Global Humanitarianism and Media Culture
University of Sussex, 6 - 8 February 2015
Programme

Supported by the School of Media, Film and Music, the Sussex Centre for the Visual and the Doctoral School’s Researcher-Led Initiative Fund.

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Cover photo: Toni Frissell, Self-Portrait with Children, 1945.
WELCOME

We are delighted to welcome you to the Global Humanitarianism and Media Culture Conference at the University of Sussex. We would like to thank the School of Media, Film and Music, the Sussex Centre for the Visual and the Doctoral School’s Researcher-Led Initiative Fund for generously supporting this conference. We would also like to thank all our keynote speakers, panel contributors and acting chairs. Finally, thanks to Ben Burbridge, Fernando Espada, Julio Fiori, Sarah Maddox, Sally Mitchell, Christine Whitehouse, Frank Verano and Cathrin Yarnell.

GLOBAL HUMANITARIANISM AND MEDIA CULTURE

This conference intends to bring together scholars and students working across a range of disciplines to consider the relationships between global humanitarianism and media culture from a variety of critical and theoretical perspectives. As Keith Tester has argued, modern humanitarianism and the institutions and technologies of media culture are inextricably entwined. In recent decades various scholars have analysed the relationship between media representations and moral sentiments, from the emergence of “humanitarian narratives” in the eighteenth century (Thomas Laqueur) to the “humanitarian optics” of today (Eyal Weizman). This conference seeks to contribute to our understanding of the histories and futures of global humanitarianism by focusing attention on diverse intersections between media technologies and cultures and what Didier Fassin has called “the politics of precarious lives.”

We were delighted with the richness of the papers received from across the globe. We hope that you find the discussions stimulating, informative and challenging.

If you plan to tweet about the conference our hash tag is #ghmc2015.

GLOBAL HUMANITARIANISM AND MEDIA CULTURE : CALL FOR CHAPTERS

Delegates are invited to submit chapter proposals for a planned edited collection based on the conference. Proposals should be 4-500 words and include an indicative bibliography. Please send your proposals to Michael Lawrence by 1 June 2015.

Conference Organisers

Michael Lawrence, University of Sussex, Michael.Lawrence@sussex.ac.uk

Rachel Tavernor, University of Sussex, R.Tavernor@sussex.ac.uk
CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

FRIDAY 6 FEBRUARY

REGISTRATION 13:30-14:00
Fulton Social Space

WELCOME AND KEYNOTE 1 14:00-15:45
Fulton Lecture Theatre A

Post-Humanitarianism: The Contemporary Politics of Solidarity
Professor Lilie Chouliaraki, London School of Economics

Chair: Rachel Tavernor, University of Sussex

BREAK 15:45-16:15
Fulton Social Space

PLENARY 1 16:15-18:00
Fulton Lecture Theatre A

Celebrity Humanitarianism and North-South Relations
Chair: Anke Schwittay, University of Sussex

- Celebrity Humanitarianism and North-South Relations: Politics, Place and Power
  Lisa Ann Richey, Roskilde University

- When Access in the North Outweighs the South: Comparing Ben Affleck’s Influence in the US and Congolese Contexts
  Alexandra Cosima Budabin, University of Dayton

- The National Identity Politics of Danish Humanitarianism
  Lene Bull Christiansen, Roskilde University

- The Paradoxes of Celebrity Advocacy
  Dan Brockington, University of Manchester

DRINKS RECEPTION 18:00-18:30
Fulton Social Space
SATURDAY 7 FEBRUARY

REGISTRATION  09:00-09:15
Fulton Social Space

PARALLEL SESSIONS 1  09:15-11:00

1A. SOCIAL MEDIA
Fulton Room 103
Chair: Bruno Campanella, Universidade Federal Fluminense

- Civil Society, Advocacy and Social Media: An Examination of the Bring Back Our Girls Campaign
  Ibrahim Mohammed, Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission

- Social Media and Philanthropy: How Qatari Charity Organizations are Using Social Media in Persuasion
  Rana S. Hassan, Qatar University

- Web of Confusion? – The Quakers’ Use of Social Media in their Humanitarian Work in Israel-Palestine
  Alexis Constantinou, University of South Wales

1B. AUDIENCES AND ACTORS
Fulton Room 101
Chair: Alexandra Cosima Budabin, University of Dayton

- Role of Mobile Media in Supporting Humanitarian Activities in Conflict-Affected Areas
  Philip Onguny, Saint Paul University, Ottawa

- Classical Antiquity as Humanitarian Narrative: Marshall Plan Films about Greece
  Katerina Loukopoulou, Panteion University, Athens

- Spectators of Distant Suffering: Towards an Interdisciplinary Approach for Empirical Inquiry
  Eline Huiberts, Ghent University,

1C. PARTICIPATION
Fulton Room 107
Chair: Wilma de Jong, University of Sussex

- Direct Connections? Do-it-yourself-Aid and Digital Media in Cambodia
  Anne-Meike Fechter, University of Sussex

- An Analysis of Al Jazeera Media Network’s Collaboration with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to “Give Voice to the Voiceless”
  Eiman Eissa, Qatar University

- Red Balloons: Video Production in Refugee Communities
  Gillian Gordon, Royal Holloway
BREAK  
Fulton Social Space  

PARALLEL SESSIONS 2  
11:30-13:15

2A. DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES  
Fulton Room 103  
Chair: Martin Scott, University of East Anglia

- **Getting to the Truth Behind the Tears: Data and Design in The Tear Gas Research Connection Project**  
  Anna Feigenbaum and John Horne, The Tear Gas Research Connection

- **Humanitarian Technologies: Ordinary Uses in Extraordinary Times**  
  Jonathan Ong, University of Leicester (co-authors: Mirca Madianou & Liezel Longboan)

- **A Genealogy of Digital Humanitarianism: Think Big (Data) for Development and Social Change?**  
  Eleftheria Lekakis, University of Sussex

2B. ETHICS  
Fulton Room 101  
Chair: Rachel Tavernor, University of Sussex

- **Journalism Practice needs to Communicate Risk if it Wants to Achieve Effective Humanitarian Communication**  
  Jairo Lugo-Ocando, University of Sheffield

- **Sensational Suffering: Religion, Media and the Politics of Pictorial Humanitarianism in the late-19th Century United States**  
  Heather D Curtis, Tufts University

- **The ‘Virtual Doorstep’: How Citizen Journalists Caught up in Disasters Experience the Use of their Words/Images in Mainstream Media**  
  Glenda Cooper, City University London

2C. UNITED NATIONS’ NARRATIVES  
Fulton Room 107  
Chair: Emily Bauman, New York University

- **Affective Economy in Humanitarian Reality Series**  
  Kaarina Nikunen, University of Tampere

- **“United Nations” Children and Humanitarian Endeavour in Hollywood Films of the 1940s**  
  Michael Lawrence, University of Sussex

- **Art House Aid: Reading Development and Humanitarianism in the Texts of Audio-visual Assistance**  
  Benjamin A. J. Pearson, University of Michigan

LUNCH  
13:15-14:15  
Fulton Social Space
3A. PEACE
Fulton Room 103
Chair: Shohini Chaudhuri, University of Essex

- Peace Journalism as Research Scholarship and a Form of Media Development in Conflict
  Jake Lynch, University of Sydney

- The Role of New Media and Technologies in Peace Building
  Vladimir Bratic, Hollins University

- The Beautiful Americans: the Peace Corps and the Popular Reinvention of the Third World
  Agnieszka Sobocinska, Monash University

3B. FORMS OF ENGAGEMENT
Fulton Room 101
Chair: Lene Bull Christiansen, Roskilde University

- Trying to Inject ‘The Humanitarian Gene Back into this Big Beast’: Intra-Organisational Struggles over the Meaning and Purpose of Media Production at Save the Children UK
  Kate Wright, University of Roehampton

- Celebrity, Social Entrepreneurism and New Models of Societal Engagement in Brazil
  Bruno Campanella, Universidade Federal Fluminense

- The Problem of Images? Television and the Humanitarian Industry in Britain since the 1960s
  Andrew Jones, University of Birmingham

3C. COMMUNICATING SOCIAL CHANGE
Fulton Room 107
Chair: Eleftheria Lekakis, University of Sussex

- Portraying Global Poverty: Learnings from the Microcredit Experience
  Odile Vallee, School of Communication of Audencia Group

- Fair Trade Brand Communication in Social Media as (Post)Humanitarian Communication. The Case of Pizca del Mundo (Poland) and Reilu Kauppa (Finland)
  Kinga Polynczuk-Alenius (co author: Mervi Pantti), University of Helsinki

- Young, Global, and Ready to Read: Contemporary Humanitarian Children’s Books
  Emily Bauman, New York University

BREAK
Fulton Social Space
KEYNOTE 2
Fulton Lecture Theatre A
16:30-18:00
Humanitarian Narratives – Missing out on the Politics?
Professor Suzanne Franks, City University London
Chair: Professor Ivor Gaber, University of Sussex

CONFERENCE DINNER
Pizza Express Brighton, A3 Block, Jubilee Street, BN1 1GE
21:00-LATE
Registration required

SUNDAY 8 FEBRUARY
PARALLEL SESSIONS 4
09:30-11:15

4A. HUMANITARIANISM ONLINE
Fulton Room 103
Chair: Jonathan Ong, University of Leicester

• Distant Suffering Online: The Unfortunate Irony of Cyber-utopian Narratives
  Martin Scott, University of East Anglia

• Sentiments of Aid: Everyday Humanitarian Communications for Online Microfinance
  Anke Schwittay, University of Sussex and Paul Braund, RiOS Institute

• New Media and the Mediation of Humanitarianism: The Creation of a Global Consciousness or Commercialization of Human Suffering
  Noureddine Miladi, Qatar University

4B. CONFLICT
Fulton Room 107
Chair: Jairo Lugo-Ocando, University of Sheffield

• From Action to Alleviation – Humanitarian Engagement with Conflict Victims: The Case of Biafra 1967-70
  Mie Vestergaard, Roskilde University

• Comparing Russian, French and UK Television News: Portrayals of the Casualties of War
  Emma Heywood, Coventry University

• A Path into Alternative Models? The Role of Citizen Journalism in Global Representations of Humanitarianism
  Valérie Gorin, CERAH, University of Geneva and the Graduate Institute
BREAK                                                        11:15-11:45
Fulton Social Space

