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Policy Learning and the Diffusion of Stand-Your-Ground Laws

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Stand-Your-Ground (SYG) laws have recently received increased attention due to the controversial verdict in the 2013 George Zimmerman trial. At the time of the trial, 22 states had adopted SYG laws, with Florida adopting the first SYG law only a few years earlier. This article explores how policy learning contributed to the diffusion of these laws among U.S. states. It is found that learning exhibits atypical and complex patterns of diffusion not observed in previous studies. We posit that this dynamic is likely attributed to the fact that SYG is a controversial version of a morality policy, and these types of policies may exhibit multiple properties of policy learning theory. In addition, we find that multiple internal determinants including racial context, gun purchase rates, and poverty influence the likelihood of SYG adoption.

Keywords: Stand-Your-Ground Laws, Zimmerman Trial, Moral and Social Policy, United States, Policy Theory, Policy Learning, Policy Diffusion, Minority Policy, Crime, Gun Policy, Firearms, Self-Defense Policy, Deadly Force, Castle Doctrine, Race and Ethnicity, Racial Politics, Florida, National Rifle Association, NRA.

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Las leyes "defiende tu posición" (SYG por sus siglas en inglés) han recibido recientemente una creciente atención dado el controversial veredicto en el juício de George Zimmerman del 2013. Durante el tiempo del juício, 22 estados habían adoptado leyes SYG, siendo Florida la primera en adoptar tales leyes con anterioridad. Este artículo explora cómo el aprendizaje de políticas contribuyó a la difusión de estas leyes entre los estados de EEUU. Encontramos que el aprendizaje exhibe patrones atípicos y complejos de difusión no observados en estudios previos. Planteamos que esta dinámica puede ser atribuida al hecho de que SYG es una versión controversial de una política de moralidad y que estos tipos de políticas pueden exhibir multiples propiedades de la teoría de aprendizaje de políticas. Adicionalmente, encontramos que los multiples determinantes internos incluyendo el contexto racial, las tasas de compra de armas, y la pobreza influyen en la probabilidad de adoptar leyes SYG.

In Sanford, Florida on February 26, 2012, George Zimmerman shot and killed unarmed teenager Trayvon Martin, igniting a firestorm of media coverage regarding the appropriate boundaries of legitimate self-defense measures. In the aftermath of the tragedy, discourse largely centered on the contours of Stand-Your-Ground (SYG) laws that allow an affirmative legal defense in the use of deadly force outside of one's home and without initial retreat. This stands in stark contrast to the common law Castle Doctrine that has historically outlined the legal guidelines for the use of deadly force in self-defense. Given this, SYG laws have been highly controversial.

Advocates of SYG laws argue that permissive SYG measures are necessary to ensure a fundamental right to self-defense and defense of one's property, irrespective of location or circumstances. From this perspective, the legal use of

deadly force should not be constrained to operate within limited confines, such as one's home or place of business, but anywhere and everywhere one has a right to be. Yet critics suggest that SYG laws have the potential to invite vigilante justice that favors a "shoot perpetrators first" standard at the expense of due process and legal protections for potential defendants.

Besides being the source of the controversial Zimmerman trial, Florida was also the first state to adopt explicit SYG provision in 2005. Since Florida's adoption, almost two dozen other states have followed suit, but the underlying dynamics of SYG adoption have received scant attention from policy scholars. This is unfortunate considering the tempestuous nature of the recent SYG policy debate that has far-reaching implications that shape fundamental citizen rights and legitimate claims to justice. Voluminous research examines the adoption and diffusion of various policy innovations across U.S. states, yet little is known about the adoption and diffusion of SYG laws. This study endeavors to fill this void in the public policy literature by examining the diffusion of SYG laws across U.S. states. We find that SYG laws diffused through policy learning, but how states learned from one another was a multidimensional process as evidenced by our empirical findings. We believe that how scholars theorize about and model policy learning should depend on the type of policy that is being examined. Furthermore, we contend that in addition to isolating specific mechanisms of policy diffusion, scholars should also focus on unraveling the specific causal pathways of these mechanisms, especially for theories that are used to explain morality policies of first principles such as SYG laws. Additionally, we find several internal factors—including racial context, gun violence, and poverty—also increased a state's propensity to adopt a SYG law. Interestingly, minority presence is found to motivate SYG adoption among Southern states, while an inverse racial effect is observed outside the South. These findings suggest racial context may exhibit influence in the diffusion of certain public policies, such as self-defense policies that contain potent dimensions of racial salience and unflattering social construction of minority criminality.

SYG Laws

SYG laws have their roots in a Century English Common Law feature known as the Castle Doctrine, in which people are given the right to protect themselves in their homes from intruders. The traditional application of the Castle Doctrine has always been limited in scope in two important ways when it involved the use of deadly force. First, it has been interpreted to mean that people's homes are their castles and that they have a greater freedom for self-defense there. However, outside of their castle walls, individuals have limited ability to utilize deadly force in the defense of themselves, their property, or other individuals. Second, the use of deadly force in self-defense has traditionally been accompanied by a "duty to retreat" that required the individual to avoid conflict if possible and to only utilize deadly force out of necessity.

SYG laws expand upon the Castle Doctrine and other traditional guidelines with respect to the use of deadly force in self-defense. These laws differ due to two specific provisions that allow for greater latitude in the allowable use of deadly force. First, unlike traditional common law policies regarding self-defense, SYG laws remove the "duty to retreat" prior to the use of deadly force. In other words, even if a clear avenue of escape exists for an individual, they may instead choose to "stand their ground" rather than retreat and still have a valid affirmative defense. Second, traditional common law policies, such as the Castle Doctrine, limited the use of deadly force to one's home, place of business, or other specific locations. Conversely, SYG laws allow for the use of deadly force in any place that an individual has a legal right to be.

The first SYG law originated in Florida in 2005, where it enjoyed wide popularity in the Florida State Legislature, unanimously passing the State Senate and overwhelmingly passing the State House by a 94–20 margin. Following Florida's example, SYG laws soon spread throughout the country with support from influential policy entrepreneurs like the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) and the National Rifle Association (NRA). For example, after the law passed in Florida, "the NRA vowed to promote similar legislation throughout the nation" (Weaver 2008, 397). The following year, ten states passed similar laws, and a total of 22 states passed SYG laws by the end of 2011.

In order to better understand how SYG spreads among states, this article takes cues from existing policy diffusion research that examines cross-jurisdictional policy choices over time. Policy diffusion refers to the subsequent patterns by which policy innovations spread to other jurisdictions (Berry and Berry 2007; Gray 1973; Shipan and Volden 2006, 2008; Walker 1969).[1] These jurisdictions may consist of countries, states, cities, or counties, though interstate policy diffusion has received the most attention from scholars (Berry 1994; Berry and Baybeck 2005; Berry and Berry 1990, 2007; Boushey 2010; Gray 1973), who examine many policy areas such as education reform (Mintrom 1997; Wong and Langevin 2007), death penalty laws (Mooney and Lee 1999), Indian gaming (Boehmke and Witmer 2004), lottery systems (Berry and Berry 1990), and same sex marriage laws (Haider-Markel 2001), among others.

