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**STAR/POVERTY SPACE: THE MAKING OF THE
DEVELOPMENT CELEBRITY**

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*The celebrity ambassador ... will be seen trying to help, assist and transform the degradation (of whatever kind or magnitude it is) into something hopeful. However, again, the congruity between this persona (the hands that will get dirty, do-gooder, who can do good things with their fame and wealth) and the glamorous celebrity life from which they have come and to which they will return, are **decidedly liquid in form**. While celebrities have always combined the life of glamour with visits to see a sick child at a hospital or support the troops, and so on, the self-reflexive and ironic ways in which celebrities view themselves and are viewed today ... means that there is a spilling-over and constant shattering of persona. For a celebrity (politician) to rise above such a tide they need **charismatic authority** that effervesces, and the **rooted** (even if temporary or transitory) adoration of devotees. (Redmond 2010 p. 89; emphasis added)*

A performance presupposes a practice. (Warde 2005, p. 134)

Just when you thought that blood diamonds or the Haiti disaster were confined to the collective dustbins of media history, along comes Naomi Campbell and Wyclef Jean to turn our be-spectacled eyes back to these (respective) issues. A re-turning to these concerns is not all that strange, however, if we put stock in the argument that Holmes and Redmond (2010, p. 7) put forward in the opening editorial to this journal, that “celebrities exist at the core of many of the spaces, experiences and economies of modern life”. Here, Campbell, one of the world’s foremost ‘supermodels’, is a ‘star’ witness at the war crimes trial of Charles Taylor, the former president of Liberia, as a recipient of ‘small, dirty-looking stones’ when the two were at a dinner for Nelson Mandela in 1997. And Jean, as one of the founding members the multi-platinum, Grammy®-winning Fugees, has officially thrown his hat in the ring for the presidency of his home country of Haiti.

Yet, if as Littler (2008, p. 238) says, compassion and caring are ‘part of the contemporary celebrity job description and a hallmark of the established star’, Campbell’s statement about how ‘inconvenient’ her trial appearance is for her is not one of the discourses surrounding celebrity we are all that familiar with at the moment.¹ Rather, Mia Farrow, also a dinner guest of Mandela in 1997 and so also a witness at the trial, is more ‘on script’ with her statements that she’s ‘eager to see the people of Liberia and Sierra Leone see justice’, that the Rwandan genocide ‘changed [her] life’ and that she was ‘gratified that [Taylor] was arrested’ (Weaver 2010). Similarly on script would be Jean, who, through his relief and rebuilding efforts, is a slightly different kind of star ‘witness’ to the Haitian earthquake in early 2010. As he puts it, in his characteristic ‘third person’ style, after vacationing with his family in the country in December of 2009:

We escaped death by a few weeks. So that's why I'm standing [for president]. Maybe I could have waited another 10 years for this, but this is urgent. Singing about policy is not enough. I've seen musicians sing about it all their life. I've taken the position to not only exercise what we are singing about, but to see if we could take five years to move this country into a better direction. ... People can say, 'Clef what do you know about politics and running the country, it sounds pretty insane Clef.' But when you think of the connections and allies I've assembled around the world, I feel I can help move this country forward. ... This pop star was not necessarily trying to be famous. His first album was called Blunt on Reality. It talked about human rights, social issues. ... We wanted to call the group Refugees but when we went to register it we saw there was already a group with that name so we called it Fugees. So this pop star stands up, this pop star has always been an activist for the people. In my world and the stereotypes we usually have, us hip-hop artists are going to go to jail. Here you have an artist who says: my idea is not to go to prison, my idea is to run my country as president. He decides he's at a point to transform music into policy. (Pilkington 2010)

¹ She worked to get a ban on any photos of herself coming and going from the trial (which was unsuccessful) at the same time expressing concern over how her appearance would put herself and her family in danger; her tropes of ‘inconvenience’, however, come off more as ‘bothersome’ and ‘annoying’ rather than anything else.

Even with tons of seemingly positive coverage in global news reports, his campaign is off to a rocky start with criticism coming from fellow ‘politicised’ celebrity Sean Penn giving his own ‘testimony’ through numerous media (re)appearances. According to Penn, who runs the ‘J/P Haitian Relief Organization’ and a massive tent-city in Haiti, Jean has been a ‘non-presence’ in Haiti thus making Penn ‘suspicious’ of him although he admittedly ‘doesn’t know the man’ (Beaumont, 2010)²; there has also been related suspicion over the ‘mishandling’ of some of the money donated for Haitian relief through Jean’s organisation known as the Yéle Haiti foundation as well as his income tax issues in the US. So, now it is not only compassion, but rather compassion of a particularly *competitive* type that is the hallmark of contemporary celebrity. Who knew that care—or what Marshall (1997), in the realm of public political culture, refers to as celebrities’ ‘embodiment of affect’—would become a competitive sport played out for us between media personalities on the front pages of newspapers and TV screens?

But what is it that gives these celebrities the voice and authority to do and say the things they do—in short, in what ways and through what means are they able to *be* or, better yet, *made to be* the sorts of politicised celebrities they are? Put in other terms, how is their celebrity ‘practiced’—in the discursive, representational, material and political economic senses—and, simultaneously, how does this praxis create their celebrity, their persona, their politics and, indeed, *them*? In exploring several aspects of ‘celebrity praxis’ in this paper, we do this through what we see as the creation of the contemporary ‘development celebrity’: those celebrities working for ‘development’ writ large in the Third World. These arrangements potentially fall across a multiplicity of different relations in the creation of the development celebrity: through association with and/or endorsement of a development-related organisation, by working through/for their own foundation or charity, and, finally there are those who are more ‘freelance’ in their appearances and statements. But there are also those celebrities, much like Naomi Campbell, who do not necessarily directly embody the politics of development like Jean or Penn, but rather by virtue of their star power and relationship to a development-related issue (e.g. blood diamonds) they raise the profile of various issues in and through the media. For example, *The Guardian*³, after the coverage of the Farrow/Campbell testimonies started to heat up, created a news webpage devoted solely to their current and past coverage of the issues (*The Guardian* 2010) as well as an ‘Everything you need to know about blood diamonds’ resource page (Tran 2010).

