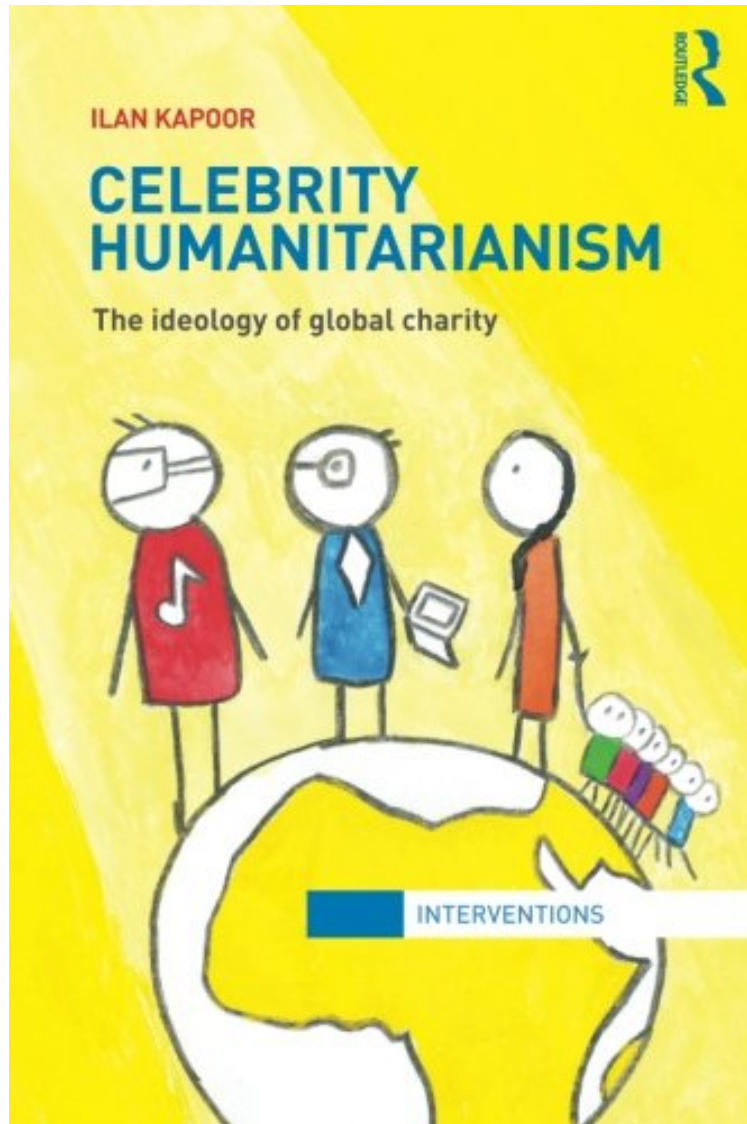


[Download pdf] Celebrity Humanitarianism: The Ideology of Global Charity (Interventions)

## Celebrity Humanitarianism: The Ideology of Global Charity (Interventions)

*Ilan Kapoor*

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**Ilan Kapoor : Celebrity Humanitarianism: The Ideology of Global Charity (Interventions)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Celebrity Humanitarianism: The Ideology of Global Charity (Interventions):

5 of 13 people found the following review helpful. Total GobbledygookBy Flatlander11A primer on how to use fancy words to convey nothing. See if you can make heads or tails out of these sentences:"In this sense, ideology should not

be dismissed as an 'error' but regarded as an unwitting indication of a truth' so that the Real or the unconscious is not so much hidden as obscured in plain view, disavowed even as it is spoken, audible in the silences of language itself. Surely this sentence sets a record for the most number of oxymorons ("audible in the silences", "not so much hidden as obscured"). Not yet convinced? Try this one: "Here, Žižek is advocating for a universality or truth-dimension targeting postmodernism's relativism, and in particular Foucault's historicism (ie the view that everything is historical). As Vighi and Feldner point out, Žižek distinguishes between 'historicism' and 'historicity', understanding the latter to mean that the Real is an absent cause or imminent exception that always returns in history: the Real is not 'an underlying Essence' but a 'rock that trips up every attempt to integrate it into the symbolic order'. A modern Alice in Wonderland, using words ("Real") to mean what he pleases. Save your money and avoid a headache.

