



Studies in the News

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

Overlooked: Women and Jails in an Era of Reform. By Elizabeth Swavola, et al. Vera Institute of Justice. Aug. 17, 2016. 48 p.

<http://www.safetyandjusticechallenge.org/resource/overlooked-women-jails-era-reform/>

“Women in jail are the fastest growing correctional population in the country—increasing 14-fold between 1970 and 2014. Yet there is surprisingly little research on why so many more women wind up in jail today. This report examines what research does exist on women in jail in order to begin to reframe the conversation to include them. It offers a portrait of women in jail, explores how jail can deepen the societal disadvantages they face, and provides insight into what drives women’s incarceration and ways to reverse the trend.” This report compares state programs tailored to the probationary and re-entry support needs of incarcerated women.

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

Digital Divide Narrows for Latinos as More Spanish Speakers and Immigrants Go Online. By Anna Brown, et al. Pew Research Center. July 20, 2016. 24 p.

<http://www.pewhispanic.org/2016/07/20/digital-divide-narrows-for-latinos-as-more-spanish-speakers-and-immigrants-go-online/>

“Since 2009, the share of Latino adults who report using the internet increased 20 percentage points, up from 64% then to 84% in 2015. Over the same period, internet use among whites grew too, though at a slower rate, moving from 80% to 89%. As a result, the gap in internet use between Latinos and whites declined from 16 percentage points in 2009 to 5 percentage points in 2015.... As internet use has grown more common among Latinos, the demographic profile of Latino internet users has also changed and is now more representative of the Hispanic adult population.”

ECONOMY

Entrepreneurs, Startups, and Innovation at the University of California. Bay Area Council Economic Institute. Aug. 2016. 68 p.

<http://www.bayareaeconomy.org/report/entrepreneurs-startups-innovation-at-uc/>

This report is about initiatives undertaken by the University of California system to support entrepreneurial-led start-ups in California. These companies contribute to the economy through revenues, jobs, and the indirect effects of spending in the community. “Counting only startups in STEM-related fields (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) that were formed using UC-generated intellectual property or were founded by faculty, staff, or ... students within one year of completing their UC affiliation, 1,267 companies were generated by the University of California between 1968 and June 2015.... Of these companies, 622 were still in business ... in June 2015, and 603 of those still active companies were headquartered in California. The ... revenue reported for the 440 active companies for which information was available was \$16,170,859,930. Venture capital investment totaling \$9,812,978,018 was attracted by 268 active companies.”

EDUCATION

The Teacher Pay Gap is Wider Than Ever: Teachers’ Pay Continues to Fall Further Behind Pay of Comparable Workers. By Sylvia A. Allegretto, et al. Economic Policy Institute. Aug. 9, 2016. 29 p.

<http://www.epi.org/files/pdf/110964.pdf>

“The teacher pay penalty is bigger than ever. In 2015, public school teachers’ weekly wages were 17.0% lower than those of comparable workers—compared with just 1.8% lower in 1994. This erosion of relative teacher wages has fallen more heavily on experienced teachers than on entry-level teachers. Importantly, collective bargaining can help to abate this teacher wage penalty. Some of the increase in the teacher wage penalty may be attributed to a trade-off between wages and benefits. Even so, teachers’ compensation (wages plus benefits) was 11.1% lower than that of comparable workers in 2015.”

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

CEQA in the 21st Century: Environmental Quality, Economic Prosperity, and Sustainable Development in California. By Janet Smith-Heimer, et al. Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment. Aug. 2016. 102 p.

<http://rosefdn.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/CEQA-in-the-21st-Century.pdf>

This study provides an overview of the CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) process, focusing on the rate of lawsuits and the direct and indirect costs of compliance. “The number of lawsuits filed under CEQA has been surprisingly low, averaging 195 per year throughout California since 2002....The rate of litigation compared to all projects receiving environmental review under CEQA is also very low, with lawsuits filed for fewer than 1 out of every 100 projects reviewed under CEQA that were not considered exempt.... In San Francisco, just 14 EIRs [environmental impact reports] were prepared in the past three years (less than 5 EIRs per year).... Despite critics often citing CEQA as a ‘major barrier to development,’ no evidence supports that assertion.”

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Do Grocery Food Sales Taxes Cause Food Insecurity? By Norbert L. W. Wilson, et al. Agricultural & Applied Economics Association Annual Meeting. July 2016. 35 p.

<http://ageconsearch.umn.edu/bitstream/235324/2/Wilson,%20Zheng,%20Burney,%20Kaiser%20-%20Do%20Grocery%20Taxes%20Cause%20Food%20Insecurity.pdf>

“Thirteen states and many localities continue to tax the sale of groceries.... The taxes provide a steady source of revenue in volatile times.... [B]ecause counties and localities sometimes collect food taxes even if their states don’t, people living in more than a third of the nation’s roughly 3,000 counties are taxed at some level on the food they buy at the store.... The taxes disproportionately hurt low-income Americans ... and contribute to ‘food insecurity,’ which the U.S. Department of Agriculture defines as ‘reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet’ or ‘disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake.’” (*Stateline*, Aug. 16, 2016).

HEALTH

When the Price Is Not Right: State Options on Prescription Drug Pricing. By Marge Ginsburg, et al. California HealthCare Foundation. June 2016. 16 p.

<http://www.chcf.org/publications/2016/06/when-state-rx-pricing>

“In response to California’s interest in pursuing reasonable and effective strategies for high-value medical care, this issue brief presents information about the cost of prescription drugs, details the landscape of rebates and barriers (primarily around outpatient prescription drugs), describes the various strategies being pursued at the national and state levels, notes California’s own efforts, and speculates on possible outcomes.” The report finds that “[t]he most effective strategies require changes in federal laws or regulations. These changes are being pursued by those in both the public and private sectors.” Further, “[s]ome private purchasers are experimenting with innovative value-based formularies, which encourage patients to choose cost-effective medications.”

HUMAN SERVICES

A Qualitative Research Study of Kinship Diversion Practices. By Karin Malm, et al. *Child Trends*. July 2016. 7 p.

<http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/2016-24KinshipBrief.pdf>

“This brief explores the practice of ‘kinship diversion,’ in which children are placed with relatives as an alternative to foster care.... Study participants—agency caseworkers, court personnel, and kinship caregivers—generally viewed child welfare agencies as intrusive in families’ lives. However, they also felt that they and the agency had a responsibility to provide resources and support to the kin who step in to care for children. The availability and accessibility of such services varies greatly across the local jurisdictions in the study. All of the jurisdictions struggle to determine which cases needed ongoing monitoring and services, or to determine the appropriate amount of time to support the families.”

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

“Uber and Metropolitan Traffic Fatalities in the United States.” By Noli Brazil, et al. *American Journal of Epidemiology* (July 2016) 7 p.

<http://aje.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2016/07/22/aje.kww062>

“Uber and similar rideshare services are rapidly dispersing in cities across the United States and beyond. Given the convenience and low cost, Uber has been characterized as a potential countermeasure for reducing the estimated 121 million episodes of drunk driving and the 10,000 resulting traffic fatalities that occur annually in the United States.... We found that the deployment of Uber services in a given metropolitan county had no association with the number of subsequent traffic fatalities, whether measured in aggregate or specific to drunk-driving fatalities or fatalities during weekends and holidays.”

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