

## News of January 2018

Written and compiled by Trudy Huskamp Peterson for the HRWG

### Commentary.

Did you read the article about the twins, both boys, born 4 minutes apart, one of whom is a U.S. citizen and one is not? If not, here is a summary: A legally married male same-sex couple, one with dual Canadian-U.S. citizenship and the other an Israeli citizen, were living in Canada. Wanting children, they combined an anonymous donor's eggs with the sperm of the two men, and a surrogate "carried and delivered" their twins 16 months ago in Canada. The couple decided to move to California, so they went to the U.S. Consulate in Toronto to get U.S. passports for their sons, bringing their marriage certificate and the twins' birth certificates. The consular official said the U.S. Immigration and Nationality Act requires "a blood relationship between a child and the U.S. citizen parent in order for the parent to transmit U.S. citizenship" and told the U.S. citizen that he "would have to undergo a DNA test to prove a biological link to each twin," the *Los Angeles Times* reported. The results of the test showed that one of the twins is the biological son of the U.S. citizen and the other is the biological son of the Israeli citizen. Armed with that information, the U.S. issued a U.S. passport to one twin and denied the other. The couple, now living in California, are suing the U.S. government. <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-twins-citizenship-20180127-story.html>

Think for a minute of the number of babies who may have been conceived outside a verified system of parentage: for example, heterosexual couples who use assisted reproduction in a foreign country; the non-citizen wife who has an affair with another non-citizen but whose husband is a citizen (laws in many jurisdictions presume a husband is the father of his wife's children). The possibilities are, today, quite endless. In the past, would any consular official or registrar even think of asking for documentation of biological parentage? But now, because DNA tests are common, a new element has arisen: the record of DNA testing.

Archivists have long argued that knowing your past is an important element in a healthy life, whether of the person or the nation. Records of DNA tests challenge that assertion. People who take a DNA test learn the scientific makeup of the genes they carry, and testing companies will provide a list of countries or regions where the predominant genetic traits match their genetic makeup. As the *Washington Post* recently reported, surprising DNA test results elicit "a range of emotions," from joy to curiosity to denial. [https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/social-issues/they-considered-themselves-white-but-dna-tests-told-a-more-complex-story/2018/02/06/16215d1a-e181-11e7-8679-a9728984779c\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.65723a923a45](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/social-issues/they-considered-themselves-white-but-dna-tests-told-a-more-complex-story/2018/02/06/16215d1a-e181-11e7-8679-a9728984779c_story.html?utm_term=.65723a923a45) The ability to "reverse engineer" the DNA of the dead (see "medical records" below), the ambitious project of the World Economic Forum to create a databank of DNA of all living things (same section) and the Guatemala project to create a national DNA bank ("Guatemala" below) mean that the unsettling of personal assumptions of "who I am" is sure to continue. And as archives, like that of the International Committee of the Red Cross, begin to manage quantities of DNA records, archivists will continue to be central to the stories of genetics and geography that people tell about themselves and their families.

**HRWG News.** We are pleased to announce that the Italian online archival magazine *Il Mondo degli Archivi*, a joint project of the Italian Archival Association ANAI and the Central Institute for Archives, with the financial support of the Directorate of Archives, has taken over the distribution of *HRWG News* that was formerly handled by UNESCO. To subscribe to the *News*, go to <https://anai.us13.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=5942a8a83f3023c6a5a63139e&id=324882c3f7>

Thank you to all involved in making this change and the improvement it brings to readers! We are all very grateful.

An ad-hoc Working Group, consisting of representatives of sending and hosting institutions, governmental and non-governmental, the ICA and the HRWG, developed a draft statement, "Guiding Principles for Safe Havens for Archives at Risk." The Guiding Principles can be found [here](#). The Working Group also drafted [commentaries to the principles](#) that explain the intention of the respective

principles and provide guidance for their implementation. ICA will officially comment on the Principles through its elected leadership, but comments from anyone are welcome. Comments should be sent to Rahel von Arx ([rahel.vonarx@swisspeace.ch](mailto:rahel.vonarx@swisspeace.ch)) by 28 February.

The index to *HRWG News* of 2017 is available from [trudy@trudypeterson.com](mailto:trudy@trudypeterson.com).

### **International news.**

Court of Justice of the European Union. In 2015 a man from Nigeria sought asylum in Hungary, saying that as a homosexual he faced persecution in his home country. Hungarian immigration officials made him take psychological tests, including “drawing a picture of a person in the rain and the Rorschach ink-blot test,” after which the state psychologist concluded he was not a homosexual and his claim was rejected. The Court said that while a state can use such tests, “recourse to a psychologist’s expert report in order to determine the sexual orientation of the asylum seeker constitutes an interference with that person’s right to respect for his private life” and should not be the sole basis of an asylum ruling. <http://news.trust.org/item/20180125110854-b2gq9>; <https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2018-01/cp180008en.pdf>

Permanent Court of Arbitration. Two union federations reached a settlement in a case against a global brand manufacturing in Bangladesh under the terms of the Bangladesh Accord on Fire and Building Safety. The company will pay \$2 million “towards remediation of more than 150 garment factories in Bangladesh” and will contribute \$300,000 to a fund to support the work of the unions. The name of the brand was not disclosed. For background see *HRWG News* 2017-12. <https://business-humanrights.org/en/bangladesh-unions-reach-settlement-with-apparel-brand-following-delays-over-fixing-hazards-at-its-factories>

United Nations. After interviewing UN employees in “more than 10 countries” and reviewing “internal documents,” the *Guardian* reported that the United Nations has allowed sexual harassment and assault to flourish in its offices around the world.” The UN said the Secretary General has appointed a “victims’ rights advocate,” established a high-level task force on sexual harassment “to review policies and strengthen investigations,” will carry out a survey “to measure the extent” of the problem and will “introduce a helpline for people seeking advice.” [https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/jan/18/sexual-assault-and-harassment-rife-at-united-nations-staff-claim?utm\\_source=esp&utm\\_medium=Email&utm\\_campaign=GU+Today+USA+-+Collections+2017&utm\\_term=261122&subid=22849866&CMP=GT\\_US\\_collection](https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/jan/18/sexual-assault-and-harassment-rife-at-united-nations-staff-claim?utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=GU+Today+USA+-+Collections+2017&utm_term=261122&subid=22849866&CMP=GT_US_collection)

### **World/general news.**

Business records. “Corporate Surveillance in Everyday Life,” a report by a research institute in Vienna, Austria, “shines light on the actual practices and hidden data flows between companies.” The authors say two aspects of commercial tracking and profiling raise special concerns: pervasive social sorting (categorizing consumers “may lead to cumulative disadvantage, discrimination and exclusion, and may reinforce or even worsen existing inequalities”) and data-driven persuasion (“a powerful tool set to systematically influence people’s behavior”). <http://crackedlabs.org/en/corporate-surveillance>

