

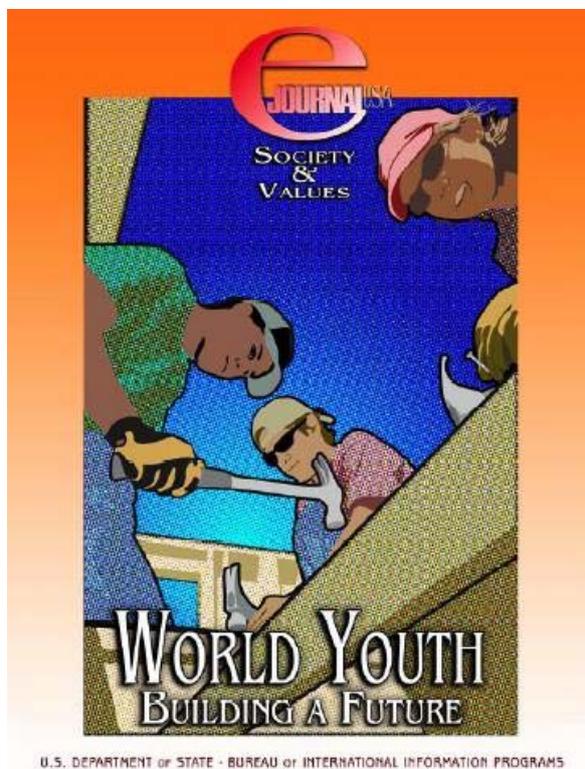


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U.S. Society and Values

August 2007

World Youth Building A Future



This edition of *eJournal USA*, "World Youth Building a Future," opens a window on the real life experiences of young people who have left home and family to participate in an international exchange program. Young American adults offer first-person accounts of their discoveries in educational programs abroad, and exchange students from various countries share their insights about adjusting to life and family customs in the United States.

Cover illustration created by Vincent Hughes based on a photograph courtesy of American Jewish Society for Service

<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itsv/0707/ijse/ijse0707.pdf>

**YOUNG AMERICAN MUSLIMS ENCOURAGED TO SEEK PUBLIC-SERVICE CAREERS
GROUP MEETS WITH U.S. OFFICIALS, ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES IN WASHINGTON**
By Jane Morse, *USINFO* Staff Writer. 17 July 2007

Washington -- Young American Muslims should make their voices heard in American mainstream society and consider careers in public service, U.S. government officials say.

Officials at the U.S. Department of State met July 12 with 27 highly accomplished individuals aged 20 to 25 from across the United States.

There is a "huge receptivity to ideas" at the State Department, according to Ambassador Shirin Tahir-Kheli. She said the State Department and the Bush administration are committed to reaching out to young Muslims.

Tahir-Kheli is the senior adviser on women's empowerment issues to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Of Pakistani heritage, Tahir-Kheli said she is the first Muslim to be appointed as a U.S. ambassador.

Among the State Department officials available to answer the young people's questions was Seema Matin, who joined the State Department in 2002 and currently is a public diplomacy officer working for Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs Karen Hughes. Matin has been recognized for her contributions to one of Hughes' "War of Ideas" initiatives, which focuses on countering ideological support for terrorism.

Matin, who was born in the United States of Pakistani immigrants and chooses to wear the hijab, told the group of young American Muslims that her head covering signals the world that highly educated professional women can wear this expression of their faith proudly.

Matin told *USINFO* that she is grateful to see more young American Muslims becoming interested in careers in politics, journalism and nongovernmental organizations.

Also on hand was Kareema Dauod, who works for the State Department while studying for her doctorate in Arabic linguistics at Georgetown University. The daughter of a German mother and a Palestinian father, Dauod urged the group of American Muslims to become more involved in the American public sphere and more engaged civically. "Citizens, whether they be Muslim or not, have a responsibility to engage and collaborate with their government on issues that affect the common well being. Being proactive means having a goal in mind, addressing those individuals who can help actualize that goal, and then following through on the steps necessary to making that goal a reality," she said.

The young adults' trip to Washington was arranged by the Muslim Public Affairs Council (MPAC), which describes itself as "a public service agency working for the civil rights of American Muslims, for the integration of Islam into American pluralism, and for a positive, constructive relationship between American Muslims and their representatives."

Although it was founded in 1988, this is the first time MPAC has organized a nationwide Youth Leadership Conference such as this, according to Salam al-Marayati, MPAC's executive director. During their two-day stay in Washington, the group met with members of the U.S. Congress, officials at the departments of Justice and Homeland Security, and visited the White House to talk to the director of the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.

In assessing the conference afterwards, al-Marayati told *USINFO* that the group found it an "empowering experience" and appreciated meeting with officials who explained opportunities in the U.S. government for Muslim-Americans.

"It's even more important for U.S. government officials to recognize the willingness of Muslim-Americans to help government without giving up their faith," he said. He added that the participants of the Youth Leadership Conference have strong views on Islamic identity in the United States.

"We want to define ourselves as having a Muslim-American identity," al-Marayati said, "and show that U.S. values are compatible with Islam."

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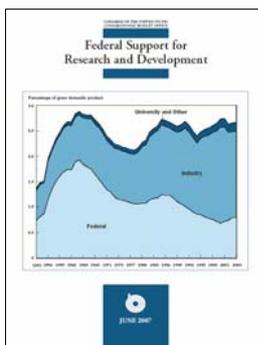
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“The Department of State is required by law to submit a Report each year to the U.S. Congress on foreign governments’ efforts to eliminate severe forms of trafficking in persons.” This is the seventh annual Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report. It is intended to raise awareness, to highlight efforts by the international community, and to encourage foreign governments to take action against TIP.

<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/82902.pdf> [pdf format, 240 pages]

FEDERAL SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT. Sheila Campbell. Microeconomic Studies Division, Congressional Budget Office (CBO), Congress of the United States. June 2007. 07AD734



New knowledge and innovation are major factors in economic well-being. Private industry is the largest sponsor of research and development (R&D); however, the federal government provides significant support to R&D through government spending--\$137 billion in Fiscal Year 2007.

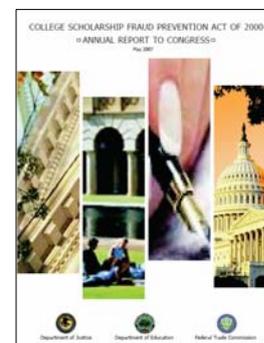
This study looks at several issues concerning government appropriations for R&D. The concerns are whether the current spending levels are appropriate, are taxpayers’ returns sufficient, and are funds allocated properly.

