INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

REPORTS


**Security and Governance in Somalia: Consolidating Gains, Confronting Challenges, and Charting the Path Forward.** Testimony by Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State, before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Subcommittee on African Affairs. October 8, 2013.

**Reversing Iran’s Nuclear Program.** Testimony by Ambassador James F. Jeffrey, Philip Solondz Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, before the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. October 3, 2013.


**Sahel: Recurrent Climate Shocks Propel Migration; Resilience Efforts Face**


ARTICLES


Gerges, Fawaz A. *The Islamist Moment: From Islamic State to Civil Islam?*. *Political Science Quarterly*. Fall 2013.


**U.S. DOMESTIC POLICY AND TRENDS**

**REPORTS**


Whitehurst, Grover (Russ); Whitfield, Sarah. **School Choice and School Performance in the New York City Public Schools - Will the Past be Prologue?**. The Brookings Institution. October 8, 2013.


**ARTICLES**


Badger, Emily. **The Best Thing We Could Do About Inequality Is Universal Preschool**. *The Atlantic Cities*. June 2013.


INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

REPORTS

The United States, the European Union, and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership

"Today, the U.S. and the European Union are each other’s largest economic partners, with $2.6 billion dollars’ worth of goods and services flowing between us each day. We invest nearly $4 trillion in each other’s economies, creating the world’s largest investment relationship. And more than 13 million people owe their jobs to the transatlantic economic relationship. The U.S.-EU economic partnership is second to none. But we know that we can do more. We can do more for economic growth. We can do more to create jobs. We can do more to strengthen rules-based trade that supports the entire global trading system. "And that is precisely why we launched the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, or T-TIP. Together with the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP, and the work being done at the WTO to negotiate a multilateral Trade Facilitation agreement, a plurilateral Trade in Services Agreement (TISA) and an expansion of the Information Technology Agreement (ITA), we see T-TIP as an opportunity to raise the standards, to introduce new disciplines and ultimately to strengthen the multilateral trading system. "Our goals for T-TIP are clear. A successful negotiation will create a comprehensive agreement, which not only opens markets but ties us closer together; not only enhances our mutual commitment to rules-based trade, but empowers us and enhances our ability to strengthen the rules-based system around the world – including around issues such as localization and the role of state-owned enterprises."

Security and Governance in Somalia: Consolidating Gains, Confronting Challenges, and Charting the Path Forward
Testimony by Linda Thomas-Greenfield, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of African Affairs, U. S. Department of State, before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Subcommittee on African Affairs. October 8, 2013.
http://www.state.gov/p/af/rls/rm/2013/215220.htm

"Somalia will remain a top foreign policy priority for the Department of State, as it is for the Obama Administration. The past year marked significant changes in Somalia and in our bilateral relationship with Somalia. The election of President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud
was a welcome signal that room for political progress in Somalia was opening. This was made possible, in part, by the international community’s support of the Djibouti Peace Process and the leadership role of our regional partners, notably the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). On January 17, we formally recognized the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), after two decades of transitional governments.”

REVERSING IRAN’S NUCLEAR PROGRAM
Testimony by Ambassador James F. Jeffrey, Philip Solondz Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, before the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. October 3, 2013 [PDF format, 3 pages]

“The rapid pace of events since Iranian president Hassan Rouhani took office this past summer has significantly increased the possibility of a successful negotiation on Iran's nuclear program, thereby forestalling either a military strike on Iran or the emergence of a nuclear-armed or nuclear-weapon-capable Iran. Either of these latter eventualities would unleash unknown but likely very serious consequences on an already stressed international situation. The United States thus should vigorously engage, with Iran and with our allies and partners, accepting risks when necessary, to achieve a diplomatic breakthrough that would meet President Obama's criteria of being meaningful, transparent, and verifiable.”

Iran's Unavoidable Influence Over Afghanistan's Future
http://carnegieendowment.org/2013/08/15/iran-s-unavoidable-influence-over-afghanistan-s-future/gii0

"Iran has positioned itself as an important regional actor in Central Asia and is committed to playing a role in neighboring Afghanistan. As U.S. troops draw down their numbers in Afghanistan, Washington should consider how improved U.S.-Iranian relations could further long-term U.S. policy goals in Afghanistan and in the region, according to the report. “While the future of U.S.-Iranian relations remains unclear, any improvement in the relationship would facilitate the success of U.S.-supported initiatives in Afghanistan: the “New Silk Road” strategy, which seeks to improve Afghanistan’s economic ties with Central and South Asia, and the “Heart of Asia” confidence-building process, which fosters high-level dialogue on security, political, and economic cooperation among Afghanistan and its neighbors.” Martha Brill Olcott is a senior associate with the Russia and Eurasia Program at the Carnegie Endowment in Washington, DC. She is also the co-director of the al-Farabi Carnegie Program on Central Asia.

Egypt in Crisis: Issues for Congress
http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/214921.pdf
“This report provides a brief overview of the key issues for Congress related to Egypt. U. S. policy makers are now grappling with complex questions about the future of U.S.-Egypt relations, particularly in light of the growing unrest and violence currently unfolding. These debates are shaping consideration of appropriations and authorization legislation and congressional oversight options in the 113th Congress. To date, the Obama Administration has “strongly condemned” the ongoing violence in Egypt, has focused on urging all parties to resolve the conflict peacefully, and has denounced the imposition of martial law. President Obama also has canceled a joint U.S.-Egyptian military exercise planned for September referred to as Bright Star, a multinational training exercise co-hosted by the United States and Egypt annually since 1981.” Jeremy M. Sharp is an Specialists in Middle Eastern Affairs at the CRS.

What Path Will Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood Choose?

“Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood faces a tremendously difficult but crucial choice about what role it will try to play in Egypt’s political future. The organization is reeling from the stunning reversal of power it experienced this summer, when massive popular protests against the serious governance failures of the government led by then president Mohamed Morsi, a senior Brotherhood figure, prompted the Egyptian military to overthrow Morsi and install a caretaker government... It is hard to forecast the Brotherhood’s future decisions right now given the roiling uncertainties of Egypt’s current situation. The real strategic choice for the Muslim Brotherhood is between a scenario of accommodation and one of continued protest. The violence scenario is not an exclusive one; the country could descend into violence even as the Brotherhood pursues either of the two other scenarios. The continued protest option is the de facto scenario and will likely remain so for some time.” Ashraf El-Sherif is a nonresident associate in the Democracy and Rule of Law Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

US Development Assistance to Pakistan: 2014 and Beyond

“The withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan in 2014 provides a critical moment for the United States to evaluate its development objectives in Pakistan and signal its credibility as a long-term partner. Afghanistan and Pakistan are at different points on the path of development and require different kinds of assistance delivered in different way. Short-term stabilization is the top priority in Afghanistan while long-term development is and should be the priority in Pakistan. Given this context, the key development considerations for Pakistan are as follows.” Alexis Sowa is a Senior Policy Analyst at the Center for Global Development.

