

Promote Community Engagement and Challenge Prejudice with a Human Library

January 20, 2022

DiMenna-Nyselius Library



Our Presenters



Lisa Thornell
DiMenna-Nyselius
Library, Fairfield
University (CT)



Rebecca Hass
Anne Arundel
County Public
Library (MD)



Monica Powell
Anne Arundel
County Public
Library (MD)

Agenda

- How to plan and implement a Human Library program
- How are the 'Books' and staff prepared
- How was the Human Library offered successfully online
- Q&A

What is the **HUMAN LIBRARY®**

<https://humanlibrary.org>

- A worldwide movement for social change
- A conversation event to expose and breakdown stigma, prejudice, and/or discrimination

Have you participated in a Human Library?

- Yes, as a Book
- Yes, as a Reader
- Not yet

You can click the link in the chat to answer in the poll:

<https://pollev.com/oclc>

Or type your response into chat.

DiMenna-Nyselius Library - Fairfield University

Event History at Fairfield fairfield.edu/humanlibrary

- 2015 - Research Librarians discover and discuss the Human Library concept
- Early 2016 - meeting between colleagues from the Library & Office of Student Diversity & Multicultural Affairs
- Spring 2016 - Committee established with representatives from across the University
- Fall 2016 - 1st Human Library event held at Fairfield University: 11/9-11/10/2016
- 2019 - [Fairfield University's Diversity & Inclusion Statement](#) highlights encouraging dialogue, communication, and a culture of understanding through among other things - inclusive excellence and radical hospitality.
- 2020 - 5th Human Library hosted virtually due to pandemic
- 2021 - 6th Human Library offered hybrid



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DiMenna-Nyselius Library - Fairfield University

Planning Timeline

- 4 - 5 months in advance: choose date, submit application to Human Library organization, review organization Dropbox materials, select committee meeting date(s)
- 2 months in advance: start recruiting books



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Campus Partners

DiMenna-Nyselius Library

Athletics

Campus Ministry

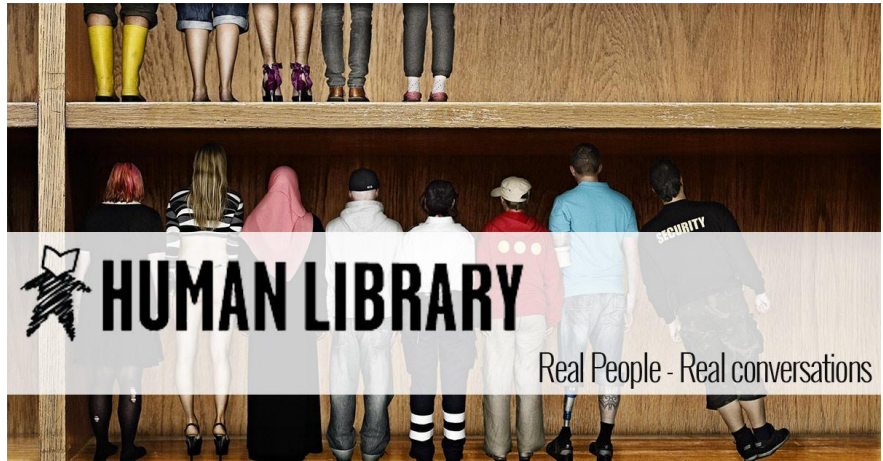
Center for Social Impact

Counseling & Psychological Services

Marketing & Communications

Department

Murphy Center for Ignatian Spirituality



Older event graphic. Provided by the Human Library Organization

Office of Student Diversity &
Multicultural Affairs

Office of Student Engagement

Office of Residence Life

Since 2016, **80 “Human Rooks”** and **1,942 “Readers”** have attended Fairfield University’s Human Library events



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2021 Catalog of Human Books at DiMenna-Nyselius Library


