

## Day 1 – Public Event

The community was invited to a public reception as a part of the two-day conference, featuring experts in the field, for discussions on how to end cycles of conflict and promote greater human dignity through research, education and intervention. The community event highlighted a panel of eminent scholars and leading thinkers including Hilary Silver, Donald Klein, and Carlos Sluzki.

Cybele opened the reception with a musical incantation of peace. Her music, similar to chanting, is inspired from India. The music helped to focus the minds of the group in preparation for the talks that followed.

**Evelin Lindner**, as the founder of HumanDHS, was the first to speak. Her topic was “Humiliation in a Globalizing World: Does Humiliation Become the Most Disruptive Force?” This talk highlighted how globalization is interlinked with new and unprecedented psychological dynamics that call for novel solutions at all levels – macro, meso and micro levels – and in all fields of public policy. Please see the full paper [here](#) or at <http://ssrn.com/abstract=668742> (this paper’s SSRN ID is 668742).

Evelin’s life project is this network. Other projects include her newly published book, “Making Enemies.” She also accepted an award on behalf of the network. She considers herself to be a global citizen from the planet Earth. We are part of the global family. The world is her home.

Evelin typically does five-day workshops, covering five steps:

1. Why?
2. Where? – Studied Rwanda, Somalia; then later – Japan, China
3. How? – Concept of humiliation
4. What now? – How can we apply it?
5. Film / play

In her story, the life of Evelin’s father and mother essentially ended in 1945, when they were displaced from Central Europe. Evelin was born and grew up with an identity of a refugee: the painful identity of non-belonging, which was a large motivation behind her work on humiliation.

In 1997, Evelin began doctoral research on humiliation. She looked at Somalia and Rwanda, where there have been more recent genocides. Looking at European history and Versailles at the conclusion of WWI, the intent was to keep Germany harmless. It had the opposite effect. The national humiliation narrative demonstrated that humiliation leads to war and respect leads to peace.

Her dissertation looked to see if this was relevant to Africa, and if so, how? Evelin intends to look more at other parts of world in the future.

The dynamics of humiliation lead to rifts. *Humiliation* – how to understand it: the “humus” which means “earth” is to “put with face into the dust of the earth.” It is a spatial downwards movement. In all languages, it means “degradation.”

1757: New meaning for the verb *to humiliate*: to mortify, to lower or to depress.

Humility and humiliation became two different words. Humility had a positive connotation and humiliation did not. This period marked the beginning of rights with the Declaration of Rights.

Two Turning Points:

- I. Hunting-Gathering
  - II. Agriculture – hierarchical – honor societies – win/lose – forces people into win/lose frame. Either my land or your land.
  - III. Global Knowledge Society – what we’re moving towards. Win/win frame – expandable pie.
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- I. Pride – put down – nature and people are regarded as relatives; words and tools are seen as connections
  - II. 10,000 years ago – the first globalization – human race populated land on accessible land. The world suddenly full. Brought about land intensification. Had to defend against neighbors. Hierarchical society developed. Idea that something could be put down. Stones put down and instrumentalized – humans – slaves. Deeply legitimate for 10,000 years.
  - III. Now – putting down human beings is illegitimate. Core of Human Rights Movement. We take back what human kind did for last 10,000 years. Dignify nature and human kind.

Hunters and Gatherers – Pristine Pride

10,000 years ago – human kind built gradient of masters and underlings. Some people born as higher beings and others as lesser beings. More or lesser honor. Masters’ duty to put down underlings. Honor societies. Right to invoke humiliation given to higher beings. Honor humiliation.

Then human rights message – 180 degrees normative U-turn. Dismantle this gradient.

Mandela – when we talk about human rights. Master – supremacists (thought utterly legitimate in being higher beings). New frame – human rights frame. You are no longer legitimate. Must come down – this is not humiliation – not a duel or war. Humbling. Bring down. Being down is not ordained or God’s will. No longer underling. Empowering. (Be careful because in Rwanda it was those not in power who committed genocide.)

Meet on line of equal dignity.

Evelin, in response to Hilary: Social exclusion and humiliation. Entire talk within frame of HR. Moral normal claim that all deserve to be.

In honor society – all wrong. Normal to have some excluded. Not called excluded. Staying within language is nothing. Terminology is obsolete in an honor society. Honor killings in England, Egypt – two normative worlds incompatible with each other.