Explaining the Adoption of SYG Laws

Internal Determinants

Even though policy adoption can often be explained by external diffusion processes, internal determinants must also be examined because of their potential influence on policy adoption (Berry and Berry 1990, 2007).

[1]This study examines lateral adoption patterns at the state level because SYG policies are set by state governments and do not readily diffuse downward across localities.

Internal determinants refer to those socioeconomic and political factors that exist within state-level contexts, such as political ideology, levels of wealth, urbanization, industrial activity, and demographics such as race that could potentially influence the likelihood of policy adoption (Gray 1973; Walker 1969). Due to the nontechnical, noneconomic nature of SYG policies, we expect competitive marketplace pressures from neighbors to be muted and the decision to adopt to be driven largely by a unique set of internal predictors relevant to SYG policy adoption, which are discussed in this article.

In a general sense, policy entrepreneurs advocating for targeted interests have been found to influence the introduction and adoption of policies.[2] Guns are a salient issue with regard to self-defense policy, and we expect that states with a pro-gun culture or increased gun-rights' interests would be more likely to adopt SYG laws. Thus some dimension of interest group strength related to this issue would likely explain a state's adoption of SYG laws, or at least gauge the importance of guns in each state. To determine gun interest in states, we rely on the number of gun-related interest groups operating in states. Similarly, we also expect that gun ownership would likely gauge the gun culture of a state. Specifically, states with higher levels of gun ownership will have a greater likelihood of adopting SYG laws because effective self-defense is one of the primary justifications for gun ownership. Therefore, we rely on the number of gun owners (in addition to interest groups) within each state.

While policy entrepreneurs have been found to influence the introduction and adoption of policies, we also contend that crime rates would influence state policy makers—either directly or through public pressure—because they enhance the permissiveness of self-defense laws, including SYG policies. One primary argument used to justify the adoption of expansive self-defense provisions is that expanding legal protections will ultimately deter crime and reduce overall crime rates. Another argument is that in states with higher crime rates, politicians may feel pressured by their constituents to do something about high rates of gun violence and give average citizens a way to "fight back." We therefore include multiple types of state level crime rates in this study. We believe that many of these, especially gun crime rates, may have an influence on SYG adoption.

[2]One interesting corollary to the internal determinants framework involves the propensity for policy leadership or "innovativeness" (Gray 1973). Policy leaders refer to the groundbreaking early adopters of a policy innovation from which all subsequent diffusion dynamics flow. Before a policy can be emulated in laggard jurisdictions, an initial foray into policy formulation and adoption must be undertaken. Policy scholars have sought to identify universal jurisdictional characteristics that underlie a consistent likelihood of undertaking policy innovativeness, including levels of wealth, urbanization, and industrial activity that allow for "slack resource" and the "luxury of experiment" (Walker 1969, 883). Unfortunately, early empirical research into policy innovativeness was found to be mixed and inconsistent (see e.g., Gray 1973), suggesting that leadership characteristics wax and wane depending upon specific issue areas and temporal contexts.

Researchers in policy diffusion studies often hypothesize that the ideology of a government and its citizens often influences the policies that are adopted by jurisdictions (Berry and Berry 1990; Grossback, Nicholson-Crotty, and Peterson 2004; Shipan and Volden 2006). In other words, the ideological considerations of the electorate "affect which policies are ultimately enacted as well as the provisions of these policies" (Karch 2007, 4). Government officials that are oriented toward a certain ideology will adopt some policies and not others (Grossback, Nicholson-Crotty, and Peterson 2004), and the link between ideology and partisanship has been found to have an impact on policies oriented toward crime (Flanagan, McGarrell, and Lizotte 1989). For example, conservatives as opposed to liberals may be increasingly likely to adopt certain policies because conservatives value property rights (see e.g., Booth 2002), policies that secure social order, or policies that place an "emphasis on personal self-defense" (Farmer 2005, 49). While liberalism is traditionally associated with expanding civil rights in America, self-defense permissiveness expands the defense of personal property rights typically associated with conservative ideology. In other words, conservatives should be more likely to expand the legal defense of personal property as opposed to the rights of potential victims of deadly force. Additionally, conservatives are less likely to view people who kill in self-defense as violent perpetrators because they are preventing themselves from becoming crime victims. Persons using deadly force are assumed to be preventing someone else from committing crimes against themselves and society, and thus we expect to observe an increased likelihood of SYG adoption in more conservative states. For these reasons, we believe that ideology is an important component of SYG law adoption.

Racial politics, an area not traditionally associated with policy diffusion may influence the attractiveness of SYG policies due to the nature of these policies. The "social construction" of target populations is rooted in popular stereotypes that can shape policy design and adoption (Schneider and Ingram 1993, 1997). Hispanics and blacks are overwhelmingly constructed as violent and behaviorally deviant in the minds of the majority of whites (Peffley and Hurwitz 2010) and are also arrested and incarcerated at disproportionately higher rates. Additionally, these groups are perceived as similarly threatening populations from whom citizens must protect themselves, potentially with deadly force (Alexander 2010; Mauer 2006). Therefore, according to conventional "threat" accounts (see Key 1949), states with greater minority presence should be more interested in adopting SYG provisions.[3] While minority size might uniformly shape SYG laws in a permissive direction, we suspect that certain regions of the country will be more

[3]For the purposes of this study, we conceptually define "minority" as only African-Americans and Hispanics. While there are examples of racial animus being directed toward other minority groups, these other groups are not the subject of criminal stereotyping to the extent that African-Americans and Hispanics are.

susceptible to having negative minority considerations inform their policy decisions regarding the use of deadly force in self-defense. In particular, the American South has a known history of racial prejudice and minority subjugation and might respond to racial presence with expansive SYG laws with greater ferocity than states outside the South. Due to an ongoing history of overt racial animus (DuRocher 2011), constituents and policy makers in Southern states particularly should be more sensitive to racial considerations when thinking about criminality and self-defense of life and property. Therefore we expect them to be more likely to respond to negative racial constructions with active self-defense measures, such as SYG policies. In short, minority presence should animate SYG provisions to a greater degree in Southern states.

On an opposing front, a separate literature has stressed the importance of minority group electoral strength in overcoming negative policy outcomes that might be associated with the presence of sizeable minority populations (see Keech 1968). Following the federal protections promulgated in the Voting Rights Act of 1965, electoral access was opened up for minorities to more fully participate in formal democratic institutions. As a result, in the modern era, racial presence can more readily translate into electoral influence and political power and eventually enhance minority interests in both policy adoption and implementation arrangements. Avenues of minority political power involve descriptive representation arising from minority representatives seeking and winning office coupled with responsiveness from vote-maximizing white public officials. With more African-Americans and Hispanics sitting in elected office, it is presumed that minority policy agendas will receive greater attention and will ultimately have substantial effects on realized policy outcomes, such as a reduced likelihood of SYG policy adoption. Empirical studies of state and local politics generally conclude that black and Hispanic representation in government promotes more favorable policy outcomes for minorities across a variety of policy areas. These include municipal services and programs (Browning, Marshall, and Tabb 1984), police practices and oversight (Saltzstein 1989), sentencing and incarceration (Yates and Fording 2005), social welfare policy (Fording 2003), and state spending priorities (Owens 2005), among other studies of successful policy responsiveness. Given this possibility, it is quite plausible that pro-SYG forces are muted by minority electoral strength, reducing the likelihood of SYG policy adoption. In turn, minority presence should exhibit a strong, negative relationship with SYG laws as policy responsiveness predicts more restrictive use of deadly force.

