

# Exam 2 Prep - Marijuana Liberalization

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1. What is the evidence regarding the relationship between marijuana liberalization and traffic fatalities? Discuss strengths and weaknesses regarding a causal interpretation.
  - *State Marijuana Laws and Traffic Fatalities* by Dewey et al (2021) suggests that marijuana liberalization is associated with lower traffic fatalities. This could be explained by suggesting marijuana is a substitute for alcohol and that there are fewer drunk drivers because more people are smoking marijuana instead of drinking alcohol. A causal interpretation provides insight into how the world works in a more in depth manner than a correlative or predictive model might. However, in the real world, a perfect causal model is impossible because we cannot see the causal effect because we cannot control for all possible unknown unknowns. In other words, we would need a time machine to see the effect of treatment on the untreated or the effect of non-treatment on the treated.
2. What are the other major potential benefits and costs associated with legalizing recreational marijuana use? What is the state of evidence regarding their size?
  - As we saw in our debate in class, it is difficult to provide high-quality reasons that recreational marijuana should not be legalized. Besides pearl-clutching purpose driven works, there is not a lot of evidence that support the continued restrictions on recreational marijuana. Some benefits of legalization include, more resources towards causes that aren't the legalization of marijuana, potential growth of a new industry, regulation which only helps consumers, removes part of a black market for illicit substances, and greatly reduces the number of imprisoned people in the United States. Some potential downsides are that the pearl-clutchers will clutch even tighter and will try to enact local laws banning it which will tie up the courts and local resources and that depending on costs after regulation and taxation, people still may turn to black market sales to avoid the additional costs.