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**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. **THE UNITED STATES AND ASIA IN 2007: A REGION IN TRANSITION**

Robert A Scalapino

***Asian Survey***, February 2008, 8 pages

Robert Scalapino, Robson Research Professor of Government, Emeritus, notes that the year 2007 illustrates in a variety of ways the combination of positive and negative features, advances and challenges in Asia that are an inevitable product of the revolutionary age. He examines the economic and political conditions in Asia, as well as Asian nations' relations with the United States, and discusses three forces rising in Asia -- internationalism, nationalism, and communalism.

2. **MAPPING CHANGE IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION: GEOPOLITICS, ECONOMICS, AND DIPLOMACY**

***East-West Center Senior Policy Seminar***, 2008, 40 pages

This paper provides a retrospective on the ongoing "tectonic shifts" in various dimensions of power within the Asia-Pacific region, in view of the profound changes that have occurred in the Asia Pacific region in recent years and in anticipation of the 2008 presidential election in the United States. The article discusses the evolution of regional institutions, community-building, and the specific position and role of the United States in the region.

3. **5 'TRUTHS' ABOUT WOMEN VOTERS**

Melinda Henneberger

*Politics (Campaigns & Elections)*, January 2008, 3 pages

Women may like the idea of a female president, but that does not mean support for a female candidate is a given. This article presents facts about women voters in the United States, based on a study of women across all ages, races, tax brackets and points of view in various states.

4. **SEPARATION ANXIETY**

Kirk Victor

*National Journal*, February 9, 2008, 7 pages

This article examines the challenges Republican senators face in their 2008 congressional re-election bids. In 2002, at the height of President Bush's popularity, Republican senators ran as strong Bush allies. Since then, the president's approval rating has dropped and many of the senators' states have favored Democrats in recent elections. The author examines the current state of these races and identifies strategies the Republican senators are using to highlight their independent nature, at the same time that their Democratic opponents try to tie them to the President.

5. **THE END OF MULTICULTURALISM**

Lawrence E. Harrison

*The National Interest*, January/February 2008, 9 pages

Future generations may look back on Iraq and immigration as the two great disasters of the Bush presidency. Ironically for a conservative administration, both of these policy initiatives were rooted in a multicultural view of the world. Since the 1960s, multiculturalism has become a dominant feature of the political and intellectual landscape of the West. But multiculturalism rests on a frail foundation -- cultural relativism, the notion that no culture is better or worse than any other. It is merely different, writes Lawrence Harrison, who directs the Cultural Change Institute at the Fletcher School at Tufts University.

6. **THE TASKS OF DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION AND TRANSFERABILITY**

Valerie Bunce

*Orbis*, Winter 2008, 26 pages

Valerie Bunce, Professor of International Studies at Cornell University, asserts that there is no single road to democracy. Nevertheless, there are some factors that seem to have consistently positive effects on democratic development, including the existence of a large and diverse civil society as well as a sharp political break with the authoritarian past. Regular turnovers in political leadership, governing parties, and stable state borders usually follow. Bunce asserts that a successful democratic transition must also include political institutions which empower parliaments and, in culturally diverse societies, give minorities political voice without locking them into permanent coalitions. The less significant issues include economic considerations. Bunce theorizes that these reforms are far more likely in democratic settings than in authoritarian regimes, and far more supportive of robust economic performance.

7. **GREAT POWERS AND HIERARCHICAL ORDER IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

Evelyn Goh

*International Security*, Winter 2007/2008, 45 pages

Over the last decade, scholars have debated how Southeast Asian countries will cope with China as a growing power, as well as how their relations with the other major powers in the region will change. This article investigates contemporary Southeast Asian regional security strategies and ideas for maintaining regional order. Evelyn Goh, University Lecturer in International Relations and Fellow of St. Anne's College at the University of Oxford, suggests that key Southeast Asian states rely on two main pathways to regional order -- the omni-enmeshment of major powers and the complex balance of influence.

8. **CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATIONAL SECURITY: AN AGENDA FOR ACTION**

Joshua W. Busby

**Council Special Reports #32**, November 2007, 40 pages

The connection between climate change and national security is receiving unprecedented attention from policymakers and analysts. Joshua Busby, Assistant Professor at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, moves the discussion from broad assessments of the links between climate and security to a plan for action. Recognizing that some climate change is inevitable, the author proposes a portfolio of feasible and affordable policy options to reduce the vulnerability of the United States and other countries to the predictable effects of climate change.

9. **WHAT MAKES A TERRORIST**

Alan Krueger

**The American**, November/December 2007, 5 pages

Public policymakers have been grappling for decades trying to understand what makes a terrorist, so that effective anti-terrorism and counterterrorism measures can be developed and implemented. One of the most popular explanations is that terrorism is caused by economic deprivation and a lack of education, which creates the growth media for extremism that leads to terrorism. Alan Krueger, Professor of Economics and Public Policy at Princeton University, recently completed research that indicates that neither economic deprivation nor a lack of education is a major contributing factor to extremism.

10. **THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD**

Rajan Menon

**The National Interest**, January/February 2008, 8 pages

There is a widely-held view that sometime during this century a “changing of the guard” will occur, when China will displace the United States in much the same way as America did Britain. This idea unites liberals and conservatives, optimists and pessimists, most of whom accept the proposition that “the East is back,” with China leading the pack. The debate is when the shift will happen and what a world that currently bears an American stamp will look like after China has become Mr. Big, according to Rajan Menon, Professor of International Relations at Lehigh University and a fellow at the New America Foundation.

