

AIRC ALERT

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HIGHLIGHT DOCUMENTS

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What's New

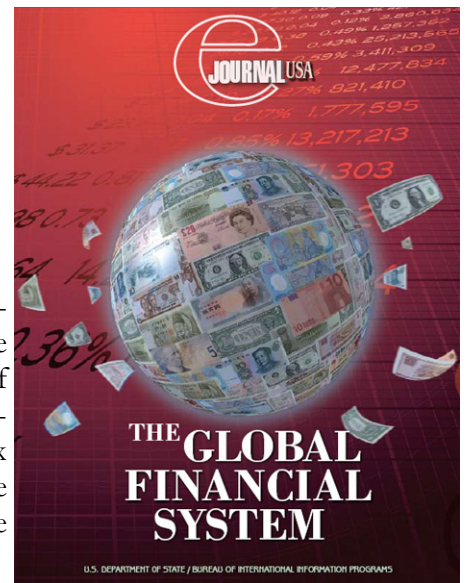
A New Beginning: Engaging With Muslims Worldwide

http://www.america.gov/obama_cairo.html

America and Islam "overlap and share common principles - principles of justice and progress, tolerance and the dignity of all human beings," President Obama says in remarks at Cairo University on June 4.

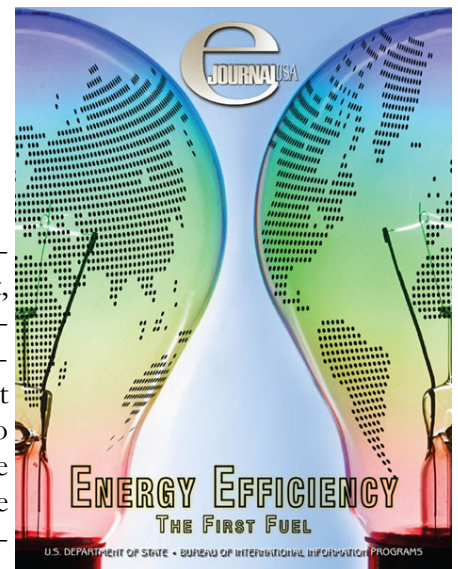
2-1/H
THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL SYSTEM: Six Experts Look at the Crisis
 Electronic Journal of the Department of State, Volume 14, Number 5, May 2009
<http://www.america.gov/>

Experts describe the mechanics of the global financial system presenting their views concerning the cyclical nature of markets, the interdependence of global trade relationships, and the role of regulation. For this issue of eJournal USA, we asked six financial experts to offer their opinions on how the global crisis came about and some of the ways the world will react to this shared problem.



2-2/H
ENERGY EFFICIENCY: The First Fuel
 Electronic Journal of the Department of State, Volume 14, Number 5, May 2009
<http://www.america.gov/>

Increasing the efficient use of existing energy supplies is widely acknowledged as the fastest, cheapest, and cleanest way to meet future energy needs. Energy, Environment, Economics, all three forces contribute to standard of living and quality of life, and it has been true since the earliest humans learned to make fire and coax crops from the ground. The need to maintain a careful equilibrium among the three has taken on a new urgency in the 21st century. The United States has a strong record on tapping efficiency as a resource. The energy consumed to produce a dollar's worth of national output of goods and services has declined by more than 50 percent since 1970, according to the Energy Information Administration.



2-3/UP

A NEW PLAN FOR AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN

By Michelle Austein Brooks
America.gov, 27 March 2009.

With Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates at his side, President Obama unveiled a new strategy for fighting terrorists in Afghanistan and Pakistan. President Obama says the new strategy, which “marks the conclusion of a careful policy review” with top military and diplomatic officials, includes plans for increased funding and an additional 4,000 troops above the 17,000 increase he previously authorized. These 4,000 troops will train Afghan security forces. “As president, my greatest responsibility is to protect the American people. We are not in Afghanistan to control that country or to dictate its future,” the president said. “I want the American people to understand that we have a clear and focused goal to disrupt, dismantle and defeat al-Qaida in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and to prevent their return to either country in the future.” The increased funding will support civilian efforts, because “a campaign against extremism will not succeed with bullets or bombs alone,” Obama said. He said he supports a congressional bill that would authorize \$1.5 billion in aid over the next five years to help build schools, hospitals and strengthen democracy in Pakistan. The president acknowledged the high price of these efforts. “Resources are stretched,” Obama said. “But the American people must understand that this is a down payment on our own future.”

