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News Frames and Policy: Frame-Building in Mainstream News and Political Commentary Media, 1992-1997

by

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A dissertation submitted to the faculty of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication

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ABSTRACT

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News Frames and Policy: Frame-Building in Mainstream News and Political Commentary Media, 1992-1997

(Under the direction of Anne M. Johnston)

Frames are processes individuals and institutions use to interpret and communicate about the world. This analysis uses the marijuana issue in the 1990s to study the building of frames in the news narrative. The aim is to advance previous framing studies through analysis of changing and competing frames of a single issue over time.

Through the sponsorship of sources and the use of newsworthy events, the news narrative frames issues in four ways: by defining a problem, recommending a solution, blaming people or institutions as causal agents, and evaluating them in moral terms. This analysis finds that most mainstream stories about the marijuana issue were almost completely controlled by one frame over others, although different frames often appeared in stories. Also, dominant, successful frames usually linked all four framing components consistently in news stories. Oppositional frames usually did not link these components consistently. The most important of these components were the blaming of

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causal agents and moral evaluations of them. Once these components were linked to the others (problem and solution) the frame became more resonant with larger cultural themes. The news values of *conflict* and *familiarity* are among the most important factors in determining the success of frames. Journalists should be aware of the power of framing in limiting how we see issues and how news routines and values reinforce it.

Oppositional frames may influence the news narrative if their sponsors become regular sources in the news, if those sources can take advantage of a platform of newsworthy events over time on which to fully describe or integrate all elements of the frame, and if they can maintain that same complete frame in the news over successive stories. Future research should look into other ways frames might be built by looking at the coverage of other issues. The rise of new media technologies should also be studied with regard to their influence on how receivers, texts, communicators and the culture build frames.

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To Mom and Dad

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INTRODUCTION

85% of 12th-graders say they haven't used pot in last month: slight decrease from last year

Pot use among 12th-graders climbing: 25% increase over last year

Suppose that, as a concerned parent (I'm one myself), you pay regular attention to the news reports that focus on children: their health, safety issues that affect them, and the current data on their use of drugs. And suppose that one morning you come across the headline on the left above in your morning newspaper.

You might find yourself thinking that such a high percentage of high school seniors saying they haven't used marijuana in at least a month (meaning, for many of them, never) isn't too bad -- or maybe you'd only be satisfied with 100% abstinence. At any rate, you would most likely be less alarmed than if the headline were framed like the example on the right.

These two hypothetical headlines draw attention to the same set of facts, and both are accurate accounts of those facts. In 1994 one of the most respected annual surveys of drug use in the U.S. reported that casual marijuana use, defined as any use in the last 30 days, was up among 12th-

grade students, from 12% in 1992 to 15% in 1993.[1] But each of the above headlines cues the news reader to think of the problem differently; perhaps the first one might even cue us not to think about it as much of a problem at all. Each headline presents a distinct *frame* of the issue.

Frames highlight some aspects of reality and omit or obscure others; the same event can lead to varying reactions according to how it is communicated and perceived. Observers of the news have long recognized the power of frames to drive the way we sort our perceptions of the world. About 15 years ago researchers devised a similar, but more sophisticated, example of two separate frames and tested their effects. A scenario of a disease outbreak was presented to two experimental groups. The researchers gave each group the same two options for dealing with it, but they framed the options for one group in terms of *maximizing lives saved*, and those for the other group in terms of *minimizing deaths*. Because of those different frames, the two groups favored different options for addressing the problem.[2] It was a vivid demonstration of how frames work in presenting facts and in affecting public perceptions and responses.

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[1]National Institute on Drug Abuse, *National Survey Results on Drug Use From the Monitoring the Future Study* (Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1994).

[2]D. Kahneman and A. Tversky, "Choice, Values and Frames," *American Psychologist* 39 (1984): 341-350.

Let's go back to the two hypothetical headlines about teenage pot smoking. Now suppose that the second, more sensational headline (emphasizing those teens who have smoked pot, not the majority who haven't) is the lead headline on your newspaper's front page, and is accompanied by an eye-catching color graphic with a rising line to demonstrate the reported increase and projecting it into the future. And when you tune to the network news show that morning, the same story leads the broadcast. It includes interviews with the researchers who conducted the study and maybe with a spokesperson from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, all promoting a frame of a problem out of control and getting worse.

The following analysis explores why the other frame -- the "good news" frame -- almost certainly would not have received front-page, top story treatment, and why it would be unlikely to appear in the mainstream news at all. By cuing how we define the problem of marijuana (or whether we define it as much of a problem at all), the news narrative may prompt us as news readers and viewers to decide what solutions are plausible, who is responsible for the problem, and even how to explain and judge those people who are to blame.

This analysis approaches the news as a range of possible frames, some of which become the basis for news stories and some of which are delegitimized or left out of the narrative. The analysis will show what influences are

involved in building different frames of an issue over time. These influences include the sources and journalists who provide and structure information, and how they define which events make news. This project connects these influences on framing by studying the news content among different types of media over time. The analysis uses coverage of the marijuana issue in the 1990s as a case for studying the maintenance and building of five distinct news frames: *crime*, *threat to youth*, *public health*, *medicalization*, and *decriminalization*. Each of these frames has deep roots in the history of marijuana in the United States.

Problem statement and purpose

> *[The debate underlying marijuana policy] goes back to the Federalist Papers . . . or to the Constitution. How should we run our lives? And marijuana has become the symbol of how we should think about something that's a medicine or not a medicine, a private right or a public right; and people bring to it their deepest feelings and their image of how they would like the world to be run.*
>
> David F. Musto, M.D.
> on PBS's "Frontline," 28 April 1998

This comment illustrates the place that marijuana has taken in American culture: not just as a plant over which powerful (and not-so-powerful) interests collide, but as a symbol of freedom, or destruction, or healing, or seducer of the young. Marijuana straddles the cultural divisions in our society. Many revile it as dangerous and hence properly kept as an illegal drug; others see it as a relatively safe

alternative to America's most popular legal recreational drug, alcohol, or even as a unique medicine with attributes not found in other treatments.[3]

Marijuana is the most commonly used illegal drug in the U.S.[4] It is ideal for a framing study because its social and legal history (discussed in more detail in Chapter 1) has reflected changing *views* of the drug and its relationship to other drugs. For example, society's view of marijuana users underwent a revolutionary change in the 1960s and 1970s as middle-class youth discovered the drug and created the conditions which led to a somewhat softer policy. One researcher refers to this period as the "embourgeoisement" of marijuana; partly because of the changing demographic of users, the ideology of the drug itself went from "killer weed" to "drop-out drug".[5]

Second, the marijuana issue in the last few years has received more public attention than at any time since the mid-1980s, and perhaps since the early 1970s. Studies show

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[3]The basic assumption, drawing from Erving Goffman, is that the acts of distributing, possessing and especially smoking marijuana are subject to interpretation. In this sense, such acts are models on which to "work transformations" depending on the *context* of the act: *who* does it, *where* they do it, *who* witnesses it, and (most relevant to us) *who* interprets (or transforms) it for dissemination to an audience. *Framing Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1974), 560.

[4]Michael Childress, *A System Description of the Marijuana Trade* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1994), 7.

[5]Jerome L. Himmelstein, *The Strange Career of Marihuana: Politics and Ideology of Drug Control in America* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1983), 106-111.

that after a steady decline since the late 1970s, marijuana usage among teen-agers began rising again in 1992.[6] The political ramifications of this perceived threat to youth, in competition with the grassroots movements to legalize medical uses, has renewed public and media attention to marijuana.

One assumption in a framing study is that all sides of an issue may construct logical arguments based on principles that underlie all identifiable frames. For example, as some argue, people engaged in the distribution of marijuana are breaking the law (*crime*); marijuana (like all drugs) presents a special threat for young people whose bodies, social skills, and intellects are still developing (*threat to youth*); marijuana abuse leads to social costs in public health and other areas (*public health*); marijuana has properties that benefit some sick people under some conditions (*medical*); and marijuana and its use may be a matter best left to the individual, rather than to the government or even to doctors (*decriminalization*). Each of these statements reflects abstract principles that are used to frame news stories.[7]

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[6]Lloyd D. Johnston, Patrick M. O'Malley and Jerald G. Bachman, *National Survey Results on Drug Use from the Monitoring the Future Study, 1975-1993* (Rockville, MD: National Institute on Drug Abuse, 1994), 75.

[7]Frames, in this sense, are expressions of the interpretive structures of social actors as manifested in various modes of communication. Reese's working definition of frames, as a broad description of how we apprehend the world, is: "Frames are *organizing principles* that are socially shared and persistent over time, that work

It is precisely because of these competing (if not always contradictory) frames that the marijuana issue is uniquely appropriate to advance our understanding of frames and how they come about. This approach is not a matter of supporting or opposing marijuana in all (or any) of its uses, meanings, and significations as a social phenomenon. It is instead a matter of recognizing the meaning given to a controversial issue, who assigns that meaning, what actors are identified with it, and how the news narrative changes or reinforces it.

In the last few years communication scholars have recognized the increasing number and prominence of studies based on the framing concept; a few authors have attempted to summarize and clarify its definition and reach, as well as to place it within the broad scholarship on communication studies.[2] This study aims to aid the effort by showing how the framing process works over time,[3] how frames are built and the policy implications of that process.

This analysis will show that there are three main factors that determine why some frames dominate the

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symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world." (Italics added.) Stephen D. Reese, "Framing Public Life: A Bridging Model for Media Study," Paper presented to the Inaugural Conference for the Center for Mass Communication Research, "Framing in the New Media Landscape," University of South Carolina, Columbia, 12-14 October 1997, 5.

[3]Two of the best examples are Reese, "Framing Public Life"; and Robert M. Entman, "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm," *Journal of Communication* 43 (Autumn 1993): 51-58.

[4]Reese, "Framing Public Life," 20.

narrative, why others don't, and how a rare frame may gain greater influence over the narrative: the frame's congruity with larger cultural norms and values; support (or *sponsorship*) by powerful elites with positive images; and successive newsworthy events on which the frame can be built over time. The study points to ways in which journalists might approach frames and adjust to their power in a deliberate effort to open up the framing process, and it encourages news workers to recognize that frames exist despite the ideal of objectivity. The following literature review (Chapter 1) places this analysis within the tradition of studying the news as narrative.

Chapter 2 discusses the method used to study the framing of the marijuana issue. Chapter 3 briefly summarizes *what happened* over the study period, in terms of the salience and selection of different frames and the factors involved. Chapters 4-6 focuses on how the *decriminalization* frame rose and fell against the *crime* frame, how the *threat to youth* frame rose to prominence in the middle of the period, and how the sponsors of the *medical* frame were able to build it, despite its inherent disadvantage as an oppositional frame. Chapter 7, the conclusion, discusses *why* each frame had varying levels of success and the implications for framing theory and future research. First, some of the terms used in the following discussion will be defined for the reader's reference.

Definition of terms

Frame-building: the ongoing creation and modification over time of the frames used to define an issue in the news, influenced by the relationships between sources, journalists, news events (past and present) and the larger culture.

Frame sponsor: any person or organization that seeks to promote a frame through the news media to a wider audience. Successful sponsorship depends on first becoming a news source.

Cultural resonance: when a frame conforms to the norms and values of the dominant culture. Cultural resonance privileges some frames over others.

Framing component: one of the four parts of a complete frame that are usually based on abstract principles. Problem definitions, solution recommendations, causes, and moral evaluations are the four components of any frame. These components become *linked* when they appear together in the same story or paragraph. The more of these components a frame regularly links, the more *integrated* it is.

Frame prevalence: when a given frame influences the ongoing narrative of an issue at least as much as other frames over an extended period of time, and when a frame makes up an overwhelming proportion of individual stories over time (again, as measured against other frames).

Dominant frames: those frames that are supported by ruling or dominant interests or elites in society, who

usually promote the status quo policy. This study defines the *crime, threat to youth* and *public health* frames as *dominant.*

Oppositional frames: those frames that resist or counter the *dominant* frames. This study defines the *medical* and *decriminalization* frames as *oppositional.*

CHAPTER I

LITERATURE REVIEW:

THE NEWS NARRATIVE AND FRAMING

George Herbert Mead argued more than seventy years ago that daily mainstream news was largely an exercise in aesthetic story-telling, "not the facts."[1] Since then many researchers have applied a *narrative* analysis to the news under the assumption that the news is "a story about reality"[2], not its reflection.

This approach can focus on micro- or macro-level influences on the narrative. The most basic micro-level influence is that of individual media workers, manifested in demographic characteristics and professional training, for example.[3] Successive levels can include media routines (such as the use of news beats),[4] the structural dynamics of

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[1]George Herbert Mead, "The Nature of Aesthetic Experience," *International Journal of Ethics* 36 (July 1926), 389-90.

[2]S. Elizabeth Bird and Robert W. Dardenne, "Myth, Chronicle, and Story: Exploring the Narrative Qualities of News," in *Media, Myths, and Narratives*, ed. James W. Carey (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1988), 82.

[3]Pamela J. Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese, *Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Mass Media Content*, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 1996), 63-103.

[4]Ibid., 105-137.

media organizations,[5] the influence of societal institutions and actors such as sources, advertisers and media regulations,[6] and at the highest macro-level, ideology.[7] These levels often work together to construct, manipulate and defend the narrative and its creators.[8]

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[5]One of the earliest studies at this level was that by Breed, who found that newsroom rules for journalists, set by the publisher/owner, are commonly enforced through cultural and social controls (such as rewards, official and unofficial, from peers and superiors), rather than through an explicit adherence to serving the needs of the reader. Warren Breed, "Social Control in the Newsroom," *Social Forces* 33 (May 1955): 326-35. Another study analyzed how *Newsweek*, due to competitive pressures and staff routines, framed the cocaine issue in 1986 as much more of a threat to the nation than the data justified. James D. Orcutt and J. Blake Turner, "Shocking Numbers and Graphic Accounts: Quantified Images of Drug Problems in the Print Media," *Social Problems* 40 (May 1993): 190-206. See also Leon V. Sigal, *Reporters and Officials: The Organization and Politics of Newsmaking* (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1973); Gaye Tuchman, *Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality* (New York: Free Press, 1978).

[6]Shoemaker and Reese, *Mediating the Message*, 175-220.

[7]Ibid., 221-251. Shoemaker and Mayfield advocate an economic model that emphasizes the ideology of a medium's funders as determining the boundaries of influence on the narrative. Pamela J. Shoemaker and Elizabeth Kay Mayfield, "Building a Theory of News Content: A Synthesis of Current Concepts," *Journalism Monographs* 103 (June 1987); another view is that ideology is inherent in news texts due to reporters' "unconscious absorption of assumptions about the social world...." Robert A. Hackett, "Decline of a Paradigm? Bias and Objectivity in News Media Studies," *CSMC* 1, (September 1984): 248.

[8]Reese maintains that the journalist community preserves and defends the paradigm of objectivity at several of these levels, including "reasserting the ability of journalistic routines to prevent threatening values from 'distorting' the news." Stephen D. Reese, "The News Paradigm and the Ideology of Objectivity: a Socialist at the Wall Street Journal," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 7 (1990): 400.

Using the structure set up by all these levels, the news media *select* certain elements -- for example, the inverted pyramid and the narrative elements of a story with characters, action, and a beginning, middle and end -- to create news frames.[9] These influences and conventions "help make culturally consonant messages readable and culturally dissonant messages unsayable. Their function is less to increase or decrease the truth value of the messages they convey than to shape and narrow the range of what kinds of truths can be told. They reinforce certain assumptions about the political world."[10] So rather than opening up issues for consideration on all sides, frames often limit our perceptions of issues. Todd Gitlin offered one of the first broad descriptions of the framing process and why it happens, linking macro-level forces such as ideology and lower-level forces such as media routines with the final framed news product:

> *Media frames are persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse, whether verbal or visual.* Frames enable journalists to process large amounts of information quickly and routinely: to recognize it as information, to assign it to cognitive categories, and to package it for efficient relay to their audiences. Thus, for organizational reasons alone, frames are

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[9]Entman, "Framing: Toward Clarification."

[10]Michael Schudson, *The Power of News* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 55.

> unavoidable, and journalism is organized to regulate their production.[11]

Framing, then, is not only "unavoidable," but is embedded in the news-making process.

Symbolic politics, policy-making, and the news narrative

Frames have real-world effects. Matters of public policy, especially those involving controversial issues such as illegal drugs, are subject to framing by political authorities and powerful interests.[12] The government is a primary shaper of cognitions about political issues; it uses signifying devices such as symbols (representations of ideas or events) and myths (particular kinds of political symbols -- a myth is "an unquestioned belief held in common by a large group of people that gives events and actions a particular meaning"[13]). Officials engage in symbolic activities in part to define the boundaries within which political debate takes place. Other groups may also have the same influence on policy, especially groups whose interests are aligned with those of officials.

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[11]Todd Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 7.

[12]Erich L. Jensen, Jerg Gerber and Ginna M. Babcock, "The New War on Drugs: Grassroots Movement or Political Construction?" *Journal of Drug Issues* 21 (1991): 651-67; Erich Goode, "The American Drug Panic of the 1980s: Social Construction or Objective Threat?" *Violence, Aggression and Terrorism* 3 (1989): 327-48.

[13]Murray Edelman, *Politics as Symbolic Action* (Chicago: Markham, 1971), 53.

Policy analyst Deborah Stone argues that a key element of politics and policy is categorization, the creation of "intellectual boundaries we put on the world in order to help us apprehend it"[14]; therefore an essential arena of political power is the "struggle to control which images of the world govern policy."[15] Two scholars have created a typology to guide thinking about how these social constructions (positive or negative), on the one hand, combine with political power (weak or strong) on the other to influence the benefits or burdens assigned to policy "target populations," depending on which category those populations fall into.[16]

For example, while some "advantaged" groups (such as physicians' associations or scientists) are routinely constructed in the news media positively and have a relatively large amount of political power, "deviants" (such as illegal drug users) fall into the other end of the typology: they are constructed negatively and are weak in political power.[17] Assigning deviancy to groups is often a symbolic goal of other groups wishing to bolster their own status in society. Indeed, fostering the mainstream

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[14]Deborah A. Stone, *Policy Paradox and Political Reason* (New York: HarperCollins, 1988), 307.

[15]Ibid., 309.

[16]Anne Schneider and Helen Ingram, "Social Construction of Target Populations: Implications for Politics and Policy," *American Political Science Review* 87 (June 1993): 334-47.

[17]Ibid., 336.

societal perception of groups such as marijuana users or reformers as deviant is in the interest of those who favor continued prohibition. This strategy can have real effects on the news narrative: political groups continually perceived as deviant are given systematically less favorable treatment by news editors.[18] As Joseph Gusfield's study of the temperance movement and its use of symbolic politics demonstrated, a favored or politically dominant group (such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union) may enhance its status through use of prohibitive laws (e.g., the Eighteenth Amendment) that stigmatize the behavior (drinking) of another group, whose values and norms do not conform to those of the former.[19]

The government's use of symbolic politics may have similar aims. For example, as part of its drug policy, the Bush administration used the negative symbols of war to define the enemy, to strengthen the political consensus about the drug problem, to relieve public guilt over it and

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[18]Pamela J. Shoemaker, "Media Treatment of Deviant Political Groups," *Journalism Quarterly* 61 (Spring 1984): 66-75, 82.

[19]Gusfield's *status groups* are more complex than class-based interest groups, which are usually defined by a common economic interest vying through more traditional political struggles for influence in the redistribution of economic benefits. *Status groups* or movements are more clearly defined as seeking status *through* symbolic politics. They are defined, in addition to class, by race, religion, geographic region, etc., all of which contribute to their perceived status in society. Joseph R. Gusfield, *Symbolic Crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 13-35. See also Troy Duster, *The Legislation of Morality: Law, Drugs, and Moral Judgment* (New York: The Free Press, 1970).

to stigmatize those who disagreed with the government's policy.[20] There were concrete policy results from this strategy of symbolism: the law and the military have been increasingly used (especially since the end of the Cold War around 1990) to confer status and legitimacy to the government and its drug policy, in reaction to the threats the government perceives the drug problem poses to *its own* authority and status, including the disintegration of the family and an increase in juvenile crime.[21]

Recognizing the power of symbolic and status politics is important because if a group affected by marijuana policy (for example, medical users who suffer from glaucoma, or from the nausea induced by chemotherapy) gain the political or symbolic power to affect the social construction of themselves as a group, and of their marijuana use, the dominant social construction may change to their benefit.[22] Alternatively a weak, negatively constructed group may be able to associate its status with that of an elite group, such as doctors, that is both politically powerful and

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[20]Susan Mackey-Kallis and Dan Hahn, "Who's To Blame For America's Drug Problem?: The Search For Scapegoats in the 'War on Drugs,'" *Communication Quarterly* 42 (Winter 1994): 1-20. See also William N. Elwood, *Rhetoric in the War on Drugs: The Triumphs and Tragedies of Public Relations* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1994).

[21]Peter B. Kraska, "Militarizing the Drug War: A Sign of the Times," in *Altered States of Mind: Critical Observations of the Drug War*, ed. Peter B. Kraska (New York: Garland, 1993), 196.

[22]David Dingelstad and others, "The Social Construction of Drug Debates," *Social Science and Medicine* 43 (1996): 1829-38.

positively constructed in the news. Grassroots groups interested in marijuana reform, as well as mainstream anti-drug groups might, as part of their competing strategies to frame the issue and to help bolster their influence through the news, seek the support of elite experts such as physicians and scientists.

There are many individuals, groups and institutions that would benefit from favorable frames in the news media, to the extent such framing would either change or reinforce society's views of those people or institutions. The next four sections discuss how the concept of framing can be used to understand the steps involved in strengthening old (dominant) frames about a single political or social issue and in building new (oppositional) ones into the news narrative. This process begins with the first step in the creation of many stories: the news source.

Sources as "frame sponsors"[23]

One of the most studied influences on the news narrative is journalists' use of sources to collect information and structure news. News sources -- which ones predominate, how they interact with journalists, and how journalists select and use them -- may be the most important

[23]I borrow this term from Gamson and Modigliani's discussion of "sponsor activities." William A. Gamson and Andre Modigliani, "Media Discourse and Public Opinion on Nuclear Power: A Constructionist Approach," *American Journal of Sociology* 95 (July 1989): 6-7.

factor in understanding the news narrative.[24] In their use of information and its sources, journalists are guided by the ideal of objectivity (reporter non-involvement and avoidance of overt opinion in the news) to seek balance of opinion and information, but within the circles of the political elite, rather than from a broader cross-section of the general public.[25]

Mainstream journalism reflects the cultural assumption that there are two sides to every story. In conjunction with the ideal of objectivity, this dialectic leads to a "balance norm,"[26] which in individual stories usually manifests itself through the appearance of sources promoting two sides of an issue. Despite the aim of objectivity, however, the balance norm results in a narrative that favors the official view, often leading to debate *within* rather than among frames.[27] Prevailing views of an issue are influenced by the enterprise of frame sponsors who use relationships with the media to promote their frames to a

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[24]Herbert J. Gans, *Deciding What's News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek and Time* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979).

[25]W. Lance Bennett, *News: The Politics of Illusion*, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 1988), 117.

[26]Gamson and Modigliani, "Media Discourse," 8.

[27]Ibid. For example, a *public health* frame may advocate the *solution* of treatment programs to deal with the marijuana problem, criticizing the *crime* frame's emphasis on the *solutions* of law enforcement or eradication. But such opposition still falls within the dominant frame of marijuana users as deviants who must be normalized by society.

wider audience.[28] Such sponsors (whether public or private sector) often adjust these strategies to conform to the conventions of journalists,[29] who the sponsors hope will promote their frame of a given issue.

News production, then, is a process dominated by bureaucratic organizations (news companies, social movement organizations, and government agencies). Indeed, most sources for news stories are officials with government agencies and elites aligned with government policies and programs. These sources dominate many stories because of their convenient accessibility for journalists and their positions as official holders of centralized information.[30] Official and elite sources are easily contacted and identified, and provide predictable responses to reporters' needs for information. "Although there are occasional 'walk-on' roles for ordinary people, the majority of news plots revolve around a cast of familiar officials who become 'star' actors. There is a clear selection mechanism at work when it comes to who 'makes' the news on a regular basis and who doesn't."[31] Journalists also tend to consider the

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[28]Ibid., 6-7.

[29]Sigal, *Reporters and Officials*, 75.

[30]Tuchman, *Making News*, 21-22. Gans, in *Deciding What's News*, also discusses the importance of *efficiency* as a factor in the reliance by reporters on government authorities.

[31]Bennett, *News: The Politics of Illusion*, 35.

information from official or elite sources as factual,[32] which further entrenches their advantage over other potential sponsors.

Due to constraints imposed on them, such as deadlines, mainstream journalists favor as sources those who can make their jobs easier: "the outsiders who provide raw materials for news."[33] Well-placed official news sources can use these constraints to their advantage by providing "information subsidies"[34] that save journalists time and effort by packaging and suppling information that satisfies the demand for news. These types of sources are "primary definers" that have a central role in constructing the terms within which an issue is covered.[35]

On popular news shows elite sources often form a cohesive central insiders' group that cuts across issues and programs and forms an interlocking structure to guide public

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[32]Oscar J. Gandy, Jr., *Beyond Agenda-Setting: Information Subsidies and Public Policy*, (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1982).

[33]Mark Fishman, *Manufacturing the News* (Austin: University of Texas, 1980), 152.

[34]Oscar J. Gandy, Jr. "Beyond Agenda-Setting," in *Agenda Setting: Readings on Media, Public Opinion, and Policymaking*, ed. David Protess and Maxwell McCombs (Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1991), 263-275.

[35]Stuart Hall and others, *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order* (London: Macmillan, 1978), 58. See also Philip Schlesinger and Howard Tumber, *Reporting Crime: The Media Politics of Criminal Justice* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 6-34.

discussion of issues.[36] Both news and political commentary in their mainstream forms are dominated by "knowns" as sources.[37] Only about one-fifth of sources for national news are unknowns, and they tend to fall into various categories of deviancy or anonymity: protesters, victims, alleged violators of laws or mores, voters or other aggregates, and participants in unusual activities.[38] This dominance by powerful, official and/or elite sources also characterizes coverage of state and local stories as well.[39] As a result the news audience receives viewpoints and information on most national and local issues that are dominated by narrow, elite sources who tend to limit diversity of opinion and reinforce the status quo.[40] The

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[36]Stephen D. Reese, August Grant and Lucig H. Danielian, "The Structure of News Sources on Television: A Network Analysis of 'CBS News,' 'Nightline,' 'McNeil/Lehrer,' and 'This Week with David Brinkley'," *Journal of Communication* 44 (1994): 84-107. *Fantasy theme analysis* also deals with the creation of political reality through mainstream news and other content such as television political talk shows. D. Nimmo and J. Combs, *Mediated Political Realities*, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 1990).

[37]Gans, *Deciding What's News*, 119.

[38]Ibid.

[39]For example, see Lynn M. Zoch, "Spokesperson as Agenda Builder: Framing the Susan Smith Investigation," Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Chicago, Illinois, 30 July 1997.

[40]Jane Brown and others, "Invisible Power: Newspaper News Sources and the Limits of Diversity," *Journalism Quarterly* 64 (1987): 45-54. Schlesinger, Tumber and Negrine have made similar conclusions in studying the British media's use of sources. Schlesinger and Tumber, *Reporting Crime;* Ralph Negrine, *The Communication of Politics* (London: Sage, 1996).

use of unnamed sources, usually men in executive positions, also serves to make this exercise of power invisible and hence less subject to alternative viewpoints.[41] This bias toward powerful, elite sources is further amplified by the tendency of the national elite media (such as the television networks and newspapers such as *The New York Times*) to all use them in covering national stories at the same time.[42] The effect can be a national "media convergence" of remarkably similar coverage of an issue.[43]

This lack of diversity in coverage can be reinforced by the national scope and the prominence of the perceived problem; these factors usually give certain news sources, especially political leaders in Washington, a dominant voice in influencing coverage because of the attention given them as sources by most of the mainstream media.

> This is potentially troublesome, for if we hear mostly the voices of national leaders on issues as they are first developed and defined, and if an issue becomes a story when national leaders speak, then they can frame the debate. For example, what happens when these leaders decide that the "cocaine epidemic" calls

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[41]Brown and others, "Invisible Power," 53.

[42]Lucig H. Danielian and Stephen D. Reese, "A Closer Look at Intermedia Influences on Agenda Setting: The Cocaine Issue of 1986," in *Communication Campaigns About Drugs: Government, Media, and the Public*, ed. Pamela J. Shoemaker (Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates), 47-66.

[43]Stephen D. Reese and Lucig H. Danielian, "Intermedia Influence and the Drug Issue: Converging on Cocaine," in *Communication Campaigns About Drugs*, 29-45. The authors studied coverage of the drug issue in the 1980s.

> for military action in a foreign country? What other voices are heard?[44]

This passage suggests that other elite voices (non-governmental) may be necessary to successfully build alternative frames of an event or issue. Otherwise, the communication of politics through news coverage helps maintain the existing power structure and stifle change.[45]

Regarding particular types of news, often sourced according to news beats, the influence of frame sponsors is apparent in both crime and medical stories, two areas of coverage under which stories about marijuana have recently appeared. For example, crime news depends heavily on the police and other officials as sources of centralized information.[46] The police "supply reporters with a constant stream of usable crime, and this information, fitting into the work requirements of the reporters, becomes the raw material from which crime news is written."[47] Gitlin especially emphasized the reliance on official and law enforcement sources as a factor in framing certain events in

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[44]Danielian and Reese, "A Closer Look," 65.

[45]David L. Paletz and Robert M. Entman, *Media, Power, Politics* (New York: Free Press, 1981); Allan Rachlin, *News as Hegemonic Reality: American Political Culture and the Framing of News Accounts* (New York: Praeger, 1988).

[46]As Tuchman argues, the news is organized and given priority according to criteria that favor information provided through bureaucracies. *Making News*, 22.

[47]Sanford Sherizen, "Social Creation of Crime News: All the News Fitted to Print," in *Deviance and Mass Media*, ed. C. Winick (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1978), 222.

terms of deviance, which is the central element in any "crime story."[48]

As a second example, medical stories generally tend to favor physicians as sources, unless the stories are about administrative or systemic aspects of medicine or health care.[49] In stories about science or health in general, journalists often use "credibility criteria that don't always take into account scientists' areas of research expertise," but rather their public visibility or other criteria.[50] Journalists covering the marijuana issue in particular tend to seek out "celebrity authorities" and "administrative officials of such government institutions as the National Institute of Mental Health, the Food and Drug Administration, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare,[51] or of private medical establishments" rather than specialists who have actually done research relevant to the story.[52] In addition to individual scientists or bureaucrats, elite journals such as the *New England Journal*

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[48]Gitlin, *The Whole World*, 28.

[49]Guido H. Stempel III and Hugh M. Culbertson, "The Prominence and Dominance of News Sources in Newspaper Medical Coverage," *Journalism Quarterly* 61 (Autumn 1984): 671-676.

[50]Sharon Dunwoody and Michael Ryan, "The Credible Scientific Source," *Journalistic Quarterly* 64 (Spring 1987): 25.

[51]Now Health and Human Services.

[52]R. Gordon Shepard, "Selectivity of Sources: Reporting the Marijuana Controversy," *Journal of Communication*, 31 (1981): 135.

of Medicine[53] (*NEJM*) and *JAMA*[54] are also popular as cues for medical news stories because they satisfy common news criteria, including demand for "the conflict and controversy within the medical profession."[55] And such journals enjoy reputations for respect within the medical community itself, adding to their credibility among journalists.

Different sources cue news stories in different ways, of course. Organized sources often have the resources to build and control their relationships with journalists by, for example, releasing information in official proceedings, press conferences and press releases that meet the definition of news events.[56] This power to organize and subsidize[57] information for news coverage is especially significant when considering the dominance of such sources relative to others. Police, for example, "have a vested interest in crime news appearing in newspapers and other media.... The more crimes which become known, the more aid the police may be able to gain in seeking increases in departmental budgets."[58] For journalists, disrupting this

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[53]Anke M. van Trigt and others, "Journalists and Their Sources of Ideas and Information on Medicines," *Social Science and Medicine*, 38 (1994): 637-643.

[54]Edward Caudill and Paul Ashdown, "The *New England Journal of Medicine* as News Source," *Journalism Quarterly* 66 (Summer 1989): 458-462.

[55]Ibid., 458.

[56]Sigal, *Reporters and Officials*.

[57]Gandy, "Beyond Agenda-Setting."

[58]Sherizen, "Social Creation of Crime News," 212.

system of dependence (say, challenging the system itself beyond just covering the occasional high-profile case of corruption) would "dismantle the news net" on which they depend for their livelihood.[59] As the next section discusses, the power of sources to make news is the power to transform one of the vast array of everyday occurrences into *events*, and to frame them in ways that are consistent with the journalistic definition of news.[60]

Events

Daniel Boorstin argued that since the 1800s and the advent of the news as a commodity to be sold to the public, journalists have needed to produce news whether there is a story or not. News gathering has become news making. "The power to make a reportable event is thus the power to make experience."[61] In making news, Tuchman says, "two processes occur simultaneously: An occurrence is transformed into an event, and an event is transformed into a news story. The

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[59]Tuchman, *Making News*, 87.

[60]Harvey Molotch and Marilyn Lester, "News as Purposive Behavior: On the Strategic Use of Routine Events, Accidents and Scandals," *American Sociological Review* 39 (1974): 101-112. Boorstin created the term "pseudo-event" to describe those news events that are "planned, planted, or incited" by someone wanting coverage "for the immediated purpose of being reported or reproduced" in the media in order to create "a self-fulfilling prophecy." Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*, 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1987), 11.

[61]Boorstin, *The Image*, 10.

news frame organizes everyday reality and the news frame is part and parcel of everyday reality. . . ."[62]

Tuchman also emphasizes: "News stories eschew analysis, preferring instead an emphasis on the concrete and the contingency of events as well as a present-time orientation. They avoid structural linkages between events."[63] The news process, therefore, tends to fragment events into self-contained isolated happenings.[64] In addition, the proximity of national news stories to news centers (such as major media markets) artificially inflates the news value of events there, further amplifying their fragmentation and importance over events elsewhere.[65]

In particular, crime news depends on the production of newsworthy illegal events. Crime news, with its emphasis on drama and the battle between good and evil, contains a mythological narrative that tells us about ourselves and our norms: "So all news media report crime and deviant behavior, and not primarily as a duty to inform; the average reader

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[62]Tuchman, *Making News*, 193.

[63]Ibid., 180.

[64]Bennett, *News: The Politics of Illusion*.

[65]This is particularly relevant to the occasional rise and fall of the illegal drug issue as a national crisis. Eric Goode and Nachman Ben-Yehuda, *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1994), 214. When events such as the cocaine-related death of Maryland basketball star Len Bias in 1986 occur in major media markets (Bias died in Washington, D.C.), the ensuing coverage adds to the national sense of panic over the problem. John E. Merriam, "National Media Coverage of Drug Issues, 1983-1987," in *Communication Campaigns About Drugs*, 21-29.

does not require the quantities of information offered on crime. . . A central meaning of crime news is symbolic."[66] As one criminologist notes, this has important implications for crime policy because for most people crime events are only experienced through the media.[67]

In short, the news narrative, influenced by sources of information, in turn affects the definition of public issues in part by dramatizing events and bringing into play "a stock of plot formulas that are used so often they become unconscious models for transforming ongoing life into 'news reality.'"[68] This news reality can overlay real-world problems with its own.

Sherizen argues that crime news involves a symbiotic relationship between reporters and police that "results in a strengthening of the police view of the causes and solutions of the crime problem."[69] This observation can be extended to any structural relationship between reporters and their sources. The relationships between frame sponsors and the events that make news can be further understood in terms of the four components of the news frame of an issue: the *problem*, its *causes*, the viable *solutions* and the way the relationship between the problem and its causes is *evaluated*

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[66]Bird and Dardenne, "Myth, Chronicle, and Story," 71.

[67]Gregg Barak, ed., *Media, Process, and the Social Construction of Crime* (New York: Garland, 1994), 3.

[68]Bennett, *News: The Politics of Illusion*, 36.

[69]Sherizen, "Social Creation of Crime News," 212.

in moral terms. The next section will address the importance to sources, and for the news value of events, of these elements when linked into a complete frame.

Framing the news: Linking components

Although framing as an analytical tool has been recognized as one extension of the agenda-setting function of the media,[70] it is more usefully understood as a basic function of communication, described more than two decades ago by Erving Goffman. One passage from the introduction to his 1974 book, *Frame Analysis*, will serve to illustrate the basic assumptions of framing; Goffman credits 19th century psychologist William James with asking an old question a different way:

> *Under what circumstances do we think things are for real?* The important thing about reality, he implied, is our sense of its realness in contrast to our feeling that some things lack this quality. One can then ask under what conditions such a feeling is generated, and this question speaks to a small, manageable problem having to do with the camera and not what it is the camera takes pictures of.[71]

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[70]See for example Maxwell E. McCombs, "Explorers and Surveyors: Expanding Strategies for Agenda-Setting Research," *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 69 (Winter 1992): 813-824; Salma Ghanem, "Filling in the Tapestry: The Second Level of Agenda Setting," in *Communication and Democracy: Exploring the Intellectual Frontiers in Agenda-Setting Theory*, ed. Maxwell McCombs, Donald L. Shaw and David Weaver (Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1997), 3-14.

[71]Goffman, *Frame Analysis*, 2. In *Communication Campaigns About Drugs*, Danielian and Reese showed the most interest in this "camera" approach to studying news. Rather than focusing on the drugs and their (perceived) social qualities as having particular influences on coverage by the

Goffman's conception of the framing of reality lends itself very well to a study of the news (something most of us consider to be an everyday activity) because he, and the studies that followed the same formulation, recognized that even *everyday reality*, no matter how commonplace or casual, is subject to interpretation by individuals and by organizations.[72]

Frames are "schemata of interpretation" that enable individuals and communicating groups "to locate, perceive, identify, and label" occurrences, both those within personal experience and those mediated from without.[73] Pan and Kosicki made the basic argument for using framing analysis to study the news:

> Framing analysis as an approach to analyzing news discourse mainly deals with how public discourse about public policy issues is constructed and negotiated. . . It shares with agenda-setting research a focus on the public policy issues in the news and in voters' minds. However, it expands beyond what people talk or think about by examining how they think and talk.[74]

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media (agenda-setting), these two researchers were addressing what it was about the *media* that influenced how they *interpreted* the issue (framing). "A Closer Look," 47-66.

[72]Goffman, *Frame Analysis*, 561.

[73]Ibid., 21.

[74]Zhongdang Pan and Gerald M. Kosicki, "Framing Analysis: An Approach to News Discourse," *Political Communication* 10 (1993): 70.

The process of framing involves "organizing information" which is "imposed on social reality,"[75] but how are we to evaluate which frames are better or more successfully *organized* than others? Reese argues that framing "varies in how successfully, comprehensively, or completely it organizes information."[76] A passage from Entman neatly summarizes how framing organizes issues and information using four specific components:

> To frame is to *select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation* for the item described.[77]

Variations in the emphasis on, or absence of, any of these components in a given story (or even sentence) are one key to understanding the power of a frame.[78]

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[75]Reese, "Framing Public Life," 8.

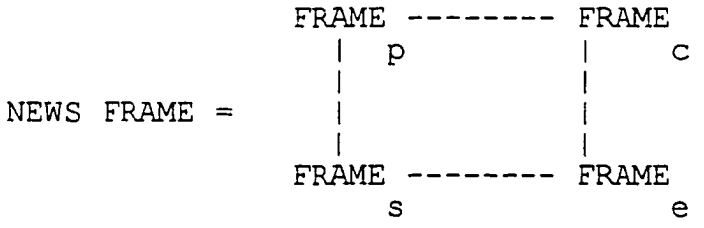
[76]Ibid., 5.

[77]Entman, "Framing: Toward Clarification," 52. Similarly, other authors point out that the flip side of giving a perspective salience is the *omission* of other perspectives. Tuchman, *Making News*, 180; William A. Gamson, "News as Framing: Comments on Graber," *American Behavioral Scientist* 33 (Nov/Dec 1989): 158. Reese critiques emphasis on the basic dichotomy of "inclusion" and "exclusion" as an agenda-setting based measure of emphasis. What matters more, he argues, is that "we ask how that omission is naturalized, made to seem as a logical exclusion or common-sensical irrelevancy given how it defines the situation." "Framing Public Life," 12.

[78]Robert W. Leweke, "Drug Problems and Government Solutions: A Frame Analysis of Front-Page Newspaper Headlines About the Drug Issue, 1987-1994," Paper presented at the National Conference (Mass Communication and Society Division) of the Association for Education in Journalism and

These four components of the news frame may be represented by the following diagram:

Figure 1.1: Framing Components



where,
p=problem
c=causal agent
e=evaluation
s=solution.[78]

For example, one possible frame of the marijuana issue is that the *problem* is the lack of access for the ill to marijuana as a treatment; the *solution* is changing marijuana policy to allow it as medicine; the *causal agents* are federal officials; and the *evaluation* of them is that their refusal to consider changing policy harms the ill and is therefore cruel. A consistent news frame of the issue using these terms, rather than others, ought to cue our definition of the issue to favor that perspective rather than others.

Mass Communication, Anaheim, CA, 10 August, 1996, 15-16.

[78]One recent study loosely used this framework, with the exception of the *moral evaluation* component, to analyze news coverage of labor relations in the automobile industry. Christopher R. Martin and Hayg Oshagan, "Disciplining the Workforce: The News Media Frame a General Motors Plant Closing," *Communication Research* 24 (December 1997): 669-697.

These four basic components, when consistently linked together in the narrative, can represent a powerful exercise of symbolic power through the news on the part of those who can construct them (especially powerful sources with the cooperation of journalists). By not only identifying problems or recommending solutions in a story, but by also blaming people or a special category of persons, and evaluating their relationship with the problem, the news may thus more completely project a given frame, and advance the aims of its supporters.

Frames using all four components tend to resonate more with "larger cultural themes," and that resonance makes them "appear natural and familiar."[80] We might then define a frame as being culturally resonant when it conforms to the norms and values of the dominant culture. For example, news stories about a rise in teen marijuana use may not just report the data giving rise to the story, but also blame parents for the problem and evaluate them harshly (especially if the researchers aimed to include parental influence in their analysis, thus cuing part of the story frame). Such a frame not only provides surveillance of the teen marijuana *problem*, but also brings in cultural themes of parental responsibility (*causes*), and the fear of the counterculture associated with the 1960s and its influence on today's parents (*moral evaluation*). A weaker, less

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[80]Gamson and Modigliani discuss the importance of "cultural resonance" to explain why some frames appear more than others in the news. "Media Discourse," 5.

resonant frame would only contain one or two components; a complete frame integrates all four components. Thus, the *strength* or *success* of a frame (in conjunction with other measures--for example, its relative proportion versus alternative frames within stories, or how long it dominates coverage) may depend on how many and which of these components it includes. Each component of the frame is briefly described below.

Problem identification/definition. This component of the frame addresses the question: *What is the problem?* The central aspect of the frame, and indeed a central focus of the rationale for news coverage in general,[81] is to identify problems using "framing devices"[82] such as metaphors, exemplars, catch phrases, depictions and visual images to define the problem.[83] For example, if the problem is framed as marijuana as a gateway for teens to harder drugs, the approach society takes to the marijuana issue will likely be different than if the problem is framed as the lack of access to marijuana for the ill.

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[81]The first function the mass media perform for society, according to Lasswell, is that of "surveillance," which in part involves identifying and warning of dangers to society through news coverage. Harold D. Lasswell, "The Structure and Function of Communication in Society," in *Mass Communication*, ed. Wilbur Schramm (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1960), 117-130.

