



# Human Library Programs

## Asian Experience

---

Joseph Yap  
Senior Expert Librarian  
Nazarbayev University, Kazakhstan

International Talks: Visiting International Librarians #7  
15 July 2021

# What to Expect?

---

By the end of this talk, the participants will gain knowledge about:



The concept of Human Library



The Human Library Experience



Human Libraries in Asia

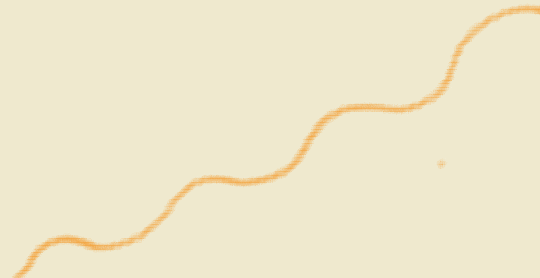
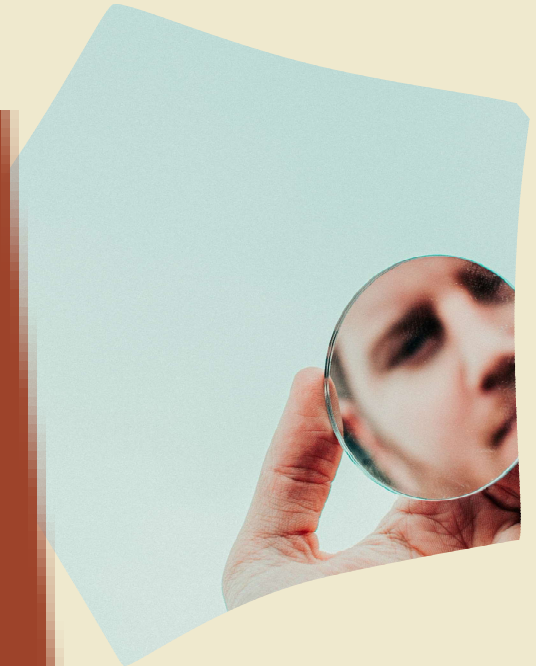


## Grab a Mirror

---

How often do you look yourself  
in the mirror?

If the mirror can speak, what will  
it tell you to the kind of person  
you've become?





How judgemental are you?

VIDEO REMOVED: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=djzamG6Hoj8>

1958 Foreign exchange: Philippines, Malaya, Thailand, Iceland, Turkey, Greece. Subject:

**Prejudice**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=djzamG6Hoj8>

# How do you react when you see/hear/encounter a person different from you?



Source: <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/health-sports-psychology/health/emotions-and-emotional-disorders/content-section-2.2>

## Basic emotions (Ekman, 1972)

FEAR

DISGUST

ANGER

SURPRISE

HAPPINESS

SADNESS



Personal Relationship: Divorced

Vocation: Gardener

Political Affiliation: Democrat

Stigma: Unemployed

Ethnicity/Religion: Agnostic

## Social Identities





Overweight



Minority



Religion



# Prejudice

An unfavorable opinion formed against a person  
or  
group based on a stereotype.

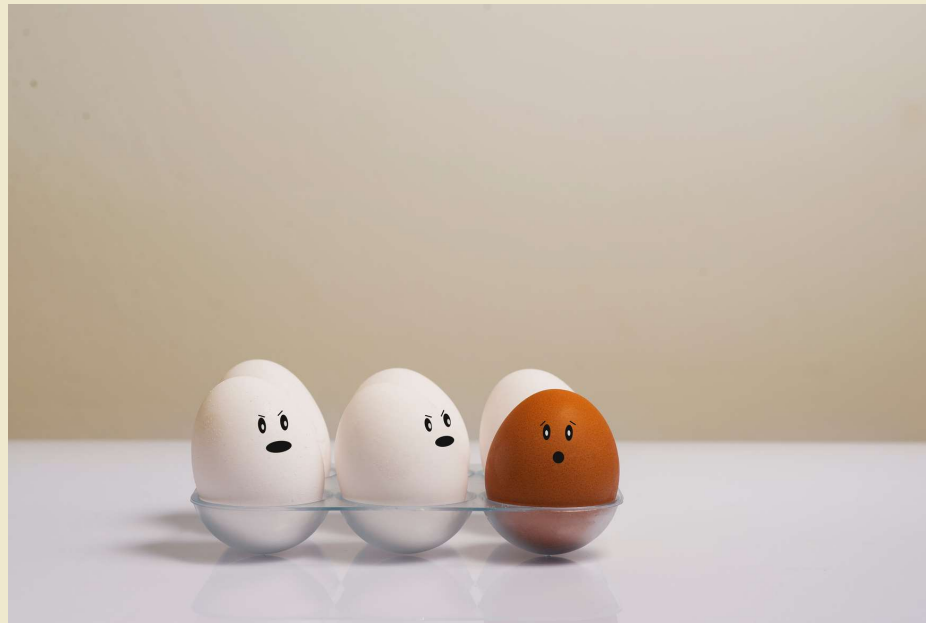
(Source: <http://remember.org/guide/history-root-stereotypes>)