We engage in the discussion here through the lens of the development celebrity for several reasons. First, as confirmed by several recent interviews we have done, activist and development organisations in the UK at least are now fully in the business of recruiting, ‘handling’ and utilising celebrities to front various campaigns as they come along or need to be re-invented. Oxfam, for example, has a set of full-time celebrity ‘liaisons’ who work with and gather various celebrities to ‘matched’ causes. At the same time, also confirmed in our interviews, celebrities are reaching out to and partnering with campaigns in order to ‘get their politics on’ as well as exercise their elevated public voices about issues; as Bono has famously put it, ‘celebrity is a currency of a kind’, and he is rather obviously in the process of ‘spending’ this currency in the hopes of improving African underdevelopment and other parts of the poor world, or of at least bringing awareness to it and his various foundations and projects. Cynics, however, would put these politicised ‘reaching out’ moves and motives of celebrities down simply to the need to build up, re-invent and/or further establish their own commodity-brands as ‘caring’ celebrities working to gain more and better publicity to sell more and better movies, albums and clothes. Either way, as Cooper (2008; see also Kellner 2010) has

² In even more ‘he said, she said’ tete a tete between the two, Jean has responded to say that he has been in Haiti but not in the (relatively easy tent-city) locations of Penn (Serpe 2010).

³ The newspaper also ‘live blogged’ the event: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/blog/2010/aug/09/mia-farrow-war-crimes-trial>

specifically explored, celebrity diplomacy and the more contemporary 'celebritisation of development' (Goodman 2010) has a relatively established modern history going back to the 1950s with Danny Kaye as the first UN Goodwill Ambassador. And, again either way, the effect is much the same: celebrities are quickly becoming the new face of charities, foundations and activists campaigns, and as we have it more broadly here, 'development', as the voice of the oppressed and down-trodden Other for a global, very often female, consuming audience.

Second, focusing on the development celebrity says something about how we go about 'doing' development today. The celebritisation of development has worked to turn 'development' as a wider project into one that is individualised, volunteer-ised, privatised and, ultimately responsabilised onto audiences, consumers and citizens (mostly of the North) as more celebrities take to their roles as endorsers of campaigns and causes. The 'heroic individual' in the form of the celebrity (Boykoff and Goodman 2009) is now here to exalt us into doing something as 'caring' individual, much like they are doing, by giving to a cause, organisation or charity, shopping in a certain store or buying a certain (most likely fairly traded) product. If they as 'extra-ordinary' individuals can do something 'ordinary', then we as 'ordinary' individuals can do something 'extra-ordinary' by helping deal with and solve the problem/crisis/catastrophe they are talking about. Indeed, in addition to the individualisation, responsabilisation et al of development through celebrity, development too is being thoroughly marketised and commoditised through the growth of various schemes such as Product (RED) which has paired up some of the world's top celebrity brands (e.g. Apple, American Express, etc) with the actual celebrities of Bono, George Clooney, Beyonce, Kate Moss and Leonardo DiCaprio.⁴ Development and the development performativities of celebrities makes it now an ethical consumerist fashion statement peppered with globalised brands, branded slogans, multinational corporations, billionaire philanthropists (e.g. Bill Gates), social- and eco-entrepreneurs and fabulously rich celebrities all of whom have come to form what might be called the (industrial) celebrity-consumption-compassion 'complex'.

What is crucial here, though, is that celebrities are now in on deciding who and what are worthy of being 'saved' or 'developed', how and in what ways to respond to various disasters and 'crises' of development, and which particular cause are important for us as citizens, consumers and audience members to focus our attention, donations and shopping on.⁵ Indeed, this growing intensive focus on particular celebrity individuals and particular causes/charities is beginning, in our opinion, to leave wider discussions of wider issues of inequality, political economy/ecology and justice even more to the wayside. Moreover, the very marketing of causes (and celebrity/development brands?), as Product (RED) has been slammed for in various forums⁶, is now almost as important if not overtaking the actual cause and the very people in need of relief, medicine, money, development, etc. The business of consumer/celebrity-driven development is just that, a business 'venture' that is run more often than not now by marketing experts rather than activists or development professionals.

All of this, of course, has to be seen in light of what this consumption-compassion-celebrity complex is capable of doing. Clearly with celebrity-fronted, very high-profile and spectacularised events like Hope for Haiti in the US and Comedy Relief in the UK, celebrity development and development

⁴ For more on Product (RED), see Ponte et al (2009) and Richey and Ponte (2008).

⁵ See Brockington (2008) for a similar discussion with regard to celebrities and the environment.

⁶ See, for example, Valley (2007) on the breakdown of the marketing budgets by various Product (RED) corporations versus what they actually provide the Global Fund for AIDS which is the recipient of Product (RED) funds. See also the website 'Buy (Less) Crap' which has its own particular take the connections of solving global poverty through shopping: <http://buylesscrap.com/>.

celebrities can generate massive amounts of money for specific causes.⁷ And, in addition, as Clarke et al (2007) point out in writing about ethical consumption, markets for products like fair trade as well as charity events like Comedy Relief go on to fund the much broader and even more politicised lobbying, funding and direct action (!) activities of these and other NGOs; it is not unusual to now see celebrities at the front of marches for dealing with global poverty as they hold up banners, carry signs and turn our heads to these particular causes. Thus, ethical consumption and giving “singularities” turn into funding streams for the various direct and related organisations involved as well as the actual ‘underdeveloped’ or ‘suffering’ target groups of the various campaigns. The point here is that development celebrities perform development and the responses to underdevelopment/disasters in particularised ways that seemingly have complex and often contradictory outcomes and, furthermore, that these performances and their paradoxical results are becoming *de rigueur* in and through the wider celebritisation of development.