Women and Conflict in Afghanistan
International Crisis Group. October 14, 2013 [Note: contains copyrighted material][PDF format, 53 pages]
"As the presidential election approaches in 2014, with the security transition at the year's end, Afghan women, including parliamentarians and rights activists, are concerned that the hard-won political, economic and social gains achieved since the U.S.-led intervention in 2001 may be rolled back or conceded in negotiations with the insurgents. Afghanistan's stabilisation ultimately rests on the state's accountability to all its citizens, and respect for constitutional, legal and international commitments, including to human rights and gender equality. There will be no sustainable peace unless there is justice, and justice demands that the state respect and protect the rights of women, half its population."

Sahel: Recurrent Climate Shocks Propel Migration; Resilience Efforts Face Challenges
Refugees International. July 31, 2013 [Note: contains copyrighted material] [PDF format, 7 pages]
http://www.refugeesinternational.org/sites/default/files/080113_Sahel_Recurrent_Climate.pdf

“Recurrent climate-related shocks in West Africa's Sahel region are having severe impacts on vulnerable populations. Increasingly, those unable to feed themselves or their families have no option but to leave their villages, resorting to new forms of migration that bring with them serious protection risks. New resilience-building initiatives launched by regional bodies, the United Nations, and donors have the potential to begin to tackle the root causes of these populations' vulnerabilities. However, a lack of coherence and coordination is seriously threatening the effectiveness of these initiatives. With implementation still in the initial stages, there is a window of opportunity to address these shortcomings before significant time and resource commitments are made.”

Internet Freedom and Political Space
http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR200/RR295/RAND_RR295.sum.pdf Summary [PDF format, 14 pages]

“Since 2008, the Department of State has spent $100 million to promote Internet freedom worldwide. These efforts included increasing public awareness of online censorship, developing and providing circumvention technologies that allow users access to blocked sites and censored information, protecting sites from distributed denial of service (DDOS) attacks, and offering Internet literacy training for civil society groups. This report examines whether and how furthering the “freedom to connect” can empower civil society vis-a-vis public officials, make the government more accountable to its citizens, and integrate citizens into the policymaking process—and if so, through which
mechanisms? To answer these questions, we examined how access to information online may affect freedom of assembly, freedom of expression, and the right to cast a meaningful vote—the three dimensions that define political space. Using Egypt, Syria, China, and Russia as case studies, we examined how online freedoms altered state-society relations in those countries.” Olesya Tkacheva is a post doctoral fellow at the University of Rochester in New York.

ENTERPRISING SOLUTIONS: The Role of the Private Sector in Eradicating Global Poverty
The Brookings Institution. September 2013 [PDF format, 47 pages]
http://goo.gl/zhrSXQ

“The following brief examine how the contribution of the private sector can be enhanced in the push to end poverty over the next generation, as well as how government can work more effectively with the private sector to leverage its investments. These policy briefs were commissioned for the 10th annual Brookings Blum Roundtable on Global Poverty, held in Aspen, Colorado from August 4-6, 2013. The roundtable brought together high-level government officials, academics, development practitioners, and leaders from business, foundations, civil society, and international organizations to discuss “The Private Sector in the New Global Development Agenda” and find new ways to alleviate poverty through cross-sector collaboration.” The report is divided into the following chapters: (1) Reimagining the Role of the Private Sector in Development; (2) A New Economic Path for Sub-Saharan African Countries through Private Impact Equity; (3) Goods, Services and Jobs for the Poor; (4) The Case for Capital Alignment to Drive Development Outcomes; (5) Women, Entrepreneurship and the Opportunity to Promote Development and Business; (6) The Role of the U.S. Government in Promoting Private Sector Development Solutions.”

Mexico’s Peña Nieto Administration: Priorities and Key Issues in U.S.-Mexican Relations
http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/213989.pdf

“U.S.-Mexican relations are evolving. During his May 2013 visit to Mexico, President Obama embraced President Peña Nieto’s desire to bolster economic ties and focus on new issues, including education. U.S.-Mexican security cooperation has continued; future efforts may increasingly focus on crime prevention and judicial reform. Bilateral cooperation may have contributed to the July capture of the leader of Los Zetas... Congress and the United States have a strong interest in the impact of the Enrique Peña Nieto government on economic and security conditions in Mexico and on U.S.-Mexican relations. Economically, the United States and Mexico are heavily interdependent, and the U.S. economy could benefit if Mexico is able to sustain or expand its economic growth rate (which has averaged 3% over the last three years). Similarly, security conditions in Mexico affect U.S. national security, particularly along the U.S.-Mexico border. Congress may closely monitor whether the reduction in organized-crime related violence that...
Mexico experienced in 2012 can be sustained without jeopardizing bilateral efforts against drug trafficking and organized crime. Maintaining strong bilateral cooperation on these and other issues, while also ensuring that U.S. interests are protected, are likely to be of keen interest to Congress.” Clare Ribando Seelke is an Specialist in Latin American Affairs at the CRS.

Conflict Management and Peacebuilding: Pillars of a New American Grand Strategy

The authors examine the utility of the U.S. Government’s whole-of-government (WoG) approach for responding to the challenging security demands of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. They specifically discuss the strategic objectives of interagency cooperation particularly in the areas of peacebuilding and conflict management. Discussions range from the conceptual to the practical, with a focus on the challenges and desirability of interagency cooperation in international interventions. The book shares experiences and expertise on the need for and the future of an American grand strategy in an era characterized by increasingly complex security challenges and shrinking budgets... This volume traces the central plans and policies that (ought to) comprise Washington’s efforts to harness political, military, diplomatic, and economic tools to advance U.S. national interests in an increasingly complex and globalizing world. Authors contributing to this volume tackle strategic choices for effectively addressing emerging security threats, integrating conflict management approaches into strategic decision-making, sharing the burden of peacebuilding and stability operations between military and civilian actors, strengthening civil-military cooperation in complex operations, and enabling the timely scaling-down of military deployments.” Dr. Volker C. Franke is Special Assistant to the Vice President for Research and Graduate Dean for Strategic Partnerships and Associate Professor of Conflict Management at Kennesaw State University. Dr. Robert "Robin" Dorff is Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS) and Professor in the Department of Political Science and International Affairs at Kennesaw State University.

