



# American Resource Center Newsletter U.S. Embassy Helsinki June-July 2014, Issue 6

## Celebrating July 4 with Route 66 Style

On June 18, U.S. Embassy Helsinki celebrated the 238th Anniversary of the Independence of the United States of America with over 1,500 guests. The theme this year was Route 66.

"There was once a thoroughfare through the southwestern United States that weaved from Chicago to Los Angeles through small towns, prairie and open desert. Route 66 took motorists into the heart of America, with kitschy motels advertised by neon signs, Indian trading posts, and oddly named bars and restaurants. As part of the journey, the long-distance traveler experienced the local culture, and that culture achieved a connection with the outside world.

Interest in old Route 66 has spiked, even outside the United States, among those who see the journey itself as the goal, not simply a means to a destination. Luckily, nearly 80 percent of the old route still exists, and many now seek to preserve the wonder of a road trip that takes the traveler off the beaten path.

Those searching for the 'Real America' — the regional accents, local culinary treats, and the generous people happy with things just as they are — can find it on Route 66."

Read more: <http://goo.gl/KRC2ll>

More information about July 4 is available in the publication *eJournal USA: Fourth of July – Everyone's Invited*. The theme in this issue includes recognition of the country's immigrant beginnings. In these pages you will read about newer immigrant communities and how they plan to celebrate the Fourth of July and about refugees resettling there. Also a report on the American taste for barbecue is included; this form of cooking is so popular that it is viewed as an institution. <http://goo.gl/eofC2z>

## Coming Up: Great Decisions

Great Decisions is America's largest discussion program on world affairs. The program model involves reading the Great Decisions Briefing Book, watching the DVD, and meeting in a Discussion Group to discuss the most critical global issues facing America today.

The program provides background information and policy options for the eight most critical issues facing America each year and serves as the focal text for discussion groups across the country. The topics include for example *Energy Independence, Food and Climate, China's foreign policy, and U.S. trade policy.*

The ARC will be hosting the Great Decisions discussion program for the first time in Finland this fall. Interested? We'll be posting information on how to sign up soon.

For more information please visit [http://www.fpa.org/great\\_decisions/](http://www.fpa.org/great_decisions/).



# WebPicks

collected by the ARC staff

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## American Life

**The Case for Reparations** by Ta-Nehisi Coates. The Atlantic, May 21, 2014.

Two hundred fifty years of slavery. Ninety years of Jim Crow. Sixty years of separate but equal. Thirty-five years of racist housing policy. Until we reckon with our compounding moral debts, America will never be whole.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2014/05/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>

**Celebrate the 20th Anniversary of Forrest Gump by Visiting the Film's Iconic Locations** by Natasha Geiling. Smithsonian, July 3, 2014.

Unlike a box of chocolates, you can know what you're going to get with these places from Gump's epic life

<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/forrest-gumps-america-180951933/#IBSj35DmrsuLuzco.99>

**Hard-Core Liberals and Hard-Pressed Skeptics Share Doubts on American Dream** by Richard V. Reeves and Joanna Venator. Brookings Blogs, July 14, 2014.

Do Americans believe in the American Dream? The short answer: most do, some don't. The slightly longer answer: different classes and groups hold divergent views on the question of whether hard work can get you ahead or whether success lies beyond the control of the individual.

<http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/social-mobility-memos/posts/2014/07/14-skeptics-doubt-american-dream-reeves>

**The Soul of the South** by Paul Theroux. Smithsonian, July 2014.

Fifty years after the civil rights summer of 1964, renowned travel writer Paul Theroux chronicles the living memory of an overlooked America.

<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/soul-south-180951861/#CRhXoUKCiOCvyx4F.99>

**Why Millennials Are Turning Away from the Mainstream Media** by Dimitri A. Simes. National Interest, July 22, 2014.

According to a recent poll, only 11% of Americans between the ages 18 and 29 trust the media to do the right thing most of the time. Looking at recent events might explain why.

