ARCHIVES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

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Commentary

Indigeneity: What’s in a Word

By Raymond Frogner, Senior Director of Research and Head of Archives, National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (Canada)

Recently, media organizations and Indigenous authorities have challenged high-profile public personalities in North America over their claims to Indigenous identity. The list is growing and includes such prominent individuals as Elizabeth Warren, U.S. Senator from Massachusetts; Mary Turpel-Lafond, Saskatchewan provincial court judge and Canadian law professor; and Buffy Sainte-Marie, Oscar and Academy award winning folk singer. In each case, the public figure has been accused of playing the role of a “pretendian,” or someone who feigns indigenous ancestry, often to further their careers.

These denunciations highlight the complex concept of colonial identity in the 21st century. They confront culturally mediated ideas of social memory, homeland, and belonging; of the immanent human, environmental, and spiritual values that weave together the notion of indigenous community.

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For the archival profession, proof of indigeneity is an example of evolving archival principles. Enlightenment philosophy developed our interpretive “methods for assessing the trustworthiness of records as evidence.” 1 One result: legal and historical research privileged the printed word, shelved in state sanctioned repositories, with juridical authority deciding the rules of access and use – a birth certificate, a marriage license, a land title register. In fulfilling this juridical mandate, we have created archives of empire, sacrificing the voices of the marginalized Indigenous societies. The “pretendian” issue reveals that evidence of identity, particularly in a colonial context is dynamic, multi-provenancial as well as multi-media. It “is not a static fact but a matrix of diverse living relationships, and like all relationships they are open to trust and mistrust; good faith and manipulation.” 2

Within this contemporary view of evidence, Indigenous professor of law, John Borrows, expanded on the singular component of contemporary Indigenous identity: generational descendants of a land that is now in control of another dominant authority. As Borrows wrote of his Indigenous identity:

Our births, lives, and deaths on this site have brought us into citizenship with the land. We participate in its renewal, have responsibility for its continuation, and grieve for its losses. As citizens with this land, we also feel the presence of our ancestors and strive with them to have the relationships of our polity respected. Our loyalties, allegiance, and affection are related to the land. The water, wind, sun, and stars are part of this federation. The fish, birds, plants, and animals also share this union. Our teachings and stories form the constitution of this relationship direct and nourish the obligations that it requires. 3

Borrows’ quote illustrates the experience of colonial dispossession is not only physical, but also cognitive, intellectual, and cultural. Indigenous identity has been a product of this evolving colonial relationship for over a century. Accordingly, the twentieth century began with the premise that Indigenous peoples could not survive modernity. Contemporary anthropologists developed the term “salvage anthropology” to describe the campaign to acquire valued Indigenous cultural and legal expressions of identity under the theory they would soon be lost forever. The century closed with settler states acknowledging the injustice of their “empires of uniformity.” 4 Indigenous societies began to gain international recognition as unique, rights bearing communities, increasingly enshrined in domestic constitutions and international declarations. As a result of Indigenous resurgence, colonial settler states, international institutions, and Indigenous activists, began to negotiate and re-imagine Indigenous belonging in constitutions of diversity.

The Indigeneity debates are a result of this increasing Indigenous struggle for self-determination. In a process fraught with misunderstanding, Borrows summarized the recent missteps in the confused Settler effort to recognize, and often co-opt, the cognitive values and knowledge of Indigenous societies: “Our codes have been disinterred, disregarded, and repressed. What is required to re-inscribe these laws and once again invoke a citizenship with the land?” 5

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5 Ibid.
For decades, international institutions of human rights have proven unable to provide pathways for meaningful Indigenous collective self-determination. In fact, Indigenous activists resisted colonial states who applied the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as an argument for total Indigenous assimilation. International debates over who is Indigenous became prominent as the UN Commission on Human Rights began to directly address the human rights of Indigenous Peoples in the early 1980s. José Martínez Cobo’s 1981-82 UN report, “Study of the Problem of Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations,” is generally regarded as the UN’s official launch into direct issues of Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination. As Indigenous scholar and UNDRIP contributor James (Sa’ke’j) Youngblood Henderson, commented, for more than two decades, “international human rights experts, states, and Indigenous peoples debated the definition and status of Indigenous peoples in international law … a legalistic, positivistic, and heartless quibble over categories and terminology.” He dryly concludes, “[s]ince cultural diversity has become the defining characteristic of humanity, no universal, unambiguous definition of the concept of ‘Indigenous peoples’ exists in international law.” Attempts to define Indigenous peoples have struggled with the fact that relationships between Indigenous communities and dominant settler society will change over time just as Indigenous communities will continue to evolve and self-determine. Therefore, “no single accepted definition captures the evolving diversity of Indigenous heritages, cultures, histories, and current circumstances…” The best that can be done is to acknowledge the unique, dynamic, and reciprocal relationships interrelating land, cultures, and peoples, both settler and Indigenous. More recently the U.N. Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples reiterated this position:

As is often repeated in the literature on the subject, no such definition exists. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples does not attempt to provide one, although it does affirm that Indigenous peoples have the right to determine their own identity or membership in accordance with their customs and traditions (art. 33).

There is another problem in attempting to formulate a general definition of the term Indigenous: it perpetuates the modernist, Eurocentric, grand social theory approach that envelops groups in social engineering programs assigning to them unique characteristics, strengths, and vulnerabilities to formulate universal laws of behavior and social control. The historic result has been catastrophic social programs such as Canadian residential schools and eugenics. As legal scholar Sébastien

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7 James (Sa’ke’j) Youngblood Henderson, P. 42.

8 Ibid.

Grammond wrote, “ethnicity is a descriptive concept carrying no inherent normative value, so it needs to be assessed against a moral standard.”