**Indonesian vs Indonesian**

**Indonesian vs Non-Indonesian**

**Indonesia vs Global Population**

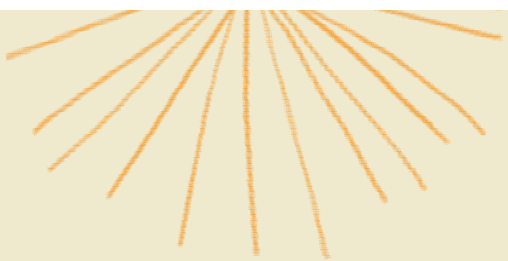
# What is your bias/prejudice?



# Cultural Diversity



Human Library addresses misinterpretation and misunderstanding among cultural groups (Yap, Labangon, & Cajés, 2017).

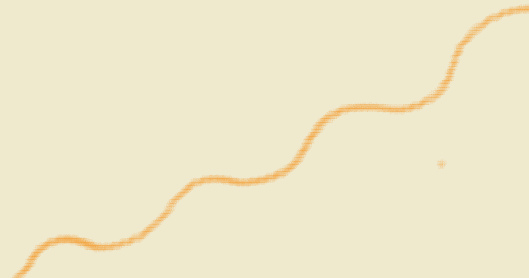


# Human Library

---

Venue for dialogue among those stereotyped, judged, oppressed and discriminated against (Yap, 2020).

Started in Denmark in 2000.





## Human Library

Lessen existing forms of stereotyping and branding  
(Yap & Labangon, 2018)

The program's ultimate vision is to empower people to accept themselves and let others view those who are prejudiced with tolerance and understanding  
(Yap & Labangon, 2015)



# Role of Libraries

---

Shared safe place for all. A venue for truthful conversation pieces – making the library an indispensable learning opportunity for everyone.

(Yap & Labangon, 2017)



# Human Library Experience: Organizers



## Build a Committed Team

Gather team members who are open-minded and are willing to change the world for a better place.

## Be positive

Because of its sensitivity, the team must be prepared for all the challenges. The team must convince themselves first before embarking on the ideals of the campaign. It is time to end prejudice.



# Human Books

Based on prevalent prejudices existing in the community. Survey may be used to identify a list.

Scouting or searching of volunteers is quite challenging.

You may ask to sign a volunteer agreement.



