Enlightenment of Living Library to Knowledge Service of University Library

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ABSTRACT

Living library is a brand new service way that has emerged in the library community at home and abroad in recent years. “Living library” is to take the "people" as "books" to build the new way of library knowledge services. The “borrowing” of “books” is to make face-to-face communication with people with expertise, providing “borrowing experts” for readers to answer questions and discuss with them, and provide a wide range of knowledge services and intellectual help for readers. At present, this kind of service has been tried in China. In the context of vigorously advocating knowledge services, the living library project can provide reference for the improvement of the knowledge service system of university libraries.\(^1\)

ORIGIN OF LIVING LIBRARY

Living Library Overview

In 1993, Danish Ronnie Buerger was severely injured after a party. After recovery, Buerger established a non-profit organization to "stop violence" together with four friends. Buerger believes that everyone has a tendency of violence, but if there is an opportunity to communicate face to face with their enemies, the conflict will be effectively curbed. “If people talk and communicate with each other, they will better understand each other, and the tolerance will come with mutual understanding.” Therefore, the living library activity was born. The living library is mainly to take "people" as "books" that can be borrowed. The way to read "books"

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is to "talk", thereby people can mutually understand and eliminate misunderstandings in life.

Now the theme of living library is not only limited to anti-violence content, it can also help readers to understand themselves from many angles[1], solve various problems in study, work and life, eliminate people's prejudice on some problems, deeply discuss social problems, and analyze social phenomena, etc., which has been recognized by the participants, the attention degree of the living library is getting higher and higher, and the participation scope is becoming wider and wider.

**Living Library Features**

The living library can be recognized by organizations and participants because it has the following four features: ① take "people" as "books" for the collision of thought; "You can always find something to learn from the people who keep you company", a person's social experience and life experience is a valuable treasure, a person's specialties in a certain discipline or a certain aspect are also valuable resources... They will be a "book" that readers hope to read; ② conduct instant communication and information interaction; through face-to-face communication, information can be instantly exchanged, which can greatly improve the reader's efficiency compared with the display and paper reading; ③ cover diverse themes, with a large amount of information: it can be seen from the theme of the Living library currently selected that most of themes are hot issues. Even under the same theme of the "bibliography", the information generated is also different, so it is unquestionable that there is a large amount of information. ④ adjust according to local conditions, so the location is flexible. The living library activity does not have to be carried out in the library, which is flexible and alive, so it first appeared in a mobile form during the meeting.

**LIBRARY PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

**Implementation of Living Library in Foreign Libraries**

The living library is currently implemented in the United States, Japan, Romania, Iceland, Finland, Norway, Italy and Australia. Most of the activities are conducted in public libraries or other educational institutions, festivals, book fairs, etc. There are special websites for such activities, too. The themes involved in the activity are mostly hot issues and social issues that are concerned widely, such as politics, feminism and others.

In 2000, Buerger organized 75 “books” that were very popular. The activity first spreads in Europe and then arrives in Australia and is currently spreading in North America. According to statistics, more than 100 living library activities have been held in 23 countries.
In May 2008, a living in London held the living library activity, and organized 26 books, and the “readers” could talk to people with a rare encounter in this activity. The process operation of searching and borrowing "books" was entirely same as that of the library.

The United States held this activity for the first time at the Santa Monica Public Library in California on October 4, 2008. The “books” included believers, star agents, and so on. Afterwards, the Bann Bridge Island Library also held a “borrowing” activity. In this activity, 15 volunteers were recruited, including former FBI officials and black single father, etc.

The Lismore City Library in Australia hosts a living library activity each month. In July 2008, there were 13 “books” available for “borrowing”. Volunteers wore black aprons with the words "books" printed in bright yellow, to talk with the "readers" in an independent space.

Implementation of Living Library in Domestic Universities

The living library activity of the Shanghai Jiaotong University Library was originated from the 5th “Advanced Seminar on Library Frontier Issues in the Digital Environment” held in December 2008, which was the first exploration of the “living library” in the domestic library community. In this activity, 15 experts in the field of library and information participated in this "living library" salon interview unit[2].

Experts and students made a series of discussion on various hotspot frontier topics, including: medical information technology; metadata, technical standards; knowledge organization, entity classification and semantic interoperability; library system; Web2.0, library 2.0; librarian quality, information literacy education, discipline services; digital resource management and preservation; visualization technology and other hotspot frontier issues. In order to conduct this activity better, the Library System Department has developed the living library online reservation system, of which the system functions mainly include activity management, expert appointment, tag addition, activity evaluation, and so on.