The third reason to use this idea of the development celebrity—and, indeed, its/their praxis—is in order to make a set of theoretical/conceptual points related to celebrity studies. In particular, building on the concerns of Turner (2010), we wish to argue for the need to consider and engage with the processes of the ‘making’ of celebrity that works to combine a consideration of its discourses and representations specifically *with* its cultural economic materialities. In this we want to broaden out Turner’s plea for a focus on the economic structures behind the creation and maintenance of celebrity/celebrities-commodities, to suggest the need to explore the ‘materialities’ inherent in these political economies of celebrity, and here, as specifically related to the creation and practices of development celebrity and celebrities. In addition, we also work to engage with, expand on and articulate Redmond’s (2010) idea of ‘liquid celebrity’; here we explore the ‘stuff’ through which liquid celebrity is created, circulated and moved in global networks. In doing this, we focus our analysis on the processes by which the ‘liquidity’ of development celebrities actually ‘touches down’, becomes solid and is made semi-rigid (or ‘rooted’ as Redmond would have it) to allow, in a sense, this liquid celebrity to slip, slither and drip across and through media networks, audiences and personal, local relationships and across the multiple personas that work to ‘politicise the senses’ (Redmond, 2010, p. 93) through development celebrities.

Drawing variously and diffusely on work in science studies (e.g. Gieryn 1999; Irwin and Michael 2003), material cultures (e.g. Woodward 2007) and the growing geo-socio-anthropologies of ‘things’ (e.g. Cook et al 2004, 2007; Appadurai 1987; Jackson 1999, 2000; Latour 1993; Warde 2005), the key to understanding the material practices embedded in development celebrity networks is the multiple and complex circulations of the ‘everydayness’ *and* ‘bespectacled-ness’ of the artefacts of celebrity in the labour, economies, financing, images, discourses, representations, performances, politics, emotions, knowledge and acts of consumption that hold together these sometimes durable, sometimes fragile networks. Thus, the performances of development celebrities are *as much* about everyday events, materials, technologies, emotions and consumer acts as they are the spectacled construction of the stars that stump for development. Articulated in the terms of the theme of this special issue, the transnational networks of (development) celebrities are held together by many of the very quotidian material things we take for granted such as cameras, images, texts, computers, newspapers and televisions that circulate in and through the constructions of ‘liquid celebrity spectacles’ (Redmond 2010, p. 83). Add to this the often ‘visceral’ and perhaps ‘everyday’ (cf. Barnett et al 2005) need to care in citizens, consumers, audiences, activists and the now rich and

⁷ Except, for some reason, the current flooding disaster in Pakistan which, at the time of writing had many journalists, media outlets and development professionals scratching their collective heads as to why there has been such a poor response in terms of donations, money and materials. Perhaps, in the void of no obvious as of yet celebrity face to drum up the relief aid/support for poor Pakistanis, the threat of the growth of terrorist organisations in flooded and destroyed areas might work as a ‘hook’ to get access to relief funds from other anti-terrorist sources.

famous, the development celebrity—and most importantly, their embodied and elevated voice—is born.

The discussion continues as follows. First, in this context of understanding the making of development celebrities, we explore how it is that development celebrities gain their voice to pronounce on the topics that they do through a generalised discussion of the creation of ‘expertise’. Here we explore what we feel goes into and circulates in the creation of ‘authenticity’ in development celebrity. Next we discuss two ‘things’ deployed in this desire to construct authentic development celebrities: the photo shoot of the star in the ‘places’ of poverty and their textual descriptions of the event/poverty tour, which are very often their ‘diaries’ that are now turned into blogs, Tweets and webpage text. This is not only about them ‘bearing witness’ to what is going on, but also to provide them with firsthand knowledge and/or the ‘credentials’ to be able to speak authoritatively and authentically about something. We refer to this as the creation of *star/poverty space* in and through the materialities of photos, images and texts that work to create the development celebrity and create these transnational networks and connections of care and compassion. In essence, the creation of *star/poverty space* is performed through the ‘materialities of authenticity’ that are at the centre of the material and discursive networks of development celebrity. We conclude with some general observations about the politics, possibilities and problematics of development celebrities and the *star/poverty spaces* that they create.

Thinking about Development Celebrities: Science, Expertise and Authenticity

In order for celebrities, as ‘extra-ordinary’ individuals, to encourage and achieve ‘extra-ordinary’ behaviors from us, ‘ordinary’ citizens they must seem genuinely concerned and knowledgeable about the cause they are promoting. Thus, credibility and authenticity, and to some extent expertise—or at least an impression of expertise—are fundamental to the success of the development celebrity. But given that celebrities endorsing development campaigns are not ‘experts’ on the subjects they talk about and pronounce on, how do they come to capture the public’s imagination and be perceived as an authentic, credible and—as in some cases, like Bono, who is an adviser to the US government on African aid spending—an almost expert sources of knowledge on development? In short, why is it we listen to what Chris Martin has to say about fair trade or what, in broadening this out to the environment, Leonardo DiCaprio thinks we should do about climate change? Here, we draw broadly on research within science studies to develop a brief but useful understanding for how authenticity, credibility and expertise within science are mirrored yet also different in this celebritisation of development. Development celebrities are in a way even more contingent here, with the role of performance and their thorough entanglements with the everyday materialities in the realm of liquid celebrity and its spectacle.

