

ARTICLE ALERT

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U.S. POLITICS AND SOCIAL PROCESSES

[1] Will Arizona Be America's Future?

William H. Frey

Brookings Institution. April 28, 2010

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As the controversy surrounding Arizona's new immigration legislation continues, William Frey identifies a "cultural generation gap" in relation to largely white baby boomers and older citizens that may be fueling anti-immigrant sentiment in the state. He explores this trend and provides perspective on what it may mean for the rest of the United States.

[2] The History of the Filibuster

Sarah A. Binder,

Brookings Institution. April 22, 2010.

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In testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Rules and Administration, Sarah Binder counters a number of conventionally held notions about the origins and history of the Senate filibuster. Binder notes that the filibuster was not part of the original design of the Senate and the creation of the cloture rule was not a statement of the Senate's love for supermajority rules, but rather the product of hard-nose bargaining with an obstructive minority.

ENVIROMENT AND ENERGY

[3] Assessing The Benefits Of Avoided Climate Change: Cost-benefit Analysis And Beyond Pew Center on Global Climate Change. May 2010.

[Click here for available text on the Internet](#) [PDF format, 252 pages]

The report conveys the proceedings of an expert workshop on the economic benefits of avoided climate change. Drawing from the environmental economics, impacts and vulnerability, and risk analysis communities, the workshop sought to glean insights on how to better quantify the benefits of reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

[4] The Gulf OF Mexico Oil Spill: An Accident Waiting To Happen
Yale Environment 360, May 10, 2010
McQuaid, John

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Recent calls to expand offshore drilling in the U.S. reflected a belief that deepwater oil operations had become so safe and technologically advanced that the danger of an accident was infinitesimal. McQuaid, a journalist specializing in environmental and science issues, writes that the growing volume of crude oil billowing from a ruptured well at the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico, puts to rest the notion that offshore drilling is a risk-free endeavor. While the exact causes of well blowout, explosion and sinking of the Deepwater Horizon offshore rig may not be known for months, systemic problems are becoming apparent, including lax government oversight, complacency by the oil industry, the reluctance of government agencies and oil companies to consider worst-case scenarios, the fragmentation of tasks among different contractors, and the complexities of drilling miles under the ocean floor in an unforgiving environment.

[5] Fading Fast
National Parks, vol. 84, no. 2, Spring 2010, pp. 39-47
Minard, Anne

[Click here for available text on the Internet](#)

Light pollution, a problem in many brightly lighted urban centers, is preventing us from seeing the stars distinctly and even having adverse health impacts on humans and animals. The author surveys the research on the subject and discusses what U.S. National Park Service officers such as Chad Moore, who heads Yellowstone's Night Sky Team, are doing to preserve the night environment. Organizations such as the International Dark Sky Association and NASA are among those working to provide data on the effects of light pollution. Individuals can help by restricting outdoor light use and installing fixtures that direct light downward.

ECONOMICS AND TRADE ISSUES

[6] The Case For Auditing The Fed Is Obvious
Arnold King

Cato Institute. April 27, 2010.

[Click here for available text on the Internet](#) [PDF format, 8 pages]

Recently, the Federal Reserve has significantly altered the procedures and goals that it had followed for decades. It has more than doubled its balance sheet, paid interest to banks on reserves held as deposits with the Fed, made decisions about which institutions to prop up and which should be allowed to fail, invested in assets that expose taxpayers to large losses, and raised questions about how it will avoid inflation despite an unprecedented increase in the monetary base, says the author.

[7] Debt and Unemployment: Is Global Capitalism Responsible? – Part I
Jeffrey E. Garten

YaleGlobal , 23 April 2010

[Click here for available text on the Internet](#) [HTML format]

Global capital markets have been footloose and fancy free since the 1980s, boosted by rapid globalization in transportation, communication and technology industries. Prowling for profits, investors leap boundaries in an instant, manipulating growth, jobs and industries. In this series, two economists explore global capitalism's growing reach that defies even the world's greatest economic power. In the first article, management professor Jeffrey E. Garten argues that the Obama administration's attempt to reform the financial system misses an essential ingredient – global structure and cooperation. Markets wield more influence than politicians do, acting as arbiters that evaluate every public policy move. Any nation with heavy debt, including the US, is vulnerable, because foreign investors could refuse to lend funds, hiking interest rates and forcing reduced expenditures in services. Some lenders chase short-term profits, while others are wary of excess, demanding sustainable programs. Lacking global tools, nations can only tinker with reform.

[8] The Future of Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Mark Muro

Brookings. Posted on May 19, 2010

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In a presentation to the International Economic Development Council, Mark Muro outlines ways to build innovation in the United States. He calls for a strategy that properly uses the expertise and assets concentrated in metropolitan areas, along with stressing the importance of exports.