[82]Gamson and Modigliani, "Media Discourse," 3.

[83]Pan and Kosicki identify the same five devices, but they focus more on discourse analysis and take an even more explicit constructionist position. They call these five framing devices the "rhetorical structures" of the news discourse. "Framing Analysis," 61-62.

Identification of causal agents creating the problem. This component answers the question of "who is responsible" for social problems,[84] or *who is to blame*? In his study of how television framed several social issues, researcher Shanto Iyengar found that how the news structures stories influences who the viewer will tend to blame for the problem. Iyengar defined frames as either "episodic" (using individuals, families or other social groups as "faces" to represent an issue such as crime or poverty) or "thematic" (presenting the same problems in broader terms as matters of public policy or as social or economic phenomena -- in other words, naming officials or institutions as causal agents, if any).

The author found that episodic frames dominated television news' definition of most social problems[85] and that the viewing public therefore was more likely to assign responsibility for both the causes and solutions for those problems to the "faces" in the news, rather than to broader economic, social or political factors, actors or institutions. Most importantly, the presence and framing of causal agents can itself affect other components of the

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[84]Shanto Iyengar, *Is Anyone Responsible? How Television Frames Political Issues* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

[85]The issues Iyengar studied were crime, terrorism, poverty, unemployment, racial inequality, and the Iran-Contra affair. For a similar approach on another issue, see also Shanto Iyengar and Adam Simon, "News Coverage of the Gulf Crisis and Public Opinion: A Study of Agenda-Setting, Priming, and Framing," *Communication Research* 20 (Summer 1993): 365-383.

frame (e.g., the solution recommended[86]) as well as the frame's strength. Gamson and Modigliani also identify a causal dimension, but call it the "roots" of the framed problem.[87]

Moral evaluation of the problem and causal agent(s). A complete news frame not only identifies the individual, group or societal agents causing the problem, but evaluates them using moral claims.[88] Also termed "appeals to principle,"[89] this third component makes the most obvious links to broader cultural norms surrounding the issue in the frame.

In crime news, for example, the media engage in "symbolic policing," which identifies "heroes, villains, and neutral characters and associat[es] them with specific traits, beliefs, or kinds of behavior. . . . Sometimes this rewarding and punishing is done explicitly, sometimes it is accomplished by way of unspoken assumptions, or by the

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[86]Bob Leweke and Steve Jackson, "News Narratives of the Drug War in Newsweek, 1989-1992," Paper presented at the National Media Literacy Conference, Appalachian State University, Boone, NC, 24 September 1995. One problem with Iyengar's study was the unit of analysis: the story. For various justifications for analyzing elements *within* individual stories, see Gamson, "News As Framing," 159; Gamson and Modigliani, "Media Discourse," 3-4; Entman, "Framing: Toward Clarification"; Entman, "Framing U.S. Coverage of International News: Contrasts in Narratives of the KAL and Iran Air Incidents," *Journal of Communication* 41 (Autumn 1991): 6-27; Pan and Kosicki, "Framing Analysis."

[87]Gamson and Modigliani, "Media Discourse," 3-4, fn 2.

[88]In a sense, this element is implicit in evaluating the "faces" in episodic frames, to use Iyengar's term.

[89]Gamson and Modigliani, "Media Discourse," 3-4, fn 2.

framing of news accounts."[90] In framing deviancy the news media may operate as "merchants of discipline," morally condemning deviant populations for the benefit of normalized society.[91]

The link between this component and *causal agents* is very strong in the narrative. When moral issues are at stake -- for example, the effect of illegal drugs on *youth*, or the availability of marijuana for a terminally ill patient to stimulate the appetite (*medical*) -- *causal agents* are often vital. Without agency there is no question of will, choice or responsibility; without these elements moral evaluation is much harder to come by.

Solution recommendation. This fourth component of the news frame is similar to what Gamson and Modigliani call "consequences,"[92] and was also the other side of the coin in Iyengar's asking "who is responsible" for solving a problem. However, recommending treatments or solutions to a problem goes beyond merely framing the *effects* of an event or news story or calling on an individual or government agency to take responsibility for solving the problem. It involves the broader question, *what do we do?* As Entman argues the news media not only predict likely effects or outcomes of

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[90]Barak, ed., *Media, Process, and the Social Construction of Crime*, 13.

[91]Jimmie L. Reeves and Richard Campbell, *Cracked Coverage: Television News, The Anti-Cocaine Crusade, and the Reagan Legacy* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), 35-47.

[92]Gamson and Modigliani, "Media Discourse," 3-4, fn 2.

problems, they also "offer and justify treatments for the problems."[93] In other words, they recommend solutions, whether by public policy or some other means.

These components may appear together in a single story, and even within a given paragraph. As examples of linking components, two paragraphs from separate *Los Angeles Times* stories follow, the first linking all four *crime* components:

> Sheriff's deputies said they searched a West Hollywood club that openly sold marijuana [*problem*] and arrested [*solution*] four men [*causal agents*] Monday on suspicion of possession of the drug for sale [the *evaluation* is that marijuana possession is a deviant act deserving of punishment].[94]

The second example links *medical* components in a story about a similar but separate event. The paragraph quotes a spokesperson for a pro-medicalization group, Americans for Medical Rights, commenting on a federal raid of another club about seven months later:

> Flower Therapy, said Fratello, "has taken very, very careful steps to ensure that they're legitimate patients [*solution*]. [The DEA, *causal agent*] is highlighting that by raiding one of the very good ones [*moral evaluation*]. . . . I think this is very significant and could foretell a crackdown on all the clubs [*problem*]."[95]

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[93]Entman, "Framing," 52.

[94]"4 Arrested as Club Alleged to Openly Sell Marijuana Is Raided," *Los Angeles Times*, 17 September 1996, B4.

[95]"DEA Agents Raid Marijuana Club," *Los Angeles Times*, 22 April 1997, A3. These two stories and others will be discussed in the analysis chapters.

The symbolic power of the components is brought to fruition only when they can stay linked over time and can dominate the narrative in relation to other alternative or competing frames. A prevailing frame appears more often in the narrative than other frames, and also prevails over individual stories. Prevalence of a frame may be measured both quantitatively (e.g., the number of paragraphs or stories framed a certain way) and qualitatively (e.g., symbolic cues such as repeated use of catch phrases like "gateway drug" to legitimize a frame).

Prevailing over the narrative and frame-building

The concept of frame prevalence partially draws from the agenda-setting tradition of studying how the news media's emphasis on certain issues influences the audience's attribution of importance to those same issues. The studies in this tradition originally addressed the news coverage of election campaigns.[96] This tradition came into its own with the influential work of McCombs and Shaw published in 1972 that provided evidence of news media influence on the salience voters gave various issues covered in the 1968

[96]Bernard R. Berelson, Paul F. Lazarsfeld and William N. McPhee, *Voting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954); Kurt Lang and Gladys Engel Lang, "The Mass Media and Voting," in *Reader in Public Opinion and Communication*, 2d ed., ed. Bernard Berelson and Morris Janowitz (New York: Free Press, 1966).

presidential campaign.[97] The agenda-setting approach has been used to understand the relationship between, for example, drug policy, information campaigns and public opinion[98]; but its assumptions have also been sharply criticized for accepting the hegemonic function of elites to define the acceptable boundaries of opinion on drug policy, and for "cashing in" by arguing that the media should reinforce those boundaries.[99]

The media in general and the news narrative in particular influence audience opinion, but macro influences such as culture, politics and the audience also form a structure which in turn informs the media, its conventions, and its language.[100] To understand the prevalence of

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[97]Maxwell E. McCombs and Donald L. Shaw, "The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 36 (1972): 176-187. Many of the studies in *Communication Campaigns About Drugs* were in this tradition. Another study of the drug issue analyzed it as it cycled through the media, presidential policy statements and public opinion. William J. Gonzenbach, *The Media, The President, and Public Opinion* (Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc., 1996). This reciprocal process of influence is more aptly referred to as "agenda-building." Gladys E. Lang and Kurt Lang, *The Battle for Public Opinion: The President, the Press, and the Polls during Watergate* (NY: Columbia University Press, 1983), 58-59.

[98]Shaw, Donald L. and Maxwell E. McCombs, "Dealing with Illicit Drugs: The Power--and Limits--of Mass Media Agenda Setting," in *Communication Campaigns about Drugs*, 113-20.

[99]Reeves and Campbell, *Cracked Coverage*, 22-23.

[100]Gamson and Modigliani put it this way: "Each system interacts with the other: media discourse is part of the process by which individuals construct meaning, and public opinion is part of the process by which journalists and other cultural entrepreneurs develop and crystallize meaning in public discourse." "Media Discourse and Public Opinion," 2.

particular frames, attention must be paid to the preference the news narrative gives to one frame over others and to the underlying organizational and structural factors involved.[101]

In addition to asking *how does the news tell us what to think about* (agenda-setting), we might ask: *How does a given frame stay on (if prevalent), become part of (if challenging), or drop out of, the news agenda?* Following the idea of the balance norm discussed in the previous section on the news narrative, an important final measure of the success of a frame in the news is its relative prevalence over other frames within individual news stories. As Gamson pointed out:

> We should recognize that there are multiple "senders" in most news reports. The reporter or anchor person suggests a story line in the lead and closing; the sources quoted suggest frames in sound bites or interviews used during the broadcast. For many events, there may be more than one frame suggested, and one needs to ask questions about the prominence of competing frames in the same news report.[102]

Frame-building, then, can happen when *frame sponsors*, through their interpretations of news *events*, create or modify news frames to define a given issue or set of related issues. News frames are created or modified 1) to respond

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[101]Shoemaker and Reese emphasize the need to focus communication research more on "larger questions of power, values, and social structures." *Mediating the Message*, 24. In social science terms, this makes the narrative the dependent variable, rather than an independent variable affecting another dependent variable (the audience).

[102]Gamson, "News as Framing," 158.

to a new competing frame (or resurgence of an old one), 2) to frame an emerging event with high news value, or 3) to bolster public attention to a frame that has lost its resonance.[103] Building new frames may hinge on the identification of a new problem or a new aspect to a previously recognized problem. Generally, sources will search for the most culturally resonant mix of *linked components* -- *problem*, *causal agent*, *moral evaluation*, and *solution* -- in order to facilitate the *prevalence* of a particular integrated frame *over time*. In general, a frame is successful if reporters *approach and present* a story or event in that frame's terms, and especially if those terms are already news-tested or resonant. The following graphic shows how, through newsworthy events, frame sponsors (with framing components) can become sources (promoting integrated frames). The feedback loop illustrates the importance of studying this process over time:

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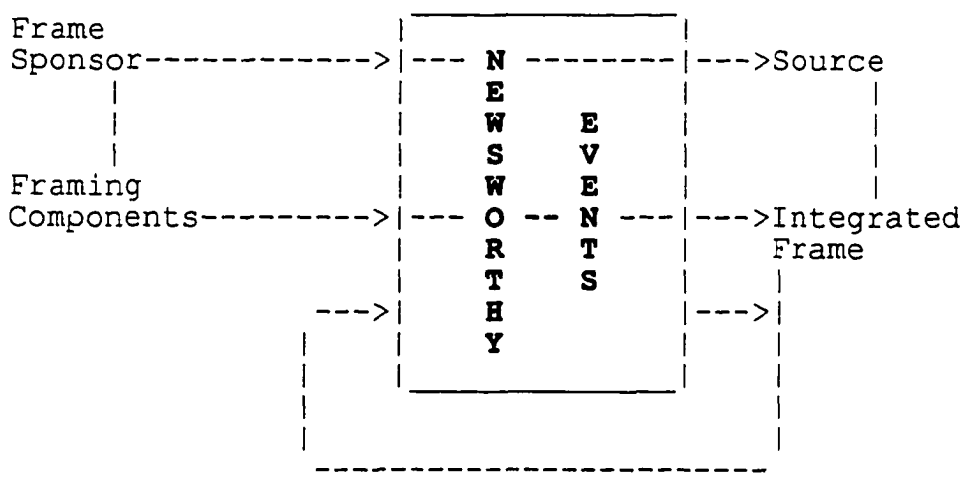
[103]Again, resonance refers to the relationship between news frames and cultural frames, which Entman suggests are "the empirically demonstrable set of common frames exhibited in the discourse and thinking of most people in a social grouping." "Framing: Toward Clarification," 53.

Figure 1.2: Frame-Building Through Newsworthy Events



A frame can prevail as its sponsors become common sources, as events arise in the news and then become background information in subsequent stories, and as the narrative links the important framing components. References to past events in news stories helps to influence and determine later frames. How does the history of the marijuana issue, and its framing, present a case for studying this process?

A history of marijuana frames

In spite of the fact that there was "no public outcry or popular crusade against marijuana,"[104] national governing authorities initiated and defined it as a problem in the 1930s. Since then, oppositional frames have always had to

[104]Malcolm Spector and John I. Kitsuse, *Constructing Social Problems* (Menlo Park, CA: Cummings, 1977), 155.

work against government-promoted ones. The federal government effectively prohibited the use of marijuana in 1937,[105] despite the research record, which up to that time indicated no serious medical, individual or social dangers from the drug.[106] The major study by the so-called LaGuardia Commission that analyzed recreational marijuana use in New York City in the 1940s came to similar conclusions, as did the Shafer Commission created by President Nixon and the report of the National Research Council during the Reagan administration.[107] The recommendations of these reports --

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[105]The history, sociology and politics of the debates in the 1930s leading to the Marijuana Tax Act of 1937 are addressed in many works. Chief among them are Howard S. Becker, *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*, (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963); Richard J. Bonnie and Charles H. Whitebread II, *The Marihuana Conviction: A History of Marihuana Prohibition in the United States* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1974); Himmelstein, *The Strange Career;* John C. McWilliams, *The Protectors: Harry J. Anslinger and the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1930-1962* (Newark, University of Delaware Press, 1990); Kenneth J. Meier, *The Politics of Sin: Drugs, Alcohol, and Public Policy* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1994); Larry Sloman, *Reefer Madness* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1979).

[106]The Indian Hemp Drugs Commission (1890s) and the Panama Canal Zone studies (1916-1929) were the two most reliable reports. Theodore R. Vallance, *Prohibition's Second Failure: The Quest for a Rational and Humane Drug Policy* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993), 144.

[107]Mayor's Committee on Marihuana, George B. Wallace, Chairman, *The Marihuana Problem in the City of New York: Sociological, Medical, Psychological, and Pharmacological Studies* (Lancaster, PA: Jacques Cattell Press, 1945); Raymond P. Shafer, Chairman, *Marihuana: A Signal of Misunderstanding. First Report of the National Commission on Marihuana and Drug Abuse* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1972); National Research Council, *An Analysis of Marijuana Policy* (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1982).

an end to complete prohibition -- were repeatedly ignored by policymakers.

Instead the federal government has periodically tightened its grip on marijuana.[108] National marijuana policy is governed by the so-called Controlled Substances Act (1970) which revised the nation's drug policy in part by setting a schedule governing the legal status of all controlled substances. The act placed marijuana in the most restrictive category, Schedule I, along with 81 other drugs, including heroin.[109]

Marijuana since 1991

Table 1.1 lists the major marijuana-related events narrated in the news from 1992 through 1997. The table shows the rise of concern over youth drug use in 1994 and the success of the movement to make marijuana available to the ill in 1996; interspersed throughout the period are other events that gave rise to different news frames.

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[108]For a list of major federal legislation, see Bonnie and Whitebread, *The Marihuana Conviction*, 210; Meier, *The Politics of Sin*, 35; Vallance, *Prohibition's Second Failure*, 135-40.

[109]Drugs in Schedule I, by definition of the act, have "a high potential for abuse," "no currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States," and lack "accepted safety for use . . . under medical supervision." *Comprehensive Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Act of 1970, Statutes at Large*, 84, sec. 202, 1247 (1971).

Table 1.1: Timeline of Events Related to the Marijuana Issue.

1992

Jan Feb	DEA affirms decision to keep marijuana in Schedule I
Mar	Bush administration ends expansion of program providing marijuana for the ill, which caps the number of people legally using pot at 12. Governor Clinton admits using pot during his campaign for president.
Apr May	
June July	
Aug	San Francisco passes resolution to make arrests for medical use of marijuana "lowest priority." Republican Richard Cowan named new executive director of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML).
Sep Oct Nov	Los Angeles sheriff's deputies kill Donald Scott in his Malibu home during marijuana raid. No illegal drugs are found.
Dec	Joycelyn Elders says as Surgeon General she'll support medical use

Table 1.1 (continued):

1993

Jan	
Feb Mar	
Apr May	
June July	
Aug Sep	California legislature votes 2-1 in favor of allowing medical use
Oct Nov	
Dec	

1994

Jan	The University of Michigan's annual Monitoring the Future survey (paid for by the Department of Health and Human Services) is released, reports rising use of illegal drugs, including marijuana, by children in 8th, 10th and 12th grades for the first time since late 1970s
Feb Mar	
Apr May	Columbia court legalizes drug use, is reversed by the government.
June July	
Aug Sep	Los Angeles sheriff's deputies raid West Hollywood marijuana club
Oct Nov	
Dec	Monitoring the Future survey reports marijuana use up 6 percentage points among 8th and 10th graders and 4 points among 12th graders

Table 1.1 (continued):

1995

Jan	
Feb Mar	
Apr May	
June July	
Aug Sep Oct	Annual National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA) for 1994 (also paid for by HHS) reports marijuana use among children aged 12-17 up from 4% in 1992 to 7.3% in 1994.
Nov Dec	Monitoring the Future survey reports marijuana use among 8th, 10th and 12th graders continues to rise

Table 1.1 (continued):

1996

Jan	Leading conservative William F. Buckley renews calls for legalizing narcotics in a *National Review* editorial and series of articles
Feb	
Mar	
Apr	
May	
June	
July	
Aug	California state drug agents raid Cannabis Buyers Club in San Francisco. Sheriff refuses to enforce court order to shut it down. NHSDA reports marijuana use among children aged 12-17 up almost one point, to 8.2% in 1995.
Sep	
Oct	California Attorney General Dan Lungren calls on newspapers to stop running *Doonesbury*, due to its satire of his opposition to Proposition 215.
Nov	Voters approve Propositions 215 (California) and 200 (Arizona), legalizing marijuana for medical use
Dec	Monitoring the Future survey reports marijuana use up again for 8th, 10th and 12th graders. Federal officials threaten to take away prescription-writing privileges and prosecute doctors if they recommend marijuana

Table 1.1 (continued):

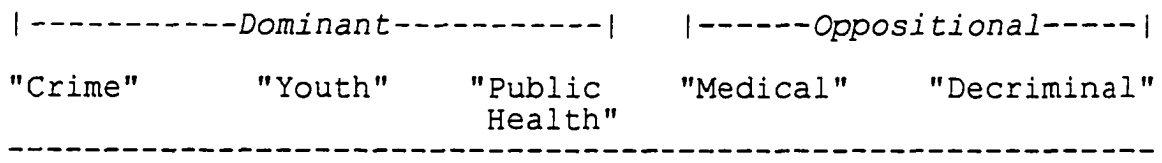
1997

Jan	White House says it will spend $1 million to study marijuana's use as a medicine. San Francisco judge says Cannabis Buyers Club may reopen. Group of doctors and patients files suit to block federal action. claiming First Amendment protects them. Dr. Jerome Kassirer editorializes in favor of medical marijuana in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, attacks federal policy as "inhumane."
Feb	Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agents question doctor in California for recommending marijuana to three patients
Mar	San Jose announces plans to include marijuana clubs in zoning regulations, just like businesses. American Medical Association (AMA) calls for end to legal battles, more research into medical marijuana; releases guidelines for doctors to discuss it with patients.
Apr	Federal district judge issues restraining order, then preliminary injunction, halting federal action against doctors. Arizona state senate passes bill requiring Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval of illegal drugs, reversing legal impact of Proposition 200. DEA agents raid a marijuana club for the first time since Proposition 215 passed.
May June	
July Aug	NHSDA reports marijuana use among children aged 12-17 declined in 1996. Joseph Califano's Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse releases a study claiming use to be climbing still. Report for NIH recommends more research into marijuana's potential as medicine.
Sep	
Oct Nov	Researchers report cannabinoids proven to relieve pain
Dec	AMA delegates pass resolution in favor of free discussion of marijuana with patients. California state appeals court reinstates injunction against Cannabis Buyers Club, saying the law prohibits selling marijuana.

Based on previous studies of the drug war, news coverage, and marijuana frames, we might expect to see five general frames of marijuana in recent media coverage: *crime, threat to youth, public health, medicalization,* and

decriminalization.[110] Each of these frames is rooted in principles in the larger culture beyond the marijuana issue itself, and each is comprised of the four components of *problem, cause, moral evaluation,* and *solution*.[111]

The basic continuum of these five marijuana frames may be presented graphically as follows:



CONTINUUM OF ISSUE FRAMES

The relative weight and interaction of these frames over time, and the proportion of *problem, cause, solution* and *evaluation* components, influence which policy options are considered appropriate. Because it is sensitive to the weighting of frames, this conception may enable a researcher to identify the interaction of frames with one another and the melding of frames over time into new frames, with predictable policy outcomes (at least in terms of possible policy choices). Also, the idea of a frame continuum is important because it allows for the competition of frames

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[110]Vallance suggests a continuum of "governing ideas about drugs," in *Prohibition's Second Failure*, 9. I use this continuum (from *crime* as the most restrictive frame of marijuana, to *decriminalization* as least restrictive) to arrange an *ordinal* ranking of the news frames about marijuana. (In this sense restrictiveness refers to the amount of force society is willing to use to control certain behaviors.)

[111]See Table 1.2 for a list of the frames and components used in the coding.

within a dominant or opposition frame structure, not just competition *between* dominant and oppositional frames. This continuum may better indicate each frame's underlying principles and assumptions. The various historical perspectives of marijuana may be described using the five frames on the continuum.

Dominant frames[112]

The 'crime' frame. Some frames of an issue have more cultural resonance than others: that is, "their ideas and language resonate with larger cultural themes."[113] Such frames "appear natural and familiar."[114] The *crime* frame of marijuana is such a frame because of the traditional attraction mainstream media have for crime stories and their role in punishing deviance, a larger cultural theme. The origins of the criminal approach to marijuana have been attributed, depending on the source, to racism against Mexicans and blacks on the part of law enforcement officials[115]; "moral entrepreneurship" on the part of Harry

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[112]Each of these three frames are usually represented in separate chapters of the primary statement of the national government's drug policy. The White House, *National Drug Control Strategy: Reclaiming Our Communities From Drugs and Violence* (Washington, D.C.: Office of National Drug Control Policy, 1994).

[113]Gamson and Modigliani, "Media Discourse," 5.

[114]Ibid.

[115]John Helmer, *Drugs and Minority Oppression* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), 54-79. See also David F. Musto, *The American Disease: Origins of Narcotic Control* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 219-223. Himmelstein refers

Anslinger, commissioner of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics[116]; and a wave of state legislative anti-marijuana sentiment created by the commissioner himself in his promotion of the Uniform Narcotic Drugs Act.[117]

In the last few decades, an entire "drug war-dependent" culture[118] (the set of laws, regulations and societal norms, and the people and organizations devoted to them) has grown to support the continued national prohibition of marijuana and other drugs.[119] Narcotics officials have long emphasized the perceived link between marijuana use, harder drugs, deviance and violent crimes such as murder, and thus helped justify the outlawing of marijuana to maintain social order and to fight crime.

The *crime* frame, likely the most common in the mainstream media,[120] may identify a range of problems and causal agents, including marijuana itself, drug-related

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to Helmer's view as the "Mexican Hypothesis," *The Strange Career*, 27-30.

[116]Becker, *Outsiders*, 135-163.

[117]Himmelstein, *The Strange Career*, 27-30, 52-59.

[118]Vallance, *Prohibition's Second Failure*, 13.

[119]This group includes governmental agencies such as the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), as well as state and local law enforcement, but also other public and private-sector professions supporting (and dependent on) this culture of control and prohibition: a large number of judicial branch workers, academics, journalists, treatment professionals, insurance companies and drug-testing and security services. Ibid.

[120]Leweke, "Drug Problems."

crime, or users, but most problems identified will be in terms of the illegality of marijuana and its relationship (and that of its users) to the law. This frame may also link the marijuana problem to violence.[121] The recommended solutions will be within the confines of prohibition and police enforcement; moral evaluations may tend to focus on the inherent transgression of marijuana and its users as outside the bounds of normalized society, and especially to contrast the former with law-abiding citizens and police officers.

The 'threat to youth' frame. The threat of marijuana (and many other drugs) to *youth*, especially *our youth*, has been used as a powerful framing device by drug officials and also by concerned interest groups to justify prohibition. This frame, like that of *crime*, resonates with the larger cultural theme of protecting children from evil or from the wrong path.[122] In the 1930s, drug agents sounded the alarm about a dangerous threat to the nation's innocent, law-abiding (white) youth that they said was posed by the lower

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[121]Himmelstein, *The Strange Career*, 46.

[122]The resonance of this frame for the mainstream news media is demonstrated by the hoax perpetrated on the staff of the *Washington Post* by reporter Janet Cooke. Cooke's terrifying story about an eight-year-old heroin addict was nominated by the *Post* for a Pulitzer Prize, despite the staff's inability to confirm the existence of the boy or any others in his situation in the Washington, D.C. area. "Jimmy's World" first ran on 28 September 1980. This and many other incidents of the media accepting outrageous claims and statistics about youth drug use without skepticism are recounted by Dan Baum in *Smoke and Mirrors: The War on Drugs and the Politics of Failure* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1996).

classes and minorities such as Southwest Mexicans and blacks who used the drug.[123] These groups, as Commissioner Anslinger himself wrote with co-author Will Oursler, threatened "America's fresh, post-depression crop of teen-agers."[124]

Since then, drug officials and their political supporters have shifted the frame of marijuana's threat to youth: from the dark dangers of a lower-class drug (1930s), later to a "stepping-stone" to harder drugs in the 1950s,[125] then as an amotivational ("drop-out") drug in the 1960s-70s.[126] It may be that the frame has come full circle: current drug officials have increasingly relied on the threat of marijuana as a gateway drug that easily leads youth to other drugs such as heroin (reminiscent of the "stepping-stone" arguments of the 1950s). The success of the parents' movement against even casual marijuana use and paraphernalia, beginning in the late 1970s, is evidence of the aims and policy results of the *threat to youth* frame.[127]

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[123]Himmelstein, *The Strange Career*, 65-67.

[124]Harry J. Anslinger and Will Oursler, *The Murderers: The Story of the Narcotic Gangs* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, 1961), 35.

[125]Himmelstein, *The Strange Career*, 84-89.

[126]Ibid., 122-130.

[127]Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, *Parents, Peers and Pot*, by Marsha Manatt, National Institute on Drug Abuse (Rockville, MD: National Institute on Drug Abuse, 1979); Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, *Parents, Peers and Pot II: Parents in Action*, by Marsha Manatt, National Institute on Drug Abuse (Rockville, MD: National Institute on Drug Abuse, 1983); for an account of

One prominent policy result (a solution in this frame) is the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) program involving local police in emphasizing the dangers of drugs, including marijuana, to public school children.

The 'public health' frame.[126] This frame presents marijuana (and illegal drugs generally) primarily as a threat to the public's health that deserves the attention of health control industries and agencies within the Department of Health and Human Services, such as the Public Health Service, the National Institute on Drug Abuse and others.[127] It is promoted by those agencies and by public health social movement organizations (SMOs) such as the Partnership for a Drug-Free America (PDFA), and by numerous state and local agencies in law enforcement and social welfare. These organizations and agencies share an interest in studying, and alerting the public to, the problems and health effects of drug use and abuse.

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the parents movement's success and influence in changing marijuana policy beginning in the late 1970s, see Baum, *Smoke and Mirrors*, 92-136.

[126]Both the *public health* frame and that of the *threat to youth* are less restrictive than that of *crime*, because the latter explicitly and more clearly encompasses the policy of prohibition. I consider the *youth* frame to be slightly more restrictive than the *public health* frame because it is more concerned with restricting behavior, and its history is closely linked with crime; however, this ranking is obviously problematic and not always clear.

[127]See Susan B. Lachter and Avraham Forman, "Drug Abuse in the United States," in *Communication Campaigns About Drugs*, 7-12; Avraham Forman and Susan B. Lachter, "The National Institute on Drug Abuse Cocaine Prevention Campaign," in *Communication Campaigns About Drugs*, 13-20.

The organizations and agencies in this category are likely to frame marijuana as a dangerous or harmful substance threatening individual and public health, especially in terms of the drug's clinical and social effects. The frame may favor identifying the drug, usage behaviors and social effects of use as the problems; individual users, addicts or dealers as the causal agents; and may focus the other aspects of the marijuana frame on addressing them, especially suggesting solutions such as public health information and education campaigns and treatment programs.[130]

Oppositional frames

The 'medicalization' frame. The *medicalization* frame is illustrated by this passage from *Confronting Drug Policy*: "Suppose the United States adopted a policy of medicalizing cocaine, heroin, marijuana, and other substances commonly called 'psychoactive substances of abuse.' Under such a policy these substances could be obtained on the prescription of a physician; when thus acquired, their possession or use would no longer be considered criminal offenses."[131] As this passage on drug policy shows, this frame may focus on the physician-patient relationship; it

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[130]Lachter and Forman, "Drug Abuse," 7-10.

[131]Robert J. Levine, "Medicalization of Psychoactive Substance Use and the Doctor-Patient Relationship," in *Confronting Drug Policy: Illicit Drugs in a Free Society*, ed. Ronald Bayer and Gerald M. Oppenheimer (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1993), 319.

views marijuana (and perhaps other illegal drugs) as a potential medicine (a *solution*) as long as it is under the control of physicians in consultation with their patients. It thus opposes total government prohibition (one possible *problem*, in addition to illness or suffering), but limits decriminalization to the boundaries of medical control (another *solution*).[132] This would require moving marijuana to Schedule II, allowing it to be used by prescription.

That almost happened as recently as 1992. In 1988, after years of legal and political pressure by medical use advocates, the administrative law judge for the Drug Enforcement Administration, the agency responsible for federal policy on controlled substances, ruled that "it would be *unreasonable, arbitrary, and capricious* for DEA" to not move marijuana to Schedule II for use by patients.[133]

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[132]Communication researcher Matthew McAllister has documented the changing perspective of AIDS in the 1980s in terms of the issue's "medicalization." This approach critically analyzes the influence of medicine as a form of social control, especially over groups defined as deviants by society. Matthew P. McAllister, "AIDS, Medicalization, and the News Media," in *AIDS: A Communication Perspective*, ed. Timothy Edgar, Mary Anne Fitzpatrick and Vicki S. Freimuth (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1992), 195-221. Reeves and Campbell's concept of the drug control establishment is similar, *Cracked Coverage*, 35-47.

[133]Opinion and Recommended Ruling, Marijuana Rescheduling Petition, Department of Justice, Docket 86-22, Washington, D.C.: Drug Enforcement Administration, 6 September 1988. Italics added.

The DEA overruled the judge's opinion and in 1992 it issued a final rejection of all requests for reclassification.[134]

To the extent that more and more elites in politics and the media see marijuana medicalization as a viable option (perhaps ameliorating or pacifying the push for more radical legalization), the more likely those groups pushing at least medicalization will become more acceptable, and newsworthy, as sources of information in news stories. As Gitlin observed: "The more closely the concerns and values of social movements coincide with the concerns and values of elites in politics and in media, the more likely they are to become incorporated in the prevailing news frames."[135] It follows that because of recent support for the medicalization of marijuana by authors writing in respected medical journals such as *JAMA*[136] and *The New England Journal of Medicine*,[137] for example, this frame may appear in mainstream news stories more frequently over time during the study period. This trend would reflect the identification of marijuana with the culturally resonant theme of leaving

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[134]Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration, Marijuana Scheduling Petition: Denial of Petition: Remand (Docket No. 86-22) Federal Register 1992; 57(59): 10489-508.

[135]Gitlin, *The Whole World*, 284.

[136]Lester Grinspoon and James B. Bakalar, "Marihuana as Medicine: A Plea for Reconsideration (Commentary)," *JAMA* 273 (21 June 1995): 1875-76.

[137]Jerome P. Kassirer, "Federal Foolishness and Marijuana (Editorial)," *The New England Journal of Medicine* 336 (30 January 1997): 366-7.

medical decisions up to doctors and their patients. The *medicalization* of marijuana is also linked to the political power of people with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome and their advocates.[138]

The 'decriminalization' frame. As another oppositional frame, this is chiefly a *counter-frame* opposing that of *crime.* As such, it tends to focus on the perceived failures of prohibition; more proactively, this frame also may emphasize the benefits of taking a "harm minimization"[139] approach to marijuana (and overall drug) policy, rather than all-out war and zero tolerance (again, this is in opposition to the crime frame). This frame also may cite perceived threats to individual liberty as special problems of current marijuana (and illegal drug) policy.[140]

This frame is therefore likely to concentrate on the problem of prohibition,[141] focusing causes on the government

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[138]Robert C. Randall, *Marijuana & AIDS: Pot, Politics & PWAs in America* (Washington, D.C.: Galen Press, 1991).

[139]Stephen B. Duke and Albert C. Gross, *America's Longest War* (New York: Putnam, 1993), 279-306.

[140]Milton Friedman, "An Open Letter to Bill Bennett," *Wall Street Journal,* 7 September 1989. See also Steven Wisotsky, *Beyond the War on Drugs* (Buffalo: Prometheus, 1990), 117-139; Arnold S. Trebach, *The Great Drug War* (New York: Macmillan, 1987): 179-213; Lester Grinspoon, *Marihuana Reconsidered,* 2d ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), 344-371.

[141]For example, Lois G. Forer, *A Rage To Punish: The Unintended Consequences of Mandatory Sentencing* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1994); David Boaz, ed., *The Crisis in Drug Prohibition* (Washington: CATO Institute, 1990); Duke and Gross, *America's Longest War;* Trebach, *The Great Drug War;* Wisotsky, *Beyond the War on Drugs.* This frame is also promoted by such SMOs as Families Against Mandatory Minimums

(or sometimes "drug warriors" in general[142]), recommending decriminalization (or all-out legalization[143]), and evaluating the issue in terms of various perceived social and political harms stemming from current policy.[144] This frame has rarely appeared in news headlines about the drug issue in recent years.[145] There is no reason to believe the minimal presence of this frame in the news has increased significantly regarding marijuana,[146] but the ongoing social advocacy on the part of the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) and other pro-legalization SMOs, as well as by scholars and some policy elites, may be changing the marijuana frames, especially with renewed attention to the issue in 1996.[147]

(FAMM).

[142]Richard L. Miller, *Drug Warriors and Their Prey* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1996).

[143]See Ed Rosenthal and Steve Kubby, *Why Marijuana Should Be Legal* (New York: Thunders Mouth Press, 1996); Richard L. Miller, *The Case for Legalizing Drugs* (New York: Praeger, 1991).

[144]Eva Bertram and others, *Drug War Politics: The Price of Denial*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

[145]Leweke, "Drug Problems." Although unusual, some journalists, freed of the constraints of the mainstream media, attack dominant frames of an issue. For example, see Baum, *Smoke and Mirrors*.

[146]However, the *problem* and *solution* components may have changed in response to the political situation as a strategy to gain acceptance. Robert J. MacCoun and others, "A Content Analysis of the Drug Legalization Debate," *Journal of Drug Issues* 23 (Fall 1993): 615-29.

[147]Chapter 4 will show what obstacles kept this frame from being built.

The following detailed descriptions of each frame come from the marijuana literature as summarized in the previous discussions.

Table 1.2: Five Marijuana Frames and the Possible Components of Each.

Crime

Problem	*Causal Agent*	*Solution*	*Evaluation*
Marijuana (illegal) Marijuana (as medicine) Marijuana use Marijuana distribution Pot-related crime Crime (no mention of marijuana) Violence Lack of support for law enforcement, prohibition General social chaos or mayhem Ballot referenda or political process	Marijuana users, dealers, or growers Anti-prohibition groups Physician or medical group Media Judge/judicial ruling	Police enforcement (general) Incarceration Civil forfeiture Eradication Prohibition Sanctions on doctors Propagation of anti-drug/ prohibition message Gov't mandated drug testing	Pot users, etc. are bad/deserving of punishment Those against prohibition are misinformed or have bad motives and threaten rule of law Cultural/media messages undermine prohibition Something in legal process works against law enforcement

Threat to Youth

Problem	*Causal Agent*	*Solution*	*Evaluation*
Youth pot use Youth addiction Youth attitudes Harm to kids' growth process Pot as gateway drug for kids Ballot referenda (sends wrong message) Lack of awareness by youth of dangers of pot	Young users themselves Parents Dealer/grower Pro-legalization group Pro-medicalization group Media Youth culture or the "wrong crowd"	Control thru schools Control thru parents/ family (other than testing) Peer group pressure Control thru society/ ads/ culture Home drug testing	Parents are responsible for kids' drug use Some kids good but are in danger from bad people pushing pot Youth users signify the drug problem Youth users are rebels/ need "normalizing"

Table 1.2 (continued):

Public Health

Problem	*Causal Agent*	*Solution*	*Evaluation*
Marijuana use Pot as gateway drug Addiction Health effects (long- and short-term) Economic costs (e.g. health care, etc.) Lack of awareness of pot's dangers Marijuana as unsafe/ unproven medicine	Users/dealers/ growers Pro-marijuana groups Pro-medicalization physicians "Buyer's clubs" Media	Money for drug treatment Drug testing (not necessarily by law) Media/public info campaign Disdain/shaming of users, etc. Marinol or other alternatives	Users are sick and deserve treatment Addiction is sign of weakness/ cry for help Pot use saps society of its resources Use/abuse results from ignorance

Medicalization

Problem	*Causal Agent*	*Solution*	*Evaluation*
Illness or suffering Prohibition (hurts ill) Gov't restrictions on doctors Gov't restrictions on research Gov't interference into doctor/patient relationship Recreational use threatens medical use	Federal agency State agency Medical board Medical professionals who oppose pot for medicine Politicians against medical marijuana Family/friends who shun medical users	Marijuana as medicine Allow pot for medicine (change in policy) Research into pot as medicine Doctor/patient control Free speech rights of doctors Lobbying or legal strategy	Gov't policy is cruel and harms defenseless ill Gov't threatens medical profession Govt threatens doctor/ patient relationship Those opposing pot for medicine are wrong/misinformed

Table 1.2 (continued):

Decriminalization

Problem	*Causal Agent*	*Solution*	*Evaluation*
Overcrowded prisons Disrespect for law Prohibition/ drug war Forfeiture laws Police enforcement Public acceptance of policy Loss of freedom	Federal government branches State officials Police/law enforcers Opponents of legalization Prosecutors Politicians/ policy-makers in general	Legalization/ decriminalization in general Democratic process Court strategy State action "Hemp" strategy/ more environmentalist image Marijuana itself/ pot culture	Gov't agencies/ officials threaten right to use marijuana Gov't enforcement is excessive or out of control Gov't agencies/ officials threaten overall civil/ individual liberties Gov't is fighting losing battle Gov't hasn't done enough to reform law

Research questions

First, to what degree are competing (e.g., *crime* versus *decriminalization*) frames present in individual news stories? How does the use of sources relate to the appearance and competition between frames? How do differing styles (including use of sources) among different types of media affect the frame? What sources dominated and how did they gain or lose framing power (e.g., by associating marijuana with other illegal drugs)?

Second, how did sources and journalists use events to frame the issue? In which frames were sources, through news events, most successful integrating the components of *problem*, *cause*, *evaluation*, and *solution* together in

individual stories? Which components were most important for building a given frame?

Finally, which frames dominated (in terms of lack of competition from other frames within stories, or prominence in news coverage)? Were either of the oppositional frames able to dominate coverage, and if so, why, and for how long? What are the implications for building frames over time?

Limitations

In answering these questions, it was beyond the scope of this analysis to address influences such as distinct newsroom policies of the outlets studied and their effect on the framing process, for example. Similarly, the specific effects, if any, of framing on resulting policies are not within the bounds of the study, although an attempt is made to suggest the policy implications of the framing process.

Also, as the next chapter on method explains, the coding was limited to one person. The limits this imposes on the analysis are therefore more strict than if the coding was spread across more coders whose agreement on measuring variables could be determined and accounted for. On the other hand, by concentrating the work in the hands of one researcher this project allowed a deeper qualitative look into the latent content of the texts and its implications for framing. In addition, steps were taken, including review by an outside observer, to maximize both the validity and reliability of the coding.

The next chapter describes in more detail the steps taken to assure a sound approach in answering the research questions.

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CHAPTER II

METHOD

The news media

To address the research questions, an analysis was conducted of the content of leading national newspapers, news magazines, television news transcripts and specialized periodicals from 1992 through 1997.[1] This six-year period covers the recent renewal of marijuana as a social, political, medical and cultural issue through two presidential elections, three congressional elections and the ballot initiatives in California and Arizona.

Three newspapers were analyzed: The *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and *USA Today*. Previous media studies have found that the *New York Times* influences other print outlets, which then influence the television networks in their selection of news stories, including those about the

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[1]At least one analysis suggests that different types of mainstream national news media (print versus broadcast) use different sources who may provide different types of information (and perhaps different frames) on breaking stories. For example, broadcast news media may rely more on government officials for crisis news information than do their print counterparts, such as the *New York Times*. Dominic L. Lasorsa and Stephen D. Reese, "News Source Use in the Crash of 1987: a Study of Four National Media," *Journalism Quarterly* 67 (Spring 1990): 60-71.

illegal drug issue.[2] The *New York Times*' daily (Monday-Friday) circulation is 1.1 million; Saturday is 1.0 million; and Sunday is 1.6 million net paid.[3] The *Los Angeles Times* is the leading daily on the west coast; it was also selected because of its proximity to the political movements in California and Arizona to allow marijuana for medical use in 1996.[4] The *Los Angeles Times*' circulation is comparable to that of the *New York Times*: 1.1 million daily, 1.0 million Saturday, and 1.4 million net paid on Sunday.[5] Finally, *USA Today* has grown to be one of the largest general interest daily newspapers in the U.S., and bills itself as the nation's newspaper. As of the first quarter 1998, *USA Today*'s daily (Monday-Thursday) net paid circulation was more than 1.7 million, nearly tying the *Wall Street Journal*'s 1.8 million.[6]

Two weekly news magazines were also included: *Time* and *Newsweek*. *Time* is the top weekly news magazine with more

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[2]Reese and Danielian, "Intermedia Influence," 41.

[3]*SRDS Newspaper Advertising Source* 80 (December 1998), 5.

[4]Coverage by the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times* from 1972 to 1986 accounted for nearly half of the variance in public concern about the drug issue during that time. Pamela J. Shoemaker, Wayne Wanta and Dawn Leggett, "Drug Coverage and Public Opinion, 1972-1986," in *Communication Campaigns About Drugs*, 67-80.

[5]*SRDS Newspaper Advertising Source* 80 (December 1998), 69.

[6]Ibid., 5-9.

than 4.1 million in sales.[7] *Newsweek* is second with more than 3.2 million.[8] Also, the transcripts of ABC's *World News Tonight* were analyzed. These were readily available through the NEXIS retrieval system.[9] For much of the 1990s, *World News Tonight* has held the top ratings spot among the three traditional network evening news broadcasts, and is highly respected in the broadcast news industry.[10] In Fall 1995 *World News Tonight* maintained a rating of more than 10 points (as a percentage of all households with televisions) and a share approaching 20 percent (of sets in use). NBC's *Nightly News* held second place and CBS's *Evening News* was third.[11]

Finally, three specialized magazines were analyzed: the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *National Review* and *Rolling Stone*. All three outlets published articles, analysis or editorial commentary on the marijuana (and illegal drug) issue during the study period. Two of these specialized publications are among the most commonly cited in mainstream stories about

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[7] *SRDS Consumer Magazine Advertising Source* 80 (December 1998), 686.

