Pop-culture icons as agents of change?

The roles and functions of celebrity activists
in peace- and development related global issues

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Abstract

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The purpose of this study is to examine the possible theoretic and (f)actual role(s) of pop-culture icons in peace and development-related global issues, using the qualitative research methods of text- and discourse analysis. Do pop-culture icons have a role to play at all in this field? If so, what is that role? What are these celebrity activists currently saying and doing on the international development scene and what are their analyses like? What are their current and historical functions?

There is support in the academic literature suggesting that celebrity activists can possess vast power resources (scope of influence), (soft) power and (charismatic) authority, which in turn enables them to influence the attitudes and values of (especially young, receptive) people.

The findings also show that the most successful celebrity activists have a global reach, as well as access to the international arenas of political power (e. g. the G8 and the World Economic Forum).

Celebrity activists seem to be able to “sell” messages in a way that the politicians and officials of today cannot. When they speak, people listen. They further employ a two-level outreach, as they connect with political and economical elite groups as well as with the masses of world citizens in a way that politicians and officials, whose influence is more often limited by traditional nation state boundaries, cannot.

I argue that the celebrity activists should be seen as a complement to the civil society and the work of NGO’s and INGO’s, since it is by further enhancing their work and strengthening their agendas that most of them act.
Celebrity activists offer an alternative to the political establishment, which is viewed by suspicion by large groups of citizens, and can play a role in empowerment, inspiration, education, information, awareness raising, fundraising, opinion building and lobbying and function as diplomats, spokespersons, ambassadors, entrepreneurs, convenors and heroic voices.

Key words: celebrity activism, pop-culture icons, politics, advocacy, diplomacy, power, authority, media, global issues, opinion-building, awareness-raising
1. Introduction

Whenever you put your name to a message, you raise awareness far and wide, among policy makers and among the millions of people who elect them. In an age when the media are cutting down on their coverage of international news, and chances of breaking through the barrier of indifference are vastly improved when we have people like you to plead our cause.¹

Since the start of the millennium, much debate and discussion has taken place about the increasing role of celebrities in politics and public affairs in and within the media and the academia, not least in the United States of America. Much of this discussion has focused on the efforts of pop-culture icons like those of for example U2-singer Bono, Live Aid/Live 8-arranger Bob Geldof and Hollywood film darling Angelina Jolie.

Nowadays, it is not uncommon for high-profile celebrities from the worlds of entertainment and sport - such as actors and artists as well as athletes - to speak out in public on complex global issues, matters and concerns that in reality have nothing, or at least very little, to do with their normal day-jobs/daily trade. Many of these pop-culture-icons in different ways support and endorse politicians and/or organisations. They all ambassador, represent, advocate and/or promote different causes. Many of them engage in some kind of social, humanitarian or direct political activities, sometimes with no former political training nor formal, testified knowledge thereof. The question immediately arises: Do these celebrities know what they are saying and doing, and what effects their socio-political actions can have?

Nowadays, it is possible to witness artists and actors sharing the stage with Presidents and Prime Ministers for a joint press conference on debt relief, appearing on the World Economic Forum with the business elite, or attending G8-summits together with world leaders.

In September 2005, an international interdisciplinary academic conference on celebrity culture, hosted by the school of media, language and music at the University of Paisley, Scotland, took place. The connection between celebrities and global issue-activism, however, was - sadly enough - not investigated at all. That is one of the reasons for the existence of this study.

¹ Then UN Secretary General Kofi Annan at the 2000 U.N. Goodwill Ambassadors gathering, see http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2000/20001023.sgs7395.doc.html
In 2005, Irish singer Bono of rock group U2 was named Time Magazine’s person of the year after having successfully lobbied politicians on third world debt-cancellation and AIDS-relief. More recently, an array of high-profile Hollywood stars engaged in public and media-campaigns to “Save Darfur”.

On 070707, some of the most prominent artists from the world of popular culture came together and joined forces with NGO S.O.S. (SaveOurSelves), Live 8-arranger Kevin Wall and former US Vice President and Nobel peace prize laureate Al Gore, to bring public and media attention to the burning issues of global warming and climate change by staging a massive concert telethon called Live Earth. This is yet another remarkable example in a row of activities of awareness-raising and opinion building that uses the global reach of music and popular culture and the support and services of prominent pop-culture icons to raise awareness, funds or media interest.

Nowadays, literally all of the most influential NGO’s as well as other actors within the field of social change enlist the services of well known “stars” or celebrities to help spread their messages to the public.

Not much has been concluded though, what role(s) these celebrities can play in peace- and development-related global issues, if any. This is exactly what this master’s thesis sets out to investigate, by examining the history of the phenomenon as well as mapping and analyzing the academic theories behind its existence.

1.1 Pre-understanding

This master’s thesis is related to, and in some parts also based on my bachelor’s thesis called “Rockstjärna, aktivist, opinionsbildare”, which I conducted as part of the advanced course of political science/international relations. In this thesis, I mapped and examined the previously mentioned U2-singer Bono’s social, humanitarian and political commitment with the focus on what the results of his commitment are. This study draws on some of the same theoretical and empirical material; on experiences derived and lessons learned from it.

2 For a list of some of Bono’s latter-day further nominations, distinctions and awards, see enclosure 1
1.2 Linguistic clarification and delimitation of the pop-culture icon-concept

Throughout this thesis, I write about celebrities, stars and pop-culture icons. I deliberately vary from time to time in order to keep the language fresh and flowing instead of repetitive and boring.

I have chosen to limit the study of celebrity activism to pop-culture icons such as artists and actors, and not for example athletes, with artists or musicians being more in focus since the most successful celebrity activists - historically as well as currently, I argue - have been just artists and not actors nor athletes.3

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this master’s thesis is to examine the possible theoretic and (f)actual role(s) of pop-culture icons in peace and development-related global issues⁴.

1.4 Primary research questions

1. Do pop-culture icons have a role to play in peace- and development-related issues/global issues? 2. If so, what is that role? 3. What do celebrities currently say and do on the international development scene and what are their analyses like? 4. What are the current and historical functions of celebrity activists?

1.5 The starting point of the study

The study focuses on the actions of pop-culture-icons on the global peace- and development scene and sets out to describe the different parts of the broad phenomenon known as “celebrity activism” (i.e. famous celebrities using their “star power” to influence politics and

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3 With some exceptions, of course. Formerly mentioned US-American actress Angelina Jolie perhaps being one of them.
4 Throughout this thesis, I deliberately use the somewhat general term “peace and development-related global issues” without specifying it closer, since my position is that if celebrities can play a role at all, they most certainly can do so – be it indirectly - in almost any issue. Furthermore, I think that the term “peace- and development related issues” speaks for itself and needs no further specification or clarification.
public affairs). At the core of the study lies the primary research question: what role(s) can pop-culture icons play in peace- and development-related global issues?

It is at the outset of this work a hypothesis of mine that pop-culture icons indeed have a role to play, as they have the ability to reach out to many - primarily young people – who, as studies have shown, might perhaps not be interested in these, often complex, socio-political and historical issues otherwise because they are suspicious of the political establishment.\(^5\)

It is at the start of this research project also a hypothesis of mine that these young people tend to be paying more attention to messages if they come from pop-culture icons such as artists, actors or even athletes, than politicians or officials from official organs and institutions. This too has to do with the low status of politicians and politics in several nations as well as media’s fascination with fame, celebrity and stardom.

Therefore, I argue, it is especially interesting to study the power and influence of pop-culture icons over these individuals and at least loosely compare this with the power and influence that for example the U.N., the World Bank or the IMF hold over the attitudes and values of members of the same target group.

1.6 Disposition/Thesis arrangement

The aim of this introduction chapter is to present the study and the research area to the reader. Chapter 2 provides the reader with some more substantial background information. The purpose of this chapter is to give a more comprehensive introduction to the research field.

In Chapter 3 we find some of the concepts related to celebrity activism; theoretical bits and pieces that are an attempt to lay the foundation for the upcoming analysis (chapter 7), which in turn draws on the more descriptive, factual accounts of chapter 5. Here, several concepts are presented and described that are of high importance for the following chapters, such as the analysis, especially. Power, authority and legitimacy are some of these concepts. There is

\(^5\) See, for example, Micheletti & Stolle
also a part about the development and (r)evolution of the Internet, and the Internet as a new arena and tool for social change.

Chapter 4 describes the approach as well as the methods through which the study has been conducted. Here is also a part about the evaluation of the sources, i.e. the credibility and legitimacy of the study. Some of the material used is also presented.

Chapter 5 gives a more factual account of current pop-culture-icon-celebrity activism by describing and examining a few examples in what can be described as a miniature case study.

Chapter 7 draws on chapter 5 as well as the theoretical base of chapter 3 in order to analyse the material through/by means of the primary research questions (found in chapter 1). The chapter is in two parts. In the first part, I analyze, compare and exemplify the facts found in chapter 5 with chapter 3. In the second part, which acts as a complement, I analyze one of the examples/cases presented in chapter 5 by means of/through a shorter discourse analysis.

Chapter 8 attempts to tie the study together by answering the research questions and shortly summarizing the findings of the analysis.
2. Historical and thematic background

In this chapter, we will look into the mixing of politics and entertainment in today’s media landscape and media climate (what has been known as ‘politainment’). Celebrities in politics and celebrity politicians is also touched upon. Following this is a historical description of the early days of celebrity activism (1960’s - 1980’s).

That artists and actors involve themselves in political, social or humanitarian causes is nothing new (just keep in mind the civil-rights-movement and the anti-war movement of the 1950’s and ‘60’s). What is new, compared with this period of time, however, is that we today have a different media climate and media landscape today, as well as additional new technological inventions such as high-speed Internet. We also seem to be witnessing a boost of the status of stars and celebrities in the spotlight of the media.

Furthermore, the complex processes of internationalisation and globalization have profoundly altered and transformed our ways of life and changed the way we perceive the world. For the first time in the history of mankind, music and popular culture can now also be said to truly have a global reach.

Celebrity politics, celebrity advocacy and celebrity diplomacy are some concepts that have been used to describe the different aspects of celebrity activism - i.e. various forms of social, political or humanitarian commitment/activism from celebrities. In this thesis, I primarily use examples from the world of entertainment and the performing arts, with the emphasis on artists/musicians.

It is difficult to date the exact origins of the phenomenon of celebrity activism. The phenomenon is not a new one, as we shall see later on in more detail. Ever since 1953, what is today known as “celebrity diplomacy” - approx. an organisation or institution enlisting the services of a celebrity - has been part of the communications-strategy and opinion building of the United Nations, initiated by the UNICEF, the United Nations Children’s Fund. It has since been even more institutionalized through the appointments of the U.N. “Goodwill Ambassadors” and the U.N. “Messengers of Peace”.

Furthermore, there have been benefit- or charity concerts, shows and galas for emergency relief or humanitarian aid featuring musicians, comedians, or other performers for several decades. Such events often had the purpose to raise both funds and public awareness to address the cause at issue. In popular-culture, however, this was something new, when Bengali Sitar musician Ravi Shankar and late Beatles-guitarist George Harrison staged what is usually considered the world’s first major charity pop- or rock concert, the “Concert for Bangladesh” in 1971. The concert proved for the first time that musical activism could be used successfully on a large scale.

Major NGO’s have enlisted the services of celebrities from the world of entertainment ever since the 1970’s, at least. In 1976, Amnesty International staged the comedy show “A Poke In The Eye (With A Sharp Stick)” co-arranged by Monty Python-member John Cleese in order to raise funds.

In 1984, Irish singer Bob Geldof, formerly of the punk-rock band The Boomtown Rats, gathered several English, Irish and Scottish pop stars for a collaborative charity single and album release, and staged the televised benefit concert-marathon Live Aid the year after. He was awarded an honorary knighthood for it, and 20 years after, he followed up with the awareness-raising telethon Live 8.

2.1 Celebrityhood, media exposure and politics

In the information age of today, social scientist cannot afford to overlook the power of celebrityhood in their analyses of politics. The advantages of celebrityhood have, throughout the years, come to show very efficient as a means when it comes to reaching out with a message to the public via the media. Because of the media’s fascination with “stars” or celebrities, these famous individuals are to be seen or heard in the mass media on a regular basis, where they nowadays often don’t hesitate to speak their minds on complex global issues concerning everything from climate change to the war on terror, poverty or third world debt.
When US-American governor- or presidential candidates announce their candidature, it is nowadays not unusual that it occurs in the guest sofa on an entertainment-show on TV. Arnold Schwarzenegger announced his candidature in the 2003 Californian governor’s election on comedian Jay Leno’s popular ”The tonight show” in august, and John Edwards announced his presidential candidature in the 2004 elections on the satire-show ”The Daily Show”, hosted by comedian John Stewart in 2003.

Today it is almost customary for a person currently in power and in office, as well as former US-politicians (and even presidents) to visit the Oprah Winfrey Show as well as the popular late night shows hosted by the aforementioned Leno as well as his fellow comedian-talk show host David Letterman. Former vice-president Al Gore has been both Leno and Letterman’s guest. The same goes for the democratic senators and candidates of the 2008 presidential election, Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton, the latter who announced her candidature by posting a short message on her website saying: ”I’m in, and I’m in to win”.  

It is, however, not only in the United States that we see leading politicians in entertainment-shows. Also in Sweden, we have witnessed the same thing; politicians appearing in contexts and surroundings where everything but their politics and policies is in the spotlight. Former social democratic Prime Minister Göran Persson visited ”Sen kväll med Luuk” in 2000 and ”Ett herrans liv” in 2006, and has on top of that also been seen dancing with the cow “Doris” in the children’s show “Bolibompa”. It should also be noted that the current liberal conservative Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt, just like his predecessor Persson, also has been observed in similar TV-performances, even though he has yet to dance with the cow. He was, for example, also a guest in the aforementioned ”Ett herrans liv” in the capacity of Prime Minister.