2-4/UP

TIME FOR SOBER REALISM: Renegotiating U.S. Relations with Pakistan

By C. Christine Fair
Washington Quarterly, Vol. 32, No. 2, April 2009,
pp. 149-172.

The author, a senior political scientist with the RAND Corporation, asserts that the U.S. has largely failed in its efforts to help Pakistan become a stable, prosperous, and democratic state that supports U.S. interests in the region, including combating Islamist militancy, supporting a secure Afghanistan, and preventing further nuclear proliferation. An important reason for

this lack of success is that “the main U.S. programs misdiagnose the various problems they seek to affect.” An example is the assumption that the Pakistani government supports the various plans that have been put forward to develop the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), despite much evidence to the contrary. Analysts have proposed a number of approaches to improve the situation and encourage more Pakistani cooperation with the U.S., including 1) mitigating the trust deficit caused by the American perception that Islamabad has a history of “saying one thing and doing another” and the Pakistani perception of the U.S. as an unreliable partner, 2) addressing Pakistan’s regional security concerns, particularly its fears of an Afghanistan allied with India, and 3) civilianizing a militarized state. The U.S. needs to lessen its dependence on Pakistan, provide assistance that strengthens Pakistan’s ability to govern itself and to wage counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations effectively, and support Pakistani civil society.

2-5/UP

A RENEWED APPROACH: finding stability in US-Pakistan relations

By Maleeha Lodhi
Harvard International Review, Vol. 31, No. 1,
Spring 2009, p82-83.

Maleeha Lodhi, who have extensive experience in Pakistani diplomacy and have served Pakistan as Ambassador for two terms presents her thoughts on main diplomatic issues facing Pakistan during her ambassadorship, “I think that the first challenge of representing a country like Pakistan is the challenge of making people understand Muslim countries and Muslim societies. Pakistan is the second-largest Muslim nation in the world and has more than its fair share of challenges. One of the key challenges has been the fact that I never thought I would be representing the entirety of Muslim people, which increasingly became the case especially after 9/11. It required making people understand both our Islamic faith and the geopolitics of our country. Pakistan has remained in the eye of the storm due to what I call the “tyranny of geography”; being situated in a very volatile part of the world leads Pakistan to be a critical player in both regional and global security. Making people understand the tough issues of the population and fiscal issues has, in my opinion, become much more difficult for several reasons. Firstly, the failure of the Bush policies in Afghanistan and the fallout seen at Pakistani borders has turned a once peaceful society into a violent

one. Secondly, the catastrophe of the Bush policies has been compounded by Pakistan's own record of not having the best governance. This has prevented Pakistan to actualize their stability and is representative of the failure of rulers to meet the expatiations of their people.”

2-6/UP

PAKISTAN'S CAPITAL CRISIS: IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. POLICY

By Michael F. Martin and others.

Congressional Service Report, CRS Publication, March 2009.

Pakistan's continuing capital crisis is affecting the nation's overall economic performance and raising concerns about its political stability. During her Asia trip in February 2009, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton made several references to the importance of solving Pakistan's economic problems in the continued campaign to combat Islamic militants in the region. The Atlantic Council has called for an increase in U.S. assistance "to avert an economic meltdown." The severity of Pakistan's economic situation has also been raised by several members of Congress. Several different research groups have recently issued reports on the situation in Pakistan that contain recommendations on what the United States could do to help alleviate Pakistan's economic problems. There are indications that Congress may consider some of these recommended actions, including an increase in U.S. non-military assistance and the creation of "reconstruction opportunity zones" in Pakistan

DEMOCRACY AND GLOBAL ISSUES

2-8/DG

10 MUST-SEE ENDANGERED CULTURAL TREASURES

Smithsonian, Vol. 39, No. 12, March 2009.

