Articulating the Cultural Politics of Representation, Global Development & Developmental Difference in the United States

Radical Digital Cartography as a Cultural Studies Methodology

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2014 Master of Arts in Cultural Studies
Capstone Thesis: Unpublished

On the Ground with Nicholas Kristof, 2009:

"This is historic. For the first time the International Criminal Court has called for the arrest of a sitting head of state. He's charged with mass murder, extermination, rape as a weapon of war and other crimes against humanity. It's about time, and it may help end the culture of impunity that has allowed such atrocities to unfold time and again. A little boy named Bakeit would have clapped… if he only had hands."

Figure 1. *Arrest Warrant for Sudanese Leader*

Autism Speaks: I am Autism, 2009:

"I am autism I have no interest in right or wrong, I derive great pleasure out of your loneliness. I will fight to take away your hope; I will rob you of your children and your dreams. I am Autism. I will make sure that every day, you wake up you will cry… wondering who will take care of my child after I die. And the truth is I am still winning and you are scared, and you should be I am autism you ignored me… and that was a mistake."

Figure 2. *I am Autism*

Figure 1. On March 5, 2009, New York Times correspondent and Pulitzer Prize winning columnist Nicolas Kristof filed *Arrest Warrant for Sudanese Leader* (figure 1), the latest in his award-winning online video series *On The Ground with Nicholas Kristof*. Filmed in Darfur and the surrounding region, the op-ed calls on close-up video editing to highlight a young boys damaged and scarred body parts, disfigured facial features and missing eye as a visceral representation of why the Obama administration and world leaders should back the International Criminal Court decision to file and arrest warrant for Sudan's President Bashir. Global Development (GD) Map: point 41.

Figure 2. On September 22, 2009, Autism Speaks, "the world's largest autism research and advocacy organization" (Autism Speaks: About Us, 2009), unveiled Academy Award-nominee Alfonso Cuarón and Grammy-nominee Billy Mann's Hollywood style video production *I am Autism* (figure 2) to international dignitaries attending the *United Nations Second Annual World Focus on Autism* in New York City. Written and produced specifically for *Autism Speaks,* Mann and Cuarón visually represent video footage of autistic subjects, submitted to Autism Speaks by families from around the globe, as isolated and alone. Accompanied by Mann's poetic interpretation of the ominous motives of a metaphorical living entity, 'Autism, the voice-over warns 'Autism' "will derive great pleasure" from destroying lives, tearing families apart and driving autistics into isolation. Developmental Difference (DD) Map: point 50.

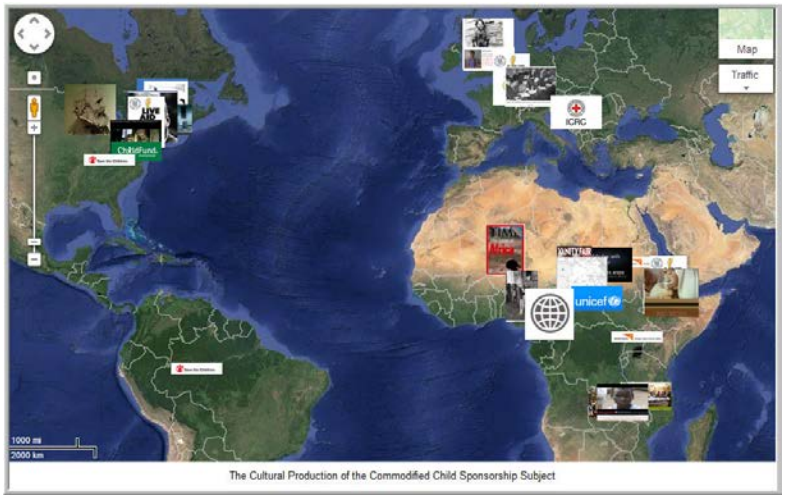
*this project uses Google mapping technology, map points, links and visual data are best explored through Google Chrome browser.

What digital radical cartography really shows is that history does not so much repeat itself in as much as it never truly becomes 'history' in the first place.

Representations of helpless, victimized and destitute children located in the global South and tragic autistic subjects isolated and suffering in worlds of their own saturate television screens, popular culture, fundraising campaigns, mediated awareness events, news and documentary productions, social media and online and print journalism. These expressed assumptions of difference lack essential context for us to appreciate the relatable human experiences, histories and political stories of those fixed within the image, framed for eternity as helpless wanting victims and tragic icons primed for a humanitarian call to action. As a cultural studies student and scholar, I frequently return to lingering questions that surround the cultural production of difference, the

meanings and *values* that constantly churn in, around and throughout the seemingly never-ending structural histories, political cycles and global economies that reproduce distant 'others' and the insatiable social appetites that continue to consume them.

As a cultural researcher, I spent several years analyzing multiple representations of autism and the categorical shaping of autistics in the United States while simultaneously engaged in what I thought was a singular attempt to understand the global North's insistence on explaining regions in the global South as single nations, populated by one distressed 'people' lacking culture or political agency. However, discernible patterns began to emerge across the two projects that provoked a different yet increasingly intriguing set of questions. Do mechanisms that impose, and to some degree rely on, marginalizing assumptions about autistics and those diagnosed with developmental disabilities in the United States share or intersect with the characteristics, apparatuses and histories of international development that construct essentialized 'others' in the global South? What political histories and economic prescriptions are familiar to both representations, how and when do these subjectivities become embedded into categories of the less developed, and finally, who gets erased from the picture altogether? Kosek et al. describe cultural articulation as "a means for understanding emergent assemblages of institutions, apparatuses, practices



Global Development Map (GDM)

and discourses… points of intersection [that] give shape to formations that are reworked through historical agency rather than structurally determined" (2003, p. 4). Articulating the cultural and political production of the subjectivies of humanitarian and global development requires a historical understanding of the discursive practices of each, which then advances a broader appreciation for what Cultural Media Analyst Michael Pickering describes as "the value of histories in present debates about identity, nation, ethnicity, cultural encounter and interaction" (Pickering, 2008, p. 200).

Figure 1. has a lot to say about Kristof' s 2009 assumptions about the Sudan as well as the comfort and ease of his viewers lingering and potentially objectifying gaze; however, exploring the histories that construct a young boy devoid of self-determination or identity reveals a meaningful story about humanitarianism and the global North's knowing of cultural identity outside their own. Each study reveals the prevalence of culturally produced graphic imagery focusing on the "aesthetics of pity despair and the appeal to suffering as a universal moral cause" (Chouliaraki, 2010, p. 108) to raise funds and attract media viewership while the viewpoints, lived experiences and personal narratives of those depicted are rarely sought in the 'telling' of their own lives. Media and Communication Scholars Simon Cottle and David Nolan's exhaustive analysis of the increasingly "crowded humanitarian field" (2007, p. 863), describes a complex relationship between humanitarian agencies, the media they increasingly depend on to promote their organizational 'brand', consumers and donors. INGO's depend on media outlets to disseminate their messaging, link global humanitarian needs to development field efforts, elicit public sympathies and garner

government and donor support. While news media are drawn to "the pornography of suffering" (p. 863) to increase ratings and engaged viewership, organizations prefer to characterize their efforts through less graphic narratives.

These emerging tensions in representational approaches, fierce donor market competition and limited consumer attention spans construct an ethical paradox for humanitarian development that forces organizations to sometimes unwillingly submit to what Cottle and Nolan frame as a particular "media logic" (2007, p. 864) that ultimately dehumanizes the populations they serve. Cottle and Nolan analyze this "crisis triangle' [of]… humanitarian organizations, news media and governments" (p. 863), and suggest media occupy an increasingly influential role in how giving and awareness organizations market their brands to the public.

Developmental Difference Map (DDM)

Pickering calls on cultural studies to "keep [sic] the diverse interactions between 'then' and 'now' in continual and active view of each other," (2008, p. 13) and while examining contemporary signifiers provides a useful guide for pointing to reinforced difference *at this particular moment,* its ability to engage how and why these representations came into view in the first place is limited. The following article demonstrates how, when mixed with multiple modes of critical analysis, digital

mapping techniques and conventions of radical cartography serve as effective research strategies for engaging the intricate complexities that inevitably confront cultural studies projects. In their collective project, *An Atlas of Radical Cartography,* artist and critical geographer Liz Mogel and artist Alexis Bhagat define critical cartography as "the practice of mapmaking that subverts conventional notions in order to actively promote social change" (2007, p. 6). Anthropologist and Digital Storytelling Scholars Chris Fletcher and Carolina Cambre believe "visuality as a cultural process—creating, communicating, consuming, and encountering imagery—is at a new apogee" (2009, p. 112). The digital radical cartographies that follow visually situate international non-governmental organization (INGO) and non-profit organization (NPO) produced marketing videos and images, news articles, primary resource data, historical documents, scholarship and experiential narrative onto a digital interactive platform.

The process of mapping the discourses of global development and the production of developmental differences provides open access to the research archives in order to provoke reader engagement with the multiple elements on their own terms. While mapping the various points, data clustering appeared in both geographical and historical locations that did not come into view during the preliminary textual, image, discourse and narrative analysis, a surprising result that emerged on both maps. Radical digital cartography is uniquely suited for a cultural exploration of the suggested links in the seemingly disconnected subjects of global development and developmental difference. The meticulous recording of the representational discourses onto the digital cartographies productively broadens both projects beyond the subject

images as site of analysis and attempts to make sense of not only their production but also their social consumption. This invites immersion in the research data and allows various interpretations of the intersecting nodes in the political geographies, global economies, development histories and media technologies across temporal and geographical locations. This project and its digital radical cartographies intends to provoke a new set of questions regarding the political foundations of humanitarian interests, the very specific ways apparatuses choose to represent subjectivities and *how and why* societies come to embrace these privileged assumptions as acceptable, and in the case of child and global development, righteous, decent and noble practice.