For centuries, there has been a tension between the immanent relationships of land and community that define Indigenous identity, and the juridical will of the sovereign. The current indigeneity debates are the latest manifestation of this tension. The great difference is that after 25 years of activism in international forums, in 2007 the UN passed the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. For the first time, Indigenous peoples have an internationally recognized Declaration of what it means to be Indigenous, as expressed by Indigenous peoples. There is also a recognition that the details of immanent Indigenous identity itemized in the UNDRIP’s 46 articles – the spirituality, the humanity, the environment – must be braided into constitutions of multiple identities. In the words of article 27 of the UNDRIP, “...giving due recognition to Indigenous peoples laws, traditions, customs and land tenure systems...” There must be a balance between the juridical evidence of identity and the community acceptance of someone as belonging. As Indigenous Anishinaabe Elder Giizih-Inini, the Spiritual Guide of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, commented, “there is a legal side to this; but there is also a community side... adoption is very important to us... it is acceptance by the community,... if you are accepted by a family then you become part of that family... but you shouldn’t be making money off a legal process...” Recognition by a family doesn’t entitle you to personal gain. Luke Marston, Ts'uts'umutl, member of the Stz'uminus First Nation and nationally renowned Indigenous artist offers similar advice. As Indigenous scholar James (Sa'ke') Youngblood Henderson has written, “in the history of Eurocentric legal thought and transformations, inherent human rights have existed as a shadow realm that reveals and reflects the concept of law both as an immanent order and as the will of the sovereign.” The indigeneity debates reveal the “quandary of how to implement the human rights of Indigenous peoples within the law of the nation state...” It is a dialogue that will continue both in good faith and exploitation.

**SAHR News**

- On 10th of December, the [Section on Archives and Human Rights (SAHR) of the International Council on Archives](https://www.ica.org/en/sahr) took part in the celebrations of United Nations’ International Human Rights Day, established to commemorate the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, see also the respective [press release](https://www.ica.org/en/sahr).

- To make this 75th Anniversary special, SAHR is launching an online Knowledge Base called “Rights and Records”, a practical tool to help building knowledge, skills and capacity among professional archivists for managing archives with human rights implications: [https://rightsandrecords.ica.org/bib/](https://rightsandrecords.ica.org/bib/).

- The section also organized a talk with Trudy Huskamp Peterson on the close relationship between archival materials and selected articles of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights which will be followed by a brief launch of the Rights and Records Knowledge Base.

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11 Interview with Elder Giizih-Inini November 27, 2023.


Events

Would you like to promote your event (conference, webinar, exhibition, etc.) to an international audience? Please submit information, including title, description, date(s) and URL to sahr-newsletter@ica.org for upcoming publication.

United Kingdom: Exhibition - 'Women in Revolt!' at Tate Britain is a deliciously angry tour de force of feminist art. [Silver, Hannah], 2023-11-08, wallpaper.com, [Women's Rights]


United States of America: Exhibition - "Out Down South: Voices & Portraits of LGBTQ+ Atlanta". [National Center for Civil and Human Rights], 2023-11, National Center for Civil and Human Rights, [LGBTQ+ Rights]

Worldwide: ICA-SAHR First Tuesday Talk by Elena Zhemkova, Co-founder and Executive Director of Memorial, moderated by José Faraldo, professor at the Madrid University Complutense. Event link and details forthcoming [International Council on Archives], 2024-02-06, [Human Rights]

Editor's Note

You may have noticed some changes in the newsletter format. We are constantly reviewing and updating the newsletter to ensure that the news is presented in the most readable and logical way. Comments and feedback are welcome to sahr-newsletter@ica.org.
News by heading

Armed Conflict and Groups

Mapping with deep meaning: Preserving memory in El Salvador. Western University Libraries (London, Ontario, Canada) is contributing to Surviving Memory in Postwar El Salvador by capturing the history of Salvadoran Civil War [Stacey, Megan], 2023-10-27, Western News, [El Salvador]

Child Abuse

Iglesia española indemnizará económicamente a las víctimas de abusos. La Conferencia Episcopal Española trabaja en la elaboración de un plan de reparación integral a las víctimas de abusos que prevé indemnizaciones económicas, incluso si no hay sentencia judicial porque el abusador haya fallecido o porque el caso haya prescrito. El secretario general de la instancia dijo aún no se ha calculado un monto, e indicó que sí existe un fallo de la justicia, este establecerá la cantidad a pagar. [EFE], 2023-11-25, CNN Chile, [Spain]

Children's Rights

Despite Bans, Disabled Women Are Still Being Sterilized in Europe. Governments have declared the practice a human rights violation. But they have made exceptions that are divisive among parents, doctors and social workers. [Hurtes, Sarah], 2023-11-25, The New York Times, [Europe]

On #International_Children_Day: #Justice_for_Yemen_Children Must Be Included in Peace Talks. November 20th marks International Children's Day. This day serves as a poignant reminder that we must take a resolute stand to defend, promote, and celebrate the rights of Yemeni children. We, the undersigned, call on the parties to the conflict in Yemen and the international community to work towards securing justice for Yemeni children and enabling them to lead dignified lives, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Yemen is a signatory. [Human Rights Watch], 2023-11-20, Human Rights Watch, [Yemen]

Tanks on the Playground. “Tanks on the Playground,” documents the damage and destruction of schools and kindergartens in four Ukrainian regions during the first months of the fighting, causing significant damages. Russian forces also frequently looted and pillaged schools they occupied, a war crime. [Human Rights Watch], 2023-11-09, Human Rights Watch, [Ukraine]

Climate Change

Global: Documentos para ayudar al presidente de la COP a promover los intereses de las empresas aumentan la preocupación por el resultado de la Cumbre. Ante un informe según el cual Sultan al Jaber, presidente designado de la COP28 que es también director ejecutivo de la compañía estatal de Emiratos Árabes Unidos de petróleo y gas ADNOC, había sido informado para promover los intereses de las empresas que dirige en decenas de reuniones bilaterales sobre la cumbre del clima, Ann Harrison, asesora sobre cambio climático de Amnistía Internacional, ha declarado: “Sultan al Jaber afirma que sus conocimientos desde dentro del sector de los combustibles fósiles lo cualifican para liderar una cumbre del clima crucial, pero parece cada vez más que un zorro cuida el gallinero. El nombramiento del director ejecutivo de una de las mayores empresas del sector de los combustibles fósiles del mundo para presidir la COP28 ha sido siempre un claro conflicto de
interests that would diminish the capacity of the meeting to achieve the result that we need urgently.” [Amnistía Internacional], 2023-11-27, Amnistía Internacional, [Worldwide]

