Celebrity humanitarianism, transnational emotion and the rise of neoliberal citizenship

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Abstract *Celebrity humanitarianism is a form of advocacy for the poor and ill, primarily those populations residing in developing regions of the world. Often the celebrities attempt to galvanize support and care for these distant populations through various kinds of emotional practices, which are promoted and sustained across space through the invocation of community and the use of new social media. The articulation of community, empathy and fan activism creates an experience of citizenship that appears to transcend national borders and enables affective relations between distant individuals and places. In this article, I analyse the mechanisms of emotion in the constitution of these deterritorialized networks, including the specific practices and pastoral language that draw individuals into feelings of transnational solidarity, through fan groups and fan–celebrity engagement. Further, I address the ways in which the emotional enrolment of individuals in this vein can be read as part of a larger process of neoliberal citizenship formation and depoliticization, in which subjects are subtly directed away from state-based responses to problems of poverty and ill health, and towards more individualized, enterprising, and market-mediated forms of social aid.*

Keywords CELEBRITY, CITIZENSHIP, HUMANITARIANISM, NEOLIBERAL GOVERNMENTALITY, PHILANTHROPY, TRANSNATIONALISM

In a TED talk on poverty, musician and activist Bono (2013) stated that:

> So I'm here to – I guess we're here to try and infect you with this virtuous, data-based virus, the one we call factivism. It's not going to kill you. In fact, it could save countless lives. I guess we in the ONE campaign would love you to be contagious, spread it, share it, pass it on. By doing so, you will join us and countless others in what I truly believe is the greatest adventure ever taken, the ever-demanding journey of equality. Could we really be the great generation that Mandela asked us to be? Might we answer that clarion call with science, with reason, with facts, and, dare I say it, emotions?

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Contemporary celebrities such as Bono appear regularly in advertisements, on the news, in world forums such as Davos and on TED talks to promote more global humanitarian aid (Farrell 2012; Ponte et al. 2009; Richey and Ponte 2008; Yrjölä 2009). Through their actions, projects and foundations, these celebrity humanitarians appear to be able to transcend nation-state problems regarding international giving. They can leapfrog cumbersome bureaucracies and corrupt receiving governments to channel aid directly to the poor. Their charity advocacy promises a form of deterritorialized citizenship through transnational activism and global emotion, one that relies on a technologically well-informed use of new social media, direct advocacy campaigns and a fan base that rivals the populations of small countries (Bennett 2012; Jenkins and Shrethsova 2012).

Fans are recruited to the celebrities' charitable activities and projects in Africa and other international sites through the invocation of pastoral care paired with 'reason', and through the use of intimacy, including several different registers of emotion; these include those of the confessional (Chouliaraki 2012), development made sexy (Cameron and Haanstra 2008) and the language of love and redemption (Hintzen 2008). Many of these emotional gestures are inflected with Christian imagery, language and themes (Duvall 2010). Through their comments, donations and group-related activism, fans are enticed to feel closer to both the celebrity and the place and people 'over there' who are receiving 'their' aid. The process is quick – sometimes just the click of a button – digital, individual and distant, yet also frequently saturated with intense emotion.

The emergence and intersection of celebrity humanitarians, their fans, the recipients of aid and the practices of global giving portend the rise of new transnational fields constituted by elite-driven affective networks spanning national borders (Hutchison 2014; Hutchison and Bleiker 2014; Mercer 2014; Pedwell 2012, 2014). These transnational relationships and practices are channelled via the beloved celebrity, who helps to create feelings of individual connection and empathy between the potential fan donor and needy recipients in distant locations. It is a digitalized mode of transnational lived citizenship in the age of global social media, for the long distance charitable acts and relationships of celebrities and fans are purely electronic and financial, yet through these mediated emotional connections a seemingly authentic and frictionless global field is constituted (Bennett 2013; Chouliaraki 2012; Häkli and Kallio 2013).

Hutchison and Bleiker (2008: 63) argue that emotions are 'an active component of identity and community'. Emotions bind people together and give them a sense of identity and group belonging because of particular experiences they may share and/or forms of language and communication they may use to express these emotional experiences and ways of being (see also Ahmed 2004). Arenas (2015: 1125) notes, in particular, how the powerful emotions connected with social movements for change bring people together and can generate solidarities that 'offer the collective potentiality of interconnection' that 'expands people's capacity to act'.

Emotions are shaped by historically and geographically specific forms of socialization and help to situate people in a social relation with others. This can occur at

multiple different scales, from individual relations to world politics. Emotions thus carry the potential to play a pivotal role in policy analysis and in political debates on global concerns such as the war on terror, as well as the creation of transnational networks and feelings of solidarity (Bosco 2007; Hutchison and Bleiker 2014). Group emotions also play an important role in structuring relations between different political groups at international scales (Mercer 2014). These forms of social emotion are often critical *vis-à-vis* the particular manner in which transnational communities are formed and their long-distance practices and experiences are shaped. Pedwell (2014: 30) notes how emotions such as these are also a key circuit through which power is mediated, and that feelings of empathy for others can be 'made to work as a powerful mode of biopolitical governmentality'.