Smithsonian staff writers highlight endangered treasures around the world that range from prehistoric monuments at the Hill of Tara in Ireland to neglected stretches of the venerable twentieth-century Route 66 in the United States. Other sites threatened by development, war, climate change or neglect are Italy's Fenestrelle Fortress; the Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem, in the Palestinian territories; and Hasankeyf,

Turkey, one of the oldest continuously-inhabited areas in the world. Rains brought by climate change are taking a toll on the sandstone Jaisalmer Fort in Rajasthan, India, and the adobe city of Chan Chan, once capital of the Chimu civilization, in Peru. Also featured are The Buddhist Xumishan Grottoes in China; ancient petroglyphs at Dampier Rock Art Complex, Australia; and the Visoki Decani Monastery, Kosovo.

2-9/DG

COULD FOOD SHORTAGES BRING DOWN CIVILIZATION?

By Lester Brown

Scientific American, May 2009.

The author, president of the Earth Policy Institute, writes that the biggest threat to global stability is the potential for food crises in poor countries to cause government collapse. Food scarcity and the resulting higher food prices are pushing poor countries into chaos. Such "failed states" can export disease, terrorism, illicit drugs, weapons and refugees. Water shortages, soil erosion and rising temperatures from global warming are placing severe limits on food production. Without massive and rapid intervention to address these three environmental factors, the author argues, a series of government collapses could threaten the world order.

2-10/DG

MAN-MADE NOISE MAY BE ALTERING EARTH'S ECOLOGY

By Clive Thompson

Wired, Vol. 16, No. 6, June 2008.

The author notes that noise from human activities, such as aircraft, highway traffic and construction is not just an aesthetic nuisance – it is becoming a serious environmental issue. In a wilderness environment, the distinctive sounds of the various species of animals use different frequencies in the acoustic spectrum, and their mating calls or warning cries can be heard without interfering with those of other species. The author notes that some researchers believe that this is how they can coexist so well. Noise from human activities can interfere with various acoustic frequencies, compromising species' ability to communicate and making them vulnerable to predation. This is possibly a factor in many species' decline worldwide.

2-11/IS

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT MODERNIZATION

By Ronald Inglehart and others.

Foreign Affairs, Vol. 88, No. 2, March-April 2009.

The authors write that, although democracies are in retreat in some developing countries, evidence shows that over time democracy emerges from modernization. Inglehart and Welzel, coauthors of MODERNIZATION, CULTURAL CHANGE, AND DEMOCRACY, say industrialization brings about rapid economic growth and other changes that transform behavior. High levels of development make people more tolerant and trusting, promoting self-expression and participation in making decisions, including political decisions. “This means that the economic resurgence of China and Russia has a positive aspect: underlying changes are occurring that make the emergence of increasingly liberal and democratic political systems likely in the coming years,” they note. Modernization does not go on indefinitely; each phase of modernization effects some changes to people’s world views. It does not weaken religious and ethnic traditions or lead to westernization. Nor does it lead to democracy automatically; democracy emerges as highly educated people increasingly think for themselves and change their behavior. At some point democracy becomes hard to avoid “because repressing mass demands for more open societies becomes increasingly costly and detrimental to economic effectiveness.”

2-12/IS

THE SOCIAL MARKET ROOTS OF DEMOCRATIC PEACE

By Michael Mousseau

International Security, vol. 33, no. 4, Spring 2009, pp. 87—114.

