

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

=====

**Alert Service**

Dear All,

The U.S. Embassy's Information Resource Center is 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 email below tel. 267089; 267263, or fax: 267160**

**ARTICLE ALERT  
JULY 2012**

**SPOTLIGHT: AMERICAN SPIRIT**

**1. "Guide to Historic Sites in Maryland"**

*American Heritage*, Winter/Spring 2012, 6 pages.

Focusing on western and southern Maryland and the city of Baltimore, this guide covers such historic locations as the U.S. Naval Academy, the Maryland State House, the Fort McHenry National Monument, and the Clara Barton National Historic Site.

**2. "The Transgender Athlete"**

Pablo S. Torre and David Epstien. *Sports Illustrated*, May 28, 2012, 8 pages.

Playing fields have long been segregated on the basis of sex. But what happens to the athletes whose physiology doesn't match their gender identity? Against whom do they compete? What obstacles do they face? And how are they being treated by sports' governing bodies? The authors explore transgender athletes and rules on the eligibility of transgender athletes in both men's and women's sports.

**U.S. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS 2012**

**3. "Have President Obama's Re-Election Prospects Brightened?"**

[Charles E. Cook](#). *Washington Quarterly*, Spring 2012, 6 pages.

Have the 2012 U.S. elections reached an inflection point? The author, a political analyst for NBC News, discusses the directions of the U.S. presidential race, whether it will be shifted from uphill for President Obama to a very close fight and a more evenly-balanced contest.

**4. "A Real Race"**

[Ramesh Ponnuru](#). *National Review*, June 25, 2012, 2 pages.

The author, President of the John Locke Foundation, discusses why U.S. Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney is poised to give President Barack Obama a stern challenge in the November, 2012 election.

## 5. "The Battleground"

[Alec MacGillis](#). *The New Republic*, June 7, 2012, 5 pages.

The author, a senior editor at *The New Republic*, explores political events in the swing state of Ohio from 2011-2012 and their implications for the election in November 2012, focusing on the case of Senate Bill SB5, which restricts the collective-bargaining rights of public sector employees.

## GLOBAL ECONOMY

### 6. "Rethinking Hegemony: Uneven Development, Historical Blocs, and the World Economic Crisis"

[Richard Saul](#). *International Studies Quarterly*, June 2012, 16 pages.

The author analyzes the 2008–2009 economic crisis with regard to longer-term developmental trends in the global economy centered on the Sino–U.S. economic relationship and the issue of whether or not the crisis is indicative of a decline in the material basis of American hegemony.

### 7. "The Dollar and Its Discontents"

[Olivier Jeanne](#). *PIIE Working Paper 12-10*, May 2012, 26 pages.

Has the U.S. dollar delivered the benefit that the rest of the world is expecting from its holdings of international liquidity? The author, a professor of economics at the Johns Hopkins University, examines whether U.S. dollar debt remains liquid, safe and abundant enough to support the role of the dollar as the main reserve currency and its performance as a store value.

### 8. "Toward a Global Monetary Order"

[Gerald P. O'Driscoll Jr.](#) *Cato Journal*, Spring/Summer 2012, 10 pages.

The author, a senior fellow at the Cato Institute, examines a global monetary system and monetary nationalism, focusing on the classical gold standard and the restoration of the gold commodity standard.

## THE UNITED STATES AND ASIA

### 9. "The Resurgence of Asia"

[Meghnad Desai](#). *Asian Affairs*, March 2012, 11 pages.

Now the dynamic Asia is modernizing very fast. Is it sustainable? The author discusses the resurgence in different parts of Asia, which seems to continue at a different pace, and examines the prospects and the transformation of the region's nature.

### 10. "Asia in the Balance: Transforming US Military Strategy in Asia"

[Thomas Mahnken](#), et al. *American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research*, June 2012, 32 pages.

The authors explore long-standing U.S. dominance in the Asia-Pacific and how to effectively maintain its position in the region. They offer fundamental strategic alternatives to match its ends and its means in an increasingly turbulent environment.

## THE UNITED STATES AND WORLD AFFAIRS

### 11. "Scoring Obama's Foreign Policy: A Progressive Pragmatist Tries to Bend History"

[Martin S. Indyk](#), et al. *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2012, 15 pages.

Is the United States declining during the Obama administration as Republican opponents have accused? Has President Obama have a strategy at all or merely responds to events? The authors examine President Barack Obama's foreign policy and national security issues from 2009-2012.

## NUCLEAR POLICY CHALLENGES

### 12. "Bombs Away? Being Realistic about Deep Nuclear Reductions"

[James M. Acton](#). *The Washington Quarterly*, Spring 2012, 17 pages.

The author, a senior associate with the Nuclear Policy Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, analyzes key barriers that prevent a major element of President Obama's foreign policy – nuclear reductions – from success.

### 13. "President Obama's Nuclear Legacy"

[Nancy Soderberg](#) and [Ryan Costello](#). *American Foreign Policy Interests*, May/June 2012, 14 pages.