In this article, I am interested in these emotional modes of governmentality *vis-à-vis* humanitarianism and social aid, especially their role in what I see as a broad contemporary shift to a type of depoliticized global 'care citizenship.' This form of neoliberal citizenship is underpinned by a waning faith in governments and a growing confidence in individual enterprise, people power, and the efficiency of market systems and logics. To investigate the constitution of this type of citizenship and citizen, I examine some of the specific emotional practices through which celebrities cultivate and recruit their fan donors and connect them to their targeted sites of benevolence in Africa.

In this empirical enquiry, I use interpretative methods to examine specific discursive representations of emotion. As Hutchison (2014: 4) notes, representations 'are the language and imagery through which meanings are produced and disseminated in societies'. They 'embody particular forms of feeling' in systems of language and communication and enable us to observe the social nature of emotions as well as the connections between 'the individual and collective politics of emotion'. The types of discursive representations with which I engage here are taken from a wide range of sites and events. These include: Bono's TED talk of 2013 and 622 related comments on ONE's website; 370 comments related to the talk on the TED website; fan websites, including Zootopia and the Bono Street Team; fan-based social media sites, such as Twitter and Facebook; charity websites, including ONE and Product (RED); pop culture magazines, such as *Vanity Fair*; YouTube clips; and, television and newspaper interviews with celebrities and fans.

In the following sections, I chart the rise of celebrity humanitarianism in the social media era and describe some of the forms it has taken and organizations it has spawned. I focus on the celebrity activist Bono and the charity organizations associated with him. I then turn to the existing literature on emotional citizenship and investigate the ways in which celebrity fans are enlisted into global giving and care activism through various forms of emotional intimacy, moral urgency, and the articulation of Christian-themed assumptions about pastoral care, paired with a neoliberal logic of 'fact'-based rationality, individual enterprise and market efficiency. I conclude by examining some of the ways that these forms of emotional recruitment have been received and acted on by fans, focusing on their distant yet intimately networked relationships with the celebrity, the site or sites of empathy in Africa, and each other.

Celebrity humanitarianism, social media and fan mobilization

Celebrity humanitarianism is a phenomenon involving well-known figures from the worlds of entertainment, sports and business who use their fame for humanitarian causes. The most famous recent examples of such figures – entertainers such as Bono, Geldof, Oprah and Jolie – are perhaps as famous for their activism or charitable causes as they are for their professional work. In some cases, the celebrities are such well-known charity activists that they are invited to meet heads of state to press their causes and to offer advice on issues of global aid and development.

Prime Minister Cameron and President Obama, for example, have met Bono on more than one occasion. His high status as a peer discussant and advisor at these types of meetings was evident in a statement from his advocacy group ONE. The organization wrote that the point of a recent get-together with President Obama was to 'discuss the administration's development strategy heading into the upcoming G-8 and G-20 meetings in Canada and September's UN Summit on the Millennium Development Goals'. Using the familiar language of friendly compatriots of equal status, Bono added, 'with the first BlackBerry president, we discussed the power of new technology to empower activists and entrepreneurs across Africa' (quoted in Cooper 2010).

This form of political prestige and exposure at the highest levels of government is mirrored by renown and adoration at the level of popular culture and the general public. Well-known celebrities are able to disseminate their messages of concern and exhortation to their extensive fan bases – vast populations that have been built up over years and in some cases decades. For rock stars like Bono and Lady Gaga, the numbers of their devoted followers are huge: 67 million 'likes' on Facebook for Lady Gaga and 42 million followers on Twitter in 2014; 18 million likes for U2/Bono and the development of multiple fan sites and organizations connected with him and his group. Meanwhile, all-round entertainers and public figures such as Oprah Winfrey also boast numerous devotees and sources of exposure, including a daytime television programme, a magazine, the cable network OWN, as well as 25 million Twitter followers in 2014.

Bennett (2012) has noted how the rise of new social media such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube has revolutionized activism, including the mobilization of celebrities' fans for activist causes (see also Earl and Kimport 2009; Kligler-Vilenchik et al. 2012). One of the many advantages of drawing on social media to disseminate ideas and engage fans in various kinds of campaigns is the way in which a seemingly direct connection with the star and his or her cause can reinvigorate and expand existing fan communities. Despite the distances involved, feelings of proximity and intimacy can be created both between the celebrity and the fan, and also between fans, who have been conjointly hailed through the celebrity's social media outreach. Bennett (2012) writes of this process:

> It is this sense of closeness offered by social media, even if a simple illusion, that enables artists who use this tool to mobilize their fans so effectively. It is a glaring paradox that any fan is only one of potential millions of followers being spoken to through this platform, but the directness and dialogic nature of the

> communication can create a situation whereby fans feel spoken to personally, consequently instigating a powerful and active response when calls to action are generated by a celebrity to their fan base.

The aura of authenticity surrounding the media relationship between star and fan is critical for the development of both intimacy and a belief in the celebrity's cause. Researchers have shown that one of the primary ways in which the various forms of media convey authenticity is through the display of a private self that appears to be seamlessly connected to public actions. Duvall (2010), for example, has noted how sincerity of belief and action was attributed to the charitable works of Angelina Jolie because of their connection with her private life. Her charismatic performances on-screen allied with her appealing personal actions (including multiple international adoptions), made her activism seem authentic and believable (see also Chouliaraki 2011).