In March 2009, the living library activity, as a “special branch”, was included in the series of activities of Shanghai Jiaotong University Library discipline service system IC2 Innovation Support Plan Phase II, and is planned to continue the development in a normal mechanism throughout the university. Meanwhile, the work system with sustainable development has been explored. The project mode has also been applied to the library's discipline services, which is warmly welcomed by readers. The university has carried out a school-wide "living library" activity with the theme of "taking "people" as "books", sharing wisdom, and passing down the torch of Shanghai Jiaotong University between you and me". During the period from March to June 2009, the activity was carried out for 6 times, and selected five themes, i.e. study abroad, English, work (internship), postgraduate education, and scientific research. Four “bibliographies” were launched in each time for communication with readers, getting an excellent response.
The living library activity was held at a college library in Shijiazhuang. There were 35 living books for internal communication within the association in March, and there were also self-employed persons in the volunteer team.

In May 2009, the living library activity was launched at the Tongji University Library Reader Service Month, with the theme of “Together in the same boat, sharing the new knowledge of the living library”. The source of the living books is: experts in various fields, social elites, and teachers and classmates. The slogan of the activity is: “Life is like a book.”

**Enlightenment of the Living Library Project on the Knowledge Services of University Libraries**

As an organizer to teach students how to read in colleges and universities, and a library of colleges and universities that provides reading content and space for readers, that how to promote the development of students' deep reading and communication is an important mission for us.

At present, the atmosphere to implement the “living library” project has not yet been formed in China, and the "living library" project has not been practiced in the university library. However, as an important part of the information communication system, the library undertakes the functions of a true knowledge exchange center and information sharing space. In order to make a library become a "dazzling" information highway and make all resources "live", it is required to achieve effective circulation of resources and even high-speed circulation. In this way, the library's resources are no longer just print and electronic resources, but also have "thought-type "resources. The living thought is the most attractive, and the reading benefit it brings will be N times greater than that of ordinary reading.

The environment in which a university library is located is the most abundant and concentrated place for high-level personnel resources. All outstanding behavioral individuals on campus can be the resources for the library to “purchase”. The exchange of thoughts between readers in the library is a reflection of reading function of the library, making the library become a knowledge exchange center on campus.

Due to the special nature of the management of colleges and universities, the students have strict time schedules. Most of the collective actions do not have many individual behaviors, and a large number of courses make students have no more opportunities and time to contact the society and various groups of people, so they are lack of information in many aspects. Students at all levels of education need a large amount of information, and they also need deep communication and correct guidance for the information acquired in many aspects. The living library is the way to provide an effective function for this.
DISCUSSION ON SPECIFIC MEASURES OF LIVING LIBRARY

Determine the Theme and Explore Bibliographies

Selecting the theme of the "book" from the hot issues of the countries, colleges and universities, the extensibility and expansibility of the theme can involve any aspect required by the reader, which can also involve the professional discipline services. For “living books”, it can recruit volunteers at first, then gradually determine "books" for long-term borrowing, and finally continue to explore new “books” according to different themes.

Volunteers first come from college experts, professors, teachers, agency staff, or people with expertise in a particular field or discipline. For example, colleges and universities can take "basic experience", "college literature", "college student psychology" and "discipline discussion", etc. as the theme, to expand students' thought and explore students' potential.

Conduct Vigorous Publicity and Formulate Relevant Rules

Before launching the living library each time, it shall do a good job in advance publicity and preparation, and publish the theme, title, content introduction and publisher (Department or Grade), call number, book date, borrowing time, etc. to the readers through various channels, such as notices, posters, college and library homepages, campus BBS, and broadcasting, etc., convenient for the reader to participate in the activities in a planned and targeted manner.

Establish a "circulation" rule, so that readers can borrow these "books" according to their interests. After completing the borrowing procedure, each book can be borrowed for 40 minutes. The process for reading the "book" is to sit down and talk face to face with the "book". With the consent of the former borrower, the next borrower can join in the reading, to make one-to-one communication becomes a group-based communication, which can improve the efficiency of borrowing, activate the atmosphere of communication, and further enhance the connotation of knowledge sharing.

In the activity, each "book" is equipped with a recorder who is responsible for recording and summarizing the contents of the "book" and borrowers to extract representative questions. After obtaining the consent of both parties, these materials will be open to readers throughout the university and become a “campus manual” that everyone can refer to, so as to maximize the effect of knowledge sharing.

For colleges and universities, there can be concentrated borrowing activity time, and daily borrowing time under normal conditions. The role of these "books" is acted by the library staff as the part-time job.
CONCLUSIONS

At present, the Living library project is still in the stage of exploration. The experience of foreign universities and the attempt of Jiaotong University Library have set a good example for the development of the project and provided a model of the service system. As a new way to expand the library information communication function, the Living library project is also feasible to integrate into the normal service mechanism of the university library. In order to go beyond the daily basic mode, university libraries should emphasize the difference and strengthen the understanding and communication between the students and teachers, and give full play to the diversified functions of the library as a knowledge processing center, academic exchange center, innovation growth center and campus cultural center, and make the library become an attractive and influential academic innovation hub and cultural exchange paradise on campus. Living library can add value to the knowledge service system of university libraries and create a new path of hope.

REFERENCES