW-NOM more conservative than their party mean.

Finally, *Legislator Ideology* is the legislators' DW-NOM score. Larger positive numbers indicate legislators are more ideologically conservative, and larger negative numbers indicate they are more ideologically liberal. Values range from a low of -0.70 to a high of 1.3 with a mean score of 0.12.[31]

[31] A mean score of 0.12 indicates that legislators have a slight ideologically conservative bias.

I also use the Tausanovitch and Warshaw (2013) multilevel regression with poststratification (MRP) district ideology scores to test hypothesis 6.3. The MRP scores provide an estimate of constituent preferences at the congressional level (Tausanovitch & Warshaw, 2014) and a robust estimate of mass public partisan preferences (Lelkes, Sood, & Iyengar, 2017). Although some studies rely on district demographics (Hogan 2008) or presidential vote shares (Shor, 2010; Shor & McCarty, 2011) as a proxy of district ideology, these measures are vulnerable to "home-state effects, regional biases, and heterogeneity" effects that decrease validity and reliability of district preferences (Tausanovitch & Warshaw, 2013, p. 337).

I code *District Ideology* as the Tausanovitch and Warshaw (2013) MRP district ideology scores. Higher scores indicate districts are more ideologically conservative, and lower scores indicate more liberal ones. The model includes an interaction between *Risk Acceptance* and *District Ideology* to test whether the risk accepting are less likely to follow district preferences. The dependent variables are linear and are thus analyzed using Ordinal Least Squares regression.

I include several theoretically important variables from the literature to control for legislative behavior such as leadership positions and safety of the district (Ansolabehere & Jones, 2010; Canes-Wrone, Brady, & Cogan, 2002; Erikson & Wright, 2001). Scholars find that legislator decision making is influenced by being in the *Majority Party* and being a *Party Leader* or *Party Chair* (Holbrook & Tidmarch, 1993; Pritchard, 1992; Rothenberg & Sanders, 1999; Van Dunk, 1997). I control for legislators who are more likely to ignore constituent preferences in safe districts and when leaving office with *Vulnerable*, *Margin of Victory*, and *Leave Office* to (Carey et al., 2006; Jones, 2003; Mayhew, 1974; Rothenberg & Sanders, 2000). Legislators who are new to Congress or have little political experience are more likely to be influenced by interest groups and other political actors (Canes-Wrone, Brady, & Cogan, 2002; Carey et al., 2006; Mayhew,

1974a; Munger, 1988), which I account for *Prior Experience*. A detailed description of control variable coding is available in Table A6.1 in the Appendix.

Findings

For the analyses that follow, recall from Chapter 3 that *Risk Acceptance* ranges from the lowest value of 0.36 to the highest of 99.88 and the Rohde Measure is a binary variable with respondents coded either a 1 or 0.[32] Results from the main analysis are in Table 6.1. *Risk Acceptance* (b= -0.0003, p<.05) has a negative and statistically significant effect on *Ignore Party Preferences*, controlling for all other factors in the model. A one-unit increase in risk acceptance decreases the likelihood of ignoring party preferences by -0.0003 DW-NOM. In Figure 6.1, I graph the results with all other variables set to their mean. Moving from the lowest risk-acceptance score (0.36) to the highest (99.88) reduces the likelihood of ignoring party preferences by -0.03 DW-NOM. In other words, the most risk-accepting legislators are 23% less likely to ignore party preferences than the least risk accepting. This finding is in direct opposition to hypothesis 6.1 and somewhat unexpected. However, following party preferences can be a risky proposition. Consider for instance that constituents punish legislators for being too partisan (Carson et al., 2010) and following the party may lead to electoral defeat (Hutchings, 2003). Although parties provide resources that help with reelection campaigns (Jacobson, 2004; Heberlig & Larson, 2005; Wright, 2000) and provide leadership positions (Canes-Wrone, Brady, & Cogan, 2002; Heberlig, Hetherington, & Larson, 2006; Hogan, 2008; Smith, 2000), the empirical evidence indicates the

[32] A score of 0.36 represents lower risk acceptance and a score of 99.88 represents higher risk acceptance. Risk acceptors are coded a 1 for the binary Rohde measure and 0 otherwise.

risk accepting are more willing to risk reelection by following party preferences relative to less risk-accepting members.

I include the same analysis using the Rohde measure of risk acceptance in the second column of Table 6.1. The Rohde measure of risk acceptance fails to reach traditional levels of statistical significance (b= -0.003, p= 0.77). The Rohde measure of risk acceptance does not appear to have any influence on party preferences. Note that the Rohde measure also has a negative coefficient suggesting that risk acceptance decreases the likelihood of ignoring party preferences.

While I make no hypotheses regarding differences in party affiliation and risk acceptance on party loyalty, I estimate the effect of risk acceptance on ignoring party preferences separately for Democrats and Republicans in the third and fourth columns of Table 6.1. Risk-accepting Democrats (b= -0.0003, p= .061) and Republicans (b= -0.0008, p= .079) are less likely to ignore the preferences of their respective party relative to the low risk accepting, although this effect is statistically insignificant with a two-tailed test. Risk acceptance, then, seems to influence party loyalty regardless of party affiliation. Interestingly, the effect of risk acceptance on party loyalty is stronger for Republicans than Democrats. This may be because the risk accepting tend to identify as Democrats and are generally more liberal than other members of society (Kam, 2012). Therefore, it is unsurprising that risk acceptance would have a larger substantive effect on Republicans. This is highlighted further below in Table 6.2.

In the first column of Table 6.2, *Risk Acceptance* (b= -0.0006, p<.01), has a negative and statistically significant effect on *Ideological Conservatism*, controlling for all other factors in the model. A one-unit increase in risk acceptance decreases the ideological conservatism of legislators by -0.0006 DW-NOM relative to the mean of their party. I graph the results with all other variables set to their mean in Figure 6.2. Moving from the lowest risk-acceptance score (0.36) to the highest

(99.88) reduces legislator conservatism by a total of -0.08 DW-NOM. In other words, the most risk-accepting legislators are 60% less ideologically conservative than the mean of their party compared to the least risk-accepting legislators. This provides support for hypothesis 6.2. Legislators are less conservative than their party mean as their level of risk acceptance increases. Once again, I conduct the same analysis using the Rohde measure of risk acceptance and include it in the second column of Table 6.2. The Rohde measure of risk acceptance fails to reach traditional levels of statistical significance (b= -0.02, b= 0.21) and does not appear to have any influence on legislator ideology relative to the mean of the party.

I estimate the effect of risk acceptance on ideological conservatism separately for Democrats and Republicans in the third and fourth columns of Table 6.2. Risk Acceptance influences the ideological conservatism of Democrats (b= -0.0009, p< .001) and Republicans (b= 0.002, p< .001) at highly statistically significant levels controlling for all other factors in the models. A one-unit increase in risk acceptance decreases the ideological conservatism of Democrats by -0.0009 DW-NOM. However, a one-unit increase in risk acceptance increases the ideological conservatism of Republicans relative to the mean position of their party. This is a highly unexpected finding. Indeed, previous literature finds that risk acceptance increases ideological liberalism, not conservatism (Kam, 2012).

This finding may be due to two factors. One, risk acceptance may influence the behavior of legislators differently than the mass public. For example, literature has not considered how risk acceptance influences the ideology of political elites at the federal level. A second explanation may be that risk acceptance increases ideological extremity rather than ideological liberalism. Put another way, the decrease in ideological conservatism for risk-accepting Democrats and the

increase in ideological conservatism for risk-accepting Republicans indicates that the risk accepting are at the polar extremes of their respective party.

