

IRAP Environmental Scanning Digest

A digest of our collective environmental scanning
Summer 2017

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STUDENTS

Student Admissions

The Assault on Colleges—and the American Dream. *The New York Times*, David Leonhardt, May 25, 2017.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/25/opinion/sunday/the-assault-on-colleges-and-the-american-dream.html?mcubz=3>

Public universities have an unmatched record of providing upward mobility for first-generation students and students from modest backgrounds. However, over the last several years, most states have cut their spending on higher education. Many public universities have responded by enrolling fewer poor and middle-class students and replacing them with affluent students who can afford the tuition. This can be seen by the declining percentage of freshman class receiving Pell grants, which generally go to students from the bottom half of the income distribution.

Legislators successfully advocate for UC Riverside. *The Press-Enterprise*, Kim A. Wilcox, June 17, 2017.

<http://www.pe.com/2017/06/17/legislators-successfully-advocate-for-uc-riverside/>

Opinion piece by UCR Chancellor thanking local legislators for advocating on behalf of the campus in the face of Gov. Brown's unachievable funding conditions. UCR is a nationally-recognized model of diversity and of remarkable improvements in graduation rates.

Justice Dept. to Take on Affirmative Action in College Admissions. *The New York Times*, Charlie Savage, August 1, 2017.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/01/us/politics/trump-affirmative-action-universities.html?mcubz=3>

The Trump administration plans to direct the Justice Department to investigate and sue universities for admissions policies that discriminate against white applicants. The project will be run by political appointees in the Office of Civil Rights' front office, rather than career staff in the Educational Opportunities section, which traditionally handles education work. The project may look for gaps in test scores or dropout rates among different racial cohorts as evidence that admissions policies place too much emphasis on race. The Supreme Court has ruled that colleges may use race as one factor among many in a "holistic" evaluation.

Affirmative Action Policies Evolve, Achieving Their Own Diversity. *The New York Times*, Vivian Yee, August 5, 2017.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/05/us/affirmative-action-justice-department.html?mcubz=3>

Affirmative action has evolved from its original race-based orientation to measures that give preference to low-income students instead. This has implications for addressing socioeconomic diversity but may not improve racial diversity.

Student Enrollment

Feds award UCI designation of being a Hispanic-serving institution. *Orange County Register*, Roxana Kopetman, May 22, 2017.

<http://www.ocregister.com/2017/05/22/feds-award-uci-designation-of-being-a-hispanic-serving-institution/>

UC Irvine has attracted enough Latino students to be designated by the U.S. Department of Education as a Hispanic-serving institution. The new designation comes on the heels of UCI's recognition earlier this year as an Asian American- and Native American Pacific Islander-serving institution. These titles mean UCI will be eligible to compete for more funding and grants from various federal agencies to benefit not only its minority students, but all students, university officials said.

Universities and colleges struggle to stem big drops in enrollment. *The Hechinger Report*, Jon Marcus, June 29, 2017.

<http://hechingerreport.org/universities-colleges-struggle-stem-big-drops-enrollment/>

Colleges and Universities, especially small private nonprofit colleges, in the Midwest and Northeast, are face with enrollment drop due to a dip in the birth rate as well as a decline in number of students older than 24. Campuses have taken strategies to recruit more students, such as cutting the price and creating programs that are more attractive to student. Nevertheless, small private colleges are facing enrollment crisis.

Why Many High-Achieving Indigenous Students are Shunning University. *Indian Country Today*, Jenny Gore, July 1, 2017.

<https://indiancountrymedianetwork.com/news/indigenous-peoples/many-high-achieving-indigenous-students-shunning-university/>

Indigenous students remain vastly underrepresented in higher education in Australia. Research found that high-achieving indigenous students were significantly less likely to want to go to university than their high-achieving non-indigenous peers. For indigenous students, aspiring to university is likely to require negotiation of race, class, economic, and cultural divides in ways that are not shared by non-indigenous students.

Student Affordability

Challenges and opportunities for undocumented students. EdTrust West, EdTrust West, April 21, 2017.

