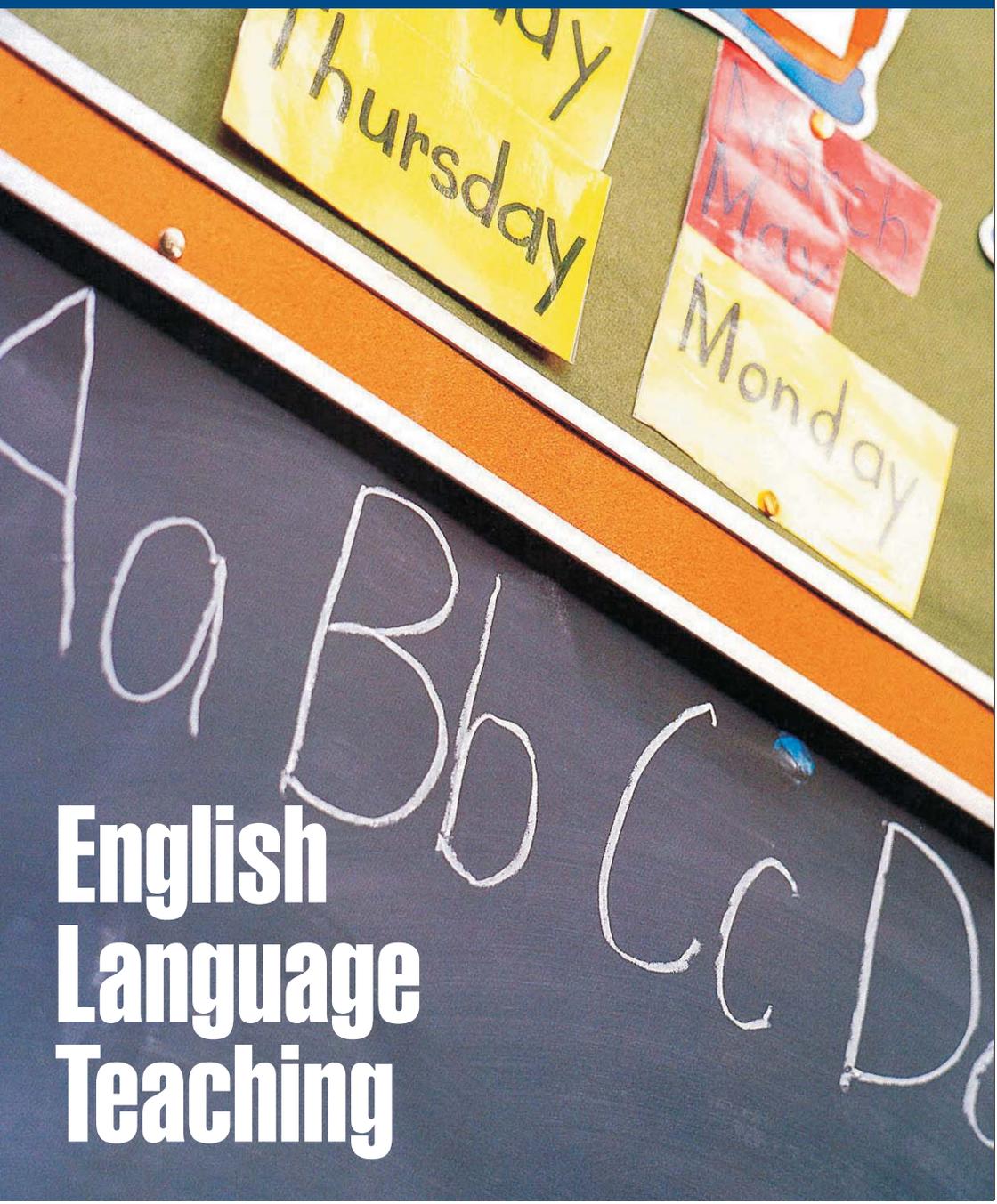


November/December 2009

ARTICLE & WEB ALERT

Digest of Articles and Websites
of Significant Interest



English Language Teaching

The American Libraries in India

The American Library

Gemini Circle, Chennai - 600 006

Library Director: Mr. M.K. Jagadish

Reference Desk: Tel. No. 91-44-28574000 ext. 4017 & 4089

Fax: 91-44-28574307, Email: chennairefdesk@state.gov

Web Address: <http://chennai.usconsulate.gov/irc.html>

The American Library

38A Jawaharlal Nehru Road, Kolkata - 700 071

Library Director: Dr. Sushanta Banerjee

Reference Desk: Tel. No. 91-33-39846398/99

Fax: 91-33-22882445, Email: kolkataamlibrary@state.gov

Web Address: <http://kolkata.usconsulate.gov/irc.html>

The American Library

4 New Marine Lines, Mumbai - 400 020

Library Director: Ms. Usha Sunil

Reference Desk: Tel. No. 91-22-22624590/92 ext. 2204

Fax: 91-22-22624599, Email: libref@state.gov

Web Address: <http://mumbai.usconsulate.gov/airc.html>

The American Library

24 Kasturba Gandhi Marg, New Delhi - 110 001

Library Director: Ms. Kala Anjan Dutta

Reference Desk: Tel. No. 91-11-23472115/16

Fax: 91-11-23329499, Email: libdel@state.gov

Web Address: <http://newdelhi.usembassy.gov/americanlibrary.html>

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Articles listed in *Article & Web Alert* are available at The American Library nearest to you. Should you wish to receive photocopy of any of the articles, please fill in the attached reply-paid card with your request and mail it to us. We shall mail you the requested articles. For your convenience, addresses of the four American Libraries in India are given on the inside front cover.

