

Online Appendix for: The Persistence of Survey Experimental Treatment Effects

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A Average Treatment Effect and Persistence Estimates

Tables A.1 and A.2 present the estimates and standard errors for the average treatment effect (ATE) at time 1, the ATE at time 2, and persistence, which is the ratio of the time 2 ATE to the time 1 ATE. The treatments and outcome measures used in each experiment are included in the remainder of the appendix.

Table A.1: Studies 1 - 10 Average Treatment Effect and Persistence Estimates

Treatment	Dependent Variable	ATE T1	(SE)	ATE T2	(SE)	Persistence	(SE)
Study 1: Capital Punishment							
Pro CP Information Content	CP Support	0.12	(0.03)	0.10	(0.02)	0.85	(0.17)
Pro CP Information Content	CP Belief	0.27	(0.03)	0.26	(0.03)	0.96	(0.10)
Study 2: Minimum Wage							
Pro MW Information Content	MW Amount	1.15	(0.14)	0.62	(0.13)	0.54	(0.08)
Pro MW Information Content	Favor Raising MW	0.53	(0.07)	0.39	(0.07)	0.74	(0.10)
Study 3: Gun Control							
Citizens' Rights Frame	Concealed Carry Support	0.52	(0.13)	-0.03	(0.14)	-0.06	(0.44)
Study 4: Superordinate Identity							
Superordinate Identity Frame	Minority Opportunity	-0.03	(0.04)	-0.05	(0.04)	1.66	(>100)
Superordinate Identity Frame	Public Schools	-0.08	(0.04)	-0.07	(0.05)	0.96	(16.33)
Study 5: Patriot Act							
Anti-Patriot Act Messages	Patriot Act Support	-0.83	(0.21)	-0.52	(0.22)	0.62	(0.19)
Both Types of Messages	Patriot Act Support	-0.19	(0.21)	-0.20	(0.22)	1.06	(>100)
Pro-Patriot Act Messages	Patriot Act Support	0.46	(0.21)	0.16	(0.22)	0.34	(14.51)
Study 6: Elite Endorsements							
In Party Cue	Support for Immigration Bill	0.11	(0.06)	0.02	(0.06)	0.14	(28.23)
In Party Cue	Support for Foreclosure Bill	0.14	(0.05)	-0.01	(0.05)	-0.06	(1.77)
Study 7: Free Trade A (GfK)							
Expert	Support for Free Trade	0.08	(0.02)	0.00	(0.02)	0.03	(1.14)
Positive Frame	Support for Free Trade	-0.01	(0.03)	-0.00	(0.03)	0.20	(73.14)
Negative Frame	Support for Free Trade	-0.14	(0.03)	-0.02	(0.03)	0.14	(0.24)
Both Frames	Support for Free Trade	-0.11	(0.03)	-0.01	(0.03)	0.14	(0.93)
Study 8: Free Trade B (MTurk)							
Expert	Support for Free Trade	0.12	(0.02)	0.07	(0.02)	0.59	(0.12)
Positive Frame	Support for Free Trade	-0.04	(0.02)	-0.04	(0.02)	1.03	(61.45)
Negative Frame	Support for Free Trade	-0.13	(0.02)	-0.06	(0.02)	0.43	(0.17)
Both Frames	Support for Free Trade	-0.14	(0.02)	-0.05	(0.02)	0.36	(0.16)
Study 9: Frame Breadth A (GfK)							
Crime Argument	Crime Spending	0.07	(0.08)	-0.08	(0.07)	-1.18	(>100)
Healthcare Argument	Health Care Spending	-0.01	(0.09)	0.05	(0.09)	-7.93	(>100)
Stimulus Argument	Stimulus Spending	-0.50	(0.09)	-0.11	(0.09)	0.23	(0.17)
Terror Argument	Terrorism Spending	0.33	(0.09)	0.06	(0.09)	0.17	(1.08)
Study 10: Frame Breadth B (MTurk)							
Crime Argument	Crime Spending	-0.04	(0.08)	0.07	(0.08)	-1.59	(61.32)
Healthcare Argument	Health Care Spending	-0.08	(0.09)	-0.05	(0.09)	0.59	(>100)
Stimulus Argument	Stimulus Spending	-0.42	(0.08)	-0.25	(0.08)	0.61	(0.16)
Terror Argument	Terrorism Spending	0.16	(0.09)	0.03	(0.09)	0.20	(>100)

Table A.2: Studies 11 - 18 Average Treatment Effect and Persistence Estimates

Treatment	Dependent Variable	ATE T1	(SE)	ATE T2	(SE)	Persistence	(SE)
Study 11: Polarization A (GfK)							
Placebo	Extremity of Policy Views	0.00	(0.05)	-0.04	(0.05)	-16.69	(>100)
Polarized	Extremity of Policy Views	0.07	(0.05)	0.03	(0.05)	0.48	(31.56)
Placebo	Perceived Polarization	0.36	(0.10)	0.02	(0.11)	0.06	(0.64)
Polarized	Perceived Polarization	0.65	(0.10)	0.20	(0.10)	0.31	(0.13)
Study 12: Polarization B (MTurk)							
Placebo	Extremity of Policy Views	0.02	(0.03)	-0.03	(0.03)	-1.49	(>100)
Polarized	Extremity of Policy Views	-0.03	(0.03)	-0.04	(0.03)	1.15	(44.34)
Placebo	Perceived Polarization	0.37	(0.07)	0.04	(0.06)	0.11	(0.18)
Polarized	Perceived Polarization	0.47	(0.07)	0.13	(0.06)	0.28	(0.12)
Study 13: Immigration							
Negative	Support for Immigration	-0.10	(0.07)	0.03	(0.08)	-0.28	(>100)
Positive	Support for Immigration	0.17	(0.07)	0.12	(0.07)	0.69	(15.99)
Negative	Negative Impact	0.13	(0.06)	0.05	(0.06)	0.40	(3.71)
Positive	Negative Impact	-0.11	(0.06)	-0.08	(0.06)	0.73	(58.73)
Study 14: System Threat							
Majority Minority	Way of Life	0.11	(0.10)	0.05	(0.10)	0.50	(>100)
Majority Minority	Support for Immigration	-0.25	(0.08)	-0.08	(0.08)	0.33	(2.80)
Study 15: Expert Economists							
Expert	High Skill Immigration	0.16	(0.02)	0.02	(0.02)	0.12	(0.12)
Expert	Fiscal Sustainability	0.17	(0.02)	0.01	(0.02)	0.09	(0.11)
Expert	Trade with China	0.21	(0.02)	0.04	(0.02)	0.21	(0.09)
Expert	Tax Cuts	0.22	(0.02)	-0.01	(0.02)	-0.06	(0.09)
Expert	Gold Standard	0.25	(0.02)	0.07	(0.02)	0.27	(0.07)
Study 16: Mental Illness							
News	Support Magazine Ban	0.01	(0.06)	0.00	(0.06)	0.34	(26.91)
LCM Ban	Support Magazine Ban	0.19	(0.07)	0.17	(0.07)	0.91	(1.82)
Mental Illness	Support Magazine Ban	-0.01	(0.07)	0.01	(0.07)	-0.66	(68.10)
News	SMI Danger	0.03	(0.05)	-0.02	(0.04)	-0.66	(44.17)
LCM Ban	SMI Danger	0.01	(0.06)	-0.04	(0.05)	-3.29	(>100)
Mental Illness	SMI Danger	-0.08	(0.06)	-0.02	(0.05)	0.31	(51.12)
Study 17: Contentious Global Warming							
Hiatus	Belief in Increase	-0.11	(0.08)	-0.08	(0.07)	0.74	(31.35)
Hiatus	Degrees	-0.09	(0.04)	-0.07	(0.04)	0.86	(9.89)
Study 18: Newspapers							
Amtrak Op-Ed	Amtrak Scale	0.58	(0.06)	0.32	(0.05)	0.56	(0.07)
Climate Op-Ed	Climate Scale	0.30	(0.05)	0.17	(0.05)	0.56	(0.10)
Flat Tax Op-Ed	Flat Tax Scale	0.52	(0.06)	0.25	(0.06)	0.49	(0.07)
Veterans Op-Ed	Veterans Scale	0.66	(0.05)	0.33	(0.05)	0.51	(0.06)
Wall Street Op-Ed	Wall Street Scale	0.65	(0.05)	0.34	(0.05)	0.52	(0.05)

B Study 1: Capital Punishment

This study was conducted in collaboration with Andrew Guess. It embeds a replication of the Lord et al. (1979) laboratory demonstration in a larger random-assignment study. The results of the experiment indicate that presenting subjects with pro or con information about capital punishment changed both their beliefs about and support for the policy.

Sample: 683 Mechanical Turk subjects in wave 2, 628 in wave 3. In wave 1, pre-treatment attitudes and beliefs were measured and treatments were allocated in wave 2.

Dates of data collection: May 2014.

Treatments: There were six sets of experimental stimuli: The content of the reports could be Pro, Con, or Null, and the study methodology could be time series or cross sectional. Each report contained two sections: Subjects were first presented study summaries, then study details and criticisms. Subjects saw two sets of evidence. In total, subjects could be assigned to one of 18 combinations of treatments, as shown in the table below. Conditions 7, 8, 11, and 12 correspond to the conditions to which subjects could be assigned in the original Lord et al. (1979) experiment.

Table B.3: Capital Punishment Treatment Conditions

	1 st Study		2 nd Study		Condition	Info	Content	N
	Content	Method	Content	Method				
1	Con	Cross	Con	Time	Con Con	-2		62
2	Con	Time	Con	Cross	Con Con	-2		54
3	Con	Cross	Null	Time	Con Null	-1		31
4	Con	Time	Null	Cross	Con Null	-1		30
5	Null	Cross	Con	Time	Con Null	-1		28
6	Null	Time	Con	Cross	Con Null	-1		26
7	Con	Cross	Pro	Time	Pro Con	0		26
8	Con	Time	Pro	Cross	Pro Con	0		36
9	Null	Cross	Null	Time	Null Null	0		67
10	Null	Time	Null	Cross	Null Null	0		45
11	Pro	Cross	Con	Time	Pro Con	0		23
12	Pro	Time	Con	Cross	Pro Con	0		33
13	Null	Cross	Pro	Time	Pro Null	1		28
14	Null	Time	Pro	Cross	Pro Null	1		32
15	Pro	Cross	Null	Time	Pro Null	1		32
16	Pro	Time	Null	Cross	Pro Null	1		28
17	Pro	Cross	Pro	Time	Pro Pro	2		49
18	Pro	Time	Pro	Cross	Pro Pro	2		53
18	Pro	Pro	Time	Cross	Pro Pro	2		53

Experimental Materials: Study Summaries

- Pro Time

Kroner and Phillips (2012) compared murder rates for the year before and the year after adoption of capital punishment in 14 states. In 11 of the 14 states, murder rates were **lower after** adoption of the death penalty.

This research supports the deterrent effect of the death penalty.

- Con Time

Kroner and Phillips (2012) compared murder rates for the year before and the year after adoption of capital punishment in 14 states. In 11 of the 14 states, murder rates were **higher after** adoption of the death penalty.

This research opposes the deterrent effect of the death penalty.

- Null Time

Kroner and Phillips (2012) compared murder rates for the year before and the year after adoption of capital punishment in 14 states. In 5 of the 14 states the murder rate was **lower** after adoption of capital punishment laws. Another 5 of the 14 states showed the **opposite**

pattern. In the remaining states, there was **no change** in the murder rate before and after the adoption of capital punishment laws.

This research is inconclusive regarding the deterrent effect of the death penalty.

- Pro Cross Palmer and Crandall (2012) compared murder rates in 10 pairs of neighboring states with different capital punishment laws. In 8 of the 10 pairs, murder rates were **lower** in the state with capital punishment. This research supports the deterrent effect of the death penalty.
- Con Cross Palmer and Crandall (2012) compared murder rates in 10 pairs of neighboring states with different capital punishment laws. In 8 of the 10 pairs, murder rates were **higher** in the state with capital punishment. This research opposes the deterrent effect of the death penalty.
- Null Cross Palmer and Crandall (2012) compared murder rates in 10 pairs of neighboring states with different capital punishment laws. In 4 of the 10 pairs, murder rates were **lower** in the state with capital punishment. In 4 of the 10 pairs, murder rates were **higher** in the state with capital punishment. In the remaining two pairs, murder rates were the **same** in both states. This research is inconclusive concerning the deterrent effect of the death penalty.

Experimental Materials: Study Details and Criticism

The format of the Study Details and Criticism section was the same in all conditions. Subjects first saw a description of the debate over capital punishment, followed by a description of the research design employed by the fictitious researchers. The next page of the survey presented the conclusions, table, and graph. The final page contained a critique of the design and a summary of a replication study (which always confirmed the original results). There are two main differences between these stimuli and those used by Lord et al.: First, the original study did not include either of the Null study reports. Second, the fictitious publication dates were 1977 for the main study, and 1978 for the replication. I also updated the tables and graphs using modern statistical software.

Pro Time Series Details and Criticism

Can crime be prevented by the death penalty?

In recent years there has arisen a great public debate over whether or not capital punishment (the death penalty) is effective in preventing murders. Those who favor capital punishment claim that the death penalty acts as a deterrent by reminding the potential murderer of the possible consequences, whereas those who oppose capital punishment claim that such officially sanctioned killing by the state sets a violent example that will produce murders that might have been avoided. A recent research effort attempted to shed light on this continuing debate.

The researchers (Kroner and Phillips, 2012) noticed that within the past twelve years fourteen states have passed capital punishment laws or reinstated the death penalty. They reasoned that if capital punishment laws deter murders, the murder rate should have been higher for the year just before the adoption of the death penalty than for the year just after the adoption of death penalty in each of these states.

The results, shown in the table and graph below, were that in 11 of the 14 states the murder rate was lower after adoption of capital punishment laws than before the adoption of capital punishment laws. The researchers concluded that the death penalty does act to deter murderers.

Critics of the study have complained that the crime rate in general dropped significantly in many of the states studied during the two-year period surrounding the legal change, and that they may be able to show that murder rates, when expressed as a percentage of all crimes, actually increased following the adoption of capital punishment (though they present no supporting data).