<http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/82xx/doc8221/06-18-Research.pdf> [pdf format, 42 pages]

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP FRAUD PREVENTION ACT OF 2000: ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS. U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of Education, and U.S. Federal Trade Commission. Web posted June 1, 2007. 07AD675

“Every year, millions of high school graduates seek creative ways to finance the costs of a college education.” In the process, graduates may encounter scholarship or financial aid scams. Consequently, in 2000, Congress passed the College Scholarship Fraud Prevention Act that established stricter sentencing for financial aid fraud. The U.S. Departments of Justice, Education, and the Federal Trade Commission are required to submit a report to Congress on the year’s activity under this Act.

<http://www.ftc.gov/reports/collagescholarshipfraud/2006CollegeScholarshipFraudPreventionReport.pdf> [pdf format, 18 pages]



SQUEEZE PLAY: HOW PARENTS AND THE PUBLIC LOOK AT HIGHER EDUCATION TODAY. John Immerwahr, Jean Johnson, Paul Gasbarra, Amber Ott, and Jonathan Rochkind. National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, Public Agenda, and Reinvesting in College Access and Success. Web posted May 31, 2007. 07AD686

The U.S. educational system has been the envy of countries around the world for its high quality, accessibility, ability to train skilled workers, and its contribution to the creation of the middle class. For the past several years, higher education in America has experienced new pressures—more students are seeking admission while public funding has been severely strained.

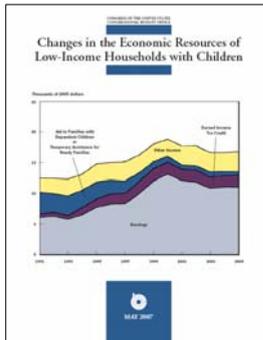


The Secretary of Education’s Commission on the Future of Higher Education called for greater accountability and more productivity. This report, based on a random sample survey of 1,001 Americans, five focus groups, and interviews with corporations, media, philanthropic organizations, and legislative leaders, explores the American public’s perception of higher education today.

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

http://www.makingopportunityaffordable.org/pdfs/solution_papers/squeeze_play.pdf [pdf format, 59 pages]

CHANGES IN THE ECONOMIC RESOURCES OF LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN. Molly Dahl. Congressional Budget Office, U.S. Congress. Web posted May 22, 2007. 07AD639



This report uses data for low-income families with children from national surveys of economic resources over a 15-year period. The data identify changes in the sources of income and show economic resources to a given household over a three-year period.

In 2005, the average annual income of the poorest households with children was \$16,800, which was 35 percent higher than in 1991. The boost was driven by a large increase in earnings during the late 1990s. However, this growth does not describe changes for individual households. Surveying and following individual households over a two-year period provides a different perspective. “Six in 10 of the surveyed households experienced a substantial increase in income, while 1 in 4 experienced a substantial decline.” This report provides details on the survey, but does not make any recommendations.

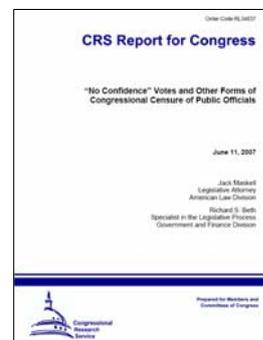
<http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/81xx/doc8113/05-16-Low-Income.pdf> [pdf format, 22 pages]

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“NO CONFIDENCE” VOTES AND OTHER FORMS OF CONGRESSIONAL CENSURE OF PUBLIC OFFICIALS. Jack Maskell and Richard S. Beth. Congressional Research Service (CRS), Library of Congress. June 11, 2007. 07AD723

This report discusses the significance of a Congressional action or an action by either chamber of a resolution of “no confidence” of public officials. It examines the legal issues and discusses the differences between no confidence votes in a parliamentary system to that of congressional censure actions. The report also describes past instances where Congress has attempted to express a lack of confidence in public officials.

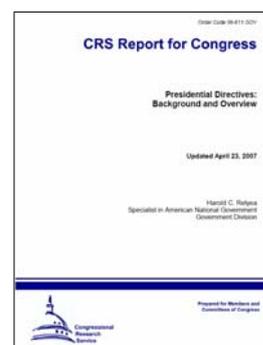
http://opencrs.cdt.org/rpts/RL34037_20070611.pdf [pdf format, 17 pages]



PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVES: BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW. Harold C. Relyea. Congressional Research Service (CRS), Library of Congress. Updated April 23, 2007. 07AD682

From the earliest days of the federal government, Presidents have issued directives establishing new policy or cessation of action or notice of some declaration. Executive orders and proclamations are the best-know types of these directives. This report provides an overview of the various types of directives, their historical development, their accounting, their use, and their effects.

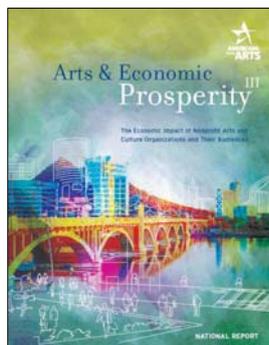
<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/98-611.pdf> [pdf format, 19 pages]



THINK TANK PUBLICATIONS

AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS

ARTS AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY III: THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF NONPROFIT ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS AND THEIR AUDIENCES: NATIONAL REPORT. Robert L. Lynch. Americans for the Arts. Web posted May 22, 2007. 07AD709



This is the third study of the nonprofit arts and culture industry and its impact on the economy. This study covered 156 regions (116 cities and counties, 35 multi-county regions and five states) that included 6,080 nonprofit arts and culture organizations.

The study shows that the nonprofit arts and culture industry generates \$166.2 billion in economic activity—a 24 percent increase since 2002. The industry supports 5.7 million full-time jobs; generates \$30 billion in revenue to local, state, and federal governments; and pumps revenue

into restaurants, hotels, retail stores, and other local businesses. “Nationally, as well as locally, the arts mean business!”