NATO Matters: Ensuring the Value of the Alliance for the United States

This policy brief suggests several steps to improve NATO capabilities and maintain U.S. support for the alliance. Among these are recommendations to preserve the command and control interoperability gained in Afghanistan and to expand the current metric of a two percent of GDP contribution to the NATO budget for a more qualitative assessment. “Since its founding in 1949, NATO has served as the cornerstone of the
transatlantic alliance, anchoring both military and political cooperation among its members. Today, however, the international security environment is changing rapidly. The strategic malaise afflicting the alliance in the immediate post-Cold War period was in large part papered over by the wars in Kosovo, then Afghanistan and, for a brief time, Libya. With those conflicts winding down, NATO faces another deep crisis: shrinking European defense budgets are stressing American support for the alliance. At a time when U.S. defense budgets are declining many Americans believe that the United States continues to carry a disproportionate burden for the alliance. This policy brief recommends ways to improve NATO capabilities and to maintain support for the alliance among U.S. policymakers and the public.” Jacob Stokes is a Research Associate at the Center for a New American Security (CNAS). Dr. Nora Bensahel is the Deputy Director of Studies and a Senior Fellow at CNAS.

The Security Concerns of the Baltic States as NATO Allies
Corum, James S. Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College. August 27, 2013. [PDF format, 50 pages]

“If the United States is likely to fight in a coalition with small allies in the future, then it is useful to understand the experience, capabilities, and perspectives of those allies. Since regaining independence in 1991, the countries of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania have been very active in supporting NATO and U.S. military operations abroad. It is notable that the three Baltic countries have also used the deployment of a significant part of their forces in the last decade as a major part of their program to carry out a major force transformation... This monograph recommends several steps that the United States ought to take to help allay the legitimate security concerns of the Baltic allies and to help build a more effective NATO policy to engage Russia over the next decade.” Dr. James S. Corum is a retired lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve who served in Iraq in 2004. Since 2009, he has been the Dean of the Baltic Defence College in Tartu, Estonia, the military higher college of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

The Emerging Asia Power Web: The Rise of Bilateral Intra-Asian Security Ties
Cronin, Patrick M. Center for a New American Security. June 2013 [PDF format, 52 pages]

“Countries in Asia – including Australia, India, Japan, Singapore, South Korea and Vietnam – are developing bilateral security ties with one another in unprecedented ways. This emergent trend of intra-Asian defense and security cooperation, which we term the “Asia Power Web,” will have profound implications for regional security and U.S. strategy in Asia. Bilateral security relationships in Asia are building on previously existing foundations of economic and political integration. Asian countries are diversifying their security ties primarily to hedge against critical uncertainties associated with the rise of China and the future role of the United States in the region. Bilateral ties are also developing as states seek to address nontraditional security challenges and play larger roles in regional and global affairs... This report examines the phenomenon of growing intra-Asian security ties among six key countries – Australia, India, Japan, Singapore, South Korea and Vietnam – and assesses the implications for regional security and U.S.
strategy. In doing so, we seek to widen the analytical aperture through which policymakers view Asia and to describe an increasingly complex regional security environment, one too often defined solely by the U.S. “hub-and-spoke” alliance system and China’s rapid military modernization.” Patrick M. Cronin is a Senior Advisor and Senior Director of the Asia-Pacific Security Program at the Center for a New American Security (CNAS).

ARTICLES

US Strategy in a Post-Western World

“Developing nations now account for roughly one-third of world trade. This is a telling sign of the new dynamics of globalization, which are shifting away from a US-centric economy towards a more complex and disorderly world order. The Obama administration would do well to fully grasp the implications of these realities and adjust US foreign policy accordingly. This essay seeks to sketch the accommodations US strategists might be wise to consider. Globalization has wrought a diffusion of power among nation-states and increased the technology-driven empowerment of individuals, non-state actors and networks. This is redistributing and redefining power – a far cry from the early 1990s, when the term globalization was synonymous with the United States. Solving problems such as poverty, disease, climate change and those stemming from the Middle East's difficult metamorphosis may lie more in new collaboration between non-traditional partners – including, in some cases, non-state actors – than in current arrangements among states. It is a fragmented and messy, but not a classically multipolar, world.”


“The current balance-of-power challenge for the United States is in East Asia. Unless balanced by the United States, China’s rise could yield regional hegemony. None of its Asian neighbors has the resources necessary to balance China’s rise. Japan’s decline has been precipitous, and China’s other neighbors are too small to present a challenge. A balance of power in East Asia will require direct US strategic involvement to maintain a divided region. During the first term of the Obama administration, the United States undertook a strategic initiative to strengthen its presence in East Asia. Often called the US “pivot” toward East Asia, this policy has been characterized by development of enhanced strategic cooperation with a wide range of East Asia countries, including traditional allies and new security partners.”

Robert S. Ross is a professor of political science at Boston College, an associate at Harvard University’s Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies, and senior advisor to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology security studies program.
The New Terrorist Training Ground

“Last year, al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb did something no other modern terrorist group has: conquered a broad swath of a sovereign country—Mali. Since then, despite French intervention, northern Mali has become a jihadist front, with Islamist militants flowing in from around the world. While America remains focused on threats from the Middle East and South Asia, the new face of terror is likely to be African... Fears about Africa’s emergence as a terror haven are unlikely to subside anytime soon. Africa’s Islamists are able to take advantage of the fact that many of the continent’s countries have porous borders; weak and corrupt central governments; undertrained and underequipped militaries; flourishing drug trades that provide a steady source of income; and vast, lawless spaces that are so large—and so far away from major American military bases like those in the Middle East and Afghanistan.” Yochi Dreazen is a contributing editor for *The Atlantic*, covering national security and foreign policy. Dreazen is also a Writer in Residence at the Center for a New American Security.