The general population dynamics of a state may also influence its policy adoption behavior (Berry and Berry 1990, 1992; Boehmke and Witmer 2004; Bouche and Volden 2011; Mooney 2001). Furthermore, population may be a predictor of crime or the need for policy oriented toward crime reduction. Currently, there is a debate about the role of population and

criminality. For example, some scholars argue that densely populated areas might provide safeguard from crime, while others argue that they increase the surveillance of crime (Harries 2006). Furthermore, a larger population might reflect negative externalities produced by urbanized areas (e.g., crime, densely populated areas, and pollution, among others). These factors could make population density a factor in a state's decision to adopt a SYG law.

Last, it has been discovered in previous work that states with higher poverty rates are more likely to have SYG laws (McClellan and Tekin 2012). Higher poverty states may have more gun violence, differing political demographics than lower poverty states, or poverty may reflect corollaries to other economic factors. Because of this, we believe that higher poverty states are more likely to adopt SYG laws and therefore poverty should be included. Beyond the internal determinants discussed above, the innovation and diffusion literature suggests that external factors beyond state borders also may influence the probability of SYG policy adoption.

Policy Learning and the External Diffusion of SYG Laws

Unlike internal determinants of policy adoption mentioned previously, external theories or mechanisms are those factors that occur outside the adopting jurisdiction that are theorized to influence the diffusion of policy innovations. One of the main theories of policy diffusion, policy learning, refers to governments learning from each other when deciding on a certain policy approach (Berry and Baybeck 2005; Mooney 2001; Shipan and Volden 2008). This theory has its roots in social learning (Glick and Hays 1991), a social psychological framework that explains how information exchange occurs outside the context of individuals (Rogers 2010). This theory holds that actions occurring within a society are nonindependent of one another in a dynamic system that is continually learning from external circumstances and actors. For example, individuals within a social system make decisions, but they are based on the actions of others rather than solely on their own experiences. Put differently, individuals observe and extract patterns of behavior from others and are more apt to engage in similar behaviors. Thus an individual does not merely copy the behavior, but learns from the other individuals and adapts accordingly (Rogers 2010). This theory contends that individuals can learn from observation but direct communication does not have to occur, making it ideal to explain policy adoption among states, where there is uncertainty involving whether or not policy makers communicate with one another directly.

Social learning is often considered an important external mechanism of policy diffusion, but exact causal pathways of learning remain ambiguous. In the context of policy diffusion, this theory is conceptualized to operate within a regional or proximal spatial framework. More specifically, diffusion through

learning is theorized to operate through immediate neighboring or regional effects and through national interaction (e.g., national connectedness of state-level actors beyond neighboring proximity).[4] National forces, such as widespread mobilization among advocacy coalitions, are inherently difficult to operationalize (see Haider-Markel 2001); studies therefore often rely on a geographic proximity dimension to determine the extent to which diffusion by learning is occurring.[5]

Despite the fact that a regional effect is often considered a primary component of social learning theory, the actual primer for learning and diffusion is usually theorized to occur through one of two processes: the first being the internal cognitive processes of a policy maker and the second being informational cues. For the former, the availability heuristic accounts for the regional effect because people are more greatly influenced by events that they observe directly, and policy change that occurs "next door" has greater salience and availability to the policy maker (Weyland 2009, 49). Another similar cognitive process relies on a cognitive bias of the decision maker of accepting what is most familiar to them. Policy makers look at neighboring governments to find solutions to problems because they are the most familiar, and policy makers more readily learn from what is closer in proximity (Mooney 2001). For the latter process or informational cues, law makers generally face time constraints and they cannot complete all of the tasks required of them because their time is limited. Therefore, they must prioritize tasks and choose which policies are the most politically salient and highly visible and use those resources that provide a "maximal amount of information about policies for a minimal amount of effort" (Karch 2007, 4).

Most current theories of policy diffusion rely on informational cues rather than cognitive biases of policy makers. One information shortcut is law makers learning from each other when they are considering the adoption of a policy (Berry and Baybeck 2005; Mooney 2001). This relates to the notion that state governments serve as policy laboratories, and jurisdictions look to each other and learn from the experience of each other, which helps to ensure that governments will adopt policies that will work with their respective jurisdictions. This means that governments can have more favorable outcomes when adopting policies (Shipan and Volden 2008).

[4]For example, Haider-Markel (2001) argues that national-level forces can create an environment that facilitates the widespread adoption of morality policy. However, modeling the national environment is exceedingly difficult.

[5]Though these external dynamics have arguably remained underdeveloped theoretically and empirically (Boehmke and Witmer 2004; Karch 2007; Shipan and Volden 2006), recent research has sought a richer understanding of longitudinal diffusion processes and the specific mechanisms that drive policy diffusion (Berry and Baybeck 2005; Boehmke and Witmer 2004; Shipan and Volden 2008).

The Dynamics of Morality Policies

Despite our belief that policy learning will influence the diffusion of SYG laws, we believe that the external dynamics of SYG policies may differ from other economic or materially redistributive policies due to them being a morality-driven issue, making it empirically challenging to model conventionally. For instance, although scholars conventionally hypothesize that neighboring adoptions increase the likelihood of home-state adoption, Glick and Hays (1991) argue that relatively controversial policies like public financing of campaigns will diffuse with less comprehensiveness than uncontroversial policies like "living will" laws, which will be increasingly facilitated across jurisdictions. SYG laws arguably represent a radical version of first principles engrained in self-defense permissiveness that allow for legal use of deadly force in all situations and circumstances without traditional constraints. Thus, in the case of SYG laws, states are likely to react to these particularly controversial neighboring SYG adoptions with less comprehensive and more nuanced self-defense policies of their own. Rather than adopting comprehensive SYG policies, they may respond to neighboring SYG adoptions by adopting nuanced self-defense policies that still allow for use of deadly force but are more narrow in scope, limiting the use of deadly force to binding locations or specific criminal circumstances. We believe the conventional notion that neighboring adoption increases the likelihood of home-state adoption will not hold true for SYG laws. Neighboring SYG adoption could heighten the visibility and perceived necessity for home-state self-defense policies but not necessarily extreme iterations that are increasingly accompanied by negative press coverage and divisive controversies like Trayvon Martin. It seems quite likely that through policy learning states will eschew neighboring SYG in favor of more nuanced and modest self-defense policies of their own.