This finding has broad theoretical implications. Given that Congressional Democrats are becoming more liberal and Republicans more conservative, this may be due to an increase in risk-accepting legislators taking office. When we couple this finding with the results from Table 6.1 we begin to see a pattern emerge for the risk accepting. They are more likely to follow the party while at the same time they are more ideologically extreme than the mean of their party. The risk accepting then, may contribute to a more polarized and gridlocked Congress.

Table 6.1 OLS Regression of the Effect of Risk Acceptance on Ignoring Party Preferences, H6.1

	Risk Acceptance	Rohde Measure	Democrats	Republicans
Risk Acceptance	-0.0003*	----------	-0.0003#	-0.0008#
	(0.0002)	----------	(0.0002)	(0.0004)
Rohde Measure	----------	-0.003	----------	----------
	----------	(0.01)	----------	----------
Party	-0.01	-0.03**	----------	----------
	(0.01)	(0.01)	----------	----------
Vulnerable	0.05***	0.04**	0.06***	-0.03
	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.03)
Party Chair	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.01
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Party Leader	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.01
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.04)
Majority Party	0.002	0.002	0.01	-0.02
	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.01)	(0.02)
Margin of Victory	0.0004*	0.001**	0.0002	0.0008*
	(0.01)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0003)
Leave Office	0.009	0.008	0.01	0.01
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Prior Experience	0.02*	0.01#	-0.01	0.05***
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Congress 109	-0.01	-0.02	----------	----------
	(0.01)	(0.01)	----------	----------
Congress 110	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	-0.0098
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)
Constant	0.11***	0.11***	0.10***	0.106***
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.018)
Adj. R^2	0.03	0.02	0.05	0.06
N	593	584	355	238

Notes: OLS Regression with standard errors in parentheses. # p<.10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 6.2 OLS Regression of the Effect of Risk Acceptance on Ideological Conservatism, H6.2

	Risk Acceptance	Rohde Measure	Democrats	Republicans
Risk Acceptance	-0.0006**	----------	-0.0009***	0.002***
	(0.0002)	----------	(0.0002)	(0.0007)
Rohde Measure	----------	-0.021	----------	----------
	----------	(0.02)	----------	----------
Party	0.03*	0.01	----------	----------
	(0.02)	(0.01)	----------	----------
Vulnerable	-0.09***	-0.10***	-0.11***	0.06
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.05)
Party Chair	-0.02	-0.02	0.01	-0.08**
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)
Party Leader	0.01	-0.0002	-0.05	0.05
	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.06)
Majority Party	0.02#	0.02#	0.04*	0.02
	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)
Margin of Victory	0.001***	0.001***	0.001***	0.0001
	(0.0003)	(0.0002)	(0.0003)	(0.0005)
Leave Office	0.004	-0.0001	-0.07*	0.04
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Prior Experience	-0.03*	-0.03*	-0.009	-0.06*
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)
Congress 109	-0.01	-0.01	----------	----------
	(0.02)	(0.02)	----------	----------
Congress 110	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	0.006
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.03)
Constant	-0.02	-0.03*	0.01	-0.05#
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Adj. R^2	0.15	0.14	0.36	0.07
N	593	584	355	238

Notes: OLS Regression with standard errors in parentheses. # p<.10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

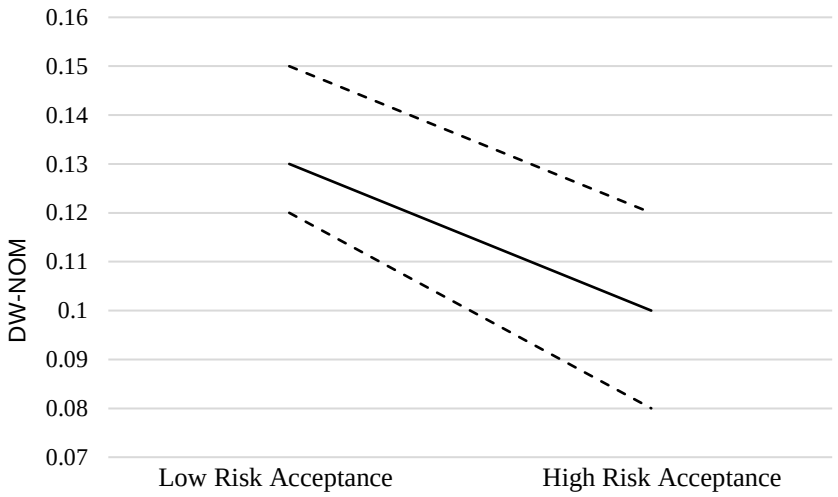

Figure 6.1 Risk Acceptance and Ideological Deviation From Party Mean

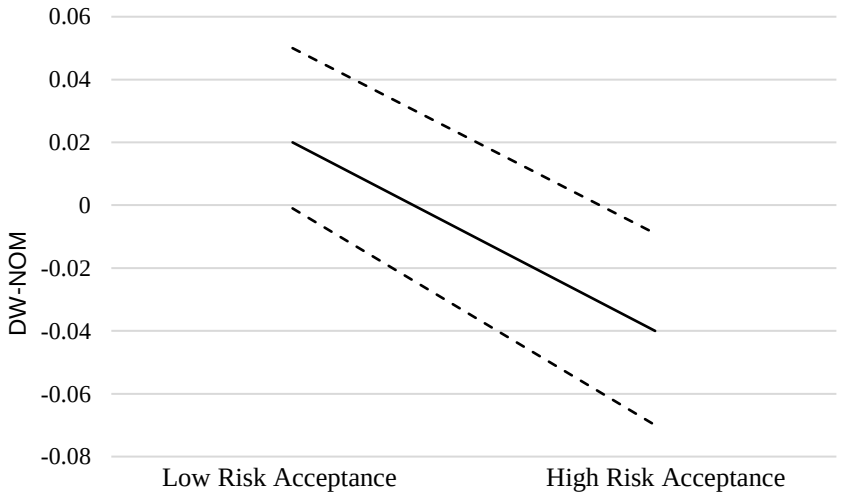

Figure 6.2 Risk Acceptance and Legislator Conservatism

Next, I turn to the results of risk acceptance's impact on whether legislators adhere to their districts' preferences, which I outline in Table 6.3. Neither *Risk Acceptance* (b= 0.0001, p= 0.85) nor the Rohde measure of risk acceptance (b= -0.004, p= 0.93) reach traditional levels of statistical significance. In other words, risk-accepting legislators in the aggregate are no more likely to ignore

district preferences than those who have a lower tolerance for risk. It is important to note that we cannot, however, rule out the possibility that the null results are due to measurement error. The lack of congruent measures between legislator and district ideology make direct comparisons difficult.

There are statistically significant relationships once I estimate the effect of risk acceptance on district preferences separately for Democrats and Republicans in the third and fourth columns of Table 6.3. The interaction terms between district ideology and risk acceptance influences following constituent preferences for Democrats (b= 0.002, p< .001) and Republicans (b= -0.01, p< .01) at highly statistically significant levels controlling for all other factors in the models. The lowest risk-accepting Democrats in liberal districts have a more liberal DW-NOM score (-0.55) than the highest risk-accepting Democrats in liberal districts (-0.45). Likewise, the lowest risk-accepting Republicans in conservative districts have a more conservative DW-NOM score (0.76) than the highest risk-accepting Republicans in conservative districts (0.72). This is an important theoretical and empirical distinction from previous literature. Risk-accepting legislators are generally more ideologically liberal than their less risk-accepting counterparts (See Table 6.2). Further, once we account for district ideology, low risk-accepting Democrats are more liberal than high risk-accepting Democrats, and low-risk-accepting Republicans are more conservative than high risk-accepting Republicans. Although we cannot determine whether the low risk accepting are more aligned with district preferences, we can conclude that the low risk accepting are more liberal in liberal districts and more conservative in conservative ones relative to highly risk-accepting legislators.