ExxonMobil, the giant oil and gas company, responded to a lawsuit brought against it by multiple cities and counties in California by threatening “a counter-lawsuit over alleged ‘abuse of government power’” reported *CNN*. Exxon said it “has reason to believe local municipal officials could ‘conceal and potentially even destroy evidence.’” *CNN* noted that a recent academic study found that “for nearly 40 years Exxon publicly raised doubt over the dangers of climate change even as scientists within the company acknowledged the growing threat.” For background, see *HRWG News* 2017-08 and 2017-12. <http://money.cnn.com/2018/01/09/investing/exxon-climate-change-california-san-francisco-oakland/index.html>

New York City announced it will “divest City funds from fossil fuel reserve owners within five years” and filed a lawsuit against the five largest “investor-owned fossil fuel companies as measured by their contributions to global warming” (BP, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, ExxonMobil and Royal Dutch Shell). The city’s press release cited “recently uncovered documents” that “make it clear that the fossil fuel industry was well aware of the effects that burning fossil fuels would have,” apparently referring to the same study that *CNN* pointed out. <http://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/022-18/climate-action-mayor-comptroller-trustees-first-in-the-nation-goal-divest-from#0>

A judge in the U.S. State of Washington ordered a new trial in the case of a man who died, allegedly from infection caused by the use of a contaminated medical tube manufactured by the Japanese company Olympus. The judge said the corporation “failed to properly disclose internal emails that raised safety concerns about a redesigned medical scope as early as 2008,” five years before the man’s death in 2013, reported the *Los Angeles Times*. <http://beta.latimes.com/business/la-fi-olympus-scopes-outbreak-emails-20180118-story.html#nws=mcnewsletter>

**Medical records.** The World Economic Forum announced “an ambitious partnership to sequence the DNA of all life on Earth and create an inclusive bio-economy,” *Eurasia Review* reported. Called the Earth Bio-Genome Project, it will “work by providing an open, global, public-good and digital platform that registers and maps the biological IP [intellectual property] assets on the blockchain. This code bank will record the provenance, rights and obligations associated with nature’s assets—their intellectual property—to track their provenance and use.” A “proof of concept” will begin in the Amazon basin. The article notes that “the regulatory framework, governance and data-sharing principles and protocols will need to be developed.” [http://www.eurasiareview.com/23012018-new-partnership-aims-to-sequence-genomes-of-all-life-on-earth/?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29](http://www.eurasiareview.com/23012018-new-partnership-aims-to-sequence-genomes-of-all-life-on-earth/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29)

The Mental Health Europe and the Tizard Centre, University of Kent, published a report on the state of mental health services across Europe. The researchers used both government data and personal testimonies on current practices in mental health systems in 36 European countries. *The Lancet* editorialized, “That coercion and human rights abuses in mental health services remain common place across many European Countries is a shameful state of affairs in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.” [http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(18\)30108-9/fulltext?dgcid=etoc-edschoice\\_email\\_Jan](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(18)30108-9/fulltext?dgcid=etoc-edschoice_email_Jan)

Medicaid is the U.S. government program that helps with medical costs for some people with limited income and resources. Using a “decade’s worth of Medicaid data on about 1.4 million women who gave birth during that time,” researchers found that a common anti-seizure drug (topiramate) taken by pregnant women during their first trimester “may boost the risk that their child will be born with a cleft lip or cleft palate,” reported *HealthDay News*. [https://www.upi.com/Health\\_News/2017/12/27/Widely-used-epilepsy-drug-may-raise-risk-for-birth-defects/5621514408947/](https://www.upi.com/Health_News/2017/12/27/Widely-used-epilepsy-drug-may-raise-risk-for-birth-defects/5621514408947/)

JASON is a scientific advisory group that provides consulting services to the U.S. government on matters of science and technology. In a new report on “Artificial Intelligence for Health and Health Care,” the group said artificial intelligence will play a role in future “transformative changes” in health and health care, *Secrecy News* reported. The panel said the future development “depends on access to private health data” and noted the U.S. National Institutes of Health project to “develop a 1,000,000 person-plus cohort of individuals across the country willing to share their biology, lifestyle, and environment data for the purpose of research.” This project “has recognized from the start . . . that no amount of de-identification (anonymization) of the data will guarantee the privacy protection of the participants.” [https://fas.org/irp/agency/dod/jason/ai-health.pdf?utm\\_source=Secrecy+News&utm\\_campaign=dcb805d834-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2018\\_02\\_01&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_654cfcc056-dcb805d834-222161509](https://fas.org/irp/agency/dod/jason/ai-health.pdf?utm_source=Secrecy+News&utm_campaign=dcb805d834-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_02_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_654cfcc056-dcb805d834-222161509)

As if to prove JASON’s predictions, researchers using “160,000 adult and child patient files” from two hospitals in the U.S. State of California developed an artificial intelligence computer program that predicts the death of hospital patients “with an astonishing 90 percent accuracy rate,” the *Sunday Express* reported. Scientists said they hope the system “could enable better end-of-life care for hospital patients.” <https://www.express.co.uk/news/science/907166/ai-predict-when-you-will-die>

Using “genetic analysis and genealogy checks” in Iceland, a team of scientists “reconstructed part of the genome of a man who died in 1827 from the genomes of 183 of his descendants,” *Science Alert* reported. This is “the first time someone’s genotype has been reconstructed using only descendants rather than . . . physical remains.” The researchers acknowledged that Iceland’s “extensive genealogical records,” the fact that the man was of African ancestry through his mother (the first man with known African heritage “to set foot in Iceland”), and the country’s “comprehensive genome database for its residents” made the identification possible. <https://www.sciencealert.com/scientists-recreate-genome-of-famous-18th-century-icelander-hans-jonatan>

Privacy. The Hong Kong-headquartered VTech Electronics settled a case brought by the U.S. Federal Trade Commission that charged that the company's Internet-connected toys for children collected personal information from the children "without providing direct notice and obtaining their parent's consent" and failed "to take reasonable steps to secure the data it collected." The penalty paid was a mere \$650,000; VTech also is required to "implement a comprehensive data security program, which will be subject to independent audits for 20 years." Canada is also investigating the company.  
<https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/press-releases/2018/01/electronic-toy-maker-vtech-settles-ftc-allegations-it-violated>