Work with Dennis Smith – Why is humiliation much more salient and harmful in a HR context than honor?

In honor – not that hurtful if staying within the “in” group:

- Conquest humiliation: Conquered and included in group of victor. You are alive and swallow it. Women especially – tend to befriend when in stress. Men have flight. Men killed, women captured – how adapted.
- Relegation humiliation: When an individual or group is forcefully pushed downwards within an existing status hierarchy.
- Reinforcement humiliation: Routine abuse of inferiors to order to maintain the perception that they are, indeed, inferior.
- Exclusion humiliation: Forcefully ejected from society. Out of humanity. Cannot travel downward and still be included.

Down but included.

Other normative world – human rights: cannot travel down and still be included. As soon as put down, immediately exclusion humiliation (worst one). Being put down IMMEDIATELY puts you out of society (compared to honor society, when you can be put down and still within group).

Ntl.org – brochure of programs for this year and coming year

**Hilary Silver**, Professor of Sociology and Urban Studies at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, USA, began the panel discussion with her topic entitled, “Social Exclusion, Humiliation, and Shame.” Professor Silver has published widely on the topic of social exclusion, namely for international organizations such as the International Labour Office, World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, and currently, the Wolfensohn Center at the Brookings Institution. Her empirical research on social exclusion has been conducted at the grassroots neighborhood level in such cities as Paris, Berlin, and of course, Providence, Rhode Island.

Silver spoke about the many existing definitions of social exclusion and humiliation, or this “rupture of the social bond.” The panel topic also reviewed the mechanisms of social exclusion and how they work, the importance of power in a social relationship, and shame as the most social emotion. The topic concluded with what can be done.

It has taken ten years for the European Union to adopt a definition of social exclusion. Countries are currently being required to submit national action plans for social inclusion. It remains difficult to identify common terms. There are many definitions because the experience is context-dependent. Many societies think about inclusion and integration in different ways. An example being that the sense of belonging is defined in many ways.

Most agree that social exclusion takes on a number of characteristics, including a multi-dimensional nature – rather, not due to simply one thing. Also, the cause is difficult to tease out, and it is easy to mix up causal direction. One cause may give rise to other forms. It can take place over time. There are active agents, and it is relational, meaning relationships in which people actively include (and exclude) others. Therefore, for studies pertaining to the topic and to humiliation, studies should not focus solely on disadvantaged or excluded groups but should also look at who the excluders are.

It is critical to note that social exclusion is not reducible to poverty. One frequent example is that of young people with college degrees who cannot find jobs. Additionally, there are downward spirals that contribute to social exclusion. Salient examples of downward spirals include long-term unemployment, divorce, homelessness, etc. Also, skills atrophy. Homelessness frequently occurs due to some other downward spiral before.

Social exclusion on a macro level (according to the EU definition) is the denial of full participation in society's normatively prescribed activities and relations. This is the "rupture of the social bond." It provides a framework for looking at "full" citizenship. In France, citizens belong in part through a social bond; that is, all citizens have obligations towards one another (and not just rights). On the other hand, in the US, the individual is free from state.

On the micro level of social exclusion, the loss of social inclusion includes rejection versus simply just a separation and recognition of difference between self and others. Social exclusion often includes ostracism. Furthermore, the power of silence or leaving people alone is taught at a very young age to be punitive, leading to social disqualification or disaffiliation.

There are a number of social exclusion mechanisms through creating social boundaries. One way this is done is through an established "outsider" configuration, which is organized to be internally cohesive. Outsiders are newcomers, strangers and disorganized, while the established internal group finds a feeling of euphoria, belonging, and contempt for outsiders. The established internal group uses praise and gossip for social control. It stigmatizes and excludes outsiders from social contact. As Durkheim said, "exclude one group to reinforce the 'in' group." These differences and boundaries give rise to inequalities.

Another example of a social exclusion mechanism through the creation of the social boundary is snobbery or one-upmanship. A snob is someone who practices, lives by, exults in the system of distinctions, discrimination and social distractions. The essence of snobbery is that you wish to impress other people. There is upward and downward snobbery. Always drawing distinctions and improving one's status by criticism of others. According to De Botton, humans tend to worry about where they are in a pecking order. Status anxiety reflects the fear of losing sense of membership or love.