[8] Ibid., 682.

[9] Although an analysis of the video images was not possible, the written text was used as a guide for the prevailing frames.

[10] "NBC Nightly News tops nets," *Broadcasting & Cable*, 15 September 1997, 46. Despite the title, the article recounts *World News Tonight's* dominance in the ratings through most of the 1990s.

[11] *Hollywood Reporter*, 22 November 1995. See also "ABC News Rolls with Punches," *Broadcasting & Cable*, 10 February 1997, 33-34.

illegal drugs.[12] And *Rolling Stone* may set the media agenda for stories dealing with "anti-establishment" or "counter culture" issues, such as illegal drugs.[13]

These three publications have different missions and more targeted audiences than the mainstream outlets, and so should purposefully take a different approach to stories. The specialized publications, aiming at better educated, more select or more segmented audiences, tailor their journalism to appeal to the specific political tastes or world view of those audiences (whether liberal, conservative, etc.), rather than to the mainstream. For example, the *Atlantic Monthly* emphasizes coverage of "the many aspects of a well-balanced lifestyle" and "the important issues of the day,"[14] without reference to delivering the "news." Similarly, the *National Review* "focuses on political, social and cultural developments,"[15] and *Rolling Stone* aims at "young adults who have a special

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[12]The *Atlantic Monthly* and the *National Review* are cited often in the *New York Times*, not just for stories about illegal drugs. From 1992 to the end of 1996, the *Atlantic Monthly* was mentioned 319 times, 38 times in drug stories; the *National Review* 184, with 25 drug stories. NEXIS (Mead Data), 21 May 1997. The *National Review* was also chosen because of its long-standing editorial support for decriminalization of marijuana, beginning in the 8 December 1972 issue ("American Conservatives Should Revise Their Position on Marijuana" by Richard Cowan).

[13]Susan H. Miller, "Reporters and Congressmen: Living in Symbiosis," *Journalism Monographs* 53 (January 1978), 17.

[14]*SRDS Consumer Magazine Advertising Source* 81 (February 1999), 414.

[15]Ibid., 736.

interest in popular culture, particularly music, film and politics."[16] In contrast, *Time* and *Newsweek*, as well as the newspapers and *World News Tonight*, style their journalism according to a more traditional definition of news. Unlike the specialized publications, *Time* and *Newsweek* in their editorial profiles use the term "news" more than once to describe their approach to journalism.[17]

Selection of stories

Using a consistent list of key words,[18] articles from each outlet in the study period were selected from NEXIS for coding based on the following criteria:

1) The headline mentioned marijuana; or,

2) marijuana was mentioned in the first paragraph; or,

3) marijuana was mentioned throughout the article.

Generally, stories pulled up by the key word search were *not* selected for the analysis if:

1) The headline did not mention marijuana or drugs at all; and,

2) marijuana was mentioned only once, sporadically, or not until end of article; and,

3) marijuana was mentioned only casually or as incidental to the story.

Although all identified stories in the weekly news

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[16]Ibid.

[17]Ibid., 679.

[18]"Marijuana," "marihuana," "cannabis," and "THC."

magazines, specialized publications, and ABC news transcripts were coded, the initial search of the newspapers retrieved several hundred articles, more than could be analyzed by one coder. In order to reduce the units of observation to a manageable level, the population of newspaper articles about marijuana (excluding editorials and letters to the editor) were identified for each of the three newspapers.

After the total population of articles was collected and listed, it was decided to sample articles from the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times* populations. A die was thrown to determine a random starting place for a systematic sample[19] of every third article in the *New York Times* population and every second article in the *Los Angeles Times* population (only articles in the "Home Edition" of the *Los Angeles Times* were included in the population, to avoid duplication of articles and to ensure the availability of articles on microfilm). The die came up six on the first throw for the *New York Times*, so the sample began with the third article (six being the first multiple of three). The *Los Angeles Times* sample began with the first article in the list (a one was thrown; any odd number used to start with

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[19]See Bruce L. Berg, *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, 3rd ed. (Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1998), 228. I decided against using a constructed sample for the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times* because the sampled coverage might not have been representative of the time period. See Laura Ashley and Beth Olson, "Constructing Reality: Print Media's Framing of the Women's Movement, 1966 to 1986," *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* 75 (Summer 1998), 265.

the first article, any even number to start with the second article). The total sample yielded 545 articles from all outlets.

Once the coding population was selected, stories were also coded for the prominence of marijuana, to further filter out those not related to the issue. This final selection yielded 503 articles in which marijuana was either central to the story or part of another related issue; these articles provided the basis for the analysis. The following table shows the number of stories by outlet.

Table 2.1: Number of Coded Stories with Marijuana Central or Part of Another Related Issue, by Outlet

Publication	*Coded Stories*	*Percent*
New York Times	126	25.0%
Los Angeles Times	137	27.2
USA Today	128	25.4
Time	22	4.4
Newsweek	25	5.0
World News Tonight	41	8.2
Atlantic Monthly	3	.6
National Review	8	1.6
Rolling Stone	13	2.6
	503	100.0

Variables

To address the research questions, the following aspects of each story or article were coded or recorded:

1) Frames and their components; comparison or contrast to other drugs:

The frames and their sources were analyzed by coding each

paragraph for the four components of the frame. In addition, a tally was made for each mention of other illegal drugs when they were either compared to marijuana (as dangerous or Schedule I drugs) or contrasted with or differentiated from marijuana. The headline was also recorded. Finally, a section of the coding sheet was set aside to record any common catch phrases and descriptive modifying words (especially adjectives) used to describe marijuana and its users.

2) Changes over time; selection and salience of articles:

The date of the publication or broadcast was coded. Also, measures of the prominence of each story was taken: whether it was a cover story (magazines), on the front page (newspapers) or in the lead (ABC); the page number (print); section number (newspapers); type of story (hard news, feature, etc.); number of photos, and the caption(s) (print); number of paragraphs.

3) Frames from quoted or paraphrased sources:

Each quote or paraphrase used by the journalist was coded for its frame; the name of the source and the type of source (government official, document, physician, marijuana user, etc.) was also recorded. Also, the byline was recorded for each article to generate a list of reporters and writers.

Coding[20]

Content analysis is not merely positivist and reductionist (Reese, for example, argues against traditional content analysis for a framing study[21]). Well-designed content analysis is a good way of organizing, clarifying and structuring textual information,[22] and is very useful for making inferences about the senders of messages, given a properly grounded and defined study.[23]

Successful content analysis, to draw as much meaning from the material as possible, should include measures of both manifest (surface) and latent (thematic) content.[24] When coding themes, beyond a certain level of distinction each paragraph in each article might be given its own unique code, because no two paragraphs are exactly the same. So a limited number of categories must be constructed and then adhered to during the coding. Each category necessarily is somewhat broad and can include nuances that can be studied only by going past the categories themselves and into the individual distinctions. This was the purpose of the qualitative analysis.

Many paragraphs (especially in the magazines) had more

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[20]Appendix A contains a copy of the coding instrument and instructions.

[21]Reese, "Framing Public Life," 9-10.

[22]Berg, *Qualitative Research Methods*, 225.

[23]Ibid., 227.

[24]Ibid., 226.

than one sentence. When sentences within a paragraph did not reflect the same frame, the coding focused on the most important sentence or sentences. For example, a paragraph using the first sentence(s) to lead up to a point made by the last sentence determined the code assigned.

When a paragraph contained one sentence, the main part (containing subject, verb and object) was used to code. For example, in the following lead sentence the first 10 words indicate one frame; they serve as a dependent clause (beginning with the word "while") for the main part of the sentence, which indicates another frame:

"While Colombian artists and students fired up joints to celebrate, a decision by the country's highest court to legalize consumption of marijuana and cocaine has thrown officials into a tailspin."[25] In this case, the main part of the sentence (beginning with "a decision...") determined the codes assigned for the *problem* (general social chaos), the *cause* (judicial ruling), *solution* (none), and *moral evaluation* (judicial process works against law enforcement).

Validity and intra-coder reliability

The coding rules were designed to assure both validity (measuring the things that would answer the research questions) and reliability (measuring consistently). In order to check the validity of the measures, an independent

[25]"Ruling Legalizing Drugs Leaves Many Colombians in a Tizzy," *Los Angeles Times*, 20 May 1994, A7.

reviewer who was familiar with the project evaluated the coding of 10 stories, which were selected through a systematic sample of all articles starting at the article number selected randomly by the reviewer.[26]

The results of the independent review were as follows: The 10 stories contained a total of 115 paragraphs, or 460 frame components (4 for each paragraph). Agreement was reached on 98.3% (452) of the components (8 disagreements). On all other measures, the agreement was 100%.

Because one person performed all the coding it was necessary to check "the same coder at different times"[27] to ensure the "stability of coding."[28] Ten stories were selected in the same manner as above after all stories in the study sample were coded.[29] These articles were coded again in the same manner. Out of 126 paragraphs (504 frame components), there was a mismatch of coded framing components 23 times, with matches on the other 481 (a .95

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[26]The reviewer was a doctoral student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The articles reviewed were numbers 249, 303, 357, 411, 465, 519, 28, 82, 136, and 190.

[27]Alan Beardsworth, "Analyzing Press Content: Some Technical and Methodological Issues," in *The Sociology of Journalism and the Press*, ed. Harry Christian (University of Keele, 1980), 382.

[28]Daniel Riffe, Stephen Lacy and Frederick G. Fico, *Analyzing Media Messages: Using Quantitative Content Analysis in Research* (Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1998), 123.

[29]Another person randomly chose a number to begin selection of the articles for coding, which were numbers 462, 516, 25, 79, 133, 187, 241, 295, 349, and 403.

coefficient of reliability).[30] Out of the 23 mismatches, 16 were disagreements about either whether there was a particular framing component in the paragraph, or which frame the component constituted (e.g., from *crime* to *youth*). The only other disagreement in the reliability check was a single mismatch on the "article focus" variable (local versus national). The agreement reached on all other aspects of the coding was 100%, including the coding of sources and source frames.

The coding and analysis revealed interesting answers to the research questions. The next chapter discusses the general quantitative trends regarding sources, frames and frame-building over the study period. Chapters 4-6 will add a more detailed qualitative look at the influence of each of the five frames over the marijuana narrative.

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[30]A formula to account for chance agreement between separate codings of the *problem* component yielded a Scott's index of reliability (*pi*) of .91. See Ole R. Holsti, *Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and Humanities* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1969), 140-41.

CHAPTER III

GENERAL TRENDS

Early in the study period, some mainstream stories granted the *medical* or *decriminalization* frames significant attention in the narrative. Several in-depth stories questioned drug policy and the war on marijuana in particular. For example, reporters critically addressed the federal government's decision to stop adding more recipients to its marijuana program for sufferers of AIDS and other illnesses. Stories also began to cover the rise of the grassroots movement to legalize pot for medicinal uses.

But the *crime* frame provided a nearly constant backdrop throughout the period, often in stories covering the police, sports and entertainment. Year by year the *crime* frame accounted for more of the coverage than other frames most of the time. *Crime* stories appeared more regularly than the others.

Also, in 1993 the government reported an increase in the use of marijuana and other illegal drugs among the young, the first such increase reported since the late 1970s.[1] As a result, the *threat to youth* frame effectively

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[1]National Institute on Drug Abuse, *National Survey Results on Drug Use From the Monitoring the Future Study* (Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human

took over much of the marijuana narrative until the medical use movement regained media attention in 1996.

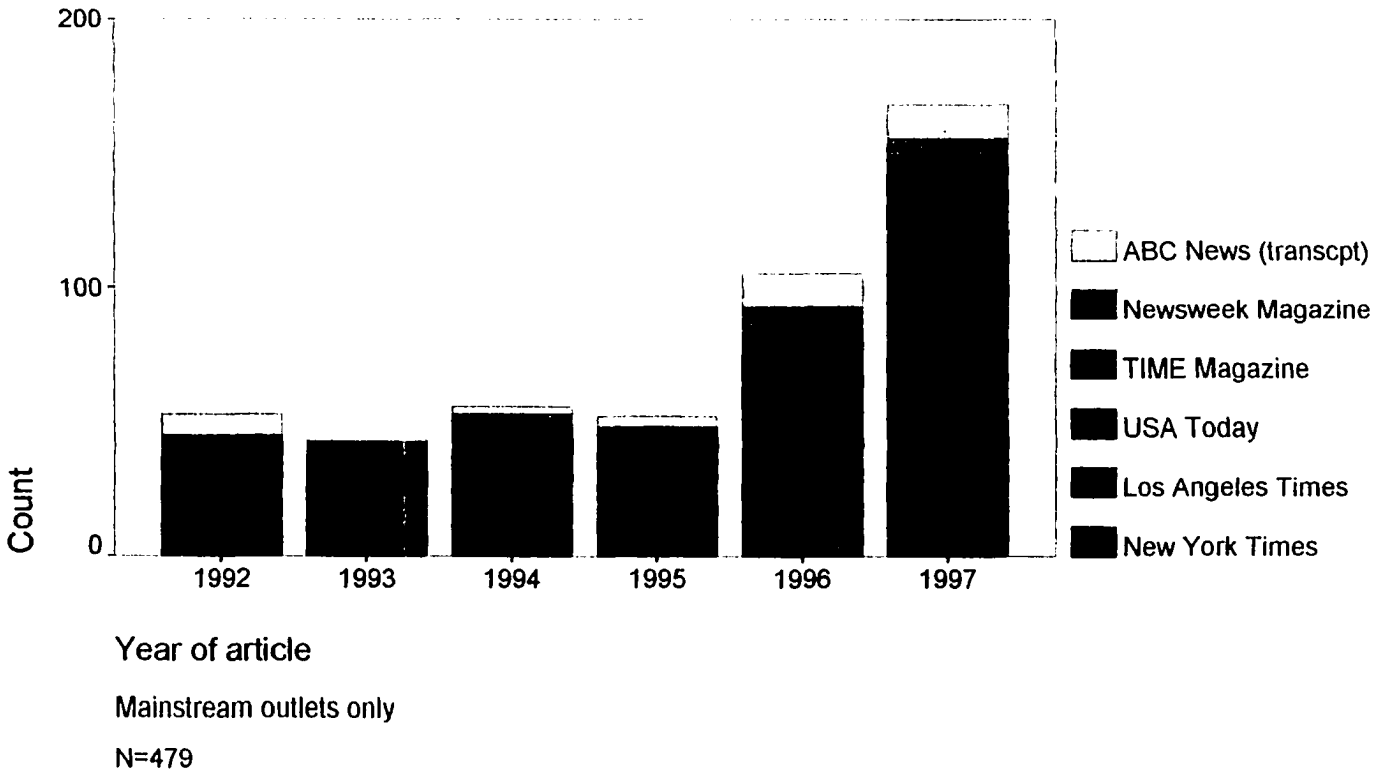
This chapter will explore the overall trends in the framing of marijuana over the study period, in terms of 1) the activity and use of sources and their influence over framing events; 2) the integration of the four framing components within stories and paragraphs; and 3) the prevalence of some frames over alternative frames within individual news stories, and over time. The next three chapters continue that detailed approach toward the *decriminalization*, *crime*, *threat to youth*, *medical*, and *public health* frames, and how successfully each was built.

Competing frames over time and among outlets

As Figure 3.1 shows, the number of mainstream stories about the marijuana issue greatly increased from around 50 stories each year from 1992 through 1995, to over 100 stories in 1996 and over 150 in 1997. The increases were due mainly to coverage of youth drug use and of the medical marijuana movements in California and Arizona. Figure 3.2 shows the number of paragraphs (to account for varying story length) by frame; as a whole the *crime* frame prevailed throughout the period. The greatest contention between competing frames -- especially between *medical* and *crime* -- occurred in late 1996 and early 1997.

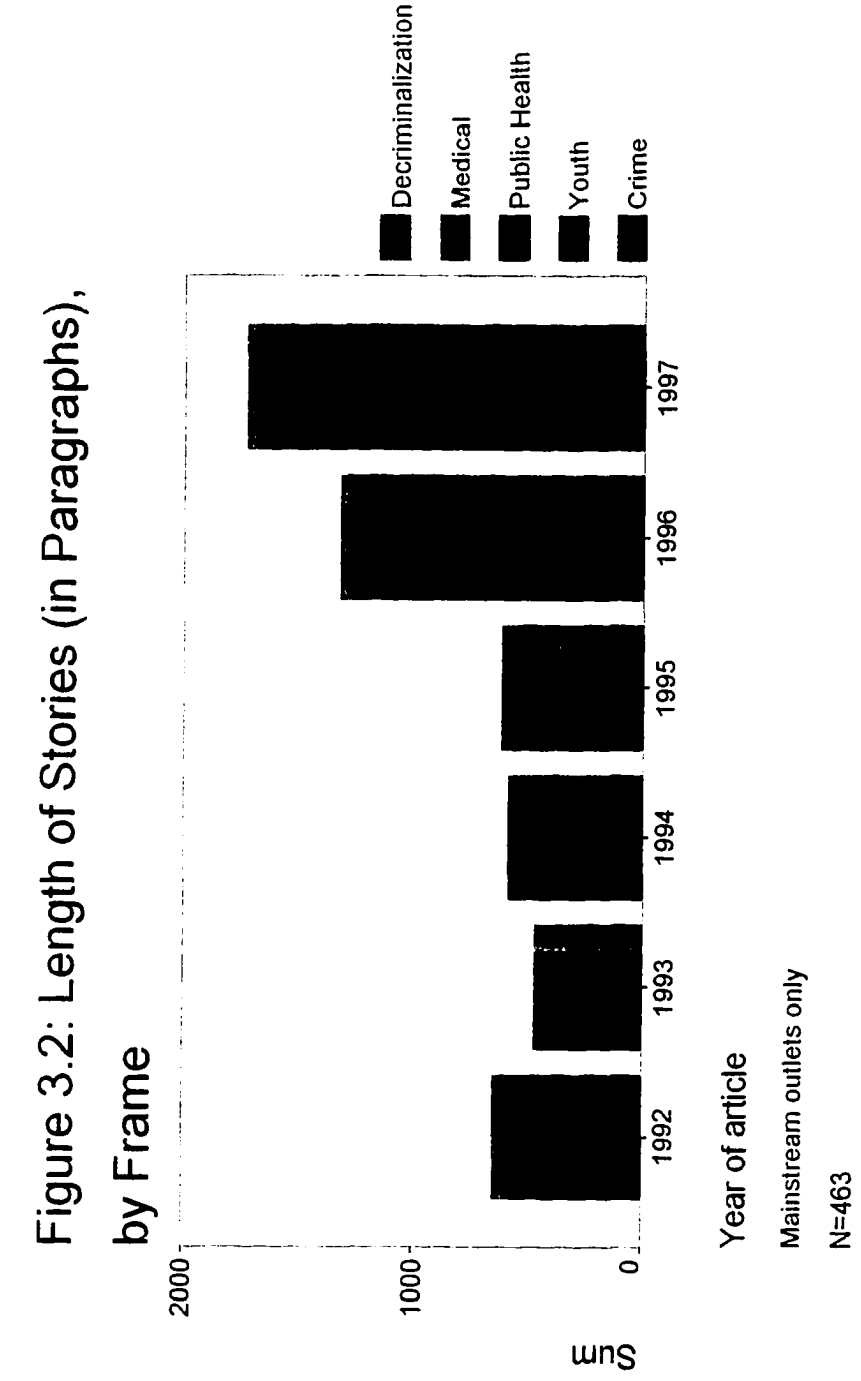
Services, 1994).

Figure 3.1: Number of Stories by Outlet



Mainstream outlets only

N=479



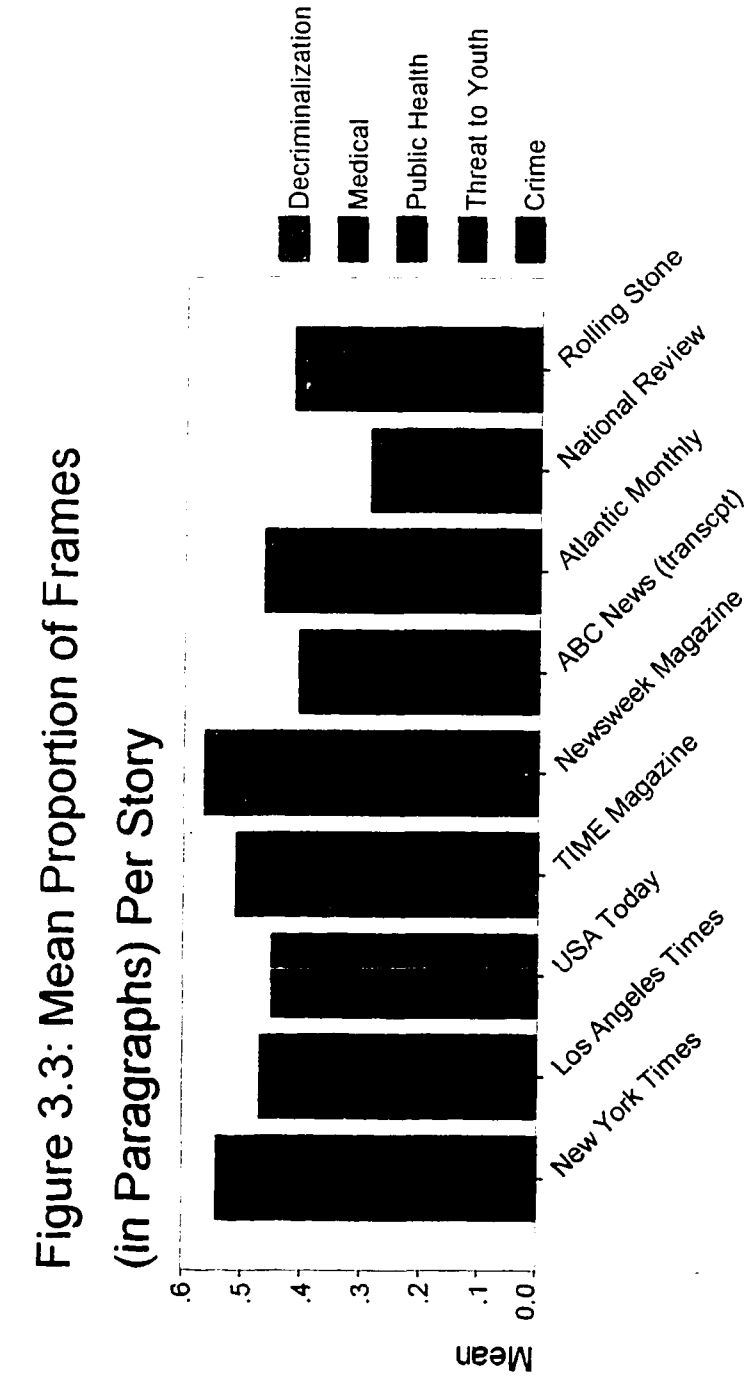


Figure 3.3: Mean Proportion of Frames (in Paragraphs) Per Story

Three main periods may be identified in which competing frames rose to relative influence or prevalence over the narrative along with the *crime* frame: 1992 to early 1993 (*decriminalization*); mid-1993 to late 1996 (*threat to youth*); and late 1996 to the end of 1997 (*medical*).

Differences among national media

The most obvious and least surprising difference among the national media in the study is that of the overall frames between the mainstream news outlets -- the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *USA Today*, ABC's *World News Tonight*, *Time* and *Newsweek* -- and the specialized periodicals -- the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *National Review* and *Rolling Stone*. One part of the coding was to assign a frame for each paragraph. The data analysis then assigned values for each story indicating the proportion of each of the frames out of the total number of paragraphs in the story. Figure 3.3 shows the mean proportion of frames for each outlet per story.

The mainstream national news media tended to favor either the *crime* or *threat to youth* frames, which together accounted for nearly two-thirds of the stories. *Newsweek* was the only mainstream news outlet in the study to allow a significant proportion of its news content to frame marijuana using the *decriminalization* frame. Even so, *Newsweek* still favored the *crime* frame more than any other.

Table 3.1: Stories by Frame, Mainstream and Specialized Outlets, 1992-1997[2]

Mainstream Outlets

Frame	*Number of Stories*	*Percentage*
"Crime"	225	47.0%
"Youth"	85	17.7
"Public Health"	37	7.7
"Medical"	72	15.0
"Decriminalization"	44	9.2
Divided[3]	16	3.3
	479	99.9%

Specialized Outlets

Frame	*Number of Stories*	*Percentage*
"Crime"	--	--
"Youth"	1	4.2%
"Public Health"	--	--
"Medical"	6	25.0
"Decriminalization"	17	70.8
	24	100.0

[2]Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

[3]These stories were evenly divided between two or more frames.

Table 3.1 shows the number of stories each frame dominated in both mainstream and specialized outlets.[4] The specialized publications overwhelmingly favored either the *medical* frame (*National Review* and *Rolling Stone*) or the *decriminalization* frame (*Atlantic Monthly*).

Linking marijuana to other drugs

The battle over how to frame marijuana in the news may hinge in part on linking or de-linking it symbolically with other controlled substances. For example, sources interested in keeping marijuana a Schedule I drug would want news reports about marijuana to also mention other drugs in Schedule I such as heroin or LSD. In contrast, sources with an interest in medicalizing marijuana (and removing it, say, to Schedule II where it could be prescribed by a physician, like cocaine is) would want to separate marijuana symbolically from the group of illegal or hard drugs (again, especially heroin or LSD).

The correlations in Table 3.2 are generally consistent with this strategy. In each category (legal drugs such as alcohol or tobacco, Schedule II drugs such as cocaine or morphine, and Schedule I drugs such as heroin or LSD) the

[4] "Dominance" means out of the total number of possible components (up to four for each paragraph) more than half were of a single frame. If, for example, in a three-paragraph story, seven out of the 12 components were *crime* components, then the story was categorized by the data processor as being a "crime" story. As the figures and discussion will show, most stories were much more heavily dominated by a single frame than in this hypothetical example.

threat to youth framed stories were the most likely to associate marijuana with other substances. The higher the proportion of paragraphs in a story framing marijuana as a threat to youth, the more likely the story was to associate marijuana with other drugs, especially those in Schedule I. Table 3.2 also shows the opposite relationship between the *medical* frame and mentions of other drugs.

Table 3.2: Correlations of Proportion of Each Frame (in Paragraphs) Per Story with Mentions of Other Drugs (Mainstream Outlets Only, N=479).

	Type of Drug		
Frame	*Legal*[5]	*Schedule II*[6]	*Schedule I*[7]
"Crime"	-.20***	-.11*	-.14**
"Youth"	.39***	.32***	.43***
"Health"	.19***	.28***	.24***
"Medical"	-.13**	-.13**	-.17***
"Decrim"	.05	.01	.09*

*$p<.05$; **$p<.01$; ***$p<.001$

Frame-building: Sources and frames

Frames depended heavily on the type of sources that successfully sponsored them. Table 3.3 (mean number of sources and paragraphs per story, by frame) shows that

[5]Alcohol or tobacco.

[6]Cocaine, morphine or other controlled substances approved for physician prescription.

[7]Heroin, LSD, PCP, and other drugs, like marijuana, without legal usage.

threat to youth stories tended to rely on more sources (most of whom were either government officials or anti-drug groups) than any other type of story (.81 per paragraph). Table 3.4 breaks down by type the sources in the first five paragraphs of all mainstream stories,[8] and shows the prevalence of law enforcement and other government sources (27.9%). Marijuana stories heavily favored government officials as sources (either police or civilian officials). This result is consistent with the literature showing that mainstream journalists depend heavily on such officials for news, especially issues involving crime. In contrast,

Table 3.3: Mean Number of Sources and Paragraphs Per Mainstream Story, and Sources Per Paragraph, by Frame (N=479).

	Frame				
	"Crime"	"Youth"	"Public Health"	"Medical"	"Decrim"
Sources	5.7	8.5	9.3	8.4	7.6
Paragraphs	9.7	12.7	15.9	12.6	14.2
Sources per paragraph	.65	.81	.64	.76	.67

[8]Later discussion will use the same categories for each frame for comparison.

Table 3.4: First Five Source Types in Mainstream Stories (N=479).

Source Type	*Number of Mentions*	*Percent*	*Cumulative Percent*
Police/ corrections	271	16.2%	16.2%
Miscellaneous govt. officials or politicians	196	11.7	27.9
Bystanders/witnesses (private)	161	9.6	37.5
Offenders/attorneys	118	7.0	44.5
Miscellaneous other (private)	113	6.7	51.2
Federal drug policy/ health officials	102	6.1	57.3
Medical pot users/ referenda backers	96	5.7	63.0
Federal surveys	89	5.3	68.3
Science or other experts	79	4.7	73.0
Main anti-drug groups (CASA, etc.)	74	4.4	77.4
District attorneys/ prosecutors	69	4.1	81.5
Federal law enforcers/military	66	3.9	85.4
Other anti-drug organizations	59	3.5	88.9
Foreign officials/ report	54	3.2	92.1
Miscellaneous reformers	45	2.7	94.8
Judge/judiciary	35	2.1	96.9
Physicians/ attorneys	31	1.8	98.7
Youth pot smokers	20	1.2	99.9
	1678	99.9[9]	

[9]Percentage does not equal 100 due to rounding.

advocates of marijuana reform (medical users, referenda backers, or reform advocates) made up only about 8.4% of sources used in the first five paragraphs.

Specialized publications

Journalists in the specialized publications used many of the same sources for their stories, but there was little evidence that they influenced or led the mainstream media in their selection of sources. However, there were several instances, especially in critical periods during which attention turned to the drug issue, of the mainstream media relying on sources popular in the specialized publications.

The most prominent example was the article in *USA Today*, "Pot Group Takes Conservative Turn," about Richard Cowan's appointment as executive director of NORML. Cowan's conservative business interests (he was billed as a Texas oil-man) and strong ties to the Republican party made his affiliation with NORML especially newsworthy. It was his conservative credentials that also brought attention to his friendship with William F. Buckley, the editor of the *National Review;* and the *USA Today* story by Dennis Cauchon referred to this relationship. In one of the few instances of crossover influence, Cauchon interviewed Buckley for the story on Cowan and gave Cowan credit for influencing Buckley's editorial opposition to the drug war.

Because the analysis turned up little evidence of sources, events, or frames in the specialized media

influencing the mainstream media, the following discussion deals mainly with the latter. The specialized publications will be discussed occasionally for comparison purposes in the following chapters.

Frame-building: Frames and their components

The analysis showed that different frames emphasized different frame components (*problem, causal agent, moral evaluation* or *solution*). Table 3.5 shows the relative presence of components in the first paragraph of each story, by frame.

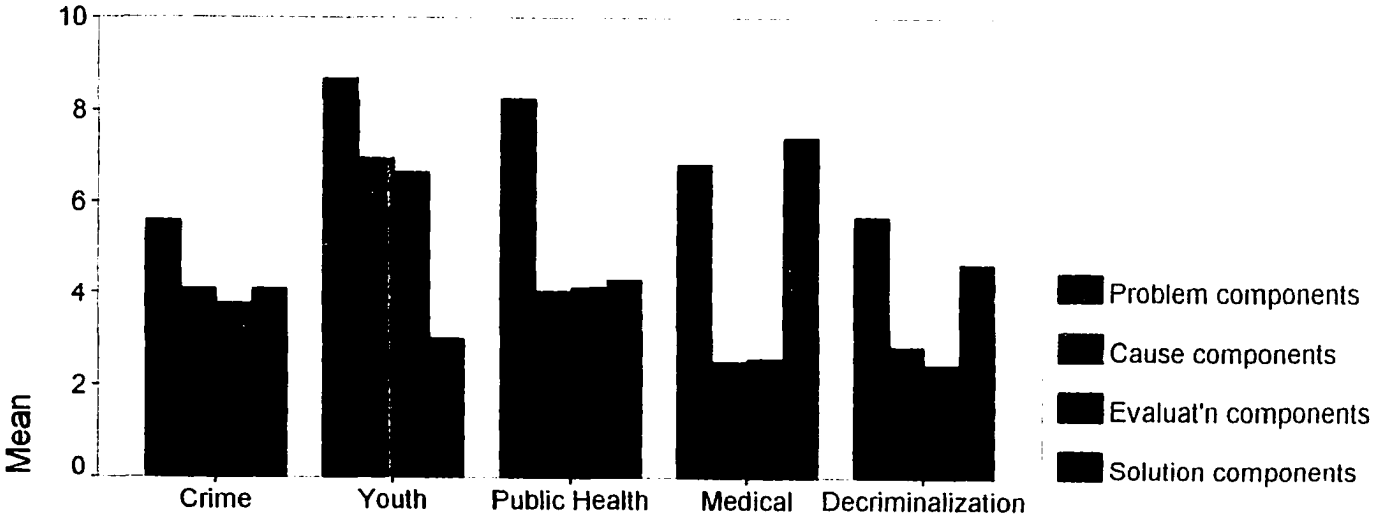
Table 3.5: Proportions of Frame Components for First Paragraphs Naming a *Problem* (Mainstream Stories Only, N=323).

		Other Components	
Frame (and number of Stories)	*Causal Agents*	*Moral Evaluations*	*Solutions*
"Crime" (166)	72.9% (121)	71.1% (118)	72.9% (121)
"Youth" (71)	87.3% (62)	81.7% (58)	15.5% (11)
"Public Health" (24)	41.7% (10)	33.3% (8)	37.5% (9)
"Medical" (41)	39.0% (16)	41.5% (17)	70.7% (29)
"Decrim" (21)	47.6% (10)	47.6% (10)	47.6% (10)

Because the most common component for all frames except *medicalization* (see Figure 3.4) was the *problem* component, those first paragraphs naming a *problem* component were selected. The columns in Table 3.5 show the frequencies of the other three components for those paragraphs.

As the table and Figure 3.4 show, the *threat to youth* and *crime* frames were much more likely to include *causal agents* and *moral evaluations* of the agents and problems, than were the *public health*, *medical* and *decriminalization* frames. As the following discussion and later chapters will show, the *threat to youth* and *crime* frames' heavy dependence on official sources had much to do with naming and evaluating people responsible for the problem. Conversely, the same dominance of official sources also placed them as the most likely *causal agents* for the *medical* and *decriminalization* frames. However, their position as dominant sources overall inoculated them somewhat from blame for the problem, even in those oppositional stories; this relationship between the nature of sources (as central framers for journalists) and causal agents is a key to understanding the obstacles faced by oppositional frames. The extent to which these frames overcame the challenge will be discussed later and in the next three chapters on frame-building.

Figure 3.4: Mean Number of Frame Components Per Story, by Frame



Mainstream Outlets Only

N=463

Frame prevalence

Frame prevalence was looked at quantitatively in terms of the proportion of each story (in paragraphs) framed a given way, and in the number of stories over time dominated by a given frame. The qualitative analysis in the following chapters also elaborates on this. Individual stories about marijuana usually projected one frame almost to the exclusion of all others. Figures 3.5-3.9 show the relationships between the frames within individual stories in the sample. In *crime*-dominated stories, the main alternative frame was *decriminalization*, and vice versa.[10]

Also, Figure 3.6 indicates that *youth* stories were the least likely to be challenged by alternative frames.[11] The ratio between the nearest challenger (*public health*) and *youth* was about 1 to 23, the smallest ratio of alternative frame to prevalent frame.

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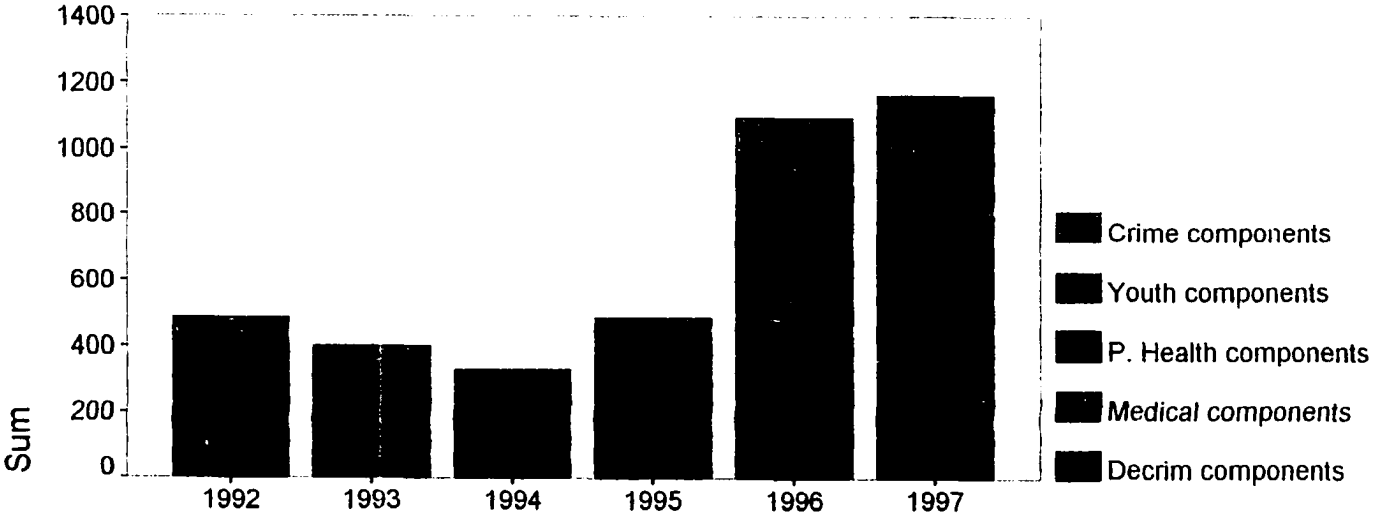
[10]In addition, *decriminalization* stories were more likely to be challenged from within by the *crime* frame, than were *crime* stories to be challenged by *decriminalization* paragraphs: The mean proportion of *crime* paragraphs in *decriminalization* stories is larger (a ratio of about 3 to 12) than the ratio of *decriminalization* paragraphs in *crime* stories (about 1 to 15). In other words, in their coverage journalists were more likely to balance a *decriminalization* story with the official *crime* view, than to balance *crime* stories with *decriminalization* paragraphs.

[11]Chapter 5 will discuss the building of the *threat to youth* frame.

