

## [Call for participation | Drafts of history: the world in newspapers on a single day \(10 March 1881/2020\)](#)

Announcement published by Vaibhav Singh on Thursday, December 19, 2019

Type:

Call for Volunteers

Date:

March 10, 2020

Location:

United Kingdom

Subject Fields:

Communication, Cultural History / Studies, Journalism and Media Studies, World History / Studies, Historic Preservation

### **Drafts of history: the world in newspapers on a single day (10 March 1881/2020)**

• • •

#### **10 MARCH 2020 • LONDON**

Call for artefacts for an exhibition of newspapers

#### **CALL FOR PARTICIPATION**

**Calling all newspaper-lovers and print-aficionados everywhere to take part in our new independent project 'Drafts of History', exploring the world in newspapers and newspapers in the world.**

**Be our international correspondent: sign up to send us a physical copy of your local newspapers dated 10 March 2020, and be part of a major exhibition of newspapers from around the world that will be held in London in March 2021.**

Newspapers - in words made famous by *The Washington Post* in the 1940s - form the 'first rough draft of history'. Newspapers are also a bundle of contradictions, mayflies of the print world - short-lived, cheap, ubiquitous, and unreliable documents that are both instruments and recipients of a wide variety of use/abuse. Moving from drafts, advertisements, stories, and news to rags, *raddi*, wrappers, and pulp, in a matter of days, the printed newspaper has a particularly complex existence as a temporal and informational artefact. Thousands of newspapers around the world have ceased to operate over the last decade, and thousands more are on the brink of closure as ways of reporting and transmitting information change. Moreover, it is evident that we are at a juncture where not only the viability of the newspaper as a tangible document is under question, but when the free press as

Citation: Vaibhav Singh. *Call for participation | Drafts of history: the world in newspapers on a single day (10 March 1881/2020)*. H-Announce. 12-19-2019.

<https://networks.h-net.org/node/73374/announcements/5580854/call-participation-drafts-history-world-newspapers-single-day>

Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 United States License.

an institution is itself under sustained attack.

Now, as a myriad small and local newspapers across the world continue to teeter on the edge, and as the [Newseum](#) in Washington DC - one of the largest monuments to newspapers, journalism, and news reporting - [closes its doors](#) in December 2019, we are initiating the '**Drafts of history**' project, extending over the next two years. This project comprises a range of activities that focus on the complex, contradictory, deeply contested, and truly multifarious global history of the printed newspaper.

The first in this series of events is a **call for participation and 'collective' action** (never mind the pun). We hope to collect physical/paper copies from around the world to create a snapshot of **the newspaper as a printed artefact** in our tumultuous times. We invite all interested individuals - wherever you happen to be on the globe - to send us a physical copy of your local newspapers dated **10 March 2020**. The process of participation is relatively simple (see below), and there are also some material benefits of taking part.

Why 10th March? Because it connects to the second part of our project: creating a historical, comparative snapshot of **the world in newspapers on a single day**. One instance of such a striking collection that we are working with happens to be for **10 March 1881**- a treasure trove of newspapers from across the world, which we will be exhibiting in the coming year. We are looking to bring together March 1881 with a 'first draft of history' for March 2020. And, of course, to lay the foundations for future drafts of history in 2031 and 2081 - if we still have printed newspapers then - marking 150- and 200-year retrospectives.

• • •

## HOW TO PARTICIPATE

[Sign up here](https://www.contextualternate.com/collection01) (<https://www.contextualternate.com/collection01>) and tell us what you will send.

This is an occasion to celebrate your local newspaper scene, the diversity of voices, scales, and readership - you could choose your community paper, ones you encounter daily, or ones that you have never read, independent papers, the diaspora or foreign language press in your city, and so much else. Everything is welcome!

**Please note:** the newspapers will need to be sent by post to London (UK) at their own expense by those who are willing and able to participate and contribute to this project. Details of mailing and a PO Box address will be provided to participants who sign up on the project website.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch (see email contact below).

• • •

**If you know someone who may be willing and able to send us their local newspapers for 10 March 2020, please tell them about our project and help us include a wider representation**

**of local newspapers from around the world.**

**We only need a handful of people from any one city/country to be enthused and willing to commit to sending us newspapers by post - but we recognise that the task is nonetheless enormous, so any help you can offer will be greatly appreciated.**

• • •

Contact Email:

[editor@contextual-alternate.com](mailto:editor@contextual-alternate.com)

URL:

<https://www.contextualalternate.com/collection01>