**Human rights are a low priority for many national climate change adaptation policies, research finds.** The link between human rights and climate change adaptation policy has not been a major source of discussion in national policies, according to a new study. [Lejtenyi, Patrick], 2023-11-28, Phys.org, [Worldwide]

**Colonialism**

**Les archives de la répression de 1945 à 1971 déclassifiées.** Paris livre ses archives classifiées à la commission d’historiens pour faire la lumière sur le rôle de la France dans la violente répression ayant visé les indépendantistes. [AfricaNews], 2023-10-18, Africanews, [Cameroon]

**Shaping Archaeological Archives: Dialogues between Fieldwork, Museum Collections, and Private Archives.** Most of the book's case studies explore archaeological sites in the eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. Some contributions showcase the depth of research on archaeological archives as a representation of past excavations and surveys and the colonial context. [Raja, Rubina], 1905-07-15, [Worldwide]

**Corruption**

**Antonio Costa: el escándalo de corrupción que llevó a la dimisión del primer ministro de Portugal.** Costa está siendo investigado por la forma como se entregaron contratos para extraer litio y producir hidrógeno verde. [BBC News Mundo], 2023-11-07, BBC News Mundo, [Portugal]

**Escándalo por entrega de pasaporte a narcotraficante genera un efecto dominó de cambios en el gabinete uruguayo.** El presidente de Uruguay, Luis Lacalle Pou, anunció varios cambios en su gabinete, que incluyeron a los responsables del Ministerio del Interior, la Cancillería y el Ministerio de Industria, como respuesta a la crisis política desatada por la entrega de un pasaporte al narcotraficante Sebastián Marset y por el presunto intento de ocultar pruebas de ese trámite, que investiga la Justicia [Barney, Darío], 2023-11-06, CNN, [Uruguay]

**Juicio por los documentos de Trump podría sentar en el banquillo a varios trabajadores de Mar-a-Lago, según fuentes.** Un plomero, una mucama, un chofer y un carpintero están entre los empleados y trabajadores contratados de Mar-a-Lago que los fiscales federales podrían llamar a testificar contra el expresidente Donald Trump y sus dos coacusados en su próximo juicio penal en Florida, según múltiples personas familiarizadas con la investigación. [Polantz, Katelyn; Reid, Paula], 2023-11-10, CNN, [United States of America]

**Crimes Against Humanity**

**France issues arrest warrant for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.** France has issued an international arrest warrant for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, accused of complicity in crimes against humanity over chemical attacks in 2013 [France 24], 2023-11-15, France 24, [Syrian Arab Republic]

**UN Rights Review Amid Violent Crackdown.** The Bangladesh government should seriously respond to concerns regarding grave abuses and the crackdown on civil society raised by member states on
November 13, 2023, during Bangladesh’s Universal Periodic Review (UPR). [Human Rights Watch], 2023-11-16, Human Rights Watch, [Bangladesh]

**World Court Rules Against Syria in Torture Case.** The International Court of Justice (ICJ) order on November 16, 2023, directing Syria to take all measures within its power to prevent acts of torture and other abuses is a milestone toward protecting civilians in the country [Human Rights Watch], 2023-11-16, Human Rights Watch, [Syrian Arab Republic]

**Decolonization**

**Kazakhstan Opens Secret KGB Archives Amid Moves Toward Decolonization In Central Asia.** Central Asian states are trying to rehabilitate the victims of Stalin’s repression by opening up KGB archives and clearing the names of executed politicians, rebels, and other victims. But the Kremlin is not happy. [Chynybaeva, Baktygul], 2023-11-12, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, [Kazakhstan]

**Resisting the Colonial Imagination: The Role of Exhibition Design in the Decolonial Project.** The staff of First Americans Museum are among many museum professionals seeking to disrupt the methods of presentation still endemic among collections of Indigenous cultural materials. These models may feel nostalgic or elevated to some, but can make an thoughtful and compelling exhibition feel hostile for the descendants of people brutalized by European and American empires. [Lalli Hills, Adrienne; Middleton, Margaret], 2023-10-26, American Alliance of Museums, [Worldwide]

**Destruction of documents**

**UN Syria Commission welcomes landmark ICJ order to Syria to prevent torture and destruction of evidence.** The UN Syria Commission of Inquiry welcomed a landmark order by the International Court of Justice in The Hague binding the Syrian Arab Republic to take all measures within its power to prevent acts of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and ensure that its officials - as well as any organizations or persons under its control, direction or influence - do not commit any such acts. [OHCHR], 2023-11-16, OHCHR, [Syrian Arab Republic]

**Disinformation**

**85% of people worry about online disinformation, global survey finds.** UN announces plan to tackle phenomenon as survey finds people worry particularly about impact on elections. [Henley, Jon], 2023-11-07, The Guardian, [Worldwide]

**Archives: utilité publique, exigence démocratique.** Contre les fake news, la désinformation à grande échelle, les Archives semblent un rempart essentiel. Conserver et garantir l’accès à des informations vérifiées, fiables, devient un réel enjeu démocratique [Roth-Lochner, Barbara; Dubois, Alain], 2023-11, [Worldwide]