Why Radical Cartography? What does Digital Mapping *Do*?

> *"If the map is an instrument of power, then that power is available to whoever wields it. The map is as available as a tool for liberation as much as for exploitation" (Bhagat & Mogel, 2007, p. 7).*

To illustrate how these subjects become culturally, politically and historically produced I point to specific moments situated on two digitally interactive radical cartographies; *The Cultural Production of the Child Sponsorship Subject,* referenced throughout this article as the Global Development Map (GDM) and *The Cultural Production of Developmental Difference in the United States,* or the Developmental Differences Map (DDM). Cultural Geographer Don Mitchell believes cultural and representational politics are embedded in the ways "representations themselves take on

a circulatory life of their own" and that "various cultural industries have a lot to say about the conditions of their own choosing" (2000, p. 147). The literature on global development and humanitarianism document a well-established practice of NPO/INGO interests speaking on behalf of the populations they serve while excluding lived experience from the frame. Anthropologist Liisa Malkki contends "one important effect of the bureaucratized interventions… is to leach out the histories and the politics of specific refugee circumstances… refugees stop being specific persons and become pure victims: universal man, universal woman, universal child" (1996, p. 378). Visual Architect and Professor of Spatial and Visual Cultures Eyal Weizman notices trends in humanitarian witnessing that are "geared to popular media [that] tend to be more emotional than analytical… a mediatization of suffering… presented alongside photographs of helpless children… to compete for money in the charitable markets" (2011, p. 44). Children are frequently center frame in humanitarian marketing materials that intend to grab audience attention regarding the populations they intend to serve. Erica Bornstein underscores fellow Anthropologist Liisa Malkki's contention that children serve a very specific purpose in humanitarian contexts. Malkki believes, "children, as incarnations of utopia in humanitarian discourse, serve as depoliticizing agents in highly political contexts" (cited in Bornstein, 2003, p. 71), and as depoliticizing agents, child representations also serve to situate subjects of humanitarian and development interest into essentialized one dimensional categories of benevolent interest. Isolated children are some of the more recognizable icons of humanitarian aid, global philanthropy and U.S. domestic non-profit campaigns; a marketing strategy

Manzo believes serves as the "signifier of an NGO corporate identity… a sort of brand logo that advertises NGOs humanitarian principles" (2008, p. 635). The imagery of childhood does a great deal of work in the arena of charity, giving, aid and awareness while erasing adults, cultures and other forms of difference from the political landscape.

These radical cartographies discursively explore the cultural industries surrounding INGO and NPO practices and how the images, signifiers and representations they produce in the name of humanitarianism and child saving 'take on a circulatory life of their own' through media, consumers, political economies, histories and institutional agendas. These visual productions are the culmination of mixed methods research projects that blend deep explorations of historical archives, experiential and narrative methods, critical media analysis, primary resource data and representational and discourse analysis with robust cultural studies theory to probe the circulating systems that reproduce tragic victim ideologies across time, place and subjectivities. The process of creating radical digital cartographies allows for ***A*** story of global development, developmental difference and questions about the cultural politics of representation to unfold. Situating subjectivities on the digital map alongside and within the power structures that produce what Foucault describes as "a discursive formation sustaining a regime of truth" (cited in Hall, 1998, p. 34) provides a visual appreciation for the multiple matrices that insist on fixing the helpless tragic victim frame. I locate marketing videos and images, news articles, historical archives, government correspondence and policy documents, primary resources data, academic scholarship and narrative expressions onto an interactive platform that I hope invites

critical engagement with the resource materials. These cartographies explore how images and text, both historically and in the current moment, function to reproduce power and difference. The data archives are accessible and readers are encouraged to search organization links, historical archives, marketing videos, presidential correspondence, legislative reports and a myriad of additional raw data—, which for any researcher is a radical act in and of itself.

Contemporary Representations of Difference

"The problem with images of anonymous and autonomous children--somehow cast adrift from surrounding adults, local cultures, and indigenous aid organizations... expression of their vulnerability is encouraged... the visible connotations of protection and rescue suggested by the presence of... contemporary aid workers magnify the power and influence of external forces" (Manzo, p. 643).

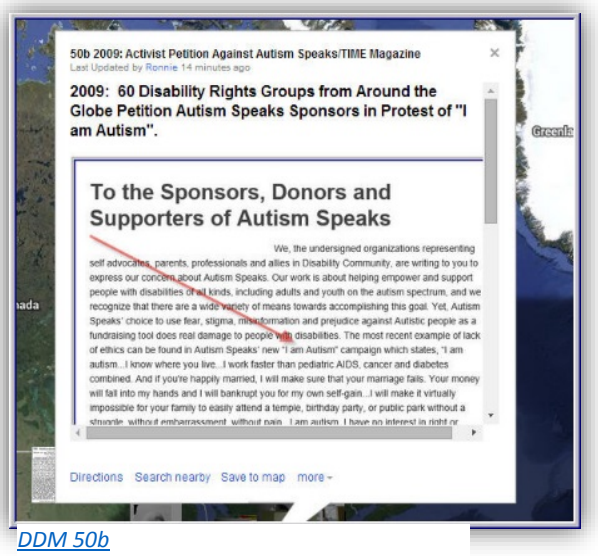
From 2010 through 2013, I studied the cultural politics of a group of Autistic activists known as the Neurodiversity Movement. This project drew primarily from media, news, textual, image, and experiential narrative analysis to explore how current-day cultural industries, practitioners, institutions and consumers reproduce stigmatizing, stereotypical and oppressive assumptions about autism and how Autistic activists are working to change these externally imposed assumptions

DDM 48

about their lives. Murray frames the persistent storyline of isolation and suffering as an "overcoming narrative… in which autism is seen as a potential destroyer of the family unit… an affliction that can be fought" (2008, p. 15). The insistence of a governing medical deficit discourse essentializes Autistic subjectivities within a child-centered frame that represents "autism as a…condition to be therapied, remedied, assaulted, in an effort to "save" afflicted children" locked inside an autistic cage (Nadesan, 2005, p. 2). Activists Robertson and Ne'eman (2008, p. 4) believe some awareness and humanitarian discourses rely on pejorative misinterpretations when describing their lives and that these "accounts of autistic peoples experience… shaped distorting metaphors that patronized, dehumanized, and demeaned autistic people" (p. 4). Autistic activists argue marketing, media and public service platforms "use damaging and offensive fundraising tactics, which rely on fear, stereotypes… devaluing the lives of people on the autism spectrum" (Neeman, 2007).

DDM 50

One particularly productive political site came into view through media coverage of the events surrounding the movement's successful protest to end the 2007 *New York University Child Center* mental health awareness campaign entitled *Ransom Notes* (DDM, 48 and 48b). *The Ransom Notes* messages displayed across New York City billboards, New York and Newsweek magazines and bus banners signaled autism as a metaphorical kidnapper holding children hostage while threatening to drive them into



DDM 50b

lifelong isolation (Press Room Ransom Notes, 2007, p. 2). As a visual cultural studies approach, digital mapping tools are well suited to shift readers gaze between images like *Ransom Notes* and social texts to create different ways to envision the dominance of tragedy metaphors across representational sites (DDM 38, 44, 47b, 49, 50, 50b, 51, 53, 54). *Ransom Notes* and similar awareness projects illustrate how pervasive "entrenched patterns of representing" (Braun, 2003, p. 183) work to stubbornly reify the 'lone tragic' autistic object of pity (DDM 47b, 49, 50, 51, 54). Hall calls on Barthes 'mythologies' to explain how these types of signifiers reproduce stereotypes of difference through "connotative or thematic meanings" (1997, p. 217) that accumulate as they are consumed "across a variety of texts and media" (1997, p. 222). Exploring news, magazine, NPO, and social media reveals an underlying myth of desolation, which calls on autism as "the latest global epidemic," (Johansen, 2013) "a huge national health burden," (Kristof N. , 2010) "a national emergency," (Brown, 2012) "parents No. 1 fear" (McCarthy & Carey, 2008) and imagines Autistics "living in a state of lonely despair," (Wright, 2008) with "devastated … families in crisis" (Cain, 2012). Hall further delineates ideological frames as those "images, concepts, and premises which provide the frameworks through which we represent, interpret, understand and 'make sense' of some aspect of social existence" (2011, p. 81) and this abundance of

epidemic ideologies regarding autism provide a nearly universal way of making sense and speaking about Autistic culture. Radical cartographies propose new ways of seeing politics, power and social relationships to "aid in not only reconceiving the territory but in recreating it" (Bhagat & Mogel, 2007, p. 9). While DDM point 50 positions Autism Speaks, *I am Autism, World Autism Day* campaign (full video) in the 2009 geographical territory of the U.S., its universal message reproduces the isolated victim narrative for a transnational *political* audience of "over 150 first spouses and dignitaries" (Autism Speaks, 2009) in attendance at the *Second Annual United Nations World Focus on Autism.*

DDM 50b moves autism's social context beyond dominant isolated victim frameworks and highlights activist collective online efforts through *ipetitions.com* to reconceive the representational territories and relocate them outside of the governing domain of the media, NPO's like Autism Speaks and global political bodies such as the UN. The global petition supported by over 60 international disability rights organizations calls for *Autism Speaks* sponsors to recognize the NPOs "choice to use fear, stigma, misinformation and prejudice against Autistic people as a fundraising tool" (ASAN, 2009). This public interaction demonstrates how representational politics continuously shift within "complex circuits of meaning and value" (Mitchell, 2000, p. 147), specifically through TIME magazine's coverage of the ND Movements strategy to target *Autism Speaks* economic base, which momentarily relocates the representational practices of autism from dominant *inactive* victim iconographies towards meaningful, recognized and *active* agency and self-determination.

