

## PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS

*For Museum Openings: Caring for Difficult Knowledge within and Beyond the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (a workshop)*

### SESSION 1: *Human Rights in a Museological Context*

#### **Presenting Canada's Legal Traditions at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights: Challenges and Choices**

— Armando Perla (CMHR)

The CMHR is set to open its doors on September 20<sup>th</sup> 2014. Many of its exhibits are based on the vulgarization of human rights laws, legal doctrine and jurisprudence in order to make them accessible to the general public. The exhibit titled *Canada's legal traditions* aims to present a narrative that speaks to processes of colonization and decolonization of legal traditions in Canada. Through the use of artifacts such as the Royal Proclamation 1763, Aboriginal treaties, the Proclamation of the Constitution 1982, and an Aboriginal judge's robe, this museum exhibit aims to present the visitor with an invaluable piece of Canadian legal history. As such, this exhibit intends to walk the visitor through the history of legal traditions in Canada, acknowledging that Indigenous legal traditions pre-dated European contact. This paper will bring to light a great number of challenges that presenting complex legal ideas in an exhibit with limited text space poses to its developers. At the same time, it will highlight strategies that have been used to solve some of these challenges.

#### **Works in progress: Negotiating human rights in museological context**

— Jennifer Carter (Université du Québec à Montréal)

Human rights museums are a new phenomenon in the cultural sphere. As institutions that self-identify in their title and mission statements as museums dedicated to human rights, they are somewhat different from earlier examples of museums that pursue human rights issues, or social justice more broadly, in their exhibition, curatorial and/or programming orientations – but how? And to what ends? Located in specific geo-political contexts and arising from different political, economic, social and cultural exigencies, a dozen human rights museums founded since the millennium are responding in different ways to the conjuncture of museology and human

SESSION 2: *Resituating Subjects and Participants in Human Rights Discourse and Practice*

**From Karl Heinrich Ulrichs to Lady Gaga: Born this way and its Discontents**

— David Churchill (University of Manitoba)

The history of homosexuality, of what in contemporary terms we refer to as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, two-spirited, queers, and other sexually diverse subjects, has been bound up with the language of rights (civil and human rights) since the 19th century. One of the most consistent arguments, made by many early emancipation advocates, was that homosexuality was a natural, material condition one was born with. As such homosexuals were according to the logics of natural justice, entitled to dignity, deserving of protection and entitled to legal standing as modern citizens. This legitimization argument is not only central to many contemporary LGBT rights campaigns such as Born the Way but also to the very conceptualization of who is the subject of human rights instruments. This paper will examine the implication of the naturalization of same-sex sexuality in terms of human rights but also in terms of the place of sexual and gender diversity within the Canadian Museum of Human Rights.

**Comfort Women in Human Rights Discourse: Obscured Colonialisms, Fetishized Testimonies, and the Politics of the Abstract**

— Hee-Jung Serenity Joo (University of Manitoba)

This paper provides a brief critical overview of the history of the Comfort Women in the context of the 19th-century colonialism and the politics of the abstract.

SESSION 3: *Building the Museum, Making the Nation*

**Curating the Fourth Framework: The Work in Progress**

— Deanna Aubert (McMaster University)

In keeping with current theoretical perspectives on the state-sanctioned museum, Canadian varieties are understood to distribute social recognition on the basis of cultural difference as an extension of the state's multicultural logic. In the area of curating for difficult knowledge and human rights museology, Angela Failler and Roger Simon's work considers how a new and radically different fourth framework

SESSION 4: Views from Here

**Historical Dislocation: The Confluence of Monumental Architecture, Community Voices, and CMHR Programming**

— Tina Mai Chen (University of Manitoba)

This paper considers two aspects of the CMHR: (a) the decision to fund and build a piece of monumental architecture

**KEYNOTE: Memory Politics and/as Human Rights: What We Can Learn from the CMHR Debates**

— Karyn Ball (University of Alberta)

The aim of this talk is to propose a definition of memory politics that reflects recent scholarship in trauma and affect studies in order to elaborate on the role this conception could play in furthering the cause of human rights. The talk will also highlight various issues that arose over the past few years about the composition and lay-out of the CMHR. Ultimately, then, I will discuss my hopes for a CMHR vision that will serve human rights by facilitating critical explorations of Canada's relationship to the traumatic histories of its citizens.

SESSION 5: *Comparative and Dialogic Approaches*

**Expanding Museum Spaces: A Networked Analysis of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights**

— Nadine Blumer (Concordia University)

**Museums and the Ongoing Crisis of Murdered or Missing Indigenous Women: Some Provocations  
from the Art of Pamela Masik and Rebecca Belmore**

— Amber Dean (McMaster University)

museums. In an attempt to consider the curation of contested memories, this paper considers the conflicting social actors who make up the memory entrepreneurs, and their different engagement with the construction of museum spaces.

**The changing roles of testimony in exhibition practices: From the provision of evidence to the challenge of shaping empathetic citizens**

— Andrea Witcomb (Deakin University)

In this paper I will be looking at the changing uses of first person narratives in e1 09on narrapoy e-7( us)-2(-2(g)-2(e)-9( o