Promote Community Engagement and Challenge Prejudice with a Human Library

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Our Presenters

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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/ocl

Or type your response into chat.
Event History at Fairfield  [fairfield.edu/humanlibrary](http://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](http://fairfield.edu/humanlibrary) 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
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
Campus Partners

DiMenna-Nyselius Library
Athletics
Campus Ministry
Center for Social Impact
Counseling & Psychological Services
Marketing & Communications Department
Murphy Center for Ignatian Spirituality
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.
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

- STRAIGHT EDGE -

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

- STRAIGHT EDGE -
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

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

https://www.fairfield.edu/library/humanlibraryevent/faculty_resources.html
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.”

Photos used with permission from DiMenna-Nyselius Library
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

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”  
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
(Virtual) HUMAN 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

[Image of a virtual event with multiple participants]
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
  o The time might end early
  o 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
  o Books instructed to raise their hand or make eye contact if they need assistance (read body language, observe)
  o Share suggestions
  o 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?

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Thank you!