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Reaction Paper Week 7

The Graham et al. paper focuses on political science articles about policy diffusion (of American, Comparative, and International policies) from 1958 through 2008 in an effort to generate a comprehensive outline of key terms and methodology and to suggest ways to move forward in the field. The article ends by establishing the lack of interconnectedness between scholars in the field, and how this has hindered development of the literature. The Shipan and Volden paper focuses on four mechanisms of policy diffusion (learning, competition, imitation, and coercion) at the city level surrounding the passage of anti-smoking legislation. They find that there are temporal and conditional components to these effects, with larger cities being more well off in all four of these mechanisms.

I found the Shipan and Volden paper extremely interesting, well written, and comprehensive; however, I had a few problems with the paper at large. One issue I found was that they state that the, "focus on city-to-city diffusion allows us to examine each mechanism individually as well as in conjunction with one another". But they give no reason or evidence to support this, so I wish they had explained their reasoning for this a little deeper. The other main issue I found was with the variable *Nearest Bigger City*. I have a few issues with this variable; one issue being the definition, as I think that simply looking at the closest city bigger than the original leaves out a lot of nuance about the city's relations. I think making this a proportional connection instead of an indicator variable, so you can get an idea of how proportionally bigger that city is. Also it could have been quite beneficial to look at the big cities in the state in relationship, opposed to simply the city that is closest and slightly larger. I think these two changes could have made this paper stronger, but overall I found it interesting and compelling.