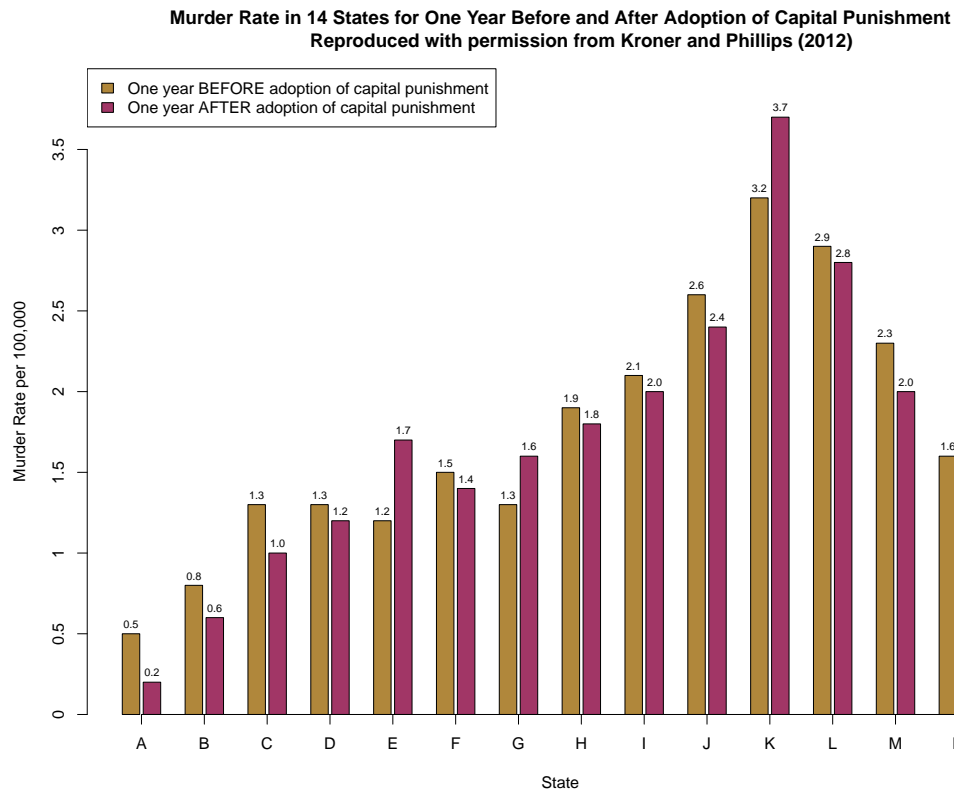
In addition, they pointed out that many other factors may have changed in addition to the adoption of the death penalty, drawing attention especially to the fact that several of the states studied had made parole more difficult for convicted murderers at the same time that they adopted or reinstated capital punishment laws, thus accounting for all or part of the changes.

Kroner and Phillips (2013) have recently replied to this last criticism by stating that several of the states included in their study had also adopted more lenient parole procedures, thus balancing the states that have become stricter on paroles.

Murder Rate in 14 States for One Year Before and After Adoption of Capital Punishment

State	Murder Rate	Year	State	Murder Rate	Year
A	0.5	Before	H	1.9	Before
	0.2	After		1.8	After
B	0.8	Before	I	2.1	Before
	0.6	After		2.0	After
C	1.3	Before	J	2.6	Before
	1.0	After		2.4	After
D	1.3	Before	K	3.2	Before
	1.2	After		3.7	After
E	1.2	Before	L	2.9	Before
	1.7	After		2.8	After
F	1.5	Before	M	2.3	Before
	1.4	After		2.0	After
G	1.3	Before	N	1.6	Before
	1.6	After		1.5	After

Table reproduced with permission from Kroner and Phillips (2012)



Con Time Series Details and Criticism

Can crime be prevented by the death penalty?

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The results, shown in the table and graph below, were that in 11 of the 14 states the murder rate was **higher after** adoption of capital punishment laws than before the adoption of capital punishment laws. The researchers concluded that the death penalty does not act to deter murderers.

Critics of the study have complained that the crime rate in general dropped significantly in many of the states studied during the two-year period surrounding the legal change, and that they may be able to show that murder rates, when expressed as a percentage of all crimes, actually decreased following the adoption of capital punishment (though they present no supporting data).

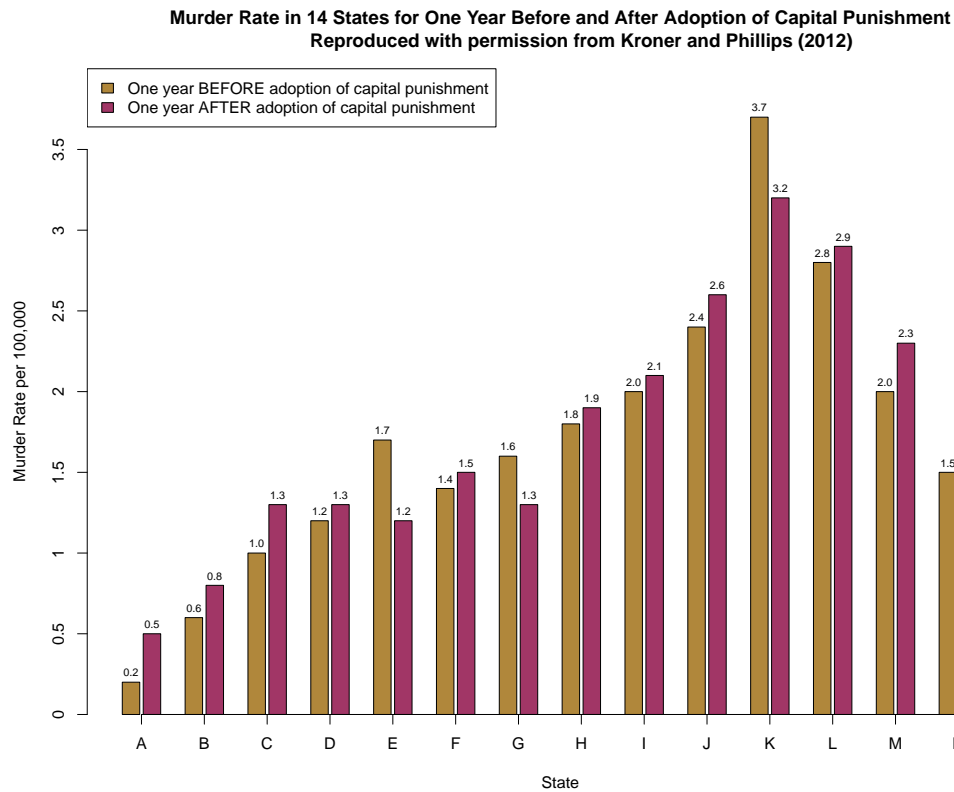
In addition, they pointed out that many other factors may have changed in addition to the adoption of the death penalty, drawing attention especially to the fact that several of the states studied had made parole more difficult for convicted murderers at the same time that they adopted or reinstated capital punishment laws, thus accounting for all or part of the changes.

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Murder Rate in 14 States for One Year Before and After Adoption of Capital Punishment

State	Murder Rate	Year	State	Murder Rate	Year
A	0.2	Before	H	1.8	Before
	0.5	After		1.9	After
B	0.6	Before	I	2.0	Before
	0.8	After		2.1	After
C	1.0	Before	J	2.4	Before
	1.3	After		2.6	After
D	1.2	Before	K	3.7	Before
	1.3	After		3.2	After
E	1.7	Before	L	2.8	Before
	1.2	After		2.9	After
F	1.4	Before	M	2.0	Before
	1.5	After		2.3	After
G	1.6	Before	N	1.5	Before
	1.3	After		1.6	After

Table reproduced with permission from Kroner and Phillips (2012)



Null Time Series Details and Criticism

Can crime be prevented by the death penalty?

In recent years there has arisen a great public debate over whether or not capital punishment (the death penalty) is effective in preventing murders. Those who favor capital punishment claim that the death penalty acts as a deterrent by reminding the potential murderer of the possible consequences, whereas those who oppose capital punishment claim that such officially sanctioned killing by the state sets a violent example that will produce murders that might have been avoided. A recent research effort attempted to shed light on this continuing debate.

The researchers (Kroner and Phillips, 2012) noticed that within the past twelve years fourteen states have passed capital punishment laws or reinstated the death penalty. They reasoned that if capital punishment laws deter murders, the murder rate should have been higher for the year just before the adoption of the death penalty than for the year just after the adoption of death penalty in each of these states.

The results, shown in the table and graph below, were inconclusive: in 5 of the 14 states the murder rate was **lower after** adoption of capital punishment laws. Another 5 of the 14 states showed the **opposite pattern**. In the remaining states, there was **no change** in the murder rate before and after the adoption of capital punishment laws. The researchers concluded that the death penalty has an indeterminate effect on deterrence.

Critics of the study have complained that the crime rate in general dropped significantly in many of the states studied during the two-year period surrounding the legal change, and that they may be able to show that murder rates, when expressed as a percentage of all crimes, actually do respond to the adoption of capital punishment (though they present no supporting data).

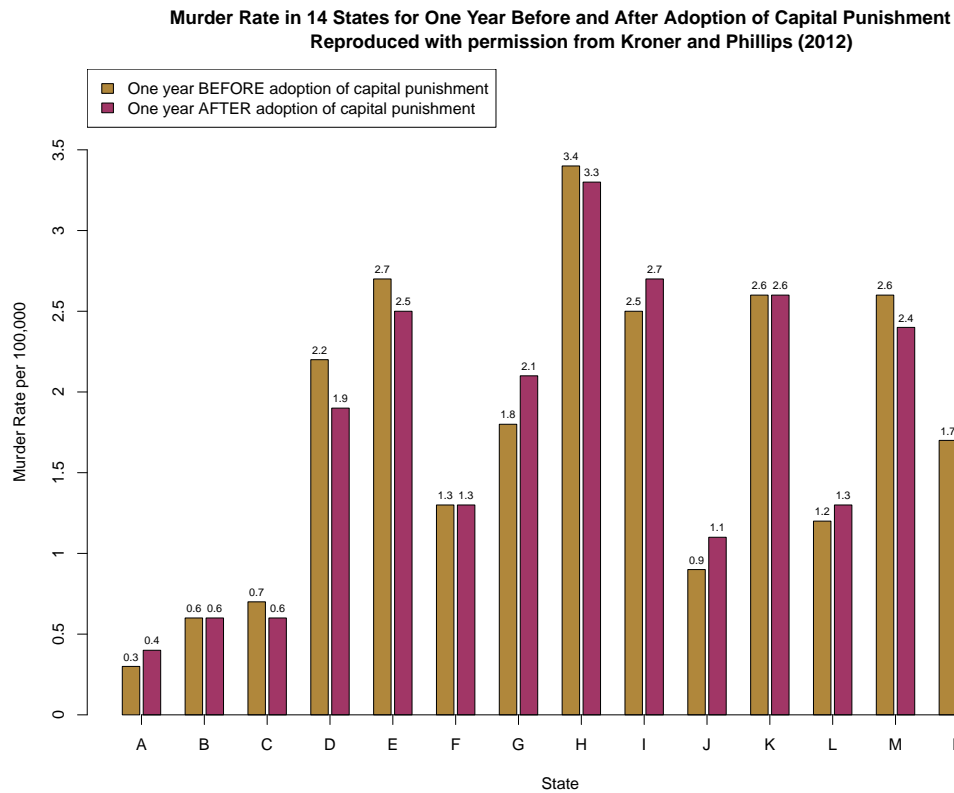
In addition, they pointed out that many other factors may have changed in addition to the adoption of the death penalty, drawing attention especially to the fact that several of the states studied had made parole more difficult for convicted murderers at the same time that they adopted or reinstated capital punishment laws, thus accounting for all or part of the changes.

Kroner and Phillips (2013) have recently replied to this last criticism by stating that several of the states included in their study had also adopted more lenient parole procedures, thus balancing the states that have become stricter on paroles.

Murder Rate in 14 States for One Year Before and After Adoption of Capital Punishment

State	Murder Rate	Year	State	Murder Rate	Year
A	1.7 0.4	Before After	H	2.9 3.3	Before After
B	0.6 0.6	Before After	I	2.5 2.7	Before After
C	0.7 0.6	Before After	J	0.9 1.1	Before After
D	2.2 1.9	Before After	K	2.6 2.6	Before After
E	2.7 2.5	Before After	L	1.2 1.3	Before After
F	1.3 1.3	Before After	M	2.6 2.4	Before After
G	1.8 2.1	Before After	N	1.7 1.7	Before After

Table reproduced with permission from Kroner and Phillips (2012)



Pro Cross Section Details and Criticism

Does Capital Punishment Prevent Crime?

One of the most controversial public issues in recent years has been the effectiveness of capital punishment (the death penalty) in preventing murders. Proponents of capital punishment have argued that the possibility of execution deters people who might otherwise commit murders, whereas opponents of capital punishment denied this and maintain that the death penalty may even produce murders by setting a violent model of behavior. A recent research effort attempted to shed light on this controversy.

The researchers (Palmer and Crandall, 2012) decided to look at the difference in murder rates in states that share a common border but differ in whether their laws permit capital punishment or not. Carefully limiting the states included to those which had capital punishment laws in effect or not in effect for at least five years, they compiled a list of all possible pairs and then selected ten pairs of neighboring states that were alike in the degree of urbanization (percentage of the population living in metropolitan areas), thus controlling for any relationship between the size of urban population and crime per capita. They also limited the capital punishment states to those which had actually used their death penalty statutes, thus controlling for the possibility that the mere existence of the death penalty may not carry the same weight unless capital punishment is known to be a possibility. Using the murder rate (number of willful homicides per 100,000 population) in 2010 as their index, they assembled the table and graph shown on the next page. They reasoned that if capital punishment has a deterrent effect, the murder rates should be lower in the state with capital punishment laws.

The results, as shown in the table and graph below, were that in eight of the ten pairs of states selected for their study the murder rates were **lower** in the state with capital punishment laws than in the state without capital punishment laws. The researchers concluded that the existence of the death penalty does work to deter murderers.

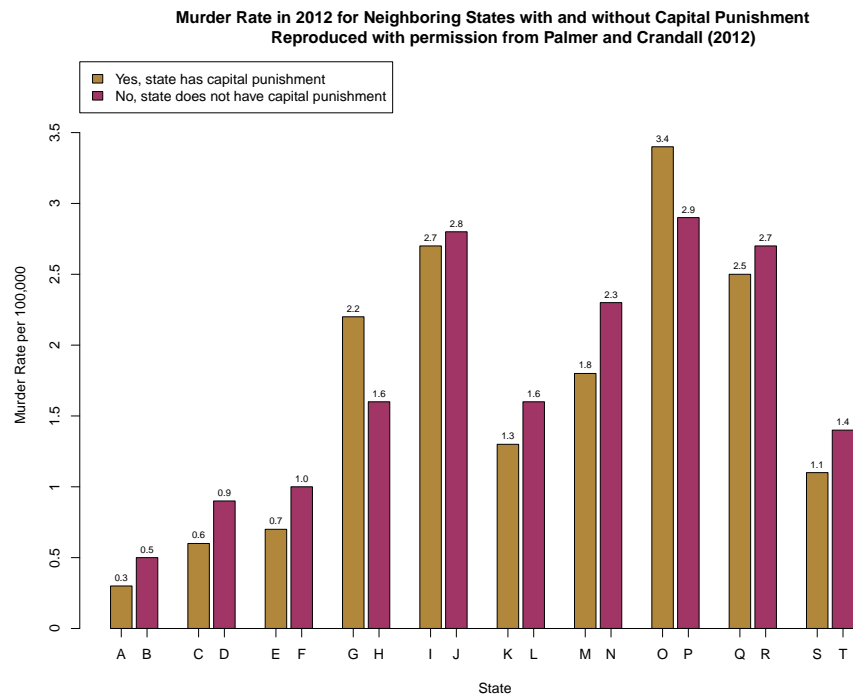
Critics of the study have complained that selection of a different set of ten neighboring states might have yielded a far different, perhaps even the opposite, result.