To win the allegiance of fans to a particular cause, celebrity activists must show a personal connection in their private lives with the cause that is being promoted (King 2006). Moreover, this connection must take place over a lengthy period and in the actual – rather than virtual – places in which the problem or event is occurring. Otherwise, the celebrities run the risk of the cause seeming like a 'photo op' that will advance their careers rather than aid the individuals and communities being touted as in need of help. Bono, for example, is widely perceived as an authentic humanitarian because of the length of time he has been pursuing the causes of debt relief and AIDS in Africa, as well as his personal engagement in multiple transnational encounters with politicians worldwide and with people in townships and villages on the African continent (Cooper 2008). For many Christian followers, Bono's authenticity is also evident in his expressions of religious faith and in the link between his own spiritual journey and his humanitarian work (Gulbrandsen et al. 2005).

Fan mobilization by 'authentic' celebrity figures such as Jolie and Bono also works through the inculcation of a sense of a community, one that is activated by the possibility of individual participation and engagement linked to something larger (Brough and Shresthova 2012; Kligler-Vilenchik et al. 2012). Social media is integral to this process, since it is 'through the platform of social media that a fan culture, in all its interconnected networks and communities, can quite rapidly be drawn together, working to achieve a shared goal' (Bennett 2012). As I show later in the case of the Bono Street Team and comments on the ONE website, it is the 'strong communal discussions and deliberation' (van Zoonen 2004: 46) that fans engage in around issues affecting the beloved celebrity and his or her causes that create the effect of a democratically inclusive community space. This space incorporates all in its emotional orbit – celebrity, fan-donors, cause, distant place and recipients. This deterritorialized space of encounter is a form of mediated 'quasi-interaction', which Thompson (1995: 219) suggests is essential to modern fandom. He writes, 'an important part of being a fan is the cultivation of non-reciprocal *relations of intimacy with distant others*' (Thompson 1995: 222, my emphasis). Notably, this fan community is constituted and held together not despite but because of the spatial and temporal distance between the actors and things involved.

The current activation of these intimate yet distant fans through social media platforms corresponds to some degree with a shift in celebrity orientation from domestic politics to more international concerns and priorities. Current issues on the radar for activist celebrities from Jolie, Pitt, Oprah and Bono to George Clooney (Darfur), Sean Penn (Haiti), and Madonna (Malawi) primarily involve distant places, populations and issues related to health, education, poverty and natural disaster relief. Bono, for example, began his public involvement in humanitarian causes by participating in concerts that supported famine relief in Ethiopia in 1984 and 1985. Following this, he joined Amnesty International and the Jubilee 2000 movement, arguing for wealthy nations to erase the debts owed by 52 of the poorest countries.

More recently, in 2002, Bono helped to found DATA (Debt, AIDS, Trade, Africa) and engaged in numerous tours and campaigns, including the 'Heart of America' tour and the 'Make Poverty History' campaigns, in the early 2000s. Perhaps responding to the increasing prevalence and importance of social media, in 2005 he helped to establish the advocacy organization ONE. This organization relies on social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook to promote its campaign to 'join the fight against extreme poverty'.[1] Product (RED), a retail-based charity offshoot of ONE co-founded by Bono, also relies heavily on the digital dissemination of its activities and goals to the wider community (Magubane 2008; Ponte et al. 2009; Richey and Ponte 2008).

Advocacy efforts such as these rely on recruiting like-minded campaigners, and an examination of comments to Bono's 2013 TED talk on the ONE website shows a high concentration of responses with Christian themes and language. In recruiting fans to become active in charitable causes, celebrities rely on the possibilities of long-distance intimacy and community afforded by the new social media. These forms of intimate communication across spatial divides work best when the fan base feels a sense of shared community in working for something larger and when the celebrity's humanitarian actions appear authentic and heartfelt. I turn now to examine how these emotions can be linked to the experience of a kind of deterritorialized citizenship that I argue is becoming increasingly prevalent for those populations drawn to the pastoral language of long-distance care.

Transnational emotion and deterritorialized citizenship

In examining the representations and practices associated with emotional citizenship, I draw here on the understanding of citizenship as a formation constituted and negotiated through various practices and forms of identification in addition to a normative legal status (Isin and Nielsen 2008; Leitner and Ehrkamp 2006; Marston and Mitchell 2004). Practices and acts both reflect and create various experiences of citizenship, including at different levels and registers and often with more scalar flexibility than conventional notions of abstract loyalty to or identification with the nation-state. In the era of large-scale transnational movements and global ties, these practices and forms of identification are increasingly important to investigate *vis-à-vis* new contexts, experiences and imaginings for a growing cross-border set of actors (Leitner and Ehrkamp 2006).

In her work on transnational mobility and emotional citizenship, Ho (2009: 789), for example, argues for a more systematic analysis of the emotions with respect to their impact on other types of behaviour – such as political attitudes and acts related to the nation-state. Foregrounding emotional dynamics allows an examination of 'the substance of social relations and structures' rather than merely holding them up as something fixed and given. This in turn enables an articulation of individual feelings in relation to larger forces and fields.

