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## Star Power, Pandemics, and Politics: The Role of Cultural Elites in Global Health Security

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Star Power, Pandemics, and Politics  
The Role of Cultural Elites in Global Health Security

by

Holly Lynne Swayne

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
School of Interdisciplinary Global Studies  
University of South Florida

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## **Dedication**

To my mom, whose strength has inspired and saved me in ways I cannot begin to describe. To my dad, who taught me by example about grace and compassion, and always believed in the beauty of my dreams. To my brother, who never gave up on me, and is always one of my most enthusiastic supporters. And finally, to my niece, may she find her own passion in life as she grows into the greatness she is meant for.

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## Abstract

Celebrities have historically served a variety of roles in society ranging from the inspirational to the cautionary, utilizing their platforms of visibility to promote themselves, their work, as well as their social and political causes. This study focuses on celebrities as activists engaging with global health issues, with particular attention to the form this engagement takes, the publicity it receives in the mass media, and the types of global health issues that receive the most celebrity attention. An interdisciplinary approach drawing from theories of power, social movement theory, agenda-setting, and cultural studies is used to achieve greater understanding of underlying components of the framework within which this activism exists.

Guiding this research is the primary question, “*How do cultural elites prominent in U.S. media impact global health security?*”, where the specific subset of cultural elites examined are the most influential Hollywood celebrity actors in film. A series of secondary research questions provide insight on the multiple dimensions of celebrity influence and impact in the context of global health security. Specifically, how does celebrity activism affect global health security discourses? What “truths” are created by celebrity activism in global health? Finally, are the issues these celebrities are advocating for, the most pressing global health concerns?

Utilizing a mixed-methods approach (quantitative-qualitative-quantitative), I demonstrate the most frequent forms of celebrity engagement with their affiliated global health organizations, as well as the media attention devoted to this engagement in the most prominent U.S.

newspapers. Furthermore, I offer empirical evidence of how global health engagement of the most influential celebrities compares to the most pressing global health concerns, as expressed through an analysis of the global health issues that claim the most lives globally. Results demonstrate the most effective application of celebrity resources, and determine whether celebrities can be differently situated for greater impact in global health security overall.

## Chapter 1

### Acting Activists: Performing for Global Health

*“Once you achieve everything you’ve wanted, what do you do? You give back. But you have to find your own voice and use it for a cause that you feel is important.” -Edi Gathegi<sup>1</sup>*  
(Gathegi, 2012)

Celebrities engage the public by entertaining, educating, promoting and inspiring through the various tangible and intangible platforms made available to them. Social media has taken this reach to new levels, enabled by societies defined by their insatiable consumption of information. Omnipresent throughout the various print and electronic media, celebrities’ every action may become fair game for public consumption and scrutiny. The visibility afforded these public figures by both the literal and metaphorical lens has also allowed them the opportunity to share their political ideals and personal causes with their audiences.

In this dissertation, I focus on celebrity engagement with the issue of global health, specifically. By analyzing multiple dimensions of influence celebrities have on global health security, I argue that the health issues with which celebrities publicly engage are not the most pressing global health security concerns. I further demonstrate that media representations of celebrity activism frame significant political global issues as parenthetical to the personal and

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<sup>1</sup> Edi Gathegi is an American actor born in Kenya, most known for his roles in Hollywood blockbuster films such as *Gone Baby Gone* (2007), *The Twilight Saga* (2008, 2009, 2012), *X-Men: First Class* (2011) and television shows including *House* (2007) and *The Blacklist* (2015-2017). A complete list of the actor’s work can be found at <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1346230/>.

professional lives of the celebrities themselves, contributing in this way to normative implications that promote underdeveloped public global health security discourses. By analyzing the forms of engagement celebrities choose in order to promote health issues, I also determine the ways in which institutions and organizations seeking to enlist famous supporters can direct outreach and recruitment efforts for greater celebrity involvement. Specifically, I demonstrate that active participation in events or campaigns intended to raise awareness or funds for a particular global health issue is the most frequent form of celebrity engagement, superseding mere appearance at an event or a public financial donation to a cause.

As this chapter unfolds, I will provide background information on the issue of global health security, and highlight notable historical applications of celebrity resources within institutions and movements. The purpose and significance of this study will then be discussed, as will the research question and hypothesis. Terms will also be defined for clarity, before the study's limitations are acknowledged. Finally, this chapter will include a brief overview of following chapters.

## **Background**

Governments, organizations, and institutions address global issues of interest to them by using a combination of material, political, and social resources they have at their disposal. One of the resources they have available to further their causes is the social capital afforded by persons of high visibility or celebrity status, who often serve as high profile activists. These cultural elites promote issues of social or political interest, and in turn may become activists with political legitimacy. Since high profile activism is an increasing phenomenon in both national

and international social and political contexts, it is important to understand the influence this type of activism exerts on affairs of global significance.

The United Nations has played a key role in legitimizing celebrities as advocates for global causes since they first appointed comedic actor Danny Kaye as the first “Goodwill Ambassador” for the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) in 1954. Although a few other celebrities including Peter Ustinov (1968) and Audrey Hepburn (1989) later became involved in global aid efforts, it was under the direction of Secretary General Kofi Annan, who served from 1997-2006, that the U.N. expanded its use of celebrities as representatives for U.N. missions. Unlike previous secretaries-general, Annan was more attuned to the evolution of modern media, and its potential to raise the visibility of his institution and the issues it promoted. During his tenure in the UN’s highest post, he emphasized partnerships with NGOs, corporations, as well as an increasingly self-aware global civil society (Annan and Mousavizadeh, 2012). Guided by Annan’s vision of utilizing modern media as a platform of influence, in 1997, the U.N. began actively recruiting celebrities as public relations figures to mobilize support for programs focusing on human rights, health, and environmental justice. By 2010, high-profile figures such as Jackie Chan, Nicole Kidman, and Michael Douglas (among many others) had joined the ranks of more than 175 active Goodwill Ambassadors and 12 elite Messengers of Peace representing the various U.N. agencies around the world as an extension of the organization’s public relations strategy (Huliaras and Tzifakis, 2010).

In the United States, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is just one organization that has enlisted celebrities for its campaigns. Celebrities including Geena Davis, Josh Hartnett, and Uma Thurman have been included in USAID’s “FWD” campaign, which addresses diseases propagated by drought, famine, and lack of access to vaccines in the Horn of

Africa (USAID, 2012). The partnership between the non-governmental organization, Human Rights Watch, and the celebrity-oriented philanthropy consulting firm, Global Philanthropy Group, is another example of the shifting discourse on global social, economic, and health issues from the realm of politics to the realm of popular culture as well (Global Philanthropy Group, 2012). U.S. based organizations such as the Global Philanthropy Group and the Entertainment Industry Fund mobilize celebrities around philanthropic causes, operating under the premise that celebrities have become change-makers with symbolic value, capable of affecting public discourse on matters of global significance.

One example of celebrity influence came in 2006, when actress Lucy Liu appeared on the Oprah Winfrey Show after representing UNICEF on a visit to earthquake victims in Pakistan. On that day, following her interview, traffic on the UNICEF website increased by 91 percent, calls increased by 300 percent, and donations rose by 240 percent compared to an average weekday (Boustany, 2007). Similarly, following George Clooney's interview to Oprah Winfrey where they spoke on television about his trip to war-torn Darfur, donations to UNICEF increased by 20%. However, the timeframe for this increase was not noted in the literature citing this increase (Boustany, 2007; Huliaras and Tzifakis, 2010).

Actress Angelina Jolie acknowledges that celebrities have a responsibility to be knowledgeable and committed to the issues they speak of, and has become an example of the successful application of fame towards global diplomacy. Despite early fears that her activism would mirror her messy personal life, Jolie established herself as a responsible and dedicated promoter of human rights, and is now perhaps the most recognizable Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR). In 2005, she was awarded the Global Humanitarian Action Award by the United Nations Association for her activism and

diplomatic engagement (Cooper, 2008). After an interview she granted CNN the following year, donations to the UNHCR increased “by more than half a million dollars”, although once again, the timeframe for this increase is unclear (Boustany, 2007; Huliaras and Tzifakis, 2010).

MTV’s nonpartisan “Rock the Vote” campaign provides another example of celebrity activism correlating with increased public engagement. This campaign seeks to motivate people between ages 18-29 to participate in presidential elections by enlisting celebrities to create public service announcements, visit college campuses, and deliver concerts in order to raise awareness of the importance of political participation. In 2008, the turnout of voters in the campaign’s target age group had doubled that in previous elections. The campaign has also generated 2.25 million voter registration applications, a substantial amount of which were from underrepresented populations including African Americans, Latino, and unmarried women voters who otherwise may not have been interested in or connected to the political process (Rock the Vote, 2012). Although this information shows a correlation between celebrity engagement and political participation, other factors such as the appeal of the candidate himself to these populations, or what is known as the Obama Effect, would have to be taken into account in order to determine causality.

The 2014 social media campaign to raise awareness for ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or Lou Gehrig’s disease), known as the Ice Bucket Challenge was an internet-based sensation that calls on participants to donate funds toward research of ALS or have ice water dumped on them. A number of celebrities took to the challenge in support for the cause, broadcasting their participation across social media for their millions of followers. According to TIME, the ALS Association raised \$79.7 million between July 29<sup>th</sup> and August 25<sup>th</sup> in 2014 when the challenge was first popularized, compared to only \$2.5 million during the same period



in the previous year (Couch, 2014). Furthermore, according to the ALS Association, the increased funds raised as a result of this challenge contributed to improved patient services, education, and research, which led to the discovery of a gene (NEK1) that is associated with ALS (Rogers, 2016). Therefore, preliminary data would suggest that this was an effective campaign enabled by the combination of high-profile participation and social media ubiquity.

More recently, in 2018, the Golden Globe Awards departed from the lighthearted standards of prior years as many celebrities chose to use the awards show as a platform to convey a message of resistance to abusive power structures. The colorful couture of past shows was replaced by predominantly black (yet equally elegant) garments, and some accessorized their outfits with pins displaying the message *#TimesUp*, in reference to the movement begun by Hollywood celebrities in response to the *#MeToo* movement against sexual harassment in the workplace (Time's Up, 2018). Some celebrities furthermore chose activists as their dates instead of their romantic partners, sharing for the evening their platform of visibility to audiences tuning in. Although these gestures are by no means solutions to the underlying issues that necessitate such action and/or resistance, they are one step in directing public attention to issues of political, social, and economic salience, even if their influence is itself the result of a modern form of idolatry, as will be discussed further in this dissertation.

## **Significance**

Globalization has increased the ease and extent of interactions among nations, states, people, and cultures, where physical proximity is no longer the exclusive determinant of accessibility. States are not discrete territories unaffected by the internal affairs of others, but

rather part of an intricate system of global interactions that influence the social, financial, and health concerns carried forward. The interconnection and interdependence among people throughout the world means that concerns in one region may affect the stability in another, potentially posing a threat to its geographic neighbors as well as the entire globe. Financial disadvantage and lack of resources for instance, both cause and result from poor health. Physical violence, whether individual or organized, can in turn manifest from the ranks of poor, sick, and disenfranchised populations, leading to internal political unrest and physical violence as an expression of discontent. Such instability creates an intricate cycle of disease, poverty, and violence whose multifaceted implications may transcend territorial boundaries. Transportation channels that physically enable travel and trade, also enable the movement of people, products, and ideologies that can spread such instability throughout the region, or even affect distant populations. For this reason, global health is intimately connected to issues of globalization and security as well. The pursuit of global health is therefore a leading concern among national governments, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) worldwide.