As always, we welcome your comments and suggestions. Please send your feedback to Mr. Steven P. Kerchoff, Information Resource Officer, Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy, The American Center, 24 Kasturba Gandhi Marg, New Delhi 110001.

Note: Internet sites included in this publication, other than those of the U.S. government, should not be construed as an endorsement of the views contained therein.

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English Language Teaching

In today's globalized world, there is an interconnectedness of people and a border-free exchange of ideas, cultures, and economies. The language used most often in today's globalized world is English. English has become the lingua franca for communication, business, education, and opportunity in general. Between 500 million and 1.8 billion people speak English. It is the first language of only 300 to 400 million of them. People working or studying in (country) X often use English to communicate with people working or studying in (country) Y, and one can replace these letters with the names of nearly any country.

The chairman of TeamLease Staffing Solutions in Bangalore recently said at a conference that English is like a computer's operating system. From a linguistic standpoint, that is not accurate but I like this analogy. Like the most important program that runs a computer, English is used to recognize input, send output, and store files and records in memory. Employees, students, athletes, and entrepreneurs are at a definite disadvantage if they lack the tool that the members of the globalized community use most.

Die Grenzen meiner Sprache bedeuten die Grenzen meiner Welt.

The limits of my language are the limits of my universe.
(Ludwig Wittgenstein)

English language teaching is a hot topic in India these days. Since arriving in India in September, I have met with academics, government authorities and non-governmental organization stakeholders, business leaders, parents, and students and listened to their opinions on this topic. Many of them are aware of the social divide between Indians who can speak English and those who can't. They believe that English language skills are important to India's aspirations in today's world, and many are concerned about the quality of English language teaching in schools.

In his forthcoming book *English Next India*, linguist David Graddol claims there are three main incentives driving the momentum of English language learning in India. Education (demand for English language medium schools is on the rise, more students have access to higher education, vocational training programs are increasingly including English language classes in their curricula), employment (some Indians need to be

proficient in English in order to get and keep jobs), and social mobility (many people perceive English to be useful both for geographical mobility within the multi-lingual country and for reaching the middle class).

Almost no official data are available regarding how many people in India speak English nor the proficiency level of Indian English-speaking students and teachers. This makes planning and implementing improvement in English language education difficult. Still, it is widely believed that India does not have enough teachers of English to meet the demand for English language classes. In some schools, teachers who themselves do not speak English teach about English in their vernacular language classes. Their students learn English grammar rules and can repeat context-less words and phrases, but they are not able to communicate in English after completing their final exams.

Obviously, the principle purpose of language is communication. Language also facilitates a better understanding of people, their cultures, and their ways of thinking. Exposure to English via computer software, language learning websites, and even popular music and movies can enhance some English language skills. However, someone who has memorized long lists of vocabulary words, song lyrics, or lines from a film script and/or knows all of the grammar rules of English but cannot convey or understand utterances or written messages has no proficiency in the language. This is why people best learn English with a human teacher and at least a few classmates.

High quality English language teaching is the key to improving English in India. One of the ways that the U.S. partners with India in order to facilitate improvements in English language teaching is by providing resources, educational materials, and training opportunities to Indian teachers of English, especially those who work in non-elite educational institutions. Over 1,000 teachers receive copies of *English Teaching Forum* magazine, a juried quarterly publication of articles written by English teachers for English teachers. Some teachers participate in training programs on specific areas of English language teaching which are conducted by U.S. academic experts who come to India on short-term visits. Others get scholarships for distance learning (online) classes on English teaching at U.S. universities. Additionally, the U.S. contributes to improving English teaching in India by providing support to ELTAI, the English Language Teachers' Association of India. Website: www.eltai.org. There are 32 local chapters of ELTAI throughout India; 12 to 15 of them are

active. ELTAI chapters bring local teachers of English together to enhance their professional development through formal conferences and less formal meetings for idea and resource sharing. The U.S. Embassy and Consulates support ELTAI by providing resources, training, and train-the-trainer opportunities to its members so that these teachers can be both leaders and valuable resources to other English teachers in their own communities.

As you will see in the articles of this edition, English language teaching is a hot topic in other parts of the world as well. For additional information, a webliography is also presented for your use. The inclusion of Internet sites other than those of the U.S. government should not be construed as an endorsement of the views contained therein. The websites are current as of publication date and are subject to change at any time.
Happy reading!