In replying to this criticism, Palmer and Crandall (2013) have recently reported a replication of their study, using a different set of ten states that share a common border but differ in whether their laws permit capital punishment or not. The results of this second study were essentially the same, murder rates being lower in the capital punishment state for seven of the ten comparisons.

Murder Rate in 2012 for Neighboring States With and Without Capital Punishment

Pair	State	Murder Rate	Capital Punishment	Pair	State	Murder Rate	Capital Punishment
1	A	0.3	Yes	6	K	1.3	Yes
	B	0.5	No		L	1.6	No
2	C	0.6	Yes	7	M	1.8	Yes
	D	0.9	No		N	2.3	No
3	E	0.7	Yes	8	O	3.4	Yes
	F	1.0	No		P	2.9	No
4	G	2.2	Yes	9	Q	2.5	Yes
	H	1.6	No		R	2.7	No
5	I	2.7	Yes	10	S	1.1	Yes
	J	2.8	No		T	1.4	No

Table reproduced with permission from Palmer and Crandall (2012)



Con Cross Section Details and Criticism

Does Capital Punishment Prevent Crime?

One of the most controversial public issues in recent years has been the effectiveness of capital punishment (the death penalty) in preventing murders. Proponents of capital punishment have argued that the possibility of execution deters people who might otherwise commit murders, whereas opponents of capital punishment denied this and maintain that the death penalty may even produce murders by setting a violent model of behavior. A recent research effort attempted to shed light on this controversy.

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The results, as shown in the table and graph below, were that in eight of the ten pairs of states selected for their study the murder rates were **higher** in the state with capital punishment laws than in the state without capital punishment laws. The researchers concluded that the existence of the death penalty does not work to deter murderers.

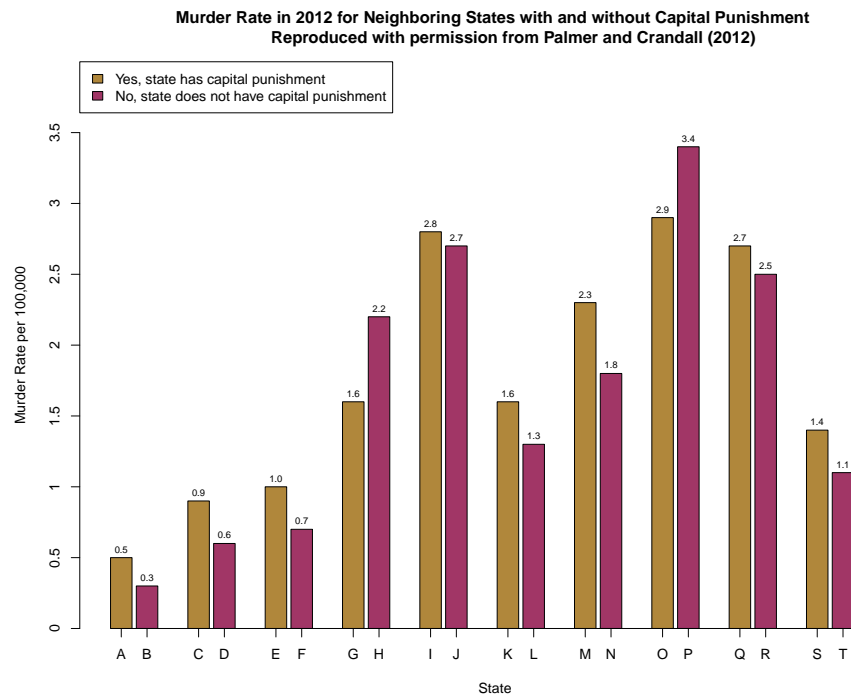
Critics of the study have complained that selection of a different set of ten neighboring states might have yielded a far different, perhaps even the opposite, result.

In replying to this criticism, Palmer and Crandall (2013) have recently reported a replication of their study, using a different set of ten states that share a common border but differ in whether their laws permit capital punishment or not. The results of this second study were essentially the same, murder rates being higher in the capital punishment state for seven of the ten comparisons.

Murder Rate in 2012 for Neighboring States With and Without Capital Punishment

Pair	State	Murder Rate	Capital Punishment	Pair	State	Murder Rate	Capital Punishment
1	A	0.5	Yes	6	K	1.6	Yes
	B	0.3	No		L	1.3	No
2	C	0.9	Yes	7	M	2.3	Yes
	D	0.6	No		N	1.8	No
3	E	1.0	Yes	8	O	2.9	Yes
	F	0.7	No		P	3.4	No
4	G	1.6	Yes	9	Q	2.7	Yes
	H	2.2	No		R	2.5	No
5	I	2.8	Yes	10	S	1.4	Yes
	J	2.7	No		T	1.1	No

Table reproduced with permission from Palmer and Crandall (2012)



Null Cross Section Details and Criticism

Does Capital Punishment Prevent Crime?

One of the most controversial public issues in recent years has been the effectiveness of capital punishment (the death penalty) in preventing murders. Proponents of capital punishment have argued that the possibility of execution deters people who might otherwise commit murders, whereas opponents of capital punishment denied this and maintain that the death penalty may even produce murders by setting a violent model of behavior. A recent research effort attempted to shed light on this controversy.

The researchers (Palmer and Crandall, 2012) decided to look at the difference in murder rates in states that share a common border but differ in whether their laws permit capital punishment or not. Carefully limiting the states included to those which had capital punishment laws in effect or not in effect for at least five years, they compiled a list of all possible pairs and then selected ten pairs of neighboring states that were alike in the degree of urbanization (percentage of the population living in metropolitan areas), thus controlling for any relationship between the size of urban population and crime per capita. They also limited the capital punishment states to those which had actually used their death penalty statutes, thus controlling for the possibility that the mere existence of the death penalty may not carry the same weight unless capital punishment is known to be a possibility. Using the murder rate (number of willful homicides per 100,000 population) in 2010 as their index, they assembled the table and graph shown on the next page. They reasoned that if capital punishment has a deterrent effect, the murder rates should be lower in the state with capital punishment laws.

The results, as shown in the table and graph below, were that in four of the ten pairs of states selected for their study the murder rates were **lower** in the state with capital punishment laws than in the state without capital punishment laws. In another four pairs, the **opposite** was true. In two of the ten pairs, the states had the **same** murder rates. The researchers concluded that the existence of the death penalty has an indeterminate deterrent effect on murderers.

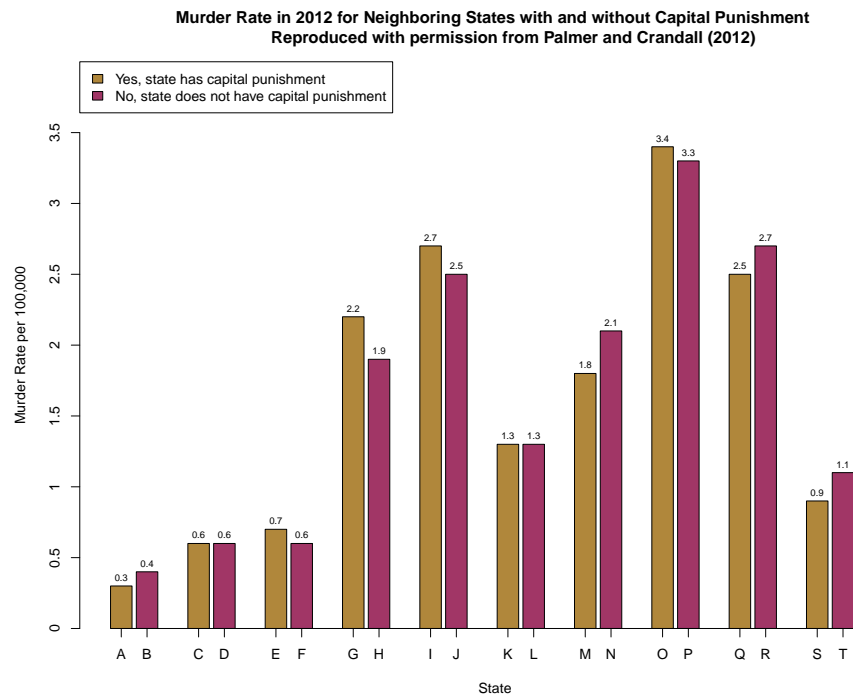
Critics of the study have complained that selection of a different set of ten neighboring states might have yielded a far different result.

In replying to this criticism, Palmer and Crandall (2013) have recently reported a replication of their study, using a different set of ten states that share a common border but differ in whether their laws permit capital punishment or not. The results of this second study were essentially the same, murder rates being lower in the capital punishment state for some comparisons and higher in others.

Murder Rate in 2012 for Neighboring States With and Without Capital Punishment

Pair	State	Murder Rate	Capital Punishment	Pair	State	Murder Rate	Capital Punishment
1	A	0.3	Yes	6	K	1.3	Yes
	B	0.4	No		L	1.3	No
2	C	0.6	Yes	7	M	1.8	Yes
	D	0.6	No		N	2.1	No
3	E	0.7	Yes	8	O	3.4	Yes
	F	0.6	No		P	3.3	No
4	G	2.2	Yes	9	Q	2.5	Yes
	H	1.9	No		R	2.7	No
5	I	2.7	Yes	10	S	1.1	Yes
	J	2.5	No		T	0.9	No

Table reproduced with permission from Palmer and Crandall (2012)



Outcomes:

- **CP Attitude:** Which view of capital punishment best summarizes your own? (1: I am very much against capital punishment; 7: I am very much in favor of capital punishment)
- **CP Belief:** Does capital punishment reduce crime? Please select the view that best summarizes your own. (1: I am very certain that capital punishment does not reduce crime; 7: I am very certain that capital punishment reduces crime.)

C Study 2: Minimum Wage

This study was conducted in collaboration with Andrew Guess. It showed that viewing pro or con videos about the minimum wage moved opinions about raising the minimum wage in the direction of information.

Sample: 1,170 Mechanical Turk subjects in wave 1, 1,019 in wave 2.

Dates of data collection: August 2014.

Treatments: Subjects were assigned to see 2 of 6 videos. A placebo group was assigned to see both placebo videos. The treatment groups were assigned to see any two of the four treatments videos – all orderings of two videos were possible, as shown in the table below.

Table C.4: Minimum Wage Treatment Conditions

	1 st Video		2 nd Video		Condition	Info Content	N
	Content	Tone	Content	Tone			
1	Con	Old	Con	Young	Con Con	-1	79
2	Con	Young	Con	Old	Con Con	-1	83
3	Con	Old	Pro	Old	Con Pro	0	86
4	Con	Old	Pro	Young	Con Pro	0	91
5	Con	Young	Pro	Old	Con Pro	0	93
6	Con	Young	Pro	Young	Con Pro	0	99
7	Pro	Old	Con	Old	Pro Con	0	79
8	Pro	Old	Con	Young	Pro Con	0	102
9	Pro	Young	Con	Old	Pro Con	0	78
10	Pro	Young	Con	Young	Pro Con	0	93
11	Pro	Old	Pro	Young	Pro Pro	1	90
12	Pro	Young	Pro	Old	Pro Pro	1	104
13	Placebo	Placebo	Placebo	Placebo	Placebo	NA	93

Pro Young

Title: Should We Raise the Minimum Wage?

Presenter: John Green

Length: 3:46

URL: <http://youtu.be/ZI9aDHLptMk>



Transcript:

Good morning Hank, it's Tuesday. So you've started a lot of businesses: Crash Course, Scishow, DFTBA Records, Vidcon, the ceaseless juggernaut that is 2D glasses. And Hank your companies employ dozens of people, none of whom work for the federally-mandated minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour.

But Hank, let's imagine that your next project is a fast food restaurant: Corndogs and Sodium. What impact would raising the federal minimum wage have on you and your employees?

At first glance it seems like a no-brainer. Any minimum wage is terrible, both for Corndogs and Sodium and for its employees. The Econ 101 argument goes like this. The free market is going to set wages where they need to be. Like, if you want to pay \$5.00 an hour for Corndogs and Sodium employees but no one takes the job for \$5.00 an hour, you're gonna have to pay more. You'll increase your wages until you can attract the kind of employees that you need to, you know, batter and fry and serve encased cast-off pig meat. And we know that economies tend to grow less when governments set and control prices, so higher minimum wages restrict economic growth. Plus, unemployment will go up, because if the minimum wage is \$10.00 per hour, Corndogs and Sodium can only afford to hire one person. But if there was an unrestricted wage market, then they could attract two people who would be willing to work for \$5.00 an hour each. So in the end, setting a minimum wage is an attempt to alleviate poverty that actually increases it.

However Hank, surprisingly enough, it turns out that actual labor markets are a lot more complex than the models of labor markets created by college freshmen. This brings us to a famous study by two economists: David Card and Alan Krueger. So in 1992, the state of New Jersey raised its minimum wage 18.8%. Pennsylvania, right next door, did not raise its minimum wage.

Card and Krueger had the bright idea to go to the border of New Jersey and Pennsylvania and do employment surveys on either side of it. And what they found is that restaurant employment in New Jersey actually increased when the minimum wage went up. Since then a bunch of other studies have confirmed Card and Krueger's findings, while some have found that there actually are negative effects to unemployment when you raise the minimum wage though it's surprisingly and consistently mild.

Why? Well, a bunch of reasons. For one, the minimum wage is probably near where the market would set it. But also, low-wage workers tend to spend most of their pay raises, which leads to increased economic activity, which in turn leads to more jobs. And higher wages also means less turnover, which leads to lower costs of training and hiring and firing. On the downside, higher wages are also associated with higher prices on goods and services that rely on low-wage labor which means that your corndogs, Hank, would probably be a bit more expensive.

But Hank the larger question is whether raising the minimum wage actually reduces poverty. And on that front there is consensus that – at least in the medium run – it does. A number of recent studies have shown that raising the minimum wage 10% reduces the number of people in poverty by about 2.5%. Even many opponents of the minimum wage acknowledge this. But it's important to note that, like, that won't always work. At some point, raising the minimum wage will lead to inflation and slower job creation. It's just not clear where that point is. But it's just as disingenuous to call the minimum wage a job killer as it is to say that the minimum wage is going to fix economic inequality. In short Hank, in economics, there's no such thing as a free lunch. But when it comes to reducing poverty without affecting employment, higher minimum wages seem at least to be the cheapest lunch available.

But ultimately, Hank, now that I'm, I guess, an employer, I'm more persuaded by the personal argument. We've found that paying a living wage, which we would do even if we opened Corndogs and Sodium, leads to happier more productive employees. Now I know that's hard to quantify, but it's also what's allowed Vidcon and DFBTA Records to retain employees for years and years and grow sustainably.

Now Hank, obviously I am not an economist (although I did win a bronze medal in economics at the Alabama state academic decathlon tournament in 1993). But our strategy has worked out pretty well for us so far, and it's also working at much larger companies like CostCo.

Hank, the United States is a rich country and I think that there's a growing body of evidence that the U.S. doesn't benefit from having poor workers. Of course raising the minimum wage isn't going to fix that problem, but I hope at least we can begin to have a nuanced conversation about the problem.

Hank – I'll see you on Friday.

