



Reflections on the 25th Dignity Conference in Rwanda in 2015

2nd – 5th June 2015

Evelin Lindner, Kigali, Rwanda, and Linda Hartling, Oregon, USA

**Notes compiled from 12th May 2015 onwards, then edited by
Linda Hartling**

See also

www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/annualmeeting/25.php

Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies

World Dignity University Initiative

Dignity Press

Reflections on the 25th Dignity Conference in Rwanda in 2015

Evelin Lindner, Kigali, Rwanda, and Linda Hartling, Oregon, USA

Notes compiled from 12th May 2015 onwards, then edited by Linda Hartling

Evelin Lindner, Founding President of the global Human Dignity and Humiliation
Studies fellowship

Linda Hartling, Director of the global Human Dignity and Humiliation
Studies fellowship

Table of Contents

An Appreciative Introduction	1
Our hosts, our heroes of human dignity	3
Our hero in spirit: Honoring Felicitas Niyitegeka	5
Dignity and the Challenge of Change	6
Dignity and redirection	6
Dignity and religion	7
Dignity and economy	8
Dignity and research	11
Dignity 1.0 vs. Dignity 2.0	13
Dignity Lessons and Change for the Better.....	14
Keep striving to make our <i>Appreciative Enquiry</i> approach clearer	15
Keep striving to make our approach of “universal responsibility” clearer	17
Clarify that “dignity as solidarity” can be practical, economical, ethical, and sustainable ..	19
Keep striving to make clear that both firmness and flexibility may protect dignity	20
Clarify that everyone’s health depends on everyone’s health	21
Concluding Reflections.....	22
Rebuilding a country: Positive signs in the presence of ongoing challenges	22
Happy outcomes: The media hears our message of dignity	24
An affirmation of mutual learning, building a relational path forward	26
References.....	28

A Note to Readers:

This document was kindly composed as a way to share highlights and insights from our 25th Annual Human Dignity Conference, 2nd – 5th June 2015, in Kigali, Rwanda. While it is primarily prepared for the friends and supporters of the global network Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies (HumanDHS), Dignity Press, the World Dignity University Initiative, and our highly esteemed conference hosts, Emmanuel Ndahimana and the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC), we welcome all readers who are striving to create a world that dignifies the lives of all people.



AN APPRECIATIVE INTRODUCTION

May we begin with introducing to you the work of Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies (HumanDHS), a global transdisciplinary fellowship of concerned academics, practitioners, activists, artists, and many others, who collaborate in a spirit of mutual support to understand the complex dynamics of dignity and humiliation (humiliationstudies.org). We wish to stimulate systemic change, both globally and locally, to open space for dignity, for mutual respect and esteem to take root and grow, thus ending humiliating practices, and preventing, discontinuing and healing cycles of humiliation throughout the world. We do our best to cultivate a relational climate characterized by dignity, walking our talk, and mutual growth. For more than a decade, our relational approach has been more than sustainable, it has offered a new model of collaborative action, a *replenishing relational-organizational climate* that is constantly evolving and growing with, rather than at the expense of, the people involved. The nomination for the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize gives all our members great courage.¹

We are currently around 1,000 personally invited members from all continents, and our website is being accessed by between 20,000 and 40,000 people from more than 180 countries per year since its inception in 2003. In 2011, we launched our World Dignity University initiative (worlddignityuniversity.org) and our publishing house Dignity Press, which has published many books since 2012 (dignitypress.org). We organize two conferences per year. We gather for one global conference at a different location each year, which has led us to Europe (Paris, Berlin, Oslo), Costa Rica, China, Hawai'i, Turkey, New Zealand, South Africa, Chiang Mai in Northern Thailand, and Rwanda this year. Then we come together a second time each December for our Workshop on Transforming Humiliation and Violent Conflict at Columbia University in New York City, with Morton Deutsch as our honorary convener. We have held 25 conferences all around the world since 2003. See for a list of past and future conferences humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/annualmeetings.php. See where we stand at humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/whoweare.php#status.

Thanks to the remarkable contributions of our hosts in Rwanda and thanks to everyone's efforts throughout our conference, we concluded our 25th Annual Dignity Conference in Kigali, Rwanda, with many happy outcomes (please see www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/annualmeeting/25.php). We are especially grateful for the loving support that made it possible for us to keep the conference moving forward while responding to new developments all along the way. Our experience at this remarkable conference led us toward profoundly valuable insights about being courageous and compassionate *Beacons of Dignity* in the world.

By listening with our hearts, we treasured learning about the experiences of all who participated in our conference. We know that today the people of Rwanda stand in between the promises and the dilemmas that this world offers and suffers, and it does so in very particular ways. The promise is to achieve dignity through economic growth, supported by reconciliation, which is the path the country has chosen and carries out with great concern for the common good. Public health care is one example: in Africa, only South Africa and Rwanda offer public health care. Great attention is also given to the perils of corruption, and this stands in contrast to so many other world regions which are marred by elites enriching themselves to a degree that the rest are merely ruthlessly exploited. It is, furthermore, safe to walk in the streets of Rwanda, even at night, in contrast to many other countries (South Africa is a particularly sad example, as our conference participant from South Africa attested). The first obvious impression each visitor is awed with, moreover, is the stunning cleanliness of Rwanda, in contrast to the piles of rubbish and plastic spoiling so many other world regions. Rwanda has often been compared with Switzerland, yet, I can confirm that its cleanliness is even more advanced than that of Switzerland (plastic bags are forbidden in Rwanda). All this is being achieved, while there are people outside of the country who wish to turn the clock back to before 1994, ready to go down the path of violence again. It is being achieved all the while the promise of dignity through economic growth has its dangerous pitfalls, as was illustrated, not least, by the number of "profiteering" non-profit organizations that flooded Rwanda after the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi. Profit and nonprofit *profiteering* are risks that can ultimately undermine sustainable economic advancement and social cohesion in the long run.

Given the complex conditions that characterize Rwanda today, my arrival a month prior to the conference became a crucial part of building the necessary *conditions of connection* that made our conference possible. From the start, it was clear that I would need to play a significant role as an ambassador for our entire community. I had to *walk our talk of dignity* by meeting and greeting new friends in Rwanda with absolute humility and flexibility. Furthermore, it became clear that my words could have enormous consequences enhancing or potentially upsetting our local hosts and supporters who invested so much to organize this dignity meeting. Therefore, I invested all of my energy in finding the right way to humbly becoming a part of Rwandan society – a fellow human being, rather than a "visitor" – and finding the right words that would express our community's profound commitment to listening and learning from the people of Rwanda. It has indeed proven to be crucially important for our dignity work, again and again, that it is a global endeavor, that I am living a global citizen's life, rather than being part of any national agenda. It helps us to maintain our independence that I personally decline invitations to being fully employed in any one national context, for example, at a national university. The only university I do identify with, is our World Dignity University initiative

Rwanda's heroic story of moving forward in the years since the genocide against the Tutsi set a powerful stage for our conference to become one of the most rewarding, and at the same time one of the most thought-provoking conferences we have ever had. This document is a reflection

on the challenges we faced at this conference and the valuable lessons we learned before, during, and following this remarkable event. It is also a tribute to our dear Rwandan friends and our community as a whole: to those who supported this event, to those who attended, and to those who were with us in spirit. It describes the hurdles we had to surmount and the happy outcomes that affirmed our fundamental priority of “giving priority to loving relationships of mutual respect for equality in dignity” (rather than allowing cold rules of status turn our event into a stiff and impersonal experience, or letting money corrupt our choices).

Our hosts, our heroes of human dignity

It was the greatest honor to host our 25th Human Dignity Conference in Rwanda! We are humbly aware that without the remarkable efforts of our hosts, it would not have been possible to bring our community together in this nation at the forefront of courageous social transformation. Rwanda is one of the most important global locations for learning about how the world can cultivate social infrastructures that heal the wounds of history while encouraging a new world of mutually dignifying opportunities. There are too few words to express our gratitude to all those who trusted the integrity of our community’s efforts, both prior to this conference and throughout it. There are too few words to express our gratitude to all who helped build the loving relational-bridges that led us to deeply constructive conversations and many other happy outcomes as a result of this conference.

In particular, we have no words for how much we appreciated the support from our inspirer and convener Emmanuel Ndahimana, who has been part of our community since its inception. It was his visionary leadership that encouraged us to organize a meeting in Kigali. It was his steady support that made it possible for us to move forward, also when conditions called for re-orientations. It was his far-sighted leadership that recognized that our community needed to be in Rwanda to learn lessons of dignity that can serve the world. He was *our Beacon of Dignity* as we moved through the process of planning and bringing this conference to life. More importantly, he is a *Beacon of Dignity* for the world. Emmanuel Ndahimana most insightfully explained on 17th August 2015:



Emmanuel
Ndahimana

In some cases humiliation is the cause of violence, in other cases, it is just an instrument or an expression of violence. Humiliation takes many forms: it can be physical, psychological, cultural, emotional and even becomes systematic in day to day human endeavors. Evelin came to Rwanda, not to produce another case study on humiliation. She came to enrich her already monumental experience on that topic, on which she has spent so much of her life. She also came to express her sincere compassion with the suffering people of our History. And I think she succeeded because the media have reflected her ideas in their publications. Humiliation is always bad, whether it falls on my neighbor or my friend, be it a cause or a consequence, an instrument of power or an expression of violence between individuals or nations!

On 28th September 2015, Emmanuel kindly added: “...in many societies, there are individuals or groups who strongly believe that they are superior to others. They keep on humiliating what they call the underdogs (to use Evelin’s expression) by all sorts of actions, attitudes, and behaviors in order to maintain them in that position, while the group of the underdogs spends

their precious time to fight back by desperately trying to value themselves against the other group. Both groups remain the victims of their own egos, fighting an illusory war, because at the end of the day, they will share both their final destiny!”

We would now like to proceed and convey our profound gratitude to the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) for hosting our conference with such visionary and extraordinarily generous support, with Bishop John Rucyahana, its President, and Dr. Jean Baptiste Habyalimana, its Executive Secretary, with Johnson Mugaga kindly standing in for Jean Baptiste Habyalimana while he was away (in the meantime, Dr. Habyalimana has been appointed Ambassador of Rwanda to Congo Brazzaville). In appreciation, it will be our community’s ongoing honor and duty to spread the word about the extraordinary work of the NURC that we had the privilege of experiencing first-hand.

Also Professor of Anthropology Déo Mbonyinkebe Sebahire, and Fr. Jean d’Amour Dusengumuremyi played extremely important roles in making this historic event possible and we cannot imagine our global dignity work without them anymore.

On the NURC website, you read:

The National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) is a national institution, provided for by the National Constitution adopted by Rwandans in June 2003. The idea of establishing a commission for national unity and reconciliation was first thought of by the Arusha Peace Accord signed in 1993. The main objective for such a commission was to assist the government of national unity then anticipated, to foster unity and reconciliation among the people of Rwanda who had experienced long periods of bad governance characterized by divisions, discriminations, human rights abuse and acts of violence. After the tragic Genocide of 1994, the establishment of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission was made even more necessary. In March 1999, by the law N°03/99 of 12/03/99, the Government of National Unity established the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission with the responsibility of using all available means to mobilize and sensitize Rwandans for this noble task. (Quoted from the NURC website, www.nurc.gov.rw/index.php?id=73, last updated Monday, 07 December 2009.)