Morality policies, unlike other policy types, are technically simplistic, seek to redistribute core values or "first principles" of citizenship—as opposed to direct material or financial resources—(Mooney and Lee 1999), have a constituency that is generally well-informed on the issue, are generally salient to the public, and have higher levels of participation than other policies (Mooney 1999; Mooney and Lee 1999). An established literature on policy diffusion investigates the manner by which policy innovations diffuse longitudinally across jurisdictions (Glick and Hays 1991; Hays 1996; Mooney and Lee 1999). One area focuses on temporal diffusion patterns to determine how rapidly or slowly adoptions diffuse over time (Boushey 2010; Haider-Markel 2001; Mooney and Lee 1999) and the other examines the comprehensiveness, or how broad or narrow in scope, subsequent policy adoptions become as they diffuse across jurisdictions (see Glick and Hays 1991). Because SYG adoption occurs as a mutually exclusive binary policy outcome (either a state adopts a SYG provision or not), more nuanced

dimensions of the comprehensiveness are absent from the empirical analysis.[6]

Extant research suggests that certain types of policies will diffuse more rapidly than others. For example, morality policy—demonstrating technical simplicity and a potential for high salience among the mass constituency concerning issues such as the death penalty or marriage equality—is assumed to lessen barriers to social learning and diffuse more rapidly than technically complicated economic policies (Mooney and Lee 1999). We contend that SYG laws resemble morality policy not only due to technical simplicity but also because these policies principally seek to redistribute core values or first principles of citizenship as opposed to direct material or financial resources (Mooney and Lee 1999).

SYG policies are not overly complex or broadly redistributive materially, thus *prima facie* we would expect rapid diffusion as laggard jurisdictions adopt SYG initiatives over time. In other words, SYG laws should not follow the conventional "s-shaped" temporal diffusion pattern in which substantial time elapses before a period of rapid policy adoption occurs (see Berry and Berry 1990; Walker 1969) because theoretically a high number of states can quickly learn about and subsequently adopt morality policy alternatives. Due to their technical simplicity and potential for mass saliency, we expect self-defense policies to diffuse rapidly across states—similar to death penalty and same-sex marriage policies (Haider-Markel 2001; Mooney and Lee 1999)—in areas where there is popular support for fundamental rights to self-defense permissiveness.[7] Recent survey data shows that there is a slim majority of support nationwide for SYG laws (53 percent) that varies highly based on race, partisan affiliation, and gender.[8] During the time period examined in this study, we believe that passing expansive self-defense measures should exhibit relatively low political costs, aiding in the rapid diffusion of SYG provisions over time.[9] Figure 1 illustrates the number of states adopting SYG provisions over time.

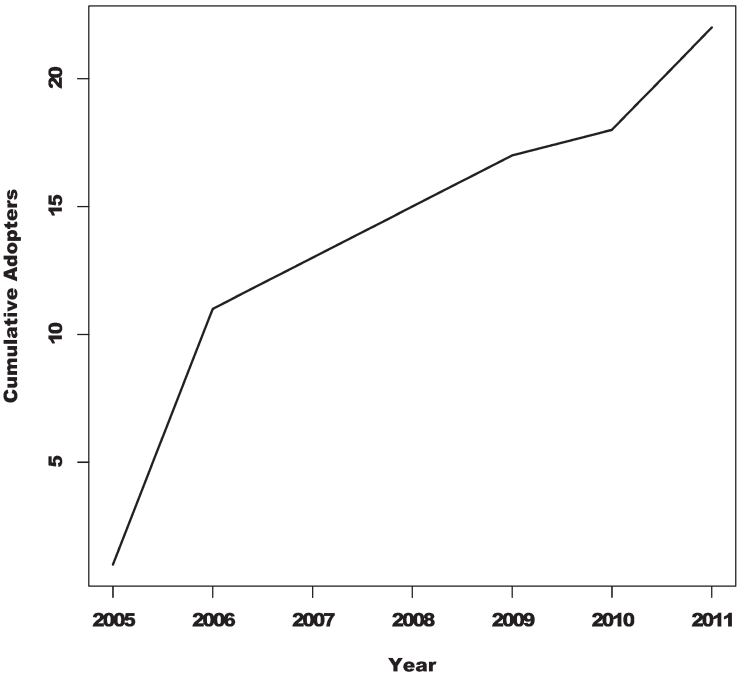
[6]Discussion of SYG laws by the media and political elites focuses almost entirely on the presence or absence of Florida-style SYG laws. While this misses potential nuances among state variation in the acceptable use of deadly force in self-defense, this is the logical starting point for research in this area as policy diffusion of SYG laws is still in its infancy.

[7]Exact measures of mass support across the states or a similar measure of public opinion is unavailable, although we do acknowledge that this would likely exhibit an influence on SYG adoption.

[8]This data is from an August 2013 Quinnipiac survey. Full details on the survey can be retrieved from http://www.quinnipiac.edu/institutes-and-centers/polling-institute/national/release-detail?ReleaseID=1931

[9]We believe the low political costs are associated with the fact that the policy was new when much of the diffusion took place. At this time period, there was little negative media attention regarding the policy.

Figure 1.
Diffusion of Stand-Your-Ground Laws, 2005–11

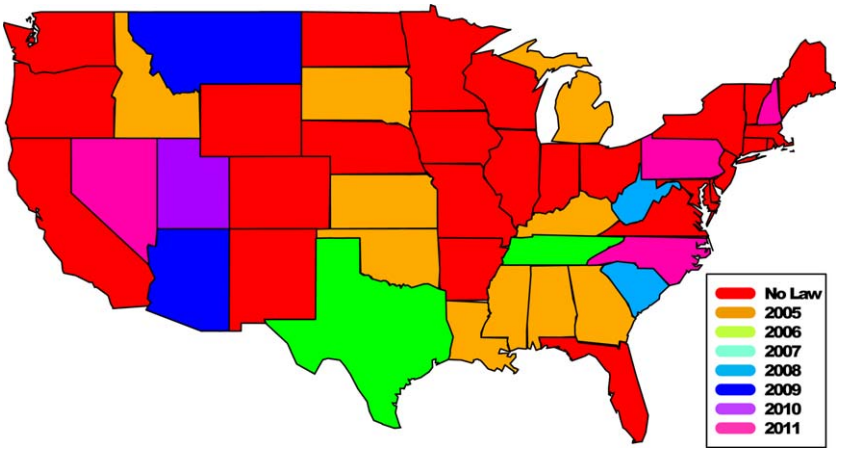


Examining Figures 1 and 2, there is evidence of rapid policy diffusion among states following the initial adoption of a SYG provision by Florida in 2005. Five years after Florida's adoption, some 21 additional states had adopted a SYG provision, resembling the rapid diffusion dynamics exhibited by other morality policies, such as same-sex marriage bans and death penalty policies (see Haider-Markel 2001; Mooney and Lee 1999; Soule 2004).[10] Figure 2 maps the temporal and spatial spread of SYG laws across the U.S. states.

Unfortunately, because the initial adoption of a SYG policy occurred less than ten years ago, we cannot observe long-term diffusion dynamics over many years. As such, we remain uncertain about how SYG policies will diffuse in the future. Since 2011, the adoption of SYG laws has appeared to taper off perhaps suggesting that extreme versions of morality policy facing widespread controversy have a limited ceiling of adoption potential. We can document an early burst of

[10]Soule (2004) reports that while one leader state, Texas, adopted a same-sex marriage ban early on in 1973, the bulk of states adopted same-sex marriage bans in rapid, explosive fashion during the 1990s. Beyond the Texas case, same-sex marriage bans mirror morality policy patterns observed in complementary diffusion research.