Figure 3.5: Frame Components in "Crime" Stories

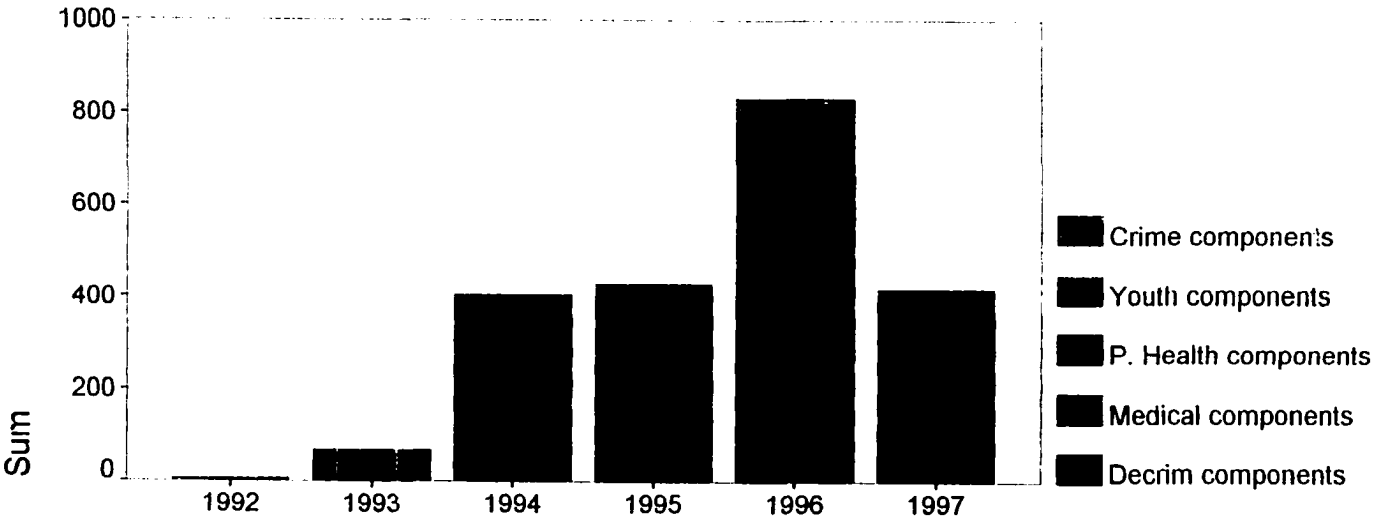


Year of article

Mainstream outlets only

N=225

Figure 3.6: Frame Components in "Threat to Youth" Stories



Year of article

Mainstream outlets only

N=85

Figure 3.7: Frame Components in "Public Health" Stories

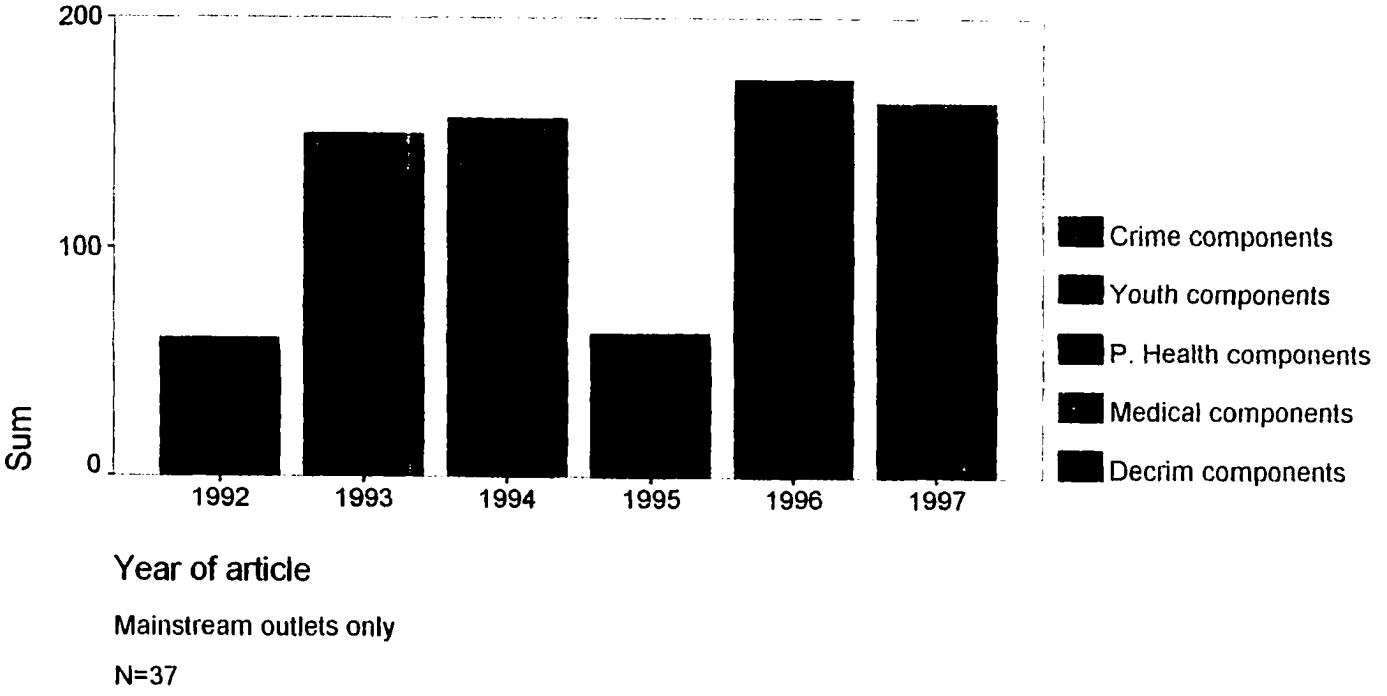
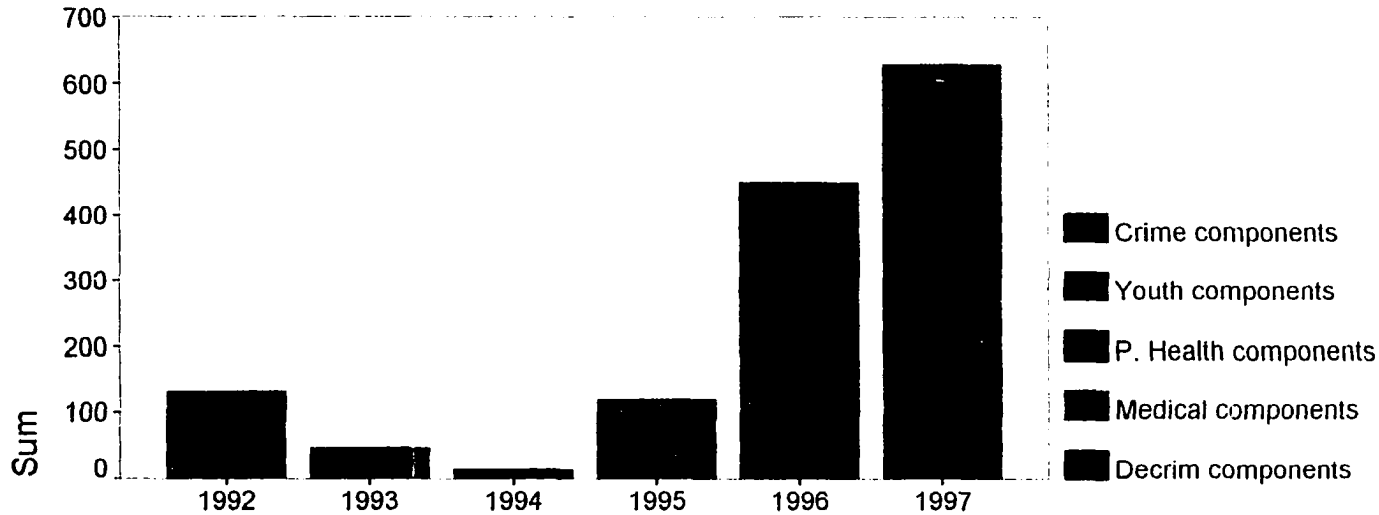


Figure 3.8: Frame Components in "Medical" Stories

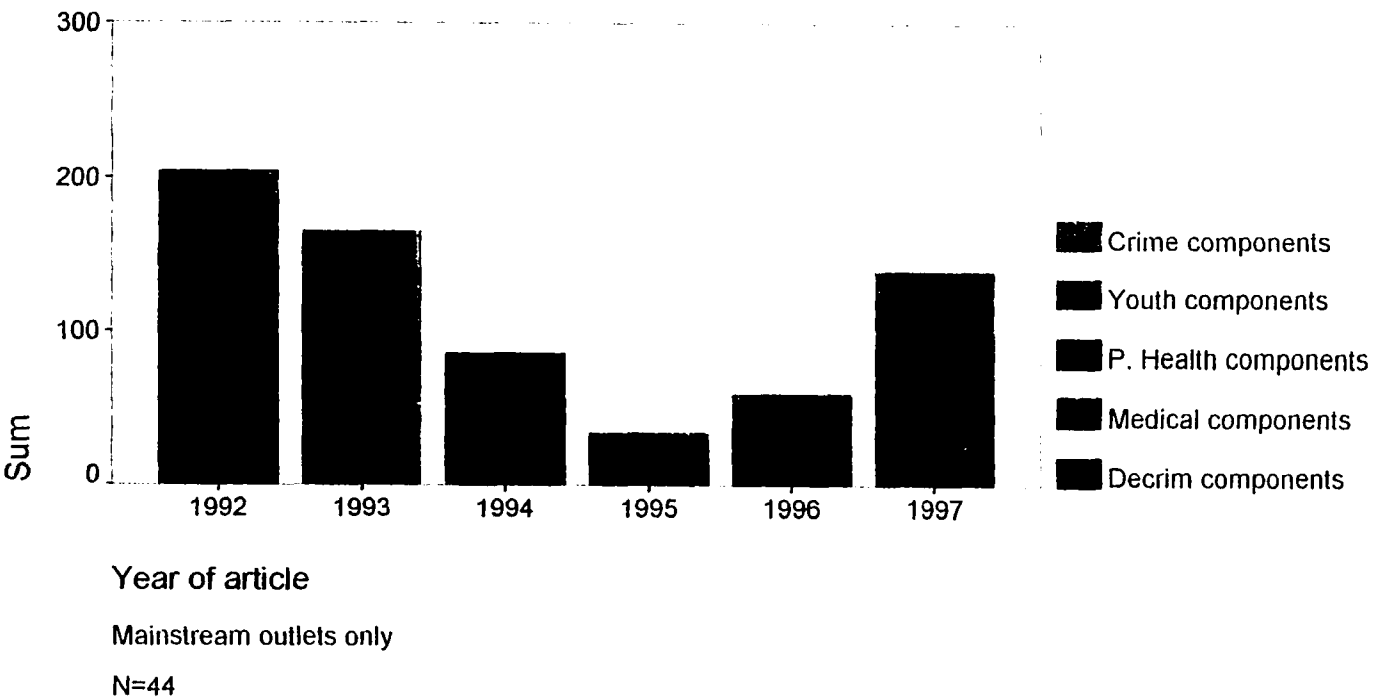


Year of article

Mainstream outlets only

N=72

Figure 3.9: Frame Components in "Decriminalization" Stories



As the following chapters on frame-building discuss in more detail, the *medical* and *decriminalization* frames traded off and competed for the opportunity to challenge the *crime* frame. After the *youth* frame rose in early 1994, pushed out the *decriminalization* frame, and became a dominant frame along with *crime*, the *medical* frame became the primary challenger to the dominant frames of *crime* and *youth*.

The next chapter discusses the competition between the *crime* and *decriminalization* frames. Of all the frames these two were in most direct competition with other.

CHAPTER IV

DECRIMINALIZATION VERSUS *CRIME*: A RIGGED GAME

In 1991 a compelling series of articles appeared in the *Pittsburgh Press* that described government abuse of federal and state drug laws and regulations that allowed officials to seize property without trial and that guided them to target highway traffic stops based on the racial characteristics of a vehicle's occupants.[1] The stories found that the policies against illegal drugs and the incentives they provided led the police to abuse their power. Such anti-*crime* frames questioning drug policy implementation could have been widespread in the mainstream media, but weren't. The *Pittsburgh Press* stories were a rare exception. No extended series of stories attacked the *crime* frame in this manner in the mainstream media analyzed for this study.

The previous chapter showed that as a proportion of the amount of space the news devoted to the marijuana issue, the *decriminalization* frame appeared sporadically in the mainstream news media. And as one of two oppositional frames, it lost relative influence as the news paid more attention to the *medical* frame in late 1996 and 1997. With

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[1]"Presumed Guilty," 11-16 August, 1991.

the exception of the brief period in mid-1992 when reporter Dennis Cauchon wrote several articles for *USA Today* highlighting *decriminalization*, this frame lacked a well-placed network of sponsors, or a sustained series of events that garnered enough media coverage to build it.

For a brief period, however, the *decriminalization* frame gained some prominence, though it never dominated the narrative. One April 1992 *USA Today* graphic titled "Pot's waning popularity"[2] reported findings by the National Institute on Drug Abuse[3] that announced the continued decline in the use of marijuana. Aside from then-Governor and presidential candidate Bill Clinton's admission that he had tried pot as a college student, and the continued problem of hard-core addiction, overall drug use seemed to be declining. As the problem waned from public view in the wake of other issues such as the Gulf War and the economy,[4] the mainstream media, especially *USA Today*, became more receptive to sensational and dramatic stories detailing the costs of the war on drugs and the misplaced priorities some saw in sending people to jail and seizing property without a trial for growing, smoking or selling marijuana. These

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[2]*USA Today*, 2 April 1992, D1.

[3]National Institute on Drug Abuse, *National Survey Results on Drug Use From the Monitoring the Future Study* (Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1992).

[4]William J. Gonzenbach, "A Time-Series Analysis of the Drug Issue, 1985-1990: The Press, The President and Public Opinion," *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 4 (1992): 128-129.

stories were based on events isolated by space and time (and fragmented in the overall narrative) but linked by common *decriminalization* problems (especially the excesses of marijuana policy and law enforcement). These problems were never integrated into a complete frame and so were unable to dominate the narrative. The following sections discuss the brief attention given the *decriminalization* frame and then its decline in relation to *crime*.

Sources as frame sponsors

As the literature review showed, mainstream news assigns high value to coverage of law-breaking (especially that involving violence or well-known people), of illegal drugs, and of police activity in general. Similarly, in this study the *crime* frame of marijuana dominated most of the study period. One reason is the relative power and organization of the *crime* sponsors versus that of the sponsors of the *decriminalization* frame, the frame most directly challenging *crime*.

Tables 4.1 and 4.2 show the types of sources appearing in the first five paragraphs of stories dominated by the *decriminalization* and *crime* frames, respectively.

Table 4.1: First Five Source Types in Mainstream *Decriminalization* Stories (N=44).

Source Type	*Number of Mentions*	*Percent*	*Cumulative Percent*
Bystanders/witnesses (private)	24	15.3%	15.3%
Miscellaneous reformers	24	15.3	30.6
Offenders/attorneys	23	14.6	45.2
Foreign officials/ report	19	12.1	57.3
Judge/judiciary	15	9.6	66.9
(Other)	52	33.1	100.0
	157	100.0	

Table 4.2: First Five Source Types in Mainstream *Crime* Stories (N=225).

Source Type	*Number of Mentions*	*Percent*	*Cumulative Percent*
Police/ corrections	237	32.8%	32.8%
Miscellaneous govt. officials or politicians	82	11.3	44.1
Bystanders/witnesses (private)	72	10.0	54.1
Offenders/attorneys	61	8.4	62.5
Federal law enforcers/military	58	8.0	70.5
District attorneys/ prosecutors	49	6.8	77.3
(Other)	164	22.7	100.0
	723	100.0	

Table 4.3: Frequencies and Main Relationships of *Decriminalization* Components, Mainstream Outlets Only (Story N=44).

If the problem is....	*And the causal agents are....*	*Then the moral evaluation of prob/cause....*	*And the solution will be...*
Civil or criminal forfeiture laws (99)	"Government", especially federal authorities (18)	(Various/other) (14)	Other decriminalization solution (or none) (18)
Loss of freedoms or property through enforcement of drug laws (53)	Police or law enforcers (93)	Government is a threat to individual liberty (beyond marijuana) (38)	Usually none
Prohibition as approach to drug policy (66)	Politicians or policy-makers (9)	Government law/ enforcement is excessive, illogical, or out of proportion to the problem (74)	Decriminalization in general (64)
Questionable information or hysteria to support drug war (37)	Other opponents of decriminalization (such as anti-drug groups) (4)	Opponents of decriminalization mislead or use poor arguments (6)	Usually none
			Marijuana/hemp itself (51)
			More mainstream or environmentalist image or strategy (39)

Decriminalization stories relied mainly on bystanders, witnesses to an event, or general anonymous commentators (15.3%); miscellaneous advocates for marijuana reform (15.3%); and marijuana offenders or their attorneys (14.6%). In contrast to *crime* story sources (overwhelmingly police or corrections officials), *decriminalization* frame sponsors were disparate and less often members of official organizations. This fragmentation of frame sponsors was also reflected in the lack of connections between the stories themselves.

Decriminalization: The excesses of the drug war

The *decriminalization* frame was unique in that even though the *problem* and *solution* components made up roughly equal proportions of the overall frame, *problems* often did not appear in the same stories as *solutions* (see Table 4.3; Table 3.5 also showed this lack of linkage in stories). For example, Table 4.3 shows that the most frequent problems named (forfeiture laws or prohibition in general) usually did not appear with the most frequent solutions (marijuana itself, or mainstreaming its image). This was a primary weakness in the *decriminalization* frame: an inability to articulate through news coverage the *solutions* that offered remedies to the *problems* covered in other stories.

One reporter in particular, *USA Today*'s Dennis Cauchon, favored the *decriminalization* frame early in the study period. In 1992 he wrote a series of stories narrating the

cost to individuals resulting from police enforcement of the laws against marijuana: *decriminalization* problems. But these stories demonstrate the difficulty even the most sympathetic narrators had in combining cogent links between *decriminalization problem, causal agent, evaluation* and *solution*.

Two articles that ran a combined 74 paragraphs used the stories of several marijuana offenders to investigate the confiscation by police of the assets of minor offenders (rather than of the drug smugglers and kingpins the federal forfeiture laws were supposedly meant to go after). The first story, headlined "Are seizures legalized theft? Government doesn't have to prove guilt,"[5] appeared as a top story in May 1992 and ran to 50 paragraphs. Of those, 35 paragraphs (70%) were framed in terms of *decriminalization*: 33 cited as *problems* either the forfeiture law itself or the loss of property or other rights at the hands of law enforcement. The story ran with a graphic showing the breakdown of how "$692.2 million"[6] in confiscated assets had been spent by police nationwide, pointing up the conflict of interest the laws present. It also included a photograph of two of the victims of the law.

The narrative cited numerous cases, all scary, compelling and dramatic, of the government taking money, cars, and other property from suspects who were never

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[5]*USA Today*, 18 May 1992, A1.

[6]Ibid.

charged with a crime. The following section (paragraphs 7-13) demonstrates the journalist's frame:

> Federal forfeitures have taken $2.4 billion from tens of thousands of people since 1985, when the civil forfeiture law was greatly expanded in the heat of the drug war.
>
> The law - little known to the general public - gives police power to take your property without convicting you of a crime - or even charging you.
>
> You have few rights because, technically, your property is on trial, not you.
>
> You have no right to a lawyer if you can't afford one and no right to a hearing before your property is seized.
>
> And in a unique twist: The government doesn't have to prove you're guilty; you must prove you're innocent.
>
> In fact, you must meet a higher standard of proof to get your property back than the police must meet to take it.
>
> "It is legalized theft," says defense attorney Janet Sherman. "How many Americans know the government can take your property without ever charging you with a crime?"[7]

But only one paragraph recommended a *solution* (a court challenge to the law) and then only in passing: as an action the two victims of the law portrayed in the lead *had already taken*.[8] The lack of a verifiable event to which the reporter could link more solutions kept those possible solutions out of the narrative.

That story was accompanied by a sidebar. Headlined "Collegian takes pounding over 1 ounce of pot," it told the tale of Adam Baroudi, whose Oldsmobile was confiscated by

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[7]Ibid.

[8]"...after a 15-month legal battle to keep his home." The paragraph referred to Kevin Perry who, the story said, pleaded guilty to growing four marijuana plants and was fined. Ibid.

police for its role in Baroudi's arrest for marijuana possession (police reportedly found the marijuana in the car's trunk). Although the jury found him not guilty of possession with intent to distribute, the story said, police used forfeiture law to take his car anyway, which Baroudi had to pay the police to get back. The narrative, although sympathetic to Baroudi's story, cited *decriminalization problems* (civil forfeiture laws) in only six paragraphs, and none of those recommended *solutions* (such as a legal challenge based on due process). Again, the lack of the identifiable event (a solution that had occurred and could be verified) precluded the linkage of components into a complete frame.

The need for such an event (for example, serious police abuse or violence) to trigger a *decriminalization* frame in the news is illustrated by the coverage of the Donald Scott case. The Scott case received much attention by the *Los Angeles Times* and provided a potential platform for the confluence of sources to build a *decriminalization* frame. But as the narrative unfolded in successive stories, it mainly evolved into coverage of conflict between the Los Angeles County Sheriff's office and the district attorney, rather than a discussion of the policy of forfeiture or other problems involving marijuana policy that may have contributed to Scott's death.[9] In October 1992 Los Angeles

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[9]A year after the event, a *Los Angeles Times* editorial called for further investigation into the conflict between the sheriff's office and the district attorney's office, but

sheriff's deputies broke into the home of Donald Scott, a wealthy Malibu homeowner, and shot him to death in a futile marijuana raid. The high-profile event was investigated by the district attorney's office. The DA's report criticized the sheriff's department for falsifying information to get a warrant to search Scott's home in hopes of finding marijuana and seizing the property, worth millions of dollars. As the events after the shooting and the subsequent investigation were reported in successive stories over several months, the frames leaned more strongly toward *decriminalization*. The series of four stories in the sample showed how shifts in events and sources can influence the resulting frames in the news narrative.

The first story narrated the basic events of the raid as recounted by police. In the second paragraph, the narrative assigned responsibility for the events (though not yet framed as a marijuana problem) to the suspect: "Donald P. Scott, 61, was struck twice in the upper body about 8:40 p.m. Friday when two deputies opened fire *as he confronted them* with a .38-caliber revolver, Deputy Benita Hinojos said."[10] Note the change in who confronts whom in paragraph four of the next story appearing 10 days later: "Scott, 61,

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did not address overall marijuana policy as contributing to Scott's death. "Just the facts please; grand jury is obviously needed to investigate that mysterious Malibu ranch raid," 3 October 1993.

[10]"No marijuana found after deputies killed man in raid," *Los Angeles Times*, 4 October 1992, B1. Italics added.

was shot to death by Los Angeles County sheriff's deputies *when they confronted him* in the ranch house living room. According to accounts by deputies and his wife, Scott entered the room with a gun held over his head."[11] Although the facts are the same in both paragraphs (Scott had a gun, deputies shot him), two shifts occurred that signal the change in frames that would characterize the second and later stories. First, the responsibility for the confrontation changes from Scott in the first story to the deputies in the second story; and second, the sourcing has changed from a specific deputy whom the reporter interviewed for the first story, to "deputies" and Scott's wife in the second.

Two in-depth stories in late March 1993 reported the district attorney's findings. Because the stories relied mostly on the DA's office and his very critical report for its sourcing, they were dominated by the *decriminalization* frame. The detailed narratives ran to a combined total of 48 paragraphs; 20 cited forfeiture laws or police enforcement as problems. But as in the earlier *USA Today* stories (and others[12]) no specific *decriminalization* solutions were offered, such as reform of the law.

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[11]"Flyover led to fatal raid," *Los Angeles Times*, 14 October 1992, B1. Italics added.

[12]E.g., "(Forfeiture laws)," *World News Tonight*, 19 October 1992.

Decriminalization: "Pot culture" -- the beginning of the end

The *decriminalization* solutions missing from those stories appeared in later stories that avoided direct criticism of policy or the police.[13] The compelling but scarce stories criticizing the excesses of marijuana law and policy became scarcer. The narratives had cited *problems* such as police abuse that, although often peripheral to the question of marijuana policy, might have been properly matched by particular *solutions*. But the lack of supporting events precluded such *decriminalization* solutions from appearing. When the solutions appeared most often in stories in 1994, an end to prohibition was the one most commonly cited. But by that time stories were no longer narrating particular problems. The lack of narrative linkage between decriminalization (as a solution) and the problems it might solve weakened the frame. *Solutions* were thus largely divorced from legal and policy considerations.

These stories from early 1993 narrated the rebirth of marijuana culture. Depending on the outlet, they provided a

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[13]Minor exceptions are also demonstrated by two international stories in the sample reporting the February 1992 decision by a judge in Germany that ruled the laws against marijuana unconstitutional. The reported *solutions* included decriminalization itself, the democratic process to change policy, constitutional challenges to drug policy, and the use of a "scientific" model that would use epidemiological and other types of research to craft policy based on a drug's effects relative to other controlled substances. The recommended *solutions* are based on the reporting of events unlikely to occur in the U.S. "A pro-drug ruling stirs the pot in Germany," *New York Times*, 3 March 1992, A5; "The right to get high," *Time*, 16 March 1992, 43.

forum for the *decriminalization* frame (provided by sources such as NORML) but they also lay the foundation for the *threat to youth* frame. In doing so these articles also marked the end of a period in which the drug policy model set in the previous decade was just beginning to be questioned by mainstream reporters in their frames.

In this phase of *decriminalization* stories, narratives generally welcomed, or at least did not take very seriously, the return of pot culture. But as the news media, led by their sources, began to give the *youth* frame more space and time, this Pot Culture Resurgence period became a basis for framing marijuana as a youth *problem* rather than as a possible *solution* to whatever advocates of reform found lacking in drug policy.

The story of marijuana's comeback is illustrated by the headlines:

"Turning over a new, old leaf"[14]
"Repotted"[15]
"High times return"[16]
"Hello again, Mary Jane"[17]
"Reefer madness, '90s style"[18]

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[14]*Newsweek*, 8 February 1993, 60.

[15]*New York Times*, 7 March 1993, Sec. 9, 1.

[16]*USA Today*, 19 March 1993, D2.

[17]*Time*, 19 April 1993, 59.

[18]*Los Angeles Times*, 9 October 1993, F1.

These stories appeared in the "Style" or "Music" sections of the publications. None of them were top stories. To the extent they seriously advocated decriminalization or freedom of choice, they treated the issue not as a serious policy matter but as a cultural trend or a somewhat unwelcome, but non-threatening, outgrowth of popular music. If there was a problem, it was generally bad taste in fashion, as this passage from the final paragraph of a February 1993 *Newsweek* story (the first to set this tone) demonstrates: "It seems a contradiction that marijuana fashion is rebounding without any demonstrable rise in actual use....one worries whether this first step will lead to harsher measures, as the twentysomethings repeat the baby boomers' descent through harder drugs, Earth shoes, solipsism, the '80s."[19] The reference to "baby boomers" as a bad example for the present generation of youth would return as a central theme in the *threat to youth* frame.

The next story in the sample that narrated the Pot Culture Resurgence ran 50 paragraphs in the *New York Times* about a month later (March 1993). It focused on a new strategy among marijuana activists to use the growing popularity of hemp products and cultural symbols, such as "Phillies Blunt" T-shirts and pot leaf caps, to restructure the image of marijuana as more in line with the

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[19]"Turning over a new, old leaf."

postmodernist 1990s.[20] The story positioned the movement as consisting of parts competing for dominance: the Old Guard, represented by legalization advocates such as NORML, and the New Guard, led by organizations such as the Cannabis Action Network that were taking a more environmentalist approach.

In this and later articles narrating pot culture's return, the *problems* of drug policy, or police enforcement, or others that might have questioned the basis for current policy and *evaluated* its supporters, rarely were addressed. In keeping with the narrative's focus on culture, the *solutions* that appeared were usually in the form of quotes from popular advocates of marijuana such as musicians (especially rockers or rappers) praising the drug as "'an essential part of life on the road'"[21]; in general, pot was becoming the cool drug of choice for popular musicians, such as the Black Crowes, Cypress Hill and others. The link between the image of pot as a resurging cultural icon and reports of increasing youth use of marijuana that same year would establish the foundation for the *threat to youth* frame.

The final article of this type appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* in October 1993; it explored the perceived rise in references to marijuana not just in popular music

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[20]The earlier *Newsweek* article asserted: "In a loopy way, this resurgent reefer madness *is* consistent with the earthy '90s climate. These days, pot is as much a symbol of simplicity and health consciousness as it is a companion to one's Pink Floyd CDs." Ibid.

[21]"Hello again, Mary Jane."

but on television shows, such as *Roseanne*, and the movies (*Dazed and Confused, Short Cuts*). The end of the article featured a face-off between the two views of marijuana as dangerous to youth and as a relatively harmless symbol of normal youthful rebellion. The source the reporter allowed to close up the story (in the final paragraph below) signaled one of the final gasps of the argument for decriminalization:

> "Advertising marijuana by showing it in a [motion] picture can lead people to want to experiment with it," adds Henry Hall, volunteer director of the Narcotic Education Foundation of America. "We're all imitators, especially young people. It's what's called a gateway drug; it leads to experimenting with other drugs." [*Threat to youth*]
>
> Others beg to differ. "If there's any evidence that the culture is prepared to be less hysterical about the occasional use of marijuana, it can only be applauded, says UC Berkeley sociology professor Todd Gitlin, author of "The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage." "The hard-and-fast view has been ineffectual. Most kids think it's ridiculous." [*Decriminalization*]
>
> ...For [filmmaker Richard] Linklater, who calls the current pot resurgence "innocent," "it's just young people who had to grow up in the '80s own little healthy rebellion. Pot is a symbol of rebellion. If they made it legal, it would no longer be that symbol."[22] [*Decriminalization*]

Over the next three years, as reports of rising marijuana use among teens would prevail over the narrative, Gitlin's and Linklater's view that ending prohibition might take away part of marijuana's allure (one possible *decriminalization solution*) would not be an acceptable way

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[22]"Reefer madness, '90s style."

of framing the issue in the mainstream news, especially in *threat to youth* stories.

Decline: *Decriminalization* becomes rare alternative

Later in the period (after 1994) the *decriminalization* frame tended to appear more as an alternative frame within *crime* stories rather than as its own stand-alone frame. These unusually mixed-frame stories, although often heavily based on police and other official sources, represented the main appearance of the *decriminalization* frame later in the period. Five articles in particular, three in the *New York Times*, narrated stories of the war on marijuana gone awry. The stories used competing sources and alternating frames, sometimes from paragraph to paragraph, to expose the ambiguity of the drug war. A representative example:

> The FBI figures, released Sunday, show pot smokers are again the No. 1 target of police.
>
> Marijuana possession arrests have doubled since 1991 to 306,000 -- roughly equal to arrests made for cocaine and heroin combined, a major change from 1991.
>
> Drug war critics say that shows police are running up huge arrest numbers that have little impact on the drug trade.
>
> "It's a system gone amok," says Edward Czuprynski, a Michigan lawyer who got a 14-month federal sentence -- later overturned -- for possessing 1.6 grams of marijuana.
>
> Arnold Trebach, founder of the Drug Policy Foundation, which advocates decriminalization, says, "The much-vaunted war on drugs keeps arresting petty criminals."
>
> But defenders say arresting drug users is instrumental.

> Users "are keeping the dealers in business," says Robert Peterson, former Michigan drug czar. "They disappear and the dealers disappear."[23]

Figure 4.1 shows in graphic form the fall of *decriminalization* relative to the rise of *crime* during the period.

Crime: Police reports, celebrities and sports

Even during the height of mainstream news criticism of the drug war in 1992 and 1993, the sprinkling of the *decriminalization* frame in the news was overshadowed by the *crime* frame not just from within stories, but also by the ongoing, routine coverage of law enforcement and its fight against illegal marijuana that produced stories entirely or overwhelmingly dominated by the *crime* frame.

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[23]"Drug war shifting from dealers to users," *USA Today*, 20 November 1995, A1. Other in-depth stories with competing *crime* and *decriminalization* frames: "The squeeze on head shops," *New York Times*, 19 May 1996, Sec. 4, 13; "Crackdown on drugs brings fear to border," *New York Times*, 26 December 1996, A16; "More than 50 are arrested in drug raid in the village," *New York Times*, 21 June 1997, Sec. 1, 25; "Weld ambassadorship stalled by Sen. Helms," *World News Tonight*, 2 August 1997. These stories all covered police enforcement actions but allowed *decriminalization* sources to challenge either the tactics or rationale used by authorities.

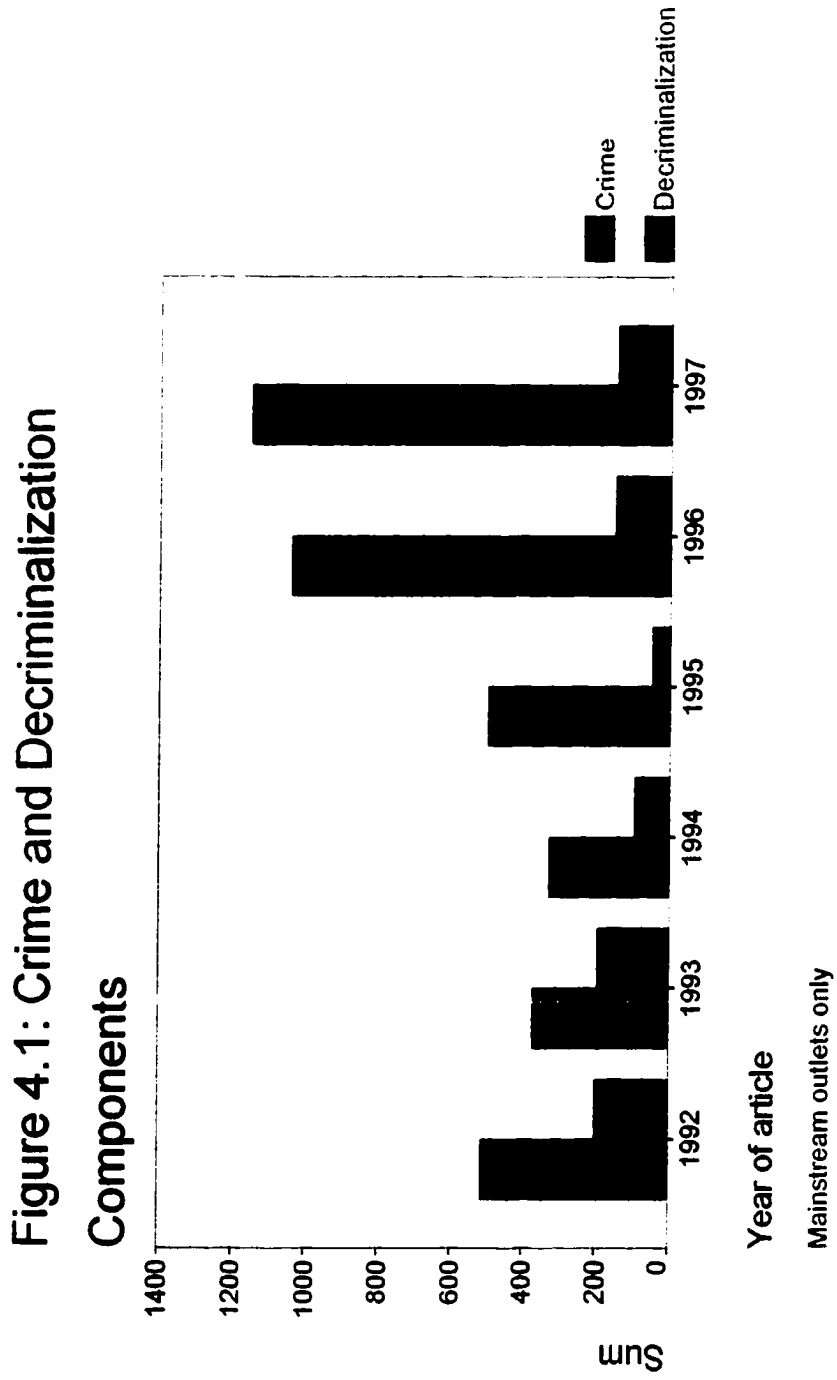


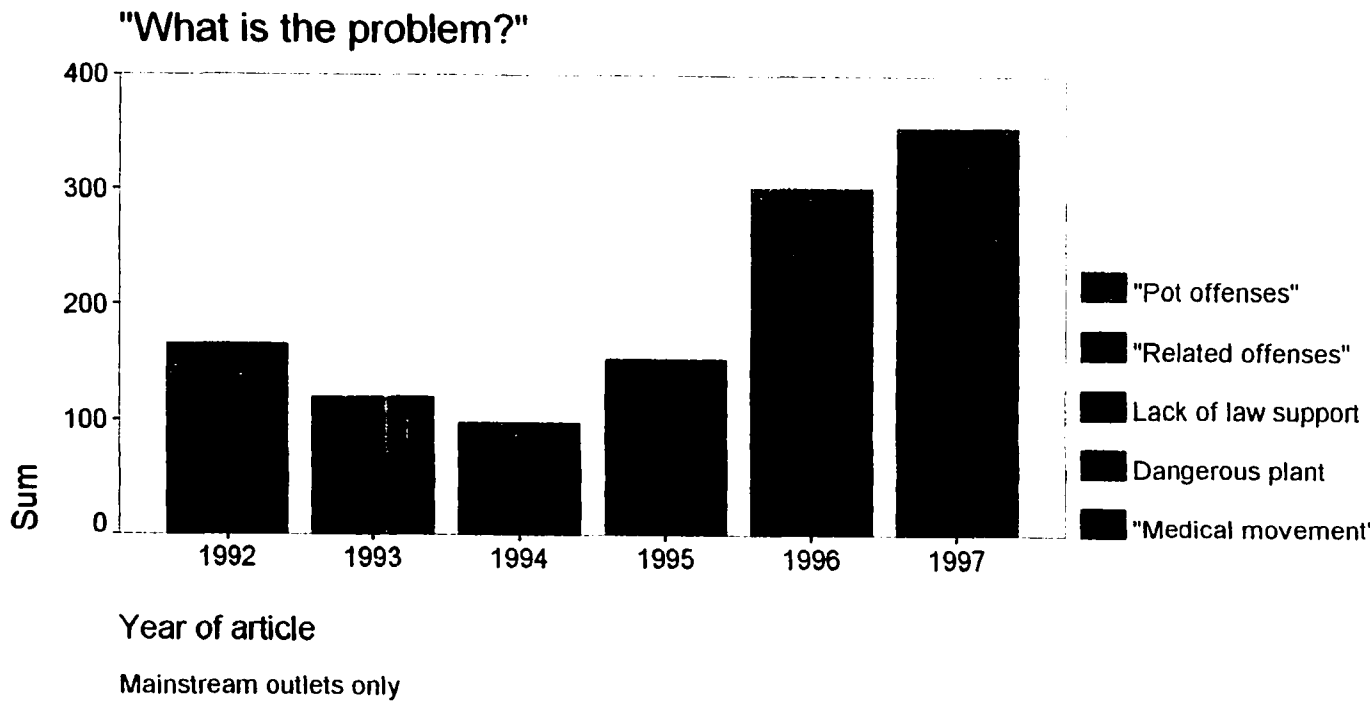
Table 4.4: Frequencies and Main Relationships of *Crime* Components, Mainstream Outlets Only (Story N=225).

If the problem is....	*And the causal agents are....*	*Then the moral evaluation of prob/cause....*	*And the solution will be...*
Marijuana growing or distribution (303)	Illegal marijuana users or offenders (433)	Marijuana offense is a sign of criminal nature (197)	Police enforcement, rule of law (642)
Drugs or drug crime in general (including marijuana) (298)	Drug criminals in general (143)	Marijuana or drug offense is a sign of criminal nature (see above)	Police enforcement (see above)
Marijuana use or possession (147)	Illegal marijuana users or offenders (see above)	Marijuana offenders deserve punishment (274)	Police enforcement (see above)
Marijuana as an illegal and dangerous substance (107)	Usually none OR Buyer's clubs (31)	Clubs threaten drug war (26)	Police enforcement (see above)
Other marijuana-related crime (105)	Illegal marijuana users or offenders (see above)	Contrast of "good" cops with "bad" or violent offenders (45)	Police enforcement (see above) OR Eradication (34)
Other crime problem (78)	(Various)	(Various)	(Various)
Ballot initiatives or political process (75)	Physicians (41) OR Reformers (24)	Doctors threaten drug war (31) OR Those against drug war are wrong (23)	Sanctions on doctors (39) OR Propagation of anti-drug message (13)
Lack of support for law (48)	(Various)	(Various)	(Various)
Marijuana as medicine, interfering with drug enforcement (35)	Physicians (see above)	Doctors threaten drug war (see above)	Sanctions on doctors (see above)

Table 4.4 shows the frequencies and main relationships between the four components (*problem, causal agent, moral evaluation,* and *solution*) of the *crime* frame. Figure 4.2 shows the frequency of the main *crime problems* during the study period. The two main problems, running almost constantly, were pot offenses (the combined problems of marijuana growing or distribution, possession or use, and pot culture) and other drug crimes (such as drug trafficking in general, including marijuana). The *causal agents* were almost always marijuana growers, distributors or users, or drug offenders in general (see Table 4.4). The *crime* frame, as Table 3.5 showed, also was more likely than any other frame except *threat to youth* to facilitate *moral evaluation* of the relationship between *problems* and *causal agents*.

As Table 4.4 shows, two *moral evaluations* accounted for over half of the total: "marijuana offenders are bad or deserving of punishment," and "marijuana offenders signify criminal nature or anti-social behavior." The *solutions* to marijuana offenses rarely strayed beyond law enforcement -- arrests, indictments, etc.

Figure 4.2: Top Crime Problems



The ongoing tales in the mainstream news of arrests, transgressions and incarcerations for marijuana offenses accounted for a large proportion of the coverage throughout the period. Compared to the other frames, *crime* stories were more likely to be news briefs or short stories of three paragraphs or less (about 29%, compared to only about 17% for stories dominated by other frames). Of the 65 stories falling into this category, about 34% were "national" stories,[24] 32% "local",[25] and 23% "sports."[26]

The use of frame sponsors, events and integrated *crime* components that dominated individual stories demonstrate how culturally resonant themes such as deviant activity either punished or repented can maintain a dominant frame, as the following examples show. Early in the period, the majority of short *crime* stories were interspersed with longer stories narrating tales of repentance or forgiveness. One such article, "Ex-Con markets his management skills,"[27] told the

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[24]These were often stories received over the AP wire or from another bureau. A representative sample, "2 Floridians sentenced to life in drug case," was a three-paragraph AP story reporting the punishment of two men for operating a marijuana and cocaine ring. *New York Times*, 24 October 1992, Sec. 1, 29.

[25]E.g., "LAPD gets airplane seized in drug bust," *Los Angeles Times*, 21 March 1992, B1 (a two paragraph story about one of the benefits police derive from confiscating "a large amount of marijuana").

[26]These stories usually appeared in the sports section and followed the high-profile drug infractions of various professional star athletes, including Isaiah Rider, Michael Irvin, Allen Iverson, Bam Morris, Robert Parish and Warren Sapp.

[27]*Los Angeles Times*, 26 January 1992, A3.

story (much of it in his own words) of a likeable former marijuana smuggler who, after spending time in jail and realizing the error of his ways, was now offering his socially valuable "management skills" in a resume that openly detailed his criminal background. Sixteen out of the story's 34 paragraphs cite the *problem* of marijuana growing or trafficking; 19 cite the smuggler himself as *causal agent;* 19 *evaluate* his illegal deeds as either indicative of a criminal nature or at least deserving of punishment; and 9 recommend either incarceration or law enforcement as *solutions.* There were no alternative frames. Other longer-than-average *crime* stories also featured clever marijuana offenders offering penance for their actions.[28]

Those stories had access to the *causal agents* as sources to facilitate easy moral evaluations; others did not ("Secret forest of marijuana is uncovered in SoHo fire"[29]; "Festival seizes first marijuana"[30]; "A man said to be waving a gun is killed by two officers"[31]). But in later stories delving into the mechanics and deviancy of marijuana operations, the *causal agents* would become more sinister, the problem more intractable, and the evaluations harsher.

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[28]For example, "Pot growers sentenced," *Los Angeles Times,* 2 April 1992, J2.

[29]*New York Times,* 4 August 1994, B4.

[30]*New York Times,* 11 August 1994, B6.

[31]*New York Times,* 14 April 1995, B3.

Crime: Following the police

The excitement and fun (for both the journalist and the audience) of following the police around and experiencing their fight against crime through the journalists' narration or the television camera, make the *crime* frame even more attractive for mainstream news. Sometimes such stories are the actual fruit of the use of the news media by the police to promote the *crime* frame.[32] Such in-the-field stories helped frame marijuana and offenders as signifiers of the sinister, and often violent, criminal nature. These stories replaced the earlier ones presenting marijuana offenders as redeemable and instead framed them and their actions as irredeemable, anti-social and almost beyond the reach of the best efforts of law enforcement.

These stories used the same basic components as shorter *crime* news briefs: the *problems* of marijuana growing, trafficking and other pot-related crimes; the *causal agents* of marijuana offenders (especially growers); the *moral evaluations* of them as indicative of the criminal nature or deserving of punishment; and the *solutions* of police enforcement actions. However, other *solutions* and *moral evaluations* sometimes appeared: the increasingly popular tactic (among law enforcers) of eradication as a *solution*, and the *evaluation* of the perpetrators as violent and bad, especially in contrast with the good cops.

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[32]Reeves and Campbell, *Cracked Coverage*, 133-6.

The first of these articles signaled *USA Today's* switch from journalistic advocate for the victims of civil forfeiture law, as already discussed, to advocate for the police in their war against marijuana growers. Headlined "Across the USA, drug enforcers uproot a bumper marijuana crop,"[33] it narrated the police's efforts to adjust to the tactics of increasingly "sophisticated" growers. The switch from framing forfeiture law (the ability of the government to seize property if involved in a drug crime) as a *problem* (within the *decriminalization* frame), to framing it as a legitimate *solution* (within the *crime* frame) is signaled in the narrative's focus on the new craftiness on the part of growers: "Other growers in states like Kentucky hit on a cheap way to find fertile ground -- using government-owned park and forest land. Not only do they avoid the cost of buying land, if police find the pot, the land can't be confiscated because the growers don't own it."[34]

The almost complete dominance of the *crime* frame in the article is not threatened by the two paragraphs (out of 28) that allow a *decriminalization* source (Steven Hager of *High Times* magazine) to promote that frame:

> High-grade prices have held steady the past few years. "We're hoping it goes down because of the increased supply," Hager says.
>
> Demand also is up, he says, because marijuana is "the healthiest recreational drug in the world." Who uses it? "Anybody into health, the musician, the

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[33]8 October 1992, A12.

[34]Ibid.

> artist or anybody who fits under the heading of counterculture," he says.[35]

The brief presentation of this view of marijuana users as "into health" and representing the counterculture only serves to delegitimize the *decriminalization* frame and strengthen the *crime* frame. The juxtaposition of Hager's countercultural breeziness toward the issue, with the dominant portrayal of drug enforcers as fighting a dangerous enemy, makes the dominant *crime* frame resonate that much more as the legitimate narrative about marijuana.

Other long *crime* stories periodically appeared that portrayed marijuana growing, growers and police eradication efforts.[36] Although the *crime* frame shifted to oppose the *medical* frame, the stories of ever more violent marijuana growers increasingly dominated it, often relegating to the end of the articles questions about whether the policy of prohibition itself contributed to the problem (if such alternative frames appeared at all). For example, in the sample's final story of this type appearing in September 1997, out of 49 paragraphs only the last two opposed the

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[35]Ibid.

[36]"Drug bazaar sweep or swap?" *New York Times*, 11 February 1996, Sec. 6, 13; "The violent drug war within," *USA Today*, 4 October 1996, A3; "Five family members held in drug raids," *Los Angeles Times*, 25 September 1996, B1; "L.A. seizures of marijuana soar in 1996," *Los Angeles Times*, 25 November 1996, A1. "Mexican cartels tied to state's pot groves," *Los Angeles Times*, 14 September 1997, A1. Including the other *USA Today* story mentioned above, these articles averaged almost 28 paragraphs in length (18 more than the mean; see Table 3.3).

crime frame's *solution* of tracking down pot farms and arresting the "mules" tending the crop:

> Such law enforcement efforts may, in fact, aggravate the problem as much as they alleviate it, according to Mark Kleiman, a professor and drug policy expert at UCLA. Although eliminating tons of marijuana, he said, the actions have probably forced many small-time operators out of business, allowing more powerful criminal organizations to fill the void.
>
> "You're probably going to see more violence and corruption," Kleiman said. "Domestic marijuana production is becoming more like a criminal enterprise than a hobby."[37]

Crime 1996-1997: Fighting *medicalization*

After the *decriminalization* frame lost what little prevalence it had in the news, the *crime* frame was rebuilt by sources and journalists to respond to the rising *medical* frame in 1996. Its promoters (especially law enforcement and government officials; see Table 4.2) built the new *crime* frame on two *problems* (see Figure 4.2): Marijuana as medicine, and the ballot initiatives (or political process that led to them), combined in Figure 4.2 as the "medical movement." In 1996, Proposition 215 and the general movement for medical marijuana were the most frequently cited *crime* problems regarding the issue.