Joëlle Uzarski
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U.S. Embassy, New Delhi

Webliography

America.gov: Dynamic English
<http://www.america.gov/publications/ejournalusa/0807.html>

America's Story: See, Hear and Sing
<http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/sh>

AskOxford.com: Ask the Experts
<http://www.askoxford.com/asktheexperts/?view=get>

Center for Applied Linguistics
<http://www.cal.org>

Center for Multilingual, Multicultural Research
<http://www-rcf.usc.edu/~cmmr/>

The College of Education, Office of Bilingual Education
<http://www.edb.utexas.edu/education/centers/obe/>

Connect with English: Exploring American Language and Culture through Film
<http://exchanges.state.gov/media/oelp/cwe-final-handbook-june-2007.pdf>

Dave's ESL Café
<http://www.eslcafe.com>

Double-Tongued Dictionary
<http://www.doubletongued.org>

English as a Foreign Language: Publication Catalog
<http://eca.state.gov/education/engteaching/pubs/>

The English Language Fellow Program
<http://elf.georgetown.edu/>

English Language Specialist Program
<http://exchanges.state.gov/englishteaching/el-specialist.html>

English Teaching Forum
<http://exchanges.state.gov/englishteaching/forum-journal.html>

ESL Independent Study Lab
<http://legacy.lclark.edu/~krauss/toppicks/toppicks.html>

ESL: Listening: Downloadable MP3 Files
http://iteslj.org/links/ESL/Listening/Downloadable_MP3_Files/

E-Teacher Scholarship Program
<http://exchanges.state.gov/englishteaching/eteacher.html>

Federal Resources for Educational Excellence
<http://www.free.ed.gov>

KissThisGuy: The Archive of Funny Misheard Music Lyrics
<http://www.kissthisguy.com>

The Linguistic Funland
<http://www.linguistic-funland.com/>

The National Capital Language Resource Center
<http://www.nclrc.org/essentials/index.htm>

New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT)
<http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa/nyseslat/>

NIEHS Kids' Pages: Sing Along Songs
<http://kids.niehs.nih.gov/music.htm>

The Office of English Language Acquisition
<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/index.html>

The Office of English Language Programs
<http://exchanges.state.gov/englishteaching/index.html>

Old West Legends
<http://www.legendsofamerica.com/WE-Slang.html>

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<http://www.onelook.com>

Phonetics: The Sounds of Spoken Language
<http://www.uiowa.edu/~acadtech/phonetics/>

Public Broadcasting Service
<http://www.pbs.org/speak/>

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.
(TESOL)
www.tesol.org

TESOL Journal
http://www.tesol.org/s_tesol/seccss.asp?CID=1997&DID=12258

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www.ets.org/toefl/

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<http://www.ed.gov>

Urban Dictionary
<http://www.urbandictionary.com/>

UsingEnglish.com: Resources for English as a Second
Language (ESL)
<http://www.usingenglish.com>

Voice of America Special English
<http://www.voanews.com/specialenglish/>

Voice of America: Radio English Course
<http://www.dynded.com/voa/>

1. CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS FOR ELLS

By Lori M. Edmonds. The Science Teacher, v. 76, no. 3, March 2009, pp. 30-33.

In this article, Edmonds explores some of the difficulties which English Language Learners (ELLs) usually have with science content. She identifies five primary challenges. These problems could be associated with cultural perceptions of science as well as language and writing skills. The author also offers some suggestions and strategies to address these issues in the classroom. She suggests engaging students through knowledge of their native culture. She also encourages use of outlines and visual aids in the classroom to elucidate lectures and lessons. In addition, student collaboration and visual communication methods can also engage ELLs in active discussions.

2. DETERMINING THE ROI OF AN ONLINE ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE PROGRAM

By Edward P. Nathan. Performance Improvement, v. 48, no. 6, July 2009, pp. 39-48.

Nathan seeks to justify corporate investment in an online English as a Second Language (ESL) program. The case study presented in this article is based on a multinational research-based biopharmaceutical company. The return-on-investment (ROI) evaluation described here represents the sixth year of evaluating the online ESL course from a company called Global English (GE). The analysis shows that it is quite possible to make a strong qualitative and quantitative case for investing in this learning intervention.

3. EFFECTIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL LEARNERS IN MULTICULTURAL, MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOMS

By Barbara N. Allison and Marsha L. Rehm. Middle School Journal, v. 39, no. 2, November 2007, pp. 12-18.

Middle school teachers in the United States are confronting the challenges posed by increasing diversity in the nation's classrooms. The influx of immigrants entering the U.S. education system has resulted in increasing multicultural and multilingual student population with its own specific needs. These adolescent students from varying ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds often experience cultural conflict in the home and conflict with culturally different peers. Middle school teachers need to be educated and skilled in using

pedagogy that is both sensitive and responsive to the special needs of these young adolescents, who speak a native language other than English. Exploring instructional strategies employed by middle school teachers in Florida, this article illustrates how they can be adapted by others in similar circumstances.

4. IMPLEMENTING LANGUAGE ACQUISITION IN CLASSROOMS

By Richard P. Carrigan. The Education Digest, v. 75, no. 4, December 2009, pp. 57-61.

With rapid globalization, the need to communicate across language barriers has become critical. This has also affected the way second-language classrooms operate, and the way students learn new languages. In this article, Carrigan examines how research in this area has altered our understanding of what language is and how a learner acquires a second language.

5. IMPROVING FLUENCY SKILLS OF SECONDARY-LEVEL STUDENTS FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS

By Doris J. O'Shea, Kathleen McQuiston, and Michelle McCollin. Preventing School Failure, v. 54, no. 1, Fall 2009, pp. 77-80.