When we consider the evidence together from Table 6.1 and Table 6.3, the findings suggest that while risk-accepting legislators are more likely to follow the mean of their party, they are also

less likely to follow district preferences relative to less risk-accepting Members of Congress. Theoretically, then, the results suggest that risk acceptance provides political parties with more power while limiting the power of constituents. Party leaders may possess more influence over the legislative process and the roll-call votes of the rank-and-file because MCs in leadership positions generally earn them by towing the party line. This would explain how House Republican leaders could pass the American Health Care Act with only 17% public approval in 2017.

Finally, in Table 6.4 I report the effect of risk acceptance on legislator vote shirking. *Risk Acceptance* (b= 0.0014, p= .83) has no effect on *Vote Shirking*. Even though the risk accepting are less ideologically conservative and follow the ideological base of the party at higher rates than those with low levels of risk acceptance, the limitations of Congressional institutions constrain even the most risk accepting. Legislators are willing to take some risks with their party and ideology, but ultimately the institution of Congress keeps legislators in check. In other words, risk-accepting legislators are not willing to go so far as to commit political suicide by not even showing up to work. Indeed, it may be that the ideological extremity of the risk accepting encourages legislators to participate in the legislative agenda.

Table 6.3 OLS Regression of the Effect of Risk Acceptance on Legislator Ideology by District Preferences, H6.3

	Risk Acceptance	Rohde Measure	Democrats	Republicans
District Ideology x Risk Acceptance	0.0001	----------	0.002***	-0.01**
	(0.01)	----------	(0.0006)	(0.004)
Risk Acceptance	0.0005	----------	0.001***	-0.0004
	(0.02)	----------	(0.0002)	(0.0008)
District Ideology x Rohde Measure	----------	-0.004	----------	----------
	----------	(0.05)	----------	----------
Rohde Measure	----------	0.07***	----------	----------
	----------	(0.01)	----------	----------
District Ideology	0.28***	0.30***	0.16***	0.45***
	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.12)
Party	-0.91***	-0.90***	----------	----------
	(0.02)	(0.02)	----------	----------
Caucasian	0.02	0.01	0.03	----------
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	----------
Male	0.04*	0.04*	0.02	0.06
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.04)
Prior Presidential Vote	-0.0002	-0.00009	-0.0007#	0.0003
	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0007)
Congress 109	-0.03*	-0.03*	0.0009	-0.06*
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.03)
Congress 110	-0.01	-0.01	0.00004	-0.03
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.03)
Constant	0.58***	0.56***	-0.39***	0.58***
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.06)
Adj. R^2	0.94	0.94	0.57	0.12
N	488	479	287	201

Notes: OLS Regression with standard errors in parentheses. # p<.10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Table 6.4 The Effect of Risk Acceptance on Vote Shirking, H6.4

	Vote Shirking
Risk Acceptance	0.0014
	(0.0065)
Party	-0.3548
	(0.3163)
Vulnerable	0.2436
	(0.5477)
Party Chair	1.1449***
	(0.3552)
Party Leader	0.3591
	(0.5400)
Majority Party	0.0033
	(0.2911)
Self-Contributions	0.0551**
	(0.0193)
Citizen Contributions	0.0080
	(0.0084)
Margin of Victory	0.0263***
	(0.0062)
Leave Office	0.0737
	(0.4354)
Prior Experience	0.0103
	(0.3167)
Congress 109	0.3509
	(0.3032)
Congress 110	0.6389*
	(0.3175)
Constant	2.3138***
	(0.6418)
Adj. R^2	0.07
N	582

Notes: OLS Regression with standard errors in parentheses.
# p<.10, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Chapter Conclusion

The findings in the main analyses support the notion that legislators' propensity for risk acceptance influences their decision making. High risk-accepting lawmakers are willing to move toward their party's position despite potential negative electoral consequences (Carson et al., 2010; Hutchings, 2003). This suggests that the risk accepting may be more likely to follow party preferences over their constituents' ideal policy preference points. The risk accepting are also more ideologically liberal than the mean of their party, though they do not ignore their constituents' preferences at higher rates. The inclusion of risk acceptance in theoretical models of representation adds a wrinkle to our current understanding of the delegate-trustee relationship.

If party loyalty is a function of risk acceptance, then party leaders may be in an advantageous position of power to push their legislative agenda. By contrast, the risk accepting may be taking risks by following party preferences that may lead to uncertain electoral outcomes. Risk-accepting lawmakers may be overestimating the possible benefits of following party preferences relative to other factions (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979), or they may be trustees who make decisions with little concern for electoral accountability (Fearon, 1999). Rather than demonstrating loyalty to constituents, the risk accepting are accountable to the party. This is not to suggest legislators are political kamikazes willing to risk their tenure in government by ignoring relevant political factions such as constituents. Indeed, the statistically insignificant results would suggest otherwise. They may, however, be political daredevils who view uncertain outcomes, such as following the party, in a more positive light compared to those with low levels of risk acceptance.

Another important theoretical implication is the role of risk acceptance on legislators' ideology. When we compare the highest risk-accepting to the lowest risk-accepting legislators,

there is a 60% reduction in ideological conservatism relative to the mean of the party. Risk acceptance, then, may help explain why ideological moderates do not run for office in the modern Congress (Thomsen, 2014). When one considers the risks associated with winning public office, such as the time and money required to run, and the potential for controversy and constant public scrutiny in office, even the decision to run for office seems risky. Given that highly risk-accepting legislators are more ideologically liberal than their less risk-accepting counterparts, risk acceptance may not explain why Republicans are becoming more conservative (McCarty, Poole, & Rosenthal, 2006). It may, however, explain why Congress is more ideologically extreme than in the past (Brewer, 2005; Mann & Ornstein, 2016). The extreme ideological differences between the high and low risk accepting suggests that we should expect further ideological conflict and polarization in Congress.

Although constituents ultimately have the final say who stays in office and who goes, the party may provide risk-accepting legislators with perceived benefits that outweigh the perceived threat of ignoring constituents. These findings would suggest that the power of the party is increasing. If the risk accepting are more likely to follow party preferences, then party leaders may possess more influence over the legislative process and the roll-call votes of the rank-and-file. This would explain, for example, how House Republicans were able to pass their American Health Care Act with only 17% public approval.

Finally, risk acceptance has no effect on vote shirking. Although the risk accepting are more likely to follow party preferences and, they are not any more, or less, likely to show up for work than other members. Varying levels of risk acceptance may influence legislators to take some liberties when it comes to representation but ultimately, they are unwilling to go to the extreme of dereliction of duties. Legislators may fear skipping roll-call as it may lead to reprisals from

constituents and challengers may use their absence to mount political attacks (Figlio, 2000; Wright, 1993).