Figure 2.
States with Stand-Your-Ground Laws



Note: This map shows only the 48 continental U.S. states for simplicity. Neither Alaska nor Hawaii has a SYG law, but both are included in all subsequent analyses.

SYG adoptions with certitude as Figure 1 clearly illustrates, but we are hesitant that adoption patterns will continue along a path of rapidity and expansion.

Data and Methods

While there exists wide variation in state laws concerning the use of deadly force in self-defense, our theoretical focus is solely on what are commonly referred to as SYG laws. These laws are different from other laws allowing for the use of deadly force in self-defense in that they contain two specific provisions that permit greater latitude in its application. First, unlike traditional common law policies regarding self-defense, SYG laws remove the "duty to retreat" prior to the use of deadly force. In other words, even if a clear avenue of escape exists, individuals may instead choose to stand their ground rather than retreat and still have a valid affirmative defense. Second, traditional common law policies, such as the Castle Doctrine, limited the use of deadly force to one's home, place of business, or other limited locations. Conversely, SYG laws allow for the use of deadly force "in any place one has a legal right to be."

Our measure of *SYG Adoption* is a dichotomous indicator of whether a given state adopts a SYG policy in a given year. We code this variable 1 if a state adopts the policy and 0 otherwise. As Figures 1 and 2 illustrate, as of

2012, 22 states had passed SYG laws making this policy quite widespread given that its genesis was only seven years prior.

Based on our theoretical discussion above, we expect key internal determinants to have an impact in determining a state's SYG adoption; thus we use several covariates to capture internal influences. The first set of independent variables captures the influence of gun rights interests groups and the overall "gun culture" in a state. First, to capture the level of organized gun rights *Interest Groups* in the state, we rely on a count of the number of interest groups pertaining to guns present within each state as indicated by Project Vote Smart. Project Vote Smart lists each interest group that is present within each state on various issues, including guns. Next, while direct measures of gun ownership are difficult to obtain, we utilize data on background checks to serve as a reasonable proxy. The FBI's National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) provides a system through which all background checks made prior to the purchase of a firearm are conducted. While there are some types of purchases exempt from background checks, the vast majority of formal gun purchases go through this system. This NICS data provides a good proxy of the number of guns purchased. To generate our measure, we utilize the FBI's "Total NICS Firearm Background Checks" reports for the years 2005–11, which give the monthly total of background checks for each state in a given year. Our measure of *Gun Purchases* is the natural logarithm of the total annual number of background checks for each state each year.[11]

In addition to gun ownership, we also believe that crime rates might influence state policy makers—either directly or through public pressure—to enhance the permissiveness of self-defense laws. One primary argument underlying expansive self-defense provisions is that expanding legal protections will ultimately deter crime and reduce overall crime rates. Specifically, it seems that the level of *Gun Violence* in a state should have an impact, as citizens who feel most threatened by the potential to become victims of gun violence might be more likely to push their elected officials to give them a chance to defend themselves against the criminal element. For our measure of gun violence in each state, we rely on data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics on the number of firearm incidents (both fatal and non fatal) involving guns in each U.S. state for each year in the 2005–11 time frame.[12]

[11]As an alternative indicator of variation in the "gun culture" of each state, we created an index of other gun laws (open carry, limits on magazine capacity, limits on assault weapons, permit requirements for purchase, and mandatory firearm registration laws). All models were reestimated using this index in place of our *Gun Purchases* measure, and model estimates were largely unaffected.

[12]We also estimate alternative models with three other indicators of crime that seem theoretically relevant to public desire for more permissive self-defense laws (all are derived from data from the FBI's annual crime statistics reports): motor vehicle crime rates, violent crime rates, and property crime rates. The models utilizing these alternative indicators of crime yield estimates with no significant changes from those presented below.

While liberalism is traditionally associated with expanding civil rights in America, self-defense permissiveness expands the defense of personal property rights typically associated with conservative ideology (Booth 2002). In other words, conservatives should be more likely to expand the legal defense of personal property as opposed to the rights of potential victims of deadly force (Farmer 2005). Additionally, conservatives are less likely to view people who kill in self-defense as violent perpetrators because they are preventing themselves from becoming crime victims. The person using deadly force is assumed to be preventing someone else from committing crimes against themselves and society, and thus we expect to observe an increased likelihood of SYG adoption in more conservative states. We utilize the updated Berry and others' (2010) measures of *Citizen Ideology* and *Elite Ideology* to account for variation across states.

Additionally, we include two sets of covariates to capture the effects of racial pressures and socioeconomic effects. To account for the impact of the racial makeup of a state, we include measures of the *Percent Minority Population* that combines annual Census estimates of a state's African-American and Hispanic populations. To capture potential socioeconomic effects, we include the annual measure of *Percent in Poverty* from Census data for each state.

Finally, to estimate the impact of policy learning on the time until an adoption of a SYG law, we must consider how to model learning empirically. Looking specifically at self-defense policies, it was found that neighboring proximity to previous adopters increased the likelihood of "shall issue" concealed weapons and permits (Tucker, Stoutenborough, and Beverlin 2012). Therefore, we expect in a general sense that geography may also impact the probability of SYG adoption. However, policy diffusion in itself is more than just geographic proximity (Shipan and Volden 2012). Looking at previous research, scholars have relied on multiple measures of policy learning, including the average number of local government innovation adoptions within a state (Hsieh 2011), the sum of all policy-adopting counties' populations within a state divided by the population of the state (Bouche and Volden 2011), the total lagged number of neighboring policy adopting counties (Mitchell and Stewart 2014), the sum of all the of cities' populations adopting a policy divided by the state population, the average proportion of neighboring adopters (Mooney 2001), and the most common measure, the number of neighboring states that have adopted a policy previously (Berry and Berry 1990, 1992; Makse and Volden 2011; Pierce and Miller 2004). Given the complexity of SYG laws and the fact that they are a morality policy, we estimate a series of models to capture the full dynamic of policy learning, rather than just one estimate.