But the news stories in which *crime* sources attacked the medical frame also cited another *problem*, in conjunction with the new anti-medical *problems*, that had appeared since

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[37]"Mexican cartels tied to state's pot groves," *Los Angeles Times*, 14 September 1997, A1.

the beginning of the study period: marijuana as an illegal and dangerous plant. It was on this older *problem* that the new ones of *marijuana as medicine* and *the ballot initiatives or political process* were built and combined.

An early example reported a raid by the Los Angeles sheriff's department of a marijuana club in West Hollywood. The *problems* of marijuana growing, marijuana as medicine, and marijuana as an illegal or dangerous plant all appeared.[38] After Propositions 200 and 215 passed in November 1996 federal officials became the most frequent promoters of the new anti-medical frame. Articles in *USA Today* and the *Los Angeles Times* especially presented the frame preferred by the White House and federal agencies responding to the political situation in California. The coverage further demonstrated the importance of sources and their power in framing events to build and maintain a frame.

For example, one *USA Today* story quoted administration sources as saying that the federal response to the state challenges to national drug policy would come soon, and that federal employees would be fired if caught using marijuana for medical purposes. The link between the new marijuana problems and the overall *crime* frame was cemented in the conclusion:

> Following up on a campaign pledge, Clinton announced federal guidelines aimed at making staying

[38]"4 arrested as club alleged to openly sell marijuana is raided," *Los Angeles Times*, 17 September 1996, B4.

drug-free a condition for prisoners getting out of jail or remaining on parole.

"There is a huge connection between crime and prison populations and drug use that we are now strongly determined to break," Clinton said.

"This law says to inmates, if you want out of jail you must get off of drugs," he said.

"It says to parolees if you want to stay out of jail you must stay off drugs. If you go back on drugs, then you have to go back to jail."[39]

The announcement, a deliberate rhetorical link between marijuana, other illegal drugs, and "crime and prison populations," was an event the administration was able to organize to re-assert control over the framing of marijuana as a problem of *crime*, with solutions (especially "jail," repeated several times) best left in the hands of federal law enforcement and political authorities.

Later in December the same administration sources began to link the *problem* of marijuana as an illegal or dangerous drug (along with medical pot and the ballot initiatives) to *causal agents* such as reformers in general -- but particularly doctors. These administration sources very clearly identified doctors as the *causal agents* who would be held legally responsible. Later stories repeated and thereby built the new *crime* frame.[40]

As the repercussions from the ballot referenda played out in the news in the early months of 1997, the *medical*

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[39]"Medical marijuana reply due soon: White House fears 'threat to national drug strategy'," 13 December 1996, A3.

[40]Chapter 6 will discuss the *medical* frame and its role as competitor with the *crime* frame in more detail.

frame built a successful challenge to the *crime* frame, in part due to the news coverage of the lawsuits filed by physicians groups, the responses by national doctors' associations such as the AMA, and other events that brought new elite actors into the contest for control over the framing of the marijuana issue.

Summary

Evidence from these stories shows that there are several keys to the durability of the *crime* frame. First, it is supported by both the law and culture. Second, the *crime* frame is promoted by well-organized official institutions and actors (police, government officials) in an organized way, as part of a traditional routine relationship with mainstream news. These sponsors create and influence events (news conferences, arrests, enforcement actions) that enable them to cite and blame *causal agents*, and assess them with *moral evaluations;* completing the frame, *solutions* are readily provided by the actions of officials (usually arrests or other activities). In short, the *crime* frame of marijuana is a culturally resonant frame linked to larger societal values and norms, and is easily maintained and integrated.

The keys to the weakness and failure of the *decriminalization* frame are, first, the lack of newsworthy *events* supporting it. By covering everyday occurrences (what has happened) the routine news narrative lacks the

ability to include frame components (such as solutions) when those components are not readily apparent to the journalist from the event or events in the story. Even the most damning *decriminalization* stories often failed to link components, because, for example, the *solution* to the *problem* of the government's forfeiture laws (legal challenges, persuasive campaigns to reform the law, etc.) are usually complex and *have not happened.* They have not been given the status of *event* necessary to draw them into the everyday news narrative. These links are necessary, though not always sufficient, for successful frame-building.

The second key failure of the *decriminalization* frame was its lack of *causal agents* and the *moral evaluations* to go with them, and an even greater failure to link *solutions* to *problems* in the same stories, even though solutions and problems dominated that frame. *Causal agents* for *decriminalization* stories often would have been the very sources used by reporters in *crime* stories, so their dominance as sources and their official positions precluded to a great extent their identification as bearing actual responsibility for the problem.

The feature stories about the Pot Culture Resurgence set up part of the basis of the *threat to youth* frame. Ironically, by concentrating more on marijuana itself (as a cultural solution without a problem), and less and less on real problems such as civil forfeiture, the news made it easier for proponents of the *youth* frame to cite *pot culture*

as a problem (threat), replacing the image of marijuana as exemplar solution for the laid-back, environmentalist 1990s. As the next chapter shows, anti-drug groups, government officials and others were able to use fear of pot culture, its threat to youth, and regularly recurring events such as survey reports to quickly and successfully build an integrated *threat to youth* frame that would dominate news about marijuana for many months.

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CHAPTER V

"SURVEY *SAYS...!*" KIDS, PARENTS AND THE WRONG ATTITUDE: THE *THREAT TO YOUTH* FRAME

Even after the *threat to youth* frame had peaked in prominence in 1996, its appeal still proved irresistible to the producers of ABC's evening news broadcast. On a Saturday evening in April 1997 the program led with the story of a group of third-grade students near Denver caught rolling a marijuana joint. The story that followed was about the deaths of five children from fire in California.[1] On that night the scandalous story of young children caught with marijuana trumped the more tragic, though perhaps less unusual, story of dying children.

This example highlights not only the importance of the *unusual* as a news value,[2] but also the cultural resonance of framing marijuana and children as signifiers of the illegal drug problem. Of all five frames, *threat to youth* stories were most likely to be assigned top story coverage,

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[1]*ABC World News Saturday*, 26 April, 1997.

[2]Shoemaker and Reese, 111. See also Doris A. Graber, *Mass Media and American Politics*, 4th ed. (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 1993), 118.

especially on ABC's news broadcasts[3]; the *threat to youth* frame also named people causing the problem (*causal agents*) and assigned explanations of that relationship (*moral evaluations*) most often. And except for *crime*, it also dominated individual stories more than any other frame. This chapter will discuss how sources sponsoring the frame, such as anti-drug groups and their surveys, in concert with the mainstream news media, were successful in building it.

At first the marijuana *threat to youth* narrative took off from the Pot Culture Resurgence stories detailed in the previous chapter. The general frame was that pot culture was undergoing a renewal of popularity, especially in music and popular entertainment for the young, and that this was simply a sad, if unimportant, reflection of the earthy 1990s. By the end of the study period in 1997, anti-drug sources had built a new *threat to youth* frame through their control of newsworthy events (especially the release of survey results) and their ability to link resonant components. The new frame was that the rising marijuana use by young people was due largely to the uncertainty and incompetence of baby boomer parents, who had grown up in the 1960s and were now failing their (our) children.

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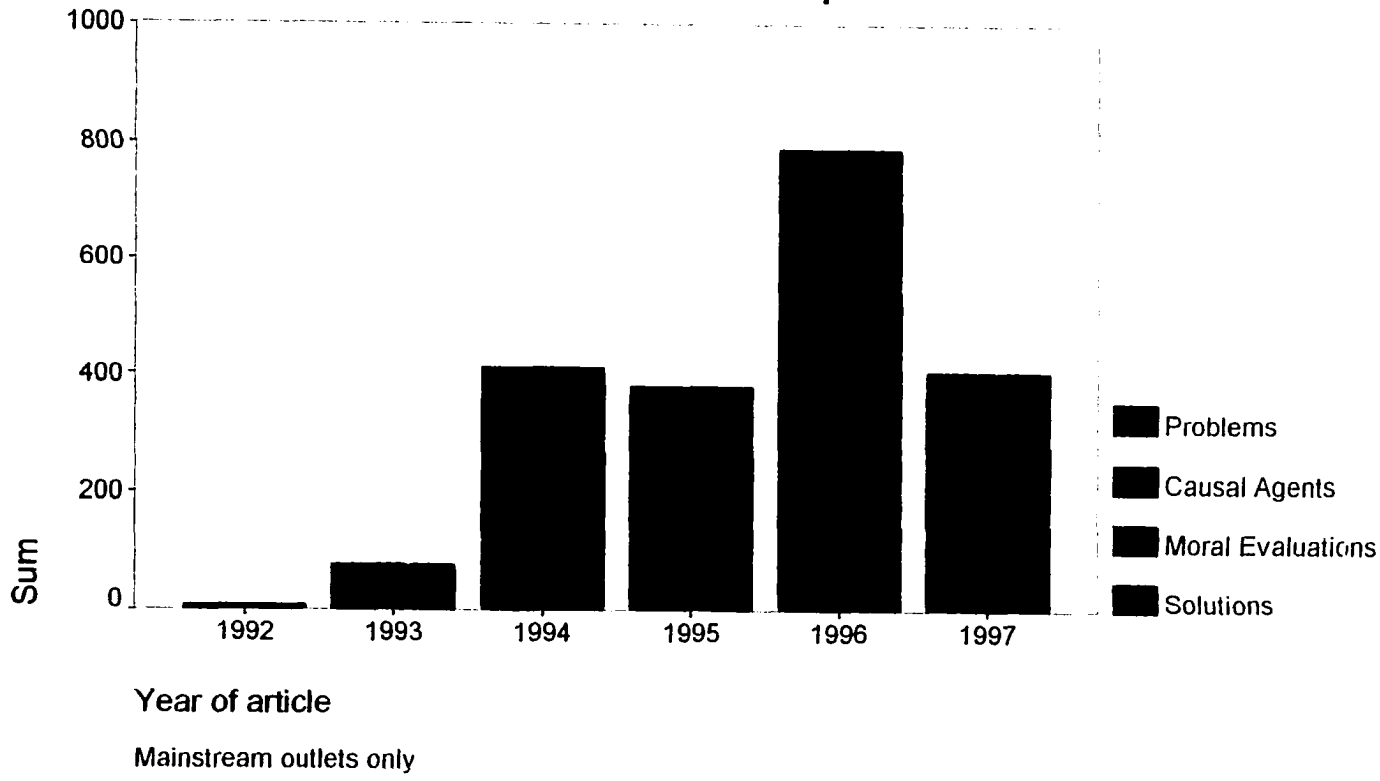
[3]More *youth* stories (14) were top stories (either above the fold on the front page of the newspaper, a magazine cover story, or the lead story on *World News Tonight*) than any other frame, and also as a proportion of all stories dominated by that frame (14 out of 85, or 16.5% of *youth* stories).

Figure 5.1: Threat to Youth Components



Mainstream outlets only

Early in the study period the news repeated catch phrases applied by frame sponsors; the same catch phrases later appeared in and supported news stories that blamed parents for the perceived marijuana *problem* among youth. The framing of parents (especially baby boomers who grew up in the 1960s) as central to both the problem of teen marijuana use, and its solution, began in 1993, was built in 1994 to 1995, and culminated in 1996. The *threat to youth* frame waned in 1997 as a proportion of the total marijuana coverage (see Figure 3.2; Figure 5.1 shows the number of *youth* frame components appearing over the period).

Table 5.1: First Five Source Types in Mainstream *Threat to Youth* Stories (N=85).

Source Type	*Number of Mentions*	*Percent*	*Cumulative Percent*
Federal surveys	65	19.1	19.1
Main anti-drug groups (CASA, etc.)	65	19.1	38.2
Bystanders/witnesses (private)	43	12.6	50.8
Federal drug policy/ health officials	41	12.1	62.9
Miscellaneous govt. officials or politicians	29	8.5	71.4
Other anti-drug organizations	29	8.5	79.9
(Other)	68	20.0	99.9
	340	99.9	

Sources sponsoring the *threat to youth*

Table 5.1 shows the frequencies of the first five sources cited in *youth*-dominated stories. As the table

indicates, *youth* stories were very often generated by the release of survey reports, conducted or financed either by the federal government or by a non-government anti-drug organization; the survey research and its sponsors then were used as sources of information for those stories. The other type of source, "bystanders" or "witnesses," was a miscellaneous category of anonymous individuals or second-hand media accounts. Most often, these sources appeared in man-in-the-street style interviews or focus groups gauging public reaction to the story at hand.

The *threat to youth* stories linked sources and events together more closely than any other frame: for many of these stories, a major national health agency or anti-drug organization would release the findings from a national or regional study of youth drug use, and the press release or conference announcing results to the media would provide the event required for news coverage.

Every year federal government agencies announce the results of periodic surveys of drug use in the U.S. These agencies and reports include NIDA's Monitoring the Future Report, usually released in December by the Institute for Social Research (ISR) at the University of Michigan, and the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse in September. Less regularly, private surveys are conducted by quasi- or non-government organizations such as the Center for Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University, and the Partnership for a Drug-Free America (PDFA). Especially at

the beginning of 1994 when the first major *threat to youth* coverage hit, stories followed a pattern: the release of survey results would spawn *hard news* stories reporting them; then, days or even weeks later *feature* stories would appear interpreting the results. This pattern helped build the *threat to youth* frame promoted by the officials and organizations releasing the results. The first hard news stories often quoted frame components provided by the spokesperson, agency or official, or used their information to frame the story. The later interpretive stories would be narratives from the field (a high school, a youth treatment center, a panel of teenagers), often using youths themselves as sources to frame the issue; these later stories reinforced the frames promoted by the original press releases. This was the primary mode of building the *youth* frame in this period. It illustrates how stories, when using frames with high cultural resonance such as the *threat to youth*, often do not require prompting from frame sponsors; in these follow-up feature stories the journalists created the *events* (such as interviews to interpret previous hard news) on which to base the stories.

The earliest stories chronicled a rise in marijuana use as part of a wider pattern of illegal drug usage, as in this lead paragraph from the transcript of a *World News Tonight* story, introduced by anchor Peter Jennings:

> There is a new report about drug use among the young today. It's not the biggest survey of its kind

but it is politically sensitive because of its findings. According to this survey, drug use among young people went up in 1991 for the first time in three years. Here's ABC's Linda Pattillo.

LINDA PATTILLO: The most dramatic increase was among students in grades six through eight. Marijuana up seven percent; amphetamines up nine percent; cocaine up 15 percent; and hallucinogens, such as LSD, up 20 percent.[4]

As a symbol of the problem of illegal drug use, the metaphor that the nation was "losing ground" in the fight against teen drug use first appeared in this *USA Today* article in April 1993 following the release of an HHS-funded study by the University of Michigan called the National High School Senior Survey. The survey reported an increase "in eighth graders' use of many drugs, including marijuana, cocaine, crack, LSD and inhalants."[5] This front-page story quoted the University of Michigan's Lloyd Johnston: "'We may be in danger of losing some ... hard-won ground (in reducing drug use) as a new, more naive generation of youngsters enters adolescence....'"[6]

Another *problem*, that youth attitudes about illegal drugs were deficient, was linked to this "losing ground" catch phrase by Johnston a few days later in another story

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[4]*World News Tonight*, 19 October 1992.

[5]"Drug use up at younger age," *USA Today*, 14 April 1993, A1. This story was also significant because, along with the earlier *crime* story titled "Across the USA, drug enforcers uproot a bumper marijuana crop," from 8 October 1992 (see previous chapter), it signaled *USA Today's* switch from sympathy for *decriminalization* to endorsement of the *crime* and *threat to youth* frames.

[6]Ibid.

in the New York Times: "'The younger teen-agers haven't had the chance to learn as much about the dangers of drugs as their predecessors.'"[7] A few months later in a story about illegal drugs including marijuana, *Time* also repeated Johnston's "generational (or inter-generational) forgetting" metaphor illustrating how the country was "losing ground" due to the lack of proper attitudes by youth: "'LSD may be a prime example of generational forgetting,' says Lloyd Johnston...."[8] This theme of a new, lost generation that was being deprived of the same attention previous generations had received, would appear later in no less than a dozen stories focusing more on marijuana.

Often the youths themselves were used as sources to illustrate the *problem* of *wrong attitudes*, as in this *Newsweek* article appearing a few months later about the pot culture:

> There is a sea change in attitudes, if not in actual use: an emerging population that openly espouses that drugs--at least some drugs--are no big deal. In Boston's Mission Hill district, a teen in a White Sox windbreaker and Duke baseball hat, smoking a cigar filled with marijuana, sums up a growing attitude: "I don't consider it a drug. It's a plant. Coke, I don't do that sh-t. That's a drug."[9]

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[7]"Among the youngest, a rise in marijuana, cocaine, LSD," *New York Times*, 18 April 1993, Sec. 4, 2.

[8]"Choose your poison," *Time*, 26 July 1993, 57. As the headline indicates, the general thrust of this story was that illegal drugs were everywhere and widely available.

[9]"Just say maybe," *Newsweek*, 1 November 1993, 51-52.

Linking components and building the threat to youth frame

As Table 5.2 shows, the *threat to youth* frame in the mainstream outlets rested on three main *problems*: youth illegal drug use (including marijuana), youth marijuana use, and youth attitudes (e.g., a lack of awareness of marijuana's dangers). The table also details the frame's emphasis on *causal agents* and *moral evaluations* of their relationship with the *problems; solutions* (as the previous chapter showed) were less frequently offered. The period in which the *threat to youth* frame gained prominence in framing the marijuana issue (roughly from mid-1993 to late-1996) shifted the *problems* identified, and the *causal agents* and *moral evaluations* of them changed also. These changes at first broadened the range of people blamed for the problem and assigned to youth a bystander or victim status; however, near the end of the period news stories homed in on kids and their parents and evaluated them more harshly as the problem reportedly worsened (see Figures 5.2-5.5).

Table 5.2: Frequencies and Main Relationships of *Threat to Youth* Components, Mainstream Outlets Only (Story N=85).

If the problem is....	*And the causal agents are....*	*Then the moral evaluation of prob/cause....*	*And the solution will be...*
Youth drug use (including marijuana) (296)	Youth drug users (176)	Youth drug users signify the drug problem (222)	Usually none OR Control or persuasion of youth through ads/society (66)
Youth marijuana use (196)	Youth marijuana users (154)	Youth pot users are rebellious, need normalizing (109)	Usually none OR Youth self-discipline ('Just Say No') (26)
Youth marijuana use (see above)	Parents, especially 'baby boomers' who smoke(d) themselves (57)	Parents (especially those who smoke[d] marijuana) are responsible for the problem (60)	Usually none OR Control of youth through family (other than home drug tests) (54)
Youth attitudes, or lack of awareness of dangers (94)	Youth culture; 'the wrong crowd'; youths as a whole, not just users (69)	Youth drug users signify the drug problem (see above)	Usually none OR Control or persuasion of youth through ads/society (see above)
Youth attitudes, or lack of awareness of dangers (see above)	Media messages or youth popular culture purveyors (39)	Media and popular culture threaten youth, send 'wrong message' about drugs (34)	Usually none OR Control or persuasion of youth through ads/society (see above)
Marijuana as a 'gateway' to harder drugs (16)	Usually none	Usually none	Usually none

Figure 5.2: Main Youth Problems

"What is the problem?"

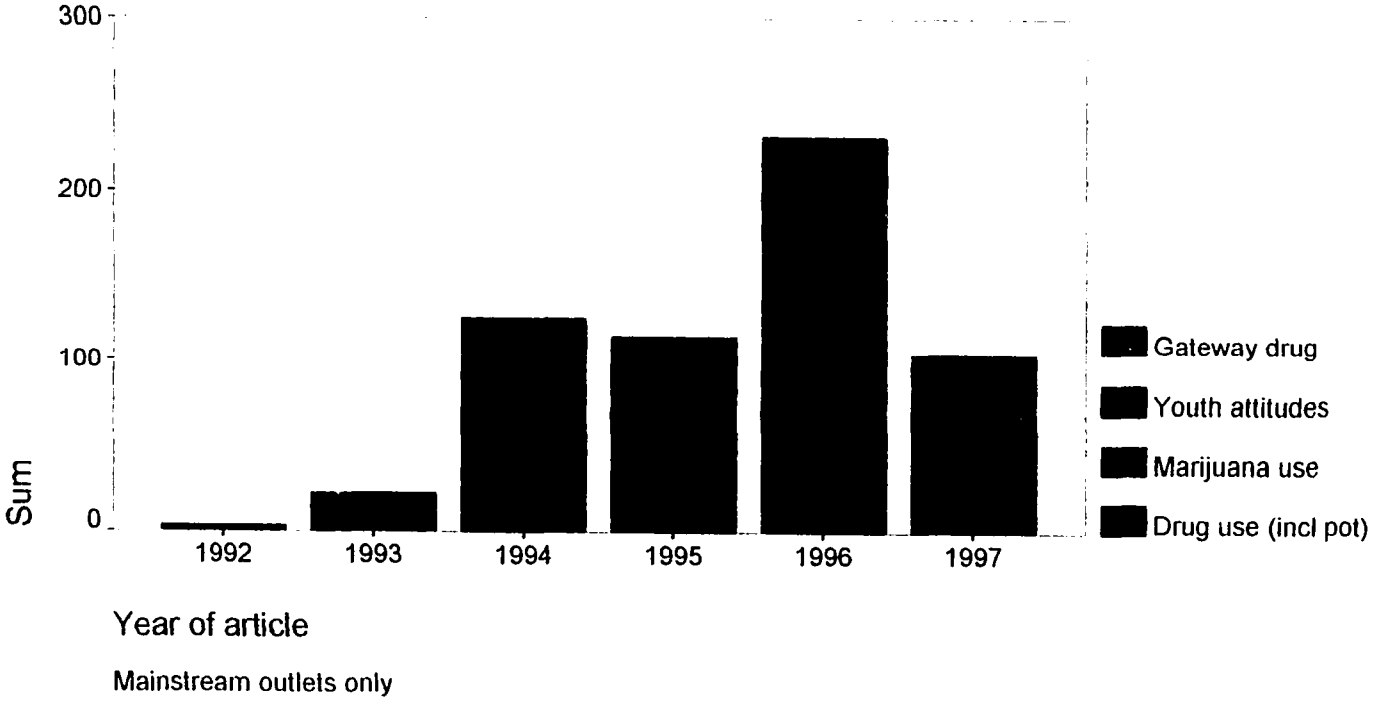
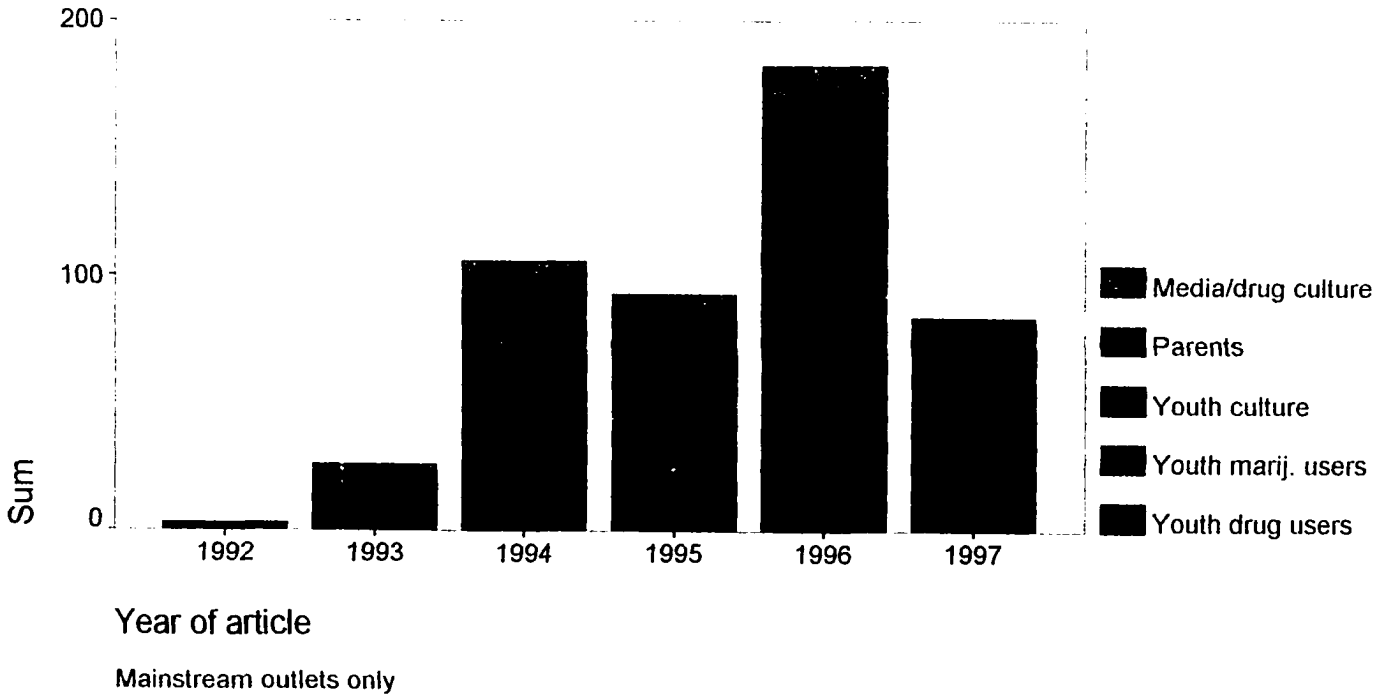


Figure 5.3: Main Youth Causes

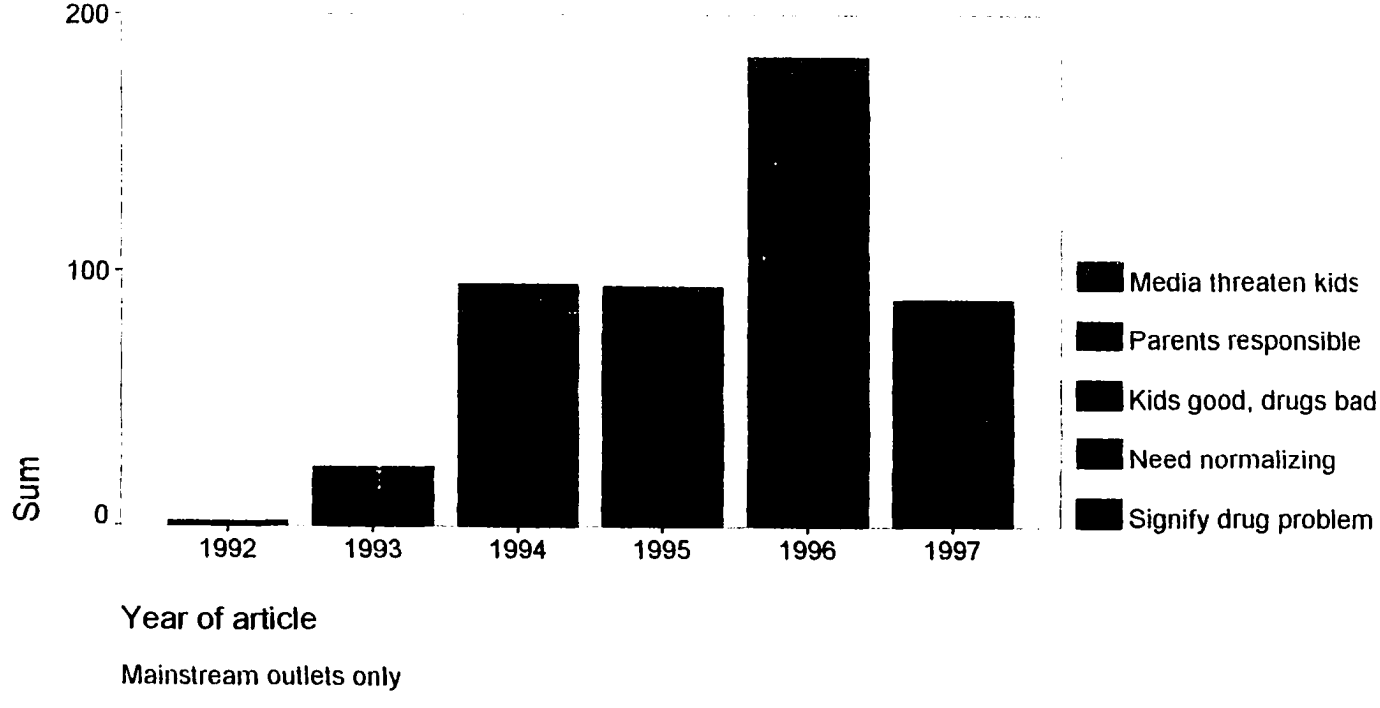
"Who is to blame?"



Mainstream outlets only

Figure 5.4: Main Youth Moral Evaluations

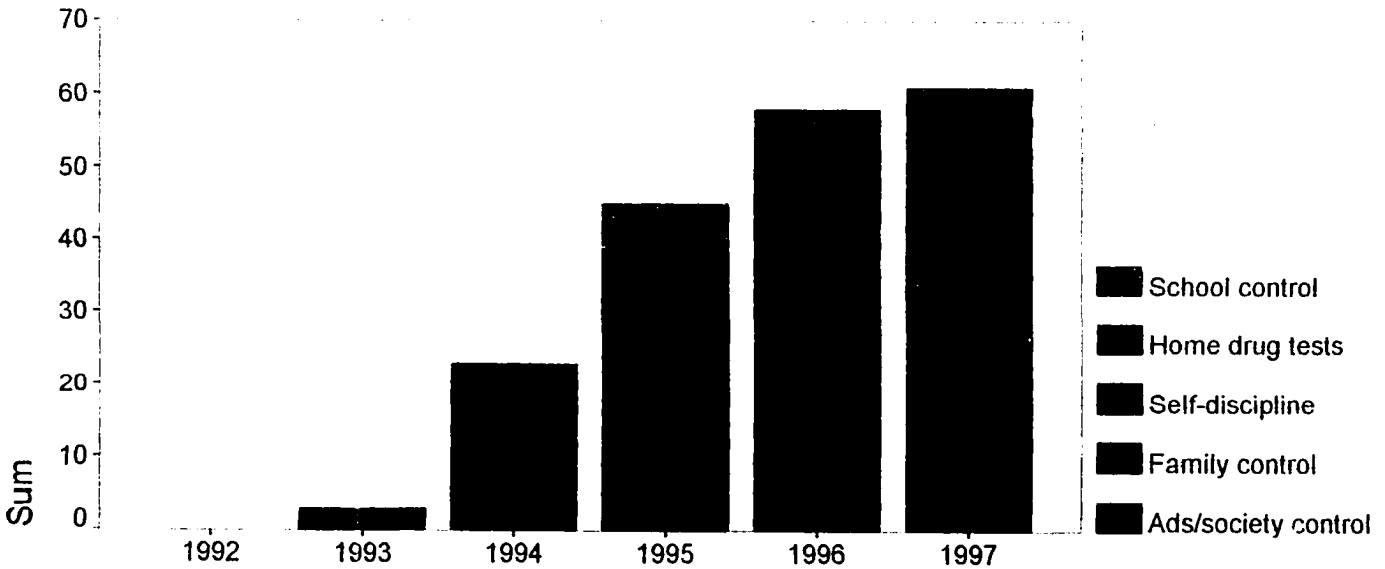
"What does it mean?"



Mainstream outlets only

Figure 5.5: Main Youth Solutions

"What do we do?"



Year of article

Mainstream outlets only

As the figures show, although the young drug and marijuana users themselves were most often blamed, other agents soon replaced them as the problem seemed to worsen. These people and groups were outside influences, especially *youth drug culture* (in a sense, the influence of the wrong crowd, and the pervasiveness of marijuana or drugs among them); the *mass media* (especially the music industry); and later, *parents*. To some degree, the *moral evaluations* changed as the frame shifted blame from one group to another.

The most common *moral evaluations* centered on two basic competing explanations for the relationship between *problems* and *causes*: 1) youths themselves were central to the problem (either as rebellious kids needing normalizing or as signifiers of the drug problem); or 2) outside influences (usually either popular culture, especially the music industry, or parents) were somehow corrupting or providing bad examples for youth. The next three sections discuss how sources and journalists built the frame by changing these components.

Linking *youth* components: 1992-1993

In this period the frame began to emphasize marijuana as an exemplar of the drug problem. The three main *problems* in the *youth* frame were: 1) *illegal drug use* (including marijuana) -- based largely on the metaphor of the country "losing ground" in its fight against teen drug use;

2) *the wrong attitudes* -- that youth were not aware of the dangers of marijuana because their attitudes about it were wrong; and,

3) *the gateway drug* -- marijuana as a gateway to harder drugs such as heroin or LSD.

The *problem* of *wrong attitudes* tied in thematically with an argument that appeared in the news and was presented as a fact throughout the study period, beginning in 1993: that marijuana potency (i.e. the levels of THC, marijuana's psychoactive ingredient) had increased several times since the last generation, and therefore marijuana was more dangerous and addictive than ever. These arguments also sometimes combined with the *problem* of marijuana as a gateway drug, which appeared in the study group first in the same *Time* article quoted previously:

> Marijuana, usually the first illegal drug sampled by eventual hard-core abusers, is also back in vogue. Of the 11.4 million Americans who admitted to using drugs within a month of the 1992 Household Survey, 55% referred solely to pot; an additional 19% abused marijuana in combination with other drugs. "Cannabis is the drug that teaches our kids what other drugs are all about," says Charlie Stowell, the DEA's cannabis coordinator in California. He says today's marijuana is considerably more potent and expensive than the pot of the '60s because the amount of THC--the ingredient that provides the high--has risen from 2% or 3% to 12%.[10]

This paragraph links the gateway problem to an argument about increased potency, which in later stories would vary

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[10]"Choose your poison," 57.

from the four-fold increase (cited in the above *Time* article) to a twenty-fold increase in at least two other stories.[11]

Later, the same claims appeared in the *Newsweek* article quoted previously ("Just Say Maybe," 1 November 1993), but unlike most of the stories making the claim the source was cited: "Back in the '70s and '80s, average marijuana was about 1.5 to 2 percent THC, the main psychoactive ingredient; now it's twice as high and can even reach 30 percent THC, according to NIDA."[12]

This broader theme, like the catch phrase "intergenerational forgetting," also tied together the two *problems* of youth drug use itself and the wrong attitudes about pot and later fed into the identification of parents as the main *causal agents*. But the potency theme was especially interesting because it appeared numerous times and cited statistics that wildly fluctuated from story to story; the *Newsweek* article was an exception in that it cited the source of the data. The potency argument was a key part of the building of the frame that later slammed the baby boom generation.

As these early stories took off from the Pot Culture Resurgence stories (Chapter 4), they turned the *decriminalization solution* frames (pot is the new wave of

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[11]"'Pot' surges back, but it's, like, a whole new world," *New York Times*, 6 February 1994, Sec. 4, 18; "Bad habits," *Los Angeles Times*, 16 February 1994, E1.

[12]"Just Say Maybe," *Newsweek*, 1 November 1993, 54.

the '90s) from the latter into *threat to youth problem* frames (the new wave of marijuana use threatens our youth). This switch illustrates the power of frame sponsors. One example was the *Newsweek* article (discussed above) in which the head of the ONDCP blamed the rise of pot culture among the young, signified by popular clothing such as T-shirts and other emblems, on parents:

> Lee Brown, the new drug czar, is outraged by this fashion statement.... "It angers me when I see" the drug wear, he says. "It's a mistake for parents to allow their children to get caught in that culture."[13]

Linking *youth* components: 1994-1995

By the end of 1993, a significant shift occurred in the frame: marijuana use by youths became the exemplar of the drug problem, as the headlines below indicate. Whereas up to that time none of the headlines in the sample had mentioned marijuana alone,[14] many of them now did:

"'Pot' surges back, but it's, like, a whole new world"[15];
"Bad habits: Marijuana is back as the drug of choice"[16];

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[13]"Just say maybe," 53.

[14]One headline before had mentioned several drugs including marijuana: "Among the youngest, a rise in marijuana, cocaine, LSD," *New York Times*, 18 April 1993, Sec. 2, 4.

[15]*New York Times*, 6 February 1994, Sec. 4, 18.

[16]*Los Angeles Times*, 16 February 1994, E1.

"Pot drawing in teens"[17];

"Teen pot use up"[18];

"Teens' growing marijuana use is 'dangerous'"[19];

"Marijuana use rises in 12-17 age group"[20];

"More teen-agers using marijuana"[21];

"Teen-agers' marijuana use nearly doubles."[22]

Although youth marijuana use was a strong *problem* component in earlier stories, it shared much space with other illegal drugs also. In 1994, it became the main drug problem in the news.

On the last day of January 1994 NIDA released the findings of ISR's annual survey of teenagers and drug use[23]; the story made the evening news, the next morning's newspapers and spawned feature stories days later exploring the return of marijuana, this time without the tongue-in-cheek faddishness of the Pot Culture Resurgence period. But it was the follow-up feature stories, not the original news

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[17]*USA Today*, 15 February 1995, A1.

[18]*ABC World News Saturday*, 13 May 1995.

[19]*USA Today*, 19 July 1995, A1.

[20]*USA Today*, 12 September 1995, A3.

[21]*USA Today*, 13 September 1995, D7.

[22]*Los Angeles Times*, 13 September 1995, A5.

[23]National Institute on Drug Abuse, *National Survey Results on Drug Use From the Monitoring the Future Study* (Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1993).

stories covering the results, that focused on marijuana. The first of these articles in the sample was an "Ideas & Trends" story in the Sunday *New York Times* that followed the announcement. The article mainly used drug treatment experts, police and teen-agers as sources; it mentioned other drugs, but out of 26 paragraphs, 11 set youth marijuana use alone as the *problem*, including the lead:

> Baby boomers with fond memories of marijuana brownies and bong hits around the lava lamp may not be particularly alarmed by last week's news that pot is making a major comeback among teen-agers. But the culture of cannabis, which currently goes by names like "chocolate tide" and "chronic," has grown considerably more dangerous in the years since the flower children left Haight-Ashbury to the cappuccino merchants.[24]

As the first phrase in the first sentence vividly illustrates (and the last drives home with "the flower children"), at the center of the problem of pot's "major comeback" are the "baby boomers," whom later paragraphs also cite as *causal agents* (not only for the problem itself but also for not caring about it). This paragraph also illustrates the entwining of the potency argument ("considerably more dangerous") with parents and youth attitudes.

Another example from a similar feature story in the *Los Angeles Times* 10 days later also illustrates the use of the potency theme as a part of the problem of *youth attitudes*:

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[24]"'Pot' surges back, but it's, like, a whole new world," *New York Times*, 6 February 1994, Sec. 4, 18.

> Across Los Angeles, some students are taking a fast, drug-laden trip fueled by an attitude that it's cool to smoke marijuana, not viewing the drug as addictive, harmful or a great risk, even though researchers warn that it is 20 times more potent today than in the 1960s and '70s.[25]

After appearing 10 days earlier in the *New York Times* article ("Pot surges back"), the "20 times" argument is repeated here and again is not attributed to any named source.

In this period (1994-1995) the much larger role of *youth attitudes* as a *problem* signified a second shift in the frame. In contrast, the *gateway* problem frame appeared only sporadically. Marijuana as a gateway to harder drugs was not as important as it had been before; instead, marijuana *became* the exemplar of the youth drug problem.

At the peak of the appearance of *youth attitudes* as the *problem*, one story in the sample allowed one source -- CASA's Joseph Califano -- to submit his own *causal agents* to be blamed for the problem: parents. The following excerpt shows the paragraphs addressing this problem: numbers 7 and 8, the last sentence in paragraph 9, then 10.

> The survey also found in that age group that the view of marijuana as dangerous had decreased.
> "When teen-agers' perception of the harm caused by marijuana goes down, marijuana use goes up," said Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala, speaking before an audience of local high school students....

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[25]"Bad habits," *Los Angeles Times*, 16 February 1994, E1.

> ....Experts, seeking to explain the turnaround in marijuana use, pointed to a *pervasive ambivalence on the part of today's parents--many of whom once smoked marijuana themselves.*
>
> "*They do not know how to deal with this subject with their kids,*" said Joseph A. Califano Jr., secretary of health, education and welfare during the Jimmy Carter Administration, who now heads the Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University. "*The parents of many of these kids smoked pot like little chimneys in the '70s.*"[26]

Califano's preoccupation with marijuana-smoking parents, and his influence as a regular source, would be instrumental in building the *threat to youth* frame a year later when his center would release its own survey focusing on the relationship between parents, kids and marijuana.[27] Here, his presentation as an "expert" on the problem helped secure his later influence in framing the issue.

The emphasis on *solutions* (see Figure 5.5) rose in 1994 and 1995 as sources of the *threat to youth* frame appeared more frequently in the news and as the frame-building process intensified. However, the wide range of solutions, and the relative scarcity of the *solution* component in the overall frame, reflected the ambivalence about the exact nature of the problem. As Table 5.2 shows, the preferred *solution* tended to vary with the *problem* and the *causal*

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[26]"Teen-agers' marijuana use nearly doubles," *Los Angeles Times*, 13 September 1995, A5. Italics added.

[27]As the conclusion to this chapter notes, CASA had just released another report in September 1998 (after the study period) that was still pushing the same combination of frame components.

agent. For example, when the *causal agents* were outside influences such as the media and popular culture, the solution tended to be control or persuasion through other outside forces such as public service ad campaigns aimed at kids.

The types of *causal agents* blamed for youth marijuana use broadened, and the mention of *solutions* increased, in December 1994 as a result of the next release of the Monitoring the Future study.[28] In the original announcement and interviews Lloyd Johnston suggested a *problem* that was widely reported and set the tone not only for recommended *solutions* but also for later feature stories reinforcing it. The lead of the front-page *New York Times* story blamed the increase in drug use on "a trend that the study's director attributed to the 'glamorizing' of drugs by the entertainment industry."[29] Other outlets also echoed the same frame, and the *Los Angeles Times* and ABC especially emphasized the *solution* of society countering the influence of the media with anti-drug messages that would turn the problem around:

> [Donna] Shalala, joined by Education Secretary Richard W. Riley and federal drug czar Lee P. Brown, blamed "drug glorification messages" for much of the

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[28]National Institute on Drug Abuse, *National Survey Results on Drug Use From the Monitoring the Future Study* (Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1994).

[29]"Survey reports more drug use by teen-agers," *New York Times*, 13 December 1994, A1.

increase and said that the primary cause is that "fewer young people believe that marijuana is harmful."

"We need anti-drug messages that are every bit as pervasive and strong as the pop culture images that tell our youth drugs are OK," Shalala said. Displaying T-shirts bearing pro-drug use slogans and symbols that her staff purchased in the Georgetown neighborhood where she lives, Shalala said: "Increasingly, drug glorification messages are creeping back into our popular culture."

Lloyd D. Johnston, the survey's principal investigator, said there also has been a decline in peer disapproval of drug [*sic*]. "If the softening of attitudes and peer norms continues unabated, we can expect to see continued increases in drug use among our children," Johnston said.[30]

And from the *World News Tonight* transcript:

DONNA SHALALA, Health and Human Services Secretary: To those who use drugs, stop now. Drugs are unsafe and they're illegal.

[Reporter] CAROLE SIMPSON: [voice-over]: The proposal is not new - a concerted effort by the government, parents, teachers and the media to spread the word that drugs are bad for you....

Experts say society must send a much different message about illegal drugs.