The author, associate professor of international relations at Koc University in Istanbul, writes that democracy does not cause peace among nations. Rather, domestic conditions cause both democracy and peace. From 1961 to 2001, democratic nations engaged in numerous conflicts with each other, including at least one war, yet not a single fatal militarized incident occurred between nations with economies characterized by widespread public participation. In such contract-intensive economies, individuals learn to respect the choices of others and value equal application of the law; they demand liberal democracy at home and perceive it in their interest to respect the rights of nations

and international law abroad. The consequences involve more than just peace: the contract-intensive democracies are in natural alliance against any challenges to the Westphalian system of law and order by state or nonstate actors. Because China and Russia lack contractualist economies, this economic divide will define great power politics in the coming decade. To address the challenges posed by China and Russia and secure their citizens from terrorism, the contract-intensive powers should focus their efforts on supporting global economic opportunity, rather than on promoting democracy.

2-13/IS

HIGHER EDUCATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

By Alan Dessoff

International Educator, Vol. 17, No. 5, September/October 2008, pp. 16-20.

Former Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs and current President and CEO of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Patricia de Stacy Harrison, gives an interview urging patience on waiting for returns on investments made in international education. Ultimately, international education is an incredible value as it fosters a community of people of goodwill with mutual respect and understanding. A joint Department of State and Homeland Security advisory panel recently issued a report specifically advocating international education as a key component of public diplomacy. Harrison concludes this interview by citing the need for international education to be a two-way street with American students also studying abroad.

2-14/DG

WHAT MAKES US HAPPY

By Joshua Wolfshenk

Atlantic Monthly, June 2009.

For more than 70 years, Harvard University researchers have been collecting data on a group of its male students to gain some insights into the keys to “successful living.” The collected data of what is known as the Grant Study, passed from one generation of researchers to another, amounts to a rare kind of longitudinal study. Wolfshenk is the first journalist to comb through the accumulated files and draw some conclusions about whether the data does what it set out to do. The primary researcher on the study for more than forty years says the lives of the 268 sub-

jects, half of whom are now deceased, “were too human for science, too beautiful for numbers, too sad for diagnosis and too immortal for bound journals.” On a more tangible level, researcher George Vaillant did identify a number of factors that seemed to mark a healthy transition from middle age to a healthy old age: education, stable marriage, not smoking, not abusing alcohol, some exercise, and healthy weight. Of those who had most of these factors in their favor at age 50, half arrived at the age of 80 as happy and well.

2-15/DG

ROLL THE DICE: How One Journalist Gambled on the Future of News

By Charles M. Sennot

Columbia Journalism Review, March-April 2009.

Sennot, a former Boston Globe correspondent, writes of his transition from being a traditional print journalist to co-founding GlobalPost.com, an online “collaborative” foreign news agency that has attracted major journalists who write on a freelance basis for a modest stipends and shares in the company. Despite the trepidation of entering a new realm, and a shortfall in funding, GlobalPost.com was launched and is among a group that includes ProPublica and Politico moving the news delivery model forward. It also offers an entrepreneurial landing spot for journalists exiting traditional print careers. “It is an exciting time, a historic shift in how the world will be informed,” Sennot writes. He is currently GlobalPost.com’s executive editor.

2-16/DG

ROLL THE DICE: HOW ONE JOURNALIST GAMBLED ON THE FUTURE OF NEWS

By Charles M. Sennot

Columbia Journalism Review, March-April 2009.

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INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

2-17/IS

CENTER STAGE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY: Power Plays In The Indian Ocean

By Robert Kaplan

Foreign Affairs, Vol. 88, No. 2, March-April 2009.

According to Kaplan, a national correspondent for Atlantic Monthly magazine, the Indian Ocean is central to understanding geopolitics in the 21st century. “It combines the centrality of Islam with global energy politics and the rise of India and China to reveal a multilayered, multipolar world,” he says. Already the world’s most important passageway for trade of energy and other goods, the Indian Ocean will become even more crucial. As rivalry intensifies between India’s and China’s economies and between their expanding navies, the U.S. Navy, its power declining, will have to manage the peace in the Indian Ocean. While the United States leans on India’s navy in the Indian Ocean and Japan’s navy in the Pacific to limit China’s expansion, it will at the same time have to lead incorporation of China’s navy into international alliances in order to attain global political stability. Lacking the singular threat of the Soviet Union during the Cold War, the U.S. military will need to become more flexible and build shifting alliances to respond to many different types of crises in the “weak governments and tottering infrastructure” lining the Indian Ocean from Somalia to Pakistan to Burma.