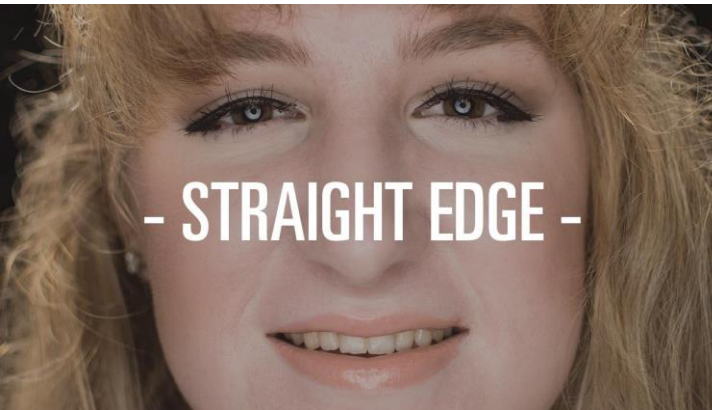
- ADHD
- Autistic
- Bipolar Disorder
- Brain Injury
- Disabled
- Early Hearing Loss
- Feminist
- First-generation college student
- Gang Rape Survivor
- Gaucho
- Grew up on Welfare in upper-middle class home
- Living with Cancer
- Mother of Gay Son
- Non-binary
- Music & Race
- People who Self-Harm
- Perfection/Model Minority
- Placed Child for Adoption
- Sexually Abused
- Survived Civil War

Book Training

- Mandatory one on one meeting with a committee member when they sign-up using our form
- Created a pdf with our event logistics and tips. We email this the week before the event
- NEW Human Library organization provides training opportunities

Marketing


- Digital boards
- Flyers
- Lobby signage
- Email blasts
- Tabling events
- Personal Asks
- First Year Experience



HUMAN LIBRARY®


unjudge someone.
@THE DIMENNA-NYSELIUS LIBRARY

a worldwide movement for social change that challenges stereotypes based on race, religion, sexual orientation, class, gender identity, lifestyle choices, disability or other aspects of life




HUMAN BOOKS

FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY STUDENTS, STAFF, FACULTY, AND ALUMNI WITH STORIES TO SHARE



READERS

PEOPLE FROM THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY WHO WANT TO LEARN AND UNDERSTAND



CONVERSATIONS

A SAFE SPACE FOR ONE-ON-ONE DIALOGUE BETWEEN HUMAN BOOKS AND READERS

FAIRFIELD.EDU/HUMANLIBRARY



5TH ANNUAL HUMAN LIBRARY®

@ THE DIMENNA-NYSELIUS LIBRARY, FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY

Sign-up for a 30 min. time slot for a *virtual one-on-one* conversation with a "Human Book" at The Human Library®. Human Books are Fairfield University, students, faculty, and staff with a personal story to share that can challenge stereotypes and prejudices.

Be part of the "worldwide movement for social change". Choose one book & register to be a "Reader": bit.ly/humanlibrary20



**VIRTUAL
EVENT
FRIDAY
10/23**

**GOT A STORY THAT CAN CHALLENGE
STEREOTYPES OR PREJUDICES?**
SIGN-UP TO BE A "HUMAN BOOK" BY 10/15
fairfield.edu/humanlibrary



HUMAN LIBRARY®

unjudge someone.
@ THE DIMENNA-NYSELIUS LIBRARY & ONLINE

Logistics

In Person Event

- ✓ T-shirts for all Books and volunteers
- ✓ Lobby greeter directing
- ✓ Check out board with book titles and 2-3 staff members
- ✓ Greeters provide list of books, reader rules/event guidelines
- ✓ Readers show up and speak to first available book or can wait for a specific book
- ✓ Approx 20 min. conversation
- ✓ 1-3 Readers per Book
- ✓ Conversations take place throughout one level of the Library
- ✓ Break room for books and volunteers with food, drinks, laptops for taking the assessment
- ✓ Colored card for Books to use if they need help
- ✓ Counselor available in a private room
- ✓ Photographer (and no photography signs for certain areas)
- ✓ Take assessment in another room after conversation