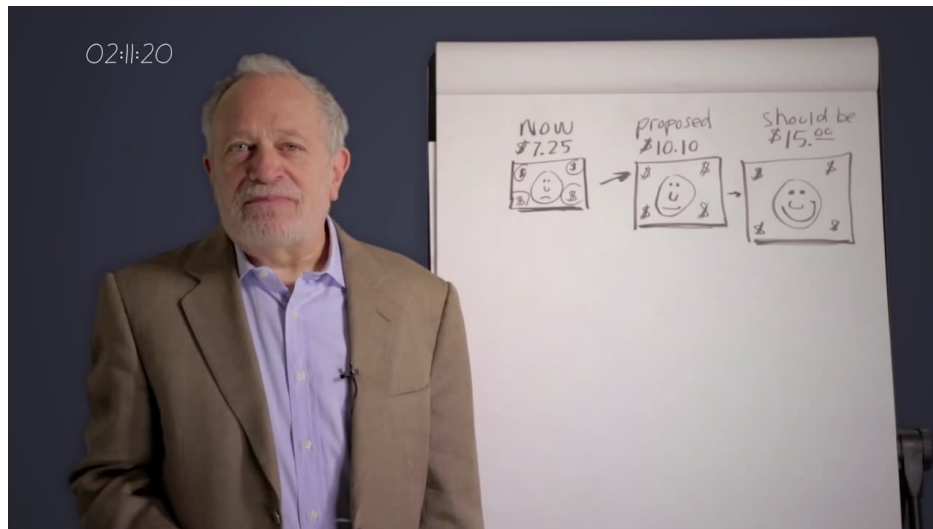
Pro Old

Title: Raise the Minimum Wage to \$15/hr (in 2 minutes 30 seconds)

Presenter: Robert B. Reich

Length: 2:41

URL: <http://youtu.be/G0qt153V3JI>



Transcript:

Democrats are getting ready for a major push to raise the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour. Now that's better than nothing. But it is not enough. The federal minimum wage should be raised to \$15.00 an hour, incrementally, over the next three years.

Here's seven reasons why.

One. Had the minimum wage of 1968 been adjusted for inflation it would be well above \$10.00 an hour today. A typical worker today is also more than twice as productive as back then. Adjusted for inflation and productivity gains therefore, the minimum wage should be at least \$15.00 an hour.

Two. \$10.10 an hour is not enough to lift all workers and their families out of poverty. This is especially true for millions of low-wage workers who want full time jobs but can only work and find part time work. Most of the workers are not teenagers. They are major breadwinners for their families.

Three. Because some employers don't pay wages that lift their workers out of poverty, the rest of us pay for their Medicaid, food stamps, housing, and other assistance. In effect, subsidizing these low-wage employers. Some, like McDonald's, actually advise their employees to use public programs because their pay is just too low.

Four. Some jobs may be lost if the minimum is raised to \$15.00. But many more people will be lifted out of poverty. And because low-wage workers will have more money to spend, their spending will create many more jobs.

Five. Such a wage increase is more likely to come out of profits than be passed on in higher prices, because most employers of low wage workers face intense competition for customers.

Six. Since Republicans will no doubt try to push Democrats to go even lower than their \$10.10 proposal, it's doubly important to be clear about what's right in the first place. Democrats should be talking about a bigger increase, not listening to Republican demands for a smaller one.

Seven, and finally. At a time in our nation's history when 95% of all economic gains are going to the top 1%, raising the minimum wage to \$15.00 isn't just smart economics, it's the right thing to do.

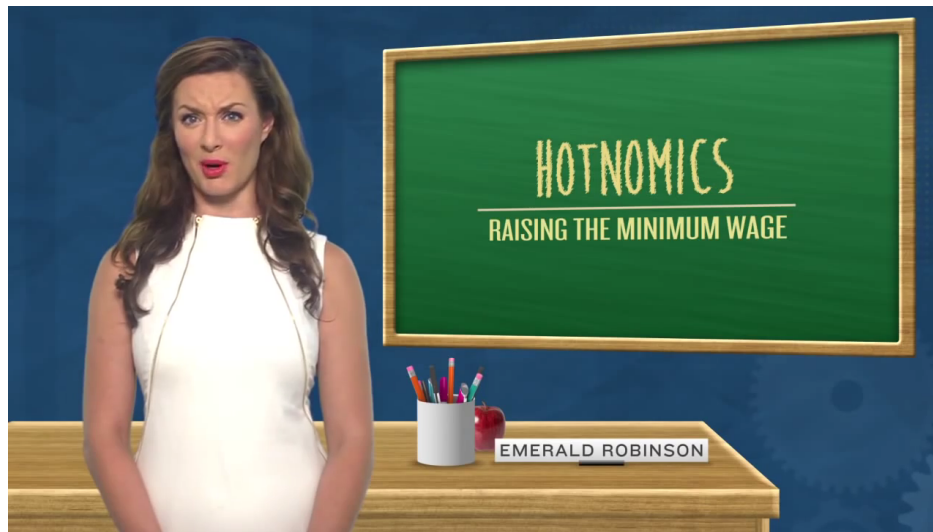
Con Young

Title: Hotnomics – Minimum Wage

Presenter: Emerald Robinson

Length: 2:32

URL: <http://youtu.be/hFG1Ka8AW6Q>



Transcript:

More money more happiness? Or more money more problems? We're cashing in on the effects of raising the minimum wage in this episode of Hotnomics. Raising the minimum wage is a hot topic right now, with President Obama calling on Congress to raise the minimum wage from \$7.25 an hour to \$10.10 an hour. That's a 40% hike! Who wouldn't take more money, right?

But when it comes to raising the federal minimum wage, it might be a little different than you think. You have to look at the bigger overall picture to really understand what it would mean for workers in our country. Workers in entry level jobs will earn a little more – that is if they even get to keep their job. When asked if they would cut hiring if the federal minimum wage was raised to \$10 an hour, the majority of chief financial officers across the country said "Yes."

A recent report from the Congressional Budget Office predicts that 500,000 Americans will lose their job by 2016 if the federal minimum wage is raised to \$10.10 an hour. 500,000 people! That's a lot of out of work teens, Mom and Dad.

Just over half of the minimum wage earners are 16 to 24 years old and tend to live in middle-class households with a family income of over \$65,000 dollars per year. Way above the poverty line. In fact, the CBO also estimates that only 20% of minimum wage earners fall below the poverty line. And with raising the federal minimum wage, the skill level that employers expect their employees to have also rises. So the youth from low income neighborhoods and disadvantaged adults that are supposed to benefit from a higher minimum wage actually get pushed out of jobs.

But you say, "I don't work in an entry-level job and I don't have teenage kids, so what do I care?" Well you might care the next time you go to get that \$1.50 hot dog special at your favorite

joint on the corner, when it's now \$2.00 a hot dog. Yep. Higher minimum wages means that business owners will be forced to up their prices to compensate for the increase in employee wages.

And what about the differences in the cost of living across the country? \$10.10 means one thing in Manhattan, as opposed to Birmingham, Alabama.

A recent letter to federal policy makers signed by 500 economists including several Nobel prize winners said that raising the minimum wage is not a silver bullet solution to poverty. Instead these economists support finding solutions that encourage employment, business creation, and boost earnings, rather than across the board mandates that raise the cost of labor.

So in this case, raising the federal minimum wage means more problems for the economy as a whole.

To learn more about how the economic machine works, keep tuning in to Hotnomics. Not your typical economics class.

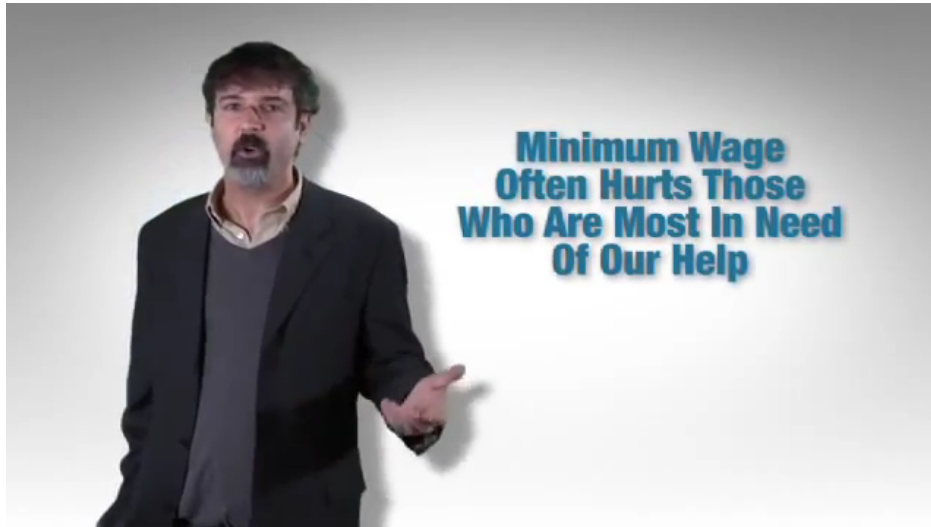
Con Old

Title: Does the Minimum Wage Hurt Workers?

Presenter: Antony Davies

Length: 4:28

URL: <http://youtu.be/Ct1Moeaa-W8>



Transcript:

Some politicians argue that raising the minimum wage helps the poor and disadvantaged. It might seem that way at first. Certainly workers who are earning \$8.00 an hour today would be better off if they were earning \$12.00 an hour instead. The problem is that this view of the minimum wage overlooks one important detail. A \$12.00 minimum wage doesn't force employers to pay \$12.00 to every worker. It forces them to pay \$12.00 to the workers the employer chooses to keep. The employer pays \$0.00 to the workers who get laid off, or who were never hired in the first place.

Let's look at an example. Suppose this guy owns a burger joint. The reason the employer hires a worker is because the worker generates value for the owner. Suppose that, not counting what he pays his worker, the owner makes 10 cents on every burger he sells.

Here's Al. Al can flip 100 burgers an hour. If the owner makes 10 cents on every burger, not counting what he pays Al, then Al generates \$10.00 worth of burgers for the owner every hour. If the owner pays Al \$8.00 an hour, then the owner makes \$2.00 an hour profit: \$10.00 an hour on the burgers, minus \$8.00 an hour that he pays Al.

Now, suppose that the owner hires three workers of varying abilities: Al, Bob, and Carl. Bob is a faster worker, and can cook 120 burgers an hour. Carl is a slower worker, and can only cook 90 burgers an hour. Since each burger is worth 10 cents to the owner, each hour Al produces \$10.00 worth of burgers, Bob produces \$12.00, and Carl produces \$9.00. Suppose the owner pays Al, Bob, and Carl \$8.00 an hour each. After paying the workers, the owner earns \$2.00 an hour profit from employing Al, \$4.00 an hour profit from employing Bob, and \$1.00 an hour profit from employing Carl. In total, the owner makes \$7.00 profit per hour from employing the three workers.

Now, suppose the government imposes a minimum wage of \$9.50 an hour. What does this do to the profit of our three workers? Al produces \$10.00 worth of burgers per hour. At a cost of \$9.50 an hour, Al now generates a profit of only 50 cents an hour for the owner. Bob produces \$12.00 worth of burgers an hour. At a cost of \$9.50 an hour, Bob now generates a profit of \$2.50 an hour. But look at what happens to Carl. Carl produces \$9.00 worth of burgers per hour, but he now costs the owner \$9.50 per hour in wages. Carl is no longer generating profit for the owner. Carl now generates a loss. In fact, the owner would be 50 cents an hour better off if he fires Carl.

The minimum wage was good for Al and Bob. They're each a \$1.50 an hour better off than they were before. But it was devastating for Carl. Carl lost his job, and so is \$8.00 an hour worse off than he was before.

Here's the first lesson of the minimum wage. It doesn't help the worker at the expense of the owner. It helps the more productive workers at the expense of the less productive workers. What's even worse is that the more productive workers usually don't need the help. What do you think would have happened over time to Bob, the most productive worker? Either the owner would have rewarded Bob's higher productivity with a raise, or, if the owner didn't reward Bob, one of the owner's competitors would have offered Bob more money to go work for the competitor. Either way, Bob would have ended up earning more anyway.

This is the second lesson of the minimum wage. Many of the workers that it does help would have ended up better off anyway, even if the minimum wage hadn't existed. It works this way in the real world. Increases in the minimum wage have little effect on unemployment among college graduates. Increases in the minimum wage increase unemployment among high school graduates. And among the least skilled, least educated workers, increases in the minimum wage significantly increase unemployment.

The minimum wage may be a well-intentioned policy. But it often hurts the very workers who are in most need of our help.

Placebo 1

Title: Are Workers Who Receive Tips Eligible for Minimum Wage?

Presenter: Daniel Swanson

Length: 0:28

URL: <http://youtu.be/sRMvH2L4Dss>



Transcript:

Workers who receive tips, like waitresses or waiters, are entitled to the minimum wage, but it works a little different for those folks. The employer is required to pay them at least \$2.13 an hour, but their tips must equal the amount of the minimum wage, which is \$7.25 an hour. If their total compensation does not equal \$7.25 an hour, the employer must pay the difference.

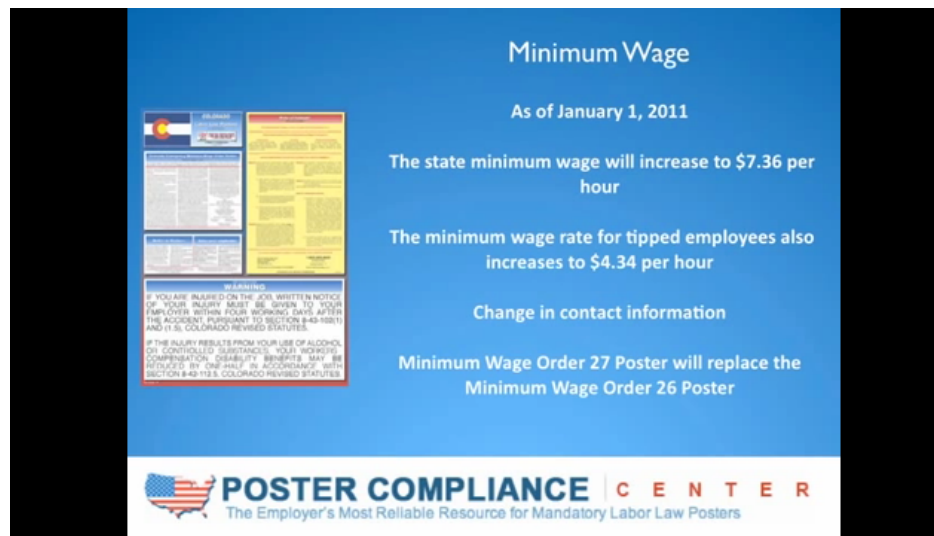
Placebo 2

Title: Labor Law Posters: Colorado Minimum Wage Labor Law Poster

Presenter: Poster Compliance Center

Length: 0:28

URL: <http://youtu.be/xd7RrMW8MwE>



Transcript:

Poster Compliance Center would like to welcome you to our labor law quick update for Colorado. Minimum wage regulations are changing and we would like to inform you of these important changes. As of January 1st, 2011, the state minimum wage will increase to \$7.36 per hour. The minimum wage rate for tipped employees also increases to \$4.34 per hour. Changes have been made to the contact information listed. The minimum wage order 27 poster will replace the minimum wage order 26 poster. Poster Compliance Center would like to thank you for joining us. We look forward to serving you and all of your labor law needs.