2-18/IS

THE THREE FACES OF NATO

Richard K. Betts

National Interest, no. 100, March-April, 2009, pp. 31-38.

Betts, an adjunct senior fellow for national-security studies at the Council on Foreign Relations, writes that NATO is facing an identity crisis. Is it a club for democracies or a means for fighting offensive wars? He argues that without a serious rethink of NATO’s fundamental purpose, the alliance could well come apart and create conflict with the former Soviet Union in the process.

2-19/IS

ASIA'S NEXT CHALLENGE: Securing the Region's Water Future
Asia Society, April 2009, 59p.

One-sixth of the world's population currently does not have good access to safe water and half of all countries could have water shortages by 2025, according to the UN. In this report, an international group of leaders from academia, government and the private sector convened by the Asia Society urges countries to take more action to avert a world "water crisis." It says policy makers should begin by looking at the world's growing water scarcity as of more than just an environmental threat and consider water scarcity both a national security and development challenge. With climate change and a growing world population, the water supply is becoming more and more uncertain. The group says countries should use existing scientific data on climate change and water already collected and that more resources should be directed to the UN so it can collect more data.

2-20/IS

COMING TO GRIPS WITH AN EXPANDING EXTREMIST THREAT IN PAKISTAN

By Lisa Curtis

The Heritage Foundation, April 22, 2009.

<http://www.heritage.org/>

Pakistan is in the midst of rapid political shifts that are challenging the leadership's ability to maintain cohesion within the country and even raising questions about the potential for an Islamic revolution by year's end. Pakistan has long suffered from ethnic and sectarian divisions in different parts of the country. But the recent threat from a well-armed and well-organized Islamist insurgency pushing for the establishment of strict Islamic law in parts of the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) adds a new and more dangerous dimension to the country's challenges.

2-21/IS

CRITICAL QUESTIONS: Taliban Expansion in Pakistan: The Buner District Falls to Militants

By Rick Barton and others.

The Center for Strategic and International Studies, April 22, 2009.

The Taliban won and are now firmly in control of Buner District. Pickup trucks filled with heavily armed, black turbaned Takfiri roam the streets. Local religious

leaders have disappeared--after fleeing or worse--and the Friday sermons are now being delivered by outsiders from Swat, preaching their version of Shari'a law, Islam, and anti-Westernism. The Takfiri have also posted signs banning women from the market and closed down "un-Islamic" centers, such as barber-shops and schools. There have also been reports that the Swat Taliban have already begun a rapid recruitment drive for new fighters in Buner.

2-22/IS

MOTIVES FOR MARTYRDOM: Al-Qaida, Salafi Jihad, and The Spread of Suicide Attacks

By Assaf Moghadam

International Security, Vol. 33, No. 3, Winter 2008/2009, pp. 46-78.

The author, assistant professor at the U.S. Military Academy's Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, chronicles the suicide missions that have occurred starting in the early 1980s. In recent years, however, there has been an unprecedented increase in the number of attacks, the organizations conducting these attacks, the countries targeted, and the number of victims. Moghadam believes that current explanations cannot account for the dramatic increase and spread of suicide attacks. Analysis of 1,857 suicide attacks from December 1981 through March 2008 suggests that two interrelated factors have contributed to the "globalization of martyrdom": al-Qaeda's evolution into a global terrorist actor and the growing appeal of its guiding ideology, Salafi jihad. As localized patterns of suicide missions have given way to more globalized patterns, the author believes that states must rethink their counterterrorism strategies. At the same time, because Salafi jihadist groups tend to target Muslims, moderate Muslims and nonviolent Salafists must take the lead in challenging these groups.