Politicians are not only to be seen in comedy- and entertainment-shows on TV; representatives of the Swedish political parties are as a rule also represented on youth-culture

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7 Doris is a human being in a cow-costume…
or pop-culture events like major rock festivals (e. g. the popular Hultsfredsfestivalen), trying to attract new potential members/voters.

2.3 Celebrities in politics and celebrity politicians

That some celebrities turn their attention to politics during or after their careers as artists or actors is nothing new. As we all know, Ronald Reagan was a b-movie actor before he was elected President of the USA in 1981, and in 1998, professional US-American wrestler and b-movie star Jesse Ventura was elected Governor of Minnesota. Fellow muscleman Arnold Schwarzenegger used his celebrity status the same way, as already mentioned, when he campaigned successfully in the election for the governor’s seat in California in 2003. Former Liberian football star George Weah, in 1995 named FIFA World Player of the Year, European Footballer of the Year, and African Footballer of the Year, was perhaps the latest celebrity without any longer documented political experience and background to run for President, as he ran (albeit unsuccessfully) in the 2005 Liberian presidential election. In Sweden, Big Brother-winning tabloid-darling Linda Rosing, leader of the then newly started Unika Partiet (“The unique party”), ran for a parliamentary seat in September 2006. Without much success, though, one must admit.

Of this can be concluded that: being a celebrity does not guarantee that you will succeed in being elected, but on the other hand, your chances of getting the sought-after media exposure and thereby getting out with your message to the public and the voters are presumably bigger than those of a non-celebrity, in large due to media’s fascination with fame and the famous (stars or celebrities).

2.4 The early days of celebrity activism

As long as there have been celebrities, there have been various forms of celebrity activism. Stephen Huddart describes the role of music in social change from a historical perspective thoroughly and from different perspectives in the part “From Plato To Bono: The Roots of

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8 That he was elected President just because of his status as a quasi-celebrity is not my point, but it most certainly did not reduce his chances of e.g. reaching out to the public with his message.

9 Program Director at the The J. W. McConnell Family Foundation, McGill University, Montreal
Celebrity Activism”. However musicians’ and actors’ power and reach grew exponentially with the arrival of the gramophone and the cinema, like Huddart notes:

The modern concept of a “star” - meaning a performer whose public visibility is so great as to constitute wide recognizability of name, features and something of their personal story – has its origins in a specific confluence of events in the history of the cinema.\textsuperscript{10}

So, the birth of the “celebrity-phenomenon” coincides with the rapid growth of the Hollywood film industry in the beginning of the twentieth century. The early days of celebrity activism, did however not so much focus on international or global peace- and development-related issues, but instead, they often had as their primary motive to raise public awareness and/or funds, as well as influence legislators and legislation on more local issues and phenomena. Huddart writes:

Until the late 1950s, mainstream twentieth-century musicians and actors espoused few but the safest social causes. Larger historical events – two world wars and a depression – dominated public concern. During peacetime and prosperity, the rigidities of the Hollywood studio system; movies’ and music’s role as escapist entertainment in the 1930s; and the anti-communist scare after the Second World War – all militated against performers visibly aligning themselves with movements for social change.\textsuperscript{11}

There were of course, as always the case, exceptions to this “rule”. Huddart mentions Charlie Chaplin’s movie “The Dictator”, in which the latter warns for fascism as one such example, and singer/actor Paul Robeson and singer-songwriter Woody Guthrie as two other. I argue that at least one more prominent singer-songwriter needs to be added to this short list of exceptions to the general rule, that person being Pete Seeger.

\textit{2.4.2 The 1960’s: Pop-culture icons as leaders of social change}

Larry Flick writes in Billboard Magazine: “In the rebellious '60s, music and political activism seemingly went hand in hand. Another shift is that the '60s marriage of artists and activism took place primarily within the rock idiom and often was apparent in outspoken lyrics.”\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{10} Huddart p. 15
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid. p.21
\textsuperscript{12} 12/26/98, Vol. 110/111, Issue 52/1
This was especially evident with the US-American protest- or folk-movement\textsuperscript{13}, which had its creative and commercial peak during the 1960’s, when so called "topical protest songs" were in fashion. The Protest movement was a musical movement of singer-songwriters that found inspiration from - among others - Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger, who were the prominent persons for a similarly political form of music in the wake of the Great Depression of the 1930’s. The Protest movement rested on a storyteller-tradition, and the artists sang in a straight-forward and honest fashion about social injustice, war and other ills and wrongs. The scope of the lyrical content was wide, and contained everything from civil rights issues and nuclear disarmament to anti-war- or pacifism-hymns (which gained a considerably more specific meaning with the Vietnam War).

\textit{The civil rights-movement}

The civil rights movement was the crucible where many singers and actors first participated in leading social change, Huddart writes, and mentions Joan Baez as one of several musicians inspired by Martin Luther King Jr:

Joan Baez was one of several musicians inspired by Martin Luther King’s campaign for civil rights, based on Gandhi’s philosophy of non-violent resistance. She first heard him speak at her Quaker high school in 1956 when she was fifteen years old (Baez 1987, 1). After touring the South in 1962, she returned in 1963 and for the first time insisted that her audiences be integrated.\textsuperscript{14}

Aforementioned Pete Seeger, Peter, Paul & Mary and Bob Dylan were all similarly engaged, writes Huddart, “making appearances throughout the South and publicly championing civil rights”.\textsuperscript{15} The movement reached its peak with the March on Washington in August 1963, in which Baez participated. Baez was however not the only performer to witness and be inspired by King’s speech:

King had asked Harry Belafonte, the popular black singer (and first recording artist to sell a million albums) to organize a group of celebrities to walk with him in Washington. Those who responded included Marlon Brando, Burt Lancaster, James Garner and Charlton Heston. Peter, Paul & Mary and Bob Dylan sang, as did Marian Anderson and Mahalia Jackson.\textsuperscript{16}

At a rally in Greenville, Mississippi in 1963, Bob Dylan performed “Only a Pawn in Their Game” to protest the killing of black civil rights leader Medgar Evers. Two years later, King

\textsuperscript{13} “Folk”, after the then popular style of music – folk music, or folk rock – sometimes also synonymous with the US-American singer-songwriter-tradition.

\textsuperscript{14} Huddart p. 30

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid. p.30

\textsuperscript{16} Ibid. p.31
organized a march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, after CBS News showed state troopers “clubbing, whipping and tear-gassing 600 peaceful marchers (protesting the killing of a black civil rights activist who had tried to stop state troopers from beating his mother and grandfather as they lay on the ground)”, as Huddart writes.17

Once again, motion picture and recording stars rallied to the cause. Musicians included Sammy Davis, Jr., Pete Seeger, Tony Bennett, Leonard Bernstein, Joan Baez, Nina Simone, Odetta, Leon Bibb, Oscar Brown and the Chad Mitchell Trio. Mike Nichols, Elaine May, Anthony Perkins, Shelley Winters and Alan King were among the actors involved.

Three models of celebrity activism are discernible here, Huddart argues: the heroic voice (Baez, Seeger, Dylan, Peter, Paul & Mary); the convenor (Harry Belafonte); and the entourage or support group (Brando, Bernstein et al.).18

The protests against the Vietnam War

The anti-war movement repeated the models of the civil rights movement, Huddart writes.19

Phil Ochs joined the small cast of heroic voices. Convenors ranged from actor Jane Fonda to impresario Bill Graham. Country Joe McDonald composed the great anti-draft anthem – the I-Feel-Like-I’m-Fixing-to-Die-Rag, while songs like Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young’s Ohio expressed social truths in the best tradition of the Troubadours: “Tin soldiers and Nixon’s coming, we’re finally on our own. This summer I hear the drumming, four dead in Ohio” (Young 1969).

There was small-scale opposition against the war ever since 1964, at least, first and foremost on university campuses throughout the USA. Many of that era’s popular artists also took a stand against the war; Bob Dylan20 and Joan Baez being two primary examples. This era also gave birth to artists like Phil Ochs21 and Barry McGuire.22

The late 1960’s was a pop-cultural era on the one hand characterized by flower-power, hippies and drugs, but on the other hand, there were also strong touches of social awareness. The period also saw the creation of several new models of engagement, Huddart notes.23

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17 Ibid. p.31
18 Ibid. p.31
19 Ibid. p.32
20 With socio-political songs like "Blowing in the wind" and "A hard rain’s gonna fall"
21 With socio-political songs like "I ain’t marching anymore", "Draft Dodger Rag", "Here’s to the state of Mississippi", "Canons of Christianity", "War is over" and "Cops of the world"
22 With socio-political songs like the highly controversial "Eve of destruction"
23 Huddart p.32
John Lennon and Yoko Ono’s bed-in being one example, and Peter Yarrow’s (of Peter, Paul & Mary) benefit concert, according to Huddart “the first major rock and roll [charity] concert”, raising 100,000 Dollars in one night at Madison Square Garden in order to pay off the debt of the Vietnam Moratorium Committee.

As celebrity involvement in opposing the war in Vietnam declined, other issues came into focus, Huddart writes. Celebrities started to respond to more inter-, trans-national or even global concerns. The 1971 Concert for Bangladesh is one example of this, as well as Rolling Stones singer Mick Jagger’s 1972 benefit-concert for the earthquake victims of Nicaragua and Phil Ochs “Evening for Salvador Allende” in 1974. The 1970’s also saw Bonnie Raitt and Jackson Browne’s “No Nukes” concerts and Joan Baez establishing Humanitas International, all presented below.

2.4.3 The 1970’s: A shift of perspective - from local to global issues

Polar music prize-winning Bengali Sitar musician Ravi Shankar and late Beatles Guitarist George Harrison were together responsible for what is often deemed the world’s first major benefit concert, and therefore also the predecessor of other joint musical-political collaborations and events such as Bob Geldof’s Live Aid and Live 8. During two days in August of 1971, Shankar and Harrison joined forces with Bob Dylan and Eric Clapton among others for two concerts in New York City’s Madison Square Garden in front of 40 000 people. The initiative was Shankar’s, and the background lay in the struggles for sovereignty by the people of East Pakistan. The accompanying political and military turmoil had led to a massive refugee problem in India. The problem became aggravated by a cyclone (the 1970 so called Bhola cyclone), which brought torrential rains which in turn caused devastating floods.

Shankar contacted his friend Harrison, who recorded a single called “Bangla Desh” to raise public awareness and also pushed Apple Records to release Shankar’s single “Joi Bangla” in order to raise funds. Shankar also proposed the idea of a fund-raising concert in the United States to Harrison, who made some phone calls to his friends in the music business. The concert in Madison Square Garden was organized in five weeks time. The concert raised 243 418, 50 US Dollars for Bangladesh relief, which was administered by UNICEF. As much as 15 million US Dollars was said to have been made by the album and film, but the money

24 http://www.theconcertforBangladesh.com
was held in an Internal Revenue Service escrow account for years because the concert organisers hadn't applied for tax-exempt status. It is uncertain how much money actually went to relieve the initial refugee crisis. Sales of the re-released album and DVD nevertheless continue to benefit the George Harrison Fund for UNICEF.25

In 1972, Nicaragua was severely hit by an earthquake. With his Nicaraguan (social activist and Right Livelihood Award recipient) wife Bianca, whose family’s fate was at first unknown, Rolling Stones singer Mick Jagger organized a benefit concert for the victims, raising some 500 000 US Dollars.26

In 1974, aforementioned protest-singer Phil Ochs organized an “Evening for Salvador Allende”, in which Bob Dylan, Arlo Guthrie (the son of Woody Guthrie), Pete Seeger and Peter, Paul & Mary participated. The goals were, according to Huddart, to “raise money to assist refugees escaping from post-coup Chile, inform Americans about US involvement in Allende’s overthrow and commemorate the torture and death of folksinger Victor Jara”.27

In 1978 and 1979, the anti-nuclear movement was high on the celebrity activism-agenda. A series of “No Nukes-concerts” took place, led by artists Bonnie Raitt and Jackson Browne, which, according to Huddart “gave the issue a prominent profile among young people”.28 Also in 1979, Joan Baez established Humanitas International, whose first public act was to print full-page ads in major US newspapers calling on Vietnam to respect fundamental human rights.29 This, Huddart writes, distanced some left-wing supporters, but:

In response to Baez’s personal appeal on behalf of Vietnamese boat people, President Carter dispatched the Seventh Fleet, saving thousands of lives. Under Humanitas’ auspices, Baez traveled to South East Asia to publicize Cambodia’s killing fields.30

Baez also organized a series of concerts to raise emergency funds for Cambodia, which raised over a million Dollars.31

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25 Wikipedia, search word “The concert for Bangladesh”
26 Huddart p.34
27 Ibid p.35
28 Ibid p.35
29 Ibid. p.35
30 Ibid. p.35
31 Ibid. p.35
2.4.4 The 1980’s: Bob Geldof and the birth of the telethon, etc.

In 1982, Graham Nash of Crosby, Stills and Nash organized the Peace Sunday concert at the Rose Bowl, which coincided with a UN Disarmament Conference. The concert attracted a record 100,000 people and raised funds for grassroots peace groups.\textsuperscript{32}

When the Irish singer Bob Geldof, previously of punk-rock band the Boomtown Rats, watched a BBC-documentary on the 1984 starvation catastrophe in Ethiopia, he got the idea of recording a charity-single together with popular Irish, Scottish and English pop stars. Together with Scotsman Midge Ure of synth pop group Ultravox, Geldof wrote the song “Do they know it’s Christmas”, which was performed and recorded by a collective of forty-five pop stars, calling itself Band Aid\textsuperscript{33}. The single sold 3, 5 million copies in the UK alone. (The single was also re-recorded by several of 2004’s best selling artists under the band name Band Aid II.) According to Huddart, the 1984 single raised six million pounds.\textsuperscript{34} Shortly thereafter, Geldof was in the middle of planning and arranging/staging a massive charity-concert for the victims of the Ethiopian famine, which later evolved into two long, gala-like shows called Live Aid. On July 13th 1985 the enormous concerts were held simultaneously on both sides of the Atlantic; at Wembley Stadium in London and JFK Stadium in Philadelphia. Live Aid became the world’s largest telethon up to that point, and raised almost 150 million US Dollars.\textsuperscript{35} Geldof was nominated for a Nobel Peace prize, and was also presented with an honorary knighthood from Britain.

