



## HUMAN RIGHTS IN ACTION

### Podlich Fellow: John Prendergast

The Mgrublian Center for Human Rights (MCHR) was honored to welcome human rights activist, best selling author, and Founding Director of the Enough Project, John Prendergast as an annual Podlich Fellow for human rights scholarship. Prendergast spent his week on campus interacting with students across the 5 Claremont Colleges, professors and faculty members, and engaging in discussions with President Chodosh. The human rights activist, who has worked for peace in Africa for over 30 years, began his week of events with a dinner sponsored by the Robert Day School of Economics, discussing the role of conflict minerals, tin, tantalum, tungsten, and gold, present in most of our electronics, in fueling a genocide in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The following night, Prendergast engaged with students in Parents Dining Room in the Marian Miner Cook Athenaeum, highlighting the 7 stories of change and transformation in his personal life which have allowed him to effect change and transform the landscape for activists and humanitarians across the globe. He later presented at the Ath about the most effective ways to combat violent kleptocracies, unveiling his new project, The Sentry, which he launched with actor/activist, George Clooney. The Sentry is an initiative using satellite imagery, through the support of Google and Google Earth, which tracks armed conflicts and mass atrocities NGOs cannot witness due to closed borders. He ended his visit sitting on several panels, including "Human Rights in Film" which addressed the role that documentary and feature films play in social activism and social movements, and "Human Rights Atrocities and the Failures of the Legal System," a roundtable with President Chodosh. The MCHR thanks John Prendergast for his time and we look forward to future visits from the activist.



**Image 1.** John Prendergast, Director of the MCHR Professor Wendy Lower, and President Chodosh during a panel discussion on "Human Rights Atrocities and the Failure of Legal Systems"

**Image 2.** Activist and humanitarian John Prendergast meets with MCHR student activist Will Cullen '19

# Highlighting Student Work

## Summer Internships



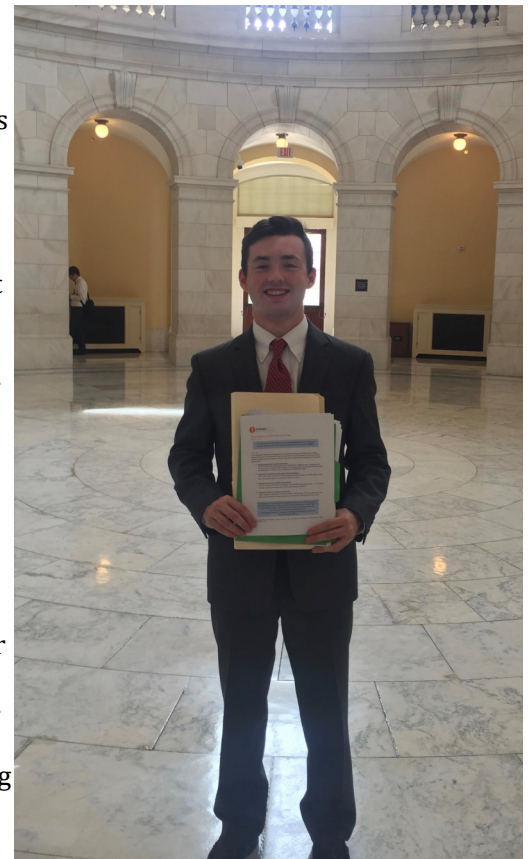
**Anoush Baghdassarian '17, Human Rights Watch, New York**

"Each internship I've had throughout my college career, I have been fortunate enough to have support by the Mgrublian Center for Human Rights and Claremont McKenna College. My most recent internship this past summer was at Human Rights Watch in New York City. Not only did I interact with and learn from those in my department, but I interacted with researchers in different countries, heads of divisions ranging from Americas to Middle East North Africa (MENA), to disabilities rights, and everything in between. I attended advocacy meetings, communications meetings, marketing meetings, and learned so much from each experience. My favorite experience was the opportunity to meet Suleyman Guengueng, a survivor of the torture perpetuated by Chad's ex-dictator Hissene Habré. Suleyman did not come in daily, but when he did, I got to speak with him about his experiences working with a lawyer from Human Rights Watch, Reed Brody, on a case to convict Habré. Just this summer, after seventeen years, they won the case and Habré was convicted for crimes against humanity. Suleyman was an essential part of this case thanks to the initiative he started to document testimonies from as many survivors as he could after he was tortured so that in the future they could try the dictator. It worked; the testimony was a crucial part of winning this almost-impossible case to win. Mr. Brody has become an example for me with regard to his determination and devotion to human rights. Suleyman has become a role model as well demonstrating how one person can inspire a whole group to not lose hope and can be the determining factor in restoring justice to a community. HRW is an extraordinary place to learn and grow in the field of human rights and I am so excited to continue on this path in this field with this experience.