To begin with, as Greiyn (1999) has it, the prominent and superior position of science on a cultural map renders it a trusted, credible source of knowledge. While its cultural positioning changes according to available knowledge, audience and media surrounding it—think climate change here—in general, its credibility is usually maintained. This is in part due to the ‘epistemic seal of approval’ granted to science by society (Gieryn, 1999), but also by virtue of the ways that science is ‘consumed’ as a ‘trusted’ enterprise by the public; as Wynne (1992, p. 282) has it, ‘the issues of public understandings of science, and of public risk perceptions, are not so much about public capabilities of understanding technical information, but about the trust and credibility they are prepared to invest in scientific spokespersons or institutions’. Yet, despite its elevated cultural position even with science, credibility must be earned and maintained and it is no longer appropriate to assume credibility is a given feature of an expert. The public has become ambivalent to scientific expertise: Trust in science has shifted from an automatic to contingent response (Irwin and Michael, 2003; Kinchy and Kleinmann 2003). Health scares such as foot and mouth and bird flu, as well as

growing public concern over issues such as nuclear power, climate change and GM crops, have led to greater public mistrust and questioning of scientific policy and opinion (Levidow 2002) and sometimes for good reason (e.g. Boykoff and Boykoff 2004; Boykoff 2007). Indeed, as society becomes increasingly cynical in the growing integration of science and society, science becomes more about gaining public trust than presenting fact (Irwin and Michael 2003).

In this context, Hilgartner (2000) has developed the idea that scientific credibility is an important part of the 'performance' of science, which is particularly pertinent to discussions of the growing 'expert' of the development celebrity. He suggests that even the scientific expert has a mediated persona which 'they construct ... managing information and appearances in complex ways' (Hilgartner 2000, p. 6). The connection to celebrity here is obvious, with forays into development campaigning as an extension of their ongoing 'performance' of their public persona (Littler, 2008). Like science, celebrity also holds an elevated position within society-though in markedly different ways. Celebrities may hold higher social positions vis a vis science and scientists, particularly if they are in the medias' or society's favour through a popular movie, 'must-watch' TV show or fashion line rooted in positive coverage and/or a large public fan base (Redmond, 2010). This amplified voice, mirroring the elevated cultural position of science, grants the development celebrity access to wide audiences ready and willing to absorb and act on what their chosen celebrity says. In further extending the (media forced?) 'para-social relations' (citation?) between celebrity and audience, development 'work' becomes another part of the celebrity performance (Turner, 2004), but one that, even with its elevated position, must garner some form of further credibility and authenticity much like the contingent position that many scientists find themselves in. Photo-shoots, magazine and newspaper articles, interviews and blogs help naturalise and cement this performance and, as discussed more below, work to add layers of authenticity and credibility to the celebrity development 'on stage'. While scientists rely on expert knowledge to reinforce their credibility, celebrities instead rely on not only their association with credible NGOs and charities, such as Oxfam and Friends of the Earth, they need to have *their own* knowledge and experiences in relation to underdevelopment and crises documented and packaged through everyday activities, interactions and networks of the media and the charities/NGOs they are involved with.

Science is unique in that its practitioners are often perceived as authoritative, an expert and credible at the same time. The authoritative voice of science is both generated by and helps to generate expertise and this unique two way flow of authority and expertise forms a platform that draws audiences and the media to scientists (Gieryn 1999). Importantly, the distinction between credibility and expertise becomes crucial as celebrities can be credible and speak from positions of authority but, unlike scientists, are rarely experts in water supplies, disaster relief and/or humanitarian crises. In short, creating a 'celebrity expert', or as we might have it here a 'pseudo-' or 'para-expert', has quite a bit to do with their power and authority as a *celebrity*, rather than any insight or experience of campaign issues or crises, although these are also crucial as we show below. There are obvious exceptions, Bono and Angelina Jolie for instance, but this knowledge and 'expertise' has often come from previous philanthropic or development-related experience, as we again show below. In either instance, the amplified voice of celebrity grants them authority beyond 'normal' citizens, including, now, many scientists and development practitioners.

Yet, even with celebrities, in following examples laid out by science and scientists, knowledge-makers seek credibility by projecting their claims into the realms of 'real world' facts (Gieryn 1999; Wynne 1992). This is one way in which development celebrities gain their highly-sought-after authenticity and credibility by presenting themselves as 'experts' in the issues they promote with an array of well rehearsed facts at their fingertips, photos in their chosen place of development and a range of media backing them up; done this way, the strategy can be fairly effective. However, even here, the 'expert persona' of many of these development celebrities is heavily managed by the

organisations they represent, themselves 'experts' in development issues, who provide them the information they repeat as 'para-experts'. Information is carefully scripted by the charity to allow the celebrity to present the campaign in the best possible light, whilst also appearing knowledgeable and sincere on the issues they discuss. Development celebrities may thus be seen as a heavily mediated (re)constructions born out of development organisations, PR agencies, photo opportunities and media, and this is on top of the already constructed public persona of the celebrity themselves. That the public are expected to consume the many manipulated layers of the celebrity and still find them authentic seems a tough sell, yet for many development celebrities, this is exactly what happens and it happens through very mediated and material processes.

The Materialities of Authentic/Caring Development Celebrities

Sean Redmond's (2010) recent writing on the 'avatar' that is Obama argues—with a generous tip of the intellectual hat to Bauman's work—that '...liquid modernity cannot be solidified' in making the case for the need to understand, describe and experience what he calls 'liquid celebrity' and the 'liquid celebrity spectacle'. Yet, for Redmond, even this liquid celebrity—a particular form of Kellner's (2003; cited in Redmond 2010) media spectacle which invariably have '...aesthetic and technological dimensions [that] utilises special effects, costume, set, setting, graphics, pyrotechnics [and] consumer goods' (Redmond 2010, p. 83)—is not as fleeting, transitory or floating as it often might seem. This is implied not only by Redmond's description of what makes up media spectacles as quoted above, but through the use of terms such as 'embodiment' and 'rootedness' in the context of his discussion of what creates and is contained in liquid celebrity. Rather, it is a kind of 'ghost-like' materiality in the things and objects that go into the making of a constantly shifting, fleeting, transitory and floating liquid celebrity.