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

http://www.artsusa.org/pdf/information_resources/research_information/services/economic_impact/aepiii/national_report.pdf [pdf format, 314 pages]

BAKER INSTITUTE

THE “WOMAN’S ISSUE” IN CONTEXT: DEFRAMING THE DISCOURSE ON MIDDLE EASTERN WOMEN. By Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al Missned, the State Of Qatar. May 21, 2007. James A. Baker III Institute For Public Policy. Rice University, Houston, Texas

The debate over women in the Middle East often frames women in a timeless battle against oppressive traditions and religions of the region. And it ignores the larger socio-political realities. This debate swings dangerously between two poles: patronage and apologism. The first group follows the line of colonial feminism in the hope of enlightening the women of the Middle East. They perceive an endless clash between women’s liberation and religion. They hope we will come to our senses and reach the same types of rights and freedoms as they have, only guaranteed, of course, by secularism. On the other side of the debate, there is a growing branch of radicalism that denies problems with women’s issues in the region. And claims that a return to their version of Islam is all that is needed to guarantee women’s rights. This view feeds on a mistrust that the women’s movement has been co-opted for other political objectives, just as democratization has been co-opted. That women’s rights have become a cover for a secularist agenda to annihilate our identity and religion.

<http://bakerinstitute.org/Pubs/Sheikha%20Mozah%20Transcript.pdf>



BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

REDISCOVERING FEDERALISM. Pietro S. Nivola, Vice President and Director, Governance Studies. Brookings Institution. Issues in Governance Studies, July 2007



This paper stipulates that federalism can offer government a helpful division of labor. The essay argues that the central government in the United States has grown inordinately preoccupied with concerns better left to local authorities. The result is an overextended government, too often distracted from higher priorities. To restore some semblance of so-called "subsidiarity"—that is, a more suitable delineation of competences among levels of government—the essay takes up basic principles that ought to guide that quest. Finally, the paper advances several suggestions for how particular policy pursuits might be devolved.

<http://www3.brookings.edu/views/papers/nivola/20070709.pdf>

DEMILITARIZING WHAT THE PENTAGON KNOWS ABOUT DEVELOPING YOUNG PEOPLE: A NEW PARADIGM FOR EDUCATING STUDENTS WHO ARE STRUGGLING IN SCHOOL AND IN LIFE. Hugh B. Price. Center on Children and Families (CCF) Working Paper, Brookings Institution. Web posted May 29, 2007. 07AD678

In the future, the U.S. economy will rely more heavily on Latino and African Americans because they will comprise a steady, growing, adult workforce. But, nearly 50 per cent of fourth grade and eighth grade black and Latino students fall below basic levels in reading and math. As a result, a large number of Latino and African-American students drop out of school.

Parents of students who dropped out of school but joined the National Guard Youth Challenge Program (a quasi-military program established in 1993) state that the Program significantly changed their children's lives for the better. This paper examines the Program's approach, wisdom, and experience; and attempts to determine if there is solid proof of its success.

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

<http://www3.brookings.edu/views/papers/price200705.pdf> [pdf format, 46 pages]



SUBSIDIZING HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH TAX AND SPENDING PROGRAMS. Elaine Maag, David Mundel, Lois Dickson Rice, and Kim Rueben. Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center, Brookings Institution. Web posted May 29, 2007. 07AD650



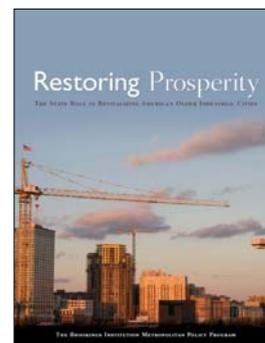
In 1997 Congress enacted a number of tax benefits programs directed at the middle- and upper-middle income groups to help with rising college costs. This brief analyzes who benefits from Pell grants, tax subsidies that resemble grants, the Hope and Lifetime Learning credits, and the tuition tax deduction. This brief also assesses the potential impacts of these programs on the "affordability of college and the college-going rates of potential students."

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

<http://www3.brookings.edu/views/papers/lrice200705.pdf> [pdf format, 8 pages]

RESTORING PROSPERITY: THE STATE ROLE IN REVITALIZING AMERICA'S OLDER INDUSTRIAL CITIES. Jennifer S. Vey. Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program, Brookings Institution. Web posted May 21, 2007. 07AD649

America's central cities are coming back—employment is up, populations are growing, and real estate is hot. This report examined 302 U.S. cities on eight issues dealing with economic indicators and residential well-being. Most of these central cities are older industrial communities with challenges such as low employment and business growth, low incomes, high unemployment, and a diminished tax base.



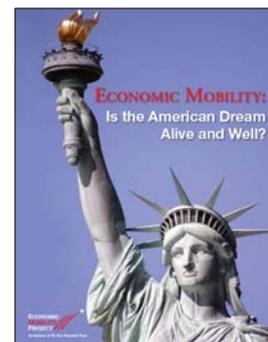
This report provides a framework for understanding how to restore prosperity to these cities especially those in the Northeast and Midwest. The report describes the challenges and opportunities these communities face as well as a policy agenda to advance their renewals.

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

http://www3.brookings.edu/metro/pubs/20070520_oic.pdf [pdf format, 84 pages]

ECONOMIC MOBILITY: IS THE AMERICAN DREAM ALIVE AND WELL? John E. Morton and Isabel V. Sawhill. The Brookings Institution. May 2007

For more than two centuries, economic opportunity and the prospect of upward mobility have formed the bedrock upon which the American story has been anchored — inspiring people in distant lands to seek our shores and sustaining the unwavering optimism of Americans at home. From the hopes of the earliest settlers to the aspirations of today's diverse population, the American Dream unites us in a common quest for individual and national success. But new data suggest that this once solid ground may well be shifting. This raises provocative questions about the continuing ability of all Americans to move up the economic ladder and calls into question whether the American economic meritocracy is still alive and well.



<http://www3.brookings.edu/views/papers/sawhill/200705.pdf>

A BLUEPRINT FOR NATIONAL PROSPERITY: WHAT THE 2008 ELECTION SHOULD BE ABOUT...AND HOW TO MAKE IT HAPPEN. Speech by Bruce Katz, Vice President and Director, Metropolitan Policy. Brookings Council, May 23, 2007

As we approach the 2008 presidential election, Bruce Katz argues that the United States needs a national agenda—a Blueprint for National Prosperity—to give cities and metros the rules and the tools to leverage their economic strengths, grow in environmentally sustainable ways, and build a strong, diverse, and resilient middle class.

The metro program hosts and participates in a variety of public forums. To view a complete list of these events, please visit the metro program's Speeches and Events page which provides copies of major speeches, PowerPoint presentations, event transcripts, and event summaries.