Teachers face a special challenge in developing the language skills of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) adolescents. They must decide the content and methodology to teach CLD students accordingly. This requires valuing and accepting students' backgrounds and readiness. The authors explore the process of fluency development and offer several suggestions for improving the linguistic skills of CLD students. Included among the teaching tips are repeated readings, partner reading through pairing of students, implementing echo reading, choral reading and antiphonal reading.

6. INTEGRATING INDIGENOUS CULTURES INTO ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

By Susan C. Barfield and Joëlle Uzarski. English Teaching Forum, v. 47, no. 1, 2009, pp. 2-9.

<http://exchanges.state.gov/english/teaching/forum/archives/docs/09-47-1-b.pdf>

Barfield and Uzarski discuss the preservation of indigenous cultures through English language teaching. They provide practical teaching ideas in which English as Foreign

Language (EFL) teachers can integrate indigenous artifacts and cultural components into their classes. These ideas are aimed at exposing students to international cultures and geography, and can be adapted to best suit the local indigenous culture.

7. IS IT TIME TO ABANDON THE IDEA OF "BEST PRACTICES" IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH?

By Peter Smagorinsky. English Journal, v. 98, no. 6, July 2009, pp. 15-22, 23-29.

Discussing the notion of best practices in the teaching of English, Smagorinsky explores the elusive "silver bullet"—the teaching method that always works. He discusses various approaches including structured process approach and individualized teaching approaches. He analyzes the merits and applicability of different approaches in social, cultural, and historical perspective. However, the author admits that there is no one best practice and he prefers to shift the term "best practice" to "principled practice," which invests a great deal of authority and responsibility in the teacher. The article is accompanied by George Hillocks, Jr.'s response to Smagorinsky, which provides a contrasting viewpoint.

8. LANGUAGE AND ACADEMIC IDENTITY: A STUDY OF THE EXPERIENCES OF NON-NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

By Olívia Halic, Katherine Greenberg and Trena Paulus. International Education, v. 38, no. 2, Spring 2009, pp. 73-93.

This analytical study is an in-depth survey of the experiences of non-native English speaking international graduate students regarding language, culture, and identity in the context of their graduate studies. Eight participants from different countries were interviewed for the purpose and the findings of the study were organized under four different themes. The study revealed that irrespective of their country of origin and their native language, the participants shared more similar perceptions than differences regarding language, American culture, and academic identity. Further, the participants perceived English as both a barrier and channel of access. The finding of the study emphasizes the significance of learner-centered instructional design in addressing the special needs of the non-native English speaking international students.

9. SUCCESS WITH ELLS

Edited by Margo DelliCarpini. English Journal, v. 98, no. 5, May 2009, pp. 116-119.

This article looks at the problems faced by English language learners (ELLs) on standardized assessments. ELLs face dual challenge—simultaneous second language acquisition and content-knowledge development. Often there are differences over the interpretation of the results of ELLs' exams—do they reflect the content knowledge or English language ability? Although assessing ELLs in mainstream English classrooms is a challenging task, English teachers can move towards a more accurate way of learning about their ELLs. Key problem areas include unfamiliar vocabulary use, learners' background knowledge and past educational experiences. English teachers can address these issues through innovative approaches like including presentation formats that connect a work of literature, a poem, a quote, a piece of art, or song lyrics.

10. TEACHING THE WORLD

By Alan Dessoff. International Educator, v. 18, no. 3, May/June 2009, pp. 44-56.

In the light of globalization of education and increasing academic exposure of students beyond national borders, U.S.-based institutions that educate their teachers are internationalizing their programs to prepare their teachers to instruct students in a global classroom. Teachers must have deep knowledge and robust skills needed to bring the world into their classrooms.

11. TRAINING ESOL INSTRUCTORS AND TUTORS FOR ONLINE CONFERENCEING

By Beth L. Hewett and Robert Lynn. The Writing Instructor, September 2007.

<http://writinginstructor.com/esol>

In this brief literature review, the authors reveal how the subject of training educators to work with ESOL students in online settings has been underrepresented in the professional literature. They stress exploring ESOL conferencing in online settings with the goal of developing sound instructor training. Towards this end, they offer some practical strategies common to ESOL conferencing. They present these online strategies through three conference-based cases, which engage some common online platforms to demonstrate real-life conferences at post-secondary level. Each ESOL conference-case is followed by discussion and

practical recommendations that can be adapted by online instructors in developing overall stronger online instructional skills.

BUSINESS & ECONOMICS

12. ANTICIPATING THE NEXT CRISIS

By Atish R Ghosh, Jonathan D Ostry and Natalia Tamirisa. Finance & Development, v. 46, no. 3, September 2009, pp. 35-37.

The authors, all International Monetary Fund (IMF) officials, write that the global economic upheaval has sparked new interest in the financial version of an "early-warning system" that could anticipate a future crisis-in-the-making. Various proposals have been floated that have in common a means to identify underlying vulnerabilities and specific events likely to trigger a crisis, and policies that can be adopted to address the shortcomings that might lead to a collapse. They note that a more ambitious goal for such an early-warning system would be to spell out worst-case scenarios, and provide policymakers options for how to respond. However, they acknowledge that no such system would be able to identify all financial crises, and also produce false alarms.