[9] 2010 Special 301 Report

Office of the United States Trade Representatives. Web posted May 4, 2010

[Click here for available text on the Internet](#) [PDF format, 54 pages]

The report reflects the Administration's resolve to encourage and maintain effective Intellectual Property Protection and enforcement worldwide. It identifies a wide range of serious concerns, ranging from troubling "indigenous innovation" policies that may unfairly disadvantage U.S. rights holders in China, to the continuing challenges of Internet piracy in countries such as Canada and Spain, to the ongoing systemic IPR enforcement challenges in many countries around the world.

[10] Green Economics

New York Times Magazine, April 11, 2010, pp. 34//49

Krugman, Paul

[Click here for available text on the Internet](#)

Krugman, Nobel Prize-winning economist, notes that we can afford to tackle climate change, but any serious solution must rely mainly on giving everyone a self-interested reason to produce fewer emissions. This is not fair, he says, but climate altruism must take a back seat to getting such a system in place. Rather than focus on climate change itself, it is necessary instead to understand climate economics, or rather the economics of lessening climate change. Ronald Reagan liked to talk about the magic of the marketplace but today conservatives now think that the marketplace loses its magic as soon as market incentives are invoked in favor of issues such as energy conservation.

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY**[11] Shanghai Dreams****Larmer, Brook****National Geographic, vol. 217, no. 3, March 2010, 124-141**[Click here for available text on the Internet](#)

On May 1, Expo 2010 will open in Shanghai, an ambitious effort by the Chinese government to showcase its most populous city. For this event, the city has reportedly anted up \$45 billion, more than Beijing spent on the Olympic Games. The author notes that Expo 2010 is Shanghai's latest campaign to reinvent itself. As China's one global city, Shanghai has long straddled the East-West divide, having started out as a meeting place between Western merchants and Chinese migrants. The city has long been set apart from the rest of China, with its distinct language, customs, architecture, food and attitudes. Says Larmer, "Shanghai's urban explosion will continue long after the expo is over. All the tearing down and building up underscores one Shanghainese trait: its obsession with the new."

[12] The Geography of Chinese Power**Robert D. Kaplan****May/June 2010, Foreign Affairs**[Contact IRC for an electronic copy](#)

The raise of China is not an existential problem for China's neighbors or the United States, but it is a geopolitical challenge. On land and at sea, abetted by China's favorable location on the map, Beijing's influence is expanding – from Central Asia to the South China Sea and from the Russian Far East to the Indian Ocean. By securing its economic needs, China is shifting the balance of power in the Eastern Hemisphere.

[13] Vietnam And America: Parameters Of The Possible**Current History, vol. 109, no. 726, April 2010, pp. 162-169****Brown, Frederick**[Contact IRC for an electronic copy](#)

The author, a fellow of the Foreign Policy Institute at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies, writes that the 2008 official visit of Vietnam's prime minister to Washington was a major step in thawing U.S.-Vietnam relations. Brown writes that the Vietnamese leadership have come to realize that their connection with the U.S. could be an asset in their competition with China, despite misgivings among conservative elements in both the Vietnamese Communist Party and in the U.S. foreign-policy establishment. He notes that the regime largely abandoned Marxist economics in the 1980s, and became further isolated from Marxist doctrine in the 1990s with the collapse of the Soviet Union. The U.S.-Vietnam relationship is still colored by the legacy of the Vietnam war and fundamental differences in official perspectives, but Brown believes that both governments have a realistic view of what can be accomplished; he believes that educational exchanges offer the best opportunity for improving relations.

[14] RAND Database of Worldwide Terrorism Incidents

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For over 30 years, the RAND Corporation has been at the forefront of terrorism and counter-terrorism studies. In support of this work, RAND has developed and maintained a database of terrorism incidents stretching back to 1972, which is widely regarded as the gold standard for comprehensive information on international and domestic terrorism.

[15] United Nations Human Rights Council: Universal Periodic Review for the United States of America

Steven Groves, Brett Schaefer.

The Heritage Foundation, posted on April 20, 2010

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The United States is not party to all of the core human rights treaties, but ratification of treaties is not the indispensable condition of the observation and protection of human rights. Many governments boast that they have ratified a treaty, or that human rights are enshrined in their constitutions and laws, yet routinely and flagrantly violate those rights. The evidence indicates that without an independent judiciary and an ability to enforce civil and political rights, such rights are under constant threat regardless of the number of treaties a state has ratified or the rights provided for under their laws. The United States' system of representative government, its independent judiciary, its robust civil society, and the principles enshrined in its Constitution represent best practices that all states and stakeholders should emulate in observing and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms.