KEYNOTE 3                                                    11:45-13:15
Fulton Lecture Theatre A

‘Telegenically Dead Palestinians’: Cinema, News Media and Perception Management of the Gaza Conflicts
Dr. Shohini Chaudhuri, University of Essex

Chair: Michael Lawrence, University of Sussex

LUNCH                                                        13:15-14:15
Fulton Social Space

PLENARY 2 AND CLOSE                                          14:15-16:15
Fulton Lecture Theatre A

Syria
Chair: Professor Suzanne Franks, City University London

• A Social Media Revolution? Syrian Chemical Attack Images in Western Media and International Politics
  Noora Kotilainen, Finnish Institute of International Affairs

• Reporting Za’atari: The Media Portrayal of Children in the World’s Second Largest Refugee Camp
  Toby Fricker, UNICEF Jordan

• Working on the Side of Dignity: Reflecting on the Syrian Crisis
  Juliette Harkin, University of East Anglia

• Humanitarian Media Events: The Case of the Belgian Appeal for Syrian Refugees
  Robin Vandevoordt, University of Antwerp

BREAK                                                        16:15-16:30
Fulton Social Space

SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND FILM SCREENING                      16:30-18:00
Fulton Lecture Theatre A

A special screening of the previously banned Save the Children Fund Film (Ken Loach 1969) with Fernando Espada, Humanitarian Affairs Adviser, Save the Children UK.
KEYNOTES

Professor Lilie Chouliaraki, London School of Economics
Post-Humanitarianism: The Contemporary Politics of Solidarity

In this lecture, I discuss historical change in the communication of solidarity, within the fields of human rights and humanitarian communication. To this end, I present a typology of forms of solidarity, dominant in the past 50 years, and focus, in particular, on a new form, what I call a ‘post-humanitarian’ solidarity, which tends to focus on ‘us’ rather than distant sufferers as the moral source for action on their suffering. Drawing on specific examples of this emerging form of solidarity, I explore its key features and reflect on its moral and political implications.

Biographical note: Lilie Chouliaraki is Professor of Media and Communications at the London School of Economics. She has written extensively on distant suffering as a problem of communication and is the author of *The Spectatorship of Suffering* (2006/2011); *The Soft Power of War* (ed, 2008) and *The Ironic Spectator. Solidarity in the Age of Post-humanitarianism* (2013).

Professor Suzanne Franks, City University London
Humanitarian Narratives – Missing out on the Politics?

The origins of humanitarian media coverage as a distinctive genre extends back into the nineteenth century originating as a particular way of engaging audiences and communicating suffering. Western media reporting of disasters in faraway countries (especially in Africa) has developed a template which means that this type of coverage often fails to take account of political circumstances. Frequently the journalism relies upon familiar stereotypes – using frames such as ‘faraway suffering’, ‘primitive tribal hatreds’ or resorting to explanations based upon ‘natural disaster,’ when there are in fact complex underlying social and political causes to many crises and complex emergencies. This presentation will analyse the way that so called ‘humanitarian reporting’ has failed to take account of political explanations with reference to key case studies and explain why this is a matter of vital concern. In particular it will highlight the powerful and consciously apolitical position of international aid agencies and examine the many layered and interrelated factors which contribute to the absence of political analysis in the way that distant crises are described and understood.

Biographical note: Suzanne Franks is Professor of Journalism at City University in London. She is a former journalist with BBC TV where she worked on programmes such as Newsnight and Panorama. Her recent books include *Reporting Disasters. Famine, Aid, Politics and the Media* (2013) and *Women and Journalism* (2013).
During the 2014 Israeli bombardment of Gaza, Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, in response to a perceived shift in international media coverage of the conflict, accused Hamas of using ‘telegenically dead Palestinians for their cause’. Aided by social media reporting from Palestinians inside the war zone, this recent media stance on the conflict has played out through images of dead and injured Palestinian children and disturbed Israel’s attempts to justify its actions with humanitarian claims. Netanyahu’s abhorrent phrase gives renewed significance to what Paul Virilio calls the ‘logistics of perception’ – that a ‘war of pictures and sounds’ accompanies conflicts and shapes our attitudes towards state violence as just or unjust.

This paper will explore relationships between news media and filmic representations of the conflict, including: Waltz with Bashir (2008), an Israeli coproduction about the 1982 Lebanon War whose release coincided with the 2008-9 Gaza conflict; Where Should the Birds Fly (2013), a Gazan documentary about the 2008-9 conflict; British news presenter Jon Snow’s video blog upon from his return from Gaza in July 2014; and The Honourable Woman, a BBC drama screened at the time of the 2014 conflict. Arguing that audiovisual strategies constitute means of ‘perception management’ (a term I adopt from Mark Curtis), the paper shows how the media orientate our feelings towards the conflict by aiding in either the dehumanization of the ‘enemy’ or constructing Palestinians as objects of humanitarian appeal and (more rarely) as active subjects. It thereby probes the role of humanitarian images in our understanding of the conflict.

Biographical note: Shohini Chaudhuri is a Senior Lecturer in Film at the University of Essex. Her publications include Contemporary World Cinema: Europe, the Middle East, East Asia and South Asia (2005), Feminist Film Theorists (2006) and Cinema of the Dark Side: Atrocity and the Ethics of Film Spectatorship (2014).
ABSTRACTS

PLENARY 1:

CELEBRITY HUMANITARIANISM AND NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONS
Chair: Anke Schwittay, University of Sussex

Celebrity Humanitarianism and North-South Relations: Politics, Place and Power
Lisa Ann Richey, Roskilde University

Celebrities have become increasingly important political actors in global humanitarianism acting as ‘aid celebrities’, advocates, and cause marketers. From serving as UN ambassadors to appearing as spokespersons for major NGO campaigns, some celebrity actors have become permanently wedded to humanitarian work and public engagement. In the policy realm, celebrity endorsement may shift attention, shape decisions, and build/erode key alliances. Meanwhile, the figure of the celebrity offers an enticing lens to refract critical issues of gender—power, influence, and voice—within neoliberal North-South relations. This paper draws from the emerging literature on celebrities in North-South relations to analyse the contemporary celebrity discourses and practices of professional entertainer Ben Affleck and his engagement in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in order to understand how celebrities intersect with and popularize representations of gender. I argue that Affleck’s performances of North-South relations complicate the typical ‘white saviour’ discourses of American men who ‘save’ Africa, but also perpetuate the limitations of neoliberal feminism in performances of agency, voice and the primacy of the economic.


When Access in the North Outweighs the South: Comparing Ben Affleck’s Influence in the US and Congolese Contexts
Alexandra Cosima Budabin, University of Dayton

From Sharon Stone at Davos to George Clooney at the United Nations, celebrities are edging deeper into elite spheres that address development. They hob-nob with policy-makers and philanthropists, address political bodies, and serve as unofficial ambassadors to international forums. Within this group, there are a small but growing number of celebrities who have started their own development organizations, crafting platforms that offer the prospect for greater influence—focusing attention on underreported areas but also promoting unique visions for interventions in the Global South. Media plays a critical role as a space for celebrity humanitarians to build credibility and influence.

This paper will offer a treatment of Hollywood actor/director Ben Affleck’s celebrity humanitarianism by examining his media activities on behalf of the Eastern Congo Initiative (ECI). Affleck co-founded ECI in 2010 to spur social and economic development in the DRC. Despite the relative youth of ECI, Affleck’s work has already received extensive validation—from glowing
compliments bestowed by former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to million-dollar starting funds to multiple invitations to address the US Congress. ECI has dual objectives that link the Global North and South. In the North, Affleck raises funds from elite circles, educates political elites, and lobbies the US Congress in order to shape foreign policy towards DRC. In the South, Affleck pays visit to local partners who have been given grants; ECI also conducts research to identify potential grantees for Northern donors.

Affleck’s NGO and its mission encapsulate a particular set of North-South power relations. Crucially, the platform offered by founding one’s own development organization marks the expanding territory for celebrity actors to mediate the Global North’s interventions into the Global South. There are serious questions Affleck’s celebrity engagement raises about our understanding of public accountability and the power of elites in global humanitarianism. This paper poses the question: how does a celebrity humanitarian such as Affleck mediate elite politics across two contexts through the media?

Biographical note: Alexandra Cosima Budabin is a Human Rights Centre Research Fellow at the University of Dayton (USA). She holds a PhD in Politics from the New School for Social Research (USA). Her work focuses on non-state actors such as NGOs, social movements, diasporas, and celebrities in human rights, humanitarianism, and conflict resolution.

The National Identity Politics of Danish Humanitarianism
Lene Bull Christiansen, Roskilde University

Studies into humanitarian communication have forcefully shown the current tendency towards individualisation and commercialisation in aid campaigning (e.g. Chouliaraki, 2012; Kapoor, 2012) and pointed out the gendered and colonialist representations in such campaigning (e.g. Barron, 2009; Clarke, 2009; Jefferess, 2002; Repo and Yrjölä, 2011). While these studies provide important insights, another side remains – that of collective identity narratives associated with humanitarian appeals. This paper posits that collective identity narratives have a vital importance in many humanitarian appeals and proposes to look beyond the mainstream US/UK contexts in order to make this point. The paper takes point of departure in the annual Danish aid telethon Danmarks Indsamling (Denmark’s Collection). Against the backdrop of the local identity politics in Denmark revolving around immigration policies and the aftermath of the so-called Muhammad Cartoon Crisis, the paper posits that the telethon represents a particular version of a national narrative. Two interconnected articulations of the local understandings of community (the Danish concept fællesskab) contribute to this narrative. Firstly, a version of national fællesskab, which envisages the nation as a divers, inclusive and outwardly caring community; Secondly, a version of global fællesskab, which links the Danish nation with a one-dimensionally depicted innocent childlike constitutive ‘Other’ in an affective economy of aid. These two versions of a collective identity narrative are seen to draw on the above-mentioned gendered and colonialist discourses while simultaneously engaging in local politics around diversity and national identity.