This rootedness, however fleeting and transitory it may be given media cycles and internet technologies, is fundamental to the making of the development celebrity and, most importantly their elevated and authoritatively 'credible' voice. There are two 'everyday' artefacts and/or technologies that we see specifically going into and creating this rootedness of development celebrities: images of development celebrities in the 'places' of poverty, and second, their discourses about these places and the experiences of being in them. Across both categories, the internet has become an important medium for the transmission and creation of development celebrity materialities, especially given the proliferation of celebrity 'gossip' websites and blogs and the growth of Twitter.⁸ We take each of these artefacts in turn then explore how they work to facilitate the authenticity and thus authority and voice of development celebrities.

Imagineering the Development Celebrity

Even more than the publication of the words of celebrities described below, it is the images of them in the places they are concerned about—the places and spaces of poverty, development, disaster, underdevelopment, crisis—that are the most important circulating material associated with the creation of the development celebrity. Getting these images or as we have it, the 'materialities of authenticity' involves the practices of the well-established poverty/crisis 'tour': either a charity/foundation-sponsored trip or one that the celebrity, most likely with the help of their many 'handlers', can freelance; both of these sorts of trips must involve the participation of the press by having the celebrity in the right spot and/or being followed by the paparazzi or TV crew⁹ or, in some campaigns, a photographer is commissioned and the campaign organisation sends out a subsequent

⁸ So-called 'Web 2.0' technologies, such as having space for comments on websites and blogs and the 'following' process of Twitter, allow for different and interesting forms of engagements with development celebrities that we only have space to note briefly here.

⁹ YouTube and other online video clip hosting websites are clearly growing in importance here.

press release and/or often develops a dedicated set of tour webpages. Relatedly, then are the associated practices of choosing and creating the photo-ops on the tour—with the ‘un-staged’ photo or film clip between the celebrity and the locals worth the most—deciding which images to publish/post, what forums to publish/post them in and how to articulate and contextualise them. The most crucial practice here, however, has to be that of the celebrity: the joyful look on their face in being entertained by/helping/walking amongst the locals, the sweat on their brow in digging a new well for clean water/handing out water/watering a newly built, local garden, their look of concern in holding a sick orphan/checking on a recovering child/talking to a pregnant mother. Their care and compassion, their imploring ‘doing-ness’, their humane- and human-ness, their extra-ordinary- and ordinary-ness must come through and be a part of the performance of the moment, of the crisis/underdevelopment and of the ‘practices’ of the development celebrity more generally. Lindsey Lohan reduced to tears on a BBC documentary about child trafficking, Angela Jolie sitting on a bench chatting to a young Haitian girl, Chris Martin chewing on sugarcane in the midst of a field in Haiti/Dominican Republic, Scarlett Johansson joining in a song/dance with local girls in a village in India and/or Bono’s ever-present red/blue sunglasses reflecting the glaring reality of poverty on the outskirts of an African township: whoever the celebrity is and wherever it is ‘over there’ they are urging us to be concerned about, it is the photo-op that is at the forefront of the making, practicing and practice of the development celebrity.

The absolute importance of the publication and circulation of these images is not lost on the rather ‘savvy’ development celebrities as both Chris Martin and George Clooney can attest to. Martin, in becoming the face of Oxfam’s ‘Make Trade Fair’ campaign a few years back put it this way: ‘Nobody has to listen to me as long as they can see me’. Thus, in almost all the campaign/tour images of him, in public and in public performances, he was sure to have a ‘Make Trade Fair’ t-shirt front and centre in the photo-op. And, as soon as television broadcasters started to blur out the slogan on his shirt, he began to write it on his hand in big, black felt tip pen so that the slogan was still front and centre as the camera zoomed in on him singing and playing the piano or during interviews. Clooney, as one of the key figures in publicising the Darfur crisis related something very similar to Martin’s admission after an appearance before the UN: ‘My job isn’t really to change [the minds of the UN Security Council]. My job is to make sure that cameras and lights follow where I go’. Yet, Clooney also hints at a slight variant of the needed image of the development celebrity in ‘place’ which has also taken hold but in a lesser fashion: this is the image of the development celebrity in those places of power or with those people in power. Images that come to mind here include Bono and former President Bush or with former Prime Minister Tony Blair, Angelia Jolie hanging out with Kofi Annan, Brad Pitt presenting next to the Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi during a press conference about the rebuilding efforts in New Orleans and pictures of Clooney leaving the Whitehouse in the US after speaking to President Obama about Darfur. Thus, getting or being granted—but more crucially—*showing* an access to powerful places and people is, like compassion and care, becoming part of the job description of development celebrities.

Discoursing, Facebooking, Tweeting and Blogging the Development Celebrity

Articulated in tandem with the material practices and ‘results’ of the visual evidence of the compassion, care and indeed, growing power of development celebrities is their written or spoken accounts of the ‘tour’ or (under)development/crisis encounter. These accounts can be presented thorough magazine and newspaper feature stories and interviews that highlight the responses of the development celebrity to the tour or the public ‘diaries’ of celebrities that record and reflect on their day to day activities in the midst of flights, travels and meetings. For example, with Oxfam’s celebrity ambassadors’ programme, the tour diaries¹⁰ of both Chris Martin and Scarlett Johansson have been

¹⁰ Observer diaries are a key artefact for Oxfam more broadly in order to communicate first-hand through its aid and relief workers; this has been a recent strategy in order to show the devastation caused by the Pakistani

published this way, with accompanying images of course. This is how Oxfam describes the trip, tour and diary: 'Taking a crash course in the economics of international trade, Coldplay's Chris Martin spent a week in Haiti with Oxfam to promote the Make Trade Fair Campaign. Find out how he got on in Chris's Haiti diary' (Martin 2010). In his final diary entry entitled 'Heaven and Hell', Martin sums it all up:

I didn't expect Haiti to be like this. Some of it is like hell on earth, other bits are so beautiful. No one I talked to here wanted their children do the same as them - they hoped they would leave the country and send money back. That's sad. But I loved meeting people like Yolette [the local head of Oxfam in Haiti] who are working to change things, to do something practical. They're trying to help Haiti grow from the bottom up, and we can do our bit by buying Fair Trade products, as well as pressuring politicians to change this insanity, to make trade fair.

