



Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

August 2, 2017

Contents this week:

CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

Racial bias starts when charges are filed, not at sentencing

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

Report: Latinos contribute \$2.13 trillion to U.S. GDP

ECONOMY

The role corporate political influence plays in undermining competition

EDUCATION

Looking to Louisiana as a model for education reform

EMPLOYMENT

Tailoring job assistance programs to those who are out-of-work

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

9 billion tons of plastic produced since 1950—7 billion of it is garbage

HEALTH

Opioid prescription rates remain high in certain counties, despite overall decline
1 in 3 Medicare Part D beneficiaries received opioid prescriptions in 2016

HUMAN SERVICES

Early connection with children's programs can lead poor to success as adults

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Task force recommends ways to combat healthcare cybersecurity threats

CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

Examining Racial Disparities in Criminal Case Outcomes among Indigent Defendants in San Francisco. By Emily Owens, et al. Quattrone Center for the Fair Administration of Justice. July, 2017. 134 p.

<http://sfpublicdefender.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2017/06/quattronefullreport.pdf>

"In San Francisco, black people are held in jail longer than whites, their cases take longer, they are convicted of more serious crimes and they serve longer sentences. ... The root of this disparity is not prosecutors or the courts. Instead, the study found it is mostly in the hands of police, who book black and minority defendants on more severe charges when they are jailed." ([San Francisco Examiner](#), July 27, 2017).

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

Latino Gross Domestic Product Report: Quantifying the Impact of American Hispanic Economic Growth. By Werner Schink, et al. Latino Donor Collaborative. June 2017. 40 p.

<http://latinodonorcollaborative.org/latino-gdp-report/>

"In 2015, the 55 million Latinos living and working in the U.S. were responsible for \$2.13 trillion -- or 11.8% -- of America's \$18.04 trillion gross domestic product.... By 2020, the researchers estimate that Latinos will fuel nearly a quarter of all U.S. GDP growth, and represent 12.7% of the country's total GDP.... Between 2010 and 2015, Latino GDP grew at a rate of 2.9% annually, outpacing overall U.S. GDP growth of 1.7% ... [and] the number of Latinos graduating college between the ages of 20 and 24 grew by 40.6%, compared to 13.6% for the non-Latino college graduates." ([CNN Money](#), July 1, 2017).

ECONOMY

Towards a Political Theory of the Firm. By Luigi Zingales. Stigler Center for the Study of the Economy and the State. July 2017. 27 p.

<https://research.chicagobooth.edu/~media/5D8A9BE2EFB8435B91D23E6BB1859B2E.pdf>

"Historically, competition in the United States was ensured by the very large size of the country, which made it more difficult for a small group of producers to 'own' the government. During the Cold War the efficiency of the government was required by the threat of military conflict. Both these aspects have vanished now, increasing the risk that the United States becomes a vertical politically integrated regime a la Latina America.... To fight these risks, several political tools might be put into use [including] more aggressive use of the antitrust authority, and attention to the functioning and the independence of the media market. Yet the single most important remedy may be broader public awareness."

EDUCATION

"Louisiana Threads the Needle on Ed Reform: Launching a Coherent Curriculum in a Local-Control State," by Robert Pondiscio, *Education Next*, vol. 17, no. 4 (Fall 2017) pp. 1-8.

<http://educationnext.org/louisiana-threads-the-needle-ed-reform-launching-coherent-curriculum-local-control/>

Louisiana's curriculum-driven reforms have resulted in the highest growth among all states on the 2015 National Assessment of Educational Progress—in 5th grade reading and math. As a local-control state, Louisiana's reforms have centered on offering incentives "for districts and schools statewide to adopt and implement a high-quality curriculum, particularly in English Language Arts and mathematics." The incentives allow teachers and schools to select their own textbooks, and instructional/professional development systems—via a tiered review process. Also, the teachers were very involved in the overall reform process—evaluating the curriculum rubrics the state created.

EMPLOYMENT

Meet the Out-of-Work: Local Profiles of Jobless Adults and Strategies to Connect Them to Unemployment. By Martha Ross et al. Brookings. June 2017. 48 p.

https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/out-of-work_paper_final.pdf

Interactive data by region: <https://www.brookings.edu/research/meet-the-out-of-work/>

The out-of-work are not only those who are unemployed (and looking for work), but also those who are typically considered not in the labor force (and who want to work). These U.S. adults, ages 25 to 64, can be categorized into seven groups based on their varying levels of education, work experience, English proficiency, and other well-recognized barriers to employment. Researchers match the groups with types of programs that might best benefit people in those groups. For instance, where 41.9% of the out-of-work in Fresno County are less-educated but prime-age people and would benefit from seven of eight programs; another 5.9% are highly educated and engaged younger people who would benefit from one type of program, job assistance and counseling.