The Global Health Initiative created under the Obama administration sought to lessen gender-based inequalities that lead to health disparities, reduce the prevalence of AIDS, and eliminate infectious disease and preventable child deaths (GHI, 2013). Agencies that contributed to the GHI mission include the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department of State, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and its U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as well as the Peace Corps and the Department of Defense. Global partners include UNICEF, the World Health Organization, recipient countries, other governments and donors, the private sector and nongovernmental organizations (GHI,

2013). These partners have in turn worked with celebrities as high profile activists to raise awareness for their causes, and generate greater support—both ideological and material—by using the visibility afforded to them by their celebrity status.

Prompted by the proliferation of technologies that extend a celebrity’s visibility across multimedia platforms, this study also examines the way mass media represents celebrity activism in global health. It is important to understand the demographic characteristics of the audience that receives these messages, since these individuals also potentially contribute to the status of global health through charitable donations they choose to make to various organizations. Data on the demographic composition of readers aged 18 years or older for the top 5 newspapers analyzed in this study revealed that the majority of readers were male college graduates, with an annual household income of \$150,000 or more (Audience Snapshot Database, 2016). Moreover, according to the Almanac of American Philanthropy (n.d.), a non-profit organization dedicated to the interests of philanthropists, individuals possessing at least a Bachelor’s Degree are 50 percent more likely to make donations than those without a college education, indicating that readers of the top U.S. newspapers are among the most likely population to contribute to global health causes as well. Since more foreign aid, some of which is allocated to global health, from the United States as a whole is given by private donations via private charities, religious organizations, corporations, foundations, volunteers, and colleges than by government aid (Hudson Institute , 2013), it is important to understand factors that can influence donor behavior.

## Research Question and Hypothesis

This dissertation will be motivated by several questions, which fall under the overall research question of “*How do cultural elites prominent in U.S. media impact global health security?*”

This question will be answered through the lens of a series of secondary questions that collectively address influence in the context of celebrity activism. Specifically, how does celebrity activism affect global health security discourses? What “truths” are created by celebrity activism in global health? Finally, some issues receive greater attention and promotion than others. Are the issues these celebrities are advocating for, the most pressing global health concerns?

Cultural elites who engage with globally significant issues contribute to the creation, adoption, and implementation of programs whose goal is the promotion of global health security. This contribution is enabled by dynamic processes whereby the power of cultural elites is constituted, mediated, and expressed, allowing them to effectively mobilize economic, social, and political resources towards initiatives aimed at addressing global health security concerns. However, it is my hypothesis that these efforts by celebrities who are prominent in U.S. media are not most frequently allocated towards the global health issues that have the greatest effect on global health security. It is also my hypothesis that media representations of celebrity activism detract from meaningful global health security discourses by extolling the famous persona rather than their engagement with significant global issues.

## **Key Terms and Definitions**

Due to varied ways in which the main terms of this study have been defined by scholars, it is necessary to clarify the way in which these terms are being used in my research.

### *Cultural Elites*

The term “cultural elites” in this study refers to persons who have achieved high visibility due to their social status or prominence in popular culture, thereby becoming social agents capable of effecting changes to the social and/or political environment. The specific group of cultural elites this study will examine is that of “celebrities”, who are operationalized to refer to the subset of cultural elites who, emerging from the entertainment industry, sports, family legacies, significant events, business, or from politics, are “persons who, in the eyes of other members of the society, are especially remarkable and attract universal attention” (Tsaliki et al., 2011). Therefore, celebrity is a “social category that captures a position of well-knownness of an individual”, without consideration for the length of time this celebrity status lasts or the way this status was attained (Driessens, 2013). Celebrity status is a dynamic process constructed through the interaction of: 1) the celebrity industry, which encompasses all those concerned with selling the celebrity’s image, 2) the media, which is interested in capturing audience attention and ratings, 3) the celebrity him/herself, and 4) the public. For the purposes of this study, only celebrities who have engaged primarily with the American public will be examined as a relevant subset of cultural elites, and specifically, professional actors who are active in Hollywood constitute the specific group of celebrities selected to serve as the study population.

### *Celebrity Activism and Engagement*

The term *activism* encompasses multiple forms of agency and engagement in support or opposition of a particular politically charged or globally significant issue. The issues of interest to activists have ranged from civil rights to environmental justice, gun rights to anti-war movements and beyond. Activism may occur within a social movement or independent of it, and can sometimes lead to the formation of a social movement, illustrating the interconnection between the two. For example, AIDS activism, which evolved into a larger AIDS movement, emerged from within broader anti-apartheid and gay rights movements (Zoller, 2005). Activism can take the form of political campaigning, lobbying, boycotts, strikes, street marches, fundraising, or creating materials (audio, visual, or written) to be published in the mass or social media. Similarly, in discussing the engagement of cultural elites in global health issues within the context of this study, the term “engagement” refers to any of the following:

- Speaking before Congress, the United Nations, or other governance institution
- Participation in protests / demonstrations / social movements
- Appearance in mass media to promote relevant global health issue
- Social media activism (i.e. via Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, etc.)
- Personal financial contributions
- Public appearances aimed at raising awareness and/or funds
- Making of documentaries and films (as either actor, guest, producer, writer, or other contributor), songs (as either singer, writer, producer, etc.), or other artistic productions that address relevant global health issues
- Establishment of foundations (example: Clinton Global Initiative, Carter Foundation, etc.)
- Partnerships with NGOs, IGOs, and governmental organizations
- Operating in the diplomatic world (as celebrity diplomats) through exchanges with state officials.

### *Global Health Security*

The next term that must be clarified is “global health security”. Although this term lacks a single, universal conception among scholars as to the character of threats, there is a focus on

the threat of diseases that have the potential to disrupt the global social, economic, political, as well as health environment. Therefore, in this study, the term “global health security” is used to describe a set of health related transborder threats against the social, economic, and political stability of the global environment, issues which are frequently interconnected and interdependent (Lakoff, 2010; Rushton, 2011; Ryan and Glarum, 2008). Under this conception, health issues that claim the most lives globally, including fast spreading or emerging infectious disease, non-communicable disease, as well as other conditions, carry an inherent destabilizing effect for the status of global health security. As the leading global authority on health, World Health Organization (WHO) data on disease prevalence and mortality is therefore essential to assessing the urgency of global health security threats in this research.

### **Methodological Considerations and Limitations**

Case study methodology was selected as most appropriate to answer the research questions, where the most influential Hollywood actors would serve as the subset of cultural elites studied. I developed an instrument I have named the *Celebrity Influence Quotient*, or CIQ, to isolate the top five actors, who in descending order of influence were identified as Tom Cruise, Robert Downey, Jr., Bradley Cooper, Leonardo DiCaprio, and Matt Damon. Analysis of their public engagement with charitable organizations allowed me to identify the global health issues with which they were active during the ten-year period between 2006 and 2016, while the top newspapers in the U.S. provided further data on media representations of that activism.

Among data sources used to identify the actors’ associated global health issues was the *Look to the Stars* database, which provided information regarding the celebrities’ organizational associations. Though it is the most comprehensive publicly-available database for celebrity

activism and charitable work, one limitation is that it is not necessarily all-inclusive. As one example of its deficits, the active participation of Bradley Cooper with the Parker Institute for Cancer Immunotherapy, despite having received recognition in various print and online magazines (Miller M. , 2016; Pearson, 2016; Willis, 2016), was not listed among his associations in Look to the Stars at the time of research, and for the purposes of methodological integrity, it was necessary to exclude this organization's data in this dissertation research. The search for global health issues *and* organizations each celebrity engaged with was intended to broaden the scope of results presented in newspapers examined, however, any issues not listed in Look to the Stars were not included. For this reason, it is possible that there are other issues and organizations with which the five celebrities were associated, but not recognized in this study.

With regard to the global health issues that were analyzed, the multidimensional nature of health itself is inherently problematic for categorization of global health issues into discrete conditions, in that it is challenging to attribute a numerical figure to deaths caused by a disease with multiple potential etiologies. For example, although air pollution has been linked to diseases causing the highest global mortality rates, including stroke, ischaemic heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), respiratory infections, and lung cancer (World Health Organization, n.d.), the etiology of these diseases is not necessarily air pollution. Another consideration related to the available health data is the self-reporting nature of state data on disease prevalence and/or mortality. The inconsistent methods of data collection, measurement, and reporting between states means that it is possible that the numbers presented to (and consequently by) the World Health Organization will not be entirely accurate representations of global health, but rather estimates of global health status. Nevertheless, this data remains the



most reliable and comprehensive health data currently available, and any minor numerical discrepancies in mortality would not affect the integrity of the conclusions reached in this study.

Similarly, I reiterate that celebrity influence will be assessed in this study based on publicly available information. Since some celebrities choose to support causes anonymously, the available data may not accurately reflect actual contributions of all celebrities. For example, it is possible that not all celebrity donations were made in the public eye, thus underrepresenting the celebrity's true engagement in this study. However, since this research is also concerned with the public influence and norm activation potential of celebrity activists vis a vis the representation of that engagement in the public media, publicly available data still serves the research goals. Although elite interviews were intended to complement any publicly available data on celebrity activism, access to cultural elites who are active in global health initiatives is another limitation of this study. However, although any information gathered from such elite interviews would enhance the scope of knowledge on specific high profile activists, it was not essential to addressing the research question of this study, since various Internet and media sources also provide a wealth of information on this type of activism.

Finally, regarding the identification of actors serving as cases for this study, data compiled to generate the Celebrity Influence Quotient (CIQ) score is mutable, where the introduction of any new film production into the actor's body of work is capable of shifting the ranks in either direction. For this reason, it must be noted that the CIQs calculated for this research, and all contingent data produced, represent a metaphoric screenshot in time. Data on any manifestations of activism is similarly perpetually in motion, as each new organization or campaign the actor chooses to align himself with has the potential to affect the frequency of each type of engagement celebrities choose as a group. It is therefore important to view this study as

a framework through which to examine celebrity activism, rather than a finite discussion of who is influential and how they are using their influence. It is my contention that the data suggests behavioral, social, and cultural trends, and is therefore useful in directing future political engagement, irrespective of who occupies the seats of influence at a particular time.

### **The Phenomenally Famous**

Celebrity itself is phenomenologically grounded in the coalescence of cultural, political, sociological, psychological, and business processes, and therefore requires an interdisciplinary approach to understand its multiple dimensions. In Chapter 2, I survey and assess theories of power, social movement theory (with particular attention to framing), cultural studies, and agenda-setting as a means through which to analyze celebrity activism, with particular attention to the construction of celebrity influence, the relationship between celebrities and media representation, and ways in which celebrities contribute to discourses on issues of global consequence, such as global health security. Existing literature is expressly connected to the dissertation's focus, while a critical examination of gaps in the literature is also addressed.

The study's research design and methodology are detailed in Chapter 3, where I elaborate on the use of a small n comparative case study, mixed methods approach, and use of internet databases in the collection of relevant data, along with a justification of why these methods of data collection are best suited to the study at hand. Specific cases, as well as the sources and types of participants, i.e. sampling methods, are also discussed in depth, including my development of an instrument to measure celebrity influence among Hollywood actors, the Celebrity Influence Quotient, or CIQ. Based on cases identified using the CIQ, I then offer

empirical evidence in Chapter 4 of initiatives related to global health that the identified population of high profile activists have supported and advocated for, as well as the character of their involvement for each initiative, and the publicity received for this involvement. Once their global health engagement and/or activism has been identified, it is then cross-referenced with the data gathered on the most pressing global health concerns, in order to determine if high profile activists' efforts are being applied for the greatest impact in global health, i.e. causes affecting the greatest number of people globally. This chapter also includes an analysis and interpretation of collected data, and a discussion of research findings.