Another example of this, but one that records the diary through a combination of video records, stories and images includes the 'fact finding' tour diary of Matt Damon¹¹ who travelled through Africa (Rwanda and Ethiopia) on a trip sponsored by the ONEXONE charity.¹² In using other media outlets, Sean Penn, in commenting on Haiti (most recently), has taken to television but also his own foundation's website to provide feedback and evidence of his experiences. As he puts it at the top of the homepage for his Haitian relief organisation's website, 'This is an emergency that is just beginning. Flooding and outbreak of communicable diseases are certain if shelter and relocation are not achieved' (Penn 2010).

Not shying away from the so-called 'new media' of Web 2.0 technologies such as Facebook, Twitter and Blogs, development celebrities have made their presences and discourses known in these forums as well. One of the most recent famous practices of development celebrity-ism has to be the dust up over Lindsay Lohan's Tweets about her single-handed 'saving' of 40 child labourers from a 'sweat shop' during her BBC-sponsored documentary tour of India. The problem, for those who did not follow this story, was that the raid in New Delhi had occurred when 'LiLo' was not yet in the country (Nelson 2009). Other celebrities like Paris Hilton, Dannii Minogue, Chris Martin and Ben Stiller took to their Twitter accounts to, in the words of Stiller, alert their followers after the Haitian earthquake that 'People in Haiti need our help and attention right now' (Thompson 2010); Wyclef Jean Tweeted that he was '... on my way to the DR to get to Haiti. Please urge your councilmen, governors, etc; we need a state of emergency for Haiti' and that 'Haiti today faces a natural disaster of unprecedented proportion, an earthquake unlike anything the country has ever experienced' (Thompson 2010). Thus in a sense, through these newish technologies, the 'presentation cultures' Marshall (2010, p. 38) describes surrounding celebrities are deployed not just for the 'promotion and the presentation of the self' (p. 34), but, for the development celebrity specifically, the presentational technologies of Twitter are being used to bring us closer to the causes and crises of development.

Materialising the Development Celebrity through Star/Poverty Space(s)

These two interrelated socio-material practices of the imagineering and textualisation of the development celebrity create what we refer to here as 'star/poverty space'. These spaces in turn

floods in August, 2010 and was published on Oxfam's 'News Blog' website (<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/applications/blogs/pressoffice/?v=newsblog>)

¹¹ A very busy development celebrity, Damon has just started water.org which '...is a U.S.-based nonprofit organization committed to providing safe drinking water and sanitation to people in developing countries. We envision a day when everyone can have safe water. How far will you go?' See www.water.org for more.

¹² See <http://www.onexone.org/africa2009.php>

make and 'make up' the development celebrity at the same time they give them their elevated and authoritative voice that draws us in and allows them to pronounce on (under)development and humanitarian crises. These images and words of development celebrities provide the basis around which charity campaigns and events are now created, popularised and marketed in order to facilitate the transnational relations of care between audiences, consumers and contributors and those 'in need'. Celebrities are now the cultural intermediaries, along with NGOs and charities, that get us to care about Others, Other environments and Other places.

But, having compassionate development celebrities rendered as only 'caring' through images, photo-ops and Tweets is not enough as the LiLo 'Twitter-gate' event shows. Rather, it is these material practices that work to and attempt to, most crucially, embed and embody a sense and/or feeling of 'authenticity' in development celebrities. Put another way, the development celebrity photo-op and/or their discourses about their development celebrity-ness are a veritable *requirement* for them to acquire, develop and maintain the authoritative and authentic voice that they are granted and often have. There are several important points to be made here, not least vis a vis the credibility, authority and voice of science and scientists as explored above.

First, gaining a sense of authenticity requires a certain level of knowledge and understanding of what it is the development celebrity is talking about; not only do these trips/tours provide this first-hand knowledge for the development celebrity, but they provide documented and documentary evidence of the processes of the gaining of this first-hand knowledge. Trips, tours and relief work endeavour to give us a sense of the credibility embodied in and believe-ability of the development celebrity, their actions and their statements describing underdevelopment and crises. In this, it is not that far of a stretch to refer to development celebrities as new para- or pseudo-experts, through this first-hand knowledge, understanding and embodied trust/credibility, on topics ranging from women's empowerment, disaster aid, sanitation, water and water supplies, 'blood-less' diamonds and more general topics including humanitarian crises, global trade, civil wars and of course underdevelopment. Their 'smartening-up' is a way to battle back against the so-called 'dumbing-down' of society generally and of tabloid-culture more specifically.

Yet, at the same time not all issues or concerns are created equally nor are all celebrities. For example, taking the latter first, there is more of an urgent need for those celebrities new to the game of celebrity development to have to establish their credibility; thus, as time goes by, photo-shoots enter our collective memory and development celebrities begin to more fully embody their accreted experiences, travels and campaigns, the less they need to be photographed or talk specifically about a crisis in order to bring out attention to it. In a moment of candid self-reflexivity, something else we tend to like in our caring celebrities (more on this below), Chris Martin articulated this point on day one in his Haiti diary: 'I felt like a fourth-rate Bono. Later on I felt like a third-rate Bono, and hopefully it'll escalate until I feel like a full-on Bono'. Bono has the development celebrity gravitas while Martin is on his way to gathering it through his trip. Moreover, someone like Bono with this accreted experience and gravitas working through his years of campaigning across AIDS, African development and trade issues, would be able to move across new and different issues much more easily without having to have the materialities proving his experience to back up new pronouncements. Indeed, by virtue of being in Haiti as an Oxfam ambassador, Martin was able to Tweet to his followers to help out with the Haitian earthquake which happened years after his original trip.

