

## Thank you, dear Howard!

### Howard Richards is the recipient of the 2021 HumanDHS Lifetime Commitment Award!

Evelin Lindner expresses her deep gratitude and profound appreciation for Howard Richards' lifelong work for dignity

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Day Two of the 2021 Workshop on Transforming Humiliation and Violent Conflict,  
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Howard Richards is a philosopher of social science, and a scholar of peace and global studies. We so much thank Alicia Cabezudo, who is also with us today, for introducing him to us in 2006.



Dear Howard, you are one of the deepest thinkers of our time, and more — you have also put into practice what you teach. I have no words to thank you for including us in your lifelong journey of reflection on how a dignified future for humankind may be possible. It is an enormous privilege to have you as esteemed member in the global advisory board of our community and as a core founder of our World Dignity University initiative.

Also I personally are deeply indebted to you. You have authored the Foreword for the book on dignity in solidarity that I just finalized. You have lovingly supported its coming into being both in practice and with your theory building.

You have taught and lectured all around the world, living in Chile and often working in South Africa, together with our dear Gavin Andersson, with whom you founded the Unbounded Academy.<sup>1</sup>

#### Chile

I had the privilege of joining you in both places, Chile and South Africa. In 2012, you kindly invited me into your intellectual universe in Chile. You generously declared your home in Chile to

be one of the Dignity Dialogue Homes of our dignity community, and this was also my home for many weeks in 2012.<sup>2</sup>

Our dear Brian Ward is with us now, who made s wonderful plaque for our Dignity Dialogue Homes in 2011 in New Zealand, and I took this plaque with me all the way to you, dear Howard, in Chile, in 2012!

### South Africa

Then, in 2013, you kindly joined us in our Dignity Conference in Stellenbosch in South Africa, hosted by our dear H el ene Lewis, who is with us also in this workshop now, and our dear Joy Ndwandwe participated as well, who was with us also yesterday.<sup>3</sup>

After our conference in Stellenbosch, we worked in Pretoria for many weeks, together with our dear Catherine Odora Hoppers. Your lovely granddaughter Justine did the video-recording of our dialogues.



### Solidarity

I would like to share with you a little glimpse of our dear Howard’s brilliance, both intellectual and ethical brilliance.

Dear Howard, thank you again for writing the Foreword for the book on solidarity that I just finalized. I would like to share your defense of the term solidarity. (The full references can be found in my book *From humiliation to dignity: For a future of global solidarity* that will come out early in 2022).

The phrase and concept of solidarity is problematic, just as many other similar concepts and terms are problematic. It can lead very much astray. Only if certain conditions are fulfilled can this term set us on a path towards building cultural mindsets that support the well-being of all people across all differences. The first condition is that it must be *global* solidarity rather than *local* in-group solidarity for the sake of out-group enmity, and, second, it must be *global common* solidarity rather than simply the solidarity among “the rentiers, the plutocracy, and globalized finance,” as economist Guy Standing would say.

You, dear Howard, acknowledge that for some people, the word solidarity brings back nightmare memories of the Gulag — this word, solidarity, “has been the rhetoric of unworkable schemes that existed only on paper, while the reality has been inefficient bureaucracies, corruption, the silencing of dissent, and terror.”

You published three books with the phrase solidarity in the title, *Solidarity for Full Employment*, *Solidarity to Raise Wages*, and *Solidarity for Forgiveness of Debts*. You defend the use of the word solidarity as follows:

The word began its career as a player in the discourse of modernity as *solidarité*. It was a watchword and an ideal of the French working class in the mid nineteenth century. The French delegation brought it into the first socialist international, the International Workingman's Association, founded in London in 1861, and through it into the world's main languages. Its main meanings were two: Stand Together United, and Mutual Aid. In the early days, it was used especially to raise funds for international aid sent to comrades in distress in other countries.

You, dear Howard, are in favor of the term solidarity because it was historically associated with questioning the system, both from a socialist point of view, and from a pre-modern religious traditionalist point of view. What motivates both you and me to use this word is that it “puts structural change on the agenda by proposing — and often the proposals are made by people who practice what they preach — living by the rules of a different basic social structure.”

Indeed, together with you, we all are embedded in global networks of people who attempt to walk their talk, who attempt to practice what they preach, not just in their work but also in their personal lives — and who work for deep systemic change.

**Our heartfelt congratulations, dear Howard!**



### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Unbounded Academy, [www.unboundedacademy.org/](http://www.unboundedacademy.org/).

<sup>2</sup> For Dignity Dialogue Homes, see [www.humiliationstudies.org/intervention/dialoguehome.php](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/intervention/dialoguehome.php).

**Notes**

<sup>3</sup> 2013 Annual Dignity Conference in Stellenbosch, South Africa, titled 'Search for dignity', 24th–27th April 2013. See more on [www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/annualmeetings.php](http://www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/annualmeetings.php).