Biographical note: Lene Bull Christiansen is an Assistant Professor at the Institute of Culture and Identity, Roskilde University, Denmark. Her current work deals with development communication, celebrity and nationalism in Denmark. She is a core member of the Research Network on Celebrity and North-South Relations and heads the Research Cluster on Celebrities as New Global Actors at Roskilde University.
The Paradoxes of Celebrity Advocacy
Dan Brockington, University of Manchester

In the last 15 years there has been a sea change in the way in which NGOs, and particularly development NGOs, have interacted with the celebrity industries. Relations between the two have become much more intensive. This talk explores the anatomy of these new interactions to explore some of the paradoxes at work in the representation of development issues and the work of development advocacy. These are, first that celebrity advocacy occupies a significant proportion of the public domain, but does so without always engaging particularly well with much of the public. Celebrity is populist in form, but not always popular in character. Second, that failure to engage the public does not really matter. Celebrity advocacy can be a remarkably effective tool for working with corporate and government elites. Third, it is not just elites who may be deceived as to the nature of celebrities’ influence, in the glare of publicity we, the viewers and consumers of celebrity spectacle, are also blinded. We may think that the publicity is the important aspect of celebrity. But publicity can be a sideshow; what matters goes on behind the scenes. My argument therefore is that celebrity advocacy which is now so well organised by NGOs marks, ironically, a disengagement between the public and politics, and particularly between the public and the civil society organisations which try to represent development and humanitarian needs. As such celebrity advocacy is part of the lived practices of post-democracy.

In this talk I present the evidence for these paradoxes, and explore some of its consequences for international development, and democratic practices. This talk will be of interest to people working on the Geography of Development, and particularly the geography of development NGOs and of the media.

Biographical note: Dan Brockington is a Professor of Conservation and Development at the School of Environment, Education and Development, University of Manchester (UK). Most recently, Dan has worked on celebrity and development based largely on work in the UK. His recent publications include *Fortress Conservation* (2002), *Nature Unbound* (with Rosaleen Duffy and Jim Igoe, 2008), *Celebrity and the Environment* (2009) and *Celebrity Advocacy and International Development* (2014).
1A. SOCIAL MEDIA

Chair: Bruno Campanella, Universidade Federal Fluminense

Civil Society, Advocacy and Social Media: An Examination of the Bring Back Our Girls Campaign
Ibrahim Mohammed, Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission

The Mass media especially Social media help amplify advocacy efforts by potentially reaching more people, in more places, faster than ever before. The Internet, mobile technology and social media have become part and parcel of our social life. As veritable tools of communication, they can be used to effectively raise awareness about people around the world who are powerless, helpless and can do nothing about a dangerous, difficult, or otherwise unfortunate situation. For this reason, Civil Society Organizations such as the Bring Back Our Girls Campaign easily find it a great opportunity to carry out digital advocacy through the use of digital technology to contact, inform, and mobilize disparate groups of concerned people around the World about the plight of the abducted Chibok Girls. This study takes a look at the roles of CSOs in creating awareness through digital advocacy, with a focus on the Bring Back Our Girls (BBOG) campaign that initiated the global campaign to free the abducted girls from their captors. The objectives of the study include; to assess the roles of BBOG in promoting awareness and to examine the effect of these campaigns on the rescue efforts of government(s). Content analysis and in-depth interviews will be used in the triangulation method, while purposive sampling will be used to gather the editions of the newspapers to be studied. The uses and gratification theory will be used to explain the research.

Biographical note: Ibrahim Mohammed currently works at the Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission where he heads the Public Relations and Information Office. Ibrahim also writes radio commentary for Radio Nigeria and script for television documentary on various programmes, public policy and international issues.

Social Media and Philanthropy: How Qatari Charity Organizations are Using Social Media in Persuasion
Rana S. Hassan, Qatar University

Social Media has become an essential tool in any integrated marketing communication plan created by marketers and public relations practitioners. It is used to promote awareness, market for a product, communicate with stakeholders, polish images, increase profit and sales rate and compete with other similar products. Recently, charity and non-profit organizations have increasingly using them to communicate with supporters, call for volunteer, call for a cause and promote good will. In Qatar, there are many charity organizations, which have different goals of supports. Most of them used to follow face-to-face communication for persuasion. They always have booths in malls and popular locations in addition to a representative to persuade people to donate and volunteer in addition to using traditional media such as TV commercials. Recently, many charity organizations in Qatar depended on social media in reaching more supporters and in documenting their activities. Digital Persuasion became an essential tool to include in non-profit organizations’ strategy. Storytelling in social media sometimes succeed in turning awareness into action. In some cases, individuals even use social media in calls for actions and financial support through their Facebook status. This study tends to examine the influence of charity organizations through social media and its impact on persuasion. The study will focus on charity organizations such as RAF, Qatar Charity and Qatar Animal Welfare Society through analysing their Twitter and Facebook pages in addition to distributing 200 questionnaire among
citizens in Qatar to examine the impact of promoting organizations’ activities and customers’ perception and persuasion.

**Biographical note:** Rana S. Hassan is a Lecturer in Strategic Communication at the Mass Communication Department, Qatar University. Rana’s research focuses on social media, Cyber-activism and consumer buying behaviour. She is on the editorial board of the *Journal of Mass Communication and Journalism*.

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**Web of Confusion? – The Quakers’ Use of Social Media in their Humanitarian Work in Israel-Palestine**
Alexis Constantinou, University of South Wales

Finding peace in Israel-Palestine has been the objective of many Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs). This paper will focus on the Christian FBO, the Quakers, use of social media as a tool to demonstrate their humanitarian endeavours in the region. Blogging and tweeting has proven to be an invaluable resource for their work. Volunteers record their own eyewitness accounts of human rights violations seen in the Occupied Territories by publishing photos and writing eyewitness accounts. Many, if not all, of those writing blogs are not journalists. However, within the last decade there have been major alterations to who is perceived to be a trustworthy source. As a result hyper-local journalism involving formats such as blogging have become a prominent feature of many humanitarian groups. By presenting evidence online humanitarian groups face critical evaluation of whether the evidence they gather is genuine and, in doing so, ethically correct. The most recent conflict during the summer of 2014 received unprecedented coverage online. Graphic images were posted on line but a BBC trending analysis found that some of the images reported by various online outlets were from 2009 or even conflicts from other countries. For humanitarian groups such as the Quakers social media has provided new opportunities but the anonymity they once could rely on is far harder to achieve. The aim of this paper is to demonstrate how humanitarian groups use social media as well as the pros and cons of such a decision.

**Biographical note:** Alexis Constantinou is a PhD student from the University of South Wales. He is currently studying the humanitarian work of the Society of Friends in Israel-Palestine. Alexis’s research involves analysing the blogs, diaries and interviews volunteers have provided about their work.

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**1B. AUDIENCES AND ACTORS**
Chair: Alexandra Cosima Budabin, University of Dayton

**Role of Mobile Media in Supporting Humanitarian Activities in Conflict-Affected Areas**
Philip Onguny, Saint Paul University

This article critically examines the extent to which mobile technologies can be adapted to meet humanitarian objectives in conflict-affected areas. It focuses on Ushahidi2 and SNA-K3, mobile-based applications that are increasingly playing an important role in understanding how ordinary individuals and affected communities directly contribute to crisis preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery. Some of these technologies have been applauded for providing dynamic
timelines to track events as they happen and where they occur, offering multiple geo-locatable
data streams to collect information via different sources such as YouTube, Facebook, and SMS,
and enabling interactive mapping features to visualize activities on a map. Although there is an
emerging discourse suggesting that the future of humanitarian work hinges on how innovative
first responders adopt mobile technologies in their work, it is still uncertain if the expounded
benefits outweigh the risks in terms of practicality. Often, two lines of argument seem to
dominate the literature on the topic. The first one focuses on whether or not interactive media
represent an alternative means to reach and mobilize segments of population alongside
mainstream media and well-established organizations. The second, related to the first, suggests a
correlation between online and offline civic activities such as political demonstrations. While
these studies offer interesting perspectives on the potential uses of mobile media in areas such
as global activism, less work has been done to examine how such applications can be integrated
into humanitarian activities in conflict-riddled areas, a gap this article seeks to address.

Biographical note: Philip Onguny is an Assistant Professor in the School of Social
Communication and Leadership at Saint Paul University in Ottawa. His research revolves around
the roles of media in conflict processes, including the use of mobile technologies in strengthening
social activism and humanitarian objectives in the Global South.

Classical Antiquity as Humanitarian Narrative: Marshall Plan Films about Greece
Katerina Loukopoulou, Panteion University

This paper aims to contribute to the histories of global humanitarianism with a case study on the
Plan film propaganda, there has been a growing interest in national case studies, such as Ireland,
Austria and Italy. The case of Greece has not been explored so far. I will thus consider a small
number of MP films about Greece, where the tensions between cinema’s drive for projecting
utopian futures and the ‘nightmare of history’ and humanitarian disaster become visible through
documentary film’s unique ability to transpose the history and the present into future promises.
This applies, of course, to all MP films produced and distributed in Western Europe to propagate
not only information about the European Recovery Programme (the official name of the MP), but
most crucially to shape the projection of Western Europe’s future through a humanitarian
narrative that was dressed within a utilitarian discourse of liberal humanism. In the case of MP
films about Greece’s post-war reconstruction, this projection takes a special form, framed by
narratives that promote a historical dialectic between modern and classical Greece. The case of
the short documentary *The Good Life* (1951) is of special interest. Initiated by the British
documentarian Humphrey Jennings in September 1950, *The Good Life* propagates post-WW2
(1945-) and post-civil war (1949-) reconstruction of Greece’s health system in relation to the
country’s classical past. Building on recent scholarship about ‘useful cinema’ (Acland and
Wasson, 2011), this paper will discuss the audio-visual rhetoric of this film in relation to the
developing formation of a new geo-political context and alongside it a new humanitarian narrative
for the future of post-WW2 Europe.