Gossip is another mechanism; however, a group needs to be fairly well bound for gossip to work. People need to care; in modern society it does not matter if there is no group. Stigma is another mechanism. It is defined as a discrepancy between one's virtual and actual society identity. It is a sign of unusual or discredited moral status used to impute a wider range of imperfections (categorization of "master status"). Types of stigma include deformities of the body (visible), deficiencies of character, and tribal stigma. These deformities serve as a signal, particularly to the "in" group, to treat people not as full human beings. People begin to conceal their true selves. There is a tremendous role of visibility and exposure to the public. Appearances are central to categorization.

Humiliation is very tied to social exclusion, as the joy of belonging has a flip side, and that is the ability to treat others as less than human. Self respect depends on others' attitudes and treatment, and thus humiliation is a form of rejection of the humanity of others. Humiliation is a loss of human dignity and trust in the world.

Humiliation is public, rather, known to a third party. It is the degradation of body and clothing, and it gives rise to shame and anger. Shame is the social emotion. It can cause a physical reaction (e.g. rapid heartbeat).

Is shame instinctual or socially produced? When we feel shame we try to avoid humanity by, for example, averting the gaze of others. There is shame of unemployment, shame of homelessness, both of which cause people to isolate themselves rather than remain in society. The observer of shame may also feel shame. Humiliation produces shame and anger.

Interpersonal and collective solutions presented include: face saving, interaction, memory forgetting, and forgiveness for one's own sake, or justice and reconciliation processes. A decent society's institutions do not humiliate, are inclusive, and do not shame others.

**Don Klein** was the second panelist of the evening.

Klein thanked Morton Deutsch, as host of the workshop and a leader of social science in the country. Deutsch was involved in the creation of the movement and the study of group dynamics, and he has been involved in training people with skills to work with groups of varying sizes and complexities.

Deutsch, a student of renowned academic, Kurt Lewin, did much work in Germany, and then on the effects of different types and styles of leadership on the productivity of different groups. Involved in development of "Action Research," Deutsch helped to spread this idea of importance. Kurt Lewin, described by Klein as a "magnet inspirer," had around him a group of recent young graduates with doctorates in social psychology and adult education. Very important to him was democracy. Fascism was a real threat in Europe. It was very powerful and could have brought destruction. Deutsch looked to increase people's skills for participation in democracy. Lewin and his students conducted workshops on intergroup relations while discussing racism. During the workshops, there were observers of groups. Every evening leaders,

facilitators, and observers spoke about what went on in those groups. One of the participants heard about meetings and asked to join. The woman was going to just to listen. They began talking about what happened to her. She corrected them because they were wrong, thereby serving as an example of how research contribution can be augmented by actions of a participant. She was then encouraged her to talk about what went on.

Three students and Lewin were very excited, and they determined that they should be experimenting with running groups that learn about inter-personal behavior by forming their own groups. Their discussion was the basis for research on group formation and behavior. They then received a grant and did sensitivity training groups – now called “T” groups.

Klein became involved at the NTL in 1956. In the '50s and '60s, this country still invested fair amounts to social areas, which is now in mostly areas of business but is still seen as action research.

Work today is possible thanks to the results of the work previously done by NTL. Some earlier people in the NTL network just incorporated a non-profit organization called “The Lewin Center,” a conference center in Bethel, Maine. It is the emotional headquarters of NTL. The center is committed to training programs, workshops and promoting action research in areas of the study of democratic participation and social justice.

Klein ended his portion of the panel discussion by emphasizing the excitement surrounding the Lewin Center, namely as an important place for the humiliation network and the organizations that all workshop participants are associated with.

**Carlos Sluzki**, Professor at the College of Health and Human Services and at the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University, and Clinical Professor at the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, George Washington University Medical School, was the third and final panelist of the evening. Sluzki, active in the field of migration and family therapy, gave a talk entitled, “Humiliation and Shame Dynamics.”

Sluzki, with wonderful illustrations, spoke about the role and presence of the witness as a crucial element of humiliation and shame dynamics. The key example presented by Sluzki is a person tripping and falling down. And how the reaction of whoever is witnessing the incident participates in defining the dynamic toward making it a humiliating or a shaming experience, as well as its intensity and potential resolutions.