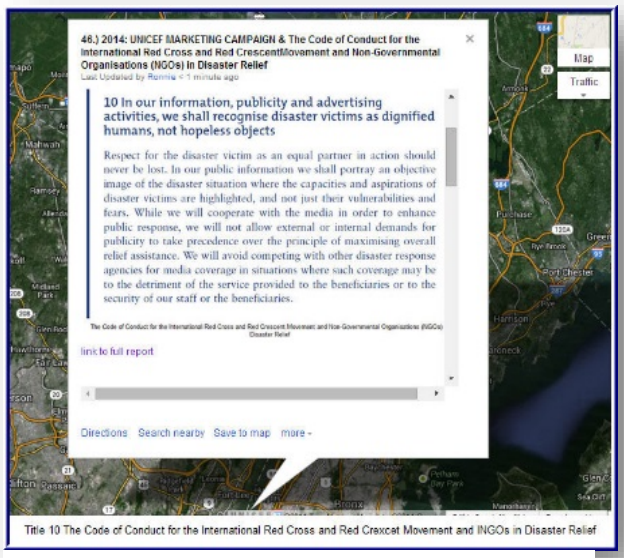
GDM 35

Successful INGO and NPO programs are heavily mediated productions that have been "rightly identified as leading agencies in the promotion of global humanitarianism… highly dependent on the practices of the media" (Cottle & Nolan, p. 863). News organizations and marketing agencies in the global North produce an abundance of lone child victim centered representations that tend to fixate on notions of superiority over people, regions and cultures located in the global South (GDM 24, 27, 29, 34, 35, 36, 40, 41 43). These endeavors frequently resonate with the persistent "myth of the person alone" (Biklen, 2005, p. 4), and epidemic framing of autism and developmental disabilities in the United States. Images of "starving children and women, dying children, children with kwashiorkor stomachs" (de Waal, 1997, p. 74) and "victim depictions of Southern clients particularly from Africa" (Dogra, 2007, p. 162) are the recognized standard for raising funds, authorizing political claims, increasing viewership and harvesting social support for geo-political causes. Social Anthropologist and author of *Famine Crimes,* Alex de Waal believes this dehumanizing lens regarding distant 'others' is commonplace, particularly since "journalists do not need to worry if they present famine victims in false, offensive or degrading terms, because they know that the people portrayed will not complain" (1997, p. 84). These

discourses portray seemingly parentless children, starving and alone, isolated on a barren landscape waiting for what Law Professor Makau Mutua identifies as "the human rights corpus… the savior… the United Nations, Western governments, INGOs, and Western charities as the actual rescuers, redeemers of a benighted world" (2001, p. 204) to free them from their undeveloped state. Children in distress elicit the collective paternalism of Northern consumers; however, problems arise when INGOs/NPOs present "anonymous and autonomous children--somehow cast adrift from surrounding adults, local cultures, and indigenous aid organizations... expression of their vulnerability is encouraged... magnify the power and influence of external forces" (Manzo, 2008, p. 643). The sometimes-contentious interdependent relationship between media, INGOs/NPOs, governments and the public is in a continuous reactive state resulting from the highly competitive INGO field, global economies, increased displaced people, and what Media Scholar Susan Moeller describes as the media and viewer appetite for "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse… disease, famine, war and death" (1999, pp. 2-3). These ways of coming to know and constructing difference reify tensions between aid and reporting, where, as BBC correspondent George Alagiah confesses, "relief agencies depend on us for publicity and we need them to tell us where the stories are. There is an unspoken understanding… we try not to ask too bluntly 'Where will we find the most starving babies?' And, they never answer explicitly. We get the pictures just the same" (cited in de Waal, p. 83).

Aid organizations recognize if they wish to grab attention and raise desperately needed money for their cause or 'brand', they must "reflexively incorporate…

information and images in conformity to the media's known predilections" (Cottle & Nolan, 2007, p. 866). In response to public calls for more dignified practices, the humanitarian and global development industry has taken collective self-governing steps in an attempt to move away on the near ubiquitous victim representation in their marketing materials. In 1994 the *Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies* drafted the *Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief* (GDM 38), later folded into the 1999 *Sphere Project Humanitarian Charter and Minimum standards in Disaster Response Handbook* (GDM 46), and updated in 2000 and 2004. Structured as a humanitarian charter, *The Sphere Project* is a 345 page handbook detailing the "international initiative aimed at improving the effectiveness and accountability of humanitarian assistance" (2004, p. 2), in which title 10 (GDM 46) announces "In all of our information, publicity and advertising activities, we shall recognize disaster victims as dignified humans, not hopeless objects" (2004, p. 327). The international charter includes highly visible INGOs such as *Mercy Corps, CARE International, ICRC, IFRC, Save the Children Alliance, Oxfam GB* and the initiative receives financial support from *UNICEF, DFID, AusAid* and many others. In *Title 10* the charter

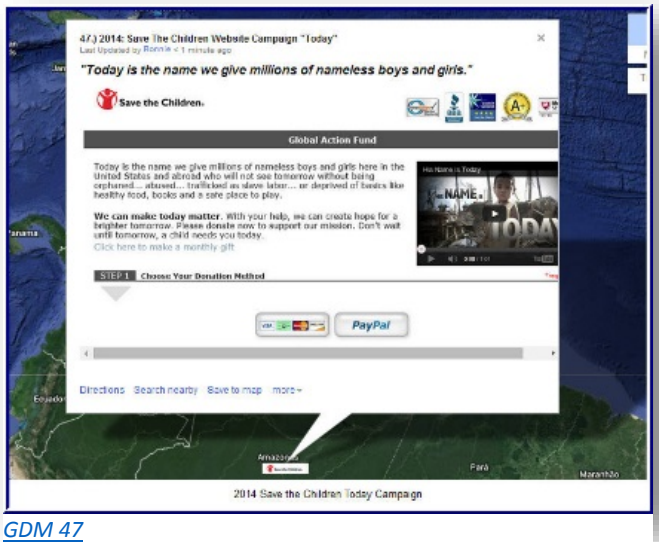


GDM 46

determines *voluntary* ethical standards that should include "respect for the disaster victim as an equal partner… avoid competing with other disaster response agencies for media coverage… [represent] an objective image… where the capacities and aspirations of disaster victims are highlighted, and not just their vulnerabilities and fears" (2004, p. 327). DDM and GDM markers exhibit an abundance of child/victim centered marketing ventures appearing on the scene well after *The Sphere Project Initiative* circulated within the industry which supports de Waal's philosophy that " while humanitarian agencies are good at drawing up principles, they are rather poor at enforcing them" (1997, p. 135) . These recent campaigns illustrate that no matter how well-intended, self-governing ethical standards are easily, and as practitioners might argue *necessarily*, abandoned in current day contexts, crowded and competitive humanitarian markets and organizational needs to "distinguish… from its nearest competitors in the media marketplace" (Cottle & Nolan, 2007, p. 865). Both maps also point to how these ongoing struggles to fashion distinct market branding have become more challenging in recent times with the surge in new online application based communication platforms that utilize tactics such as bait and click headlines and the viral expediency in which information travels.

Global development and aid agencies *do* have to compete for political and consumer attention, funding resources and media response and Manzo accurately recognizes "some of the most powerful reflections of humanitarianism are found in child images that actually violate the guiding principles of shared codes of conduct on images and messages" (2008, p. 635). Oxfam, ICRC, UNICEF, Autism Speaks, Save the

Children and World Vision produce vast amounts of content on their YouTube platforms as one strategy to attract consumer attention. The official viewing event for *"I am Autism"* (DDM 50) was relatively internal, invitation only and localized; however, the surrounding controversy quickly spread into the public sphere when *Autism Speaks* made the strategic decision to widely circulate the video on their YouTube platform, which in turn provided a discursive space for activists to collectively and publically resist its metaphorical tone. Early in 2013, *Save the Children* blanketed their *My Name is Today* (GDM 47) child sponsorship project across the organizations multiple websites, YouTube platforms and Facebook pages. Reminiscent of *I am Autism,* the *Today* campaign structures its message around the poetic writings of a highly influential supporter of the values put forth by *Save the Children*. However, unlike *I am Autism's* myopic dependence on fear and stereotyping *My Name is Today* mobilizes viewer shame while also calling up the mythical suffering child imagery. Poet and Nobel Laureate Gabriela Mistrals *prose* is foreboding and the narrative squarely faults a universally neglectful 'we' rather than abstracting the undeveloped other:



GDM 47

> We are guilty of many errors and many faults, but our worst crime is abandoning the children, neglecting the fountain of life. Many of the things we

> need can wait. The child cannot. Right now is the time his bones are being formed, his blood is being made, and his senses are being developed. To him we cannot answer 'Tomorrow,' his name is today (Save the Children, 2014).