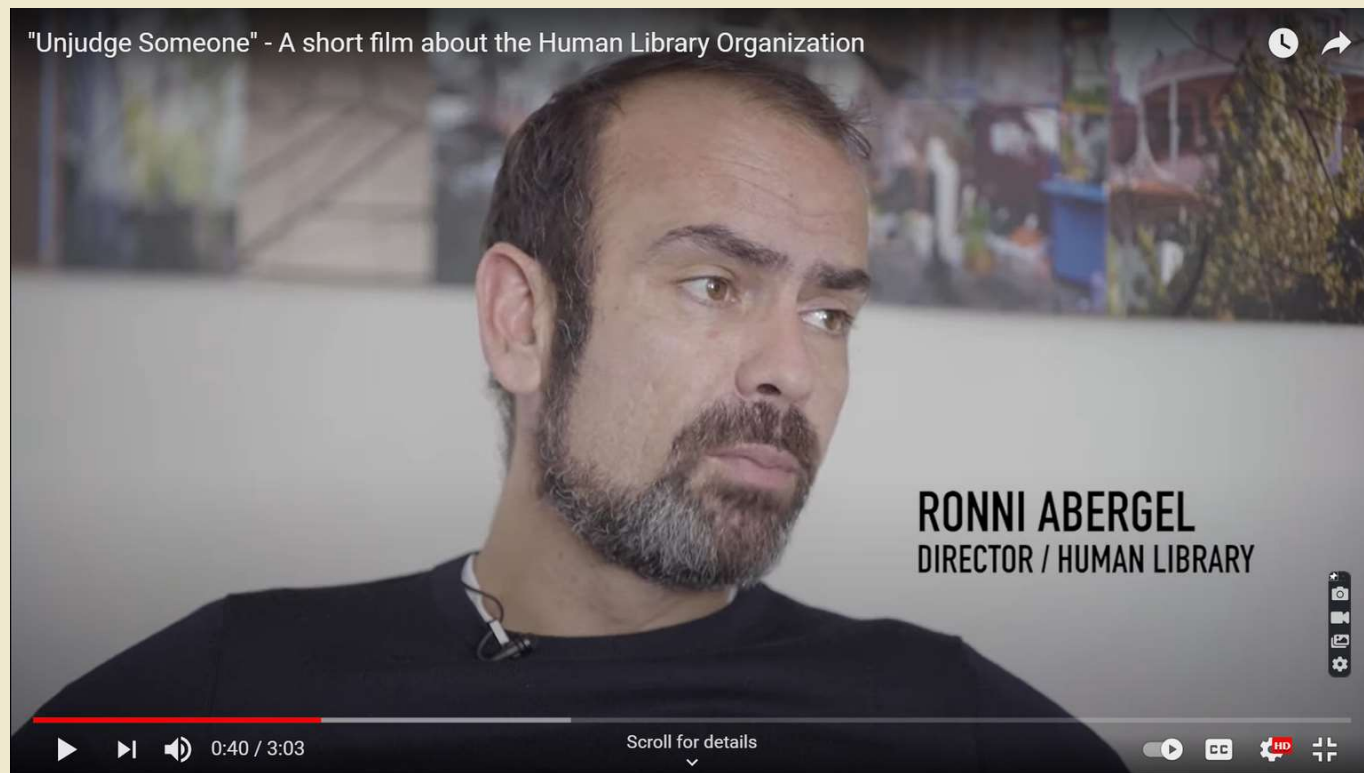
A composite image of promotional materials for the Human Library. On the left is a graphic of a bookshelf with ten books, each representing a different topic and featuring a photo of a volunteer. The books are: 'WITH CARBON', 'FROMM LAY', 'LIFE', 'GAY', 'KIDNAP', 'MILITARY', 'TRANSGENDER', 'STRANGE MEN', 'LIFE LINE', and 'WITH 1 BROTHER'. On the right is a poster for 'THE HUMAN LIBRARY' event. The poster includes the date 'November 18, 2014, 10:00 AM' and the location '12th floor, The Learning Commons'. It also features a grid of book covers with titles like 'POLITICS', 'THE 15%', 'STROLLER', 'PLIGHT', 'MARTIAL LAW', and 'BAND'. The poster has a header with logos for 'Libraries', 'HUMAN LIBRARY', and 'AP'.



**Summary of the human books.** Our human books vary with every session and we strive to provide a diverse selection to our readers. In the course of our implementation of this program, we have classified the prejudices in the following:

- 1) *Physical traits.* e.g. person with tattoo, overweight, underweight; person with physical deformities, blind, midget;
- 2) *Gender preference.* e.g. lesbian, gays, bisexual and transgender;
- 3) *Profession.* e.g. politician, policeman, banker, businesswoman, columnist, fitness teacher, lingerie model, young entrepreneur;
- 4) *Religious belief/practice.* e.g. atheist, Buddhist monk, Muslim, nun;
- 5) *Afflicted with disease.* e.g. person living with HIV;
- 6) *Distinct character.* e.g. geek, person with third eye, vegetarian, animal lover; strict parent, social activist.

# Documentation





## Readers

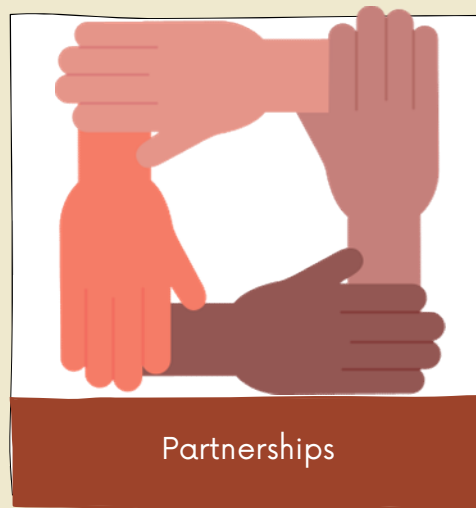
Pre-register or Walk-in  
(Yap & Labangon, 2015).

May ask unscripted questions to clarify things based on their views on the subject of the human book. They can personally ask questions and learn from a different perspective.



# Campaign & Promotion of HL

---



# Evaluation and Reaction from Books & Readers

## Human Books

"I hope I gave the readers something to think about."

"It was great. I want to do this again if given a chance",



## Reader

s

"I learned something new based on the experience of the human book. My prejudice towards the subject decreased."

"That understanding is [the] key to learning."



# Tokens/Certificates

Give some love to your volunteers

# Kazakh Experience



## Five Sessions Held

At Nazarbayev University Library, Human Library events started in 2016, and the Library has hosted five of these activities.

Readers noted that the most important experiences they gained from this program included acknowledging the existence of these communities, understanding the difficulties biases can cause other people, and listening to wonderful stories that changed their perspectives.