Ho (2009: 789) raises two theoretical lines of enquiry – on the emotional representations of citizenship and on the types of emotional subjectivities and related social and political behaviours formed in connection with citizenship governance. Emotional representations of citizenship involve the ways in which individuals 'describe and give meaning to citizenship'; it emphasizes the personal and intentional attitudes and investments in the concept. The notion of citizenship governance incorporates a larger sphere of subjectivity formation involving varying modes of recruitment and the formation of consent. It is a broader framing of 'consensual-cum-socialized forms of political control' (Sparke 2006: 357). Forms of governance related to citizenship formation are multiple and involve diverse actors, institutions and practices.

Both these lines of enquiry are important to consider when investigating deterritorialized citizenship formations that are social media-oriented and based in fan culture. For example, in their study of two quite different activist global fan groups, the Harry Potter Alliance (HPA) and Invisible Children (IC), Kligler-Vilenchik et al. (2012) identified the 'wish to help' as a commonly expressed narrative among all their interviewees. Two other frequently narrated emotions common to fan activism, a sense of community and shared media experiences, accompanied this 'wish to help', which is a key attribute of participatory citizenship and engagement.

Despite these commonalities, however, their research indicated that these two activist fan organizations were formed and mobilized in quite different ways. HPA could be characterized as emerging directly from the shared experiences, passions and perspectives of Harry Potter fans interested in connecting the actual stories in the books and films to real-world issues. They felt and expressed a strong sense of emotive citizenship and affiliation with the group from the beginning. IC, by contrast, was formed as part of a larger mission of the film directors to inspire young people to get involved in ending the war in Africa. In the latter case the youthful directors' own examples and direct recruitment practices *vis-à-vis* youth involvement was key to the successful enrolment and ensuing forms of governance of this transnationally active fan base.

The differing practices and effects of these two globally active, transnationally oriented fan clubs provide a good example of how similar feelings of a wish to help can be mobilized emotively in extremely diverse ways. Moreover, these differences can have lasting effects *vis-à-vis* the formation, experience and governance of citizenship. In what follows, I identify some specific emotional practices that celebrity humanitarians employ in their efforts to recruit activists and donors to their causes. The examples emphasize different registers of emotion and language used by Bono and others in their interactions with fans. They include the confessional style, development made sexy, and love and redemption. In each form of emotional outreach, both non-liberal and

neoliberal rationalities are at play: these include expressions of pastoral care and duty (with clear Christian overtones), paired with a strong rhetoric of individual efficiency and popular enterprise. In the latter case, the superiority of individual actions and people power contrasts with assumptions about government inefficiencies, alongside nudges towards public–private partnerships, more 'rational' methods of care and market-friendly approaches to social aid. I argue that the particular method of outreach and recruitment that Bono employed is emblematic of a much broader shift to deterritorialized and neoliberal forms of citizenship in the twenty-first century (cf. Mitchell 2016).

The confessional

A celebrity's 'confessional style' is one that is perceived as a true and authentic public expression of personal feelings. It embraces both the performative aspect of confessing in a court of law, and also the more private sense of a religious space – the confessional – where one shares the most intimate and innermost fears, insecurities and transgressions. When celebrities seem to confess, either verbally or through embodied actions such as tears, they are seen to be feeling deeply and truly, embodying an authentic act or message that deserves to be heard and respected (Bennett 2013; Redmond 2011).

This type of heartfelt expression is seen as relying on the 'intimacy of emotion', one that captures the practices of public self-disclosure as integral to authentic performances. For Chouliaraki (2012: 15), the concern here is not with the performative aspect of the confessional, but rather with the ways in which this emotive speech act often blurs and collapses the pain of the sufferer onto that of the celebrity. The celebrity 'displaces the affective relationship of spectator and sufferer onto a relationship between spectator and celebrity as the most "authentic" figure of pity'. She argues that, over the long term, this type of emotive connection, which ultimately returns to the celebrity him or herself, provides intensity and high drama in the immediate space of encounter, but most likely will not endure over time and distance.

In his TED talk in 2013, Bono does not cry, but he invites audience intimacy through confessing (and ridiculing) his own exalted sense of self, his self-proclaimed 'messiah complex'. He says at one point, 'there are all kinds of benefits to this. For a start, you won't have to listen to an insufferable little jumped-up Jesus like myself. How about that?' (Bono 2013). His self-reference to Jesus, even though made in a self-deprecating turn of phrase, highlighted the Christian overtones in his talk, something that many commentators noted on both the TED and ONE sites. With an emotional tone, Bono also exhorted his followers to be factivists, to believe in data and evidence as well as in the power of emotions. 'Might we answer that clarion call with science, with reason, with facts, and, dare I say it, emotions?'