Winners and Losers After Arab Spring
Benstead, Lindsay J., et. al. *YaleGlobal*. August 27, 2013 [HTML format, various paging]
http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/winners-and-losers-after-arab-spring

According to the authors, who conducted post-election surveys in Egypt, Libya and Tunisia, each political transition underway since the Arab Spring has its own characteristics. “Transitions in Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia have yet to extend opportunities for political participation and good governance. Frustration with the slow, halting progress in bringing representative democracy there might lead foreigners to recommend a procrustean solution, but what the countries need is a differentiated approach. The ouster of President Mohamed Morsi and the violent repression of his supporters in Egypt highlight the fragility of representative institutions vis-à-vis the ideological divide and conflicting interests. Tunisia has seen its share of economic and political struggles. While its transition process has been the most successful to date, the hard task of ratifying the constitution and holding elections lies ahead. Libya faces the challenge of armed militias and building the capacity and legitimacy of state institutions. Behind headlines focusing on national struggles lurk differences in who is empowered, who is sidelined, in the transition processes. The challenges and possibilities for international efforts aimed at strengthening democratic politics are not uniform across the countries.” Lindsay J. Benstead is an assistant professor in the Mark O. Hatfield School of Government at Portland State University.

Obama’s Policy Towards Syria

The author discusses the reluctance on the part of the United States to become more
deeply involved in ongoing conflict in Syria and the various pressures on Washington to adjust its policy and to aid the rebels. “President Obama is under great pressure to provide American weapons to the Syrian opposition. Obama’s domestic political opposition, including such respected veteran politicians as Senator John McCain, have urged the United States to do so. President Obama has, however, so far resisted these pressures. He has instead taken several steps to try to be helpful to the Syrian opposition without direct military intervention or significant arms supply. First, he has clearly taken sides in the conflict, although it is essentially a stalemated civil war. Since the summer of 2011, he has publicly blamed Assad for the continuing violence and called for him to step down. Second, Obama has made an ongoing effort through diplomatic means to bring the conflict to an end. He has fully supported the United Nations and Arab League efforts, and his government has consulted regularly with leaders in the Arab world, Europe, and elsewhere, with particular emphasis on trying to persuade the Russian government to cease supporting Assad. Third, the United States has provided more humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people and to the opposition than any other country. Fourth, the United States has reportedly provided training in Jordan for some of the opposition fighters, and has announced some limited lethal assistance but without giving details."

Ambassador Rugh was a U.S. Foreign Service officer from 1964-1995, serving as Deputy Chief of Mission in Syria, Ambassador to Yemen and Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates among numerous other posts. Ambassador Rugh is also Edward R. Murrow Visiting Professor of Public Diplomacy at The Fletcher School.

Syrian Alliance Strategy in the Post-Cold War Era: The Impact of Unipolarity

The author examines cases of Syrian alignment with Iran, the United States, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia in order to test competing claims about the impact of unipolarity on alliance formation strategy. He argues that while one strategy—hard balancing against threats—previously dominated Syrian foreign policy, a diverse and nuanced set of strategies have characterized Syrian alliance-making over the past two decades. This analysis contributes toward a greater understanding of both Syrian foreign policy in the twenty-first century and alliance theory more broadly. This paper explores Syrian alliance formation strategy since the end of the Cold War. While previous research has sufficiently covered the alliance-making strategies of Syria and other Middle East states during the Cold War, surprisingly little work has been done to address the changes that have occurred in the past two decades. Chief among these changes was the fall of the Soviet Union and the transition to a unipolar balance of power marked by American primacy. Accordingly, this study seeks to answer the following question: how does the change in structure of the international system from bipolarity to unipolarity affect Syrian alliance formation strategy?”

David Wallsh is a PhD candidate at The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University where he concentrates on Middle Eastern Politics and International Security Studies.

Syria’s Growing Jihad
Jones, Seth G. Survival. August/September 2013, pp. 53-72.
"The escalating war in Syria presents a growing threat to the Middle East and the West more broadly. Led by groups like Jabhat al-Nusra (the Victory Front), an al-Qaeda-affiliated organisation, Syria is becoming a training ground for foreign fighters and a microcosm of sectarian conflict. Over the past year, an increasing number of fighters have travelled to Syria from other areas – including the West – in an effort to topple the Assad regime, where some have joined Jabhat al-Nusra and other rebel groups. These fighters are gaining valuable experience in combat, bomb-making, propaganda and counter-intelligence. Most are developing relationships with fighters from other regions – such as the Persian Gulf, North Africa and South Asia – and becoming more ideologically committed. In addition, these ties are being used to transport greater amounts of money, lethal aid and non-lethal material to the Syrian front." Seth G. Jones is Associate Director of the International Security and Defense Policy Center at RAND, Adjunct Professor at Johns Hopkins University’s School for Advanced International Studies, and author most recently of Hunting in the Shadows: The Pursuit of Al Qa’ida Since 9/11 (Norton, 2012).

Tunisia’s Fragile Transition

“Earlier this month, Tunisia’s main political parties signed an agreement on how to proceed in its transition to a consolidated democracy. While Tunisia’s process so far has been slow and steady, it has also been largely devoid of internal or external meddling like the coup d’état in Egypt or outside interference in Libya or Syria. These factors could actually lead to its ultimate success and should be applauded. Further, Tunisia has the right ingredients to succeed: unlike Syria or Egypt, there are not outside powers overtly meddling in Tunisia’s affairs, thereby allowing Tunisian political actors to grapple with problems themselves and together; Tunisia’s military is apolitical and weak in manpower, and has no interest in a coup d’état; and unlike Egypt, there is not one dominant political party. It is true that while Ennahda has lost support over the past two years, it still has a dedicated base and their electoral ground game is still likely strongest. Further, the secularist parties, civil-society groups, and the UGTT have been enough of a check to rein in any excesses of Ennahda over time. Due to these factors, all political actors must work things out together on their own terms and actually engage in back and forth, which are the first steps to achieving a consolidated democracy.” Aaron Y. Zelin is the Richard Borow Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

The Islamist Moment: From Islamic State to Civil Islam?