Yet there are also differences across different causes, crises and issues of underdevelopment. Clearly those either relatively new issues, like clean water supplies or new/renewed issues that form new charity/NGO campaigns are in need of (re)gathering the public's attention through the images and descriptions of development celebrities in star/poverty spaces. Other issues, though, that have

received considerable media attention—celebrity fuelled or not—are more ‘open’ in that they are already in the public consciousness and so may not require a celebrity to front them. Or, where there is already established wall-to-wall coverage and thus an issue already perceived as ‘bad’ or ‘problematic’, then celebrities who have never been there or associated with the issue/crisis—let alone any—are able to comment and get audiences/Twitter followers to pay attention. This latter point is illustrated by the Haiti earthquake with the likes of Paris Hilton and Ben Stiller urging us to help the Haitian people through their Tweets. There is little to no need for credibility and/or the photo-shoot here as there is a tacit societal agreement that the issue/crisis itself is already credible and a true ‘problem’ with the existing media coverage and so development celebrities here are able to go ‘free range’ and comment away in efforts to get us to care; here, with these socially-recognized crises/disasters, the desire for transnational compassion trumps all in efforts to help out the Other.

Second, authenticity becomes embodied in development celebrities through the processes of ‘bearing witness’ to crises and underdevelopment that they do for us as the audience, potential carer and potential consumer/donator. Not only do we like to watch them, as ‘ordinary people’ bearing witness to the shocking horrors of poverty or the positive spirit of those recipients of relief/aid/development for our ‘ordinary selves’, but in addition, this visual or textual record provides yet further credible evidence for us to believe what they are saying or urging us to do with our emotions or money. If, through what Nunn and Biressi (2010) call the ‘emotional work’ of the celebrity confessional—their tears of sadness or joy, their words of anger or experience—we can see and read about them caring in a ‘real’ way, then we too can care, can cry, can be angry and, ultimately do something about it all, much like the development celebrity. Here, as photographed, videoed or writing about these star/poverty spaces, they are our proxies or ‘para-selves’ to understanding crises or underdevelopment, designed to show their understanding to get us to understand these situations. Indeed, part of the power of development celebrities’ process of bearing witness is their reflexive approach and their self-reflexive use of ‘I’; without it the confessional doesn’t work, we don’t see or hear about them being touched, made sad/overjoyed or describe how it is they, and of course, we should feel. They navigate star/poverty space through an ‘I’ that is done in the name of ‘we’ and ‘us’.

Third, the creation, circulation and marketing of star/poverty space is designed and, indeed, required to fight against the supposed and oft-critiqued excesses of the very celebrity culture that made many celebrities, development or otherwise, what they are; this is very different from the processes of scientists being able to call on the credibility of the body/practice of science, no matter how contingent, in developing their authoritative and authentic voice in relation to the media. Chris Martin has been very open about these processes as related to celebrities in his diary: ‘I came out here feeling like a fraud, but I now feel informed, more able to get the issues across. I’ve had so many facts and figures about coffee and rice, import and export tariffs, World Trade Organisation rules and World Bank loan conditions’. There is seemingly a continual and constant fight against the very brand/commodity nature of celebrity, who can be constructed as nothing but images, movie lines, song choruses and fodder for the paparazzi and ‘People’ or ‘Hello!’ magazine: those no-nothing, do-gooding, out-of-touch, famous-for-being-famous, liberal, socialistic, Hollywood, effete, elites should stick to singing, acting, playing sports and all-around entertaining us rather than babbling on about floods in Pakistan and poverty in Africa! In effect, star/poverty space is the use of the paparazzi and other media to fight against the paparazzi and (over) media-sation of celebrities. Development celebritisation renders its own dialectic through its authenticity- and authoritative-seeking, socio-material practices. The use of media—and now the so-called ‘new media’—is being marshalled to ‘cancel out’ the (old) other media and coverage of development celebrities in tabloids, scandals and television talk shows in order for us to take them seriously as a para-expert on crises, underdevelopment and poverty. Here, seeing the equally spectaclised everyday, ordinary-ness of the

authentic development celebrity not only provides them with a credible voice, but fights against, jostles and is in tension with the spectacles of liquid celebrity.

In essence, through star/poverty space, development celebrities must become rooted, must become known and knowable as 'ordinary' and 'extra-ordinary', as self-reflecting and reflectable in order to have an authentic and authoritative voice. If they weren't rooted, they would just be a set of floating signs/signifiers and texts we couldn't grasp, couldn't care and be compassionate about and with, couldn't learn with, from and about, and couldn't, crucially, *become like them* by doing something for their and now our Others. In other words, if they were just liquid without material substance, however fleeting, transitory, shifting, malleable, etc, there there would be little from which to development our transnational relations of care and compassion, nor, indeed, transnational material economic relations in the donations that support aid, relief and charity organisations. As it is, development celebrities are the way—and the specifically bounded way—that many of us come to know about the conditions, responses and (sometimes) causes of underdevelopment, environmental and socio-economic crises in an increasingly mediated world. Marketing and selling development and relief aid has never been easier through the rise and spread of the development celebrity.

Conclusion: Politicised Star/Poverty Spaces or Poverty-tainment as an Ethics of Care?