Photo used with permission from DiMenna-Nyselius Library

Virtual Event

- ✓ Registration through LibCal
- ✓ Sent link the day of and reminder 15 min. before start
- ✓ Received reader guidelines in advance
- ✓ Books sent a t-shirt in the mail
- ✓ Books could change their name on Zoom to their book title
- ✓ 1 Reader per Book
- ✓ Zoom breakout rooms
- ✓ Librarian moderates Zoom and has welcome and closing remarks. Puts assessment link in the chat.
- ✓ Sends follow up email to Readers later in day with assessment link again
- ✓ Need backup Readers in case someone does not show up

The Event Pre-COVID



Photos used with permission from DiMenna-Nyselius Library

The Event During COVID



Photos used with permission from DiMenna-Nyselius Library

Reflection Form

All readers and books are required to fill out a reflection form after their conversations.

2021 ASSESSMENT DATA

149 READERS

REFLECTED ON THEIR CONVERSATION
WITH A "HUMAN BOOK" ON 11/8/21

95% felt that the 'Book' was effective in communicating their story, including social identity, stereotypes and/or barriers they face.

91% agreed that through their conversations about the 'Books' experiences, values, and world views, they feel more connected to people who are different from themselves.

92% expressed their eyes were open to other experiences, perspectives, and world views that they were unaware of before.

85% were invited to question their assumptions about an underrepresented group of people

83% are now more aware of the diversity within their Fairfield University Community.

89% are now better able to understand their own social identity & experiences.



19 HUMAN BOOKS



SHARED THEIR STORY & REFLECTED ON THEIR
OVERALL CONVERSATIONS WITH "READERS"

93%

felt they were effective in communicating their story, including social identity, stereotypes and/or barriers they face.

93%

believe they opened the readers' eyes to other experiences, perspectives, & world views they were unaware of before.

73%

learned about their own social identity through telling their story to multiple readers.

73%

answered questions & voiced solutions about inequity & stereotypes.

Selected quotes from Human Book Reflections

“My most important takeaway from this has been that just by being me I have not only the power, but the responsibility to inform others, and to change people's minds. So many of the people I spoke to wanted to know how they could be allies, and how they could use their privilege to make a difference. **I have never felt more affirmed, or more sure of my identity, even in a community like this one where it's so easy to feel isolated.**”

“It helped me to think about the different layers of my identity, one's that i often don't show or keep hidden away.”

“I realized that opening myself up and **having discussions with other people is really important for my own well-being.**”

“I met one student who had the same disability I had. She and I had such a great conversation. I literally cried and so did she. We switched numbers. I am so happy I spoke with her. **She is the first person I have met who has the same disability as me.**”

“Unbelievable experience battling *my own* stereotypes”

“It made me feel more than I originally thought I was.”



Photo used with permission from DiMenna-Nyselius Library

Selected quotes from Reader Reflections

"I never really thought about how I interacted with people different than me because **I am usually surrounded by people who are similar to me. I not only learned about the "Book" but I learned about myself as well.**"

"**As a minority I really appreciate the university striving to show the diversity of the school** and make people more aware that everyone has differences but we are all still alike in many other ways."

"I realized that **my own social identity has a larger than I imagined impact** on others."

"We are so much more alike than different. **Our differences should be celebrated** not feared, ridiculed or victimized."

"I learned **the value of diversity** on campus."

"I felt really connected and it really **helped me to feel like I wasn't alone** in this community."



Post Event Wrap up

- Send thank you notes to committee, volunteers, and Books
- Send anonymous volunteer survey
- Try to get more people to fill out the assessment if they didn't do it the day of the event
- Offer a post event gathering for Books
- Review assessment data
 - save selected quotes
 - create infographic
- Write blog post* recap and share
- Planning team debrief meeting - document what well and what didn't!
- Submit documentation to the Human Library Organization within 30 days of event

*See blog post: <https://thednlreport.fairfield.edu/human-books-facilitate-dialogues-with-stags-at-6th-annual-human-library/>

Sharing the importance of the Human Library with others

- Helping other libraries, universities, and organizations through meetings and providing planning resources
- Presentations
- Classroom connections
 - a. First Year Experience
 - b. Extra credit opportunity
 - c. Assignment design
 - d. Post-event opportunities

CREATING SPACES FOR MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE: THE HUMAN LIBRARY AT THREE UNIVERSITIES

The Human Library is designed to build a positive framework for conversations that can challenge stereotypes and prejudices through dialogue. "Human Books" can be students, faculty, staff, alumni, or community members, who have volunteered to share their story with "Readers" to break down barriers based on race, religion, sexual orientation, class, gender identity, lifestyle choices, disability or other aspects of their life.