These conclusions are the starting points for most Congressional theories of representation but the inclusion of legislator risk acceptance adds an additional wrinkle to scholarly understanding. The findings demonstrate that although legislators are risk accepting, the status quo of legislator preferences are different than previous theories may predict. This chapter is only the first step in understanding what legislators deem to be risky behavior and how it influences the normative implications of democratic representation. Indeed, many more questions remain about policy implications and the actions of other political actors. For example, are risk-accepting political actors more likely to support marijuana policies, declare war, or change economic safety nets? How are judicial opinions influenced by their acceptance of risk? Are risk-accepting judges more likely to overturn national precedent to avoid changing the status quo? The findings in the present chapter indicate that policy positions of the risk accepting may be a fruitful and robust area of future scholarly research.

CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSIONS

Does risk acceptance influence the decision making of political actors? The simple answer is maybe. Risk-accepting citizens are less likely to vote in compulsory voting countries but more likely to protest in nondemocracies. Risk-accepting legislators in the U.S. House are more likely to follow the preferences of their party and they are less ideologically conservative than the mean of their party. However, the risk accepting are not any more likely to ignore constituent preferences or shirk their vote.

In Chapter 4 I hypothesized that there was a negative relationship between risk acceptance and voter turnout. I found support for this hypothesis. The findings in Chapter 4 indicate that the most risk-accepting citizens vote ~4.5 percentage points lower than the least risk accepting. While this is a substantively weaker finding than expected, consider that compulsory voting increases turnout around 10% (Panagopoulos, 2008; Singh, 2011). Risk acceptance, then, decreases the effects of compulsory voting by roughly half of the intended effect. This effect is limited to only countries with both high sanctions and enforcement. I find no evidence that the risk accepting are any more (less) likely to vote in countries with compulsory voting that do not either enforce or implement strong sanctions for abstaining. Ironically, as the sanctions and enforcement increase in severity, leading to an increase in turnout, so too does the likelihood that the risk accepting will abstain.

In Chapter 5 I hypothesized that there was a positive relationship between risk acceptance and protesting. I found very strong support for this hypothesis. The findings in Chapter 5 indicate that the most risk-accepting citizens are twice as likely to report a willingness to participate in future protests compared to the least risk-accepting members of society. Whereas risk acceptance *decreases* voter turnout in compulsory voting countries, it also *increases* the likelihood of

demonstrating and boycotting. The most risk accepting are twice as likely to demonstrate and boycott compared to the least risk accepting. This represents an impressive substantive increase from 23.8% to 47.6% for individuals in nondemocracies who reported they might demonstrate, and from 16.6% to 43.8% for those who might boycott. The substantive effects are just as impressive for individuals who report past participation. Those with the lowest level of risk acceptance report a probability of past demonstration of ~11% compared to ~20% for the highest risk accepting. Likewise, risk acceptance increases past participation in boycotts from 3.7% to 9.0% moving from the lowest to the highest level. However, the substantive findings for past participation is statistically insignificant.

Recall that the purpose of Chapter 6 was two-fold. First, I wanted to establish a more accurate scaled measure of risk acceptance that could replace Rohde's (1979) binary measure of risk. Multiple item indices are more representative of the mass public and reduce error that increase validity and reliability (Ehrlich & Maestas, 2010). To create the scaled measure of risk acceptance I estimated the statistical probability that a legislator would win their first election to Congress. I considered factors that scholars find have a strong influence on the likelihood of a legislator winning office such as the prior presidential vote percentage, primary vote percentage, money spent campaigning, and whether the seat was open or had an incumbent (Born, 1981; Hogan, 2008; Jacobson, 2006). To test the validity and reliability of the new measure, I used a Chi-Square Test of Independence between *Risk Acceptance* and the Rohde measure. The result was statistically significant indicating that the variables were related, or not independent of each other. In other words, the two variables measured similar concepts and the relationship was moderate to strong. The two measures were also correlated at .47. Again, a correlation of .47 indicates a moderate relationship between the two variables. Risk-accepting legislators are more likely to run against

an incumbent or for a seat that has been held by a member of the opposite party for at least two election cycles with 57% or more of the vote. These tests indicate strong evidence that *Risk Acceptance* and the Rohde measure are highly correlated and dependent upon one another. Given the findings, we can be confident that the proposed risk acceptance scale in Chapter 3 provides future scholars with a multiple item index with high validity and reliability.

The second purpose of Chapter 6 was to use the risk acceptance scale to predict legislator decision making in the U.S. House. I hypothesized that there was a positive relationship between risk acceptance and ignoring the preferences of the party and constituents, and the willingness of legislators to shirk their vote. I also hypothesized that there was a negative relationship between risk acceptance and ideological conservatism. I found no support that the highly risk accepting are any more likely to ignore constituent preferences or shirk their vote compared to their less risk-accepting colleagues. These results were statistically insignificant. I also did not find support that the highly risk accepting are more likely to ignore party preferences. Indeed, I found the opposite. Moving from the lowest risk-acceptance score to the highest reduced the likelihood of ignoring party preferences by -0.03 DW-NOM. The most risk-accepting legislators are 23% less likely to ignore party preferences than the least risk accepting. I did, however, find support for the hypothesis between risk acceptance and ideological conservatism. Moving from the lowest risk-acceptance score (0.36) to the highest (99.88) reduces legislator conservatism by a total of -0.08 DW-NOM. The most risk-accepting legislators are a very robust 60% less ideologically conservative than the mean of their party compared to the least risk-accepting legislators. Finally, the Rohde measure of risk acceptance does not appear to have any influence on party or constituent preferences, ideological conservatism, or shirking one's vote.

While I find support for four out of the seven proposed hypotheses, see Table 7.1 below, the lack of support for the final two hypotheses and opposite findings for hypothesis 6.1 paints an interesting picture for the risk accepting. On the one hand, the findings in Chapter 5 suggest that the risk accepting are more likely to protest and risk their safety. One could conclude that the risk accepting may be less concerned about potential physical or financial risks that come with participating in protests compared to other members of society. This conclusion is especially robust in non-democratic countries. On the other hand, the findings in Chapter 6 suggest that they are not willing to go to the political extreme to ignore the voices of their constituents. Why would risk-accepting citizens be willing to risk more than legislators?

These conclusions may seem contradictory, or at a minimum counterintuitive, but they also highlight that risk acceptance is contextual. While individuals may be willing to accept risk in one scenario, they may show little signs of accepting risk in another. Risk-accepting citizens may be willing to go to the extreme of risking financial or physical harm, but legislators may only be willing to go to the extreme of following party preferences. Some theories of representation also suggest that ignoring constituent preferences may not end a legislator's career. Fearon (1999) argues that trustees make decisions for their district without considering the preferences of the district. Instead, citizens grant trustees autonomy to make decisions that are best for the district that may not directly follow the preferences of the majority. It is arguable that risk-accepting legislators are trustees given the findings in Chapter 6.

By contrast, the political strategies between legislators and the mass public are similar insofar as both groups are willing to take risks to accomplish their political goals. For example, risk-accepting citizens protest the government at higher rates than other members of society to

right perceived political injustices, and risk-accepting legislators follow the preferences of the party, presumably to seek higher office and leadership positions.

Theoretical Implications

The theoretical consequences of these findings are numerous. First, compulsory voting laws may be less effective in compelling citizens to vote in countries with large risk-accepting populations. This is important given that the risk accepting are more likely to vote for challengers over incumbents (Kam & Simas, 2012). If the risk accepting are less likely to vote but more likely to vote for challengers, then governments may enjoy greater incumbency effects with compulsory voting laws. The lower participation rates for the risk accepting also suggests the government may be influenced to enact less risky policies since fewer risk acceptors participate in compulsory elections.