Within the trip-and-fall example, if a person falls, his/her first reaction is to see if someone is looking. If somebody happens to be looking, the second reaction is to see HOW that witness may be looking. If the person is a friendly observer and helps, the act of solidarity reduces the intensity of emotion. It may even bring about some emotions of shame. On the other hand, if the observer is laughing or even indifferent, the externalizing process of rage increases dramatically, as the event became a source of humiliation rather than shame. The reaction of the audience affects in a crucial fashion the kind of emotion experienced. The nature of the witnessing is a central variable to define the destiny, as well as the intensity, of our experience.

Early in the history of the family therapy field, a well-known researcher presented in a congress a description of his intervention with his own family of origin, focusing on revealing family secrets, which he considered toxic and creating intergenerational mishaps. This pioneering presentation was extremely personal and valiant, as it legitimized the theme of the person and family of the therapist, not only of the patients. The risk was, of course, that revealing family secrets risks shaming and humiliating those who are jealous guardians of the secrets. In fact, this author eventually had the article published but signed it “Anonymous,” just to protect family members...or being sued by them.

It should also be kept in mind that perpetrators are also witnesses – when there is a perpetrator, the perpetrator’s comments and even acts can be defined as that of an observer – which presents an interesting added complexity in any circumstance that elicits shame and humiliation. It probably does not make sense to discuss which level is primary and which secondary – whether the event, the style of the victim, or the witness/context – but to consider all part of a complementary gestalt that will define the nature of the experience.

Emotions are part of the social arena. Unless we study them in context, are social phenomena, we are impoverishing our observations.

**Question and Answer Session:** (*People are welcome to remain afterwards*)

**Floyd:** There seem to be so many anomalies to theory – banishment.

1700 – shift to human rights – Declaration of Rights – not blacks, landless men, women.

Romans had concept of citizenship.

Modern Western nations – collectivist groups – were farmers. US Midwest – farmers have sense of egalitarianism – not in agriculture per se.

Theory – all of this is acting – Marcus Aralias – slave from bottom to top. Concept that just a coincidence in high place. Had practice dinners to pretend to be slaves. Role landed in is a coincidence – not subtlety in stratified society.

Theory – all an illusion – all of us acting in a role.

Muslim – role to have war – have to kill people without being attached. All an illusion.

**Evelin:** Difficult to respond, not much time. Buddhism has claim for equality. Jesus. There has always been tendency to claim that all human beings are to be equal.

Structures have quickly taken over (church, etc.) and instituted hierarchical systems. Look at a mother who is absolutely convinced she's not socially excluded. Has no salary or money of her own. Shift to concept that everyone is deserving of equal dignity. Is relatively new transition and shift.

Why EU working on definition now?

If same done in another part of world – honor killing – legitimate. If social exclusion carried out – wouldn't be where EU is now.

Worldwide transition – human rights message is not legitimate.

Hilary is working in field – social exclusion – hurtful to be put down.  
We are coming from a different normative world.

#### Religious Narrative vs. Cultural Narrative

Quran –

Want to return to our dignity. Dictatorships do not want oppression from rulers or the west. Comes from religious narrative.

Value the way in book, improve theory on relative deprivation. In study in Jihadist narratives seen relative dependency. People comparing own situation – see entitlements only adds to sense of humiliation. Dating back to 1700... Human rights narrative based in religions keep comparing to, going back.

Regaining dignity through use of violence. Makes the argument more complex.

**Evelin:** Injustice in ranking people. Religious founders have pinpointed that and movements often start with that. Egypt (lived there for seven years) is a hierarchical society. Religious revolutionaries – message hasn't been strong enough for past 10,000 years. Human rights not a Western invention, but has roots/backgrounds in religious backgrounds that go back thousands of years.

But didn't have chance to win over tendency to the building of hierarchical society. Why doesn't original message win over? Seeming contradiction? Why doesn't Jesus win over?

Message has been there thousands of years, and has real chance to win over now – because living in historical time.

**George Mason Professor:** Is human rights in your view an exclusionary discourse?

**Hilary:** Universalism to the extent of its force can be exclusionary. Aspects of difference. Universalism is an exclusionary policy because it excludes their differences.

Larger controversy on human rights.

Universalist message in Islam.

Any member of a family can bring shame .

