

**2004 Annual
Paris Meeting of
Human Dignity and
Humiliation Studies
(HumanDHS)**

16th - 18th September 2004



Meeting Notes

**Thursday and Friday:
Maison des Sciences de l'Homme de l'Homme,
Paris, 54, boulevard Raspail (metro Sèvres-Babylone)**

**Saturday:
Maison Suger,
Paris, 16-20 rue Suger (metro Odéon/St. Michel)**

Annual Meeting on
Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies

16-18th September 2004
Maison des Sciences de l'Homme
Paris

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Annual Meeting on
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Program Notes

Day One, Thursday, 16th September 2004

Maison des Sciences de l'Homme de l'Homme, Paris, 54, boulevard Raspail (metro
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Working Together: An Appreciative Frame

Evelin Lindner, University of Oslo, Norway

Donald Klein, Union Institute and University, USA

Linda Hartling, Jean Baker Miller Training Institute, Wellesley Centers for women,
Wellesley College, USA

- Setting a frame of “appreciation” for facilitating and enhancing the productivity of our work together.
- Last year we learned that it is not just the work we do together, but *how* we work together that facilitates our examination of humiliation.
- “Appreciate Inquiry” — Donald Klein introduced this concept last year. It involves practicing openness, “listening others into voice,” mutual empathy, respect (freedom from contempt and rankism), and not taking ourselves seriously.
 - An appreciative approach does not mean we have to “like” what is presented.
 - We will disagree, but we can practice “waging good conflict,” approaching disagreements with mutual empathy and respect.
- Hypothesis: Engaging in appreciative practice allows us to simultaneously prevent and reduce humiliations that are almost inevitable when people are working to connect across academic disciplines, cultures, language, race, sex, education, social class, and other differences, differences that enrich our work together.
- Periodically during the meeting we will stop to reflect on the work and *how* we are doing the work.

Introduction of Participants

Please see further down the complete list of contributors and participants.

Humiliation, Appreciative Psychology, and Relational-Cultural Theory (RCT)

Joint presentation giving an insight into the previous annual meeting in Paris, in September 2003, and how everybody fared since.

Evelin Lindner, Founder of Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies
Eric van Grasdorff, Freie Universität Berlin
Donald Klein, Union Institute and University, USA
Linda Hartling, Wellesley College, USA
Rebecca Klein, USA
Judit Révész, NY

Evelin Lindner

Please see her presentation on

<http://www.humiliationstudies.org/howeare/evelin10.php>.

First, Evelin shared her story of the unexpectedly expensive Kimono she acquired during her efforts to create “clothing for equal dignity.”

Evelin reviewed her 2003 presentation:

Theory of Humiliation:

1. Life story that motivated her interest in this work
2. Where did she study cases of humiliation?
3. What is humiliation?
4. What has she learned?
5. What do we do now?
6. Film on her fieldwork in Somalia

Developing a Theory of Humiliation

Humiliation initially presents itself as an extremely confusing concept. It becomes clearer, however, when one considers the linguistic core, which suggests that humiliation involves a downward movement – holding, keeping, and putting someone down. Interestingly, in 1757, a new meaning of the verb *to humiliate* emerged, namely to mortify, to lower or to depress the dignity or self-respect of someone (Oxford English Dictionary). Prior to this time *to humiliate* meant putting someone in his/her rightful lowly place.

Hunting-Gathering-Pride Society

Historically people have practiced “holding down,” initially by “holding down” nature and creating tools.

Agriculture-Honour Society

Subsequently also people were “held down” and instrumentalized. Agricultural societies (starting about 10,000 years ago) began developing hierarchical societal structures with

lower beings and *higher* beings. Some human beings became tools in the hands of others. The core of hierarchical societies was the abasement of some human beings by others.

Global-Knowledge-Dignity Society

However, while instrumentalizing people was regarded as utterly legitimate during the past millennia, the idea of human rights turns this into a violation.

Human rights ideals represent a revolutionary “U-turn” from the idea of ranked societies to the idea of societies of equal dignity for all. Human rights ideals aim at dignifying all humankind.

We currently find ourselves in the middle of a historic transition from one normative system towards another. And this transition began to gather strength about three hundred years ago.

Human kind introduced a gradient, 10,000 years ago, where underlings were expected to accept their lowly place. Aristocrats were permitted to defend their honour against humiliation, while underlings were not. To use a metaphor, underlings had to do the caring with the left arm (let us call it the caring arm), and had no permission to use the right sword arm. In contrast, aristocrats did not use the caring arm; they used only the right arm, the honour-defending arm. Both, aristocrats and underlings, were handicapped by using only one arm, preventing them from using the entirety of their potential.

Collapsing the gradient of ranked honour to the line of equal dignity means asking masters to come down – and underlings to rise up – both to the line of equal dignity. (Dismantling abusive hierarchy is the important point here, however, not necessarily dismantling hierarchy itself: functional hierarchy can coexist with equal dignity.)

In former times, ranked societies with masters at the top and underlings at the bottom were regarded as divinely ordained, as God’s will or nature’s order. When underlings occasionally succeeded to rise up, they usually kept hierarchy in place and merely replaced the master.

As soon as hearts and minds of people are touched by human rights ideals, the world changes dramatically. Now underlings are encouraged to invoke the notion of humiliation and feel feelings of humiliation that they did not dare to be aware of beforehand, or that they simply did not feel.

[Argument from Bhawuk about the choice of the word “underlings”: Mandela became an underling because of oppressors making him that.]

Thus, what we have to take note of, is that advocacy of human rights is bound to increase feelings of humiliation among underlings – with all the violence that thus can be created. Human rights advocates need to be aware of this dynamic, a dynamic which represents a risk for the human rights revolution (which, Lindner suggests, is the first continuous, never-ending revolution that humankind has ever put in motion).