In other public engagements, Bono confesses to a preoccupation with his underdog Irish ancestry and working-class orientation – making both identity markers to his sense of self an intimate point of connection for his fans as well as a form of identification that links him with the downtrodden of the world – especially in distant regions like Africa. Magubane (2008) notes how this type of discourse of long-distance identification often 'places those who are talked about in a time other than that of the one who

talks'. This form of what she terms 'coevalness' enables emotional connections to be foregrounded between people and places while sidestepping contemporary problems of politics and race. Public figures such as Bono and Oprah employ the rhetoric of cosmopolitan identification, drawing on their own personal backgrounds as members of historically subjugated and dispossessed groups, to delineate a transnational connection existing outside nation-state borders. (Winfrey's is with respect to race and gender; Bono's is *vis-à-vis* Irish colonial dispossession.) In Bono's case, as a rich white man, he seeks to defuse criticisms about both his own potentially patronizing role in 'helping' Africans and in the broader racial politics of contemporary nation-states; in a sense, as a member of a similarly colonized and oppressed country, he does this by 'becoming' the African Other. Magubane (2008: 119) writes of this move:

> Bono can be seen as engaging in exactly this type of practice – of attempting to sidestep the uncomfortable and messy question of race – choosing to focus on his Irish ethnicity as a way of defusing questions and criticism. Shortly after he launched the Red campaign, for example, he fended off critics, who pointed to the possible contradiction raised by his race and class position, by declaring that his drive to fight on behalf of Africans was 'an Irish macho thing, I really don't like losing' (Perry 2006). Thus, Irishness silently came to confer racial 'Otherness'. This 'Otherness' was given further legitimacy when it was supplemented by his claiming of a 'macho' (read working class) masculinity.

Development made sexy

Another strategy to attract interest in development and poverty relief in the global South is making development appear sexy. Cameron and Haanstra (2008) have noted a recent proliferation of campaigns in which even concepts such as children's suffering and sustainable development are perceived as needing the boost that sexy delivery can bring. Rather than generating a willingness to help through inducing emotions of pity, the so-called 'pornography of poverty', the current effort seems to take the opposite tack – the sex appeal of poverty activism.

In a number of recent advertisements, video clips on YouTube, magazines and journals, non-profits and aid agencies are shown trying to harness this emotive mood and language. Instead of drawing on the guilt of affluence in the face of distant suffering, the fan donor and activist is recruited through positive associations of wealth and attractiveness; he or she is made to feel sexy and sophisticated through the very possibility of aiding the wellbeing of others. As Cameron and Haanstra (2008: 1476) put it, 'the strategic emphasis of awareness and fundraising initiatives has shifted from guilt about scarcity in the global South to a celebration of abundance in the global North.'

Several celebrity humanitarians have engaged in this new type of campaign through their actions as well as, in some cases, through their very personae.[2] Bono has been one of the most explicit promoters of what he terms 'sex appeal' in marketing Africa as a charitable cause to his fan base. In one video clip aired on Youtube, Bono promoted the so-called Africa issue of *Vanity Fair* by noting:

> I want people to see the adventure of Africa. … We've got twenty different covers so you've got George Clooney on the cover and Mohammad Ali. They've just one thing in common: their passion about Africa. That's what this issue of *Vanity Fair* is all about – is trying to bring some sex appeal to the idea of wanting to change the world.[3]

This tack was tried in a Save the Children video released in April 2014[4] in which a number of models were asked to read cue cards in a sexy manner, beginning with words like 'desire' and 'lust' and then moving to statistics on poverty and death among women and children in Africa. As Hengeveld (2014) points out, among the many problems with this form of representation, including the temporary quality of most reactions that appeal primarily to the libido, the Save the Children video also denigrates and denies agency to both the beneficiaries and the donors. The children and their stories are rendered mute, as they are perceived as not 'hot enough' to appeal to others; and donors are seen as flighty and superficial creatures unable to connect to others without a little 'T and A' (tits and ass) on the side.

The appeal to the shallow side of donors is prevalent in the Product (RED) campaign as well. Product (RED) is a licensed brand that operates by working with private corporations to sell products and raise awareness about HIV/AIDS in Africa; a portion of the sales of (RED) products goes directly to the Global Fund, which fights AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. Product (RED) was first unveiled and promoted by Bono at the World Economic Forum at Davos in 2006, and in subsequent years he has rallied his fans to support (RED) partner retailers (Microsoft, Coke, Gap, Armani, and so on) by buying their goods.

Product (RED) initiated a new way of thinking about development aid, one predicated on the idea of ethical consumption as a form of global engagement. The connection to 'development made sexy' is evident in the selling of many of the (RED) products. In one advertisement for Motorola's Product (RED) mobile phones for example, sensuous models in bikinis dance to rock music, while 'saving lives is sexy' flashes on the screen alongside the Motorola logo (Cameron and Haanstra 2008: 1475). The implication is that through the purchase of products such as Motorola phones, international aid is hip and sexy, as consumers are able to shop in what they are told is an ethically reflexive way and see themselves as both sophisticated and responsible world citizens at the same time (Richey and Ponte 2008).

