

  [Greetings from Ecuador](#) by Evelin L. [2012, Jul 24]

Dearest Louise!

I hope you are well!

May I ask you something? Have you or your colleagues written on humiliation and politics?
THANK YOU!!!

Dear Louise, as you might know, our Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies (HumanDHS) network has been "weakest" in South America, not least because I, as our global "ambassador" had not been there. Therefore, it was necessary for me to plan to spend time in South America at some point. This year, finally, I succeeded in making time for this effort.

I am now in Quito, Ecuador, after two weeks in Marabá, in the state of Pará, Brazil, the sad "cradle" of the industrialization of the Amazon, see my "digniventure" reflections that are currently in progress attached for you ("digniventure" is a word that peace linguist Francisco Gomes de Matos coined for me). I am spending altogether 4 months in South America, with the aim to strengthen our HumaDHS network here. I started in Chile, from where I went to Bolivia by bus (5 days), then to Brazil (4 days), and now I am in Ecuador for the month of July. See always the newest pictures on www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/evelinpics12.php

Pará is like another continent, compared with the rest of Brazil. It has the size of Western Europe and one landlord can own half a million of cattle. It has a sad reputation for its hired gunmen. For example, this article is illustrative: "Brazil: Homage to the Victims of the Amazon in Washington, D.C.," in Global Voices, posted by Georgi McCarthy on 16th April 2012, <http://globalvoicesonline.org/2012/04/16/brazil-amazon-victims-washington/>.

Not only hired gunmen, also drugs are used to weaken communities who stand in the way of "progress," crack is given out for free until people are addicted. Just when I was there, two people were killed in execution style a few houses away from where I stayed with Dan and his wife.

Dan Baron and Manoela Souza live in the local community of Cabelo Seco and are the artistic-pedagogic coordinators of the Rivers of Meeting project. They were my wonderful hosts. Cabelo Seco is an extremely vulnerable community. It is also a relatively poor community. The roof above me, for example, leaked when it rained and I had to cover my computer and all other valuables with plastic sheets.

Being alerted by my presence, the television came to interview us twice, my host and his community (see http://youtu.be/a_y7G2KFeQo). As it turned out, it was extremely meaningful that I was there, much more than I initially thought. My presence made a difference that it could not have made in Rio + 20, where I was invited, too. I chose Marabá over Rio + 20 because, this I had learned, the voices of the people in the Amazon are not heard, even not in Rio or Brasilia, and I wanted to hear them and bring their voices to larger audiences. As you might be aware, many people working in the field are very sad that Rio +

20 provided much too little space for real transformation. Nnimmo Bassey, chairman of Friends of the Earth International, summarized the Rio + 20 event as follows:

“Governmental positions have been hijacked by corporate interests linked to polluting industries.” Indeed, the river that was 10 meters away from the house where I wrote these lines is polluted with mercury; it is a dying river. Children in the Cabelo Seco community are blind because of the toxic particles in the water...

Pará is a lesson in predator capitalism, the Amazon is a frontier of raiding. The natural resources are being raided and whoever stands in the way has to fear for his/her life. The brutality of this state of our world is of course omnipresent on our planet, however, more sharply visible at such front lines than elsewhere. A consumer who revels in buying several cell phones, for example, usually spares herself the awareness that she uses up rare minerals that must be mined somewhere. The Amazon is one of the places where the mining is being done, and its ugliness and unsustainability is glaringly visible for those who are not co-opted.

And, clearly, also the killing is happening everywhere, only less visible. I just got aware, for example, of "The Scam Wall Street Learned From the Mafia," on how America's biggest banks took part in a nationwide bid-rigging conspiracy and systematically stole from schools, hospitals, libraries and nursing homes, by Matt Taibbi in Rolling Stone Politics, at www.rollingstone.com/politics/news/the-scam-wall-street-learned-from-the-mafia-20120620. Or, raiding can also simply take the form of public policy. For instance, the same day I learned that the Brazilian Ministry of Culture no longer funds “Living Culture” projects committed to harnessing popular culture for the development of sustainable communities (as the project by Dan and Mano) but only “creative industry spectacles,” I also heard that in Norway long-term services for drug addicts will receive less funding and that short-term interventions will be given priority. These are only two examples.

I see social cohesion being weakened qua policy wherever I go. Solidarity is made ever more difficult, solidarity that could be a force for a more caring way of relating to our planet's resources. Charles Eisenstein expresses the paradigm shift that is needed in "Looking Beyond Rio, Towards Degrowth," on 1st July 2012, see postgrowth.org/looking-beyond-rio-towards-degrowth/.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=a_y7G2KFeQo#!

Sending warm greetings from Ecuador,
Evelin Lindner, MD., PH.D.

 [South America 2012.pdf](#)