13. THE COMING CONSEQUENCES OF BANKING FRAUD

By J.S. Kim. Seeking Alpha, posted September 9, 2009.

http://seekingalpha.com/article/160619-the-coming-consequences-of-banking-fraud?source=article_sb_popular

An independent financial advisor and analyst, Kim writes that the rally in Western stock markets in recent months has been the result of financial fraud, a "scheme executed by an elite global financial oligarchy ... to fool the world into believing that global economies are recovering." Kim contends that the banking and financial establishment has engaged in transactions that have been kept secret from the public and will have severe and negative consequences in the not-so-distant future. The blowback from these activities will exceed the downturn the world experienced in 2008. In view of the worsening economic data, the current stock market rally makes sense only when viewed through the prism of fraud, with the rise of computerized ultra-fast high-frequency proprietary trading programs, and the fact that

much of the trading volume in recent past has been in only a handful of financial firms. He adds that all government-produced economic statistics have been massively distorted towards the side of optimism and away from reality during financial crisis, and this false front of optimism has been abetted by financial journalists.

14. ECONOMIC SECURITY FOR A WORLD IN CRISIS

By Muhammad Yunus. World Policy Journal, v. 26, no. 2, Summer 2009, pp. 5-12.

Yunus, founder of Bangladesh's Grameen Bank, notes that the optimism about global prosperity that prevailed at the beginning of the millennium has been soured by the financial collapse that began in 2008. He predicts that we are in the beginning stages of a long and painful period, in which the combined effects of the intertwined financial, food, energy and environmental crises will have a disproportionate effect on the world's poorest people. Capitalism is in crisis, says Yunus, because the basic purpose of the financial system and credit markets has been fundamentally distorted by the obsession with paper profits instead of serving human needs. He argues that capitalism is a "half-built structure"—most efforts have been focused on the profit-making framework of the free-market system that was conceived by Adam Smith 250 years ago, yet we have paid little attention to Smith's equally-important writings on the moral dimension. Yunus believes that the current economic crisis offers an unparalleled opportunity to reintroduce the disregarded aspects of Adam Smith's message by developing what Yunus calls "social businesses," whose primary function is not to make profits, but to promote the public welfare.

15. RESHAPING THE WORLD ORDER: HOW WASHINGTON SHOULD REFORM INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth. Foreign Affairs, v. 88, no. 2, March/April 2009, pp. 49-63.

Brooks and Wohlforth propose a strategic approach rather than a recipe for reforming international institutions and present the case for Washington leading the reform process. They believe that the existing architecture is out of sync with today's world of rising powers and new challenges. As interdependence among countries intensifies and the list of global problems that the U.S. can't resolve on its own grows, the benefits of international institutions will increase. The U.S. has the means and the motive to spearhead the foundation of a new institutional order. It should follow a strategy that highlights the benefits of the institutional revisions, links the

proposed order to the current one, and uses the United States' position of influence to persuade other governments to sign on to reform.

16. WHY CAPITALISM FAILS

By Stephen Mihm. Boston Globe, September 13, 2009.

http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/ideas/articles/2009/09/13/why_capitalism_fails/?page=full

The author notes that a hitherto obscure economist named Hyman Minsky, who died over a decade ago, has become recognized as the most prescient thinker about the current financial crisis. Minsky, who spent the latter part of his career in isolation and was little-known at the time of his death, argued that modern finance is inherently unstable, creating the conditions for its own downfall. Mihm notes that Minsky believed that the work of renowned economist John Maynard Keynes amounted to an admission that capitalism, far from tending toward equilibrium, was prone to collapse. Minsky was not a fatalist, though he believed that it was possible to craft solutions that would ameliorate the worst effects of an economic crisis. He advocated for a bubble-up approach, in which money would be given to the poor and unskilled, and government would provide minimum-wage guarantees, an approach that Mihm concedes would not be very palatable today.

INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL RELATIONS & SECURITY

17. EXPEDIENCY OF THE ANGELS

By Suzanne Katzenstein and Jack Snyder. National Interest, March/April 2009, pp. 58-65.

According to the Chicago Council on Global Affairs' Global Views 2008 survey, U.S. public opinion about promoting and defending human rights has downgraded from a "very important" to a "somewhat important" goal. The majority wants to move cautiously, rather than either aggressively or slowly in promoting human rights abroad. The Obama administration will face human rights issues at every turn in confronting terrorism, insurgency and ethnic cleansing from South Asia to Sudan. To tackle these strategic challenges as well as chronic rights abuses, the new administration and nongovernmental advocacy groups need a new, more pragmatic approach. In the past, the strategies of neoconservatives and liberal activists have been long on the rhetoric of freedom and rights, but have fallen short on results.

Wary of overpromising, the U.S. public has become skeptical about promoting American ideals abroad. Yet, the real lesson of these setbacks should not be to abandon idealistic goals, but to pursue them in more pragmatic ways. Without developing a more effective human rights policy, the United States will neither recover its tarnished reputation nor accomplish its strategic goals.

18. IN AFGHANISTAN, TRAINING UP IS HARD TO DO

By Sydney J. Freedberg Jr. National Journal, October, 24, 2009.

In an article profiling the commander of the 4th Brigade of the 82nd Airborne Division, the author notes that training Afghan soldiers will require more American advisors and troops, in order to reverse the years of underinvestment in security in Afghanistan after 2003. Freedberg writes that Afghanistan became an afterthought with most of the attention on Iraq. As a result, the situation in Afghanistan today is probably worse than it was in Iraq several years ago. As U.S. experience in Iraq has shown, it is difficult to separate the advisory role from the fighting. American troops are needed to serve alongside the Afghans in order to reduce the threat to a level where the Afghans can handle it on their own.