Jesuit values: Cura Personalis, Magis, Reflection, Contemplatives in Action

HUMAN LIBRARY
unjudge someone.

Additional resources: <http://bit.ly/jcuhumanlibrary>

DIMenna-Nyellus Library, Fairfield University	University Libraries, Loyola University Chicago	William H. Hannon Library, Loyola Marymount University
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Four years in-person event (drop-in) and one year virtual via Zoom breakout rooms by appointment.• Committee of nine departments as planning committee, led by the Library <p>Facilitated Dialogue through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Committee engagement: Recruiting books, advising on event logistics, and volunteering at the event.• Course Engagement: Work with faculty across disciplines to promote event. Students attend for extra credit. Provide list of possible assignments.• Assessment: Given to all books and readers as an opportunity to reflect on their experience and an opportunity for us to see the impact of the event.• Inter-Book Dialogue: Providing a space for books to interact with one another during and after event. <p>Barbara Ghilardi, Assessment Librarian Lisa Thornell, Student Engagement & Outreach Librarian</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A focused defined audience: Arrupe College of LUC offers a rigorous 2-yr associate's degree education to a diverse population, 1st-generation, & underserved students). LUC Students, Downtown Chicago Library community, local high school students also invited.• Two LUC librarians worked with the local Human Library chapter to set up the date. Both supplied books. <p>Facilitated Dialogue through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Engagement: promotion in classes, local community groups, academic department meetings and internal library meetings, and social events.• Assessment: Gave readers an end of discussion survey and chance to reflect on their experience. Also had stats provided by reservation software.• Interpersonal Reflection: Multiple readers were allowed with the book's approval and spaces were provided for books and readers to discuss and reflect on their experiences. <p>Susan Wardle & Annarda Alvarado Research and Outreach Librarians</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hosted 5 in-person Human Library events since 2013, planned by a committee of librarian staff and often in coordination with other campus units. <p>Facilitated Dialogue through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Engagement: Planned and hosted in collaboration with the Office of International Students & Scholars as part of the annual "World Fest" activities. Participants were selected based on "global/local" experiences and stories to tell.• Assessment: Attendees were asked questions such as "Do you feel like you learned anything from experiencing/listening to another person's global perspective? If so or if not, what?" to determine if prejudices, biases, or stereotypes were critically examined. <p>John Jackson, Head of Outreach & Communications</p>

"Creating Spaces for Meaningful Dialogue: The Human Library at Three Universities" *AJCU Justice in Jesuit Higher Education Conference*, virtual poster session, June 2021 <https://youtu.be/TUo4pYmXp4U>

A few things to consider before hosting

- Must submit an online application to be [Human Library Organizer](#)
- Will receive a license agreement to sign
- Organization has parameters around:
 - marketing the event
 - organizing the event
 - book titles
 - assessment/survey
- Human Library lingo
- Training for organizers (live on Zoom) NEW
- Training for Books (live on Zoom) NEW
- Your Books can choose to be part of the Human Library's book depot and connect with readers internationally!
- You may have a Book or two drop out at the last minute! Anticipate that and you won't be as stressed.
- It can be a lot of work BUT it will be worth it!

Anne Arundel County Public Library

<https://aacpl.net/human-library>

- How we got started
- In-person (2018, 2019) & Virtual (2021)
- Next: May 14, 2022 at Busch Annapolis Library

<https://www.aacpl.net/events/human-libraryr-unjudge-someone>





Photos: Anne Arundel County Public Library



unjudge someone.