Thanks to President Bishop John Rucyahana and the generous support of the NURC, all of us benefited from the many intellectual contributions shared, among others, at our Public Event (4th June, at the Foyer de Charité Sainte Trinité de Rebero, Kigali). This event welcomed all, guests, participants, and the larger community. The program below illustrates the far-reaching topics discussed, topics that have global implications, impacting current and future generations:

Welcome to Everybody: Official Opening – Emmanuel Ndahimana, Dr. Evelin Lindner, and NURC President Bishop John Rucyahana

Official Opening – NURC President Bishop John Rucyahana

What the World Can Learn from Rwanda’s Experience – Johnson Mugaga, on behalf of Dr. Jean Baptiste Habyalimana

Restorative Justice in Rwanda, The Gacaca Experience – Odette Yankulije, Principal State Attorney, Ministry of Justice (MINIJUST)

Fighting the Genocide Ideology and Denial – Jean-Damascène Gasanabo, Director General of Research and Documentation, Centre on Genocide, National Commission for the Fight against Genocide (CNLG)

Regaining Dignity: A Dignity Renaissance – Dr. Evelin Lindner

Healing the Wounds of Humiliation – Hélène Lewis, Psychotherapist, South Africa

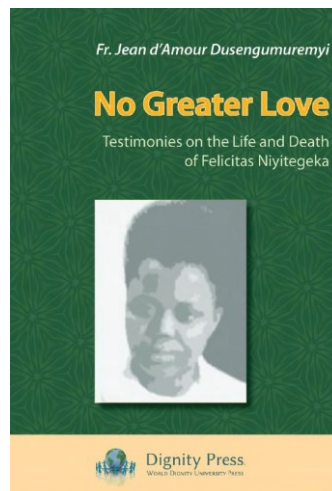
Preventing Humiliation Through Education – Prof. Magnus Haavelsrud, Global Peace Education, Norway

Honoring Felicitas Niyitegeka, a Martyr of Genocide – Fr. Jean d'Amour Dusengumuremyi

Official Closing – NURC President Bishop John Rucyahana

We will always consider our Rwandan hosts – and all who joined us in support – our heroes of human dignity. As Bishop Rucyahana said: “People who come to Rwanda, always come back!” We cannot emphasize enough that they exercised the highest level of courage in support of this event. Their efforts were beyond compare – their efforts in bringing this conference to Kigali, their collaboration with our global network, their joining us in developing a deeply moving and inspirational dialogue on dignity. We invite and encourage our entire dignity community to continue to carry their message of courageous action forward in our shared efforts to bring greater dignity into the world.

Our hero in spirit: Honoring Felicitas Niyitegeka



So many heroes of dignity have gone before us. This conference gave our community a very special opportunity to honor the work and sacrifice of one Rwandan woman who deserves to be known throughout the world: Felicitas Niyitegeka. She gave her life in the genocide that ravaged Rwanda in 1994, targeting Tutsi together with moderate Hutu who were opposed to the killing. Father Jean d'Amour Dusengumuremyi wrote a book about her, published by our Dignity Press, titled *No Greater Love: Testimonies on the Life and Death of Felicitas Niyitegeka*. A friend of Father Jean d'Amour even composed a song to honor Felicitas Niyitegeka. She was an Auxiliaire de l'Apostolat, a laïque engagée, who had dedicated herself to a celibate life to serve the common good with love. As the responsible head of the Centre Pastoral St. Pierre of the

Diocèse de Nyundo in Gisenyi, she saved the lives of many Tutsi, and, at last, she chose to die together with the Tutsi women who were in her care and whom she could not save. Inspired by her story of unconditional compassion, we will do our best to strengthen her legacy of love by planting the seeds of peace and dignity in the lives of all who suffer.

DIGNITY AND THE CHALLENGE OF CHANGE

Legendary psychiatrist Jean Baker Miller emphasized: “The very essence of all life is growth, which means change.”² Our community has navigated many, many demanding changes over the years. This conference called on us to apply all of our skills for negotiating change, and all of us heroically rose to the challenge! This began with a major change in venue that required us to find a new meeting facility on short notice. Faced with this daunting development, I strongly suspect that most organizations would have canceled this event. Yet, our community has been served well by its long history of adapting to change, by its long history of thinking creatively about *solving problems in solidarity*. We have learned to hold true to our vision of dignity in the face of hardships, rather than slipping into pointless blame-shame spirals as we have seen disrupt and derail the efforts of other groups. We were tested by stress, but once again our “Hold Hands Policy” kept us coming together in solidarity and support to solve problems. This conference, more than any other, allowed us to prove the power of this policy, which ultimately led us to many happy outcomes.

Before summarizing some of my specific reflections, please allow me to repeat our words of thanks and again say that I have no words for how much I appreciate the support we received from our friends within Rwanda. Again, I especially admire Emmanuel and all of our new friends at NURC for taking the huge trouble to believe in the trustworthiness of our community. It was profoundly admirable that they were willing to also tackle the most complicated practicalities to bring this conference to life!

In addition, I would not have known what to do without your support during the conference, dear Uli Spalthoff, and you, dear Linda Hartling and Rick Slaven, holding our hands behind the scene. Mark Itallange and Francis Nuwagaba volunteered to do the hard work of recording most of our videos, and Nira Shahaf took wonderful photos, together with Théoneste Hitimana. Thank you!

Dignity and redirection

After emphasizing my deepest appreciation to so many people involved with our conference, please allow me now to describe the first enormous challenge that required a change in plans. Only weeks before the conference, our initial host withdrew. Although the reason for this change wasn't clear at first, it seemed that something about my 1999 doctoral dissertation led to concerns. Over time, I was able to surmise that a reader of my dissertation misunderstood the text as implying that genocide is an unavoidable and even “legitimate” outcome of humiliation, and that humiliation justifies mayhem. The actual message of my dissertation – as well as the entire rest of my work – is the stark opposite of justifying genocide as “understandable and thus a legitimate” consequence of humiliation. Indeed, my research shows that, since humiliation *can* lead to violence, in order to avoid this outcome, humiliation must be better understood – which is

the very aim of my research. There is no automatism that it *must* lead to violence and, furthermore, it *ought not* lead to violence (since cycles of violence only humiliate all involved, including the perpetrators, rather than healing humiliation). This misunderstanding was a very valuable lesson for us, as it reminded us that some who are new to our work may confuse our community's efforts to understand humiliation with condoning these acts.

In the midst of this misunderstanding, we were faced with the choice of canceling our conference or finding a new host. Our dear Emmanuel, extremely courageously, set out to do the latter, not least, as I understood later, because cancelling could blemish the reputations of our local supporters, possibly unsettling them in the long run. Yet, locating a new host presented numerous complications, in particular, the challenge of building a mutually trustworthy relationship with a new host that would be strong enough to carry us through the conference and support us in discussing dignity in the spirit of unity in diversity.

In general, not just in this case, the overall aim of our work is to nurture dignity in the sense of unity in diversity. We wish to nudge world culture into this direction, away from confrontational thinking, toward cohesion across even the severest fault lines. A crucial part of this approach is the psychological insight that only on the basis of relationships of mutual respect can disagreement be fruitful (see our appreciative nurturing approach³). If we wish to manifest this nurturing, we have to refrain from dogmatic judgmental *verdict thinking* (S. Mike Miller) that makes the bridging of fault lines and the co-creation of new meaning impossible. For dignity to prevail, unity needs to be protected from becoming uniformity, and diversity needs to be protected from becoming division. Both, unity without diversity, and division without unity, can bring about uniformity in division, rather than unity in diversity.

For humankind, to give attention to unity in diversity, means “harvesting” the best of all cultures on our planet.⁴ In 2007, for example, we had our annual dignity conference in China, where we benefited from learning the Confucian language of a “harmonious society.” By doing so, our conference contributed to opening up space for dignity, both within China and outside of it. In the same spirit, we were more than grateful to our dear Emmanuel that he opened the opportunity for us to go ahead with the conference, overcome misunderstandings, and benefit from learning from the Rwandan experiences.

Dignity and religion

Allow me now to describe another dilemma, the dilemma of connecting across different religious or spiritual perspectives. Does religion always cultivate love and dignity? When is religion hijacked by dogma or self-serving interests? Can we constructively build bridges across significant religious or spiritual differences? Can nonbelievers be included? Can we prevent and heal the pain and violence that is sometimes instigated in the name of religion? Just as we question materialism in general, can we avoid the pitfalls of *religious or spiritual materialism* that can lead to an outlook of religious superiority? Whom can one trust if even religious practitioners can be implicated in abuse and genocide? These are just a few of our questions about the role of religion in building dignity in the world today.

The following poem by John Oxenham introduces the last chapter of Bishop Rucyahana's biography: “Love ever gives. Forgives outlives. And ever stands with open hands. And while it lives, it gives. For this is love's prerogatives – to give, and give, and give.” I highly admire these reflections and they represent also one of the mottos of my personal life. I am deeply appreciative

of the Bishop's commitment to this love. This is the common ground that I feel I share with many formalized religious traditions. I believe that each of us has the duty to continuously stay alert and attempt to do more to enlarge our capacity to extend our love to others. Each of us, because we have grown up in certain traditions, has blind spots that limit our capacity to reach out in love to all those who need it. We need to be models of love and dignity not only in our lives, but also in our religious traditions and communities.

I am happy that Linda made us aware of the call for becoming *Upstanders* (instead of *Bystanders*), a term formulated by the father of Tyler Clementi. Tyler, a promising musician, killed himself after being publicly humiliated by his roommate and other students at his college. He was mortified and isolated in his humiliation, cut off from loving support of others who might have been able to save him. The concept of being an Upstander invites us to step up to the challenge of showing others more love, and how love of divinity can be nurtured in support of an individual or group that had previously been excluded.

This conference also reminded us to find common ground across religious and other differences so we can engage in the vital dialogue that raises each one of us above our blindnesses. It seems that all systems of belief (as there are, for instance, political, religious, social, or cultural) can be used as tools of exclusion, oppression, and violence, and Rwanda has seen sad examples of this, not least during the genocide against the Tutsi in 1994. At the same time, systems of belief rooted in love and humility – systems that encourage mutually beneficial relationships – can be powerful sources of energy for building a world that supports the dignity of all people. Also here, Rwanda offers wonderful examples to the world.

Dignity and economy

How do Western models of business and economics — models that are built on a tradition of hyper-individualism, self-sufficiency, and market domination — benefit or obstruct the social goal of equal dignity? No doubt, monetary resources, meaningful livelihood, and creative engagement play a role in strengthening feelings of dignity. Yet, in today's world, it seems that too much mainstream business activity is tied up with toxic logics, namely, that self-interest trumps common good, that corporate interests trump human interests, that maximizing profit trumps environmental stewardship, and so forth. If humans are to survive on our planet, we need to re-evaluate and reform the business and economic practices that are handicapping our future, our lives, our relationships, and life on this planet.

Linda Hartling reports from Oregon in the United States about a plethora of highly educated, yet, short-sighted business gurus promoting their latest, greatest ideas on getting rich quick, finding shortcuts to success, taking the fastest path to making millions of dollars. Linda writes on 16th July 2015:

They seduce people with their perpetual preaching, their showmanship, their glossy brochures, and their fast-track solutions, all of which distract us from fully understanding the social or environmental implications of their actions. Their unsustainable ways of doing business are glorified and exported with a prodigious dose of hubris. Businessman Donald Trump, who is running for President in the U.S. (without any political or government service experience), is only one example of this grandiose corporate packaging. We may be impressed or entertained

by his hyper-confident showy-style, yet we do not need to be convinced by his use of emotions to “sell” his short-sighted, socially divisive agenda.

I hail from a family that has been deeply traumatized by World War II and the ensuing forced displacement. In my case, my family lost their homeland Silesia. As a result of this background, my life has evolved as a global mission to work for “never again,” “never again war, genocide, and terror.” When I look back on my global path during the past forty years, on all continents, I have lived with people from all walks of life, from indigenous communities in the rainforest to city dwellers in the world’s slums and palaces.