2-23/IS

THE UNRAVELLING OF PAKISTAN

By John Schmidt

Survival, Vol. 51, No. 3, June 2009.

Self-absorbed and disposed to muddle through even as their world is crumbling about them, the feudal elites who govern Pakistan are poorly equipped to resist the growing threat from radical Islamic forces. Having played the key role in the emergence of radical Islam in Pakistan by using jihadist groups to advance Pakistani foreign-policy interests in Afghanistan and Kashmir, Pakistani authorities have long since lost their

ability to control them. The desultory Army performance against Pakistani Taliban forces in the tribal areas and the recent concessions made in Swat suggest they lack the will to decisively meet the radical Islamic threat. The consequence of their persistent failure to act may be the eventual collapse of the state

ECONOMIC SECURITY

2-24/ES

THE END OF PLENTY: The Global Food Crisis

By Bourne Joel K., Jr.

National Geographic, June 2009.

This special report reviews in-depth the problem of how to feed a world that is consuming more food than farmers have been producing. The combination of several factors has led to the current global food crisis. Populations in many poor countries are burgeoning, and consumers in countries experiencing new economic growth are eating more meat. There are growing demands for grain for food, animal feed and fuel. Global warming has restrained growth in yields by depleting water and soil resources. As a result, food prices have risen dramatically, and global grain reserves have dropped to record lows; the author notes that these factors ensure that food prices are not coming down soon. Although controversial, some are calling for another “green revolution”, involving new seed varieties and environmentally-sound uses of fertilizer, pesticides and irrigation; it must include Africa, Bourne writes, and in half the time of it took for the first revolution that led to a reduction in widespread hunger in Asia in the 1960s and 1970s. An increasing awareness of the importance of agricultural development has led to more investing in that area by international donors and by some countries -- like Malawi -- whose leaders want to turn their nations into surplus producers.

2-25/ES

LAST MAN STANDING

By Tyler Cowen

Wilson Quarterly, Vol. 33, No. 2, Spring 2009, pp. 55-58.

The author, a professor of economics at George Mason University, believes that although America's rela-

tive decline in global affairs has been foretold many times, it never quite seems to happen. Today, the rest of the world is looking to the U.S. to pull it out of a recession (or depression), even though many blame us for having started it. The truth is that the worse things get for the world as a whole, the more the U.S. gains in relative power and influence. The U.S. has more demographics than many countries; with its relatively unified system of governance, the U.S. Federal Reserve can simply print money to fund bailouts, and even if that is an ugly alternative, the government's ability to act underpins the credibility of the system as a whole. The European Central Bank (ECB) is explicitly banned from creating more euros for bank bailouts; the Swiss central bank could, but the prospect of the resulting inflation and rapid depreciation of the Swiss franc makes this an unappealing choice, especially for a country that has marketed itself as a financial haven. It's not widely recognized that Europe, because of its systemic weaknesses, already has required implicit bailouts by the U.S. European financial institutions are prominent on the list of creditors of the failed insurance company AIG. Few U.S. financial regulators would say it openly, but one reason why the Fed rescued AIG was that it knew that European regulators could not handle the fallout from an AIG collapse.

2-26/ES

THE QUIET COUP

By Simon Johnson

Atlantic, May 2009.

Johnson, former chief economist of the International Monetary Fund, writes that the Obama administration is unlikely to reform the U.S. financial system because his top economic advisers have been recruited from the leading investment banks, the very institutions in need of reform. “The finance industry has effectively captured our government,” Johnson writes; “recovery will fail unless we break the financial oligarchy that is blocking essential reform.” Johnson said that the U.S. financial troubles are similar to the crises that brought heavily indebted developing countries to the IMF for loans. The author, now a scholar at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, asserts that the U.S. financial disaster was brought about by an “Oligarchy, running the country rather like a profit-seeking company in which they are the controlling shareholders.” He said that government bailouts of the banks that have become too big to fail are not incentives to reform. “The government’s velvet-glove approach with

banks ... is inadequate to change the behavior of a financial sector accustomed to doing business on its own terms,” Johnson asserts. In contrast to the administration’s bailout strategy, Johnson has another proposal: nationalize troubled banks and break them up as necessary. Without thorough banking reform, the author said that the world risks going into an economic slump worse than the Great Depression. “We face a synchronized downturn in almost all countries, a weakening of confidence among individuals and firms, and major problems for government finances,” Johnson writes.