The author discusses the rise to power of Islamist parties in the Middle East after the Arab Spring. He argues that the political future of Islamists will depend on whether they meet the rising expectations of the Arab public. He concludes that if the Islamists fail to deliver local public goods, the voters and society will turn against them. “What does the rise to power of Islamists mean for the future of the Middle East and the region's international relations? What is the balance of social forces among Islamists? How will the Islamists's coming to power affect transition from authoritarianism to pluralism, including the institutionalization of political participation, civil–military relations, civil society, and...
the rights of minorities? To what extent will the Islamist moment transform the
géostratégique architecture of the Middle East, especially the Arab–Israeli conflict and the
cold war raging between the Saudi and Iranian camps? How have the Western powers,
particularly the United States, responded to the rise of the Islamists? In other words, will
parliamentarianism and the burden of governance have a moderating effect on Islamist
parties and transform them into interest- and constituency-driven parties like their
Christian counterparts in Europe and religious-based groups in Indonesia and Turkey?...Islamist parties are slowly moving away from their traditional agenda of establishing an
authoritarian Islamic state and imposing Islamic law, to a new focus that is centered on
creating a “civil Islam” that permeates society and accepts political pluralism.” Fawaz A.
Gerges is a professor of International Relations at the London School of Economics where
he directs the Middle East Centre.

Lessons From Negotiating With the Taliban
http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/lessons-negotiating-taliban

"Pakistan released the Afghan Taliban's second in command to catalyze a peace process.
It's not the first effort. In trying to end fighting in Afghanistan and secure a sustainable
representative government for Afghans, from mid-2011 to March 2012, the United States
tried encouraging Taliban members to work with the Afghan government. Those talks
failed, explains Marc Grossman. Grossman offers three lessons for others who have little
choice but to negotiate with stubborn insurgents: set moral guidelines on end goals for
the negotiating team, recognize that it’s challenging for both sides to negotiate and fight
simultaneously; and apply force to back diplomacy and vice versa. Fragmentation among
opponents is frustrating when commitments are not met, but can lead to breakthroughs.
For most it's puzzling why a few ideologues prefer endless pursuit of power, at any cost,
over peace and stability." *Marc Grossman is a vice chairman of The Cohen Group and a
Kissinger Senior Fellow at Yale’s Johnson Center for the Study of American Diplomacy. A
Foreign Service Officer for 29 years, he retired in 2005 as Under Secretary for Political
Affairs."

Pakistan, India, China, and the United States: Energy, Climate Change, and
National Security

"This article focuses on the interplay of energy, climate change, and national security
issues in Southwest Asia, using the newer definition of “national security” to include
energy security, economic development, and climate change, as well as traditional
security focusing on the military aspects. Modern economies depend on the availability of
sufficient energy at acceptable prices. Essentially all forms of energy can be used to
generate heat or electricity. The transportation sector, however, is still almost entirely
dependent on products of petroleum, such as gasoline or diesel. Consequently, many
policy analysts have considered energy security primarily in terms of oil security. This
perception needs to change quickly if we are to address concerns about environmental
impacts such as climate change. And there is the opportunity to adopt newer
technological options, such as solar and wind power, where the prices have come down
rapidly, and natural gas... This article focuses on the interplay among four countries—Pakistan, India, China, and the United States—on national security, as evidenced in the context of natural gas and nuclear power." *Toufiq Siddiqi is President of Global Environment and Energy in the 21st Century, Honolulu, Hawaii and Adjunct Senior Fellow at the East-West Center, in Honolulu.*

**The US and Iran in a Tantalizing Dance**

According to the author, Rouhani has a narrow time frame to fulfill campaign promises for restless Iranians, assure the West that Iran’s nuclear program intends no harm, keep hardliners at bay and, above all, satisfy Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, who under the Iranian constitution is not accountable to any earthly authority. Amanat suggests that Rouhani may have just a year to prove that his moderate style can produce results for the many competing interests at home and abroad. “President Hassan Rouhani’s speech to the United Nations General Assembly promises a sea change after 33 years of troubled relations between the Iran and the United States – and perhaps a new start over issues ranging from stalled nuclear negotiations to the Syrian crisis and, one would hope, the sad state of human rights and individual freedoms for Iranians. Both sides show positive signs, but poisonous vibes are not rare either, be it editorials of hardline dailies in Tehran or the alarming statements of Israeli Premier Benjamin Netanyahu and his supporters in the US Congress.” *Abbas Amanat is professor of history and international studies at Yale University and director of the Program in Iranian Studies at Yale MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies.*

**Asia's Looming Power Shift**

“Cartographical conceptions of Asia obscure what, in strategic terms, is a “Greater Asia.” It stretches from eastern Iran through Central Asia and South Asia to Indonesia, and from the Aleutian Islands to Australia, encompassing the Russian Far East, China, Japan, the Korean Peninsula and Southeast Asia. It is connected by multifarious transactions, cooperative and adversarial, resulting from flows of trade and investment, energy pipelines, nationalities that spill across official borders, historical legacies that shape present perceptions, and shifting power ratios, within and among states. This is not a closed system; after all, many Greater Asian states are closely tied to the United States, a non-Asian Pacific state whose prowess enables it to shape power balances and political and military outcomes across the region. Yet America will face unprecedented changes in the distribution of power in Greater Asia’s eastern theater and disruptions in the western theater, as domestic constraints—economic and political—curtail its choices. That, in turn, will necessitate strategic reassessments by states in the region, particularly those that have relied on American protection. All this will undermine long-standing analytical frameworks and policies.” *Rajan Menon is the Anne and Bernard Spitzer Professor of Political Science at the City College of New York/City University of New York.*
Will Latin America Miss U.S. Hegemony?

“For decades, the standard framework for describing and understanding U.S.-Latin American relations has been the overwhelming hegemonic power of the "colossus of the north." Now, though, with the rise of regional powers like Brazil, the importance of new emerging economies like China, and the diversity of political and economic models in the region, policymakers and observers are beginning to discuss the decline of U.S. power in the region. Whether real or perceived, the effects of waning U.S. influence are already shaping countries' calculations in their domestic and foreign policies and the formation of multilateral alliances. What are the implications of the perceived decline of U.S. hegemony for Latin America? This article explores the possible facets of the decline of U.S. influence in the region. It will start by examining whether, indeed, the United States' ability to shape outcomes or impose its preferences in the region has diminished or shifted in how it must conduct diplomacy. Second, it will examine the possible outcomes of diminished influence. Finally, this article will consider the times when there have been a convergence of values and interest between the United States and governments in the region, and the likely effect that diminished U.S. power will have on areas of common interest: democracy, human rights, and the peaceful resolution of intra-regional conflicts." Christopher Sabatini is the senior director of policy at the Americas Society and Council of the Americas, and founder and editor in chief of the hemispheric policy magazine, Americas Quarterly.