The final chapter of the dissertation provides a summary of the study, along with my conclusions based on the information garnered from my research. In conclusion, this section will situate my findings in a greater context, and discuss questions that fall beyond the scope of this dissertation as suggestions for potential avenues of future research. Any charts or tables created to visually represent the data that complements the narrative elaboration of findings not included in the main body of the dissertation are provided in the Appendices section for reference, along with any supplemental material used for illustrative purposes.

## Chapter 2

### Star Power: Evaluating the Discussion

The term *celebrity* may evoke notions of paparazzi, glamorous galas, and diamond-studded beauties dripping with the latest couture. Yet there are significant political processes that are facilitated by such high profile figures, which have previously been largely overlooked by academia. Despite growing interest from the media as well as academia on the intersection of celebrity and politics, little systematic empirical research has been conducted on the extent and impact of this intersection. Furthermore, although there is increased visibility and prominence of celebrities in both domestic and international affairs, much of the existing literature on celebrity politics has focused only on its implications for democracy. Previous scholarly research that has focused more specifically on the role of high profile activists in influencing global politics has concentrated primarily on their involvement in trying to change the policies of other states with regard to human rights abuses (Cooper, 2008; Huliaras and Tsifakis, 2010; Tsaliki et al., 2011), with little academic work done on the effects of high profile activism on global health security specifically.

According to Marsh et al. (2010), scholarly literature on celebrity politics tends to fall into one of three categories. The first category is literature that discusses celebrity itself, with sections devoted to politics. The second category is literature devoted to the media and politics, with sections discussing celebrity. The final and least robust category includes literature devoted

specifically to celebrity politics, however, these works tend to focus on ways in which to classify celebrity politicians, their roles in politics and society, and whether the crossover between celebrity and politics benefits or damages the democratic process. It is these three categories of literature that will inform the discussion of celebrity politics here.

### **Categories of Celebrity**

In order to better understand celebrity as an identifying characteristic, one must become familiar with existing conceptualizations of the term. Existing literature on celebrity politics offers multiple ways to categorize celebrities in politics, with two broad approaches as their cornerstone. The first approach is focused on the origin of the individual's celebrity status, while the second addresses the nature of the celebrity's political engagement (Marsh, t' Hart, and Tindall, 2010).

The most basic categorization of celebrity politicians is made by Street (2004, 2010), who follows the second approach, discussing celebrity politics in terms of politicians who have pursued fame and celebrity status for electoral purposes, and celebrities who have become high profile activists in political matters. Thus, he examines only two categories: the celebrity *politician* and the *celebrity* politician. The first category, the celebrity *politician*, or CP1, refers to an elected official or nominated candidate who uses either preexisting ties to the world of entertainment, or establishes new associations in an attempt to gain popularity and political advancement. In the United States, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Clint Eastwood, and Jesse Ventura are prime examples of the CP1 category, while the political campaign and eventual election of Donald Trump as President of the United States embodies this phenomenon at the highest level.

The second category, the *celebrity* politician, or CP2, refers to celebrities who engage in political debates and/or advocate for specific public policy agendas without seeking political office. This is the most prevalent category of celebrity politicians, including stars such as Madonna, Bono, and Angelina Jolie to name a few. The political engagement of CP2s is recognized either by media attention for their political opinions, the ability to garner audiences with politicians to discuss particular issues or policies, or audience support that can include increased contributions to the celebrity's cause or other actions that exceed traditional fan behavior.

Although Street acknowledges that there are nuances within and overlaps between these two types of celebrity politicians, this binary categorization fails to address the various levels of political engagement celebrity politicians pursue. For example, although certain celebrities are given roles as institutionally-supported advocates for particular causes or organizations (i.e. United Nations Ambassadors), others may simply express their opinions in concise soundbites via available social media outlets. Whereas the former may place the celebrity's political voice before a number of policy makers, the latter will reach the celebrity's fan base, comprised predominantly of members of the general public, and will tend to be a superficial, and possibly ephemeral, presentation of the issue. Understanding the extent of a politician's association with celebrity culture (in the case of CP1s), and the reach of a celebrity's engagement with political issues (in the case of CP2s) is needed to further contribute towards an understanding of the meaningful social, cultural, and political implications of the relationship between celebrity and politics. Furthermore, closely connected to the celebrity politician taxonomy is the legitimization of celebrities as representatives of popular opinion, which would in turn affect their effectiveness as political activists, and yet Street does not address this in due detail. Unless

there is an understanding of the cultural underpinnings that bind celebrity to power, such categorizations remain only fractional.

‘t Hart and Tindall (2009) further the discussion by delving deeper into the sort of involvement celebrities have in politics. By analyzing the ways in which celebrities and politicians use fame for political action, they distinguish celebrity activists from celebrity endorsers, celebrity politicians, and the politician-turned-celebrity. Though ‘t Hart and Tindall do not detail the characteristics of all the typologies they reference, the celebrity activist and celebrity endorser are clearly related to Street’s (2004) typology of the *celebrity* politician, or CP2, while the latter two categories of celebrity politician and politician-turned-celebrity exemplify Street’s definition of the *celebrity politician*, or CP1.

As the name would suggest, celebrity activists are those who take on a more dynamic role than mere endorsement of a cause, utilizing their material resources as well as their social capital to evoke media, public, or political attention to a particular issue. However, the authors argue that in order to be effective activists, these celebrities must appear to be involved for reasons of genuine interest, rather than using their activism as a distraction from an otherwise negative public image as in the case, for example, of Paris Hilton’s well-timed if short-lived interest in African children following her incarceration for probation violation in 2007. Furthermore, ‘t Hart and Tindall recognize that effective celebrity activists must also have sufficient understanding of the issue for which they are advocating, in order to be taken seriously when they present it on their platforms. Of course, there has been multidisciplinary scholarly recognition (within political science, culture studies, and media studies, among others) of the importance of this quality for any effective activist, celebrity or not (Della Porta and Tarrow, 2005; Marsh et al., 2010, Pleios, 2011; Tsaliki et al., 2011).

Although celebrity activists as defined by ‘t Hart and Tindall retain their prominence in whatever sphere produced their celebrity status, the category of celebrity politicians refers to those who mostly abandon that sphere in favor of occupying or pursuing political office. Therefore, the means through which activism is enabled for these individuals now becomes the executive and/or legislative infrastructure rather than public media. The authors argue that use of existing institutional channels to further certain causes lends legitimacy to these celebrity politicians as official representatives of the public. Concurrently, media coverage enabled by their celebrity status offers a wider political opportunity structure than that available to traditional politicians, with the notable exception of a state-controlled “media landscape” (‘t Hart and Tindall, 2009, p. 23). However, though the authors acknowledge the role of the media in creating opportunities for those seeking public office, they fail to recognize the legitimizing potential of public opinion as expressed through fandom, and mediated through mass and social media outlets, for those celebrities who seek political influence outside of political office.

Further deconstruction of celebrity politicians’ typological distinctions is found in West and Orman’s (2003) exploration of celebrity politics, in which they distinguish five types of celebrity political groups. West and Orman divide celebrities into types based on the way their celebrity originates and how it relates to politics. The first is the category of *political newsworthies*, who like George Stephanopoulos and James Carville are politicians adept at publicly promoting their issues as well as themselves. By incorporating entertainment with information, they become interesting to watch, securing for themselves positions as regular spokespersons on political issues on major news networks (as Jesse Jackson, Sr. has done on CNN, for instance), which in turn only increases their visibility and celebrity status.



The second category of celebrities is known as *legacies*, who are family members of famous politicians. The Kennedy or Bush families are examples of legacies. These figures are often propelled towards political success by the reputational legacy of their famous family members, and may be ascribed advantages based on lineage rather than competence in their own political careers. However, success in their own political pursuits is not guaranteed. For instance, despite notable family ties, various descendants of the Roosevelt family have failed to establish themselves as political figures.

Third are *famed nonpoliticos – elected officials*, who pursue political office after gaining fame in fields outside of politics, and include such figures as Ronald Reagan, Sonny Bono, and Jesse Ventura. Unlike legacies, these figures are responsible for their own fame. The fourth category is of *famed nonpoliticos – lobbyists and spokespersons*, who advocate or lobby for specific issues, and may emerge from fame gained in the arts, such as Robert Redford and Paul Newman, or from the fields of sports, science or business fields, such as famed businessman and founder of Virgin Atlantic (among others), Richard Branson. These individuals may engender greater public trust, since they are not direct products of the stigmatized political world (West and Orman, 2003).

In the final category of celebrities as defined by West and Orman are *event celebrities*. These are individuals who gain fame or notoriety because of their involvement in a particular event, such as a tragedy or notable life situation. Their rise to fame is immediate following the event, and they are frequently sought by media to speak as authorities on the circumstances they were involved in. This spotlight generates a certain credibility that then translates to political legitimacy. For instance, using the example provided by West and Orman, Carolyn McCarthy became a prominent gun control activist after her husband was killed and her son paralyzed in

the Long Island Railroad shooting in 1993, and her recognition as a credible voice for change helped win her a seat in Congress in 1996.

Although West and Orman's taxonomy of celebrity politicians is useful in explaining celebrity activity in politics, it does not adequately address the dynamic relationship between politics and popular culture, and how activity in this dynamic realm expresses a form of political agency (Wheeler, 2013). Similarly, Boykoff and Goodman (2009) follow this approach of developing categorizations based on the origin of one's celebrity, distinguishing the following types of celebrities: a) celebrity actors, who use the celebrity status gleaned from the entertainment world to facilitate political activism, b) celebrity politicians, who bring attention to themselves as well as their causes through their positions in political office, c) celebrity athletes/sports figures, whose advocacy is notable due to their high visibility in sports entertainment, d) celebrity business people, who gain attention for high-profile investments or other business transactions that relate to their causes, e) celebrity musicians, who use their art as a platform for advocacy, and f) celebrity public intellectuals and figures, whose visibility in the public sphere (for instance as former politicians or political commentators) amplifies their activism. By exploring celebrity politics more narrowly through the lens of climate change activism, they suggest these categorizations in order to better understand what they term "Politicized Celebrity Systems".

In the formulation of these Systems, Boykoff and Goodman aptly address the varied and interdependent contexts that both enable and perpetuate celebrity political engagement, recognizing as elements of this System: a) celebrity performances, b) celebrity branding and causes, c) celebrity artifacts/images, d) political economics (PE) of celebrities and media, and e) audiences. Although the taxonomy of celebrity and its context are developed here in order to

better understand climate change activism, its value transcends this issue in that it can inform studies in celebrity activism for a much broader set of causes, including global health.

Each system of categorization, whether focusing on the particular fields from which celebrity activists emerge or the type of political engagement they pursue, is useful in its own way for examining different aspects of celebrity politics. However, a comprehensive understanding of the growing phenomenon of celebrity activism and political engagement requires an amalgamation of both of these ways of thinking. For instance, all celebrity actors, to borrow from Boykoff and Goodman's (2009) category, will not pursue the same level of involvement in their causes, and could therefore also fall under the categories of either a celebrity endorser, activist, or politician if using 't Hart and Tindall's categorizations (2009). Similarly, a famed nonpolitico-lobbyist or spokesperson as defined by West and Orman (2003) could also be either a celebrity endorser or activist. To recognize the origin of celebrity without simultaneously acknowledging the character and type of political involvement would be as if to present a square foot section of Monet's *Les Coquelicots* up close, and expect the viewer to make sense of the image. Although each pointillist brushstroke is essential to the painting, the only way to grasp its full meaning and beauty is to view all brushstrokes together as they have been combined to create the famous image of the poppy field. Similarly, only when all elements are regarded in tandem can the true image that is celebrity politics reveal itself.