Kazakhstan

Relevant SDGs

Share this story:

### “HUMAN LIBRARY” IN KAZAKHSTAN PROVIDES SAFE SPACE FOR DISCRIMINATED COMMUNITIES

In Kazakhstan, communities which are not a part of the country's five main religious groups face discrimination. Ethnic minorities experience violence and hate crimes, and the LGBTQ+ community experiences violence and discrimination which leads them to hide their identities due to fear. Minorities are underrepresented politically, and cases of suicide have been linked to the pressure of acceptance. These are just some of the problems facing Kazakh society.

The human library is a social movement that originated in Denmark in 2000. It addresses the issue of discrimination based on religion, ethnicity, political opinion, gender, sexual orientation and disability and aims to create an open dialogue where people can challenge their stereotypes.



# Human Library in ASEAN



Thailand - 2010

Singapore - 2011

Malaysia - 2013

Philippines - 2014

Vietnam - 2016

Indonesia - 2016 (Bandung); 2019 (Jakarta)





# Human Library Videos

You may watch some Human Library Videos in YouTube  
Griffith University Libraries

# SDG Story

## Kazakhstan Relevant SDGs



SDG stories demonstrate how libraries and access to information contribute to improved outcomes across all SDGs.



Human Library Org

@TheHumanLibrary



"It's making me examine where I have biases, why they exist. Possibly the best event ever attended in 30 years of leadership roles" - Reader Review from Tesco.

[#unjudgesomeone](#) [#humanlibrary](#) [#tesco](#) [#online](#)  
[pic.twitter.com/l4slq2xNVR](https://pic.twitter.com/l4slq2xNVR)

05.05.2021, 9:21 PM



humanlibraryorganization  
Kildevældsparken Legeplads



16 likes

humanlibraryorganization Today we're hosting an event for our youngest readers 📖 #humanlibraryforchildren #unjudgesomeone #curiosity #diversity



**Ben Caron** <bencaroncreates@gmail.com>

to ben.caron, bcc: me ▾

Tue, May 11, 2:46 AM



Hi! You're getting this email because you attended a previous Human Library event, and we'd be glad to have you join us Saturday, May 22nd from 11AM-1PM PST for our Human Library event on Zoom!

\*\*\*\*\*

If you, or others you know, would like to join us, please sign-up using our registration link: <https://forms.gle/qLhmSv6FsVw6xkZz5>

The Zoom link will be emailed at least 3 days before the event, most likely earlier. If you haven't received your link by an hour before the event, feel free to reply to this email and I'll send to you directly.

**A NOTE ABOUT TIME ZONES:** This event is programmed at 11AM Pacific Standard Time. As this is an international event, it's common to get confused about time zones, [so here's a link that will translate our event time to your time zone.](#)

We hope you can join us! Thanks!

<ben.caron@humanlibrary.org  
>

# Wrapping Up

Human Library is a response to SDG

Human Library is our response to multicultural literacy / MIL

Advance the level of social transformation and increase progressive human interaction

The human library becomes a safe space for persons who experience discrimination.



# References

ArchiveMC. (2020, Dec. 2). 1958 Foreign exchange: Philippines, Malaya, Thailand, Iceland, Turkey, Greece. Subject: Prejudice [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=djzamG6Hoj8>

Ekman, P. (1972) 'Universals and cultural differences in facial expressions of emotion', in Cole, J.R. (ed.) Nebraska Symposium on Motivation 1971, Lincoln, NE, University of Nebraska Press, pp. 207-83.

Yap, J.M. (2020). Unlocking the lives of human books: Sharing videos to inspire people hiding in **the shadows**. In **S.S. Witriani et al. (Eds.), Proceedings: ADAB International Conference on Information and Cultural Sciences (pp. 78-85)**. UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta.

Yap, J.M. & Labangon, D. G. (2018). **フィリピンと東南アジア諸国連合 (ASEAN) におけるヒューマンライブラリー = Human library in the Philippines and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**. In K. Tsuboi, M. Yokota, & K. Kudo (Eds). **多様性を育む「人を貸し出す図書館」の実践と研究**. Tokyo: Akashi Shoten.

Yap, J.M., Labangon, D.L.G., & Cajés, M.L. (2017). Defining, understanding and promoting cultural diversity through the human library program. *Pakistan Journal of Information Management & Libraries*, 19(1), 1-12.  
<http://journals.pu.edu.pk/journals/index.php/pjiml/article/view/1012/598>

Yap, J. M. & Labangon, D. L. G. (2015). Embedding corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities in an academic library: highlights on the social aspects of the human library. *PAARL Research Journal*, 2(1): 14-24.

# Thank you :)

joseph.yap@nu.edu.kz

<https://ph.linkedin.com/in/joseph-yap-2172b774>

