



ALLEGHENY COLLEGE

Faculty Scholarship Collection

The faculty at Allegheny College has made this scholarly article openly available through the Faculty Scholarship Collection (FSC).

Article Title	Cosmopolitan Stars, Interactive Audience Labor, and the Digital Economy of Global Care
Author(s)	Julie A. Wilson (Allegheny College)
Journal Title	<i>Television & New Media</i>
Citation	Wilson, Julie A. 2014. "Cosmopolitan Stars, Interactive Audience Labor, and the Digital Economy of Global Care." <i>Television & New Media</i> 15, no. 2 (February): 104-120
Link to article on publisher's website	http://tvn.sagepub.com/content/15/2/104
Version of article in FSC	Postprint
Link to this article through FSC	https://dspace.alleggheny.edu/handle/10456/37061
Date article added to FSC	November 10, 2014

Cosmopolitan Stars, Interactive Audience Labor, and the Digital Economy of Global Care

Abstract

Cosmopolitan stars like Angelina Jolie not only urge charity and care; increasingly, they link Western media audiences to international aid and development agencies, enjoining them to become empowered, socially-entrepreneurial ‘world’ citizens through on-line participation in global civil society. These developments are indicative of significant shifts in the cultural life of both media celebrity and citizenship, as charitable stars and the small acts of digital caring they solicit from their media audiences have emerged as central linchpins in global governmentality. Tracing the social, cultural, and political-economic productivity of celebrity branding and media interactivity for global regimes of governing, this essay shows how caring stars and audience labor are mobilized to fuel a digital economy of global care that sustains the social welfare work of the international community.

Keywords

Audience Labor, Branding, Celebrity, Charity, Citizenship, Cosmopolitanism, Governmentality, Interactivity

Star Appeal

“Give Dadaab A Brighter Future,” pleads the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR) 2009 “Star Appeal” (UNHCR 2009a). Since 2004 the U.N. organization has used web-based, celebrity-fronted, annual Christmas-time fundraising campaigns to garner monies

and draw attention to the plight of refugees. The 2009 effort features the organization's most famous Goodwill Ambassador, Angelina Jolie, and the refugees of Dadaab, Kenya. A large map of Africa is presented on the homepage, while a prominent yellow star invites visitors to "Click here to enter Dadaab." Next to the map is an image of Jolie talking with a group of young Somali refugees, under the headline "Watch UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Angelina Jolie in Her Recent Visit to Dadaab." Clicking on Jolie's image loads a 2-minute video produced by UNHCR that chronicles Jolie's tour of the Kenyan refugee camp (UNHCR 2009b). The video is speckled with familiar images, frames crowded with malnourished bodies and sad faces. Jolie is shown talking with refugees and humanitarian aid workers, asking questions about the situation in Somalia and the pressing health matters facing the camp's inhabitants. Amidst all the suffering and need, Jolie stresses the generosity and strength of the refugees she meets, concluding, "The Somali families I met today are full of warmth and affection. I wish more people could meet them and then they would have a stronger desire to help." Curiously, the Star Appeal does not simply ask for monetary donations for UNHCR and the residents of Dadaab. Rather, it urges site visitors to shop, that is, to choose specific gift items to send to particular areas of the camp. Donors are presented with a range of aid products available for purchase: a \$10 mosquito net, 100 textbooks for \$20, a \$100 therapeutic feeding kit, and building a classroom for \$1000. Once the donor has made her selections, she is prompted to deliver her aid virtually, by dropping gift items (represented by icons) onto an area of the camp (rendered as a virtual map) of her choosing. With each purchase, the donor is also asked to send emails to friends and family about the unique and important items she has just bought.

On the surface, UNHCR's "Star Appeal" appears straightforward, even mundane: a caring and privileged celebrity volunteering her star power to raise funds for a noble, charitable

cause. However, it is important to see that interactive, celebrity-fronted campaigns like UNHCR's "Star Appeal" are indicative of significant shifts in the cultural life of both media celebrity and citizenship, as increasingly caring stars connect Western audiences to international institutions, enjoining them to become active participants in global regimes of development and aid. Do gooding stars and the small, charitable acts they solicit from their media audiences (i.e., buying virtual aid products on-line) are important linchpins of global governing as they help to fuel a digital economy of global care that sustains the social welfare work of the international community. This essay traces the productivity of celebrity branding and media interactivity for global regimes whose aid and development efforts in the Global South rely on the cultural, social, and economic values produced by caring stars and the audience labor of media citizens.

Global Governmentality, Cosmopolitan Stardom, and Media Citizenship

The proliferation of charitable stars like Jolie over the past two decades has not gone unnoticed by critical scholars. For example, a growing body of work focuses on the problematic politics of celebrity philanthropy, often taking Bono and Bobby Shriver's Product (RED) venture as an exemplary case. According to this scholarship (See for example Banet-Weiser and Lapsansky 2008, Richey and Ponte 2011), (RED)-- a celebrity-fronted, business-friendly endeavor that empowers consumers to save the lives of AIDS victims by purchasing (RED) brand lifestyle products-- is a telling example of how, within global brand culture, the market, often with the help of media celebrities, is re-positioned as the superior approach to social problem-solving, while the consumer realm is offered up as the primary context for civic participation. Lines between citizenship and consumerism blur in new ways, as media audiences' acts of charity