### **Celebrities as Activists**

One underlying question throughout the literature is the legitimacy of celebrities as political activists ('t Hart and Tindall, 2009; Marsh, 't Hart and Tindall, 2010; Wheeler, 2010;

Caso and Hamilton, 2015). There is debate as to whether the platform of visibility that celebrities enjoy simply allows them to impose their own ideals on the public, or whether the nature of political engagement itself is transforming to include cultural elites as representatives of the public (Wheeler, 2013). Despite the scarcity of scholarly research on the relationship between pop culture and politics, most existing literature has been quick to dismiss or even condemn this relationship as harmful to the sanctity of the political system. These critics recognize the increasing presence of celebrity culture in both civil society and political arenas, but would prefer politics be kept separate from entertainment (Postman, 1985). However, to separate the two would be to ignore the cultural processes through which public will is formed, mediated, and expressed in the democratic system. Politics that are isolated from popular culture are therefore disconnected from the very citizens they are supposed to represent.

In an examination of the relational dynamics of citizenship, Robert Putnam (2000) contends that citizens have become disconnected from their societies, jeopardizing the very foundation of participatory democracy. In order to restore this connection, he argues that “new forms of social capital” may be necessary, where the two components of social capital are defined as associational activism and social trust (Norris, 2002). Originating in the works of Pierre Bourdieu (1970), Putnam further addresses the idea of social capital, defining it as “connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them” (Putnam, 2000, p. 19). However, it is important to note that Putnam’s notion of social capital is a “relational phenomenon” present at the societal, not the individual level, and therefore depends on the collective engagement of connected individuals functioning as a group. These connections result in a set of shared understandings and common goals that in turn engender cooperation and reciprocity, thereby adding value to these networks

as incubators of social trust. The resulting trust thus motivates members of these networks to produce more collective goods, stimulates political participation, and promotes responsible and effective governance. Yet Putnam argues that the infiltration of new technology, such as television for example, in leisure activities has moved the leisure culture away from collective experiences (i.e. movie-going, town hall meetings, etc.) towards a more privatized leisure system that reduces networks to individuals, thus eroding social capital. In the time since Putnam made this argument, however, evolving social media and online social networking systems have transformed methods of socialization, reducing the need (and perhaps the desire) to engage in face-to-face communication, while simultaneously connecting a much broader range of like-minded individuals through vast electronically-enabled networks. Therefore, rather than its erosion, this transformation may in fact signify a reconfigured avenue towards the achievement of social capital.

In a study of political party membership, Norris (2002) argues that “at the individual level, the role of agencies and of motivational interest are far more important in explaining membership than the standard social structural differences of gender, age, class, and education” (Norris, 2002, p. 134). Since political party membership is largely based on an individual’s values and evaluation of issues of import, this argument could be transferred to the specific political or social issues that form a person’s political ideology. Therefore, motivational interest gleaned from traditional social networks as well as modern social media networks could also explain voluntary association with a particular issue, including global health activism. However, instead of viewing social background as separate from participation in social networks, further research should explore the ways in which participation in such networks, which in turn

influence motivational interest, is also related to gender, age, class, and education, particularly as the norms of personal interaction are evolving with technological innovation.

Within the realm of governance studies, Bang (2004) posits that citizens are increasingly losing interest in party politics, and have a dwindling sense of duty in comparison to generations before them. Their political interest, he argues, is instead motivated by their need to develop themselves personally and to feel involved. Therefore, politicians must use the media and celebrity to persuade citizens to become engaged by supporting a certain political cause or candidate. However, in his emphasis of networks and “Everyday Makers”, who are citizens that participate in their society without using traditional state channels or established ideologies, Bang neglects the independent role of the media in framing political matters for public consumption. Furthermore, by focusing on the output of messages from a “demo-elite” (Wheeler, 2012) to the general public, Bang presents celebrity politics as an avenue of influence for these elite, rather than a discursively mediated space where norms and values are perpetually negotiated. Bang in this way presents citizens as largely unsystematic, making their political involvement unreliable and based on transient affinities rather than deep-rooted ideology. Furthermore, though Bang raises important questions regarding the relationship between politics, celebrities, and participatory democracy, the theoretical contribution to the study of celebrity politics would be enhanced by greater empirical substantiation. Bang’s argument that network governance has replaced hierarchy therefore seems underdeveloped, and moreover neglects the role of power relations and structural inequalities that exist within these networks.

The debate regarding the impact celebrity politics has on the public’s political engagement remains unresolved. Although critics have suggested that celebrity activism in politics may be “a new ‘pseudo politics’ designed to undermine civic engagement” (Tsaliki et al.,

2011), this overlooks the potential for celebrity activism to also be enabled by civic engagement. In a representative democracy, for instance, political leaders are given power when their constituents elect them. Similarly, celebrities are given their power by the ordinary people who choose to consume the entertainment they provide. Just as voters deny a politician the power of office by not electing him/her, so may consumers revoke a celebrity's power over the political system simply by denying them their attention.

It has also been suggested that the celebritization of politics and the politicization of celebrities performs the function of redefining democratic processes (John Street, 2004; van Zoonen, 2005; Corner, 2003; Pels, 2003). Furthering this discussion, Street (2003) argues that the integration of pop culture and politics does not weaken democracy or the political process. Instead, this integration is part of the evolution of politics, and any critical examination of the political system requires an evaluation of pop culture elements that influence constituents. Similarly, and in contrast to Putnam's thesis arguing a decline of civic engagement, the works of Henrik Bang (2003; 2004; 2009) discuss the shifting character of governance from a hierarchy to a network, placing value on the discursive processes that help define and redefine the forms of contemporary political participation. These discursive processes are mediated to a great extent in the realm of mass media and pop culture, as will be examined in greater depth in Chapter 3, which will delve into this study's methodology.

### **The Media Mirror: Perception and Presentation**

In 1964, Herminio Martins discussed celebrities as an "elite without power", who despite maintaining positions of high observability, are incapable of providing "life chances for the

public's benefit" (Wheeler, 2013, 1). However, later works have reconceptualized celebrity itself as a form of power, as celebrities become publicly engaged in political affairs, while at the same time acknowledging that politicians increasingly behave like celebrities themselves by seeking public visibility and self-promotion. By examining celebrities as prominent figures in global governance, Cooper (2008) furthers the discussion by drawing attention to the increasing significance of celebrity activists as diplomats of greater moral credibility than traditional politicians. Similarly, Yrjölä (2012) further argues that through their utilization of non-traditional platforms of political engagement, celebrities have become critical elements in global governance discourses. Their position as free agents rather than career politicians allows celebrities to adopt unpopular issues without consideration of a partisan agenda, and to inject new ideas into politically stagnant discussions. In this way, celebrity activists are also a type of social entrepreneur, i.e. individuals who address social problems in part by influencing society and its institutions to consider innovative solutions (Tsaliki et al., 2011).

The relationship between celebrity and politics can be further understood by examining the characteristics sought in political representatives themselves. Research conducted by Miller et al. (1986) on American elections between 1952 and 1984 showed that people evaluate political candidates based on five categories: competence, reliability, integrity, charisma, and personal traits. Whereas the first three categories refer to the candidates' past political successes, trustworthiness, and likelihood to accomplish what they say they will, the latter two categories place importance on more personal dimensions. Since politicians are public figures, even their private lives have become just another stage for them to perform on some level for their constituents. Their choice of hobbies, religious engagement, philanthropic activities, visible



associations, and choice of television network appearances are all partial reflections of who they are as private individuals, even as they become susceptible to public scrutiny.

It is therefore unsurprising that politicians often form high visibility relationships with celebrities as a way to draw attention and support for their various campaigns. Coleman (2003) claims that this is because politicians recognize that they are often perceived as being disconnected from the public, and therefore out of touch with the people who would vote for them. Furthermore, politicians are “among the least trusted groups in society, and their ranking seems to be going down” (van Zoonen, 2005, 5). This mistrust allows political outsiders, such as pop culture celebrities, to gain public trust more easily, since they are less likely to be perceived as the career politician stereotypes who have insinuated themselves into positions of power through greed and corruption. Therefore, by mixing with celebrities, politicians may appear more trustworthy by association.

West and Orman (2003) explore this association by providing case studies of notable Hollywood celebrities who have actively used their celebrity influence for political causes. Oprah Winfrey, for example, managed to bridge daytime talk shows with national politics when she invited both presidential candidates in the election of 2000 (George W. Bush and Al Gore) as guests on her popular TV show. The authors suggest that Bush’s appearance humanized him and helped win him votes from more moderate audiences that may not have previously related to the candidate. This example touches on the complex cultural processes that legitimize celebrity as a powerful tool in facilitating and directing public and political discourses.

To further explore the legitimization of celebrities as representatives of the public, I turn to the field of celebrity studies, and Richard Dyer’s seminal texts, *Stars* (1998, originally 1978) and *Heavenly Bodies* (1986), among the most influential, arguing that celebrities are in fact

representations of what it means to be human in our society. As such, he examines celebrities in three ways: 1) as a social phenomenon, 2) as images, and 3) as signs. Central to all three concepts of celebrity is ideology, which Dyer defines as “the set of ideas and representations in which people collectively make sense of the world and the society in which they live” (1998, p. 2). Ideologies are formed in response to the material circumstances societies seek to understand and learn from, and Dyer argues that although different ideologies exist in relation to various class, gender, cultural, and other social divisions, elements of these differing ideologies may converge to produce contradictions both between and among the various social groups. However, since most societies tend to be identified according to their dominant ideologies, the attention given to Hollywood by western society is a direct reflection of the dominant ideologies that legitimize and perpetuate that attention.

As a social phenomenon, Dyer delves into the reason celebrities exist, and the social context that produces and sustains them. Mass media offer an effective way for the various ideologies to infiltrate the public consciousness, and vie for a position of ideological hegemony that will affect the public’s values, interests, and pursuits. Of course, Dyer contends that such hegemony is unstable, since contradictory ideologies that comprise it must constantly be managed. For instance, although the principle of equality is championed in western societies and is expressed through things like universal education, suffrage, and healthcare, there is still incidence of varying degrees of inequality among the social classes, which raises questions regarding the implementation of this principle.

The media landscape also enables celebrities to paradoxically present themselves as simultaneously ordinary and exceptional, both an insider and outsider in the political arena (van Zoonen, 2005), despite their status as a sort of high profile elite. Ronald Reagan embodied this

duality, as he was an actor who eventually became the President of the United States. When he entered politics and sought office as governor of California, he was a high profile figure (extraordinary) due to his career as an actor, and yet he was also an ordinary member of society in the sense that he was an outsider to politics. By the time he sought and won the presidency, he had transformed into a political insider through his time as governor, but managed to retain an “intimate communicative style” that presented him as ordinary, without forgoing his exceptionality as former movie star (van Zoonen, 2005).

When celebrities expose themselves in moments of emotional intimacy to their fans, they often convey a sense of authenticity and accessibility that makes them seem more like ordinary people (Holmes and Redmond, 2006). A celebrity who is able to personify the sentiments of the audience is able to connect with them on a personal level despite their physical distance. However, entertainment celebrities are still most commonly recognized for their public rather than their private persona. This has prompted a common criticism of celebrity activism, that motivating factors for celebrities to engage in political initiatives may include a desire for self-promotion, to divert attention from a tarnished public image. Similarly, Meyer and Gamson (1995) question the motives of celebrities who engage in social movements, alluding to their inherent duality as both natural and artificial figures. The authors argue that in an effort to accommodate both their personal and professional personas, they may choose to participate in less controversial movements. Politically divisive issues are less on celebrities’ agenda, due to the potentially damaging effects of a campaign that risks alienating a large portion of one’s fan base and popular support.