Second, countries with low risk-accepting populations may provide non-democratic governments more flexibility and stability to enact repressive policies because most individuals are not willing to risk the consequences of defiance (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979). Theoretically, governments in countries with highly risk-accepting populations are likely less repressive and grant more concessions to their citizens because protests are often successful in achieving their intended goals (Celestino & Gleditsch 2013; Stephan & Chenoweth 2008).

Third, if party loyalty is a function of risk acceptance, then party leaders may be in an advantageous position of power to push their legislative agenda. By contrast, the risk accepting may be taking risks by following party preferences that may lead to uncertain electoral outcomes. Risk-accepting lawmakers may be overestimating the possible benefits of following party preferences relative to other factions (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979), or they may be trustees who

make decisions with little concern for electoral accountability (Fearon, 1999). Rather than demonstrating loyalty to constituents, the risk accepting are accountable to the party. This is not to suggest legislators are political kamikazes willing to risk their tenure in government by ignoring relevant political factions such as constituents. Indeed, the statistically insignificant results would suggest otherwise. They may, however, be political daredevils who view uncertain outcomes, such as following the party, in a more positive light compared to those with low levels of risk acceptance.

Finally, when we compare the highest risk-accepting legislators to the lowest, there is a 60% reduction in ideological conservatism relative to the mean of the party. Risk acceptance, then, may help explain why ideological moderates do not run for office in the modern Congress (Thomsen, 2014). When one considers the risks associated with winning public office, such as the time and money required to run, and the potential for controversy and constant public scrutiny in office, even the decision to run for office seems risky. Given that highly risk-accepting legislators are more ideologically liberal than their less risk-accepting counterparts, risk acceptance may not explain why Republicans are becoming more conservative (McCarty, Poole, & Rosenthal, 2006). It may, however, explain why Congress is more ideologically extreme than in the past (Brewer, 2005; Mann & Ornstein, 2016). The extreme ideological differences between the high and low risk accepting suggests that we should expect further ideological conflict and polarization in Congress.

Future Research

Where do we go from here? While this dissertation addressed several of the shortcomings in the risk acceptance literature, many future questions remain. I consider future research for each substantive chapter below. I first consider how scholars can improve measures of risk acceptance.

Next, I discuss future risk acceptance and voting research followed by other contexts of participation. Finally, I consider other ways that legislators may be influenced by their acceptance of risk. The major conclusion of this section is that scholars need more accurate and congruent measures of risk acceptance, and measures between political elites and their constituents.

Measuring Risk Acceptance

One of the major current shortcomings for studying risk behavior is the lack of congruent risk measures in the literature. In the past decade many of the major national surveys have included measures of risk acceptance. However, as this dissertation has shown, the availability of consistent measures leaves much to be desired. The Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) and the American National Election Study (ANES) have started including measures of risk acceptance, but the measures are not included consistently. The measures still vary by year and, more importantly, by question. While scholars have demonstrated that single-item measures of risk are valid and reliable (Ehrlich & Maestas, 2010), consistent measures would provide scholars a uniform approach to studying risk behavior.

Further, these surveys do not provide measures of risk acceptance for political elites at the federal level. Experimental studies have considered risk acceptance for legislators at the state level (Nyhan & Reifler, 2015), but again these measures are inconsistent. The financial and logistical costs of surveying legislators in the U.S. House may prohibit more accurate measures of risk acceptance in the near future. In the meantime, additional improvements to proxy measures of risk acceptance for political elites at the federal level will provide scholars with more accurate predictions. Indeed, the multiple-item index in Chapter 3 is the first major update to measuring

risk acceptance for U.S. Congressman since Rhode's seminal study in 1979. Scholars would do well to continue improving the risk acceptance measure in Chapter 3.

Risk Acceptance and Voting

Furthering the research between voting and risk acceptance may also provide scholars with a fruitful research agenda. In Chapter 4 I found some evidence that risk acceptance influences individual-level turnout. The sanctions and enforcement of compulsory voting systems provided an interesting theoretical wrinkle to Kam's participation study in the United States. While she found no evidence that risk acceptance increases the likelihood of voting, I argued this was due to a lack of costs associated with voting in American elections. Kam (2012 argues voting is the fulfillment of civic duty and fulfilling the duty provides neither excitement nor novelty to the risk accepting. Her findings provide an interesting theoretical and empirical predicament. If risk acceptance has no effect on the likelihood of turning out to vote, does risk acceptance influence the reporting of whether one voted?

The risk accepting are more likely to challenge the status quo, which is to fulfill one's civic duty and vote (Kam 2012). Highly risk-accepting individuals may be more likely to report their abstention from the electoral process compared to those with low levels of risk acceptance, because highly risk-accepting individuals may not be concerned about being cast in a socially undesirable light. If, however, the status quo is to *accurately* report one's vote, rather than simply reporting one's vote, then the expected behavior of the risk accepting changes. In this scenario, highly risk-accepting individuals may be more likely to misreport their vote without concern for accurate reporting.

Risk Acceptance and Protesting

In Chapter 5 I found very strong evidence that risk acceptance increases protesting activity. I used a dichotomous measure of democracy to test this relationship. Democracies are not dichotomous. Future research should consider which non-democratic institutions, political rights, or freedoms, influence the behavior of risk-accepting individuals. Does freedom of speech, freedom to protest, severity of repression, or other liberties influence whether the risk accepting participate in protests? I looked at some of these relationships briefly in the appendix but more in-depth study is required. The Freedom House Index provides multiple detailed measures of freedom and liberties that scholars can use to more accurately understand what motivates the risk accepting to participate in protests.

Scholars should also consider whether and how immigration of risk-accepting individuals from nondemocracies to democratic countries influences participation. Democratic and non-democratic countries are inherently different. They differ in their institutions, policies, and goals. The findings in Chapter 5 indicate that the risk accepting are more likely to report a willingness to protest in nondemocracies. Does the strength of this relationship hold for immigrants? Because democracies provide citizens with other institutional avenues to express their displeasure with the government, risk-accepting immigrants from nondemocracies may conform to these democratic principles, such as voting, petitioning, and writing letters, rather than protesting.

Risk Acceptance and Legislators

I found no evidence that risk-accepting legislators are any more (less) likely to follow district preferences compared to their less risk-accepting counterparts in Chapter 6. This may be due to measurement error. Measures of constituent and legislator preferences have greatly

improved over the past few years. Scholars, however, currently do not have congruent measures between political elites at the federal level and their constituents. Instead, I used the Tausanovitch and Warshaw (2013) measure of constituent ideology and the Poole and Rosenthal (2003) measure of legislator ideology to test whether legislators follow constituent preferences. The lack of congruent measures hinders substantive interpretations and estimate validity. Once we also include the proxy measure of risk acceptance from Chapter 3 to make predictions, the results become even more susceptible to error. Scholars would do well to continue their pursuit of more valid and reliable measures of ideology and risk.

Future research should look beyond legislators. How might judges interpret cases based on their acceptance of risk? Do highly risk-accepting political elites propose policies differently from their less risk-accepting counterparts? Although risk acceptance is highly correlated with party and ideology (Kam, 2012), political outcomes may vary once we consider individual's acceptance of risk.