In the last two decades especially, we have witnessed the rise of celebrity forms of global humanitarianism and charity work, spearheaded by entertainment stars, billionaires, and activist NGOs (e.g. Bob Geldof, Bono, Angelina Jolie, Madonna, Bill Gates, George Soros, Save Darfur, Médecins Sans Frontières). This book examines this new phenomenon, arguing that celebrity humanitarianism legitimates, and indeed promotes, neoliberal capitalism and global inequality. Drawing on Slavoj Žižek's work, the book argues how celebrity humanitarianism, far from being altruistic, is significantly contaminated and ideological: it is most often self-serving, helping to promote institutional aggrandizement and the celebrity brand; it advances consumerism and corporate capitalism, and rationalizes the very global inequality it seeks to redress; it is fundamentally depoliticizing, despite its pretensions to activism; and it contributes to a postdemocratic political landscape, which appears outwardly open and consensual, but is in fact managed by unaccountable elites.

"Kapoor cuts through the tsunami of celebrity banality like a hyper-critical porpoise with purpose - a sleek, brilliant riposte to gormless media values." - Paul A. Taylor, University of Leeds "Ilan Kapoor's stunning new book exposes the most appealing--and thus most dangerous--sacred cows of contemporary ideology: the humanitarian actor, the billionaire philanthropist, and the NGO. Kapoor shows that it is precisely where we feel most emotionally satisfied that we must be most suspicious. Celebrity Humanitarianism represents a landmark in the critique of ideology and a decisive blow in the struggle against apolitical ethics." - Todd McGowan, University of Vermont "Celebrity Humanitarianism critiques an intriguing phenomenon: spectacularized humanitarianism. Publics are increasingly mobilized as visual witnesses to images of stars doing relief work or posing with newly transnationally adopted children; "benevolent" corporate billionaires on redemptive missions in Africa; or iconic manoeuvres of semiotically savvy NGOs. Against the popular adulation of these figures or their liberal recuperation, Kapoor's brilliant Žižekian analysis complicates this picture with a disarming thesis: celebrity humanitarianism legitimates and indeed promotes liberal capitalism and perpetuates global inequity. This is an enjoyable yet critical, serious and non-celebratory approach to celebrity and corporate philanthropy, as well as the disavowal characteristic of our post-political age." - Diane Rubenstein, Cornell University, USA ""This short book is engaging, witty and it carries an important message. Highly recommended to all, especially to those who like Bono." - Ray Kiely, Professor of International Politics, Queen Mary University of London "The book offers a rich theoretical argument against the empty posturing that follows global disasters." - Joseph Breen, National Post "Kapoor avoids the trite and banal and refuses to return to the all too easy suggestion that something is better than nothing. Instead, Kapoor's text skilfully addresses the role of celebrity charities by systematically deconstructing the manner in which they justify and support the very inequities that they purport to challenge ... the issue [of global celebrity charity] is under-discussed and rarely critiqued, making Kapoor's cutting and insightful analysis long overdue." - Sonja Killoran-McKibbin, Undercurrents; Journal of Critical Environmental Studies "The strength of the book is the way in which it brings together the three examples of celebrity humanitarianism in order to conduct a Žižekian ideology critique. The Žižekian analysis is pursued consistently throughout the book and as such the book reads as an accessible introduction to the work of Žižek and how it can be used to conduct a critical analysis of development." - Louise Mubanda Rasmussen, Journal of Development Studies "There have been several scholarly attempts in recent years to grasp the phenomenon of celebrity humanitarianism, but few have been as thorough as Kapoor's contribution in this book." - Maria Gabrielsen Jumbert, Journal of Peace Research "... a refreshing counterpoint to the glib celebrity worship that too often goes unchallenged ... Kapoor is at his strongest when he points out that it is too easy to simply blame the fame-hungry celeb we are all complicit in this particular charade." - Jenny Holland, The Risky Shift "Kapoor provides a scathing critical analysis that will serve as a benchmark for future study of relations between celebrities, the private sphere, and politics ... Kapoor's work should be of appeal to scholars seeking to gain a better understanding of the culture industry, political economics, development, and international politics. Kapoor has laid the groundwork for additional Žižekian critiques ... of celebrity humanitarianism." - Sandra Via, New Political Science "The book critically analyses the humanitarian work of three contemporary types of celebrity humanitarianism namely entertainment stars, philanthropic billionaires and NGOs that for their spectacular reputation and highly mediated character have become celebrities in their own right. The book is certainly relevant to those investigating celebrities and humanitarianism." - Carlo Piccinini, E-IR, May 2013 About the

Author Ilan Kapoor is a Professor at the Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University, Toronto. He is the author of *The Postcolonial Politics of Development* (Routledge, 2008). His research interests include critical development studies, postcolonial theory/politics, psychoanalysis and Marxism, participation/democratic theory, and social and environmental movements.