**China lleva a cabo la mayor operación de desinformación en línea conocida en el mundo para acosar a los estadounidenses, según una investigación de CNN.** El gobierno chino ha creado la mayor operación de desinformación en línea conocida en el mundo y la utiliza para acosar a residentes, políticos y empresas estadounidenses, amenazando en ocasiones a sus objetivos con la violencia, según ha revelado un análisis de CNN de documentos judiciales y revelaciones públicas de
Naomi Klein on “Selective” Information About Israel and Gaza. Host Brian Stelter joins Naomi Klein to discuss how right-wing podcasters helped create “a parallel reality,” and the challenges of understanding what’s happening on the ground in Israel and Gaza as an information war plays out alongside the carnage. [Stelter, Brian], 2023-11-02, [Worldwide]

What can Taiwan learn from Ukraine? Can Taiwan learn from Ukraine as it faces military threats from China? Fighting disinformation, utilizing technology and establishing command systems are crucial. [Noubel, Filip], 2023-11-25, Global Voices, [Republic of China (Taiwan, not a UN member)]

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

The doomsday vaults storing seeds, data and DNA to protect our future. Around the world, highly secure chambers are being built to preserve everything we need to withstand any number of worst-case scenarios. [Braidwood, Ella], 2023-11-19, The Observer, [Worldwide]

The role of data and statistics in advancing the population and sustainable development agenda. In a world increasingly driven by information, the role of ‘data’ and ‘statistics’ is guiding decisions, including on population and sustainable development. In Asia and the Pacific, home to 60 per cent of the global population, data are an important foundation of informed policymaking. But does data drive policy development by shedding light on where disparities exist or where progress is slow? Or does a focus on data drive us to prioritize only those issues that can be measured and quantified? [Napaphat Satchanawakul; Jessica Gardner; Christophe Lefranc], 2023-11-06, UNFPA Asiapacific, [Worldwide]

Environment

Corte Suprema panameña declara inconstitucional contrato minero. La decisión, reclamada por las protestas de gremios de varias ramas podría ser una inflexión a una crisis nacional. [teleSUR; DRL], 2020-11-28, teleSUR, [Panama]

Epidemic and pandemic

data.org Partners With the World Health Organization on Global Health Response. This partnership will drive the development and deployment of digital public goods for pandemic and epidemic intelligence. [The Rockefeller Foundation], 2023-11-01, The Rockefeller Foundation, [Worldwide]

Forced Disappearance

Urge Laos to Address Rights Abuses. In the context of the upcoming Australia-Laos 8th bilateral human rights dialogue, the Australian government should press Lao government leaders to end their systemic human rights violations when the two governments meet for a bilateral rights dialogue. [Human Rights Watch], 2023-11-19, Human Rights Watch, [Lao People’s Democratic Republic]
**Forced Labor**

« Travaux forcés, le SOS d'un prisonnier chinois », sur Arte : la face cachée du « made in China ».
A partir d'un appel au secours découvert dans un test de grossesse, Laetitia Moreau a mis au jour le système de « prisons-entreprises » chinoises, centres de profit pour des firmes publiques travaillant à l'exportation. [Lemaître, Frédéric], 2023-11-14, Le Monde.fr, [China]

**Labour abuses, including slavery, found on European fishing vessels.** Research by a Washington DC-based organisation which tracks illicit money flows has found that tens of thousands of workers every year on these boats are estimated to be trapped in unsafe conditions. [O’Donoghue, Saskia], 2023-11-19, euronews, [Worldwide]

**Freedom of Expression**

Right to information still an ‘empty promise’ for billions. The UN-appointed expert on freedom of opinion and expression has called for governments to strengthen efforts to close the “digital divide” and remove all barriers to the right to information. [UN News], 2023-09-28, UN News, [Worldwide]

South Korea: Jail sentence for man who praised North an attack on freedom of expression. Responding to the sentencing of a South Korean man, Lee Yoon-seop, to 14 months in prison for praising North Korea in a poem, Amnesty International’s East Asia Researcher Boram Jang said: “South Korean authorities must drop all charges against Lee Yoon-seop, who has been sentenced to jail simply for exercising his right to freedom of [...]” [Amnesty International], 2023-11-27, Amnesty International, [Korea, Republic of]

**Freedom of the Press**

In Turkey, the state is targeting scores of journalists. Content about corruption or irregularities in due process is frequently blocked in Turkey. By some estimates, close to half of the blocked news is directly related to Erdoğan, his family, or other government officials. [Geybullayeva, Arzu], 2023-11-07, Global Voices, [Türkiye]

**Genocide**

A Desperate Call from the Cold Crematorium. This podcast talk about a letter dated 23 April 1945, from a man called Hans Frölicher to the Swiss Minister of Foreign Affairs. Hans Frölicher was the Swiss ambassador to Germany during World War II. The official letter starts: “I have the honour to enclose a copy of a communication that was secretly delivered to the Consulate General in Munich/Rottach-Egern.” [Meerwald, Johannes], 2023-11-15, [Europe]

Hunger for Truth. Ukraine commemorated the 90th anniversary of the Holodomor, or death by hunger, when millions starved to death in Europe's breadbasket after Stalin ordered the seizure of farmers' crops and food. This film is based on a Canadian reporter's unauthorised truth-telling trip through the starving Soviet heartland. It's interwoven with the story of a Ukrainian prisoner of war from Russia's invasion. [Tkach, Andrew; Kyiv Post], 2023-11-25, [Ukraine]

Patrick Baudoin, président de la Ligue des droits de l’homme: « Le génocide, c'est le crime des crimes ». Entretien avec Patrick Baudouin, président de la Ligue des droits de l'homme (LDH), autour
de la notion même de génocide ainsi que des autres outils juridiques mis à la disposition de la justice internationale. [Gauquelin, Igor], 2023-11-16, RFI, [Worldwide]

**Human Rights**

**Archives des dictatures sud-américaines. Entre droit à la mémoire et droit à l’oubli.** Centré sur les pays du Cône Sud (Argentine, Brésil, Chili, Paraguay, Uruguay), l’ouvrage porte sur la période des dictatures militaires inaugurée par le coup d’État au Brésil de 1964 et se termine avec le retour à la démocratie au Chili en 1990. Il traite du sort et de l’utilisation des archives administratives à la chute de ces dictatures, dans une visée internationale. [0], 2023-10, [South America]