<http://www3.brookings.edu/views/speeches/katz/20070525.pdf>

CATO INSTITUTE

FIRST WE TAKE MANHATTAN, THEN WE TAKE BERLIN. by Julian Sanchez.
CATO. Reaction Essay July 16th, 2007

Reason contributing editor Julian Sanchez spots several ambiguities in Brink Lindsey's argument leading him to doubt the conclusion that America has become more libertarian in a meaningful sense. "To speak confidently about America's growing libertarianism," Sanchez writes, "we need to establish that at least some of the changes Lindsey lauds are driven by a shared conception of justice" that leans increasingly libertarian. Yet Sanchez is unimpressed by the polling data Lindsey recruits to his cause. There is no doubt we now have more choice due to increasing abundance, but "the conception of freedom that has always centrally concerned libertarians has been the freedom from restraints on choice, not the variety of available options." But, Sanchez argues, "much of the plausibility of Lindsey's thesis relies on [the] conflation" of these two conceptions of freedom.

<http://www.cato-unbound.org/2007/07/16/julian-sanchez/first-we-take-manhattan-then-we-take-berlin/>

THE LIBERTARIAN CENTER. By Brink Lindsey, CATO. Lead Essay. July 9th, 2007

There is no organized libertarian movement of any significance in American politics. To be sure, libertarian academics and intellectuals occupy some prominent positions and exert real influence on the public debate. But they do not speak on behalf of any politically mobilized mass constituency. Only about 2 percent of Americans describe themselves as libertarian, according to a 2000 Rasmussen poll. And the Libertarian Party is a fringe operation that, at best, occasionally plays the spoiler.

Nevertheless, the fact is that American society today is considerably more libertarian than it was a generation or two ago. Compare conditions now to how they were at the outset of the 1960s. Official governmental discrimination against blacks no longer exists. Censorship has beaten a wholesale retreat. The rights of the accused enjoy much better protection. Abortion, birth control, interracial marriage, and gay sex are legal. Divorce laws have been liberalized and rape laws strengthened. Pervasive price and entry controls in the transportation, energy, communications, and financial sectors are gone. Top income tax rates have been slashed. The pretensions of macroeconomic fine-tuning have been abandoned. Barriers to international trade are much lower. Unionization of the private sector work force has collapsed. Of course there are obvious counterexamples, but on the whole it seems clear that cultural expression, personal lifestyle choices, entrepreneurship, and the play of market forces all now enjoy much wider freedom of maneuver.

<http://www.cato-unbound.org/2007/07/09/brink-lindsey/the-libertarian-center/>

CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE

U.S. LIVING STANDARDS IN AN ERA OF GLOBALIZATION. Sandra Polaski. Carnegie Endowment. Policy Brief No. 53, July 2007



Domestic policy choices that favor corporations, the wealthy, and politically connected sectors of the U.S. economy have been the main cause of stagnating middle class incomes in the United States, says a policy brief from the Carnegie Endowment.

In U.S. Living Standards in an Era of Globalization, Carnegie Endowment Senior Associate Sandra Polaski argues that globalization revealed and exacerbated—rather than created—the unequal distribution of U.S. economic gains over the last three decades. Polaski further contends that reform of domestic labor laws, the tax system, and

international economic policy are the policy tools needed to reverse stagnating incomes and the erosion of job security, health care, and pension plans. These policy changes would also sustain domestic demand in the U.S. economy.

http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/pb_53_polaski__us_living_standards_final.pdf

WOMEN IN ISLAMIST MOVEMENTS: TOWARD AN ISLAMIST MODEL OF WOMEN'S ACTIVISM. Omayma Abdel-Latif, Marina S. Ottaway. Carnegie Endowment. Carnegie Paper, July 2007



Islamist women are increasingly involved in political processes and could spawn a full-fledged Islamist movement for women's rights, finds a new study by the Carnegie Endowment. In Women in Islamist Movements: Toward an Islamist Model of Women's Activism, Carnegie scholars Omayma Abdellatif and Marina Ottaway argue that women's participation in Islamist movements reflects a growing trend toward women's activism in the Arab world, though quite different from Western norms.

Through interviews and conversations with women belonging to Lebanon's Hizballah, Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, and other Islamist organizations across numerous Arab nations, the authors found an energetic debate among women activists on their newfound role as political actors.

http://www.carnegieendowment.org/files/cmec2_women_in_islam_final1.pdf

EDUCATION SECTOR

LEADING THE LOCAL: TEACHERS UNION PRESIDENTS SPEAK ON CHANGE, CHALLENGES. Susan Moore Johnson. Education Sector Reports. June 28, 2007

Teachers unions are among the most powerful organizations in American education today. At the state and national level, the National Education Association (NEA) and American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the two largest, have long exerted tremendous influence over

education policy. But it is the leaders of the thousands of local NEA and AFT affiliates who hold the greatest sway over the educational lives of public school teachers and students.

Unlike many other countries, the U.S. has no national teachers union negotiating a single contract for the country's entire teaching force. Instead 45 states permit or require collective bargaining and, within those states, local teacher representatives negotiate contracts one by one with their local school boards. These agreements define local policies and practices ranging from class size and the length of the school day to textbook selection and teacher evaluation.

http://www.educationsector.org/usr_doc/UnionLeaders.pdf



LEADING LADY: SALLIE MAE AND THE ORIGINS OF TODAY'S STUDENT LOAN CONTROVERSY. Erin Dillon. Education Sector. May 2007. 07AD625



This report provides background information on the \$85-billion-a-year student loan industry. In March 2007, the Attorney General of New York opened an investigation of the lending practices between the leading lending companies and college financial aid officers. The largest and most influential player in this industry is SLM Corporation, better known as Sallie Mae. The author maintains that since Congress created Sallie Mae, it "has an opportunity to strike a new balance in student lending, one that serves the interests of students, taxpayers, and the industry in more equal measures."

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

http://www.educationsector.org/usr_doc/SallieMae.pdf [pdf format, 18 pages]

FREEDOM HOUSE

IDEALS VS. REALITY – HUMAN RIGHTS AND US FOREIGN POLICY: THE CASES OF AZERBAIJAN, CUBA, AND EGYPT. Testimony Prepared for Delivery. Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights and Oversight, U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee. Jennifer Windsor, Executive Director. Freedom House, Washington, D.C. July 12, 2007

On July 12, Freedom House Executive Director Jennifer Windsor testified before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight. She discussed U.S. human rights policies toward Azerbaijan, Cuba and Egypt.

