



Studies in the News

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE & LAW ENFORCEMENT

California's Criminal Courts. By Sonya Tafoya, et al. Public Policy Institute of California. Oct. 2015.
2 p.

http://www.ppic.org/main/publication_show.asp?i=1165

This report provides some arresting statistics: Most reported crimes do not become criminal cases (45.6% of violent crimes and 13.5% of property crimes in 2013 were prosecuted); the majority of criminal cases are traffic violations (over 4.6M filings); and most felony cases are resolved before trial (2% were settled by trial in 2013-14). The authors also note that the California court system, consisting of 58 superior or trial courts, a Court of Appeal, and the State Supreme Court, receives about 1% of the state's General

Fund to handle about 7.5 million criminal, civil, family and juvenile, probate, and mental health cases per year.

CULTURE & DEMOGRAPHY

Privacy and Information Sharing. By Lee Rainie, et al. Pew Research Center. Jan. 14, 2016. 47 p.
http://www.pewinternet.org/files/2016/01/PI_2016.01.14_Privacy-and-Info-Sharing_FINAL.pdf

“[T]here are a variety of circumstances under which many Americans would share personal information or permit surveillance in return for getting something of perceived value. For instance, a majority of Americans think it would be acceptable (by a 54% to 24% margin) for employers to install monitoring cameras following a series of workplace thefts. Nearly half (47%) say the basic bargain offered by retail loyalty cards—namely, that stores track their purchases in exchange for occasional discounts—is acceptable to them, even as a third (32%) call it unacceptable.”

EDUCATION

Accounting for the Rise in College Tuition. By Grey Gordon, et al. National Bureau of Economic Research. NBER Working Paper No. 21967. Feb. 2016. 62 p.
<http://papers.nber.org/tmp/63471-w21967.pdf>
(Available at the California State Library)

“We develop a quantitative model of higher education to test explanations for the steep rise in college tuition between 1987 and 2010.... We measure how much changes in underlying costs, reforms to the Federal Student Loan Program (FSLP), and changes in the college earnings premium have caused tuition to increase. All these changes combined generate a 106% rise in net tuition between 1987 and 2010, which more than accounts for the 78% increase seen in the data. Changes in the FSLP alone generate a 102% tuition increase, and changes in the college premium generate a 24% increase.” The authors suggest, based on their model, that the increased demand for student financial aid that took place over several decades, and subsequent increases in college tuition around the same time, were useful in helping to explain the steep rise in college tuition between 1987 and 2010.

EMPLOYMENT

“The Public Cost of Low-Wage Work in New England.” By Ken Jacobs, et al. *Communities & Banking*, vol. 27, no. 2 (Spring 2016) pp. 12-14.
<https://www.bostonfed.org/commdev/c&b/2016/spring/The-Public-Cost-of-Low-Wage-Work.pdf>

“When jobs don’t pay enough, workers turn to public assistance in order to meet their basic needs. Such programs provide support to millions of working families.... [H]igher wages would allow states to reduce the portion of program dollars going to cash assistance and consider increasing the funding for services such as child care, job training, and transportation assistance. Lowering public-assistance costs through higher wages and employer-provided health care should allow all levels of government to do a better job of targeting their tax dollars.”

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

Impacts of California's Ongoing Drought: Hydroelectricity Generation 2015 Update.

By Peter H. Gleick. Pacific Institute. Feb. 2016. 14 p.

<http://pacinst.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2016/02/Impacts-Californias-Ongoing-Drought-Hydroelectricity-Generation-2015-Update.pdf>

“This analysis examines the impacts of drought on hydropower production, which depends on water available at specific times to flow through turbines that generate electricity. It provides an update of a report released last year that evaluated these impacts during the first three years of the drought.... This analysis finds that during the four years ending September 30, 2015 (the end of the 2015 “water year”), hydropower generation was substantially below average, and the added economic cost to California ratepayers of reduced hydroelectricity production was approximately \$2.0 billion.”

An Evaluation of California's Adjudicated Groundwater Basins. By Ruth Langridge, et al. State Water Resources Control Board. Feb. 2016. 284 p.