double as value on corporate balance sheets, making aid contingent upon commercial imperatives and branding campaigns. Jo Littler's work (2008) tells a somewhat different story about the politics of celebrity charity, arguing that celebrity performances of global caring "are a way for celebrities to appear to raise their profile above the zone of the crudely commercial into the sanctified, quasi-religious realm of altruism and charity, whilst revealing or constructing an added dimension of personality: of compassion and caring" (239). Littler parses the benefits and drawbacks of celebrity associations with international causes for both stars and charities, showing how celebrities may generate much needed publicity for causes, while causes may provide a highly expedient and cost-efficient means of crafting star persona. Of central concern to Littler though are the ways in which such decidedly cosmopolitan performances of celebrity caring and charity disavow the highly unjust and unequal power relationships that sustain the post-colonial global capitalist system.

However, what is missing in these accounts of celebrity philanthropy and charity-- and what this essay brings to the table-- is a serious consideration of the complex ways in which caring, do gooding stars like Jolie and Bono are embroiled in the material and technical work of global governmentality. By global governmentality, I mean the matrix of social welfare programs and citizen-shaping activities pursued by liberal international institutions like the U.N. and its partner agencies in hopes of achieving economic equality and social security on a global scale. This conceptualization is indebted to Michel Foucault's theory of governmentality and the growing, interdisciplinary field of governmentality studies. Foucault (2007; 2008) developed the concept of governmentality to account for a highly dispersed form of power specific to liberal-democratic states. Aimed at regulating a population through maximizing the health and wealth of citizens, governing works through the social realm, "at a distance" from official centers of

power, to shape conducts and dispositions in accordance with broader political rationalities (Foucault 1994; Dean 1999; Gordon 1991). Work on global governmentality considers how the liberal arts of governing have been adapted and made effective within international political contexts (See for example Lerner and Walters 2004; Rojas 2004; Zanotti 2005; Dean 2007; Greene 1999). Crucially, as Nikolas Rose (1999) points out, governmentality is modality of social control that acts upon and through the freedoms of subjects; in contrast to the powers associated with disciplinary regimes, governmentality often appears congenial, promising self-empowerment, responsabilization, and actualization.

A governmentality approach to cultural phenomena like celebrity charity focuses attention on the technical and practical means by which conducts (i.e., to give, to participate) are mobilized and brought into alignment with regimes of governing (Bennett 1998; Ouellette and Hay 2008). From this vantage point, caring stars do more than raise money and garner publicity. Rather, they figure as cultural technologies of global governing “at a distance;” their charitable activities take form within and are articulated to the broader political rationalities that animate and guide the work of international agencies. This caring work is ultimately aimed at acting on the dispositions of media audiences in hopes of constituting these audiences as active, empowered participants in global governing.

Broadly speaking, what makes stars effective cultural technologies of global governmentality are the ways in which star discourse speaks to and engages audiences. As scholars like Richard Dyer (1986) and Richard deCordova (2001) have shown, the cultural power of stars stems from star discourse’s individualizing function. By encouraging audiences to seek out the ‘real’ lives, ‘true’ identities, and inner depths of screen idols, stardom figures deeply affective, hermeneutically-oriented relationships between stars and audiences, while,

simultaneously, elevating the social power of the individual thereby shoring up liberal ideologies of individualism. In turn, stars are positioned within media culture as accessible and prominent cultural sites for identity negotiation and moral community building (See May 1980; Bird 1992; Hermes 2006; Wilson 2010). Sue Collins (2009) theorizes how celebrity charity in particular works as a cultural technology of governmentality. In her analysis of *America: Tribute to the Heroes*, the star-studded benefit concert for victims and their families of the September 11, 2001 attacks, Collins shows how images of stars urging care mobilized practices of citizenship in step with neoliberal governance, and suggests that such images served a double function: a social one that “valorizes the emotional as a part of citizenship in the public sphere,” and a political one that “contains emotion by redirecting it towards an ethos of self-responsibility” (91).

Following Collins, I detail this double function at work in the realm of global governmentality by tracing how charitable, caring stars engender individualized feelings and practices of global citizenship, while bringing media audiences into alignment with the aims and agendas of global governing. I use the term cosmopolitan stardom to capture this particular instrumentalization of celebrity. For the cosmopolitan star/citizen, there is a greater moral obligation that supersedes domestic politics and is derived from a sense of-- a feeling of-- membership in a global human community (Nussbaum 1996). As cultural technologies of global governmentality, stars substantiate a cosmopolitan social disposition and political orientation wherein the betterment and rights of global humanity-- the purview of the U.N. and the international community-- is paramount (Wilson 2011). Cosmopolitan stars thus enable Western media audiences to feel as caring, ‘world’ citizens responsive to the governing agendas of the U.N. who, since its inception, has claimed to promote the “general welfare” of the world (Asher *et al* 1957). Crafted from within the institutions and discourses of global governing,

cosmopolitan stardom then is less about the profiteering of media industries and more about promoting international social welfare programs.