<https://west.edtrust.org/resource/fact-sheet-undocumented-students/>

Challenges faced by undocumented children in school and at home. President's actions expanding immigration crackdowns on non-criminal immigrants have increased the threat of deportation. California offers a number of safeguards and benefits for undocumented children, especially at the post secondary level.

Life in College after a Life in Foster Care. *The New York Times*, Noel Anaya, April 25, 2017.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/25/opinion/after-foster-care-college-california.html?mcubz=3>

In many states, foster care youth are required to exit the system when they finish high school or turn 18. Housing, food and counseling mostly disappear, and homelessness is common. Extended support from colleges and universities is very important for foster youth during the transition period to finish college.

UC Merced pricer than UCLA? The surprising cost to live on campus. *Bay Area News Group*,

Emily DeRuy, June 4, 2017.

<http://www.mercurynews.com/2017/06/04/it-will-cost-more-to-live-at-uc-merced-than-at-ucla-next-year/>

It's expensive to live on campus. It's tough figuring out how California's universities calculate housing costs. UC Merced has the biggest gap between on-campus and off-campus living costs; nearly \$8,000. Housing at UC campuses increased by 30% in last 10 years, making it increasingly difficult for some low-income students to earn a degree. The reality is student debt loads are driven by non-tuition costs.

Pilot Program at UCI to slash tuition in half for incoming freshman. *Orange County Register*,

Brian Whitehead, June 12, 2017.

<http://www.ocregister.com/2017/06/12/pilot-program-at-uci-to-slash-tuition-in-half-for-incoming-freshmen/>

The Anteater Leadership Academy program would let students take fully-accredited courses, taught by accredited instructors in the Division of Continuing Education during their freshman year, paying tuition of \$6,315, a savings of about \$6,000. After their freshman year, students would be eligible to take all courses throughout the campus at standard prices. The Anteater Leadership Academy will offer general education courses in fields such as sociology, economics, political science and math, and special courses aimed at beefing up leadership skills.

\$78,000 of debt for a Harvard theater degree. *The New York Times*, Sophie Haigney, August 7, 2017.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/07/theater/harvard-graduate-theater-debt.html>

Most young actors don't face graduate school debt like this—yet it is common for those who attend the A.R.T. Institute. Despite being at the world's wealthiest university, institute students receive modest financial aid and leave with a median of \$78,000 in debt in exchange for a master of liberal arts degree from the Harvard Extension School. The steep repayment burdens have been a straitjacket on students and their career aspirations for years. The real question here is how artists make a living in America, and this points to the underlying issue of how the arts are valued in America, in a transactional capitalist economy.

Student Outcomes

Learning and Earning. *The Economist*, Letter to the Editor, February 4, 2017.

<https://www.economist.com/news/letters/21716014-letters-editor>

We tend to think of schools as places where teachers impart knowledge to students, whose capacity for memorization and repetition is rigorously tested. Now that we can search Google in a moment, these skills are no longer necessary. Children need to retain a basic framework of conceptual knowledge, but the detail can be recalled from computers. We need to rethink our approach to schooling and understand that we are now educating for humanity. Creativity, empathy and leadership should be nurtured, equipping people with the skills set to start a business, lead a team and approach problems creatively. Exams must adapt to a new reality by allowing the use of the internet in order to test thinking rather than recall.

University of California plan links first-generation students with similar professors. *Inside Higher Ed*, Colleen Flaherty, June 2, 2017.

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/06/02/university-california-plan-links-first-generation-students-similar-professors>

Santa Cruz campus faculty lead on the University of California's systemwide First-Gen Faculty campaign. Systemwide, some 800 faculty participants are expected to wear First-Gen Faculty shirts and share their experiences with their students across nine undergraduate campuses during the first week of classes this fall. By this initiative, UC aims to connect first-generation students with the tools necessary for academic success, to foster a sense of belonging and ownership among this critical student population, and to ensure that UC continues to serve as an engine of economic mobility for our diverse population of undergraduates.

When higher education is possible but not desirable: Widening participation and the aspirations of Australian Indigenous school students. *Australian Journal of Education*, Jennifer Gore, et. al., June 2, 2017.

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0004944117710841>

Indigenous students are less likely to aspire to attend university. This means that increasing the possibility for Indigenous students to attend university will not necessarily make them do so. They have to want it.

