HEALTHRIGHT INTERNATIONAL

Human Rights Clinic Photo Database:
A Reference Tool Documenting the
Long-term Physical Sequelae of
Torture

Objectives

- Objective 1: Learn
  - What is available in the HealthRight Human Rights Clinic photo database
  - How was the content compiled
  - How is the content categorized and presented

Objectives Contd.

- Objective 2: Learn
  - How to seek and receive permission to access the database
  - How to search the database
  - How to understand, interpret and apply the information in the database

Objectives Contd.

- Objective 3:
  - List 3 ways in which the database can benefit torture treatment programs

HealthRight Mission

HealthRight (formerly Doctors of the World-USA) works with local partners to build lasting access to health in excluded communities.

HealthRight: Focus Areas

- **TB and AIDS epidemics**
  prevention, treatment, support, stigma reduction

- **Orphans and vulnerable children**
  foster care, community-based services
  de-institutionalization, family preservation

- **Women's health**
  safe motherhood, equal access to information, education and service

- **Survivors of gross human rights abuses**
  services for those who have been tortured, trafficked, seek asylum

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Human Rights Clinic

- **Term:**   1993 - Present
- **Sites:**   California, Colorado, Arizona, New York, New Jersey, other East Coast states
- **Objective:** Train & deploy volunteer physicians/mental health experts to conduct evaluations of and prepare affidavits for those seeking asylum based on claims of torture; refer asylum seekers for follow-up health and social services

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HRC in Numbers

- Trained >695 health professionals (340 physicians). >520 joined volunteer network.

- Asylum seekers without HRC assistance have average success rate of ~25%, with HRC help, about 80-90%

- Provided >3000 forensic evaluations to survivors of torture

HRC Photo Database
Why is it needed?

■   Almost no formal training in medical education institutions on recognizing the patterns and clinical sequelae of torture

■ No 'handbooks' or 'clinical reference manuals' for providers working with survivors of torture

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HRC Photo Database
What is it?

- Created in 2008 with NCB grant

- Database of 200+ pictures of scars on the bodies of survivors of torture

- Pictures taken by HRC physician volunteers In the course of forensic evaluations

HRC Photo Database Content
What is in it?

NOTE: All identifying information has been removed from database entries and photographs. Clients' full faces and names are not included in the database.

However, maintaining client privacy is of paramount importance to HealthRight. This, along with the sensitive and graphic nature of the content, is why HealthRight requires database users to be HealthRight volunteers or to apply for permission to use the database.

HRC Photo Database Content
What is in it?

Demographic Information

- Client's Age when tortured
- Biological Sex
- Country of Origin
- Country of Torture
- Sub-Regions
- Year of Torture
- Year of Evaluation

HRC Photo Database Content
What is in it?

Clinical Forensic Information

- Category of Torture
- Instrument of torture
- Body part with scar
- Immediate Sequelae
- Late Sequelae
- Skin Pigmentation
- Post-Trauma Care
- Wound complications

HRC Photo Database Content
How is it categorized?

Content: Category of Torture

- **Blunt Trauma, including** beating, falanga
- **Burns** ,including electric shocks)
- **Lacerations,** including whipping, cuts
- Sexual Torture
- Amputations
- Forced Positions
- Crushing Injuries
- Penetrating Injuries
- **Forced postures,** including suspension, restraints

Content: Instruments of Torture

- Bare hands/fists
- Boots
- Wooden/metal rods
- Truncheons
- Belts/buckles
- Whips (metal/leather)
- Rocks, bricks
- Gun-butts
- Cutting instruments - Knife, machete, spear, broken glass

- Guns, rifle
- Live wires, cattle-prods, other electrical instruments
- Ropes, Hand-cuffs
- Heated Instruments
- Fire
- Chemicals

Content: Immediate Sequelae

- Crushed muscle
- Stab Wound, cuts, lacerations
- Fracture
- Burn
- Dislocation
- Swelling/Bruising
- Dental Trauma
- Scabies/Rashes

- Abrasions
- Peeled skin
- Crushed Bone
- Broken bones
- Amputation
- Heavy Bleeding/Hemorrhage

Content: Late Sequelae

- Scars
- Broken bones
- Disfiguration of body parts
- Keloids/ hypertrophic scarring
- Dislocation
- Loss of body parts
- Dental trauma
-

- Loss of muscle mass and tissue
- Restraint tattoos
- Fistula
- Palsy/Other Neurologic sequelae
- Demo Photos (Simulations of torture)

Content: Sub-regions

- North Africa & Middle East (Eastern Mediterranean)
- Central, East, & Southern Africa
- West Africa
- Central Asia
- East Asia
- South-East Asia
- South Asia

- Central and South America
- Caribbean
- North America
- Western Europe
- Central, Southern, and Eastern Europe
- Oceania & Pacific

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Content: Skin Pigmentation

- Dark

- Medium

- Light

Content: Post-trauma Care

- None
- Suturing
- Surgery
- Antibiotics
- Sling/Cast/Immobilization
- Traditional Care
- Other

Content: Wound Complications

- None

- Infection

- Permanent deformity

- Other

How was the content compiled?