Challenge stereotypes

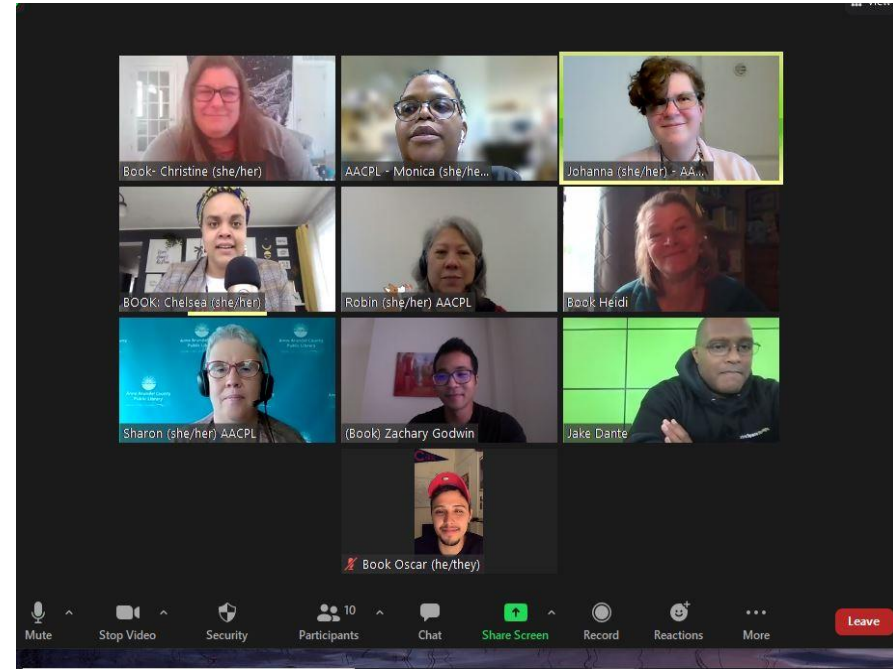
Dismantle prejudices

Ask the difficult questions

April 17th

10am ➤ 11am ➤ 1pm ➤ 2pm

Register at aacpl.net/events starting April 3rd



Books: Be Yourself, and Be Comfortable

- Be genuine
- Be ready to share, and share, and share
- But if you don't want to, tell your reader that and offer something else to talk about
- Ask the reader about themselves, and why they are interested in your book
- Have a conversation
- Don't provide advice or counseling
- Take a break
- Notify us if you have an aggressive reader
- Raise your hand if you need assistance

Logistics

- Readers will register at the desk or virtually, and be given “Reader Rules”
- Readers can check out a human book for 15 minutes
 - The time might end early
 - Staff will be available to help with transitions
- There will be a list with Book Title Cards and descriptions to choose from
- Repeat Readers are allowed if there is space and time
- We also encourage Books to “read” each other if possible

How we set up the spaces

- Reading Hall
- Green Room for Books
- Reflection Room for Participants
 - Readers will have access to Creation Station to decompress
 - Two clinicians from AAC Mental Health Agency
 - Journals, coloring sheets, colored pencils/markers
 - Quiet space

FAQs - Supporting Books and Readers

- Be genuine
- Be ready to support
- Resources: Reader Folder, Book List
- Books don't provide advice or counseling
- Breaks and Lunch
- What do to if we have an aggressive reader
 - Books instructed to raise their hand or make eye contact if they need assistance (read body language, observe)
 - Share suggestions
 - Security Guard

Partners

- Participation partners – help bring audience to event
- Promotional partners – share fliers, Facebook events, email distribution to partner networks
- Presenter partners – potential Books; wellness partners in the Reflection Room

Feedback and Impact Stories

- Surveys - Books and Customers
- Debrief session with staff and Books
- Tell Us What You Think:

<https://www.aacpl.net/form/tell-us-what-you-think>

Questions?



Lisa Thornell
lthornell@fairfield.edu



Rebecca Hass
rhass@aacpl.net



Monica Powell
mpowell@aacpl.net

DiMenna-Nyselius Library



Fairfield University



ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY
PUBLIC LIBRARY
& FOUNDATION



Thank you!

