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Edwin Amenta, David Meyer, Charles Ragin, and Rory McVeigh
Dissertation Committee

Dear Committee:

Please find my responses to your prior comments below.

Chapter 1:

I have added a brief introduction to the dissertation.

Chapter 2:

Given the committee's concern regarding the quality of the manuscript, I've now revised the chapter to be more descriptive: The chapter now describes changes in marijuana discourse over time.

Any advice about augmenting various sections of this chapter is truly appreciated.

Chapter 3:

Edwin's Comments:

Edwin's first question focuses on whether or not there are political leaders involved in the passage process. The short answer is no. The longer answer is that this process has been complicated, with various representatives within the U.S. House, the U.S. Senate, and State legislatures proposing bills, but all would die in committee. Interestingly, there doesn't seem to be a social movement story to the passage process, insofar as we focus on social movements initiating the initiative process. There may be, however, a "movement' sponsorship" story. The problem is, there aren't good data on *when* marijuana movement organizations threw in their support (e.g. beginning/signature gathering stages, or after polls were released, or near elections). Because it's hard to pinpoint the timing of their role, it's also difficult to incorporate their impact into the analyses.

Edwin's claim about the standard movement influence (e.g. Soule) argument on earlier stages of the policy change process is important. However, the process of policy change/adoption has not been the same for marijuana legalization. Instead of non-institutional

actors raising awareness about an issue which influences earlier stages of the policy process, for marijuana legalization, there aren't stages or institutional political actors who are influenced. Rather, policy change has occurred by way of the ballot initiative.

Any advice you can provide on the policy story here would be beneficial to advancing the theory section. I look forward to your comments.

Edwin added that the chapter should include a table describing each initiative, and the characteristics of each. As such, Table 3.1 includes various characteristics for every ballot initiative between 1990 and 2016.

Edwin also asks for a Table describing differences in means. Can you explain what you mean by this? Are you looking for a descriptives table? If so, how would you envision doing this, given that state-years are the units of analysis (e.g. 27 year observations per state).

Toward the end of Edwin's comments, he suggested many things. First, because the control measures make model fit take a hit, he suggested I work with a smaller set of more plausible controls over those that seem less plausible. As such, in Table 3.2, we can see that I've dropped some of the measures... but generally the addition of any controls is a detriment to model fit. As you can see, and from my interpretation of the models, we see that the second model (without controls) is still the best fit model for explaining the rate of passage for legalization in the U.S.

Regarding these models, Edwin mentioned that I should line up all the variables together, then add the positive coverage measure. As such, I've removed the previous Model 1 (which included only the measure of public opinion).

Edwin also asked if states are available to adopt if they do not have the initiative/referendum as an option. The obvious answer is "yes," yet, in practice, it has not worked out this way. Of course, we are in the midst of the policy change process, so there are (still) various routes to legalization that may not have been utilized yet. But, generally, states legalize marijuana *outside* of Federal or State legislative action. In fact, during the period of analysis, states only passed legalization via the referendum. Thus, for this analysis, there is a perfect overlap for the subset of cases that legalized marijuana, and the set of cases that have the initiative/referendum. Importantly, this relates to one of Edwin's first questions about whether this process only occurred via the referendum/initiative, or whether there were other ways. Again, because we are in the midst of this process, all cases of statewide legalization during the period of analysis resulted from initiatives. The one negative case is in Maine, where, in 2018, marijuana was legalized via the state legislature. This case is outside the period of analysis and would require a separate project to identify the mechanisms that set off the legalization process. As states begin to legalize via state legislatures, I believe there will be more room for identifying the processes of legalization that are distinct for non-direct democratic states. Therefore, there would be no results for states without initiatives where legalization passed.

Chapter 4:

David's Comments:

I have addressed some of David's comments regarding the age of the citations. In many places, I have included more updated citations.

In the "history" section, I've included citations as well as discussed the run-up to state-level legalization initiatives.

In the section 4.3 on "Support for Social Liberalization Policies," now called "Policy Positions and the Role of Communities" I am unsure what is meant by the comment:

> Is this a departure for otherwise liberal parents on social issues, or are parents just more conservative overall?

Any clarification is appreciated.

Also, David mentioned that he is interested how individual patterns of younger, and more liberal people fits into the story regarding support for legalization. I'm wondering how you envision examining youth/liberal positions further without distracting from the story put forth here regarding parenthood and the structure of communities. I do find that there is very little difference between median ages for high parental segregation counties (at or above the mean segregation) and low segregation counties. These distinct areas do, however, have huge differences in their support for Democrats, where segregated areas also tend to show strong support for democrats.

I appreciate David's question about the characteristics of these parent segregated communities. To address this, I've added a bit of a description of some of the communities in the "Parental Segregation" subsection of the "Data & Methods" section, where I describe the calculation of the measure.

In the "Data & Methods" section, David asked whether wealthier areas have more inequality. By breaking up the data, I found that for places with high median incomes (at or above the median), inequality (Gini) was .438, whereas places with low median incomes (below the median), inequality (Gini) was .424 – so both high and low income areas have similar levels of inequality. But I'm not sure what is implied by the question. Here, I am making the argument that more equality in incomes (or less spread in the distribution of incomes) may contribute to a general sense that maintaining mobility is possible, whereas in places with extreme spreads in the distribution of incomes (more inequality) may incite fear that mobility changes, especially mobility drops are possible. And this threat can contribute to a general sense of fear that legal marijuana could initiate a mobility decline. In areas with low inequality, legal marijuana is less of a threat because mobilities don't fall far.

David made a comment about everything correlating. To ease concerns, the correlation matrix can be found at the end of the chapter. David also mentioned that it seems that the segregation measure is an effect of something else. I think what is implied here is that there might be some collinearity with other variables. To be sure, we can see in the correlation matrix, the measure of parental segregation is most correlated with the Democratic voter measure and the Marriage measure.

In the "Results" section, per David's suggestion, instead of just describing the coefficients in the model, I will give examples of counties with high and low levels of support and low and high levels of segregation.

Next steps include explaining why there are high levels of support in certain places.

Rory's Comments:

In Rory's previous email, he described ways in which the argument could be made simpler. I've tried to accomplish this in various ways. In the section on "Parental Segregation" and the subsection on "Parental Segregation and Politics" incorporate these simpler arguments about how in segregated spaces, parents' decreased exposure (and therefore) opposition pairs with nonparents' freedom to use (and lack of fear about) marijuana. In this section, I redirect my argument away from "parents having a lack of concern – since they're around other families" to "parents being concerned, but experiencing a lack of *threat* in segregated environments."

In these same sections, I give closer attention to the distribution fo people, not just the size of the groups with certain attributes. Doing so, I think, makes the message about segregation (and composition) being relevant for aggregate support in places.

Additionally, throughout the chapter, I've tried to emphasize the importance of place rather than individual-level support.

Chapter 5:

I have added a brief conclusion that discusses the take-aways from the previous three chapters.

Sincerely,
Burrel