<http://nationalinterest.org/feature/why-millennials-are-turning-away-the-mainstream-media-10924>

## Economy & Politics

**The Biden Agenda: Reckoning with Ukraine and Iraq, and Keeping an Eye on 2016** by Evan Osnos. The New Yorker, July 28, 2014.

At noon on Thursday, July 17th, Vice-President Joe Biden was on his way to Detroit for a day of light political fare: a fund-raiser, a community-college visit, a speech to progressive groups. Shortly before he landed, an aide told him that Malaysia Airlines Flight 17, en route from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur, had crashed in eastern Ukraine, an area controlled by pro-Russian separatists. Details were sketchy, but intelligence suggested that the Boeing 777-200, carrying two hundred and ninety-eight people, had been hit by a surface-to-air missile. There were no survivors. When Biden reached the dais at a convention center in Detroit, he said that the plane "apparently has been shot down." He added, "Not an accident. Blown out of the sky."

<http://origin.www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/07/28/biden-agenda>

**Digital Tools are Becoming More and More Central to the Process of Winning Your Vote. Just How Far Can Technology Reach?** by Andrew Rice. National Journal, July 19, 2014.

If you are a living, breathing, voting-age American, the political analytics firm i360 says it has your number. Its database contains more than 250 million individual profiles, basically one for every adult in the country, each of which is scored on a 100-point scale. Zero represents the most partisan Democrat, and 100 the most partisan Republican. The higher the score, the better it is for i360, which is affiliated with the conservative nonprofit network funded by the Koch brothers. The firm claims that its predictive model helps its clients to judge whether any given person will likely be receptive to an advertisement or a knock at the door—and will ultimately be inclined to vote the right way.

<http://www.nationaljournal.com/magazine/how-far-can-political-technology-reach-20140718>

**Finland's New Tech Power: Game Maker Supercell** by Joshua Brustein. Bloomberg Businessweek, June 5, 2014.

First, Finland had timber. Then there was Nokia (NOK). Today its most visible export is video games.

<http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2014-06-05/clash-of-clans-maker-supercell-succeeds-nokia-as-finlands-tech-power#p1>

**Hillary Clinton's New Image: Cool Grandma. Can She Maintain It?** by Monica Potts, The American Prospect, June 25, 2014.

Her attitude—unabashedly feminist, casually in charge—was captured most effectively toward the end of her stint as secretary of state. Can she keep it as a candidate?

<http://prospect.org/article/hillary-clintons-new-image-cool-grandma-can-she-maintain-it>

**Power Shift: Inside New CEO Mary Barra's Urgent Mission To Fix GM** by Joann Muller. Forbes, May 28, 2014. [This story appears in the June 16, 2014 issue of Forbes]

Mary Barra made history by working her way into Detroit's car-guy club and becoming the first female CEO of General Motors. Now can

she fix the company? ... "The most powerful woman in the history of the auto industry came to the business the way so many others of her generation did in the mid-1980s: through osmosis. Born Mary Barra, Barra grew up in Waterford Township, Mich., a middle-class suburb north of Detroit, where local car dealers turned the arrival of new vehicles into small holidays, covering the windows to make a big production out of unveilings."

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/joannmuller/2014/05/28/exclusive-inside-mary-barras-urgent-mission-to-fix-gm/>

## Global Challenges

**Bringing the Farm to Your Backyard** by Shaylyn Esposito. Smithsonian, July 11, 2014.

Development Supported Agriculture is a growing trend in the housing world, and one subdivision is taking it mainstream.

<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/innovation/bringing-farm-your-backyard-180951245/#tmYmC4CSEyDvW3yG.99>

**Can't Picture a World Devastated by Climate Change? These Games Will Do it for You** by Amy Westervelt. Smithsonian, July 21, 2014.

Augmented and virtual reality games may help crack the code of getting humans to do something about the environment.