Over the decades, underneath the vast cultural diversities around the world, I have learned to distinguish two core groups of people, or approaches to life. Simplified, those who resonate with the *dominator* model that Riane Eisler describes are the first group, and those who manifest the *partnership* model the second.⁵ Existing business and economic models largely emerged out of the dominator model, which has led us to a number of ever-worsening social conditions, including ever-increasing degradation of ecological and social carrying capacities. The dominator model has a history of ignoring, invisibilizing, or belittling fundamental forms of relational activity that contribute the most to building dignity in the world (as there are, for instance, nurturing, companionship, parenting, dialogue, caring, protecting, to name a few). Indeed, business has a long history of denying the value of relational work to maximize profits: *product development trumps people development*. If relationship-building is emphasized at all, it is used as a vehicle for extracting money from others, whereas nurturing relational activity for its own sake typically is not considered a “real effort” or valuable work. In many ways, the “problem” is that relational activity is immeasurable, much like love, honesty, integrity, compassion, and other human behaviors that add immeasurable social wealth to society and to our lives.

Beyond traditional business and economic models, charitable endeavors based on these models can also be problematic. Nonprofit organizations can be hijacked and used as yet another avenue for practicing exploitive profit-maximization. Charitable organizations can become “profiteering nonprofits,” spreading the corrosive social disease of distrust, locally and globally. Let’s consider one example. Many of us were initially encouraged by the development of “microfinance” efforts offering small loans to individuals as a pathway for reducing poverty around the world. Within the microfinance frame, some would argue that dignity is violated if simple charity were given to poor people, suggesting that it is more dignifying for them to prove that they are able to repay loans with interest. Indeed, in our dignity movement, we want to encourage ethical microfinance initiatives; yet, according to what I see around the world, increasingly this “do good” methodology has been sliding into unethical directions. I am reminded of the subprime crisis in America, which started with the U.S. government’s laudable intention to dignify poor people with enabling them to own their own home. Many were given loans they could not repay. The banks repackaged these loans and made huge profits. When the bubble burst, many people lost their homes. They were worse off than before, not only had they lost their homes, they also had to unlearn linking dignity with owning a home. This was double humiliation.

It is clear that microfinance has been abused, for instance, some began as not-for-profit initiatives and then turned into for-profit companies. In recent documentaries, filmmakers went back to supposed success stories of microfinance, and found people were even more impoverished than before. This is what I found frequently happen in Africa: the time given to repay the loan is too short, the interest too high, and too little help is given to succeed with

projects financed by these loans. The result is that people lose everything they ever had and end up worse off than before.

You all know anthropologist Alan Page Fiske, who found that people, most of the time and in all cultures, use just four elementary and universal forms or models for organizing most aspects of sociality. Interaction can be structured according to (1) what people have in common, (2) according to ordered differences, (3) according to additive imbalances, or (4) to ratios.⁶ When people emphasize what they have in common, they give primacy to what Fiske describes as Communal Sharing (CS). Family life is often informed by communal sharing. Trust, love, care, and intimacy can prosper in this context. This is the arena for the dignity of a *Homo amans*. The African philosophy of *Ubuntu* has its place here. “Communal Sharing relationships are formed among people who are considered and who consider themselves equal (in one or more aspects). The participants in this relationship feel togetherness; they are bounded; they have something in common (interest, origin, blood, etc.), and refer to themselves as ‘we’.”⁷ When people set out to create ordered differences, they use the strategy of Authority Ranking (AR). Authority ranking involves asymmetry among people who are ordered along vertical hierarchical social dimensions – it can be a good parent or a brutal dictator who follows a *Homo dominans* path. Equality Matching (EM) is the model for arranging interactions in terms of additive imbalances and implies a model of balance such as taking turns, for instance, in car pools or babysitting cooperatives. The Market Pricing (MP) model views relationships as defined by proportions or rates, and this is the arena for the *Homo economicus* model.

Indigenous psychologist Louise Sundararajan recommends to study Fiske’s insights, not least because many indigenous communities give primacy to communal sharing as guiding principle for their social and societal life, and combine it with caring versions of authority ranking. They refrain from allowing life and society to be defined and thus impoverished by less comprehensive frameworks, such as equality matching or market pricing.⁸ As anthropologists have found, market pricing has not evolved to make exchange easier, as many believe; it is reciprocity and mutuality rather than exchange that is practiced in indigenous communities.

In short, the double humiliation of the subprime crisis and of some of the microfinance schemes is perpetrated by misusing the concept of dignity: for the victims, it starts with the promise to be dignified and it ends in double humiliation. The promise is framed as authority ranking and communal sharing, yet, soon after, market pricing kicks in and destroys the promise. Authority ranking is linked to dignity initially by telling the victims that the ability to repay a loan with interest will make them rise up on the scale of authority ranking. Those who offer microloans thus begin their campaign by using a rhetoric of communal sharing, like good parents who wish to give their children a chance to rise up in society by earning more dignity. Yet, as soon as the loan has been accepted, the game may suddenly change and it may become painfully clear to the receiver of the loan that far from being a caring and fairly treated family member, she is in fact a victim of abuse. This happens when the frame of communal sharing is replaced by the frame of market pricing. The end result may then be a rapid descent on the scale of authority ranking for the victim, and the difficult task of having to make authority ranking independent again from wanting to earn dignity by repaying loans.

In other words, while the argument that donations and charity can be humiliating is indeed valid, the argument that lending is more dignifying than donating, can also be used as a trap. It is not “help to self-help” when time to repay is too short, for instance, or when interest is too high, and help is not given to succeed with projects (which is almost unattainable in any case in a context of systemic impossibilities, even with much help, not to mention that producing ever

more stuff for sales is not a sustainable strategy for a sustainable human future). It rather means hooking a person to connect dignity with market pricing, which then will destroy communal sharing. The aim of present-day market pricing is not necessary benevolent community-oriented help to self-help, much of it is rigged toward profit for a few. The misuse of the rhetoric of poverty reduction thus may only hook people on definitions of dignity that trap them as willing victims to be exploited in a money-making system whose *raison d'être* is far from serving their interest. The “all boats are lifted up” narrative may work in certain cases, yet, as far as I observe all around the world, increasingly, the very poorest in society now become targets of very sophisticated methods of exploitation.

Canadian international relations specialist Stephen Purdey wrote on 15th May 2015, in his contribution to the Great Transition Initiative discussion on “Economics for a Full World”:

Instead of trying to transition to a steady-state economy, government leaders worldwide are still fixated on the pursuit of economic growth as a top policy priority. If a “major change in philosophical vision and ethical practice” is required to defeat this fixation, then we’ll first need a good understanding of its power to persuade. Here are two examples, one political and one ethical, of this power. First, economic growth is politically expedient. Growth, as John Kenneth Galbraith once called it, is the ultimate social lubricant. It draws support and approbation from all sectors of society – rich and poor, employers and employees, public and private sectors alike, because they all stand to gain. The “rising tide lifts all boats” mantra is universally appealing and therefore politically compelling. It is also, of course, a utopian economic model which hints at an abrogation of governmental responsibility, even as it helps us understand the lure of growth.

My thought: let us refrain from connecting dignity with owning something, with getting money, or with being able to pay back loans, particularly, when given with false promises. Let us listen to Howard Richards, scholar of peace and global studies and philosophy, and his message of “the strategic value of acts of solidarity, and of separating the right to live from the duty to sell.”⁹

Dignity and research

The human dignity community is honored to have many members who are scholars, researchers, and academics around the globe. Our annual conferences are some of the best opportunities for our community to connect and engage in conversations about the study of dignity and the dynamics of humiliation. As a result, our conferences have evolved in a way that might surprise some who regularly attend academic or professional conferences.

First of all, our conferences and workshops are more than stand-alone events in which researchers or others fly in to deliver a paper and fly out again. Many of us who have studied the dynamics of humiliation have become aware that these “helicopter” methods for conducting and presenting research are rooted in the limitations of the dominator model, a model in which taking time to build relationships may be viewed as unnecessary, inconsequential, inconvenient, a distraction, someone else’s job, or even an obstacle to so-called objective research. In contrast, our work as a community has taught us that conducting research without building *trust in relationships* can be humiliating, not only for the subjects/”objects” of study, but also for the investigators, supporters, and funders of that research. In response, scholars who have joined with

our community develop what might be called a keen sense of *humiliation awareness*. They recognize that research can humiliate, just by carrying a message of superiority – superiority of the researcher over the subjects of research. I wrote an article about “How Research Can Humiliate” after reflecting on these dilemmas during my doctoral work.¹⁰

Of course, nobody can avoid recognizing the tremendous competitive pressures on professionals (pressured by time, budget constraints, or other responsibilities) to fly in quickly and extract information to satisfy funders, institutions, and other personal or professional demands. Yet, our dignity community encourages everyone to be aware of these pressures and seek methods that serve and preserve our community’s highest ethic of *meeting in mutual dignity*. This means that we refrain from using relationships or our connections to achieve a research agenda, a professional agenda, or any other agenda. Rather, our community is committed to taking the time necessary to build mutually beneficial, mutually dignifying relationships first and foremost, regardless of all other possible outcomes.

From a broader perspective, I sense here still a “masculine” world at work (I mean the cultural script of “masculinity,” not “men” – since also many women follow the “masculine script”), and the academic world is part of it: the script for a professor has long been the one who does the “real work,” namely research, while his secretaries and assistants (the professor typically has a female secretary in his office), buy the flowers to thank people who need to be thanked (the secretary often even buys the flowers for the birthday of the professor’s own wife). Those professors (the same is valid also for CEOs, directors, and so forth) overlook relationship-building – “building mutually-growth-fostering relationships” as Linda formulates it so beautifully. Relationships, however, are the very basis of everything else, nothing really substantive will follow if that foundation lacks. Highly-placed academics and other professionals may build fraternities, where favors and dependencies are created and exchanged. Yet, when it concerns topics such as peace and dignity, another kind of relationship-building is needed, exactly the kind that Linda describes, rather than fraternities of mutual dependencies. This relationship-building is far from a nice little side-effect that can be delegated to “assistants” and bought by money. In today’s fragile social climate, it is wise to revise the traditional assumption that subordinates and assistants can be used to fill the large “black hole” that “business-as-usual” brings into the situation, namely, lack of trust and lack of relationship.

Just as an illustration: If I had come to Rwanda only a few days prior to our conference, rather than one month before it, there would most probably never have been a conference. Although we had built caring connections prior to our conference, I needed to continue to nurture in person the relational infrastructure that led to the happy outcomes for our event.

This is also why our dear Annette Engler is such a gift for us when she offers her time to nurture the relationships in our dignity movement, thus dignifying the formerly belittled and marginalized duties of a “secretary” and bringing it to the center of our work. Her priority is to express warm and welcoming appreciation, rather than to distribute “hard information” or to give orders to others, as we see practiced in business communication. With her wonderful way with words, she realizes our highest goal: building the foundation of our relationships in our network. All of us do our best to join Annette in this relational way of communicating, or what we call practicing *dignicommunication*.

Knowing what we know now about the dynamics of humiliation and the necessity of mutually supportive relationships, all of us are called to transform the practices of non-relational systems, as these systems tend to be blind and make us blind to the fact that one cannot create a world of dignity, or conduct research for dignity, in ways that overlook its very foundation. We need to

think twice, for instance, when applying for funding for a hotel during our “field work,” as it easily locks us into a position where we are viewed, rather than as fellow human beings, as rich visitors who come and go, who have nothing to do with the local people except extracting the information needed for the visitor’s own advantage (tenure, publications, and so forth). Plus, it may be wise to rethink the practice of applying for funding for “research assistants,” who are hired and required to do the relational work so researchers can do the “real work.” The reason is that the very pre-condition of everything, namely, taking time to build trust, is the real work, the oxygen of all subsequent efforts.