While the poetic narrative appears to shift the familiar 'Southern victim' message towards its 'Northern villain' binary, a closer reading of the text alongside its accompanying images and website campaign tells a different story that epitomizes how representation "as a concept and a practice… is a complex business" (Hall, 1997, p. 216). The *My Name is Today* 'Northern villain' story takes place over visceral imagery of Southern children embedded deep in the suffering victim frame, amongst piles of environmental devastation and wrecked housing remains while staring deep and wide eyed into the camera, or filmed from behind as they trudge through dilapidated geographies. The few faceless adults, turned away from the viewer's gaze, faceless and nearly invisible and imaged as tragically unprepared to promote the full developmental capabilities of their young. The humanitarian frame foregrounds unlivable conditions through editing and focus techniques while shadowing individual cultures, landscapes, regions and people. The 2014 *Save the Children* website messaging epitomizes the organizations use of 'nameless and faceless' iconography as an advertising approach to enhance the guilty 'we' messages in the *My Name is Today* video:

> Today is the name we give millions of nameless boys and girls here in the United States and abroad who will not see tomorrow without being orphaned… abused… trafficked as slave labor… or deprived of basics like healthy food, books and a safe place to play. (Save the Children, 2014).

A tattered conference name badge scrawled with "Help, My Name is Today" serves as the *Today* campaign logo and appears across *Save the Children* marketing platforms. The *Today* video campaign, online marketing messages and logo collectively paint a wide geographical and metaphorical brush that is in tension with the humanitarian charters pledge to "portray an objective image… where the capacities and aspirations of disaster victims are highlighted, and not just their vulnerabilities" (The Sphere Project, 2004). Read as individual productions, *Save the Children 'Today'* and *Autism Speaks 'I am Autism'* "do not signify or carry meaning on their own," (Hall, 1997, p. 222); however exploring multiple sites across the radical cartographies conveys the embeddedness of victim/savior representations and demonstrates how these dominant and powerful ideologies travel across time and place.

Frames of the Progressive Era

The vitality of cultural studies depends, in one key dimension of its development, on keeping the diverse interactions between 'then' and 'now' in continual and active view of each other" (Pickering, 2008, p. 194)

In 1893, Children's Aid Society founder Charles Loring Brace authored the opening segment to *The History of Child Saving in the United States*, an extensive 337 page 'circular' on the workings of child institutions, almshouses, asylums, poorhouses and the "charitable effort among destitute or neglected children" across the United States (p. 1). Reprinted unedited and in book form in 1971, the report cites observations, data, methods and institutional records from fourteen committee members located all across

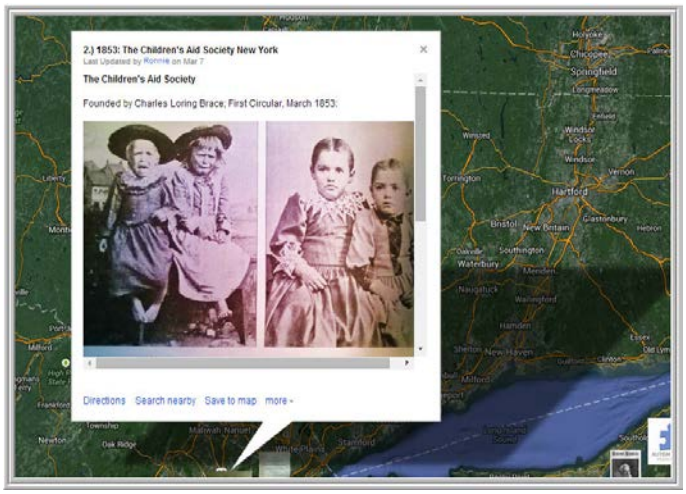
the country from New York to San Francisco. This rich archive was originally gathered the *20th Annual Meeting of the Conference of Charities and Correction* held in Chicago in the summer of 1893. Referenced throughout the text as child savers, these practitioners, institutional superintendents and educators came together with the intent to facilitate a nationalized and systematic welfare policy. Read in context of the late 1800s, this archive of institutional thought offers a window into how particular representations form within historical moments, how societies come to certain assumptions about unfamiliar ways of being, or difference, and what interests these discourses serve.

Braces introduction foreshadows discursive practices of development and humanitarianism that prevail throughout the following century that authorize dominant ideologies structured around notions of benevolence, responsible citizenry, national prosperity, the preservation of economic interests and the promotion of properly developed socially 'fit' citizens. Brace describes the mission of child saving in the geographical regions of the United States as critical to the future of the nation while attributing the potential ills of its citizenry on undeveloped youth imposed on the American public by distant and foreign others:

> As Christian men, we cannot look upon his great multitude of unhappy, deserted, and degraded boys and girls without feeling our responsibility to God for them. The class increases: immigration is pouring its multitudes of poor foreigners who leave these young outcasts everywhere in our midst. These boys and girls, it should be remembered, will soon form the great lower class of our city. They will influence election; they may shape the policy of the city; they will

assuredly, if unreclaimed, poison society all around them. They will help to form the great multitude of robbers, thieves, and vagrants, who are now such a burden upon the law-respecting community" (Brace, 1893, p. 3).

This is a significant cultural moment in humanitarian discourse as it situates the framing of the child victim as a national threat coming from both within and outside of U.S. borders. Brace locates the distant other and the improperly developed citizen within the similar discourses that repeat across historical and geographical landscapes.



GDM 2, *DDM 3*

As founding secretary of *The Children's Aid Society*, Brace's interpretation of immigrant and vagrant children reflects his New York City experiences; however, the image that appears on GDM 2 and DDM 3 illustrates how his paternalistic values and standards of national purity become entrenched throughout institutions across the country.

The Superintendent of The Minnesota Schools section of the conference report incorporates the 'before and after' child saving image (GDM 2, DDM 3) as a visual emphasis to support the organizations recommendation for temporary youth detention facilities. Following a model developed in Michigan, these provisional placements allow agents to study child behaviors and to foster a space for "the wisest work in placing children… to have the filth of the slums removed and the poorhouse marks erased" (p. 221). Representing immigrant and intellectually disabled children as the foundation for

future defective classes also resonates throughout *The Orphan Home* in Terre Haute Indiana contribution to *The History of Child Saving in the United States*. This section of the report suggests, "it is well known that for many years our country has been the dumping ground for the criminal, insane, pauper, and other defective classes of all the nations of Europe (p. 69); a philosophy in adamant agreement with Brace's introduction. Superintendent Merrill repeatedly cites the State interest in harvesting socially and economically productive children while boasting, "***no intelligent*** [emphasis added] child… need go without a home." (1893, p. 221) Merrill's privileging of the intellectually capable citizen is a familiar signifier across a range of texts published from the late 1800s/early 1900s that serve to construct boundaries between what type of child is worthy of State and humanitarian 'saving' and those best kept tucked away in institutions, asylums, or worse, eliminated from the national citizenry altogether.

Sarah Cooper provides San Francisco Kindergarten Schools contribution, in which she criminalizes disability and melodramatically proclaims her fellow child saving colleagues "are compelled to admit that a large proportion of the unfortunate children that go to make up the great army of criminals, paupers and lunatics are not born right… they start out handicapped in the race of life" (p. 89). Newspaper stories and advertisements across the United States throughout the progressive era illustrate how this criminalizing language imposed on the developmentally disabled class contextualized their experience as genetically driven socially inadequate threats to national prosperity and security.

DDM 3 locates a noteworthy moment in 1857 in which a *New York Herald* report on the *Meeting of the Superintendents of Insane Asylums* begins to set the public stage for institutionally sanctioned interventions that authorized control over the reproductive habits of the developmentally disabled through forced medical sterilization (see DDM 9-19). The lengthy *New York Herald* piece describes the convention proceedings and summarizes the causes of idiocy cited by physiologists and professionals in attendance. The representational frames that emerged situate the features of developmental difference as innately genetic, socially undesirable and inherently immoral while claiming "eight tenths of the idiots are born of wretched stock, of families which have seem to have degenerated to the lowest degree of bodily and mental condition; whose blood is watery; whose humors are vitiated" (1857, p. 1). In 1857, New York Herald readers consumed this very specific interpretation of developmental and intellectual disabilities, framed as a containable social ill and a serious threat to national prosperity, easily controlled if the public were more aware of its cause and approved the proper population suppression policies. If only, the article contends, "parents and people generally understood the causes that produce idiocy there would be fewer of those poor unfortunates cast upon the world" (Herald, 1857). This recurring patronizing sentiment of pity also appears in an 1888

DDM 3

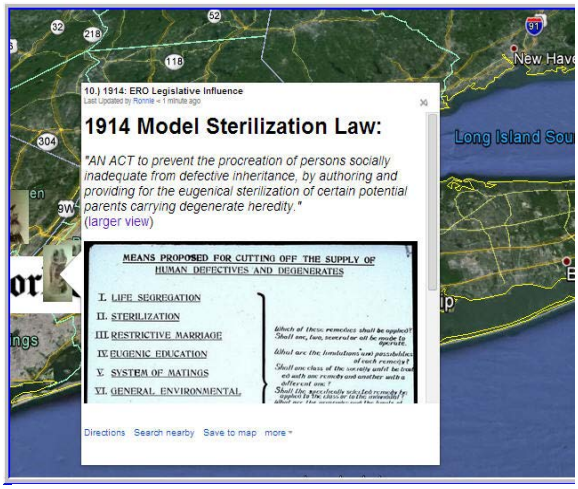
Aberdeen *South Dakota Daily News* report (DDM 4) advocating for feebleminded, idiocy and imbecile classes "segregation from the rest of the community" (1888, p. 1). This account echoes the New York Herald inheritability frame, provides statistical probabilities to back their urgent appeal for segregationist policies and vehemently claims, "There is nothing more hereditary… than idiocy, if one parent is idiotic and the other not so the first generation will be 40 percent idiots; the second generation 80 percent, and the third generation 100 percent". There is ample evidence that private industry sought to gain economic advantage from the social fears produced by this language of degeneracy, inheritability and the utter shame 'degenerate offspring' would inflict on their families.