Band Aid and Live Aid together “accelerated the growth of celebrity activism, both in terms of the models he developed and their magnitude”, Huddart comments.

Geldof ’s achievement was that of a bricoleur – rearranging pre-existing elements in a way that no one had before, to achieve surprising results. The Beatles had performed “All You Need is Love” for the Our World television show, seen by 400 million viewers, in 1967. George Harrison had organized a benefit song, concert and film for Bangladesh in 1971 and in 1979 Joan Baez produced the US Concerts for Kampuchea, in response to a similar event in the UK. Geldof combined these models, added a telethon and uniquely prevailed upon his contacts in the music business. Simultaneous concerts in the UK and the US created a sense of global occasion. Phil Collins opened the London event, took Concorde to the US and appeared live in the Philadelphia concert as well. The concerts brought the plight of starving Ethiopians to the attention of 2 billion viewers, and challenged them to respond.\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{32} Ibid. p.36
\textsuperscript{33} Band Aid consisted of f. ex. Bono, George Michael and Midge Ure
\textsuperscript{34} Huddart p. 36
\textsuperscript{35} Ibid. p.36
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid. p.36, italicized by the author of this study
This came to be the starting point for a whole wave of charity-shows, -records and other projects during the 1980’s, of which the year 1985 in hindsight was one that spawned especially many.37

In this chapter, we have seen examples of celebrities involving themselves in politics, as well as politicians taking part in entertainment-TV-shows in order to reach out with their messages to the public. We have also found that the birth of the “celebrity-phenomenon” coincides with the exponential growth of the Hollywood film industry in the beginning of the twentieth century. The early days of celebrity activism often had as their primary motive to raise public awareness and/or funds, as well as influence legislators and legislation on local issues and phenomena. They normally did not focus on international or global issues.

Stephen Huddart has noted three types of activists in this era: the heroic voice, the convenor and the entourage/support group. Celebrity activism witnessed a shift of perspective in the 1970’s; from local to global issues (examples that were touched upon were, among others, issues concerning Bangladesh, Nicaragua, Chile and Cambodia). The 1980’s saw the birth of the telethon. Bob Geldof, the man behind Band Aid and Live Aid, was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize and received an honorary knighthood from Britain. Perhaps one can say that celebrity activism therefore consequently also in a way was on the verge to become legitimized by the political establishment.

37 For example Farm Aid, USA for Africa, Artists united against apartheid, Hear’n Aid, etc. See All Music Guide for more information regarding these projects.
3. Theoretical and conceptual framework

In this chapter, some of the concepts related to celebrity activism are presented. Several concepts, such as power, authority and legitimacy, are presented and described that are of high importance for the following chapters. A part about the development and (r)evolution of the Internet, and the Internet as a new arena and tool for social change is also included, in order to highlight the importance of latter day technological improvements and innovations for social change.

3.1 Power and power resources

Aristotle, Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes, Karl Marx and Max Weber are only some of those who have used and discussed the concept of power. Professor Walter Korpi at the Swedish Institute for Social Research, Stockholm University, writes:

Power is exercised directly when an actor A gets an actor B to act according to the will of A, even if the act is not consistent with the will or interests of B, but can also be exercised indirectly. The base of A:s ability to exercise power is made up of power resources, with which A can reward or punish B. Examples are means of violence and force, labour, the right to vote, control over economic resources like money and the means of production, as well as symbolic rewards and punishments like praise and blame. Important characteristics of power resources are for example versatility (what different kinds of actions of B can A influence?), scope (how many others can A influence?), concentration and costs.

Exercise of power based on the means of violence or force most often leads to negative reactions of B, and therefore becomes unstable. Economic resources are usually understood as more neutral of B, while symbolic means of power are seen as legitimate. Exercise of power that is accepted of the concerned are usually characterized as authority.

3.1.2 Different kinds of power

In the social sciences, it is customary to separate between different kinds of power. There is, for example, the “traditional” hard power (often homogenous with military or economic power), rooted in the thought of competing nation states in an anarchical international system and the international relations theory of realism, as well as something called soft power. This concept is a newer one, and something that we will have to look into.

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38 Italicized by the author of this study
40 Ibid.
3.1.3 Soft power

Noted US-American International Relations Professor Joseph Nye at Harvard university who coined the concept of “Soft power” in his 1990 work “Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power”, describes this power as a “co-optive behavioural power— getting others to do what you want” and its resources as “cultural attraction”, ideology, and international institutions. Nye also claims that soft power means more than the ability to influence, because the power to influence also can arise from the possession or use of hard power. The same way, soft power is, according to Nye, more than just persuasion or the ability to move people by arguing, even if this is an important part of it: ”It is also the ability to attract, and attraction often leads to acquiescence”. Nye also argues that:

The success of soft power heavily depends on the actor’s reputation within the international community, as well as the flow of information between actors. Popular culture and media is regularly identified as a source of soft power.

Nye argues that soft power always has been a key element of leadership:

Soft power has always been a key element of leadership. The power to attract—to get others to want what you want, to frame the issues, to set the agenda—has its roots in thousands of years of human experience. Skillful leaders have always understood that attractiveness stems from credibility and legitimacy. Power has never flowed solely from the barrel of a gun; even the most brutal dictators have relied on attraction as well as fear.

3.1.4 A powerless elite?

Italian sociologist Francesco Alberoni argued in “The powerless elite: theory and sociological research on the phenomenon of the stars”(1972), that a ”star” or a ”celebrity” in fact is a

41 On page 188 according to Domett, Tania
42 Italicized by the author of this study
43 Domett, Tania
44 Ibid.
45 Italicized by the author of this study
46 Domett, Tania
47 Italicized by the author of this study
48 Wikipedia.org, search word ”soft power”, italicized by the author of this study
50 in Mcquail, Dennis (ed.), (1972), ”Sociology of mass communication”
“powerless elite”, while these entertainers – despite their probable riches and their star status - feel trivial because they don’t have any real "purchase on society".\textsuperscript{51}

3.2 About authority and legitimacy

Authority and legitimacy are two central concepts of public affairs and leadership that are closely linked and interconnected. There can hardly be one without the other. Authority is a social relation where a person, group or institution has influence over another person, group or institution, and where this influence is seen as rightful or legitimate by the latter.\textsuperscript{52} According to Max Weber, authority is synonymous with legitimate power. Weber also distinguishes between different types of authority, one being the charismatic authority, described below.

3.2.2 Charismatic authority

In his monumental work “Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft - Grundriss der verstehenden Soziologie”, first published in 1922, German sociologist and economist Max Weber launched the concept "charismatische Herrschaft” (approx. charismatic authority/charismatic leadership).\textsuperscript{53} Weber argued that an individual, thanks single-handedly to his/her personality and charisma, can be “upraised” as a leader and consequently gain power over others. It is this type of authority, leadership or power that has been used to describe the “non-formal” type of power of highly influential individuals like Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr.

\textsuperscript{51} With the words of Bennett, Oliver Brante, Thomas, \url{http://www.Ne.se}
\textsuperscript{53} Weber, Max (1922)
3.3 The expansion and (r)evolution of the Internet

In his book “The Internet Galaxy”, influential Spanish sociology professor Manuel Castells claims that:

The Internet is our web of life. If the information technology is today’s equivalent to electricity in the industrial era, the Internet can be likened with both the power-net and the power-engine because of its ability to distribute the information power to all areas of human activity.  

In the part “Nätverkande Sociala Rörelser” (‘Networking Social Movements’), Castells writes:

The social movements of the 21st century, conscious collective actions that aim at changing the values and institutions of society, are manifesting themselves through and on the Internet. The Labour movement, a remain from the industrial epoch, makes contact, organizes and mobilizes through and on the Internet. So does the environmental movement, the women’s liberation movement, different civil rights movements, ethnic identity movements, religious movements, nationalist movements and defenders of/proponents of an endless number of cultural projects and political issues. Cyberspace has become a global electronic agora where the diversity of human discontent explodes in a cacophony of dialects.

Castells argues that the Internet is more than just a technology:

“It is a communications medium and the material base for the organizational form that is the network.”

He furthermore argues that there are three reasons behind the Internet having become an indispensable feature of the social movements that arise in what he calls the network-society, two of which are described below.

1. The social movements of the information age are mobilized around cultural values. Cultural movements (movements that aim at defending or advocating specific ways of living and specific opinions) are essentially constructed around the Internet and the media, because this is the most important way for these movements to reach out to those who share their values and can imagine joining, and thereafter influence the consciousness of the whole society.

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54 Castells, Internetgalaxen p.13 *translated to English from Swedish by the author of this study*
55 Ibid p. 146 *translated to English from Swedish by the author of this study*
56 Ibid p. 147
57 Ibid. p. 147 ff.
2. Characteristic for the social movements of the network-society is also that they have to fill the void that has arisen as a consequence of the vertically integrated organisations that we have inherited from the industrial era. The political mass-parties that may still exist are nothing but empty shells that are just about activated as election-machines at regularly recurrent occasions, according to Castells. Labour unions only survive by abandoning their traditional organizational forms that historically were built up as copies of the rational bureaucracy characteristic for large companies and authorities. Formal non-profit organisations and their apparatuses are declining as forms of social engagement, like Putnam, among others, has documented.

Castells doesn’t mean, however, that people nowadays don’t organise and mobilise themselves in defence of their interests or to confirm their values, but instead of the old, formal organisations, he writes:

loose coalitions, semi-spontaneous mobilisations and temporary movements of neo-anarchical character are replacing the permanent, structured and formal organisations. Emotional movements, often triggered by media-events or big crises, are more often the cause of social change than the dutiful routines of non-profit organisations.

The Internet, according to Castells, becomes:

a central medium of expression and organisation for such manifestations that take effect via the world of the media and influence institutions and organisations (like e.g. the trade and industry/business) via their influence on the public opinion.

These movements are, in Castells’ words, movements that try to take power/control over souls, and not over the state. The Seattle protests against the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in December 1999, described in the following part/piece, were a typical example of this new form of social movement, according to Castells.58
3.3.2 The anti globalization/global justice movement

The Seattle protests, as Castells writes, brought together a broad coalition of highly different and even contradictory interests and values:

Everything from the battalions of the US-American working-class to swarms of eco-pacifists, environmentalists, women’s rights activists and a myriad of alternative groups, including neo-heathens.

The movement was, according to Castells:

built on the exchange of information and on previous months of heated political debate on the Internet that preceded the individual and collective decisions to go to Seattle in order to block the get-together of what was seen as an institution that wanted to force through a globalization without representation.59

This model of protest has since returned several times at the heels of the summits of the wealthy and powerful, like in Washington a few months later, and in Bangkok, Melbourne, Prague, The Hague, Nice and Quebec as well, just to mention a few.

The anti-globalization-movement (Castells’ name for it, I prefer Global Justice Movement) has no permanent, professional organisation and it lacks a centre, command structure and a common programme. As Castells notes, there are hundreds and thousands of organisations and individuals around the world that meet in conjunction at symbolic protests and then scatter in order to focus on their own specific issues – or simply disappear just to be replaced by newly-hatched activists. The efficiency of the movement is explained in terms of its diversity, by stretching all the way from violence-inclined forces at the margins of society to the most elevated moral and religious authorities, Castells argues. Its influence, already considerable, if one looks at the considerable change of attitude by important institutions like the World Bank, is a result of its ability to put issues on the agenda and bring forth a debate, without really negotiating, while there, in Castells’ (2001) view is no one able to negotiate on behalf of the movement.

The new thing about this movement, Castells argues, is its use of Internet-networking, which allows the movement to be multifarious and coordinated at the same time, to participate in an ongoing debate and yet not be crippled by it. Castells concludes that the anti-globalization-

59 Ibid.
movement not only is a network but an electronic one; an Internet-based movement. Thanks to the Internet being its home, it cannot be disorganised or caught. To quote Castells: “It moves like a fish in Internet-water”.  

3.3.3 The Internet as an arena and a tool for change

When it comes to the possibilities of reaching out to the public community with a message, the Internet is a new and important tool that has to be taken into account and studied by social scientists. Some websites nowadays have hundreds of millions of “unique” visitors, a month. As an example of the coverage or potential to reach out to the public of certain websites, it can be mentioned that online Swedish youth community Lunarstorm reached 70 per cent of all Swedish youngsters in the ages between 15 and 20 in 2006 and served as an interactive meeting place for 1.2 million people a week.

Discussion-forums, e-mailing-lists and guest books provide information of all sorts to the users of the Internet. There opinions and thoughts are shared and discussed. It is therefore quite logical to presume that the Internet, in several ways, has come to take over the role of both youth centre and political party- or association-headquarter. In this light, one could argue that what first was a communication’s tool now seems to have obtained an intrinsic worth and come to be a kind of virtual gathering place for many; a plaza of opinions in cyberspace.

3.4 Previous research on different forms of celebrity activism

Whenever a celebrity takes a public stand on a social issue, acts as spokesperson for a charity, or participates in a benefit performance, he or she can be said to be engaging in a form of celebrity activism. Celebrities’ contributions to civil society organizations can be separated into three primary categories, Huddart argues: awareness raising, funding (through own or

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60 Ibid. p. 150  
61 I.e. visits from computers with unique IP-addresses  
63 Trägårdh, Maria and Sandahl, Ronnie, ”Lunarstorm: Vi hänger på”, Aftonbladet, 2006-11-24  
64 According to the welcome-message of the online community Lunarstorm, http://www.lunarstorm.se/ 2006-11-24  
65 Huddart, p.8
I would like to stress that there also are different forms of celebrity activism. Some of these different forms are described briefly below.

