



Information Resource Center (IRC)
Public Diplomacy Section
U.S. Embassy, Vientiane, Laos



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Article Alert: May, 2014

Dear All,

The U.S. Embassy's Information Resource Center is very pleased to offer you **ARTICLE ALERT**, the monthly current awareness publication of the U.S. Embassy Public Diplomacy Section. Article Alert is designed to keep IRC users abreast of issues and concerns in the United States. **Full texts of all listed articles are available upon request** at irc_vientiane@state.gov or call us: 021 267089/267263, fax: 021 267160.

SPOTLIGHT: JOURNALISM AND DIGITAL MEDIA

1. "Let Us Rank Journalism Programs"

[Joseph Weber](#), *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator*, March 2014, 11 pages. What is the best journalism school in the United States? What about the top ten undergraduate and graduate schools? The author, an associate professor of journalism at the University of Nebraska, discusses why the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication should develop a ranking system that would be helpful to anyone interested, especially because federal policy makers soon will rate universities overall on affordability and value.

2. "Connecting with the User-Generated Web: How Group Identification Impacts Online Information Sharing and Evaluation"

[Andrew J. Flanagan](#), et al. *Information, Communication & Society*, August 2014, 12 pages.

The authors examine how group identification affects the ways in which online information pools, such as user-generated encyclopedias and websites that aggregate users' ratings of various products and experiences, are formed and sustained, as well as how information seekers evaluate the information they find in them.

3. "Audience Clicks and News Placement: A Study of Time-Lagged Influence in Online Journalism"

Angela M. Lee, et al. *Communication Research*, June 2014, 26 pages.

As audiences and their content preferences are rendered increasingly visible through digital tracking metrics and features such as "most viewed" lists on news homepages, to what extent has this development affected editorial decisions? The authors examine this phenomenon in journalism, building on a revised theoretical model that accounts for greater audience engagement in the gatekeeping process.

DEMOCRACY

4. "Constitutional Contestation over Thailand's Senate, 1997 to 2014"

[Michael H. Nelson](#). *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International & Strategic Affairs*, April 2014, 26 pages.

The author examines the ideational resources drawn on by the members of Thailand's 2007 Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC) in debating and deciding the shape of the National Assembly's upper house, the Senate.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

5. "The Mobile-Finance Revolution"

Jake Kendall and Rodger Voorhies. *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2014, 5 pages.

The authors explore how the widespread growth of mobile communication systems in developing countries can be used to offer financial services to the poor, through means such as microfinance, mobile banking and electronic fund transfers.

6. "World Hunger and the Global Economy: Strong Linkages, Weak Action"

Jennifer Clapp. *Journal of International Affairs*, Spring/Summer 2014, 17 pages.

Since the crisis hit at a time when global food production per capita was rising, it is important that policies addressing hunger incorporate dimensions beyond food production. The author discusses the role of global economic forces that has contributed to the ongoing precarious global food security situation, especially in the years since the 2007 to 2008 food crisis.

ENERGY

7. "Development of Refining and Petrochemical Industries in East Asia: An Interpretation Based on the Flying Geese Paradigm"

Clara García and Enrique Palazuelos. *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, April 2014, 21 pages.

The authors assess whether the development of refining and petrochemical industries in Asian countries may be better understood with the aid of one of the major interpretative paradigms of structural change and foreign relations in East Asia: the Flying Geese Paradigm.

8. "America's Energy Edge"

Robert D. Blackwill and Meghan L. O'Sullivan. *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2014, 13 pages.

The authors discuss U.S. shale gas production and the fracking revolution, focusing on a dramatic increase in U.S. petroleum and natural gas production made possible by the techniques of horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing, and its impact on geopolitics.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT

9. "Think Again: Climate Treaties"

David Shorr. *Foreign Policy*, March 2014, 5 pages.

While environmental agencies promote the notion of targets and timetables, lack of attention to costs and the viability of making changes to which they had committed forces countries to remove themselves from binding international agreements. The author discusses obstacles to international environmental treaties.

10. "Can Coal Ever Be Clean"

Michelle Nijhuis. *National Geographic*, April 2014, 11 pages.

The author discusses how coal, as an energy source, can be made clean enough to slow

rapid global climate change and localized disasters such as increased respiratory ailments and premature deaths.

11. "Networking Nature"

Jon Hoekstra. *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2014, 10 pages.