2-27/ES

A SENSE OF UNREALITY

By Francis Fukuyama

American Interest, May-June 2009.

The author writes that there is a “pervasive sense of unreality” in Washington about the scale of the economic crisis facing the U.S. and the rest of the world. The current administration’s economic policy team seems to be operating, says Fukuyama, on the assumption that the problem facing the financial system is one of illiquidity and not of insolvency, and that their task is to prop up the banks until their toxic assets can be fairly valued. The problems run deeper than that, says Fukuyama, resulting from years of Americans consuming and spending more than they were saving or producing, and trillions of dollars from abroad fueling the rapid increase of debt. He points out that this is a non-partisan crisis – both Republicans and Democrats were complicit in the deregulation of the financial sector that enabled the explosion of the shadow banking economy. The crisis is primarily a failure of U.S. public policy, writes Fukuyama, and “now that the public sector is cleaning up behind them, we need to move from astonishment to a different model of capitalism if we are to fix our own economy and regain a shred of credibility on the world stage.”

2-28/SV

EBOOKS HIT CRITICAL MASS: Where Do Libraries Fit With Oprah?

By Jean Bedord

Online, Vol. 33, No. 3, May/June 2009, pp. 14-17.

The author, a private consultant, was one of the earliest eBook readers and one of its strongest proponents of the then-emerging format. The earliest eBooks were large, bulky contraptions that looked like thick binders. Since then, readers have shrunk to the size of a thin paperback, more titles are available (now a major key to the success of eBooks), and the term “eBook” is now part of the general lexicon. Much of the credit for this change goes to television celebrity Oprah Winfrey’s endorsement of the Amazon Kindle, which did much to change the mind-set for both readers and publishers, plus infrastructure changes that created larger inventories of book titles. When eBooks first launched, there were less than 10,000 titles available. In contrast, present users (thanks to Kindle) have 230,000 titles. Overdrive claims more than 150,000 titles; NetLibrary has over 180,000 titles while Google has just announced the availability of more than 1,5 million public domain books for the iPhone and the Android-based GI.

2-29/SV

FIERO! Museums as Happiness Pioneers

By Jane McGonigal

Museum, Vol. 88, No. 2, March/April 2009, pp. 48-53.

The author, a designer of alternative reality games and a research affiliate at the Institute for the Future in Palo Alto, California, believes that mass collaboration in the virtual world can translate into helping communities in the real world probe the future and solve problems. Museums should be in the business of making people happy; for this reason, gaming, long thought of as a way to pass time, is now a way to solve real-world problems. Museums can harness gaming’s power to help someone who might otherwise be without resources. This is part of the case for public funding by proving museums’ value, an argument that museums are now trying to make before Congress. In this article, an excerpt from a lecture the author gave

in December 2008 at Washington, DC's Newseum as a presentation by the American Association of Museums' Center for the Future of Museums, McGonigal looks at ways in which innovative thinking and new ideas about the role museums are now playing in shaping communities and society.

2-30/SV

IS TECHNOLOGY TEARING APART FAMILY LIFE?

By Dana Wollman

Laptop, March 2009, pp. 92-97.

The author notes that text messaging, social networking and online video are changing the dynamics between parents and children; technology today is the new "rock-and-roll", with the older generation trying to make sense of it, if not openly embrace, it. Some believe that social networking will improve family interaction, while others argue that the new technology threatens to rip apart not just family unity but the fabric of society itself, as more individuals communicate only through their high-tech devices, decreasing the amount of time they actually interact on a personal level. Eye contact, emotional resonance and body language are lost if humans rely primarily on texting, instant-messaging or FaceBook as means of communication. Family togetherness, like evening meals or weekend activities, gets short-changed once again as children use their gadgets as a substitute for family participation.