### 3.4.2 "Celebrity Politics"

Two political scientists that have researched the links between celebrities and politics are Dr. John Orman, professor at Fairfield University, Connecticut, USA and Darell M. West, John Hazen White Professor of Public Policy and Political Science, Taubman Center for Public Policy, Brown University, Rhode Island, USA. In the book “Celebrity Politics” (about the then political climate in the USA and Canada), they argue that there are four chief areas where the line between politics and celebrity becomes blurred:

1) When politicians become celebrities, which results in us treating our politicians like tabloid celebrities (f. ex. the Kennedy family and Bill Clinton);

2) When celebrities are treated like politicians (f. ex. film-maker Michael Moore);

3) When celebrities sponsor and support candidates and raise money in order to try to transfer their star power to the candidate (f. ex. Madonna who supported Wesley Clark, Martin Sheen who supported Howard Dean, Michael Moore [again] who supported Clark)
   And finally yet another feature of celebrity politics,

4) When the celebrity bypasses the political system and starts expressing his/her own political views (f. ex. actors Susan Sarandon and Tim Robbins).

Dr. Orman and Professor West also argue that the media’s love for celebrities actually leads to a succeeding of the celebrities in bringing the media to their events. It also helps the candidate look “hip” and “cool”, Orman told CBS TV-show “Disclosure”. If the candidate hangs out with the right kind of celebrity, he or she will get media coverage. Another major

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66 Huddart, p.40
67 Published in 2003 and written before the 2004 elections in the US and Canada.
thing celebrities do, says Orman, is fund-raising. They can be great fund-raisers, and if you put those three things together, celebrities play an important role, he claims.69

3.4.3 “Celebrity Diplomacy”

Dr. Andrew F. Cooper is a political scientist and Associate Director at the Center for International Governance Innovation, Waterloo University, Canada. His forthcoming book, titled “Celebrity Diplomacy: The Bono-ization of Diplomacy”, deals with the issue of celebrity diplomacy, a phenomenon that has yet to be thoroughly and widely researched. According to Cooper, “the spotlight grabbing role of stars in the diplomatic realm” cannot be ignored.70 Serious celebrity diplomats have taken on real problems like debt reduction and health issues and have brought them to the public in a way politicians cannot, says Cooper.71

In the book synopsis, Cooper writes:

Over the last decade there has been a marked accumulation of media snapshots of celebrity activism, a focus of interest highlighted by the selection of Bono and Bill and Melinda Gates as Time Magazine’s 2005 Persons of the Year. Yet a comprehensive treatment of what these celebrities are actually doing, how they are doing it, where and why is still not available.

In addressing these important – and exciting – questions, this book not only accepts but privileges the diplomatic role that celebrities have taken on in the 21st Century. It does so in an accessible fashion that highlights not only the personalities of the celebrities but also the tensions between how they want to perform their emergent set of new roles and the operational context of an ingrained culture of how diplomacy “should” be done.

What is novel about the celebrity diplomats portrayed in this book is the extent of their global reach. The best known of the celebrity diplomats, from both the worlds of entertainment and commerce, push their activities to the frontlines of crisis situations. Collectively, they have accorded status to untraditional places, such as Davos, as significant hubs for clustered interaction with other elites.

Traditional statecraft and politics are facing a number of challenges of legitimacy and efficiency that have contributed to the emergence of a demand for a new type of transnational actor. Glamorous enthusiasts can add a buzz that draws attention to themselves and their causes. Business celebrities add the infusion of massive material resources. When they speak, other actors in the global system listen.72

Mark DaCosta Alleyne is associate director at the Ralph J. Bunche Center, University of California, Los Angeles. He has investigated the United Nations’ increasing use of “celebrity diplomacy” under former Secretary General Kofi Annan (SAIS Review WINTER–SPRING

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69 Ibid.
70 Dalton, Melinda, Local Professor Welcomes ‘Bono-ization’ of Diplomacy, The Record, September 13, 2006
71 Ibid.
72 Cooper, “Celebrity Diplomacy Book Synopsis”
2005). In the article, Alleyne argues that celebrities are convenient tools for promoting the universality that the U.N. project embodies.\footnote{Alleyne p. 176}

In "Do We Need Another Hero? Understanding Celebrities’ Roles in Advancing Social Causes", Stephen Huddart concludes that celebrity musicians and actors have played a legitimate role in advancing social causes. Huddart also adds that:

"if celebrity activism today appears to be in danger of becoming trivialized and commodified, at its best – as exemplified by Bono and Geldof – it continues to shape social meaning and inspire civic engagement".\footnote{Huddart, Stephen, "Do We Need Another Hero? Understanding Celebrities’ Roles in Advancing Social Causes", McGill University, May 2005 p. 10}

Joshua William Busby at the Center for Globalization and Governance, Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University is the author of the case study “Bono Made Jesse Helms Cry: Jubilee 2000, Debt Relief, and Moral Action in International Politics”, in which he asks the important question why some advocacy efforts succeed while others fail.

3.4.4 “Celebrity Advocacy”

The United Nations Children’s Fund, UNICEF, first enlisted the services of a celebrity in 1953, when their then-executive director together with entertainer Danny Kaye, according to UNICEF “forged a new kind of partnership between celebrities and global causes”\footnote{UNICEF; “UNICEF to celebrate 50 years of celebrity advocacy”}. The following year, Kaye became UNICEF’s first Goodwill Ambassador. This is usually considered the birth of what is known as celebrity advocacy.
### 3.5 Huddart’s “Models of Celebrity/Civil Society Engagement”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Engagement level</th>
<th>Primary Activity or Focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOW</strong></td>
<td>AWARENESS: Patron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FUNDING: Appeal Letter,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Donor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ADVOCACY: Public Letter</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MEDIUM</strong></td>
<td>AWARENESS: Spokesperson</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FUNDING: Personal</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Foundation, Benefit</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ADVOCACY: Convener,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Endorser</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HIGH</strong></td>
<td>AWARENESS: Ambassador,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Author</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FUNDING: Benefit Tour,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ADVOCACY: Themed Film, OR</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recording</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TRANSFORMING</strong></td>
<td><strong>VISIONARY LEADER</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 4. Models of Celebrity/Civil Society Engagement**

Huddart has created a model that lets us categorize the engagement of celebrity activists in terms of the level of their engagement and the primary activity or focus of it. According to this model, there are four levels of engagement, ranging from “low” to “transforming”, and there are three different primary activities: awareness raising, funding and advocacy, all described and exemplified by Huddart (sometimes summarized/shortened by me) below:

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Huddart p. 40
Patron:

The celebrity allows his or her name to be cited by an organization, affording credibility to external publics and validation to internal audiences.

- Signing a letter or public appeal. A celebrity allows the use of his or her name on an appeal letter to donors, or joins with others in making a public call for support.

- Personal donations. An artist makes a donation of money, an artistic work, or a personal object to a cause.

- Signatory to a public letter. Musicians and actors, along with authors, scientists and other prominent individuals, sign a public statement calling on someone – usually a government – to take action. Sometimes the signatories contribute funds to place a newspaper advertisement. In 2002 such a campaign was carried out to dissuade UNICEF from partnering with fast food giant McDonalds to sponsor World Children’s Day, November 20, 2002 (Commercial Alert, 2002).

Spokesperson/Endorser:

Typically, the celebrity is identified with a particular charity and appears or makes statements on its behalf. By participating in a public service announcement, writing an opinion piece, or appearing at a public rally, the celebrities attract visibility to the cause and to themselves.

- Board member. This resembles the patron model, but here the celebrity plays a more active governance role, connecting the organization to personal networks.

- Foundations. Most foundations in this category are eponymous, are funded solely by contributions from the star’s work and tend to make gifts to schools, causes or communities that reflect the stars’ own provenance.

- Convenor. As a convenor, a celebrity acts to bring together friends or similarly to support an organization or political candidate. Celebrities can be very effective in this role – whether it was Phil Ochs persuading his friend Bob Dylan to perform at an Evening for Salvador Allende in 1974, or Geldof getting every major British rock star of the previous 25 years to perform at Live Aid, celebrities respond to other celebrities.

Ambassador/Author

- Author. When a celebrity writes a book about a cause, he or she has generally made a significant effort to understand the issue and has an ongoing personal and professional commitment to it. Michael J. Fox’s recent memoir, Lucky Man, is an example of this form.

- Public foundation. In contrast to the personal foundation that is primarily a vehicle for the star to direct charitable contributions, the public foundation is focused on an issue or cause and often involves the celebrity on more levels than as donor. An example is Jewel’s Higher Ground for Humanity Foundation, which sponsors clean water projects in several developing countries.

- Fundraising tour. Canadian actor and country music star Tom Jackson has produced The Huron Carol every year since 1988. Each December in ten to fourteen Canadian cities, local performers join the touring cast, raising a total of $500,000 for local food banks (Charity Village 1998).
• Lobbyist. In February 2002 World Wildlife Fund Canada called upon children’s Troubadour Raffi to present its call for reform of Canada’s pesticide laws. The result was extensive media coverage and a public commitment from the Minister of Health. Key elements included solid background research that presented the scientific and ethical case; a well-briefed and sympathetic celebrity with a genuine link to the issue; careful timing; and an imaginative agenda with multiple photo and TV opportunities. (World Wildlife 2002)

• Endorsing politicians. Politicians often seek and accept celebrity endorsement during election campaigns. It can signal to certain constituencies that the candidate is sympathetic to their concerns. The practice can be controversial. Ray Charles was criticized for performing “America the Beautiful” at the 1984 Republican convention and afterwards revealed this had been a paid appearance – he’d already turned down the Democrats because they wanted him to play for free (Lydon 1998, 354). Another problem occurs when politicians enlist celebrities but fail to carry out a promised agenda, as occurred with Clinton and gays and the support of Melissa Etheridge and Michael Stipe of REM (Crosby 2000, 103).

• Movement leader. The music of Joan Baez, Pete Seeger or Bruce Cockburn often expresses the artist’s views about controversial issues. In addition to their music and their appearances at rallies and benefits, these artists traveled, wrote and gathered with others of like mind to create a sense of civil society in development.

**Visionary leader**

• Ambassador extraordinaire. Audrey Hepburn is remembered for the extraordinary effort she put into her UNICEF role, when between 1988 and 1992 she made over 50 journeys to developing countries to bring hope to impoverished and disenfranchised peoples and news of their plight to the rest of the world.

• Global televised concert/telethon. By bringing the story and images of the Ethiopian famine to almost a billion people, Bob Geldof helped two billion people become aware of the unfolding tragedy, and gave them a way to respond. Geldof’s Live Aid raised over US$100 million by the time he wrote his memoir, Is That It? (1986). With additional commitments by governments, private donations and continuing royalties from merchandise and records, that total would reach over 67 million pounds (US$150 million) (Westley 1990, 1013).

• Branded merchandise. Paul Newman owns this category, using his fame to market a range of food products in North America, Europe, Australia and Japan. The enterprise now employs his daughter and has recently expanded to include organic items. Profits over the past 20 years have totalled over US$125 million, all of which has been donated to charities in communities where the products are sold.

• Running for office. A discussion of celebrity activism would be incomplete without mention of the actor who became President of the United States. Ronald Reagan’s appeal was at least partially based on nostalgia and a hearkening back to the simplistic value system that imbued his film roles.

• Transforming a domain. Domain transformation is rare, and even more rarely can we point to a single individual or moment when something of this magnitude occurs. Social problems and efforts to ameliorate them are so complex as to generally preclude the efforts of a single individual making a noticeable difference. Bob Geldof is such an individual and although we have stressed the historical trajectory that preceded and informed his success with Live Aid, Geldof is more than the sum of his predecessors. He draws on the moral cadences of the Robeson-King tradition, pressing against seemingly insurmountable odds and succeeding in creating a massive response. He also adapts the expressive, Troubadourian role. “Do They Know It’s Christmas,” co-written with Midge Ure, contains the same kind of oblique appeal to a sense of justice as Guthrie’s and Dylan’s best songs. He was also a consummate convenor, bringing an unprecedented number of rock’s top stars together, to record and perform on both sides of the Atlantic. Furthermore, having sworn to avoid creating another bureaucracy, he didn’t, though he certainly inspired many other individuals and organizations. Today, he works closely with Bono on the issues of debt forgiveness and increased aid to Africa.
3.6 Some theoretical arguments against celebrity activism

As previously stated, many artists, actors and sport stars are celebrities and public persons with role model-functions for hundreds of thousands, perhaps even millions of people around the world. These celebrities are often to be seen and heard in the mass media, where many of them nowadays don’t hesitate to express their views on various complex international or global issues. Some people are questioning their motives. Is it merely and egoistically to enhance their own popularity and status, f. ex. increase their record sales, or does it come down to a genuine will and wish to be allowed to be able to express their views on these issues, just like any other citizen in a democracy is allowed to do? Below, I list some general theoretical arguments against celebrity activism, which will be discussed in the analysis.

1. The “lack of knowledge”-argument
   Example: "When did celebrity x become an expert on debt relief?"/"Since when does celebrity x know best?"

2. The “wealth”-argument
   Example: "Celebrity x who is so wealthy – why doesn’t he/she just give from his/her own fortune to charity?"

