



November/December 2008

INFO-ALERT brings to your attention a selection of abstracts of current articles and new materials from American publications on current political, economic, social issues and trends in the United States. These materials are available upon request from the *Information Resource Center*.

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POLITICS & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. **BORN-AGAIN DEMOCRACY**

William Greider

The Nation, October 20, 2008, 4 pages

What must the United States do to tackle the current financial crisis? William Greider, National affairs correspondent and a political journalist, compares the conditions of the 2008 U.S. financial crisis with those of the 1929 stock market crash that produced the Great Depression. He argues that a total collapse like the one in the 1930s may still be avoided if policies change direction. He proposes five concepts for recovery and reconstruction, which will redefine the next presidency.

2. **AMERICAN ASIA POLICY AND THE U.S. ELECTION**

Lowell Dittmer

Orbis, September 2008, 19 pages

Lowell Dittmer, Professor of Political Science at the University of California at Berkeley, examines the United States' post-Cold War policy toward Asia and its potential impact on the electoral process as the United States selects its future foreign policy leadership and respective course of direction. Among issues discussed are U.S. security architecture in the Asian region, the relevance of recent changes in regional political economy, and attempts to determine how this emerging economic-security model might dovetail with perceived American political interests at a time of national resolution.

3. **PREVENTING TERRORISM: A CASE FOR SOFT POWER**

Michael Chertoff

Harvard International Review, Summer 2008, 4 pages

Michael Chertoff, U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security, argues that the United States must increase emphasis on soft power methods for combating terrorism worldwide and to win nations and peoples to its side. He discusses soft power solutions and how to strike a balance between hard power and soft power, in order to help the United States and its allies reduce the appeal of terrorist organizations, as well as deter individuals from joining them.

4. **THE POWER OF BALANCE: AMERICA IN ASIA**

Kurt M. Campbell, Nirav Patel and Vikram J. Singh

Center for a New American Security, June 2008, 100 pages

The authors discuss the transformations across the Asia-Pacific region and how the region is best addressed strategically in terms of its dynamism rather than through a Cold War or anti-terrorism lens. The authors examine the threats and opportunities faced by America as Asia transforms, and suggest that amidst such change, hope, and possibly turmoil, the "power of balance" is the best framework for shaping American strategy toward the region.

5. **THE SEPTEMBER 12 PARADIGM**

Robert Kagan

Foreign Affairs, September/October 2008, 15 pages

Robert Kagan, Senior Associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, examines the changes in the political and economic world sphere since the end of the Cold War and describes the development of the United States as a world superpower, as well as the world's response to this development. The role of U.S. President George W. Bush in the changing of the United States' global identity and global policy is discussed, in addition to the impact of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on U.S. foreign policy and the subsequent role of the United States in world politics.

ECONOMIC SECURITY AND TRADE

6. **A STRATEGIC ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT**

Henry M. Paulson

Foreign Affairs, September/October 2008, 19 pages

One of the largest challenges facing the next U.S. president is the response to China's emergence as a global power. According to the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Paulson, the United States should engage with China in order to bolster the U.S. economy and maintain good international relations. The U.S.-Chinese trade relations, the economic growth of China and the integration of China into the global economy are examined in this article.

SOCIAL ISSUES & VALUES, EDUCATION & THE ARTS

7. **A GLOBAL FRAMEWORK: INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE**

John Marburger

Harvard International Review, Summer 2008, 4 pages

According to John Marburger, Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, Executive Office of the President, the current climate crisis is mainly focused around energy resource questions. Viable solutions to climate problems, therefore, should focus on smart management of such resources. He suggests an ethical approach to the problems of international responses to climate change.

8. **YOUTUBE PROFESSORS: SCHOLARS AS ONLINE VIDEO STARS**

Jeffrey R. Young

Education Digest, May 2008, 3 pages

Colleges and universities previously featured video clips on their web sites, but with the rise of YouTube, these institutions are now able to reach even more people. Jeffrey Young, senior writer for The Chronicle of Higher Education, discusses how video-sharing on the Internet can be incorporated into the classroom and examines the efforts being made by YouTube to enter into academia.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

9. **LOST MEDIA, FOUND MEDIA**

Alissa Quart

Columbia Journalism Review, May/June 2008, 7 pages

Alissa Quart, contributing editor to the *Columbia Journalism Review*, examines the state of journalistic writing in the age of digital media and internet journalism. At present, journalism is more or less divided into two camps: Lost Media -- traditional, long-form reportage involving in-depth investigation and research --and Found Media -- the new media innovations of blogging, news aggregation web sites, and "real-time" reporting. The author discusses how the forces of creating this new division of "Lost" and "Found" media are affecting and afflicting the world.

10. **MURKY BOUNDARIES**

Kevin Rector

American Journalism Review, June/July 2008, 8 pages

What are the guidelines for personal blogs of journalists who work for mainstream news organizations? Some news outlets such as *The New York Times* and *The Los Angeles Times* have specific policies addressing blogs, but many organizations have not incorporated the new forum into their respective corporate policies. Kevin Rector, editorial assistant from the *American Journalism Review*, examines the potential conflict with journalists who also maintain blogs, as well as the problems in approaching the guidelines.

11. **CLOSING THE GAP**

Janette Kenner Muir

Harvard International Review, Spring 2008, 4 pages

Every campaign season generates discussion about the ways media can influence the political process and shape public debate. This year, citizen engagement was another strong source of influence, manifested through Internet social networks and blogging sites. Media now faces perhaps its greatest identity crisis as it redefines its role in a media-saturated society. Janette Muir, Associate Professor of Interdisciplinary and Integrative Studies in New Century College at George Mason University, discusses the impact of shifting influences in the media and increased citizen involvement.

12. **MALEVOLENCE: THE WORLD OF WEB TROLLING**

Mattathias Schwartz

The New York Times Magazine, August 3, 2008, 6 pages

The author explores one of the unfortunate side effects of the Internet -- a growing subculture of "trolls" who intentionally disrupt online communities. Incidents of web trolling increasingly involve harassing strangers and hacking into web sites of nonprofit organizations. The author warns that prosecuting the trolls can be problematic and questions if we are ready for an Internet where law enforcement keeps watch over every vituperative blog and back-biting comments section, ready to spring at the first hint of violence.

13. **WEB SCIENCE: STUDYING THE INTERNET TO PROTECT OUR FUTURE**

Nigel Shadbolt and Tim Berners-Lee

Scientific American, September 2008, 5 pages

Studying the web will reveal better ways to exploit information, prevent identity theft, revolutionize industry and manage our ever-growing online lives. The relentless rise in web pages and links is creating emergent properties -- from social networking to virtual identity theft -- that are transforming society. A new discipline, Web Science, aims to discover how web traits arise and how they can be harnessed or held in check to benefit society. Important advances are beginning to be made; more work can solve major issues such as securing privacy and conveying trust.