2-31/SV

LEGAL RESEARCH: An Introduction to Key Online and Print Sources

By Knapp, Jeffrey

Choice, Vol. 46, No. 8, April 2009, pp. 1439//1449.

The author, a librarian with Pennsylvania State University, Altoona, offers a basic overview of the legal process, a collection of resources for finding primary and secondary sources of legal information, resources for understanding the legal process, and resources specifically tailored for legal research. The essay is divided into two parts -- focusing on how a law is made and recorded, and aids in researching the law. Law reviews and legal periodical articles provide interpretation of the law as well as detailed articles on particular legal topics. There are also a number of specialized finding tools that enable one to search for relevant materials in primary authorities, like the index volumes for statutes and regulations compilations. Shepard's Citations pro-

vides references to when cases and law review articles were cited by another source. Computer databanks (Lexis, Westlaw) and the free Thomas (from the Library of Congress) provide the legal profession with quick and efficient tools to do research. State and specialty law collections pulling together diverse types of authority are now appearing on CD-ROM and the Internet and today, foreign law and international law are included in many legal portals. The study of law is a highly inter-disciplinary endeavor that requires invaluable resources for the study of many of its subjects. Law and governmental sources are the foundation upon which we base our civic knowledge.

2-32/SV

UNCLE SAM: SCIENTIST

By Lisa A. DuBois

Lens, Winter 2009, pp. 4-9.

During the past century, America reached the pinnacle of science and technology, thanks in no small measure to its immigrant spirit, diversity and genius for innovation. The U.S. outstripped all other countries in the number of science-related Nobel prizes awarded, in bringing new biotechnical products to the market, and in the amount of money spent on basic research. However, at the beginning of the 21st century, America's position of strength can no longer be taken for granted, hindered by the triple-whammy of reduced federal funding for basic research, a flagging biotech industry, and a public education system rife that is failing to turn on young people to careers in the sciences. The author believes that this can be changed if new federal investment in basic research can shore up a struggling economy. DuBois fears that, without investment in science and education, the United States will become a second-rate country.

2-33/DG

HILL TUNES IN TO NEW MEDIA

By Winter Casey

National Journal, March 7, 2009.

Lawmakers' growing awareness of the Internet's importance to campaigns and of their constituents' increasing desire to connect and gather information on the Web has led to a growing use of social media in Congress. Members are hiring new-media experts to extend their reach on the Web, Facebook, MySpace, Twitter and YouTube. Some new-media staffers like Matt Lira, who works for Representative Eric Cantor of Virginia, attends senior staff meetings so that inte-

gration with new media is considered on a daily basis. New-media staffers hope members of Congress will continue to expand their use of these tools as they come to see it as essential for promoting their agendas.

2-34/SV

CAN AMERICA FAIL?

By Kishore Mahbubani,

Wilson Quarterly, Vol. 33, No. 2, Spring 2009, 48-54.

The author, dean of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore, believes that the massive crises that the U.S. is now experiencing are partly the product of three systemic failures. First, American society is afflicted with “groupthink,” having accepted the proclamations of economic gurus such as Alan Greenspan and Robert Rubin that unregulated financial markets would naturally deliver economic growth and serve the public good. Second is the erosion of the notion of individual responsibility, as Americans cannot see how their individual actions have undermined, rather than strengthened, their society. Third is the inability of American society to see how the abuse of power has created many of the problems the U.S. now confronts abroad. The author sees the American people losing confidence in their ability to compete with Chinese and Indian workers. At the moment of their country's greatest economic vulnerability in many decades, few Americans dare to speak the truth and say that the U.S. cannot retreat from globalization; both the American people and the world would be worse off. However, as globalization and global capitalism create new forces of “creative destruction,” America will have to restructure its economy and society in order to compete.