<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/cant-picture-world-devastated-climate-change-these-games-will-do-it-you-180952104/#5Jl2o6drHCzvDqLJ.99>

**The Change Within: The Obstacles We Face Are Not Just External** by Naomi Klein. The Nation, May 12, 2014.

The climate crisis has such bad timing, confronting it not only requires a new economy but a new way of thinking.

<http://www.thenation.com/article/179460/change-within-obstacles-we-face-are-not-just-external>

**End of the Earth's Oceans?** The Futurist, May/June 2014.

A billion years from now, solar radiation will have set the Earth's oceans aboil. Imagine a map of the Earth in the future. Depending on how far in the future you're imagining, you might envision political boundaries redrawn after war, or major cities swallowed by rising sea levels. But if you picture a map of Earth's distant future, you might be alarmed by a major change: The Big Blue Marble will be missing its requisite stretches of blue, as the oceans will have completely disappeared from Earth. When? About a billion years from now, according to the latest estimates.

<http://www.wfs.org/futurist/2014-issues-futurist/may-june-2014-vol-48-no-3/end-earth%E2%80%99s-oceans>

**How to Boost Food Production but Not Emissions? Researchers Identify Key Ways** by Noelle Swan. The Christian Science Monitor, July 18, 2014.

The international agricultural system already produces a hefty share of the world's greenhouse gases, making expansion of food production a delicate balancing act. But it might not be as hard as it seems, researchers say.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/2014/0718/How-to-boost-food-production-but-not-emissions-Researchers-identify-key-ways>

**A Plan B for Climate Agreements** by Kevin Bullis. MIT Technology Review, June 12, 2014.

U.N. negotiations are going nowhere, and greenhouse-gas emissions are soaring. It's time to move on.

<http://www.technologyreview.com/review/528106/a-plan-b-for-climate-agreements/>

## International Relations

**After Karzai** by Mujib Mashal. The Atlantic, June 23, 2014.

Afghanistan's outgoing president helped heal a shattered country. He also winked at corruption and ruled like a tribal chief. His successor will inherit a nation that's in better shape than you might think—and a government with little power to keep it that way.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2014/06/after-karzai/372294/>

**The Myth of Petroleum Independence and Foreign Policy Isolation** by Sarah A. Emerson and Andrew C. Winner. Article Originally Appears in Washington Quarterly, Spring 2014.

The linkage between U.S. oil import dependence and military commitment to the Gulf region has given rise to a myth favored by policymakers, markets, and the public that if the United States could attain oil independence, we could also reduce our military responsibilities around the world. Recent and ongoing changes in both the oil sector and in political-military strategy are for the first time in forty years combining in a manner that is leading some to believe this story could come true.

<http://www.esai.com/petroleum/14/washingtonquarterly030114>

**Russia's Five Most Lethal Land Weapons of War: What Ukraine and NATO Should Fear the Most if the Unthinkable Happens** by Michael Peck. National Interest, July 24, 2014.

Should direct conflict erupt between Russia and Ukraine, or between NATO and Russia, the Russian Army will be fielding some powerful weapons.

<http://nationalinterest.org/feature/russias-five-most-lethal-land-weapons-war-10944>

**Superpowers Don't Get to Retire: What Our Tired Country Still Owes the World** by Robert Kagan. The New Republic, May 26, 2014.

Almost 70 years ago, a new world order was born from the rubble of World War II, built by and around the power of the United States. Today that world order shows signs of cracking, and perhaps even collapsing. The Russia-Ukraine and Syria crises, and the world's tepid response, the general upheaval in the greater Middle East and North Africa, the growing nationalist and great-power tensions in East Asia, the worldwide advance of autocracy and retreat of democracy—taken individually, these problems are neither unprecedented nor unmanageable. But collectively they are a sign that something is changing, and perhaps more quickly than we may imagine. They may signal a transition into a different world order or into a world disorder of a kind not seen since the 1930s.