Table 7.1 Review of Tested Hypotheses

HYPOTHESES	HYPOTHESIZED DIRECTION	ACTUAL DIRECTION	SIGNIFICANT
Hypothesis 4.1: There is a negative relationship between risk acceptance and turnout in compulsory voting countries.	(-)	(-)	YES
Hypothesis 5.1: There is a positive relationship between risk acceptance and protest activity in non-democratic countries.	(+)	(+)	YES
Hypothesis 5.2: Risk acceptance has a weaker positive relationship on protest activity in democratic countries.	(+)	(+)	YES
Hypothesis 6.1: There is a positive relationship between risk acceptance and ignoring party preferences.	*(+)*	*(-)*	*YES*
Hypothesis 6.2: There is a negative relationship between risk acceptance and ideological conservatism.	(-)	(-)	YES
Hypothesis 6.3: There is a positive relationship between risk acceptance and ignoring district preferences.	(+)	(+)	NO
Hypothesis 6.4: There is a negative relationship between risk acceptance and vote shirking.	(-)	(-)	NO

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APPENDIX: SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS FOR CHAPTERS 4, 5, AND 6

Table A4.1 Chapter 4 Control Variable Coding

Social Trust: A dichotomous variable where 1 is for individuals who believe most people can be trusted and 0 otherwise.

Government Confidence: A four-point scale coded 0 with the lowest confidence and 3 for the highest confidence in the current government.

Ideology: A ten-point scale where 1 is for individuals who are on the Left and 10 for individuals who are on the Right.

Political Interest: A four-point scale coded 0 for individuals with the lowest interest in politics to 3 for those with the highest level.

Labor Member: A dichotomous variable where 1 is for individuals who are current members of a labor union and 0 otherwise.

Party Member: A dichotomous variable where 1 is for individuals who are current members of a political party and 0 otherwise.

Employment: A dichotomous variable where 1 is for individuals who are employed and 0 otherwise.

Religiosity: A eight-point scale where 0 is for individuals that never attend religious services and 7 for individuals that attend more than once per week.

Education: Ranges from 1 for those who lack an elementary education to 8 for people who earned a university degree or higher.

Age: Age in years.

Sex: A dichotomous variable coded 1 for women and 0 for men.

Year: A dichotomous variable for 2006-2007. Excluded year is 2008.

Table A4.2 Binary Logit Estimates for Voting Sanctions on Risk Acceptance and Voter Turnout With Full Risk Scale (0-43)

VARIABLES	Model-1	Model-2	Model-3
Risk	-0.01***	-0.01**	-0.01***
	(0.004)	(0.04)	(0.004)
Compulsory	0.92***	--------	--------
	(0.23)		
Risk x Compulsory	-0.02	--------	--------
	(0.01)		
Sanction	--------	0.34	--------
		(0.51)	
Enforcement	--------	-0.01	--------
		(0.47)	
Risk x Sanction	--------	-0.06***	--------
		(0.01)	
Risk x Enforce	--------	0.06***	--------
		(0.02)	
Severity	--------	--------	0.56***
			(0.12)
Risk x Severity	--------	--------	-0.01*
			(0.004)
Constant	-1.99***	-1.71**	-2.17***
	(0.31)	(0.58)	(0.28)
Observations	28,050	28,050	28,050

Source: World Values Survey 2005-2008
Table includes all control variables from Table-4.1. Clustered standard errors In parentheses.
#p<.10 *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001, two-tailed.

Table A4.3 Hierarchical Binary Logit Estimates for Voting Sanctions on Risk Acceptance (0-5) and Voter Turnout

VARIABLES	Model-1	Model-2	Model-3
Risk	-0.05***	-0.07**	-0.05***
	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)
Compulsory	0.70*	--------	--------
	(0.30)		
Risk x Compulsory	-0.01	--------	--------
	(0.03)		
Sanction	--------	0.08	--------
		(0.40)	
Enforcement	--------	0.20	--------
		(0.41)	
Risk x Sanction	--------	0.03	--------
		(0.03)	
Risk x Enforce	--------	-0.03	--------
		(0.03)	
Severity	--------	--------	0.23*
			(0.11)
Risk x Severity	--------	--------	-0.01
			(0.01)
Constant	-1.10**	-0.55	-1.11*
	(0.43)	(0.51)	(0.425)
Observations	29,664	29,664	29,664

Source: World Values Survey 2005-2008
Table includes all control variables from Table-4.1.
#p<.10 *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001, two-tailed.

Table A4.4 Hierarchical Binary Logit Estimates for Voting Sanctions on Risk Acceptance and Voter Turnout With Full Risk Scale (0-43)

VARIABLES	Model-1	Model-2	Model-3
Risk	-0.002***	-0.02**	-0.02***
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Compulsory	1.09*	--------	--------
	(0.43)		
Risk x Compulsory	-0.001	--------	--------
	(0.01)		
Sanction	--------	0.29	--------
		(0.41)	
Enforcement	--------	-0.01	--------
		(0.41)	
Risk x Sanction	--------	-0.06***	--------
		(0.01)	
Risk x Enforce	--------	0.07***	--------
		(0.02)	
Severity	--------	--------	0.50
			(0.15)
Risk x Severity	--------	--------	-0.002
			(0.003)
Constant	-2.06**	-1.58**	-2.10***
	(0.43)	(0.57)	(0.63)
Observations	28,050	28,050	28,050

Source: World Values Survey 2005-2008
Table includes all control variables from Table-4.1.
#p<.10 *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001, two-tailed.

Table A5.1 Full 10-Question Scale of Risk Acceptance Questions

Question 1: It is important to this person to think up new ideas and be creative; to do things one's own way.
Question 2: It is important to this person to be rich; to have a lot of money and expensive things.
Question 3: Living in secure surroundings is important to this person; to avoid anything that might be dangerous.
Question 4: It is important to this person to have a good time; to "spoil" oneself.
Question 5: It is important to this person to help the people nearby; to care for their well-being.
Question 6: Being very successful is important to this person; to have people recognize one's achievements.
Question 7: Adventure and taking risks are important to this person; to have an exciting life.
Question 8: It is important to this person to always behave properly; to avoid doing anything people would say is wrong
Question 9: Looking after the environment is important to this person; to care for nature.
Question 10: Tradition is important to this person; to follow the customs handed down by one's religion or family.

Respondents can choose from "Very Much Like Me"; "Like Me"; "Somewhat Like Me"; "A Little Like Me"; "Not Like Me"; "Not at All Like Me". Questions 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7 are reverse coded so that responses are congruent to risk acceptance.

Table A5.2 Binary Logit of The Effect of Risk Acceptance on Voting and Petitioning 2006-2008

	Voting		Petitioning	
Risk Acceptance x Non-Democracy	---------	-0.0571	---------	0.2659***
	---------	(0.0459)	---------	(0.0702)
Non-Democracy	---------	-0.1555	---------	-1.7960***
	---------	(0.3067)	---------	(0.3892)
Risk Acceptance	-0.0362	-0.0503*	-0.0021	-0.0633
	(0.0217)	(0.0230)	(0.0312)	(0.0329)
Social Structure				
Age	0.0369***	0.0368***	0.0005	-0.0041
	(0.0040)	(0.0042)	(0.0042)	(0.0034)
Sex	-0.0950	0.0946	0.0055	-0.0097
	(0.0564)	(0.0562)	(0.0572)	(0.0575)
Education	0.6212	0.0145	0.0860*	0.0841**
	(0.0264)	(0.0265)	(0.0384)	(0.0315)
Employment	0.6212***	0.6199***	0.2084	0.1561
	(0.0801)	(0.0803)	(0.1262)	(0.1353)
Religiosity	0.0982***	0.0977***	-0.0671	-0.0679*
	(0.0259)	(0.0265)	(0.0416)	(0.0403)
Motivational Attitudes				
Political Interest	0.3858***	0.3874***	0.3240***	0.3855***
	(0.0547)	(0.0536)	(0.0855)	(0.0854)
Systems Support				
Government Confidence	0.1438**	0.1461**	-0.2399*	-0.1742*
	(0.0523)	(0.0511)	(0.1217)	(0.0836)
Social Trust	0.1480	0.1492	0.2102	0.1814
	(0.1079)	(0.0831)	(0.1552)	(0.1415)
Political Behavior				
Party Member	0.7079***	0.7092***	0.2905	0.3772**
	(0.1268)	(0.1284)	(0.1517)	(0.1462)
Labor Member	0.1910*	0.1909*	0.4846***	0.4671***
	(0.0887)	(0.0816)	(0.1250)	(0.1213)
Constant	-1.1444	-1.1025	-0.2761	0.3943
N	34,789	34,789	35,700	35,700

Table Entry is the binary logit regression coefficient with Clustered Standard Errors presented in parentheses. Year variables are excluded for brevity, excluded year is 2008. ***p<.001; **p<.01; *p<.05; #p<.10, two-tailed.