Biographical note: Katerina Loukopoulou is a film historian, having completed her PhD at
Birkbeck College in 2010. Katerina is currently affiliated with Panteion University in Athens
(Greece) as a Visiting Research Fellow (2012-2015) of an EU-funded project on post-WW2
European Cinema, for which she has conducted research in various European film archives
Spectators of Distant Suffering: Towards an Interdisciplinary Approach for Empirical Inquiry
Eline Huiberts, Ghent University

This paper presents the first results of an on-going research project to investigate possibilities for an interdisciplinary and multi-methodological approach to study audiences in the face of mediated distant suffering. Several steps have already been taken to ascertain viewers' reactions to images of distant suffering (Höijer 2004; Seu 2010; Kyriakidou 2011; Scott 2014). So far, most empirical inquiries have been undertaken in different disciplinary fields and although each contribution is valuable, the accumulating body of empirical knowledge still lacks coherence or structure. In our view, there is need for a more structured interdisciplinary and holistic understanding of audience reactions to images of distant suffering. This paper contributes to this discussion by drawing on interviews with different experts in both academic and practical areas of expertise. Academically from the fields of sociology, social psychology, ethics, cultural anthropology, communication science, political science and philosophy of science. Other expert interviews are held with those working in practical fields; functionaries of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), journalists and policy experts. The main objective of this project is to disentangle major methodological, epistemological and ontological differences and similarities amongst the different fields of research and practice. Secondly, this study will further deliberate on the advantages and disadvantages of an interdisciplinary and multi-methodological approach for empirical inquiries into audience reactions to distant suffering.

Biographical note: Eline Huiberts is a PhD candidate at Ghent University. Her project focuses on interdisciplinary and multi-methodological ways to study audience and mediated suffering.

1C. PARTICIPATION
Chair: Wilma de Jong, University of Sussex

Direct Connections? Do-it-yourself-Aid and Digital Media in Cambodia.
Anne-Meike Fechter, University of Sussex,

Over the past few years, a phenomenon described as ‘Do-it-yourself-Aid’ has become more widespread, and increasingly visible in the context of broader humanitarian and development activities. The term ‘DIY-Aid’ refers to enterprising individuals who set up their own projects in developing countries in order to support people in need. It is not necessarily a new phenomenon: Henri Dunant, for example, already commented on the ‘assorted individuals’ who ventured to help in the aftermath of the battle of Solferino. What has been changing significantly, though, is the ability of such individuals to raise awareness and resources in the form of time, effort and funds through their personal networks. This is, in no small measure, achieved through the use of digital media. Crucially, the ways in which these DIY-Aiders make use of websites, blogs, and social networks aims to make good on the promise that their projects reach real, tangible people, rather than the ‘generic poor’ as they are portrayed in fundraising campaigns, for example for international NGOs. The prospect of making and maintaining direct connections between supporters and supported is thus to a considerable extent facilitated through these media. The proposed paper discusses the modalities, backgrounds and implications of this enablement, drawing on ethnographic fieldwork among people undertaking ‘DIY Aid’ in Cambodia.

Biographical note: Meike Fechter is a Senior Lecturer in Anthropology at the University of Sussex. Meike is currently working on a research project on Alternative Actors in Development:

An Analysis of Al Jazeera Media Network’s Collaboration with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to “Give Voice to the Voiceless”
Eiman Eissa, Qatar University

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is a global humanitarian organization that focuses on helping all human beings regardless of their nationality, religion and gender. While Al Jazeera Media Network is an international news network based in Qatar with the slogan “setting the news agenda” and “every story, every side.” These two organizations met on the ground that awareness needs to be spread about humanitarianism, and so they formed a memorandum of understanding in May 2014 with the aim to “improve cooperation and give voice to the voiceless.” This research aims to explore the developments of this partnership and to evaluate its strengths and weaknesses. Media messages are analysed to reveal whether the aim of this partnership is to inform the public of the activities of the IFRC, to persuade the public to take part in humanitarian goals, or both. Also, a survey is conducted with university students in Qatar to assess this partnerships’ success in reaching its goal and the effects its messages have on the youths’ awareness and participation in humanitarian activities.

Biographical note: Eiman Eissa is a Lecturer in the Mass Communication Department at Qatar University. Her research interests include political communication, technological and cultural determinism, public relations and the effect of media on children.

Red Balloons: Video Production in Refugee Communities
Gillian Gordon, Royal Holloway

This paper explores the work of participant video making projects and their content in refugee camps and settlements and draws upon research in the field and current literature. It will examine the humanitarian messaging made by refugees in The Kakuma and Dadaab camps in Kenya and the uses of video narratives in communicating crucial information, managing and evaluating the humanitarian needs. This paper will look at the work of NGO’s, participant video projects, their texts and meaning. It will also consider the place of video culture in the refugee communities of Mae La, Thailand and Zata'ari Jordan and consider current understandings of the restorative potential of the creative arts and culture to work as a catalyst for change within refugee communities living in pre-designed refugee camps and in outlying urban locations. The concept of video as intervention in working with trauma is an area that will be explored through anecdotal research (Gillian Gordon, Boston University, FilmAid International, UNCHR, WHO, Trojan Women Project). Implementing video production can potentially empower refugee communities through acts of art as well as the control of information. Participatory communication initiatives in Kenya have enabled community members in the production of films addressing gender-based violence (GBV), (HTP), and related health issues. In the digital age access to information is a human right and information is a critical factor for refugees in securing what they need. But how does the dissemination of participatory videotexts have an impact on the relationship between the spectators (local refugee community and the World Wide Web) and the refugees themselves?
Biographical note: Gillian Gordon is an award-winning film/television producer and executive with more than thirty years in the media industry. She is also a Senior Lecturer in Media Arts at Royal Holloway, University of London.

2A. DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES
Chair: Martin Scott, University of East Anglia

Getting to the Truth Behind the Tears: Data and Design in the Tear Gas Research Connection Project
Anna Feigenbaum and John Horne, The Tear Gas Research Connection

Tear Gas is used around the world from Ferguson to Hong Kong. Yet, as journalists file daily news stories of tear gas deployments, its health effects remain undetermined, its death toll ill defined, and its legality a recurring question. While researchers and campaign groups work hard to raise awareness of tear gases’ true effects, data is dispersed across nations, suppressed by governments, and spun by corporate manufacturers with a vested interest in keeping sales figures high. As NATO and the World Health Association have admitted, little is known about the real-world effects of this ‘less lethal’ weapon.

This presentation will engage participants in the on-going work of the Connecting Tear Gas Research project. We will discuss how we combine traditional academic research methods, alongside media monitoring, FOI requests, data scrapping and corporate market research to bring together often hidden knowledge around tear gases and the impacts less lethals have on people and their lived environments.

We will then introduce the audience to the ‘datalabs’ process we use to turn this raw information into resources for organisations and journalists, as well as tools for public engagement. In particular, we will share three of our on-going projects: (1) ‘media mapping’ that monitors news reports of tear gas use and creates interactive visuals; (2) the weapons ID app that is puts the tools of humanitarian witnessing in citizen journalists hands; and (3) an online memorial that serves as a visual vigil for those who have been killed by this ‘non-lethal weapon’.

Biographical note: The Tear Gas Research Connection began through a collaboration between Dr. Anna Feigenbaum, author of the forthcoming book Tear Gas: The Making of a Peaceful Poison (2015), and John Horne, a doctoral researcher on representations of torture and a member of Bahrain Watch. Identifying the need to bring scattered research on tear gas together, Anna and John set out on this project, working with international organisations including Campaign Against the Arms Trade, Omega Research Foundation, Bradford Non-lethal Weapons Project, alongside local and international NGOs concerned with the use of tear gas. To connect data with design, the ‘Research Connection’ pairs up with developers, designers and media makers from Tactical Technology, Meedan, Bellingcat, and the Forensic Architecture Group.

Humanitarian Technologies: Ordinary Uses in Extraordinary Times
Jonathan Ong, University of Leicester (co-authors: Mirca Madianou & Liezel Longboan)

Digital innovations such as social media, SMS hotlines and smartphone apps have been celebrated for ushering in a new era of “digital humanitarianism”, enabling disaster-affected
communities to “organize, coordinate, and respond to their own problems” (WDR, 2013). However, what is often missing from these highly optimistic accounts of policymakers and technology designers is the perspective of affected populations themselves. In what ways do ICTs actually matter in people’s lives after Typhoon Haiyan? How, if at all, do they use media to report about aid distribution and give feedback to NGOs? And how might everyday media practices in the Philippines as the most active social media country in the world be regarded as coping mechanisms in a “culture of disaster” (Bankoff 2003)? This paper draws from the on-going Humanitarian Technologies Project, an 18-month collaborative research funded by the UK’s Economic and Social Research Council. It takes an ethnographic approach to better understand potential versus actual uses of technologies in disaster recovery. By presenting ethnographic accounts of affected peoples’ media practices for 1) online dating, 2) selfies, and 3) song requests via humanitarian radio hotlines, this paper argues that ICTs are crucial not only for their most “virtuous” uses, but for remaking ontological security and reaffirming social relationships in the aftermath of disaster. Humanitarian technologies are reclaimed for their most ordinary uses to neutralize extraordinary rupture, achieving everyday forms of belonging and dwelling, and constituting an orientation to a public—if not necessarily civic—space.

Biographical note: Jonathan Corpus Ong is Lecturer in Media and Communications at the University of Leicester, UK. His research is primarily about the social and moral consequences of media in the lives of minority groups and vulnerable populations, particularly in the developing world. He has two manuscripts currently in preparation: The Poverty of Television: Suffering, Ethics and Media in the Philippines and Taking the Square: Mediated Protest and the Struggle for Democracy from Below with Maria Rovisco.

A Genealogy of Digital Humanitarianism: Think Big (Data) for Development and Social Change?
Eleftheria Lekakis, University of Sussex

The evolution of technology has been hand in hand with the proliferation of discourses around its effects on social change. Throughout their history, media have been utilised for a series of politically progressive goals ranging from alternative printing presses to mobile technologies. This paper interlaces a history of ICTs for development and social change, in order to formulate a critical approach to digital humanitarianism (cf. Meier, 2012; Burns, 2014). It provides context for global humanitarianism vis-à-vis new technologies, such as big data, in order to build a coherent framework for analysing articulations and attempts of social change. This paper argues that important context for analysing digital humanitarianism includes an exploration of economic power (i.e. funding, structure, and influence of technologies), while also considering symbolic power (cultural intermediaries and narratives, organisation and hierarchy in civil society) and exploring how these intersect. Technological developments in the broader field of humanitarianism, in other words, need to be explored at the intersection of economic and cultural dimensions.

