As Advocates Celebrate a ‘Renaissance,’ Could Psychedelics Become the Next Cannabis?

When Oregon voters decided this week to legalize psychedelic drugs—the first state in the country to do so—it brought the conversation around magic mushrooms and their psychoactive brethren into the mainstream.

With new national attention comes a logical question: Are hallucinogens queuing up to be the new cannabis?

Advocates acknowledge the short mental hop between both drug categories. But on a deeper level, they hasten to add that there are few direct parallels between the fast-growing legal cannabis industry, which added five states to the market on Tuesday, and the nascent psilocybin movement. For instance, shrooms will not be sold at the neighborhood dispensary, at least not in the foreseeable future.

Still, the results in Oregon may be a harbinger of things to come. Americans increasingly indicate that they’re open to formerly verboten drugs as remedies. And as this recent election cycle proves, they’re voting in significant numbers for decriminalization.

“We’re living through a massive cultural shift,” said David Bronner, CEO of Dr. Bronner’s Magic Soap and a longtime activist whose company donated more than $5 million for measures on drug reform and ending cannabis prohibition during the 2020 election cycle. “And there’s definitely a psychedelic

renaissance.”

> *We’re living through a massive cultural shift, and there’s definitely a psychedelic renaissance.*
>
> *David Bronner, CEO, Dr. Bronner’s*

Dr. Bronner’s, via its “Heal Soul!” campaign and other efforts, threw its

financial and marketing resources behind two Oregon ballot initiatives. One re

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, and methamphetamine. The measure also included funding for drug-addiction

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The family-owned brand is celebrating a number of electoral wins, including decriminalizing psychedelics in Washington, D.C. Bronner described the brands efforts as “blazing a path for more compassionate and rational drug policy—it’s really exciting to see this happen.”

Psychedelics have spent little time in the spotlight outside of the 1960s or the last jam-band tour. But in recent years, this class of drugs has become increasingly accepted as treatment options for PTSD, depression, anxiety and other conditions. Clinical trials at leading medical institutions like Johns Hopkins, NYU and UCLA have added credibility to a formerly stigmatized category.

Business and pop culture have added to the new appeal of psychedelics. Michael Pollan’s New York Times bestseller, How to Change Your Mind, reintroduced hallucinogens as a provider of wellness and positive driver of mental health. Separately, investment in the space by billionaires like Silicon Valley’s Peter Thiel has contributed to greater acceptance of these drugs as well.

Bronner called psychedelics “life-saving medicine that the world needs now, especially highly traumatized populations like veterans, first responders and marginalized communities.”

Advocates say that while cannabis is a different animal, its adoption has laid some groundwork for a psilocybin push. Weed, after all, has seen its legal market expand by leaps and bounds in less than a decade. (The first recreational markets opened in Colorado and Washington in 2012; with Tuesday’s results, there are now 15 states that have approved adult-use

sales).

> *It’s not over-the-counter like alcohol, and there are no provisions for dropping in and taking the product with you.*
>
> *Noah Potter, Hoban Law Group*

Oregon’s Measure 109, which legalizes psychedelic drugs, passed with about

56% of the vote. It’s a medical program, overseen by the Oregon Health Authority,

that will be put into place after a two-year development period. Psychedelics li

kemushrooms and MDMA will be available only at state-licensed facilities and unde

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