The authors discuss President Obama's accomplishments in reducing the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. policy and in keeping safe the world's nuclear weapons and weapons-grade material, focusing on President Obama's commitment to a world without nuclear weapons and the policies he has set in place to make progress toward that goal.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

### 14. "Is Facebook Making Us Lonely?"

[Stephen Marche](#). *The Atlantic*, May 2012, 8 pages.

The author, a novelist, discusses the prevalence of online social networks such as Facebook in the United States and their impact on the emotional, psychological, and physical health of their users, focusing on the increase of users' loneliness.

### 15. "Second Chance"

[Caitlin Johnston](#). *American Journalism Review*, April/May 2012, 8 pages.

The author, an editorial assistant at *American Journalism Review*, discusses the future of traditional news outlets that stumbled at the onset of the digital era and the advent of tablet computers, focusing on the impact of tablets on the news industry and the need for newspapers to modify content for tablet computers.

### 16. "Power of the iMob"

Andrew Marshall. *World Today*, April-May 2012, 6 pages.

The author, a media consultant and former journalist, analyzes the emergence of a new wave of organizations and the rise of dot-orgs as global players, mobilizing millions and changing social activism for a new digital age.

### 17. "Top-Level Domain Names"

[Wallace Koehler](#). *Searcher*, May 2012, 3 pages.

The author, Director of M.L.I.S. Program at Valdosta State University, discusses the expansion of the range of generic top-level domain names from the original seven to the many, and its implications for several different constituencies and information professionals.

## LIBRARY TRENDS

### 18. "An Ebook Primer"

[Sue Polanka](#). *Library Journal*, April 15, 2012, Vol. 137 Issue 7, p42-44, 3p

The author, Head of Reference & Instruction at Wright State University Libraries, outlines how libraries can bring ebooks into their collections, and discusses the advantages and disadvantages

of ebooks for libraries and the importance of getting community input to inform any shift to digital media.

#### **19. "Next Generation Social Networks and Search"**

[Greg R. Notess](#). *Online*. May/June 2012, 3 pages.

The author, a reference team leader at Montana State University, discusses the next generation social networking and search sites including Google Inc.'s Google+ and image-based social networks Pinterest and Tumblr, focusing on the key features of each site and their advantages and disadvantages from research perspectives.

### **EDUCATION**

#### **20. "Grand Test Auto"**

[Bill Tucker](#), *Washington Monthly*, May/June 2012, 5 pages.

The author, a managing director of Education Sector, explores stealth assessments that are embedded into learning experiences to assess a student's skills and knowledge and how these skills can predict academic achievement.

### **DEMOCRACY PROMOTION**

#### **21. "People Power in the Era of Global Crisis: Rebellion, Resistance, and Liberation"**

[Barry K. Gills](#) and [Kevin Gray](#). *Third World Quarterly*, March 2012, 20 pages.

The authors analyze the struggle for human freedom and liberation from structures of oppression and exploitation, and the relation to democracy and to the agents of social change. The past several decades of 'People Power' via popular struggles for substantive democratization are also examined.

#### **22. "The Ambivalence of Populism: Threat and Corrective for Democracy"**

[Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser](#). *Democratization*, April 2012, 25 pages.

The author offers a roadmap for the understanding of the diverse and usually conflicting approaches to studying the relation between populism and democracy, focusing on three main approaches: the liberal, the radical, and the minimal.

#### **23. "Democratization and Multilateral Security"**

[Isabella Alcañiz](#). *World Politics*, April 2012, 35 pages.

Does democratization increase commitment to multilateral security? The author, an assistant professor of government and politics at the University of Maryland, examines the relationships between democratic transitions and the incentives of states to cooperate in multilateral security.

#### **24. "Why Women Are a Foreign Policy Issue"**

[Melanne Vermeer](#). *Foreign Policy*, May/June 2012, 4 pages.

Why the world can no longer afford to leave millions of women out of the global community? The U.S. State Department's ambassador at large for global women's issues discusses women basic human rights and the importance of advancing the status of women and girls around the world.

### **GLOBAL HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT**

#### **25. "Developing Symptoms: Noncommunicable Diseases Go Global"**

[Thomas J. Bollyky](#). *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2012, 11 pages.

The author, a senior fellow for Global Health, Economics, Development at the Council on Foreign

Relations, analyzes the biggest health challenges confronting the developing world and the increase of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) in developing countries.

**26. "Bubbles from the Deep"**

[Henrik Svensen](#). *Nature*, March 22, 2012, 3 pages.

The author, a senior researcher at the Centre for Physics of Geological Processes, discusses the greater influence that hydrates has on a warming world, now that ocean temperatures has risen high enough to melt methane-bearing gas hydrates.

**27. "Sun Struck"**

[Timothy Ferris](#). *National Geographic*, June 2012, 16 pages.

The author, a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, discusses the effects of solar storms upon electrical systems and its potential to knock out power grids and digital technologies on Earth.