DDM 8

In 1897, a Kansas City Missouri newspaper ran an advertisement for the Van Vleck-Minter Chemical Company (DDM 8) touting its "recent triumph in medicine" as a cure for a variety of mental and physical maladies, with a particular focus on its miraculous regeneration of the idiot classes. Van Vleck-Minter's marketing strategy speaks to consumer fears of degraded minds and their repulsion towards the socially inadequate classes. The advertisement is a reproduction of those representations produced by institutions, journalists, politicians and educators (DDM 7, 9, 9c, 10) that consistently resurface from the late 1800s to mid-1970s eras. The advertisement

announces the revolutionary French product *Thyroin V.V.* miraculously reclaimed even "Those idiots who were stunted in appearance and peculiarly revolting in aspect gradually assumed a shape and demeanor that were almost normal… the idiots, too, came to be possessed of increased intelligence. Among them all previously, not one to had seemed to have the smallest atom of mental life" (Kansas City Missouri Herald, 1897).

These protectionist ideologies circulated throughout the social, political and cultural spheres influenced educational platforms, and shaped policies authorizing the forced sterilization of those deemed socially and intellectually unfit to serve the national interest. DDM 10 evidences grave and irreparable consequences resulting from the prevailing 'threat to the social and economic well-being' discourse of the time. The document produced by the Eugenics Record Office (ERO) in 1914 recommends the national implementation of its model sterilization law to "prevent the procreation of persons socially inadequate from defective inheritance, by authoring and providing for the Eugenical sterilization of certain potential parents carrying degenerate heredity (Laughlin, 1922, p. 312)". *Means Proposed for Cutting off the Supply of Human Defectives and Degenerates* is a vehicle for the ERO to promote the organizations outline of concrete methods and for reducing 'degenerate' classes; policies ranging from restricted marriage to segregation and forced medical



DDM 10

sterilization. Although ERO messaging appears in newspapers, social gatherings and public events around the country, this particular version is located in one of the more influential and controversial texts of its time, *Eugenical Sterilization in the United States.*

In 1922, The ERO, headed by Harry Laughlin, produced *Eugenical Sterilization in the United States,* a 500 page text that provides a detailed script defending the practice of eugenics with a comprehensive listing of the 'scientific techniques and facts' regarding existing compulsory sterilization policies. The report argues that national compulsory sterilization policies would effectively "aid [in] protecting the country's family stocks from deterioration" (p. vii). Published by *The Municipal Court of Chicago*, the text reads like a manifesto of Laughlin's philosophical doctrine on sterilization. Widely disseminated to courts, judges, medical practitioners, politicians (such as former President Theodore Roosevelt) and Asylum Superintendents, the ERO text offers detailed illustrations on how to perform sterilizations, intricate and at times mundane details on sterilization policies and procedures across the United States and grand pontificating on the national duty to stop the feebleminded idiot from breeding. The opening pages include a glowing introduction authored by Chicago Chief Justice Harry Olson, cited at length to provide explicit context and to help situate the historical and cultural significance of the texts contribution:

> The courts have a special function to perform in the suppression of crime… In the performance of this duty, the Municipal Court of Chicago has pointed out the need of permanent segregation of incorrigible defectives… The alternative to segregation is to continue to do what we have been doing, that is, incarcerate the

> offender for a time, more or less brief, and then permit him freedom to repeat his offence, and to propagate his kind… Segregation is necessary, even though sterilization were invoked… The two theories of segregation and sterilization are not antagonistic, but both may be invoked. (p. vi).

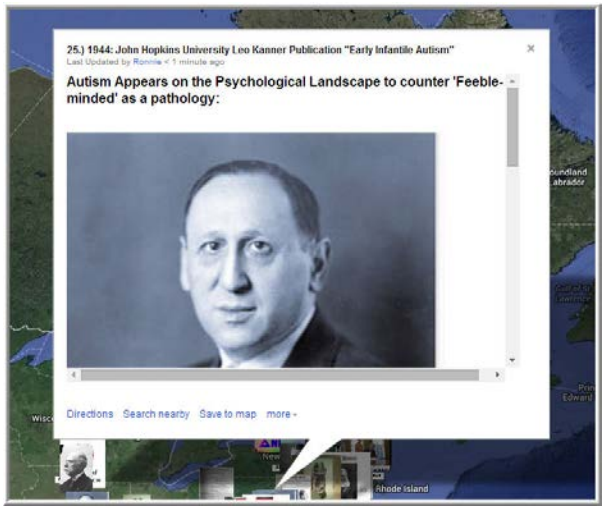
This extremely valuable cultural artifact offers a historically revealing roadmap of how the Eugenics movement progressed as a policy, politic and practice in the United States, while framing the language and politics of global development and humanitarianism throughout the decades that follow.

In the 1927 landmark Supreme Court case *Buck v. Bell,* (DDM 16) the ERO defended the right of the State to forcibly sterilize those deemed 'socially inadequate'. In his decision, Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. uttered the now famous phrase "three generations of imbiciles are enough" and approved compulsory sterilization as a national right and duty in the protection of its socially fit citizenry (DDM 18b). In his written comments, Holmes cites the global benefits of his decision and argues, "It's better for all the world... if instead of waiting to execute degenerate offspring for crime, or to let them starve for their imbecility, society can prevent those who are manifestly unfit from continuing their kind." Over the next sixty years, thousands of developmentally disabled citizens were stripped of their legal

DDM 16

right and physical capacity to produce children, and U.S. ideologies determining who, or what, constitutes as a 'properly developed' citizen spread to global interests and political geographies.

The social imagination regarding autistic subjectivities does not appear on the landscape until the early to mid-1950s, nearly a decade after the Journal of Pediatrics published John Hopkins University Child Psychologist Leo Kanner's 1944 study, *Early Infantile Autism* (DDM 25). DDM 24 highlights the cultural significance Kanner's 1942 work, *Exoneration of the Feebleminded*, published two years before he designated autism as a diagnostic category in 1944. Analysis of Kanner's writing in this earlier piece contextualizes how Progressive Era social and diagnostic expressions concerning the underdeveloped idiot, feebleminded, degenerate, brute, mental defective and imbecile classes travel across the formation of contemporary representations of autism. In *Exoneration of the Feebleminded* Kanner demonstrates an intriguing defense of *certain* subjectivities and produces new boundaries around acceptable intellectual standards for society. Kanner's 'exoneration' takes a perplexing approach as he reprimands "psychiatric clinics [for] showing neither interest nor empathy with the group of patients commonly called the feebleminded or mental defectives," while in the following paragraph he contends "people emotionally and



DDM 25

intellectually unfit for parenthood should be sterilized" (1942, p. 331). In this precursor to his famous study on infantile autism, Kanner struggles to merge his experience of his subjects (those he later defines as autistic) with 1930s-40s definitions of socially acceptable and economically productive behavior. Read in close context with Kanner's large body of work, *Exonerating the Feebleminded* could practically be interpreted as an early attempt to shift assumptions about the socially and intellectually unfit classes while producing a space for a new class of citizens diagnosed with autism:

> Distinction must be made between the idiots and imbeciles whose cognitive, emotional and conative potentialities are so defective that they are misfits in any society, and those individuals with an I.Q. of, say, 60-85, who may be called intellectually inadequate. Their limitation is mainly in the cognitive sphere… many of them are emotionally mature and stable people… Our complex civilization depends on the services rendered by the "intellectually inadequate" and the elimination of this group would soon result in a social catastrophe" (1942, p. 331).

Although he does not explicitly say so, given the publication of his landmark study published two years later, *Exoneration of the Feebleminded* is an early moment in the archive of Kanner's work in which he begins his endeavor to shift the social imagination away from the unproductive socially unfit feebleminded citizen towards the 'intellectually capable' and socially productive autistic subject.

Charles Loring concludes his contribution to *Child Saving in the United States* with a nationalistic message adjudicating the national citizen to strive towards meeting the

highest possible intellectual and moral standards as their patriotic and moral responsibility and offers his steadfast warning that "nothing but virtue and intelligence can save a republic from ending in despotism, corruption and anarchy" (p. 90). These early interpretations, representations and social assumptions about the feebleminded, idiot, mental degenerate and imbecile classes effectively historicize how contemporary discourses of deficiency, fear and social inadequacy came into view, and how they effectively frame discourses of global development and developmental difference throughout WWI, WWII, The Cold War, and within contemporary moments.

