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### Nominations Sought for 2017 Common Reading Experience

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# Nominations Sought for 2017 Common Reading Experience

Community invited to suggest books for next year's freshman class

CTOBER 12, 2016 BY MEREDITH HUTCHESON

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2016 Orientation leaders pass out copies of this year's Common Reading Experience selection, 'Ten Little Indians.' Photo by Thomas Graning/Ole Miss Communications OXFORD, Miss. – Read any good books lately that you think others would enjoy? If so, now is the time to share your recommendations, as nominations are being accepted for the 2017 **Common Reading Experience** at the **University of Mississippi**.

Faculty, staff and students, as well as alumni and anyone in the greater Oxford community, are invited to take part in the selection process by nominating a suggested title.

This will be the seventh year for the project, which provides all incoming freshmen and

transfer students with the selected book, with the requirement that it be read before the fall semester begins. The text is then used during classes across the curriculum for discussion, enriching a sense of community among classmates.

The larger university family, including faculty and staff, are also encouraged to read the book.

"There are a thousand ways for students to learn, from downloads to blogs," said Kirk A. Johnson, associate professor of sociology and **African-American studies** and co-chair of the Common Reading Experience selection subcommittee.

"But books will always be the cornerstone of their college experience. And by assembling a diverse group of interested parties from across the campus, we're guaranteed to select a memorable book with broad appeal."

The selection committee meets weekly from mid-October through January to discuss all suggestions and finalize a recommendation. Nominations can be made via the online form at http://umreads.olemiss.edu/suggest-a-book/ until Nov. 11.

Variety is important, so recommendations from diverse people are encouraged. A few key qualities of desirable books are that they are less than 400 pages, available in paperback, written by a living author, published within the last five years and accessible to both students and community readers.

The 2016 Common Reading Experience selection is "Ten Little Indians," written by Sherman Alexie. Previous selections include "The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks," by Rebecca Skloot (2011), "Crooked Letter, Crooked Letter," by UM professor Tom Franklin (2012), "The Unforgiving Minute: A Soldier's Education" by Craig Mullaney (2013), "The Girls of Atomic City" by Denise Kiernan (2014) and "The Education of a Lifetime" (2015), a memoir by UM Chancellor Emeritus Robert Khayat.

"Reading and the exchange of ideas are at the heart of learning, especially in higher education," said Leslie Banahan, assistant vice chancellor for **student affairs** and committee co-chair. "The Common Reading Experience provides opportunities for students, faculty and staff to engage in discussions about one book and one author.

"The experience strengthens the overall academic atmosphere of the university, connects students to peers and instructors, and provides a variety of programs and events that are linked to the selected book. It's one of many efforts to enrich new students' first year at the University of Mississippi."

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