Outcomes

- **Favor Raising MW:** The federal minimum wage is currently \$7.25 per hour. Do you favor or oppose raising the federal minimum wage? (1: Very much opposed to raising the federal minimum wage, 7: Very much in favor of raising the federal minimum wage)
- **MW Amount:** What do you think the federal minimum wage should be? Please enter an amount between \$0.00 and \$25.00 in the text box below.

D Study 3: Gun Control

Haider-Markel and Joslyn (2001) report the results of test of experimental primes on attitudes toward gun control, finding that a public safety frame decreased support for a controlled carry law, relative to a citizen's rights frame.

Sample: 1,502 Mechanical Turk respondents in wave 1; 1,311 in wave 2.

Dates of data collection: March 2015.

Treatments:

- **Public Safety Frame:** Concealed handgun laws have recently received national attention. Some people have argued that laws allowing citizens to carry concealed handguns **threaten public safety** because they would allow almost anyone to carry a gun almost anywhere, even onto **school grounds**. What do you think about concealed handgun laws?
- **Citizens' Rights Frame:** Concealed handgun laws have recently received national attention. Some people have argued that law-abiding citizens have the **right** to protect themselves. What do you think about concealed handgun laws?

Outcomes:

- **Concealed Carry Support:** 1: Strongly Oppose to 7: Strongly Support.

E Study 4: Superordinate Identity

Study 4 is a replication of Transue (2007), which reports the results of a test of identity frames on support for taxes. These frames had small to negligible effects on tax preferences.

Sample: 496 Mechanical Turk respondents in wave 1, 447 in wave 2.

Dates of data collection: March 2015.

Treatments:

- **Ethnic Identity Frame:** How close do you feel to your ethnic or racial group? Very close, somewhat close, not very close, not at all close.
- **Superordinate Identity Frame:** How close do you feel to other Americans? Very close, somewhat close, not very close, not at all close.

Outcomes:

- **Support Tax Increase (Public Schools):** Some people have said that taxes need to be raised to take care of pressing national needs. How willing would you be to have your taxes raised to improve education in public schools? Very willing, somewhat willing, not very willing, not at all willing.
- **Support Tax Increase (Minority Opportunity):** Some people have said that taxes need to be raised to take care of pressing national needs. How willing would you be to have your taxes raised to improve educational opportunities for minorities? Very willing, somewhat willing, not very willing, not at all willing.

F Study 5: Patriot Act

Study 5 is a replication of Chong and Druckman (2010), which reports the results of an experiment testing the effects of pro and con information on attitudes toward the Patriot Act. This study is unique among those I replicated in being the only study to have included an over time component originally.

Sample: 1161 Mechanical Turk respondents in wave 1, 912 in wave 2.

Dates of data collection: March 2015.

Treatments: Subjects could be assigned to receive no treatment, a series of Pro-Patriot Act messages, a series of Con-Patriot Act messages, or both types of messages.

Pro messages:

- The Patriot Act was enacted in the weeks after September 11, 2001 to strengthen law enforcement powers and technology.
- Under the Patriot Act, law enforcement agencies have more tools to prevent new terrorist incidents.
- The Patriot Act gives U. S. security forces the resources they need to identify terrorist plots on American soil and to prevent attacks before they occur.
- The Patriot Act enhances domestic security through counterterrorism funding, surveillance, border protection, and other security policies.
- The Patriot Act includes less known provisions including funding for terrorism victims and their families.
- The Patriot Act enables officials to effectively combat national security threats, and provides prompt aid and compensation to victims in the event of a terrorist attack.

Con messages:

- The Patriot Act was enacted in the weeks after September 11, 2001 to strengthen law enforcement powers and technology.
- The Patriot Act has sparked numerous controversies and been criticized for weakening the protection of citizens' civil liberties.
- Under the Patriot Act, the government has access to citizens' confidential information from telephone and e-mail communications.
- The Patriot Act allows law enforcement officials to search citizens' homes, businesses, and financial records without their permission or knowledge.
- The Patriot Act significantly expands government policing powers without specifying an agency that is responsible for safeguarding citizens' rights.
- Since its passage, the Patriot Act has been challenged in federal courts on the grounds that many of its provisions are unconstitutional.

Subjects who were assigned to Pro, Con, or Both information treatments were also assigned to a processing condition. I will collapse over these categories in all my analyses.

- On-line processing. After reading each statement, subjects are asked: “To what extent does this statement decrease or increase your support for the Patriot Act?”
- Memory-based processing. After reading each statement, subjects are asked: “How dynamic would you say this statement is? (Remember that a statement is more dynamic when it uses more vivid action words.)”
- No instructions. Subjects are asked to read each statement with no further instructions.

Outcomes:

- **Patriot Act Support:** “Do you oppose or support the Patriot Act?” 1: Oppose very strongly to 7: Support very strongly.

G Study 6: Elite Endorsements

Study 6 is a replication of Nicholson (2012), which reports the results of a test of partisan cues on support for legislation. Relative to out-party cues, in-party cues increase support for legislation.

Sample: 1,245 Mechanical Turk respondents in wave 1; 1,095 in wave 2.

Dates of data collection: March 2015.

Treatments:

- **In Party Cue:** For each of the dependent variables shown below, I define a subject as being in the “In Party” condition if their own party identification matches that of the endorser.
- **Out Party Cue:** For each of the dependent variables shown below, I define a subject as being in the “Out Party” condition if their own party identification is opposite that of the endorser.

Outcomes:

- **Support for Foreclosure Bill:** A bill circulating in Congress [supported by Barack Obama/John McCain/George W. Bush/the Democratic Party/the Republican Party] would allow the Federal Housing Administration to guarantee up to \$300 billion in new loans to help at-risk homeowners refinance into more affordable mortgages. What is your view of this bill? (-1: I oppose this policy, 0: Not sure, 1: I support this policy)
- **Support for Immigration Bill:** As you know, there has been a lot of talk about immigration reform policy in the news. One proposal [backed by Barack Obama/John McCain/George W. Bush/the Democratic Party/the Republican Party] provided legal status and a path to legal citizenship for the approximately 12 million illegal immigrants currently residing in the United States. What is your view of this immigration reform policy? (-1: I oppose this policy, 0: Not sure, 1: I support this policy)

The original analysis did not group the treatments into In Party and Out Party, but because the experiment is somewhat underpowered, I think that doing so gives a clearer picture of the modest effect that party endorsements in general have on support. In the analyses I present below, I include an indicator for party, as Republicans and Democrats have different probabilities of assignment to in- and out- party treatments. In addition to the endorsers listed above, I included Hillary Clinton and Jeb Bush. Unfortunately, due to a coding error, those assigned to see endorsements by Hillary Clinton or Jeb Bush in the immigration experiment actually saw an endorsement by George W. Bush. This error is addressed when constructing the categorical party match treatment variable.

H Studies 7 and 8: Free Trade

Studies 7 and 8 are replications of Hiscox (2006), which reports the results of a test of positive and negative frames on support for free trade.

GfK Sample: 2,084 GfK respondents in wave 1; 1,838 in wave 2.

Dates of data collection: August 2015.

MTurk Sample: 2,972 Mechanical Turk respondents in wave 1; 2,307 in wave 2.

Dates of data collection: July 2015.

Treatments: This study employed a 2 X 4 factorial design, where the first factor is the Expert treatment and the second factor is the frame the subject is shown: positive, negative, both, or neither.

- **Expert:** According to the New York Times, almost 100 percent of American economists support increasing trade with other nations. In 1993 over a thousand economists, including all living winners of the Nobel Prize in economics, signed an open letter to the New York Times urging people to support efforts to increase trade between the United States and neighboring countries.
- **Positive:** Many people believe that increasing trade with other nations creates jobs and allows Americans to buy more types of goods at lower prices.
- **Negative:** Many people believe that increasing trade with other nations leads to job losses and exposes American producers to unfair competition.
- **Positive + Negative:** Many people believe that increasing trade with other nations creates jobs and allows Americans to buy more types of goods at lower prices. Others believe that increasing trade with other nations leads to job losses and exposes American producers to unfair competition.
- **Control** (No introduction before asking the free trade question.)

Outcomes:

- **Support for Free Trade:** Do you favor or oppose increasing trade with other nations? (0: oppose; 1: favor)

I Studies 9 and 10: Frame Breadth

Studies 9 and 10 are replications of Hopkins and Mummolo (2015), which shows that frames in one issue area by and large affect only “target” attitudes and not attitudes in other domains.

GfK Sample: 3,189 GfK respondents in wave 1; 2,510 in wave 2.

Dates of data collection: August 2015.

MTurk Sample: 2,972 Mechanical Turk respondents in wave 1; 2,281 in wave 2.

Dates of data collection: July 2015.

Treatments: Subjects were assigned at random to one of the treatment texts below, before answering the following question: “The argument below was recently made by a U.S. Senator. Please take a moment to read the argument carefully and then tell us what you think. [Treatment Text] Do you think the Senator is making a convincing argument? Please tell us why or why not. [Text entry]. ”

- **Crime Argument:** America is very vulnerable to violent crime, with forty-two Americans murdered every single day on average. Innocent people can be killed in their front yards. Across the country, we have to do everything we can to reduce the threat of violent crime. We have to stop violent criminals before they act. This means cracking down on the smaller offenses that all too often lead to violent crime, and making sure that convicted criminals always serve out their full sentences.
- **Health Care Argument:** Health care is one of the most complicated issues we face. It involves 1 of every 6 dollars spent here in the United States. The health care system includes millions of doctors and nurses and thousands of hospitals and clinics. Together, they regularly make decisions that can mean life or death. The government in Washington can’t even balance its own budget. How can we trust it to run something as complicated as the health care system?
- **Stimulus Argument:** With a recession as deep as this one, there are more than 10 million unemployed Americans, and it’s going to take years for our economy to recover. In February 2009, the government in Washington made things worse by passing an \$800 billion stimulus package, which is more than \$2,500 for every person living in this country. Now, it looks like a lot of that money didn’t help the economy. Unemployment is still very high. The money went to pork-barrel projects and federal bureaucrats rather than creating jobs for unemployed Americans. The government in Washington can’t even balance its own budget. How can we trust it to spend so much taxpayer money?
- **Terror Argument:** The September 11th attacks and the news that al-Qaeda was planning new attacks on U.S. soil show how vulnerable America still is to terrorists. Innocent people can be killed while traveling to visit family or going to work. Across the country, we have to do everything we can to reduce the threat of terrorism. We have to stop terrorists before they act. This means conducting more frequent searches of suspicious people boarding planes, trains, subways, and buses.

Outcomes: Spending preferences were measured in all four areas, regardless of treatment assignment. The response options were 1: Decreased a lot, 2: Decreased a moderate amount, 3: Decreased a little; 4: Kept about the same; 5: Increased a little; 6: Increased a moderate amount; 7: Increased a great deal.

- **Crime Spending** Should federal spending on dealing with crime be increased, decreased, or kept the same?
- **Health Care Spending** Should federal spending on health care be increased, decreased, or kept the same?
- **Stimulus Spending** Should federal spending to stimulate the economy be increased, decreased, or kept the same?
- **Terrorism Spending** Should federal spending on the war on terrorism be increased, decreased, or kept the same?

J Studies 11 and 12: Polarization

Studies 11 and 12 are replications of Levendusky and Malhotra (2015), which shows that descriptions of a polarized electorate led subjects to view Republicans and Democrats as further apart on issues.

GfK Sample: 2,115 GfK respondents in wave 1; 1,855 in wave 2.

Dates of data collection: August 2015.

MTurk Sample: 2,972 Mechanical Turk respondents in wave 1; 2,288 in wave 2.

Dates of data collection: July 2015.

Treatments: Subjects were assigned at random to see one of three treatments: **Polarized**, **Moderate**, or a **Placebo**.

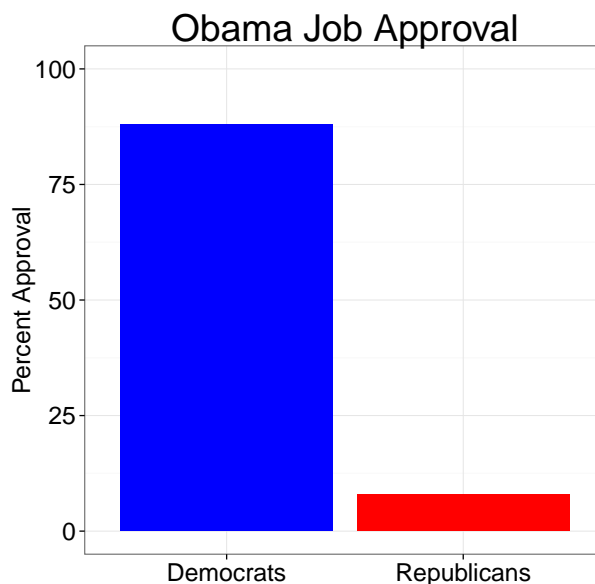
Polarized:

Electorate as Divided as Ever
Jefferson Graham (USA Today)

In the aftermath of the 2012 presidential election, interviews with voters at a diner in Smithfield, PA reveal an electorate as divided as ever. When asked about the importance of the election results, Republican Marlene Evers of nearby Fairchance said, “I can’t believe Obama won. He is a radical socialist. He will destroy the Christian values set forth by the Founding Fathers that have made this country great. If he gets his way, he’ll overturn 5,000 years of tradition and allow gay marriage, destroying the American family. We must stop him any way we can.”

Later on that evening, Democratic voter and Obama supporter Dan Thompson of Masontown pointed to economic issues as influencing his vote in the election. “The Republican Party is for corporate greed and will do nothing but destroy the lives and hopes of regular working people in this country. They tried to use voter ID laws to steal this election, because they know the American people reject their ideas.” He added, “Bush was a complete idiot who bankrupted this nation with the Iraq War, and Romney would have been just as bad, destroying the economy. Republicans want to roll back women’s reproductive freedom by restricting access to contraception and labeling women who defend it sluts and prostitutes.”

As we left Smithfield, it is clear that Republicans and Democrats in the area seem as divided as ever before. This same pattern also holds nationally: Democrats and Republicans across the country are deeply divided. For example, Gallup data released last week shows that while nearly 9 in 10 Democratic voters (88 percent) approve of President Obama’s job as president, less than 1 in 10 Republicans (8 percent) approves. This 80 point gap between the parties in approval is among the largest ever recorded (see figure). “Differences in Obama’s approval reflect fundamental divides between the parties,” says Stanford political science professor Neil Malhotra. “Democrats and Republicans really do hold different beliefs.”