The choice of cause(s) a celebrity supports is/are closely related to the construction of the celebrity identity, which comes from a combination of public relations techniques, media hype,

and the success of their film, song, television show, sports game, etc. as relevant. This, according to Boorstein (1987), also leads to illusions being mistaken for reality. In this way, celebrities who promote political issues are in effect replacing a mature understanding of the issue, or substance, with the spectacle offered by a commodified version of the issue (Kellner, 2010). The popularity celebrities enjoy does not inherently endow them with the knowledge or skills to effectively represent public opinion or interest. In fact, West and Orman (2003) argue that their often incomplete understanding of the political system risks trivializing “serious political issues... in the attempt to elevate celebrities to philosopher celebrities” (ibid, 118).

Critiques of celebrity politics also discuss the media as a means to manipulate public opinion and serve the interests of social and political elites, thereby providing these elites with a mechanism through which to distort the public sphere (Wheeler, 2013). While the attention given celebrities has transformed them into a sort of power elite (Mills, 1956), information offered the public through the media may be incomplete, and according to Habermas (1992), selected in the interest of the powerful few. Similarly, criticism of celebrities’ legitimacy as political activists in global health specifically has centered on the often shallow representations of global health problems, which many celebrities tend to oversimplify in the interest of concise “sound bites” or “bits” in the media that are crafted for their emotional impact. Further criticism arises when the solutions that celebrities endorse perpetuate the misconception that only Western aid and intervention can fix the problems of the global south.

Such one-dimensional prescriptions tend to neglect the historical context of foreign aid programs. Despite Cooper’s (2008) notable contributions to the study of celebrity activism, as he focuses on the African continent, he offers a normative discussion of celebrity diplomacy as a sort of tool of salvation and morality. This echoes the sentiment of many celebrity activists

themselves, however, constructing global problems as reliant upon western charity. In effect this serves to perpetuate an imposition of western solutions on the “helpless” LDCs (less developed countries), and neglects the historical and political space in which these problems exist.

Dambisa Moyo in her book *Dead Aid* (2009) further explores this phenomenon citing what she calls the “pop culture of aid”, through a historical examination of Western initiatives for the alleviation of poverty in Africa. Disregard for the local context in the implementation of aid efforts on the continent has often compounded an already desperate situation, increasing the levels of poverty, stifling potential for economic growth, and enabling corruption. Similarly, initiatives that fail to consider the social, historic, economic, and cultural complexity of the issues they purport to address seem self-indulgent, with greater emphasis on publicity than solutions. In the context of celebrity activism, it is therefore not enough to look at a celebrity’s association with a particular cause, but also to examine the rich contextual dimensions of their activism.

## **Legitimate Acting**

*“The celebrity... is an embodiment of a discursive battleground on the norms of individuality and personality within a culture. The celebrity’s strength or power as a discourse on the individual is operationalized only in terms of the power and position of the audience that has allowed it to circulate.” (Marshall, 1997, p. 65, in Boykoff and Goodman, 2009, p. 397)*

The way in which celebrity politics is researched and conceptualized has remained largely underdeveloped due to the disciplinary limitations of traditional political science studies. Therefore, much of the contemporary academic debate on celebrity activism has been limited in both breadth and depth of argument. By examining celebrity politics through the lens of humanitarianism, Yrjölä (2012) attempts to address this dearth of literature by stepping away

from the confines of disciplinary boundaries established by international relations (IR) theory, and recognizing the significance of representational and cultural practices in the understanding of political processes. Yrjölä further argues that the nature of global governance is evolving to a system of “more non-territorial and networked relations of governance of which NGOs as well as global celebrity diplomats form an increasingly visible part” (Yrjölä, 2012, 361). In this system, power relations are less contingent upon traditional hierarchies, while the practices of humanitarianism and development have become integral parts of the shift to a more liberal global governance.

Existing multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks can contribute to a better understanding of the ways in which celebrity activism enables public engagement with political processes in non-traditional political platforms. Specifically, theories of power are useful in explaining the influence cultural elites have on formal institutions (NGO, IGO, and government) that create global health policies, as well as the influence they have over public attention. Social movement theory with particular attention to framing helps further an understanding of the way celebrity power is constructed and expressed as influence over public interest and action towards global health causes, while cultural studies will help explain the way cultural materials are transmitted through various channels of communication. Furthermore, agenda-setting can be used to better understand the context in which cultural elites communicate their values and use the media as advocacy networks to promote certain global health causes to the public. It is through these theoretical contexts that celebrity activism will be analyzed in relation to global health security in this study.

When discussing individuals as a popular unit of analysis in international relations, most academic attention has centered on state agents (Burchill et al., 2005; Tsaliki et al.; Barnett and

Duvall, 2005). Tsaliki et al. (2010), however, move the discussion forward by looking at activists who are not agents of the state. In their discussion, they reference Sydney Tarrow, who suggested that transnational activists in general usually have a higher level of education, a larger social or professional network, and more opportunities for travel than other members of society. Celebrities tend to fulfill at least the latter two criteria (network and travel), suggesting that they may in fact make ideal activists.

Theories of power are integral to achieving an in-depth understanding of underlying components of celebrity activism, and to analyze the influence that celebrity exercises over the greater context of global health security. However, although power is central to political relations, there is no single universally accepted definition of power. In the context of International Relations theory, Mearsheimer defines it in terms of state assets and military capacity, with material resources as the basis of state power (Mearsheimer, 2001). But realist perspectives on power resulting from “brute material forces” (Burchill et al., 2005), provide a limited understanding of power, since power can have many forms of production and manifestation. For this reason, it is important to examine various ways in which power has been understood in the past, and how an interdisciplinary approach may provide a richer understanding of dynamic and ever-evolving power relations.

Hobbes explains in his seminal work on political philosophy, *Leviathan*, that “The Power of a Man... is his present means to obtain some future apparent Good” (Hobbes, 1994), while from his early works, he conceives of power as “faculties”, or the natural ability of humans to do things, enabled by their mental and physical capabilities as well as their knowledge (Hobbes, 1969). Although humans vary in their innate abilities, they share a fundamentally similar capacity for inflicting harm on others, which they inevitably exercise in their pursuit of power

and self-preservation. In this way, Hobbes expounds on a relational and zero-sum conceptualization of power that exists in a state of nature where trust is nonexistent, and in which one's gain is necessarily another's loss. Fear is a great motivator, and the fear of others exercising their powers is what ensures general social balance and peace.

In order to explain the form power takes beyond the state of nature and in the context of a civil society, Hobbes develops social contract theory, in which he conceives of power as the relative function of collective faculties allocated towards a common goal. In the pursuit of their common goals, individuals form associations, and eventually a social agreement thereby appointing a sovereign to represent their collective interests. However, sovereign power, which Hobbes describes as the result of an allocation of the subjects' natural power, is also described as a function of a lack of power from the subjects (Hobbes, 1994, 237). Therefore, even in the context of an established civil society where some degree of trust and cooperation are essential, the conception of power as zero-sum remains.

Similar to Hobbes, Weber argues through the sociological lens that although power is ubiquitous, social agents operating outside established power *relations* would lead to conflict and inevitable tragedy (Weber, 1978). This is not far removed from philosopher and social theorist Michel Foucault's explanation of power as the result of strategic mechanisms that regulate daily life and produce the subjects of contemporary societies, which arise from the basis of conflict (Jimenez-Anca, 2012). However, although Hobbes understands power as a relational phenomenon, he argues that even the dissension of equal forces can express power. He defines the result of such conflicting pursuits as "contention", in which such "equal powers oppose ... (and) destroy one another" (Hobbes, 1969, I.8.4). In arguing that two opposing forces can have equal power, however, Hobbes often conflates the terms "power" and "faculties". Furthermore,



even in the transition from the state of nature to civil society, where civil society results from power expressed as the collection of faculties, the understanding of power remains underdeveloped. The distinction between the “power-to” and the “power over” made by numerous other analyses of power (Parsons, 1963; Riker, 1964; Morriss, 1980; Connolly, 1983) more comprehensively addresses the different ways in which power may manifest.

It seems any discussion of power is incomplete without consideration of a comparative excess of a person’s, group’s, or institution’s abilities or “faculties” (to adopt Hobbes’ term) over another. Weber acknowledges this as he discusses power, which he concludes is “sociologically amorphous” alone, since any person may find themselves in the precisely favorable circumstances to carry out their will on another person in spite of that person’s resistance. Therefore, he gives greater attention to the sociological concept of domination, which he defines as “the probability that a command with a given specific content will be obeyed by a given group of persons” (Weber, 1978, 53). Furthermore, in a critique of America’s power structure, sociologist C. Wright Mills remains true to the sociological tradition in viewing power as highly centralized, in the hands of dominant institutions (i.e. the military, economic, and political), that exist in a dominant country (Mills, 2000). According to Mills, these power elites are of a narrow demographic, and have the ability to manipulate the ordinary citizen, who is relatively powerless against them, to their will. However, in the years since Mills penned his argument on power elites, power structures have evolved.

Dahl offers an alternative to Mills’ argument by broadening the scope of what constitutes a power elite, and acknowledging that power comes in many forms. Dahl thus moves the discussion further by offering a definition of power in terms of influence, where “A has power over B to the extent that (A) can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do” (Dahl,

1957). Therefore, power is produced by the difference in comparative capacity of one force exercising its desires over the other. This definition has been integral to the field of political science, as it refers to a form of direct power produced through the relationships between actors, who may be “individuals, groups, roles, offices, governments, nation-states, or other human aggregates” (Dahl, 1957). Dahl refers to the actor’s resources, both material and symbolic, as the base of power, which must be exploited in some way in order to produce power. Therefore, the means of resource exploitation, which may include such things as either promises or threats to act, or the action itself, enable the actor’s power. Furthermore, according to Dahl’s model, the power relation requires that the actor A’s actions precede the respondent B’s responses, and that there must be a connection between the two, which provides the opportunity for the actors to act. However, what constitutes a connection is never clearly defined by Dahl.

In addition to the base and means for power, other elements in Dahl’s examination of power relations include the amount and scope of power, where the amount refers to the probability that actor A will evoke a response from actor B, and the scope of power refers to the type of response evoked (Dahl, 1957). Dahl further distinguishes positive power from negative power, where with positive power actor A gets B to do what A wants, whereas with negative power, A gets B to respond to the exploitation of resources, however, B responds in a way other than what A intended.

A broader definition of power is offered by Barnett and Duvall, who state that power results from those elements that “guide, regulate, and control social life”, and can take the form of imposition and might, or the form of social processes that create circumstances that define actors’ “social identities and capacities” (Barnett and Duvall, 2005). Included in this notion of power is Nye’s concept of “soft power”, which he defines as “the ability to get what you want

through attraction rather than coercion or payments”, in contrast to “hard power”, which is “the ability to coerce... (through) a country’s military and economic might” (Nye, 2004). A state’s soft power is facilitated by others’ perception of its legitimacy, which makes the state popular among others, and enables multilateral cooperation. This cooperation is essential to achieving outcomes in global issues such as environmental protection, international crime, or disease eradication efforts.