I wish that more people who are bound up in non-relational systems would become more aware that the system is the “problem” and acknowledge that dependency on that system (such as wanting to keep one’s job, have a house, and pay down one’s mortgage) means that one can perhaps not solve this problem from within the system. I wish we would refrain from expecting outsiders to make a dysfunctional approach functional. Our work as a community gives us the opportunity to open a window into understanding systems that have the power to make us blind. Particularly fields of expertise that concern dignity, such as peace, justice, conflict resolution, and alike, carry the responsibility to recognize and transcend systemic indignity.

On 25th November 2014, I saw Suzan-Lori Parks’ play, “Father Comes Home from the Wars (Parts 1, 2 & 3)” at the Public Theatre in New York City.¹¹ It somewhat shows how blind systems make also their participants blind. A slave named Hero is the lead figure in this play. The play reflects on freedom in its various manifestations. Hero is a thoroughly well-intentioned, honest man, a man who, for instance, is opposed to stealing. Therefore he will not run away from his master, since a slave like him has a considerable monetary value and running away would be like stealing. At the same time, Hero is not without freedom, at least in certain ways, freedom, for him, is whatever choices are placed in front of him within his slave-status. He cannot fathom freedom outside of that status; he cannot envision the freedom of “owning oneself.” Slavery is an unescapable frame of life for Hero, like a law of nature, and he has difficulties grasping that this frame is made by humans — and that it can therefore also be undone by humans. Slavery, including living with a never-ending sense of fear and terror, is a “given” for Hero. Hero accepts and succumbs to a system of domination that is human-made, rather than forced upon him by nature’s constraints.

To me, this play made palpable the widespread inability, also nowadays, to fathom the possibility of wider definitions of freedom. A number of frames of contemporary life, far from representing laws of nature, are human-made and can be changed, as there are, among others: the clinging to the need to dominate, be it over nature or “enemies,” in the face of the vast opportunities to let go of this cultural script by intentionally nurturing global interconnectedness for the stewardship of the world’s ecological and social spheres. There is no need to bow to sentences such as “we are a business and no charity,” which insinuate that profit maximization is a first-order frame with the status of a law of nature. Like Hero, we, as humankind, seem to fail to recognize that we are agents, and that we, particularly at the present juncture in history, a juncture of risk and possibility, may need to reconsider what we should accept as givens. There might exist unnecessary limitations to our freedom, limitations designed by us, humankind, that can be un-designed.

Dignity 1.0 vs. Dignity 2.0

Dignity is a complex topic, a difficult concept for taking action. Many of us may be confused about this concept for a variety of reasons. Recently, sociologist Mark Regnerus described a “mission creep” of dignity, from what he calls Dignity 1.0 to Dignity 2.0.¹² Dignity 1.0, a view shared by many religious and secular groups, assumes that humans have “inherent worth of immeasurable value that is deserving of certain morally appropriate responses.” This outlook held sway from times far back before Catholic Pope Leo, up to Immanuel Kant and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It was used less during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (coinciding with the industrial revolution), then dignity re-emerged in the 1990s, however, as Dignity 2.0.

Dignity 2.0 is similar to its predecessor insofar as it has to do with inherent worth, the reality of the good, and rights seen to be flowing from dignity. Dignity 1.0 pointed at the ability to “flourish as the person one is and should become” and to help other persons to do the same. In contrast, Dignity 2.0 seems to disregard flourishing in favor of freedom, autonomy, and independence. This emphasis on freedom over flourishing allows Dignity 2.0 to fit comfortably within the Western framework of rugged individualism. It privileges the myth of autonomy that distracts us from seeing the truth of our growing global interdependence.¹³ Moreover, it may underwrite the rapacious marketing of merchandise designed to prop up our illusions of self-sufficiency and competitive superiority. In sum, Dignity 2.0 generates a stealthy social blindness to the reality of global interconnectedness and communal responsibility. It invisibilizes our common obligation to create conditions that provide for the flourishing of others and all life on the planet. Dignity 2.0 transforms the “we” of dignity into a “me.”

Yet, some still stand up for Dignity 1.0 without selling out to the slippery slope of Dignity 2.0’s false autonomy. South African theologian H. Russel Botman, the first black Vice-Chancellor of Stellenbosch University (where we had our 2013 annual dignity conference), for instance, said with regard to Dignity 1.0: “The dignity of human beings emanates from the network of relationships, from being in community; in an African view, it cannot be reduced to a unique, competitive and free personal ego.”¹⁴

Going further, sociologist Christian Smith suggests that Dignity 1.0, the “flourishing of personhood,” needs to be nurtured by all social practices, institutions, and structures, to avoid damaging dignity.¹⁵ It will be wonderful to see Rwanda be a global leader of a Dignity 1.0 Renaissance, showing the world how human flourishing can be realized through community connectedness that leads to social, economic, and environmental sustainability. Rwanda has all that is needed to show the world how dignity could encompass the Rwandan spirit of *Umuganda*, “coming together in common purpose.” Our conference was an opportunity to help the rest of the world listen.

DIGNITY LESSONS AND CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

...we’re “in the business” of change – change for the better. That’s our goal.
– Jean Baker Miller, 2002, p. 1

Throughout this conference new insights and new understandings emerged amidst all challenges, insights that will contribute to the growth of our community now and into the future. Some of the greatest challenges led us to some of the most useful lessons, and, not surprisingly,

to some of the happiest outcomes. One example of a happy outcome was our media appearances that were widely acclaimed.

The following sections summarize some of the valuable insights we learned that will help us build on the discussions at the conference and plan for future events.

Lessons for future action

- Keep striving to make our Appreciative Enquiry approach clearer
- Keep striving to make our approach of “universal responsibility” clearer
- Keep striving to make clearer that “dignity as solidarity” can be practical, economical, ethical, and sustainable
- Keep striving to make clearer that we are connected in creating conditions that support the health of all our participants and guests

Keep striving to make our *Appreciative Enquiry* approach clearer

Our conference frame of Appreciative Enquiry (AE) offers a unique approach for conversations about human dignity and humiliation (we have adopted the spelling of *enquiry* to indicate that we have adapted David Cooperrider’s concept of “appreciative inquiry” for our own dignity work). Participants, especially those who are very new to our community, may find that they initially have to stretch themselves to try out this approach. This is particularly true when we encounter topics on which people disagree. At this conference, I very much appreciated that some participants let me know that they avoided asking critical questions because they thought that AE meant that critical questions are not desirable, not permitted, not the way to proceed. This was a sign that, despite all our efforts, a significant misunderstanding of AE persists. Appreciative Enquiry signifies the stark opposite of simply “being nice,” engaging in “happy talk,” or avoiding conflict. Rather, it teaches that one can find ways to wage constructive conflict, to disagree without being disagreeable. Avoiding necessary conflict can be as damaging as instigating unnecessary conflict.

Here are some inspirational sayings that contribute to our thinking about AE: “There are no murderers, there are only people who have murdered,” by Arne Næss, in our 2003 Annual Conference of the Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies network in Paris, France. “Hate the sin, love the sinner,” by Mahatma Gandhi. “Don’t hate the player, hate the game!” is an anonymous saying.

As reported earlier, when I look back on my global path during the past forty years, on all continents, where I have lived with people from all walks of life, underneath the vast diversity, I have learned to distinguish two core approaches: the dominator approach and the partnership approach (again, Riane Eisler’s coinage), as well as two principle blind spots in the second group, of which also I am part. Allow me to expand on the blind spot that relates to dignified and dignifying communication or, to say it short, to *dignicommunication* (the other blind spot that I observe in the second group concerns global governance).

We know about the *Socratic dialogue*, and that *constructive controversy* is more beneficial than confrontation. Aristotle spoke of *deliberate discourse*, meaning joint discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of proposed actions aiming at synthesizing novel solutions

embedded in creative problem solving.¹⁶ Psychologist Carl Rogers has developed a *client-centered therapy* and *student-centered learning*, where a person does not judge or teach another person but facilitates another's learning.¹⁷ Researcher Mary F. Belenky calls for *connected knowing* rather than *separate knowing*.¹⁸ In connected knowing "one attempts to enter another person's frame of reference to discover the premises for the person's point of view."¹⁹

Connected knowing, incidentally, can also be called "women's ways of knowing."²⁰ Philosopher Agnes Heller, in her theory of the consciousness of everyday life, describes how masculinity, on an ordinary, everyday level, reproduces itself through the interplay of individual consciousness and social structures, and how the masculinist models of consciousness objectify world order, obfuscating how fluid and continuously malleable it is in reality.²¹

Sociologist Jürgen Habermas advocates *public deliberation*.²² We should *grapple* with issues.²³ The concept of *nudging* has become popular.²⁴ Social psychologist Morton Deutsch suggests *persuasion strategies* and *nonviolent power strategies*.²⁵ *Listening into voice* is how psychologist Linda Hartling calls it, with social scientist Andrew Dobson agreeing that listening is "the new democratic deficit."²⁶ Linda Hartling explains as follows:

The expression "listening into voice" draws our attention to the fact that human communication is a bi-directional experience. It is a phrase that encourages us to attune to the fundamental relational nature of speaking. It reminds us to look beyond the individualist myth that speaking is a one-way experience in which the speaker is solely responsible for communicating effectively. Speaking is interactive. It is a two-way experience in which both (or all) people participating in the relationship can choose to listen and engage in a way that will help others to effectively express and clarify their ideas.²⁷

Sociologist S. Mike Miller recommends *let-it-flow thinking* to prevail over *verdict thinking*.²⁸ A Buberian *I-Thou* orientation,²⁹ the terminology of *capabilities* and *human flourishing* by Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen,³⁰ or the teachings of *dialogue* by Paulo Freire point into the same direction.³¹ David Bohm,³² Otto Scharmer,³³ Leonard Swidler,³⁴ and, finally, Inga Bostad,³⁵ are other relevant names.

Where does the blind spot with respect to dignicommunication come from? It might precisely be due to the fact that it is a "women's ways of knowing," which, as many other approaches which stem from the traditional role description for women, often are regarded as irrelevant for the solution of "hard" problems. What is being overlooked is that in many cases, those "hard" problems only get harder if confrontational methods are used. Unity in diversity can only be achieved by first building a common ground of mutually respected fellow humanity; otherwise, conflicts remain stuck in uniformity in division, uniformity without diversity.

Rhetoric of democracy and free speech often overlooks these insights. If "my right of free speech" means "my right to undermine unity in diversity, and transform diversity into division," then this oversight can even become dangerous. This is one of the reasons why we have developed the frame of Appreciative Enquiry and dignicommunication. These are approaches that open up conversation while standing on a foundation of equal dignity. These approaches allow people to disagree without disconnecting (which is equivalent to Jean Baker Miller's concept of "waging good conflict"), which means people engaged in a dialogue can be more authentic about their ideas and concerns, they can bring more of themselves into the community, which, in turn, leads to greater clarity and often also to deeper connection.

Learning our AE approach is a little like learning to communicate in a new language. This is because it does not rely on the tools of competitive debate or aggressive confrontation, the tools that dominate politics, business, academia, and other contexts. Some may think tools of confrontation are necessary for ensuring honest discussions, but we have found that these methods can, in fact, obstruct conversation, shut down collaboration, and block future dialogue. Rather than debate, AE relies on dialogue, as sociologist S. Mike Miller (2013) describes:

A dialogue differs from the debate stance that too frequently occurs in discussions. In a dialogue, we learn from and with each other rather than keeping to a fixed position. There are no winners or losers as in the debate exchange. Rather, at the end of a dialogue we are all enriched. We learn from each other and are stimulated or prodded to move beyond our outlooks and formulas.

We have to overcome our mis-training and likely experience to participate in joyful, enlightening, creative, helpful dialogue rather than indulging in debate and issuing (usually negative) verdicts on the other participants. The aim is to build together rather than to block one another. We change others by changing ourselves in the course of dialogue.