Increasing share of good-paying jobs go to college graduates. *Inside Higher Ed*, Paul Fain, July 26, 2017.

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/07/26/increasing-share-good-paying-jobs-go-college-graduates>

The college degree has solidified its role as the best ticket to the middle class. Citing research from Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce, the article reports that an increasing share of well-paying jobs have shifted to workers who hold four-year or associate degrees. Four-year degree holders held 55 percent of well-paying jobs in 2015 compared to 40 percent in 1991. (The center defines "good jobs" as those paying an annual wage of least \$35,000 for workers under the age of 45 and \$45,000 for workers over 45.) Over all, good jobs for workers with some college grew by 11 percent, while good jobs for those with associate degrees increased by a whopping 83 percent. Men account for

roughly two-thirds of the well-paying jobs held by workers without a bachelor's degree, a proportion that has changed little since 1991. And white workers (men and women) hold roughly two-thirds of the good jobs going to workers without a four-year degree.

Why We Shouldn't Think About College as a Business. *The New York Times*, Kristin Wong, July 31, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/31/smarter-living/why-we-shouldnt-think-about-college-as-a-business.html?mcubz=3>

As tuition skyrockets and becomes less accessible for everyone, students have been compelled to think of college from a business perspective. While there are conflicting opinions on the cause of rising tuition, students are relying on loans now more than ever to fund their education, leading student debt in the United States to top \$1 trillion. "In absolute dollars, the price of college has increased by 1,120 percent since 1978, more than any other good or service in the entire U.S. economy," said the filmmaker Andrew Rossi, who directed the student debt documentary *Ivory Tower*. He also says, "(there is a) cultural transition from viewing college as a public good to a private benefit pursued by students and parents as consumers." Rachel Wu, a professor and researcher at the University of California, Riverside, states, "when students are forced to see college as a means to an end, they potentially switch from broad learning to a specialized learning mind-set even sooner." Paraphrased from Ms. Emilie Wapnick, author of "How to Be Everything:" We're encouraged to deepen our existing knowledge (specialized learning) rather than develop new skills or consider how disparate ideas relate to one another (broad learning). This can lead to a sense of boredom and dissatisfaction. It also stifles healthy interdisciplinary dialogue that fuels innovation.

California Today: A 'Seismic Change' at Cal State. *The New York Times*, Mike McPhate, August 4, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/04/us/california-today-cal-state-remedial-classes.html>

California State University will remove all remedial classes next fall. The radical shift aims to allow more students to receive their degrees more quickly. According to a senior strategist for academic success in the chancellor's office, the change will ultimately make college more affordable.

The People's Champion. *The Economist*, August 5, 2017. <https://www.economist.com/news/economics-brief/21725757-becker-made-people-central-focus-economics-second-our-series-big>

Gary Becker's concept of human capital.

1. Knowledge production is key to societal mobility and productivity.
2. Societies that invest more in education for its members fare better than societies that don't.
3. The acquisition of general knowledge is just as valuable as the acquisition of specific knowledge in a chosen field or profession.
4. Public universities should raise tuition because graduates can expect higher lifetime earnings.
5. Governments should fund research more than tuition because this brings a greater return on investment.
6. Governments should invest more in ECE.

College is Trade School for the Elite. *The Wall Street Journal*, Allen Guelzo, August 6, 2017. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/college-is-trade-school-for-the-elite-1502051874>

Concerns that general education in universities will suffer if vocational instruction is expanded are misplaced. American higher education is already more vocational than ever. More degrees are in professions - STEM, health care, social work, education - than in liberal arts areas, such as the humanities. Expanding vocational instructional makes sense economically as well as socially.

Good jobs that pay without a BA. Georgetown University, Anthony P Carnevale, Jeff Strohl, Ban Cheah, Neil Ridley, 2017.

<https://goodjobsdata.org/wp-content/uploads/Good-Jobs-wo-BA.pdf>

The report was done based on the findings of the Good Jobs Project by the Georgetown University Center on Education. It has examined good jobs for non-BA workers on earnings and other characteristics. The findings conclude that the brightest economic prospect for workers without BAs are found more and more in skilled-services industries, in which some college education has become more and more important.