19. THE NPT: ASSESSING THE PAST, BUILDING THE FUTURE

By Lewis A. Dunn. Nonproliferation Review, v. 16, no. 2, July 2009, pp. 143-172.

This article provides an analysis of the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty's (NPT) successes and failures to date. The author, senior vice-president for Science Applications International Corporation, also examines the prospects for the upcoming May 2010 NPT Review Conference. Ambassador Dunn suggests 15 possible steps to strengthen the treaty. He recommends pursuing three plans of action to establish a roadmap between the 2010 meeting and the next review conference in five years. The first plan would be organized around non-proliferation goals. Peaceful uses of nuclear energy would be the focus of the second plan. The last one would explore the broader ramifications of nuclear disarmament.

20. PIRATES, THEN AND NOW: HOW PIRACY WAS DEFEATED IN THE PAST AND CAN BE AGAIN

By Max Boot. Foreign Affairs, v. 88, no. 4, July/August 2009, pp. 94-107.

The author examines pirate activity in past centuries to see how nations dealt with the problem, and as a way to consider lessons and

tactics that may be applicable now. Boot, a fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, notes that 17th-century governments initially hired private pirate hunters, but later committed more naval assets to the task. From 1650 to 1850 nations took other steps that included convoying merchant ships, chasing pirates on sea and land, blockading and bombing ports used by pirates, and occupying and dismantling pirate lairs. In 2008, less than a half of one percent of the commercial ships passing the Horn of Africa were attacked and most of those attempted hijackings were unsuccessful. He notes that some suggest that shipping companies paying ransom to pirates should be denied the right to conduct business in the United States. Boot, meanwhile, advocates using private security firms to patrol alongside vulnerable ships or to have armed guards onboard. If past generations succeeded in defeating the Barbary pirates, the Caribbean buccaneers and the marauders of the Red Sea, Boot writes that "surely this generation can defeat the ragtag sea robbers of Somalia." Indeed, this will require a robust response by maritime nations.

DEMOCRACY & HUMAN RIGHTS

21. US-UN TIES STILL STRAINED

By Barbara Crossette. *The Nation*, October 2, 2009.

<http://www.thenation.com/doc/20091019/crossette>

The Obama administration's efforts to mend ties with the United Nations suffered with the United Nation's firing of Peter Galbraith, the American diplomat appointed deputy special UN envoy to Afghanistan in March. The UN said he was fired in the best interests of the Afghan mission, but Galbraith had been berating Afghan and UN officials over what he saw as an inadequate response to the messy and fraud-plagued August 20 elections. He told British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) his being sacked "sends a terrible signal when the UN removes an official because he was concerned about fraud in UN-sponsored and funded election."

22. THE WOMEN'S CRUSADE

By Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl Wudunn. *New York Times Magazine*, August 23, 2009, p. 28.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/23/magazine/23Women-t.html?pagewanted=1#>

The authors argue that the paramount moral challenge of this century may be the appalling brutality inflicted on millions of women and girls around the world, such as sex trafficking, physical attacks, mass rape

and bride burning. They cite estimates that there are about 100 million missing women and girls worldwide—more than all the men killed in conflicts of the past century—due to abuse, neglect, sex-selective abortion and infanticide. In much of the developing world, girls are uneducated and women marginalized—and it is no accident that those countries are mired in poverty and chaos. There is growing recognition among aid groups, the World Bank and the U.S. military that focusing on women and girls is the most effective way to fight poverty and extremism.

COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION

23. THE NEW ENERGY BEAT

By Curtis Brainard and Cristine Russell. *Columbia Journalism Review*, v. 48, no. 3, September/October 2009, pp. 40-44.

http://www.cjr.org/feature/the_new_energy_beat.php

Climate change and energy reporting behooves journalists to collaborate within the newsroom and with news outlets to deepen expertise and resources to better explain these critical, complex topics. Varied regional concerns and new technologies increase the need for a broad knowledge base that allows for delving beyond the pronouncements of politicians or industry lobbyists. Covering energy well means giving a comprehensive "big picture" that can both inform and influence the public and policy makers.

24. THE MOGULS' NEW CLOTHES

By Jonathan A. Knee, Bruce C. Greenwald and Ava Seave. *The Atlantic Monthly*, v. 304, no. 3, October 2009, pp. 58-64.

Even before the Internet upended their industry, big media companies were turning in poor performances and disappointing their shareholders. The four tenets of media industry wisdom—growth, globalization, content and convergence—are myths, the authors insist. Growth has actually resulted in lower stock performance, and globalization doesn't necessarily lead to higher profits. Creating superior content makes more money for the artists than for the media companies hosting their work. And finally, increased competition from multiple media sources and the Internet undercuts the advantage traditional big media companies had of economies of scale and captive customers. Improving the efficiency of their operations is the only choice left with the traditional media industry.

25. REDISCOVERING CENTRAL ASIA

By S. Frederick Starr. *Wilson Quarterly*, v. 33, no. 3, Summer 2009, pp. 33-43.