The transition towards human rights entails certain risks because underlings learn feelings of humiliation that were weak or even absent before. Yet, usually, this risk is weighed as worth to be taken in order to build a more dignified world. However, we, the wealthy nations of the world, currently engage in compounding this risk unnecessarily and inadvertently by creating a humiliating gap between rhetoric and reality. On one side we encourage underlings around the world to interpret their lowly position as a humiliation violation of their human rights, and on the other side, we push them further

down (the gap between poor and rich has increased, both locally and globally; many poor get poorer).

Thus, we, the wealthy nations, contribute to making the transition even more risky than it already is, and thus live in dangerous times of the violence and terrorism that can grow out of compounded feelings of humiliation.

Globalization and Egalization

Lindner suggests a deep link between globalization and egalization. She defines *globalization* as the coming-together of humankind and *egalization* as the building of a world society with equal dignity for all. Currently globalization is “married” to humiliating ranking, however, it needs to be “married” with egalization. We have the rich exploiting the poor, and we need to build a *global village of equal dignity*.

What now?

Underlings, those who wish to rise, are well advised to follow Mandela’s “script” and

- step outside the master-slave dyad,
- begin to act autonomously, stop re-acting,
- teach master elites that change is necessary (this is moderation and NOT softness).

Third parties are well advised to focus on fault lines between moderates and extremists and facilitate alliances between the moderates in all camps.

Lindner rounds up her presentation by saying that her work is meant to stimulate, not to dominate, and calls for a Moratorium on Humiliation, and considers our group as part of this endeavor.

Eric van Grasdorff

Since last year, Eric and Evelin have been thinking about a HumanDHS newsletter and the website. Rather than hiring an outside group, Eric supervised the development of a website for HumanDHS, which has been very useful to the network. If the group needs to update the site, Eric has a friend who can be hired at a low price. We want to consider what additions would make the site even more useful for the group.

Donald Klein

Don’s major focus has been to do workshops and seminars on the *Psychology of Appreciation* – not western psychology, which is a psychology of projection. Don will be talking about communities and community dynamics during the meeting.

Linda Hartling

Linda continues to use the framework of Relational-Cultural Theory to explore the dynamics of humiliation. Humiliation keeps people from engaging in necessary growth-promoting relationships. Recently, Linda collected papers from network contributors various forms of humiliation to submit to the Journal of Human Rights. The editor of the journal will be sending the group written feedback about these papers.

Rebecca Klein

Rebecca took notes throughout last year's meeting and is continuing to take notes at this meeting. She is also maintaining a database for the Network.

Judit Révész

Based in New York, Judit has been networking with organizations as much as possible and doing ongoing communication and networking including meeting people and inviting them to join the work. Most of the feedback from these efforts has been very positive. Judit is a mediator in New York State. Because our work as a group is new, Judit poses the question of how do we maintain identity and create bridges to others.

Evelin Lindner: Final Comments

Evelin offered greetings from people who could not attend. One Advisory Board members was held up at the Oslo airport. Jean Damas could not attend because of illness. Francisco Gomez de Matos sends his greetings from Brazil via Eric and Veronique. Arne Naess and his wife send their greetings to all.



Patricia, Don, Vero & Evelin

Welcome by Hinnerk Bruhns, Directeur de recherche au CNRS, Adjoint à l'Administrateur de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme

Welcome!

The Maison is occupied by two different Institutions. The fifth to ninth floors house a post-graduate university. This includes 130 administrative employees and scientific staff who are not from the Maison, but come from different organizations. Founded with the ideas of cross-disciplinary efforts, researchers from different countries and from different institutions are given space and time and some funding for experimental research and new projects. There is a good research library available to doctoral students.

International Connections

Invited scientists come from abroad to work at the Maison for durations of one week to one year. Not all come to the Maison because some work for other universities and institutions in France. Many are from Europe and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, India, Pakistan, China, Japan, and increasingly more from Africa and Latin America. Not many researchers, however, come from North America.

Guiding ideas at the Maison are

- Bringing together different people who are working on common themes
- Looking for new ideas, mostly for ideas coming from the bottom up
- Most ideas are proposed by researchers
- Offering structured programs for post-doctoral students
- Publishing a catalog of work in the internet.

Somebodies and Nobodies: Overcoming the Abuse of Rank

Robert Fuller, author of *Somebodies and Nobodies: Overcoming the Abuse of Rank*, 2003

For a summary of Fuller's talk, please see his text *Democracy's Next Step: Overcoming Rankism* on <http://www.humiliationstudies.org/documents/FullerImpulse.pdf>.

Discussion

- There is fertile groundwork out there for this topic. For example, in the area of “participative management.” Because we have all experienced rankism, we can understand it. This may be a nonjudgmental way to discuss this topic, i.e., to “hold a mirror up.”
- You may have to be a comic and actor to address the issue of rankism at times.
- What are the tools to address rankism and how do you use them to *not* appear superior?
- It is hard to generalize experiences of rankism. One needs to consider a particular situation to use tools to mirror behavior. Then everyone in the group gets to add to the list, and then the list goes around again and again because things get voiced more and more with time.
- DC hotel workers are close to picketing because one of their major issues is dignity, explicitly saying that rankism is a problem.
- The presentation did not discuss confrontation specifically. Confrontation may help people recognize what they are doing.
- There will be confrontation, it is not a tea party, especially in the initial stage, but confrontation does not have to be humiliating.
- The difficulty when trying to counter humiliation or rankism is that the suppressed group may apply the only way they know, which is taking over the oppressors' means. In that case they get caught up in the system themselves. For example, the Woman's Movement (a room of one's own) moved out of the men's room but now we need a “third room” which is a shared room, where men and woman can relate to each other, where rankism is not practiced. And, on the way to third room there are many dangers.