Graduate Students

The Great Shame of Our Profession: How the humanities survive on exploitation.

The Chronicle of Higher Education, Kevin Birmingham, February 12, 2017.

<http://www.chronicle.com/article/The-Great-Shame-of-Our/239148>

A talk the author gave in Iowa City in October on winning the Truman Capote Award for his book, *The Most Dangerous Book: The Battle for James Joyce's Ulysses* (Penguin, 2014), reprinted with permission. Kevin Birmingham used the opportunity of accepting the award to describe how Humanities PhDs have a very difficult time winning tenure-track professorships, mostly, he says, because of a system of exploitation put in place by the very institutions and departments that are granting the PhDs. "If you are a tenured (or tenure-track) faculty member, you are both the instrument and the direct beneficiary of exploitation.

- Tenured faculty represent only 17 percent of college instructors.
- Part-time adjuncts are now the majority of the professoriate and its fastest-growing segment.
- Thirty-one percent of part-time faculty members live near or below the poverty line.
- Twenty-five percent receive public assistance, like Medicaid or food stamps.

Besides the hardships on the adjunct, society suffers also. Junior faculty play it safe "conceptually, politically, and formally" because they write for job and tenure committees rather than for readers. Publications serve careers before they serve culture.

Gender Gaps Shrinking and Lingering. *Inside Higher Ed*, Colleen Flaherty, May 1, 2017.

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/05/01/study-faculty-job-market-finds-some-gender-gaps-shrinking-and-others-remaining>

This article is data-rich and highly detailed in explaining the many possible trajectories to and out of academe based on several demographic factors but focuses on gender. Some high-level findings include: the majority of recent studies on the issue have found that women have a harder time earning tenure-track professorships and tenure than do their male counterparts, some studies also suggest that women are now playing on a level field with men -- or even possess some advantage. A paper examining the career paths of recent Ph.D.s finds there's no strong, comprehensive evidence of gendered paths to

tenure during the first decade after degree completion. Scholarly publications and activities, such as research, and a postdoctoral appointment in the years following degree completion were the most important factors in getting a tenure-track job for both men and women.

The paper suggests that women do earn lower salaries than men and take longer to complete their doctoral degrees. It also says that important gender-based differences in men's and women's career trajectories may still exist in the second decade after degree completion.

What comes after a Ph.D? Check out the data. *Science*, Maggie Kuo, July 24, 2017.

<http://www.sciencemag.org/careers/2017/07/what-comes-after-phd-check-out-data>

Findings from National Science Foundation's Survey of Earned Doctorates:

- Number of students completing doctorates is definitely on the rise since NSF started collecting graduate data in 1957.
- Percentage of new Ph.D holders with concrete postgraduate plans has been declining
- Median salary data may be a useful reference for those who are considering their post-Ph.D career direction.

EMPLOYEES

Resisting the corporate university: what it means to be a 'slow professor'. *National Public Radio*, Barbara J. King, May 12, 2017.

<http://www.npr.org/sections/13.7/2016/05/12/477687350/resisting-the-corporate-university-what-it-means-to-be-a-slow-professor>

In their new book - *The Slow Professor: Challenging the Culture of Speed in the Academy*, Berg and Seeber describe the current corporatization of the college campus and urge professors to resist it with all they've got. They think professors should take back the intellectual life of the university and reflective inquiry is the heart and soul of the university.

5 reasons for "administrative bloat". *EAB*, EAB, June 2, 2017.

<https://www.eab.com/daily-briefing/2017/06/02/5-reasons-for-administrative-bloat>

The five reasons why college administrations have expanded in recent years suggested by Audrey Williams June are: 1. Families expect more; 2. Student success doesn't happen on its own; 3. Colleges are looking for alternative revenue sources; 4. Compliance is getting more expensive; and 5. Bureaucracy is difficult to escape.

UCSC humanities dean contributes to Time Magazine's "25 Moments That Changed America".

UCSC Newscenter, Scott Rappaport, July 14, 2017.

<https://news.ucsc.edu/2016/07/time-magazine-stovall.html>

UCSC Humanities Dean was one of 25 distinguished historians who contributed to TIME Magazine article on "25 Moments That Changed America."