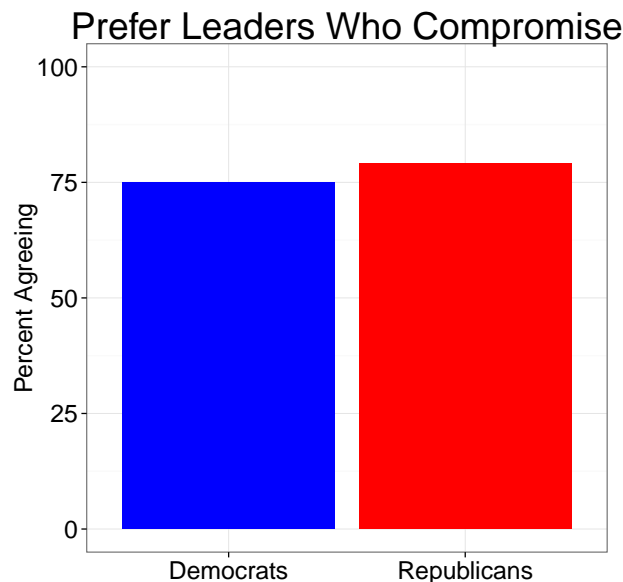
Moderate:

Electorate Remains Moderate
Jefferson Graham (USA Today)

In the aftermath of the 2012 presidential election, interviews with voters at a diner in Smithfield, PA reveal few real divisions in the electorate. When asked about Obama's victory, Republican Marlene Evers of nearby Fairchance said, "I don't agree with all of Obama's economic policies, but he seems to be trying hard to resolve America's economic problems. He's doing things that we all agree with, like trying to bring down the deficit. He's also trying to find a middle ground on social issues like his gay marriage decision. While he supports gay marriage, he did not push to change federal on policy on this issue, knowing that it might upset some voters. I am pro-life, but I agree with President Obama that women need access to safe and affordable family planning tools."

Later on that evening, Democratic voter and Obama supporter Dan Thompson of Masontown pointed to economic issues as influencing his vote in the election. "I'm not an ideologue. I find myself mostly in the middle, and really just want the country to get back on track and find common-sense solutions to get our economy fixed." Thompson also noted that he wanted a break from the culture wars, and wants politicians to stop focusing on controversial social issues like abortion. "Americans can all agree that, even if we support the right to abortion, it should be rare and avoided, and the President's policies are trying to reduce the need for abortion in this country."

As we left Smithfield, it is surprising to find that Republicans and Democrats in the electorate seem to want the same things, very different from the picture we get from Washington. This same pattern also holds nationally: Democrats and Republicans across the country are not really very divided. For example, recent data from the Pew Center for the People and the Press show that Democrats and Republicans alike overwhelmingly support leaders who compromise to get things done. 75 percent of Democrats feel this way, as do 79 percent of Republicans, a nearly identical level (see figure). "This shows that there is no divide between ordinary Democrats and Republicans," says Stanford political science professor Neil Malhotra. "Democrats and Republicans really do want the same things."



Placebo:

The Lasting Appeal of So You Think You Can Dance

After 12 seasons of dance, you've got to shake things up a bit and bring in something fresh – and the new format really has done that. From what I've seen, being in Vegas and watching the audition cities that I had not seen previously, we are getting some of the best of the best talent. And on my side, the Street side, we're getting some incredible people who previously would not have even tried for So You Think You Can Dance. We're dealing with people who have never left their cities, much less taken any dance classes or had any formal training, and now they're starting to come out and wanting to show what they can do – because they have the chance to do what it is that they do.

There's something about a family show like So You Think You Can Dance offering a wide variety of talent in many different packages – whether it be color, creed, size, anything – because you get to see these people doing what it is they're strongest at, and you never know who that's going to inspire as they're watching. And I think that's been one of the strongest common threads through every season: that it's ongoing inspiration for the future generation, and there's always somebody that you can connect with. Out of the 20, there's at least one person, and even if they don't make it to the top 20, if you watch through the audition specials, you'll see someone that you connect with; they'll strike a chord. It moves you.

Outcomes: I focus on two dependent variables. The first, *Perceived Polarization*, is built from subjects' responses to a series of policy questions. After giving their response to each question in the list below, subjects were asked how they think a “typical Democratic voter” and a “typical Republican voter” would respond to each question. The outcome variable is the average of the absolute values of the differences in subjects' Democratic and Republican Responses.

- The tax rates on the profits people make from selling stocks and bonds, called capital gains taxes, are currently lower than the income tax rates many people pay. Do you think that capital gains tax rates should be increased, decreased, or kept about the same? (7 point scale. Decreased a lot: -3; Increased a lot: 3)
- There is some debate about whether or not undocumented immigrants who were brought to this country illegally as children should be deported. Which of the following positions on the scale below best represents your position on this issue? (7 point scale. Very strongly oppose deportation: -3; Very strongly support deportation: 3)
- The United States is currently considering signing additional free trade agreements with Central American, South American, and Asian countries. The Democratic Party wants to make it more difficult for the U.S. to enter into such agreements. The Republican Party wants to make it easier to do so. What do you think? Do you support or oppose the United States signing more free trade agreements with Central American, South American, and Asian countries? (7 point scale. Very strongly oppose free trade: -3; Very strongly support free trade: 3)
- Public financing of elections is when the government pays for the cost of campaigning for various offices, rather than the campaigns relying on donations from the general public, corporations, or unions. Democrats typically support public financing plans while Republicans

have wanted to eliminate them. What do you think? Do you support or oppose the government paying for the public financing of elections? (7 point scale. Very strongly oppose public financing: -3; Very strongly support public financing: 3)

K Study 13: Immigration

Study 13 is a replication of Brader et al. (2008), which finds that news articles focusing on the negative economic impacts of immigration decrease support for immigration.

Sample: 2,138 Mechanical Turk subjects in wave 1; 1,773 in wave 2.

Dates of data collection: July 2015.

Treatments: Subjects could be assigned to one of four treatment stories or a placebo news story. The treatment stories were made to look like articles in the New York Times. In the analysis, I group the treatments into **Positive** and **Negative**, marginalizing over the immigrant origins.

Negative European/Latino

The New York Times

Immigration Concerns Governors

Questions Raised About Economic, Cultural Impact of Immigrants

NEW YORK (AP) — During the 1990s, more immigrants entered the United States than in any previous decade, and the growing number of immigrants in the U.S. clearly has some Americans worried. At a state governors' convention in June, many governors called for the Bush Administration and Congress to step in to restrict the flow of immigrants.

Several governors voiced concern that immigrants are driving down the wages of American workers, while taxpayers are forced to meet the rising costs of social services for the newcomers. Governors say these views are shared by many of their constituents.

John Baine, shift manager at a large auto parts factory in Cleveland, said he is angered that "a number of friends have been laid-off or forced to take a pay cut" because of the influx of cheap immigrant labor.

Nancy Petrey, a Boulder, Colo. nurse, has seen staff let go for similar reasons. "People give twenty years of their lives to this hospital and then, boom, they're out the door because some foreigner will do their job for half the pay," Petrey said. "It just isn't right."

Governors also say constituents are worried that the country is no longer a "melting pot," because new immigrants are not adopting American values or blending

into their new social world.

Mary Shown, an Omaha-based sales associate, says she is frustrated by the fact that recent immigrants to her area "do not learn English or make any effort to fit in."

But Callaway, a construction supervisor in Newark, says he sees similar problems with immigrants hired by his company. "These people are totally unwilling to adopt American values like hard work and responsibility," Callaway said. "I try not to complain, but sometimes they are so pushy and uncooperative — it's not acceptable."

When asked his opinion, Jose Sanchez, a recent immigrant from Mexico, says he welcomes the chance for a better life in America. "Many of my cousins find work here and now it's my turn. I want a good job and benefits."

"That," Sanchez added, "that doesn't mean I have to change who I am. We love our culture. I'm proud to be from Mexico."

While there was agreement at the convention that the federal government needs to do more to help states manage the rising tide of newcomers, few governors agree on exactly why immigration levels have increased.

Some blame the Immigration Act passed by Congress in 1990, which loosened federal restrictions on immigration. Others point to the fact that large companies are



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attracting immigrants to the U.S. with the promise of prosperity, a practice that has become widespread in recent years. Still others maintain that, in a world full of turmoil, people are attracted here by the hope of a better way of life.

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Positive European/Latino

The New York Times

Immigration Heartens Governors

Promise Seen in Economic, Cultural Contribution of Immigrants

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Outcomes:

- **Support for Immigration:** Do you think the number of immigrants from foreign countries who are permitted to come to the United States to live should be increased a lot, increased a little, left the same as it is now, decreased a little, or decreased a lot? (1: Decreased a lot, 5: Increased a lot)
- **Negative Impact:** In your opinion, how likely is it that immigration will have a negative financial impact on many Americans? (Very Likely, Somewhat Likely, Somewhat Unlikely, Very Unlikely) (1: Very Unlikely, 4: Very Likely)

L Study 14: System Threat

Study 14 is a replication of Craig and Richeson (2014), which shows small effects of a news story describing the US as becoming “majority-minority” on various measures of system threat.

Sample: 1,276 Mechanical Turk subjects in wave 1; 1,065 in wave 2.

Dates of data collection: July 2015.

Treatments:

Majority Minority Treatment

In a Generation, Racial Minorities May Be the U.S. Majority

New U.S. Census Bureau data suggest that America will become a majority-minority nation much faster than once predicted. The nation’s racial minority population is steadily rising, advancing an unmistakable trend that could make minorities the new American majority by midcentury.

The data show a declining number of White adults and growing under-18 populations of Hispanics, Asians, and other minorities. Demographers calculate that by 2042, Americans who identify themselves as Hispanic, Black, Asian, American Indian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander will together outnumber non-Hispanic Whites. The main reasons for the accelerating change are rapid immigration growth and significantly higher birthrates among racial and ethnic minorities. As White baby boomers age past their childbearing years, younger Hispanic parents are having children and driving U.S. population growth. For example, there are now roughly 9 births for every 1 death among Hispanics, compared to a roughly one-to-one ratio for Whites.

The latest figures are predicated on current and historical trends, which can be thrown awry by several variables, including prospective overhauls of public policy.

Placebo

U.S. Census Bureau Reports Residents Now Move at a Higher Rate.

New U.S. Census Bureau data suggest that the rate of geographical mobility, or the number of individuals who have moved within the past year, is increasing. The national mover rate increased from 11.9 percent in 2008 (the lowest rate since the U.S. Census Bureau began tracking the data) to 12.5 percent in 2009.

According to the new data, 37.1 million people changed residences in the U.S. within the past year. 84.5 percent of all movers stayed within the same state. Renters were more than five times more likely to move than homeowners. The estimates also reveal that many of the nation’s fastest-growing cities are suburbs. Specifically, principal cities within metropolitan areas experienced a net loss of 2.1 million movers, while the suburbs had a net gain of 2.4 million movers. For those who moved to a different county or state, the reasons for moving varied considerably by the length of their move.

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Outcomes:

- **Way of Life:** Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statement:
The American way of life is seriously threatened. (1: Strongly Disagree, 7: Strongly Agree)
- **Support for Immigration:** Do you think the number of immigrants from foreign countries who are allowed to come to the U.S. to live should be increased a lot, increased a little, left the same as it is now, decreased a little, or decreased a lot? (1: Decreased a lot, 5: Increased a lot)

M Study 15: Expert Economists

Study 15 is a replication of (Johnston and Ballard, 2014), which found that informing the public of economists' expert opinion on various economic policies exerted a profound effect on subjects stated preferences. In five issue areas, subjects who learned of economists' views on policy were far more likely to support those positions than subjects in a control condition.

Sample: 2,985 Mechanical Turk subjects in wave 1; 2,487 in wave 2.

Dates of data collection: July 2015.

Treatments: Subjects were assigned to respond to an economic opinion question of five topics. Subjects were assigned to see the "expert" or "control" versions of each question. Technically, this is a 2 x 5 factorial design, in which the first factor is whether subjects saw economists' opinions and the second factor is which economic opinion question seen. The estimand is the effect of learning economists' opinions on subjects' agreement with the economists' point of view. The order of the five questions was randomized as well.

Factor 1:

- **Expert:** A sample of professional economists with widely varying political preferences was asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the following statement: [Treatment Text] To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Disagree Strongly, Uncertain)
- **Control:** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Disagree Strongly, Uncertain)

Factor 2:

- **High Skill Immigration:** The average US citizen would be better off if a larger number of highly educated foreign workers were legally allowed to immigrate to the US each year. (Economists: Strongly Agree: 49, Agree: 46)
- **Fiscal Sustainability:** Long run fiscal sustainability in the U.S. will require cuts in currently promised Medicare and Medicaid benefits and/or tax increases that include higher taxes on households with incomes below \$250,000. (Economists: Strongly Agree: 56, Agree: 35)
- **Trade with China:** Trade with China makes most Americans better off because, among other advantages, they can buy goods that are made or assembled more cheaply in China. (Economists: Strongly Agree: 59, Agree: 41)
- **Tax Cut:** A cut in federal income tax rates in the US right now would raise taxable income enough so that the annual total tax revenue would be higher within five years than without the tax cut. (Economists: Strongly Disagree: 57, Disagree: 39)
- **Gold Standard:** If the US replaced its discretionary monetary policy regime with a gold standard, defining a "dollar" as a specific number of ounces of gold, the price-stability and employment outcomes would be better for the average American. (Economists: Strongly Disagree: 66, Disagree: 34)

Outcomes:

- **Agree:** For each question, the agreement dependent variable was coded 1 if the subject chose either “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” when the economists did or “Strongly Disagree” or “Disagree” when the economists did.

N Study 16: Mental Health

Study 16 is a replication of (McGinty et al., 2013), which shows that a news article about a mass shooting affects support for stricter gun control laws as well as perceptions of how dangerous people with serious mental illness are.

Sample: 2,985 Mechanical Turk subjects in wave 1; 2,474 in wave 2.

Dates of data collection: July 2015.

Treatments:

News The gunman who opened fire in an Indianapolis park yesterday morning has been identified as Indianapolis resident Jake Robinson, age 30. According to police, the shooter has a history of serious mental illness. Mr. Robinson’s motivation for opening fire in Smith Park in central Indianapolis is unclear. Witnesses said Mr. Robinson arrived at the park around seven-thirty am and appeared agitated, pacing up and down and talking to himself.

At approximately 8:15 am, Mr. Robinson took a gun out of his bag and began to shoot. Three adults passing through the park on their way to work were shot and killed. Three more adults and two children were wounded. The police officer leading the investigation said that Jake Robinson used a semiautomatic weapon to shoot about 30 bullets in a row before he was tackled by a security guard from a nearby building. Little is known about Mr. Robinson, who lived alone and appears to have no immediate family. Mr. Robinson’s cousin, who lives in South Carolina, said Mr. Robinson was hospitalized for mental illness last year.

LCM Ban Yesterday’s shooting in downtown Indianapolis left residents looking for solutions to the problem of gun violence. According to the Indianapolis Coalition against Violence – a group whose membership includes city lawmakers, law enforcement officials, researchers, advocacy groups and citizens concerned about violence in Indianapolis – gun violence in the United States has reached epidemic proportions.

“With more than 65,000 Americans shot in an attack last year, we have to do something to keep dangerous guns off our streets,” said Kim Jones, the spokesperson for the group. One proposal currently being considered by Congress is a good start, Jones said. Congress is considering legislation to ban large ammunition clips, which are military-style high capacity magazines that can shoot 30, 50, or 100 bullets without requiring the shooter to stop and reload. According to Kim Jones, “Getting this law in place is one way to protect the public from dangerous guns.”