Orgad and Seu (2014) have developed similar context in understanding the mediation of humanitarianism in terms of a multi-situated dialectical process, the experience of humanitarianism and a move away from ‘prescriptive normativity’. Yet, it is often in accounts of cultural production of the global civil society, that discussion of technology takes either the driver’s seat (technological determinism) or the back seat (technological scepticism). The relationship between media technologies and humanitarianism evokes a call for rethinking and contextualising contemporary technological landscapes.
Biographical note: Eleftheria Lekakis is a Lecturer in Global Communications at the School of Media, Film and Music at the University of Sussex. Her research interests include consumer cultures and politics, promotional cultures and social change, economic cultures of austerity and crisis communication. Eleftheria recently published Coffee Activism and the Politics of Fair Trade and Ethical Consumption in the Global North: Political Consumerism and Cultural Citizenship (2013).

2B. ETHICS
Chair: Rachel Tavernor, University of Sussex

Journalism Practice needs to Communicate Risk if it Wants to Achieve Effective Humanitarian Communication
Jairo Lugo-Ocando, University of Sheffield

Regarding the need of an effective humanitarian communication that can political assist mobilisation and public engagement, most scholarly work has focused upon the ability of the news media to create regimes of pity. Some authors have gone further to say that if audiences are passive and uninterested, sometimes the media have to stand in for them, and agitate on their behalf (Seaton, 2005: 286). However, as this paper argues, this is a problematic stance that tends to ignore the power relations between those who suffer and the spectators. What is needed instead is a type of news coverage that creates political solidarity, which makes individuals at both sides of the screens see each other as equals and having the same rights. To do that, journalism practice requires to set aside the sense of power and certainty that articulates in its narratives and embrace a view of ‘shared risk’ in which all people share the same concerns about a common future, therefore calling into play the principle of average utility (Rawls, 1971). By doing this, risk will not be simply interpreted as ‘fear’, but instead journalistically narrativised as a more rational process on our daily lives. By doing this, I suggest, journalism as a professional body can contest not only the utilitarian ethics that currently dominates humanitarian news but also challenge normative claims that it is there just to inform about tragedy.

Biographical note: Jairo Lugo-Ocando, Lecturer in Journalism Studies at the University of Sheffield. He is also co-director of the Centre for Freedom of the Media. Before becoming an academic, he worked as a journalist, correspondent and news editor for several news media in Latin America and the United States. Jairo’s recent publications include Blaming the Victim: How Global Journalism Fails Those In Poverty (2014) and (with Anya Schiffrin) Developing News: Global Journalism and Coverage of the Third World (2015).

Heather D Curtis, Tufts University, USA

This presentation analyses the visual culture of late-nineteenth-century humanitarianism on display in popular religious periodicals. Probing how American Protestants exploited innovations in print journalism and photography to arouse sympathy for suffering strangers around the world during the 1890s illumines the linkages between late-nineteenth-century pictorial humanitarianism and earlier struggles to abolish slavery, while also foreshadowing the increasing entanglement of appeals for aid with the sensationalistic mass culture that intensified after the turn of the century. Studying the visual strategies Protestants employed to inspire empathetic engagement with distant and culturally different others in an increasingly modern,
interconnected, and imperial era also exposes the ambivalent and contested nature of late-nineteenth-century humanitarianism. While American Protestants shared many assumptions about the nature of Christian charity, conflicting perspectives on the ethics of “sensational journalism,” diverging views on the spiritual integrity of American culture, and contrary opinions about the probity of U.S. imperial expansion produced subtle but significant differences in attitudes toward almsgiving. The culture of humanitarianism that emerged during the 1890s was, I argue, shot through with tensions made visible in the diverse ways American Protestants dealt with the challenges of picturing pain. Through this analysis, this presentation invites reflection on the on-going influence of popular media in shaping the culture of humanitarianism within and beyond the United States. Shedding light on the conflicts that characterized earlier efforts to extend American charity abroad will help place the issues that bedevil contemporary humanitarianism in broader historical perspective and provide a wider frame for current deliberations about the politics of depicting distant suffering.

Biographical note: Heather Curtis is an Associate Professor of Religion at Tufts University, where she also serves as a member of the core faculty for the American Studies and International Relations programs. Heather is the author of *Faith in the Great Physician: Suffering and Divine Healing in American Culture, 1860-1900* (2007). Her current research project, *Holy Humanitarians: American Evangelicals and Global Aid* examines the crucial role evangelical missionaries and popular religious media played in the extension of U.S. aid at home and abroad from the late-nineteenth to the early-twentieth century.

The ‘Virtual Doorstep’: How Citizen Journalists Caught up in Disasters Experience the Use of their Words/Images in Mainstream Media

Glenda Cooper, City University London

Images and words describing crisis events are now often created not by journalists but ordinary citizens – so-called ‘accidental journalists’. Many researchers have seen this as a democratisation of communication and shift in the journalistic field. Much research has (rightly) centred on how the use of this material affects the work of journalists or the reactions of the audience to this content. In contrast, this paper draws on around 30 semi-structured qualitative interviews with those caught up in the Great East Japan earthquake (March 2011) and whose images/words were used by two major UK media players in their live blogs. These users were questioned about the consequences of their material being used, with the aim of discussing how voices of citizens in crises are being mediated/mediatised, whether such citizens altered their content as a result, and the responsibility of mainstream media when using this material in terms of privacy and ownership.

Biographical note: Glenda Cooper is a PhD student at the Centre for Law, Justice and Journalism at City University London. Before returning to study, Glenda was a journalist working at national level for over a decade including the BBC and Channel 4 News, the Independent, Daily Mail, Washington Post, Daily Telegraph and Sunday Times. Her research interests focus upon user-generated content, reporting of NGOs and humanitarian issues, and conflict reporting.
2C. UNITED NATIONS’ NARRATIVES
Chair: Emily Bauman, New York University

**Affective Economy in Humanitarian Reality Series**
Kaarina Nikunen, University of Tampere

The paper explores affective economy in the making of humanitarian reality television shows. The case study in question explores the Australian originated television format “Go back to where you came from” (SBS) that follows the experience of six prominent members of the society sent to travel refugee route backwards to camps and dangerous conditions in conflict areas. The series, created in co-operation with UNHCR, is an example of recent philanthropist trend in television production, also discussed as “ethical entertainment”. By drawing on theorizations of affective economy the paper focuses on the ways in which the format combines emotional address with humanitarian objectives and commercial success. The paper explores how media industries adapt and seek economic value in affective humanitarian imageries and how, on the other hand, humanitarian organizations in the post-humanitarian era (Chouliaraki 2013), challenged by the increased individualization and marketization (Barnett & Snyder 2008) seek new ways to draw attention to their cause. The series format was sold to nine countries, yet it only succeeded in Australia. The paper explores the localizations of the format in Denmark, Germany and Italy, and points out the problems and challenges of localizing humanitarian address in a global reality TV context.

**Biographical note:** Kaarina Nikunen is Acting Professor of Media Culture at the University of Tampere, Finland. Her current work draws on theorizations of solidarity, hospitality, cosmopolitanism, transnationalism and public sphere. Kaarina’s research investigates how media imageries and contexts of production shape the ways in which we understand our roles as political subjects and response to marginalization and suffering.

**“United Nations” Children and Humanitarian Endeavour in Hollywood Films of the 1940s**
Michael Lawrence, University of Sussex

Dominique Marshall has argued that the child is a privileged focus of global humanitarianism and was of particular significance in the attempt “to channel the humanitarian movements of wartime toward international cooperation in peacetime” (2002: 184). This paper derives from my current research project—*The Children and the Nations: Global Humanitarianism and International Film, 1940-65*—which examines ideological and aesthetic aspects of the representation of children in cinema produced during and in the decades following the Second World War. As Tara Zahra states, the Second World War “was not only a moment of unprecedented violence against children ... [it] also spawned ambitious new humanitarian movements to save and protect children from wartime upheaval and persecution” (2011: ix). By exploring the depiction of groups of international children (and particularly refugee orphans) in three Hollywood pictures made during the war, this paper considers the significance of the child for generating sentimental feelings about global humanitarian endeavour during the establishment of the United Nations. Hollywood studios were instructed by the Office of War Information to ‘teach’ the public about the member states of United Nations, and especially China and Russia. My paper will show how children became a valuable means through which the cinema could not only idealise the global humanitarianism associated with the organisation (e.g., the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) but also the international constituency of the organisation itself.
**Biographical note:** Michael Lawrence is Lecturer in Film Studies at the University of Sussex. He is the author of *Sabu* (2014) and is the co-editor of *The Zoo: Images of Exhibition and Encounter* (2015) and *Animal Life and the Moving Image* (2016). He is currently working on a new book, *The Children and the Nations: Global Humanitarianism and Film, 1940-1965*. 

**Art House Aid: Reading Development and Humanitarianism in the Texts of Audiovisual Assistance**

Benjamin A. J. Pearson, University of Michigan

In 1974, UNESCO established the International Fund for the Promotion of Culture (IFPC), providing financial and technical assistance to states and individuals for the creation of artistic works and the bolstering of cultural industries – particularly of the audiovisual variety. The project was a significant departure from the organization’s previous international interventions in culture, which focused on the preservation of static sites of heritage. It also embodied a new way of thinking about economic development assistance that was more concerned more with quality of life than simple economic indicators. Today, 40 years after the Fund’s creation, development aid to audiovisual industries has proliferated, particularly within international organizations. UNESCO and the EU operate multiple programs providing economic assistance for the production and distribution of TV, film, and new media, as well as training for audiovisual professionals in the Global South.

While the primary stated of such programs is economic development, they also espouse humanitarian aims, such as democratization, cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, and conflict resolution. Yet, these audiovisual productions more resemble art house films than traditional forms of development and humanitarian media – indeed, many have won awards at high profile festivals such as Cannes. Using a content analysis of several dozen films produced with funds from EU audiovisual aid programs, I will explore how development and humanitarian aims are encoded in these productions, paying particular attention to the disjunctures between policy aims and their textual embodiment (or lack thereof). This paper is part of a larger project on EU and UNESCO aid to audiovisual industries in the Global South, and builds on previous archival and interview research conducted at the European Commission.