"Each country requires a specific tailored strategy based on an assessment of the dynamics within a particular society, and the leverage that the U.S. government can use to bring about change. However, in our dealings with foreign governments and their citizens, we should never allow our core values of human rights and democracy to fall off the table. Instead of ignoring this commitment because it may be too difficult, we should consider new and innovative ways to help those who need it most," said Ms. Windsor.

http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/press_release/JW_testimony_3countries_11jul07.pdf

HERITAGE FOUNDATION

HIGHER EDUCATION FOR TAXPAYERS. JD Foster, Ph.D. Heritage Foundation. WebMemo #1547. July 10, 2007

Good news from Congress on spending is rarely unaccompanied by bad news. The good news is that Congress and the Administration have identified wasteful spending that can be cut as part of the reauthorization of the federal government's main higher education spending programs. Decades ago, the government put in place large subsidies to entice lenders to participate in federal student loan programs. Today these programs are popular, the lenders plentiful and highly profitable, and the subsidies unneeded. Following the Administration's lead, the House Education and Workforce Committee reported a bill that would largely eliminate these subsidies, saving almost \$38 billion over the next 10 years.

http://www.heritage.org/Research/Budget/upload/wm_1547.pdf



A CLOSER LOOK AT TITLE I: MAKING EDUCATION FOR THE DISADVANTAGED MORE STUDENT-CENTERED. Susan L. Aud, Ph.D. Special Report #15. June 28, 2007



Since its inception in 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, now known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB), has directed billions of federal dollars toward low-income students. Title I, Part A of NCLB is designed to equalize educational opportunities and resources for disadvantaged children.

This analysis examines whether the current mechanisms for providing federal education funding to disadvantaged children are effective and whether the system works as originally intended. The evidence yields the following major findings.

http://www.heritage.org/Research/Education/upload/SR_15.pdf

REAUTHORIZATION OF NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND: FEDERAL MANAGEMENT OR CITIZEN OWNERSHIP OF K-12 EDUCATION? Eugene Hickok and Matthew Ladner, Ph.D. Backgrounder #2047. June 27, 2007

As Congress considers reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001,[1] a fundamental question in the debate is whether to continue to increase the federal government's management authority over education or to restore citizen ownership of America's schools.

The No Child Left Behind Act dramatically increased federal authority. While the federal government provides only 8.5 percent of the funding for public education, NCLB gave Congress and the U.S. Department of Education new powers to set policies governing America's public schools.[2] This increased power has resulted in unintended consequences and problems that need to be addressed in the reauthorization.

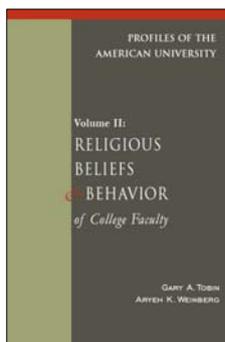
http://www.heritage.org/research/education/upload/bg_2047.pdf



INSTITUTE FOR JEWISH & COMMUNITY RESEARCH

PROFILES OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY: VOLUME II: RELIGIOUS BELIEFS & BEHAVIOR OF COLLEGE FACULTY. Gary A. Tobin and Aryeh K. Weinberg. Institute for Jewish & Community Research. Web posted May 9, 2007. 07AD630

American universities are often described as “ivory towers”; which means that the environment is separated from realities. A number of studies have shown how faculties differ politically from the general public, and a number of critics have argued that higher education has become too secular. This study analyzes these notions and offers a broad overview of American university faculties and their religious beliefs.



The survey confirms that faculties are less religious than the general population; additionally, most faculties believe that universities should not foster religion. The study also explores how faculties approach religion in their personal lives and how they regard religion in others. “This research raises many questions.”

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

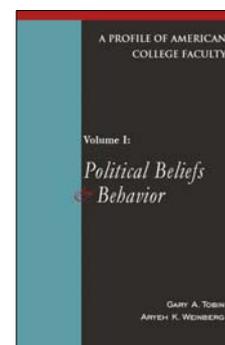
<http://www.jewishresearch.org/PDFs2/FacultyReligion07.pdf>

[pdf format, 97 pages]

See Also:

A Profile of American College Faculty: Volume I: Political Beliefs & Behavior. 2006

http://www.jewishresearch.org/PDFs2/FacultySurvey_Web.pdf [pdf format, 93 pages]



INSTITUTE FOR WOMEN’S POLICY RESEARCH (IWPR)

WOMEN IN THE WAKE OF THE STORM: EXAMINING THE POST-KATRINA REALITIES OF THE WOMEN OF NEW ORLEANS AND THE GULF COAST. Avis A. Jones-DeWeever, Ph.D.. Institute for Women’s Policy Research. June 2007.

This report is the third in a series examining the experiences of women, particularly women of color, in the areas hit by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. In Part I, we discussed poverty among women and people of color in the Gulf Coast region and in the South more generally. In Part II, we presented data from before and after the storms, examined women’s role in the labor market prior to the hurricanes, and offered policy recommendations for reincorporating women into the workforce during and after the rebuilding period. This report shares findings garnered from a series of interviews held with a diverse group of women from throughout the Gulf region. In telling their stories, it provides an analysis of women’s increased vulnerability during times of natural disasters and lays out policy recommendations that pinpoint how best to address those needs in the wake of this disaster, and in anticipation of the next.

<http://www.iwpr.org/pdf/GulfCoastExecutiveSummary.pdf>



AN ECONOMY THAT PUTS FAMILIES FIRST: EXPANDING THE SOCIAL CONTRACT TO INCLUDE FAMILY CARE. Heidi Hartmann, Ariane Hegewisch, and Vicky Lovell. IWPR Research. Co-sponsored by the Economic Policy Institute. EPI Briefing Paper #190. May 24, 2007



In two-thirds of families with children, both parents work. A typical child today is just as likely to live in a family with a working mother as with a working father. These facts herald a startling change that has occurred over a remarkably short period of human history—in only a few decades we have experienced a revolution in how we raise our children. Yet it is a revolution with which our government and public policies have not kept pace. Parents have made enormous changes in their lives with little help or support, and the strains are showing. Two-thirds of working parents feel they do not have enough time to spend with their families (Gallinsky, Bond, and Hill 2004), and 1.3 million children below the sixth grade (age 11) spend at least some time each day in self care (Afterschool Alliance 2003).

