



## Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

November 14, 2018

*Studies in the News will not be published next week in observance of Thanksgiving.  
Publication will resume on Wednesday, November 28.*

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CA's level of economic 'inequality now is higher than that of Mexico'

### **ECONOMY**

Imports and automation, not labor supply factors, drive decline in U.S. employment

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Why art museum field trips have a positive impact on student critical thinking

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75% of L.A. landlords refused Section 8 housing vouchers in pilot study

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Study looks at relationship between racial discrimination, chronic disease

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Characteristics of people who face work requirements in safety net programs

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Study suggests children's screen time has little effect on sleep

### **TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE**

15 million Americans 'experienced a water shutoff in 2016' for nonpayment

## **CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY**

***California Feudalism: The Squeeze on the Middle Class.*** By Joel Kotkin, et al. Chapman University Center for Demographics & Policy. Oct. 15, 2018. 54 p.  
[https://www.chapman.edu/wilkinson/\\_files/Feudalism.pdf](https://www.chapman.edu/wilkinson/_files/Feudalism.pdf)

"Today California is creating a feudalized society characterized by the ultra-rich, a diminishing middle class and a large, rising segment of the population that is in or near poverty.... The state's level of inequality now is higher than that of Mexico.... California, adjusted for costs, has the overall highest poverty rate in the country.... [C]lose to one in three of the state's families are barely able to pay their bills. Overall, 8 million Californians live in poverty, including 2 million children, a number that ... has risen since the Great Recession.... California ... is home to a remarkable 77 of the country's 297 most 'economically challenged' cities.... Some 76,000 millionaires and billionaires call Santa Clara and San Mateo counties home but nearly 30 percent of Silicon Valley's residents rely on public or private

assistance; the real wages of the largely Latino and African-American working class actually have dropped in the midst of the 'boom.' ” ([OC Register](#), Oct. 14, 2018).

## ECONOMY

***Explaining the Decline in the U.S. Employment-to-Population Ratio: A Review of the Evidence.* By Katharine G. Abraham, et al. NBER. Feb. 2018. 65 p.**  
<https://www.nber.org/papers/w24333> (Available to .gov accounts or from the California Research Bureau)

“Our critical review of the evidence put forward in over 150 studies identifies labour demand factors as key drivers of the decline in employment between 1999 and 2016.... Increased import competition from China is the single largest contributing factor.... These import pressures also had negative employment effects on ‘upstream’ intermediate goods industries, as well as other non-manufacturing industries.... The employment effects from industrial robots ... displaced 0.95 million workers.... Labour supply factors as a group have been considerably less important than labour demand factors in driving the decline in employment. The claim that expanded safety net support through SNAP (food stamps) or Medicaid led to sizable decreases in employment is hard to square with either the institutional features of these programmes or the evidence on causal linkages.” ([VoxEU](#), Oct. 17, 2018).

## EDUCATION

***Impact Study: The Effects of Facilitated Single-Visit Art Museum Programs on Students Grades 4-6.* RK&A, Inc. Sep. 2018. 35 p.**  
<https://www.arteducators.org/research/articles/377-naea-aamd-research-study-impact-of-art-museum-programs-on-k-12-students>

“In this study, facilitated single-visit programs are defined as one-time museum field trips in which students engage with original works of art within the physical setting of an art museum.... Through a quasi-experimental study, we measured the effects of facilitated single-visit art museum programs on students. Ultimately, we found that a facilitated single-visit program in an art museum affects students in grades 4-6 in four ways: 1) Questioning: Students ask more complex questions about works of art; 2) Multiple Interpretations: Students are more accepting of multiple interpretations of a work of art; 3) Physicality of Art: Students are more likely to think about art in terms of its material properties; and 4) Emotive Recall: Students experience greater emotive recall of the program.”