Survival checklist for university presidents. *University Business*, Joseph Brennan and Mark Weaver, April 24, 2017.

<https://www.universitybusiness.com/article/survival-checklist-university-presidents>

New findings by Southern Methodist University researchers reveal that “involuntary” presidential departures rose dramatically between 2007 and 2013. A study reported in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* last November found that just one in five forced presidential departures over a 25-year period involved financial issues. The rest generally involved “broken relationships.”

Preparation is key: Smart presidents recognize that no campus is immune to crisis. They insist that their senior teams develop a crisis mindset and acquire the necessary skills for preventing, responding to and recovering from severe disruptions.

Build your team: Presidents need to surround themselves with trustworthy advisors who can bring multiple perspectives on issues.

(Lack of) Speed kills: Higher education moves slowly and in predictable ways. Crises do not. Wise leaders demand their teams move quickly when problems flare up. One of the best ways to do this is to remove layers of approval and pre-authorize people to act and communicate immediately.

Get the big picture: Your job is to interpret the situation for your stakeholders. Good presidents are out front with honest answers that display accountability and transparency.

Relationships matter: Prudent leaders spend a great deal of time nurturing relationships in advance with faculty, students, alumni, activists, the news media and others who will influence the situation.

It’s not over until it’s over: A critical mistake many leaders make is to assume too quickly that the crisis is over. The toughest questions often come on the second day, when the media and activists change the conversation from “what happened” to “who is to blame.”

Close the chapter: Good leaders also know how to move their campuses from response to recovery.

Learn from the last time: Presidents should insist on a full examination that includes what came before, and they should see to it that changes are made based on the lessons learned.

SPONSORED RESEARCH

Research in the Trump era: How presidential budget could affect university funding.

The Daily Californian, Hyunkyu Michael Lee, April 13, 2017.

<http://www.dailycal.org/2017/04/13/research-trump-era-presidential-budget-affect-university-funding/>

Trump's proposed budget has called for major cuts to agencies, such as the Department of Health of Human Services, NASA and the Department of Energy, which provide the majority of UC research funding.

The only proposed increase to a department that significantly finances UC research was to the Department of Defense, which makes up 9 percent of the university's federal research budget.

UC President Janet Napolitano said in an email that the university will continue to make its case to Congress about the necessity of federal investments in research, which she called crucial to economic and social progress.

UCSC team wins contest about importance of humanities. *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, Sentinel Staff, June 26, 2017.

<http://www.santacruzsentinel.com/article/NE/20160626/NEWS/160629822>

The UC Santa Cruz team of The Gail Project took first prize for Do You Have a Passport? an essay/memoir about the project written by team member Stella Fronius. Stella made the case for the importance of the humanities by telling the story of her own path into the Gail Project and describing how the prospect of the work captured her imagination and how her work in the project itself challenged her horizons and her own sense of her abilities.

PLANNING

When nudge comes to shove. *The Economist*, May 20, 2017

<https://www.economist.com/news/international/21722163-experimental-iterative-data-driven-approach-gaining-ground-policymakers-around>

Policy makers around the world are embracing behavioral science. Many governments are turning to nudges to save money and do better. Behavioral psychology is used to design and test policy tweaks, in order to change behavior, make good choices easy, attractive, social and timely.

Flying high: A new crop of hands-on universities is transforming how students learn. *The Economist*, June 25, 2017

<https://www.economist.com/news/international/21701081-new-crop-hands-universities-transforming-how-students-learn-flying-high>

The rise of challenge-driven universities is discussed, citing examples of experiential and experimental learning; a paradigm for learning with no textbooks, lectures or professors--students work in teams to solve problems.

Excess credit hour policies increase student debt. *Inside Higher Ed*, Ashley A. Smith, July 20, 2017

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/07/20/excess-credit-hour-policies-increase-student-debt>

Excess credit hour policies adopted by states adds to student debt and harms low- and middle-income students. This is due to an information gap between state policy makers and individual students. Students are only exposed to the policy when they are close to the threshold where it becomes too hard to make a substantive change to their degree program.