The most common family type with children today is the two-earner couple (47% in 2005) (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2007). These parents typically juggle multiple forms of child care and two work schedules. Perhaps one parent drops off a school-age child at a neighbor's before school to get an early start to work, while the other takes a pre-school child to a child care center or family day care home. Each proceeds to a job, and then they do it all in reverse at the end of the day, one stopping by the school to pick up the older child at an after school program while

<http://www.iwpr.org/pdf/bp190familyfirst.pdf>

MEDIA MATTERS FOR AMERICA

LOCKED OUT: THE LACK OF GENDER AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY ON CABLE NEWS CONTINUES. Media Matters for America. May 7, 2007. 07AD607

Media Matters analyzed the race/ethnicity and gender of the hosts and guests on major prime-time cable news programs during and after the Imus controversy (Monday, April 2 through Friday, April 27). This study demonstrates that during this brief period “cable news remains an overwhelmingly white and male preserve.” When an issue involves gender and/or race/ethnicity, the three major cable networks (CNN, Fox News, and MSNBC) bring a more diverse lineup of guests, but the rest of time the guest list are overwhelmingly white and male.

The conclusion reached is that “if the cable-news networks want their guests to represent the full spectrum of Americans, they have a long way to go.”

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

<http://mediamatters.org/items/200705070003> [html format, various pagings]

PEW

WHO'S WILD ABOUT HARRY? SO FAR, THE PUBLIC IS MORE INTERESTED IN BUYING THE BOOK THAN IN READING ABOUT IT. PEW. Polls/Survey Results. July 20, 2007

In addition to the hard news stories of the week, Harry Potter-mania became a news story of its own. In the week ending July 13, the national media devoted 1% of its top story coverage to news about the release of the newest Harry Potter movie and the upcoming release of the final book in the series. While the public wasn't particularly interested in Potter news a week or more before the book's release (only 8% followed related news very closely), a substantial minority (25%) say they or someone in their household plan to buy the new Harry Potter book when it comes out.

As the 12:01-Saturday- July 21 deadline approaches, public interest in news about Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, may have increased as major news media have given greater attention to the book's publication. In particular, controversy about alleged pre-deadline internet postings and printed copy sales of the embargoed book attracted the attention of such sober-minded outlets as the Wall Street Journal, while the New York Times came under attack on Thursday for publishing an overly revelatory review of J.K. Rowling's latest and final installment in the highly popular series.

<http://pewresearch.org/pubs/547/harry-potter-deathly-hallows>

AS MARRIAGE AND PARENTHOOD DRIFT APART, POLL SHOWS PUBLIC IS CONCERNED ABOUT SOCIAL IMPACT. Pew Research Center. July 2007



Americans believe that births to unwed women are a big problem for society, and they take a mixed view at best of cohabitation without marriage. Yet these two nontraditional behaviors have become commonplace among younger adults, who have a different set of moral values from their elders about sex, marriage and parenthood, a Pew Research Center Survey finds.

This generational values gap helps to explain the decades-long surge in births to unmarried women – which now comprise nearly four-in-ten (37%) births in the United States – as well as the sharp rise in living together without getting married, which, the Pew survey finds, is something that nearly half of all adults in their 30s and 40s have done for at least a portion of their lives.

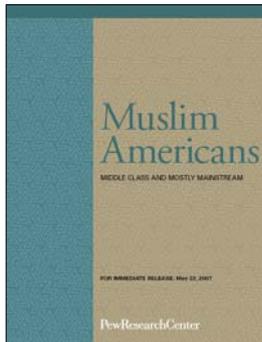
Read the full article and view a list of findings at the Pew Research Center Web site:

<http://pewresearch.org/pubs/526/marriage-parenthood>

Or, view the complete report Generation Gap in Values, Behaviors:

<http://pewresearch.org/assets/social/pdf/Marriage.pdf>

MUSLIM AMERICANS: MIDDLE CLASS AND MOSTLY MAINSTREAM. Pew Research Center for People and the Press. May 2007



The first-ever, nationwide, random sample survey of Muslim Americans was conducted by the Pew Research Center for People and the Press, and it found them to be largely assimilated, happy with their lives, and moderate with respect to many of the issues that have divided Muslims and Westerners around the world.

The Pew Research Center conducted more than 55,000 interviews to obtain a national sample of 1,050 Muslims living in the United States. Interviews were conducted in English, Arabic, Farsi and Urdu. The resulting study, which draws on Pew's survey research among Muslims around the world, finds that Muslim Americans are a highly diverse population, one largely composed of immigrants. Nonetheless, they are decidedly American in their outlook, values and attitudes. This belief is reflected in Muslim American income and education levels, which generally mirror those of the public.

Key findings include:

- Overall, Muslim Americans have a generally positive view of the larger society. Most say their communities are excellent or good places to live.
- A large majority of Muslim Americans believe that hard work pays off in this society. Fully 71% agree that most people who want to get ahead in the U.S. can make it if they are willing to work hard.

View more findings and charts at the Pew Research Center for People and the Press Web site: <http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?ReportID=329>

Read the full report Muslim Americans: Middle Class and Mostly Mainstream on the Pew Research Center for People and the Press Web site: <http://pewresearch.org/assets/pdf/muslim-americans.pdf>

POLL FINDS FOUR-IN-TEN AMERICANS HAVE CLOSE FRIENDS OR RELATIVES WHO ARE GAY. Pew Research Center for People and the Press. Polls/Survey Results. May 24, 2007

In the past four decades, growing numbers of gays have come out of the closet and into the mainstream of American life. As a consequence, 4-in-10 Americans now report that some of their close friends or family members are gays or lesbians, according to a recent national survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press.

About half of all women, young people, college graduates, political liberals and mainline Protestants say that someone close to them is gay, the survey found. But significantly fewer men, conservative Republicans and older Americans report that a good friend or family member is homosexual.

An analysis of survey results suggests that familiarity is closely linked to tolerance. People who have a close gay friend or family member are more likely to support gay marriage and they are also significantly less likely to favor allowing schools to fire gay teachers than are those with little or no personal contact with gays, the poll found.

Read full article and view charts at the Pew Research Center Web site: <http://pewresearch.org/pubs/485/friends-who-are-gay>

WHO'S WATCHING AMERICAN IDOL? RELATIVELY FEW WORSHIP REGULARLY AT THE TOP TV SHOW'S ALTAR. Pew Research Center for People and the Press. Polls/Survey Results. May 18, 2007

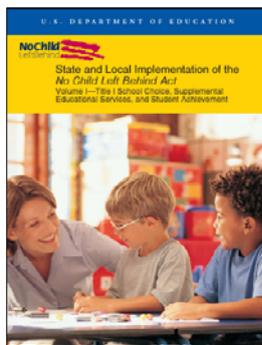
As "American Idol" Season 6 comes to a close, 22% of the public is paying close attention to what's happening on the show including 13% who are following Idol news very closely and 9% are following fairly closely. In spite of the fact that "American Idol" has been at the top of the television ratings throughout the season, three-quarters of the public are paying little or no attention to the show (11% say they're not following Idol news too closely and 66% say they're not following it at all).

