



BERKELEY INITIATIVE FOR TRANSPARENCY  
IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

FOIA Data

Christensen

Introduction

Data

# FOIA Data: War Deaths and the Military Labor Supply

Garret Christensen<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>UC Berkeley:  
Berkeley Initiative for Transparency in the Social Sciences  
Berkeley Institute for Data Science

Love Data Week, February 2018  
Slides available online:

<http://www.github.com/garrettchristensen/FOIA>



BERKELEY INITIATIVE FOR TRANSPARENCY  
IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

# More common?

FOIA Data

Christensen

Introduction

Data



Pat Tillman, former Pac-10 Defensive Player of the Year and Arizona Cardinals safety, killed by friendly fire in Afghanistan in 2004.

# Less common?

FOIA Data

Christensen

Introduction

Data



Bill Krissoff, orthopedic surgeon, aged 61, enlisted in the Navy Medical Corps after his son Nathan was killed in the Marine Corps in Iraq in 2006.



# Data

FOIA Data

Christensen

Introduction

Data

## ■ FOIA: Recruits

- Three separate sets of all Military Applicants, Contracts, Accessions from January 1990-July 2006.
- Active Duty (6.4m, 3.4m, 3.0m)
- Able to match 96% to a ZIP

## ■ US military deaths

- Public: Those considered to be part of OIF/OEF starting October 2001. (2886 before July '06)
- Able to match 94% by county.
- FOIA: Every death from January 1990-2010 (21,744)

## ■ Unemployment (BLS)

- Mortality (NCHS–no geographic identifiers after 2004)
- Quarterly Recruiters by State (through '04/'05)
- FOIA: Military Occupational Specialty (MOS)



BERKELEY INITIATIVE FOR TRANSPARENCY  
IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

FOIA Data

Christensen

Introduction

Data

# Data Acquisition

## How?

- 1 Spend too much time on Facebook
- 2 Realize you need more data
- 3 File FOIA request
- 4 ???
- 5 Profit!



BERKELEY INITIATIVE FOR TRANSPARENCY  
IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

FOIA Data

Christensen

Introduction

Data

# Filing a FOIA Request

## Freedom of Information Act (1967)

- Right to information from government
- Nine exemptions [Link](#)
  - National security
  - Personal privacy
  - Oil well information (of course)
- File with relevant agency: DOD (Broken link!)
- Be specific!

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**  
**OFFICE OF FREEDOM OF INFORMATION**  
**1155 DEFENSE PENTAGON**  
**WASHINGTON DC 20301-1155**

**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**

**CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS**  
**2000 NAVY PENTAGON**  
**WASHINGTON DC 20350-2000**

(DNS-36)

**OFFICIAL BUSINESS**

**Department of Defense**  
Office of Freedom of Information  
1155 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1155

2  
1  
10  
7;  
Department of Defense  
Office of Freedom of Information  
1155 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1155



# Concerns

FOIA Data

Christensen

Introduction

Data

- “We will be unable to respond...” [More](#)
- You’ll never be able to run the SQL query yourself.  
Jump on mistakes fast!
- Reduced/no fee for educational use? [More](#)



BERKELEY INITIATIVE FOR TRANSPARENCY  
IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

FOIA Data

Christensen

Introduction

Data

# Ask the Librarian!

## U.S. Freedom of Information Act and the California Public Records Act: U.S. Freedom of Information Act

Information on how to make a FOIA or CORA request

**U.S. Freedom of Information Act**

**U.S. FOIA Exemptions**

**U.S. FOIA Groups**

**California Public Records Act and CA Open Meeting**

**Subject Guide**



Jesse Silva

**Email Me**

**What is FOIA?**

**FOIA** stands for **Freedom Of Information Act**. It allows anyone to request information from the Executive Branch agencies and departments (those agencies and departments that report to the President--[find them here](#)). FOIA does not apply to the Legislative Branch (U.S. Congress) nor the Judicial Branch (U.S. Courts).

[FOIA Resources, including the law itself](#) (from the U.S. Department of Justice).

[Read the regulations governing FOIA.](#) (from the Legal Information Institute at Cornell University Law School).