Terrible cultural relativist. Not in business of telling people in other societies how to live their lives

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Interest in Dynamic of Change. Social shift to human rights concept. Understanding how shifts happen. Dynamic – interpersonal.

How to recover from the pie – Others like to shame. Large violence happening now

**Hilary:** Shame and shaming is not always bad. Humiliation is bad – is excluding people – not from any society, but from the human family. No matter who you are, you should not exclude someone from the human family.

Shame – normal part of growing up – learn right from wrong – shamed with respect to who we care about.

EU – thing with social exclusion policies – national action plans – supposed to turn in what down. Naming and shaming. Creating social control amongst a group of people who share social norms. Can become pathological if leads to other forms, rather than finding ways to re-knit society and rejoin.

**Carlos:** In a clinical setting, it is much easier to “work through” experiences of shame than experiences of humiliation. Humiliation has a toxic quality in addition to the “advantage” of discharging responsibilities through externalization.

**Don:** Struck by the number of perspectives. How we use words to encompass different packages of information. Not telling what is right, but what my words say to me. When you think of humiliation, think of what happens to African Americans in this country.

Pie in face – there is a choice as to whether someone feels humiliated. African American receives differential treatment – humiliating process is there – no choice.

Humiliation is a very painful experience. We fear it. Some groups experience every day and have to manage it.

Psychoanalytic literature tends to be compared – but different, e.g. of wife/husband and adultery – useful to conceptualize as distinct and separate.

Chose conceptual framework, not because it is right – but because it is useful for its purposes.

**Evelin:** Have lived – like Manal – in contexts where equal dignity not subscribed. How to relate to others who think rank not right thing to do? How to respect those who condone putting down others as pro-social (China – need to humiliate employees otherwise they do not work)? Respect even though don't agree. Research: respect those who condone ranking and explain why better normative and practical system not to rank.

Another tradition – how useful to apply – 30 decades of trying to be respectful of those who believe ranking legitimate. Explain why harmful.

**Unknown Questioner:** Interested in EU and their national plans for social inclusion. Reflected on whether the US would be able to undertake and the two contexts.

**Hilary:** Article with Mike Miller on website focuses on these questions. Could a social exclusion framework be applicable to the US? Resistance amongst colleagues. French imperialist. Not jiving with Anglo Saxon thinking. Liberal societies not necessarily unamicable – just used differently.

For example, racial problems in the US – use different words like affirmative action, diversity, equal opportunity. More or less same thing; we want society to be inclusive.

In policy – Bill Clinton on inclusion – more a democratic discourse than a Republican. Zoning – inclusionary policies – racial. Where exclusion used in our vernacular often references race. No reason why can't use more expansively in the future.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

**Linda Hartling:** Thank you for joining us tonight. I'd to close the public part of our meeting by reading a quote about the African concept of "Ubuntu." One of the participants at our Berlin meeting, Jean-Damascène Gasanabo, introduced this concept to our group. It captures aspects of our efforts working as a community to end cycles of humiliation and promote human dignity.

This quote comes from Desmond Tutu's book *No Future without Forgiveness* (1999).

“Ubuntu is very difficult to render into a Western language. It speaks of the very essence of being human... You share what you have. It is to say, “My humanity is caught up, is inextricably bound up, in yours: We belong in a bundle of life. We say, ‘A person is a person through other person.’ It is not, ‘I think therefore I am.’ It says rather: ‘I am human because I belong.

I participate, I share. A person with ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed, or treated as if they were less than who they are.”

Please see also:

Hilary Silver & S.M. Miller. (2003). Social Exclusion: The European Approach to Social Disadvantage. *Indicators*, 2 (Spring), pp. 1-17.

**Michael Kimmel** was not able to participate in the discussion as previously anticipated. His work is “Men, Masculinity, and the Role of Humiliation.”

Michael Kimmel, Professor of Sociology at State University of New York, Stony Brook. Michael Kimmel is a sociologist who studies gender and masculinity. For the past three years, under the auspices of the Carnegie Endowment, he has been studying the extreme right in the US and Scandinavia, and comparing them to the terrorists of al Qaeda. He has found similar sorts of complaints and similar backgrounds, and similar claims about the restoration of manhood – a theme missing from much of the discussion of humiliation – that it is a decidedly gendered phenomenon.