Still, nearly three-in-ten Americans say Idol comes up in conversations with family, friends and co-workers at least occasionally. Another 31% say the topic hardly ever comes up, and 39% say it never does. Loyal Idol viewers, spend a lot of time talking about the show. Among those who are following American Idol very closely, fully 84% say they frequently or occasionally discuss the show with family, friends and co-workers.

<http://pewresearch.org/pubs/482/american-idol-audience>

RAND

STATE AND LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT. Volume I — Title I School Choice, Supplemental Educational Services, and Student Achievement. Ron Zimmer, Brian Gill, et.al. RAND. June 27, 2007.



A key component of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) was to provide options to parents whose children had been attending Title I schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring due to failure to achieve adequate yearly progress toward meeting state standards for two or more years. Under NCLB, parents have the option of (1) transferring their children to another school in the district that is not in need of improvement or (2) enrolling their children in supplemental education services (e.g., tutoring, remediation, or other academic instruction) in addition to instruction provided during the school day. This study used data from nine large, urban

school districts to examine the characteristics of students participating in the two options and the resulting impact on student achievement. The study found the following: that participation was highest in elementary grades; that African-American students had the highest participation rates of all racial and ethnic groups; that participating students had lower achievement levels than eligible but nonparticipating students; that students who transferred tended to transfer to higher-achieving, racially balanced schools; and that there was no statistically significant (positive or negative) effect on achievement among students participating in the two options.

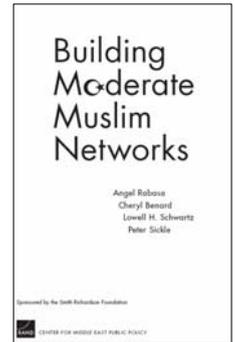
http://www.rand.org/pubs/reprints/2007/RAND_RP1265.pdf

BUILDING MODERATE MUSLIM NETWORKS. Angel Rabasa, Cheryl Benard, Lowell H. Schwartz, and Peter Sickle. Center for Middle East Public Policy, RAND Corporation. May 2007. 07AD638

Due to networks in the Muslim communities in North America and Europe, radical Islam has grown in recent years. Moderates Muslims do not have similar networks. The authors argue that the “United States has a critical role to play in leveling the playing field for Muslim moderates. The authors derive lessons from the U.S. and allied Cold War network-building experience, determine their applicability to the current situation in the Muslim world, assess the effectiveness of U.S. government programs of engagement with the Muslim world, and develop a “road map” to foster the construction of moderate Muslim networks.”

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2007/RAND_MG574.pdf [pdf format, 217 pages]



UNESCO

EDUCATION UNDER ATTACK: A GLOBAL STUDY ON TARGETED POLITICAL AND MILITARY VIOLENCE AGAINST EDUCATION STAFF, STUDENTS, TEACHERS, UNION AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, AND INSTITUTIONS. Brendan O'Malley. Education Sector, Division for the Coordination of United Nations Priorities in Education, UNESCO. April 27, 2007. 07AD587

UNESCO conducted this worldwide study of violence directed at educational personnel to determine what could be done to improve their safety and security. The objective was to raise “awareness and understanding of the extent to which those involved in education, whether students, teaching staff, trade unionists, administrators or officials, are facing violent attacks, and what can and should be done about the problem.” The study focused on targeted attacks that were carried out for political, military, ideological, sectarian, ethnic, or religious reasons. The report also includes information on attacks on educational buildings.

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

<http://www.unesco.org/education/attack/educationunderattack.pdf> [pdf format, 45 pages]

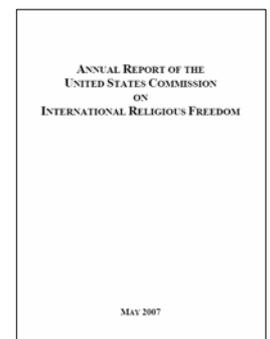


United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM. May 2007

The report covers the period May 2006 through April 2007.

In carrying out its mandate, the Commission reviews information on violations of religious freedom as presented in the Department of State’s Country Reports on Human Rights Practices and its Annual Report on International Religious Freedom. The Commission also consults regularly with State Department and National Security Council officials, U.S. Ambassadors, and officials of foreign



governments, as well as with representatives of religious communities and institutions, human rights groups, other non-governmental organizations, academics, and other policy experts. It visits foreign countries to examine religious freedom conditions firsthand. The Commission also holds public hearings, briefings and roundtables.

The Commission has met with President George W. Bush and senior members of his Administration, including the Secretary of State and the National Security Advisor, to discuss its findings and recommendations. The Commission also briefs Members of Congress, U.S. Ambassadors, and officials from international organizations. In addition, the Commission testifies before Congress, participates with U.S. delegations to international meetings and conferences, helps provide training to Foreign Service officers and other U.S. officials, and advises the Administration and Members of Congress and their staff on executive and legislative initiatives.

<http://www.uscirf.gov/countries/publications/currentreport/2007annualRpt.pdf#page=1>

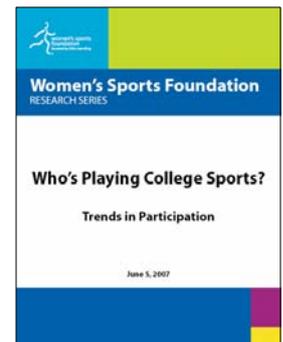
WOMEN'S SPORTS FOUNDATION

WHO'S PLAYING COLLEGE SPORTS? TRENDS IN PARTICIPATION. John Cheslock. Research Series, Women's Sports Foundation. June 5, 2007. 07AD706

This study provides a comprehensive examination of women's participation in intercollegiate athletics. The research team analyzed data from most institutions of higher education. The results indicate that women continue to be underrepresented among college athletes. Women enjoyed a substantial increase in the 1990s, but that progress slowed since 2000.

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

<http://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/binary-data/reportcard/fullreport.pdf>
[pdf format, 32 pages]



WORLD BANK

GIVING CHILDREN A BETTER START: PRESCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND SCHOOL-AGE PROFILES. Marco Manacorda, Sebastian Galiani, and Samuel Berlinski. Impact Evaluation Series, Policy Working Paper, World Bank. Web posted June 1, 2007. 07AD694

This study looked at the effect of pre-primary education based on preschool attendance. The authors found that the impact of school attendance at early ages magnified as the children grew. By age 15, children who attended pre-primary classes had “accumulated 0.8 extra years of education and are 27 percentage points more likely to be in school compared to their untreated siblings.” The authors conclude that pre-primary education appears to be a “successful policy option to prevent early grade failure and its long lasting consequences.”