Table A5.3 List of Democratic and Non-Democratic Countries 2006-2008

COUNTRY	Democracy	Nondemocracy	N
Argentina	X		1,002
Brazil	X		1,500
Bulgaria	X		1,001
Canada	X		2,164
Egypt		X	3,051
Ethiopia		X	1,500
France	X		1,001
Georgia		X	1,500
Germany	X		4,090
Ghana		X	1,534
Great Britain	X		1,041
India	X		2,001
Indonesia	X		2,015
Iraq		X	2,701
Mali	X		1,534
Moldova	X		1,046
Netherlands	X		1,050
Norway	X		2,152
Peru	X		1,500
Russia		X	2,033
South Africa	X		2,988
Spain	X		1,200
Sweden	X		1,003
Switzerland	X		1,241
Thailand	X		1,534
Turkey	X		1,346
Ukraine	X		1,000
Vietnam		X	1,495
United States	X		1,249
Uruguay	X		1,000
Zambia		X	1,500
Total	23	8	50,972

Notes: Country regimes are determined using the Freedom House Index. Democratic countries require a score of "7 or better in the Electoral Process subcategory and an overall political rights score of 20 or better" (p. 3).

Table A5.4 Multinomial Logit of the Effect of Risk Acceptance on Protest Politics by Freedom House Scores 2006-2008

	Demonstrate		Boycott	
	Might Do	Have Done	Might Do	Have Done
Risk Acceptance x Freedom House	0.0218#	0.0093	0.0229***	0.0148
	(0.0131)	(0.0423)	(0.0061)	(0.0095)
Freedom House	-0.2361***	-0.2378***	-0.2281***	-0.2974***
	(0.0387)	(0.0229)	(0.0329)	(0.0605)
Risk Acceptance	-0.0651	0.0093	-0.0388	0.0549
	(0.0564)	(0.0423)	(0.0340)	(0.0726)
Constant	1.6157*	0.7246	0.2939	-1.9343***
N	26,775	26,775	26,435	26,435

Table Entry is the multinomial regression coefficient with Clustered Standard Errors presented in parentheses. Control variables are the same as Table 5.1, excluded for brevity with the excluded year set to 2008. Dependent variable is scaled as 0 (Never Do); 1 (Might Do); 2 (Have Done) with baseline category "Never Do." ***p<.001; **p<.01; *p<.05; #p<.10, two-tailed.

Table A5.5 Chapter 5 Control Variable Coding

Freedom: A twelve-point scale reverse coded where 0 is low levels of rights and liberties and 12 is high levels of rights and liberties.

Parliament: A dichotomous variable coded 1 if the country is a parliamentary system of government and 0 otherwise.

President Election: A dichotomous variable coded 1 if there was a presidential election and 0 otherwise.

Bicameral: A dichotomous variable coded 1 if the country has a bicameral legislature and 0 otherwise.

GDP: The per capita GDP for each country.

Population Density: The population per square kilometer for each country.

Political Interest: A four-point scale coded 0 for individuals with the lowest interest in politics to 3 for those with the highest level.

Employment: A dichotomous variable where 1 is for individuals who are employed and 0 otherwise.

Education: A eight-point scale where 1 is for those who lack an elementary education and 8 is for people who earned a university degree or higher.

Age: Age in years.

Age^2: is Age x Age

Sex: A dichotomous variable coded 1 for women and 0 for men.

Year: A dichotomous variable for 2006-2007. Excluded year is 2008.

Table A5.6 Multinomial Logit of the Effect of Risk Acceptance on Protest Politics 2006-2008

	Demonstrate		Boycott	
	Might Do	Have Done	Might Do	Have Done
Risk Acceptance	0.0437*	0.0593*	0.0665**	0.1217***
	(0.0211)	(0.0263)	(0.0242)	(0.0346)
Non-Democracy	-0.2943	-0.3714	-0.2525	-0.5832
	(0.0211)	(0.5350)	(0.3404)	(0.5290)
Constant	0.6602*	-0.2545	-0.5922#	-3.0619***
N	26,775	26,775	26,435	26,435

Table Entry is the multinomial regression coefficient with Clustered Standard Errors presented in parentheses. Control variables are the same as Table 5.1 in the main analysis, excluded for brevity with the excluded year set to 2008. Dependent variable is scaled as 0 (Never Do); 1 (Might Do); 2 (Have Done) with baseline category "Never Do." ***p<.001; **p<.01; *p<.05; #p<.10, two-tailed.

Table A5.7 Multinomial Logit of the Effect of Risk Acceptance on Protest Politics with Full 10-Question Risk Acceptance Scale 2006-2008

	Demonstrate		Boycott	
	Might Do	Have Done	Might Do	Have Done
Full Risk Acceptance x Non-Democracy	0.0698**	0.0749**	0.0854***	0.0597***
	(0.0248)	(0.0252)	(0.0224)	(0.0150)
Non-Democracy	-1.7487***	-1.7682#	-1.9758*	-1.7673***
	(0.4248)	(0.9578)	(0.7900)	(0.4513)
Full Risk Acceptance	-0.0092	-0.0117	0.0094	0.0173
	(0.0149)	(0.0101)	(0.0119)	(0.0128)
Constant	0.1076	1.0318**	-0.5510	-3.0591***
N	26,036	26,036	25,714	25,714

Table Entry is the multinomial regression coefficient with Clustered Standard Errors presented in parentheses. Control variables are the same as Table 5.1 in the main analysis, excluded for brevity with the excluded year set to 2008. Dependent variable is scaled as 0 (Never Do); 1(Might Do); 2 (Have Done) with baseline category "Never Do." ***p<.001; **p<.01; *p<.05; #p<.10, two-tailed.