**Archives et droits humains.** Les archives peuvent servir à prouver les violations des droits de l’homme, notamment les crimes contre l’humanité, et aider à lutter contre l’impunité. Archives et droits humains montrent la relation étroite entre ces deux termes et rappelle l’émergence, en droit international, du droit à la vérité, à la justice et à réparation. [Boel, Jens; Canavaggio, Perrine; González Quintana, Antonio], 2023-11-14, [Worldwide]

**Belonging, Identity, and Conflict in the Central African Republic.** Political conflict in many parts of the world has been shaped by notions of who rightfully belongs to a place. The concept of autochthony—that a true, original people are born of a land and belong to it above all others—has animated struggles across postcolonial Africa. [Vlavonou, Gino], 2023-11, [Central African Republic]

**Cambodia: Mass evictions at UNESCO World Heritage site Angkor violate international law.** Cambodian authorities cruelly uprooted families who have lived in Angkor for several generations. [Amnesty International], 2023-11-14, Amnesty International, [Cambodia]

**Five Anti-War Price Tags, Seven Years in Russian Prison | Human Rights Watch.** Russian court sentenced artist Aleksandra Skochilenko to seven years in prison for replacing supermarket price tags with information about Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine. [Lokhmutov, Aleks], 2023-11-17, Human Rights Watch, [Russian Federation]

**ICA-SAHR First Tuesday Talk by Elena Zhemkova, Co-founder and Executive Director of Memorial, moderated by José Faraldo, professor at the Madrid University Complutense.** Event link and details forthcoming. [International Council on Archives], 2024-02-06, [Worldwide]

**Película sobre el Tribunal Europeo de Derechos Humanos.** Dirigido a una amplia audiencia, este vídeo explica el funcionamiento del Tribunal, recuerda los desafíos a los que se enfrenta y demuestra el alcance de su actividad a través de ejemplos jurisprudenciales. [European Court of Human Rights], 2023-09-05, [Europe]

**Human Rights Defenders and Activists**

**Can we make better use of humanitarian data for an impartial and humane response to crisis?** Data is everywhere, and the humanitarian sector is no exception. As humanitarians, we want decision-making to be ‘data-driven’ or ‘evidence-based’. However, this opportunity also presents a risk of misguided analysis supporting misguided response. [Cara Kielwein], 2023-11-24, Humanitarian Practice Network, [Worldwide]
Mary Robinson: ‘everyone has core human rights’. In 1997, Robinson’s friends warned her – in vain – not to take the job of UN Human Rights Commissioner. She talks about the challenges of the role. [Foulkes, Imogen], 2023-11-08, SWI swissinfo.ch, [Worldwide]

Michelle Bachelet: The Universal Declaration is ‘good enough’. Over a year out of her job as Human Rights Commissioner, Michelle Bachelet talks about her legacy and controversies that rocked her presidency. [Foulkes, Imogen], 2023-11-23, SWI swissinfo.ch, [Worldwide]


Human Trafficking

Lloyds of London archives show how important the City was to transatlantic slavery. The author's work on the Legacies of British Slavery project traced how the profits of slavery were invested in Britain. Research of this kind raises questions about reparations and whether responsibility, today sits with individuals, organisations or the state. [Donington, Katie], 2023-11-28, The Conversation, [United Kingdom]

Indigenous Matters

Inuit leader warns of Labrador group’s ‘illegitimate claims’ to Inuit identity. The head of the national organization for Inuit in Canada is warning the public about what he calls “illegitimate claims to Inuit rights” being advanced by a self-identified Indigenous group in south and central Labrador. [Forester, Brett], 2023-11-06, CBC News, [Canada]

Investigating Buffy Sainte-Marie’s claims to Indigenous ancestry. Music icon Buffy Sainte-Marie’s claims to Indigenous ancestry are being called into question by family members and a Fifth Estate investigation that includes genealogical documentation, historical research and personal accounts. The Fifth Estate examines the harms of “pretendians” — those faking Indigenous heritage. [The Fifth Estate], 2023-10-27, [Canada]

Meet the Archivist Whose Obsession for Detail Matches Martin Scorsese’s. "Killers of the Flower Moon" executive producer Marianne Bower talks about her decades-long role as Martin Scorsese’s researcher and archivist and what it meant for the director’s newest film. [Hemphill, Jim], 2023-10-30, IndieWire, [United States of America]

Stored in the Bones. Stored in the Bones, details intangible cultural heritage (ICH) community-based practices, knowledges, and customs with Anishinaabeg and Inninuwag harvesters, showcasing their cultural heritage and providing a new discourse for the promotion and transmission of Indigenous knowledge. [Pawlowska-Mainville, Agnieszka], 2023-11, [Canada]

Why Buffy Sainte-Marie’s ‘pretendian’ case strikes a nerve. Prominent figures in North America have faced allegations of lying about being indigenous. But none have touched a nerve quite like the recent allegations about Buffy Sainte-Marie - an Oscar-winning folk singer long celebrated as an indigenous icon and biggest name caught up in questions around indigenous identity. [Yousif, Nadine], 2023-11-15, BBC News, [Canada]
Internet and Social Media

**British Library: Employee data leaked in cyber attack.** A group of cyber criminals have claimed they are behind the ransomware attack and are auctioning off the data. [Rufo, Yasmin], 2023-11-21, BBC News, [United Kingdom]

**Court document claims Meta knowingly designed its platforms to hook kids, reports say.** Facebook parent Meta Platforms deliberately engineered its social platforms to hook kids and knew — but never disclosed — it had received millions of complaints about underage users on Instagram but only disabled a fraction of those accounts [AP News], 2023-11-27, Associated Press, [Worldwide]