Rick, Evelin & Bob

- This is why “waging good conflict is essential.” We must find more humiliation-free ways to engage in conflict to constructively confront issues of humiliation and rankism.
- For example, not everyone would agree that humans are “predators” by nature, as mentioned in the presentation. A recent newspaper article described interesting situation with a group of primates. The dominant males of a group of primates found some meat that they aggressively kept to themselves, not sharing it with the females or non-dominant males of the group. The meat turned out to be poisonous. Consequently, the dominant male primates in the group died. The non-dominant males, who survived with the females, became collaborative rather than engaging in the aggressive practices exhibited by the dead dominant males.
- In the presentation, “dignification” was one term used in reference to changing the dynamics of rankism. We have also discussed the concept of creating equal dignity. Another word to consider as useful for thinking about the transformation of rankism and humiliation is the word “mutuality.” Building mutuality in relationships suggests that relationships can be mutually beneficial, which moves away from the power-over dynamics of rankism.
- Rank is not the problem; rankism is the problem. Rank is not a problem if it comes with appropriate responsibility. How does one use responsibility with rank? The US places responsibility on the individual, i.e., if you haven’t made it, it is somehow your own fault; if you had really wanted it then you could have made it. What about the responsibility of government?
- Rank needs to be watched, in the civic realm, it needs to be watched by institutions, which includes divisions of governmental power, free press, and watchdog organizations. To overcome rankism we need system of checks and balances. When we do not have these systems, someone will figure out a way to take advantage of it.
- Another growing movement involves dialogue, or approaches to explore difference without confrontation. Understanding what happens is a function of what is going on between people, so people need to see themselves as a system. Part of our objective would be to make these tools accessible by disseminating them.
- We need more ideas as to how to make rankism a household word. What about using bookstores, radio, and TV?
- If you can hear resistance to the concept of rankism, you will know you are making progress. Resistance is part of change.
- Perhaps rankism could be addressed in educational materials for kindergarten-young young because old, or even comic books.
- There is a national program about bullying in the workplace and in school.
- The concept of bullying tends to individualize, which focuses on the bully as the problem rather than looking at the context that influences the behavior.
- How can we raise awareness of global responsibility? Evelin Linder took action in Germany in 1993. She went on television for six months asking people for ideas about how they can be part of global responsibility. Thousands of people responded by sharing the work about making a difference.
- Turning people’s mind is also a question of timing. We need to grab something that is in the air. At this point in history, we could start globally. This timing would turn many, many minds.

- As people become more conscious of humiliating forms of rankism, whole corporations are now being prosecuted. This would not have happened before.

Humiliation and Human Rights in Diverse Societies: A Cross-Cultural Perspective

Dharm P. S. Bhawuk, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Hawaii, USA

Key topics

- What happens in multi-cultural societies? How do we deal with the minefield of humiliation in multicultural societies?
- Personal experience:
 - Academic freedom means being treated with respect. In India and Nepal you are more likely to keep your ideas to yourself. Since moving to the US, Bhawuk appreciated engaging dialogue in America.
 - In the US, one can study anything you want with anyone on campus. Consequently, Bhawuk was able to learn things he would not have been able to in Nepal and India.
 - In the US, Bhawuk invited professors and colleagues and they always came. This did not happen in Nepal.
 - However, it was humiliating when he once was treated like a “go-for-boy” (in the US this is a student who does monotonous jobs like photocopying). At another time, when Bhawuk was proctoring an exam for a friend/colleague, he was severely cursed at by another professor who was angry at Bhawuk’s colleague. Although he filed a report to the associate dean, nothing was done until two years later, when a memo from the state government was distributed about work place violence following multiple killings at the Xerox Corporation.
 - So how do you deal with this?
 - Things like this happen all the time in multicultural societies. There are positive and negative aspects to multicultural societies. How you look at it depends on your past experiences – more positive experiences help you deal with the negative experiences.
- Disconfirmed expectations that occur when you meet other cultures can become a problem. Little things can get bigger. This is why Bhawuk uses the image of the minefield
- “Isomorphic attributions” means making the same attribution that the culture makes, i.e., learning to be accurate within the culture.
 - To prevent humiliation we need to train people to make isomorphic attributions
 - For example, “time” has different meanings in different cultures. Some cultures are clock cultures; others are event cultures.
- In the end, we have to deal with the experience of humiliation at a personal level.
 - Looking at the work of Gandhi can help us understand the rank problem. It can help us discipline and train ourselves to protest with dignity.
 - If you stand up with dignity, no one can take your dignity away. Changing the other person through your own suffering takes a lot of discipline.

- A story about Gandhi who met with a mother who was worried about her child eating sweets. Gandhi told the mother he would talk to the child but she would have to wait two weeks. So she brought the child back in two weeks. Why? Gandhi told the child, “I had to stop eating sweets myself; I did it for you” “My life is my message”, i.e., do what I do, not what I say.
- What about differences within the culture? One participant recommended the idea of network building, over-coming group misunderstanding by building horizontal social capital.

The Role of the Humiliator: Collaborative Discussion

Linda Hartling, Jean Baker Miller Training Institute, Wellesley Centers for Women, Wellesley College, USA, leads a collaborative discussion of the role of the humiliator:

Small Groups Discuss the Following Questions

Group 1

- Q: What are the fundamental motivations of humiliators? What are, for example, individual and social benefits?
 - People might be motivated by past experiences of humiliation
 - Narcissism
 - Using humiliation in an effort to become popular or part of the group – like in hazing
 - Humiliation is meant to be “pro-social,” for example, in military training

Group 2

- Q: What are the conditions or situational contexts within which individuals or groups may be moved to inflict humiliation?
 - An established group feels threatened or challenged, or vulnerable
 - Inflicting acts of humiliation is seen as retaliation for perceived victimization by humiliation
 - Humiliation can be an abuse of power in an institution where the perpetrator gets away with it
 - Humiliation may be built into the social structure, e.g., how people are treated at social services, in welfare office, and other institutions.