3. The “hostage of power”-argument
   Example: "Celebrity x is a hostage of power; he/she legitimizes it”

4. The “anti aid”-argument
   Example: "Corruption takes everything"/"Live Aid just gave the African dictators and dictatorships more money"

5. The “jealousy and discontent”-argument
   Example: "Celebrity x is selling out"/"he/she does it just for the sake of him/-herself"
3.6.2. Question marks and potential dangers of celebrity activism according to Huddart

Huddart thinks that:

Celebrity’s appeal and reach to the public may lead to commitment, constructive engagement, social grouping and philanthropic behaviour. On the other hand, in the hands of the unscrupulous or unenlightened, celebrity can also be used to promote greed, apathy, racism, sexism and violence.77

He also writes:

Celebrity does us a disservice when it makes doing good look like an exclusively heroic act – diminishing the power that each of us has to act on principle to affect our immediate surroundings and the world, and reducing the perceived importance of causes that lack celebrity support.78

“Celebrities’ attention can also distort social priorities by influencing philanthropy and government spending”, Huddart writes.79 The Philanthropy Journal notes that diseases with celebrity advocates get more research money than those without:

in 1999 celebrity-supported HIV/AIDS got six times as much US government research money as heart disease, despite affecting one-fifteenth as many people. Mary Tyler Moore is credited with helping to boost the research budget for juvenile diabetes from $3 million to $75 million since 1984 (Philanthropy Journal 2000).80

In Huddart’s view, Michael J. Fox and Christopher Reeve are considered heroes for their efforts to publicize and raise funds for Parkinson’s and spinal cord injuries. “Were these increases in funding at the expense of other afflictions?” Huddart asks.81

The sheer proliferation of celebrity activism and its commodification threaten to bring the whole field into disrepute. When every celebrity has to have a cause and when those celebrities can be bought, credibility and sincerity should be questioned.82

In this chapter, we have found that there are different kinds of power. Soft power, according to Joseph Nye, who coined the term, is “getting others to do what you want”, and “the ability to attract”. Popular culture and media are furthermore regularly identified as sources of soft power. There are also different kinds of authority, according to Max Weber.

77 Huddart p. 48
78 Ibid. p. 48
79 Ibid. p. 48
80 Ibid. p. 48
81 Ibid. p. 48
82 Ibid. p. 48
Weber argued that an individual, thanks single-handedly to his/her personality and charisma, can be “upraised” as a leader and consequently gain power and influence over others. This type of authority is called charismatic authority.

We also discovered that the social movements of the 21st century are manifesting themselves through and on the Internet. Cyberspace has become a global electronic agora, according to Manuel Castells, who also argues that the Internet is more than just a technology; “It is a communications medium and the material base for the organizational form that is the network.” The global justice movement or the anti-globalization movement is a new, Internet-based social movement whose organisational form is that of the network.

We also found that celebrities’ contributions to civil society organizations can be separated into three primary categories, as suggested by Huddart: awareness raising, funding and political advocacy. Celebrity activism can also be separated into different forms, I argued: celebrity politics, celebrity diplomacy and celebrity advocacy. Huddart’s model of celebrity/civil society engagement furthermore lets us grade or classify the engagement of celebrities into four levels: low, medium, high and transforming. Huddart suggests that there are three different primary activities: awareness raising, funding and advocacy. These were all described and exemplified in the chapter. I also listed five general, theoretical arguments against the phenomenon, which will be discussed in the upcoming analysis.

The central theoretical concepts that will be used in the analysis of the study are first and foremost celebrityhood, charismatic authority and soft power.
4. Method and material

This chapter describes the approach as well as the methods through which the study has been conducted. Some of the material used is also presented, and a part about the evaluation of the sources is included as well.

Starting point and approach

The starting point of this study was to research and investigate the phenomenon of celebrity activism from several different angles and perspectives. The initial step was to map the phenomenon, chronologically as well as thematically and find the relevant connections to global, peace- and development related issues.

This study has been carried out using qualitative research methods. The primary research method has been that of literature study/text analysis, complemented by a short discourse analysis. The discourse analysis, applied on one case only, is included in order to exemplify what a current day pop-culture icon can say and do on the current-day development-scene by illustrating the approach, methods and language of U2-singer Bono.

Motivation and criticism of the research methods used

I consider these two research methods (text analysis and discourse analysis) especially suitable for the purpose of this study, with the aim being to investigate the theoretical and (f)actual role(s) of celebrities and pop-culture icons in peace-and development-related global issues. As always with research and perhaps more directly so with qualitative research methods such as text analysis or literature studies, the material used (sources and literature, etc.) plays a crucial, deciding role. It is the material that to a very high degree makes the end product of the study what it is. A critical evaluation of the sources, therefore, is essential.

It is my belief that interviews, statistics or other quantitative data would most likely not have been able to supply me with both width and depth when it comes to mapping and examining celebrity activism from different angles. Therefore, I have found no better research methods than the ones already mentioned and used.
The qualitative research methods generally can be said to offer better chances of delving deep into the phenomena researched or studied, and this most certainly also is the case when it comes to studying celebrity activism.

**About the used methods as such**

A discourse analysis is a critical analysis of the whole of the connected expressions, statements, ideas, notions and concepts that together form what is called a *discourse*. A discourse furthermore consists of words, metaphors, assumptions, grammatical forms, myths and beliefs. A discourse includes texts and symbols that communicate messages that together form a narrative or a story. The full story or the “final package” is the discourse.

I argue that politics and society cannot be properly analyzed and understood if the researcher does not study its language, as language shapes, forms and to a certain degree even constructs reality.

The discourse analysis is a method of analysis that deals with the meaning of our words; what we choose to say and not to say, but it does not limit itself strictly to semantics, linguistics and rhetoric, but instead combines all. A source of inspiration for my discourse analysis has been Richard Jackson’s “Writing the War on Terrorism: Language, Politics and Counterterrorism”.

In the discourse analysis (chapter 6.1), focus is put on the actions of U2-singer Bono as a single actor and as part of different structures or networks, such as the Jubilee 2000-campaign, the Make Poverty History/One-campaign and the advocacy group DATA. What language does Bono speak and which world view is he presenting and representing? Which is his message, method and approach? These are some of the underlying, implied questions that together form the basis of the discourse analysis.

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83 Jackson (2005)
Presentation and evaluation of the sources

Stephen Huddart is Program Director at the The J. W. McConnell Family Foundation, McGill University, Montreal, Canada. His “Do We Need Another Hero? Understanding Celebrities’ Roles in Advancing Social Causes” has been an interesting and inspirational read and very helpful in the process of sorting my own thoughts.

The discourse analysis is largely based on Michka Assayas “Bono on Bono”. Assayas is a French music journalist and critic, whose aforementioned book offers a unique way to get to know Bono’s inner thoughts, feelings and values, as it in fact is a collection of first-hand conversations between Assayas and Bono. With a foreword written by Bono personally, the book can be seen as (at least) semi-legitimized and therefore almost also to be best described as a first hand source.

The remaining part of the analysis is based on interviews, speeches and other information taken from a large number of newspaper and magazine articles (see “Bibliography” and “Further Reading”). Even though I have tried my best to refer directly to the sources in the text, I am willing to admit that there might still be things found in the part which are - partially at least - a product of my pre-understanding.

The sources have however - in the selection phase - all been subject to Esaiasson’s, Giljam’s, Oscarsson’s och Wängnerud’s criteria of authenticity, independency, current validity and tendency (objectivity/impartiality). That means: I have only used sources which I consider trustworthy. I have furthermore used primary as well as secondary sources, as well as different types of sources and sources of different origin (literature such as Swedish and international newspaper articles, magazine articles, books, biographies, reports, papers, research reports as well as speeches, etc.) Some of these sources are not explicitly referred to in the study, but have all been read, and therefore also substantial in forming my pre-understanding (at least indirectly so). This way, they have most likely influenced and shaped my values before starting the writing process of this research project. I therefore consider it fair to list them.

84 Esaiasson, Giljam, Oscarsson and Wängnerud (2004)
A large number of sources have been used in order to be able to paint a broad picture of the phenomenon known as celebrity activism. The theoretical part of the study is based on thoughts by, among others: Professor Walter Korpi at the Swedish Institute for Social Research, Stockholm University, International Relations Professor Joseph Nye at Harvard university, German sociologist and economist Max Weber, Spanish sociology professor Manuel Castells, Dr. John Orman, professor of political science at Fairfield University, Connecticut, USA, Darell M. West, Professor of Public Policy and Political Science, Taubman Center for Public Policy, Brown University, Rhode Island, USA, Dr. Andrew F. Cooper, political scientist and Associate Director at the Center for International Governance Innovation (CIGI), Waterloo University, Canada.

Since the beginning of writing this study, several interesting books have seen the light of day, the use of which could have been rewarding. Unfortunately, I have not been able to use these books, due to time limitation. One such example is aforementioned professor Andrew F. Cooper’s ”Celebrity Diplomacy: The Bonoization of Diplomacy” (also presented in chapter 3.4.3), which discusses issues similar to this study.

For the gathering of information and material, I have mainly used Internet-based-resources such as databases, search engines, and the Swedish Mediaarkivet (containing articles from the Swedish daily press), but also Växjö university library as well as the city library. Among the key search words when conducting database-searches were “celebrity politics”, “celebrity diplomacy”, “celebrity advocacy”, “star power” and “Bono”.

Discourse analysis delimitation

Because of the vast amount of empirical material concerning Bono’s socio-political commitment (biographies and other books, newspaper and magazine articles, interviews, TV- and radio-speeches, press releases, notices from websites, etc.), I have had to limit the study of this commitment. Since Bono has had a series of social topics and themes close to his heart throughout the years, I have chosen to concentrate on those that can be said to be global as well as peace-and development related. More specifically, I have focused on issues that concern African poverty, the fight against AIDS and the struggles for fair trade agreements.  

85 Environmental security and human rights are two examples of themes which Bono has had an interest in. See Andersson, 2007 for more information on his commitment concerning these issues.
5. Global issue-celebrity activism in the 21st century

This chapter, just like the headline suggests, deals with current day global-issue celebrity activism. The make poverty history/One campaign serves as an example of an international campaign supported by many a pop-culture icon. The chapter also includes a miniature case study of U2-singer Bono’s work for debt cancellation, fair trade and the fight against AIDS in Africa.

5.1 The Make Poverty History-/One Campaign

Aforementioned Bob Geldof and fellow Irish rock star Bono of U2 are two of the more prominent persons behind the global campaign Make Poverty History (in the USA called the One Campaign), which is supported by several hundreds of organisations (over 530 in the UK alone), and is running in over 90 countries. The three “demands” of the campaign are “trade justice”, “drop the debt” and “more and better aid”.

Approximately 225 000 people participated in a giant protest march in Edinburgh, Scotland, on July 2nd 2005, making it the biggest in Scottish history the largest ever anti-poverty protest in the UK, in conjunction with the thirty-first G8-summit in Gleneagles. Before the G8-leaders met in Gleneagles on July 6-8th, representatives of the Live 8-telethon, arranged as a part of the campaign July 2005 (20 years after Live Aid), handed over a petition to British Prime Minister Tony Blair, then chairman of G8, with more than 30 million signatures.

The telethon Live 8 was arranged in conjunction with the G8-summit and went on at ten different stages in the world simultaneously and was broadcasted to an estimated three billion viewers around the globe. More than 1000 musicians performed during the different concerts, which were live-broadcasted through 182 TV- and 2000 radio transmitters. The purpose of Live 8 was unlike that of Live Aid not to raise money but the awareness of the public about the extreme poverty in the world and press the G8-governments to action against

86 Wikipedia, search word Live 8
87 http://www.live8live.com/list/
88 In the G8-countires and South Africa, i.e. in Cornwall, London, Paris, Berlin, Rome, Philadelphia, Barrie, Tokyo, Johannesburg and Moscow.
89 Wikipedia, search word Live 8
the same. U2 opened the concert in London’s Hyde Park. Singer Bono declared to the large audience and the billions of TV-viewers from stage:

So, this is our moment. This is our time. This is our chance to stand up for what's right. We're not looking for charity. We're looking for justice. We can't fix every problem, but the ones we can, we must. 3,000 Africans, mostly children, die every day of a mosquito bite. We can fix that. We can fix that. 9,000, 9,000 people dying every day of a preventable, treatable disease like AIDS. We've got the drugs. We can help them. We've got the drugs. Dirty water, death by dirty water. Well, we can dig wells. If you want to join us, go down on the streets of Edinburgh, or anywhere else. Text us. Call us. There's phones, they're dangerous little devices. Eight of the most powerful men on earth are meeting on a golf course in Scotland. There's a lot at stake. We have a message for them: This is your moment, too. Make history, by making poverty history.\(^{90}\)

There are, however, those who are critical against what results Live Aid and Live 8 in fact have brought to the world’s poor. Italian economist, writer and journalist Loretta Napoleoni, of the London School of Economics and previously with the IMF, for example, argues that Bono, Geldof and other celebrities are simplifying the problems of Africa\(^{91}\).

5.2 The case of Bono and Africa: Debt relief, AIDS and fair trade

The birth of Bono’s commitment towards the impoverished people of Africa can be traced back to 1985 and the time of the aforementioned Live Aid, after which the U2-singer visited starvation-struck Ethiopia where he stayed and worked at an orphanage for a month together with his wife Alison. But it was not until the end of the 1990’s that the lives of the people of Africa became Bono’s highest priority. At the end of 1998 he got involved in the British drop-the-debt-campaign ”Jubilee 2000”. The campaign worked for debt cancellation of the world’s poorest countries until December 2000 in over forty countries.