**Biographical note:** Benjamin Pearson is a PhD student in Communication Studies at the University of Michigan. His project is on development and media globalization – particularly the relationship between international cultural policy, national media production, and minority subjectivity in media texts. Currently, his research focuses on development aid programs to audiovisual industries in the Global South funded by the EU, UNESCO, and other international organizations.
Peace Journalism as Research Scholarship and a Form of Media Development in Conflict
Jake Lynch, University of Sydney

Peace Journalism (PJ) is a set of distinctions in the news representation of conflicts, of all kinds, which has grown over recent years both as a field of research scholarship and as a normative concept in media development as a form of conflict intervention. In this paper, I will show how forms of reporting recognised as Peace Journalism can prompt and enable readers and audiences to take issue with the characteristic framings with which calls for armed ‘humanitarian intervention’ in conflicts are launched and justified. In its call for journalists to devise creative ways to depict conflicts as processes, rather than a drumbeat of violent events, it provides opportunities to diagnose problems in structural terms, and to consider and value nonviolent treatment recommendations. Peace Journalism has been promoted through exhortatory and pedagogical initiatives, and as a form of journalist training it draws on the principles of critical pedagogy. In doing so, it can be a component of conflict intervention approaches that wish to work around the ‘liberal peace’ model – based, as it is, on the implantation of standardised institutional frameworks, overcoming resistance where necessary, and which forms an essential conceptual underpinning to calls for ‘humanitarian intervention’.

This paper will draw on the presenter’s long experience as a leading original researcher in Peace Journalism; as a creator and facilitator of training courses for professional editors and reporters in many countries, for clients including major aid and development agencies; and as an experienced reporter and presenter in international television news.

Biographical note: Jake Lynch is an Associate Professor and Director of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (CPACS) at the University of Sydney. Jake’s scholarly publications include A Global Standard for Reporting Conflict (2014) and he has served as Guest Editor of themed Special Editions of several scholarly journals, including Global Change, Peace and Security (2008) and Ethical Space: The International Journal of Communication Ethics (2013). In addition, Jake has a long record of professional consultancy on peace building initiatives, devising and delivering media development programmes for societies affected by conflict.

The Role of New Media and Technologies in Peace Building
Vladimir Bratic, Hollins University

This study examines the latest trend in peace, conflict and democratization literature and practice which principally agrees that new technologies can generate improvements for countries in conflict. This enthusiasm for the impact of technology on societies in conflict is remarkably reminiscent of the earlier claims about the traditional media impacts on democratization and development. This is why it is surprisingly that the discussions about the applications of new media and technologies treat it with clean slate disregarding the lessons from the research on traditional media. Theoretically, the impacts of new technologies are handled dialectically; there are a number of diverging viewpoints and schools of thought (i.e. Internet optimists, pessimists and realists). Practically, the evidence from the new media applications demonstrates ability of the new media to inform, involve and mobilize citizens. Additionally, new media seemed to have enhanced the ability of peace building agents to achieve their goals in almost all facets of their practice. Overall, majority of new media applications provide evidence for many repetitive, though often improved functions (e.g. informing, persuading, entertaining) while new original application
are constantly developed (e.g. Big Data analysis, crowdsourcing, satellite monitoring). Yet, there is no evidence of magical power of new technologies on peace while numerous obstacles continue to flourish: hate speech proliferates due to the online anonymity, free speech continues to be repressed and authoritarian actors and terrorist groups continue to be successful in engaging in propaganda warfare.

**Biographical note:** Vladimir Bratic is Associate Professor of Media and Communications at Hollins University. He teaches and lectures about media’s capacity to promote the peaceful transformation of violent conflict across the world.

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**The Beautiful Americans: the Peace Corps and the Popular Reinvention of the Third World**  
Agnieszka Sobocinska, Monash University

In the early 1960s, the Peace Corps brought international volunteering to a new prominence. Its sophisticated publicity material reached popular audiences in the United States and across the world. The publicity presented the United States in a positive light, as vigorous, noble and idealistic. Romanticised images of young American volunteers selflessly helping ‘underdeveloped’ nations also resulted in a ‘Peace Corps mystique’ that, for the first time, made foreign aid appear glamorous. Reaching into the public sphere in a way that few international issues did, the Peace Corps informed popular views regarding international development and foreign aid, just as these issues reached a new prominence within the international system. This paper will argue that the Peace Corps’ publicity affected popular Western ideas about global disparity, and contributed to the broader process by which publics in the West came to understand the division between the Global North and the Global South. It will show that, by presenting ‘developed’ nations as modern and dynamic, and ‘underdeveloped’ nations as backward and passive, the Peace Corps helped shape popular understandings of the Third World at a time when its meaning and location was under negotiation.

**Biographical note:** Agnieszka Sobocinska is Deputy Director of the National Centre for Australian Studies and a Senior Lecturer at Monash University. She is the author of *Visiting the Neighbours: Australians in Asia* (2014) and, with David Walker, she is co-editor of *Australia’s Asia: From Yellow Peril to Asian Century* (2012). Agnieszka researches the intersection of popular opinion and foreign affairs through travel and tourism, and of popular Western perceptions of the Third World.

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**3B. FORMS OF ENGAGEMENT**

Chair: Lene Bull Christiansen, Roskilde University

**Trying to Inject ‘The Humanitarian Gene Back into this Big Beast’: Intra-Organisational Struggles over the Meaning and Purpose of Media Production at Save the Children UK**  
Kate Wright, University of Roehampton
What is ‘humanitarianism’? How should it guide humanitarian organisations’ engagement with mainstream journalists, media audiences and those whom they seek to represent? This paper explores why and how different readings of such complex, normative issues shape the intra-organisational struggles (Orgad 2013; Powers 2014) of even the most commercially-driven aid agencies. In order to do this, this paper uses data drawn from thirteen semi-structured interviews conducted with those whose decisions shaped the ways in which Save the Children UK collaborated with BBC News Online to construct an audio slideshow about a former child soldier in South Sudan. This media item was initiated by a multimedia producer appointed by the Humanitarian Head, Gareth Owen, in order to reintroduce what he saw as ‘humanitarian’ values into the charity’s media relations. For Owen argued that Save’s press officers had prioritised fundraising so much that they had ‘forgotten’ the political importance of ‘giving voice’ to vulnerable others and ‘educating’ media audiences about why the aid system failed to prevent ‘humanitarian emergencies’. Whilst Owen was happy for this media work to be conducted through relatively niche media outlets, the press office were not and effectively ‘hijacked’ previous arrangements in order to ‘sell’ the piece to a more popular news outlet, so achieving ‘more bang’ for the organisation’s ‘buck’. Yet press officers also legitimised their highly commercialised stance in relation to what they saw as their ‘humanitarian’ purpose: that is, reaching as many audience members as possible in order to create powerful, imagined relationships between them and those represented. In the abstract, normative arguments may be made in support of either faction. But in this instance, the effects of the latter approach on the child concerned were extremely worrying. For the last minute changes of plan and the privileging of speedy media production in the name of ‘value for money’ meant that he and his family were not properly informed about the purpose of their media participation. Indeed, they only found out that the piece was for a news outlet a month later – long after a slideshow about them had been published on one of the most popular news websites in the world.

Biographical note: Kate Wright is Senior Lecturer in Journalism and News Media at Roehampton University. BBC Radio Today and News hour journalist. Recent publications include Reality without Scare Quotes: Developing the Case for Critical Realism in Journalism Research (2011), Listening to Suffering: What does Proper Distance have to do with Radio News? (2012) and Should Journalists be ‘Virtuous’? Mainstream News Production, Complex Media Organisations and the Work of Nick Couldry (2014). Kate previously had a ten-year career in broadcast journalism, spanning the BBC and independent production companies.

Celebrity, Social Entrepreneurism and New Models of Societal Engagement in Brazil
Bruno Campanella, Universidade Federal Fluminense

Taking the participation in social and humanitarian campaigns of Brazilian TV host Luciano Huck as a case in point, this paper investigates how new models of celebrity civic engagement based on social entrepreneurship are becoming increasingly popular in Brazil. Just like Angelina Jolie, Bono Vox, and George Clooney, Huck is frequently promoting humanitarian and environmental campaigns aiming at some of the most challenging problems facing society. If, on the one hand, the type of action championed by him lays bare social imbalances created by neoliberalism, on the other, it simultaneously offers a rationalization that safeguards it against anti-capitalist critiques. Moreover, Huck’s successful combination of social entrepreneurship with private interests is seen by many as an alternative model to the public social policies implemented by Brazilian Labour Party, in power since early 2000’s. These social welfare programs created in the last decade are often described by some segments of society as opportunistic, and a return to the “old” practices of state intervention.
For many, Huck, which has over 15 million followers on Facebook alone and hosts local variations of internationally known Extreme Makeover: Home Edition and Pimp my Ride, represents a distinct project. He openly champions the idea that the solution for some of the deepest problems faced by Brazilian society should start from private initiative. Celebrities, in this context, have a role to play by endorsing contracts with businesses that want to build a socially concerned image.

Biographical note: Bruno Campanella is Assistant Professor in Media and Cultural Studies at Universidade Federal Fluminense. Recent publications include *Os Olhos do Grande Irmão: Uma etnografia dos fãs do Big Brother Brasil* (2012), and several academic articles on reality TV, fan culture, media ethnography, celebrity, and television studies.

The Problem of Images? Television and the Humanitarian Industry in Britain since the 1960s
Andrew Jones, University of Birmingham

The mass media is widely understood as a critical force in the contemporary humanitarian system, for publicising distant suffering and mobilising responses. However, there has been little systematic historical analysis of how the media and humanitarian organisations have interacted and shaped one another over time, in national or international contexts. This paper does so through an overview of the relationship between the British humanitarian sector and television, from the early 1960s to the present day. It will probe how the rise of leading British aid agencies (such as Oxfam and Save the Children) has been fuelled, shaped and contained by the institutional and technological development of television. News footage and images of overseas emergencies stimulated the growth of humanitarian empathy within Britain. The types of action fostered by such images has also undermined long-term efforts to promote solidarity and tackle the structural causes of global poverty, by promoting a certain understanding of the majority world. As this paper will show, the main television broadcasters in Britain (the BBC and ITV) also actively reinforced this process through their charitable appeals mechanisms and deliberate interventions into the sector. However, it will also be argued that humanitarian NGOs have themselves been complicit in this process, using provocative images of starving children to drive fundraising within a crowded marketplace. This analysis complicates linear narratives of modern humanitarianism, and highlights how crucial media institutions and technologies have been in determining the trajectory and possibilities of modern humanitarianism.