Nye states that culture, whose elements exist partly outside of government control, contributes to a state’s soft power (Nye, 2004), and since celebrities constitute a part of culture, they consequently contribute to a state’s soft power as well. Interactions between cultural elites and states can also facilitate international diplomatic relations, since Nye contends that the “best communicators are often not governments but civilian surrogates, both from the United States and other countries” (Nye, 2004). Global health initiatives such as AIDS relief can also improve a state’s soft power, and cultural elites are often at the forefront of such efforts through their collaboration with governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations that promote global health initiatives. Although Nye refers to the leadership and power of states, the concept of soft power can similarly be applied to cultural elites, whose power of influence derives from the legitimacy attributed to them by their audience and media, and who in turn contribute to a state’s soft power through their influence on and representation of culture.

According to Barnett and Duvall, the concept of compulsory power refers to “the direct control of one actor of the conditions and actions of another”, typically by deploying resources that grant power of one over the other (Barnett and Duvall, 2005). However, compulsory power also extends beyond the use of material resources to include the influence of “symbolic and normative resources” (Barnett and Duvall, 2005). Such resources are frequently enlisted by civil

society organizations, transnational activists and non-governmental organizations that appeal to normative sensibilities in order to pressure governments, multinational corporations, and other entities to act in accordance with those values. Celebrities also make use of these symbolic and normative resources to garner support for their political causes.

One reason celebrities have the opportunity to utilize such resources is that audiences afford cultural elites (as celebrities) a platform for expressing their values, by admiring and following them through social and mainstream media. In turn, the expansion of communication and travel technologies that both enable and are enabled by globalization, allow celebrities to reach audiences beyond many physical or social barriers, and invoke a type of global civil society, or a civic sphere that transcends borders and governments to organize in the promotion of common interests (Keane, 2003; Hurrell, 2007). This global civil society is in a position to mobilize advocacy networks which can pressure policy-makers toward specific humanitarian, market, or other reforms. Therefore, the social processes which place celebrities in a position of influence also offer opportunities for the celebrity's ideas and values to be assimilated and expressed by their audiences. According to Street (2002), through their activism, influential figures invoke a collective learning process in their audience that then leads to the formation of a collective consciousness that helps determine the values those audiences will adopt as their own, and drives people to support a specific cause. The expression of these shared ideas, which translate into values, in turn mobilizes resources for global development and health programs to varying degrees.

## **Powerful Personae**

Although the nation-state has traditionally been the seat of political power, a range of additional factors including social and cultural influences have transformed the political dialogue to include previously marginalized groups. Factors such as globalization, communication technologies, and market forces contribute to the continuous redefinition of the political environment in which activism is inspired, informed, and operated. These factors have increased interaction among people, and altered the channels of visibility and accessibility for cultural elites. Such interactions in turn contribute to the formation and growth of collective identities that form the basis of social movements as well (della Porta and Tarrow, 2005). Most conventional accounts of power, which tend to focus on the power of the state, are insufficient to explain the influence increasingly being exercised by non-state actors, who affect state policies by motivating the citizenry to adopt certain issues and concerns. Traditional conceptions of power in the field of International Relations as the exclusive domain of the state are being challenged and even redefined through an interdisciplinary acknowledgment of the increasing role of other actors whose resources are also now capable of influencing outcomes.

Although Cooper's (2008) contribution to the understanding of celebrities as activists and cause ambassadors in the field of political science is notable, it fails to address the context in which certain celebrities achieve their influence over global affairs, and by conceptualizing global governance in terms of cooperative engagements, he leaves notions of power underdeveloped. Power generates the ideas and values that define reality and influence action. Power is therefore at the center of action, and the evolution of the social setting in which it is applied constantly defines and redefines political culture. In order to determine the influence cultural elites may have, it is therefore important to understand the context in which they operate

and exercise that influence, as well as the systems and structures that enable certain issues to reach the public and/or political agendas. Political decision-making takes place within the context of culture—which includes popular culture—and is based on the discourses that help define power and make political action meaningful (Weldes, 2006). Discourses are therefore inherently powerful and can define power relations by attributing meaning to representations in society. An understanding of political power requires an examination of these discourses, some of which are produced within popular culture.

Celebrities therefore embody a form of power, constructed through discourses that shape the social context in which political decisions are reached, and which places them in positions of political influence. However, although celebrities as cultural elites share certain characteristics with power elites when defined as “those who control larger resource pools” (McCarthy and Zald, 1977), they are in fact distinct groups. In a society characterized by constant consumption of information from multiple and competing media, attention is in fact a great resource. Since celebrities command that resource, they embody a type of power, and are placed in a position of institutional influence where the people who choose to direct their attention to celebrities give celebrities their power. In other words, discursive processes whereby meaning and value is placed on certain individuals who become social symbols (i.e. celebrities) place those celebrities in positions of influence. However, although the influence these cultural elites exercise over people and/or institutions makes them powerful groups, cultural elites remain distinct from power elites, who for the purposes of this study are understood to have direct control over the dominant institutions in the dominant countries.

The power celebrities possess does not derive from formal institutional channels, but rather is given by the attention of audiences that support them, and enabled by the mass media

and arts that promote them. According to Mills (2000), society has created a star system by fetishizing competition, and those who are successful in this system are granted social access to the highest ranks of politics. Political figures are often inclined to discuss a particular policy issue with a celebrity rather than an ordinary lobbyist, since association with the celebrity could increase visibility for the political figure as well, through media promotion. Celebrities may also facilitate introductions between policy makers and activists who would have perhaps otherwise been unheard. For example, actress Elizabeth Taylor's involvement in AIDS activism helped forge political relationships between leaders of the AIDS movement and policy makers by using her visibility as a cultural elite to offer a platform for the movement's expression and advocacy (Cooper, 2008). As engines of resource mobilization, celebrities' primary asset is the visibility their participation affords the particular cause. Their involvement with an organization may inspire others to participate, or increase fundraising by offering to make public appearances or performances in exchange for donations.

However, the construction of celebrity power is closely connected to the cultural frames that enable such construction. Culture has been viewed by sociologists as both a passive reflection of social norms and values, and as a dynamic and interactive process of constructing meaning. In the symbolic interactionist tradition, people actively attribute subjective meaning to certain things, thereby creating symbols that help them understand and navigate their social setting. Therefore, society produces and interprets elements of culture, shaping their social circumstances, and to some extent choosing how culture influences the society and its members (Brym and Lie, 2013). Similarly, the theoretical perspective known as "framing" in social movement theory explores social movements as partly resulting from processes of social construction, whereby individual concerns are framed as broader social interests deserving of

collective attention and action (Brown et al. 2004). For this reason, the framing perspective can help explain the way cultural elites present to the public the interests of individuals who may be distant from them, and frame their concerns as greater social interests deserving of both attention and action. Although this theoretical perspective originated in the U.S. as a way to explain the processes through which movement identity is produced, it may be useful in explaining the way in which celebrities influence the public and their interest in global health causes.

The cultural framing perspective emphasizes the importance of shared understanding, but also attempts to address the question of how such shared understanding is formed, and how the character and identity of a social movement is developed and sustained. Framing is not concerned with all elements of culture expressed in and through social movements, but rather specifically on those elements that “legitimate and motivate collective action” (McAdam et al., 1996). Since discourses contribute to the development of a shared understanding by both defining and expressing power relations that can in turn influence such action, they are closely tied to framing, as the latter also emphasizes the importance of interpretation and meaning. Furthermore, since framing acknowledges the dynamic process in which the cultural, social and political context of a particular society is perpetually evolving, it provides a complementary avenue through which to explain the way celebrity power is both produced and manifested. Framing also focuses on the processes whereby reality is actively constructed when events, ideas and symbols are perceived, interpreted, and attributed meaning. The resulting collective understanding of reality constitutes “collective action frames”, and provides the context in which actors engage in collective action to either challenge or support existing structures through the lens of injustice, agency, and identity (Benford and Snow, 2000; Snow et al., 2004). Collective action frames are the beliefs that guide the interpretation of occurrences, which in turn motivate



members of a group to mobilize toward a particular collective goal. These are created through: 1) discursive processes, which are the communications among members of a particular group or movement, 2) strategic processes, which are utilitarian framing processes centered on the achievement of a particular goal, and 3) contested processes, which refer to the challenges social movement participants face when trying to negotiate the frame to be adopted for action (Benford and Snow, 2000). These processes can also manifest in the context of a celebrity's audience or fan-based constituency, mobilizing this constituency toward a particular cause, global health or otherwise.

According to Benford and Snow (2000), collective action frames perform “diagnostic”, “prognostic”, or “motivational” functions. Diagnostic frames describe the way in which a movement organization frames the problem they are addressing., whereas prognostic frames address a desirable solution to this problem. Motivational frames address the way a call to action is cast in order to encourage participants to mobilize in the pursuit of movement goals (Snow et al., 2004). Collective action frames can also take the form of “master frames”, which can influence a variety of movements due to their wide-ranging applicability (Snow et al., 2004). A notable example of a master frame is found in the civil rights movement, which blended religious, political, and humanitarian ideals for the creation of a “rights” master frame that provided “an ideational appeal unmatched” by many other movements (Snow et al., 2004). These master frames also contain the three above-mentioned framing tasks, and can enable broad-based mobilization even among heterogeneous movement participants. Advantageous to evoking greater support and participation in the social movement is therefore also its *frame resonance*, referring to the strategic connection made between a social movement's “frame (and) existing belief systems and cultural values” (Oliver & Johnston, 2000). The emphasis with

regard to resonance is therefore on content, and aligning the social movement's frame with dominant ideas and ideologies.

As collective action frames can influence the discourses that exist in the public media, it is also important to understand how messages are structured in order to gain the most public interest. The four frame alignment processes identified by Snow, Rochford Jr., Worden, and Benford (1986), are one avenue through which to explore this structuring, since together they analyze the way movements present their existing issues and goals in order to promote greater acceptance and support from others. The first of these processes, *frame bridging*, refers to the active "linkage of two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frames regarding a particular issue or problem" (ibid, p. 467). This linkage is accomplished by raising awareness among disconnected groups via published materials and other more direct forms of communication including mail, telephone, or personal contact, as well as more recent technological innovations like electronic communications and social media. In the age of social media, frame bridging may be enabled particularly by individuals with a large enough audience, as these audience members already share an interest in the high-profile individuals they follow, whether for their professional activities, personal lives, or philanthropic pursuits. The goal of bridging, however, is to express to the public that there is already a movement representing their interests or views about a particular issue, and thus their participation as activists would simply strengthen the cause with which they already (even if indirectly) identify (Buechler, 2016).

Similarly, the second frame alignment process, *frame amplification*, refers to the ways an interpretive frame is given greater salience in the minds of potential movement activists, through the clarification of a connection between their lives and the movement's goals, or the revitalization of a dormant goal (Snow, Rochford Jr., Worden, & Benford, 1986, p. 469). Based

on the presumption that action is motivated by values and beliefs, Snow et al. conceive of two subtypes of frame amplification that result in mobilization. Whereas *value amplification* appeals to the broad and basic values held by groups of people who have, for any number of reasons, not been moved to collective action, *belief amplification* is focused on the “ideational elements that “cognitively support or impede action in pursuit of desired values” (ibid., 469-470). Therefore, broadly conceived, values refer to the end-state that movements work to achieve, while beliefs are the ideas that contribute to the way in which a particular issue is understood, and in which the values are pursued or dismissed. One criticism of value and belief amplification, however, is that it neglects the role of emotions in determining movement support, where in fact emotional amplification is suggested as a third type of frame amplification (Schmitt, 1986 in Benford, 1997). However, although emotions undoubtedly contribute to decisions made by movement participants and recruits, they are still inextricably tied to values and beliefs. In this respect, the extent to which emotions emerge from the validation or rejection of one’s values and beliefs as related to movement activities seems underdeveloped in this literature.