The African Economic Miracle: Myth or Reality
Cohen, Herman J. American Foreign Policy Interests. Summer 2013, pp. 212-216.

"The majority of African nations have been enjoying a boom in earnings from the export of both agricultural and mineral commodities since the turn of the twenty-first century. This revenue stream, along with macro-economic reforms encouraged by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, have resulted in the growth of a middle class to about 150 million persons, about 15 percent of sub-Saharan Africa. With disposable income, this middle class is attracting investors, especially in retail, consumer goods, and banking. The financial community is understandably enthusiastic about the potential for high yields on short-term investments. Nevertheless, major deficits exist in governance, agriculture, intraregional trade, and the business climate that are inhibiting true sustainable development. With growing urbanization and a growing class of still unemployable youth, African governments need to introduce reforms expeditiously if they are to fulfill the continent’s great potential and avoid the disasters of crime, terrorism, and drugs—all of which are already creeping in." Ambassador Herman J. Cohen, a 38-year veteran of the State Department Foreign Service, Ambassador has devoted his professional career to African and European affairs. He worked in Africa for twelve years in five countries, including three years in Senegal as the U.S. Ambassador.

U.S. DOMESTIC POLICY AND TRENDS
The Financial Crisis: Five Years Later
The Executive Office of the President, The White House. September 2013 [PDF format, 49 pages]

This report describes 15 key elements of the response to the financial crises – providing an overview of the state of the economy and the financial system, the actions the Administration took in conjunction with the Federal Reserve and other regulators, and where we are now: (1) Speed and Comprehensiveness of Crisis Response; (2) Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP); (3) TARP Bank Investments; Stress Tests; (4) American International Group (AIG); (5) Automotive Industry; (6) Housing; (7) Small Business; (8) Consumer Lending; (9) Household Wealth; (10) Consumer Protections & Consumer Financial; (11) Protection Bureau (CFPB); (12) Preventing Excessive Risk Taking; (13) Limiting the Impact of Failing Firms; (14) Bank Capital; (15) Derivatives.

FIXING OUR BROKEN IMMIGRATION SYSTEM: The Economic Benefits of Providing A PATH TO EARNED CITIZENSHIP
The White House. August 2013 [PDF format, 13 pages]

This report from the Executive Office of the President highlights the economic benefits of providing a path to earned citizenship for the 11 million undocumented immigrants currently living and working in the U.S. shadow economy. The report compiles outside estimates showing that providing earned citizenship for these workers would increase their wages, and, over 10 years, boost U.S. GDP by $1.4 trillion, increase total income for all Americans by $791 billion, and generate $184 billion in additional state and federal tax revenue from currently undocumented immigrants. According to the report, it would also add about 2 million jobs to the U.S. economy.

A BLUEPRINT FOR IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION: CREATING A MUNICIPAL IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION AGENDA
New York City Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs. Spring 2013 [PDF format, 15 pages]

The New York City Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA) has created a series of guides that highlight successful models and practices for other cities to consider and use in developing their own unique responses to serving newcomers. The shared innovative strategies can be employed by local governments to foster economic, civic and cultural vibrancy by promoting the well-being and integration of immigrants. “This Blueprint details the history and development of the New York City Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs, highlights the core functions of the office and provides examples of initiatives that have been undertaken across New York City to support immigrants. Establishing a central
office, organization or entity to oversee local immigrant integration efforts is key to identifying and leveraging assets to meet the needs of immigrant communities.”

**A Blueprint for Immigrant Integration: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**
New York City Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs. Spring 2013 [PDF format, 15 pages]

“Recognizing the key role of small businesses in the local economy, the New York City Department of Small Business Services (SBS) provides direct assistance to business owners and works to foster neighborhood development in commercial districts. Similarly, the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) serves as the City’s primary engine for economic development by leveraging the City’s assets to drive growth, create jobs and improve quality of life. Through a series of initiatives launched in 2011 and 2013, NYCEDC, in partnership with SBS and MOIA, is supporting immigrant entrepreneurs and high-skilled immigrants to help them succeed and thrive economically. The Immigrant Entrepreneur Initiatives, launched in 2011, are designed to make it easier for immigrant-owned businesses to start and grow in New York City. The Immigrant Bridge program, launched in 2013 as part of a suite of initiatives known as Leveraging Innovations in our Neighborhoods and the Knowledge economy (LINK), is designed to increase the earnings potential of unemployed or underemployed foreign-trained immigrants with advanced degrees and in-demand skills.”

**Export Nation 2013: U.S. Growth Post-Recession**
McDearman, Brad, et. al. The Brookings Institution. September 2013 [PDF format, 16 pages]

“Strong export performance over the past several years has played a central role in the ongoing economic recovery in the United States, particularly in the largest metro areas. The top 100 metro areas alone account for 64 percent of the nation’s total exports and all but one of the top 100 metros saw an increase in exports from 2003 to 2012. This analysis of key export trends between 2003 and 2012 for the 100 largest metro areas finds that: (1) Exports drove post-recession growth in the 100 largest metro areas, (2) Few metro areas are on track to achieve the NEI goal of doubling exports in five years; (3) The 10 largest metro areas, by export volume, produced 28 percent of U.S. exports in 2012; (4) Two-thirds of the largest metro areas underperform the United States as a whole on export intensity, suggesting that there is significant potential for the expansion of exports at the metro level; (5) The most export-intensive metro areas are highly specialized in certain industries; (6) Metro areas whose export intensity grew fastest experienced higher economic growth; (7) Metro area manufacturing exports grew to record levels in 2012; (8) Services accounted for more than half of post-recession export growth in 11 metros, including San Francisco, Washington DC, and New York; (9) Certain industries, especially in the services sector, produce almost all of their exports in the top 100 metro areas.” Brad McDearman is a fellow and the director of the Metropolitan...
Tech Starts: High-Technology Business Formation and Job Creation in the United States
Hathaway, Ian. Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation; Engine. August 20, 2013. [PDF format, 36 pages]  

“New and young businesses—as opposed to small businesses generally—play an outsized role in net job creation in the United States. But not all new businesses are the same—the substantial majority of nascent entrepreneurs do not intend to grow their businesses significantly or innovate, and many more never do... This report contrasts business and job creation dynamics in the entire U.S. private sector with the innovative high-tech sector – defined here as the group of industries with very high shares of employees in the STEM fields of science, technology, engineering and math. These differences are highlighted at the national level, as well as detailing regions throughout the country where high-tech startups are being formed each year. High-tech firm births were 69 percent higher in 2011 than in 1980, and drilling down within high-tech to isolate just the ICT sector (Information and Communications Technology), new firm births grew by 210 percent. At the same time, private-sector business creation was down 9 percent. The report also finds that high-tech startups are springing up at a higher rate than all private-sector businesses. Relative to their share of firms in the economy, high tech is 23 percent more likely, and ICT as a segment of high tech is 48 percent more likely, than the private sector as a whole to witness a new business formation.” Ian Hathaway is an economic advisor to Engine, a research foundation and policy coalition for technology startups.