Biographical note: Andrew Jones is a Teaching Fellow in Modern British History, at the University of Birmingham. His research focuses on the history of modern humanitarianism in Britain, and in particular the history of leading NGOs such as Oxfam and Save the Children.

3C. COMMUNICATING SOCIAL CHANGE
Chair: Eleftheria Lekakis, University of Sussex

Portraying Global Poverty: Learnings from the Microcredit Experience
Odile Vallee, School of Communication of Audencia Group

This communication presents a research developed in my Ph.D. Analysing the communication processes that supported the construction of microcredit as an international cause, I examined
the uses and the stakes raised by the the « positive » portraits, both photographic and narrative, mobilized by the microfinance players. The tools developed by those players over a timespan of forty years imposed themselves in the range of actions carried out by organizations, profit and non-profit, seeking to help out precarious populations. Those tools, financial in nature, are converted in humanitarian resources through the practical, discursive and symbolic lenses provided by actors such as the Microcredit Summit Campaign (The Campaign). Indeed, this international microfinance network promotes microcredit as a tool against poverty. Its efficiency as such draws upon the positive impact of the photographic portraits of borrowers and the narratives of success they epitomize. They function as an implicit norm aiming at expressing and positioning microcredit for they are both widely used in the communication devices developed by The Campaign and highly mediatised. They circulates in social and institutional spaces and their relevance, accuracy and ethics are debated. The semiotic and narrative analysis of the portraits used by The Campaign from its inception (1997) reveal the universal-oriented picture of poverty they draw and the paradoxal statuses of suffering they bear. It sheds light on a symbolic role that exceeds the strategic one assigned to them by the rhetoric stakes carried by the microfinance discussion, triggering anew the persistent debate about the deserving and non-deserving poor.

Biographical note: Odile Vallee recently earned her PH.D. in Information and Communication Sciences from Celsa-Paris Sorbonne, the School of Communication of La Sorbonne University. She is an assistant professor at the School of Communication of Audencia Group (Nantes, France).

Fair Trade Brand Communication in Social Media as (Post)humanitarian Communication. The case of Pizca del Mundo (Poland) and Reilu kauppa (Finland)

Kinga Polynczuk-Alenius (co author: Mervi Pantti), University of Helsinki

A traditional vision of humanitarianism links it to non-profit organisations providing aid in emergency situations. However, ethics of solidarity and the urge to alleviate suffering beyond geographical borders is increasingly incorporated into the operations of commercial entities. A potent example of business founded on the humanitarian principle of global justice is fair trade: a new supply chain model that aims to create the opportunity for the underprivileged producers from the South to break the cycle of extreme poverty by offering access to Northern markets under beneficial, rather than exploitative, conditions. Thus far, fair trade brand communication has not been sufficiently addressed as an alternative form of humanitarian communication. Against this background, the paper analyses the brand communication of Pizca del Mundo, a Polish fair trade brand, and Finnish Reilu kauppa (Fairtrade Finland) on their Facebook fan pages. It examines these fair trade brands as campaigners who call for solidarity and public action, and analyses the role of the brand audiences or fans in mediating and disseminating the narratives of global inequality and suffering. Drawing on Chouliaraki’s (2013) work on post-humanitarianism and previous studies on fair trade activism (Lekakis, 2013), the paper identifies the inherent tensions residing in fair trade activism that stem from the incompatibility of humanitarian goals of sustainable development and social justice in the global South with the individualised fair trade consumption. The paper contributes to the knowledge of (post)humanitarian communication by investigating the everyday practices of fair trade communication as a form of humanitarian advocacy and activism.

Biographical note: Kinga Polynczuk-Alenius is a Doctoral Candidate in Media and Global Communication at the University of Helsinki. Her interests revolve primarily around everyday creativity in social media and communication issues related to sustainable consumption. She is currently working on her dissertation that focuses on the creative input of consumers in sustainability brand storytelling in social media.
Young, Global, and Ready to Read: Contemporary Humanitarian Children’s Books
Emily Bauman, New York University

We tend to think of humanitarianism as the work of adult actors, not just in terms of its production but also within the vast network of humanitarian consumption. With the normalization of the humanitarian industry in contemporary global media and culture, however, humanitarian narrative and images have started to orient themselves to younger audiences. This paper will investigate a little-studied area of humanitarian media: children’s books. How does children’s literature figure in the larger field of humanitarian discourse and visual culture? Does it reproduce dominant humanitarian images and representations or are there specific tendencies we might identify in this slim but growing body of texts? I show that humanitarian children’s literature is in fact not representative of the field at large but is limited to development (rather than emergency) discourse and telescoped to a single narrative prototype and “moral,” that of the “teach a man to fish” or “plant a seed” formula. The idea of the “seed” as supreme development goal and form of global aid is played out visually in the multiple picture book versions of Wangari Maathai’s autobiographic story, among others. This formula is particularly suited to the children’s literature genre in general, but I argue that it also plays into one of the hottest areas of the contemporary aid imaginary: microfinance, while at the same time resurrecting longstanding development tropes and teleologies identified years earlier by Arturo Escobar. Through close analysis of select examples I will show how this corpus might reflect back to mainstream humanitarian studies the nature of its own investments and the persistence of old forms of thinking, even at the crux of its self-proclaimed reform.

Biographical note: Emily Bauman teaches core humanities and human rights and development at New York University. She has published on the visual rhetoric of political biography, NGO video narratives, and postcolonial theory, among other topics. She is currently at work on a book on religious iconography and the Cold War.

4A. HUMANITARIANISM ONLINE
Chair: Jonathan Ong, University of Leicester

Distant Suffering Online: The Unfortunate Irony of Cyber-utopian Narratives
Martin Scott, University of East Anglia

The internet is often celebrated for the abundant opportunities it appears to offer citizens to become more informed about and inspired to act on issues related to global justice and international development. But to what extent do users actually make use of such opportunities? And what social processes are such decisions governed by? This article begins to answer these questions by analysing the results of a two-month study of UK Internet users’ online behaviour. The results reveal, not just a general resistance to using the Internet to develop a cosmopolitan consciousness, but also the dominant modes of avoidance research participants used to justify their inactivity. The unfortunate irony is that, despite demonstrating the inaccuracy of cyber-utopian narratives, the results also suggest that such narratives may nevertheless provide a means of challenging current modes of avoidance – thereby promoting digital cosmopolitanism.
Biographical note: Martin Scott is a Lecturer in Media and International Development at the University of East Anglia. His recent publications include *Media and Development* (2014). He has also written about entertainment-education, media literacy and the role of popular culture in engaging young people in politics.

Sentiments of Aid: Everyday Humanitarian Communications for Online Microfinance
Anke Schwittay, University of Sussex and Paul Braund, RiOS Institute

Using the example of microfinance – the provision of small-scale financial services to poor people – we argue for a form of everyday humanitarianism that constitutes Northern publics as microfinance supporters. This humanitarianism works through the mobilization of affective investments, which are financial, social and emotional commitments to distant others to alleviate their poverty through microloans. Within this economy of affect, microfinance appeals to its supporters through images of smiling women entrepreneurs, through its obligatory success story of development with the help of microenterprise, and through mediated encounters with microborrowers through online lending platforms. One of the most successful of these websites, particularly in the US, has been Kiva.org, which was established in San Francisco in 2005 and has since grown to include more than 1 million lenders and borrowers, facilitating loans of more than 600 million US dollars. In our presentation, we compare the mediated space created on the Kiva.org website with the seemingly more direct and personal – albeit still technologically-linked – connections established via Kiva Zip, which is a mobile phone platform that lets lenders communicate directly with their borrowers in the US and Kenya. Examining the interactions among lenders and borrowers on the website and on the zip platform, we analyse the affordances of mobile technologies for affective investment and for everyday humanitarian communication.

Biographical notes: Anke Schwittay is a Senior Lecturer in Anthropology and International Development at the University of Sussex. Her work focuses on the public faces of development in relation to financial inclusion interventions. She is the author of *New Media and International Development: Affect and Representation in Microfinance* (2014). Paul Braund is the Executive Director of the RiOS Institute, a research organization based in California that is applying design and social science methods to digital development projects. His research interests are in Information Systems and digital development.

New Media and the Mediation of Humanitarianism: The Creation of a Global Consciousness or Commercialization of Human Suffering
Noureddine Miladi, Qatar University

Satellite TV and new media are said to have enhanced communication across communities on a global scale. Social media has been hailed to have helped provide unprecedented platforms for free speech and empowered communities, the disadvantaged and the youth around the world. But also through live coverage of natural disasters, wars and conflicts new media have brought human crises to every home and to the attentions of everyone. Moreover, reporting humanitarian crises on social media have also taken reporting humanitarianism to a new turn which is maximizing the unlimited access to text and audio-visual data on human catastrophes to become part of a global consciousness. The UK is a unique country where humanitarian work is a thriving business across all communities. The efforts to serve an unlimited number of humanitarian causes cover almost every possible part of the world where there is humanitarian need. The UK NGOs have become nowadays multi-million organizations managed by top executives. They
compete with businesses and banks in their professional marketing strategies and commercial branding. Based on survey questionnaires as well as semi-structured interviews with ethnic minority groups in the UK, this paper analyses the role of new media partly on the creation of a global consciousness about human crises and partly on the commercialization of human suffering. The paper calls for a move from emotion-oriented humanitarianism to adopt new morally compelling strategies to mobilize the public away from the commercialization of human suffering.


4B. CONFLICT
Chair: Jairo Lugo-Ocando, University of Sheffield

From Action to Alleviation – Humanitarian Engagement with Conflict Victims: The Case of Biafra 1967-70
Mie Vestergaard, Roskilde University

This paper forms part of a PhD project (2013-2016), which deals with the question of how universal aspirations of addressing distant suffering shapes humanitarian agencies’ engagement with conflict victims on the ground. More specifically, the paper contributes to studies on humanitarianism by examining how public victim representations are produced and disseminated, which kind of action they encourage and legitimize, and how humanitarian agencies navigate between “global calls to act” and political restraints on the ground in a complex conflict context. Instead of reproducing contemporary critique of humanitarian agencies as being wrong in their, often simplistic, representations of victims, the paper applies a historical and intra-institutional perspective on the internal deliberations of humanitarian agencies when categorizing and representing victims. The paper uses the paradigmatic case of the humanitarian response to the Nigeria-Biafra conflict in 1967-70; a response that produced an unprecedented call for global solidarity with the “Biafran victims”. An interdisciplinary framework is applied to examine classified archival material collected at the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva from February to June 2014. By analysing historical material on humanitarian agencies’ categorizations of victims – from field reports, official headquarter policies, and publicly disseminated victim representations – the paper adds empirically grounded insight to contemporary debates on humanitarianism in existing policy-oriented and theoretical literature.

