

11-8-2017

2017 Human Library Catalog

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Repository Citation

Jackson, John M., "2017 Human Library Catalog" (2017). *Human Library 2017 Promotional Materials*. 2.
<http://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/humanlibrary-f2017-materials/2>

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China's Four New Inventions

This Human Book explores the compass, gunpowder, papermaking, and printing – the Four Great Inventions of ancient China that had a huge impact on human civilization. In recent years, a number of China's technological innovations have been making their moves in the world. Among them, four stand out with a reputation of China's "four great new inventions" in modern times, which have made the daily life of the public more and more convenient.

I Swim with Piranha (and Then I Eat Them)

This Human Book is an LMU faculty member who has travelled to over 50 countries. He is an explorer. He is curious. He taught at a university in China and conducted research at a college in Spain. He drank ice wine in Montreal and banana juice in Marrakesh. He was a hiker in Iceland and a Fulbright scholar in Colombia. While traveling in the Pantanal wetlands in rural Brazil, he swam with a school of piranha, then fished for them, then ate them for dinner while alligators watched. He says “yes” to invitations.

Soaring Eagle and Hidden Dragon: Life as a Vietnamese American Jesuit

At the age of five, this Human Book's life was shattered as he tried to escape from Vietnam during the last day of the Vietnam War--the last time he saw his father and two sisters who were eventually killed while trying to escape as boat people. Through the years, he struggled with his own identity as a Vietnamese adolescent while aspiring to fit in and be recognized as an American. Life circumstances had other plans which eventually led him to re-immers himself back in his culture of origin and eventually finding his own voice and place as a proud soaring eagle and hidden dragon.

Don't Be Afraid to Change

This Human Book is an International student from China. This is her seventh year in the United States. But she is not going to tell you her struggles of being an international student or the great experience of "studying abroad." She would like to let you know: don't be afraid of change. Her life is all about change. When she moved here, she was 15 with 1 big suitcase, a carry-on, and a hope. There were good and bad moments from her journey of change. After all, she become closer and closer every day to who she wants to be. As they say: "Don't be afraid of change. You may lose something good, but you will gain something better."

LMU Human Library 2017 Catalog of Books

Co-sponsored by the William H. Hannon Library and the Office for International Students and Scholars

Karma and Creativity

This Human Book focus on issues of human agency/identity, environmental ethics, commitment to pluralism, exploring and enhancing rhythm within life, the twin practices of yoga and meditation, and a developing a sense of ritual connection with nature.

First-Gen Immigrant & College Student: Now Professor

This Human Book was born in El Salvador and emigrated to L.A. with parents at age eight. College at UCLA, grad school in UC Berkeley, and faculty position at LMU. Through it all (or perhaps sometime during it all), he figures out that mathematics is his academic interest, and that what he's most passionate about is helping ethnic minority students and women to pursue STEM and also to work with and advocate for the education of immigrant youth.

Transcending Borders

This Human Book will tell the story of their immigration journey to the United States as a young girl and some of the trauma that that experience has created for their family and themselves, especially during today's political climate.

Elias: Alias for Word Bridges!

CHAPTER 1. In the beginning there was a 'bridge'. Even God, scripture say, used words to bring to life the universe. So does man need to use words. **CHAPTER 2.** No bridge is built without immigration and migration. From the first humans who migrated out of eastern Africa to populate the world, human history has been a catalogue of migrations and immigration. **CHAPTER 3:** When bridges fall. When word bridges fall, ignorance thrives, hatred takes root, suspicion gets normalized and decadence and regression get prominence. **CHAPTER 4.** Books as bridges of history. Various epochs and ages have come and passed but those that survived have done so through the words they preserved and used as bridges through times to connect to our age. **CHAPTER 5.** It is not how many books you have read, it's about what kinds of books you have read that breaks or builds bridges.

Don't Seize the Moment: Let the Moment Seize You

Seize the moment. There is the notion that if we don't make the best of this moment or opportunity, we will lose something. There is nothing wrong with ambition and growth if we're pursuing them from a place of trust and acceptance—and not as an attempt to find something to fix or complete us. As an international student from Argentina, this Human Book will tell you about how they put into practice this philosophy during summer, while pursuing research in Black Holes, eating Asados with friends and backpacking/couch-surfing around Europe for a month!

A River Threads my Dreams

This Human Book was one of the only two Mexican students in Prague, Czechoslovakia, in 1986. As a film student, he witnessed the last years of socialism in Bohemia, and also the end of the golden era of Czech animation. He was an apprentice in the legendary Trnka Studios and Bratri v Triku Studios which have already vanished. With all its flaws and virtues, he fell in love with Bohemia and married a Czech. Once, the great writer and Mexican ambassador in Czechoslovakia, Sergio Pitol, confessed to him that he must not forget to take advantage of living in a city with a river, “because these kind of places have the unique quality of being propitious for deep dreaming.”

Always an Alien:

Navigating America as a Brown Immigrant

This Human Book will talk about their experience as a first-generation immigrant in the United States who has lived and worked in three distinct areas of the country: the South, the Mid-Atlantic, and the West. Anecdotes will include navigating culture shock and cultural difference, dealing with the new weather, encounters with racism, and making friends.

The Value of Perseverance:

A Life-changing Constant Decision

This Human Book comes from a small town in the north of Mexico, and she is a writer/director with awards in both fiction writing and filmmaking. She's been told that she cannot write, and when working professionally she has been asked “where's the director” since she's a woman. She is the first woman in her extended family to obtain a master degree, and the third to obtain a master degree from a foreign country. She has traveled the world by having her work selected at international film festivals. It is in those moments when she thinks about an action that she can do, just one, and after taking that step, life has always surprised her with unexpected prosperity.

One Hope, One Dream, One Goal:

Reaching the Shores of Europe

Hundreds of Africans try to enter the southern European countries every day in the search for a better life. They come from different countries, such as Mali or Sudan. Poverty and war are the main causes of their escapes. Only a few made it, as many drown in the waters of the Mediterranean Sea or are detained in Morocco before crossing the borders. The “fortunate” ones that made it to Italy or Spain are sometimes caught and retained in deportation centers. Some are let “free” but many are deported in inhuman conditions. Politicians and the media often used figures to refer to these immigrants but NGOs and organizations that help them know that they are human beings like you and me. They have a journey, there have a story behind. Do you want to know some of them?

From Five to Seventy-Five:

Evolution of Ganesh Festival in an Immigrant Home

This Human Book will share how their experiences of being homesick and nostalgic in their early years in America led to hosting an annual festival at home. In 2005, her husband and she hosted five people in their home in Los Angeles. In 2017, they managed to host seventy-five people at our place. They take great pride in cooking Indian buffet meal for all guests themselves. Over the years, they have introduced children to varied Indian artistic expressions such as north Indian classical music, folk singing from Maharashtra, and Sanskrit chanting. Her narrative will illustrate the challenges we faced, the ideas that we executed, and the vision that we have for this celebration.

Let's Imagine the Resilient City

The study of human-dominated landscapes, such as cities, is being transformed by a new theory called Ecological Resilience. The idea is changing the way we think about our life, future and what it means to be happy. Chat with this Human Book - you will never think of cities the same way again.

Disposition without Borders

Laozi, a Daoist Sage in 500 BC, says that “One who knows others is wise, one who knows oneself is enlightened.” This Human Book's story is about how resilience has helped them to deal with those difficulty political and social conditions from when they grew up in China as well as those tough times in their study and work in US.