FRAMING THE CHILD ICON

> *"The starving baby image stands accused of demeaning suffering children by robbing them of their dignity, and, when read as a spatial metaphor, of demeaning entire geographical areas" (Kate Manzo, p. 638)*

GDM 4

I began my image search expecting the narrative of child imagery to emerge both geographically and historically with "helpless, passive, 'victim' depictions of Southern clients particularly from Africa" (Dogra, 2007, p. 162). However, child-focused campaigns seemingly emerge on the European landscape around 1919 when Eglantyne Jebb established what she intended to be the temporary Save the Children Fund to deliver aid to children in war-ravaged

central Europe. The organization appears to be one of the originating NGOs that was initially motivated to assist victims in war torn regions that continued their charity efforts as new crises, manmade and natural, appeared across geographical locations. In 1932 *Save the Children* extended their charity efforts to United States with an "immediate goal to help the children and families struggling to survive the Great Depression" (Save the Children, 2013), and the Oxford Committee on Famine Relief (OXFAM, GDM 7) activated their campaign against the famine of war in 1942. Children are the clear signifiers in these representations; however, GDM 4 demonstrates the general tone of representation of the time. Children do appear center frame and surrounded by volunteers or family members, situated within community settings, hospitals, cafeteria's or homes (GDM 3, 4, 6, 7); a particular tactic in stark contrast to the lone starving isolated child images placed on the landscapes of the global South in later decades. This pre-IMF, World Bank, United Nations "predevelopmentalist development" (Cooper & Packard, p. 7) period also marks the introduction of child sponsorship with the 1938 formation of the Christian Children's Fund (CCF), now known as Child Fund International. Also motivated by the damages and losses of war, CCF appealed to United States donors to "support orphanages for the children who had been left without homes or families in the wake of the second Sino-Japanese War" (childfund.org, 2013). While the majority of

GDM 5

images and representations of this period perform less like the contemporary "scenes of skeletal figures that appear on our TV screens" (Cottle & Nolan, 2007, p. 863) in contemporary times, textual signifiers from the post WWI and WWII era do evidence savior-victim ideologies. Save The Children England offers founder Eglantyne Jebb's visceral narrative expressions and demonstrates the narrative frame media and communications Scholar Lillie Chouliaraki situates as the "grand emotions on suffering" (2010, p. 108). Jebb takes an emotive and paternalistic approach as she describes the values that brought her to organize the Save the Children fund. Jebb's narrative describes the organizations founding values and argues members of the privileged classes "cannot run the risk that they [children in war torn Greece] should weep, starve, despair and die, with never a hand stretched out to help them" (Save the Children, 2013). As private and religious aid projects progressed through WWI, WWII, the formation of the United Nations and as the United States and Russia entered into the long period of the Cold War, relief efforts shifted to the international stage. During this extremely transformative period in humanitarianism, global development policies, competition for INGO funds and the emergence of neo-liberal economic policies obliged new ideologies and fierce competition in aid markets that drove new marketing tactics and fundraising strategies.

GDM 7

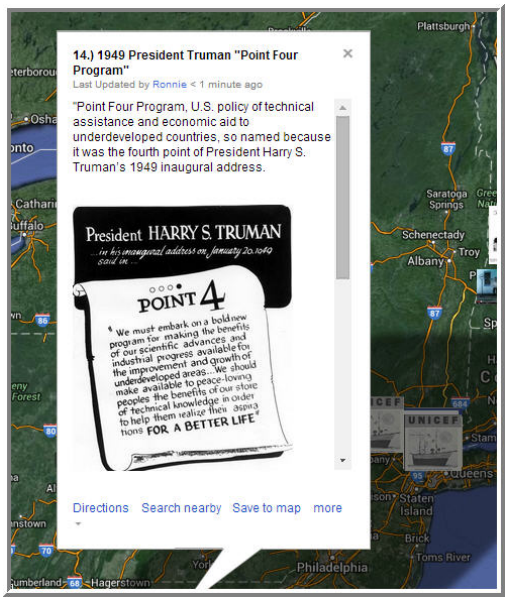
A radical shift in political, economic, social, and cultural mindsets of the late 1940s through late 1970s imposed intense and long-lasting changes onto the global humanitarian and development stage. GDM 12 provides a window into a fierce public debate that raged around George Marshall's proposed European Recovery Program (ERP), widely known as The Marshall Plan and highlights Marshall's 1948 speech before Harvard University Graduates. As President Truman's Secretary of State, Marshall calls on media and entertainment productions to help shore up national support for his reconstruction program:

GDM 12

> I need not tell you that the world situation is very serious. That must be apparent to all intelligent people. I think one difficulty is that the problem is one of such enormous complexity that the very mass of facts presented to the public by press and radio make it exceedingly difficult for the man in the street to reach a clear appraisement of the situation" (George C. Marshall Foundation, 2014).

Intense public and political resistance to Marshall's plan for reconstruction is made visible through satirist Edwin Marcus' political cartoon *While the Shadow Lengthens* published in March of 1948 in the *New York Times* (GDM 12). Although publically touted as a large scale but short-term aid package to reconstruct warn torn Europe, increased social concerns over the potential damage it might impose on the U.S.

economy placed passage of the plan in political turmoil. The cartoon exhibits how supporters of the proposed legislation called on national fears of Soviet Communism, represented by the Russian bear looming over Europe in dark shadow, to drive public concern away from short-term economic concerns towards the looming threat of communist interests around the globe. Eventually ERO did pass and paved the political stage for President Harry Truman's larger vision for economic prosperity agenda global development.

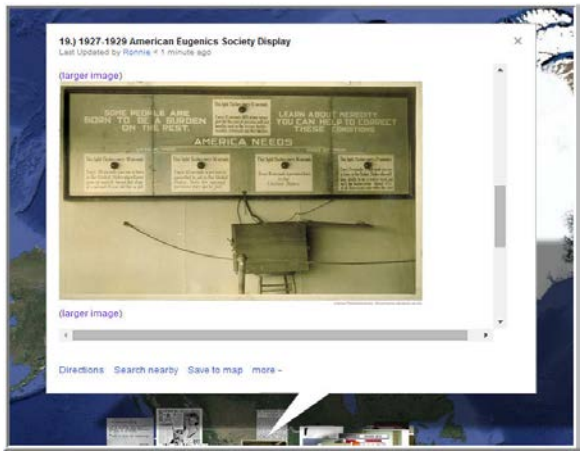


GDM 14

Truman's transitional economic, national and political agendas were in mutual accordance with the formation of The World Bank and International Monetary Fund, entities run by powerful, primarily Western, financial overseers of the international system of exchange rates and international payments that enables countries and their citizens to buy goods and services from each other" (International Monetary Fund, 2013). These apparatuses profoundly influenced the mechanisms and structures of post-colonial international relief aid. In his 1949 Inaugural address, President Truman announced U.S. intentions to save 'underdeveloped' and 'primitive' regions from their pre-modern state in what is commonly referenced as the *Point Four Program*; the partial transcription below illustrates how the emerging of neo-liberal post-modern economic agenda became historically, geographically, and politically submerged into the discursive practices of humanitarian and development interests:

> We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas. More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate. They are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. *Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas* [emphasis added]… I believe that we should make available to peace-loving peoples the benefits of our store of technical knowledge in order to help them realize their aspirations for a better life. And, in cooperation with other nations, we should foster capital investment in areas needing development (Truman Library, 2013).

History Scholars Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard suggest tropes of superiority such as those expressed by Truman are based on "the assumption that certain kinds of societies can be defined as 'backward' and means devised for transforming and 'underdeveloped person' into a 'developed' one" (1997, p. 19) have long occupied imaginations of the North. Truman's ideology is eerily reminiscent of the nationalist language emerging from the Eugenics Movement of the 1900s. DDM 19 shows archive images provided by the American Philosophical Society highlighting ERO marketing campaigns presented across the country at county fairs and public events. These billboards urge 'normal' citizens to become aware of the science of heredity and better



DDM 19

understand that "some people are born to be a burden on the rest"(American Philosophical Association). Laughlin's accompanying text foretells Truman's Point Four ideologies regarding properly developed nations. In his remarks, Laughlin argues there are "many individuals who, on account of defective or handicapping inheritance are unable to maintain themselves… and thus are *a handicap to the well-being of the body politic* [emphasis added]" (Laughlin, 1922).

UNICEF occupies an interesting and intricate political space in humanitarian aid and global development discourses, the sentiment of nations and social imaginations. While UNICEFs foundations parallel agencies outlined earlier in this work, its historical legacy, contemporary presence and political impact as a governing authority bares a heavy influence on transnational child humanitarianism. In 1946, The UN General Assembly unanimously established an International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), to facilitate and deliver "urgent relief programmes for children in war-ravaged countries… distributed without discrimination due to race, creed, nationality, status or political belief" (UNICEF, 2013). UNICEFs early representational practices avoid summoning child victim images as a fundraising tactic, opting for representational styles that convey meanings of innocence sketched in immature drawings borne from the imaginaries of children. GDM 11

GDM 11

illustrates UNICEFs 1949 inaugural fundraising effort, the first of many in the legendary "greetings that help the world's children" UNICEF campaign, a representation that exemplifies UNICEFs founding message of unity, diversity, protection, innocence, and peace. Fundraising appeals draw from the social values and cultural contexts that surround their production and how these constructions of difference are 'taken in' by the public says a great deal about the cultures that circulate, consume, reproduce, and privilege their interpretations. Analyzing debates over child subjectivities involves examining "arguments about values… [and] arguments about value in the economic sense" (Mitchell, 2000, p. 71) that are implicit in the cultural and political process; fundamentally, sympathetic appeals to a collective sense of morality are the ultimate tactic to solicit fiscal support.