- HRC screens client through attorney for scars
- HRC physician conducts exam – takes digital pictures of scars and writes affidavit
- Pictures provided to HRC and included as part of evidence
- HRC selects pictures and gathers corresponding information from client's and physician's affidavits
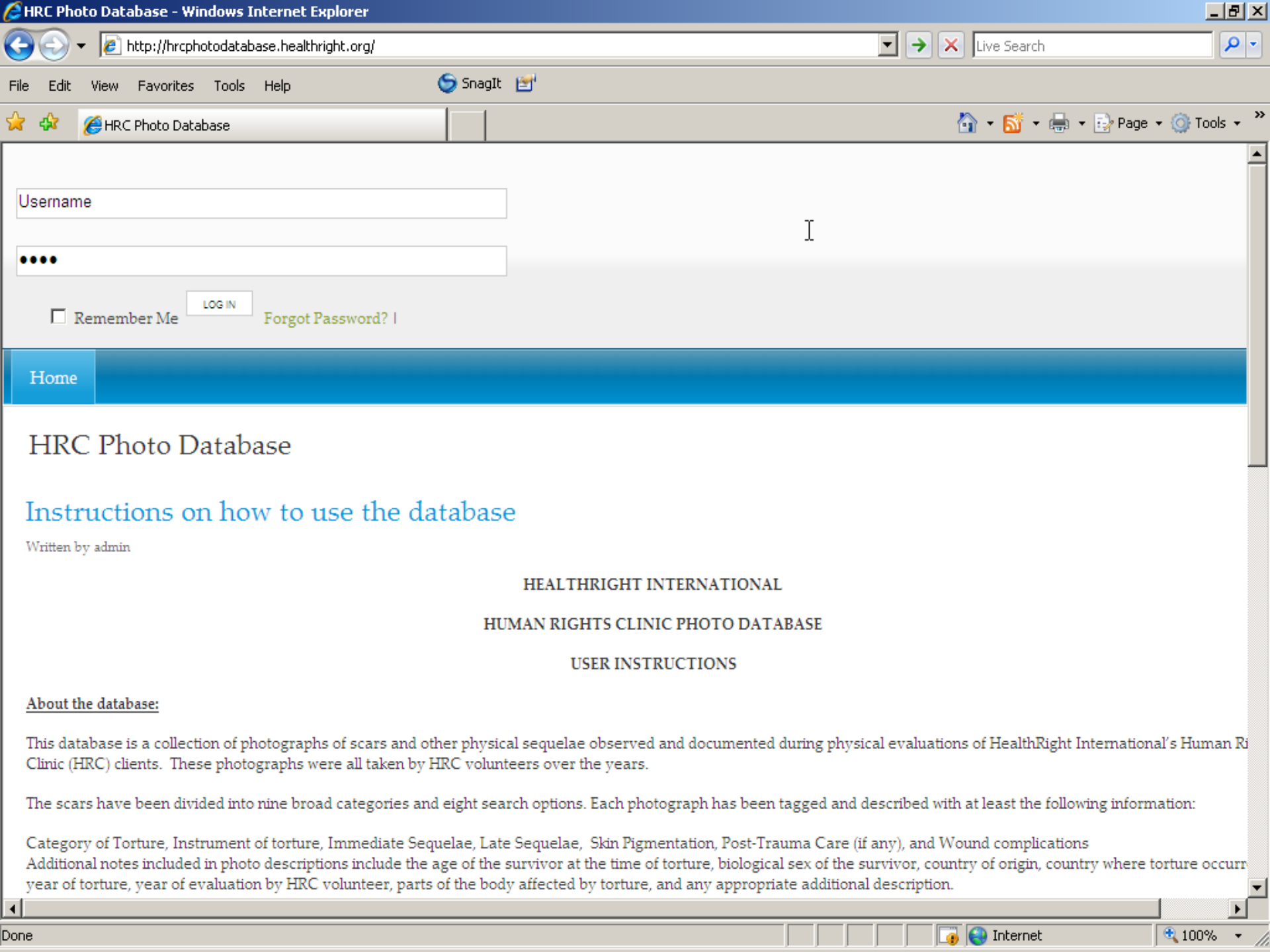- HRC uploads pictures and corresponding information to the database

Getting Access to and Searching the Database

Seeking Access

- Email Hari Acharya at hari.acharya@healthright.org or call him at 212-584-4865 to request username and password

Database Location

- Go to http://hrcphotodatabase.healthright.org

- Which will take you to....