The debut of poverty and humanitarian crises is over; they have made it to the 'big time' global stage through the efforts of the development celebrities that front campaigns and relief efforts either on their own or in association with charities and NGOs. And, this 'making it' is having effects, at least if the growth in the awareness and regulations of things like 'blood diamonds' (Le Billion 2006; see also Schroeder 2010) is any indication as well as the millions in relief and aid donations facilitated by celebrity-drenched television and charity campaigns. Indeed, while there is little hard 'connective' proof, the continuing upswing of the market for fair trade goods—and its unwillingness to go down in times of recession—might very well be due to the overwhelming success of the use of celebrities of all stripes (i.e. not just Chris Martin) to be involved in its numerous marketing and activist campaigns. If anything, increasing media coverage of development celebrities and (sometimes) their associated campaigns have picked up a clear head of steam with the equally increasing growth of star/poverty spaces and their associated socio-material artefacts in the photo-shoot and textual descriptions of their experiences amongst the poor and disaster-struck Others.

Yet, raising awareness and dealing with crises and underdevelopment in this way has a series of real and potential consequences worth airing. Indeed, as Littler (2008, p. 247) has it, '[a]t the same time as [development celebritytization] heightens processes of neo-liberal individualization'—a point built on in the opening of this paper—'... celebrity do-gooding is a response to suffering and this should not be underestimated'. Most specifically, though, development, aid and relief, through the efforts of the development celebrity, become just another product to buy and sell as caring audience members and ethical consumers as these causes fight for air time on television, news programmes and on the web. Broadly, through the compassion-celebrity-consumption complex, development, care, emotion and indeed expertise in its 'para' form of the development celebrity are all commodified through this growing market in emotions that is charity campaigns, foundations and development causes. By virtue of their own (re)branding as 'caring', 'helping', 'authentic' and 'authoritative', the 'development celebrity' becomes a new brand in and of itself. Thus, through association, in effect, development, crises and relief are equally 'branded' and commodified in the embodied form of the newly or previously minted persona of the development celebrity. But of course, as highlighted above, this is a bounded market for a bounded set of celebrities and development celebrity causes: they begin to define what is an 'urgent' need by their decree and elevated voice and they decide for us what we see, learn and care about with respect to Others and their plight.

So, while this growth in what might be seen as ‘poverty-tainment’ is perhaps getting us to care, albeit in particularised ways and through particularised means, for the cultural and economic critic, it is getting us to do so in somewhat problematic ways.¹³ Indeed, in the very passion plays of compassionate development celebrities, the transnational cultural economies of care smooth over the inequalities of power—whether they be racial, gendered, economic or socio-political—and the very structures which make them up and often do in overtly violent fashions. And, really nowhere is this more apparent in the development celebrity in their creation of star/poverty space as they, as the multi-millionaire/billionaire mega-star, become the voice of the poor and downtrodden people. Rather than the obvious point of the distractions that celebrities might become to ‘real’ causes and crises or the issue of the celebrity-consumption-compassion complex taking up air time/space in what little remains of the ‘public sphere’, it is this point of the papering over of structured political economic difference and inequality by poverty-tainment that is most worrying.

But what then to do with and about development celebrities and the wider celebritisation of development? First, in light of the discussion here, Redmond’s (2010, p. 89) claim that with celebrity ambassadors, ‘. . . the congruity between this persona (the hands that will get dirty, do-gooder, who can do good things with their fame and wealth) and the glamorous celebrity life from which they have come and to which they will return, are decidedly liquid in form’ requires qualification. Development celebrities must have this liquidity rooted in the materiality of the photo-op and set of discourses in order to have an elevated and authentic voice. Thus, liquidity is, for both development and Other celebrities, as material as it is shifting and shimmering, slippery and fleeting; the ordinary and spectacle are ‘ordinarily’ mixed up in one another and considerations of ‘liquid celebrity spectacles’ should perhaps reflect this in considering how they are created, circulate and are transmitted. Indeed, these materialities are crucial to this liquidity in the making and re-making of stars, their reputations and voices, which are only one scandal, baby bump, new ‘gal pal’ or poverty tour away from making or breaking them, their campaign and/or the charity, NGO or foundation they are associated with. Here, liquidity in its material forms can make us forget and make us remember or become newly aware of the past transgressions or current compassions of the development celebrity. Second, in their pedagogical role of teaching us—not just about consumption (Turner, 2010)—but also about and about how to react to underdevelopment and humanitarian crises, celebrities have become our muses of the political economic and ecological crises that ravage the poor, powerless and undeserving. They are how we learn about how the majority of the world live and scabble out their lives in the shadows of the very system that—in no small part—put celebrities where they are to be able to pronounce on the things they are pronouncing upon. Through the star/poverty spaces created by cameras, airplanes, videos, texts, handlers, television production teams, charity boards of directors, NGOs, audiences, ‘ethical consumption’ goods, donations and of course, the transnational ethics of care now embedded in development celebrities, they have our eyes and ears for the near future. But in working to get ‘down with the kids’—one of the reasons BBC used Lindsay Lohan in their documentary on child slavery in India—through development celebrities, there is an assumption that (younger) audiences are much less savvy than they in fact really are. Here, the pedagogical role of development celebrities might possibly be reassessed if we were to actually ask what works in trying to educate (youngish) audiences about the plights of Others. Moreover, there needs to be a clear recognition that giving celebrities even more power in mediating for us who the ‘deserving poor’ is a form of mediation that works to create even more inequalities in an already unequal world.

So, do we need to take back development from the ‘glitteratti’ of development celebrities or do we let it flourish and hope they can fight against the spectacle and liquidities of celebrity culture even more than they perhaps do now? In many ways, this may not even be possible with the media profit-

¹³ For more on this as related to celebrity (post)colonialism, see Clarke (2009).

driven models, most of which thrive on controversy, spectacle and imagineering more than anything else, that we currently operate under (McChesney 2008). Indeed, what a critique of development celebrities might actually ultimately call for is new media models driven by other concerns than profit, conflict and the increasing tabloid-isation of society. Or perhaps development celebrity needs to be even more rooted in the everyday poverty and crises that the non-celebrity, 'casualties' of globalisation experience as the Other. One thing is for certain, however: At this particular historical moment, we like watching development celebrities and they certainly make for good copy. We just better hope they get their lines right.

Acknowledgments:

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