First, to test policy learning the conventional way, we rely on the total number of neighbors that have adopted a SYG policy. We measure *Neighboring Adopters* as a raw count of the number of neighboring states that had adopted

a SYG policy in the prior calendar year or earlier.[13] Next, due to the unique dynamics of morality policy, we believe that states are unlikely to merely "learn" the policy of other states. A sizeable literature in diffusion explains why some states adopted policies more readily than others (Walker 1969) and provided partial insight into the speed at which diffusion occurred (Boushey 2010, 2012; Makse and Volden 2011; Nicholson-Crotty 2009; Savage 1985). Scholars often posit that governments will not readily copy the policies of other governments equally. Policy makers will look more toward governments that are considered leaders (Walker 1969), governments that are larger (Shipan and Volden 2008), or in the case of policy learning, governments that are the most ideologically similar (Grossback, Nicholson-Crotty, and Peterson 2004). According to the latter, state policy makers will be more likely to adopt the policies of other states with similar levels of "ideological congruence" (Grossback, Nicholson-Crotty, and Peterson 2004, 526). Policy makers do not have complete information regarding a policy, so they take cues from their most similar neighbors to see if the policy is a good fit for their respective jurisdiction. This idea has been examined in the context of learning (see e.g., Grossback, Nicholson-Crotty, and Peterson 2004), and we believe that for SYG provisions, learning is more likely between states that share similar ideologies, since SYG provisions are largely an ideologically driven policy.[14] Policy makers will learn as other proximal states increasingly begin to adopt but will likely imitate the policy only if it is adopted by an ideologically similar state. Thus we test learning by utilizing a dichotomous indicator to capture whether a state has a *Most Similar Neighbor Adopter* that has adopted the policy, set to 1 if the state's most ideologically similar neighbor had adopted a SYG policy in the prior calendar year or earlier and 0 otherwise. We define most ideologically similar neighbor as the neighboring state with the minimum absolute difference in elite ideology scores (Berry *et al.* 2010).[15]

As our interest is in the adoption of SYG laws across states over time, we utilize event history analysis (EHA) to model the diffusion of SYG policies. Since the Berry and Berry (1990) study, scholars have regularly used EHA to model policy diffusion (see e.g., Mintrom 1997; Mooney and Lee 1995; Shipan and Volden 2006). Foundational studies introduced the basic concepts of policy

[13]We also reestimate this model using the proportion of neighboring adopters in place of the raw count. Additionally, we reestimate the model with an alternative measure of this variable that captures the number of neighboring states that had adopted SYG provisions *two or more years earlier* to account for the possibility that policy learning requires time for states to see the impact of a policy in their neighboring states. Neither of these alternative specifications significantly affect our estimates in any way.

[14]This is because SYG laws have been pushed by conservative interest groups, such as the NRA.

[15]As with the learning model, we reestimate this model with an alternative measure of *Most Similar Neighbor Adopter* that captures whether a state's most similar neighbor had adopted *two or more years earlier* to account for the possibility that policy learning requires time for states to see the impact of a policy. This alternative specification does not significantly impact our estimates in any way.

innovation and diffusion, and set broad theoretical parameters while undertaking limited empirical examinations (Gray 1973; Walker 1969). Research examining state lottery adoptions (Berry and Berry 1990) brought critical theoretical and methodological advancement to innovation and diffusion studies. In particular, the authors introduced EHA to empirically gauge longitudinal policy adoption patterns and employed a well-developed methodological framework of "internal determinant" unique to each state, combined with "external determinants" that include outside economic pressures or policy signals from neighboring states or national actors (Berry and Berry 1990).

To estimate the effect of these covariates on the time until adoption of SYG provisions, we utilize a Weibull Model. While a variety of EHA models exist, a Weibull is most appropriate due to our theoretical assumption that the baseline hazard rate is likely to increase over time.[16] Since, to this point, no state has repealed a SYG law after its passage, there is no chance for repeated events, and all states are dropped from the data beginning the year after adoption. This yields an N of 240 state-years over the 2005–11 time period.[17]

Results and Discussion

Table 1 presents the results of our baseline models.[18] Learning Model A represents our traditional learning measure, as the total number of neighboring states that adopted a SYG policy in the previous year. Learning Model B shows the results of our most similar ideological neighbor measure. Looking first at the impact of internal determinants on the time until adoption of SYG laws, we see that the results are quite consistent across the two model specifications. However, it is important to note that while these coefficient estimates can be used to interpret statistical significance and the directionality of effects, they are not directly interpretable in terms of magnitude.[19] Some of the most

[16]Support for our assumption about the increase in the baseline hazard rate over time was confirmed through the examination of Kaplan-Meier graphs. Moreover, examination of Schoenfeld Residuals shows clear violation of the proportional hazards assumption, eliminating the semiparametic Cox Proportional Hazards Model as a viable alternative.

[17]Descriptive statistics for all variables can be found in the Appendix. Examination of the variables reveals no problematic collinearity issues.

[18]The statistically significant for both models shows that our models fit the data significantly better than a null model and the estimates confirm our selection of the Weibull distribution as appropriate.

[19]To interpret the substantive effects of variables in these models we rely on hazard ratios and graphs. Hazard ratios allow for a comparison of the probability of an event (in this case adoption of a SYG policy) with some treatment and without that treatment. They are useful for interpreting changes in the probability of an event occurring within a given time period for observations receiving a treatment. We interpret hazard ratios as a change in risk, where the change is equal to, and where negative values represent a proportional reduction and positive value represent a proportional increase in the likelihood of experiencing the event within a given time frame. For a more detailed explanation, see Box-Steffensmeier and Jones (2004).

Table 1. Determinants of Time until Adoption of SYG Laws: Baseline Models

	Learning Model A		Learning Model B	
	Coefficient (Standard Error)	p-Value	Coefficient (Standard Error)	p-Value
Citizen Ideology	−.017 (.024)	.49	−.018 (.025)	.46
Elite Ideology	−.033 (.012)	.01	−.036 (.012)	.00
% Minority	−4.696 (3.299)	.15	−4.099 (3.253)	.21
% in Poverty	.278 (.132)	.04	.283 (.135)	.04
Population Density	−.001 (.004)	.75	−.001 (.004)	.83
Gun Crime	.133 (.161)	.41	.114 (.160)	.48
Interest Groups	−.668 (.328)	.04	−.684 (.333)	.04
Gun Purchases (log)	.771 (.410)	.06	.765 (.416)	.07
Neighboring Adopter	−.255 (.247)	.30	— —	—
Similar Neighbor Adopter	— —	—	−.275 (.647)	.67
Constant	−14.102 (4.728)	.00	−13.755 (4.701)	.00
P	2.733 (.643)		2.503 (.605)	
N	240		240	
χ^2	47.169		46.188	
Log-Likelihood	−18.808		−19.297	

striking findings from these models relate to what appears to *not* impact the adoption of SYG laws. First, both of our Learning Models show that the time until adoption of SYG laws is found to have minimal relationship to political ideology. The estimates for *Elite Ideology* are in line with our theoretical expectations, as the estimates show more liberal states are less likely to adopt a SYG law. However, the size of the effect is substantively minimal. Hazard ratio estimates for Elite Ideology are 0.967 and 0.964 for the Learning Models A and B, respectively. The nominal magnitude of this substantive effect, combined with the insignificant finding for *Citizen Ideology*, provides evidence that the adoption of SYG laws is not being directly driven by ideology either.