The language of love and redemption

Love sells and the language of love is ubiquitous in the speeches of celebrity humanitarians, advocacy campaigns and in the advertising of (RED) products themselves. In a recent example, Damien Hirst, Bono, Sotheby's and the Gagosian Gallery organized a (RED) auction around the concept of love. They invited artists to contribute works for the auction inspired by the colour red and by love itself. Bono responded to the auction's financial success by linking 'art and love, sex and money' together in the fight against AIDS in Africa. He said 'tonight we got serious about love, and not just the love

of art, but the love of our brothers and sisters suffering from AIDS in the poorest places on the planet.'[5]

The Product (RED) motif is also an active presence in the language of redemption – that of the African continent. In a special edition of *Vanity Fair*, in which Bono introduces the Product (RED) corporate brand and charity partners to the world, age-old tropes of white love and African redemption pervade the text and photographs. In a guest editorial, Bono writes of the importance of representing Africa not as a burden but as 'an opportunity, as an adventure'. He continues, 'our habit – and we have to kick it – is to reduce this mesmerizing, entrepreneurial, dynamic continent of fifty-three diverse countries to a hopeless deathbed of war, disease and corruption' (Bono 2007: 36.) The placement of this letter opposite an advertisement for Dolce & Gabbana fashionwear is one of the many odd juxtapositions that link themes of love, sex and redemption with the developed world and Africa. The advertisement shows two racially ambiguous light brown men and one blue-eyed tanned woman intertwined in highly sexualized poses partially covered by a crocodile (Hintzen 2008: 78).

This complicated pastoral push for redemption through love and sex is tied in equally complicated ways to an appeal to individual enterprise and people power. How are these calls to action received? In the following section, I provide two different examples of the many ways that fans and fan groups internalize and carry forward Bono's messages of community, Christian love, salvation, transparent markets and transnational citizenship in their responses to the call to aid the poor in Africa.

Fan responses: from TED to the Bono Street Team

As of May 2015, 1,497,568 people had watched Bono's 2013 TED talk. In this talk, as in many other performances, Bono makes frequent reference to emotive words such as hearts, tears and emotions, even as he propounds the benefits of facts, or what he calls 'factivism', in tackling global poverty. Here, he makes quite clear the connection between his emotional enrolment of global activists and the underlying rationale of individual enterprise and engagement beyond national governments. With facts, data, technology and transparency, individuals can be armed to fight the corruption assumed to be inherent in many developing nations. Notably, his language of state-based corruption in developing countries and the need for individual enterprise and business-like benchmarking are themes that also emerge with consistent regularity in philanthrocapitalist projects worldwide (cf. Hay and Muller 2014; Kapoor 2013). Bono (2013) said:

> And right now, we know that the biggest disease of all is not a disease. It's corruption. But there's a vaccine for that too. It's called transparency, open data sets, something the TED community is really on. Daylight, you could call it, transparency. And technology is really turbocharging this. It's getting harder to hide if you're doing bad stuff. So let me tell you about the U-report, which I'm really excited about. It's 150,000 millennials all across Uganda, young people armed with 2G phones, an SMS social network exposing government corruption

> and demanding to know what's in the budget and how their money is being spent. This is exciting stuff.

Fan comments appeared on the ONE website via Facebook posts soon after the 26 February talk. Early in the morning of 14 March, Tammy Stone, an estate agent, wrote, 'thank you Bono! From despair to Hope! We will win as One! (heartshape).' This post received 37 likes and was soon followed by Ogor Winnie Okoye (with 4903 followers), who wrote, 'what a brilliant message by Bono! A must watch for everyone especially my Nigerian brothers and sisters! He said the biggest disease in the world is corruption! Hear him: "we are going to win because the power of the people is 'much' stronger than the people in power.' Amen!' This comment, which 72 people liked, was followed by three sub-comments: (a) 'Biggest disease IS corruption!'; (b) 'People are awesome. There's no doubt in my mind that the power of connecting everyday people will define the next generation of poverty alleviation'; (c) 'It takes people getting active and vocal. If you can't do anything else at least SPREAD THE WORD!!'

The responses here show a number of important connections to the underlying themes of Bono's talk. First, there are the biblical references, which are evident in the phrases and use of capital letters, 'From despair to Hope; Hear him; Amen; and SPREAD THE WORD'. This kind of language and related imagery is even more explicit in many of the other 622 posts, including a few that connect Bono directly with Jesus (for example, Winston Bowie (18 May 2013): 'cross cross cross: thank you Bono for imitating Jesus & catalyzing salvation', and Justin Brierley (16 March 2013): 'great Video – thanks Jesus … I mean Bono.'

Second, the message about corruption 'over there' ('my Nigerian brothers and sisters') is clearly heard and absorbed. This theme is amplified in many of the comments, where the writers note both the problems of trying to help in the face of corruption and inefficiency as well as picking up on the implied solution to these problems *vis-à-vis* greater transparency, metrics and individual enterprise. Roberto Agosto (18 March 2013) writes, for example, 'go Bono! I believe it is possible. Let's start the vaccinations against corruption, inertia and bad governance.' Barry McMahon (14 March 2013) writes, 'this is great news! The One organization has been working toward ending AIDS and eliminating poverty through applied methods that actually work.' Shawn Boike (20 March 2013) notes in a similar vein, 'Wow, Very well done! This should be the World's goal – not with handouts but fruitful productivity of all.'