Table A5.8 Multinomial Logit of the Effect of Risk Acceptance on Demonstrating in the United States

	Might Do
Risk Acceptance	0.1178*
	(0.0699)
Constant	-3.4990***
N	1,137

Table Entry is the multinomial regression coefficient with Clustered Standard Errors presented in parentheses. Control variables are the same as Table 5.1, excluded for brevity. Dependent variable is scaled as 0 (Never Do); 1 (Might Do); 2 (Have Done) with baseline category "Might Do." ***p<.001; *p<.05, one-tailed

Table A5.9 Hierarchical Multinomial Logit of the Effect of Risk Acceptance on Protest Politics by System of Government 2006-2008 with Fixed-Effects

	Demonstrate		Boycott	
	Might Do	Have Done	Might Do	Have Done
Risk Acceptance x Non-Democracy	0.1270***	0.0691*	0.1181***	-0.0336
	(0.0262)	(0.0347)	(0.0268)	(0.0471)
Non-Democracy	0.2345**	0.4113***	0.1836*	0.5171***
	(0.0873)	(0.1156)	(0.0917)	(0.1613)
Risk Acceptance	0.0073	0.0348**	0.0370***	0.1163***
	(0.0109)	(0.0133)	(0.0108)	(0.0158)
Social Structure				
Age	-0.0198***	-0.0115***	-0.0109***	-0.0012
	(0.0011)	(0.0012)	(0.0009)	(0.0014)
Sex	-0.0872**	-0.0904*	-0.1256***	-0.1128*
	(0.0299)	(0.0368)	(0.0296)	(0.0444)
Education	0.0696***	0.1747***	0.0788***	0.2091***
	(0.0070)	(0.0085)	(0.0069)	(0.0104)
Employment	0.0545#	0.0878*	0.1343***	0.3277***
	(0.0304)	(0.0380)	(0.0301)	(0.0468)
Religiosity	-0.0012	-0.0188*	-0.0366***	-0.0292***
	(0.0059)	(0.0074)	(0.0059)	(0.0090)
Motivational Attitudes				
Ideology	-0.0549***	-0.1835***	-0.0618***	-0.1322***
	(0.0067)	(0.0082)	(0.0066)	(0.0098)
Political Interest	0.3310***	0.5937***	0.3606***	0.6444***
	(0.0166)	(0.0210)	(0.0165)	(0.0260)
Systems Support				
Government Confidence	-0.0565***	-0.2155***	-0.1015***	-0.2493***
	(0.0168)	(0.0212)	(0.0168)	(0.0260)
Social Trust	0.0602#	0.0814*	0.2871***	0.4263***
	(0.0332)	(0.0402)	(0.0323)	(0.0467)
Political Behavior				
Party Member	0.1239*	0.5030***	0.0653	0.4471***
	(0.0627)	(0.0685)	(0.0591)	(0.0740)
Labor Member	0.1643*	0.8262***	0.2452***	0.8463***
	(0.0654)	(0.0682)	(0.0604)	(0.0720)
Constant	1.4320***	0.6581***	0.0921	-2.0941***
N	26,775	26,775	26,435	26,435

Table Entry is the multinomial regression coefficient with Clustered Standard Errors presented in parentheses. Year variables are excluded for brevity, excluded year is 2008. Dependent variable is scaled as 0 (Never Do); 1 (Might Do); 2 (Have Done) with baseline category "Never Do." ***p<.001; **p<.01; *p<.05; #p<.10, two-tailed.

Figure A5.1

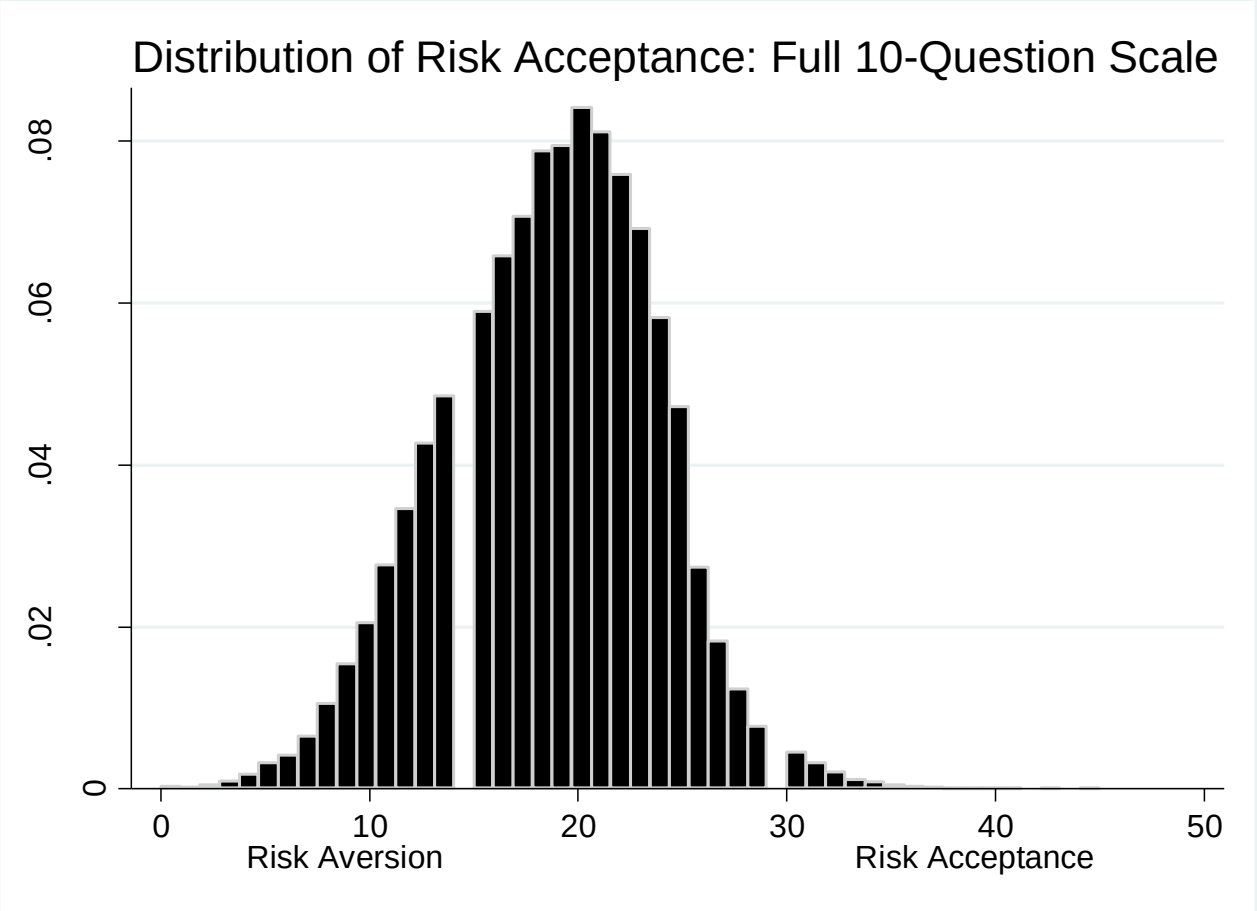
Distribution of Risk Acceptance: Full 10-Question Scale
.08
.06
.04
.02
0
0
10
20
30
40
50
Risk Aversion
Risk Acceptance

Table A6.1 Chapter 6 Control Variable Coding

Vulnerable: A dichotomous variable coded 1 if a member of the opposite party held the seat at any time in the past two or more election cycles and 0 otherwise.

Party Chair: A dichotomous variable coded 1 if you are a party chair and 0 otherwise.

Party Leader: A dichotomous variable coded 1 if you are a party leader and 0 otherwise.

Major Party: A dichotomous variable coded 1 if you are the party in the majority and 0 otherwise.

Leave office: A dichotomous variable coded 1 if the candidate willingly left office after the term and 0 otherwise.

Prior experience: A dichotomous variable coded 1 if candidate held elective office prior to congress and 0 otherwise.

Self-Contributions: The percent of campaign contributions that are self-funded by each candidate.

Citizen Contributions: The percent of campaign contributions that are donated from citizens to each candidate.

Margin of Victory: The percentage point difference from the previous election in each district.

Congress 109: A dichotomous variable coded 1 if the observation is in the 109th Congress and 0 otherwise.

Congress 110: A dichotomous variable coded 1 if the observation is in the 110th Congress and 0 otherwise. The excluded category is the 111th Congress.

VITA

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