Mental Illness Yesterday’s shooting in downtown Indianapolis left residents looking for solutions to the problem of gun violence. According to the Indianapolis Coalition against Violence – a group whose membership includes city lawmakers, law enforcement officials, researchers, advocacy groups and citizens concerned about violence in Indianapolis – gun violence in the United States has reached epidemic proportions.

“With more than 65,000 Americans shot in an attack last year, we have to do something to keep guns out of the hands of dangerous people,” said Kim Jones, the spokesperson for the group. One proposal currently being considered by Congress is a good start, Jones said. Congress is considering legislation to require states to enter people with serious mental illness into a background

check system used by gun dealers to identify people prohibited from buying guns, or face a penalty. According to Kim Jones, “Getting this law in place is one way to protect the public from dangerous people.”

Outcomes:

- **Support Magazine Ban:** As you may know, high-capacity gun magazines or clips can hold many rounds of ammunition, so a shooter can fire more rounds without manually reloading. Would you support or oppose a nationwide ban on the sale of high-capacity gun magazines that hold more than 10 rounds of ammunition? (Strongly Oppose: 1; Strongly Support: 5)
- **SMI Danger:** Do you agree with the following statement? “People with serious mental illness are, by far, more dangerous than the general population.” (Strongly Disagree: 1; Strongly Agree: 5)

O Study 17: Contentious Global Warming

This study was conducted in collaboration with Andrew Guess and was designed to measure subjects’ ability to process scientific information about global warming under contentious conditions.

Sample: 2,156 Mechanical Turk Subjects in wave 1; 1,802 in wave 2.

Dates of data collection: June 2015.

This study used a pre-treatment measure of support: How strongly do you believe in the scientific evidence that global temperatures are rising due to human activity? (Very strongly, Not very strongly). Subjects who select “Very strongly” are coded as “proponents” while those who respond “Not very strongly” are coded as “opponents”.

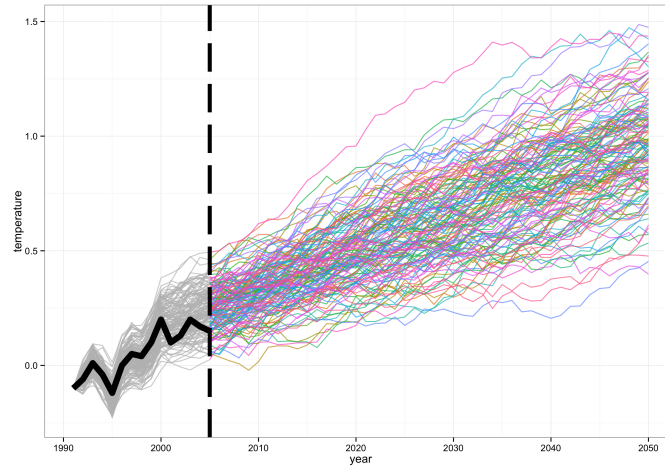
Treatments: Subjects could be assigned to a control or “hiatus” treatment. Additionally, subjects were assigned to a control processing condition or an “insults” processing condition.

Control Global warming refers to the increase in the Earth’s temperature over the last century. Since 1900, temperatures have increased by 1.4 degrees Fahrenheit. Scientists, politicians, and citizens have been debating over what, if anything, to do to combat global warming.

In order to understand what to do about global warming, we need to know more than how much the Earth has warmed in the past. We need to know how much the Earth will warm in the future.

Climate scientists try to predict how much warming will occur by creating statistical models based on historical data, then using those models to predict future temperatures. Because any one model can be wrong, the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) averages many forecasts, as shown in the figure below.

Figure O.3: Main Manipulation: Control



The colored lines show the models' best guesses for the changes in temperature. The black line shows the actual observed temperature.

There is a great deal of agreement between the models and the observed temperature. This agreement means that we can have greater confidence in the models' projections into the future.

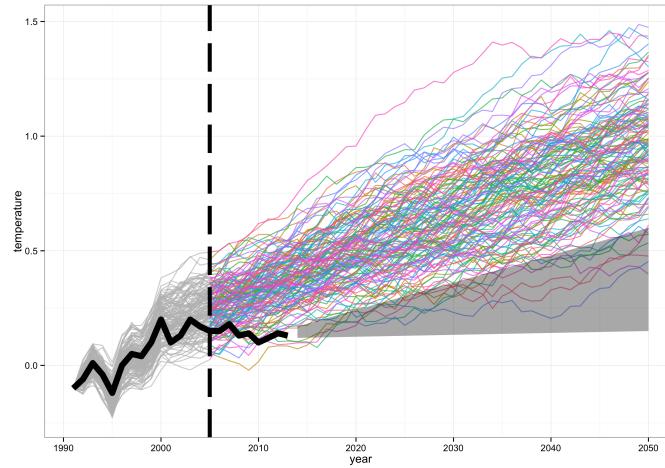
The Earth is warming, and the models predict that the warming trends will continue into the future.

Hiatus Global warming refers to the increase in the Earth's temperature over the last century. Since 1900, temperatures have increased by 1.4 degrees Fahrenheit. Scientists, politicians, and citizens have been debating over what, if anything, to do to combat global warming.

In order to understand what to do about global warming, we need to know more than how much the Earth has warmed in the past. We need to know how much the Earth will warm in the future.

Climate scientists try to predict how much warming will occur by creating statistical models based on historical data, then using those models to predict future temperatures. Because any one model can be wrong, the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) averages many forecasts, as shown in the figure below.

Figure O.4: Main Manipulation: Hiatus Treatment



The colored lines show the models' best guesses for the changes in temperature. The solid black line shows the actual observed temperature.

The dotted line represents the moment in time when the predictions were made. To the left of the dotted line, the models and the observed temperature agree. But to the right of the dotted line, the actual levels of warming clearly disagree with the predictions of the models.

This disagreement means we cannot be confident of the models' projections into the future. The shaded region describes the updated projections based on more recent data.

Processing Conditions:

- **Insults:** (if “Very Strongly”) Some people think that your position makes you an alarmist supporter of big government. How do you respond? [Text entry]. If (“Not very strongly”) Some people think that your position makes you an unthinking opponent of science. How do you respond? [Text entry].
- **Control.** In this condition, subjects proceeded directly to their information treatment.

Outcomes:

- **Belief in Increase:** Since 1850, there is a well-documented increase in global temperatures. Some attribute this increase to human activity while others attribute it to natural causes. Which comes closest to your view? (1: I believe that the increase is entirely due to natural causes, 7: I believe that the increase is entirely due to human activity)
- **Degrees:** How many degrees do you believe the Earth will warm over the next 100 years? (Slider: -1 to 3)

P Study 18: Newspapers

This study was conducted in collaboration with Emily Ekins and David Kirby. It shows that when subjects are shown newspaper opinion pieces, they update their attitudes and beliefs in the direction of the opinion piece.

Sample: 3,567 Mechanical Turk Subjects in wave 1; 2,989 in wave 2; 2,448 in wave 3.

Dates of data collection: July 2015.

Treatments

Subjects could be assigned to see either nothing or one of five op-ed pieces. The text of each treatment is below:

- Control
- Amtrak
- Veterans
- Climate
- Wall Street
- Flat Tax

Newsweek

The Amtrak Crash: Is More Spending the Answer?

BY RANDAL O'TOOLE 5/13/15 AT 4:46 PM

It is too soon to tell what caused the Amtrak train crash that killed seven people on May 12. But advocates of increased government spending are already beginning to use the crash to promote more spending on infrastructure and are criticizing Republicans who voted to reduce Amtrak's budget the day after the crash.

Yet there is a flaw in the assumption that spending more money would result in better infrastructure. In fact, in some cases, the problem is that too much money is being spent on infrastructure, but in the wrong places.

The reason for this is that politicians prefer to spend money building new infrastructure over maintaining the old. The result is that existing infrastructure that depends on tax dollars steadily declines while any new funds raised for infrastructure tend to go to new projects.

We can see this in the Boston, Washington, and other rail transit systems. Boston's system is \$9 billion in debt, has a \$3 billion maintenance backlog, and needs to spend nearly \$700 million a year just to keep the backlog from growing. Yet has only budgeted \$100 million for maintenance this year, and instead of repairing the existing system, Boston is spending \$2 billion extending one of its light-rail lines.

Similarly, Washington's Metro rail system has a \$10 billion maintenance backlog, and poor maintenance was the cause of the 2009 wreck that killed nine people. Yet, rather than rehabilitate their portions of the system, Northern Virginia is spending \$6.8 billion building a new rail line to Dulles Airport; D.C. wants to spend \$1 billion on new streetcar lines; and Maryland is considering building a \$2.5 billion light-rail line in D.C. suburbs.

On the other hand, infrastructure that is funded out of user fees is generally in good shape. Despite tales of crumbling bridges, the 2007 Minnesota bridge collapse was due to a construction flaw and the 2013 Washington state bridge collapse was due to an oversized truck; lack of maintenance had nothing to do with either failure.

Department of Transportation numbers show that the number of bridges considered structurally deficient has fallen by more than 50 percent since 1990, while the average roughness of highway pavement has decreased. State highways and bridges, which are almost entirely funded out of user fees, tend to be in the best condition while local highways and bridges, which depend more on tax dollars, tend to be the ones with the most serious problems.

Before 1970, almost all of our transportation infrastructure was funded out of user fees and the United States had the best transportation system in the world. Since then, funding decisions have increasingly been made by politicians who are more interested in getting their pictures taken cutting ribbons than in making sure our transportation systems run safely and smoothly.

Proponents of higher gas taxes and other increased funding on infrastructure may talk about crumbling bridges, but what they really want is to spend more money on new projects that are

often of little value. For example, they want high-speed trains that cost more but go less than half the speed of flying and light-rail trains that cost more but can move fewer people than buses.

This country doesn't need more infrastructure that it can't afford to maintain. Instead, it needs a more reliable system of transport funding, and that means one based on user fees and not tax subsidies.

*Randal O'Toole is a senior fellow with the Cato Institute and author of *Gridlock: Why We're Stuck in Traffic and What to Do About It*.*

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

The Political Assault on Climate Skeptics

Members of Congress send inquisitorial letters to universities, energy companies, even think tanks. BY RICHARD S. LINDZEN MARCH 4, 2015 6:50 P.M. ET

Research in recent years has encouraged those of us who question the popular alarm over allegedly man-made global warming. Actually, the move from “global warming” to “climate change” indicated the silliness of this issue. The climate has been changing since the Earth was formed. This normal course is now taken to be evidence of doom.

Individuals and organizations highly vested in disaster scenarios have relentlessly attacked scientists and others who do not share their beliefs. The attacks have taken a threatening turn.

As to the science itself, it’s worth noting that all predictions of warming since the onset of the last warming episode of 1978-98 – which is the only period that the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) attempts to attribute to carbon-dioxide emissions – have greatly exceeded what has been observed. These observations support a much reduced and essentially harmless climate response to increased atmospheric carbon dioxide.

In addition, there is experimental support for the increased importance of variations in solar radiation on climate and a renewed awareness of the importance of natural unforced climate variability that is largely absent in current climate models. There also is observational evidence from several independent studies that the so-called “water vapor feedback,” essential to amplifying the relatively weak impact of carbon dioxide alone on Earth temperatures, is canceled by cloud processes.

There are also claims that extreme weather – hurricanes, tornadoes, droughts, floods, you name it – may be due to global warming. The data show no increase in the number or intensity of such events. The IPCC itself acknowledges the lack of any evident relation between extreme weather and climate, though allowing that with sufficient effort some relation might be uncovered.

World leaders proclaim that climate change is our greatest problem, demonizing carbon dioxide. Yet atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide have been vastly higher through most of Earth’s history. Climates both warmer and colder than the present have coexisted with these higher levels.

Currently elevated levels of carbon dioxide have contributed to increases in agricultural productivity. Indeed, climatologists before the recent global warming hysteria referred to warm periods as “climate optima.” Yet world leaders are embarking on costly policies that have no capacity to replace fossil fuels but enrich crony capitalists at public expense, increasing costs for all, and restricting access to energy to the world’s poorest populations that still lack access to electricity’s immense benefits.

Billions of dollars have been poured into studies supporting climate alarm, and trillions of dollars have been involved in overthrowing the energy economy. So it is unsurprising that great efforts have been made to ramp up hysteria, even as the case for climate alarm is disintegrating.

The latest example began with an article published in the New York Times on Feb. 22 about Willie Soon, a scientist at the Harvard Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics. Mr. Soon has, for over 25 years, argued for a primary role of solar variability on climate. But as Greenpeace noted in 2011, Mr. Soon was, in small measure, supported by fossil-fuel companies over a period of 10 years.

The Times reintroduced this old material as news, arguing that Mr. Soon had failed to list this support in a recent paper in *Science Bulletin* of which he was one of four authors. Two days later Arizona Rep. Raul Grijalva, the ranking Democrat on the Natural Resources Committee, used the Times article as the basis for a hunting expedition into anything said, written and communicated by seven individuals – David Legates, John Christy, Judith Curry, Robert Balling, Roger Pielke Jr., Steven Hayward and me – about testimony we gave to Congress or other governmental bodies. We were selected solely on the basis of our objections to alarmist claims about the climate.

In letters he sent to the presidents of the universities employing us (although I have been retired from MIT since 2013), Mr. Grijalva wanted all details of all of our outside funding, and communications about this funding, including “consulting fees, promotional considerations, speaking fees, honoraria, travel expenses, salary, compensation and any other monies.” Mr. Grijalva acknowledged the absence of any evidence but purportedly wanted to know if accusations made against Mr. Soon about alleged conflicts of interest or failure to disclose his funding sources in science journals might not also apply to us.

Perhaps the most bizarre letter concerned the University of Colorado’s Mr. Pielke. His specialty is science policy, not science per se, and he supports reductions in carbon emissions but finds no basis for associating extreme weather with climate. Mr. Grijalva’s complaint is that Mr. Pielke, in agreeing with the IPCC on extreme weather and climate, contradicts the assertions of John Holdren, President Obama’s science czar.

Mr. Grijalva’s letters convey an unstated but perfectly clear threat: Research disputing alarm over the climate should cease lest universities that employ such individuals incur massive inconvenience and expense – and scientists holding such views should not offer testimony to Congress. After the Times article, Sens. Edward Markey (D., Mass.), Sheldon Whitehouse (D., R.I.) and Barbara Boxer (D., Calif.) also sent letters to numerous energy companies, industrial organizations and, strangely, many right-of-center think tanks (including the Cato Institute, with which I have an association) to unearth their alleged influence peddling.

The American Meteorological Society responded with appropriate indignation at the singling out of scientists for their scientific positions, as did many individual scientists. On Monday, apparently reacting to criticism, Mr. Grijalva conceded to the *National Journal* that his requests for communications between the seven of us and our outside funders was “overreach.”

Where all this will lead is still hard to tell. At least Mr. Grijalva’s letters should help clarify for many the essentially political nature of the alarms over the climate, and the damage it is doing to science, the environment and the well-being of the world’s poorest.