Torture. Prior to 2007 the U.S. State of North Carolina was the home to Aero Contractors, a U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) front company that flew persons captured by the U.S. to sites for detention and interrogation, the *Guardian* reported. From 2001 to 2004 two of Aero's planes "accounted for roughly 80% of all the CIA renditions during those years, landing more than 800 times in countries throughout Europe, the Middle East and North Africa." Now the nongovernmental North Carolina Commission of Inquiry on Torture is acting as a truth commission, holding a two day hearing with 20 witnesses who testified "on the damage done by Aero's rendition operations," "pressing for the release of public records from county and state officials and compiling research and testimony on the lasting harms inflicted by Aero's rendition flights. It plans to release its final report this summer."  
[https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/jan/17/cia-rendition-flights-north-carolina-citizens-commission?utm\\_source=esp&utm\\_medium=Email&utm\\_campaign=GU+Today+USA+-+Collections+2017&utm\\_term=260793&subid=22849866&CMP=GT\\_US\\_collection](https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/jan/17/cia-rendition-flights-north-carolina-citizens-commission?utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=GU+Today+USA+-+Collections+2017&utm_term=260793&subid=22849866&CMP=GT_US_collection)

World War II. The U.K. National Archives announced a project to catalogue by name an estimated 190,000 cards on "individuals captured in German occupied territory during the Second World War." When the information is entered into the database the Archives will "open records for those born more than 100 years ago or where we have proof of death." <http://blog.nationalarchives.gov.uk/blog/opening-prisoner-war-collection/>

The National Archives of Chile opened "more than 1,000 restored secret documents pertaining to the operations of 'Department 50,' a police unit that was instrumental in dismantling Nazi spy cells operating in Latin America during the Second World War," reported *EFE Al Dia*.  
<http://aldianews.com/articles/culture/chile-archieve-presents-restored-documents-wwii-era-probe-nazi-cells/51257>

An exhibition on the World War II concentration camp at Jasenovac in Croatia opened at the United Nations. Croatia objected to the Serbian-organized exhibit, claiming the purpose was "to identify Croatia with fascism and tarnish its international image," *BIRN* reported. Part of the argument is over how many people died at the site. The Jasenovac Memorial Site is compiling the names of all who died "using existing name-by-name lists, documents, confirmations of deaths and verifications by relatives" and now lists 83,145 victims; however, some Serbian estimates are as high as 700,000 or even 1.1 million. [http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/croatia-s-jasenovac-death-toll-a-political-numbers-game-01-31-2018?utm\\_source=Balkan+Transitional+Justice+Daily+Newsletter+-+NEW&utm\\_campaign=cdb9ac1d67-RSS\\_EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_a1d9e93e97-cdb9ac1d67-319755321](http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/croatia-s-jasenovac-death-toll-a-political-numbers-game-01-31-2018?utm_source=Balkan+Transitional+Justice+Daily+Newsletter+-+NEW&utm_campaign=cdb9ac1d67-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a1d9e93e97-cdb9ac1d67-319755321)

### **Bilateral and multilateral news.**

Afghanistan/United States. According to a report by the U.S. Special Inspector General for Afghan Reconstruction (SIGAR), completed in June 2017 but only released in heavily redacted form in January, on 5,753 occasions from 2010 to 2016 the U.S. military reported accusations of "gross human rights abuses" by Afghan military personnel, including child sexual abuse. Both the U.S. Defense Department (DOD) and State Department hold records of these reports, and the SIGAR recommended that they "establish a single tracking system for reported gross violation of human rights incidents in Afghanistan, accessible by all DOD and State stakeholders, along with guidance on what information should be entered in the tracker." <https://sigar.mil/pdf/inspections/SIGAR%2017-47-IP.pdf>

Bangladesh/Myanmar. The two countries agreed to voluntarily repatriate Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh to Myanmar within two years, but the start of the return was delayed. Bangladesh's refugee relief and rehabilitation commissioner told *Reuters* the delay was "because the process of compiling and verifying the list of people to be sent back is incomplete." Nongovernmental organizations and United

Nations bodies have criticized the return as too soon, fearing the hostility returnees would face. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-myanmar-rohingya-repatriation/bangladesh-says-start-of-rohingya-return-to-myanmar-delayed-idUSKBN1FB0KG>

Canada/China. Citizen Lab at the University of Toronto, Canada, issued a report of its eight months of monitoring a “phishing operation” that was focused primarily on Tibetan organizations and activists. The researchers estimated that the “phishing lures, registered decoy domains disguised as popular email services . . . fake login pages . . . [and] targeted emails to individuals and organizations” cost the operator of the “digital espionage” only \$1,068. <https://deibert.citizenlab.ca/2018/01/year-life-phishing-operation/>

Mexico/United States. The U.S. trial of Mexican “drug lord” Joaquin Guzman Loera, known as El Chapo, was postponed. His defence lawyers said the volume of evidence compiled by the government “has seriously challenged their ability to mount a defense,” reported the *New York Times*. “More than 300,000 pages of documents and thousands of secretly recorded conversations” were given to the defense, the latter “without the benefit of an index.” <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/12/nyregion/el-chapo-trial-postponed.html>

Middle East war. Calling the U.S. air wars “increasingly indiscriminate, increasingly opaque,” the *Guardian* quoted the Airwars nongovernmental organization’s statistics showing “there were nearly 50% more coalition air strikes in Iraq and Syria in 2017 compared with the previous year” and civilian deaths “rose by 215%.” Further, the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, another nongovernmental group, said there were “more US strikes on Yemen in 2017 than in the four previous years combined.” [https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/jan/23/us-air-wars-trump?utm\\_source=esp&utm\\_medium=Email&utm\\_campaign=GU+Today+USA+-+Collections+2017&utm\\_term=261535&subid=22849866&CMP=GT\\_US\\_collection](https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/jan/23/us-air-wars-trump?utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=GU+Today+USA+-+Collections+2017&utm_term=261535&subid=22849866&CMP=GT_US_collection)

A similarly sad report came from the Syrian Network for Human Rights, a nongovernmental organization, which said that “no less than 774 civilians were killed in January by the parties to the conflict in Syria, including 550 at the hands of Syrian-Russian alliance forces.” The report is based on “ongoing monitoring of news and developments, and on a wide network of relations with tens of various sources, in addition to analyzing a large number of pictures and videos.” <http://sn4hr.org/blog/2018/02/01/51521/>

The ASOR Cultural Heritage Initiative, a nongovernmental organization, reported that a Turkish Air Force airstrike caused “heavy damage” to part of the Early Iron Age temple at Tell Ain, “an important example of Syro-Hittite religious architecture and the most extensively excavated structure of its kind in Syria.” The group used video, photographs and satellite imagery to analyze the damage. The air strike was part of Turkish military action inside Syria to create a “buffer zone;” that is, to bar Syrian Kurds’ access to the Turkish border. <http://www.asor-syrianheritage.org/update-ain-dara/>