<http://www.newrepublic.com/article/117859/allure-normalcy-what-america-still-owes-world>

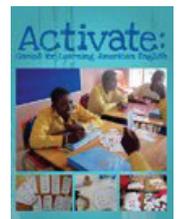
## Teacher Alert! Games, Briefings, Tours, and More



For those of you already planning your upcoming lesson plans, why not include a visit to the American Resource Center? In addition to a tour at our premises and a briefing of our services, we can also arrange game sessions and/or briefings by American Foreign Service Officers.

One of the games we have that is just waiting for players is **"You've Been Sentenced!"** The board game is for all ages, 3-10 players, and it takes 30-40 minutes to play. "You've Been Sentenced!" is a fun classroom teaching tool. It makes learning grammar and sentence construction fun and easy. 540 cards with over 2,500 words insure billions of possible sentences so the game is never repetitive and has unlimited re-play value.

Another great tool for teachers available at the ARC is **Activate: Games for Learning American English**. It is a collection of games for the language classroom. The games in *Activate* offer practice with vocabulary, grammatical patterns, and interaction skills in a learner-centered, low-stress environment. The games provide opportunities to talk informally and to think creatively.

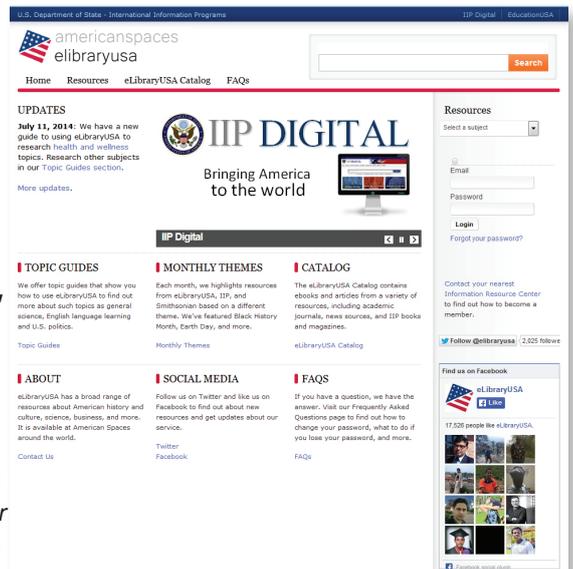


If your schedule doesn't permit for your class to visit the ARC but would like to try out some of our board games for teaching, feel free to contact us by e-mail at [arc@usembassy.fi](mailto:arc@usembassy.fi); also spread the word for your colleagues!

## eLibraryUSA - Something for Everyone

Are you familiar with the **FREE** eLibraryUSA portal yet? By signing up for this free service at the ARC, you can receive access to a virtual library that includes many useful resources for students, teachers, researchers, and anyone interested in learning more, well, just about anything. Through eLibraryUSA you can have online access to millions of publications, scholarly journals, eBooks, audio, video, and other multi-media content. Through eLibraryUSA you can access content in databases like Gale, Encyclopedia Britannica, CQ Researcher, and others specializing in diverse topics (including science, technology, environment, health, social sciences, literature, economics, business administration, English learning, history, and American culture.)

One of the useful resources in this portal we always highlight is **ebrary** - a database for the general public with a collection of over 50,000 English, Spanish, and Portuguese full-text books on history, literature, science, and technology. The database is divided into 4 parts: *Schools & Studying*, *Career Development*, *Arts & Leisure*, and *Practical Life Skills*. Under these headings you can find massive amounts of information, such as study guides for GMAT and SAT, guide books for job hunting, interviewing, and career development, cook books and quilting techniques, as well as advice for parenting and personal finance.



The eLibrary USA portal has something for everyone. Check it out if you haven't yet - <http://elibraryusa.state.gov/> - and contact the ARC for free access: [arc@usembassy.fi](mailto:arc@usembassy.fi).



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