Campus administrators weigh a more practical argument for higher education. *Inside Higher Ed*, Doug Lederman, August 2, 2017

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/08/02/campus-administrators-weigh-more-practical-argument-higher-education>

The colleges exist to educate broadly and to prepare people to be productive citizens -- but it also must recognize that students and families do want post secondary education and training to prepare them for career success.

How to change the discourse about higher education:

- a new way of articulating the value of higher education
- reaffirming the public trust in higher education

INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES & MEASURES

The Next Great Hope for Measuring Learning. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Dan Berrett, October 16, 2016.

<http://www.chronicle.com/article/The-Next-Great-Hope-for/238075>

Researchers and scholars find that accountability is often equated with standardized tests, which have attracted support from policy makers and researchers but have failed to catch on with many faculty members. Most tests are not connected to the curriculum, and students have little motivation to take them seriously. Other measures, like students' self-reported attitudes or study habits, are widely used but tend to give institutions few clues for how to improve. They feel the need to develop a broadly applicable measure of learning.

California's Tough Bar Exam, Long a Point of Pride, Faces Pushback. *The Wall Street Journal*, Sara Randazzo, May 31, 2017.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/californias-tough-bar-exam-long-a-point-of-pride-faces-pushback-1496242494>

With passing rates hitting historic lows, the state's law schools are pushing for a controversial change: lowering the score required to pass. Just 35% of takers passed the most recent California exam, given in February. Since 1984, California's so-called cut score has been 144, higher than every state but Delaware. Some practicing lawyers say the problem isn't the difficulty of the test but that there are too many law schools churning out graduates with little chance of finding decent employment.

When California and the UC system Fight, the State's kids and Its Economy Lose. *Los Angeles Times*, Karin Klein, June 5, 2017.

<http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-klein-uc-audit-20170605-story.html>

Based on the state audit results, Governor Jerry Brown and state legislature are talking about punishing UC by withholding funds that might be needed for actual education and exerting more control over UC. The fight between UC and state leaders isn't good for the university, California or the state's high-achieving students who rely on it for an affordable, first-rate higher education.

Fiscal and State Policy Issues Affecting Postsecondary Education: State Outlook. *American Association of State Colleges and Universities*, Compiled by the AASCU State Relations and Policy Analysis Team, August 1, 2017.

<http://www.aascu.org/policy/publications/aascu-special-reports/october2017stateoutlook.aspx>

This report provides an overview of the national and state economic and revenue conditions affecting public colleges and universities. In addition, it provides information on tuition changes for a number of

public college and university systems and a review of leading policy changes that have occurred in the states this year.

One key take away from the data provided: UC's 2017-18 2.5% increase is within .1% of the 2016-17 national average of 2.4%.

Other than the above, UC and California higher ed in general is conspicuously missing from this report. However, with so many data points related to other institutions and national averages, it might be interesting to answer some of the points with our own data for comparison.

DATA INFRASTRUCTURE

Redefining Student Success—How Institutions Are Achieving Breakthrough Results Across Six Categories of Impact. EAB, EAB, March 2, 2017.

<https://www.eab.com/technology/student-success-collaborative/members/infographics/redefining-student-success>

Each year brings new urgency to the student success challenge, as higher education's definition of "success" expands beyond first-year retention and graduation. Just as each student follows their own unique path to success, every institution approaches and measures student success differently. This article presents six categories of student success "results," including tuition revenue, graduation, retention, and persistence, academic progress and performance, special populations, student experience, and staff productivity. The metrics in each category are related and often intertwined, and they reflect important advancements in the landscape of student success.

Information Technology: Truth, all the truth - and statistics. *The Economist*, March 2, 2017.

<https://www.economist.com/news/books-and-arts/21722612-data-mining-becoming-more-and-more-precise-how-find-out-what-people-really-think?frsc=dg%7Cd>

This article introduces some of the findings in *Everybody Lies: Big data, New data, and What the Internet Can Tell Us About Who We Really Are*, by Seth Stephens-Davidowitz. The author argues that the web will revolutionize social science just as the microscope and telescope transformed the natural sciences. Big data can provide new sources of information and captures what people actually do or think, in contrast to survey data.

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