The author examines nature and wildlife conservation, focusing on how technological innovations including remote sensing, artificial satellite tracking of wildlife and smartphones allow for dramatic improvement in conservation efforts.

WORLD AFFAIRS

12. "A Conversation with Joseph S. Nye, Jr. on Presidential Leadership and the Creation of the American Era"

[Joseph S. Nye, Jr.](#). *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, Winter 2014, 5 pages.

How are the U.S. presidencies of the twenty-first century fundamentally different than in the twentieth? Is the legacy of President Obama in either advancing or diminishing American primacy? Is a soft power approach to global politics the best way to exercise leadership in the world today? The author, University Distinguished Service Professor and former Dean of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, examines the questions.

13. "Did History End? Assessing the Fukuyama Thesis"

John Mueller. *Political Science Quarterly*, Spring 2014, 20 pages.

The author, a senior fellow at the Cato Institute, analyzes the assertion by political scientist Francis Fukuyama that the concept of history had ended with the fall of communism, and discusses why Fukuyama's notion was misinterpreted.

THE UNITED STATES AND ASIA

14. "Far Eastern Promises"

[Kurt M. Campbell](#) and Ely Ratner. *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2014, 11 pages.

With Asia's growing prosperity and influence as well as the enormous challenges the region poses, the question is not whether the United States will focus more on Asia, but whether it can do so with the necessary resolve, resources, and wisdom.

15. "Asia First"

Robert W. Merry. *National Interest*, March/April 2014, 4 pages.

The author discusses the U.S. foreign policy towards Asia from the 1840s through the end of the 19th century, focusing on the need for the United States to pursue Asia-first strategy.

16. "Power Shift or Paradigm Shift? China's Rise and Asia's Emerging Security Order"

[Amitav Acharya](#). *International Studies Quarterly*, March 2014, 16 pages.

While the rise of China is reshaping Asia's military balance, the region has also witnessed equally longer-term changes, especially economic interdependence, multilateral institutions and domestic politics. The author, Professor of International Relations at the School of International Service, American University, assesses how these changes impact Asia's security order.

GLOBAL HEALTH

17. "Are Any Plastics Safe?"

Mariah Blake. *Mother Jones*, March/April 2014, 10 pages.

The author examines the health effects and problems associated with the plastic additive bisphenol A (BPA), which leaks synthetic estrogens, focusing on estrogen's role in bone

growth and ovulation and estrogen levels leading to diseases such as cancer, diabetes, and obesity.

18. "Secrets of the Brain"

Carl Zimmer. *National Geographic*, February 2014, 24 pages.

The author explores brain imaging and mapping technologies that let scientists peer deep into the hidden structure of the brain and may finally provide answers to basic questions about the brain including the secret to many diseases.

EDUCATION

19. "Social Media Go to College"

[Ana M. Martínez-Alemán](#). *Change*, January/February 2014, 11 pages.

The author, a professor and chair of the Department of Educational Leadership & Higher Education at the Lynch School of Education at Boston College, discusses Social media's evolution as a pedagogical tool, and the need for faculty to explore the promise of using social media as supplementary or primary instructional tools.

20. "Education in a Post-Literate Age"

Christopher L. Doyle. *Education Week*, April 2, 2014, 3 pages.

The author, a history teacher at Watkinson School in Hartford, discusses how education has changed in what he refers to as the "Age of Post-Literacy," in which the importance of printed books has declined.

21. "Promoting Information Literacy with Prezi"

Elizabeth Kiscaden. *Computers in Libraries*, March 2014, 3 pages.

The author discusses Microsoft's PowerPoint Prezi, a nonlinear presentation software and tips on using the software as a tool for library instruction and use of the software to demonstrate concept mapping to students within the undergraduate academic environment.

U.S. POLITICS

22. "Clintonism, Populism, and Hillary's Next Move"

Paul Glastris. *Washington Monthly*, January/February 2014, 2 pages.

The author discusses Clintonism and the prospect of Hillary Clinton in a second U.S. presidential run in 2016, particularly Bill Clinton's political and economic policies and the changes Hillary will bring if she won the presidential election.

23. "How Big Brother Got Bigger"

Raymond L. Fischer. *USA Today Magazine*, March 2014, 2 pages.

The author, Professor Emeritus of communication at the University North Dakota, discusses the strategies used by U.S. President Barack Obama in the 2012 presidential campaign and how the Obama team perfected targeting e-mail messages to raise money where a staff of 20 e-mail writers fine-tuned messages appropriate for specific groups of voters.