In two linked stories, the *Guardian* described “how Islamic State ran a city,” in this case Mosul, Iraq. “Isis began by conducting an extensive census in Mosul. Army and police personnel, doctors, nurses, engineers and teachers were all registered, along with their families. Every shop, factory and commercial property was listed according to the religion and sect of its owners.” Isis “abolished all existing government structures and replaced them,” but “state functionaries continued to file memos, write inventories in big ledgers and demand written orders from superiors before taking any action.” [https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2018/jan/29/bureaucracy-evil-isis-run-city-mosul?utm\\_source=esp&utm\\_medium=Email&utm\\_campaign=GU+Today+USA+-+Collections+2017&utm\\_term=262182&subid=22849866&CMP=GT\\_US\\_collection](https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2018/jan/29/bureaucracy-evil-isis-run-city-mosul?utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=GU+Today+USA+-+Collections+2017&utm_term=262182&subid=22849866&CMP=GT_US_collection)

*Al Jazeera* published yet another article on the planned transfer to the Iraqi government of the Iraqi Jewish documents that U.S. soldiers discovered in the basement of the Iraqi police headquarters and transferred to the U.S. for preservation in 2003. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/01/iraqi-jewish-archive-triggers-traumatic-memories-180122153032515.html>

Somalia/United States. The *Guardian* tried to sort out the numbers of U.S.-led airstrikes and civilian casualties, which increased to “unprecedented levels” in 2017. [https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/23/somali-citizens-count-cost-of-surge-in-us-airstrikes-under-trump?utm\\_source=esp&utm\\_medium=Email&utm\\_campaign=GU+Today+USA+-+Collections+2017&utm\\_term=261535&subid=22849866&CMP=GT\\_US\\_collection](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/23/somali-citizens-count-cost-of-surge-in-us-airstrikes-under-trump?utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=GU+Today+USA+-+Collections+2017&utm_term=261535&subid=22849866&CMP=GT_US_collection)

South-east Asia. *Reuters* reported that Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand “launched an intelligence pact” called the “Our Eyes” initiative. The members said the pact is to help combat “Islamist militants” and improve “cooperation on security threats.” They plan to “develop a common database of violent extremists;” who will manage the database was not reported. <http://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/south-east-asian-states-launch-intelligence-pact-to-counter-islamist-threat>

### National news.

Burundi. At the African festival of photography in Mali *Courrier international* interviewed Burundian photographer Teddy Mazina about his photographs of repression in Burundi. Mazina fled Burundi after the violence following the re-election of president Nkyrunziza. He calls himself “an activist of memory,” and with others he has “documented nearly 800 cases of forced disappearance, death, rape or torture.” <https://www.courrierinternational.com/article/photographie-un-activiste-de-la-memoire-contre-le-regime-burundais>

Cambodia. The Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts launched a preservation and digitization project for the archives held at Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum. Funded by the Korea International Cooperation Agency with UNESCO, the project will create a digital database to include “biographical records of prisoners, prison guards and officials, original negative films and microfilm, execution lists, prisoner release lists, daily logbooks, and records of methods used to monitor the enemy,” *Khmer Times* reported. <http://www.khmertimeskh.com/50105225/project-to-digitise-prison-history/>

Canada. Cases on the former residential school system for First Nations children continued to make headlines, as reported by *CBC News*: (1) An Ontario judge ruled that “Ottawa can continue to reject the use of police and court transcripts as evidence in student-on-student compensation claims from survivors who attended St. Anne’s Indian Residential School.” St. Anne’s was a particularly harsh residential school. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/st-annes-court-rules-opp-transcripts-can-be-rejected-as-evidence-1.4478665> (2) A judge in British Columbia ruled that the tribunal “established to evaluate claims of abuse on the part of former residential school survivors” may not reopen “claims formerly rejected, based on new evidence.” <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/northern-clients-residential-school-claims-lawyer-1.4502484>

Library and Archives Canada (LAC) denied a request for access to a March 1920 document with the subject line, “Compulsory removal to hospitals of sick children.” LAC cited “solicitor-client privilege” for its denial, *CBC News* reported. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/archives-secret-document-indigenous-children-removal-hospital-1.4513267>

Canada created an independent Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise (CORE), the first of its kind in the world. “The CORE will be mandated to investigate allegations of human rights abuses linked to Canadian corporate activity abroad.” [https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2018/01/the\\_government\\_ofcanadabringsleadershiptoresponsiblebusinesscond.html](https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2018/01/the_government_ofcanadabringsleadershiptoresponsiblebusinesscond.html)

China. In 1958 China established workshops, labs and other structures at Jinyintan in Qinghai Province to build China’s atomic weapons, a site called Plant 221. Farmers and herders were removed from the area; a police officer who investigated the clearances in 1963 told the *New York Times* that he made a report of the “barbaric” methods of removal. During the Cultural Revolution “officials detained and interrogated about 4,000 workers in the nuclear project, and about 50 were executed,” a retired physicist who worked there said. Access to the records of the nuclear program and the police force would be essential evidence to determine compensation for those harmed. <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/20/world/asia/china-jinyintan-atomic-city.html>

Colombia. The government started a land restitution and titling program in 2011 and “hundreds of thousands of hectares stolen or abandoned during Colombia’s half-century civil war have been handed back to rightful owners,” *Thomson Reuters Foundation* reported. However, “some 271 Afro-Colombian collective land claims await a decision” on about two million hectares of land. The lack of resolution puts the Afro-Colombian communities “in danger of being driven off their land by business interests,” said researchers at Javeriana University in Bogota. <http://news.trust.org/item/20180117222942-p8jay/>

Czech Republic. An article in the *Prague Daily Monitor* described the Czech Security Forces Archive, which has “some 20 kilometres of archival records” and 157 employees.  
<http://www.praguemonitor.com/2018/01/30/czech-security-forces-archive-founded-ten-years-ago>

Denmark. More than 1,000 “youths” were charged with child pornography after they shared an online video of two 15-year-olds having sex, reported *UPI*. The video was eventually flagged by Facebook, which alerted the U.S. National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, which alerted Interpol, which contacted Danish authorities. According to the *New York Times*, those found guilty are “unlikely” to go to prison, but the convictions will remain on their records for 10 years and will bar them from certain jobs. [https://www.upi.com/Top\\_News/World-News/2018/01/16/More-than-1000-Danish-youths-charged-in-child-revenge-porn-case/2391516081408/](https://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2018/01/16/More-than-1000-Danish-youths-charged-in-child-revenge-porn-case/2391516081408/)