Equally striking, *Percent Minority Population* also appears to exert no significant influence on SYG policy adoption. While this is clearly in contrast to

Table 2. Determinants of Time until Adoption of SYG Laws: Conditional Race Models

	Learning Model A		Learning Model B	
	Coefficient (Standard Error)	p-Value	Coefficient (Standard Error)	p-Value
Citizen Ideology	−.026 (.026)	.32	−.029 (.027)	.28
Elite Ideology	−.042 (.014)	.00	−.047 (.015)	.00
% Minority	−20.426 (8.389)	.01	−17.364 (8.048)	.03
% in Poverty	.384 (.162)	.02	.373 (.160)	.02
Population Density	.001 (.005)	.87	.001 (.005)	.76
Gun Crime	.302 (.187)	.11	.267 (.190)	.16
Interest Groups	−.160 (.371)	.67	−.318 (.384)	.41
Gun Purchase (log)	.731 (.437)	.09	.795 (.448)	.08
South	−2.171 (1.562)	.16	−2.321 (1.536)	.13
South*% Minority	15.387 (7.066)	.03	14.036 (7.058)	.05
Neighboring Adopter	−.601 (.317)	.06	— —	—
Similar Neighbor Adopter	— —	—	−.927 (.767)	.23
Constant	−15.935 (5.441)	.00	−15.479 (5.266)	.00
P	3.172 (.788)		2.717 (.699)	
N	240		240	
χ^2	53.953		51.388	
Log-Likelihood	−18.188		−19.048	

our racial effects hypothesis, this could simply be an artifact of regional differences in the impact of race on policy adoption. Therefore, in line with our hypothesis regarding the conditional impact of racial effects, we reestimate our Learning Models, adding a dummy variable to account for the states in the *South* and a multiplicative term *South*%Minority*,[20] the results are presented

[20]We define the South as the states of the former Confederacy along with Kentucky, Missouri, Oklahoma, and West Virginia. Models including alternative measures of the South (the former

in Table 2. Finally, neither *Gun Crime* rates nor *Population Density* appears to have a statistically significant effect either.

In contrast, a state's "gun culture" and poverty rates appear to be the key significant drivers of SYG policy adoption based on the estimates from our baseline model. First, states with higher annual rates of *Gun Purchases* are significantly more likely to adopt a SYG policy in a given year. Hazard ratio estimates for both models reveal the probability of a state adopting a SYG policy more than doubles in a given time period if they did not adopt in the prior time period. Second, states with higher rates of poverty see a substantial increase (approximately 38 percent in both models) in the likelihood of adopting a SYG policy. Finally, estimates for *Interest Groups* presence achieved statistical significant at marginal levels. However, it appears to impact the adoption of SYG policy in a manner opposite our theoretical expectations as it *decreases* the likelihood of adoption of SYG policy.

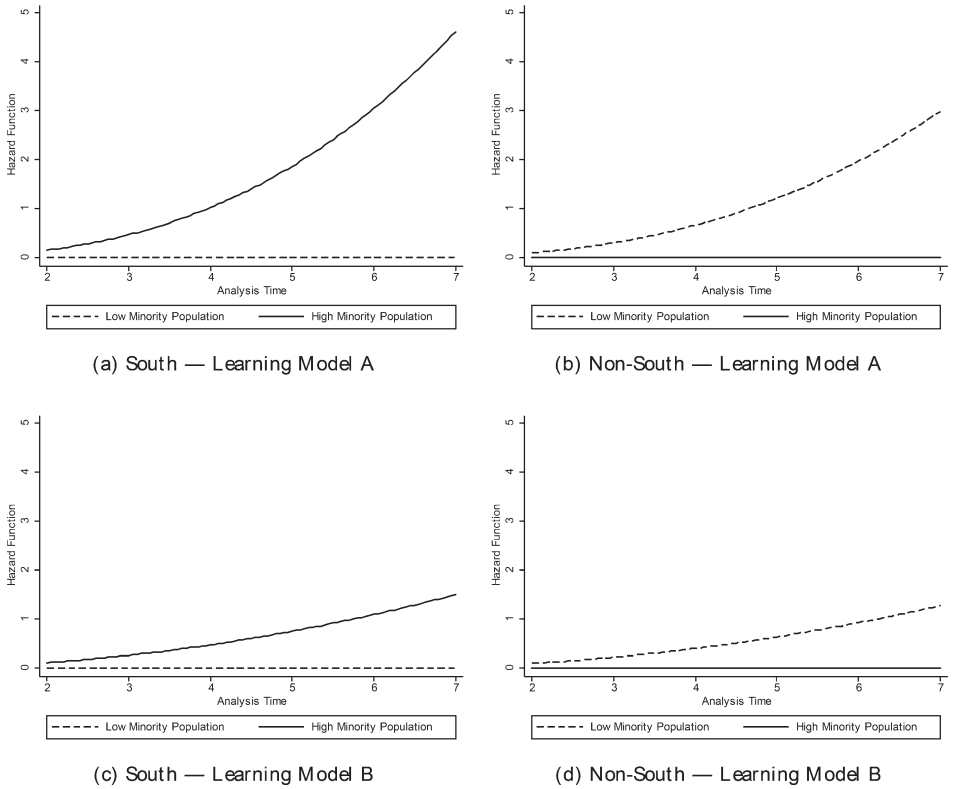
Looking at the results for our Conditional Race Models in Table 2, we see a good deal of consistency with our Baseline Models.[21] First, our ideology variables continue to show the same lack of substantive impact. *Elite Ideology* maintains a statistically significant—but substantively minuscule—relationship with the adoption of SYG policy, and *Citizen Ideology* remains statistically insignificant. Additionally, our estimates for the impact of *Population Density* remain statistically insignificant, while the impact of poverty rates on the likelihood of adoption SYG policies again appear to be strong and positive. Finally, the impact of a state's "gun culture" is again shown to have a strong impact on the likelihood of adoption. Estimated hazard ratios again reveal substantive estimates that a state's likelihood of SYG adoption doubles in a given time period if it did not adopt in the prior time period when the rate of *Gun Purchases* increases. Moreover, while the estimates for *Interest Groups* are no longer statistically significant, this may actually strengthen support for our theoretical expectation of a positive impact of the overall "gun culture" in a state on SYG adoption given that the counterintuitive finding in the Baseline Model may have simply been an artifact of an improper model specification.

The most striking difference between our Baseline Models and Conditional Race Models relates to the impact of minority population rates on SYG adoption. Estimates for our Conditional Race Models show the hypothesized regional impact of minority population on the adoption of SYG policies. These results confirm that the muted impact of the *Percent Minority Population* in the Baseline Model was a by-product of the model's failure to account for regional variation. Once this is taken into account, racial effects have a strong

Confederate states only or the states classified in the South region by the U.S. Census Bureau) yield equivalent results.

[21]Also, as with the Baseline Models, the statistically significant for both models shows that our models fit the data significantly better than a null model and the estimates confirm our selection of the Weibull distribution as appropriate.

Figure 3.
Hazard Curves for Low versus High Minority Populations



substantive impact on the adoption of SYG provisions. Consistent with our theoretical expectations, these effects manifest in complicated and competing ways. In the South, larger minority populations have a dramatic positive influence on the likelihood of SYG adoption. Conversely, outside of the South, the opposite effect appears, as greater minority presence is associated with a reduced likelihood of adopting a SYG provision over time.