While cosmopolitan stardom dates back to the 1954, when Danny Kaye became the first goodwill ambassador for UNICEF, the phenomenon has been subject to a dramatic rise in recent decades. Since the end of the Cold War and the rise of global neoliberalism (Harvey 2005), the international community has expanded rapidly. This expansion, most evident in the rising numbers of transnational NGOs, is often referred to as the emergence of a global civil society made up of citizens working together within and across national borders to address a host of social ills. During the 1990s, the number of registered international organizations increased from 6,000 to 26,000 (Bornstein 2007, 4), and today the U.N. works in partnership with this global civil society in hopes of creating a “new majority will” on issues like human rights, development, the environment, and the status of women (Jaeger 2007, 263). Crucially, this global civil society is highly participatory and mediated, as digital technologies allow for new communication practices by the U.N., NGOs, and other members of the international community. Messages-- updates, news alerts, fundraising appeals, educational materials-- to supporters and/or potential supporters are tailored for and targeted to citizens in on-line environments, including personal email, organizational websites, YouTube, and social networking platforms. Increasingly, cosmopolitan stars are dispensed across global civil society, inviting audiences to practice global citizenship in context of their everyday lives through on-line participation in programs of the international community. It is important to see that these practices of global media citizenship are ever more central to emerging paradigms of global governmentality, which envision an ever-expanding role for private Western citizens, celebrity and commoner alike. For example, as policy analysts Lael Brainard and Vinca LaFleur (2008)

explain, in contemporary global development discourses, celebrities are tapped to generate “development buzz,” while the global public, often fueled by “star appeals,” lends its voice and devotes its resources to specific projects and causes through on-line advocacy and fundraising (11-12).

Global Citizen Brand: UNHCR and Angelina Jolie

The instrumentalization of celebrity as a cultural technology within international regimes is a serious and surprisingly complex *business*, as commercial star images are refashioned and repurposed as branding and social marketing devices for global governmentality. International agencies seek to capitalize on a star’s power within commercial media culture, while, at the same time, reconstructing this power in terms moral authority and legitimacy. After all, the cosmopolitan star must appear first and foremost the model world citizen: caring, concerned, and, above all, actively committed to the welfare of populations in the developing world.

For example, Jolie’s official appointment as UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador came in July of 2001 at the end of an eleven day mission to Cambodia, only after she had demonstrated her seriousness and commitment to organization officials with hours of studying up on refugee issues and successfully completing a more taxing three-week mission to Sierra Leone earlier that year. On these first field trips, in addition to living the sometimes dangerous and meager life of a humanitarian aid worker, Jolie was charged with chronicling her experiences, offering her personal reflections on what she saw and learned in the field. The star’s diaries were then published both on-line and in book form as a fundraiser for UNHCR (Jolie 2003). Significantly, the on-line publishing of the star’s reflections proved successful for UNHCR, which saw a

substantial up-tick in web traffic upon publication (from 1,000 to 120,000 visitors per day). What is more, after its appointment of Jolie, UNHCR noted a shift in its donor base to a younger demographic whose on-line contributions averaged \$140 (as opposed to an average of \$27 from mail-in contributions) (Greene 2002). We can read this as Jolie's mediated performances of celebrity caring effectively functioning to mobilize and channel both the affect and conducts of media audiences, bringing them into the fold of global governmentality by constituting them as concerned and active world citizens helping the refugee cause. At the time of this writing, Jolie has undertaken approximately 35 field trips for UNHCR, visiting over 20 countries-- including 'missions' to Pakistan, Namibia, Thailand, Kenya, Jordan, Egypt, Sudan, Iraq, Haiti, and Bosnia (to name a few)-- and regularly participates in public education and fundraising campaigns for the organization.

UNHCR's extensive deployment of Jolie is indicative of "best practices" when it comes to the U.N.'s current Goodwill Ambassador Program. Not surprisingly, given the cultural connotations-- narcissism, superficiality, self-promotion-- that continue to adhere to celebrity culture (See for example Weisberg 2005), the rapid expansion of cosmopolitan stars in the U.N. system over the past two decades has been accompanied by growing anxiety about their effectiveness. In 2006 the Joint Inspection Unit conducted the first ever comprehensive, system-wide analysis of the U.N.'s goodwill ambassador programs in order to determine "general guidelines for improvement, rationalization and harmonization of current practices" (Fall and Tang 2006, 1-2). Of particular concern were the high numbers of goodwill ambassadors, their level of commitment, and their potential drain on U.N. resources. Aware that many celebrities are keen to use an association with the U.N. to boost their image, the report singled out UNHCR for its productive management of Jolie as a model for other agencies (4). UNHCR's website

suggests that the primary tasks of its goodwill ambassadors include awareness building and public education (UNHCR 2011a); however, the agency reported to the Joint Inspection Unit that the primary goal of its program is branding (Fall and Tang, 14).

That agencies like UNHCR and the U.N. would turn to branding (as well as worry about the efficiency and effectiveness of their branding campaigns) is not surprising. Indeed, the proliferation of cosmopolitan stars is indicative of the extent to which branding has emerged as a powerful discourse within international institutions and global charities. Non-profit organizations began incorporating marketing principles and practices into their work in the 1970s, as the concept of social marketing took hold within the non-profit community. Early proponents of the idea, Philip Kotler and Gerald Zaltman (1971), suggested that “social marketing is promising framework for planning and implementing social change...The application of commercial ideas and methods to promote social goals will be seen by many as another example of business’s lack of taste and self-restraint. Yet the application of the logic of marketing to social goals is a natural development and on the whole a promising one” (3). In the post-Cold war context, where transnational NGOs have expanded rapidly at the same time that the Washington Consensus and neoliberal ideologies have precipitated devastating rollbacks in public funding for development and aid (Harvey 2005; Klein 2007), social marketing has been fully embraced. Organizations turn to branding logics in order to better position themselves in the eyes of potential donors, governments, and clients alike; as Melissa Aronczyk and Devon Powers (2010) suggest, branding has become “a symbolic shorthand for market savvy, business acumen, and global competitiveness” (2), a way for public and non-profit agencies to signal relevance and legitimacy in a neoliberal context. Similarly, Liz Moor’s (2007) work documents how an increasingly crowded and empowered non-profit sector makes branding a necessary-- and often highly

productive-- evil, while states and governments turn to branding in the name of efficiency, “but also to help inculcate certain types of sentiments and feelings in citizens”(82).