EDUCATION AND INFORMATION**[16] The Attrition Tradition in American Higher Education: Connecting Past and Present**

John R. Thelin

American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy. April 20, 2010

[Click here for available text on the Internet](#) [PDF format, 28 pages]

In July 2009, President Barack Obama set out a bold higher education agenda for his administration and promised that the U.S. would once again lead the world in college degree attainment. Given the nation's current level of college completion, it is reasonable to wonder whether such ambitions are feasible. While there is a sense that the country needs to recreate the "Golden Age" of American higher education, where high completion rates were the norm, few have bothered to ask whether this era was actually as golden as the conventional wisdom would suggest, says the author.

[17] The Alternative

Washington Post Magazine, April 11, 2010, pp. 22-29

Davis, Michelle

[Click here for available text on the Internet](#)

Younger students are giving community colleges a second look as a gateway to a four-year degree in a still-tight economy. As job losses rack up and family savings dwindle, more students who saw themselves going directly from high school to a four-year institution are instead enrolling at their local community college. Once known for the night courses they offered to usually older students who were holding down daytime jobs and had other responsibilities, community colleges now maintain daytime programs and specialized courses of study once only available in more expensive degree programs. Nationally, about 46 percent of students on community college campuses are younger than 21, according to a 2007 report from the American Association of Community Colleges, up from 42.5 percent in 2003.

[18] ‘Haystack’ Gives Iranian Opposition Hope For Evading Internet Censorship
Christian Science Monitor, posted April 16, 2010
Peterson, Scott

[Click here for available text on the Internet](#)

Opposition activists in Iran are beginning to deploy “Haystack” – encryption software they hope will defeat extensive government efforts to block popular mobilization on the Internet inside the country. Haystack is custom-made for Iran in San Francisco by the nonprofit Censorship Research Center and is the first anti-censorship technology to be licensed by the U.S. government for export to Iran. Twitter and Facebook have played crucial roles in helping protesters organize, but Iranian “cyber police” successfully shut down the ability of Iranians to communicate with each other via the Internet. Haystack’s encryption data is similar to accessing a bank website. It hides that data inside other normal data streams and makes it look like normal Internet traffic itself, so the original data is difficult to detect and stop. It remains to be seen if this new technology will be able to win the confidence of Iranian activists as well as stay ahead of government counterattacks.

U.S. SOCIETY AND VALUES

[19] Are We There Yet ?
Newsweek, March 29, 2010
Bennett, Jessica; Ellison, Jesse; Ball, Sarah
[Click here for available text on the Internet](#)

In 1970, 46 women working at Newsweek filed a landmark gender-discrimination case and won. This article reviews that event and looks at the current status of women at Newsweek and in the workplace across the country. The authors conclude that while chances for promotion for women at Newsweek have improved, they are far from equal to that of men. Although 49 percent of Newsweek employees are female, men wrote all but six of Newsweek magazine’s 49 cover stories last year. Nationwide, the situation isn’t much better. U.S. Department of Education data show that, a year out of school, despite better college grades, young women take home just 80 percent of what their male colleagues do. Motherhood has long been the explanation for the persistent pay gap, yet a decade out of college, full-time working women without children still make 77 cents for every dollar males make. The Global [Gender Gap Index](#) -- a ranking of women's educational, health, political, and financial standing by the World Economic Forum -- found that, from 2006 to 2009 the U.S. had fallen from 23rd to 31st, behind Cuba and just above Namibia. Companies may have incorporated

policies aimed at helping women, but they [haven't helped as much as you'd think](#). "The U.S. always scores abysmally in terms of work-life balance," says the WEF's Kevin Steinberg. "But even here, [women] still rank 'masculine or patriarchal corporate culture' as the highest impediment to success." The four most common female professions today are secretary, registered nurse, teacher, and cashier—low-paying, "pink collar" jobs that employ 43 percent of all women.

[20] The Progressive Intellectual Tradition In America: Part One Of The Progressive Tradition Series

John Halpin and Conor P. Williams

Center for American Progress. April 14, 2010

[Click here for available text on the Internet](#) [PDF format, 23 pages]

The part one of the Progressive Tradition Series examines the philosophical and theoretical development of progressivism as a response to the rise of industrial capitalism.

[21] The Progressive Tradition In American Politics: Part Two of The Progressive Tradition Series

Ruy Teixeira and John Halpin

Center for American Progress. April 14, 2010

[Click here for available text on the Internet](#) [PDF format, 31 pages]

The part two of the Progressive Tradition Series examines the politics of national progressivism from the agrarian populists to the Great Society.

[22] Social Movements And Progressivism: Part Three Of The Progressive Tradition Series

John Halpin and Marta Cook

Center for American Progress. April 14, 2010

[Click here for available text on the Internet](#) [PDF format, 27 pages]

The part three of the Progressive Tradition Series examines the influence of social movements for equality and economic justice on the development of progressivism.