The first thing Bono did for the campaign in the spotlight of the media was during the Brit Awards in London in February 1999, when he encouraged politicians to cancel the debts of the poorest countries.\(^{92}\) It was in this moment the campaign really took off, according to campaign arranger Jamie Drummond, while the press then started to write about it in a way that it had not previously done.\(^{93}\) Both the Financial Times and the Guardian were now interested in the campaign, at the same time as the mail bags of the politicians were starting to fill up with letters from people who demanded that Tony Blair and Gordon Brown would do

\(^{90}\) See http://www.u2.se/konsert.php?id=1220
\(^{91}\) For the criticism voiced by Napoleoni as well as Geroge Monbiot & Bianca Jagger, see chapter 6
\(^{92}\) Jackson p. 182-3
\(^{93}\) Ibid. p.183
considerably more in the issue. A couple of days later, Gordon Brown announced the plans of the British government to cancel yet another 50 million UK Pounds of the loans of the poorest nations. The following month, Bono started writing a series of open letters to influential newspapers around the world in order for them to focus on the issue of debt-cancellation. In June of 1999, the representatives of the G8 gathered in Cologne, Germany to discuss the issue of debt-relief and debt-cancellation, and Bono was there too. The well documented chain of humans that surrounded the building where the meeting was held consisted of 20 000 persons, of which Bono was one. Bono also gave the then chairman of the G8, German chancellor Gerhard Schröder, a petition of names that demanded a cancellation of the debt of the poorest nations. Later on, Bono, together with Bob Geldof, also met Tony Blair to discuss the campaign. A total of 24 million people signed the aforementioned petition of the campaign, making it the biggest of its kind ever. As part of the campaign, three concerts were arranged on October 9th 1999, with the support of - among others - The United Nations Development Programme, UNDP. The concerts took place simultaneously on London’s Wembley Stadium, Giants Stadium in New Jersey and the Palais des Nations in Geneva under the name of NetAid. The plans were to raise money and support for the campaign by drawing on the possibilities of the Internet. The arrangers were hoping for a billion visits to the accompanying website, but only received a mere 2, 4 million, what must realistically have been very disappointing. Together with Haitian-born hip-hop-artist Wyclef Jean, Bono recorded a single bearing the title "New Day", all the sales revenues of which went to charity. Half of them were given to the campaign, and the other half to Jean’s own Wyclef Jean Foundation for supporting refugees.

On September 8th, Bono and Jean also performed the song at the UN headquarters in New York City. Bono had also, as a part of the campaigning work, applied for a meeting with Pope John Paul II in the Vatican, which was also granted him. On September 23rd 1999 Bono and his entourage visited the Pope in order to try to gain the support of the Catholic Church to their cause – a support which they later also received. On December 19th, Gordon Brown announced the UK’s decision to cancel hundreds of millions of pounds of the debts of the

94 Ibid. p.183
95 Ibid. p.183
96 Jackson p. 183
97 Jackson, p.186
98 Jackson p.187
99 Ibid.
100 Jackson p.
poorest nations. On February 23rd, 2000, Bono was back in Rome to persuade Italian Prime Minister Massimo D’Alema to cancel the debts of further poor nations. In September, Bono embarked on a two-week campaigning trip to the USA. First stop was the UN Head Quarters in New York City, where Bono, at the Millennium summit on September 7th presented Secretary General Kofi Annan with a petition of 21,2 million names, collected in over 150 countries (then the “biggest” petition in history). These individuals all demanded debt cancellation for the poorest nations of the world. Bono later held a speech, in the capacity of spokesperson of Jubilee 2000, at a press conference at the Capitol Hill in Washington DC – the absolute centre of US-American political power.

The first of many meetings with conservative republican senator- veteran Jesse Helms, the man who once called gay people “morally sick wretches” and released an official report on the influence of Satan on the music industry, took place in Washington DC on September 20th, 2000. The seventy eight year old republican, notorious for his hardy conservatism, after the meeting declared that he was impressed by Bono’s character, but even more important and remarkable, that he had also changed his view on debt cancellation.

During a well-visited press conference at the Capitol Hill two days later, Bono held a poster saying: ”Today, 19 000 children will DIE”. He urged the American congress to approve of the full amount of money, 435 million US Dollars that was needed to finance the debt cancellations of the poorest nations. He later explained to the TV-journalists that the universal will to cancel these debts were there, but there were ”sticklers for red tape in the way”. Straight-forward and not especially politically correct, he continued by requesting: ”Get your scissors and cut through the crap!”

In November, Bono sent Tony Blair a copy of the new U2 album to Tony Blair, with the cryptic or very direct greeting message (depending on how you choose to look at it):

“Don’t let me down”.

101 Jackson p. 193-4
102 Jackson, p.195
103 Jackson, p.199
104 Thomas, Kimron, p. 17
105 Jackson, p.200
106 Jackson, p.201
107 Jackson, p.206
On November 6th, US President Bill Clinton signed the check of 435 million US Dollars that would make the financing of the US’ part of the international HIPC-initiative ("Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative") possible. At the same time, Clinton thanked Bono specifically for his enthusiastic lobbying on the matter within the framework of the Jubilee 2000-campaign. The campaign continued into the new Millennium, now bearing the name "Drop the debt".

In March 2002, Bono was invited for lunch by President George W. Bush in the White House. Bush had just announced a historic aid-package comprising of five billion US Dollars (the “biggest” such package in 40 years), ear-marked for those of the poorest nations that respect human rights. Bono accompanied the President to the White House lawn for a speech in front of the international mass media. Bono commented:

“This is an important first step, and a serious and impressive new level of commitment. But this plan will be historic only if new money puts more kids in school and gives more children access to basic healthcare in Africa. This must happen urgently, because this is a crisis.”

In May of the same year, Paul O’Neill, then US minister of finance, according to Time Magazine "a frequent critic of aid money that he claims is wasted" accompanied Bono on a ten day trip to Africa. Bono tried to convince the former of the importance of American aid to the continent. The both, accompanied by members of the international media, visited Ghana, South Africa, Uganda and Ethiopia. Shortly afterwards, Bono co-founded the lobby or advocacy organisation DATA, which is short for Debt, Aids, Trade, Africa as well as Democracy, Accountability and Transparency in Africa.

DATA was founded in 2002 by Bono, Jamie Drummond, Bobby Shriver and activists from the Jubilee 2000 – Drop the debt-campaign. Initial economic contributions were made by the newly established Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, finance-man and philanthropist George Soros, as well as technology-entrepreneur Edward W. Scott. The mission of DATA is, according to its website:

To alleviate poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa through raising awareness, primarily in the USA, of the crises in Africa of debt, AIDS and trade and thereby ensure that Africa receives or is able to earn the resources

108 Denny, Charlotte and Black, Ian
109 Zagorin, Adam
110 Ibid.
111 http://www.DATA.org
necessary to overcome the AIDS emergency and achieve rapid progress towards the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals.  

DATA also:

calls on the governments of the world’s wealthy nations — the United States, Europe, Canada and Japan — to put more resources towards Africa, and to adopt policy that helps rather than hinders Africa in achieving long-term prosperity. We also call on Africa’s leaders to strengthen Democracy, Accountability and Transparency toward their own citizens- to make sure that support for African people goes where it’s intended and makes a real difference.

It is primarily within the scope of DATA, concentrating a majority of its efforts to the USA, just like the mission statement pointed out, that Bono has engaged himself - in different forms – since 2002. In May 2006, Bono visited Lesotho, Rwanda, Tanzania, Nigeria and Mali to put the international media spotlight on the continent's problems.

The DATA-report 2006 examined what had happened since the G8-summit in Gleneagles in 2005 and the promises made there. Reuters reported that “one year has passed since Live 8, but the rich countries have already forgotten Africa” Bono commented: "They started climbing the Everest but after a year they have only made it to base camp." What he was most discontent with was the lack of initiatives when it comes to making trade with poor countries, and thereafter the actions towards AIDS-relief. The only thing that the countries have been somewhat successful in was, according to Bono, debt relief (14 countries had then had their debts remitted). Bono summarized his thoughts: "I hope that the DATA-report can function as a GPS-system that shows us how to find the way back up to the road up the mountain"

Product RED

Product RED was created by Bono and Bobby Shriver, the chairman of DATA, to raise awareness and money for The Global Fund to fight Aids, Tuberculosis & Malaria by teaming up with some of the world’s most well-known brands to produce RED-branded products.

112 http://www.data.org
113 Ibid.
115 Ibid.
116 Bono: "Rika länder sviker Afrika", Pressens Mediaservice 2006-06-30
A percentage of the sales revenues of each product is given to The Global Fund. The money helps women and children with HIV/AIDS in Africa. Product Red was launched by Bono and Shriver at the yearly World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, in the beginning of 2006. The idea is that some of the world’s biggest and most well-known multinational corporations will launch parts of their assortments (such as t-shirts, shoes, sun-glasses, cell-phones and even credit cards) under the product campaign trademark/brand RED, with parts of the sales profit benefiting The Global Fund.

This was a brand new initiative, involving both the consumers and the private sector elite in the fight against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis & Malaria. Some examples of the participating corporations are American Express, Apple, Converse, Nike, Armani, GAP and Motorola. Bono visited the popular Oprah Winfrey Show in the USA in October 2006, promoting the campaign by going shopping together with Oprah Winfrey, to the delight of the assembled press-corps and other members of the mass media.

*Editor-in-chief for The Independent*

On May 16\(^{th}\) 2006, Bono, as part of the RED-campaign, was editor-in-chief for the newspaper The Independent (on that day called The (RED) Independent). The focus of the news was, for a change, on Africa. On the front-page, one could read:

"No news today – except that 6 500 Africans will die in a preventable, curable disease. HIV/AIDS". The half of the revenues of the issue was ear-marked for the fight against AIDS in Africa.

In April 2007, (RED) had generated 25 million US Dollars for the Global Fund. 11.7 million Dollars were then already funding programs in Rwanda (6.4 millions) and Swaziland (5.3 millions). As part of the RED-campaign, Bono was guest editor of Vanity Fair magazine for their July 2007 issue. The issue focused solely on Africa and contained articles and photographs aiming at “describing the continent of Africa as an opportunity and an adventure and not a burden”.

*Keep a child alive*

Keep A Child Alive is a non-profit organisation that provides life-supporting AIDS-drugs to children and families suffering from HIV/AIDS. Together with US-American singer Alicia Keyes, Bono recorded a cover of Peter Gabriels ”Don't give up” with the additional title (Africa) in 2005. The single was released exclusively on Apple’s online store iTunes in December, with all the sales revenues benefiting the organisation.

*EDUN*

EDUN is a socially and ecologically “conscious” clothing-company founded by Bono’s wife Ali (Alison) Hewson together with Bono and New York-based designer Rogan Gregory. The company was launched in the spring of 2005, and the thought is to present consumers with clothes created under fair conditions and with good ethical conditions throughout the entire production-chain. EDUN manufactures its garments in 100 % ecological cotton, and the production is carried out in small, family-owned factories in India, Peru, Tunisia, Kenya, Lesotho and Madagascar.

The interest from the media was great already at the launch, which attracted the attention of both Newsweek and Time Magazine, as well as Vogue and Vanity Fair, just to mention a few. Bono and Ali are careful in stressing that EDUN is not about charity, but about business; business that will help the people of Africa to help themselves (according to the motto ”trade rather than aid”).

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120 See http://www.edun.ie/press.asp
121 Ibid.
Placing Bono in Huddart’s Model of engagement

The level of Bono’s commitment cannot be described as anything less than “transforming”, I argue, when using the terminology of Huddart. Using Huddart’s model of celebrity/civil society engagement, I would say that “visionary leader” is the category which best describes Bono’s vast commitment.

In this chapter, we have learnt about the Live 8 telethon and the massive accompanying G8-protests. In this chapter, I have also investigated Bono’s commitment. We tracked Bono’s actions within the framework of the campaign; from holding a speech at the Brit awards in February 1999 to meeting with the Pope, Presidents and prime ministers. Product Red and EDUN were presented and described as two concrete examples of Bono trying to “put his money where his mouth is”.

6. Criticism of the telethons (Live Aid and Live 8)

This chapter presents some of the criticism of the telethons and celebrity activism in general heard from certain members of the media, academia and/or civil society.

Aforementioned Italian economist Loretta Napoleoni argues:

The naked truth about initiatives like "Live-Aid " for Ethiopia in the middle of the 1980’s and the current "Live 8” is that, however well-intentioned these may be, they will only prolong the civil wars and the lack of political stability which is the root of Africa’s economic problems.122

British columnist George Monbiot also criticised Bono and Geldof at the time of Live 8 and the G8-summit in Gleneagles in his column “Bards of the powerful” in The Guardian. Monbiot on the one hand praised both of them for being:

genuinely committed to the cause of poverty reduction. They have helped secure aid and debt-relief packages worth billions of dollars. They have helped to keep the issue of global poverty on the political agenda. They have mobilised people all over the world. These are astonishing achievements, and it would be stupid to disregard them.

But on the other hand he complained that they had taken on the roles of taste-judges, for which he did not consider them competent enough:

...of determining on our behalf whether the leaders of the G8 nations should be congratulated or condemned for the decisions they make. They are not qualified to do so, and I fear that they will sell us down the river.123

In her article “Real people power, or pernicious platitudes?,”124 Nicaraguan activist Bianca Jagger wrote that “Bono and Geldof slept with the enemy and betrayed the cause.” The basis of her critique was that she meant that an “anglo-American corporation of politicians and pop stars” (Bono, Bush, Brown, Bob Geldof and Blair) are trying to patent the language of poverty reduction. It’s not theirs, Jagger meant, but called the “corporation” a “mutual admiration club”.125

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122 Napoleoni, Loretta
123 Monbiot, George
124 New Statesman, 2005-07-11
125 Ibid.
7. Analysis

This chapter is an attempt to analyse the material found in chapter 5 as well as in chapter 3. The primary research questions (found in chapter 1) form the basis of this analysis. This chapter is in two parts. In the first part, I analyze, compare and exemplify the facts found in chapter 5 with chapter 3. In the second part, which acts as a complement, I analyze one of the examples/cases presented in chapter 5 by means of/through a shorter discourse analysis.

Music and popular culture affects the everyday life of many, especially young people of today in several ways. It is omnipresent like never before in the history of mankind; in cafés and stores, as well as in many schools and youth centres. Many artists, as well as famous actors, therefore are - whether they want to or not - idols with role model-functions to hundreds of thousands, or even millions of young people. These pop-culture icons therefore also - in several ways - influence the attitudes of many young people (by the settings in which the artists are to be seen, the issues on which they speak out, as well as what they says in those matters). There are also new arenas for social and political engagement. The Internet, for example, now functions as both a tool and an arena for change.

