

Dear Colleagues,

We are happy to let you know that [issue 20.4](#) of *The Journal of Human Rights* has been published.

In this edition we return to two longstanding human rights concerns – torture and the rights of refugees – and one newer concern, namely the role of social media in human rights violations.

Describing his ground-breaking research, Chris Einolf presents oral histories of fourteen former torturers in Saddam Hussein’s Iraq. In Einolf’s article, the torturers describe how they were recruited, trained, and ordered to do their jobs.

The refugee issue has special resonance for the human rights community at this time of concern for the situation in Afghanistan and its implications in terms of refugees. With their focus on the arrival of asylum seekers in Australia, Fiona McKay and Beke Freyer analyze whether Australia’s policy of mandatory detention breaches the human rights of asylum seekers. They identify hundreds of breaches of human rights and significant mental and physical health implications of detention.

Turning to the role of social media in human rights violations, most timely given the recent Facebook whistle-blower testimony before a U.S. Senate committee, Kyle Rapp’s article asks who is responsible when social media is used to incite genocide. He argues that home states – where social media TNCs are incorporated – are obligated to act under the genocide prohibition and discusses how this may be fulfilled.

As a regional theme, we note that 20.4 contains articles on Israel and Egypt. Using an Israeli case study, Kineret Sadeh explores the role of cultural brokers in placating cultural antagonism to human rights. His article focuses on “deliberative activism” —a new form of dialogical action that promotes legitimacy and respect between culturally opposing groups. Touching also on contested human rights discourse, Bosmat Yefet’s article questions whether national human rights institutions make a difference, by analyzing the failure of the Egyptian National Council for Human Rights to provide a public space to negotiate and contest human rights violations after the 2011 Revolution.

Rhoda Howard-Hassmann's review of three exciting, intellectually innovative books tackling difficult yet intersecting questions regarding human rights, marginalization, and personal agency is not to be missed. The three books are:

- Fully Human: Personhood, Citizenship and Rights (Lindsey Kingston)
- Joyful Human Rights (William Paul Simmons)
- Rights Make Might: Global Human Rights and Minority Social Movements in Japan (Kiyoteru Tsutsui)

In signing off, we remind you of articles from earlier editions on torture: [Beyond the Media's Explanation: Examining the Determinants of Attitudes Toward Torture](#), Volume 17, Issue 3 and

[Laws, Talk, and Human Rights: The Impact of Treaty Ratification, UN Criticism, and Democratic Change on Torture](#) Volume 17, Issue 4. Some key earlier articles on refugees include [Freedom of Movement, Migration, and Borders](#), Volume 19, Issue 3, and [Pragmatic Solidarity and Asylum Expert Witnessing](#), Volume 18, Issue 2. An earlier article on social media: [News About Her: The Effects of Media Freedom and Internet Access on Women's Rights](#), Volume 15, Issue 3. And finally, some articles on Israel and Egypt: [The Challenges and Dilemmas of Local Translators of Human Rights: The Case of Disability Rights Among Jewish Ultra-Orthodox Communities](#), Volume 20, Issue 3, and [Strange Fruit: Homophobia, The State, and the Politics of LGBT Rights and Capabilities](#), Volume 13, Issue 3.

We hope that you enjoy the Issue.

Best wishes,

Rachel Chambers (Social Media Co-Editor)