The author, chairman of the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies, notes that a thousand years ago, Central Asia was the center of the intellectual world, and that it was once the "land of a thousand cities" and home to some of the world's most renowned scientists, poets, and philosophers. Today, says Starr, "it is barely a blip on the radar except when trouble erupts;" however, that may change if Central Asians take inspiration from their past. Starr writes that, to imagine Central Asia's future, "one must journey into its remarkable past." Starr believes that the people of Central Asia have the capacity to become a bridge between civilizations.

GLOBAL ISSUES

26. COUNTDOWN TO COPENHAGEN

By Bruce Stokes. *National Journal*, Oct. 31, 2009.

Stokes says that the negotiations at the climate change talks in Copenhagen in December 2009 promise to be daunting. It is estimated that emissions will need to be cut by 50 percent by 2050 in order to hold the temperature rise to 2 degrees Celsius and carbon-dioxide concentrations to 450 parts per million. The industrialized world's goals at the conference will reflect their publics' acknowledgement of the seriousness of the problem. The developing nations see binding commitments as not in their national interest, noting that they account for only a fraction of global emissions, and want the developed countries to help pay for clean technology and environmental mitigation. Most countries are reluctant to take action on their own, without seeing that others are doing the same. Stokes says that "the central challenge in Copenhagen will be finding a way to nurture trust and club it with ambition." Coordinating these activities, striking a balance between accountability and equity, and pursuing the goals with sufficient urgency may prove to be among the most daunting tasks that the global community has ever undertaken.

27. SMALL SIZE, BIG POTENTIAL: CHECK DAMS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

By Govindasamy Agoramoorthy and Minna J. Hsu. Environment, v. 50, no. 4, July/August 2008. pp. 22-35.

Across the developing world, large numbers of major dams have been built, having been promoted as the best means of improving the supplies of fresh water. However, they have come at a great environmental and social cost. Millions of acres of wilderness and arable land have been submerged, wildlife habitat has been destroyed and large numbers of people have been displaced. In this article, the authors study the small dams in drought-prone western India. They conclude that smaller dams offer much more benefits with a much smaller environmental footprint. A network of smaller dams stores as much water over a larger area than a single large dam. Also the water supply can be managed more equitably and can be controlled at the local community level, which is not possible with mega-dams.

U.S. SOCIETY, VALUES & POLITICS

28. CHUCK BROWN'S LONG DANCE

By Robin Rose Parker. Washington Post Magazine, October 4, 2009, pp. 18-26.

At 73, legendary American musician Chuck Brown still has the energy of someone a third of his age. In the early 1970s, he created go-go music and has stayed on the scene ever since. The author writes that Brown is one of a small number of musicians that single-handedly created a genre of music, blending Latin beats, African rhythms, jazz and the music of African-American churches. Brown slowed down the tempo of disco, which was popular in the 1970s. Brown called his new music go-go, "because it goes and goes"—with no breaks between songs.

29. FULBRIGHT PROGRAM ADAPTS TO OBAMA ADMINISTRATION'S PRIORITIES

By Beth McMurtrie. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, v. 56, no. 9, October 23, 2009, pp. A29-A32.

<http://chronicle.com/article/Fulbright-Program-Adapts-to/48828/>

<http://chronicle.com/article/Fulbright-Taps/48825/>

<http://chronicle.com/article/Fulbright-in-India-Expands-and/48826/>

<http://chronicle.com/article/U-of-La-Verne-Welcomes-the/48829/>

The Obama Administration is putting its own stamp on the Fulbright Program, the U.S. Government's flagship international exchange. Beth McMurtrie describes the new priorities based on her interview with Alina L. Romanowski, the State Department's deputy assistant secretary for academic programs in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The new priorities include studies of such global issues as food security and climate change through the Fulbright Science and Technology award, increased participation of U.S. community colleges, and cultural diplomacy. Three profiles of Fulbright programs follow. In the first, McMurtrie looks at the role U.S. community colleges may play in Russia if a high-level visit to Moscow by a group of community college administrators in Spring 2010 develops as planned. In the second profile, Shailaja Neelakantan looks at the Fulbright program in India, which has doubled this year and has been named Fulbright Nehru. In the third profile, Karin Fischer describes how a university in California has taken advantage of an underutilized Fulbright program that covers scholars' travel costs when they conduct guest lectures.

30. KA'IULANI: HAWAII'S ISLAND ROSE

By Janet Hulstrand. *Smithsonian.com*, May 08, 2009.

<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/people-places/americas/Kaiulani-Hawaii-island-Rose.html>

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of Hawaii's statehood. In this article, Hulstrand profiles Princess Ka'iulani, a little-known but pivotal figure in the history of Hawaii's annexation at the time of the Spanish-American War. Born into Hawaii's royal family, Ka'iulani, who was given the name "Island Rose" by visiting author and poet Robert Louis Stevenson, was sent to boarding school in England, but, by the time she returned, Hawaii was no longer an independent nation. In 1893, a group of American and British businessmen, backed by U.S. Marines, sought to overthrow the queen and annex Hawaii to the U.S. Ka'iulani, only 17 at the time, sailed to New York to make a personal appeal to the American public to restore the Hawaiian government. The eloquence of her appeal attracted widespread publicity, and Ka'iulani was invited to visit President

Grover Cleveland, who was quite critical of the takeover, and ordered the provisional government returned to the queen. However, President Cleveland was unable to prevent it. He served only one term, to be succeeded by President McKinley, who completed the annexation of Hawaii in 1898. After returning to Hawaii, Ka'iulani tragically died at age 23—but not before she succeeded in obtaining for her people the right to vote, in large part due to her ability to sway politicians and her gift to influence public opinion.