Egypt. The independent media group Mosireen “launched its Internet ‘resistance archive’ named 858” for the number of hours of footage it holds that were shot during the 2011 revolution, *The Atlantic* reported. Mosireen “allowed individual videographers to choose whether their material would be made publicly accessible. In cases where footage had been donated anonymously or the author couldn’t be reached, Mosireen had to decide whether Egyptian authorities could use a video’s contents to prosecute those it portrays.” <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/01/an-internet-archive-rekindles-the-egyptian-revolutions-spirit/551489/>

France/Polynesia. On a visit to Papeete, the Overseas Minister established the committee that is to create an institute of archives and documentation of the nuclear tests conducted in French Polynesia. <https://la1ere.francetvinfo.fr/polynesie/tahiti/polynesie-francaise/institut-memoire-documentation-nucleaire-tahiti-553209.html>

Gambia. Former president Yahya Jammeh promoted a fake cure for AIDS which he administered to sufferers, filming them taking his treatment and showing the film on state television. None were cured and several died. Surviving victims are assembling evidence to sue the president, who is in exile in Equatorial Guinea. <http://news.trust.org/item/20180125000128-fq2et/>

Germany. The effort to digitally reassemble records of the Stasi (East German Ministry of State Security) that were torn or shredded at the end of the communist regime is suspended because the scanning system is not advanced enough for the challenge, the Stasi archives said. It hopes that technological advances will allow the project to resume later this year. Meanwhile, “a small team of manual puzzlers continue their work” of reassembling torn pages, the *Guardian* reported. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/03/stasi-files-east-germany-archivists-losing-hope-solving-worlds-biggest-puzzle>

Guatemala. “A new national DNA database and sex offender registry should increase child sex abuse convictions in Guatemala,” *Thomson Reuters Foundation* reported. The new law “requires people working with children to provide a certificate proving they have no previous convictions of sex crimes, while all employers are required to conduct background checks through a new sex offenders registry.” The law came into effect at the beginning of the year, and by 26 January “more than 223,000 certificates” had been issued and more than 30 persons identified who are working at schools and had been convicted of child sex abuse, according to the nongovernmental International Justice Mission. <http://news.trust.org/item/20180126165626-breuj/>

Haiti. The National Archives launched a major project to register all Haitians; the government estimates that 3 million of the 11 million Haitians are not registered. The project has three objectives: registration of those never registered, correction of records for those who registered but “who by lack of professionalism of the registrars” do not appear in the records, and creation of a birth certificate and National Identification Number for each newborn. A database will be created by the National Archives, the National Identification Office, the General Directorate of Taxation, and the Directorate of Immigration and Emigration “to facilitate the response to requests related to identity issues,” *Le National* reported. <http://www.lenational.org/vers-restructuration-archives-nationales-dhaiti/>

India. Two nongovernmental organizations interviewed 300 transgender women working in the sex industry in major Indian cities. India’s 2011 census recorded half a million transgender people but estimates run as high as 2 million, reported *Thomson Reuters Foundation*, and “government data shows”

that the “HIV prevalence among India’s transgender community is estimated at 7.5 percent, much higher than the country’s average of 0.3 percent.” In an alarming finding, the researchers learned that police “routinely extort female transgender sex workers, which pressures them to earn more by engaging in unsafe sex that increases the risk of disease.” <http://news.trust.org/item/20180123102724-yan0e/>

“West Bengal accounted for 44 percent of human trafficking cases” in 2016 and had “the most missing children reports, according to government data,” *Thomson Reuters Foundation* reported. Now a program to put letter boxes in “discreet” corners of high schools allows students to alert authorities to child coercion (trafficking, underage forced marriage); in West Bengal more than 20,000 students from 200 schools have sought help through the boxes. UNICEF is now working with the police to “expand the scope of the programme across the state.” <http://news.trust.org/item/20180102134836-xv7n6/>

The government of Assam published the “first draft of the updated National Register of Citizens (NRC).” An article by the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses said, “The objective behind updating and publishing the 1951 NRC is to compile a list of the names of genuine Indian citizens residing in Assam and, in the process, detect foreigners (read Bangladeshis) who may have illegally entered the state after March 24, 1971.” The author commented, “Given that a proper documentation system does not exist in the country, for most of those whose names do not appear in the NRC, procuring the required documents, especially birth certificates, in order to prove their relationships with persons whose names have appeared in legacy documents and thus establish their citizenship is fraught with difficulties.” In an understatement, he wrote that the NRC “has raised serious apprehensions in the minds of those whose names do not figure in the list.” [http://www.eurasiareview.com/07012018-publication-of-indias-national-register-of-citizens-positive-step-but-what-next-analysis/?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29](http://www.eurasiareview.com/07012018-publication-of-indias-national-register-of-citizens-positive-step-but-what-next-analysis/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29)

Government figures from western Maharashtra state show that the number of “people converting to Christianity remains nearly equal to the number of Christians leaving the religion,” disproving claims that Christian missionaries “attract thousands to Christianity,” *UCA News* reported. A law in seven Indian states, but not Maharashtra, “criminalizes changing religion without informing government authorities.” For background, see *HRWG News* 2015-08. [http://www.eurasiareview.com/29012018-india-states-data-debunks-myth-about-christian-conversions/?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29](http://www.eurasiareview.com/29012018-india-states-data-debunks-myth-about-christian-conversions/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+eurasiareview%2FVsnE+%28Eurasia+Review%29)

The Andhra Pradesh (AP) government is setting up its State archives, apparently to include copies of British colonial records, *The Hindu* reported. Ominously, it added, “If need be, the British records will be tweaked to correct any factual errors.” Andhra Pradesh state was divided in 2014, with the part now named Telangana inheriting the former state archives housing the British material. <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/andhra-pradesh/state-plans-to-have-own-archives/article22432167.ece>

Indonesia. The government launched a new cyber security agency “to tackle online religious extremism and a flood of fake news on social media,” and is “adding some 600 more personnel to the ranks of its counter-terrorism police in a bid to crack down on Islamic State-inspired groups and other militants,” *AFP* reported. However, one Internet privacy expert said he worried that the new agency “could threaten privacy rights.” The archives of the agency will need careful, robust management. <http://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/world/2018/01/03/indonesia-launches-cyber-agency-to-tackle-extremism-fake-news/>

Iran. The Baha’i International Community launched a website called “Archives of Baha’i Persecution in Iran,” making available “thousands of official documents, reports, testimonials, and audio-visual materials,” reported *Iran Press Watch*. The documents show, said the Representative of the Baha’i International Community to the United Nations in Geneva, “the depth and breadth of the persecution.” <http://iranpresswatch.org/post/18683/archives-chronicle-decades-bahai-persecution-iran/>