The U.N. in fact has a long history of using stars to promote its international health and welfare programs and to shape citizen dispositions and conducts in alignment with its political rationalities of development and aid. We might say that the U.N. has long been experimenting with its own concept of “citizen branding” through its deployment of stars from Kaye to Jolie as goodwill ambassadors. While marketing guru Mark Gobe (2002) coined the term “citizen brand” to inspire corporations to put good citizenship at the heart of their brand identity, the U.N.’s instrumentalization of celebrity as a cultural technology of global governmentality suggests an alternative concept of citizen branding whereby stars help to construct the image and identity of U.N. and its affiliated agencies in popular media culture by creating emotional ties between citizens and the institutions that comprise the international community (Wilson 2011). Simply put, we might think of cosmopolitan stars as key components of global citizen brands, brands that take form within and extend across global civil society in hopes of mobilizing global citizens responsive to and participating in the care work of global governing.

However, Jolie’s celebrity not only channels the affect of media audiences to global governmentality; her cosmopolitan stardom also generates more concrete forms of economic, cultural, and social value, value that gets produced in the context of a highly mediated global civil society, where audience interactivity is able to do double duty as dispersed care and promotional work for the U.N. In order to understand the ways in which cosmopolitan stars and audience interactivity produce value for global governmentality, it is instructive to consider how brands occupy space and communicate with consumers in contemporary media culture. Adam Arvidsson (2006) suggests that brands are social institutions, providing templates for identity,

community, and the practices of everyday life: “As a sort of virtual real estate they occupy a valuable position in the life-world...of consumers. That position is valuable insofar as it enables a brand to subsume or appropriate what the consumers do *with the brand in mind* as a source of surplus value and profits. Consequently brands work as kind of ubiquitous managerial devices by means of which everyday life is managed...” (emphasis in original)(7). Put differently, brands demand loyalty and affective investment so that those who affiliate with them will take on the labor of building, expanding, and managing the brand in the context of their everyday lives and through their practices of identity and community. As a result, successful brands produce what Lazzarato calls an ethical surplus: “a social relation, a shared meaning, or a sense of belonging, that was not there before” (10). Brands are not only productive of surplus (economic) value then, but also, and crucially, of social surpluses bound up in and productive of broader social and cultural formations.

I am interested in how, through cosmopolitan stardom, the social productivity of branding (i.e., the production of an ethical surplus, the facilitation of identity and community, the empowerment of consumers to build and expand the brand) participates in global governmentality. Within UNHCR’s global citizen brand, Jolie’s cosmopolitan stardom serves two primary functions. The first-- what I call a civic intermediary function-- is primarily symbolic and social, whereby cosmopolitan stardom helps to cultivate meanings, affects, and values for the international community at large, as well as for specific organizations, institutions, or programs in digital media environments. The second function is political and involves the generation of a social or ethical surplus that is ‘put to work,’ so to speak, as cosmopolitan stars solicit and direct “at a distance” the digital caring acts of media audiences.

Civic Intermediary/Media Interface

My concept of civic intermediary borrows from Pierre Bourdieu's (1984) work on cultural intermediaries-- those members of the bourgeoisie who mediate between producers of symbolic goods and services and consumers, thereby creating systems of cultural value (tastes) and ascribing these values to cultural artifacts and practices (Hesmondhalgh 2006). Within contemporary global governmentality, cosmopolitan stars serve a similar, though decidedly *civic* intermediary function, helping to mediate and manage relationships between Western citizens and the agencies of the international community by assigning meanings and values to particular international outfits and causes. Obviously, such symbolic activity is crucial in a crowded field with limited resources: while discourses surrounding the international community and global civil society stress interdependence and cooperation, agencies like UNHCR are a perpetual struggle to fund their work and thus in a perpetual competition with other global charities, NGOs, and U.N. agencies for private donations and public allocations.

On the one hand, a cosmopolitan star image as rich in intertextual capital (See Collins 2008) as Jolie's-- action star, global motherhood, female empowerment, unmatched glamour-- helps to construct a kind of spiritual image/idea for UNHCR and the refugee cause, while, at the same time, providing for differentiation among the vast and ever-growing numbers of organizations that make up the international community. Well-branded, star-fronted agencies like Oxfam and UNHCR are able to maintain their high-profiles on the international stage, distinguishing themselves from the hundreds of thousands of newly established NGOs and citizen groups that have sprung up in recent decades across both the global North and South (Bornstein 2007). Cosmopolitan stars thus help to construct unique brand identities for specific

agencies, as well as hierarchies within the international community. What is more, at yet another level, global citizen brands function to orient audiences more generally towards the international community: they dispose media audiences to the agendas of global governing, at once linking media audiences to global civil society and raising the field of global/cosmopolitan-oriented practices of citizenship above others (See for example Cieply and Steinhauer 2009).