Because of media’s ever-increasing interest in stars as well as the exponential growth of the media market and new technological inventions like the Internet, celebrity artists and actors have the possibility to reach out to - and thus influence - a greater number of people, who would perhaps not necessarily be interested in global peace and development-related issues otherwise. It is also probable that these non-social or non-political young individuals are more likely to be influenced by pop-culture icons speaking out on global matters than politicians, World Bank-, IMF- or UN-officials or others that are looked upon as parts of the ill-conceived establishment.

In view of the fact that the celebrities are to be seen or heard in the mass media regularly, where they quite often are free to speak their minds on complex global issues concerning everything from climate change to the war on terror, poverty or third world debt, they most certainly influence the attitudes, thoughts, feelings and values of these (young) people. Therefore, I have in this thesis argued that today’s pop-culture icons can play a role and make a difference also in complex, peace-and development-related global issues. The primary reasons for this being the following:
The pop-culture icons generally can be said to possess large or even great power resources. This is first and foremost thanks to the scope of their influence (the number of people and especially young people they can reach and influence) and their ability to attract these people - especially in, through and via the media, as well as the Internet. The pop-culture icons can also inform, inspire and empower these young people to get involved or at least get more aware and enlightened. They can therefore also be said to have an important, if indirect, informing/educating role to play.

The power of these celebrities is a soft power, as opposed to traditional hard power (military or economic power). This, as we have already known, is the power which gets others to do what they want with resources such as “cultural attraction”.

Thanks to their charismatic personalities, together with their sought-after, desired, worshipped or even envied fame, pop-culture icons have the ability to be “upraised” as leaders of social change, should they fulfil certain other criteria; e. g. have the reputation and the knowledge that is necessary to be credible, and also be able to communicate the message. This type of charismatic authority, leadership or power is a “non-formal” type of power, historically also also held by other highly influential (non-party-political) individuals like Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., who are commonly looked upon as rebels of social change.

Above all, the power of the pop-culture icons comes down to the ability to influence young, receptive human beings and a rare ability to quickly assemble or mobilize a large crowd for a protest action of some kind - for example by just posting a short message on his/her website.

A pop-culture icon also most likely has more people visiting his/her website than a less popular - as in less famous - artist or actor, a politician or an official (from e. g. the World Bank or the IMF), and should therefore also, in the end, quite logically, possess/hold larger/greater power resources than the latter. If the pop-culture icon uses this existing power resource is another question. It is there in any case; ready to be used if that should be desired. As we have discovered, there are a number of high profile artists and actors that have realized this, and in different ways have used and continue to use their celebrityhood and star power to try to inform, inspire and influence people (Bono and Bob Geldof being two of them).
In the earlier days of celebrity activism, pop-culture-icons often had as their primary motive to raise public awareness and/or funds, as well as influence legislators and legislation on more local issues and phenomena, and not on international or global issues. Artists and actors involving themselves with the civil rights-movement in the USA is an example of this, as is the protests against the USA’s involvement in the Vietnam War. This changed, however, in the early 1970’s.

What we witness today, I argue, is the arrival of a number of “alternative” (as in non-stately/non-establishment) channels for social change, global development and justice. I argue that the pop-culture icons should be seen as a complement to the civil society rather than anything else. It is by enhancing the work of the civil society – like NGO’s and other forms of social movements - and drawing public- and media attention to it that most celebrity-activists act. Inspiration, empowerment and enlightenment are three key functions here, with which these celebrities have a unique ability to reach large groups of potential voters, protesters or non-political (often young) people. Pop culture icons have become new agents of change.

Several current pop culture icons are important opinion-builders. When these celebrities speak, the media will be there and the message will get out, no matter what. What is more fascinating and perhaps also more important is that many people also will listen to what they say (access). This goes for both the business- and political elites (the annual World Economic Forum, G8-summits being an example of this), as well as for non-political or non-business-employed masses of citizens (quite certainly also parts of whom are normally un- or little interested). Our pop-culture icons are messengers that reach out almost beyond comparison, especially when it comes to reaching out to the young and reaching their hearts and their minds; their thoughts, feelings, values and attitudes. Compared with politicians or officials/professionals, their influence on the young must be described as vast. It must be added though, that it also takes credibility to reach legitimacy. Huddart suggests that the following is needed, of which I agree:

Solid background research that lets the celebrities present the scientific and ethical case; a well-briefed and sympathetic celebrity with a genuine link to the issue; careful timing; and an imaginative agenda with multiple photo and TV opportunities[…]126

126 Huddart p. 45
Social movements that aim at changing the values and institutions of society, such as the Global Justice Movement, are manifesting themselves through and on the Internet, as they make contact, organize and mobilize through and on it. Celebrities’ contributions to such movements, as well as single civil society organizations can be separated into three primary categories, as suggested by Huddart: awareness raising (Live 8), funding (Live Aid) and political advocacy (DATA).

Political scientists Orman and West argue that the media’s love of celebrities leads to a succeeding of the celebrities in bringing the media to their events. Andrew F. Cooper adds that “the spotlight grabbing role of stars in the diplomatic realm” cannot be ignored and that “serious celebrity diplomats have taken on real problems like debt reduction and health issues and have brought them to the public in a way politicians cannot.”

In other words, there is a role for celebrities to play, if they are ready, willing and able to play it and are welcomed in the game. What is novel about the current celebrity diplomats portrayed in Cooper’s book on Celebrity Diplomacy is the extent of their global reach, he writes. The best known of them, according to Cooper, “push their activities to the frontlines of crisis situations.” He adds: “Collectively, they have accorded status to untraditional places, such as Davos, as significant hubs for clustered interaction with other elites.” At its best, “as exemplified by Bono and Geldof”, Huddart notes, celebrity activism shapes social meaning and inspires civic engagement. But what about the theoretical arguments against the belief that celebrity activism can take effect and yield positive results, seen in chapter 2?

127 Cooper
128 Ibid.
129 Ibid.
130 Ibid.
131 Huddart
The “lack of knowledge”-argument

"When did celebrity x become an expert on (for example) poverty and development aid?"
"Since when does celebrity x knows best?"

The pop-culture icons do not act in a vacuum and all by themselves. The successful ones have read into the subject and surrounded themselves with professional officials and advisors. Furthermore, one could argue that they do not need to be experts on everything they talk about, but have the right to voice their opinion just like everyone else of us in a democracy thanks to the freedom of speech. Should the celebrity not have enough knowledge, it will obviously show, and both the general public and the media will recognize this.

The “wealth”-argument’

"Celebrity x that is so wealthy – why doesn’t he or she just give from his/her own fortune to charity?

Many celebrities do give to charity, but some of them they still feel that giving is not enough and no strategy for the future. They want to make a more personal contribution and make a difference in other ways as well, which I personally think should be encouraged and not looked down upon.

The “hostage of power”-argument’

“Celebrity x is a hostage of power; he/she legitimizes it”

This is an argument that has been heard in connection with e. g. Bono and Geldof meeting with Blair and Bush. This is a risk that at least Bono is aware of and that he is willing to take. If the celebrities are unaware of this risk, or aware but not willing to take it – this could of course be a problem. A celebrity in a photograph posing together with an “impopular” or “uncool” president or political leader can easily lead the public to believe that the celebrity is a supporter of the politics of this politician, which might not necessarily be the case. This risk clearly must be recognized by the celebrity and reflected over/upon.
The “anti aid”-argument
"Corruption takes everything/Live Aid just gave the African dictators and dictatorships more money”

This is a more general argument against the idea of foreign assistance and development aid, and has nothing to do with celebrity activism specifically or directly. There is of course corruption in development countries, just like there is in developed ones. The Live Aid-example is not an argument against celebrity activism but for better control mechanisms.

The “jealousy and discontent”-argument
“Celebrity x is selling out”/”He/she does it just for the sake of him-/herself”
“Jesus-complex; who does celebrity x think that he/she is”?

This argument is a less serious one, I argue, and has probably more to do with people who want musicians and actors to play music and act and the politics to be left strictly to the politicians, which I do not necessarily agree on. In a functioning and blossoming democracy, it can be argued that the citizens should engage and be active (or at least aware of what is going on). Pop culture icons are citizens as well, and should – like everyone else - be encouraged to participate in social activities.

Huddart thinks that celebrity’s appeal and reach to the public may lead to commitment, constructive engagement, social grouping and philanthropic behaviour. But in the hands of the “unscrupulous or unenlightened, celebrity can also be used to promote greed, apathy, racism, sexism and violence”, he adds.\textsuperscript{132} I too recognize this danger, but consider it a theoretical and not a factual (or an actual), current one. The primary reason for this is that I think that the media and the public only “makes” certain individuals celebrities, and that famous individuals who promote these “ills” aggressively and openly in public will not succeed in connecting with “the masses” in a big way. I, for one, do not know of such an example. The answer to what is a moral good or a moral bad can furthermore be different in the eyes of different individuals and cultures and therefore especially problematic.

\textsuperscript{132} Huddart p. 148
That diseases with celebrity advocates get more research money than those without, as reported in The Philanthropic Journal, is interesting, but not incredible or unlikely. This is instead just another proof that the star power of celebrity matters and can play a significant role in fundraising. There should also not be any general differences between the diseases that strike celebrities and non-celebrities, which means that there most likely are celebrities suffering from most diseases. Celebrities, of course, are human being just like all of us, and therefore, also stricken with disease.

There can however be a potential danger if the celebrities are all “westerners” or from the northern hemisphere or richer nations only, and therefore not suffering from the diseases only or most commonly found in poorer regions of the world or among poorer populations. If there is no celebrity suffering from AIDS, malaria or tuberculosis, but we know that there are millions of people suffering from these horrendous pandemics in other regions of the world, there is, of course, a massive problem. On the other hand, “western” or “northern” celebrity activists often focus on issues just like these: the plight of the world’s poor, with hunger/starvation and disease being some of the issues more commonly focused on.

I do share Huddart’s view that the proliferation of celebrity activism and its commodification threaten to bring the whole field into disrepute. If every celebrity has to have a cause and when those celebrities can be bought, credibility and sincerity absolutely should be questioned. Here we come back to the key element of the credibility of the celebrity. I argue, much like Huddart, that it takes both knowledge and an ability to communicate the actual (political or moral) message in order to be a successful celebrity activist.

New technological improvements have contributed to changed rules of social engagement.

The increasing participation and rising status of pop-culture icons on the scene (Bono being one of the primary examples with his work with Jubilee 2000 and DATA) could be interpreted as a failure of the traditional nation state, its politicians and their politics/policies in these complex, trans-, international or even global issues. It could also be argued that celebrities and other citizens involve themselves more actively - in what has historically been the tasks of traditional aid- or development work - is in fact the result of a failure of foreign aid and development cooperation or at least of the communication of the concerned (national and international) actors, institutions and organs to the voters and citizens of the world. It
could be seen as a failure to communicate reality; what the real problems are, how they emerged, and what the most suitable solutions to them are.

Clearly, matters concerning global human development are not improving fast enough, for if they had – by political agreements on an international or global scale (for example fair trade agreements and cancelled debts), there would most likely not be such an interest or urge from non-officials or non-politicians (be it celebrities or non-celebrities) to step up, speak out, and take action. There has no doubt been a void created, perhaps by the politicians and officials themselves, and this void has - at least partially - been filled by pop culture icons.

In this part of the chapter we have learned that new technological improvements of the last decades have brought about new arenas and forums for social movements. The Internet is especially important in this aspect. The most prominent pop culture icons of today have a global reach, thanks to the exponential growth of media market and the rise of the star status. They therefore also have the possibility to influence the attitudes and values of a greater number of people than perhaps ever before in the history of humanity.

Pop culture celebrity activists offer an alternative to the political and economical establishment, which is viewed by suspicion by large groups of citizens. This is exactly why the celebrities are appealing to parts of these groups, I argued.

Pop culture icons can possess vast power resources (scope of influence,) soft power and charismatic authority and play a role in awareness raising, funding and political advocacy (Huddart). The successful ones seem to be able to “sell” messages in a way that the politicians and officials of today cannot.
7.1 Discourse analysis

MAKE POVERTY HISTORY/One Campaign

Bono is, as we have previously found out, together with Bob Geldof, one of the prominent persons behind the Make Poverty History-campaign/coalition. The campaign has a two-fold purpose: a strict awareness-raising one (it tries to raise the awareness of the public about extreme poverty), as well as calling on the leaders of G8 to act against it. By informing the public, the campaign has put pressure of the G8-governments to act, but what has Bono said specifically about poverty and the campaign?

In his short but encouraging onstage “So, this is our moment“- speech (see p.45) at the start of the live-broadcasted London Live 8-concert in 2005, Bono told the billions of viewers and listeners that “this is our time”, and “our chance to stand up for what's right.” He stressed that the campaign was not about charity, but about justice. He tried to appeal to people’s feelings by using examples like: “3,000 Africans, mostly children, die every day of a mosquito bite. We can fix that.” The following passage further enhanced this message: “9,000 people dying every day of a preventable, treatable disease like AIDS. We've got the drugs. We can help them. We've got the drugs.” He also exemplified what the individual can do to help out in the same passage: “Dirty water, death by dirty water. Well, we can dig wells.” Here, he was clearly referring to voluntary work, and thereby calling for individual action against poverty. He also concluded that “we can't fix every problem, but the ones we can, we must”. Inspiring to individual action was also the following passage from the same speech:

If you want to join us, go down on the streets of Edinburgh, or anywhere else. Text us. Call us. There's phones, they're dangerous little devices. Eight of the most powerful men on earth are meeting on a golf course in Scotland. There's a lot at stake. We have a message for them: This is your moment, too. Make history, by making poverty history.133

In this piece, Bono exemplified what the new technology can do (in this case the cellular phones), calling them “dangerous little devices” (those being in danger, clearly, but not explicitly so said, being the leaders of the G8). The short sentence about the G8-leaders meeting on a golf-course is surely intended to bring forth the image of these rich, powerful few doing what rich people normally do – namely, playing golf. This has a function of bluntly showing how extremely different the fate of daily life can be; thousands of Africans (in this

133 http://www.u2.se/konsert.php?id=1220
case) are sick and dying because they cannot afford the medicine that they need to stay alive, while the most “powerful men on the earth” – are out meeting while playing a round of golf.