Israel. Outgoing national archivist Yaakov Lozowick published a report on the state of publicly available material in the government archives, both *Haaretz* and *+972 Blog* reported. He opened the report writing, “Israel is not dealing with its archival material in a manner befitting a democracy,” pointing to the fact that only 1.29% of state archives have been made available for research. <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-state-concealing-embarrassing-documents-under-guise-of-security-1.5742528;> <https://972mag.com/what-secrets-is-israels-state-archive-hiding-from-the-public/132706/>

Jews from Yemen, living in Israel, say that many of their children went missing from hospitals between 1948 and 1954. A special committee of the Knesset (parliament) is investigating the charges. The Women's International Zionist Organization, which "for years" has denied that it played a role in the disappearances, agreed to give the committee access to "all documents and files related to the children under question," *Jerusalem Online* reported. For background, see *HRWG News* 2017-06 and 2016-10, 11, 12. <http://www.jerusalemonline.com/news/in-israel/local/breakthrough-in-investigation-into-yemenite-children-affair-33544>

Japan. The Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry said that "work-related incidents killed 22 foreign trainees over a three year period from fiscal 2014" and on average 475 work-related accidents occurred each year, "illustrating the risk that laborers brought to Japan will face dangerous or exploitative conditions," *Japan Times* reported. <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2018/01/15/national/social-issues/foreign-trainee-fatality-data-highlight-safety-exploitation-issues-japan/#.Wl-9aIwXAdV>

"Government organizations can discard documents classified under the Act on the Protection of Specially Designated Secrets without third party checks when they are designated to be kept for less than one year," *Mainichi* reported. The chairman of the House of Representatives oversight board on state secrets is calling for "concrete rules regarding disposal." Whether the records have value for human rights purposes should be part of the rules. <http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180127/p2a/00m/0na/009000c>

Kenya. Fifty years ago 4,329 landowners were forced to leave their land to allow the extraction of fluoride by the Kenya Fluorspar Company. The government "pledged to release funds to compensate the affected landowners in the current fiscal year," *Standard Digital* reported, but, said a commissioner with the National Land Commission, "because the land was communally owned, they must first establish the genuine landowners before the valuation exercise to determine how much the community would receive." Land title records are once again central to compensation. <https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/business/article/2001265226/kerio-valley-families-displaced-by-fluorspar-firm-to-get-compensation>

The Netherlands is funding the construction of the Bonyonyu Dam project on the Gucha river. Persons who will be displaced by the project "want the feasibility study and environmental impact assessment reports made public" and "the issue of compensation clarified," reported *The Star*. [https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2018/01/10/nyamira-residents-protest-against-sh5bn-water-project\\_c1695239](https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2018/01/10/nyamira-residents-protest-against-sh5bn-water-project_c1695239)

Kosovo. The government's Committee for the Verification and Recognition of Violence Victim Status announced that it will begin accepting applications on 5 February. "Women who were raped or sexually assaulted during the 1998-99 war are eligible for benefit payments of up to 220 euros a month," *BIRN* reported. "However, according to some experts, the stigma of rape in Kosovo means many survivors may not apply to the commission." [http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/kosovo-war-raped-to-apply-for-their-legal-status-01-30-2018?utm\\_source=Balkan+Transitional+Justice+Daily+Newsletter+-+NEW&utm\\_campaign=a5194a799a-RSS\\_EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_a1d9e93e97-a5194a799a-319755321](http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/kosovo-war-raped-to-apply-for-their-legal-status-01-30-2018?utm_source=Balkan+Transitional+Justice+Daily+Newsletter+-+NEW&utm_campaign=a5194a799a-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a1d9e93e97-a5194a799a-319755321)

Malaysia. As a pilot project, a new special court will be set up in the central state of Selangor to hear and expedite cases of human trafficking, reported *Thomson Reuters Foundation*. Government data report two million registered migrant workers, but rights groups say there are many more and that many of the workers are "victims of human trafficking and debt bondage." Establishing an efficient court records system will be crucial to the court's success. <http://news.trust.org/item/20180115122716-b3qlz/>

Nigeria. The rebel group Boko Haram released two videos on 15 January. One shows 14 females saying they are some of the "Chibok girls" abducted in 2014, one of whom says that they all have married the Boko Haram leader and are not returning to their birth families. The other video shows the apparent shoot-down of a military plane, *pulse.ng* cautiously reported. <http://www.pulse.ng/news/local/boko-haram-releases-new-video-chibok-girls-refuse-to-return-id7846685.html>

Russia. An extraordinary diary on temporary display at the Gulag History Museum in Moscow was created by a woman imprisoned in 1941 in a labor camp in Kazakhstan, reported the *New York Times*. The diary was "spirited out of the camp in 1946," and in 2009 it was given to Zoya Eroshok, a prominent Russian journalist, who tried to learn who had written it. After guessing that the author was

Olga Ranitskaya, she “wrote to the archives of 15 different secret police agencies, courts and other organizations in Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan” for information on her, with no success. Finally, “Vasily Khristoforov, then head of the notoriously secretive archives of the F.S.B., or Federal Security Service, the successor agency to the Soviet secret police, offered to help. He contacted several security agency archives, including one in Ukraine, and obtained the records of Ms. Ranitskaya’s interrogation after her arrest.” <http://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/03/arts/design/gulag-museum-moscow-diary.html>

In 1997 historian Yuri Dmitriev and colleagues from Memorial, the human rights organization, discovered the mass graves of Stalin’s purge victims at Sandormokh. In the following years Dmitriev continued to search for other mass graves. He was arrested in 2016 on charges of child pornography for nude photographs of his adopted daughter. “At the end of December, an expert group found no pornographic content in the pictures, and the court . . . refused to extend his detention beyond January 28” but also ordered that he “be sent to Moscow for psychiatric tests while also asking for a new review of the photographs by other experts,” reported the *New York Times*. <http://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/11/world/europe/russia-historian-psychiatric-testing.html>

Led by a stark photo of a fire-destroyed desk, the *Daily Beast* published a report on the arson at the Memorial office in Ingushetia’s capital Nazran on 17 January and the arrest of the director of Memorial’s branch in Chechnya and the raid on his home and offices. A sobering example of archives at risk. <https://www.thedailybeast.com/memorial-human-rights-activists-in-russia-face-arrest-arson-murder>

South Sudan. President Kiir played recordings that he said show that former army chief Awan is encouraging army officers to rebel against the government, reported *Sudan Tribune*. Awan, from exile in Kenya, denied that the voice on the recording was his, saying “he personally purchased a recording machine for the South Sudan security apparatus when he was working there before independence. This machine among others ‘has the ability to record the voice of a victim and this recorded voice can be turned around to cook future voices for the sake of implication’.” <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article64444>