Mr. Lindzen is professor emeritus of atmospheric sciences at MIT and a distinguished senior fellow of the Cato Institute.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Blow Up the Tax Code and Start Over

Apply a 14.5% flat tax to personal income and to businesses. Cut deductions. Watch the economy roar.

BY RAND PAUL JUNE 17, 2015 7:09 P.M. ET

Some of my fellow Republican candidates for the presidency have proposed plans to fix the tax system. These proposals are a step in the right direction, but the tax code has grown so corrupt, complicated, intrusive and antigrowth that I've concluded the system isn't fixable.

So on Thursday I am announcing an over \$2 trillion tax cut that would repeal the entire IRS tax code – more than 70,000 pages – and replace it with a low, broad-based tax of 14.5% on individuals and businesses. I would eliminate nearly every special-interest loophole. The plan also eliminates the payroll tax on workers and several federal taxes outright, including gift and estate taxes, telephone taxes, and all duties and tariffs. I call this “The Fair and Flat Tax.”

President Obama talks about “middle-class economics,” but his redistribution policies have led to rising income inequality and negative income gains for families. Here's what I propose for the middle class: The Fair and Flat Tax eliminates payroll taxes, which are seized by the IRS from a worker's paychecks before a family ever sees the money. This will boost the incentive for employers to hire more workers, and raise after-tax income by at least 15% over 10 years.

Here's why we have to start over with the tax code. From 2001 until 2010, there were at least 4,430 changes to tax laws – an average of one “fix” a day – always promising more fairness, more simplicity or more growth stimulants. And every year the Internal Revenue Code grows absurdly more incomprehensible, as if it were designed as a jobs program for accountants, IRS agents and tax attorneys.

Polls show that “fairness” is a top goal for Americans in our tax system. I envision a traditionally All-American solution: Everyone plays by the same rules. This means no one of privilege, wealth or with an arsenal of lobbyists can game the system to pay a lower rate than working Americans.

Most important, a smart tax system must turbocharge the economy and pull America out of the slow-growth rut of the past decade. We are already at least \$2 trillion behind where we should be with a normal recovery; the growth gap widens every month. Even Mr. Obama's economic advisers tell him that the U.S. corporate tax code, which has the highest rates in the world (35%), is an economic drag. When an iconic American company like Burger King wants to renounce its citizenship for Canada because that country's tax rates are so much lower, there's a fundamental problem.

Another increasingly obvious danger of our current tax code is the empowerment of a rogue agency, the IRS, to examine the most private financial and lifestyle information of every American citizen. We now know that the IRS, through political hacks like former IRS official Lois Lerner, routinely abused its auditing power to build an enemies list and harass anyone who might be adversarial to President Obama's policies. A convoluted tax code enables these corrupt tactics.

My tax plan would blow up the tax code and start over. In consultation with some of the top tax experts in the country, including the Heritage Foundation's Stephen Moore, former presidential candidate Steve Forbes and Reagan economist Arthur Laffer, I devised a 21st-century tax code that would establish a 14.5% flat-rate tax applied equally to all personal income, including wages,

salaries, dividends, capital gains, rents and interest. All deductions except for a mortgage and charities would be eliminated. The first \$50,000 of income for a family of four would not be taxed. For low-income working families, the plan would retain the earned-income tax credit.

I would also apply this uniform 14.5% business-activity tax on all companies – down from as high as nearly 40% for small businesses and 35% for corporations. This tax would be levied on revenues minus allowable expenses, such as the purchase of parts, computers and office equipment. All capital purchases would be immediately expensed, ending complicated depreciation schedules.

The immediate question everyone asks is: Won't this 14.5% tax plan blow a massive hole in the budget deficit? As a senator, I have proposed balanced budgets and I pledge to balance the budget as president.

Here's why this plan would balance the budget: We asked the experts at the nonpartisan Tax Foundation to estimate what this plan would mean for jobs, and whether we are raising enough money to fund the government. The analysis is positive news: The plan is an economic steroid injection. Because the Fair and Flat Tax rewards work, saving, investment and small business creation, the Tax Foundation estimates that in 10 years it will increase gross domestic product by about 10%, and create at least 1.4 million new jobs.

And because the best way to balance the budget and pay down government debt is to put Americans back to work, my plan would actually reduce the national debt by trillions of dollars over time when combined with my package of spending cuts.

The left will argue that the plan is a tax cut for the wealthy. But most of the loopholes in the tax code were designed by the rich and politically connected. Though the rich will pay a lower rate along with everyone else, they won't have special provisions to avoid paying lower than 14.5%.

The challenge to this plan will be to overcome special-interest groups in Washington who will muster all of their political muscle to save corporate welfare. That's what happened to my friend Steve Forbes when he ran for president in 1996 on the idea of the flat tax. Though the flat tax was surprisingly popular with voters for its simplicity and its capacity to boost the economy, crony capitalists and lobbyists exploded his noble crusade.

Today, the American people see the rot in the system that is degrading our economy day after day and want it to end. That is exactly what the Fair and Flat Tax will do through a plan that's the boldest restoration of fairness to American taxpayers in over a century.

Sen. Paul, a Republican from Kentucky, is running for his party's presidential nomination.

The New York Times

The Other Veterans Scandal

BY MICHAEL F. CANNON AND CHRISTOPHER A. PREBLE JUNE 15, 2014

WASHINGTON THE Department of Veterans Affairs is mired in scandal. More than 57,000 veterans have been waiting at least three months for a doctor's appointment. Another 64,000 never even made it onto a waiting list. There are allegations that waits for care either caused or contributed to veterans' deaths.

But another, even larger problem with the Department of Veterans Affairs is being overlooked: Even when the department works exactly as intended, it helps inflict great harm on veterans, active-duty military personnel and civilians.

Here's how. Veterans' health and disability benefits are some of the largest costs involved in any military conflict, but they are delayed costs, typically reaching their peak 40 or 50 years after the conflict ends. Congress funds these commitments – through the Department of Veterans Affairs – only once they come due.

As a result, when Congress debates whether to authorize and fund military action, it can act as if those costs don't exist. But concealing those costs makes military conflicts appear less burdensome and therefore increases their likelihood. It's as if Congress deliberately structured veterans' benefits to make it easier to start wars.

The Department of Veterans Affairs is supposed to help wounded veterans, but its current design makes soldiers more likely to get killed or injured in the first place. The scandal isn't at the Department of Veterans Affairs. The scandal is the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Is there a better way? We propose a system of veterans' benefits that would be funded by Congress in advance. It would allow veterans to purchase life, disability and health insurance from private insurers. Those policies would cover losses related to their term of service, and would pay benefits when they left active duty through the remainder of their lives.

To cover the cost, military personnel would receive additional pay sufficient to purchase a statutorily defined package of benefits at actuarially fair rates. The precise amount would be determined with reference to premiums quoted by competing insurers, and would vary with the risks posed by particular military jobs.

Insurers and providers would be more responsive because veterans could fire them – something they cannot do to the Department of Veterans Affairs. Veterans' insurance premiums would also reveal, and enable recruits and active-duty personnel to compare, the risks posed by various military jobs and career paths.

Most important, under this system, when a military conflict increases the risk to life and limb, insurers would adjust veterans' insurance premiums upward, and Congress would have to increase military pay immediately to enable military personnel to cover those added costs.

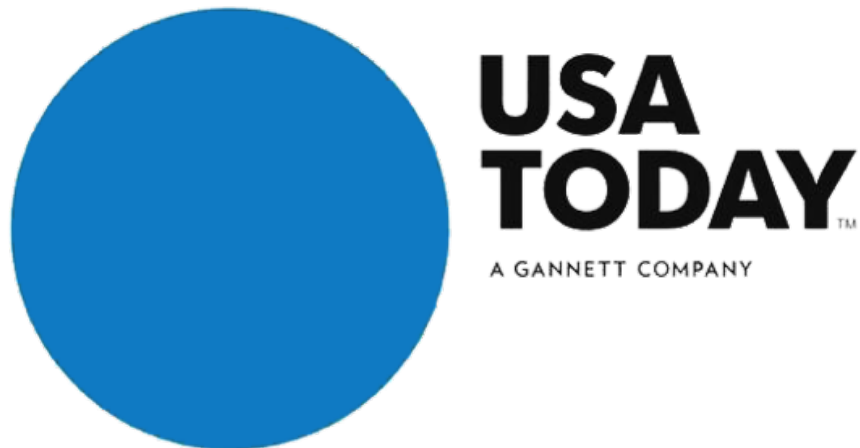
Consider how this system might have prevented Congress's misbegotten decision to authorize President George W. Bush to invade Iraq. In 2002, the Bush administration played down estimates that the war would cost as much as \$200 billion, insisting the cost would be less than \$50 billion. To give you a sense of how mistaken this was: The economists Linda J. Bilmes and Joseph E.

Stiglitz put the cost of veterans' benefits alone, from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, at roughly \$1 trillion.

Like others before her, Hillary Rodham Clinton has admitted that voting to authorize the Iraq invasion was a "mistake," though she made "the best decision I could with the information I had." How many members of Congress would have voted differently if confronted with the long-term health and disability needs of the troops they had already sent into Afghanistan and those they were sending into Iraq? How many would have pressed harder to end the wars sooner if they had to confront the mounting cost of veterans' benefits, in addition to the wars' other growing costs, every year the wars dragged on?

The alternative system we propose combines the universal goal of improving veterans' benefits with conservative Republicans' preference for market incentives and antiwar Democrats' desire to make it harder to wage war. Pre-funding veterans benefits could prevent unnecessary wars, or at least end them sooner. We can think of no greater tribute to the men and women serving in our armed forces.

Michael F. Cannon is the director of health policy studies, and Christopher Preble is the vice president for defense and foreign policy studies, at the Cato Institute.



Wall Street Offers Very Real Benefits: Opposing view

But headlines focus on the bad behavior.

BY THAYA KNIGHT 7:16 PM MAY 26, 2015

Not every person on Wall Street is a morally corrupt Gordon Gekko. Do Wall Street traders want to make money? Yes. Are they generally people who thrive in a fast-paced, competitive environment? You bet. And that is a good thing.

At its core, here's what Wall Street does: It makes sure that companies doing useful things get the money they need to keep doing those things. Do you like your smartphone? Does it make your life easier? The company that made that phone got the money to develop the product and get it into the store where you bought it with the help of Wall Street.

When a company wants to expand, or make a new product, or improve its old products, it needs money, and it often gets that money by selling stock or bonds. That helps those companies, the broader economy and consumers generally.

When we have flashing headlines about Wall Street traders acting badly, as we had last week with news of five major banks pleading guilty to criminal charges, it is very easy to hate Wall Street. But we only hear headlines about the worst behavior.

No one writes news stories about traders who go about their business every day, carefully complying with the many (and there are many) rules and regulations that govern their work. Also, the financial sector, which is usually what people mean when they say "Wall Street," isn't only or even mostly the big banks.

There are small firms, banks, funds and advisers that make up a large portion of our financial industry. While the news about corruption, corporate welfare and lawbreaking is very bad, it doesn't mean the entire industry is rotten. Or, more important, that we don't need it.

Wall Street could be better. We could eliminate regulations that crowd out competition for the big banks. We could reform the system to do away with "too big to fail," making it harder for bad traders to get away with bad behavior. Either way, we shouldn't lose sight of the very real economic and social benefits Wall Street provides.

Thaya Knight is associate director of financial regulation studies at the Cato Institute.

Outcomes

Subjects were asked a series of outcome questions on each of the five issue areas.

Amtrak Outcomes:

- Do you think the government should spend more, less, or about what it does now on transportation and infrastructure? [1: A lot more, A lot less]
- Would you prefer government pay for building and maintaining roads and infrastructure through raising taxes for transportation spending, or through charging user-fees, like paying tolls when you drive on the highways? [1: Fund entirely through tax increases, 4: Both Equally, 7: Fund entirely through user fees]
- If the government raised taxes to pay for more transportation spending, do you expect that money would primarily go toward building new infrastructure projects or maintaining and improving existing infrastructure? [1: Entirely toward NEW infrastructure projects, 4: Both Equally, 7: Entirely toward maintaining EXISTING infrastructure]
- For every dollar the government spends on transportation and infrastructure projects, about how many cents do you think are spent inefficiently? [Slider 0 - 100, How Many Cents Spent Inefficiently?]

Climate Outcomes:

- Would you say that climate change is best described as a ... (1: Crisis, 7: Not a problem at all)
- From what you've read and heard, do you believe increases in Earth's temperature are due... (1: Entirely due to the effects of pollution from human activity, 7: Entirely due to natural causes)
- Do you think the solution to the climate change problem will primarily come from government policies or technological innovation in the free market? (1: Entirely from the free market, 7: Entirely from government policies)
- Thinking about what's in the news, is the seriousness of global warming generally exaggerated, correct, or underestimated? (1: Generally exaggerated, 4: Generally Correct, 7: Generally underestimated)
- How many degrees (Fahrenheit) do you believe the Earth will warm over the next 100 years? (Select "0" if you think the temperature will stay about the same) [Slider -3 to 3]

Flat Tax Outcomes:

- Would you favor or oppose changing the federal tax system to a flat tax, where everyone making more than \$50,000 a year pays the same percentage of his or her income in taxes? [1: Strongly Favor, 7: Strongly Oppose]
- What percentage of income, from 0 to 100, do you think Americans should pay in federal taxes on average? [Slider 0 - 100, Average Tax Rate]
- Do you favor or oppose reducing the business and corporate tax rate to 14.5% percent? [1: Strongly Favor, 7: Strongly Oppose]
- Do you think a flat tax on incomes over \$50,000 without tax deductions or credits will do more to help all Americans or do more to help wealthy Americans? [1: Do more to help ALL Americans, 7: Do more to help WEALTHY Americans]

Veterans Outcomes:

- How would you rate your feelings toward the Department of Veterans Affairs (the VA) on a scale of 0 to 100, where a rating of 100 means you feel as warm and positive as possible and 0 means you feel as cold and negative as possible? How do you feel toward... [Department of Veterans Affairs]
- How much confidence do you have in the Department of Veterans Affairs' ability to care for veterans? [1: A Great Deal, 7: None At All]
- Would you favor or oppose changing the healthcare system for Veterans to a system where the government provides additional money sufficient for Veterans to purchase a government-approved health insurance plan from private health insurance companies? [1: Strongly Favor, 7: Strongly Oppose]
- For every dollar the government spends on Veterans Benefits, about how many cents do you think are spent inefficiently? [Slider 0 - 100, How Many Cents Spent Inefficiently?]

Wall Street Outcomes:

- How would you rate your feelings toward the following on a scale of 0 to 100, where a rating of 100 means you feel as warm and positive as possible and 0 means you feel as cold and negative as possible. How do you feel toward... [CEOs; Wall Street Bankers; Government Regulators]
- What percentage of Wall Street bankers, from zero to one hundred, do you think are corrupt? [Slider 0 - 100: % Wall Street Bankers Corrupt]
- How much confidence do you have in Wall Street bankers and brokers to do the right thing... [1: A Great Deal, 7: None at all]
- Compared to what it's doing now, do you think the federal government needs to regulate banks and financial institutions [1: A lot more, A lot less]

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