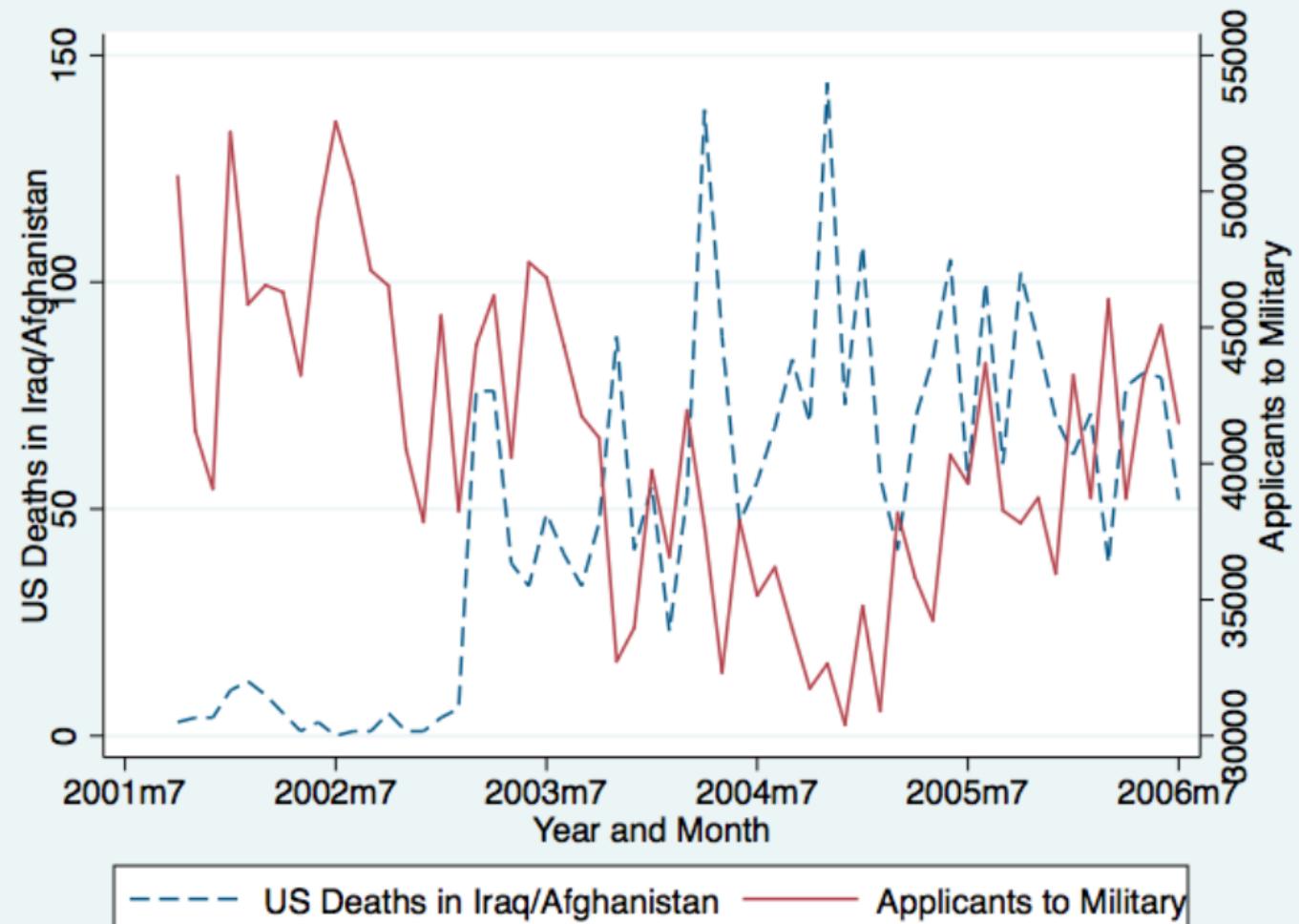
**Is FOIA Right for My Project?**

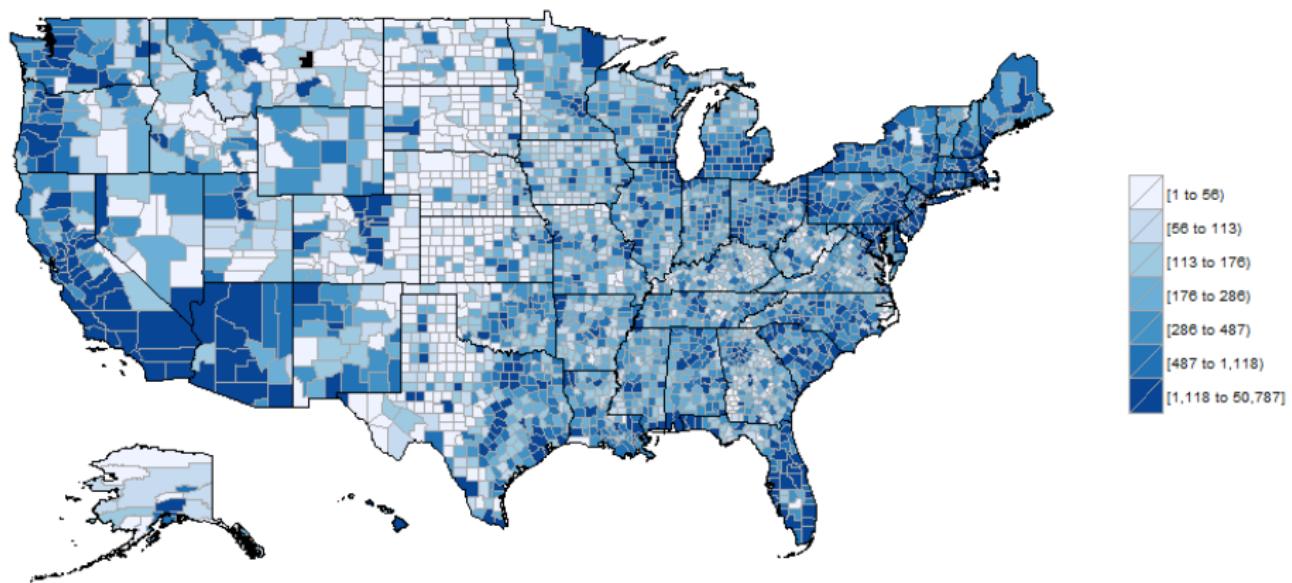
Before pursuing a FOIA request, do as much research as you can in the published record. Look at government reports, press releases, newspaper articles, etc. For most research projects, the published record can provide the information you may need. If you decide to do a FOIA request, examining the published reports will help you focus your request, or provide the necessary background information to better construct your request. Use the [government information guides](#) or contact a [government information librarian](#) for tips and advice on locating this information.