Third, the power of everyday people connecting with each other (and not with those who are in power) is a message that many respondents pick up and amplify. Jodi Crosley (14 March 2013), for example, writes 'there is power in the numbers – together we have the power to create amazing change in this world and be champions for those who need us most. Thank you to Bono, U2, and ONE for being a powerful tool to enable people like me to do just that. It feels so good to be able to be a part of making a difference on this scale (or any scale truly) … now spread the word and let's keep on keepin on!'

These types of comments give expression to some of the ways in which people receive and act on Bono's messages of emotional factivism in the short term. In another

example, the formation of the Bono Street Team, we can see how one committed fan devoted years of her life to Bono and his causes. The Bono Street Team is a fan organization headed by a woman who is a self-proclaimed Bono groupie, photographer, and mother. She created the Bono Street Team to link up with other fans interested in supporting Bono in his work in Africa. The organization's mission statement indicates the strong emotional link to the celebrity, as well as to his ONE campaign. In the organization's mission statement, Simte notes her graduation from the Hunger and Agriculture Griot Project, an online learning course designed to help people become effective advocates for hunger eradication in Africa. She writes:

> The BONO STREET TEAM are advocates that are dedicated to and support the work that Bono does for Africa. … Dion Simte is the founder/coordinator of the Bono Street Team and a graduate of the ONE and World Food Programme – Growing Solutions to End Hunger: The Hunger and Agriculture Griot Project. 'I am a mother who is passionate about using my voice on behalf of the world's poorest, by raising awareness through social media about extreme poverty in Africa, while leaving a legacy to inspire my children to help those in need.' The Bono Street Team brings exposure and actively promotes the causes close to Bono's heart and our own.[6]

The Bono Street Team is just one of many fan sites, which indicates both the love of fans for celebrity figures and their community-based interactions with each other. The site reiterates the moral urgency that Bono and his affiliated organizations express by repeating one of his calls to action in several places: 'this is our moment, this is our time, this is our chance to stand up for what's right.' A print at the top of the site shows Bono, wearing a black hat and shirt, kissing a black baby. Most of the rest of the site is devoted to a blog with featured news of Bono and his many associated campaigns and organizations such as the advocacy group ONE, and its retail offshoot Product (RED).

The African Well Fund (AWF) campaign is also featured prominently on the site and is clearly an important cause for the organizer Dion Simte. The AWF is a non-profit organization whose central purpose is to raise funds for the building and management of wells in Africa. The organization was initiated in 2002 by U2 fans via their links with Zootopia, the largest U2 fan group. According to the AFW website, the U2 fans were inspired to form the organization after learning about Bono's 2002 trip to Africa with US Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill.

Another page of the AFW site features interviews with several donors about why they have given their time and money to the organization. Parts of the interview with Bono Street Team founder Dion Simte are worth quoting, for they exemplify the power of social media in facilitating her recruitment to the cause, especially the importance of the role of the shared community of U2 fans linked through Zootopia. When asked 'how did you first learn about the African Well Fund?' Simte responds, 'I first started hearing about the African Well Fund many years ago through Zootopia, the U2.com online community.' She then explains her reasons for wanting to support

AWF with further reference to the importance of her fan community. In her statement, she notes the importance of having a 'direct impact' through giving in the following manner.

> **Why did you want to support AWF?**
>
> I wanted to support the African Well Fund because I was a U2 fan and knew AWF was created by U2 fans. I also wanted to have a more direct impact on helping in Africa and I knew I could have that opportunity through AWF.

Simte, who in another website presence calls herself 'Jesus girl',[7] was recruited because of her adoration for U2, Bono and, by extension, his chosen causes. Her entire social world, including family and friends, are brought into this relational network through the power of social media and through her own activism via the Bono Street Team. As she writes of this multiplex of emotions and connections:

> **Have you introduced your family, friends or community to AWF? How?**
>
> Yes, my family and friends donate to my annual Facebook Causes Birthday Wish. They are very aware of my passion to assist AWF in any way I can and continue to help me reach my birthday wish every year. Community wise, the power of social media – via the Bono Street Team updates through the Internet – helps me reach those on a global level. It's so exciting to help bring awareness of AWF to those I wouldn't otherwise have contact with if there were no online presence.[8]

Here we can see the blurring of boundaries 'between affect and activism' that Burwell and Boler (2008) argue are constitutive of fan activism, where collective engagement with a cause converges with 'imaginative performance' and 'cultural consumption'. Another key element to highlight in this fan site is the extension of the idea of the individual helping other individuals in distant locations of deprivation. The individuals in the developed world are held together through the shared media of U2/Bono fandom, and forge a larger community of believers in their wish to help the developing world, particularly local sites in Africa. For example, for those donating between 14 April and 31 May 2015, AWF invites U2 fans to donate to the 13th Annual Build a Well for Bono's Birthday fundraiser. The messages and signatures of those who donate can be digitally collected and compiled into a birthday card, which will be sent to Bono along with the amount raised.[9]