Whereas the above frame alignment processes help to make explicit the connections that already exist between a movement and potential participants, the third type of processes, *frame extension*, is employed as a way to broaden the movement’s frame in order to draw support from persons or groups whose beliefs and values may not be aligned with the movement’s original goals. During frame extension, interests that are incidental to the movement’s original frame, but of importance to the group the movement is seeking to recruit, are incorporated into the movement’s objectives. One example of a frame extension strategy is the recruitment of a popular music group to perform at a rally for a cause, which may extend the rally’s audience by “attract(ing) the band’s followers to the cause” as well (Buechler, 2016). The inclusion of

celebrity entertainers in events with a social or political orientation is an increasingly common practice in the age of celebrity activists, making the process of frame extension both relevant and significant to the study of celebrity activism as a whole.

Conversely, *frame transformation*, previously referred to as “keying” by Goffman (1974), goes beyond existing connections between a movement’s original framework and the concerns of recruits, and instead refers to the redefinition of previously held conceptions or understandings, including (but not limited to) the attribution of a greater level of importance to a particular issue, or a shift in the understanding of responsibility for the problem (Snow, Rochford Jr., Worden, & Benford, 1986). By reframing familiar issues, whether the smaller scale domain-specific or the larger global interpretive frames through “radically different lenses”, one’s impetus to act can thus be manipulated to the movement’s goals (Buechler, 2016). For example, the issue of poverty could be reframed as an issue of injustice to gain broader interest, although “its relationship to action is partly dependent, as attribution theorists would argue, on whether blame or responsibility is internalized or externalized.” (Snow, Rochford Jr., Worden, & Benford, 1986, p. 474). Therefore, the motivation to act in the interest of a movement’s goals may be determined by the degree to which we perceive it as problematic, as well as where we attribute the blame or causality for these problems. This is closely related to the symbolic interactionist view that people’s actions are determined by their understanding of a particular person, thing, or situation (Benford, 1997). This process is employed when an existing frame does not resonate with participants and/or potentials, necessitating a transformation of the existing frame to something more people will care about. In this transformative process, new ideas are adopted or existing ideas are reconceptualized, although much of the literature centers on the implications of this transformation rather than the social processes that enable it.

These four processes represent frame alignment as a desired outcome of effective outreach and engagement, rather than a static part of any social movement, thereby reaffirming the dynamic nature of social movements, and the constant negotiations involving activists, potential movement participants, and movement goals. However, much of the literature on framing as a conceptual tool in social movement studies has focused on the constitutive and interpretive dimensions of frames, with relatively little attention given to the operationalization of the term “frame” for the purposes of empirical research. This is not, of course, to discount the empirical groundings of discussions of framing processes ( including Goffman, 1974; Snow, Rochford Jr., Worden, & Benford, 1986; Gamson & Meyer, 1996; McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1988; and Snow et al., 2004 among others), however, the multifaceted conceptualizations of the frame perpetuates an ambiguity that makes testing hypotheses from existing framing literature concerning the effects of framing on mobilization difficult to measure (Benford, 1997). Similarly, there has been a disproportionate emphasis in the framing literature on the descriptive elements of various frame types, with less attention to the analytical dimensions of framing processes. This descriptive bias is also related to the conflation of *frames* and *framing* in social movement literature, where the rich and dynamic framing processes through which social movements are produced and evolve are given less attention than the more statically regarded frame, which refers to “an interpretive schemata that simplifies and condenses the ‘world out there’ by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences, and sequences of actions within one’s present or past environment” (Snow & Benford, Master Frames and Cycles of Protest, 1992, p. 137). However, a static conceptualization of frames is problematic in that it neglects the influence of social actors in directing the movement’s activities

and priorities, as well as the dynamic social, cultural, and political environment in which these movements exist and must adapt.

Furthermore, the generalization of meaning often found in framing literature implies that frames are perceived by members of a particular groups in the same way, neglecting the individualistic nature of interpretation, whereby each individual group member's personal context plays an active role in determining how messages conveyed by the frame are received, understood, and acted upon. Whereas Goffman (1974) raises this issue with his discussion of the influence of values and beliefs on individuals' connection with a movement and/or organization, Hart (2008) further recognizes that not all movement participants are motivated to join because of a shared belief system. Instead, participants may join a social movement whose activities approximate a desired model for action in the absence of a collective action frame with which they can more closely identify. Similarly, in what Benford (1997) refers to as the *reification problem*, the anthropomorphic qualities ascribed to social movements in the language of much of the framing literature risks trivializing the role of human agency, when social movements are presented as living things that frame issues, rather than as constructs that form as the result of forces imposed by actors' engagement with that movement. However, on the other end of the spectrum, although the influence of activists on a movement as well as their emotional context must not be neglected, Benford astutely recognizes the risk of reducing the sociological context of frames and framing to the individual, psychological level, which would in itself neglect the complex social and cultural processes through which these frames are constructed. Closely related to the risk of reductionism, and another way in which such processes may be neglected, is also disproportionate attention to movement elites, which risks creating a top-down bias

overlooking dynamic interactions and negotiations between elites, constituents, and external forces that together determine the course of the social movement.

However, in linking framing processes that are discussed in social movement literature to the study of celebrity activism, it is also important to recognize the experiential and “physical spaces... (that) build trust and shared identity”, known as *communicative spaces* (Wolfson & Funke, 2014, p. 371). Although Wolfson and Funke discuss these spaces primarily with regard to their influence on class identity, they also acknowledge their potential applications to other contexts. As these spaces serve to ally disparate individuals through the strategic communication of shared interests, though they can exist in the form of events or educational practices, it is their manifestation through mass media materials that is of particular salience to celebrity activism as examined in this study. Building on these communicative spaces, the related set of practices within *narrative spaces* further the shared understanding that connects individuals, by creating “messages and frames, stories, and understandings” (Wolfson & Funke, 2014, p. 376), which in the context of this study can be found in media publications that document a connection between a celebrity and a particular cause. The final element of the concentric practices explored by Wolfson and Funke (2014) to explain the process of class formation is found in *shared struggles*, which express cross-organizational support for challenges faced by distinct groups who may coalesce when faced with a common adversary, interest, or challenge. Although I contend that publicized celebrity activism has the potential to forge a collective identity among the celebrity’s audience, based on a common understanding of social, political, economic, or health issues, its direct connection to the concept of shared struggles would require measurement of the effects of celebrity activism on the public, which extends beyond the scope of this research.

Another valuable aspect of social movement theory for this study is its recognition of the

role of charismatic figures in contributing in some way to the collective that constitutes the movement (McAdam, 1996; Snow et al., 2004), and in helping direct the outcomes of the movement. If we are to understand power as some combination of ability to affect the course of another's action and the perception of legitimacy, social movement theory's recognition of charismatic figures is not far removed from Weber's acknowledgment of the transformative potential of charisma, rather than fear (departing from Hobbes), to legitimate authority and domination (Kalyvas, 2002). In a society that extols entertainment celebrities on the basis of the interest they command from the general public, and consequently the income they generate, these high-profile individuals have become charismatic figures that affect, if not direct, public attention. The issues these celebrities convey through their artistic works, social media presence, or other public engagement reach great masses which, having been exposed to these issues, will decide to either share in the celebrity's cause, oppose it, or ignore it.

However, theories of power supplemented by social movement theoretical frameworks alone are insufficient to fully explain the influence celebrities have over a particular public issue, in this case global health, and the way in which this influence is constructed and communicated. To further understand this influence, it is necessary to recognize pop culture as a medium of political communication, and while largely (though not entirely) neglected in the field of political science, the way in which it significantly contributes to the shape of both domestic and global politics. In analyzing pop culture's relationship to political communication, it is useful to consider elements of agenda-setting that can help more comprehensively explain how political communication occurs in the first place.

Although at any moment there are numerous issues competing for attention, only a few of those issues ever reach the public or political agendas, due to the limited resources of time,



attention, and psychological capacity of any audience. The salience of topics on the public agenda is often the result of selections made by the news media, which direct public attention towards certain topics rather than others. Therefore, the agenda-setting role of the news media presents “a reality that is structured by journalists’ reports about these events and situations” (McCombs, 2004, p. 1). The media, serving as meaning-makers, consequently often reflect the commodification of culture in a communication structure defined by the interactions between creator, producer, and consumer. The manipulation of the ideological context in which the public forms opinions and takes action is most frequently the inadvertent result of the media’s business-based decision making, where content is directed by factors including available journalistic resources, time constraints, sponsorships, and perceptions of public receptiveness. This contextual manipulation is closely tied to the debate long held among culture studies theorists as to whether the media offers a reflection or in fact a distortion of reality to their audiences (Macdonald, 1962; Adorno, 1954; Bloom, 1987). This in turn raises questions about how media messages are directed, received, and what interests are served, questions inextricably linked to the issues of power and politics.

When examining the relationship between culture, values and action, it is important to note that culture is not itself a power, but a context within which power is constructed, understood, and implemented. Agenda-setting theory examines mass media as a tool of political communication, and recognizes the role of mass communication in performing three broad social roles: “surveillance of the larger environment, achieving consensus among the segments of society, and transmission of the culture” (McCombs, 2004, p. 134). Although there is a relationship between framing and agenda-setting in that both address the public’s attitudes toward political issues, they are most clearly distinguished by their approach to these attitudes.

Specifically, while agenda-setting is concerned with “whether we think about an issue”, framing explores the processes that determine “how we think about it” (Scheufele & Tewskbury, 2007, p. 14 in Perloff, 2018, p. 188). Walter Lippmann first explored the idea of agenda-setting (although he did not use this phrase) in his seminal work, *Public Opinion* (1922), where he argued that public opinion is the result not of reality, but of the perception of reality constructed by the news media. The media communicates the importance of a topic by promoting it in its headlines, repeating the story at various intervals, and expounding on that particular topic in greater depth than it does others. By influencing what events and ideas the public is exposed to, as well as the format and frequency with which they are exposed, media outlets help direct public attention towards issues they have deemed important. Public thought and discussion subsequently follow this direction, thereby contributing to the formation of public opinion. Furthering this discussion, Bernard Cohen famously noted in 1963 that “the press... may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about” (Cohen, 1963, p. 13).

Though the original work by Lippmann proved heavily anecdotal, later research on the transfer of issue salience from the media agenda to the public agenda focused on agenda-setting in the context of voter behavior, interest in civil rights, international politics, and social issues from 1968 and after, finding strong correlation between exposure to particular issues in the news and the public agenda (McCombs, 2004). Although many of these issues are still pertinent to today’s societies, the number and character of media outlets are in a constant state of flux, directed by public demand, business interests, as well as technological advances that allow the opportunity for new platforms to be created (one example of this is Twitter). Consequently, as the public’s interaction with news and information continues to expand and/or evolve, so must

agenda-setting evolve as a theory.

The influential multiple-streams framework established by Kingdon (1984) offers some insight into agenda-building processes by examining three avenues, or “streams”, through which issues exist and are brought to the forefront of political priority. The first of these is the “problem stream”, which is characterized by issues the public perceives as problematic and requiring government intervention. Conversely, the “policy stream”, involves expert deliberation on issues deemed through analytical rigor to be deserving of policy action (or inaction), as well as the proposal of appropriate political measures. Finally, the “political stream” refers to the political events that occur, such as changes in the administration, Congress, the national mood, or interest group activity (Kingdon, 2001). Although these metaphorical streams represent separate processes, they converge at specific times to invoke political change, expressed through the adoption of the issue(s) in question into the policy agenda. “At these moments,” Kingdon argues, “a problem is recognized, a solution is available, the political conditions are right, and the three streams get joined together” (2001, n.p.). Advocates make a clear connection between these three streams at strategically advantageous times, or “open policy windows”, when issues are either particularly pressing, or the political stream has experienced a shift towards more favorable conditions for changing the agenda. Framing is also an integral component to the convergence of these streams, as advocates must determine the way in which an issue will be represented as a problem requiring action.