Group 3

- What are some of the ways we can safely disarm humiliators? Is this possible?
 - One way is to follow the practices of Gandhi and non-violent action; this does not mean that you are soft
 - Gandhi’s methods didn’t work every where – there are cultural differences and there is a right time – perhaps one of the strongest methods is by not giving up your own dignity
 - Getting to know the system well may help, because then you can learn to use the system to your advantage; sometimes you can even change the system

Group 4

- What are some of the ways we can prevent individuals or groups from becoming humiliators?
 - Explaining and sharing feelings without being judgmental
 - Staying with objective ideas
 - Reflect first on yourself and then on others
 - Listening to peoples' stories

Discussion

- Can we develop a *Typology of Humiliators*?
 - Many parents use humiliation to teach their children how to behave. What if empathy were used rather than shame or humiliation to shape our children's behavior?
 - When considering the use of the term "humiliator," it seems that it is more useful to define the *action* as bad, not the *person* (Arne Næss said in our 2003 Paris meeting: "There are no murderers, there are only people who have murdered.")
 - A typology could be groundbreaking because these words don't exist anywhere
 - In cross-cultural psychology, if we accept that we are all ethnocentric; can we then say that we are all humiliators?
 - Perhaps we should use the word "humiliation" instead of "humiliator" so that we are identifying the behavior instead of the person?
 - This way we can recognize it as a condition and a process, rather than an identity

Metafunctions of Community

Donald Klein, Union Institute and University, USA

Please see Donald Klein's presentation at <http://www.humiliationstudies.org/documents/KleinMetaFunctions.pdf>.

Donald Klein addresses the following question: What can be done to create the safety, personal and collective significance, ready exchange of needed resources, and opportunities for celebration that, we presume, would reduce if not eliminate the potential for humiliation to occur between individuals and groups? The purpose of this presentation is to stimulate thinking and understanding of how the metafunctions of geographic communities can work with humiliation.

Somalis in Exile: Do Somali Immigrants in Norway Feel Humiliated in Their Meeting with Norwegian Society?

Katrine Fangen, Department of Sociology, University of Oslo

Please see her paper on www.humiliationstudies.org/documents/FangenSomalia.pdf.

Discussion

- Shame and humiliation are different: to experience shame you have to share the same standards as the people you are feeling it from; humiliation can occur across cultures

- Some Somalis become more religious in Norway, perhaps because their feelings of alienation in Norwegian culture
- Some Somalis may use drugs, alcohol, or engage in violence in reaction to the difficulties of living in an alienating culture
- It is important to recognize the complexity of the situation; it is good to talk about the layers of the situation
- As immigrants, Somalis may experience tremendous “social pain” and may use drugs to self-medicate this pain; recent research suggests that social pain is processed in the same part of the brain as physical pain

Culture and Humiliation: The Meaning and the Consequences of Confrontation in Honour Cultures

Patricia Rodriguez Mosquera, Brunel University, UK

Patricia presents a study on the cultural meaning of confrontation in emotional episodes of disrespect and humiliation.

Key topics

- How does honour as a value shape emotion? Honour can be a central value in a culture. Mosquera conducted field research with different Dutch ethnic groups.
- Insults:
 - In Patricia’s study, insults are defined as humiliating events; therefore, direct confrontation is needed, which often leads to aggressive behavior
 - Insults are “core emotional events,” e.g., social events, usually a violation of social values
 - Insults attack one’s honour that needs to be recognized by the other
- There seems to be a strong relationship between being insulted and confrontation, but why?
 - Confronting those who insult you protects one’s honour, which shows that you have pride, that you have dignity, that you are protecting your reputation and that of your family
 - There are a lot of assumptions about this, but there is no research on the validity of this relationship
- Field study:
 - Most of the people included in Patricia’s study were second-generation immigrants who were bi-lingual and completely integrated in Dutch society
- Types of insults:
 - Interpersonal – often from members of their own ingroup
 - Racist intergroup insults, insults based on group membership

- The researcher wanted to learn about four things in her study:
 - The extent to which the offended party confronted the offender, the extent to which the offended party insulted the offender, and the extent of display of disapproval
 - The extent to which the offended party was protecting honour, either their honour as individuals, or their family honour
 - Whether there were psychological consequences of being insulted – did the offended party think about it later? For how long did it bother them?
 - Whether the conflict was resolved – did the offenders apologize? Did the relationship get repaired? Did people remain friends?
- Results of the study:
 - The researcher's statistical analysis showed that constructs across the 3 groups were statistically significant and that the paths were equal across the group (the strength/magnitude of the paths were equal)
 - There was a significant relationship between protecting honour and ruminating later, i.e., the more the subjects wanted to protect their honour, the more they thought about it
 - The Moroccan and Turkish Dutch reacted stronger than those with Surinamese and Antillean origin in terms of protecting honour
 - Confronting the offender, for some groups, leads to less rumination, e.g., for the Moroccan-Dutch
 - No differences in gender was found

Discussion

- First generation and second generation ethnic Dutch people are different than other Dutch citizens: are they socialized into new behaviour?
 - Are there various types of honour in sub-cultures? Is the construct of honour too simplistic?
 - Integrity and prestige are forms of honour important in all cultures; however, in honour cultures, honour is informing much more of their existence
 - Question to the researcher: Did you find that there are certain steps that one must take to maintain one's honour?
 - Answer: not specifically.
 - Conclusions:
 - 1) Confrontation carries a cultural meaning in honour cultures; protecting honour is that meaning
 - 2) Confronting humiliation with respect can be positive for some groups under some circumstances
-

Day Two, Friday, 17th September 2004

Group Reflections on Work Together from Day One

- What could we improve?
 - Because of time pressure, we may not be as gentle as we could be when we must move on
 - The first day was too long
 - Listening to other people's stories helps one learn about others and there is always a story for everyone in a cross-cultural group; however, the story telling method does not work that well with short amount of time that we have
 - It would be helpful to allow time to assimilate and reflect on the information shared
- What has worked so far?
 - There have been rich conversations, even though we struggled with many things, it all came together and it felt like one community
 - There are perhaps three functions of the meeting:
 - 1) Therapeutic value one gets from telling a story
 - 2) Sharing results of scholarly work
 - 3) Strategically figuring out how to change the world
 - These are all complementary
 - We did all three at the same time, without making ourselves aware which we were doing at any given point
 - We can do it the way we did, or make these functions more explicit
 - The presentations have been interesting and rich in information
- What could we add or do differently?
 - We should add time to discuss current events and international issues
 - We need to spend time identifying ways to build bridges
 - We can add time for stories
 - We need to get group agreement about starting and stopping times
 - We must allow time to assimilate information
 - We need to make the presentation day shorter

Reflections on Humiliation in a Cultural Perspective

Hroar Klempe, Professor of Psychology and Dean of the Department of Psychology at the University of Trondheim

Please see her paper on www.humiliationstudies.org/documents/KlempeReflections.pdf.

