



REGULATORY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEDICAL CANNABIS AND OTHER SUBSTANCES

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Cannabis prohibition remains a contentious issue, sparking debates on both political and moral fronts, with arguments both for and against its legalization for medicinal purposes. While scientific evidence confirms cannabis's therapeutic potential for various conditions, the lack of safety protocols in the early 20th century posed significant risks to patient safety.

During this period, there were no regulations overseeing cannabis growth or medicine production, leaving patients vulnerable to harmful additives and pesticides. Furthermore, standardized treatment practices, such as dosing and consumption methods, were nonexistent, further jeopardizing patient well-being. It can be argued that cannabis prohibition during this time contributed to patient protection and prevented misuse by both patients and providers.

However, while cannabis prohibition may have safeguarded patients from potential harm, it also hindered scientific research into its therapeutic benefits. This delay in research may have prevented cannabis from emerging as a prominent player in plant-based medicine, akin to traditional pharmaceuticals.

While both cannabis and alcohol faced prohibition in the early 1900s, cannabis prohibition persists federally and in some states today. The early repeal of alcohol prohibition was driven by its contribution to increased crime, highlighting the potential consequences of prohibition laws. "When America tried alcohol prohibition between 1919 and 1931, the country and its lawmakers discovered that the crime and violence associated with prohibition law ended up being more damaging than consumption itself." (Garcia 2014).

The cessation of alcohol prohibition was also influenced by the utilization of tax revenue from alcohol sales to support wartime efforts and government initiatives during the Great Depression. Throughout alcohol prohibition, a surge in crime occurred, largely attributed to the illicit production and distribution of alcohol on the black market. Despite prohibition, the American populace continued to consume and trade alcohol, albeit without taxation. Recognizing this persistent demand, the government seized the opportunity to bolster its finances in the aftermath of the Great Depression. "In 1932, Franklin D. Roosevelt secured the Democratic nomination for president and won on a platform that supported ending Prohibition. Soon after his election, in 1933, Congress proposed and the states approved the Twenty-First Amendment, which repealed both the Eighteenth Amendment and Volstead Act." (A History of Alcohol)

With state governments implementing regulations to oversee cannabis consumption and taxation of cannabis businesses, there is potential for federal repeal of cannabis prohibition to mirror these developments.

A History of Alcohol Policy in the United States. Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation.
<https://www.hazeldenbettyford.org/>

Garcia, C. (2014, February 10). Latin Post. Retrieved October 3, 2014, from Latest News