**Réseaux sociaux. Le Népal interdit TikTok, une question d’”harmonie sociale”**. L’application préférée de la jeunesse dans le monde “attise la haine religieuse, la violence et encourage les abus sexuels”, selon le gouvernement népalais qui a décidé de couper tout accès au réseau social chinois dans le pays. [Courrier international], 2023-11-14, Courrier international, [Nepal]

**TikTok’s ‘For You’ feed risks pushing children and young people towards harmful mental health content.** TikTok's content recommender system and its invasive data collection practices pose a danger to young users of the platform by amplifying depressive and suicidal content that risk worsening existing mental health challenges. [Amnesty International], 2023-11-07, Amnesty International, [Worldwide]

**YouTube creators: Disclose AI use or face suspension.** YouTube said creators that don't disclose their use of AI tools to make “altered or synthetic” videos face penalties - including content removal or suspension. [Euro News], 2023-11-14, euronews, [Worldwide]

**Israel-Gaza Crisis**

**Amnesty petition demanding ceasefire in Gaza. Israel backed by over million signatures.** The world is watching in horror as more and more civilians lose their lives each day amid Israel’s relentless bombardment and ground operations. [Amnesty International], 2023-11-10, Amnesty International, [Israel, Palestine (permanent observer to the UN)]

**Digital apartheid and the use of social media algorithms in humanitarian crises.** Big tech platforms extensively censor Palestinian voices, shadow banning them and their supporters, violating their rights to free speech, assembly, information access, political participation, and protection from discrimination. [Seerat Khan], 2023-11-14, Global Voices, [Palestine (permanent observer to the UN)]

**Gaza: Hostage Videos an ‘Outrage on Personal Dignity’.** The practice by Hamas and Islamic Jihad of publicly releasing videos of Israeli hostages is a form of inhumane treatment that amounts to a war crime. [Human Rights Watch], 2023-11-10, Human Rights Watch, [Israel, Palestine (permanent observer to the UN)]

**Guerra Israel - Hamás: las cifras récord de muertes y devastación que dejó el primer mes de conflicto.** Miles de muertos, centenares de secuestrados, millones de desplazados. El conflicto en marcha entre Israel y Hamás ha causado daños enormes y está afectando el acceso a recursos esenciales como el agua. [Mhadhbi, Amira], 2023-11-08, BBC Arabic, [Israel, Palestine (permanent observer to the UN)]
Statement of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Karim A.A. Khan KC, on the Situation in the State of Palestine: receipt of a referral from five States Parties. The Office of the International Criminal Court Prosecutor received a referral of the Situation in the State of Palestine, from the following five States Parties: South Africa, Bangladesh, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Comoros, and Djibouti. [International Criminal Court (ICC)], 2023-11-17, International Criminal Court, [Israel]

We are witnessing a pandemic of inhumanity: to halt the spread, we must cling to the law. There is no blank cheque in the Israel-Hamas conflict. The International Criminal Court (ICC) is working to ensure justice is on the frontlines, says Karim Khan Chief Prosecutor of the ICC [Khan, Karim], 2023-11-10, The Guardian, [Israel]

What To Expect from The International Criminal Court’s Investigation in Israel and Palestine. The International Criminal Court is opening an investigation into war crimes and crimes against humanity in Israel and Palestine following the October 7 attacks and Israeli military action in Gaza. This may set into motion a process that leads to ICC indictments of Israelis and Palestinians. [Goldberg, Mark Leon], 2023-11-06, UN Dispatch, [Western Asia]

LGBTQ+ Rights

Exhibition - "Out Down South: Voices & Portraits of LGBTQ+ Atlanta". Out Down South: Voices & Portraits of LGBTQ+ Atlanta presents stories of change-making LGBTQ+ Atlantans. The exhibit features the photographs and recorded stories of Atlantans, told in their own words. In Atlanta (Georgia), Exhibition launched in October 2023, at the National Center for Civil and Human Rights [National Center for Civil and Human Rights], 2023-11, National Center for Civil and Human Rights, [United States of America]

French Senate debates compensation for gay men jailed under homophobic laws. An estimated 60,000 gay men were convicted by French courts between 1942 and 1982 under homophobic laws that were repealed just four decades ago. On Wednesday, French senators will discuss a bill acknowledging France’s role in the persecution of homosexuals and offering compensation to those still alive, mirroring steps taken elsewhere in Europe. [France 24], 2023-11-21, France 24, [France]

Hungary sacks museum chief for not enforcing under-18s ban at LGBTQ+ exhibition. László Simon dismissed after National Museum allowed children to visit a World Press Photo show. [Oltermann, Philip], 2023-11-07, The Guardian, [Hungary]

This activist built himself a website to track global LGBTQ+ laws. Now the UN uses it too. Equaldex maps where it’s safe to travel so you don’t have to. [Owen, Greg], 2023-11-06, LGBTQ Nation, [Worldwide]

Migration

Ethiopia Partnership Eases Vulnerable Returnee Access to Legal Identity Documents. IOM has signed a cooperation agreement with the Office of the Prime Minister of Ethiopia’s National Identification Program (NIDP) to facilitate access to identification documents for vulnerable migrant returnees, displaced persons and affected communities as a prerequisite for global mobility and development. [International Organization for Migration], 2023-11-15, International Organization for Migration, [Ethiopia]
Von der Leyen invita a crear una alianza global contra el tráfico de migrantes. La presidenta de la Comisión Europea, Ursula von der Leyen, invitó este martes a instituciones y agencias europeas, organizaciones internacionales, gobiernos y a las plataformas en internet a crear una alianza global contra el tráfico de migrantes, un «desafío común» que trasciende fronteras. [Borrás, Marta], 2023-11-28, EuroEFE, [Europe]

Privacy

Personal data stolen in British Library cyber-attack appears for sale online. The library said it was “aware that some data has been leaked, which appears to be from files relating to our internal HR information”. Academics and researchers who use the library have been told that disruption to the institution’s services after the serious ransomware attack was likely to continue for months. [Sherwood, Harriet], 2023-11-22, The Guardian, [United Kingdom]