These aspects of the civic intermediary function associated with contemporary cosmopolitan stardom are well illustrated by *Look to the Stars* (2011), a website that invites users to explore “The World of Celebrity Giving.” Built on the tried-and-true idea that fans want to know more about the private lives and personal commitments of their favorite stars (deCordova 2001)-- in particular, about their good deeds and caring work-- the site hosts individual celebrity pages that provide links to the causes and charities a celebrity supports. Alternatively, visitors can look up a specific cause or charity and find out what celebrities support it, or view videos about stars’ acts of charity and giving. Cosmopolitan stars-- Bono, Angelina Jolie, Brad Pitt-- and well-branded, transnational charities-- Red Cross, UNICEF-- are prominent mainstays, the backdrop for daily updates and news reports on more “ordinary” celebrity good works (a.k.a. traditional, U.S.-centered charitable acts). Of course, what falls out of view in the “World of Celebrity Giving” are all those organizations and causes that do not have star support. In other words, while the “World of Celebrity Giving” is international in orientation and scope, its membership is largely made up of Western stars and their chosen causes.

As *Look to the Stars* and the UNHCR “Star Appeal” mentioned at the outset suggest, this civic intermediary function cannot be thought apart from the digital media technologies which allow cosmopolitan stars to serve as virtual links that bring citizens into contact with the discreet agencies and causes of global governing in on-line media environments. Jolie’s power as a

cultural technology of global governmentality thus turns largely on her image's circulation potential and intertextual capital, on its ability to mobilize media audiences in material and technical ways as participants in global governing by linking them to UNHCR in the context of an interactive media culture. Jolie's cosmopolitan stardom, as it circulates through the networks of global civil society, thus serves as a distinctive sort of media interface. Celia Lury (2004) adopts Lev Manovich's conception of the interface to theorize how brands as new media objects figure in media culture. She writes:

The interface—like the static frame of the window or mirror—is a surface or boundary that connects and separates two spaces: an inner and outer environment. So, as an interface, the brand is a frame that organizes the two-way exchange of information between the inner and outer environments of the market in time, informing how consumers relate to producers and how producers relate to consumers. The exchange is a matter not merely of qualitative calculation, but also of affect, intensity...(7)

Jolie's cosmopolitan stardom works in a similar fashion: her image is placed across multiple media platforms in hopes of connecting audiences to UNHCR, emotionally and materially. In other words, Jolie provides a virtual surface, an interface, where audiences come into contact and enter into a relationship with the U.N.'s refugee organization. For example, UNHCR maintains its own YouTube Channel where Jolie figures prominently (UNHCR 2011b). An image of the star looking sadly into the distance as she cradles a sickly child dominates the top of the page, which is also a link to UNHCR's website. While the site regularly features new UNHCR videos

from the field, Jolie videos, which receive on average thousands of views compared to the hundreds received by other non-Jolie UNHCR productions, often figure most prominently.

Indeed, the majority of media content that makes up Jolie's cosmopolitan stardom is on-line, circulating across platforms like Facebook and YouTube, organizational and campaign websites of the international community, as well as a seemingly endless array of fan, gossip, and news sites. Thanks to the digital, interactive nature of media culture, UNHCR can produce its own media content whose on-line circulation is ensured by the intertextual capital of Jolie's female stardom. Websites of popular gossip magazines like *People* and *US Weekly* regularly report on Jolie's global do-gooding and UNHCR activities, as do more the more venerable news outfits. Fan sites, too, provide information on, videos about, and links to Jolie's global endeavors. On-line stories about Jolie often contain direct links to U.N. sites and/or feature U.N. videos, while U.N. agencies make use of customizable on-line advertising and sponsored links to reach audiences searching out information on their favorite stars and those stars' caring works. In this way, as a civic intermediary and media interface, Jolie's cosmopolitan stardom not only links fans and media audiences to the institutions and agencies of global governmentality: it also helps to suture popular media culture to global civil society. Jolie's cosmopolitan stardom thus brings her fans and audiences into proximity with UNHCR's "virtual real estate," at the same time, creating an ethical surplus defined by caring and global commitment which is also 'put to work' for global governmentality.

Mobilizing Digital Care/ Managing Interactive Labor

As cultural technologies of global governmentality, cosmopolitan stars create emotional bonds between Western citizens and the international community by articulating feelings and values to

particular agencies and thereby infusing global governing with systems of spiritual and symbolic meaning. In this process, cosmopolitan stars also help to produce an ethical surplus, a sense of social relation and belonging rooted in feelings of global caring that can be acted upon in the form of media interactivity. Of course, all of this happens within the digital environments of global civil society and media culture: in linking their fans and followers to particular agencies and causes, cosmopolitan stars harness the ethical surplus, creating networks of emotionally-invested, hard-working (inter)active supporters, who are helping to build both the brand (UNHCR and the refugee cause) as well as citizen support for the broader agendas and rationalities of global governmentality.