GDM 15

In 1953, the seeds of child sponsorship became firmly situated in public view as *World Vision* founder Reverend Dr. Bob Pierce constructs a new humanitarian relief model "in response to the needs of Korean War orphans" (World Vision, 2012). Anthropologist Erica Bornstein effectively argues the World Vision model commodifies children and explains the 'adopt a needy child' ideal was "built… alongside the impersonality of the monetary exchange of child sponsorship" (2005, p. 73). GDM 15 provides a very specific and

highly productive moment in the framing of the child icon as World Vision founder Reverend Dr. Bob Pierce moves from his role as a United Nations war correspondent and representative of *Youth for Christ* to launch his own missionary project. With a particular evangelical focus on the needy child frame, *World Vision* continues in our contemporary moment to represent the victim/savior ideologies Pierce framed in its founding moments. The child sponsorship fundraising model emphasizes the needy child juxtaposed alongside the benevolent globally northern and spiritually developed savior, a practice that in turn devalues the experiences of the global South and fixes sponsored children into a commodified role. Mitchell draws out cultural theorists Fred Inglis attention to cultural values, which he defines as "the name given to those fierce little concentrations of meaning in an action or a state of affairs which fix them as good or important" (p. 71). Does this fixing of children as commodities in the name of charity ultimately produce 'fierce little concentrations of meaning' (Mitchell, 2000, p. 71) that dehumanize children, essentialize entire regions and depoliticize the intensely political?

DEPOLITICIZING MEDIATED FRAMES

"It is interesting to chart the way in which the famine progressed from its niche as a news item and a campaign by relief agencies into an unprecedented international media event with political repercussions in leading Western democracies" de Waal

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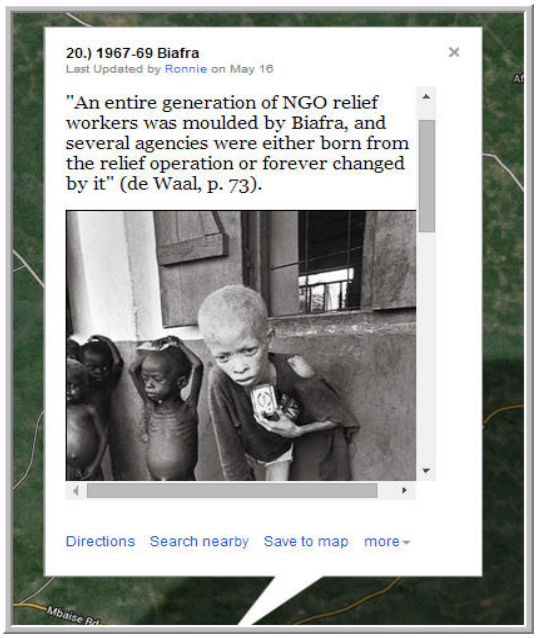
The complexities of events the global North came to understand as the 1967-69 Biafra Famine politicized humanitarian aid and exploited child imagery as a tactical method to

further the political agenda of the Biafra State in southeastern Nigeria. In what de Waal historicizes as "The first humanitarian effort dominated by NGOs," devastating images coming from aid workers in Biafra establish a turning point in representation where the pornography of suffering takes center stage (GDM 20). de Wall situates the use of the snapshots of dying children, and misinterpretations from the global North, into the politics of the region and the manipulation of consumer naiveté:

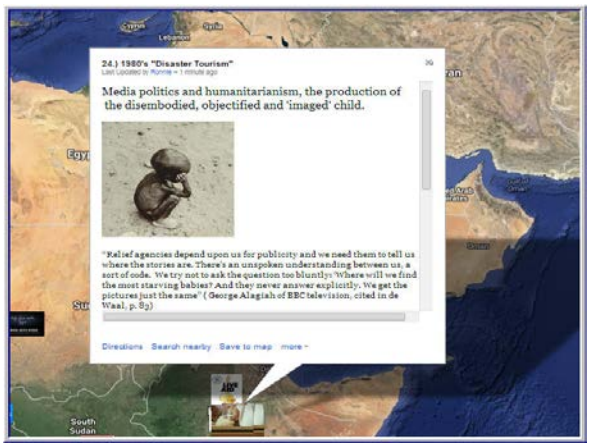


GDM 20

> Biafran propaganda was the use of images of starving, dying, hungry children. It completely obliterated what Biafra had done before then, and the outside world bought it… the pictures of starving children and women, dying children, children with kwashiorkor stomachs touched everybody, it cut across the range of people's beliefs. (1997, pp. 73-75).

de Waal evaluates the complexities of Biafra, describes the intricacies of the crises and gives perspective to images decontextualized by their original mediated performance. His reading of the Biafran story transfers the regional culture from the familiar tale of famine and points to a complex politic, erased by the Northern consumer's presumption that a 'natural' famine of the undeveloped was the lone villain behind the embodied state of the Biafran children

In reality, politics complicated famine conditions and the conflict between "The Igbo-dominated Biafra State of south-eastern Nigeria and the Federal Government… erupted into war, with the Biafrans unilaterally declaring secession. The Biafrans gained almost no diplomatic support… but came to gain enormous sympathy from the Western public" (1997, p. 73). The social implications, political complexities and erasures produced by the northern framing of Biafra demonstrate an extreme shift in representational practices from the protective Oxfam, UNICEF and Save the Children textualities of the 1940s and 50s. The graphic media performances of diseased, parentless, lifeless, culturally void and sustenance-starved objects of pity remain commonplace despite the internal codes of conduct outlined earlier in this work. As "the field of humanitarian agencies has become increasingly crowded… clamoring for government and public funds" (Cottle & Nolan, 2007, p. 864) the line between these very distinctive ways of seeing, knowing, and strategizing the child subject become extremely hard to distinguish. This merging of media-logic, humanitarian ethics of pity, consumer compassion fatigue, the crisis triangle and the dominance of neo-liberal economic structures produce a social

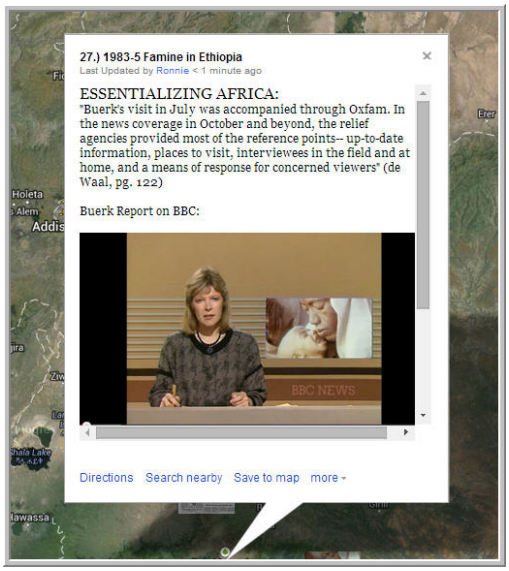


GDM 24

GDM 20

consciousness that displaces the political interests of the populations and cultures humanitarian projects intend to serve.

Digital mapping brings the persistence of these discursive practices regarding the 'properly developed culture, region and individual into sharp focus. GDM 24, 26, 30, 31, 33 and 35 illustrate a representational shift from 1930s humanitarian war relief and reconstruction into broader and farther reaching projects that "captured the imagination of many people across the world" (Cooper and Packard, 1997, p. 6). Media technologies play a central role in how INGOs and NPOs develop and maintain their market brand, attract political backing and shore up donor support.



GDM 27

Throughout the later part of the 20th century, INGOs and NPOs became particularly adept at codifying their marketing strategies across broadcast, online and mobile technologies. De Waal believes "there is a tendency to speak of 'the Ethiopian famine' as though it were a homogenous national phenomenon and to assimilate all experiences across the country into a single famine with a single explanation" (p. 112). Advances in news delivery methods and broadcast technologies in the late 1970s and early 1980s provided new platforms for spreading representational interpretations of difference with greater expediency and determination.

In 1983, BBC News produced and aired a graphically disturbing report from Ethiopia (GDM 27) with shocking footage depicting thousands of Ethiopians situated on a desolate landscape while news correspondent Michael Buerk narrates his uncompromising translation of the events that surround him:

> Dawn, and as the sun breaks through the piercing chill of night on the plain outside Korem, it lights up a biblical famine, right now, in the twentieth century. This place, say workers here, is the closest thing to hell on earth. Thousands of wasted people are coming here for help, and they find only death" (BBC News: Ethiopian Famine, 1984).

Alongside the image of a crying emaciated child, in a close frame devoid of parents, community or humanity, Buerk continues his grandiose narrative of pity; "15,000 children here now, suffering, confused, lost" and successfully transfers the disembodied objectified child image from news print to millions of televisions screens across the global North. The nearly eight-minute projection reduced all of Ethiopia, and arguably all of Africa, to one desolate and victimized people and essentialized entire nations to "panaceas for such 'unexplainable' human experiences as 'inhumanity' and 'despair'" (Bornstein, 2005, p. 72). After viewing the 1984 BBC News

GDM 26

report, British pop-star Bob Geldof collaborated with fellow musician Midge Ure to strategize ways to influence the political and social mindset. The BBC documentary "Live Aid: Against All Odds" analyzes the political, economic, social, cultural, and transnational development implications of Live Aid and situates how multi-millionaire pop-icons that generated their excessive wealth within the same neoliberal economic environment that produced impoverished conditions on the Ethiopian landscape, came to express their outrage through internationally mass mediated interventions.