Rights Concerns Over License Plate Tracking. Uganda’s new surveillance system, which allows the government to track the real time location of all vehicles in the country, undermines privacy rights, and creates serious risks to the rights to freedom of association and expression. [Human Rights Watch], 2023-11-14, Human Rights Watch, [Uganda]

The spy tech firm managing NHS data. Palantir, the US spy-tech firm co-founded by the billionaire Peter Thiel, has won a contract to handle NHS data. It’s a deal that has left privacy advocates with serious questions [Iqbal, Nosheen; Crider, Cori], 2023-11-27, [United Kingdom]

Racism

US Army clears historical convictions of 110 black soldiers. The soldiers were court-martialed after a 1917 riot in a process with "numerous irregularities". [Comerford, Ruth], 2023-11-14, BBC News, [United States of America]

Religious Archives

Senate Committee provides little pushback on Catholic representatives over residential school documents. A Canadian Senate Committee on Indigenous Peoples may have been shocked two weeks ago when witnesses told them about the difficulties they were having in accessing Catholic Church records for children who attended Indian residential schools. [Narine, Shari], 2023-11-07, Windspeaker.com, [Canada]

Reparation

Sharpeville: new research on 1960 South African massacre shows the number of dead and injured was massively undercounted. Despite its historic importance, Sharpeville itself has remained unknown and its residents anonymous, yet they have a story to tell. [Clark, Nancy L; Worger, William H.], 2023-11-28, The Conversation, [South Africa]

Technology

President Biden Issues Executive Order on Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence. US President Biden issued an Executive Order establishing new standards for AI safety and security, protecting Americans’ privacy, advancing equity and civil rights, standing up for
consumers and workers, promoting innovation and competition. [The White House], 2023-10-30, The White House, [United States of America]

Transparency

*Canada's broken information laws keep history in the dark.* It can be incredibly frustrating trying to get access to historical records in Canada. There are often lengthy delays and confusing inconsistency. That’s in large part because Canada's historical records are tied up in our access to information system, which has a lot of problems. [The Globe and Mail], 2023-11-10, [Canada]

*Democracy in Darkness Secrecy and Transparency in the Age of Revolutions.* Does democracy die in darkness, as the saying suggests? This book reveals that modern democracy was born in secrecy, despite the widespread conviction that transparency was its very essence. But as revolutionaries sought to fashion representative government, they faced a dilemma. In a context where gaining public trust seemed to demand transparency, was secrecy ever legitimate? [Carter, Katlyn Marie], 1905-07-15, [Worldwide]

*Event - Discussion with David Ferriero on the Role of Libraries, Archives, and History in Today's Democracy.* Justice Willis P. Whichard is welcoming David Ferriero for a conversation about Ferriero’s transformational leadership of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and their shared interests in history, libraries, and democracy - Durham Arts Council, Sunday, January 28, 2024 - 3 - 5:30pm EST [Durham Library Foundation], 2024-01-21, Eventbrite, [United States of America]

*Redacted and out of reach: Canada’s access laws keep the country’s history locked away.* Researchers are often denied decades-old documents because there’s no process for declassifying them and poor records of what’s piled up in government warehouses [Cardoso, Tom; Doolittle, Robyn], 2023-11-10, The Globe and Mail, [Canada]

*What Really Happened to JFK?* One thing’s for sure: The CIA doesn’t want you to know. [Sayare, Scott], 2023-11-09, Intelligencer, [United States of America]

Ukraine War

*We need to record everything*: This team stayed behind in a Ukrainian war zone. Ukrainian filmmaker Mstyslav Chernov was in Mariupol when Russia invaded. "I just understood that we need to record everything," he says. His new documentary is 20 Days in Mariupol. [Mosley, Tonya], 2023-11-13, NPR, [Ukraine]

*Damaged cultural sites in Ukraine verified by UNESCO.* As of 15 November 2023, UNESCO has verified damage to 329 sites since 24 February 2022 – 125 religious sites, 143 buildings of historical and/or artistic interest, 28 museums, 19 monuments, 13 libraries, 1 Archive. [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization], 2023-11-18, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, [Ukraine]

*Guerra Rusia - Ucrania: los rusos que sueñan con conseguir un pasaporte ucraniano.* Ciudadanos rusos en Ucrania se enfrentan a toda clase de trabas para cambiar su nacionalidad. [Waterhouse, James], 2023-11-27, BBC News Mundo, [Russian Federation, Ukraine]
**War Crimes**

'The artwork is not guilty': Swiss museum unveils Nazi era collection. A prestigious Swiss institution is attempting to navigate the troubled waters of displaying an art collection with questionable origins dating back to World War II and Nazi looted art. [Farrant, Theo], 2023-11-13, euronews, [Switzerland]

Japan ordered to compensate wartime 'comfort women'. A South Korean court has ordered Japan to compensate a group of women who were forced to work in wartime brothels. [BBC News], 2023-11-23, BBC News, [Korea, Republic of]

Kosovo Specialist Chambers and the Unappreciated Necessity of Contempt Proceedings in International Criminal Accountability. The contempt cases may assist the Kosovo Specialist Chambers Special Prosecutor's Office and the judges in carrying out their mandates and building the judicial record. [Bartels, Rogier], 2023-11-21, Just Security, [Southern Europe]

**Women's Rights**

'Like knives penetrating me': Greenland's victims of forced contraception seek justice. In the late 1960s, Denmark implemented a brutal contraceptive policy to limit births in its former colony of Greenland, forcing thousands of teenage girls to have IUDs inserted without their consent. After decades of repressing their trauma, the women are now speaking out and demanding reparation. [France 24], 2023-11-25, France 24, [Denmark]

“They Don’t Treat Us like Human Beings” “‘They Don’t Treat Us like Human Beings’: Abuse of Imprisoned Women in Japan,” documents the abusive conditions in many women's prisons in Japan. [Kasai, Teppei], 2023-11-14, Human Rights Watch, [Japan]