The frame of AE invites people to co-create a language of “dignity + dialogue,” or what we have come to call *dignilogue*. It invites all of us to build a new type of skillfulness in communication, a skillfulness that prioritizes building relationships, meeting in equal dignity, listening others into voice, and waging good conflict. Within this frame, critical questions are asked in the spirit of curiosity, free from contentiousness agendas to win a debate.

This conference reminded us again that we always need to do more to clarify what we mean by waging good conflict. Therefore, Linda Hartling plans to create a new conference video to describe how we address critical questions, differences, and disagreements as part of practicing AE and meeting in dignity (see the one she created for this conference on <https://youtu.be/p9aBq8fO6jc>).

Keep striving to make our approach of “universal responsibility” clearer

I am devastated when any aspect of our conferences results in disconnection, indignation, or discontent. Unfortunately, this conference began with just such an event. Typically, our events begin with *meeting, greeting, and receiving* participants. However, confusion about the timing of this welcome resulted in participants getting off to a very rough start. Weakened by my own unexpected health problem at the time, I was unaware of this miscommunication and misunderstanding. As far as I learned later, the mood among our participants dropped to rock bottom: “why do we fly in overnight, if the conference does not even start....” After I learned of the situation, I was heartbroken and felt helpless. I knew we needed to do more than repair the disconnections caused by this unexpected derailment of our intentions, we also needed to learn lessons from this experience for future conferences.

Over the years, our community has survived and grown in the aftermath of a number of unexpected adversities. In 2006, at our conference in Costa Rica, for instance, our dear host at the time needed to be hospitalized the day before the event. With her encouragement, we were able to rise to the challenge and come together in collaboration to carry on. The whole conference

became an exercise in *relational resilience*, that is, we learned to hold hands in solidarity in the midst of adversity. To our delight, this loving and unifying response led to relatively little disruption of our planned activities. What began as a disaster became a lesson in encouraging *universal responsibility*, being willing to share responsibility for *co-creating* our conferences in the midst of adversity. This may have been the start of what we now call our “Hold Hands Policy.”

Unfortunately, in Rwanda I didn’t have knowledge of the miscommunication until later. Consequently, we needed to respond by realizing a new level of repairing relationships and expectations. The situation tested our capacity to stand together in the face of unexpected and unintended developments. It challenged us to resist the common social practice of assigning blame and imposing shame. Instead, we needed to focus our energy on repairing relationships and re-establishing clarity. I am deeply thankful for all of our dear conference participants who made it possible for us to move forward after this rough start of our conference.

This makes me think that our community provides us with many opportunities to choose a course of solidarity in the face of adversity. After hearing the story of the start of our conference, Linda contributed to our ever-evolving Appreciative Nurturing document on 10th June 2015, and I very much appreciate her words:³⁶

In our dignity work, we strive to lovingly accept others’ strength and limitations, as much as we attempt to lovingly accept our own. We are not into “ego,” we have little inclination to “blame” others or ourselves. We aspire to practice a sense of, or an ethic of, “universal responsibility.” As a result, part of our relational work is building our capacity to be resilient in the face of adversity, for example, to take on the “blame,” meaning the responsibility and the suffering of others, even when it appears others have contributed to the problem.

As mentioned above, the Tyler Clementi Foundation (www.tylerclementi.org) speaks about turning “Bystanders into Upstanders.” Indeed, a significant part of our work is building our capacity to be *ego-free Upstanders*, which means, for example, finding creative and effective ways to address a problem, when people stumble or fall short, rather than slipping into the “blame-shame frame,” which would mean seeking to demonize individual action and result in wasting the very energy that is needed in a difficult situation.

Given that all of us share a dedication to dignifying dialogue, it is important to allow space to compassionately clarify and constructively respond to challenges that we encounter as a collaborative community. Creating a safe space to thoughtfully address problems strengthens our growth as individuals as we grow our shared efforts. When we do so, un-initiated listeners might misconstrue, misunderstand, or confuse our efforts to explore and understand problems with the practice of assigning individual blame. Therefore, we need to double our efforts in the future to explain beforehand to all participants that all of our energy is always focused on building mutual understanding and respect in every step we take on this long journey. Our energy is focused on taking courageous, collaborative responsibility for bringing dignity into the lives of all people.

What I have indeed learned in this conference is that I must make clearer in the future that I am a person who lovingly takes responsibility, which includes accepting others’ strengths and limitations, as much as I attempt to lovingly accept my own. As Linda described it so well, I am indeed not into “ego;” I seek solutions for problems and am always ready accept my responsibility, rather than seeking satisfaction in bathing in “blaming” others or myself when something doesn’t turn out the way we had hoped. In the future, I must make this much clearer

before asking for support in a mainstream environment in situations where I confront urgent problems or stressful situations. In most cases, I have exhausted myself precisely by conducting an extensive search for effective solutions, always working behind the scenes of actual events. This is the *invisible work* of our work for dignity. When I am in an emergency situation and then have to justify myself why certain proposed solutions won't work, most people are unaware that this can add last drop to the burden, rather than being of help, particularly when the next step is urgently waiting to be taken.

Over the years, Linda and I have learned that our humility can be misunderstood as our failure of having thought through and tried out possible solutions. Very often we had already worked through many more solutions than were presented to us, including those offered with great enthusiasm, assuming that we had never heard of them. What is most helpful in stressful situations is the support of those who can join us in humility, join us in holding hands through whatever storms come our way. We are deeply thankful that this rough start in the conference reminded us of the lessons of humility and solidarity in the face of adversity. These are lessons to share with the world.

Clarify that “dignity as solidarity” can be practical, economical, ethical, and sustainable

Our community has a long-standing practice of doing whatever we can to make our conferences affordable and economically sustainable. We like to think of our group as a highly practical, non-profiteering nonprofit. We have intentionally steered clear of mandatory registration fees, membership fees, and avoided perpetual fundraising campaigns. This means, we have worked diligently to forge our own ethical and economical path. We see this way of working as a creative challenge that protects two important characteristics of our community: 1) our inclusivity and 2) our intellectual integrity. By *not* charging fees for participation at our conferences, we open the door to many who would be left out of our conversations because of finances. By *not* pursuing formal fundraising, we avoid wasting energy on endless donation-generating strategies, and we avoid being influenced by entities that have self-serving or ulterior motives. We have been warned, “Whoever pays the piper is apt to call the tune” (Alcoholics Anonymous, 2006, p. 164, www.aa.org/assets/en_US/en_tradition7.pdf).

Please allow me to share a discussion about funding that helped us shape the economic course of our community. At one of our early conferences, the subject of funding came up, as it always does. In the discussion, a highly paid consultant asked me why we didn't seek funding from a company like Coca-Cola? With great enthusiasm, he said, “Coke has lots of money for doing good work.” While appreciating his support of our efforts, I responded with my own question, “Why isn't *all* of their work good work?” This interaction is an example of our caution about accepting external sources of funding. In this case, we knew we could never receive support from a company that made billions of dollars distributing non-nutritional colored sugar water around the globe. Indeed, such an arrangement would utterly undermine the essence of our dignicomunity.

Rather than growing our organization through conventional nonprofit methods, we have come to adopt a different approach. We want to create a community in which *money serves our work, rather than leading the work*. We know we would have to pay the “light bills” in a way that strengthens our commitment to bringing greater dignity into the world. Therefore, we adopt a *self-funding approach*, a super-frugal organic approach that we lovingly describe as being

“extreme-lean-green, but not mean.” For example, to cover our conference costs, we typically start by dividing the expenses equally and inviting people to contribute according to their ability. Practically speaking, this means some members can afford to contribute more while others are urged to *not* contribute more than they can afford. Although this approach is not easy, a decade of practice has taught us that we can sustain “just enough” economic support to pay the bills and grow forward.

Clearly, there are also downsides of this approach. Often, we deeply regret being unable to help would-be participants who are in need of support to attend our conferences. So far, we hold the balance we have found for now, yet, our vision is to nurture our HumanDHS Global Education Fund that is waiting in the background.³⁷

Our conference in Rwanda presented us with a special economic challenge as we needed to change venues from an unpaid facility to a paid facility. As in all world regions, there are usually a number of expensive options available (for instance, hotels), yet, in accordance with our traditions as a community, we always commit ourselves to finding the most affordable solution. During the search, we often realize that we have to overcome Western business images of conference-organizing that include expectations that our conference (like other professional conferences) would be, or should be, a significant profit-generating endeavor. Concomitantly, we try to help supporters understand that our non-profit-eering practices do not mean we are hoping to be “free-riders,” imposing an economic burden on others.

Thankfully, we eventually found what we considered was the best solution: the Foyer de Charité Sainte Trinité de Rebero Kigali, a conference venue that was willing to accept our group on short notice at a fraction of the charge of a hotel. However, finding this venue did not solve all of our problems. Even though the Foyer de Charité was the most affordable solution, it still was too costly for a number of our participants.

Again, we called on the solidarity of our community to bridge the economic gap in this situation. Members of our community became economic Upstanders in response to our dilemma, and quietly contributed more in support of the conference. They were models of “share-giving” who helped us create the economic conditions to preserve dignity in a difficult situation. I am deeply thankful to the loving members of our community who came together to demonstrate the practical power of working for *dignity in solidarity* to solve economic problems.

Keep striving to make clear that both firmness and flexibility may protect dignity

This topic belongs into the category of “Evelin needs to overcome German rigidity with respect to expectations to reliability and learn flexibility” that I meet all around the world. My position is that, yes, when it is true flexibility, I resonate emphatically, yet, not in all cases. Some approaches to “flexibility” can simply serve as a cover for justifying insensitivity to the impact of one’s actions on others. Linda recalls a time when she regularly observed the behavior of an elite scholar who was known to be “pathologically late.” Linda wrote on 15th July 2015:

The scholar had a habit of expecting “flexibility” from all who knew her, but especially from those who were in subordinate positions. I observed how this person’s habit generated massive amounts of extra effort on the part of those working in the same organization, as they were required to compensate by being “flexible.” Rather than being allowed to induce *false flexibility*, this elite scholar needed to learn about overcoming her blindness to entitlement, she

needed to increase her empathy for equal dignity. If she had worked in a system that emphasized “equal dignity,” rather than stratified entitlement, perhaps she wouldn’t have developed the habit of extorting flexibility to cover up for disrespectful negligence in the first place.

We like to think that our conferences illustrate both the need for firmness and flexibility in service of dignity. For example, we strive to keep reliable starting and ending times *and* we also have room for adjusting the schedule in order to serve the needs and interests of conference participants. Because time is experienced differently around the world, we can expect that some of our community members will be most comfortable organizing around the clock, while others may take a more fluid approach. To prevent misunderstandings and to generate a mutually dignifying progression of events, this conference reminded me that we need to clarify when firmness is necessary and when there is room for flexibility. For example, to address the miscommunication at the start of this conference, perhaps it would have been better for me to double check on our firm time agreements in advance and to be highly cautious of changing agreements in midstream. Perhaps the problem is not always a question of flexibility vs. rigidity, but a question of having clarity to preserve the dignity of all involved.

Clarify that everyone’s health depends on everyone’s health

On the days before the conference, I was gravely handicapped by my health situation (in addition to fearing that my computer would break down every moment, depriving me of my only means of communication). And all this happened, while I faced the prospect that I had to play a significant role in a conference, more so, that I would have to communicate our good intentions in that conference and the media interviews connected to it. In other words, I had to focus on having a clear head to find the right words.

My health problems reminded me that it might be helpful for all of us to understand our important role in contributing to the best health of everyone who attends our conferences. In these days of global outbreaks of illness and epidemics, we can no longer take for granted that people are sufficiently protecting their health and the health of all those around them.