Reaching the Debt Limit: Background and Potential Effects on Government Operations
http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/214922.pdf

“This report examines the possibility of the federal government reaching its statutory debt limit and not raising it, with a particular focus on government operations. First, the report explains the nature of the federal government’s debt, the processes associated with federal borrowing, and historical events that may influence prospective actions. It also includes an analysis of what could happen if the federal government may no longer issue debt, has exhausted alternative sources of cash, and, therefore, depends on incoming receipts or other sources of funds to provide any cash needed to liquidate federal obligations. Finally, this report lays out considerations for increasing the debt limit under current policy and what impact fiscal policy could have on the debt limit going forward.” Mindy R. Levit, Coordinator is an Specialist in Public Finance at the CRS.

School Choice and School Performance in the New York City Public Schools - Will the Past be Prologue?
Whitehurst, Grover (Russ); Whitfield, Sarah. The Brookings Institution. October 8, 2013 [PDF format, 26 pages]
http://goo.gl/BzXbc4

“The New York City public schools are remarkably different today than they were when Michael Bloomberg was first sworn in as mayor in 2002. One prominent dimension of change has been the expansion of school choice and school competition. This transformation has been associated with significant improvements in student outcomes, including increased graduation rates and enhanced performance on state tests of academic achievement... This paper provides evidence of a causal link between improved student outcomes and the growth in new smaller high schools and charter schools. The paper addresses the work that remains to be done to provide the students of New York City with a world class public education and an ideal system of school choice, and provides a series of policy recommendations for the city’s next mayor.”

Grover J. Whitehurst is a senior fellow in Governance Studies and director of the Brown Center on Education Policy at the Brookings Institution. Sarah Whitfield is Center Coordinator of the Brown Center on Education Policy at the Brookings Institution.

Mapping the Latino Population, By State, County and City

“The nation’s Hispanic population, while still anchored in its traditional settlement areas, continues to disperse across the U.S., according to a Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data. Today, the 100 largest counties by Hispanic population contain 71% of all Hispanics. Los Angeles County, CA alone contains 4.9 million Hispanics, or 9% of the nation’s Hispanic population... The geographic settlement patterns are to some degree aligned with the diverse countries of origin of the Hispanic population. For example, Mexican origin Hispanics are the dominant group in the Los Angeles-Long Beach metropolitan area, making up 78% of the area’s Hispanics. They are also the dominant group in many metropolitan areas in the border states of Arizona, California, New Mexico and Texas. But along the East Coast the composition of Hispanic origin groups differs. In the New York-New Jersey metropolitan area, Puerto Ricans and Dominicans are the dominant Hispanic origin groups. In Miami-Hialeah, FL, Cubans are the dominant Hispanic group and in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan areas, Salvadorans are the largest Hispanic origin group among that area’s Hispanics. Nationally, Mexicans are the largest Hispanic origin group, making up 64.6% of all Hispanics.”

Mark Hugo Lopez is Director of the Pew research Hispanic Trends Project. Anna Brown is a Research Assistant with the Pew Research Center's Hispanic Trends Project and Pew Research Center's Social and Demographic Trends project.

Latinos' Views of Illegal Immigration's Impact on Their Community Improve
Hugo Lopez, Mark; Gonzalez-Barrera, Ana. Pew Research Hispanic Trends Project. October 3, 2013[Note: contains copyrighted material] [PDF format, 15 pages]
Hispanics' views of the impact of unauthorized immigration on the U.S. Hispanic community have grown more positive since 2010, according to this survey of 5,103 Hispanic adults by the Pew Research Center. Today, 45% of Hispanic adults say the impact of unauthorized immigration on Hispanics already living in the U.S. is positive, up 16 percentage points from 2010 when 29% said the same. “Views of unauthorized immigration’s impact have improved more among foreign-born Hispanics than native-born Hispanics. According to the new survey, half (53%) of Hispanic immigrants say the impact of unauthorized immigration on the U.S. Hispanic community is positive, up 19 percentage points from 2010 when 34% said the same. This compares with a 12 percentage point increase in the share of native-born Hispanics who say the same—from 24% in 2010 to 35% in 2013.” Mark Hugo Lopez is the Director of the Pew Research Hispanic Trends Project. Ana Gonzalez-Barrera is a Research Associate.

Foreign-born Workers In The U.S. Labor Force

“This Spotlight highlights the labor market characteristics of foreign-born workers using data from the Current Population Survey (CPS). The foreign born are persons who reside in the United States but who were born outside the country or one of its outlying areas to parents who were not U.S. citizens. The foreign born include legally admitted immigrants, refugees, temporary residents such as students and temporary workers, and undocumented immigrants. In 2012, there were 25 million foreign-born persons age 16 years and older in the U.S. labor force, representing 16.1 percent of the total. About 130 million workers were native born, making up the remaining 83.9 percent of the total U.S. labor force. About 38 percent (9.5 million workers) of the foreign born were from Mexico and Central America, and 28 percent (7 million workers) were from Asia (including the Middle East). The share of foreign-born workers from Europe and the Caribbean was about 10 percent for each.” Abraham T. Mosisa is an economist in the Division of Labor Force Statistics, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Sector Effects of the Shale Gas Revolution in the United States

"This paper reviews the impact of the shale gas revolution on the sectors of electricity generation, transportation, and manufacturing in the United States. Natural gas is being substituted for other fuels, particularly coal, in electricity generation, resulting in lower greenhouse gas emissions from this sector. The use of natural gas in the transportation sector is currently negligible but is projected to increase with investments in refueling infrastructure and natural gas vehicle technologies. Petrochemical and other
manufacturing industries have responded to lower natural gas prices by investing in domestically located manufacturing projects. This paper also speculates on the impact of a possible shale gas boom in China." Alan Krupnick is Director of Resources for the Future's Center for Energy Economics and Policy and a Senior Fellow at RFF.