Key topics

- How do we challenge humiliation?

- Hroar Klempe was a conscious objector 25 years ago and helped create a national network
 - He proposed the 15th of May as a CO-day as an international day of meeting for conscious objectors; Hroar suggested it, but didn't do much more afterward (if you search on the internet, you will find this day was still alive; there is a German website that talks about the story; the point is that if a movement has a response in people than it will survive)
- “Reflections on ‘Humiliation’ in a Cultural Perspective”
 - There is a problem with defining humiliation – it is a very complex topic; semiotics are an underestimated way of looking at this issue
 - It is difficult to operationalise the term humiliation
 - Humiliation is understood in very individualistic ways, and because of this it is very connected to culture: the experience of humiliation is very diverse throughout the world and when we discuss it and ask, is that or is that not humiliation?, in some ways it could be and in some ways may not be
- We need to differentiate empirical aspect of the term humiliation vs. the theoretical aspect of the term
 - The empirical is something one could sense right now
 - The theoretical is general because you are formulating a term
 - To operationalise a term is to define it as well
 - The point is that we need to differentiate between what kind of level we are operating on when we are talking about humiliation
- How do we define different words?
 - Humiliation is closely tied to culture and defining both of these words is hard
 - In cross-cultural psychology, culture is defined by values
 - But with humiliation, culture is often found to be defined by social organization
- Cultural studies
 - Cultural studies started by studying pop culture in the 1950s
 - In the 1960s cultural studies were more oriented toward the French way of thinking in semiologic terms, which were a mixture of Marxism and semiotics
 - Michael Billig tries to combine psychology and culture: this means that culture is defined by exchanges of symbols, thus making communication central
- We can observe two orientation: Semiology / French / Structuralism on one side and Semiotics / American / Pragmatism on the other
- Nominalism: The word refers to thing: there is always a connection between the thing and the word; the word is the result of a thing
- Realism: This term is a general term which refers to the idea; it is a general aspect of the thing
 - Glad is opposite of sad, yet we have problems defining exactly what glad is
 - The way we use the language makes the distinctions, but the terms are not always clear
- Circulated signs of humiliation creates ideas of humiliation; if terms are circulated they gather content; if they are not circulated, we do not have an idea of what humiliation is
- Example of 9-11

- What did the reporters see? Initially, the way it was reported suggested that it was an accident; it was an accident and the victims were the planes and the people in the tower, not America
- The term of humiliation was not circulated immediately; in the first minutes after the incidents other terms were circulated; only a few minutes later messages from the government came about terrorism
- Although 9-11 may have been intended to humiliate America, humiliation is not necessarily an immediate reaction to a humiliating act
- Survey of Norwegian student responses to 9-11
 - Norwegian discourse described 9-11 as horrible, disgusting, sinister, but students were not frightened by the event
 - There was a high emotional reaction on the one hand, but this didn't change their behaviour
- Our ideas of what really happened depend very much on how the symbols and signs are actuated and how terms are circulated

Discussion

- Language is powerful in eliciting emotion
- The “war on terror” is a term that very much worried journalist/filmmaker Gerd Inger. Her colleagues used it visually when they began to talk about 9-11
- Do journalists create or reflect the situation or word?
- Author, Michel Foucault, who takes this to examine discourse and power

Northern Ireland's Dialectic of Humiliation

Paul Stokes, University of Dublin, Ireland

Key Points

- Paul presents a research project on Protestant and Catholic identity
- This research was inspired by an interest in the conflict of Northern Ireland, which is seen as a conflict between Catholic and Protestants
- This conflict seems to be no problem in the south, but there are problems in the north
- The methodology involved setting up resonant focus groups, i.e., bring people together for undirected conversation to talk about their experience of growing up protestant; the research was conducted in all parts of Ireland
- Intractable conflict: Thomas Scheff's theory
 - Ireland has been in conflict since 1590 or so, but it has gone in waves – bloodshed, then fighting war, then quiet, then again bloodshed
 - Then, in 1968, there was an upsurge of violence which is now heading into quiet again
- In Paul's research, he tried to look for the markers of shame that scholars had talked about
 - Some of the research was very traumatic and some of the researchers became ill during the process
 - Paul wondered if the “shame-rage theory” was applicable?