From the vantage point of global governmentality then, the most important work that cosmopolitan stars perform is mobilizing digital caring acts through managing audience labor, directing it towards the projects and causes of global governing and the international community. As many scholars point out, media audiences have been long required to perform different types of labor. “The work of watching” advertisements (Smythe 2001), the work of learning to read/consume different television genres, the work of learning appropriate behaviors for movie-going, and the work of filling out consumer surveys, represent just a sampling of the different forms of audience labor that media and cultural industries have solicited from their audiences (Shimpach 2005). Critical work (Greene 2005; Shimpach 2005; Andrejevic 2007) also shows how audience labor is historically bound up in liberal and neoliberal regimes of governing populations “at a distance,” as media consumption emerged as a prominent means of shaping good consumers/citizens. In digital media culture however, audience labor takes new forms, as audiences are increasingly urged to consume content across multiple platforms and required to gain mastery over a host of devices, applications, and other interactive technologies in order to

enhance, manage, and customize their media consumption. Mark Andrejevic (2007) is keen to point out that these new forms of interactive, audience labor include “the work of being watched,” as asymmetric monitoring and surveillance turns interactive audiences into free focus groups for marketers. At the same time, this interactivity helps to engender a new type of consumer, “one prepared to devote time and energy to developing the skills necessary to participate in an increasingly interactive media economy” (144). Noting similarities between the ways in which neoliberal regimes ask citizens to become self-entrepreneurial and media industries ask audiences to strategically manage their own consumption practices (in both cases, in the name of increased freedom and empowerment), Andrejevic sees this new interactive consumer as “the market analogue of the responsible citizen as construed by the proponents of neoliberal post welfare state” (144).

However, it is not only media corporations that rely on interactive audience labor for value production: as I have suggested, contemporary global governmentality hinges on similar forms of highly structured, carefully managed interactivity in the context of global civil society. In this case the interactive media user is not the “market analogue” of the self-entrepreneurial neoliberal citizen but the direct embodiment of the socially-entrepreneurial global citizen. Cosmopolitan stars mobilize media audiences not only as caring global citizens performing acts of charity and/or consumption, but also as active members of global civil society who are helping to solve the world’s social problems through supporting and publicizing the development and aid projects of the international community via their interactivity. Here I focus specifically the ways in which cosmopolitan stars facilitate interactive social learning and, at the same time, enjoin their followers to become on-line social marketers for the international community.

For World Refugee Day 2011, UNHCR developed the “Do 1 Thing” campaign (UNHCR 2011c), which was publicized primarily by a 30-second PSA featuring a somber Jolie pleading with viewers to understand that “1 family forced to flee is too many. 1 child growing up in a camp is too many. 1 refugee without hope is too many.” In addition to providing spiritual meaning to UNHCR and the refugee cause, Jolie’s image is also meant to inspire acts of digital caring. Visitors to the Do 1 Thing website are first invited to “Learn,” which includes, in addition to watching the Jolie PSA, linking to a YouTube page entitled “UNHCR’s Storytelling Through the Eyes of Refugees”(UNHCR 2011d). Here users can watch short videos documenting the personal stories and struggles of refugees from across the world. “Learning” may also include testing one’s own knowledge about refugees through on-line quizzes, which pose multiple choice questions to viewers (e.g.: “An Asylum Seeker is: someone who travels half way around the world to claim benefits; an album by the Fugees; someone who applies for refugee status on the basis that they are fleeing war and persecution; someone who is an illegal immigrant; someone who claims to be a refugee but isn’t; a foreign vegetable.”)(UNHCR 2011e), or playing “Against All Odds: the game which lets you experience what it’s like to be refugee” (UNHCR 2011f). The “Learn” menu also includes resources for teachers looking to incorporate refugee issues and the interactive Do 1 Thing campaign into their curriculum. Here interactivity is meant to enhance public education efforts, as Jolie’s traditional appeal for global caring and charity is linked up with newer interactive templates (watching videos, video games) that more directly engage citizens in the pedagogical process of becoming a global citizen.

Do 1 Thing also invites supporters to “Spread the Word” and to “Give,” which mostly involve putting their interactivity to work in highly specific ways for UNHCR. Most obviously, to “Give” involves making an on-line donation, either of money or time. As mentioned

previously, individual contributions are important sources of economic value and revenue for organizations like UNHCR, and in recent years, individual contributions from U.S. citizens to global aid programs has surged to \$26 billion a year (Brainard and LaFleur 2008). However, supporters looking to make a more intensive contribution and “give” time are addressed as potential social entrepreneurs, that is, as enterprising agents of social change: “Your role as a U.N. Volunteer is that of both facilitator and catalyst. UNV [United Nations Volunteers] encourages you to be creative and entrepreneurial in finding ways to develop capacity and to promote and foster volunteerism for peace and development -- both within and beyond the formal framework of your assignment” (U.N. Volunteers 2011a). Citizens can volunteer on the ground in service areas, or, alternatively, on-line, as the U.N. has recently developed a virtual volunteer center which allows supports to donate services from the comfort of their own home or workspace. On-line volunteers are encouraged to “Unleash your talents to help address challenges faced by developing countries” (U.N. Volunteers 2011b).

