Connecting Community
Through Human Library Events

Tarida Anantachai, Syracuse University Libraries
Jake Hare, Liverpool Public Library
Cindy Hibbert, Liverpool Public Library
Abby Kasowitz-Scheer, Syracuse University Libraries
Pauline Lynch Shostack, Coulter Library, Onondaga Community College

NYLA 2016 Annual Conference
Background

“Beyond the Pages”
Background (cont.)

http://humanlibrary.org

https://clrc.org/resources/human-library
“How are we to understand each other, if we do not have the opportunity to talk to each other?”

Ronni Abergel, Inventor of the Human Library™
http://humanlibrary.org/human-library-organizers
Preparing a Human Library Event
# Marketing and Recruitment

For assistance completing this form, please email askcrows@syr.edu.

**Human Book Suggestion**

**Name of the person to be a Human Book (Required)***

**Title** or topic of the book (Required) **

Short description of the person and topic. Please include the person's background or experience related to the topic. Final versions of titles and descriptions will be confirmed with human book volunteers. (Required) **

**Contact information for proposed human book**

**Email (Required)***

**Phone number (Required; ###-###-#### format)***

Affiliation of Human Book

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Join us for Syracuse University's Third Annual
**HUMAN LIBRARY**

**Wednesday, April 6**
**Bird Library**
**Noon to 4 P.M.**

**What is a “Human Library”?**
A Human Library encourages people from different backgrounds to talk with and learn from each other in a safe environment. The event promotes tolerance and understanding, challenges stereotypes, and celebrates diversity within our community. Come have a conversation with a Human Book—volunteers from the SU community who share stories about their life experiences and backgrounds.

**Human books will be available on these and other topics:**
- Kazakhstan
- Mental health
- Architecture
- Student veterans
- Human library
- Documentary television
- Yoruba of Nigeria
- Meditation
- Bookbinding
- Native Americans
- Transgender
- Minerals
- Jazz guitar
- Beijing

To view the full schedule and reserve a human book acquaintance, visit:
[http://researchguides.library.syr.edu/humanlibrary](http://researchguides.library.syr.edu/humanlibrary)

Partners are the Disability Equalization Center, the LGBT Resource Center, the International Student and Scholar Services, the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the Office of International Affairs, and the Multicultural Center for International Services.
TIPS for BOOKS in the HUMAN LIBRARY:

You will have 20 minutes with each reader. Just be yourself: Be honest and open, and talk and listen carefully.

Please prepare yourself for your role as a Book; be accurate and knowledgeable about your topic. You may even want to prepare some factual information, such as statistics or research data, to field questions or comments your readers may have.

Be ready to share your personal experiences, but if questions become too intimate, feel free to decline to answer.

As your reader borrowed your Book specifically for your topic, please try to limit your story to that topic. Additional information about yourself should be offered only for illustration.

Be prepared to repeat yourself again and again, as different readers might pose the same questions. Try to treat your reader as if they are the first person you are giving this information to.

Every reader borrowing you will be different, and the reason for choosing your Book can vary greatly. A good question to start the discussion is “Why did you choose my Book?” This will give you a first impression of the reader’s interest.

[...etc.]
Event Logistics
Assessment and Follow-Up

Reader feedback:

- “Meeting a person I probably would not have met otherwise.”
- “That it was a one-on-one interview.”
- “I was given inspiration to continue to push on in life.”
- “I think they should do this every semester. It is a unique experience that helps to expand knowledge through social interaction, which you do not always get in a classroom.”
- “I want to be a ‘book’ next time!”
Human book feedback:

- “I think many of them were using their conversation with me about my experiences as a means for simultaneously **working through things about themselves**. There was **something almost therapeutic** about it at times.”

- “I **learned from them** as much as I hope they learned from me.”

- “Being a book helped me realize that **sharing my story has benefited so many other people** and that **it is worth putting myself out there**.”

- “The setting was **more intimate than presenting to a room full of people** and gave the ‘human book’ and the ‘reader’ the opportunity to address detail and explore side topics related to the topic being ‘read.’”
Human book feedback (cont.):

- “There is something extremely warm and personal about the exchange between a ‘Human Book’ and the ‘Reader.’ As a Human Book, I felt that I was really just having a conversation with someone, much like a conversation I would have with a neighbor in my driveway.” Information is shared, questions are asked, and learning takes place in a way that is so casual and fun, one might forget that it's research! But that's what it is—customized research where the ‘Reader’ can steer the conversation in the direction that is most helpful while getting immediate answers to his/her questions as well as the immediate opportunity to clear up confusion. I think we all found it to be a rewarding and enjoyable experience.”
Other Opportunities
CLRC Human Library Special Interest Group - https://clrc.org/resources/human-library

The Human Library Organization - http://humanlibrary.org

Syracuse University Libraries Human Library guide - http://researchguides.library.syr.edu/humanlibrary