When it comes to illness, I am the canary in the coal mine, due to a chronic condition. If there is illness in the room, I’m likely to get it. My compromised immune system makes all illnesses significant threats to my health. However, I have learned to manage my health so well that few realize that I am highly vulnerable to communicable diseases. Unfortunately, my skillfulness also means that some people neglect to implement even basic ways of protecting me and others from illness. After contracting an illness just prior to this conference, I was afraid I would not be able to be at the conference and play the role I needed to fulfill. Luckily, though, I was able to control the situation successfully, yet, only by staying in bed prior to the conference and taking all the medicine I had.

This conference reminded me that personal health has moved out of the realm of individual experience and do-it-on-your-own solutions. Today, personal health might be described as “ubuntu” health, “I am healthy because we are healthy.” This is why I am deeply thankful for everyone’s sensitivity to maintaining the healthiest possible conditions by lovingly taking care of their own and others’ health by reducing their exposure to illness prior to our conferences, by getting enough sleep, and, in case of manifest health problems, to manage them with

consideration. These thoughtful preventive efforts not only allowed me to stay fully present at our meeting, they also usually allow everyone else to stay healthy and fully present.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

Rebuilding a country: Positive signs in the presence of ongoing challenges

Hélène Lewis is an Afrikaaner and a psychotherapist living in South Africa. She was the convener of our 2013 Dignity Conference in Stellenbosch in South Africa. She gave us the privilege of her participation in our 2015 Kigali conference and it was her first time to be in Rwanda. She was so impressed by Rwanda and its path since 1994 that she now hopes to come back and perhaps even open her practice in Rwanda. During our time together at the conference venue, Hélène reported to us how daily life in South Africa is now even more difficult than it was in 2013, even more marred with fear of violence, and that ever more people plan to leave the country. For Hélène, South Africa in many aspects went downhill after 1994, while Rwanda went uphill. In 1994, Rwanda was a destroyed country, filled with traumatized people, among them those who were planning to continue with violence; it was a country with prisons so full, with over 120,000 suspects provisionally incarcerated waiting for trial, that one hundred years would not have been enough to work through all the cases. In 1990, before the 1994 genocide, Rwanda had just over 7 million inhabitants, with the percentage of Hutu said to be 85 percent, Tutsi roughly 14 percent, and 1 percent Twa. In the course of the genocide, it is calculated that almost eighty percent of the Tutsi population was destroyed, together with moderate Hutu. In 1995, the population of Rwanda was reduced to 5 million and a half.³⁸ Today, it is safe to walk in the streets of the country, even at night, contrary to South Africa. Rwanda's infrastructure is developing, rather than crumbling, as in many parts of South Africa. These are only two examples of what deeply impressed Hélène.

Uli Spalthoff is another pillar of our global dignity movement, and we were privileged to have him and his wife Brigitte as participants in our conference. Uli shared the following on 25th June: "Another good sign: The quality of TV programs and newspapers looks higher than average Western media. My wife Brigitte brought some newspapers back home to show it to friends." Uli added on 27th June that Brigitte and he did not make a comprehensive survey, "we just looked into *The New Times* and the *The New Sunday Times* regularly":

We were impressed by the choice of topics: when they addressed criminality it was mostly about cases of corruption. They also had good articles about economic issues. Most impressive to Brigitte and to me was that they had a lot of content specifically written for children and students: About educational topics, about projects where children got involved, and about what needs to be done for a good future. In comparison, such content is almost absent in mainstream newspapers in Germany, except a little bit in journals like *Die Zeit*.

As another positive sign, everybody appreciated how seriously our conference was taken by the government of Rwanda. We were deeply honored when our conference was covered in the Rwanda Broadcasting Agency (RBA) News Coverage of 4th June 2015, a platform where all important events taking place in Rwanda are documented (see <https://youtu.be/kxsvvbKF2-g>).

The Prime Minister of the country, Anastase Murekezi,³⁹ approved of the conference on 13th May 2015. As guests of this country, we were thankful that the government allowed us to have this conference and to invite young people from NURC to participate, especially in light of all that this country has endured. In the aftermath of tragedy, it is to be expected that leaders and citizens live in an atmosphere of vigilance in order to protect their progress toward recovery. We were deeply honored by their willingness to trust our efforts on behalf our conference and on behalf of our entire dignity community.

It was especially notable that our network was entrusted with the opportunity to host our conference during a time in which divisiveness remains an ever-present threat in Rwanda. My understanding of this grew significantly by meeting with the German Ambassador prior to the conference and hearing his analysis. Already in 1999, when I was in Rwanda for the first time, I had learned about the devastating effects of essentializing so-called ethnic differences. German and Belgian colonizers deepened and created fault lines in Rwanda by marking everybody's ID card as "Tutsi" for all those, to say it simplified, who owned over ten cows and had long noses, while most of the rest was identified as "Hutu" (which means "servant" in the local language). This was done, even though those fault lines were rather fluid before: a Hutu could become a Tutsi, for example, by accumulating more resources. Later, in the genocide, all those were killed who had "Tutsi" in their identity papers.

As Linda shared, the same type of deadly divisiveness may have motivated the recent shooting of nine members of a Bible study group in North Carolina in the United States. No wonder that the leaders and people of Rwanda are vigilant of outsiders and outside groups that might set back the clock in their efforts toward a better future.

My discussion with the German Ambassador to Rwanda affirmed my efforts to live beyond the practice of essentializing identity. I myself have grown into what I call a "sunflower" identity, where the essence of my existence is my humanity, trumping all secondary identifications. I would say: "I am a human being." I would even avoid saying, "I am a woman," as this is secondary to my humanity. I would also avoid saying, "I am of this or that nationality," or "I am of this or that profession," and so forth. I am extremely careful with the little word "am," as it connotes essence. I would rather say, "I am a fellow human being, born with a German passport," or, "I have studied medicine and psychology." I would avoid saying "I *am* German, or I *am* a medical doctor and psychologist" because all those attributes misname the essence of who I am.

Please allow me to quote our dear friend and member of our global dignity family, Jeffrey Warner, on the question of identity. Jeffrey wrote on 11th June 2015: "Identity, what is and what if? What is "identity," really? Is it our outer shell, how we look; our inner world, how we feel on any given day, during any precious breath; is it both, a mixture – a concoction?" He also wrote:

Is "identity" how others perceive us and then treat us accordingly, based on their eyesight driven interpretation(s) of us, of what is really a mirror of their own life story, their own realized or unrealized prejudices? Or is identity more about culture, the beautiful prison of culture that dictates what its (accepted) citizen members deem as wrong or right, the rules?!

What if there was no such thing as identity?

What if we all covered ourselves with a sheet (one that includes all colors), masking our physical appearance? How would we treat one another?

What if everything is in motion, in flux, a shattered energy hologram that we put together via our (often fear fueled) interpretations?

What if our “identity” is energy, meant to shift, as life brings us on this journey – like riding a train, and all we get to do while in these bio-machine bodies is observe who is briefly standing before us while momentarily staged at the train station? Go ahead, try and hold on. What if change is life?

Identity: It’s something to ponder, for we are all multi-dimensional... Where we are at now in life is merely one element of our ever-changing story.

I’ve worn many suits of clothing in my life, have lived in various cultures, taken on many identities, many vibrations, but inside I have always been the same spirit, the same person. Just, be kind...

In addition to the problem of essentializing identity, I resonate with all those who are appalled by arrogance. There is a way to share values in dialogue while steering clear of arrogant righteousness (see our appreciative nurturing approach⁴⁰). I have seen too many well-meaning advocates speak about the common good, yet, undermining it through their confrontational approach.

Most of all, this conference was a remarkable reminder that there are many alternative cultural practices and concepts in the world that merit further exploration if we want to improve social practices everywhere – *ho’oponopono*, *musyawarah*, *silaturahmi*, *asal ngumpul*, *palaver*, *shir*, *jirga*, *minga*, *dugnad*, *sociocracy* is a collection of terms I personally came across at different corners of the world. They all point at less confrontational and more cooperative ways of arriving at consensus and social cohesion than Western concepts of democracy stand for. Hawai’ani Princess Lehu’anani, for instance, explained to Linda, Rick, and me on 29th August 2009, in the library of the little town of Lahaina on the island of Maui, the concept of *ho’oponopono*. She told us how her parents would insist that the children sit together in the evening, share all grievances and come to a consensus before going to bed. As mentioned earlier, in my work, I recommend that humankind harvest the best of all cultures – whatever helps create a dignified future – and that we leave behind what stands in the way.⁴¹

In Rwanda, I did my best to lovingly use a “quietly and humbly listening to understand” approach and believe that this was the only path forward. Luckily, forty years of global living have taught me to be very alert, especially to unhelpful discourses of “power” versus “rights.” Our dignity work has as its core to nudge world culture toward dignity, rather than to contribute to hardening fault lines.

Happy outcomes: The media hears our message of dignity

As recounted earlier, our media appearances were widely acclaimed. When asked by the journalists, I recommended all our participants to be interviewed. I see from the media clip that I was happy to receive on 22nd June (<https://youtu.be/kxsvvbKF2-g>) that Hélène, Magnus, and Déo were included, among others. I am hugely gratified that we seem to have found the right tone, both before and during the conference.

Please find the links to the media coverage of our conference on its webpage and in the conference Newsletter 25 at www.humiliationstudies.org/publications/newsletter/25.php:

“Visiting Humanitarian Activists Pay Tribute to Genocide Victims,” 4th June 2015

“Humanitarian Activists Commit to Fight Genocide Denial,” 6th June 2015

And see our television appearance: Rwanda Broadcasting Agency (RBA) News Coverage of 4th June 2015.

When the television came on our Public Event Day, I started out by saying that my aim was to turn the tables: in former times colonizers would come and tell Africans what to think and what to do, while I come to listen to the experiences of Africans. I said that the world today finds itself in a critical situation, a situation where we as humankind have to find ways to live together in dignity on a planet that has limited resources. In Rwanda, people try to live together after the most atrocious mayhem. This experience, as painful as it was and still is, is extremely valuable to learn from for the world. During the past 40 years, I have been living globally, on all continents of this planet, and I have seen with my own eyes an alarming degradation of the environment and of social cohesion everywhere on our globe. Therefore, I am painfully aware that while Rwanda is burdened with genocide, the world is burdened with the looming risk of what may be called ecocide and sociocide. And this, both despite of, and because of Western achievements. As far as I observe globally, the dominator spirit that informed colonization is still vibrant and now colonizes the entire world. If we, the human family on planet Earth wish to find a way to live together in dignity on our tiny planet, we urgently need to overcome this dominator spirit. And this is not just a luxury problem, it is at the core of any dignified survival of humankind on this planet. Therefore, it is of utmost importance for the world to listen to the experiences of people like those living in Rwanda. Dignity defined as solidarity is what is needed. And this definition of dignity can be found, among others, in Africa. This definition is emphasized, for instance, by the African philosophy of *Ubuntu*, “I am because of us.” In our globally interconnected world of today, it becomes utterly clear that everybody’s individual self-interest to want to live a dignified life is bound up in the common interest of all humankind to do so.