[Note: Contains copyrighted material.]

http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2007/06/04/000016406_20070604154223/Rendered/PDF/wps4240.pdf [pdf format, 39 pages]

ARTICLES FROM U.S. JOURNALS

AMERICAN INDIAN DRESSES BLEND TRADITION AND INNOVATION; Exhibit traces history of dressmaking by indigenous peoples over 200 years. By Lauren Monsen, USINFO Staff Writer. 20 July 2007



Cheyenne three-hide dress made by Rebecca Hamilton Brady and Jon Brady of Pawnee, Oklahoma (Ernest Amoroso/Smithsonian) -

The prominent roles of women in American Indian societies are mirrored in the evolving designs of the ceremonial dresses and accessories they have created over the past 200 years, says Emil Her Many Horses, an expert on Northern and Southern Plains cultures at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI).

Her Many Horses, a member of the Oglala Lakota (Sioux) nation of South Dakota, is co-curator of the NMAI exhibit "Identity by Design: Tradition, Change, and Celebration in Native Women's Dresses." The exhibit traces the history of native dressmaking from the 19th century to the present, with examples of richly ornamented deerhide and cloth dresses representing a variety of North American tribal and regional styles.

<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=July&x=20070720142054GLnesnoM0.5447657>

AMERICAN DANCE FESTIVAL WELCOMES INTERNATIONAL TALENT; Annual gathering connects choreographers and dancers from 23 countries. By Louise Fenner, USINFO Staff Writer. 20 July 2007

The American Dance Festival is one of the most important modern dance events in America. It introduces new and emerging talents and has commissioned more than 300 works, but it also recognizes established artists and revisits seminal works from the past. In 2007 there were more than 60 performances, ranging from a reconstruction of the 1984 Garden of Earthly Delights by its originator, Martha Clarke, to world premieres of ADF-commissioned works by Japanese-born artists Eiko & Koma and the Paul Taylor Dance Company. There were also two "minifestivals" featuring Russian and Argentine companies. The ADF wraps up July 21 with performances by the Mark Morris Dance Group.

<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=July&x=20070720155602xlrennef0.1954767>

U.S., EUROPEAN STUDENTS BLOGGING IN STATE DEPARTMENT PROGRAM: Academic semester encouraging trans-Atlantic debate among teenagers. By Stephen Kaufman. USINFO Staff Writer. 13 July 2007

Washington -- Lilya, a 16-year-old student from Bulgaria wrote in her new weblog, "I want to tell of dreams, of adventures, of unknown worlds, of treasures and quests. ... But for now I am only an introduction. The pre-history of the history I am about to write"

She and 35 other secondary-school students from Europe and the United States are participants in the State Department-funded Ben Franklin Transatlantic Fellows Initiative,

based on the campus of Wake Forest University in North Carolina. Combined with extended visits to U.S. cities and interaction with the local community, the 15- to 17-year-olds are debating citizenship and constitutional issues, as they learn how to create and maintain a successful blog.

<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=July&x=20070713172941esnamfuak0.2667353>

PRESS'S RELATIONSHIP WITH U.S. PRESIDENTS ROCKY BUT "NECESSARY"; Bush jokes about reporters, but acknowledges their importance to democracy. By Stephen Kaufman, *USINFO* Staff Writer. 11 July 2007

President Bush cuts a ribbon to mark the reopening of the renovated James S. Brady Press Briefing Room July 11. (© AP Images) Washington -- After nearly a year in temporary quarters across the street, the White House press corps has returned to the Executive Mansion complex, resuming its base of operations in the West Wing, just steps away from the Oval Office of the president of the United States.

At a July 11 ribbon-cutting ceremony marking the reopening of the renovated press area, White House Correspondents Association President Steve Scully said, "Nowhere else is the press this close to the head of state," adding that former President Nixon once tried to move the press corps to an adjacent building, but reporters prevailed in their campaign to maintain their close proximity.

In a humorous reference to the often contentious relationship between U.S. presidents and the reporters who cover them, President Bush welcomed the press corps back to the West Wing, saying, "We missed you -- sort of."

<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=July&x=20070711160024esnamfuak3.228396e-02>

DOCUMENTARIES ON SOCIAL RELATIONS, POLITICS WIN AT FILM FESTIVAL; 100 international documentaries from 42 countries screened. By Carolee Walker, *USINFO* Staff Writer. 18 June 2007

Silver Spring, Maryland – Films about social and political relations took home audience and jury awards at the weeklong Silverdocs international documentary film festival.

Top award winners *Please Vote for Me*, by Chinese director Weijun Chen, and *Enemies of Happiness*, by Danish filmmaker Eva Mulvad, use stories about the political campaign process to educate about democracy.

<http://usinfo.state.gov/xarchives/display.html?p=washfile-english&y=2007&m=June&x=20070618162309bcreklaw0.3773462>

HIP-HOP PLANET. McBride, James. *National Geographic*, vol. 211, no. 4, April 2007, pp. 100-114 AA07249

Summary: "Not since the advent of swing jazz in the 1930s has an American music exploded across the world with such overwhelming force," writes the author. The culture of song, graffiti and dance that is collectively known as hip-hop has transformed popular music in

every country that it has permeated. France, home to a large population of North African immigrants, is the second largest hip-hop market in the world. McBride traces the origins of hip-hop, from beat poet Amiri Baraka in the 1950s and 1960s, to the youth of the South Bronx and Harlem who came up with impromptu dance music in the 1970s – largely because the New York City public school system had drastically cut funding for the arts. While its structure is bewildering, and lyrics that glorify violence and ostentatious luxury disturb many, McBride writes that rap music has “become a universal expression of outrage ... at its best, hip-hop lays bare the empty moral cupboard that is our generation’s legacy. This music that once made visible the inner culture of America's greatest social problem, its legacy of slavery, has taken the dream deferred to a global scale. Today, 2 percent of the Earth's adult population owns more than 50 percent of its household wealth, and indigenous cultures are swallowed with the rapidity of a teenager gobbling a bag of potato chips. The drums are pounding out a warning. They are telling us something. Our children can hear it. We'd be wise, I suppose, to start paying attention.” Currently available online at <http://www7.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0704/feature4/index.html> [PUBS;GWB]

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