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**Will Cullen, '19: The Enough Project: Washington, DC.**

Over the summer, I interned at the Enough Project in Washington, DC. The Enough Project does policy research and activist work to build leverage for peace and justice in Central and Eastern Africa by creating real consequences for the perpetrators and facilitators of genocide and other mass atrocities. Primarily working in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Central African Republic (CAR), Sudan, and South Sudan, the Enough Project aims to dismantle violent kleptocracy in the region. As an Advocacy Intern, I wrote blog posts for the organization's website, attended think tank events, and sat in on Congressional hearings. While I was in the office, a congressman introduced an amendment to the 2017 appropriations bill that would have defunded provisions of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. Such an action would have negatively impacted the lives of people in the DRC and would have been harmful to the Enough Project's work, undermining the transparency of conflict minerals in electronic companies' supply chains. As the most rewarding experience of the summer, I drafted a one-page brief on behalf of the organization on why to vote against the amendment and circulated the fliers across every office among the Cannon, Longworth and Rayburn House office buildings. Although the amendment passed its initial procedural vote, the bill isn't supposed to pass the Senate or be signed into law. It was incredible to see the legislative process take place in DC and learn about how it can positively affect the lives of people and prevent human rights violations on the other side of the world. Moreover, my summer at the Enough Project has shaped my future career goals by sparking an enthusiasm in human rights research, a passion for international justice, and a commitment to preventing crimes against humanity.



# Upcoming Events:

“Peace does not just mean putting an end to violence or war, but to all other factors that threaten peace, such as discrimination, such as inequality, poverty.”

-Aung San Suu Kyi

## Lessons and Legacies XIV:

The Mgrublian Center for Human Rights, in partnership with Claremont McKenna College, is proud to welcome the bi-annual, Lessons and Legacies conference, being held November 3-6, sponsored by the Holocaust Educational Foundation of Northwestern University. The conference will consist of roundtables, panels, workshops, and discussions relating to recent advances in scholarship in the field of Holocaust Studies. This year's theme is “Holocaust in the 21st Century: Relevance and Challenges in the Digital Age.” A full list of events will be made available on the MCHR website, <https://www.cmc.edu/human-rights/>, in the coming week. For more information about the conference, please contact MCHR Assistant Director, Kirsti Zitar, [kzitar@cmc.edu](mailto:kzitar@cmc.edu).

## Amnesty International:

The Amnesty task force will be engaging in several campaigns over the semester. Here is an overview of the initiatives:

- “My Body, My Rights” campaign addresses the attack on women’s reproductive rights both in the US and internationally. The campaign will work on vulnerability of refugee women (Greece, Turkey, Syria, Central Africa), Protection of sex workers’ rights, reproductive rights, and discrimination against women.
- Amnesty International campaigns for the release of prisoners of conscience – people who have been jailed because of their political, religious or other conscientiously-held beliefs, ethnic origin, sex, color, language, national or social origin, economic status, birth, sexual orientation or other status, provided that they have neither used nor advocated violence.
- Support for refugee family fleeing the Syrian Civil War. The family is living in the Pomona area and is in desperate need of economic support.

For more information about Amnesty International or to find out how to get involved, please contact, Nicole Southard '17, [nsouthard17@cmc.edu](mailto:nsouthard17@cmc.edu) or Larissa Peltola '18, [lpeltola18@cmc.edu](mailto:lpeltola18@cmc.edu)

## 2016-2017 MCHR Fellows:

The Mgrublian Center for Human Rights would like to congratulate our 2016-2017 research fellows. Our fellows will research topics pertaining to human rights and social justice both domestically and internationally. They will be expected to conduct extensive research and interviews for their project and at the end of the academic year, submit their research paper. We look forward to their projects! Here are the 2016-2017 MCHR fellows and their projects:

Will Cullen: **Environmental Injustice in the Occupied Palestinian Territories**

Roxane Sazegar and Sam Neufeld: **The Plight of Central American Refugee Youth, A Call to Action**

Michele Pashby: **United States Cover-up of Japanese Unit 731**

Patrick Elliott: **Education: A Tool for Some, A Barrier for Others**

Anoush Baghdassarian: **Researching the Memoir of Hovhannes Aharonian, a Survivor of the Armenian Genocide**

Fiona Bare: **Humanitarian Aid in Conflict Zones**

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

-Martin Luther King Jr.