- All the markers are based on individual interactions in Scheff's book
- How do we separate the individual shame say from a fight with your wife, to shame that leads to war?
- What kind of conflict is it in Northern Ireland?
 - Religious war?
 - Class war?
 - Clash of Nationalisms?
- Paul finally concluded that conflict is due to damaged social bonds and the operation of bi-modal alienation, engulfment and the loss of personal identity
- In 1590 a pattern of inward migration began, the Irish were replaced with people from the UK
- In the South a social hierarchy was created and people were not displaced, this created a stable social hierarchy with lords and ladies becoming part of Irish society
- In the North, there was a pattern of competitive exclusion and a siege mentality began to take shape
 - Colonists felt unsafe to go out, natives felt displaced
 - Heimat, or a "sense of belonging" was lacking in Northern Ireland and this produced profound sense of insecurity
 - Is shame an adequate concept here?
 - Paul found (through studying the videos) that there were shame markers in the south; however, there were no shame markers in the Northern Ireland
 - In the North, people felt they should have hit the Catholics harder
- Margalit talks about humiliation involving exclusion and rendering people powerless
- This research generated a set of markers that one might apply to a society, specifically to the Northern Ireland situation
- Bloody Sunday
 - 13 people were shot dead on Bloody Sunday
 - Catholics lived in a state of humiliation, so they set out to protest and in this way they developed pride and a sense of achievement, and with this strength and self-confidence they can lay down their arms
 - Catholics wanted peace, but the Protestants were in turn humiliated and now they don't want to give more to the Catholics
- Today Sinn Fein wants *parity of esteem*

Discussion

- This research is a model we would like to see expand to the rest of the world
- This work describes the qualities of relationships that can lead to war or peace
- The military force of Sinn Fein (which means "ourselves alone") led them to power
- Were there economic factors/problems?
 - People were competitive about getting the land back and keeping the land
- Extremists have to make the agreement because they have credibility; the moderates were viewed as always selling others out, giving in too easily
- The core of the problem is that we all want to be equal in dignity



Paul

- Humbling vs. humiliation
 - When people feel forced to come down then it is humiliating; however, if they choose it, then it can be a source of pride
 - How do we convince them to come down?
 - Conceptualizing this change as up and down may get us into trouble; perhaps it is better to ask to move into a different plane?
 - The idea of the third room: Gerd Inger's daughter came up with the idea of the third room.
 - Isn't it making this type of effort too rosy?
 - The third room suggests creating new relationships that will lead to benefits for everyone

“Open Space”: Future Directions of Our Work

Donald Klein, Facilitator (his approach is based on coaching from Alan Klein)



Gerd Inger & Don

Key Topics

- As an individual or as a group, identity is still identity
 - Leaving a group can create retaliation from the group; such as the betraying or rejecting of personal roots
- It is not enough to stop humiliating people
 - People need to know that what they are contributing is recognized
 - People need the reciprocity of mutual recognition
 - It is not enough that a person feels he/she is a good soul, he/she must feel that she is contributing something useful to the group
- Are we looking for a conflict-less society?
 - We need to encourage diversity and be inclusive?
 - Conflict is inevitable
 - Conflict tends to mean disagreement, difference, warfare?
 - When we are looking for diversity and difference, we sometimes have disagreement and conflicts
 - However, there are destructive and constructive approaches to conflicts – Jean Baker Miller, Morton Deutsch
 - We are trying to find a new language that makes it safe for all of us, whether our identity is self or group; we are trying to find a language to make it safe to go into the third plane where we are able to disagree, able to have conflict that is not destructive and it is important to seek it on a level that is viable
 - We are seeking a language that lessens conflict but also enables us to meet destructive conflict and change it into constructive conflict
- Perhaps we should work for *parity of esteem* (Shin Finn's phrase)!
- Problem: When Hroar Klempe was a conscientious objector, the aim was to avoid means that were physically violent.

- Avoiding humiliation is almost impossible to practice because it goes further than the pacifist way
- You can't always use Gandhi's way because sometimes it can be too idealistic
- How can we conduct conflict, when we want to continue the relationship?
- If you don't give up your dignity, no one can take it away from you; when the humiliator is not able to inflict humiliation, it is the ultimate defeat of the humiliator
- Perhaps we focus too much humiliation instead of on dignity?
- On strategy to transform humiliation is to develop a critical mass of people working against these practices
 - Mandela was supported by a critical mass of people
 - Other examples are Freire in South America, who engaged in educational activity to make people more knowledgeable to use their power for change
 - Saul Alinsky would look for where oppressors were vulnerable, and then target them at that point; he used embarrassment
 - Is there justified shame versus humiliation?
- Mutual empathy helps promote understanding that is necessary for relationships to move to a new, better place; it is a powerful tool
- Respecting each others' dignity may be more helpful than just protecting another's dignity; this is more of *parity of esteem*. This practice has to be both ways otherwise it is paternalistic; perhaps upholding dignity is even more useful
- Strengthening resilience in response to humiliation is a positive approach to transforming feelings of humiliation
- Sometimes people try to help but humiliate anyway, that is, one party feels they are protecting and the other feels humiliated
 - Benevolent humiliation, doing so-called good that humiliates others
 - Things can be experienced as insulting rather than humiliating
- Under what conditions can one see the opportunities and benefits of joining the others in the "third room"?
 - Convincing people that we need them in the third room
 - Developing a mutually beneficial plane
 - What were the mechanisms that created the situation where people were able to leave the old way without feeling like they are losing, e.g., power, status, and so forth?
 - In Germany after the war, people felt like second-class citizens
 - To move away from feelings of humiliation we need to increase the feeling that each person has a place and can contribute to the world

Group Discussions

Structure of HumanDHS

- We need a home for HumanDHS, even if we are a global group
- We need to establish our reputation, something about our name; maybe drop the humiliation part of the word and focus on the dignity part of things?
- We may need to find ways to mobilise the advisory board

- We have a lot of emphasis on psychology and sociology, but there are also medical situations where humiliation exists
- What are some of the ways to get support from the EU?
- Would it be possible to get Mandela's blessing for our work?
- Proposals:
 - Develop a book, include politicians with the book, bind these people to the book, build our name
 - Develop teaching materials for children, if you want to change the world you need to work with children; perhaps for UNESCO, UNICEF, or Teacher's College
 - If we fundraise, we need to make sure that we have time for it



Evelin & Eric

Website

- The welcome page needs to be shorter
- We need to make sure there is current news and a news archive
- We could create a members area that is protected by password
 - Include database
 - The forum would allow people to have ongoing discussions
 - The groups from today could continue to discuss on the web

