



Studies in the News

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Special Edition

This issue of Studies in the News is presented by UC Center Sacramento, featuring reports written by researchers from the University of California.

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

Public Safety Realignment in Twelve California Counties. By Susan Turner, et al. RAND, in collaboration with the UCI Center for Evidence-based Corrections. 2015. 79 p.

http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR800/RR872/RAND_RR872.pdf

"Realignment gives counties a great deal of flexibility in how they treat these offenders and allows them to choose alternatives to custody for realignment offenders.... As time has passed since realignment began in October 2011, several studies have evaluated various aspects of the planning and implementation of

realignment. This study focused on the flexibility that the state granted counties in implementing realignment. In particular, we wanted to determine whether counties essentially continued and expanded what they were already doing in county corrections or whether they used realignment as an opportunity to change from ‘business as usual.’”

ECONOMY

“How Elastic are Preferences for Redistribution? Evidence from Randomized Survey Experiments.” By Ilyana Kuziemko, et al. *American Economic Review*, vol. 105, no. 4 (2015) pp. 1478-1508.

<http://eml.berkeley.edu/~saez/kuziemko-norton-saez-stantchevaAER15.pdf>

“We analyze randomized online survey experiments providing interactive, customized information on US income inequality, the link between top income tax rates and economic growth, and the estate tax. The treatment [information on inequality and tax policy] has large effects on views about inequality but only slightly moves tax and transfer policy preferences. An exception is the estate tax—informing respondents of the small share of decedents who pay it doubles support for it. The small effects for all other policies can be partially explained by respondents’ low trust in government and a disconnect between concerns about social issues and the public policies meant to address them.”

EDUCATION

Boosting Educational Attainment and Adult Earnings: Does School Spending Matter After All? By Rucker C. Johnson, et al. UC Berkeley, Goldman School of Public Policy. July 2015. 7 p.

<https://gspp.berkeley.edu/research/featured/boosting-educational-attainment-and-adult-earnings>

This article discusses the relationship between school spending and achievement gaps between students from varying backgrounds. “Per-pupil spending can vary drastically between school districts, with affluent suburban districts often outspending their neighbors by significant margins.” Yet, existing research attempting to draw a link between school spending and student achievement has not mirrored intuitive assumptions about less spending as a primary culprit for lower achievement. By addressing limitations in existing designs used to analyze this question, the authors find that “increasing per-pupil spending yields large improvements in educational attainment, wages, and family income, and reductions in the annual incidence of adult poverty for children from low-income families.”

EMPLOYMENT

Low-wage Work Uncertainty Often Traps Low-wage Workers. By Victoria Smith, et al. UC Davis Center for Poverty Research. 2015. 2 p.

http://poverty.ucdavis.edu/sites/main/files/file-attachments/smith_cpr_policy_brief_employability.pdf

“Some policy analysts, policymakers and scholars argue that low-wage workers should ‘work their way out of poverty’ by acquiring the human capital that would enable them to leave poverty-level jobs. A new study interviewing 25 low wage immigrant workers ... finds that while many of these low-wage workers recognize the need to enhance their skills and educational credentials, the conditions of their employment trap them, making it nearly impossible to escape.”

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

“Patterns of Freshwater Species Richness, Endemism, and Vulnerability in California.”

By Jeanette Howard, et al. *PloS ONE*, vol. 10, no. 7 (July 6, 2015) 16 p.

<https://watershed.ucdavis.edu/files/biblio/journal.pone.0130710.pdf>

“By mapping freshwater species hotspots we show locations that represent the top priority for conservation action in the state. This study identifies opportunities to fill gaps in the evaluation of conservation status for freshwater taxa in California, to address the lack of occurrence information for nearly 40% of freshwater taxa and nearly 40% of watersheds in the state, and to implement adequate protections for freshwater taxa where they are currently lacking.”

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

“Electoral Institutions, Gender Stereotypes, and Women’s Local Representation.” By Melody Crowder-Meyer, et. al. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, vol. 3, no. 2 (2015) 19 p.

http://www.researchgate.net/publication/277361333_Electoral_institutions_gender_stereotypes_and_women's_local_representation

“We use a decade of candidate-level data from a single, large state (California) to show that women are significantly advantaged in district (versus at-large) elections and in city clerkships compared with mayoralties and council positions. We suggest that this may be the result of the competitiveness of elections, the status of the offices, and gender stereotypes. We offer support for this argument by analyzing the proportion of women elected to city councils and the probability of victory for different types of offices including city council, mayor, and city clerk.”

HEALTH

“Effect of the Healthy Schools Program on Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity in California Schools, 2006–2012.” By Kristine A. Madsen, et al. *Preventing Chronic Disease*, vol. 12 (May 21, 2015). 6 p.

http://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2015/15_0020.htm

“With more than 95% of young Americans aged 5 to 17 years enrolled in schools, educational institutions have the potential to reach virtually all children, including those at highest risk of obesity. The CDC’s evidence-based School Health Guidelines emphasize changing school policy to improve the nutrition and physical activity environments as the most effective means to promote healthier schools. Recent cluster-randomized trials of school-based interventions aligned with the CDC Guidelines have demonstrated reductions in children’s weight. HSP [Healthy Schools Program] appears to be an important means of supporting schools in reducing obesity.”

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

“Aligning Natural Resource Conservation and Flood Hazard Mitigation in California.” By Calil Juliano, et al. *PLoS One*, vol. 10, no. 7 (July 22, 2015) 14 p.

<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0132651>

“The National Flood Insurance Program paid out more than \$38 billion in claims since its inception in 1968, more than a third of which has gone to the one percent of policies that experienced multiple losses and are classified as ‘repetitive loss.’ This study demonstrates that flood losses could be mitigated through action that meets both flood risk reduction and conservation objectives.... We demonstrate that

government funded buyouts followed by restoration of targeted lands can support social, environmental, and economic objectives: reduction of flood exposure, restoration of natural resources, and efficient use of limited governmental funds.”

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