## GENERAL GOVERNMENT

***A Pilot Study of Landlord Acceptance of Housing Choice Vouchers.* By Mary Cunningham, et al. Urban Institute. Sep. 20, 2018. 196 p.**  
<https://www.urban.org/research/publication/pilot-study-landlord-acceptance-housing-choice-vouchers>

“For most of its existence, the main shortcoming of the Section 8 program ... was its inability to keep up with demand. But the recent economic boom ... has led to rent increases even in poor and working-class neighborhoods, and many landlords are now refusing to accept the vouchers when they can get higher rents, without the bureaucratic red tape that plagues the program, on the open market.... A survey by the nonpartisan Urban Institute ... found that 67% of Philadelphia’s landlords refused to even consider voucher holders, some candidly citing the low subsidies and their desire to cash in on a hot market. The rejection rates were even higher in Fort Worth and Los Angeles, where three-quarters of landlords turned away Section 8 tenants.” ([New York Times](#), Oct. 12, 2018).

## HEALTH

**“Racial Discrimination, Educational Attainment, and Biological Dysregulation Among Midlife African American Women.”** By Amani M. Allen, et al. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, vol. 99 (Jan. 2019) pp. 225-235. Online ahead of print.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0306453018301215>

“Allen and her team studied 208 black women between the ages 30 and 50 from the Bay Area in order to examine the relationship between racial discrimination and allostatic load, a measure of chronic physiologic stress in the body and predictor of chronic diseases.... ‘We found that experiencing racial discrimination repeatedly can create a state of biological imbalance that leaves certain groups of people more susceptible to chronic disease.’... The study also found that higher levels of education (data from the women studied was split by those who had more than a high school diploma and those with less than or equal to a high school diploma) may serve as a buffer for some of the negative health effects of discrimination.” ([San Francisco Chronicle](#), Oct. 12, 2018).

## HUMAN SERVICES

***Work Requirements and Safety Net Programs.*** By Lauren Bauer, et al. Brookings. Oct. 15, 2018. 28 p.

[https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/WorkRequirements\\_EA\\_web\\_1010\\_2.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/WorkRequirements_EA_web_1010_2.pdf)

“We find that the majority of SNAP [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program] and Medicaid participants who would be exposed to work requirements are attached to the labor force, but that a substantial share would fail to consistently meet a 20 hours per week-threshold. Among persistent labor force nonparticipants, health issues are the predominant reason given for not working. There may be some subset of SNAP and Medicaid participants who could work, are not working, and might work if they were threatened with the loss of benefits.... [T]his group is very small relative to those who would be sanctioned under the proposed policies who are already working or are legitimately unable to work.”

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

***Digital Screen Time and Pediatric Sleep: Evidence from a Preregistered Cohort Study.*** By Andrew K. Przybylski. *Journal of Pediatrics*. Online ahead of print. Oct. 30, 2018. 7 p.

[https://www.jpeds.com/article/S0022-3476\(18\)31384-2/fulltext](https://www.jpeds.com/article/S0022-3476(18)31384-2/fulltext)

This recent study appears to counter previous findings that screen-time was a major hindrance of quality sleep time. This study finds that for every hour of screen time, youth experience only three to eight fewer minutes of sleep a night. The authors suggest other factors have a more significant impact, “Focusing on bedtime routines and regular patterns of sleep, such as consistent wake-up times, are much more effective strategies for helping young people sleep than thinking screens themselves play a significant role.” The authors suggest that other studies showing links between screen time and lack of sleep had very small sample sizes and need “much larger studies” to find conclusive evidence of a problem. ([BBC News](#), Nov. 6, 2018).

## TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

***America’s Secret Water Crisis.*** Food & Water Watch. Oct. 22, 2018. 24 p.

<https://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/insight/americas-secret-water-crisis>

“Food & Water Watch contacted the two largest water systems in each state to request the number of households whose water was shut off for nonpayment in 2016. We received responses back from 73 utilities. Top findings: The average water utility shut off 5% of households for nonpayment in 2016; [a]mong responding utilities, more than half a million households lost water service for nonpayment, affecting an estimated 1.4 million people in 2016; and, [a]n estimated 15 million people in the United States experienced a water shutoff in 2016.” ([New York Times](#), Oct. 29, 2018).

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