Spain. The Innovation and Human Rights association announced that it has created the “first central database of casualties, missing persons and reprisals during the Spanish Civil War and under Francoism,” compiled from 89 different sources. <http://www.carlapedret.cat/first-central-database-victims-spanish-civil-war-franco-regime/>

Tunisia. Civil society activists held a sit-in at the headquarters of the Truth and Dignity Commission, asking what is the plan to preserve the files of the Commission and the claims persons made to it. The protesters said they do not want the archives to be held in another country and that the national archives is able to keep the records. [https://www.shemsfm.net/fr/actualites\\_tunisie-news\\_news-nationales/186204/sit-in-devant-le-siege-de-l-ivd-pour-reclamer-le-sort-reserve-aux-dossiers-des-victimes](https://www.shemsfm.net/fr/actualites_tunisie-news_news-nationales/186204/sit-in-devant-le-siege-de-l-ivd-pour-reclamer-le-sort-reserve-aux-dossiers-des-victimes)

United Kingdom. *The Times* reported that police fail to use “Clare’s law” to alert potential victims of domestic violence. The 2014 law allows police to reveal relevant information held by authorities, either upon request or proactively to those in danger. The disclosures are at the discretion of the police, and an analysis of official data for England and Wales by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism found “disclosure rates range from 7% to 76% for ‘right to ask’ requests from women and men with concerns, and from 3 to 98% for ‘right to know’ referrals by officers or other authorities such as health workers.” <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/police-fail-to-use-clare-s-law-for-domestic-violence-alerts-gbgvw3s51>

United States. Since 2007 the National Security Agency (NSA) has been “under court orders to preserve data about certain of its surveillance efforts” including warrantless wiretapping of international communications after the 2001 terrorist attacks on the U.S. In January, *Politico* reported, NSA told the court that it “did not preserve the content of internet communications intercepted between 2001 and 2007” and that “backup tapes that might have mitigated the failure were erased in 2009, 2011 and 2016.” <https://www.politico.com/story/2018/01/19/nsa-deletes-surveillance-data-351730> Meanwhile, the law that authorizes the NSA’s warrantless surveillance program was extended for 6 years. <https://www.engadget.com/2018/01/20/trump-signs-bill-extending-nasas-warrantless-surveillance/>

Using judicial decisions, transcripts, briefs and other court records from 95 U.S. federal and state criminal cases, plus interviews, documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act, and materials disclosed by Edward Snowden and Chelsea Manning, Human Rights Watch issued a report on the Federal government’s use of concealed methods to identify or investigate suspects of crimes. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/01/09/dark-side/secret-origins-evidence-us-criminal-cases>

A map created by a fitness tracking company showing the locations of people who used the app led military analysts to notice “that the map is also detailed enough that it potentially gives away extremely sensitive information about a subset of [the app’s] users”—that is, the location of military personnel on active duty, reported the *Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/28/fitness-tracking-app-gives-away-location-of-secret-us-army-bases>

Two Arizona humanitarian groups asserted that U.S. border patrol agents “vandalize containers of water and other supplies left in the Arizona desert for migrants, condemning people to die of thirst,” reported the *Guardian*. The report said that between March 2012 and December 2015, in an 800 square mile area of the Sonoran desert, “volunteers found water gallons vandalized 415 times, on average twice a week.” “Statistical analysis of the different land jurisdictions—national forest, state trust land and private land—identified border patrol as the only group with regular access and consistent presence in all three jurisdictions.” During the period the county medical examiner “received the remains of at least 593 border crossers.” [https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/jan/17/us-border-patrol-sabotage-aid-migrants-mexico-arizona?utm\\_source=esp&utm\\_medium=Email&utm\\_campaign=GU+Today+USA+-+Collections+2017&utm\\_term=260793&subid=22849866&CMP=GT\\_US\\_collection](https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/jan/17/us-border-patrol-sabotage-aid-migrants-mexico-arizona?utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=GU+Today+USA+-+Collections+2017&utm_term=260793&subid=22849866&CMP=GT_US_collection)

Using “nationally representative data” from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s National Health Interview Survey from 2014 to 2016, researchers found that 2.4% of U.S. children between the ages of 3 and 17—or 1 in 41—have been diagnosed with autism, considerably higher than the earlier estimate of about 1.46%. One of the researchers said the findings should lead to a reconsideration of future priorities in “research, service, and policy” and demonstrate the need for more people to care for children with autism. [https://now.uiowa.edu/2018/01/ui-analysis-finds-more-children-are-diagnosed-autism-previously-thought?utm\\_source=IANowAlumni&utm\\_campaign=IANowAlumni-1-16-2018&utm\\_medium=autism](https://now.uiowa.edu/2018/01/ui-analysis-finds-more-children-are-diagnosed-autism-previously-thought?utm_source=IANowAlumni&utm_campaign=IANowAlumni-1-16-2018&utm_medium=autism)

The anti-slavery group Polaris issued a report that “U.S. traffickers make \$2.5 billion a year forcing women”—usually new immigrants with debts and no language skills—“to have sex in massage parlors.” Polaris began “with a base dataset from commercial sex ‘buyer board’ Rubmaps.com, filtered to remove legitimate establishments.” To this was added “Thomson Reuters CLEAR and open-source information including business records and registrations, news articles, tax filings, financial information, massage regulation board and authority requirements, commercial sex websites, Yelp, Groupon, and geospatial data,” as well as “quantitative and qualitative data on 484 survivors and more than 375 businesses” it obtained from law enforcement officials, public documents “including 32 federal and state level criminal cases” and analysis of 21 months of news coverage relating to trafficking. In total, analysts used “more than 60,000 pieces of data” to analyze the illicit massage businesses nationwide. <https://polarisproject.org/sites/default/files/Full%20Report%20-%20Human%20Trafficking%20in%20Illicit%20Massage%20Businesses.pdf>

United States/California. “The Los Angeles County district attorney’s office has launched a comprehensive review of past criminal cases featuring deputies placed on a secret Sheriff’s Department list of officers whose histories of misconduct could undermine their credibility in court,” reported the *Los Angeles Times*. The *Times* said a 2014 version of the list included 277 deputies, and they found these deputies were “potential witnesses in more than 62,000 felony cases since 2000.” <http://beta.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-district-attorney-review-brady-list-20180112-story.html#nws=mcnewsletter>

“San Francisco will retroactively apply California’s new marijuana legalization law to prior convictions, expunging or reducing misdemeanor and felony convictions dating back to 1975,” the *Los Angeles Times* reported. “Nearly 5,000 felony marijuana convictions will be reviewed, recalled and resentenced, and more than 3,000 misdemeanors that were sentenced [before the law passed] will be dismissed and sealed,” clearing records of “crimes that can be barriers to employment and housing.” <http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-san-francisco-marijuana-20180131-story.html#nws=mcnewsletter>