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/gmp/docs/resources/swrcb_012816.pdf

This study evaluates the history and status of California's adjudicated groundwater basins. For this report, researchers “reviewed existing literature and archival sources and conducted telephone interviews with key managers and participants engaged in the adjudication process. Each basin summary was reviewed by a stakeholder in the basin, often the Watermaster, technical expert, or lawyer who participated in the adjudication process. Key issues specified by the SWRCB [State Water Resources Control Board] that are evaluated for this report are whether an adjudication results in: overdraft conditions that are reduced or eliminated over the long term; a well-defined management structure that includes annual monitoring of groundwater conditions in the basin; and strategies that promote or hinder long-term sustainable management of the basin.”

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

America's Voting Machines At Risk. By Lawrence Norden, et al. Brennan Center for Justice. Sep. 2015. 68 p.

https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/publications/Americas_Voting_Machines_At_Risk.pdf

As many Americans cast their vote this year, many will do so on electronic voting machines at least a decade old. Looking for replacement models is both costly and raises concerns about voter fraud and machines being hacked. The Brennan Center reached out to all 50 states, surveying more than 100 specialists familiar with voting technology, and staff reviewed a number of public documents to assess efforts to move forward. This report lays out the problems with the voting machines, explores new technologies and makes recommendations for innovating future election voting practices.

HEALTH

CDC Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain—United States, 2016. By Deborah Dowell, et al. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Dec. 2015. 56 p.

<http://www.massmed.org/Advocacy/Key-Issues/Opioid-Abuse/CDC-Draft-Opioid-Prescribing-Guidelines-for-Chronic-Pain---Dec-2015-%28pdf%29/>

“The CDC's draft proposal urges primary care doctors to try drug-free methods to relieve chronic pain, such as exercise, weight loss and physical therapy, as well as non-opioid pain relievers such as acetaminophen and ibuprofen, before resorting to powerful opioid pills. If opioids are needed, the guidelines recommend starting with the smallest effective dose of immediate-release opioids, avoiding more dangerous time-release formulations except when needed. The AMA [American Medical

Association] has generally supported the concept of more cautious opioid prescribing. But the group has criticized the CDC proposal for lacking ‘a patient-centered view and any real acknowledgement of the problems chronic pain patients may face.’” (*Stateline*, Mar. 3, 2016).

HUMAN SERVICES

Using Evidence to Accelerate the Safe and Effective Reduction of Congregate Care for Youth Involved with Child Welfare. By John Landsverk, et al. Chapin Hall & Chadwick Center. Jan. 2016. 12 p.

http://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/effective%20reduction%20of%20congregate%20care_0.pdf

“The federal government is likely to revise the policy guidelines that regulate state use of congregate care [defined as group homes, residential treatment or other facilities for children/youth needing short-term supervision and structure because of behavioral issues]. Legislatures in some states, like California, already have mandated reductions in the use of congregate care. Governmental action is motivated by the realization that congregate care is expensive, does not have an evidence base to support its efficacy, and is not necessarily well-aligned with the clinical and developmental needs of young people.... In principle, any effort to reduce the use of and support for congregate care must be paired with steps to establish the infrastructure to meet the needs of children now in group placements who will be served in more home-like settings.”

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Employment Data by County and Legislative Districts. California Center for Jobs and the Economy. Jan. 2016.

<http://www.centerforjobs.org/data-tool/>

This interactive site reports recent employment and unemployment for the entire state and allows users to view data by county and legislative districts. It also offers industry-level rates and presents options for changing the analysis and timeframe.

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

California Commuters Continue to Choose Single Occupant Vehicles. California Center for Jobs & The Economy. Mar. 2016. 6 p.

<http://centerforjobs.org/reports-and-data/california-commuters-continue-to-choose-single-occupant-vehicles/>

“The recent release of the 2014 American Community Survey data provides an opportunity to gauge how California commuters have responded to this shifting policy [sole funding focus on CA’s worn roads]. The data clearly reflects that even with the well-documented and rapidly rising costs of the state’s traffic congestion and costs associated with the deteriorating condition of the state’s roads, California workers continue to rely on single occupant vehicles for the primary mode of commuting. Moreover, their reliance on this mode of travel continues to grow both in absolute and relative terms.”

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