Simte and the U2 community understand and represent the AWF charity as transparent, efficient and effective. These donors have supreme confidence that the money raised by the fan community has 'a direct impact' because it goes straight to localized African well projects without having to negotiate the perceived problems of working through unnamed frictions or blockages (namely corrupt national governments). In actuality, however, donations to AWF go directly to Africare, an NGO founded in 1971 that works with local communities and currently follows the market-philanthropy logic

of empowerment and public–private partnerships. These partnerships, some of which are with local governments and some with private sector entities, support the ideals of local self-sufficiency developed with the needs of the business community in mind. The AWF website, for example, extols the importance of private sector connections and the value of projects that can boast 'mutually beneficial impacts with measurable returns'. Such language is common to the push for greater benchmarking and metrics in contemporary venture philanthropy partnerships worldwide.[10]

Conclusion

In this article, I investigated the role of emotions in the formation of transnational solidarity and deterritorialized citizenship through some of the practices associated with long-distance charity. This social space has emerged with the growth of a form of celebrity humanitarianism enabled by the new social media and practised by fans in complex relationships and spaces worldwide. The cross-border emotions constituted through celebrity humanitarianism and long-distance giving and activism occur in a register that seeks to transcend governments and their specific geographies and histories. Fan-donors are encouraged to identify with distant individuals and local communities and to bypass collectivities of nation or class, finding morality and comfort in forms of direct action that are individualistic yet also gratifyingly social, as they are shared within a larger community of fans.

These forms of identification are encouraged through the celebrity's own practices. Through sharing quotidian experiences, emotions and activities, celebrities make 'connections between individuals who are physically remote from each other. … They build camaraderie over distance through the dynamic and ongoing practices of disclosing the everyday' (Crawford 2009: 252, 254). Celebrities thus establish, with their own intimate and authentic projections of life, the systems and practices through which seemingly deep emotional connections can be made across space. And, through their own projected love of both their fans and those suffering in distant locations, they forge a global network of intimacy and action.

Transnational lived citizenship is constituted in large measure through these types of emotions. Investigating how these feelings are formed is critical in understanding contemporary transnational relations and the scale and politics of citizenship formation in the digital era. The persuasive rhetoric of long-distance individualized activism obscures the historical causes of poverty and hunger as well as nationally based goals and actions to tackle them. In doing so, it becomes part of a larger narrative foregrounding presentist themes of individualized enterprise and responsibility. The emotional enrolment of individuals in this vein can be seen as part of a broader process of neoliberal governmentality, in which subjects are nudged away from state-based responses to social ills and towards more individualized free market or quasi-market forms of charity and philanthropy (Atia 2013; Chouliaraki 2012; Daley 2013; Farrell 2012; Kapoor 2013; Mitchell and Lizotte 2014).

Here I have focused, in particular, on questions of governance and subjectivity formation in the context of this larger shift, examining some of the emotional practices

of pastoral care and neoliberal reason through which people are recruited and enrolled as global humanitarians committed to those who live at a distance (Biccum 2011; Wilson 2014). I have tried to indicate, moreover, the ways in which this transnational lived citizenship is a deeply spatial consciousness – one that derives part of its power from the feelings of community belonging over and above the spatial container of the nation-state.

These feelings reflect the rise of new forms of 'humanitarian reason' (Fassin 2012), in which activists and donors are enrolled as compassionate warriors for long distance care, yet this care has become devoid of context and ultimately depoliticized (Žižek 2005). It is a form of deterritorialized citizenship without history or geography, time or space. It accords with the free-market capitalist fantasy of a global flat plain (Sparke 2013), but one that is mediated by the pastoral language of global empathy. As noted in the introduction to this special issue, when the experience of citizenship becomes deterritorialized (and not respatialized) in this manner, the subject of citizenship is in danger of disappearing; moreover, with the invocation of pastoral care and an ahistorical commitment to global humanity, the politics of citizenship may also be lost.

Fans are clearly attracted to feelings of intimacy between the celebrity, the fan community and the recipients of aid. Their actions and comments indicate a desire to rise above the tainted histories of colonialism, racism and corruption and make direct links to individuals and places in Africa. These emotions are often generous and complex. It is not my intent to denigrate them but rather to note their emergence within a wider moment and terrain of neoliberal governmentality. It is exactly these new types of spatial practices and experiences that we must study further, for they are a key to understanding the present and future of political belonging and of politics itself.

Notes

1. See the ONE website at: www.one.org/us/.
2. Angelina Jolie and Geri Halliwell, for example, were hired as ambassadors for the UNHCR and the UN respectively, at least partly owing to their widely perceived sex appeal.
3. See www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7srZjpCTaI.
4. See www.youtube.com/watch?v=bOXMKEnra8w.
5. See https://red.org/moments/red-contemporary-art-auction/.
6. See the Bono Street Team website at: www.bonostreetteam.com/.
7. See http://zootopia.u2.com/gallery/member/285887-Jesus%20Girl/.
8. See the African Well Fund website at: www.africanwellfund.org/archives/2011/09/dion-simte-why-do-you-give.html.
9. See www.africanwellfund.org/Bono-Well-2015.html.
10. See the Africare website at: http://www.africare.org/africares-approach/public-private-partnerships/.

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