JOSEPH CALIFANO, Addiction & Substance Abuse Center: You've got to add extra efforts, extra energy - parents, teachers, churches - to get these kids not to try something else.[31]

As Figure 5.3 illustrates, blaming societal or media-based messages for promoting (or being too soft on) marijuana and other drugs continued but was later supplanted by *youth culture* and *baby boomer parents*.

And as more stories blamed youth marijuana culture, users or their parents for the problem, *solutions* focused more on the family: parents exercising control or kids

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[30]"Nearly 50% of 12th graders linked to drug use," *Los Angeles Times*, 13 December 1994, A34.

[31]*ABC World News Tonight*, 12 December 1994.

learning self-discipline. Specific solutions ranged from new home drug test kits[32] to simple parental awareness of the problem.[33] This example presaged later harsher ones as the next period homed in on the family:

> Lloyd D. Johnston, principal investigator for the University of Michigan study, said that in an era when so many parents, including even President Clinton, have tried marijuana, some may feel awkward giving their children strong lectures on the dangers of drugs and alcohol. Most of them "do not want their children involved in drugs, marijuana or otherwise, but many have fallen silent on the issues because they feel quite conflicted about it," he said. Nevertheless, he said, it is critical that these parents warn their children of the hazards.
>
> Mr. Johnston suggested that parents can make several points with their children, including that when they were young, less was known about the dangers of drugs, and that drugs widely available today are stronger and more addictive.[34]

Again the theme of increased potency is repeated, this time firmly linked to parents as both *cause* and *solution*. As the news about kids and marijuana worsened, the *causal agents* changed from the kids themselves to their parents, and the evaluations and solutions also changed. This shift in frames shows how the news built the *threat to youth* into

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[32]*ABC World News Saturday*, 13 May 1995.

[33]"Teen-agers' marijuana use nearly doubles," *Los Angeles Times*, A5.

[34]"Drug and alcohol use rising among teen-agers, a study finds," *New York Times*, 17 December 1995, Sec. 1, 45.

a stronger, more culturally resonant frame and shifted (and repeated more often) the recommended policy solutions.[35]

Linking *youth* components: 1996-1997

These years closed out the height of the *threat to youth* period with an intense series of stories focusing on marijuana as the center of the problem and on confessions by baby boomer parents (both famous and unfamous) admitting present or past use. The coverage climaxed in August and September 1996 with a series of articles in the mainstream media building on previous components and wrapping them up to blame baby boomers for the perceived crisis in youth marijuana use. Then, the *threat to youth* frame was essentially squeezed out by the competitive pressure between the *crime* and *medical* frames. Surveys reported youth marijuana use leveling or even falling later in 1997. Indeed, the problem went on much as before, but the news lost interest.

The main headlines tell the story of the culmination of frame-building in this period:

[35]It could be argued that, because blaming societal influences logically led to societal *solutions* that cost more money and required scarce political resources, it became more attractive for anti-drug groups and officials to blame parents and the family, shouldering them with the burden and letting societal institutions and actors off the hook.

"Parents' dilemma: If you did drugs as a kid, how do you talk to your children about the dangers?";[36]

"Marijuana use by youths continues to rise";[37]

"Shalala opens drive to stem teen pot use";[38]

"Molinari admits trying marijuana in college years";[39]

"Teen drug use has doubled in 4 years, U.S. says";[40]

"Teens and drugs: Today's youth just don't see the dangers";[41]

"Like parent, perhaps like child";[42]

"Study ties teen-age drug use to parents' marijuana smoking";[43]

"Teens, parents more likely to tolerate drugs, poll says";[44]

"Many parents resigned to kids' drug use";[45]

"Like parent, like teen-ager?";[46]

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[36]*Newsweek*, 12 February 1996, 68.

[37]*New York Times*, 20 February 1996, A11.

[38]*Los Angeles Times*, 25 June 1996, A8.

[39]*USA Today*, 27 July 1996, A4.

[40]*Los Angeles Times*, 21 August 1996, A1.

[41]*USA Today*, 21 August 1996, A1.

[42]*ABC World News Tonight*, 9 September 1996. This was the lead story. Peter Jennings recited the headline that was repeated in a later *New York Times* news brief (see below).

[43]*New York Times*, 10 September 1996, D23.

[44]*Los Angeles Times*, 10 September 1996, A1.

[45]*USA Today*, 10 September 1996, A1.

[46]*New York Times*, 15 September 1996, Sec. 2, 4.

"Doing drugs: A fact of school life";[47]

"Kids & pot: Marijuana use among teens is up but baby-boomer parents (who know something about the subject) aren't sure what to do";[48]

"Pot's deep roots in unlikely ground";[49]

"Adolescent drug use continues to rise."[50]

The coverage built the frame in this period mainly by linking the *problems* of *youth marijuana use* and *youth attitudes* with the *causal agents* of *youth marijuana users* and *parents* (especially past or present pot smokers). In addition, other component combinations that had appeared before continued to appear here; but now they were woven together more completely by the underlying *problem* of *youth marijuana use* and its causes, *baby boomer parents*.

Newsweek began to make the firmest link between marijuana, other illegal drugs, and baby boomer parents in the "Parents' dilemma" article in February 1996. Later that month, in covering the release of a survey by the PDFA reporting on drug usage and attitudes, mainstream outlets began cementing the same relationships between frame components. Here, not only was marijuana use up but attitudes were still part of the problem, and parents,

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[47]*USA Today*, 28 October 1996, A3.

[48]*Time*, 9 December 1996, 26.

[49]*Los Angeles Times*, 15 December 1996, A1.

[50]*New York Times*, 20 December 1996, B12.

though well-intentioned, were responsible. Parents were also more explicitly addressed in the news. Both the *New York Times* and *World News Tonight* (the two outlets in the sample with stories reporting the results) repeated the survey's pronouncement that parents, though meaning well, suffered from a new malady:

> "We find parents strongly anti-drug and committed to their children's non-use," the survey said. "However, we do find that parents are suffering from a 'not my kid' syndrome."[51]

As part of its background, this story repeated two other catch phrases that had appeared before, quoting two researchers to repeat them: "inter-generational forgetting" (Lloyd Johnston) and "the country is losing precious, hard-won ground" (James E. Burke, PDFA chairman). Both of these arguments buttressed the *wrong attitudes* and *youth drug/pot use* problems) and had appeared since April 1993 in at least seven stories; one or the other had been repeated in at least four stories in the sample since then.[52] This story would not be the last. Examples from this period (1996-

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[51]"Marijuana use by youths continues to rise," *New York Times*, 20 February 1996, A11.

[52]These were all quoting Johnston, unless otherwise noted. "*Hard-won ground*": "Drug use up at younger age," *USA Today*, 14 April 1993, A1; "Survey reports more drug use by teen-agers," *New York Times*, 13 December 1994, A1 (Donna Shalala); "Nearly 50% of 12th graders linked to drug use," 13 December 1994, A34 (Shalala); "*Inter-generational forgetting*": "Choose your poison," *Time*, 26 July 1993.

1997) further demonstrate the building of frames through the sponsorship of sources.

This is the ABC transcript in full, from that evening, reported by anchor Peter Jennings:

> Note for parents: marijuana use among teenagers continues to rise. A study released today indicates that pot-smoking among adolescents is at a seven-year high. Thirty-eight percent of those surveyed said they had tried it. The report blames parents, many of them baby-boomers- *should I say also blames parents*, many of them baby-boomers who once smoked marijuana, for failing to realize what their children were up to, suffering from the 'not my kid' syndrome.[53]

Jennings was careful to insert the word "also," but other stories later that year on ABC and in other outlets would not so readily pull their punches.

For the next few months the news lost interest in the marijuana issue in general and the *threat to youth* frame in particular, despite the continued release of survey results that were just as alarming as they had been before, if not more so.[54] Few stories appeared again until the August release of the 1995 Household Survey on Drug Abuse. The survey spawned a front-page 32-paragraph story in the August 21 edition of *USA Today* and a *Los Angeles Times* story (also front-page) that ran 18 paragraphs. By this time the

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[53]*World News Tonight*, 20 February 1996. Italics added.

[54]Perhaps the repeated claims of periodically increasing drug usage became old news, because even though the youth drug problem still seemed to be worsening, the news was the same as it had been for the past three years: more kids are on drugs, especially marijuana.

Clinton and Dole presidential election campaigns were using the issue of youths and illegal drugs to paint each other as soft in the war on drugs, and these two stories were among the first to prominently feature campaign sources as framers of the issue. Combined with CASA's entrepreneurship in September, these sources would give the *threat to youth* frame more attention in the news than it had received since February 1994, and as much as it would receive again before the end of the study period.

The release of the CASA survey in early September generated the peak of the frame's blaming of baby boomers. Articles by every daily mainstream outlet appeared in the study sample. Joseph Califano's Center scored major coverage and was able to promote the particular *threat to youth* components he favored: parents (especially, but not exclusively, those who smoked marijuana) were to blame for their kids' drug use. The length of the stories ranged from 10 paragraphs on ABC (relatively long for *World News Tonight*) to 25 in *USA Today*. With the exception of the *New York Times*, all the stories in the sample were front-page (and the lead story on ABC). Only the *New York Times* managed to allow a dissenting view: from ISR's Johnston.[55]

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[55]Similarly, the *Los Angeles Times* story was the only one in the sample to reveal the political affiliation of the polling firm CASA used: Luntz Research Cos., "headed by Republican political consultant Frank Luntz." "Teens, parents more likely to tolerate drugs, poll says," 10 September, 1996, A13. In its story the previous evening, *World News Tonight* interviewed Luntz but did not identify his political affiliation.

In interviews Califano repeated the frame he had articulated before. The excerpts that follow show a level of access to the national media that was enjoyed by very few sources outside the government; consequently Califano, advocating particular *threat to youth* frame components, was able to dominate the coverage:

> "What's infuriating about the attitude revealed in this survey is the resignation of so many baby-boomer parents to the present mess."[56]
>
> "It's time for parents of American teens to say, 'We're mad as hell, and we're not going to take it anymore,'" Califano said. "The more parents take responsibility, the less at risk of using drugs their children are."[57]
>
> "Parents -- particularly baby boomers who smoked marijuana in their youth -- can stop blaming others for their teen-agers' behavior and start sending . . . an unequivocal message that drug use is dangerous and morally wrong," says Califano....
> "By the time American teen-agers reach age 17, they are living in a world littered with drugs," he says.[58]
>
> "The ambivalence of the baby boomers about marijuana is clearly a key factor" in adolescent drug use, said Joseph Califano....[59]

As already mentioned, only the *New York Times* allowed a competing frame into its story reporting CASA's survey. The

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[56]*World News Tonight*, 9 September 1996. The same quote appeared in the fourth paragraph of the *Los Angeles Times* story; an edited quote appeared in the fifth paragraph of the *USA Today* story.

[57]*Los Angeles Times*, A1.

[58]"Many parents resigned to kids' drug use," *USA Today*, 10 September, 1996, A1.

[59]"Study ties teen-age drug use to parents' marijuana smoking," *New York Times*, 10 September 1996, D23.

controversy hinged on the survey's finding that a much lower percentage of parents who had smoked marijuana regularly said they would consider it a crisis if their child smoked pot, than did parents who had not tried marijuana. This gap in attitudes is the "ambivalence" Califano disparaged. In its eighth and ninth paragraphs the *New York Times* story allowed Lloyd Johnston of the ISR (another main *youth* frame source) to challenge Califano's definition of "crisis" (another example of balancing a story within a dominant frame):

> But some experts questioned whether it was fair to conclude that parents who do not consider their teenagers' drug use a crisis still viewed it as harmless.
> "Considering it a crisis versus not wanting your kids to do it are two different things," said Lloyd D. Johnston...."[60]

But the sensational nature and resonance of the survey's conclusions and the success CASA had in promoting them allowed the articles to build previous framing components into the frame Califano preferred.

Prevailing over the news narrative

The *threat to youth* frame reached its peak, in terms of dominating individual stories, in 1996 largely due to the sponsorship of sources such as Califano. And as Chapter 3 showed, this frame tended to shut out other frames more completely in stories it dominated throughout the study

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[60]Ibid.

period. But one excerpt, from a February 1995, page one *USA Today* feature story about a PDFA advertising campaign, shows that a skeptical reporter could find alternative frames to counter the arguments promoted by the well-connected anti-drug organizations. This article was rare in that even though most paragraphs were *youth*-framed (with a few *crime* frames), a significant number of them featured *decriminalization*. Although 20 of the 35 paragraphs contained at least one *youth* component, seven paragraphs contained *decriminalization* components; paragraphs 11-15 illustrated a very rare give-and-take between these two competing frames. The narrative explored the debate over the effectiveness and verity of anti-drug messages and parents' roles (and presaged the greater resonance later on of parents as the central *causal agents*). But the competition between the *threat to youth* and *decriminalization* frames interfered with the integration and building of the former:

> But other experts worry that sounding such an "alarm" is guaranteed to steer curious kids into trying a "blunt," the new form of pot use - gutted cigars stuffed with pot.
>
> The top issues in the renewed debate over pot:
> --The Gateway Theory. This view holds that a pot user may progress to harder drugs. "A child 12 to 17 years old who smokes pot is 85 times as likely to use cocaine" or harder drugs, says Joseph Califano Jr., president of Columbia University's Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse.
>
> "The Gateway Theory is a kernel of truth embedded in a pound of bull----," says Ethan Nadelmann of The Open Society Institute, a think tank. Most users never used other drugs, he says. "They smoked in high school and now earn six figures."

> Lloyd Johnston, director of the University of Michigan's annual survey and a Gateway proponent, says that's why kids are vulnerable. "Parents often are conflicted about their own past drug experiences and may not communicate concerns."
>
> But another expert faults the theory's methodology. "They're looking at cocaine users and asking how many used marijuana, " says David Condliffe of the private Drug Policy Foundation. "If you ask the opposite you get a dramatically different answer from what I hear."
>
> -- The value of anti-pot ads. Partnership's new campaign shies away from the abstract ("This is your brain on drugs") and goes for in-your-face testimonials from pot-smoking teens. "You simply can't trick today's kids," says Dnistrian.[61]

The prevalence of the *threat to youth* frame in stories increased after that story appeared, taking away this kind of balance in frames -- until the end of 1996.

Decline: 1997

As the next chapter on the *medical* frame discusses, after the voters in California and Arizona approved the medicinal use of marijuana in November 1996, even the *threat to youth* frame moderated somewhat in part due to competition from the *medical* frame. The frame of baby boomer parents contributing to the increase in youth pot smoking through poor example and lack of awareness of marijuana's dangers appeared again in December in a *Time* cover story, but the story granted some skepticism to both the views that marijuana use was a crisis and that medical marijuana necessarily was antithetical to keeping kids off it. After

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[61]"Pot drawing in teens," *USA Today*, 15 February 1995, A1.

redefining "generational forgetfulness" as cyclical rather than apocalyptic, the article allowed UCLA professor Mark Kleiman, a critic of drug policy,[62] to symbolically slay the gateway theory:

> It is possible that the increased popularity of marijuana is merely cyclical, part of the usual flux and reflux that have also seen harder drugs like cocaine and heroin rise in their allure for a time, and then decline when the consequences became more luridly obvious--only to rise again when a *generational forgetfulness* sets in and a drug's glamour could assert itself afresh. Indeed, today some experts are worried that an obsessive concern about marijuana may confuse overall perspectives. Says Mark Kleiman, a UCLA professor who specializes in national drug policy: "It's destructive to focus the country on one small part of drug use. Focusing on marijuana ignores the rising use of methamphetamine and the fact that heroin appears to be coming back, and ignores the No. 1 drug of abuse among high school kids--alcohol."[63]

The article concludes its take on baby boomers by equating them with the marijuana problem: it was their generation that never grew up, so they "should reserve the world's marijuana supply for themselves and for what will no doubt be the gaudy and self-important theatrics of their dying, and encourage their children to be satisfied with becoming better adults than some boomers have managed to be."[64] This

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[62]For example, see Mark Kleiman, *Marijuana: Costs of Abuse, Costs of Control* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989).

[63]"Kids & Pot," *Time*, 9 December 1996, 28. Italics added.

[64]Ibid., 30. This article was accompanied by two commentary pieces: the tandem "Why I said no," by columnist Margaret Carlson, and "Why I said yes," by Carlson's daughter Courtney (the theme was that parents should be firm but that a little rebellion won't hurt a child with the right upbringing); and a *Forum* article written by prominent

article thus marked a moderation of baby boomers as *causal agents*: from blame to symbolic dismissal.

The last major feature on kids and marijuana in the sample ran in the *Los Angeles Times* on Sunday, December 15, 1996.[65] The 87-paragraph front-page article followed the in-the-field style of exploring the teen marijuana problem through interviews with youth, school personnel and parents. The first part of the story examined the youth culture of high school students at Manhattan Beach, California. Like the December *Time* article, this piece also blamed baby boomers as *causal agents*. To the extent it focused on solutions, it recommended family control and youth self-discipline: *solutions* very much in line, as Table 5.2 shows, with citing youth pot users and their parents as the locus of the youth marijuana problem.

As the *threat to youth* frame lost prominence as a proportion of the narrative, the components that dominated this article, as well as the one in *Time* and others, were a fatalistic view that marijuana was pervasive (the *problem*) and that the best that could be done was to rely on the family as a hedge against it getting any worse (the *solution*). The *USA Today* feature story that appeared in late October (a week before the votes on the ballot

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health experts and anti-drug activists such as former U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Joycelyn Elders and Joseph Califano, titled "What I Would Say..."

[65]"Pot's deep roots in unlikely ground," *Los Angeles Times*, 15 December 1996, A1.

propositions) emphasized pervasiveness through its panel of youth sources. The lead:

> Angela Tsai is a cultural oddity.
> Not once in her 15 years has she taken a drink, smoked a cigarette or tried an illegal drug. It's a boast that fewer and fewer high school students in Indiana -- and the USA -- can make.
> Angela's admission of abstinence evokes slack jaws from most of the 10 other teens sitting at a table on a rainy day.[66]

Quotes referring to marijuana use appeared throughout the story reporting that, for example, "'Everybody's doing it....it's, like, so normal." But the pervasiveness argument also returned the focus to other drugs, with marijuana one of the gang, not the main problem: "The students say that if they want *drugs* or *alcohol*, they can get them easily...."[67]

Similarly, the one hard news story in the sample that reported the annual Monitoring the Future survey in December 1996 did not mention marijuana until the fourth paragraph,[68] unlike the stories in 1994 and 1995 placing marijuana in the lead as the locus of the youth drug problem.

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[66]"Doing drugs: A fact of school life," *USA Today*, 28 October 1996, A3.

[67]Ibid. Italics added.

[68]And even that paragraph tempered the marijuana problem in comparison with one more prevalent (alcohol use): "Marijuana accounts for nearly 90 percent of such drug use, but alcohol is still much more widely used by teen-agers than illegal drugs, according to the review...." "Adolescent Drug Use Continues to Rise," *New York Times*, 20 December 1996, B12.

After marijuana use by children was reported to be leveling off or turning around, the number of *threat to youth* stories in the sample declined and the problems returned to youth illegal drug use overall (not focusing as much on marijuana), and occasionally either marijuana as a gateway drug or youth attitudes as problems. Although the levels of youth marijuana use had not dropped significantly, the news dropped it as a significant issue.

In doing so, it also let several groups off the hook that had been so harshly blamed less than a year before: especially parents. The frenzy to seek out as many *causal agents* as possible in order to gain attention to the problem died away. As a result, the news once again placed less emphasis on the family as the first line of defense.

But the stage had been set. The anti-drug groups and the federal agencies charged with framing the issue had succeeded in building and setting a new frame, based on taking the issue to parents and the family, that could easily be rebuilt through properly worded surveys, news releases and press conferences. Should the officials and groups dedicated to centering the marijuana issue on youth find a reason to raise the alarm again, the frame they need has been built, integrated, news-tested and is ready to use.[69]

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[69]As recently as September 1998 CASA and Califano were using the same formula, but with less emphasis on marijuana and perhaps with less success as before in terms of attention in the news. The story appearing in a local newspaper did not mention marijuana specifically until the next-to-last paragraph: "Teens who have never smoked marijuana are more likely to eat dinner every night with

Summary

At its height, the *threat to youth* frame's power over other frames stemmed from three main advantages: its sponsorship by powerful sources; their control over events (especially news conferences and press releases) that led to news and feature stories; and its sponsors' ability to help journalists build a resonant, integrated frame that tapped into deep cultural themes such as antipathy toward the counterculture and concern for the nation's children.

But the frame's dependence on newsworthy events was also a weakness that led to its decline. When the continuing reports of teen marijuana use became old news, one of its pillars (newsworthy events) collapsed and weakened its influence over the narrative. The frame's sponsors were unable to continue shifting its components to maintain or enhance its resonance, and it declined due to its own loss of momentum and the growing competition from the *medical* frame.

The next chapter will discuss the building of the *medical* frame and its role in the demise of the *youth* frame, its competition with *crime*, and its assumption of the mantle of main oppositional frame (in place of *decriminalization*). All these changes were a result of the brief but successful building of the *medical* frame.

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their parents and to rely on their parents' opinions. Pot smokers are more likely to hang out with friends after school and less likely to listen to music or do homework after school." "Study: Kids' drug usage grows; parents' role drops," Durham (N.C.) *Herald-Sun*, 2 September 1998, A8.

CHAPTER VI

DOCTORS TO THE RESCUE: THE *MEDICALIZATION* OF MARIJUANA

Despite the *crime* frame's advantages -- its tradition as a staple of mainstream news, the routine relationship between journalists and law enforcement sources, and the resonance of crime news -- the *medical* frame of marijuana was able to challenge it successfully and gain more influence over the marijuana narrative near the end of the study period. This chapter discusses how that happened.

First, advocates of medical marijuana became regular and legitimate sources for news stories. Second, these sources used newsworthy events to bring the sources of opposing frames (especially those of *crime*, but also *youth* and *public health*) into conflict with the *medical* frame -- but as *causal agents* responsible for the problems cited under that frame. When that happened in late 1996, the *medical* news frames began to apply *moral evaluations* to those agents and form the linkages between components necessary for frame-building.

This was the third step -- the linking of all four components of the frame. Finally, the medical frame began to prevail in individual news stories over a sustained period of time when coverage reached its height. Marijuana

became *medicalized* by the same mainstream news routines and conventions that normally favor dominant frames -- e.g., dependence on official sources and the use of news values such as conflict. In contrast, the *decriminalization* frame, although not lacking in advocates, did lack the ongoing, newsworthy events necessary to form linkages among all its components; as a result it failed to build the frame necessary to allow the news to become a forum for its view. The *medical* frame became the main alternative to the dominant frames of *crime* and *youth*.

Perhaps most important, *medicalization* also gained acceptance by mainstream journalists as a legitimate frame because it became associated with several politically powerful groups that are typically constructed in positive terms in news media coverage -- especially respected physicians groups such as the American Medical Association and its California affiliate. Members of these elite groups became regular sources for the *medical* frame, hence lending it legitimacy.

As the timeline in Chapter 1 showed the events drawing the most attention to the *medical* frame occurred in late 1996 and early 1997. These events included the campaigns for, and passage of, Propositions 200 and 215, the raids on buyer's clubs in San Francisco and Los Angeles ordered by California's attorney general, the federal government's public strategy to move against physicians who recommended marijuana to patients under the new state policies, and the

efforts by physicians to forestall such action through the courts. The political fight over the ballot initiatives and the legal battles over their legitimacy resulted in a huge increase in the amount of space and time the news devoted to the *medical* frame (see Chapter 3 on General Trends). This attention also allowed the *medical* frame to name and blame *causal agents* more regularly, and to explain through *moral evaluations* their relationship to *medicalized* problems -- key factors, as previous chapters have shown, in building a successful frame.

The following discussion begins with the *crime* frame's response to the rising *medical* frame alluded to in Chapter 4. The chapter then turns to an explication of how the *medical* frame became prevalent in the news over a sustained period of time.

Opposing *medicalization*: The *crime* frame

As discussed in Chapter 4, *crime* challenged the rise of the *medicalization* of marijuana more than did any other frame. Table 6.1 recounts the main *crime* components that arose in late 1996 to defend against the *medical* frame.

At first the *crime* frame devoted most of its attention to the ballot referenda themselves. State and federal drug enforcement officials decried the threat that the new California and Arizona policies presented to national drug strategies (focused on zero tolerance and prohibition, not controlled use).

Table 6.1: Frequencies and Main Relationships of Anti-*Medical* Components of *Crime* Frame, Mainstream Outlets Only

If the problem is....	*And the causal agents are....*	*Then the moral evaluation of prob/cause....*	*And the solution will be...*
Marijuana as an illegal and dangerous substance (107)	Usually none OR Buyer's clubs (31)	Clubs threaten drug war (26)	Police enforcement, rule of law (642)
Ballot initiatives or political process (75)	Physicians (41) OR Reformers (24)	Doctors threaten drug war (31) OR Those against drug war are wrong (23)	Sanctions on doctors (39) OR Propagation of anti-drug message (13)
Lack of support for law (48)	(Various)	(Various)	(Various)
Marijuana as medicine, interfering with drug enforcement (35)	Physicians (see above)	Doctors threaten drug war (see above)	Sanctions on doctors (see above)

One of the first major stories in the sample to use the *crime* frame against *medicalization* was a local story (appearing above the fold on the front page) reporting the near doubling from 1995 to 1996 of marijuana seizures in Los Angeles.[1] The story depended heavily on law enforcement authorities, drug agents, customs officials and other

[1] "L.A. seizures of marijuana soar in 1996," *Los Angeles Times*, 25 November 1996, A1.

government sources. Out of 36 paragraphs, two in particular (the fifth and sixth ones) attacked *medicalization*:

> Passage this month of Proposition 215, the state medical marijuana initiative allowing doctors to recommend the drug for medical uses, has drawn harsh criticism from law enforcement officials already overwhelmed by illegal marijuana users.
>
> "I'm not trying to sound like 'Reefer Madness' but . . . the potential for abuse is clearly there," said Sgt. Rudy Lovio, who oversees the Los Angeles County Sheriff Department's narcotics intelligence unit. He believes the ballot measure will make a losing battle even worse.[2]

About a month later the Clinton administration's drug policymakers formulated a public response to the ballot initiatives: rather than seeking to directly overturn the new state laws as violating federal drug policy under the Controlled Substances Act, they proposed to prosecute physicians under criminal law and to take away prescription-writing privileges from doctors who prescribed marijuana to their patients. Several stories in the sample reported the strategy.[3] These were the first stories to cite physicians or medical associations as *causal agents* responsible for the *problem* of medical marijuana and its threat to status quo policy. These stories (all but one lacking *medical* components as an alternative frame) *evaluated* the physicians

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[2]Ibid.

[3]"Prosecution of pot-prescribing doctors urged," *Los Angeles Times*, 27 December 1996, A3 (the sub-head categorized the story under the "Medicine" beat); "Doctors prescribing pot may lose licenses," *Los Angeles Times*, 30 December 1996, A10 (national news brief); "Doctors told not to prescribe marijuana," *USA Today*, 31 December 1996, A1.

as a threat to the drug war and offered as the main *solution* criminal and regulatory sanctions against them. The lead two paragraphs from the first story are representative of how these four *crime* components were linked together:

> A coalition of federal law-enforcement agencies in Washington is recommending that the U.S. government criminally prosecute physicians who prescribe marijuana for medical reasons under two ballot initiatives approved in California and Arizona, according to sources.
>
> Concerned about the complex legal issues as well as the practical dilemmas involved in enforcement of state laws that conflict with federal law, the agencies have identified physicians as the most effective pressure point. The new state laws will allow doctors to prescribe marijuana in some medical situations.[4]

Other stories threw in the *threat to youth* and *public health* frames to oppose *medicalization.* In particular, two stories in late December 1996, just as the Clinton administration was gearing up its public attack on physicians, mixed the *threat to youth* frame in among *crime* paragraphs. The first story was a report in *USA Today* about the new strategy and paraphrased "police and prosecutors" as claiming that "labeling pot as a medicine sends a disastrous message, especially to the young."[5] The second, the lead story on the December 30 broadcast of *World News Tonight,* used background information from previous *threat to youth* stories to lead off the report: "With teen drug use on the rise, the Clinton administration says prescribing marijuana

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[4]"Prosecution of pot-prescribing doctors urged."

[5]"U.S. may target doctors who prescribe marijuana," 24 December, 1996, A1.

for medical purposes sends a confusing message to young people." The next four paragraphs allowed administration officials[6] to press the *public health* and *crime* frames; two more quoted Richard J. Cohen, an oncologist favoring *medicalization;* the eighth paragraph was a *public health* frame attributed to the "Clinton administration."[7]

But the *crime* frame provided the most common defense against *medicalization* in the news, and the administration's strategy of threatening doctors helped prompt the building of the *medical* frame in three main ways: First, it provoked a public response from proponents of the *medical* frame; second, it cued the sponsorship of elite and positively constructed sources (physicians); and third, it enabled the *medical* frame for the first time to regularly blame *causal agents* (mainly federal officials and policymakers, primary sources of the *crime* frame) and explain their responsibility through *moral evaluations.*

The remainder of this chapter discusses how the *medical* frame was built: the increasingly successful sponsorship by its sources, the favorable events (including the government's attacks on physicians) they took advantage of to link the components of the *medical* frame, and the effect these factors had on the news narrative by integrating the frame's components and allowing it to prevail over coverage

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[6]Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala, ONDCP head McCaffrey and Attorney General Janet Reno. *World News Tonight,* 30 December 1996.

[7]Ibid.

in individual stories. As the discussion shows, this prevalence came about in terms of both the sheer proportion of *medical* paragraphs and the symbolism journalists used to cover the issue in the final year of the study.

Table 6.2: First Five Source Types in Mainstream *Medical* Stories (N=72).

Source Type	*Number of Mentions*	*Percent*	*Cumulative Percent*
Medical pot users/ referenda backers	76	28.5	28.5
Miscellaneous govt. officials or politicians	46	17.2	45.7
Physicians/ attorneys	27	10.1	55.8
Science or other experts	26	9.7	65.5
Miscellaneous other (private)	21	7.9	73.4
(Other)	71	26.6	100.0
	267	100.0	

Sources sponsoring *medicalization*

Table 6.2 shows the main sources in stories dominated by the *medical* frame: professed users or advocates of marijuana for medicinal purposes; miscellaneous government officials, such as administration officials (other than drug agencies) and state and local officials; and physicians, medical associations or doctors' attorneys. The news narrative often found medical users and their advocates sympathetic sources, especially for human interest stories, but they alone were unable to create and control events and

build the *medical* frame. Their legitimacy as socially acceptable advocates hinged on being associated in the same stories with physicians, or at least being portrayed as legitimate medical patients rather than the type of counterculture figures that represented marijuana smokers in the Pot Culture Resurgence stories, for example.

One of the earliest examples of the use of physicians to extend legitimacy to marijuana as medicine was the story in *USA Today* in September 1992 about the resolution by the San Francisco city council to make busts of medical users a low priority. In the ninth paragraph, supervisor Terrence Hallinan is paraphrased as saying that "if an ill person is caught with pot, a doctor's note should be sufficient to prevent prosecution."[8] Here, the *problem* of illness is linked to the *solution* of physician control to extend the positive social construction of doctors to those using marijuana (as long as they're medical users).

Another San Francisco-based story, airing much later on *World News Sunday* in August 1996, added the legitimacy of the clergy to that of physicians in support of medical marijuana. The story reported a minister in San Francisco that handed out marijuana to seriously ill people after service. Using the background of the raid on a marijuana

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[8]"S.F. softens marijuana use law," 21 September 1992, A3. Hallinan was one of the few sources in the "miscellaneous government official" category to sponsor the *medical* frame.

buyers' club earlier that month,[9] the story positions doctors and clergy (along with the city itself) as defenders of the sick against the state's narcotics agents. In the closing sentence referring to the upcoming vote on Proposition 215, the reporter drives home her point: "The state attorney general says the initiative would serve as a cover for widespread use of the drug. But the initiative is supported by many physicians, and now, it appears, some members of the clergy."[10]

In the last few months of 1996 and the early months of 1997 the main stories about the issue increasingly included more mainstream and positively constructed sources, such as approving scientists and doctors. At first, as with earlier stories, the most sympathetic sources were mainly medical users. One of the most compelling stories appeared on *World News Tonight* several days before the scheduled votes in California and Arizona and pitted several medical users with various ailments against administration sources. The narrative not only allowed the *medical* frame prevalence over other frames (only one paragraph featured the *public health* frame as an alternative), but surrounded that alternative with the *medical* frame by using *medical* sources at the beginning and end. The effect was to evoke sympathy for

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[9]See the next section on "Events building the medical frame" for a fuller discussion of news coverage of the raids on these establishments before and after the ballot initiatives.

[10]18 August 1996.

real people suffering real pain by giving them a voice, and to contrast their views with officials seemingly removed from and antagonistic to their plight:

> [Ken Kashiwahara, ABC News]:...Seventy-seven year old Hazel Rogers says marijuana eases her glaucoma. AIDS patient Jeffrey Reed says it relieves his pain and restores his appetite.
>
> [Jeffrey Reed]: I think if it weren't for marijuana, I don't know whether I would have had the stamina to keep going.
>
> [Kashiwahara]: It helps Dan Bear too. He has prostate cancer.
>
> [Dan Bear]: The marijuana really did eliminate the nausea, which was a terrible thing....
>
> ....[Gen. Barry McCaffrey (Ret.)]: Most of us think this is bad medicine, bad science and opens ourselves to increased drug abuse by young people.
>
> [Kashiwahara]: And in a letter, former Presidents Ford, Carter and Bush say the California initiative and a similar one in Arizona, are hoaxes that seek to cloak drug legalization under the guise of compassion for the ill.... Even if the California proposition passes, medical use of marijuana will continue to be illegal under federal law. But supporters say it would give them a legal defense in court and put pressure on Washington to change federal laws too.[11]

After the ballot initiatives passed, journalists increased their use of other sources that lent legitimacy to medical users, who throughout the study period had been among the main sources for the *medical* frame but who had been symbolically isolated. After the success of the referenda, for example, news stories used more bystanders as sources. Their quotes often served to validate *medicalization* and medical users themselves through the man-

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[11] *World News Tonight*, 30 October 1996.

in-the-street style of interview and commentary.[12] This legitimation of the *medical* frame accelerated further with the inclusion of physicians and their attorneys as sources defending their rights against the federal government's threats. One of the first stories in the sample attacking the government's post-referenda strategy used doctors to do so. Although administration sources provided alternative *crime* and *public health* frames in four paragraphs, 11 out of 22 paragraphs allowed doctors and a lawyer for the American Civil Liberties Union to provide the *medical* frame.[13]

Two lengthy stories exploring the issue appeared in the January 15, 1997, edition of *USA Today*. Both strongly relied on sources favoring the *medical* frame. The first appeared as a top story (above the fold on page one), ran to 35 paragraphs, and featured the operator of one of the marijuana buyers' clubs, who suffered from AIDS and who used the drug to treat her symptoms. In addition, the story quoted other users, club operators and doctors who spoke strongly in favor of medical use.[14] The second story appeared as a sidebar. Its significance lay in its use of

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[12]High emotions: Passage of Prop. 215 stirs strong support and harsh criticism," *Los Angeles Times*, 7 November 1996, A3. Despite the headline, 13 of the 20 sources coded (all users or bystanders) framed the issue either *medically* or in terms of *decriminalization*. This use of bystanders/ witnesses to interpret the story was also used in many *youth* articles (see Chapter 5).

[13]"Doctors criticize move against state measures," *New York Times*, 31 December 1996, D18.

[14]"Medical use of pot raises legal concerns."

USA Today's "Baby Boomer Panel," an occasional feature in which presumably representative members of the baby boom generation pondered important issues in the style of a focus group survey. Out of 16 quotes or paraphrases, nine framed the issue *medically*, including this final paragraph: "Panelists would like to know more, too. 'Why can't we stop all our b----ing and moaning, spend some money and figure out what the medical uses really are?' asks William Paprota, 45, Overland Park, Kan. 'Why can't we explore it a little bit?'"[15]

Also, the *portrayal* of pro-*medical* sources, apart from their *use* as sources, demonstrated their increased legitimacy in these later narratives. Compare two stories as examples: an earlier portrayal of a medical user, from January 1995, with another one over two years later, after the referenda passed. The first story, in the *Los Angeles Times*, presented the issue as one of family conflict: between Dixie Romagno, a sufferer of multiple sclerosis and marijuana user, and her family, who were disgusted with her pot smoking. Although Dixie's story was told sympathetically and she was used as a source to sponsor *medicalization*, the article portrayed her as a rebel who "experimented with drugs in high school"[16] but later quit when she got pregnant at age 19. Her family's rejection

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[15]"Boomers hash out merits of therapeutic marijuana," D12.

[16]"A Daughter's Pain, a Family's Anguish," *Los Angeles Times*, 1 January 1995, E4.

made them and Dixie tragic symbols of the conflict between prohibition and medicalization, as the headline indicated: "A Daughter's Pain, a Family's Anguish." Here are paragraphs 15-17, framing the issue with components of *crime* and *public health*, in a mostly *medical* story of 24 paragraphs:

> But most of her family remains unconvinced. Helen Romagno says she would have died in her tracks if the bill her daughter had lobbied for became state law.
>
> She believes that marijuana leads to harder drugs, that it is addictive. And she is particularly incensed that Dixie, desperate for relief, skips on bills to buy her weed, sometimes leaving Mom and Dad to pay up.
>
> "When people are on a limited income and can't pay their rent and buy food, they're a little stupid to spend $200 to buy pot when it's unnecessary," she says. She isn't interested in reading the studies that describe marijuana's medicinal uses.[17]

The second excerpt is from an April 1997 story on the debate in California's legislature over medical marijuana. It supported the sources advocating the *medical* frame by portraying them positively and linking them with the medical establishment, as in this two-paragraph passage quoting the testimony of one medical user:

> Joni Commons, a mother of four from San Jose, acknowledged that marijuana has indeed made her feel better, dramatically reducing the nausea associated with the chemotherapy she receives for breast cancer.
>
> "I was about ready to give up on my treatment because the quality of life just wasn't there," Commons told the committee. Now, she can take three small

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[17]Ibid.

> puffs of marijuana and "suddenly the nausea is gone. You can even eat a little something," she said.[18]

The portrayal of Commons as "a mother of four" and her appreciation for being able to "eat a little something" were important parts of the narrative's construction of her as a legitimate sufferer needing marijuana for basic "quality of life." The article combined her testimony with that of a doctor and with the comments of a sympathetic state senator to lend further legitimacy to the *medical* frame.

Similarly, the *New York Times* cemented the link between doctors (beyond their use as sources) and marijuana in its April 12 story about a federal judge's restraining order halting federal action against doctors. In paragraph 11 (right after listing the conditions that marijuana is said to alleviate), reporter Tim Golden makes a clear value statement about the government's response to the medical marijuana movement: "Most important, though, law-enforcement officials have tried to frighten doctors away from the new law by warning that they could lose the prescription licenses they receive from the Drug Enforcement Administration or could even face criminal prosecution."[19] The specter of federal agents trying to "frighten doctors" was a new frame made possible, first, by the identification

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[18]"State's medical marijuana bill passes 1st test," *Los Angeles Times*, 3 April 1997, A3.

[19]"Federal judge supports California doctors on marijuana issue," 12 April 1997, Sec. 1, 7.

of doctors with the frame, and second, the linking of federal authorities as *causal agents*.

Events building the *medical* frame

The conflict between the anti-drug organizations and officials on one side, and pro-reform groups and advocates on the other, and the climax of their battle on November 5, 1996 in the vote on Propositions 215 and 200, represented one of the long-recognized guarantees of media coverage: powerful interests diametrically opposed over a controversial issue. This provided the basic conflict between personalities and ideas that is one major element of newsworthiness.[20] As discussed in Chapter 1, the controversy over marijuana represents a clash over not only issues of law and policy, but also over issues of culture, history, public health, individual rights and the future of the nation's children. The initiatives easily met the criteria of newsworthiness by virtue of such conflict, signified by the votes in California and Arizona. The following discussion will demonstrate the changing news narrative as facilitated by the referenda and the events that followed.

The votes on election day 1996 were the first events to garner significant national news exposure for the *medical*

[20]Shoemaker and Reese, 111; Graber, *Mass Media and American Politics*, 118. Of course, the *proximity* of the referenda was another element making them newsworthy events for the *Los Angeles Times*.

frame. Although the frames were mixed, the coverage of this political event was probably the first to allow enough attention to the *medical* frame to build it successfully. The campaign, the election itself and the results generated 10 stories that appeared in the sample and that were dominated by the *medical* frame.[21] After the passage of the referenda, stories about the marijuana buyers' clubs and their attempts to continue operation in the face of official opposition more often than not favored the *medical* frame (and relied on the clubs' operators and patrons as sources).[22]

In early January the administration, perhaps stinging from criticism it was singling out physicians in its war on drugs, issued an announcement (its own event) that it would spend $1 million to gather scientific evidence on the

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[21]("S.F. church gives pot to ill"), *World News Tonight*, 18 August 1996; "California's drawn-out drug debate: 'Doonesbury' enters dispute over marijuana," *USA Today*, 3 October 1996, A6; "Pot shots in the war on drugs: 'Doonesbury' mixes it up over marijuana," *Newsweek*, 14 October 1996, 42; "Marijuana: Where there's smoke, there's fire," *Time*, 28 October 1996, 36; "Medical marijuana use winning backing," *New York Times*, 30 October 1996, A12; "Politics, science clash on marijuana as medicine," 30 October 1996, *Los Angeles Times*, A1; ("Voters in California..."), *World News Tonight*, 30 October 1996; "6 wealthy donors aid measure on marijuana," *Los Angeles Times*, 2 November 1996, A18; "Pot for sick outweighs crime fears," *USA Today*, 6 November 1996, A17; "High emotions: Passage of Prop. 215 stirs strong support and harsh criticism," *Los Angeles Times*, 7 November 1996, A3.

[22]"Medical pot club to reopen as co-op," *Los Angeles Times*, 11 December 1996, A3; "With judge's approval marijuana club is set to bloom again," *New York Times*, 13 January, 1997.

efficacy of medical marijuana.[23] These stories offered rare instances of official advocacy of the *medical* frame.

As the next section on linking the components will show, other significant events that drove the building of the *medical* frame were, first, the lawsuit filed in federal court by doctors in California to bar federal action against them under the First Amendment's guarantee of freedom of speech, and second, the rulings stemming from that lawsuit.[24] Although the specialized publications analyzed for this study did not visibly influence the coverage of the marijuana issue in mainstream news media, one other elite journal generated significant news coverage in the *medical* frame: the *New England Journal of Medicine's* support for

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[23]"Marijuana study," *USA Today*, 8 January 1997, A3; "Government to spend $1 million studying marijuana as medicine," *New York Times*, 9 January 1997, B10. In a later story the National Institutes of Health announced its support for more research into medical marijuana: "Marijuana needs study, NIH says," *USA Today*, 20 February 1997, D4. Even later in the year: "Research is urged on medical marijuana," *New York Times*, 9 August 1997, Sec. 1 p. 9; "Smoking marijuana may have healthy effects," *Los Angeles Times*, 9 August 1997, A12; "Chemicals in pot cut severe pain, study says," *Los Angeles Times*, 27 October 1997, A1.