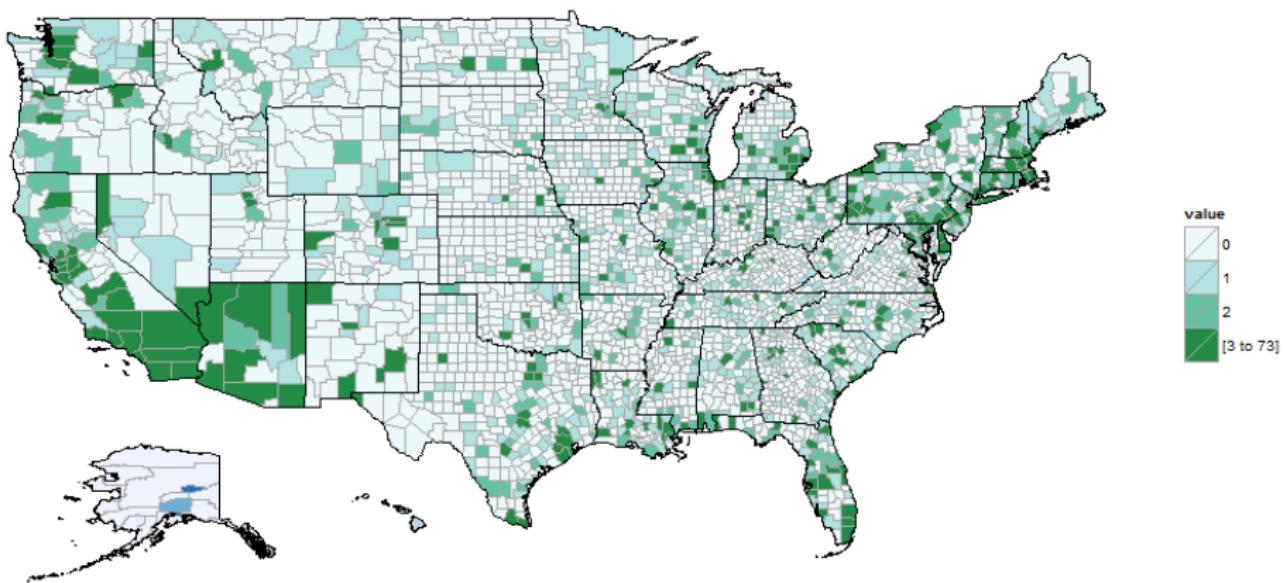
15-F-0425

Final Response  
-UNCLASSIFIED-

Doc 1









## Occupational Fatalities and the Labor Supply: Evidence from the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan ☆

Garret Christensen ✉

Show more

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2017.04.020>

[Get rights and content](#)

### Highlights

- Death of US soldiers decrease recruiting in their home county by over 1 percent.
- Deaths of US soldiers can increase recruiting in certain counties.
- Behavioral models may be necessary to explain military recruiting.



BERKELEY INITIATIVE FOR TRANSPARENCY  
IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

FOIA Data

Christensen

Introduction

Data

Questions?

Thank you!



# More on Time

[FOIA Data](#)[Christensen](#)[Introduction](#)[Data](#)

We will be unable to respond to your request within the FOIA's 20 day statutory time period as there are unusual circumstances which impact on our ability to quickly process your request. These unusual circumstances are: (a) the need to search for and collect records from a facility geographically separated from this Office and (b) the need for consultation with one or more other agencies or DoD components having a substantial interest in either the determination or the subject matter of the records. For these reasons, your request has been placed in our complex processing queue and will be worked in the order the request was received. Our current administrative workload is 1,633 open requests.

[Back](#)

[FOIA Data](#)[Christensen](#)[Introduction](#)[Data](#)

# More on Cost

Per your request, you have set out that you are in the FOIA fee category of "Educational." The intended use of the information you are seeking is not clear from the request itself, and we encourage you to give us additional information or clarification. The school, UC Berkley, must show a use or purpose for the scholarly research. As well, to qualify as an educational requester, your request has to be authorized by and made under the auspices of a qualifying institution that operates a program or programs of scholarly research that is not being accomplished for commercial use. Scholarly research should further the goal of the institution, rather than an individual goal. Please note that records requested for the intention of fulfilling credit requirements are not considered to be sought for a scholarly purpose; furthermore, students gathering data for research papers do not ! qualify as educational requesters.

Would you please provide some indication, on official school letterhead, that the information you are seeking is to be used by University of California, Berkley, prior to close of business, March 4, 2015