

Studies in the News

California Research Bureau, California State Library

Contents this week:

CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

Jury convictions often vary by race

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

Survey: 71% of Californians support AB32

ECONOMY

Public employees unsure they are saving enough toward retirement

EDUCATION

For-profit colleges issued 20% of CA degrees and certificates in 2010

Better data management can improve school functioning

ENVIRONMENT

Ideas for adapting CA agriculture to climate change

HEALTH

Emergency room visits for prescription drug misuse on the rise

HOUSING

Young people less confident in home ownership than older ones

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Data.gov

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

Fewer Americans under 19 are obtaining driver's licenses

CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

“The Impact of Jury Race in Criminal Trials.” By Shamena Anwar, et al. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* (Apr. 2012) 39 p.

<http://qje.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2012/04/15/qje.qjs014.full.pdf+html>

“This article examines the impact of jury racial composition on trial outcomes using a data set of felony trials in Florida between 2000 and 2010. We use a research design that exploits day-to-day variation in the composition of the jury pool to isolate quasi-random variation in the composition of the seated jury, finding evidence that (i) juries formed from all-white jury pools convict black defendants significantly (16 percentage points) more often than white defendants, and (ii) this gap in conviction rates is entirely eliminated when the jury pool includes at least one black member.”

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

PPIC Statewide Survey: Californians and the Environment. By Mark Baldassare, et al. Public Policy Institute of California. July 2012. 35 p.

<http://www.ppic.org/main/publication.asp?i=1028>

“This year’s survey focuses on timely and relevant environmental and energy issues, including cap and trade and fracking.... A strong majority of Californians (78%) think that the world’s temperature has probably gone up in the past 100 years (17% probably not). Most (60%) say the effects of global warming have already begun. But while a solid majority (71%) support the state law requiring emissions reductions – AB 32 – the partisan divide has increased significantly. Just before Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed the law in 2006, 65% of adults were in favor, including two in three across parties. Today, Democrats (84%) and independents (65%) favor the law, but Republicans are divided (44% favor, 48% oppose).”

ECONOMY

2012 Retirement Confidence Survey of the State and Local Government Workforce. By Joshua M. Franzel, et al. Center for State and Local Government Excellence, et al. July 2012. 17 p.

http://slge.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/SLGE_TIAA-CREF_Retirement_Confidence_Survey_2012_13-016.pdf

“This report surveyed more than 1000 state and local government employees across the nation including public educators, police and firefighters. The study found that only 16% of teachers and 25% of police and firefighters are very confident they are saving the right amount for retirement. In addition, a full 57% of public sector workers expect to work longer than they would like and 72% expect to work for pay after retiring. In particular, the survey indicates the rising cost of health care is a factor in the tepid expression of overall retirement confidence.”

EDUCATION

“The Role of For-Profit Colleges in Increasing Postsecondary Completions.” By Su Jin Jez. *California Journal of Politics and Policy*, vol. 4, no. 2 (June 2012) pp. 140-160.

<http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/cjpp.2012.4.issue-2/cjpp-2012-0010/cjpp-2012-0010.xml?format=INT>
(Available at the California State Library)

For-profit colleges have come under fire recently for dishonest recruiting practices, low graduation rates and leaving their students lacking skills to pay back their student loans. At the same time, these institutions serve a diverse student population and have awarded more than 20% of certificates, associate’s and bachelor’s degrees awarded in California in 2010. If California is going to increase the number of degrees it awards in the future, for-profit institutions will continue to play a significant part in the State’s higher education future, especially in high-demand fields such as nursing and healthcare.

“Making Use of School District Data.” By Carol S. Parke. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, vol. 17, no. 10 (May 2012) 15 p.

<http://pareonline.net/pdf/v17n10.pdf>

“This paper describes how districts can better use their extensive student databases and other existing data to explore questions of interest. School districts are required to maintain a wealth of student information in electronic data systems and other formats. The meaningfulness of the data depends to a large degree on whether they can understand the information and use it to guide their efforts. The considerations and guidelines presented here are organized into six components which include identifying

the broad area, creating specific questions, roles and trust, sample and methodology, presentation of results, and outcomes and further directions. Two examples are used throughout the paper to illustrate each component.”

ENVIRONMENT

***Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change in California Agriculture.* By Louise Jackson, et al. California Energy Commission. July 2012. 114 p.**

<http://www.energy.ca.gov/2012publications/CEC-500-2012-031/CEC-500-2012-031.pdf>

“To build public support for adapting to and mitigating climate change, it will be necessary to develop greater awareness of a broad set of ... factors that influence agricultural vulnerability and resilience. First, the study developed a spatially explicit agricultural vulnerability index for California derived from 22 climate, crop, land use, and socioeconomic variables.... Since farmland throughout the state is vulnerable to urbanization, the study also used urban growth projections for 2050 to examine the possible impacts on statewide agricultural production, land use patterns, and soils. Lastly, the study examined two on-farm case studies ... that highlight the possible benefits of innovative agricultural practices.”

HEALTH

***The DAWN Report: Highlights of the 2010 Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) Findings on Drug-Related Emergency Department Visits.* Rockville, MD. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. July 2, 2012. 8 p.**

<http://www.samhsa.gov/data/2k12/DAWN096/SR096EDHighlights2010.pdf>

“In 2010, there were 4.9 million drug related emergency department (ED) visits; about one half (46.8%, or 2.3 million visits) were attributed to drug misuse or abuse with a nearly equal percentage (47.4%) attributed to adverse drug reactions. In 2010, ED visits resulting from the misuse or abuse of pharmaceuticals occurred at a rate of 434.9 visits per 100,000 population compared with a rate of 378.5 visits per 100,000 population for illicit drugs.... ED visits involving misuse or abuse of pharmaceuticals increased 115% between 2004 and 2010.... It falls to the public health community to raise awareness of possible serious consequences of prescription as well as over-the-counter drugs.”

HOUSING

***Shifting Confidence in Homeownership: The Great Recession,* By Anat Bracha, et al. Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. June 2012. 52 p.**

<http://www.bostonfed.org/economic/ppdp/2012/ppdp1204.pdf>

In a study of the relationship between the recession and its effects on the belief in homeownership, surveyors found those directly affected by the crisis have the strongest change in attitude. Young survey respondents were less confident in the idea of homeownership than older respondents. Older respondents were still more likely to believe in homeownership, despite dramatic drops in home values.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Data.gov

www.data.gov

“The purpose of Data.gov is to increase public access to high value, machine readable datasets generated by the Executive Branch of the Federal Government... Data.gov increases the ability of the public to easily find, download, and use datasets that are generated and held by the Federal Government [and] provides descriptions of the Federal datasets (metadata), information about how to access the datasets, and tools that leverage government datasets. The data catalogs will continue to grow as datasets are added. Federal, Executive Branch data are included in the first version of Data.gov.”

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

“Update: Percentage of Young Persons With a Driver's License Continues to Drop.” By Michael Sivak, et al. *Traffic Injury Prevention*, vol. 13, no. 4 (July 2012) 1 p.

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/15389588.2012.696755>

The percentage of Americans age 19 and younger with a driver's license declined in 2010 compared to 2008 data. For all age groups up to age 39, a smaller proportion of individuals has driver's licenses today than was true in 1983. Other research has shown that the average number of vehicle miles traveled by Americans aged 16-34 dropped by 23% from 2001 to 2009. The authors speculate that increasing usage of the Internet has substituted to some degree for physical mobility. Others point to tight consumer credit markets, high unemployment and high student loan debt during the recent recession as explanatory factors in recent trends.

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