[24]"Suit seeks to bar U.S. sanctions for prescribing pot," *Los Angeles Times*, 15 January 1997, A3; "Marijuana suit," *USA Today*, 16 January 1997, A3; "Federal judge supports California doctors on marijuana issue," *New York Times*, 12 April 1997, Sec. 1 p. 7; "Medicinal pot sanctions suspended," *Los Angeles Times*, 12 April 1997, A20; "U.S. threat over drug is lifted in California," *New York Times*, 1 May 1997, A19; "California can't bust docs for marijuana advice," *USA Today*, 1 May 1997, A4.

medical marijuana and its editorial attack on the federal government, written by editor-in-chief Jerome Kassirer.[25]

Medical backing for at least studying marijuana as medicine also led the American Medical Association to announce a new strategy in March 1997 to end the conflict between the federal government and physicians defending their right to discuss marijuana with patients. The coverage narrated a careful attempt by the medical establishment to craft a compromise between either strictly adhering to the Controlled Substances Act under which marijuana had no legal uses, and letting the issue of medical marijuana escape the control of physicians.[26] In a key example of the *medicalization* of marijuana -- the acceptance by the medical establishment of marijuana as having medical uses, and its consequent attempt to frame marijuana as such and to bring marijuana under its control as a potential medicine -- the AMA issued guidelines to physicians for recommending marijuana to patients. The news

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[25]Jerome P. Kassirer, "Federal Foolishness and Marijuana," *New England Journal of Medicine* 336 (30 January 1997): 366-67. The mainstream stories in the sample reporting the editorial were: ("The New England Journal of Medicine will editorialize...," *World News Tonight*, 29 January 1997; "Journal assails U.S. stand on medical pot use," *Los Angeles Times*, 30 January 1997, A1; "Prestigious journal backs medicinal pot use," *USA Today*, 30 January 1997, A1.

[26]"Medical leaders seek truce in battle over marijuana," *Los Angeles Times*, 18 March 1997, A3; "AMA sets marijuana guidelines: California advocates hail action as a breakthrough," *USA Today*, 18 March 1997, A3.

coverage followed suit. The last three paragraphs of the *USA Today* story demonstrate *medicalization*:

> In the new AMA guidelines, doctors are urged to avoid any "intentional" step to help a patient obtain marijuana, such as filling out one of the recommendation forms being circulated by various marijuana-buying clubs in the state.
>
> Doctors also are encouraged to tell patients marijuana is illegal under federal law.
>
> But the guidelines do let doctors advise using the drug, and they acknowledge that doing so can make patients eligible for protection under California law.[27]

Note in the first two paragraphs of the excerpt the *problem* is framed as marijuana as an illegal plant; in the first paragraph the *causal agents* responsible are the buyers' clubs competing with doctors for the right to care for the ill; the *solution* is physician control; and the *moral evaluation* is that the buyers' clubs are a threat to the orderly control of medical marijuana and, by extension, to the medical profession. Thus, the frame of marijuana shifts, partly through changing *problems*, *causal agents*, and *solutions*: marijuana is an illegal substance, but properly brought under the control of physicians it may be beneficial, and more important, legitimate.

The medical establishment's attempt to gain control over the issue was also demonstrated by a slight melding of the *public health* and *medical* frames in stories that

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[27]"AMA sets marijuana guidelines." As late as December of 1997 the AMA was still pushing for the right to control the issue: "Doctors seek OK to discuss pot use," *Los Angeles Times*, 10 December 1997, A17; "Medicinal marijuana," *USA Today*, 11 December 1997, D1.

combined the frames of marijuana as a dangerous substance and of marijuana as a potential medicine. This melding was spurred by the interest in marijuana research the news demonstrated after the referenda lent popular legitimacy to medical marijuana. One *public health* story reported studies claiming to demonstrate the *gateway* role of marijuana (leading to the use of other drugs). The final paragraph cited a *public health* problem (addiction or other health effects) but a *medical* solution (continued research into marijuana as medicine).[28]

Two events reported in separate *Los Angeles Times* stories demonstrated the acceptance of the *medical* frame on the part of that newspaper's journalists. One story narrated the Arizona legislature's attempt to scale back that state's new law, which was much more sweeping than the California initiative in that it legalized all Schedule I drugs for medical use and it offered early release to inmates serving time for non-violent drug offenses. Out of 18 paragraphs the story contained five with *medical* components and five with *decriminalization* components.[29]

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[28]"Studies back 'gateway' role of pot," *Los Angeles Times*, 27 June 1997, A1. Similarly, the final paragraph in a *USA Today* story about the same research, though not *medicalizing* the issue, reflected a turn away from the *moral evaluation* of marijuana as an evil influence. A scientist is quoted as saying that "the new studies are exploding 'the old concept that drug abuse is a moral problem. Now we understand that it is a brain disease we can study.'" "Marijuana's active ingredient may cause addiction," 27 June 1997, D1.

[29]"Arizona bill guts legalized drug initiative," 22 April 1997, A3.

Another story in the same edition narrated a raid by DEA agents on a marijuana buyers' club. The two lead paragraphs of this "Health" story contained strong *medical* components:

> Ratcheting up its battle against facilities that distribute marijuana to AIDS and cancer patients, federal authorities (*sic*) Monday raided a small supplier, confiscating 331 plants and a variety of growing equipment.
>
> The early morning raid at Flower Therapy was the Drug Enforcement Administration's first crackdown on such a supplier since California voters resoundingly passed Proposition 215 in November, legalizing marijuana for medicinal purposes.[30]

There are several important points about the story and the framing of this lead:

1) It is a "Health" story, not a "Crime" story. The operation of the club is given the status of *medical* provider rather than *criminal* offender.

2) The club is said to "distribute" marijuana, not "sell," "peddle," or "traffick."

3) The victims of the raid are identified as AIDS and cancer patients, rather than, say, the club's operator, who would probably not generate as much sympathy.

4) The verb "raid" is used, and the action is conducted against a "small supplier."

5) The DEA's affront is broadened to the public -- the reader -- at large: "since California voters *resoundingly* passed Proposition 215..."

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[30]"DEA agents raid marijuana club," 22 April 1997, A3.

6) The paragraph following the above excerpt quotes Dave Fratello (Americans for Medical Rights), rather than a DEA or other official.

Compare the above narrative to the two lead paragraphs from an earlier *Times* story recounting a similar raid by authorities, published September 17, 1996 (before the ballot referenda):

> Sheriff's deputies said they searched a West Hollywood club that openly sold marijuana and arrested four men Monday on suspicion of possession of the drug for sale.
>
> The club purportedly sells the drug for medicinal purposes, but Los Angeles County Sheriff's Sgt. Robert Stoneman said that as far as he knows, "selling marijuana is still illegal."[31]

In contrast with the later story this one was a *crime* story, appearing under the heading "Official Business," a regular *Times* section usually based on local police reports. The sourcing (sheriff's deputies) reflected this. The word choices and symbolism used -- "openly sold," "suspicion," "purportedly" -- support the *crime* frame. In addition, the quote closing the second paragraph is a rhetorical slap at the idea that the law might be unjust.

Both of the above April stories (about the Arizona legislature and the bust of Flower Therapy) exhibited the use of previously reported events, framing components or both as *background* information supporting the *medical* frame.

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[31] "4 arrested as club alleged to openly sell marijuana is raided," B4.

Table 6.3: Frequencies and Main Relationships of *Medical* Components, Mainstream Outlets Only, (Story N=72).

If the problem is....	*And the causal agents are....*	*Then the moral evaluation of prob/cause....*	*And the solution will be...*
Illness or suffering (211)	Usually None	Usually None	1) Marijuana itself as medicine (141) OR 2) Change in policy (97) OR 3) Buyer's clubs to supply pot (66)
War on drugs/ prohibition (hurts ill) (65)	Federal agency or official (98)	Government policy harms defenseless ill/ is cruel (45) OR Government/ police threaten providers of medical pot (11)	Use of medicinal marijuana despite the law (14) OR Change in policy (see above)
Ill users must break law/ endure shunning or other social penalty (25)	Usually None OR Family/ friends who shun user (3)	Usually None OR Opponents of medical marijuana are wrong or misinformed (8)	Political or legal strategy to change policy (47) OR Government provision of medical marijuana (16)
Scare tactics/ questionable information used to oppose medical marijuana (17)	Usually None OR Politicians or opinion leaders against medical marijuana (9)	Opponents of medical marijuana are wrong or misinformed (see above)	Usually None OR Research into marijuana as medicine (50)
Restrictions on physicians, e.g., threats to licensing (45)	Federal agency or official (see above)	Government threatens doctors, patients and/ or medical profession (45)	Usually None OR Physicians' (free speech) rights (8) OR Political/legal strategy to change policy (see above)
Interference into physician/patient relationship (9)	Federal agency or official (see above)	Government threatens doctors, patients and/ or medical profession (see above)	Physicians' First Amendment (free speech) rights (see above)

Table 6.3 (continued):

If the problem is....	*And the causal agents are....*	*Then the moral evaluation of prob/cause....*	*And the solution will be...*
Restrictions on scientific research into marijuana (16)	**Federal agency or official (see above)**	**Government policy interferes with research/ science (7)**	**Research into marijuana as medicine (see above)**
Government bureaucracy (6)	**Federal agency or official (see above)**	**Government policy harms defenseless ill/ is cruel (see above)**	**Government provision of medical marijuana (see above)**

As Chapter 4 showed the *threat to youth* frame often relied on this journalistic device as well (e.g., past surveys showing an increase in teen marijuana use). In the case of the *medical* stories, the ballot initiatives were used as legitimizing events that supported the frame.[32] As Chapter 4 showed, the *decriminalization* frame's inability to rely on newsworthy events prevented advocates from building it in the news.

Linking the components and building the *medical* frame

Table 6.3 shows the main *medical* components; Figures 6.1-6.5 show how they appeared over the period.

[32]Later, an August story in the *Los Angeles Times* reported in the sixth paragraph that "...a debate about [marijuana's] potential medicinal use has grown since November, when voters in Arizona and California approved initiatives making it available to patients." "Smoking marijuana may have healthy effects, panel reports," 8 August 1997, A12.

Figure 6.1: Medical Components

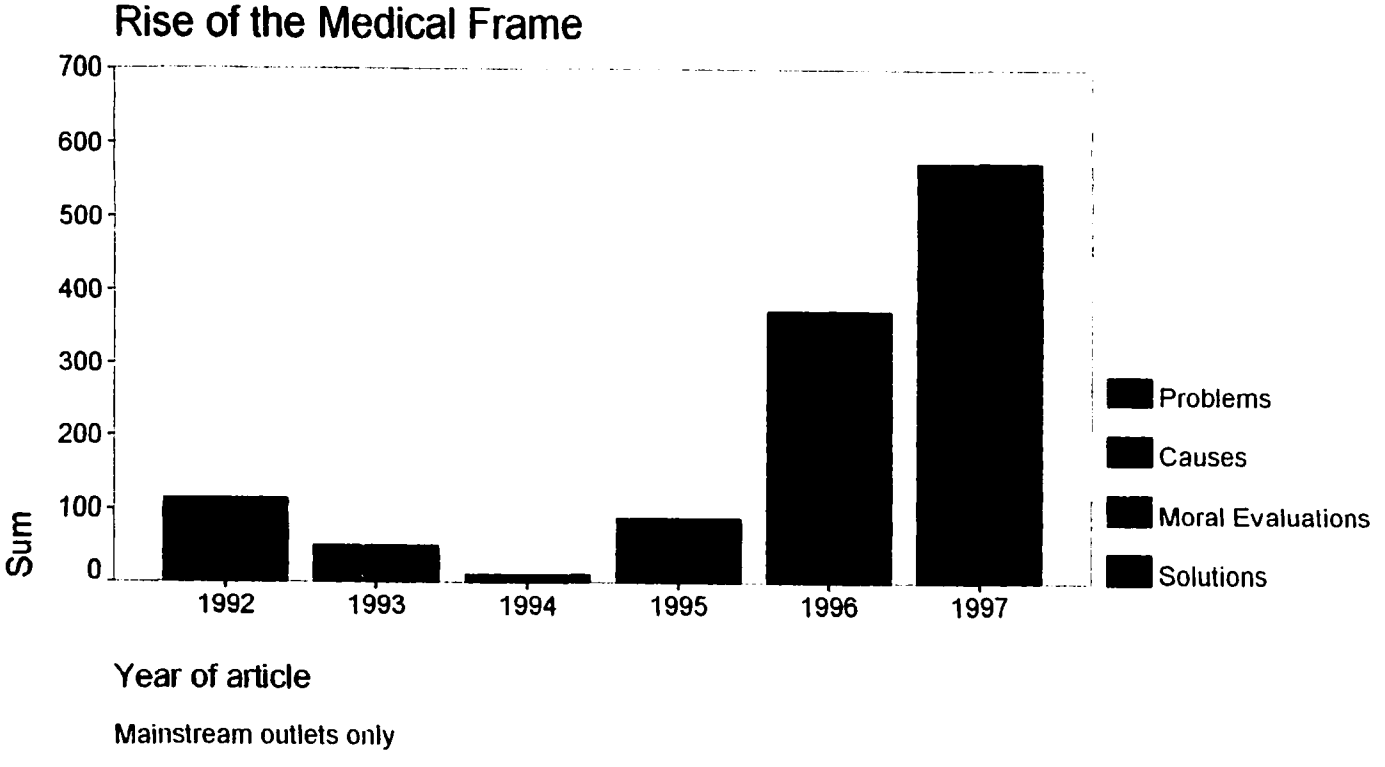
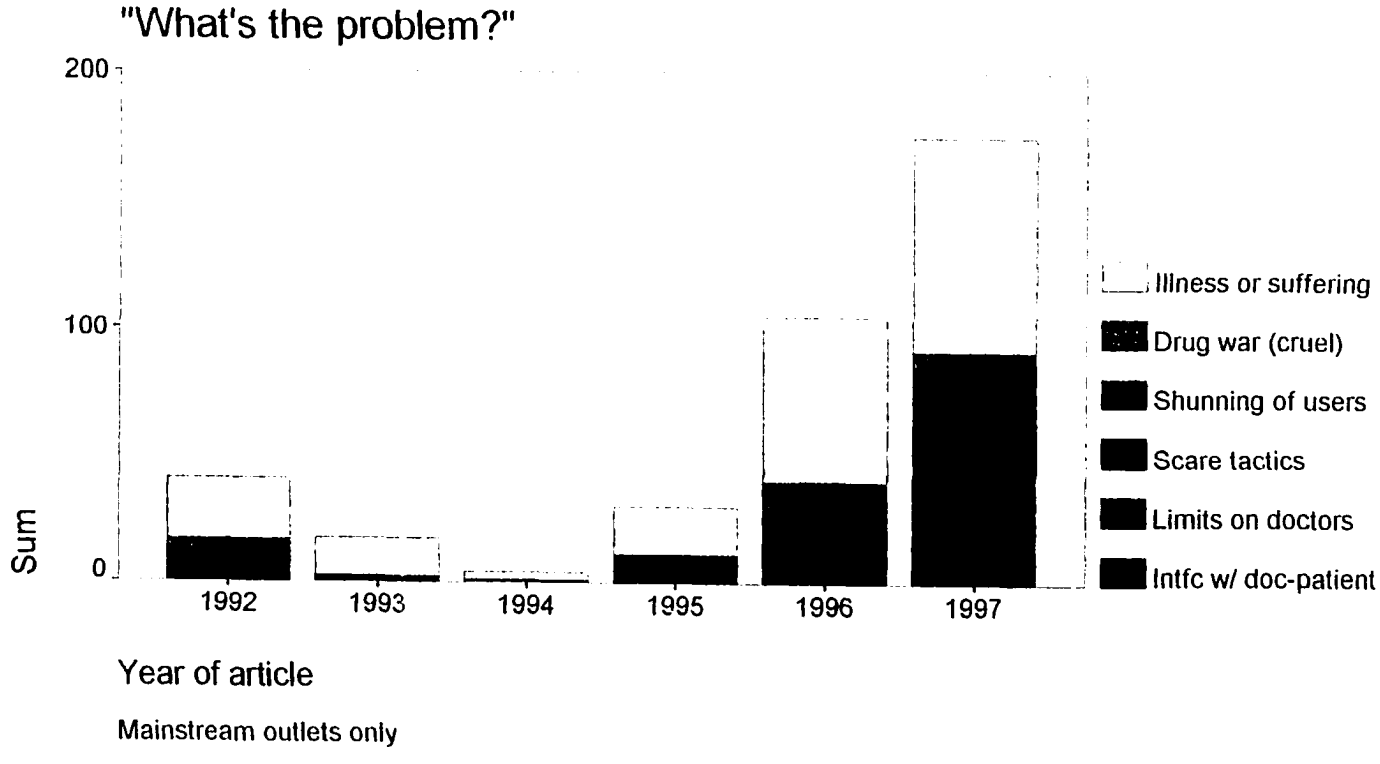


Figure 6.2: Main Medical Problems



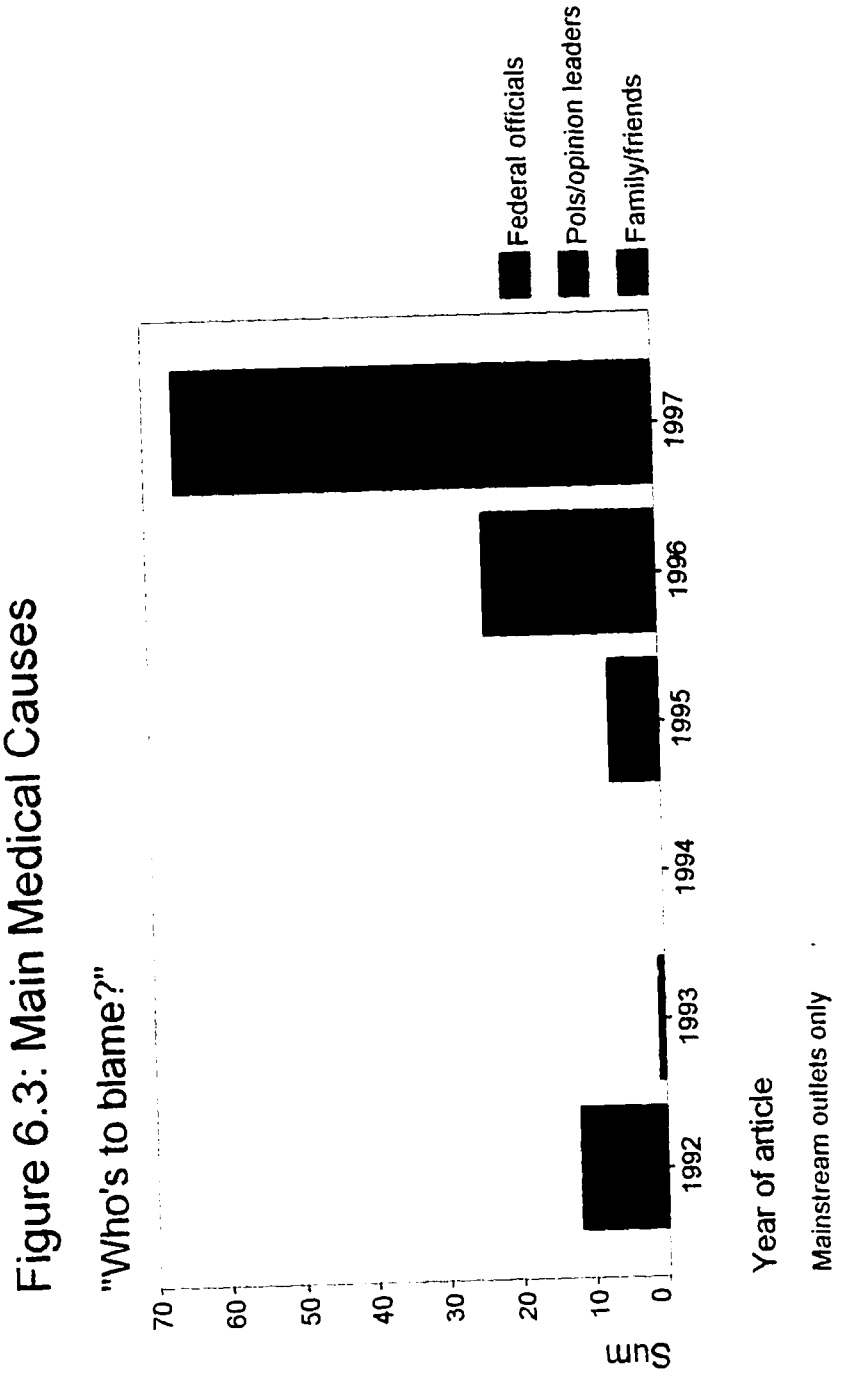


Figure 6.4: Main Medical Moral Evaluations

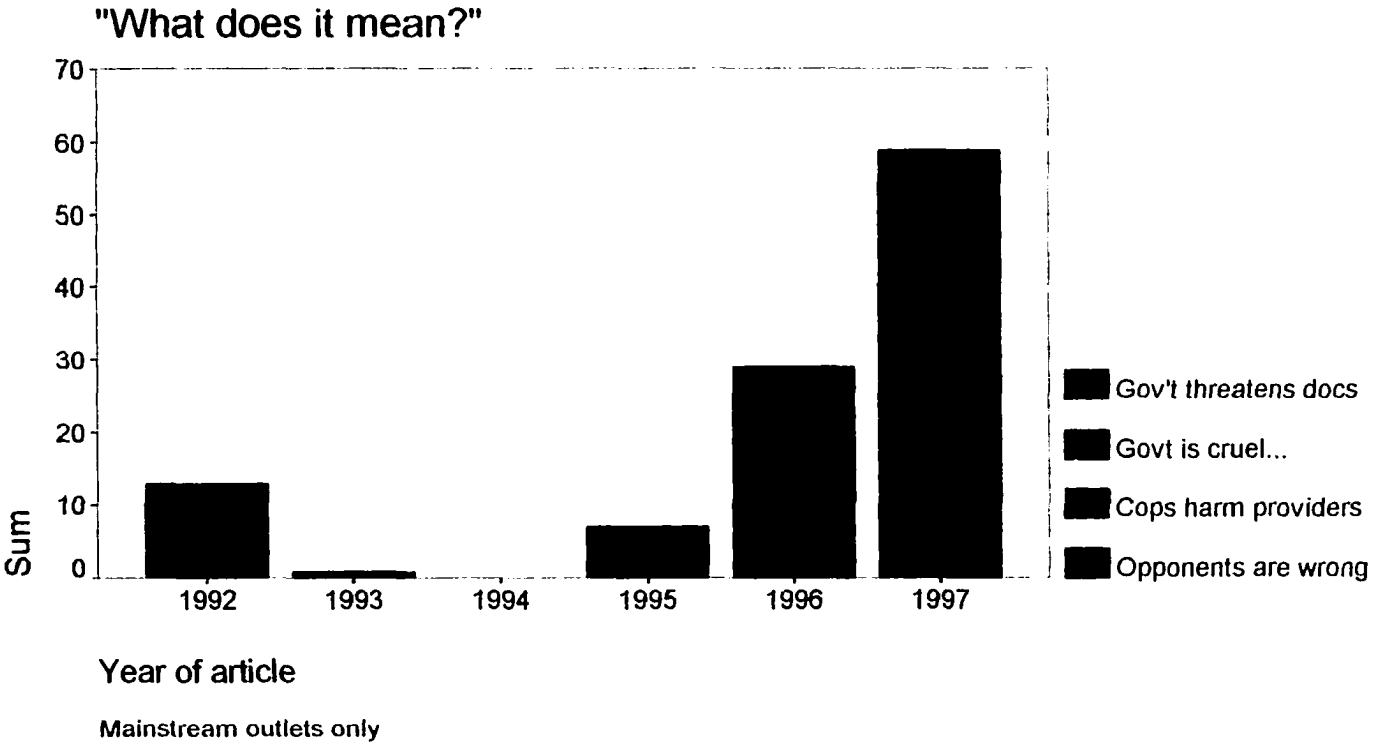
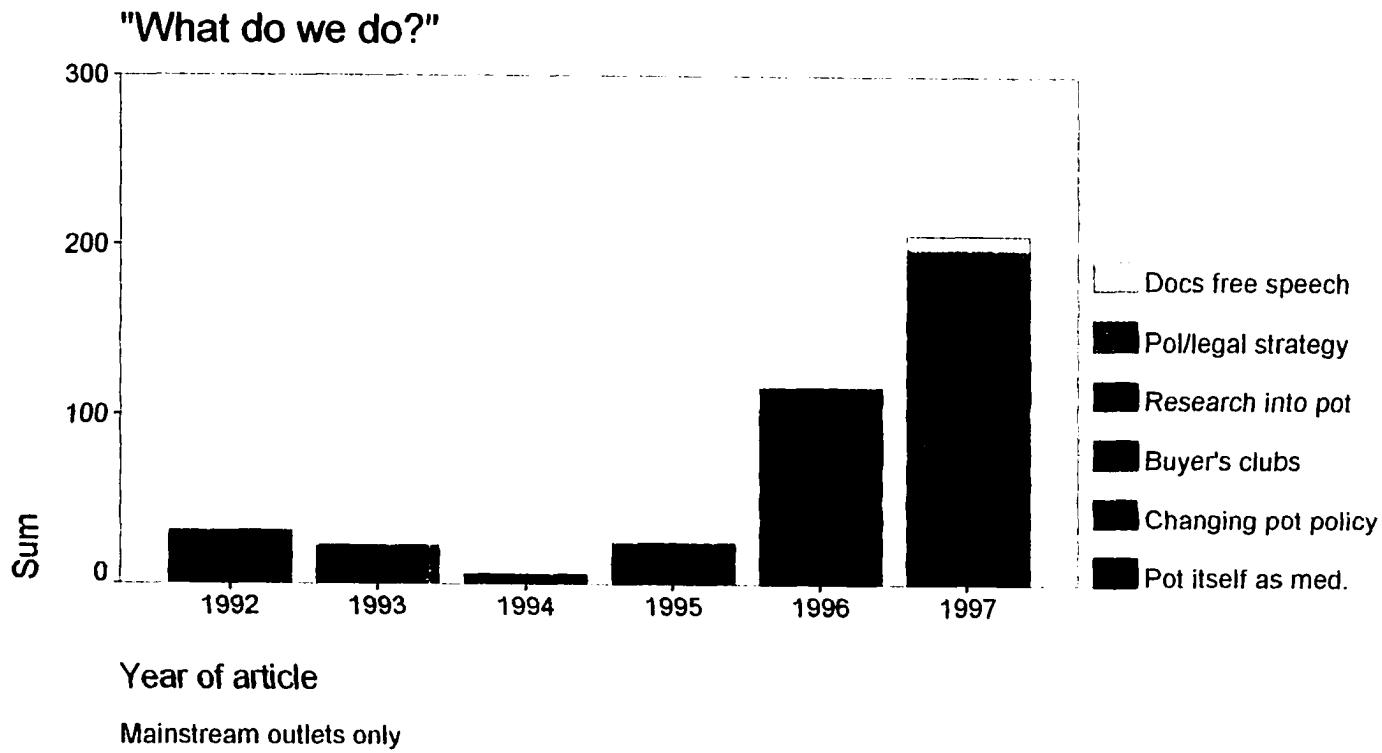


Figure 6.5: Main Medical Solutions



As the general results chapter demonstrated, the *medical* frame usually did not include the *causal agent* and *moral evaluation* components. The most common *problem* was illness or suffering from diseases or maladies whose symptoms are sometimes treated by smoking marijuana: AIDS wasting syndrome, nausea (as caused by chemotherapy, for example), multiple sclerosis, and other conditions that traditional medicine fails to treat successfully in some patients. The *solution* to this problem most often conveyed in news coverage was marijuana itself as medicine or treatment.

But the inclusion of *causal agents* and *moral evaluations* with the components of *problem* and *solution* became sustained in late 1996 and early 1997. From late December 1996 to April 1997 the news more regularly linked the four components, which usually were: 1) the *problems* of illness, and restrictions on doctors (e.g., threat to licensing) or interference with the doctor/patient relationship; 2) the federal government and officials as *causal agents;* 3) a *moral evaluation* of the federal government as a threat to doctors, patients and the medical profession in general; and 4) marijuana as medicine, changing marijuana policy, and a political (electoral) or legal strategy as *solutions* to the threat. As these components indicate, the *medicalization* of marijuana depended heavily on its use as a symbol in the battle over control between political and medical authorities, rather

than on rational debate over marijuana as a policy matter, largely due to the conventions of mainstream news that emphasize conflict over substance.

The following discussion will briefly summarize how the use of sources promoting *medicalization* enabled the linking of these four components. As already shown, the news increased the use of more positively constructed sources such as physicians and advocates for sufferers of AIDS and other illnesses.

The event that began the regular linking of all four *medical* components was the Clinton administration's attack on physicians, which prompted two major stories that appeared in the sample on the last day of December 1996. Using a mixture of *crime* and *medical* frames, they reported the administration's new strategy and the reaction of doctors and medical use advocates; in several paragraphs each allowed these pro-*medical* sources to link *causal agent* and *moral evaluation* components with the *problem* and *solution*. The first excerpt is from *USA Today*, the second from the *New York Times*:

> Advocates for AIDS sufferers unleashed a blistering critique of the administration policy Monday. They said it lacks compassion for those suffering from debilitating illnesses.
>
> "We refuse to allow Bill Clinton to make people with AIDS collateral damage in his failed drug war," said Steve Michael, a member of the AIDS advocacy group, ACT UP. "They're choosing this fight because they think it's an easy win."[33]

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[33]"Doctors told not to prescribe marijuana," *USA Today*, December 31 1996, A1.

> But the Government's threat has angered a number of doctors, who criticize it as a new intrusion by Washington into their right to decide what is best for their patients.
>
> "They can't go after the voters in California and Arizona, so they go after the medical profession," said Dr. David C. Lewis, director of the Center for Alcohol and Addiction Studies at Brown University. "Now the Federal Government is entering the practice of medicine, placing itself in the physician's office between the doctor and patient."
>
> Dr. Richard J. Cohen, a cancer specialist in San Francisco, agreed that the Administration's announcement yesterday amounted to such an intrusion. Over the last 28 years, Dr. Cohen said, he has recommended marijuana to alleviate the suffering of hundreds of his patients. Now, he said, he finds himself in the "Kafkaesque" position where he cannot do so without jeopardizing his practice.
>
> "The benefit of the California referendum was to open the door for research to be done" about marijuana, Dr. Cohen said. "The Federal mandate closes that door of opportunity." Another California doctor, Donald Abrams, has contended that the Federal Government blocked his efforts to undertake research on the effect of marijuana.[34]

In these two stories the fully linked *medical* frame consists of the following components: the *problems* of drug policy, the threats to doctors, or restrictions on the doctor/patient relationship and research into marijuana; the *solutions* are a political or legal challenge to these threats, or research into marijuana as medicine; the *causal agents* are federal agencies or officials; and the *moral evaluations* of them and their link to the problem are that government policy harms those suffering from illness or that the government itself threatens physicians, patients or the medical profession.

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[34]"Doctors criticize move against state measures," *New York Times*, 31 December 1996, D18.

These frame components would continue to be linked in news stories covering the fallout of the controversy. The events included: the announcement that the government would fund research into marijuana as medicine[35]; the physicians' lawsuit against the federal government[36] and subsequent rulings[37]; the *New England Journal of Medicine*'s editorial attacking the administration's policy[38]; the DEA's investigation of a doctor in California for recommending marijuana to patients[39]; the issuance of guidelines for doctors by the AMA[40]; and the raid on the marijuana club in San Francisco.[41] As already discussed, these stories

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[35]"Government to spend $1 million studying marijuana as medicine," *New York Times*, 9 January 1997, B10.

[36]"Suit seeks to bar U.S. sanctions for prescribing pot," *Los Angeles Times*, 15 January 1997, A3; "Marijuana suit," *USA Today*, 16 January 1997, A3.

[37]"Federal judge supports California doctors on marijuana issue," *New York Times*, 12 April 1997, Sec. 1 p. 7; "U.S. threat over drug is lifted in California," *New York Times*, 1 May 1997, A19.

[38]("The *New England Journal of Medicine* will editorialize..."), *World News Tonight*, 29 January 1997; "Journal assails U.S. stand on medical pot use," *Los Angeles Times*, 30 January 1997, A1; "Prestigious journal backs medicinal pot use," *USA Today*, 30 January 1997, A1.

[39]"DEA probe targets doctor who recommended pot," *Los Angeles Times*, 16 February 1997, A33; "A doctor is questioned over marijuana law," *New York Times*, 17 February 1997, Sec. 1 p. 14.

[40]"Medical leaders seek truce in battle over marijuana," *Los Angeles Times*, 18 March 1997, A3; "AMA sets marijuana guidelines," *USA Today*, 18 March 1997, A3.

[41]"DEA agents raid marijuana club," *Los Angeles Times*, 22 April 1997, A3.

resulted from events deemed newsworthy and that relied heavily on *medical* sources.

Prevailing over the news narrative

As Chapter 3 (General Trends) showed the *medical* frame was often challenged by the *crime* frame in news stories even when the former prevailed, but the *medical* frame dominated its own stories more in 1997 than it had earlier (Figure 3.8). This increased prevalence was due to the combined effect on the *medical* frame of the 1996 referenda and of marijuana's association with physicians, a politically powerful, well-organized group who are generally positively constructed in the news media.

One of these stories is noteworthy in that it demonstrates how omission of a news frame may mark its symbolic demise, and the prevalence of another frame in its place. One of the mainstream stories about the *NEJM* editorial explored arguments for and against marijuana in the January 30 *Los Angeles Times*. In a graphic listing both the arguments of advocates of medical marijuana, and then opponents (the former has 7 points, the latter only 4), the points of the opponents mentioned nothing about youth -- only public health arguments about unproven benefits or uncertain dangers of marijuana.[42] This story (and others about the editorial) represents a turning point in the

[42]"Journal assails U.S. stand on medical pot use," 30 January 1997, A1.

narrative when the *threat to youth* frame was becoming less newsworthy (as shown in Chapter 5) and the increasing legitimacy of the *medical* frame was taking its place.

A concurrent story in *Newsweek* made it even clearer that in policy strategy, ONDCP head McCaffrey was moving toward a melding of *public health* and *medicalization* frames (at least in his public rhetoric). While citing the lack of evidence for medical marijuana and pointing up its dangers in relation to approved treatments (a *public health* problem), the story quoted McCaffrey's office as promising that "'any serious marijuana research request will be considered,'"[43] a *medical* solution.

Summary

The explosion in attention paid to, and relative success of, the *medicalization* frame in late 1996 and early 1997 shows that although frames that are attractive to the media in a newsworthy sense may appear sporadically (such as stories throughout the period about the problem of illness and suffering of AIDS and cancer victims), the success of an oppositional frame usually depends on its linkage to the interests of a positively constructed and/or politically

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[43]"Can Marijuana Be Medicine?" 3 February 1997, 27. One important signal that the prevailing frame was shifting slightly was the headline's question. It opened the door for a change in policy, but legitimized the official position by giving authorities the right to decide, rather than medical users who already testify to marijuana's usefulness. (That headline might have read, "*Is* Marijuana Medicine?")

powerful group such as physicians and their political associations. Although human-interest style stories sympathetically narrating the plights of various medical users of marijuana appeared early and throughout the study period,[44] their situations were usually individualized and fragmented from the larger issue, and were unable to create the swell of attention and favorable frames the media lavished later on physicians and their attorneys. The effect was not short-lived: the ballot referenda and the involvement of physicians in the marijuana news narrative did lend some validation to later stories about other aspects of the issue.[45] In addition, the *Los Angeles Times* shifted its frame more toward *medicalization* than did the *New York Times*, probably due to its proximity to the reform movement in the West.

This chapter has shown that in order for an oppositional frame to become favored in the news, several

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[44]Examples include: "S.F. softens marijuana use law," *USA Today*, 21 September 1992, A3; "'Brownie Mary' won't be tried," *Los Angeles Times*, 16 December 1992, A36; "AIDS patient in a test of marijuana use dies," *New York Times*, 21 July 1993, B18; "A daughter's pain, a family's anguish," *Los Angeles Times*, 1 January 1995, E4; "Marijuana cure: Rx for arrest," *New York Times*, 10 September 1995, Sec. 13 p. 8; "Marijuana seller vows to aid the ill," *New York Times*, 7 April 1996, Sec. 13 p. 7.

[45]"Can marijuana be medicine?" *Newsweek*, 3 February 1997, 23; "Marijuana needs study, NIH says," *USA Today*, 20 February 1997, D4; "Worker fights dismissal for medical marijuana use," *New York Times*, 2 March 1997, Sec. 1 p. 18; "San Jose plans zoning rules for pot clubs," *Los Angeles Times*, 13 March 1997, B3; "Teen drug abuse decline yields hope," *USA Today*, 7 August 1997, D3; "Calif. officials would give marijuana to sick people," *USA Today*, 19 November 1997, A3.

factors must combine. The regular access of sources (especially elite and politically powerful ones) to the news narrative, especially through coverage of newsworthy events, can lead to a complete sustained linking of the four components of the frame and the prevalence of that frame in individual news stories. The presence of all these elements is especially necessary for the success of oppositional frames such as *medicalization* and *decriminalization*. The supremacy of the former during the height of coverage, compared to the failure of the latter due largely to the lack of newsworthy events, demonstrates the specific hurdles oppositional frames face and how those hurdles may be overcome.

The final chapter will discuss some of the possible ramifications of this frame-building process for journalists, their sources of information, and for public policy. The conclusion will also address how the study of frame-building in the news contributes to framing theory and future research.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

This analysis has addressed a number of research questions about the marijuana narrative and its implications for framing. This final chapter summarizes the answers to these questions and discusses their significance for policy, for journalism, and for future research.

Summary of results

The first set of research questions addressed the dominance of frames and the role of sources and journalism styles (especially between different types of media) in fostering that dominance. The analysis showed that in spite of the ideal of objectivity, individual mainstream stories presented the issue mostly in terms of one frame, not a balance of two or more. Similarly, most mainstream stories were dominated by a narrow range of sources, resulting in the limited range of frames. The specialized publications were much more likely to use oppositional frames than were the mainstream publications.

Second, the analysis addressed the use of events by sources and journalists to frame the issue and to integrate the four framing components. The *threat to youth* stories in

particular cited sources more often and allowed them to influence the narrative through events over which they had much control, and through their framing of those events. The analysis also showed that the *causal agent* and *moral evaluation* components are especially important in forming a prevailing, culturally resonant frame.

The final set of questions asked which frames prevailed over the narrative, the relative success of the oppositional frames, and the implications for frame-building. The *crime* and *threat to youth* frames were the most prevalent over the period, and they also dominated in individual stories. The *medical* frame did prevail late in the period, but only after being symbolically linked with powerful mainstream interests (especially physicians). The remainder of this chapter discusses the import of these findings for the process of frame-building.

Frames prevailing over the narrative

Marijuana frames in the 1990s showed varying degrees of success in prevailing over the news narrative. The keys to their rise and fall were the availability of elite sources, and of events as *platforms* on which to build integrated news frames that resonated with larger cultural frames.

Both the *crime* and *youth* frames prevailed over the mainstream news narrative. There are several reasons for this. *Crime* resonated in the news; it had frame sponsors who were well-placed and powerful enough to provide a

continuous supply of newsworthy events. Those sources were able to present an integrated frame that both shifted in response to challenges by another frame (*medicalization*), and prevailed over stories and the narrative itself.

The *threat to youth* frame rose to share the marijuana narrative with *crime* in 1993-1996, and then fell out of prominence in 1997. Its sponsors became regular sources for stories, based around events which they controlled and influenced (through their framing). They created and developed a resonant, integrated frame that prevailed over individual stories and the narrative itself over time. But when the events those sponsors used failed to remain newsworthy (surveys reporting rising teen drug use), the frame fell out of favor, though still resonant and integrated.

At the other end of the continuum, *decriminalization* did not prevail over the narrative because its sponsors were not able to provide newsworthy events to integrate their frame and hence they never became regular sources for news stories. This was in spite of the potentially high cultural resonance a *decriminalization* frame might have gained with a consistent platform of events on which to build. Stories in the specialized press (especially the *Atlantic Monthly* and *Rolling Stone*) provide examples: the problems of forfeiture law (both in terms of its impact on individual liberties and the incentives it gave to police to violate them), the incarceration of petty marijuana offenders for life terms,

and the linking of causes, evaluations and solutions to those problems provided by sponsors (such as Families Against Mandatory Minimums) not given a voice in the mainstream narrative. Among mainstream publications, only *USA Today* came close to a consistently linked, resonant *decriminalization* frame.

Medicalization came into its own as a significant part of the marijuana narrative near the end of the study period, but not because of any real-world change in the knowledge about marijuana's effects or efficacy as a medicine. The events of the referenda and sponsorship by elites (especially doctors' groups) legitimized the medical frame, even after the peak of the *threat to youth* period. The *medical* frame in a sense moved closer to the *public health* frame by emphasizing similar principles (such as the importance of scientific research), thus partially bridging the gap between dominant and oppositional status.

The next sections discuss the process of frame-building and its elements, and why these frames achieved varying levels of success. The aim is to flesh out the significance of frame-building for the practice and study of journalism and news making.

Frame sponsors, events and frame-building

A frame can be built when newsworthy events provide a platform for it in mainstream stories. Such a platform can link events across time in the narrative so they are no

longer fragmented. When mainstream news journalists began using the referenda and other events favorable to *medicalization* as *background information* (just as the string of surveys built a background platform for the *youth* frame), the *medical* frame became a more legitimate part of the narrative. In this way, events can build a momentum that translates into influence over the narrative.

The *medical* frame also overcame its oppositional status by integrating all four framing components (e.g., there are suffering people who should be allowed to use marijuana medically, but cannot because the federal government, supported by anti-drug groups and officials, will not even let physicians recommend it to their patients). *Medical* sponsors (especially medical users and reform advocates) were able to symbolically link their portrayals to those of doctors, a powerful and positively portrayed group who also became *medical* sponsors. As sources, they were successful in using several newsworthy events to integrate the frame and to influence the news narrative.

As Chapter 1 explained, many studies have shown how and why elites dominate mainstream news coverage as sources. This analysis showed how an oppositional frame can still adapt to the dominant narrative and can change the status quo framing of an issue, as did the *medical* frame, in part through elite sponsorship. But the success of the *medical* frame was limited. Because of the hurdles to building a successful frame, *medicalization* had to be symbolically

linked with, and promoted by, those with sponsoring power such as physicians and their advocates. The frame gained strength as it defined a new problem -- government threats to doctors -- that was only peripherally related to the issue of marijuana's medical use.

The two elite groups in conflict with each other -- government anti-drug officials and physicians -- had different *views* of the status quo. The Clinton administration and state officials in California and Arizona wanted to maintain marijuana's status as a Schedule I drug; a significant segment of the medical establishment wanted to maintain doctor-patient control and confidentiality over the use of marijuana, and felt the need to defend those prerogatives in order to maintain them. In the news, this was a conflict over how to define (and thus maintain) the current situation, not a true debate over the proper role of marijuana in society or whether to move it to Schedule II. The conflict centered on differing *problem* components of the frames: doctors encouraging illegal drug use (*crime*) versus government threats to doctors and patients (*medicalization*). And the way doctors promoted *their* version of the status quo was to fight back against the government's version. Even though the debate was somewhat peripheral to marijuana itself, the news narrative was altered through frame-building by both sides.

As the other oppositional frame, *decriminalization* was caught in a vicious cycle. Without any support from a

significant number of elite advocates (such as government officials, judges, or opinion leaders) it could not gain legitimacy in mainstream news. And without mainstream legitimacy, it could not generate the kind of elite or public support necessary to change policy.

Lacking newsworthy events as a consistent platform on which to build their frames into the news narrative, the sponsors of *decriminalization* failed at this level. But the remaining three main frames relied on strings of events that provided a platform on which to build their frames. Especially for the *medicalization* frame, such newsworthy events allowed it to influence the narrative despite its oppositional status.