Username

●●●●

☐ Remember Me **LOG IN** Forgot Password? |

Home

HRC Photo Database

Instructions on how to use the database

Written by admin

HEALTHRIGHT INTERNATIONAL

HUMAN RIGHTS CLINIC PHOTO DATABASE

USER INSTRUCTIONS

About the database:

This database is a collection of photographs of scars and other physical sequelae observed and documented during physical evaluations of HealthRight International's Human Ri Clinic (HRC) clients. These photographs were all taken by HRC volunteers over the years.

The scars have been divided into nine broad categories and eight search options. Each photograph has been tagged and described with at least the following information:

Category of Torture, Instrument of torture, Immediate Sequelae, Late Sequelae, Skin Pigmentation, Post-Trauma Care (if any), and Wound complications
Additional notes included in photo descriptions include the age of the survivor at the time of torture, biological sex of the survivor, country of origin, country where torture occurr year of torture, year of evaluation by HRC volunteer, parts of the body affected by torture, and any appropriate additional description.

Instructions!

- Read the instructions on how to use the database!

Log in

- Log in using your username and password

- For today's session, use

  Username: CVT-NCB
  Password: notorture

- This will take you to.....

Home   Database   Add DB Entry

HRC Photo Database

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The database is intended to provide a single, easily accessible database compilation of photographs of the physical sequelae of torture. The database shoul[...] assist HRC volunteers to compare the scars they encounter on their clients' bodies to the ones in the database and make informed deductions in their [...]

Click on 'Database'

- Which will take you to....

Home Database Add DB Entry

HRC Photo Database

HRC Photo Database Search

Welcome to HRC Photo Database

Sexual Torture (16/-)

Penetrating Injuries (52/-)

Lacerations (including whipping, cuts (102/-)

Forced postures (including suspension, restraints) (8/-)

Forced Positions (24/-)

Crushing Injuries (32/-)

Burns (including and electric shocks (47/-)

Blunt Trauma (including beating, falanga) (168/-)

Amputations (1/-)

This Page displays

- Links to categories of torture, clicking on which will take you to pictures that fall into that category

- Below this, there are pictures generated randomly; clicking on which will take you to the particular picture

- At the bottom there is a page navigation system, with page numbers

Caution!

- Please be aware that some photographs are very graphic in nature. Not everyone may be comfortable viewing them.

Viewing pictures for a particular category of torture

- Click on the link for pictures from the category of torture you want to view: Sexual Torture, Penetrating Injuries etc

- Once you have found a picture you want to see details on, click on the link above it: Photo <Number>.

Searching the Database

- After you log in, click on Search

- This will take you to.....

The Search Page

Search Key Words?

- Refer back to the Instructions Page!

Search Keywords Examples

blunt trauma, cutting instruments, knife, machete, stab wound, cuts, lacerations, swelling, bruising, scars, light skin, antibiotics, permanent deformity, age 45, guinea, year of torture 1999, year of evaluation 2006, hand, etc

Live Search: Example

- Find pictures of scars on the shoulder from penetrating injuries with cutting instruments in South Asia region for which the survivor received suturing after the incident.

Picture Details

- Click on the link above the picture that says 'Photo <Number>

Using the search results

- Depends on your need

Using the search results

- Compare scars for assessment if scars seem similar
  - Does my client's scar look similar to the one I found here?
  - What is different?
  - Is the other information (instrument used, age of the scar at the time of evaluation etc) matching or similar to my client's?

Using the search results

- **Research?**
  - What are the patterns and trends in torture by country?
  - By gender?
  - By year of torture in a given country?

Using the search results

- Teaching? Training?
    - Pick a demonstrative picture and use it to train physicians to recognize physical signs and sequelae of torture.

Next Steps

- Revisit the database thoroughly, ensuring the accuracy and comprehensiveness of information

- Weed out repetitive pictures

- Review by an experienced physician

- Quarterly update with new pictures

- Continually seek feedback from users and improve the usefulness of the database

Contact Information

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Questions?

THANK YOU.

www.healthright.org