What’s Next for Nonprofit Journalism?
http://www.journalism.org/2013/10/03/whats-next-for-nonprofit-journalism/

On Friday, September 20, 2013, the Pew Research Center and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation co-hosted a roundtable on the future of nonprofit journalism. The event brought together representatives of the philanthropic and journalistic communities, as well as thought leaders and experts in the field. This is a brief report that emerged from the event. “Despite all their differences, the nonprofit journalism field is coalescing—identifying common practices and organizing into groups such as INN and LION. The fragility of the sector remains real, but at least among the members in the room, there were signs that digital nonprofit journalism is entering a new phase somewhere between start-up and maturation.”

Religion Trends in the U.S.
http://www.pewforum.org/2013/08/19/event-transcript-religion-trends-in-the-u-s/

On Aug. 8, 2013, the Pew Research Center brought together some of the leading experts in survey research on religion in the U.S. for a round-table discussion with journalists, scholars and other stakeholders on the rise of the religious “nones” and other important trends in American religion. This is the edited transcript. “The share of Americans who claim no particular religion doubled from 7% to 14% in the 1990s, as sociologists Michael Hout and Claude Fischer reported in an influential 2002 article based on the General Social Survey. A decade later, the Pew Research Center found that one-in-five U.S. adults (and fully a third of those ages 18-30) have no religious affiliation.”

ARTICLES

A 2nd Term Policy For Obama That Will Boost The Economy, And Make Us Safer

“In its first term, the Obama administration was able to get Congress to agree to several Free Trade Agreements, negotiated by its predecessor. Three small ones were for countries in the Hemisphere, and one, with Korea, was a major treaty. The latter is particularly noteworthy because it required substantial renegotiation. Other than that, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative seemed to be mostly concerned with enforcement matters, which, while important, do little to boost trade. At the beginning of his second term, the President outlined his goal of negotiating a Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) and a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). A new U.S. Trade Representative,
Michael Froman, thought to be “close” to the President, has been sworn in. The time is ripe for real progress in trade. Bill Frenzel, is a Guest Scholar in Economic Studies at the Brookings Institution and Co-Chair of the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget. A U. S. congressman for 20 years, he has specialized in budget issues and tax policy.

The Best Thing We Could Do About Inequality Is Universal Preschool

“A child of parents who never went to college is less likely to go to college herself. Her educational development influences her employment prospects and the money she's likely to make over her lifetime. And the clustering of poverty in whole parts of town threatens to cut her children off from access to good schools and healthy neighborhoods. A growing body of research over the past decade, though, suggests that one intervention in particular could have cascading effects on all of these seemingly intractable challenges: Get to children as young as possible, and you can change not only their life trajectories, but also the income inequality, social mobility (and tax revenues) of the places where they live. This doesn't mean spending more per student in struggling high schools, or giving rehabbed computers to second-graders. It means reaching low-income children by the time they're 3, or even younger. It means putting them in high-quality preschool.” Emily Badger is a staff writer at The Atlantic Cities.

America's Immigration Policy Fiasco: Learning from Past Mistakes

"In this essay I discuss how and why U.S. policies intended to stop Latin American immigration to the United States not only failed, but proved counterproductive by ultimately accelerating the rate of both documented and undocumented migration from Mexico and Central America to the United States. As a result, the Latino population grew much faster than demographers had originally projected and the undocumented population grew to an unprecedented size. Mass illegality is now the greatest barrier to the successful integration of Latinos, and a pathway to legalization represents a critical policy challenge. If U.S. policy-makers wish to avoid the failures of the past, they must shift from a goal of immigration suppression to one of immigration management within an increasingly integrated North American market." Douglas S. Massey is the Henry G. Bryant Professor of Sociology and Public Affairs at Princeton University.

The Innovators Who Are Transforming U.S. Education
http://www.theatlantic.com/sponsored/chevron-stem/2013/10/innovators-who-are-transforming-us-education/31/

"In more than 4,700 schools in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, Project Lead The Way is helping students perform better, preparing them for both college and careers,
and narrowing the achievement gap. By training both students and teachers, PLTW helps ensure there is a strong pipeline of STEM-educated students waiting to fill the jobs of the future by focusing on the teaching of real-world skills that are necessary for any occupation."

The 8 Habits of Highly Successful Young-Adult Fiction Authors

"Young-adult fiction, commonly called "YA fiction," has exploded over the past decade or so: The number of YA titles published grew more than 120 percent between 2002 and 2012, and other estimates say that between 1997 and 2009, that figure was closer to 900 percent. Ask a handful of young-adult fiction writers what exactly makes a YA novel, though, and you'll get a handful of conflicting answers. At their core, YA books are for and about teenagers and pre-teens, usually between 12 and 18 years old, but sometimes as young as 10. Yet more than half of all YA novels sold are bought by older adults 18 or older, and certain titles published in the U.S. as YA are considered mainstream fiction for adults in other countries. Some authors believe the intent to write for young readers is a prerequisite of YA fiction; others don’t even realize their books will be labeled as YA until after they finish writing." Nolan Feeney writes for and produces The Atlantic's Entertainment channel.

Hillary in Midair

“For four years, Hillary Rodham Clinton flew around the world as President Barack Obama’s secretary of State, while her husband, the former president Bill Clinton, lived a parallel life of speeches and conferences in other hemispheres. They communicated almost entirely by phone. They were seldom on the same continent, let alone in the same house. But this year, all that has changed: For the first time in decades, neither one is in elected office, or running for one. Both are working in the family business, in the newly renamed nonprofit that once bore only Bill’s name but is now called the Bill, Hillary, and Chelsea Clinton Foundation, which will hold its annual conference in New York next week.” Joe Hagan writes about politics and media for New York Magazine and Rolling Stone.

Information Provided by the Information Resource Center
U.S. Consulate General - Barcelona
http://barcelona.usconsulate.gov

Views expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect U.S. government policies.