31. OPEN COURSES: FREE, BUT OH, SO COSTLY

By Marc Parry. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, v. 56, no. 8, October 16, 2009, pp. A1, A16, A20.

<http://chronicle.com/article/Free-Online-Courses-at-a-Very/48777/>

<http://chronicle.com/article/Countries-Offer-Different/48775/>

This lead in a series of articles on the open courseware movement focuses on the perils and prospects of a phenomenon that some believe could end college as we know it, but others believe that it will fail for lack of a business model. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), the leader in open courseware, offers almost 2,000 free courses and has more than 1.3 million monthly visits to its website and a \$3.7 million annual budget. But each course costs \$10,000 - \$15,000 to put together. With the foundations that have until now bankrolled open courseware projects reducing or eliminating their funding, MIT now envisions fund-raising. Students love the courses but want credit. Critics worry that you can't give away a college education for free without undermining the institutions that charge hundreds of thousands of dollars for a degree. Utah State recently dropped its open courseware project after money from the state legislature and a foundation dried up. Will Congress fund the Obama Administration's \$500 million proposal to build open courses online?. In another article in the series, *Around the World, Varied Approaches to Open Online Learning*, Simmi Aujla and Ben Terris look at efforts taken by local governments and public universities in countries like China and India to boost open courseware.

32. THE LONG WAY HOME

By Paul Theroux. *Smithsonian*, v. 40, no. 6, September 2009, pp. 70-77.

Paul Theroux is one of the masters of travel writing, but he opens this article for *Smithsonian* admitting that he has never seen a great deal of his own country. He begins his cross-country road trip in Los Angeles, heading to his home in Cape Cod, Massachusetts with the plan that the journey is the destination. Along the way, he makes

many of the iconic stops of the American road trip—the Las Vegas strip, the Red Rocks of Arizona, the memorial to victims of the Oklahoma City terrorist attack, and the blues bars on Memphis' Beale Street. He finds barren deserts, ferocious weather, and pastoral scenes which he compares to similar places he has seen in distant countries. But at the end of his 3,380-mile journey, Theroux observes his experience a rejoicing one, which was free from alienation or danger, roadblocks, and officialdom.

33. THE WRITER'S EYE

By T.A. Frail. Smithsonian, v. 40, no. 1, April 2009, pp. 84-89.

Eudora Welty, who was born 100 years ago, is one of the great figures in American literature. What is less well-known is that she was an avid amateur photographer before any of her written work was published. Her pictures, taken in Mississippi in the early-to-mid-1930s, show the rural poor and convey the worry of the Great Depression. Welty, notes the author, had a remarkable ability to put her subjects at ease, many of whom were African-American. Her interest in photography, and curiosity and empathy with her subjects, inspired her future writings. Welty said that "photography taught me to be able to capture transience ... these were things a story writer needed to know."

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

34. BIOTECH'S PLANS TO SUSTAIN AGRICULTURE

By John Rennie. Scientific American, v. 301, no. 4, October 2009, pp. 86-94.

Popular sentiment may call for more organic methods, but the agricultural industry sees biotechnology as a crucial part of farming's future. By 2050 or so, agriculture will need to produce about 50 percent more food than it now does because of the expanding population. Traditional crops and farming methods cannot sustain that much productivity. In this panel discussion, representatives from the agricultural industry defend genetically modified crops as one of several tools that should be used to help farmers in developing countries become more productive.

35. BUZZ OFF

By Morgen E Peck. Discover, v. 30, no. 9, October 2009, pp. 38-41.

The possible stresses causing honeybee die-off, known as Colony Collapse Disorder, include pesticides, bacterial or viral infections and mite infestations. Recently scientists have focused on industrial agricultural practices that isolate bees from their natural habitat, forcing them to live crowded together in unhealthy boxes where bees are given monotonous diets that deprive them of essential nutrients available in the wild. Bees are transported thousands of miles to pollinate similar kinds of crops and fed corn syrup in slack periods. Inbreeding also takes its toll. Some entomologists are establishing new hives with wild queens, settling them with beekeepers who allow bees to live naturally.

36. THE PRICE OF SILENT MUTATIONS

By J. V. Chamary and Laurence D. Hurst. Scientific American, v. 300, no. 6, June 2009, pp. 46-53.

Small changes to DNA that were once considered innocuous enough to be ignored are proving to be important in human disease, evolution and biotechnology. Scientists long assumed that any DNA mutation that does not change the final protein encoded by a gene is effectively "silent." Mysterious exceptions to the rule, in which silent changes seemed to be exerting a powerful effect on proteins, have revealed that such mutations can affect health through a variety of mechanisms. Understanding the subtler dynamics of how genes work and evolve may reveal further insights into causes and cures for disease.

Printed and published by Michael Pelletier for the Public Affairs Section,
U.S. Embassy, American Center, New Delhi.
Printed at Rakesh Press, New Delhi.

12/09-6750