Finding Funding: UN, UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank

- "Research" as a word is unpopular in the UN
 - Like the World Bank, and other bilateral organizations, research is accepted and used
 - Historically, the UN was created to provide programs and avoid conflict
 - UN-does like the word "slavery" – if you are willing to become a slave than you are welcome – you do the jobs they are incapable of or don't want to do
 - If you say "we have experts who can work on school curriculum, we have contacts, we have people, we have worked on a draft that could be adapted to different countries, etc." then say "we will go try it out for you if you are able to find us some funding," you may gain funding
 - The UN in NYC mainly deals with political and security matters
- UNESCO
 - It spends its time studying and looking at all sorts of topics, with the exceptions of a few groups
 - They do very little field work and are great orators
 - They invite great thinkers and famous people, but there is very little fieldwork, very little funding; it is like a big public library with 90% of staff in office
- UNICEF
 - Focuses on children's rights, needs, and health

- It may be a good source of funding because it has an evaluation department that was getting a lot of money from a lot of sources, however, there has been some back peddling because the independent research was creating too many bad feelings between the people in the group
- UNICEF maybe good to approach, but they are slow
- UNDP
 - The UNDP is a development program
 - The word develop is very loosely based, an umbrella term within the umbrella, with no specific target group
 - Mary Robinson, former president of Ireland, supports our work
- UN would not want us pointing any fingers at any groups or countries that will make them look culturally insensitive
- WHO
 - We may be able to approach them about lasting health effects of humiliation.
- Two new possible funding sources in the past years:
 - The Microsoft chairman Bill Gates contributes to the UN; there a number of groups that are completely funded by him – food supplements, immunization, maybe a third dealing more with human rights field
 - The Soros foundation is mainly interested in Eastern Europe and is starting some work in Africa
- The World Bank
 - They are increasingly interested in funding human rights topics
 - The leadership (Wolfenson) is quite interested in human issues
 - World Bank likes to fund research

Day Three, Saturday, 18th September 2004

We meet at the Maison Suger, Paris, 16-20 rue Suger (metro Odéon/St. Michel)

Humiliation and Retributive Peace-Building: Experiences from Iraq

Victoria Firmo-Fontan, Visiting Assistant Professor of Peace Studies at Colgate University, NY, earlier Sabanci University, Turkey

- Victoria has been in Iraq six times in the last two years observing the events
- Initially the 82nd Airborne was welcomed by Iraqis with a barbeque
 - 3 days later the 82nd Airborne shot 8 people in a demonstration because they were celebrating Hussein's birthday - "Fallujah Bloody Sunday"
 - The situation has been bad ever since
- Honour in Iraqi society
 - Honour is represented by physical force
 - Honour is represented by how you are born
 - Honour is represented through maintaining of a woman's shame; every man has to make sure that his female's honour is maintained
- Women have been sent to Abu Ghraib for being outside their homes
- Rumours started to spread about the Abu Ghraib prison
- October 2003 the "resistance" started
 - Soldiers started to use dynamite to open doors; Iraqi people don't want Americans in the streets because things will be exploded
 - Iraqis post messages on wall telling US soldiers to go home
- Humiliation of Saddam showed the Iraqi people that Saddam would not come back so now it would be safe to join the resistance
- The Iraqi people see the West as having double standards about humiliation, e.g., human right versus some Arab leaders' treatment of people
- March 2003
 - Contractors attacked
 - The local youth took over at that point (the youth were the ones who hung the bodies on the bridge)
 - Fallujah opened its arms to Al Qaeda
 - Self-fulfilling process by US military, humiliation brought the terrorism; the Coalition is turning Iraq into another Lebanon
- Beheading: Raising the stakes – you humiliated us, we are going to bestialize you – (the script is Abraham and the lamb, purification sacrifice)
- The current President of Iraq shot eight prisoners in front of everyone in a show of strength and power
- There were no terrorists in Iraq last year, now there are
- Pictures of Iraqi women being raped were staged – they were to be porn – but people believed them to be real

- In Iraqi ran out of gas on the side of the road and an American convoy ran him over and kept going
- British forces don't appear as humiliating as other Coalition forces

Discussion

- US Soldiers are trained to enter by kicking the door; they are in a war zone and that is the only way that they are trained to act
- Psychology of humiliation (applying the research); how can you use it during the conflict?
- Putting down the out group increases the honour of the military; the military is an honour system.
- Humiliation as a vector for polarization

Humiliation Depicted in Films

Coordinated by Dharm P. S. Bhawuk, University of Hawaii at Manoa, USA
Bhawuk shows a film from India. By doing so, he demonstrates how humiliation comes in many forms, and how films are suitable tools in capturing them.

TV a Powerful Medium But for What Purpose?

Gerd Inger Polden, investigative journalist at the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation NRK

- How does TV present humiliation?
- Reality shows – humiliation of participants
- Victims of humiliation – how are they presented?
- Reports from wars
- Reports from building peace
- Reports from stopping the humiliation



Gerd Inger

Film: The Dream of Knowledge

Gerd Inger Polden of UNICEF's and Tostan's work, against female genital mutilation in Senegal

Molly Melching is the Director of Tostan

Viewing of NRK documentary: *The Dream of Knowledge* – with power to make changes (30 min.)