There was nothing on a more structural level like the how’s and why’s of extreme poverty in this speech, which can be explained by the fact that this was nothing but just a short, encouraging speech from the stage at a televised rock concert, and not a longer or more academic or reflective statement in a more formal setting or environment. But that is not to say that Bono has not discussed his view on these issues before.

Bono: The causes of African poverty are historic

In chapter four of Michka Assayas highly revealing book “Bono on Bono”, called ”Who’s the Elvis here”134, Assayas and Bono discuss Bono’s humanitarian commitment, his involvement in DATA and the reasons behind his commitment in poverty-related issues. The conversation is from 2002. DATA comes from a great tradition; the journey of equality, Bono says.

Equality is an idea that was first really expressed by the Jews when God told them that everyone was equal in His eyes. A preposterous idea then and still hard to hang on to now. You can imagine these farmers standing there with sheep shit on their toes in front of Pharaoh. And Pharaoh would say: ‘You are equal to me?’ And they’d look in their book and they’d go: ‘That’s what it says here.’ After a while, people accepted that, though not easily. Rich and poor were equal in God’s eyes. But not blacks! Black people can’t be equal! Not women! You’re not asking us to accept that?!! You see, in the Judeo-Christian tradition, we have to accept this: it says that everyone is equal. Now most people accept that women, blacks, Irish, and Jews are equal, but only within these borders. I’m not sure we accept that Africans are equal.135

Assayas is not sure what Bono means, and lets him explain:

Right now there is the biggest pandemic in the history of civilization, happening in the world now with AIDS. It’s bigger than the Black Death, which took away a third of Europe in the Middle Ages. Sixty-Five hundred Africans are dying every day of a preventable, treatable disease. And it’s not a priority for the West: two 9/11s a day, eighteen jumbo jets of fathers, mothers, families falling out of the sky. No tears, letters of condolence, no fifty-one-gun salutes. Why? Because we don’t put the same value on African life as we put on a European or an American life. God will not let us get away with this, history certainly won’t let us get away with our excuses. We say we can’t get these antiretroviral drugs to the farthest reaches of Africa, but we can get them our cold fizzy drinks. The tiniest village, you can find a bottle of Coke. Look, if we really thought that an African life was equal in value to an English, a French, or an Irish life, we wouldn’t let two and a half million Africans die every year for the stupidest of reasons: money. We just wouldn’t. And a very prominent head of state said to me: ‘It’s true. If these people weren’t Africans, we just couldn’t let it happen.’ We don’t really deep down believe in their equality.136

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134 Assayas p. 80 ff.
135 Ibid. p. 81
136 Ibid. p. 81
“We have written off Africans”, Bono continues:

So the next step in the journey of equality is to get to a place where we accept that you cannot choose your neighbour. In the Global Village, distance no longer decides who is your neighbour, and ‘Love thy neighbour’ is not an advice, it’s a command. 137

Assayas argues that different civilizations “don’t keep the same pace” and that we in Western Europe and North America, for instance, live in a post-modern world, whereas Africa “lingers on in the Middle Age, or pre-Middle Age”, before Bono tells him and the readers:

“But why is Africa pre-Middle Age? The answer to that question is historical. And let me illustrate this.” Bono “abruptly gets up” from the couch and returns, “bringing back a school manual”, before continuing, Assayas writes. Bono continues:

This is a fifteen-year-old’s geography textbook. I was looking at this today, and it tells about it exactly. Income gap. Two hundred years ago, it appears that very little difference existed in living standards between the Northern Hemisphere and the Southern Hemisphere. Today, a very wide income gap exists: the North is many times richer than the South. What brought about this gap? The answer seems to lie in colonialism, trade and debt. They’re explaining to this fifteen-year-old kid how the reason why Africa is still in the Middle Age is largely to do with us, and our exploitation of unfair trade agreements, or old debts. You can’t fix every problem. But the ones you can, you must. To the degree we are responsible, we must fix (my …). When you ask me to just accept that civilizations are just at a different level, there is a reason why they are. That is my answer. 139

Bono is in his own view using his celebrity status to promote equality and justice. It is not about charity, he says, but about justice. He draws inspiration from a long history of great social movements - of which the civil rights movement and the women’s liberation movement are mentioned - to place his personal commitment within a larger context of social justice.

He uses moral arguments, and states that “we can’t fix every problem, but the ones we can, we must”. That large, multinational corporations are able to provide tiny African villages with cold fizzy drinks, but the rich world “cannot” provide anti-retroviral drugs to the same villages is emphasised as an obvious paradox. “God won’t let us get away with not acting, nor will history”, he says.

“Love thy neighbour is not an advice, it’s a command”, he furthermore concludes, quite possibly aimed at the powerful religious right of the USA, which Bono has lobbied both for the Jubilee 2000-drop the debt campaign and within the framework of DATA.

137 Ibid. p. 82
138 Ibid. p. 82-3
139 Ibid. p. 83
**Bono’s position in the development-debate**

Bono recognizes the historical factors of colonialism and debt, as well as unfair current trade agreements as the reasons for Africa’s underdevelopment. This, I argue, places him well within the realms of the global justice movement, sharing the view of many of its most prominent actors from the civil society and, I would say, is rather radical and places his views with those of many actors of the civil society and perhaps the UNDP, as opposed to that of for example the Washington consensus and WTO.

Bono has usually been conceived as a liberal or (in the USA) a left-of centre liberal (rather than a conservative). He has been known to jokingly label himself a “champagne socialist” at least once. He has nonetheless lobbied the powerful religious right (evangelicals) of the USA, and been very successful in doing so, according to various reports. Of this we can conclude that he has been a pragmatic rather than restricted or blinded by ideology.

**Bono’s three-piece rhetoric approach**

Bono has also been known to use religious (Biblical, etc.), scientific (“hard facts” such as statistics and economics from the latest canon of the development-sphere) as well as moral arguments (“justice, not charity”; the northern hemisphere has a moral obligation to act) when speaking out on African poverty. The message is the same - whether in public or in meetings with members of power - but the rhetoric may vary.

**Dual or multiple target group focus**

After having read extensively into Bono’s activism for both this study and a previous one, I argue that he also employs at least a dual (maybe even multiple) target group focus. He seems to have several different target groups; his (U2-)audience and non-politicians being one (“ordinary” citizens), and the political decision makers; the “Elvises” of development to paraphrase Bono, such as the World Bank, the IMF, the Bush-administration, the G8 and the EU being another.

140 See, for example, Traub, James
141 Before forming DATA, Bono got private tutoring from economist Jeffrey D. Sachs at Harvard university
142 Andersson, 2007
Strategy

He works both as a single actor; as a respected and charismatic individual in the spotlight of the media and with a large audience and support, as well as part of larger structures or networks such as Jubilee 2000, DATA or within the realms of the larger Global justice movement.

Political crossover-approach and result- or goal-oriented focus

Another characteristic of Bono’s work, especially that being carried out in the USA on behalf of DATA, is the political crossover-approach used, trying to bring the message across and getting results by working “with” (lobbying) both the political left and right and getting them to agree on the necessity of acting on the issues of debt cancellation, fair trade and AIDS-relief. Debt cancellation and AIDS-relief was “packaged” by DATA as something that the left and right would have to agree on, and act together based on moral grounds. In this case, the work can also be classified as result- or goal-oriented.

Efficiency, determination and purposefulness seem to have been key words in the work of DATA. The end in a way seems to have justified the means; as such things as for example personal prestige were laid aside as Bono met with powerful political or religious leaders with whom he shares little common ground (lunch with President Bush, meetings with the aforementioned ultra-conservative senator Jesse Helms). ”I’d have dinner with Satan if I had to”, Bono has commented when pressured about the possibility or dangers of him “selling out” by posing in photographs with unpopular or uncool presidents and world leaders/politicians.

I think it is also fair to say that Bono is fairly up to date with the latest canon of the foreign aid and development-discussion/debate. He e. g. emphasizes the importance of trade rather than aid and has furthermore set examples with the EDUN and RED-projects. He has also pointed out that what Africa wants and needs is partnership instead of paternalism, which is another thing that connects him with donors and several other actors from the civil society. In a way, Bono also can be said to represent (although not formally, as he has not been elected by voting) the millions of people that have signed the petitions of the Make Poverty History-campaign. He has also said that he speaks on behalf of the poor, thus giving voice to the
voiceless. One question that arises here is what these poor individuals think about his commitment and if they feel correctly and fairly represented by Bono. This important question cannot, however be answered here, as it lies outside of the scope of this thesis, but could perhaps be an interesting future study.

Bono furthermore has access to the political and economic arenas (the “Elvises of development”). He is an invited, sometimes perhaps even appreciated guest in the corridors of power; constantly in the spotlight of the media. He furthermore, in the function of celebrated rock star, possesses soft power and charismatic authority, and therefore also influence over the attitudes and values of parts of his audience.

It must be stressed though, that not much can be changed in reality, however, if the politicians are not up for the task. If they fail to deliver, fail to pass laws and legislations, etc., not much will change at all. Seen in this light, the power possessed by Bono and his celebrity peers is a weak one, assumed that they don’t have much say when it comes to the actual and final decision-making.

Instead, Bono and the pop-culture icons are involved in the earlier stages of the process, such as the opinion-building and awareness-raising. Aware of this fact, Bono has also been lobbying those in power and in office so that he this way can have - at least a small chance - of influencing politicians, politics and policies indirectly.

In this part of the chapter, I have focused on analyzing the language, rhetoric, strategy, approach and methods of Bono. I found that he believes the causes of African poverty to be historic (colonialism, debt and unfair trade agreements). The fight against poverty is - to Bono - a fight for equality (social justice). Bono’s activism has been guided by pragmatism instead of ideology. He has used a three-piece rhetoric approach (in which he has used religious, scientific and moral examples when speaking out). He has employed a dual or even multiple “target group focus” as well as a political crossover-approach. A result or goal-oriented focus can be said to have been at the core of the activism, with efficiency, determination and purposefulness serving as key words.
8. Conclusions and concluding thoughts/Summing up

The purpose of this study has been to examine the possible theoretic and (f)actual role(s) of pop culture icons in peace- and development-related global issues. Do these celebrity activists have a role to play at all in this field, and if so, what is that role? There is evidence that suggests that celebrities not only can but also do play a role in global peace- and development related issues. The answer therefore must be, yes, they most certainly do. The roles of pop culture icons are those related to empowerment, inspiration, education, information, awareness raising, fundraising and opinion building/lobbying. The pop-culture icons can also put pressure on the decision makers as well as help inspire and empower the individual to engage and act in whatever way possible.

But what do these celebrities currently say and do on the international development scene and what are their analyses like? I would like to argue that celebrities, in fact, are no more a homogenous collective than any other socio-economic group of people like a collective of teachers, car-salesmen or factory-workers. Therefore, we should always be careful in generalizing the actions of individual celebrities and treat the celebrities like an elite collective. Having said this, there are of course several things that unite the pop-culture icons and other celebrities, such as their star power - which can be international or even global -, their status in the world of the media, as well as (quite often) their personal wealth and the power of attraction they hold over many (especially young) people, some of whom are suspicious of the political establishment.

Bono has been used in this thesis as an example of an individual pop-culture icon that has successfully transformed the domain of celebrity activism by using his celebrityhood and star power to influence politicians, politics and policies in different ways.

The current functions of the celebrity activists can be said to be diplomat, spokesperson, ambassador and entrepreneur, combined with the more historical functions of the convenor, the heroic voice and the entourage/support group.

It is my hope that this study further stresses that there are several reasons for the academia to take popular culture-celebrity activism and celebrity activists seriously.
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Enclosure 1 Bono: Some awards, distinctions and nominations 2001-2007

2001 - European of the Year, European Voice Magazine
2002 - Academy of Achievement's Hall of Fame Gold Medal from the American Irish Historical Society
Humanitarian Laureate Award (Simon Wisenthal Center)
2002: Nominated to the Nobels Peace Prize for his work with easing third world debt and for raising the
awareness of the AIDS-crisis in Africa
2003 - Musicares Person of the Year.
2003 - Chevalier dans l’Ordre de la Legion d’Honneur from the French President Jacques Chirac
2003 - Humanitarian Award, Meteor Ireland Music Awards
2003 – Honorary doctorate, Trinity College, Dublin, for his contributions in the fight against world poverty
2003: Nominated to the Nobel Peace Prize again
2004 - Salute to Greatness Award vid The King Center, Atlanta fo his humanitarian efforts
2004 - Honorary Doctor of Laws, university of Philadelphia
2004 - Medal of Honour from the chilean government on the hundredth anniversary of the birth of poet Paolo
Neruda.
2004 - International Freedom Award, National Civil Rights Museums, Memphis, Tennessee, for his untiring
work for civil and human rights.
2004: Once again nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize
2005 – TED award, Technology, Entertainment, Design- conference in Monterey, CA
2005 Suggested to be the new head of the World Bank
2005 Awarded Amnesty International’s highest award for work for human rights, the ”Ambassador of
Conscience Award” together with his U2-bandmembers and their manager Paul McGuinness
2005: Person of the year, Time Magazine, together with Bill and Melinda Gates
2005: Another nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize
2005: Portuguese order of liberty
2006: Awarded the Neruda Prize, the finest Chilean arts award from President Ricardo Lagos
2006: Awarded the German media prize by former minister of foreign affairs, Joschka Fischer.
2006: Nominated to the Nobel Peace Prize for his long-standing contributions for human rights.
2007: Receives an honorary knighthood from Britain and is titled an “Honorary Knight of the British Empire”
2007: Receives the chairman award from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
(NACCP), Los Angeles