Connected to on-line forms of volunteering, “Spread the Word” involves distributing UNHCR materials through one’s own personal social networks. For example, supporters are enabled to share Jolie’s PSA on Facebook and to send e-cards to friends and family based on the Do 1 Thing campaign theme. On UNHCR’s primary website, these actions are referred to as contributing to a “digital dialogue:”

UNHCR has actively embraced online social networking sites and regards them as an important resource for connecting with our supporters and reaching a wider audience. Platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, Causes, YouTube, MySpace and Flickr provide ideal mediums for people to share their stories, ask questions, and

receive instant notices about UNHCR's latest campaigns and activities. (UNHCR 2011g)

Website visitors are urged to watch video, “befriend UNHCR” on social networking sites, view photos from the field, and sign up to receive live field reports and alerts. “Changing the world” on-line thus requires actions that are analogous to those described by Andrejevic in relation to interactive consumers, actions that double as brand management and expansion for UNHCR. Contribution to the “digital dialogue” adds cultural, social, and economic value to UNHCR’s “virtual real estate,” helping to extend the reach of the brand and thereby grow its base of citizen supporters. Put differently, practices of global citizenship now include engaging in individualized, media-based social marketing campaigns for the international community. Audience interactivity doubles as brand labor (i.e., the production of economic, cultural, and social values) and community-building work for regimes of global governing seeking to activate citizen-supporters through the media networks of global civil society.

Beyond Exploitation and Empowerment

Cosmopolitan stars are cultural technologies of citizen-shaping; they participate in technical, practical, and material ways in an apparatus of governmentality whose horizons are global, transcending and criss-crossing national borders and domestic regimes. The albeit small yet complicated acts of media interactivity they facilitate-- enabled by media and celebrity culture yet wedded to material exigencies and aims of global governing-- are entangled with the promotion, provision, and politics of international social welfare, as Western media audiences

are increasingly enjoined to fuel a digital economy of global care through on-line participation in global civil society. As a result, the activated freedoms of Western citizens-- to give, to participate, to consume-- become intimately bound up with regimes of global governmentality. Henry Jenkins (2006) might see these developments in media celebrity and citizenship as the interactive, collaborative character of contemporary 'convergence culture' spilling into politics and expanding practices of democratic citizenship. However, this essay has painted a quite different picture, as what is involved in the audience interactivity mobilized by cosmopolitan stars is at once a form of labor-- both "immaterial" (brand management) and "affective" (digital caring) labor (see respectively Lazzarato 1996 and Hardt 1999)-- as well as a practice of citizenship (promoting international social welfare, participating in global development). And as I have shown here, what is at stake in these acts of global media citizenship is not so much the exploitation of audiences or new forms of their empowerment, but rather the careful channeling of citizenship towards global governmentality via the social and political functions of cosmopolitan stardom.

References

Andrejevic, M. 2004. *Reality TV: The work of being watched*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Andrejevic, M. 2007. *iSpy: Power and surveillance in the interactive era*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.

Aronczyk, M. and Powers, D. 2010. Introduction: Blowing up the brand. In *Blowing Up the Brand: Critical perspectives on promotional culture*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

Arvidsson, A. 2006. *Brands: Meaning and value in media culture*. London: Routledge.

Asher, R. et al. 1957. *The United Nations and the Promotion of the General Welfare*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution.

Banet-Weiser, S. and Lapsansky, C. 2008. RED is the New Black: Brand culture, consumer citizenship, and political possibility. *International Journal of Communication* 2: 1248-1268.

Bennett, T. 1998. *Culture: A reformer's science*. London: Sage Publications.

Bird, E. 1992. *For Inquiring Minds: A cultural study of supermarket tabloids*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.

Bornstein, D. 2007. *How to Change the World: Social entrepreneurs and the power of new ideas*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bourdieu, P. 1984. *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Brainard, L. and LaFleur, V. 2008. Making Poverty History? How activists, philanthropists, and the public are changing global development. In *Global Development 2.0: Can philanthropists, the public and the poor make poverty history?* Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press.

Burchell, G. 1996. Liberal Government and Techniques of the Self. In *Foucault and Political Reason*, ed. A. Barry, T. Osborne, and N. Rose. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Cieply, M. and Steinhauer, J. 2009. Los Angeles Charities Rarely on Hollywood's 'Must Do' List. *New York Times*, September 4. Accessed August 2, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/05/us/05donate.html>

Collins, S. 2009. Celebrities and 9/11: 'A Simple Show of Unity.' In *War Isn't Hell: It's Entertainment: Essays on visual media and the representation of conflict*, ed. R. Schubart, F. Virchow, D. White-Stanley, and T. Thomas. Jefferson, NC: MacFarland.

Collins, S. 2008. Making the Most out of 15 Minutes: Reality TV's dispensable celebrity.

Television and New Media 9(2): 87-110.

Dean, M. 2007. *Governing Societies: Political perspectives on domestic and international rule.*

New York: Open University Press.

Dean, M. 1999. *Governmentality: Power and rule in modern society.* London: Sage Publications.

deCordova, R. 2001. *Picture Personalities: The emergence of the star system in America.*

Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Dyer, R. 1986. *Heavenly Bodies: Stars and society.* Hampshire: Macmillan Press.

Fall, P.L. and Tang, G. 2006. Goodwill Ambassadors in the United Nations System. Report by the Joint Inspection Unit. Geneva: United Nations.

Foucault, M. 2007. *Security, Territory, Population.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Foucault, M. 2008. *The Birth of Biopolitics.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Foucault, M. 1994. Governmentality. In *The Essential Foucault*, ed. P. Rabinow and N. Rose.