Key Points

- In Senegal, there is a huge gap between the educated professionals in the city and those in the villages
- When doing change work: doing it the “long way” is better
- Tostan:
 - Tostan begins with health courses in villages, and they do not immediately talk about “cutting”
 - The words people use are critical, for example, female circumcision, also known as female genital mutilation, became female genital cutting: mutilation is too strong of a word here
 - Tostan offers a health course; first nutrition info is given, then questions are asked if there are any practices that violate health: this is how talk about cutting begins
 - After talking, the women of the villages shown in the film decided that something must be done; they talked to the chief of the village, to their men, to the girls and then to the boys
- When people are just told something, change doesn’t occur; but when people learn with their heads and feel it in their hearts, then something can be done
- A *parity of esteem* existed here
- This film was made in 1999; now about 25% of the people in Senegal have taken the vow to stop female genital cutting
- Process of interviewing people in the film
 - Local journalists were always used as interviewers; this allowed the filmmaker to discover more, including a problem with the ethnic group not in power
 - Talking directly to the people was much more helpful and effective
- They succeeded with the film because they did not take any short cuts
- She would like to go back and do a follow up to see if the Tostan program is sustainable and effects on girls who were cut just before the change

Discussion after Watching Films

- The concept of “human rights” is a very Western construct
 - To avoid problems, the method used to encourage human rights is very important
 - Tostan used a discussion method that encourages people to learn and realize their rights for themselves
 - The Tostan women became empowered
- Dynamic equilibrium – driving forces and opposing forces
- What kept “cutting” in place for generations?
 - It was society
 - Often the women, especially the older kept the practice going
 - It was a practice associated with preserving chastity and being clean
- If the pressure came directly from the West, the Senegalese communities may have not agreed to change
- Sometimes human rights can be used as a weapon of force
- The Tostan program shows how important it is to have a whole village’s support

- Education is necessary
 - For example, with family planning problems in Pakistan, slowly and steadily people were educated, local people trained
 - However, there is fine line between education and propaganda; we always need to be looking at that fine line
 - Empowerment – empower them and then they make the choices themselves, but empowerment is not easy
 - Research and Practice
 - The dichotomy between research and practice is a false dichotomy; both are practice
 - Practitioners are doing research by being reflective practitioners
 - Participatory Action Research is what is developing now
 - In our work with HumanDHS we are doing both thinking about practice and thinking about inquiry
 - We have to work on our media to let other people and societies' films be seen; we need to enable others to create films about themselves
 - We are trained every day to see humiliation on TV – reality shows, live killing of people – because the images are brought directly to us from the scene, we experience the blurring of lines between fiction and reality
 - Next year we could have a day where we invite others to come see the films
 - *Ship of Fools* is a film about humiliation
 - We need to make sure we show films that are dignifying; films that have a dignifying effect
-

Closing Comments...

Evelin Lindner, Founder of HumanDHS

- This conference is a process, and we are all a part of it
- we need to ask how can we make it better?
- it is ours, our process
- all the shortcomings and all the strengths are our shortcomings and strengths
- this work is challenging, however, the best way to proceed is by working together

Conveners, Presenters, and Participants

Conveners

Evelin Gerda Lindner, M.D., Ph.D. (Dr. med.), Ph.D. (Dr. psychol.)

Interdisciplinary Social Scientist,
Founding Manager of Human
Dignity and Humiliation Studies
(HumanDHS),
www.humiliationstudies.org,
anchored at the Columbia
University Conflict Resolution
Network, New York, furthermore
affiliated to the University of Oslo,
Department of Psychology,
<http://folk.uio.no/evelin/>, and the
Maison des Sciences de l'Homme,
Paris.



Our host, the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme was represented by

Hinnerk Bruhns (or one of his representatives)

Directeur de recherche au CNRS, Adjoint à l'Administrateur de la Maison des Sciences
de l'Homme.

Caroline zum Kolk

Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, Programme Allemagne, Autriche, Suisse, Secretariat
H. Bruhns.

Anne Laurent

Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, Direction scientifique & Laboratoire européen de
psychologie.

Presenters and Participants

Donald Klein

Professor at the Union Institute and University, USA,
Member of the HumanDHS Advisory Board and Core
Team.

Linda Hartling

Ph.D., Associate Director, Jean Baker Miller Training
Institute, Wellesley College, Boston, USA, Member of
the HumanDHS Advisory Board and Core Team.



Linda & Evelin

Victoria Firmo-Fontan

Visiting Assistant Professor of Peace Studies at Colgate University, New York, formerly Sabanci University, Turkey, Member of the HumanDHS Core Team.

Eric van Grasdorff

M.A., Researcher, Freie Universität Berlin, Member of the HumanDHS Core Team, Content Manager of www.humiliationstudies.org.

Véronique Lingfeld

Freie Universität Berlin, Member of the HumanDHS Core Team, Manager of By-events to Paris Meeting.

Judit Révész

Lawyer, Researcher, Director of HumanDHS in New York, Member of the HumanDHS Core Team.



Vero & Becca

Robert Fuller

Researcher, Educator, Writer, author of *Somebodies and Nobodies: Overcoming the Abuse of Rank*, 2003, CA, USA, Member of the HumanDHS Advisory Board (he will also attend our NY conference in November).

Dharm P. S. Bhawuk

Professor of Management and Industrial Relations, College of Business Administration, University of Hawaii at Manoa, Member of the HumanDHS Core Team and Advisory Board, Director of the World Films for Equal Dignity project.

Katrine Fangen

Ph.D., Researcher, Department of Sociology, University of Oslo, Norway, Member of the HumanDHS Core Team and Research Team.

Patricia Rodriguez Mosquera

Ph.D., Researcher, Brunel University, UK, Member of the HumanDHS Core Team and Research Team.

Roos Knap

Writing her master thesis on shame at University of Amsterdam.

Samir Sanad Basta

ScD., Former UNICEF director for Europe and former UNICEF Representative to the Sudan, author of *Culture, Conflict & Children*, University Press of America, 2000.

Hroar Klempe

Professor in Musicology, Associate Professor and Dean, Department of Psychology, University of Trondheim, Norway, Member of the HumanDHS Advisory Board.

Paul Stokes

Lecturer in the Department of Sociology at the National University of Ireland, Dublin, Ireland.

Gerd Inger Polden

Journalist, TV documentaries on human rights-related issues, NRK, Oslo, Norway, Member of the HumanDHS Advisory Board and World Films for Equal Dignity project.

Stephanie Heuer

Educator, Activist, Member of the HumanDHS Core Team and Discussion Forum, CA, USA.

Olivier du Merle

Educator, Corporate Sector, Member of the HumanDHS Advisory Board, Paris.