Our long-standing global advisory board member Sultan Somjee wrote “The Ubuntu Stratagem” in the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Peace*, edited by Nigel Young, 2010, reproduced by Desmond Tutu's Journal of African Peace in 2014.⁴² Our dear friend and network member Kingsley Okoro just published an article on *Ubuntu*. You read in the Abstract:

Our study reveals that Ubuntu resembles a somewhat ‘Holy-grail’ that binds traditional African people together in an inseparable manner. It defines African philosophy of social/community living. The ideality takes different names under different African communities, however, in spite of the various names; the underling ideology is the same in all cultures. The central ideology is human-ness, cooperation, compassion and universal brotherhood of all mankind. Here Ubuntu ideality hinges on the basic truth that it is the community that defines the individual and gives people their worth-ness. Ubuntu reflects the deep spiritual truth that humanity share one indivisible essence-one spiritual essence, one planetary life system, one human race and one dependent human community.⁴³

An affirmation of mutual learning, building a relational path forward

Above all, our conference was an affirmation – as well as a robust test – of our relational approach to engagement through appreciative enquiry and dignicommunication, which led our community to a rich experience of mutual learning. In my book *Gender, Humiliation, and Global Security*,⁴⁴ I have analyzed how the dominator model of society has emerged and how it currently changes from being expressed in traditional status rankings to what is called inequality, meaning economic inequality. Clearly, in today's interdependent world, what is needed most is a co-created education in partnership rather than domination, partnership based on social-psychological connection, cohesion, and cooperation between people. Yet, even though this is what is most needed, it is also the most neglected. As already alluded to earlier, it is relegated to something that insignificant “females” can manage in the background without due recognition or just reward, a wife, a female secretary, or other marginalized caregivers. Many will admit that also in Western societies, still today, it is often the wife or secretary who is the one to remember birthdays, harmonize relationships, and altogether shoulder the responsibility of care-giving, while men do “business.” The very skills and functions of partnership that we are in dire need of in present historical times are denigrated as “soft” and inconsequential “female” functions in society, while destructive cut-throat hierarchical competition for domination is overvalued and glorified as strong and “hard-nosed maleness.” This approach is then proclaimed as “normal and necessary.”

The opposite is what is needed. Society would not exist without the crucial relational work that nurtures healthy children, families, and communities. Admittedly, the division of labor between female care-giving on one side, and traditional male “heroism in war” on the other side did have its rationale – it might indeed have won wars when the world still was a divided world of either dependence or in-dependence. Yet, nowadays, inter-dependence introduces an entirely new situation that requires a totally novel set of ground rules. As discussed earlier, nurturing mutual respect and engaging in affirmative language, rather than confrontational negations, has nothing to do with superficial positiveness of “don't worry, be happy.”⁴⁵ We avoid war-like parlance of “combatting against” or “fighting against,” we even refrain from speaking about “non-violence” or “non-killing,” since such parlance draws unwanted attention to precisely what one does *not* want; we rather strive to speak affirmatively about the dignified future that we do want. Jean Baker Miller's coinage of “waging good conflict” is crucial here.⁴⁶ Rather than “resilience against humiliation,” it is “sensitivity for humiliation” that leads to Paulo Freire's *conscientization*,⁴⁷ and, from there, to Nelson Mandela's path of inclusive social change.

This conference was an affirmation of our commitment to navigating a relational path to peace, dignity, and inclusive social change through mutual education. Following this conference, when I was in Oslo, I learned that Rwanda's President Paul Kagame was a high-level participant in the Oslo Education Summit for Development. One of the great hopes for Rwanda is that education will protect Rwanda from going down a deadly path ever again. We join in this great hope. And, in some small way, we hope our conference made a contribution in support of this future for Rwanda and this future for the rest of world!



Evelin Lindner has dedicated her entire life to “never again,” never again war, genocide, and terror. She is laying down a wreath at the Kigali Genocide Memorial of Gisozi on 3rd June 2015, on the second day of our conference.

REFERENCES

- Alcoholics Anonymous. (1953). Twelve steps and twelve traditions. 43rd Printing. New York: Alcoholics Anonymous World Services.
- Arrow, Kenneth, Robert H. Mnookin, Lee D. Ross, Amos Tversky, and Robert Wilson (Eds.) (1995). *Barriers to the negotiated resolution of conflict*. New York: Norton.
- Belenky, Mary Field, Lynne A. Bond, and Jacqueline S. Weinstock (1997a). *A tradition that has no name: Nurturing the development of people, families, and communities*. New York: Basic Books.
- Belenky, Mary Field, Blythe McVicker Clinchy, Nancy Rule Goldberger, and Jill Mattuck Tarule (Eds.) (1997b). *Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice, and mind*. 10th Anniversary edition. New York: Basic Books.
- Bohm, David (2014). *On dialogue*. London: Routledge Great Minds.
- Bostad, Inga, and Ole Petter Ottersen (2014). "Global presence, global responsibility and the global citizen." In *Global citizen: Challenges and responsibility in an interconnected world*, edited by Aksel Braanen Sterri, chapter 1, pp. 1-3. Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.
- Botman, H. Russel (2000). "The OIKOS in a global economic era: A South African comment." In *Sameness and difference: Problems and potentials in South African civil society*, edited by James R. Cochrane, and Bastienne Klein, chapter X. Washington, DC: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, www.crvp.org/book/Series02/II-6/chapter_x.htm.
- Buber, Martin (1923). *Ich und Du*. Leipzig, Germany: Insel Verlag.
- Buber, Martin (1944). *I and Thou*. Edinburgh: Clark, translated from *Ich und Du*, Leipzig: Infelverlag, 1923.
- Clinchy, Blythe McVicker, and Claire Zimmerman (1985). "Growing up intellectually: Issues for college women." In *Work in progress, No. 19*. Wellesley, MA: Stone Center Working Paper Series.
- Clinchy, Blythe McVicker (1996). "Connected and separate knowing: Toward a marriage of two minds." In *Knowledge, difference, and power: Essays inspired by women's ways of knowing*, edited by Nancy Rule Goldberger, Jill Mattuck Tarule, Blythe McVicker Clinchy, and Mary Field Belenky, chapter 7, pp. 205-47. New York: Basic Books, www.missouriwestern.edu/orgs/polanyi/kdpChapter.pdf.
- Conway, Paul (2011). "Righteous Hutus: Can stories of courageous rescuers help in Rwanda's reconciliation process." In *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, 3 (7), pp. 217-23, www.academicjournals.org/IJSA.
- Deutsch, Morton (1962). "A psychological basis for peace." In *Preventing World War III: Some proposals*, edited by Philip Quincy Wright, William M. Evan, and Morton Deutsch, pp. 369-92. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Deutsch, Morton (1991). "Subjective features of conflict resolution: Psychological, social and cultural influences." In *New directions in conflict theory: Conflict resolution and conflict transformation*, edited by Raimo Väyrynen, pp. 26-56. London: Sage, www.tc.edu/i/a/document/9703_SubjectiveFeaturesofConflictResolution.pdf.
- Deutsch, Morton (2006). "A framework for thinking about oppression and its change." In *Social Justice Research*, 19 (1), pp. 7-41, doi: [dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11211-006-9998-3](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11211-006-9998-3).
- Dobson, Andrew (2012). "Listening: The new democratic deficit." In *Political Studies*, 60 (4), pp. 843-59, doi: [10.1111/j.1467-9248.2012.00944.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.2012.00944.x).

- Ehrenreich, Barbara (2010). *Smile or die: How positive thinking fooled America and the world*. London: Granta.
- Eisler, Riane Tennenhaus (1987). *The Chalice and the Blade: Our History, Our Future*. London: Unwin Hyman.
- Eisler, Riane Tennenhaus (1995). *Sacred Pleasure: Sex, Myth, and the Politics of the Body*. San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins.
- Eisler, Riane Tennenhaus (2007). *The Real Wealth of Nations: Creating a Caring Economics*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.
- Fineman, M. A. (2004). *The myth of autonomy: A theory of dependency*. New York: New Press.
- Fiske, Alan Page (2004). "Relational models theory 2.0." In *Relational models theory: A contemporary overview*, edited by Nick Haslam, chapter 1, pp. 3-25. London: Psychology Press.
- Freire, Paulo (1968). *Educação e conscientização: Extencionismo rural*. Cuernavaca, México: CIDOC/Cuaderno, no. 25.
- Freire, Paulo (1973). *Education for critical consciousness*. New York: Continuum.
- Freire, Paulo (1998). *Pedagogy of freedom: Ethics, democracy, and civic courage*. Translated by Patrick ClarkeLatham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Gawronski, Bertram (2004). "Theory-based bias correction in dispositional inference: The fundamental attribution error is dead, long live the correspondence bias." In *European Review of Social Psychology*, 15 (1), pp. 183-217, 10.1080/10463280440000026.
- Gawronski, Bertram, and Galen V. Bodenhausen (2006). "Associative and propositional processes in evaluation: An integrative review of implicit and explicit attitude change." In *Psychological Bulletin*, 132 (5), pp. 692-731, doi: 10.1037/0033-2909.132.5.692.
- Gellman, Mneesha Ilanya, and Josh Dankoff (2007). "Reconciliation and the Khmer Rouge Tribunal in Cambodia." In *Toward Freedom, 1st February*, pp. Retrieved on 31st March 2008 from towardfreedom.com/home/content/view/970/65/.
- Gellman, Mneesha Ilanya, Seema Shekhawat, and Debidatta Aurobinda Mahapatra (2008). "Justice or reconciliation? The Khmer Rouge Tribunal." In *Changing contours of global conflicts and prospects of peace*, pp. 101-27. New Delhi, India: New Century.
- Gilbert, Daniel T. (1998). "Speeding with Ned: A personal view of the correspondence bias." In *Attribution and social interaction: The legacy of Edward E. Jones*, edited by John M. Darley, and Joel Cooper, chapter 1, pp. 5-36. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, see also www.wjh.harvard.edu/~dtg/SpeedingwithNed.pdf.
- Habermas, Jürgen (1962). *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit: Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*. Neuwied: Luchterhand.
- Habermas, Jürgen (1981). *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns, Band I, Handlungsrationalität und gesellschaftliche Rationalisierung, Band II, Zur Kritik der funktionalistischen Vernunft*. Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Suhrkamp Verlag.
- Habermas, Jürgen (1985). *The theory of communicative action, Volume 1, Reason and the rationalization of society, Volume 2, Lifeworld and system: A critique of functionalist reason*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Habermas, Jürgen (1989). *The structural transformation of the public sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Heller, Agnes (1984). *Everyday life*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

- Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies (2006-2015). *Appreciative Nurturing (AN)*. Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies (HumanDHS), www.humiliationstudies.org/documents/AppreciativeNurturingJune2015.pdf.
- Johnson, David W., Roger T. Johnson, and Dean Tjosvold (2014). "Constructive controversy: The value of intellectual opposition." In *The handbook of conflict resolution: Theory and practice*, edited by Morton Deutsch, Peter T. Coleman, and Eric C. Marcus, 3rd edition, chapter 4, pp. 76-103. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Jones, Edward Ellsworth, and t Richard E. Nisbet (1972). "The actor and the observer: Divergent perceptions of the causes of behavior." In *Attribution: Perceiving the causes of behavior*, edited by Edward Ellsworth Jones, David E. Kanouse, Harold H. Kelley, Richard E. Nisbett, Stuart Valins, and Bernard Weiner, pp. 79-94. Morristown, NJ: General Learning Press, http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic521566.files/D_jones_nisbett1971pp79-94.pdf.
- Jones, James Edward (2006). *The post victim ethical exemption syndrome: An outgrowth of humiliation*. New York: Paper presented at the 3rd Workshop on Humiliation and Violent Conflict, Columbia University, December 14-15, 2006, www.humiliationstudies.org/documents/JonesNY06meeting.pdf.
- Kabera Bazubagira, Appoline (2012). *An exploration of community perceptions and understandings of Rwandan Genocide Memorials*. Pietermaritzburg, South Africa: The School of Sociology, the University of KwaZulu-Natal, doctoral dissertation, http://researchspace.ukzn.ac.za/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10413/8373/Bazubagira_Appoline_Kabera_2012.pdf?sequence=1.
- Kelley, Harold H. (1973). "The processes of causal attribution." In *American Psychologist*, 28 (2), pp. 107-28, doi: 10.1037/h0034225.
- King, Elisabeth (2010). "Memory controversies in post-genocide Rwanda: Implications for peacebuilding." In *Genocide Studies and Prevention: An International Journal* 5(3), pp. 293-309, <http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1095&context=gsp>.
- Kirschenbaum, Howard, and Valerie Land Henderson (Eds.) (1990). *Carl Rogers: Dialogues: Conversations with Martin Buber, Paul Tillich, B.F. Skinner, Gregory Bateson, Michael Polanyi, Rollo May, and others*. London: Constable.
- Lindner, Evelin Gerda (2000). *The psychology of humiliation: Somalia, Rwanda / Burundi, and Hitler's Germany*. Oslo, Norway: University of Oslo, Department of Psychology, doctoral dissertation in psychology.
- Lindner, Evelin Gerda (2001). "How research can humiliate: Critical reflections on method." In *Journal for the Study of Peace and Conflict, Annual Edition 2001-2002*, pp. 16-36, jspc.library.wisc.edu, , www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelin02.php.
- Lindner, Evelin Gerda (2006a). *Making enemies: Humiliation and international conflict*. Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, Greenwood.
- Lindner, Evelin Gerda (2006b). *Is it possible to "change the world"? Some guidelines to how we can build a more decent and dignified world effectively: The case of dignifying abusers*. Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies, www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelin02.php.
- Lindner, Evelin Gerda (2007). "Avoiding humiliation - From intercultural communication to global interhuman communication." In *Journal of Intercultural Communication, SIETAR Japan*, 10, pp. 21-38, www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelin02.php.