New York: The New Press.

Gobe, M. 2002. *Citizen Brand: 10 commandments for transforming brands in a consumer democracy*. New York: Allworth Press.

Gordon, C. 1991. Governmental Rationality: An introduction. In *The Foucault Effect: Studies in governmentality*, ed. G. Burchell, C. Gordon, and P. Miller. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Greene, R. 1999. *Malthusian Worlds: U.S. leadership and the governing of the population crisis*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Greene, R. 2005. Y Movies: Film and modernization of pastoral power. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 2(1): 20-36.

Greene, S. 2002. Star Widens Refugee Group's Appeal. *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, January 15.

Hardt, M. 1999. Affective Labor. *boundary 2* 26(2): 89-100.

Harvey, D. 2005. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hermes, J. 2006. Reading Gossip Magazines: The imagined communities of gossip and camp. In *The Celebrity Culture Reader* ed. P. Marshall. London: Routledge.

Hesmondhalgh, D. 2006. Bourdieu, the Media and Cultural Production. *Media, Culture, & Society* 28(2): 211-231.

Jaeger, H. 2007. 'Global Civil Society' and the Political Depoliticization of Global Governance. *International Political Sociology*, 1:257-277.

Jolie, A. 2003. *Notes from my Travels*. New York: Pocket Books.

Klein, N. 2007. *The Shock Doctrine: The rise of disaster capitalism*. New York: Metropolitan Books.

Kotler, P. and Zaltman, G. 1971, Social Marketing: An approach to planned social change. *Journal of Marketing* 35(3): 3-12.

Larner, W. and Walters, W. 2004. Globalization as Governmentality. *Alternatives* 29: 495-514.

Lazzarato, M. 1996. Immaterial Labor. In *Radical Thought in Italy: A potential politics*, ed. P.

Virno and M. Hardt. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Littler, J. 2008. 'I feel your pain': Cosmopolitan charity and the public fashioning of the celebrity soul." *Social Semiotics* 18(2): 237-251.

Lury, C. 2004. *Brands: The logos of the global economy*. New York: Routledge.

Marshall, P. 1997. *Celebrity and Power: Fame in contemporary culture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

May, L. 1980. *Screening Out the Past: The birth of the mass culture and the motion picture industry*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Moor, L. 2007. *The Rise of Brands*. New York: Berg.

Nussbaum, M. 1996. Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism. In *For Love of Country* ed. Martha Nussbaum, M. and Cohen, J. Boston: Beacon Press: 7.

Ouellette, L. and Hay, J. 2008. *Better Living Through Reality TV: Television and post-welfare citizenship*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing.

Richey, L. and Ponte, S. 2011. *Brand Aid: Shopping well to save the world*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Rojas, C. 2004. Governing through the Social: Representations of poverty and global governmentality. In *Global Governmentality: Governing international spaces*, Ed. W. Larner and W. Walters. London: Routledge.

Rose, N. 1999. *Powers of Freedom: Reframing political thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shimpach, S. Working Watching: The creative and cultural labor of the media audience. *Social Semiotics* 15(3): 343-360.

Smythe, D. 2001. On the Audience Commodity and its Work. In *Media and Cultural Studies: key works*, ed. M. Durham and D. Kellner. Oxford: Blackwell.

UNHCR. 2009a. Star Appeal. <http://www.starappeal.unhcr.org/>

UNHCR 2009b. Watch Goodwill Ambassador Angelina Jolie in her Recent Visit to Dadaab. <http://www.starappeal.unhcr.org/video/>

UNHCR. 2011a. With a Little Help From Our Friends. <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c3b.html>

UNHCR. 2011b. UNHCR/VIDEOS YouTube channel. <http://www.youtube.com/user/unhcr>

UNHCR. 2011c. Do 1 Thing. <http://www.unhcr.org/do1thing/index.php>

UNHCR. 2011d. Storytelling Through the Eyes of Refugees. <http://www.youtube.com/user/storytellingunhcr>

UNHCR. 2011e. Simple Acts Quiz.

http://www.refugeeweek.org.uk/simple_acts_quiz/player.html

UNHCR. 2011f. Against All Odds. <http://www.playagainstallodds.com/>

UNHCR. 2011g. Get Active On-Line. <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c443.html>

U.N. Volunteers. 2011a. What it Means to be a UN Volunteer. <http://www.unv.org/how-to-volunteer/what-it-means-to-be-a-unv-volunteer.html>

U.N. Volunteers. 2011b. Change the World by Volunteering Over the Internet.

<http://www.onlinevolunteering.org/en/vol/index.html>

Van Zoonen, L. 2005. *Entertaining the Citizen: When politics and popular culture converge*.

Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishing Group.

Weisberg, J. 2005. Condi, Hollary, and...Angelina? *Slate*, October 11. Accessed February 11, 2010, <http://www.slate.com/id/2127834/>

Wilson, J. 2010. Star Testing: The emerging politics of celebrity gossip. *Velvet Light Trap* 65: 25-38.

Wilson, J. 2011. 'A New Kind of Star is Born': Audrey Hepburn and the global
governmentalisation of female stardom. *Celebrity Studies* 2(1): 56-68.

Zanotti, L. 2005. Governmentalizing the Post-Cold War International Regime: The UN debate
on democratization and good governance. *Alternatives* 30: 461-487.