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

“Production, Use, and Fate of All Plastics Ever Made.” By Roland Geyer, et al. *Science Advances*, vol. 3, no. 7 (July 19, 2017) pp. 1-6.

<http://advances.sciencemag.org/content/3/7/e1700782>

“More than 9 billion tons of plastic has been produced since 1950, and the vast majority of it is still around. A new study that tracked the global manufacture and distribution of plastics since they became widespread after World War II found that only 2 billion tons of that plastic is still in use. Seven billion tons is stuck on Earth as garbage in landfills, recycled trash or pollution in the environment, including deep oceans where it’s been discovered in the mouths of whales and the bellies of dead seabirds that mistook it for food.... What’s new with this research is its use of plastic-production data ... to build a scientific model that showed ‘how long plastics are in use before they reach the end of their useful lifetimes and are discarded,’ the study says.” (*Washington Post*, July 19, 2017).

HEALTH

“Vital Signs: Changes in Opioid Prescribing in the United States, 2006-2015.” By Gery P. Guy Jr., et al. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, vol. 66, no. 26 (July 7, 2017) pp. 697-704.

https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/wr/mm6626a4.htm?s_cid=mm6626a4_w

This report demonstrates the need for targeted interventions for opioid prescribing practices. While opioid prescription in the United States has declined each year since 2010, the amount of opioids prescribed remains significantly high, about three times higher than in 1999. Counties with higher amount of opioid use typically have a higher percentage of non-Hispanic whites, higher prevalence for diabetes and arthritis, and higher rates of unemployment and Medicaid enrollment. The data shows opioid prescription varied significantly across the country, which seems to indicate inconsistent opioid practice and use.

Opioids in Medicare Part D: Concerns about Extreme Use and Questionable Prescribing. Office of Inspector General. July 10, 2017. 16 p.

<https://oig.hhs.gov/oei/reports/oei-02-17-00250.pdf>

“In 2016, one out of every three beneficiaries received a prescription opioid through Medicare Part D. Half a million of them received high amounts of opioids.... Even more concerning, almost 90,000 beneficiaries are at serious risk of misuse or overdose. These include beneficiaries who received extreme amounts of opioids—more than two and a half times the level that CDC recommends avoiding—for the entire year.... These patterns are far outside the norm and warrant further scrutiny. Ensuring the

appropriate use and prescribing of opioids is essential to protecting the health and safety of beneficiaries and the integrity of Part D.”

HUMAN SERVICES

***Escaping Poverty: Predictors of Persistently Poor Children’s Economic Success.* By Caroline Ratcliffe, et al. Urban Institute. May 2017. 40 p.**

<http://www.mobilitypartnership.org/publications/escaping-poverty>

“More than one in ten US children (11.8%) is persistently poor and, as such, faces a challenging path to economic mobility. Only a small minority of persistently poor children—16%—is consistently connected to work or school as young adults and is not poor in their late 20s.... This research suggests that connecting parents and children early with services and employment and training opportunities, taking care to address the needs of children raised in families that are struggling with disability, and addressing the conditions of their neighborhoods and schools could get more children on the pathway to success.”

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

***Report on Improving Cybersecurity in the Health Care Industry.* By Emery Csulak, et al. Public Health Emergency. June 2017. 96 p.**

<https://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/planning/CyberTF/Documents/report2017.pdf>

Healthcare cybersecurity in the United States is in critical condition, since many health care delivery organizations lack qualified security personnel and the infrastructure to identify, track and respond to threats. This could disrupt patient care and leave patients vulnerable to cybersecurity threats. “Now more than ever, all health care delivery organizations ... have a greater responsibility to secure their systems, medical devices, and patient data.” The Health Care Industry Cybersecurity Task Force makes policy recommendations to increase security, define and streamline governance and leadership for cybersecurity, and improve information sharing to combat industry threats, weaknesses, and mitigations.

About the California Research Bureau

The California Research Bureau at the California State Library develops independent, nonpartisan research and analysis for the executive and legislative branches. We provide policy research, 50-state reviews, academic and media summaries, data analysis and much more. To learn more about us or to make a request, or to subscribe to *Studies in the News*, contact crb@library.ca.gov, or call (916) 319-2691.

Studies in the News archived issues and RSS feed are available at <http://www.library.ca.gov/sitn/crb/>.