- Lindner, Evelin Gerda (2009a). *What Asia can contribute to world peace: The role of dignity and humiliation*. Background text for two papers: (1) How Asia Can Contribute to World Peace Psychology: The Role of Dignity and Humiliation, in Cristina Montiel and Noraini Noor (Eds.), *The Theory and Practice of Peace Psychology in Asia*, New York, NY: Springer Science and Business Media, 2008; (2) Peace and Dignity: More than the Absence of Humiliation - What We Can Learn From the Asia-Pacific Region, in *The Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies: Occasional Papers Series*, Brisbane, Australia: University of Queensland, Australian Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (ACPACS), after the author had spent one month (August 2007) at ACPACS and had given a lecture on *The Role of Dignity and Humiliation for Peace and Conflict Studies* on 14th August 2007. Since the Occasional Papers Series closed down in December 2009, this paper was being published on the Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies website in 2009, www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelin02.php.
- Lindner, Evelin Gerda (2009b). *Emotion and conflict: How human rights can dignify emotion and help us wage good conflict*. Westport, CT, London: Praeger.
- Lindner, Evelin Gerda (2010). *From shock to awe: The world on a trajectory from humiliation to dignity - A list of "factoids"*. Istanbul, Turkey: Paper prepared for the 15th Annual Conference of Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies 'Peace at Home, Peace in the World', in Istanbul, Turkey, 28th - 30th April 2010, www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelin02.php.
- Lindner, Evelin Gerda, and Desmond Tutu (Foreword) (2010). *Gender, humiliation, and global security: Dignifying relationships from love, sex, and parenthood to world affairs*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.
- Lindner, Evelin Gerda (2012). *A dignity economy: Creating an economy which serves human dignity and preserves our planet*. Lake Oswego, OR: World Dignity University Press.
- Miller, Jean Baker (1976/1986). *Toward a new psychology of women*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Miller, Jean Baker (1983). "The necessity of conflict." In *Women and Therapy*, 2 (2-3), pp. 3-9, doi: 10.1300/J015v02n02_02.
- Miller, J. B. (2002). How change happens: Controlling images, mutuality, and power. *Work in Progress*, No. 96. Wellesley, MA: Stone Center Working Paper Series.
- Miller, S. Mike (2013). *How to dialogue and why: S. M. Miller*. Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies, <http://youtu.be/CONuz9mubnY>.
- Nisbett, Richard E., and Lee D. Ross (1980). *Human inference: Strategies and shortcomings of social judgment*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Nussbaum, Martha C., and Amartya Sen (1993). *The quality of life*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- O'Shea, Andrew, and Maeve O'Brien (Eds.) (2011). *Pedagogy, oppression and transformation in a 'post-critical' climate: The return to Freirean thinking*. London: Continuum.
- Okoro, N. Kingley (2015). "Ubuntu ideality: The foundation of African compassionate and humane living." In *Journal of Scientific Research & Reports*, 8 (1), pp. 1-9, doi: 10.9734/JSRR/2015/16982, www.academia.edu/13225615/Ubuntu_Ideality_The_Foundation_of_African_Compassionate_and_Humane_living.
- Orton, Michael (2011). "Flourishing lives: The capabilities approach as a framework for new thinking about employment, work and welfare in the 21st century." In *Work, Employment and Society*, 25 (2), pp. 352-60, doi: 10.1177/0950017011403848.
- Rogers, Carl R. (1977). *Carl Rogers on personal power*. New York: Delacorte Press.

- Rogers, Carl R., Harold C. Lyon, Reinhard Tausch, and Karin Lyon (2014). *On becoming an effective teacher: Person-centered teaching, psychology, philosophy, and dialogues with Carl R. Rogers and Harold Lyon*. London: Routledge.
- Ross, Lee D. (1977). "The intuitive psychologist and his shortcomings: Distortions in the attribution process." In *Advances in experimental social psychology. Vol. 10*, edited by Leonard Berkowitz, pp. 173-220. Orlando, FL: Academic Press.
- Ross, Lee D., and Richard E. Nisbett (1991). *The person and the situation: Perspectives of social psychology*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Ross, Lee D., and S. M. Samuels (1993). *The predictive power of personal reputation versus labels and construal in the Prisoner's Dilemma Game*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University, unpublished manuscript.
- Ross, Lee D. (1995). "Reactive devaluation in negotiation and conflict resolution." In *Barriers to the negotiated resolution of conflict*, edited by Kenneth Arrow, Robert H. Mnookin, Lee D. Ross, Amos Tversky, and Robert Wilson, chapter 2, pp. 26-43. New York: Norton.
- Ross, Lee D., and Andrew Ward (1995). "Psychological barriers to dispute resolution." In *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 27, pp. 255-304, doi: 10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60407-4.
- Ross, Lee D., and Andrew Ward (1996). "Naive Realism in everyday life: Implications for social conflict and misunderstanding." In *Values and knowledge*, edited by Terrance Brown, Edward S. Reed, and Elliot Turiel, chapter 6, pp. 103-35. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Scharmer, Claus Otto (2009). *Theory U: Leading from the future as it emerges: The social technology of presencing*. San Francisco, CA: Berret-Koehler Publishers.
- Smith, Christian (2010). *What is a person? Rethinking humanity, social life, and the moral good from the person up*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Spong, John Shelby (2002). *Why traditional faith is dying and how a new faith is being born*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Sundararajan, Louise (2012). *Indigenous psychology: Grounding science in culture, why and how? : Anthropology in China*, www.cnanthropology.com/portal.php?mod=view&aid=380.
- Swidler, Leonard, and Paul Mojzes (2000). *The study of religion in an age of global dialogue*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Szirtes, Tamás (2012). "Managing knowledge sharing - Case study of a consulting firm." In *Society and Economy*, 34 (1), pp. 139-60, doi: 10.1556/SocEc.2011.0009.
- Thaler, Richard, and Cass Sunstein (2008). *Nudge: Improving decisions about health, wealth and happiness*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Weeks Millard, Mary, and John Rucyahana (2015). *Jesus, hope of the nations: The story of Bishop John Rucyahana of Rwanda finding hope and sharing it with others*. Preston, UK: Zaccmedia.

¹ See www.nobelwill.org/index.html?tab=7, and http://nobelwill.org/Lindner_nomination.pdf.

² Miller, 1976/1986, p. 55.

³ Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies, 2006-2015.

⁴ Lindner, 2007.

⁵ Riane Riane Tennenhaus Eisler (1987). See her most recent book Riane Tennenhaus Eisler (2007). Riane Eisler is a member in the global advisory board of our Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies network, see www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/board.php.

⁶ Fiske, 2004.

⁷ Szirtes, 2012, p. 139.

⁸ Sundararajan, 2012.

⁹ Chapter 5 of Howard Richards' and South African co-authors Gavin Andersson, Kate Philip, and Malose Langa's forthcoming book *Economic Theory and Community Development*.

¹⁰ Lindner, 2001.

¹¹ See the Theater Review: "Ulysses as an American Slave," by Charles Isherwood, *The New York Times*, October 28, 2014, www.nytimes.com/2014/10/29/theater/father-comes-home-from-the-wars-by-suzan-lori-parks-at-the-public-theater.html?_r=0.

¹² "The Mission Creep of Dignity: Dignity Has Less to Do with Autonomy or Independence Than with Intrinsic Worth and the Ability to Flourish," by Mark Regnerus, *MercatorNet*, January 20, 2015, www.mercatornet.com/articles/view/the_mission_creep_of_dignity. I thank Hilarie Roseman for making me aware of this article.

¹³ Fineman, 2004.

¹⁴ Botman, 2000.

¹⁵ Smith, 2010.

¹⁶ Johnson, et al., 2014.

¹⁷ See, among others, Rogers, 1977, Kirschenbaum and Henderson, 1990, Rogers, et al., 2014.

¹⁸ See Belenky, et al., 1997a, Belenky, et al., 1997b, Clinchy, 1996.

¹⁹ Clinchy and Zimmerman, 1985.

²⁰ Belenky, et al., 1997b.

²¹ Heller, 1984.

²² See, among others, Habermas, 1962, Habermas, 1981, Habermas, 1985, Habermas, 1989.

²³ On November 16, 2011, writer and peace scholar Janet Gerson took me to Zuccotti Park and The Atrium in New York City, where most of the Occupy Wall Street activities took place. Janet shared with me her doctoral research and I thank her for reminding me of the significance of the notion of *grappling*. See www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelinpics11.php#OWS.

²⁴ As to the concept of *nudging*, see, among others, Thaler and Sunstein, 2008.

²⁵ Deutsch, 2006.

²⁶ Dobson, 2012.

²⁷ Linda Hartling in a personal communication, June 4, 2009.

²⁸ Miller, 2013.

²⁹ Buber, 1923, 1944.

³⁰ Nussbaum and Sen, 1993. See also, among others, Orton, 2011.

³¹ Freire, 1968, 1973, O'Shea and O'Brien, 2011.

³² Bohm, 2014.

³³ Scharmer, 2009.

³⁴ Swidler and Mojzes, 2000.

³⁵ Inga Bostad, Vice-Rector of the University in Oslo, Norway, sent a personal message after the 22/7 terror attacks in Oslo and Utøya. In this message, Inga Bostad encouraged and urged everybody to engage in dialogue. This message was recorded on 26th August 2011 by Lasse Moer. See http://youtu.be/hbOBj_UJt2Y. See also Bostad and Ottersen, 2014.

³⁶ Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies, 2006-2015.

³⁷ See www.humiliationstudies.org/education/educationfund.php.

³⁸ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Rwanda.

³⁹ We read on Wikipedia: Anastase Murekezi (born 15th June 1952) is a Rwandan politician. He studied in Groupe Scolaire Officiel de Butare (GSOB) and went on to Louvain-La-Neuve University in Belgium to study agriculture. He was the minister of Public service and labor until 23 July 2014 when he was nominated by President Paul Kagame as the Prime Minister of Rwanda.

⁴⁰ Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies, 2006-2015.

⁴¹ Lindner, 2007.

⁴² "The Ubuntu stratagem," by Sultan Somjee, 2010/2014, www.africanpeacejournal.com/the-ubuntu-stratagem/.
Evelin Lindner and Linda Hartling, September 2015

⁴³ Okoro, 2015.

⁴⁴ Lindner and Desmond Tutu (Foreword), 2010.

⁴⁵ Ehrenreich, 2010.

⁴⁶ Miller, 1983, Miller, 1976/1986, Lindner, 2009b.

⁴⁷ Freire, 1968, 1998.