**ECONOMIC SECURITY AND TRADE**

11. **OPEN ECONOMIES: TOWARD SECURITY AND PROSPERITY**

Robert M. Kimmitt

**Harvard International Review**, Fall 2007, 5 pages

In today’s integrated world markets, economies succeed based on their ability to harness the forces of globalization to deliver growth. But the free movement of money and goods in an integrated world economy creates an opportunity for terrorists to exploit the international financial system to advance their dangerous agendas. So how can we encourage economic growth while enhancing efforts to protect national security? Robert Kimmitt, Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Treasury, discusses the importance of maintaining open economies while coping with national security concerns.

## SOCIAL ISSUES & VALUES, EDUCATION & THE ARTS

### 12. **DEMOCRACY AND EDUCATION: EMPOWERING STUDENTS TO MAKE SENSE OF THEIR WORLD**

William H. Garrison

*Phi Delta Kappan*, January 2008, 2 pages

There is a simple yet vital link between democracy and education argues William Garrison, Director of Assessment and Evaluation for the Palo Alto Unified School District in California. If your instructional practices include such things as self-directed learning, self-reflection, or action research, you are probably well aware of the practical mechanism underlying this productivity even if you don't know it by name.

### 13. **AMERICAN TEACHERS: WHAT DO THEY BELIEVE?**

Robert Slater

*Education Next*, Winter 2008, 7 pages

Robert Slater, Professor of Education at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette, believes that teaching is as much a moral effort as it is an intellectual enterprise. Teachers not only educate children on how to think and solve problems, they also inform children's beliefs about what is right, good, and important in life, shaping their values in the process. It would be useful to know something about the values teachers hold; where they stand on freedom of speech, family values, and economic inequality. What do they believe about religion and human nature? This article examines the beliefs of elementary and secondary school teachers in the United States.

### 14. **CULTURAL TOURISM: SEEKING AUTHENTICITY, ESCAPING INTO FANTASY, OR EXPERIENCING REALITY**

Brian Osborne, Jason Kovacs

*Choice*, February 2008, 16 pages

Cultural tourism, or culture tourism, can be defined as the subset of tourism concerned with a country or region's culture, especially its arts. It generally focuses on traditional communities that have diverse customs, unique forms of art, and distinct social practices, distinguishing them from other forms of culture. Today cultural tourism is playing a major role in economic development in both the developed and the developing worlds. This bibliographical review focuses on recent literature that considers tourism strategies in which culture and heritage are considered integral to the attraction of distinctive places and experiences, especially to studies concerned with the better management of cultural tourism in terms of economic rationality, ecological sustainability, and cultural compatibility.

### 15. **COMMUNITY COLLEGES AS GATEWAYS AND GATEKEEPERS: MOVING BEYOND THE ACCESS "SAGA" TOWARD OUTCOME EQUITY**

Alicia C. Dowd

*Harvard Educational Review*, Winter 2007, 13 pages

Community colleges are essential - though often overlooked - institutions of higher education. The author explores the challenges facing community colleges as they seek to balance their multiple missions as both gateways and gatekeepers, which include meeting the diverse needs of students at the postsecondary level and responding to the changing educational and economic needs of U.S. society.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### 16. **THE AGE OF DISTRACTION: THE PROFESSOR OR THE PROCESSOR?**

Michael Bugeja

*The Futurist*, January/February 2008, 2 pages

Due to academia's reliance on technology and the media's overemphasis on trivia, future generations are not learning about social problems that require critical thinking and interpersonal intelligence. Michael Bugeja, Director of the Greenlee School of Journalism at Iowa State University, offers insights about the concept of the interpersonal divide or the social void, resulting from the increasing reliance on mediated rather than face-to-face communication.

### 17. **NONPROFIT NEWS**

Carol Guensburg

*American Journalism Review*, February/March 2008, 9 pages

With traditional news organizations continuing to trim their budgets and reduce their staffs long-term, labor-intensive investigative and enterprise journalism are more frequently made possible by funding from foundations and nonprofit organizations. The foundations are interested in a compensating for what they see as diminished coverage of civic issues, writes Carol Guensburg, a former newspaper reporter who now writes for a nonprofit organization.

### 18. **ONLINE SALVATION?**

Paul Farhi

*American Journalism Review*, December 2007/January 2008, 6 pages

As print circulation and advertising plummet, the newspaper industry and news providers look for a lifeboat online. Still, a big question lingers -- can online ad revenue grow fast enough to replace the dollars that are now being lost by the "old" media? And what happens if they don't? This article by Paul Farhi, a Washington Post reporter, examines how Internet advertising is affecting the newspaper industry.

### 19. **JOINING THE CONVERSATION**

Emily Yahr

*American Journalism Review*, February/March 2008, 2 pages

This article discusses the use of blogs by newspapers in the United States. The author focuses on how newspaper editors use blogs to achieve greater intimacy and contact with readers in order to offer additional details on top news stories, clarify the paper's ethics guidelines, and field questions from readers on any topic.

### 20. **SHARING VISUAL ARTS IMAGES FOR EDUCATIONAL USE: FINDING A NEW ANGLE OF REPOSE**

Gretchen Wagner

*EDUCAUSE Review*, November/December 2007, 9 pages

Copyright law is one of the current constructs most profoundly challenged by technological advances. The author argues that educational institutions should be actively rethinking how they are accessing and using copyrighted visual arts images, and that they should be exploring an approach that addresses copyright owners' interests, as well as users' needs, in an environment that encourages increased, shared access to these images for teaching and study.