Naming and explaining: the import of *causes* and *evaluations*

We have seen that the ability to name people or groups as agents responsible (causes) for a problem in the news, and the concurrent and inherent explanations (moral evaluations) that go along with that naming, are integral to building a frame. The reason is the existence of two key news values: *conflict* and *familiarity*. According to Graber, mainstream news' emphasis on conflict between well-known people, institutions or groups is one criterion news organizations use to select stories. Second, by translating news events into personalized stories that bring out their human elements, complex issues and events can be made familiar and brought within the comprehension of the

audience.[1] The power to turn conflict into a familiar story involving personalities is a central means by which sponsors, becoming sources, can build an integrated frame that is newsworthy and hence influences the overall narrative. Such power flows from mainstream news criteria and it leads to a natural tendency to cite specific people or groups, and to evaluate them and their impact on the problem.

The *crime* and *youth* frames dominated the narrative for this reason as much as any other: their sponsors (with the power to provide events on which to build) were able to blame people and assign a moral evaluation to them. The *medical* frame did not prevail until its sponsors were able to do the same thing. By taking advantage of events (the ballot referenda, the editorial in *NEJM*, the physicians' legal battle against the Clinton administration) as a platform, the sponsors were able to name various government officials or the government itself and to *explain their role* in the suffering of people denied access to marijuana. The central attraction for mainstream news stories is the identification of people -- if someone is at fault or can be blamed, that provides for a more attractive and compelling story (again, bringing *conflict* and *familiarity* into play). When the *medical* frame was able to provide those agents for the mainstream news, it not only became the main

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[1]Graber, *Mass Media and American Politics*, 118-120.

oppositional frame, for a brief time it challenged the *crime* frame for prevalence over the narrative.

Symbolism is important for policy, because the symbols used to support different frames influence which policy options seem possible or make more sense than others. Symbolism, through framing, can make some options seem much more natural and reasonable than others. As long as medical users, as living symbols of marijuana use in society, were seen as deviants -- pot smokers deserving punishment, or bad examples for youth -- marijuana itself would not receive serious consideration by elites as anything other than a drug belonging in Schedule I. That is why it was important for medical users of marijuana to be linked symbolically in the news with a powerful, positively constructed group like physicians and for their cause to become associated with doctors' groups. The power of those elites in sponsoring the *medical* frame -- through the elements of frame-building discussed here -- enabled a shift in the portrayals of medical users and hence of marijuana itself through their use of it. This changing social construction widened, if only slightly, the range of legitimate (mainstream) ways of thinking about the issue, and perhaps made medicalization a more realistic possibility (if only in the distant future).

Resonance between news and cultural frames

This also sheds light on the inherent weakness of the *medical* frame: its lack of resonance with the larger culture

of illegal drugs,[2] which still dominates national policy toward marijuana. As noted in the literature review, a frame will tend to resonate when it conforms to the norms and values of the dominant culture. *Crime* is such a frame, as is the *threat to youth* (although that frame lost prominence when it lost a consistent platform of newsworthy events in 1997). The rise of the *medical* frame in 1997 was highly dependent on the advocacy of doctors' groups whose own power was threatened by the conflict over marijuana. The idea of allowing any legitimate marijuana use is still antithetical to current policy. That and the ongoing recurrence of the *crime* frame (news coverage of police actions at the local level, and of the pronouncements of national leaders) will keep the *medical* frame from gaining the cultural resonance necessary to achieve real mainstream acceptance as something other than an illicit drug. This may change if the marijuana issue becomes permanently entwined with the issue of physicians' rights or the sanctity of the doctor-patient relationship. Otherwise medical use advocates must find another way to transform the framing of themselves and of their marijuana use in order to gain more adherents to their cause.[3]

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[2]This is Vallance's "drug-war dependent culture." *Prohibition's Second Failure,* 12-13.

[3]David A. Snow and others, "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation." *American Sociological Review* 51 (August 1986): 473-75.

Such a scenario is possible with the continued success of medical marijuana initiatives in states other than Arizona and California.[4] As voters in more states express a willingness to make a distinction between medical use and outright legalization, the political pressure on national politicians to find a way to move marijuana to Schedule II grows. It is possible that such continued political success is an indicator of the resonance of framing marijuana as medicine, but it is too early to tell whether that resonance has permanently altered the news frame.

Whether these changes in framing and perception lead to or influence an eventual change in national policy depends on many factors beyond the scope of this analysis. However, the fact that the mainstream news only gave the *medical* frame some real prominence in the narrative after the electoral success of the referenda in California and Arizona demonstrates both the difference and advantage of a framing analysis compared to traditional agenda-setting research as a way of studying the news media.

The "agenda-setting role of the press [as] one of civic mobilization,"[5] supposedly enabling the public to rely on

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[4]Despite continued opposition by the Clinton administration, in the fall elections of 1998 voters in Alaska, Oregon, Nevada and Washington approved referenda to allow medical use of marijuana in their states. And despite opposition from the state legislature, Arizonans reaffirmed their approval of that state's medical marijuana initiative of 1996.

[5]Shaw and McCombs, "Dealing with Illicit Drugs," in *Communication Campaigns About Drugs*, 119.

news reports to help "achieve a working consensus of how public support and the resources of government and the private sector will be allocated," is virtually absent when the actual narrative is taken into account in a framing analysis. Instead of opening up the issue of the place of marijuana in society for examination by the public, the mainstream coverage did not really address the question seriously until the ballot referenda, a political event brought about through the advocacy and hard work of reform advocates without much attention from the mainstream press. This shows a rear-view perspective on the part of the press, in that it functions not as a forum for the important issues of the day, but rather as a diagnostic device to interpret what events have occurred. The news framing function limits the debate to those frames with high resonance or elite support; news framing can actually deny us one possible public forum in which to explore the range of meaning a particular issue may encompass. For oppositional frames with little inherent resonance (especially *decriminalization*) this is a huge distinction. And when the importance of events are also taken into account, it becomes apparent how one oppositional frame (*medicalization*) might influence the narrative more than another (*decriminalization*).

Journalists should understand the power of framing and why it occurs in the news. The next section discusses the important framing elements -- the cultural resonance of an

integrated frame, sponsorship by elites, and newsworthy events as a platform -- in the context of the practice of journalism.

Framing and journalism

Scientist Carl Sagan suggested that anyone can separate verifiable truth from mere claim using what he called "the fine art of baloney detection,"[6] to detect fallacies within the claim and separate them from the fact. Reporters need to assemble and bring their "baloney detection" kits to press conferences and news releases, especially those purporting to be based on scientific data.

Entman notes that journalists are not generally trained to recognize the power of framing to limit the terms used to discuss an issue. Teaching them to temper the notion of objectivity with a recognition that frames may in fact be reinforced by the balance norm might enable them to "construct news that makes equally salient -- equally accessible to the average, inattentive, and marginally informed audience -- two or more interpretations of problems."[7]

Journalists ought to be aware of three things: first, that frames do exist, even (or especially) in objective news reports. Second, sources of information, even the seemingly

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[6]Carl Sagan, *Science as a Candle in the Dark: The Demon-Haunted World* (New York: Random House, 1996), 209-217.

[7]"Framing: Toward Clarification," 57.

most innocuous (say, a low-level bureaucrat or a bystander) have situated schemata which they apply to the world and which may take the form of news frames when they provide information to the journalist (and those schemata may even be altered through contact with the journalist, creating a news frame different from its originator's intent). Also, of course sources acting in an official capacity for an organization are even more likely than other types of sources acting without affiliation to have specialized knowledge about how to promote that organization's preferred frame of an issue through contacts with the news media. Third, the balance norm, that of balancing one view with another within news stories, often if not usually reinforces rather than challenges the status quo if the balance is within the range of dominant frames (or especially within a single frame).

Given the tendency for a single frame to control a given story, these lessons should manifest themselves in the following ways. When covering stories that are high in sensational value and tap emotionally explosive issues, such as the use of marijuana by teenagers, journalists should make special effort to temper their reporting, both in terms of broadening the range of sources they use for information and being aware of the frame sponsorship of those sources, but also in using their "baloney detection" kits to avoid simply repeating those sponsors' frames in the narrative.

This kind of reporting would, at its most active,

involve a form of biased selection of sources on the most sensational stories to avoid simply giving in to the impulse to regurgitate the frames promoted. This would be hard, given the power that sponsors of integrated, culturally resonant frames have over the news narrative. In order to get around that power, reporters could become more active in writing separate stories (sidebars) that at least use sources sponsoring oppositional frames. This might be a way of getting around the "formulaic norm of objectivity"[8] by actively presenting (and sponsoring themselves) alternate frames in separate stories about the same event or issue. It would also help reporters get around the power that sources have over events by using *other events* to *balance* the narrative, rather than to *reinforce* it. Such a strategy would still be limited by the traditional space and time constraints of mainstream news, of course.

Another suggested approach is seeking out sources at several system levels.[9] For example, a story about the government's threats to prosecute doctors for recommending marijuana ought to give fair voice not just to the officials announcing the strategy, or doctors' reaction to it, but to sources at different levels of the entire system involved. Such sources might include medical users, advocates of

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[8]Ibid.

[9]Hendrickson and Tankard, "Expanding the News Frame," 44.

reform, and scientific experts with relevant research knowledge (perhaps both pro and con).

But any solution to the problem of the advantage over frame-building held by elites and officials must take into account the many hurdles journalists face: time pressures (usually in the direct form of deadlines), the balance norm as a long-established ritual, and the traditional definitions of what makes news.

Framing theory and future research

Regarding political news, Entman argued that "the frame in the news text is really the imprint of power -- it registers the identity of actors or interests that competed to dominate the text."[10] This analysis has shown how an oppositional frame may become newsworthy through the interplay of sponsors, events and resonant framing components.

By producing a complete and integrated frame, successful frame-building by sponsors and journalists demonstrates the maxim that the integration of parts (components) constitutes a result that is more than the sum of the parts themselves.[11] That is, when all framing components come together consistently in the narrative, the result is more than just a complete frame. It is the

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[10]"Framing: Toward Clarification," 55.

[11]Hendrickson and Tankard, "Expanding the News Frame," 40.

"imprint of power" in the form of a frame that has come to either dominate the narrative or to challenge a dominant frame, in the process forcing the sponsors of other competing frames to shift in response.

This exploratory analysis points the way to several directions for research based on the concepts of framing and frame-building. First, there should be a better understanding of how a changing social perception of the targets of a public policy affects both changing news frames and policy itself. In what ways, besides symbolic linkage with a powerful mainstream group, might a target group alter its construction and gain power through the news?

Second, can there be ways of building an oppositional frame other than through the support of elites as sponsors? If so, are there ways of making such frames culturally resonant? A case study approach to the framing of an issue over time could suggest possibilities. Third, the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods should be used more often, including field research into the everyday influences on framing, such as news routines.

Fourth, the growth of the Internet and its influence on frames at different levels -- culture, audience and text -- ought to be studied. Most SMOs, not to mention government agencies and many private individuals, have created their own World Wide Web sites, and as more people turn to the original sponsors of frames by accessing those sites the influence of the news media in reinforcing or stifling

frames will almost surely decline. Audience research should focus on not only where people go on the Internet but on the relationship between their own framing processes and that of the sites they visit. It will be important to know whether the traditional news media maintain influence over national issues or simply become barometers of elite and popular opinion, pushed aside by the public in favor of other sources for information. The influence of the online Drudge Report on mainstream news frames is but one prominent example.

Ultimately, studies of framing should attempt to bridge levels of influence over the narrative, from macro to micro. Framing analysis, when incorporating the conception of frame-building, is more than studying how hegemonic societal forces create and renew ideology through the news media (the macro level), or how the characteristics of individual journalists and their routines (micro) influence the resulting news frames. This analysis has attempted to combine these influences. Always, the larger cultural milieu in which social problems are defined, blame assigned and evaluated, and solutions recommended must be taken into account. Frames are not the same as ideology; neither are they created in some imaginary vacuum of fair, balanced reporting.

APPENDIX A:

CODING INSTRUMENTS

Codesheet-Framing Analysis Date ___/___/___ No._____
Headline:_____
_____
_____

Publication: 1.NYT 4.TIME 7.ATL MNTHLY
2.LAT 5.NEWSWK 8.NATL REVUE
3.USA 6.ABC TRANS 9.ROLL STONE

Date of story or article: ___/___/___
Cover story (mag.)/above fold (newspaper)/first story on TV?:
1.Yes 2.No 9.N/A

Page #_____ **Section**#_____ **Type** of story:_____ **Focus:**_____

Day of story: 1.Weekday 2.Saturday 3.Sunday 4.Weekend 5.N/A

How many **photos** with story? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 more N/A
Caption of photo:_____
_____

Number of **paragraphs**: _____ # of **Words**:_____
Byline:_____

Code each paragraph (see coding instructions for categories):

	Prob	***Cause***	***Solu***	***Eval***		***Prob***	***Cause***	***Solu***	***Eval***
1	____	____	____	____	26	____	____	____	____
2	____	____	____	____	27	____	____	____	____
3	____	____	____	____	28	____	____	____	____
4	____	____	____	____	29	____	____	____	____
5	____	____	____	____	30	____	____	____	____
6	____	____	____	____	31	____	____	____	____
7	____	____	____	____	32	____	____	____	____
8	____	____	____	____	33	____	____	____	____
9	____	____	____	____	34	____	____	____	____
10	____	____	____	____	35	____	____	____	____
11	____	____	____	____	36	____	____	____	____
12	____	____	____	____	37	____	____	____	____
13	____	____	____	____	38	____	____	____	____
14	____	____	____	____	39	____	____	____	____
15	____	____	____	____	40	____	____	____	____
16	____	____	____	____	41	____	____	____	____
17	____	____	____	____	42	____	____	____	____
18	____	____	____	____	43	____	____	____	____
19	____	____	____	____	44	____	____	____	____
20	____	____	____	____	45	____	____	____	____
21	____	____	____	____	46	____	____	____	____
22	____	____	____	____	47	____	____	____	____
23	____	____	____	____	48	____	____	____	____
24	____	____	____	____	49	____	____	____	____
25	____	____	____	____	50	____	____	____	____

Demographics of ID'd pot users:

Sex: 1.M 2.F
8.CD 9.N/A
Race:1.Wh 2.Bl.
3.Asian 4.Lat
5.Other
8.Can't det.
9.N/A
Age:0. Pre-teen
1. Teen
2. 20s
3. 30s
4. 40s
5. 50s
6. 60s
7. 70s>
8. CD
9. N/A

Job/Class:
1. Unemployed
2. Worker/employe
3. Manager/Entre.
4. Prof. 5.Other
8. CD 9.N/A

If story is longer than 50 paragraphs, code remainder as a whole:

Problem: _____
Cause: _____
Solution: _____
Evaluation: _____

	Source	***Pgraph #***	***Source Type***	***Overall Frame***
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

If there are more than 20 source quotes or paraphrases, write in here and note type and general frame: _____
_____

How prominent is marijuana?:
1. Central part of story
2. Part of another related issue
3. Not very important

In story overall:

Number of paragraphs pot **compared** to/mentioned as similar to other substances-write in the number of each paragraph mentioned:

Legal/regulated:	Alcohol_____	Tobacco_____		
Schedule II:	Cocaine_____	Morphine_____		
Illegal:	Heroin_____	LSD_____	PCP_____	
	Ecstasy_____	Other_____		

Number of paragraphs pot **contrasted** with/differentiated from other substances-write in the number of each paragraph mentioned:

Legal/regulated:	Alcohol_____	Tobacco_____		
Schedule II:	Cocaine_____	Morphine_____		
Illegal:	Heroin_____	LSD_____	PCP_____	
	Ecstasy_____	Other_____		

Metaphors, catchphrases, keywords used to describe actors and causal agents: _____
_____

Further Comments:

Codebook

Publication:
1.NYT=*New York Times*
2.LAT=*Los Angeles Times*
3.USA=*USA Today*
4.TIME=*Time* magazine
5.NEWSWK=*Newsweek*
6.ABC TRANS=ABC
7.ATL MNTHLY=*Atlantic Monthly*
8.NATL REVUE=*National Review*
9.ROLL STONE=*Rolling Stone*

Type of story:
1=Hard news/news brief
2=Soft news/feature
3=News Analysis or column
4=Obituary
5=Stand-alone graphic or photo
6=Essay or other comment
7=Retrospective

Focus of story:
1=International
2=National (or by wire)
3=Local
4=Sports
5=Business/Financial/Technology
6=Music
7=TV Review/Media
8=Health/Medicine

Byline:
00=No source cited/"Staff"
01=AP or other wire (no byline
Others (>01-keep list here):

NYT
48 Anderson, Dave
40 Biederman, Christine
04 Bishop, Katherine
11 Bonner, Raymond
16 Brooke, James
13 Brozan, Nadine
26 Chun, Rene
31 Cooper, Michael
25 DePalma, Anthony
09 Ehrlich, Dimitri
07 Fisher, Ian
10 Foderaro, Lisa
44 Gabriel, Trip
43 Goldberg, Carey
24 Golden, Tim
28 Goldin, Davidson
19 Goodman, Walter
46 Greenhouse, Linda

12 Henneberger, Melinda
49 Hirsh, Stacey
08 Holloway, Lynette
38 Jacobs, Andrew
06 James, George
21 Janofsky, Michael
32 Keller, Susan Jo
03 Kinzer, Stephen
30 Kirk, Margaret O.
05 Kolbert, Elizabeth
22 Krauss, Clifford
15 Longman, Jere
45 Mitchell, Alison
35 Navarro, Mireya
50 Newman, Andy
29 Pereles, Jon
18 Perez-Pena, Richard
33 Pristin, Terry
27 Purdy, Matthew
20 Purnick, Joyce
36 Reeves, Richard
41 Rohter, Larry
201 Rosenbaum, David E.
37 Rothstein, Edward
17 Schmitt, Eric
14 Simons, Marlise
47 Slocum, Bill
23 Steinhauer, Jennifer
200 Stout, David
42 Toner, Robin
02 Treaster, Joseph B.
39 Van Gelder, Lawrence
51 Verhovek, Sam Howe
34 Wren, Christopher S.
202 Onishi, Norimitsu
203 Williams, Monte
204 Lii, Jane H.
205 Wise, Mike
206 Strunsky, Steve
207 Fried, Joseph P.

LAT
54 Abrahamson, Alan
74 Ambrus, Steven
91 Bailey, Eric
88 Belgum, Deborah
69 Breslauer, Jan
75 Cimons, Marlene
84 Colvin, Richard Lee
63 Core, Richard
95 Curtius, Mary
81 Dolan, Maura
92 Ferrell, David
86 Fineman, Mark

93 Fiore, Faye
61 Gaw, Jonathan
89 Greenberg, Josh
59 Jehl, Douglas
80 Jennings, Dave
67 Kelley, Daryl
68 Lacher, Irene
52 Malnic, Eric (also 64)
64 see #52
65 MacMinn, Aleene
70 Maiella, James, Jr.
83 Morain, Dan
85 Morrison, Pat
79 Nelson, Jack
60 Newton, Jim
57 Ostrow, Ronald J.
82 Plaschke, Bill
72 Quintanilla, Michael
90 Riccardi, Nicholas
62 Richter, Paul
56 Rosenstiel, Thomas B.
96 Serrano, Richard A.
55 Sherry, Joe
77 Shuit, Douglas P.
94 Shuster, Beth
87 Slater, Eric
53 Smollar, David
66 Soble, Ron
78 Tagami, Ty
73 Turner, Craig
71 Warren, Jenifer
58 Weinstein, Henry
76 Willman, Chris
97 Wilson, Tracy
98 Monmaney, Terence
99 Lesher, Dave
250 Leuer, Jennifer
251 Jackson, Robert L.
252 Clary, Mike
253 LaGanga, Maria L.
254 Maugh, Thomas H., II
255 Darling, Juanita
256 Reed, Mack
257 O'Connor, Anne-Marie
258 McAllister, Sue
259 Hua, Thao
260 Jones, Robert A.
261 Weikel, Dan
262 Vittuci, Claire
263 Perry, Charles
264 Dufresne, Chris
265 Hubler, Shawn
266 Hotz, Robert Lee
267 Kawakami, Tim

268 Simon, Richard
269 Rubin, Alissa J.

USA
100 Nagourney, Adam
101 Cauchon, Dennis
102 Landis, David
103 Goodavage, Maria
104 Johnson, Kevin
105 Strauss, Gary
106 Ross, Bob
107 Snider, Mike
108 Manning, Anita
109 Williams, Jeannie
110 Gundersen, Edna
111 Gerth, Joseph
112 Voskuhl, John
113 Thomas, Karen
114 Meddis, Sam Vincent
115 Shmerler, Cindy
116 Phillips, Leslie
117 Levy, Doug
118 Price, Karla
119 Friend, Tim
120 Healy, Michelle
121 della Cava, Marco R.
122 Forbes, Gordon
123 Bell, Jarrett
124 Patrick, Dick
125 Miller, Leslie
126 Dixon, Oscar
127 Pina, Phillip
128 Mauro, Tony
129 Kelly, Dennis
130 Henry, Tamara
131 Painter, Kim
132 Stearns, David Patrick
133 Moore, Martha T.
134 Kanamine, Linda
135 Howlett, Debbie
136 Marklein, Mary Beth
137 Price, Richard
138 Nichols, Bill
139 Curley, Tom
140 Bacon, John
141 Peterson, Karen S.
142 Hainer, Cathy
143 Roush, Matt
144 Fields, Gary
145 Weisman, Larry
146 Jones, Del
147 Cronin, Don
148 Sternberg, Steve
149 Dodge, Stephen

150 Jones, Steve
151 Katz, Lee Michael
152 Nance, Roscoe
153 Boeck, Greg
154 Wells, Melanie
155 Johnson, Peter
156 Hedges, Carrie

ABC
300 Rooney, Brian
301 McWethy, John
302 Kashiwahara, Ken
303 Foreman, Tom
304 Pattillo, Linda
305 Murphy, Charles
306 Jennings, Peter
307 Nissen, Beth
308 Greenfield, Jeff
309 Potter, Mark
310 Simpson, Carole
311 King, Jerry
312 Greenwood, Bill
313 Serafin, Barry
314 Cooper, Anderson
315 Norris, Michele
316 Muller, Judy
317 Judd, Jackie
318 Walker, James
319 Wooten, Jim
320 Johnson, Dr. Timothy
321 Amos, Deborah
322 Williams, Valerie
323 Donvan, John
324 Sawyer, Diane
325 Davis, Karla
326 Reynolds, Dean
327 O'Brien, Tim

TIME
350 Farley, Christopher John
351 Smolowe, Jill
352 Bellafante, Ginia
353 Lemonick, Michael D.
354 Lacayo, Richard
355 Morrow, Lance
356 Nash, J. Madeleine
357 Kluger, Jeffrey
358 Allis, Sam
359 Shannon, Elaine
360 Shawcross, William

NEWSWEEK
370 Kaplan, David A.
371 Zeman, Ned

372 Leland, John
373 Bogert, Carroll
374 Padgett, Tim
375 Koehl, Carla
376 King, Patricia
377 Klaidman, Daniel
378 Murr, Andrew
379 Morganthau, Tom
380 Cowley, Jeffrey
381 Fineman, Howard
382 Howard, Lucy
383 Cooper, Matthew and Howard Fineman

NATIONAL REVIEW
390 Buckley, William F.
391 Stuttaford, Andrew
392 Brookhiser, Richard

ATLANTIC MONTHLY
395 Schlosser, Eric

ROLLING STONE
396 Wilkinson, Francis
397 Wilkinson, Peter
398 Steinberg, Neil
399 Cotts, Cynthia
400 Nadelmann, Ethan
401 Massing, Michael
402 Lipsky, David
403 Perse, Tobias
404 Simmons, Michael
405 Frankel, Mark
406 Dreyfuss, Robert
407 Wiederhorn, Jon
408 Baum, Dan

Paragraph coding:

Problem 0=NONE *Criminalization*
08 Pot "culture"
09 Stigma of being accused as/associated w/ pot offender/user (or being soft on drugs)
10 Drugs/crime in general (including pot)
11 Marijuana (as an illegal/dangerous plant)
12 Marijuana as medicine, interfering with drug law enforcement
13 Marijuana use or possession
14 Marijuana growing/trafficking/distribution
15 Other pot-related crime
16 General lack of support for prohibition/law enforcement
17 General social chaos/mayhem (other than crime)
18 Ballot initiatives/political process
19 Other "criminal" problem

Youth

20 Youth drug use in general
21 Youth marijuana use
22 Youth addiction
23 Harm to youth growth/development
24 Marijuana as "gateway" drug for youth
25 Ballot initiatives/medical mar. (sending wrong message to kids)
26 Youth attitudes/lack of awareness of dangers of marijuana/drugs
27 Youth crime-pot/drug related
28 General social youth chaos (child abuse, street life, etc.)
29 Other "youth" problem

Public Health

30 Drugs (including pot) as general public health or safety problem
31 Marijuana/drug use itself
32 Marijuana as a "gateway" to other illegal drugs
33 Addiction or other health effects
34 Lack of money/official attention for treatment/research
35 Economic/social costs of drug/pot use
36 Lack of awareness of marijuana's dangers
37 Heavy drug/pot use (as opposed to casual use)
38 Marijuana as an unsafe/unproven drug/medicine
39 Other "public health" problem

Medical

40 Gov't bureacracy, red-tape, infighting (hurts ill)
41 Restrictions on doctors/threat to licensing, etc.
42 Restrictions on research into marijuana
43 Interference into doctor/patient relationship
44 Illness/suffering
45 War on drugs/prohibition (hurts ill) OR Lack of safe dist. system
46 Ill users must break law, endure shunning, pay economic/social penalty
47 The legalization mvmt. (hemp rights, etc.)
48 Scare tactics/quest'able info used to oppose medicalization
49 Other "medical" problem

Legalization/Oppositional

50 Federal criminal forfeiture laws
51 Overcrowded prisons
52 Disrespect for law engendered by prohibition/flouting of law
53 Prohibition/law itself, current emphasis on law enforcement/punishment/"drug war"
54 Civil forfeiture/ lure for greedy police
55 Police enforcement
56 General public acceptance of policy/lack of awareness
57 Loss of freedom/property/privacy thru drug laws/enforcement
58 Questionable info used to support prohibition, hysteria
59 Other "legalization/oppositional" problem

60 Mandatory sentences/ sentencing guidelines
61 Drug-based crime (due to prohibition)
62 Employer drug-testing
63 Home drug tests
(99 Mixed/competing problem frames)

Causal agent(s) creating the problem

0 NONE

Criminalization

08 Marijuana "buyer's clubs" or providers (other than physicians)
09 Police or official (corrupted by pot/drugs/drug money)
10 Drug criminals in general
11 Illegal pot users/dealers/growers
12 Reform/pro-medical or grassroots group (FAMM, NORML) or activist
13 Physician(s) or medical group
14 Media undermining police efforts
15 Judge(s)/judicial ruling(s)
16 Other drug offender (not pot explicitly)
17 Criminal (not explicitly drug offender)
18 Property
19 Other "criminal" causal agent

Youth

01 Casual/functioning users (undermine "drugs are bad")
02 Parents who once used/still use pot
20 Young drug users in general
21 Youth marijuana users
22 Dealer/grower as source of marijuana for youth
23 Anti-prohibition/anti-drug war/pro-legzn group (FAMM, NORML)
24 Pro medicalization groups
25 Media messages/youth pop culture purveyors
26 Physicians sending wrong message to youth
27 Peers/relatives, etc. as bad influence
28 Youth culture/"wrong crowd"/youths as whole (not just users)
29 Other "youth" causal agent

Public Health

30 Drug users as threat to public health in general
31 Marijuana users/dealers/growers
32 Pro-marijuana/legalization/medical pot advocates
33 "Buyer's clubs"/"Medical" providers
34 Media glorifying, or not conveying dangers of, pot/drugs
35 Adminstn./gov't officials who don't emphasize treatment
36 Heavy/hard core users
37 Drug/pot users as threat to public safety/order
38 Physicians who don't eschew, or who advocate, pot
39 Other "public health" causal agent

Medical

41 Federal agency/official(s)
42 State or local government or agency
43 Medical boards

44 Opposition within medical profession to medical marijuana
45 Individual or SMOs favoring broad leglzn (hemp rights, etc.)
46 Politicians/opinion leaders against med. mar.
47 Family/friends who shun medical user
48 Court/judicial
49 Other "medical" causal agent
50 Public (opinion) in general

Legalization

51 Federal executive agency/branch/official or "Government"
52 Congress/national legislator(s)
53 Judge(s)/judicial ruling(s)/Court(s)/jury
54 State legislators/officials
55 Prosecutors
56 Police/law enforcers
57 Other opponents of legalization/anti-drug groups or actors
58 Politicians/policy-makers in general
59 Other "legalization" causal agents
60 Parents or parents groups
61 Drug test manufacturor/seller

Solution/prognosis 0=NONE *Criminalization*

08 Kids' turning in parents
09 Mandatory minimum sentencing
10 Military
11 Police enforcement/law (general)-arrests, indictments, etc.
12 Punishment/incarceration (other than mandatory min. sentence)
13 Civil forfeiture/civil enforcement
14 Eradication
15 Prohibition/status quo policy
16 Sanctions/restrictions on doctors prescribing pot
17 Propagation of anti-drug/prohibition message
18 Gov't mandated drug testing
19 Other "criminal" solution

Youth

20 Education/betterment of youth
21 Control over/persuade youth through schools, incl. drug testing
22 Control/persuade youth by parents/family (other than home drug tests)
23 Control over/persuasion of youth through peer groups
24 Control over/persuasion of youth through society/ads/culture
25 Home drug testing of kids, or drug detection kits
26 Youth learning self-discipline/control -- "Just Say No"
27 Improving youth relationships with family, faith, etc.
28 Youth inpatient treatment/counseling
29 Other "youth" solution

Public Health

30 User awareness of danger/decision to quit
31 Drug treatment/prevention programs, education, research/"harm reduction"
32 Drug testing (not necessarily by law)
33 Media/public information campaigns, or changing attitudes
34 Disdain/marginilizing of users, firing (social or economic penalty)
35 Marinol/other alternatives to pot as medicine
36 Maintaining prohibition
37 Attacking heavy/chronic pot/drug use
38 Greater official/gov't concern
39 Other "public health" solution

Medical

04 Buyer's Clubs/medical pot providers (especially not-for-profit)
40 Marijuana *itself* as medicine to treat illness/symptoms
41 *Allowing* marijuana as medicine (change in policy)
42 Research into marijuana as medicine
43 Physician control
44 Physicians' First Amendment rights (free speech)
45 Use of medicinal pot despite prohibition (breaking the law)
46 Lobbying/political, legal strategy by pro-medicalization SMO or doctors
47 Public opinion/electoral process to change policy
48 Gov't provision of medical pot
49 Other "medical" solution

Legalization

50 Responsible use (vs. heavy/hard core smoking)
51 Legalization/decriminalization in general
52 Persuasion of electorate/democratic process/watchdog groups
53 Court/constitutional challenges to prohibition/policy
54 State legislation to legalize despite national prohibition
55 Scientific studies showing pot safe esp. compared to others
56 Focus on "hemp"/strategy away from "psychoactive drug", or more mainstream/environmentalist image or industrial hemp/seeds
57 Focus on individual rights/freedom of conscience
58 Appeals to pot smokers/users as legit. supporters
59 Other "legaliztion" solution
60 Change in/more reasonable cultural attitude (incl. vs. "hard drugs")
61 Marijuana/hemp
62 Refusal to take employer drug tests
63 Marketplace policy to regulate drug use or cut down on crime
64 Gov't selling/control of drug supply (ala ABC stores)

0=NONE **Moral evaluation**-links to broader cultural norms:

Criminalization

07 Buyer's Clubs/medical providers threaten law/drug war
08 Physicians threaten law/drug war (by prescribing pot)
09 Even good cops/officials are corruptible by drugs
10 Personal property (cars, houses) are tainted by drugs
11 Marijuana users/traffickers are bad/deserving of punishment
12 Those against prohibition are misinformed/have bad motives
13 Culture/media undermine prohibition/threaten rule of law
14 Legal/judicial process works against law enforcement
15 Electoral process threatens fight against marijuana/drugs
16 Contrast of "normal" person(s) with drug user/dealer/grower
17 Contrast of "good" cops and "bad"/violent drug offender
18 Pot offense is sign of criminal nature/anti-social behavior
19 Other "criminal" evaluation

Youth

02 "Casual"/functioning users undermine anti-drug message
20 Parents (esp. those used drugs as kids) resp. for kids' pot use
21 Marijuana users threaten future of nation
22 Contrast of "good" kids with "bad" influences of pot/drugs
23 Those in favor of *right to smoke pot* send wrong message
24 Those in favor of *marijuana for medicine* send wrong message
25 The media should be used as tools to send right message about pot/drugs to kids
26 Media/culture threaten youth -- send wrong message about drugs
27 Young users rebellious, outside mainstream/need normalizing, attitude adjustment
28 Youth drug/pot abusers signify drug problem
29 Other "youth" evaluation

Public Health

30 Workers using drugs/pot s/be subject to employer control/sanction/drug testing
31 Users are sick and deserve treatment
32 Dealers/growers undermine the public health
33 Those in favor of *right to smoke pot* endanger public health
34 Those favoring *marijuana for medicine* endanger public health
35 The media should be used as tools to send the right message about pot/drugs
36 Media/culture threaten public health by sending wrong message about pot/drugs
37 Sick who want pot are wrong/misinformed/misguided
38 National/political leaders must convey correct anti-

drug message/finance treatment
39 Other "public health" evaluation
Medicalization
40 Pot growers must be in it out of compassion, not to make profit
41 Users are patients needing care
42 Government threatens doctor/patient/medical profession
43 Those opposing medicalization are wrong/misinformed
44 Gov't policy harms defenseless ill/is cruel
45 Those in favor of broad legalztn harm medicalzn movement
46 Gov't policy ("war on drugs") interferes with research/science
47 Gov't/police threaten providers of medical pot
48 Non-medical providers, buyer's clubs threaten medical profession
49 Other "medical" evaluation
Legalization
50 Public's attitude toward drugs/pot or policy needs to be changed/is misinformed
51 Users/dealers/growers are free individuals
52 Government=threat to right to use/grow pot
53 Government=threat to indiv./civil liberties (beyond pot)
54 People caught by pot law are unfortunate/deserve sympathy
55 Gov't enf./law is excessive, illogical or out of proportion
56 Gov't seems to be fighting a losing battle against drugs/pot
57 Gov't has not gone far enough to reform drug/pot policy
58 Opponents of pot mislead/use poor methods or arguments
59 Other "legalization" evaluation
60 Drug test makers capitalize on drug/pot war
61 Parents go too far in trying to control kids drug/pot use

Source Type: Non-gov't:
0=Other non-gov't source
1=Drug counselor/treatment personnel (private)
2=Academic/medical expert (usually "Dr.")
3=Pot user/offender (admitted or accused) or spokesperson
4=Opinion leader/editorialist
5=Bystander/witness
6=Physician for legzn for med. use
7=Physician against legzn for med. use
8=Medical assn. for med. use
9=Medical assn. against med. use
10=SMO/spokesperson for legalization/decrim.
11=SMO/spokesperson against legalization/decrim.
12=Unspecified advocates for medicalization
13=Unspecified advocates for legalization
14=SMO/spokesperson for medical use
15=SMO/spokesperson against medical use

16=(Drug) policy commentator or org.
17=Family member of pot/drug user, or representative of family
18=Public defender, defense attorney
19=Private security official
20=Unnamed "critic" of policy
60=Drug test manufacturer/advocate
61=Civil rights org. (ACLU, Libertarians, etc.)
63=Paraphernalia seller/owner
64=Unspecified opponents of medical use
70=Indep. (usu. academic) report or data (survey, etc.)
71=Survey/report by "drug war" group
72=Survey/report by "opposition/medicalzn" group
73=Opinion poll
75=Ballot initiative/Proposition

Gov't:

21=Executive branch federal agency (e.g., DEA, NIDA) or officials
22=Unnamed administration official
23=Other unnamed gov't source/"authority(ies)" (fed/state/local)
24=Named administration official
25=National legislator
26=Governor/state administrative official
27=State legislator
28=Police/sheriff
29=Prosecutor/DA
30=Judge/judicial, court record
31=Gov't scientist/expert
32=Local elected official (other than sheriff)
33=Public school official
34="Opposition" official in gov't (unnamed)
35=Candidate for elective office or party official
36=Probation officer
37=Foreign leader/official
38=Military officer
39=Corrections official
40=Coast Guard official
49=Other gov't worker or unnamed source
50=Public school counselor/treatment personnel
51=Fed gov't report/survey data
52=Law enforcement document (indictment, warrant, etc.)

Source Frame

0=NONE
1=Criminalization
2=Youth
3=Public Health
4=Medicalization
5=Legalization/Oppositional
9=MIXED FRAMES

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APPENDIX B:

ORGANIZATIONS[1]

Crime, youth, or public health frame sponsors

Alcohol and Drug Problems Association of America

American Correctional Association

American Council for Drug Education

American Council on Marijuana

American Pharmaceutical Association

American Public Health Association

California Narcotics Officers' Association

Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University

Citizens for a Drug-Free California

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America

Corporation Against Drug Abuse

Drugs Don't Work Partnership

Drug Strategies

Elks Drug Awareness Program

Free Congress Foundation

Institute for a Drug-Free Workplace

Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan

International Drug Strategy Institute

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[1]The list is drawn from the articles in the study, and the following sources: Office of National Drug Control Policy, *National Drug Control Strategy*, 126-35; Vallance, *Prohibition's Second Failure*, 141-42; Mary Lynn Mathre, ed., *Cannabis in Medical Practice: A Legal, Historical and Pharmacological Overview of the Therapeutic Use of Marijuana* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland and Company, 1997), 215-16.

Join Together (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation)

Just Say No International

Kaiser Family Foundation

Los Angeles Alliance for a Drug-Free Community

Narcotic Education Foundation Of America

National Alliance of State Drug Enforcement Agencies

National Association of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselors

National Association of Black Narcotics Agents

National Council on Crime and Delinquency

National Crime Prevention Council

National Families In Action

National Federation of Parents for Drug-Free Youth

National Institute on Drug Abuse

National Parents and Teachers Association

Parents Resource Institute for Drug Education

Partnership for a Drug-Free America

Points of Light Foundation

United Way of America

Veterans Against Drugs

Medical or *decriminalization* frame sponsors

AIDS Action Council

Alliance for Cannabis Therapeutics

American Academy of Family Physicians

American Bar Association

American Civil Liberties Union

American Medical Students Association

Americans/Californians for Medical Rights

Arizonans for Drug Policy Reform

Bay Area Physicians for Human Rights

Californians for Compassionate Use

Cannabis Action Network

Cannabis Buyer's Club/Cannabis Cultivator's Club

Cannabis Helping Alleviate Medical Problems

Clergy for Enlightened Drug Policy

Criminal Justice Policy Foundation

Cure AIDS Now

Drug Policy Foundation

Families Against Mandatory Minimums

International Cannabis Alliance of Researchers and Educators

International Anti-Prohibitionist League

Libertarian Party

Lymphoma Foundation of America

Marijuana AIDS Research

Marin County Council, CA

National Association of People with AIDS

National Drug Strategy Network

National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

Oakland City Council, CA

Open Society Fund

Physicians Association for AIDS Cure

Religious Coalition for a Moral Drug Policy

San Francisco City Council, CA

Sentencing Project

Miscellaneous drug policy organizations

Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice

Drug Policy Resource Center

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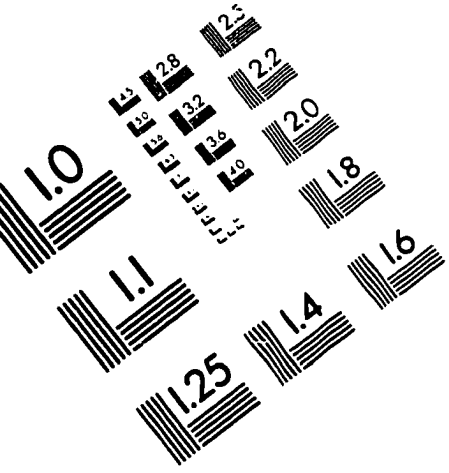
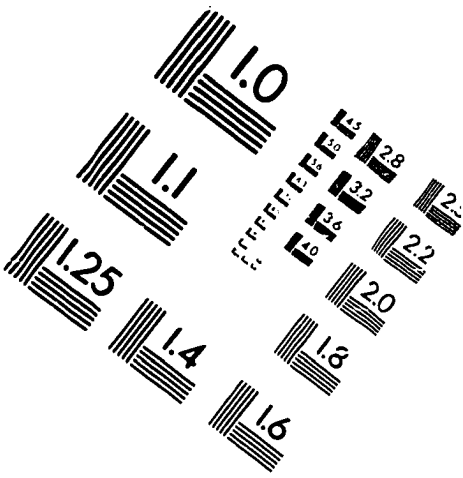
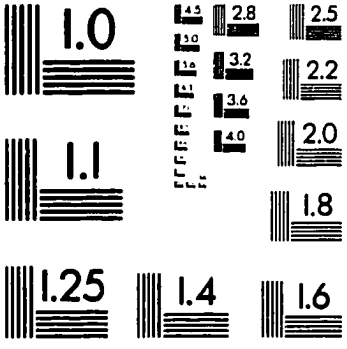
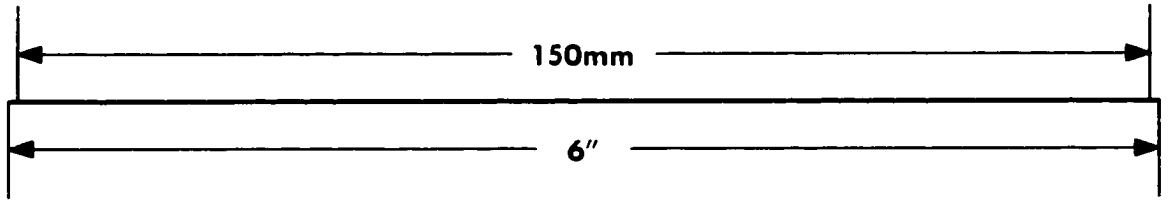
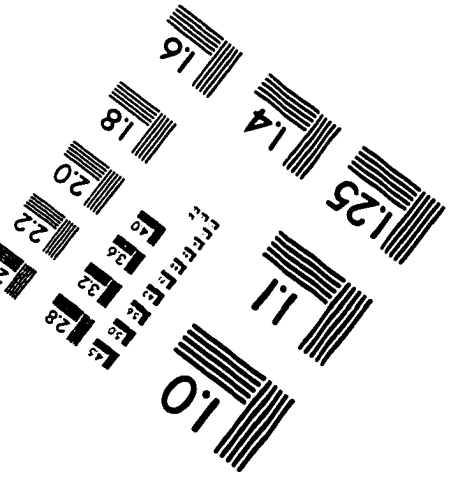
IMAGE EVALUATION
TEST TARGET (QA-3)

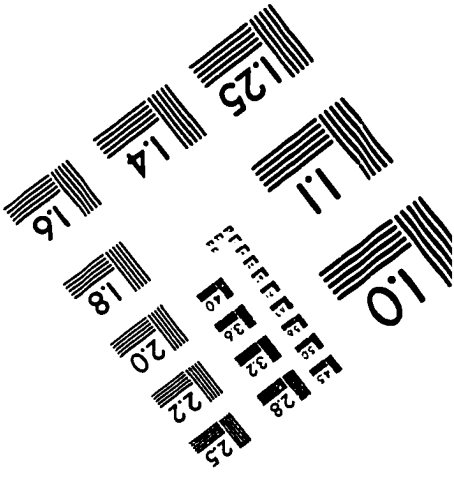












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