### Letter from the Editor:

Human rights are universal. Every human being deserves dignity, respect, and the inalienable rights granted to them in the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The protection and the respect of the UDHR serves as the guiding principles in which the Mgrublian Center for Human Rights was founded. As one of the eleven research institutes at Claremont McKenna College, we at the MCHR strive to educate and inspire future generations of activists who work everyday to make a significant difference in their world; and scholars, who will go out into the world and educate individuals on the challenge that was presented to the world after the Holocaust: that never again must genocides be allowed to occur. Never again must we, as human beings, sit by and allow genocides to take place; never again must we watch as women and girls face rape and sexual violence as a weapon of war and ethnic cleansing; never again should we close our borders to refugees and migrants seeking safe haven; never again may we allow individuals to suffer at the hands of authoritarian regimes. We, at the Mgrublian Center for Human Rights, seek to shine a light of injustice and oppression both within and out of our borders, and never give up the fight for universal human rights. We live by the examples of human rights leaders such as Elie Wiesel, who taught the world to never give up on those who are suffering, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, who continues to preach the necessity of kindness and compassion; and Martin Luther King Jr. who believed wholeheartedly that love and mercy, can drive out hatred and fear. This monthly newsletter will highlight student led initiatives and advocacy both on and off campus. For more information about the MCHR, please visit our website, <https://www.cmc.edu/human-rights>.

**In Solidarity,**  
Larissa Peltola '18,  
Editor-in-Chief



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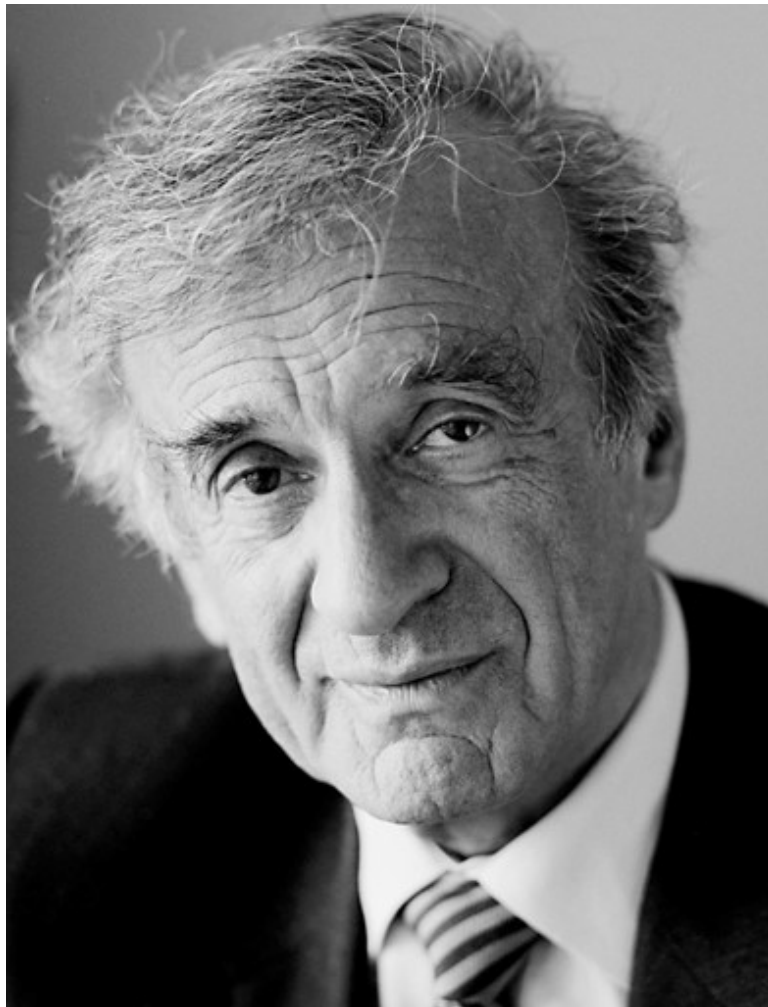
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With special thanks to Mr. and Mrs. David and Margret Mgrublian,  
Professor Wendy Lower and Kirsti Zitar

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## In Loving Memory: Elie Wiesel (1928-2016)

The Mgrublian Center for Human Rights pays tribute to lifelong activist and Holocaust survivor, Elie Wiesel. Wiesel was not only an outspoken crusader for human rights and social justice, but also a longtime friend and advisory board member for the MCHR. He will be greatly missed.



*"We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented."*

-Elie Wiesel,

Nobel Peace Prize acceptance Speech, December 10, 1986