Biographical note: Mie Vestergaard is a PhD student in International Development in the Department of Society and Globalization, Roskilde University. Her research focuses on humanitarian representations of victims in relation to the Nigeria-Biafra war in 1967-70 with special focus on the role of the International Committee of the Red Cross.
Comparing Russian, French and UK Television News: Portrayals of the Casualties of War
Emma Heywood. Coventry University

This paper examines portrayals of victims in foreign conflict reporting by Russian, French and UK television news. It compares the reports of Russia’s state-aligned news provider, Vremya; BBC’s News at Ten; and France 2’s 20 Heures and examines the extent to which they draw on, or sideline, the news value of compassion for victims of fighting to maintain the newsworthiness of their conflict reporting. The article focuses on coverage of the intra-Palestinian fighting in June 2007 and discusses representations of two very different forms of victimhood to determine how the broadcasters perceive ‘victims’. The first concerns civilians caught up in the fighting and the then emerging humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the second focuses on coverage of two hostage-takings. This paper forms a basis against which present-day media reporting of victims of conflict can be compared and analysed.

Biographical note: Emma Heywood is Lecturer in French at Coventry University. She was awarded her PhD in 2014 from the University of Manchester. Her thesis provided a comparative analysis of European reporting of the Middle East conflict (2006-2008) in the post 9/11 and post-Cold war era. News providers from Russia, France and the UK were used for the comparison.

A Path into Alternative Models? The Role of Citizen Journalism in Global Representations of Humanitarianism
Valérie Gorin, CERAH, University of Geneva and the Graduate Institute

In 2014, the Guardian’s Witness website launched its “Postcards from reality” platform, to balance the negative and stereotypical representations of failed states published on Foreign Policy’s website “Postcards from hell”. This highlights a recent interest for the emergence of citizen journalism and its potentials for more global representations of humanitarianism. Four decades of media studies have shown how the main media are regularly criticized for their use of sensationalism and simplification in the coverage of armed conflicts or famines (Moeller 1999, Franks 2013), producing images framed and selected for their Western symbolic and cultural meanings. Therefore, one of the main concerns is the need to understand “the absence of alternative, critical visualizations” (Campbell 2012, 89) of humanitarian crises in general and of suffering in particular. Citizen journalism and its use of digital media are thus seen as potentials to move away from Western bias and to encourage dialogue (Ritchin 2013) between beneficiaries of aid, audiences and potential donors.

This paper wishes then to examine citizen representations of humanitarian crises through the websites of Guardian Witness, Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting, PixelPress and the project “Everyday Africa” on Tumblr and Instagram. The comparative analysis of the amateur productions disseminated through these digital media will help to question: 1) is there a new visual culture on humanitarianism and how much can it be considered as (un)biased, (in)accurate, (i)representative? 2) How much citizen representations are filling professional gaps? 3) Can we speak of empowerment of local communities through their picturing of their own realities?

Biographical note: Valérie Gorin holds a PhD in Communication and Media Sciences from the University of Geneva, which she obtained in September 2013. Her PhD focused on the photojournalistic coverage of humanitarian crises in American and French news magazines from the 1960s to the 1990s. She has been carrying out research on media and communications and currently teaches at the Center for Education and Research in Humanitarian Action (CERAH) in Geneva.
PLENARY 2: SYRIA
Chair: Professor Suzanne Franks, City University London

A Social Media Revolution? Syrian Chemical Attack Images in Western Media and International Politics
Noora Kotilainen, Finnish Institute of International Affairs

Due to widespread use of amateur images disseminated via social media, the Syrian war (2012- ) has been referred to as a war documented like no other. This paper takes up the case of the Damascus gas attack (August 21st, 2013) to examine the contemporarily articulated social media effect – the notion that the use of social media and amateur images in mediating war have a power to revolutionize the ways in which the spectating world sees and reacts to the suffering of distant others.

Contemporarily images swiftly flow from one context to another, gathering new uses, meanings and significations along the way. Firstly I set out to analyse the image flows: the meanings the amateur images gathered while flowing from the local level into the global level, as well as the signification process of the images in mainstream media’s journalistic remediation. Secondly, I observe how the images telling of the suffering of the Syrian people devolved into the international political debate on the situation of Syria. I examine how the images were referred to and used in political argumentation and rhetoric rationalizing and legitimating the western response to the situation – namely the planned western military response. I also pay attention to the novelties that amateur images and social media mediation potentially have on conventional practices of representing distant suffering. In the light of the Syrian case, I aim to deconstruct and to draw conclusions on the global (western) uses of social media and amateur images of crisis and suffering, and to critically assess the assumption of the social media’s revolutionizing force in mediating war and crisis sentiments.

Biographical note: Noora Kotilainen is a visiting researcher at the Finnish Institute of International Affairs, Global Security research program and PhD candidate in political history at the University of Helsinki. She is completing her dissertation on visual politics of humanitarianism and the historical evolution of humanitarian imagery. Lately she has focused on strategic communication and public image of recent interventionist wars in Afghanistan and Libya, and the visual politics of the Syrian war.

Reporting Za’atari: The Media Portrayal of Children in the World’s Second Largest Refugee Camp
Toby Fricker, UNICEF Jordan

Za’atari refugee camp, Jordan, hosts some 80,000 Syrians who have fled the conflict in their country, more than half are children. The Syrian war is widely acknowledged to have had a devastating impact on the lives of children. Since opening at the end of July 2012, Za’atari has been saturated with media coverage. In Jordan, the camp has come to symbolise the refugee crisis as a whole, despite the fact that less than 15% of all Syrian refugees in the country live there. This practical presentation uses unique on the ground experience to highlight the role of aid agencies in working with international media on issues and stories related to children. But who drives the media narrative and portrayal of Za’atari’s youngest? This presentation looks at the unique role that aid agencies can play in influencing the editorial of print, online and broadcast media. From self-produced content, to celebrity and other high profile visits, aid agencies have been in a position to drive and direct media coverage. The dangers and
complications of reporting from Syria mean that refugees provide even more valuable first hand stories. With Za’atari just a one-hour 15-minute drive from Jordan’s capital, Amman, this presents a unique opportunity. Life and events within Za’atari itself also often meet the news values cited by Galtung and Ruge (1965). When they are missing, a celebrity can bring the focus back. More recent restrictions on media permits for Za’atari have further increased the reliance on aid agencies to access strong child focussed stories. The relationship between aid agencies and media can be positive or negative. The ideal result is reporting that provides the nuances and deeper context required to tell accurate and engaging stories about children. Aid agencies, whilst raising awareness about relevant issues and promoting their work, share the responsibility with media to achieve this. In the context of Za’atari you can find examples of both.

Biographical note: Toby Fricker has 16 years’ experience working in communications, Television Production and as a journalist. He is currently a Communications Specialist at UNICEF Jordan where he focuses on the Syrian refugee crisis. He has also previously lived and worked in Indonesia, Uganda and DR Congo, filming and writing for news, NGOs and UN agencies.

Working on the Side of Dignity: Reflecting on the Syrian Crisis
Juliette Harkin, University of East Anglia

This paper explores the intersection of the concept of dignity (and solidarity) within the context of Syria’s conflict and the media development response to it. There have been a great number of small and medium media interventions but the work has been mainly covert for security reasons. The Syrian revolution and the whole Arab Spring in which it emerged raises urgent questions about the political positioning of formal and informal political actors in the conflict and their relations with the development ‘industry’. Rightly, it is argued, activists and other actors are challenging not just their government but also exposing some of the problems in the media development community as they privilege work with those who show solidarity, who respect the sanctity of human dignity and who understand the political aims of the groups or ‘beneficiaries’. This paper will reflect deeply on my recent professional experiences as director of a major Syria media project, since the start of the Arab Spring. It will draw on relevant literature in media development, including Martin Scott (2014), and policy documents, including the HIVOS Briefing Note (Kawa Hassan, 2012), ‘Dignity Revolutions and Western Donors: Redefining Relevance’. It argues, in sympathy with a recent plea by Dr Atallah Kuttab of SAANED, for a dignity-centred approach to (media) development with due import on the human responses that this entails.

Biographical note: Juliette Harkin is a Doctoral student in the School of Politics, Philosophy, Language and Communication, at the University of East Anglia, examining issues of social justice and dignity in regard to the early years of the Syrian revolution. She also has over twelve years of practitioner experience managing major Arab and Syria-focused media development initiatives with BBC Media Action, Internews Europe and Internews Network. Juliette has published on the rise of Syria’s alternative radical media and has conducted and published extensive research on the ways major Arabic satellite channels have utilised user-generated content from Syria and the problems with that.
Humanitarian Media Events: The Case of the Belgian Appeal for Syrian Refugees
Robin Vandevoordt, University of Antwerp

When somewhere in the world disaster strikes, chances are that West-European NGO’s will put their hands together by launching national fundraising appeals. In these appeals, the media, public institutions and individual citizens are asked to contribute their share by donating a sum of money or, better still, by organizing their own fundraising activities. If all goes well, the appeal then soon acquires a festive character, as an entire nation interrupts its regular course of affairs to organize fundraising activities ranging from small family barbeques to widely broadcasted live shows. In this presentation, I will conceptualize these appeals as ‘humanitarian media events’ by drawing attention to their distinctive features, in line with recent attempts to broaden the notion of ‘media events’.

These theoretical reflections are then applied to the case of the Belgian appeal for Syrian refugees, launched in April 2013. This analysis consists of three components: the media, by comparing the coverage on Syria throughout the period of the appeal, both in print and broadcast media; the campaign, relying on in-depth interviews with campaigners; and the public, by using interviews and focus groups both with persons who organised a small-scale fundraising activity, and with those who did not. This presentation thereby aims to develop a neo-Durkheimian framework to understand the nature and course of national humanitarian appeals, and the role-played by a variety of social actors.

Biographical note: Robin Vandevoordt is a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology at the University of Antwerp. His research focuses on the socio-cultural conditions of moral cosmopolitan.