Exhibition - 'Women in Revolt!' at Tate Britain is a deliciously angry tour de force of feminist art. 'Women in Revolt!' puts feminist art from 1970 – 1990 under the spotlight at Tate Britain - Until 2024-04-07 at Tate Britain, London [Silver, Hannah], 2023-11-08, wallpaper.com, [United Kingdom]

Kazakhstan Woman’s Death a National Tragedy | Human Rights Watch. Saltanat Nukenova is a name that is widely recognized in Kazakhstan these days. That is because, on November 9, Saltanat’s husband, Kuandyk Bishimbayev, the former economy minister, was detained in connection with her death. She was just 31 years old. [Kim, Viktoriya], 2023-11-27, [Kazakhstan]

WHO paid compensation money to sexual abuse victims in Congo. Internal documents show the World Health Organisation paid $250 to victims in Congo who were sexually abused by their employees during the Ebola outbreak and made them take a training course to receive the money. [Euro News], 2023-11-14, euronews, [Congo, Democratic Republic of the]

**World War II**

Propaganda and Persecution. The French Resistance and the "Jewish Question". Jews in France suffered a double persecution: one led by the Vichy government, the other imposed by the Nazis. Meanwhile, a propaganda war developed between the Resistance and the official voice of Vichy. The author draws on an array of sources to show how the Resistance both fought and accommodated the deeply entrenched antisemitism within French society. [Poznanski, Renée], 2023-11, [France]
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Europe: Película sobre el Tribunal Europeo de Derechos Humanos, [European Court of Human Rights], 2023-09-05, [Human Rights]

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South America: Archives des dictatures sud-américaines. Entre droit à la mémoire et droit à l'oubli, [0], 2023-10, [Human Rights]

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Western Asia: What To Expect from The International Criminal Court's Investigation in Israel and Palestine, [Goldberg, Mark Leon], 2023-11-06, UN Dispatch, [Israel-Gaza Crisis]

Worldwide: 85% of people worry about online disinformation, global survey finds, [Henley, Jon], 2023-11-07, The Guardian, [Disinformation]

Worldwide: Archives et droits humains, [Boel, Jens; Canavaggio, Perrine; González Quintana, Antonio], 2023-11-14, [Human Rights]

Worldwide: Archives: utilité publique, exigence démocratique, [Roth-Lochner, Barbara; Dubois, Alain], 2023-11, [Disinformation]

Worldwide: Can we make better use of humanitarian data for an impartial and humane response to crisis?, [Cara Kielwein], 2023-11-24, Humanitarian Practice Network, [Human Rights Defenders and Activists]

Worldwide: Court document claims Meta knowingly designed its platforms to hook kids, reports say, [AP News], 2023-11-27, Associated Press, [Internet and Social Media]

Worldwide: data.org Partners With the World Health Organization on Global Health Response, [The Rockefeller Foundation], 2023-11-01, The Rockefeller Foundation, [Epidemic and pandemic]

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Worldwide: Human rights are a low priority for many national climate change adaptation policies, research finds. [Lejtenyi, Patrick], 2023-11-28, Phys.org, [Climate Change]

Worldwide: Labour abuses, including slavery, found on European fishing vessels. [O'Donoghue, Saskia], 2023-11-19, euronews, [Forced Labor]

Worldwide: Mary Robinson: ‘everyone has core human rights’. [Foulkes, Imogen], 2023-11-08, SWI swissinfo.ch, [Human Rights Defenders and Activists]

Worldwide: Michelle Bachelet: The Universal Declaration is ‘good enough’. [Foulkes, Imogen], 2023-11-23, SWI swissinfo.ch, [Human Rights Defenders and Activists]

Worldwide: Naomi Klein on “Selective” Information About Israel and Gaza. [Stelter, Brian], 2023-11-02, [Disinformation]


Worldwide: Resisting the Colonial Imagination: The Role of Exhibition Design in the Decolonial Project. [Lalli Hills, Adrienne; Middleton, Margaret], 2023-10-26, American Alliance of Museums, [Decolonization]

Worldwide: Right to information still an ‘empty promise’ for billions. [UN News], 2023-09-28, UN News, [Freedom of Expression]

Worldwide: Shaping Archaeological Archives: Dialogues between Fieldwork, Museum Collections, and Private Archives. [Raja, Rubina], 1905-07-15, [Colonialism]

Worldwide: The doomsday vaults storing seeds, data and DNA to protect our future. [Braidwood, Ella], 2023-11-19, The Observer, [Economic, Social and Cultural Rights]

Worldwide: The role of data and statistics in advancing the population and sustainable development agenda. [Napaphat Satchanawakul; Jessica Gardner; Christophe Lefranc], 2023-11-06, UNFPA Asiapacific, [Economic, Social and Cultural Rights]

Worldwide: This activist built himself a website to track global LGBTQ+ laws. Now the UN uses it too. [Owen, Greg], 2023-11-06, LGBTQ Nation, [LGBTQ+ Rights]

Worldwide: TikTok’s ‘For You’ feed risks pushing children and young people towards harmful mental health content. [Amnesty International], 2023-11-07, Amnesty International, [Internet and Social Media]

Worldwide: YouTube creators: Disclose AI use or face suspension. [Euro News], 2023-11-14, euronews, [Internet and Social Media]

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France: French Senate debates compensation for gay men jailed under homophobic laws. [France 24], 2023-11-21, France 24, [LGBTQ+ Rights]

France: Ripostes. Archives de lutte et d’action, 1970-1974. [0], 2023-11, [Human Rights Defenders and Activists]


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Kazakhstan: Kazakhstan Woman’s Death a National Tragedy | Human Rights Watch. [Kim, Viktoriya], 2023-11-27, [Women’s Rights]

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Korea, Republic of: South Korea: Jail sentence for man who praised North an attack on freedom of expression. [Amnesty International], 2023-11-27, Amnesty International, [Freedom of Expression]

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