This racialized distinction is illustrated concisely in Figure 3 for both the models. The subfigures illustrate the opposing effect of larger minority populations in the South (Figures 3a and 3c) and the non-South (Figures 3b and 3d). In the South there is an extremely strong increase—although somewhat less pronounced in the Learning Model B—in the hazard function over time in states with high minority populations. Conversely, in Southern states with low minority populations, there is a flat (and near 0) hazard curve. Outside the South, the opposing racial effect is visible—although again less pronounced in the Learning Model B. In states with low minority populations, the hazard function increases over time, while it is flat (and near 0) in states with high

minority populations. This finding is largely consistent with our expectations and existing work on the negative social construction of African-Americans and Hispanics as potential criminals (Peffley and Hurwitz 2010) from whom society needs active protection in the form of SYG provisions. However, this racial connection appears to hold only in the South. In other states, an inverse connection could be evidence of policy responsiveness directed toward minority constituencies, who are disproportionately arrested and incarcerated and could feasibly feel the brunt of SYG punitive policy consequences. These populations, perhaps through avenues of minority political power (Keech 1968) or through interest groups working in their behalf, may be successfully fighting the adoption of SYG policies in states where they comprise a significant portion of the electorate.

Finally, with respect to the impact of external determinants, our findings are quite revealing. In contrast to the Baseline Model, our Conditional Race Learning Model shows that having more *Neighboring Adopters* leads to a decreased likelihood in the adoption of SYG laws. While this finding runs counter to prior work on the diffusion of many other policies across states, this is consistent with our expectation due to several unique features of SYG policy. First, we believe that the atypical learning pattern is associated with the fact that SYG policies are morally driven as opposed to other types of policies. Responses by neighboring states to a state's adoption of policies such as lotteries, taxes, and environmental issues are much easier because the spillover effects are more certain. However, with morality policy, the external spillover effects are not obvious, and there is uncertainty regarding how states learn from one another. Since the effect of learning may be different, when a state adopts a SYG law, neighboring states, rather than learning and adopting the policy contemporaneously, are waiting for feedback from the initial adopter as they do for more tangible policies. More specifically, policy makers may consider the electoral repercussions, media responses, and citizen feedback before deciding on whether to adopt the policy themselves. Other possibilities could be that states may be wary of the bad publicity that may be associated with these laws. These laws may be more publicized in the neighboring states since they often share media markets; thus policy makers are more cognizant of these laws and the negative attention they may receive. Second, it could be that state policy makers may take longer to learn from other states. If a particular state adopts a policy, other neighboring states could be more reluctant to adopt and choose to wait until the "policy plays out" in the neighboring state before adopting it. This could be because of the potential negative externalities of the policy or the political repercussions involved. Finally, because SYG tends to be an extreme and controversial version of self-defense policy, it could be that states "learn" to stay away from overly comprehensive and extreme policies. Maybe these are the states with some self-defense permissiveness but not an extreme version like SYG.

Turning to Conditional Learning Model B, the estimates again reveal a null effect for the influence of *Most Similar Neighbor Adopter*, consistent with the Baseline Model. This means that the likelihood of adopting a SYG law does not follow the mechanisms of other policies where there tends to be imitation effects. This is likely due to the potential implications of the policy or the lack of the loss of benefits or capital for the adopting state. Since the adoption of a SYG law would not impact neighboring states (unlike policies such as state lotteries, tax policies, or smoking regulations), states would not necessarily want to imitate it, since there is nothing that prompts immediate response.

Conclusion

This study represents an examination of the innovation and diffusion of SYG policies in U.S. states. Several preliminary conclusions can be marshaled from the evidence. First, it appears that SYG policy resembles morality policy dynamics in that policy simplicity and the salient focus on "first principles" of citizenship has presumably lead to rapid adoption across 22 states since the year 2005. This evidence comports with existing studies on death penalty adoptions and same-sex marriage bans, both of which demonstrated rapid diffusion. Second, a confluence of internal determinants are found to influence the likelihood of policy adoption across states, oftentimes in complicated and unexpected ways. For instance, variables we expected to have an impact such as interest group presence, gun purchase rates, or ideology have either minimal or no impact. Other variables such as poverty, gun violence, and race did have an impact. Interestingly, minority presence is found to be the primary motivator of SYG policy adoptions. Among Southern states, the presence of African-American and Hispanic populations is found to significantly increase the likelihood of SYG adoption; whereas, outside of the South, minority presence exhibits a substantial negative association. The effect observed in the South is consistent with an existing body of research that demonstrates the enduring racial underpinnings of Southern politics (Key 1949; Knuckey 2006) and uncovers potent racial dimensions of punitive policy outcomes, such as restrictive welfare policy measures (see Soss *et al.* 2001). This suggests that policy makers, especially in Southern states, are potentially responding to racially symbolic notions of criminality and the perceived need for social control, rather than some other determinants, such as criminal activity and gun purchase rates.

Last, the negative effect of learning is rather unexpectedly found to substantially reduce the likelihood of home state SYG adoption, suggesting that any policy learning from those within close proximity has diminishing policy effects. That is, states are unlikely to adopt a SYG provision when neighboring states have already done so. It remains unclear why the presence of neighboring adopters diminishes the likelihood of home state adoption, but future researchers must pay heed to the complicated external social learning dynamics underlying SYG innovation and diffusion. Furthermore, how policy learning is

modeled must be given greater consideration. We used multiple measures of learning and only some yielded significant results. Future work should not only be concerned with unraveling mechanisms of diffusion, but also mechanisms of specific theories, such as policy learning.

Despite these findings, this study had several limitations. First, the time frame that we studied does not provide long-term variation. To truly unravel the diffusion process, long-term temporal studies are needed—SYG laws are relatively new (2005–12). Furthermore, less than half of U.S. states have adopted SYG laws as of 2012. This presents a small sample of those that have adopted relative to those that have not. Second, the variables we use are by no means exhaustive. Several other variables such as a better measure of interest groups, variables that measure the political context within states, and variables that measure the legislative dynamics of each state would be beneficial. Finally, qualitative or more detailed studies of each state should be included (e.g., an examination of state legislatures that may have voted against these bills). Future studies should examine the context of each state and its decision to adopt a SYG law. Finally, future research efforts could examine the influence of another outside group such as ALEC. ALEC is a nonprofit organization that was founded in 1973. This organization advocates for issues such as free markets, separation of federal and state governments, and limiting government. ALEC is a conservative consortium of state legislators operating throughout the United States and is funded by multiple corporate interests. In fact, they create model bills that can be used in multiple states simultaneously (McIntire 2012). This group was seen as very important in passing SYG laws in many states, although it backed away from its support following the Trayvon Martin case (Lichtblau 2012). Furthermore, they advocate for multiple other policies, but diffusion studies largely overlook the influence of ALEC. As a result, future work could look at whether states with more members of ALEC in their legislatures were more likely to pass SYG laws and other ALEC sponsored bills.

Appendix: Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Citizen Ideology	57.933	15.708	20.082	94.142
Elite Ideology	55.153	22.608	.000	91.035
% Minority	.198	.125	.020	.491
% in Poverty	.127	.029	.071	.215
Population Density	180.303	222.244	1.003	1012.814
Gun Violence	4.239	2.242	.800	12.400
Interest Groups	3.063	1.036	1.000	5.000
Gun Purchases (log)	11.746	1.068	8.783	13.716
South	.203	.403	.000	1.000
% Minority*South	.051	.111	.000	.483
Neighboring Adopters	.701	1.120	.000	5.000
Similar Neighbor Adopter	.122	.327	.000	1.000

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