

**Belman, Dale and Paul J. Wolfson. *What does the minimum wage do?* Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 2014. 471 p. Cloth, \$55.00. ISBN: 978-0-880-99457-6; Paper, \$35.00 ISBN:978-0-880-99456-9**

Through meta-analysis of more than 200 scholarly papers regarding minimum wage published since 1991 (with a focus on articles published since 2000), academics Belman and Wolfson attempt to clarify existing research and explain effects of minimum wage increases on factors including earnings, education, employment, inequality, and poverty. Populations impacted by changes to the minimum wage and the timing and size of effects are examined in relation to three general models of the labor market taken from existing literature. Though emphasis is on the United States (U.S.), the micro and macroeconomic analyses also consider research from Canada, the United Kingdom, and several other developed countries. The authors conclude that modest minimum wage increases raise wages for the working poor without substantially affecting employment or work hours, providing “solid benefits with small costs” (p. 401). The minimum wage is positioned as a policy instrument that, when used properly and in conjunction with other policies and programs, can improve living standards of the working poor.