GDM 26 shows Geldof's lavish and ongoing online narrative account of his interpretation of the enormity of *Band Aid, We Are the World, Live Aid,* his role as the benevolent savior, and the ongoing media events and publicized performances through the current moment. The decision to produce the one-day global concert permanently shifted the political discourses of global development and humanitarianism, highlighted geographical and resource aid limitations, challenged humanitarian aid delivery, altered media tactics and raised consumer awareness regarding child iconography.

Live Aid broadcast simultaneously in London, Philadelphia and Australia, raised millions and stirred controversies that remain in contemporary conversations today. During the five-year period following the international broadcast, debates about INGOs management of food delivery and donated funds, the politicized nature of humanitarian efforts, and the reinforcement of the global North savior ideology brought the objectified and pitied child representation into global view. The weaving of news reports and mediated fundraising actions to draw attention to international crises

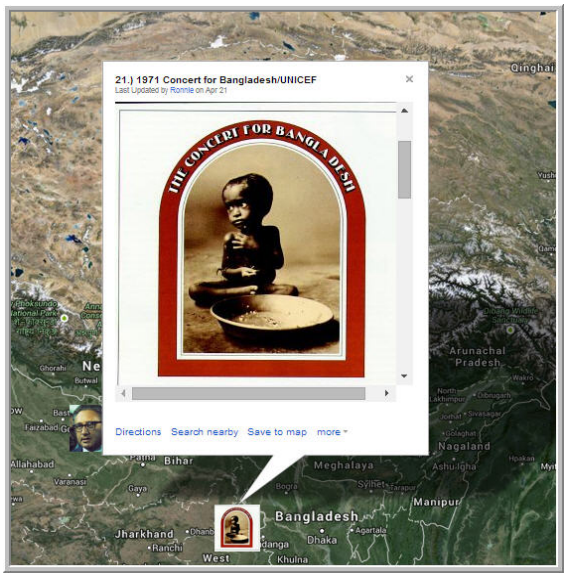
co-exists with development and humanitarian agency efforts to attract public interest and these already complex interactions are further complicated when pop-icons and celebrity spokespersons impose their political interpretations onto the landscape.

FRAMING CELEBRITY ICONS

"You can talk about it, you can have a community service announcement… a wonderful little ad… but until you've got a celebrity or photo-worthy person up there to sell it, then it's going to be a steep hill" National Red Cross Communications Director, Australia

In his 1960 speech to the UN General Assembly, President Kennedy proclaimed "political sovereignty is but a mockery, without the means of meeting poverty, illiteracy and disease… my nation now proposes… designating this decade of the 1960's as the United Nations Decade of Development" (UNICEF The 1960's: The Decade of Development, 1996). Broadcasting capacities in the global North increased significantly throughout the 50's and 60's and the viewing public witnessed this decade of development unfold on national television screens. Viewers took in the efforts of Danny Kaye (GDM 16), the first international humanitarian celebrity spokesman and watched him "travel the globe, giving speeches, entertaining communities and 'bringing attention to the world's poorest children" (UNICEF, 2013). Analysis of Kaye's travels reveals a robust archive of wholesome footage of the UNICEF Ambassador entertaining

communities and walking amongst engaged and smiling children. Images depicting Kaye's hospital and community visits primarily focus on his interactions with the children rather than their injury, suffering, or victim status. GDM 21 illustrates a shift in UNICEFs representational attention to wholesome unity, diversity, protection and peace, replaced by the lone child as an object of pity and the iconic celebrity savior. For those in the global North growing up in the 70s there is perhaps no more nostalgic or iconic representation of 'other nations' than the lone emaciated child squat before an empty grain dish, frozen in time, and plopped on the cover of George Harrison's 1971 The Concert for Bangladesh LP. Harrison and UNICEF raised millions in this "first benefit concert of its kind… an extraordinary assemblage of major artists collaborating for a common humanitarian cause," (Concert for Bangladesh, n.d.) performed at Madison Square Garden in the summer of 1971. UNICEF and Harrison successfully brought the attention of the global North to Bangladesh;



GDM 21

however, the objectifying image of the lone starving child representation is a significant shift from UNICEFs early creative art productions depicting the equal status and dignity of all children.

Harrison's international celebrity assured media interest, which in turn sparked unprecedented public curiosity regarding the previously ignored politics of suffering in Bangladesh. Leveraging the Concert for Bangladesh, the young starving isolated icon for marketing, nostalgia, and mass merchandizing continues to generate millions for UNICEF today, forever erasing the lived experience of the young child from the historical frame.

The use of celebrity to raise funds, develop agency branding, and target messages of urgent need remains a stable practice in contemporary development. The Australian National Red Cross Communications Manager views celebrity ambassadorship as a necessary attention grabbing tactic; "you can talk about it, you can have a community service announcement… a wonderful little ad… but until you've got a celebrity or photo-worthy person up there to sell it, then it's going to be a steep hill" (Cottle & Nolan, p. 868). As Northern imaginations became increasingly enthralled with the growing entertainment and cultural industries of the 60s and new technologies emerged throughout the 70s, 80s and 90s, the romanticized interactions between the media and humanitarian agencies that formed in the Danny Kaye years became increasingly complicated and interdependent.

Bob Geldof's prestige as the heroic Northern savior stemming from his leading role in the 1984 *Band Aid* and *Live Aid* Ethiopia famine relief effort transformed his visibility to the international stage and former *Playboy* model and actress Jenny McCarthy's prominence as spokesperson for *Talk About Curing Autism Now* (TACA) has captured U.S. consumer imaginations. The mediated humanitarian celebrity spans the

1950s to current day from UNICEFs Danny Kaye and George Harrison, Jerry Lewis' infamous telethons and Sally Struthers Christian Children's Fund television campaigns. Geldof's *Live Aid* shifted the production of humanitarian celebrity into a highly politicized international pop-culture phenomenon that Moeller argues "practically eclipsed the cause" (1999, p. 119). *Band Aid* and *Live Aid* relied heavily on celebrity projections of a victimized, helpless and tragic Ethiopian landscape and its overwhelming success as a pop-culture event had the ultimate effect of "intensifying competition among NGOs, with a greater scramble for media exposure and endorsement from stars" (de Waal, 1997, p. 123). Debates surrounding how the founders of *Live Aid* represent the Ethiopian landscape and its cultures emerged shortly after its airing and brought the representational practices of the global North into view.

CONCLUSION

Mapping the discursive productions of global development, humanitarian aid and the formation of developmental difference in the United States productively frames how awareness campaign images and underlying textual codes authorize certain social conventions, public assumptions and meanings of representation and difference across time and place. As a radical digital cartography, this work shows not only how the cultural industries surrounding humanitarian, global development and awareness projects have come to depend on the 'isolated child victim' to draw support and gain attention, but more significantly how and why we as consumers have come to accept these strategies as acceptable and even noble practice**.** These maps and the

accompanying analysis facilitate a better appreciation for the stakes involved in representational practices and how we come to understand difference matters a great deal to those caught up in the historical, political, social, economic and cultural links in the production and consumption of the tragic victim ideology and metaphor of tragedy discourses. de Waal believes "relief institutions are inherently political" (p. 85) and this project as both an analytical and interactive production summarizes how negative imagery and signifiers "characterized by helpless passive victim depictions" (Dogra) shift across time, place and political ideologies. Situating primary resource data, archive documents and image content analysis onto the digital maps, I located new and intriguing questions that require further exploration as I move forward. How Northern driven political, legal and economic strategies such as Buck v. Bell, the Point Four Program, Kennedy's Development Decade, frames of The Autism Epidemic and current day U.S. measures of austerity continue to drive development agendas, produce political stages of contestation and shape the ways humanitarian interests represent others? How are we implicated, and how can we begin to tell different stories about difference that will effectively produce spaces for those so frequently left out of the discussion altogether?

I believe the only way to effectively survive a project as emotionally harrowing and intellectually provocative as situating visceral imagery of representations of starving, lone and isolated children into political, social, economic, cultural, NGO-Aid, and development discourses is by persistently working at keeping the individual people imaged in the forefront. Since I was a child of the 70s, radio personality in the

80s and news producer at the turn of the new millennium, I have seen, discussed, and occasionally reported on the graphic imagery and explicit media content situated onto these radical cartographies. I have also worked closely in the service field of developmental disabilities and watched as those they depict lived out the representations situated on the DDM. Throughout the project I realized, once again, that occasional reporting, constant complaint, incidental viewing, or engaged casual discussion is profoundly different from historicizing how we are all implicated in their production, consumption and reproduction across time and place.

As I scoured through hundreds of online images seeking the proper 'selections' for analysis—rejecting this one for *that* one—and contextualizing my 'gaze' within the theories and works that have brought me to see their production differently, I found myself necessarily displacing the subjectivities in a manner similar to what this research intends to critique. This was a troubling research moment; however, what draws me to cultural studies, its methods and its theories, is this precise "terrain of struggle and contestation" (Hall, 2007, p. 42) that they are so uniquely suited to address. Working in collaboration with fellow cultural studies scholars, mentors and advisors opens up new and meaningfully productive ways of intervening through difficult conversations. This is the intervention of cultural studies.

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