United States/Kentucky. The Trump administration approved Kentucky's proposal to require Medicaid beneficiaries to work. Most will be required to pay a monthly premium to retain coverage and "to document the time they've worked or pursued work." The state believes that in five years this will reduce the people in the program by around 100,000 people. As the *New York Times* headline said, "Hate paperwork? Medicaid recipients will be drowning in it." [https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/18/upshot/medicaid-enrollment-obstacles-kentucky-work-requirement.html?ref=collection%2Fsectioncollection%2Fhealth&action=click&contentCollection=health&region=stream&module=stream\\_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=6&pgtype=sectionfront&utm\\_source=STAT+Newsletters&utm\\_campaign=6404502ccc-MR&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_8cab1d7961-6404502ccc-149736437](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/18/upshot/medicaid-enrollment-obstacles-kentucky-work-requirement.html?ref=collection%2Fsectioncollection%2Fhealth&action=click&contentCollection=health&region=stream&module=stream_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=6&pgtype=sectionfront&utm_source=STAT+Newsletters&utm_campaign=6404502ccc-MR&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8cab1d7961-6404502ccc-149736437)

United States/Louisiana. Bayou Bridge LLC wants to build a 162-mile crude oil pipeline across the state of Louisiana. Opponents filed a petition in state court to order the company to turn over "communications between government officials, regulators, LSU [Louisiana State University] researchers and lobbyists, business records shared between the pipeline company and private security firms and any records on how the company would handle public relations over safety concerns." The opponents also argued that "the governor's office is also not meeting its obligations to turn over public records on the project," *The Advocate* reported. [http://www.theadvocate.com/baton\\_rouge/news/environment/article\\_e20e6c78-fba9-11e7-bc07-6774af2be0d2.html](http://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/news/environment/article_e20e6c78-fba9-11e7-bc07-6774af2be0d2.html)

Zimbabwe. "President Emmerson Mnangagwa signed the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission Bill into law to operationalise the Commission that was appointed in 2016" by former president Robert Mugabe, reported *The Herald*. A previous Commission in 1983-84 investigated events in Matabeleland, but its final report was never made public. The records of the previous Commission would be useful to the current inquiry. <http://www.herald.co.zw/peace-and-reconciliation-commission-gets-down-to-business/>

### **Conferences, publications.**

The Centro Internacional para la Promoción de los Derechos Humanos (Argentina), together with swisspeace (Switzerland) and the Centro Nacional de la Memoria Histórica (Colombia), will hold an international conference: "Archives and human rights: an agenda to strengthen democracy," 14-16 March in Buenos Aires, Argentina. For information see [www.cipdh.gob.ar/en](http://www.cipdh.gob.ar/en).

Universitas Sumatera Utara Indonesia, in cooperation with Association of Indonesian Higher Education Archives, will hold a congress and international conference "Archives, Social Science, Humanities and Education (ICoASHE) 2018: Reform and Harmonization of Institutional Archives of Higher Education in the Information Technology," 20-22 April. For information see <http://arsip.usu.ac.id/index.php/icoashe-2018#>

The Sedona Conference, a nongovernmental group focused on legal issues, particularly e-discovery, published a draft for comment on "bring your own devices to work" [The Sedona Conference Commentary on BYOD: Principles and Guidance for Developing Policies and Meeting Discovery Obligations, Public Comment Version](https://thesedonaconference.org/publication/The%20Sedona%20Conference%20Data%20Privacy%20Primer?) and a "Data Privacy Primer." <https://thesedonaconference.org/publication/The%20Sedona%20Conference%20Data%20Privacy%20Primer?>

Annual reports from Freedom House, a nongovernmental organization: "Seventy-one countries suffered net declines in political rights and civil liberties, with only 35 registering gains. This marked the 12th consecutive year of decline in global freedom." "Disinformation tactics contributed to a seventh consecutive year of overall decline in internet freedom, as did a rise in disruptions to mobile internet service and increases in physical and technical attacks on human rights defenders and independent media." <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2018>; <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-net/freedom-net-2017>

Summary of a one day symposium on refugee rights in records held in January 2018, sponsored by the archives programs of the University of Liverpool and University of California Los Angeles and the Open Society Archives in Budapest: [http://www.osaarchivum.org/files/Final-Report\\_Symposium-on-Refugee-Rights-in-Records.pdf](http://www.osaarchivum.org/files/Final-Report_Symposium-on-Refugee-Rights-in-Records.pdf) With this, read *Gadgets 360* "What Does a Smartphone Mean to a Refugee?" <https://gadgets.ndtv.com/apps/features/what-does-a-smartphone-mean-to-a-refugee-1798259>

“Collecting, preserving, and verifying online evidence of human rights violations” and “Methodological choices in human rights research are political, not just technical” from Open Global Rights: <https://www.openglobalrights.org/collecting-preserving-and-verifying-online-evidence-of-human-rights-violations/>

On drone warfare and, although not mentioned, the risk to archives by such warfare, see the *Guardian* “The kill chain: inside the unit that tracks targets for US drone wars”:

[https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/23/the-kill-chain-inside-the-unit-that-tracks-targets-for-us-drone-wars?utm\\_source=esp&utm\\_medium=Email&utm\\_campaign=GU+Today+USA+-+Collections+2017&utm\\_term=261535&subid=22849866&CMP=GT\\_US\\_collection](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/jan/23/the-kill-chain-inside-the-unit-that-tracks-targets-for-us-drone-wars?utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=GU+Today+USA+-+Collections+2017&utm_term=261535&subid=22849866&CMP=GT_US_collection)

On the problems of declassification, this time in Canada:

<https://cihnic.ca/2018/01/29/skyhawk-skyshield-and-the-re-classification-of-canadian-history/>

NiemanLab’s report on the Offshore Journalism Project to “let news publishers, especially those from European countries with right-to-be-forgotten laws, preserve their digital work by archiving it in countries with stronger freedom-of-speech laws”: <http://www.niemanlab.org/2018/01/the-offshore-journalism-project-would-let-newsrooms-send-a-distress-signal-when-their-content-is-at-risk-of-being-lost-forever/>

**Please share news with us! [trudy@trudypeterson.com](mailto:trudy@trudypeterson.com)**

**The Human Rights Working Group is grateful to the online Italian archival magazine *Il Mondo degli Archivi* for handling the distribution of *HRWG News*. To subscribe to the *News*, enter the required information on the form that you will find here: <https://anai.us13.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=5942a8a83f3023c6a5a63139e&id=324882c3f7>**