Although this framework has been used as the basis for more than 300 policy case studies since its original publication in 1984, including its adoption in comparative analysis (Béland & Howlett, 2016), it is important to note that Kingdon’s multiple streams framework is based solely on an American social and political context. Though its ideational contributions to the study of

political science are indeed noteworthy, it is therefore insufficient to explain the wide spectrum of processes that contribute to agenda-setting in political contexts where cultural, institutional, or legislative variables distinguish them from the original study's setting. Consequently, despite the insight Kingdon's framework provides into the processes that shape the policy agenda vis a vis the problem, policy, and political streams he identifies, this framework may lose some of its explanatory utility in different systems of governance.

However, closely related to these streams and central to agenda-setting itself is inevitably the issue of access to channels of public debate. Though economic interests of the powerful elite have historically vied for control of the agenda, the modern media landscape seems to have opened new platforms of visibility that more closely resemble Dahl's view of the agenda-setting process, as they enable "any social group with a legitimate problem that could potentially be converted into votes in an election (to) gain access to the political agenda" (McCombs, 1981). The proliferation of partisan media outlets introduces another dimension to agenda-setting, as it can contribute to the inclusion of diverse ideas into the public sphere. Although this diversity has the potential to enrich the flow of ideas, and consequently the agenda itself, it also by contrast carries a danger of isolating portions of the public from varied perspectives if they only expose themselves to outlets that reinforce their existing ideas (Perloff, 2018). Furthermore, as the Internet increasingly provides public access to a myriad of news sources, some social observers argue that agenda-setting is losing its explanatory power in directing public attention and interest (McCombs, 2004). Audiences are now capable of individualizing their daily news, opting to follow particular sources and issues according to their interests. The compiled information that results is therefore less the product of a media agenda imposed on the public than it was during a time of more limited sources of information. Instead, the news the public

receives in the age of the Internet is often the result of a self-directed and idiosyncratic personalized agenda. When celebrities become a cultural phenomenon commanding a vast amount of attention from the public, self-directed news gathering allows the public to choose to follow news that focuses on the activities of specific celebrities on whom they have placed value.

However, even a personalized compilation of news from multiple sources is dependent on both the time and assertiveness of each audience member, who must sift through numerous websites, articles, or “feeds” to retrieve the desired information. Therefore, much of the public still relies on popular media outlets to learn of the day’s most important events, and consequently falls under the influence of news editors who direct public attention to those stories. Moreover, although there is an apparent decentralization of knowledge, many of these smaller media outlets are in fact subsidiaries of the larger media conglomerates, who simply disperse the same information across multiple media platforms. Debates within the field of media systems research build on this question of homogeneity versus differentiation of news delivered online, where media systems “refer to the political, economic, professional, and regulatory forces that shape journalism in different countries” (Powers and Benson, 2014, 247). Though there have been comparative studies conducted between online and print media markets regarding news content and form (Powers and Benson, 2014), sources (Humprecht and Buchel, 2013), and ideological differentiation (Baum and Groelling, 2008), there is no comprehensive explanatory framework that considers all of these interconnected dimensions of homogeneity and differentiation within the media. Furthermore, due to the relatively recent rise and constant change of online media markets, the character and role of these markets in agenda-setting is yet underdeveloped. Therefore, further research is needed to determine the salience of agenda-setting in the context of an Internet platform and its evolving news outlets.

Nevertheless, agenda-setting as a theory still has applications in the field of celebrity studies that have been mostly neglected thus far. For instance, in examining the types of agendas that characterize the political landscape, Cobb and Elder (1972) in their seminal work on the political agenda distinguish the systemic agenda, in which issues are debated in the societal context, from the institutional agenda, which addresses issues debated within specific government institutions. Despite the prominence of celebrities in society enabled through a multitude of media, their influence on the systemic agenda remains underdeveloped in the scholarly literature, while their influence on the institutional agenda has primarily focused on politicians who have achieved celebrity status (Street, 2004), rather than on a celebrity's function as a political entity. Similarly, although Cooper's work (2008) introduces celebrities as successful agenda-setters in international relations, it presents celebrity diplomats as external influences on political operations, with little examination of their role as integral components of the political process itself.

## **Conclusion**

The idea that charisma and performance are integral to politics is evident even in the writings of Machiavelli, showing that the relationship is neither new nor inherently detrimental (van Zoonen, 2005). Political figures have historically sought platforms on which to address the masses, and although the forms of engagement have evolved with time, the practice of political performance for the masses remains a critical and timeless element of politics by its very nature.

According to Thrall et al. (2008), almost 63% of celebrities publicly advocate for some sort of cause, and from those celebrity advocates, approximately 42% are engaged in health issues. However, although celebrities are frequently either enlisted or self-motivated to promote

global health causes, there is insufficient academic discussion of their influence on global health security itself. The list of celebrity activists is extensive and continues to grow, facilitated by their recruitment by governments and organizations that employ them as tools of political communication. With the ability celebrities have to command the attention of a global audience, we therefore currently occupy an era where celebrities are also in a position of institutional influence. Critics argue that celebritization has commodified politics, thus diminishing citizen/consumer engagement in political matters (Turner, 2004). However, the rise of celebrity advocacy in political matters and the public's attention to this advocacy may in fact signal a shift in the way politics work, rather than an erosion of the essence of politics itself. Celebrities have become a tool of political communication, and "a reconfigured form of agency in modern politics," where they serve as a legitimate and necessary component of contemporary political culture (Asteris and Houliaras, 2011, 47).

Celebrity activists operate within particular contexts that define the need, nature, and outcomes of their involvement in various causes, and therefore, any discussion of celebrity activism would be incomplete without an understanding of: 1) the historical context that created the problems they seek to address, 2) the political and the social contexts that provide them with channels through which to act, and 3) the personal context that shapes their interests, motivations, expressions, and omissions. A critical analysis of celebrity activism must therefore draw on contributions from a variety of disciplines, since celebrity is phenomenologically an amalgamation of cultural, political, sociological, psychological, and business processes. Using this tripartite contextual framework, this study's interdisciplinary approach provides a more comprehensive understanding of the structure of celebrity activism, with particular attention to the ways in which celebrity activism furthers global health security specifically.

## Chapter 3

### A Charitable Constellation: Measuring Effectiveness

The course of history is determined by the political influence exercised by those with power. Yet, despite the inextricable connection between pop culture and politics, and the prominence of celebrities in the construction and expression of pop culture, largely absent from previous scholarly work has been a systematic evaluation of celebrity influence in relation to the type and degree of cause-driven activism. This study attempts to address this deficit, and move the discussion forward towards a more in-depth understanding of celebrity activism in the context of global health.

In this chapter, the study's research design and methodology will be elaborated, along with a justification of why these methods of data collection were best suited to the study at hand. The specific cases, sampling methods vis-à-vis the types of participants, as well as the data sources will also be discussed in depth. Guiding the selection of this design and methodology was the primary research question, "*How do cultural elites prominent in U.S. media impact global health security?*", complemented by the secondary questions of 1) How does celebrity activism affect global health security discourses? 2) What "truths" are created by celebrity activism in global health? and 3) Are the issues these celebrities are advocating for, the most pressing concerns? As explained in Chapter 1, the hypothesis to be tested is that these efforts by celebrities who are prominent in U.S. media are not most frequently allocated towards the global



health issues that have the greatest effect on global health security.

### **The Case for Stars**

Moving towards greater clarity on the character and manifestation of celebrity engagement with health causes first requires clearly defined population parameters. To conduct this study, I determined a small n comparative case study to be the most appropriate methodology, where the most influential celebrities will serve as cases, chosen for their prominence in U.S. and global media markets combined, and level of public interest in them.

Case study as a research tool is based on the examination of context-dependent knowledge that allows the attainment of a certain expertise on a particular subject, where each case represents “an instance of a class of events” (George and Bennett, 2005). Humans are motivated by an intent to change their environment and by their reflexivity, and therefore, human affairs—the focus of social science studies—are conducted in a specific context. The context of events examined in social science research is characterized by the language (words and meanings) used to both define terms and understand that context, and by the particular time period being examined. Disregard for the specific context of a case limits a comprehensive and thorough understanding of the phenomena being examined, and thus insufficiently addresses the aims of research. In other words, context-*independent* theory would be inadequate to explain human behavior or further knowledge in social science research.

Case study methodology may be used in a wide range of theoretical frameworks, even in a complementary capacity in which the case study serves to complement other methods, since case studies are able to incorporate material as well as ideational variables.

The comparative advantages of case study methodology are useful for the examination of qualitative variables including “individual actors, decision-making processes, historical and social contexts, and path dependencies” (George and Bennett, 2005). In this respect, case studies would be particularly well suited for research centered on issues of identity and discourses, which both express and determine the power of cultural elites, while case studies are also useful in a comparative capacity for interactions in complex causal relations.

Gerring (2004) in fact argues that “all knowledge is comparative”, with even human identity to some extent predicated upon our distinction from some *other*. The same principle applies to social science knowledge. For example, with regard to this study, what makes someone a celebrity is the public attention, elevated income, and high visibility that characterizes certain individuals and distinguishes them from others within a particular society. Therefore, to understand the case of celebrity activism, we must also understand how it differs from everyday citizen activism.

In order to carry out a structured and focused comparison of cases, first, the researcher must clearly identify the class or subclass of events from which the cases are taken. Second, cases should be chosen based on the research objective and research strategy. Although random selection of cases reduces the possibility of selection bias, cases selected for their specific qualities will often yield more useful knowledge because of the significance of context in understanding a particular phenomenon. For example, intentional selection of cases allows for considerations of representativeness or external validity (if that is the intent), and comparability or unit homogeneity (Gerring, 2004). Under these considerations, intentionality informed the selection of cases and was deemed most appropriate for the examination of celebrity influence, based on calculations that will be elaborated further in this chapter.

't Hart and Tindall (2009) argue that “celebrities’ charitable and political activities will be seen as more significant and successful: (a) the more merit-based the source of their initial fame; (b) the higher the social prestige of the cultural sphere in which the celebrity gained fame; (c) the more enduring the fame; and (d) the broader (geographical and numerical) and wider (across social strata and cultural groups) the scope of their fame” (Marsh et al., 2010, p. 324). Therefore, the first step in identifying the study population was establishing which celebrity actors had achieved the most notable levels of fame and/or influence.

In determining which celebrities to focus on for the purposes of this study, it was important to note the work of Thrall et al. (2008), who found that “A-list” celebrities tend to “have more impact on media coverage of events about politics and politicians than lesser celebrities” (Marsh et al., 2010). For this reason, celebrities with the highest levels of influence would provide the best suited cases for research. In order to generate the study population, I identified the top 5 most influential celebrities who are prominent in U.S. and worldwide markets combined, and analyzed their activism in global health (both U.S. based and international). Since celebrities can be from a number of different fields, including entertainment, sports, politics, family legacies, or other news-makers, in order to control for the inherent differences in the nature of their activities and platforms through which they can engage the public, I limited the population of my study to one particular group of celebrities. While political celebrities are likely to make appearances on politically oriented talk-shows, they are unlikely to be featured in a film. Similarly, while a non-politico newsmaker (i.e. the victim of a crime, whistleblower, etc.) is likely to be in mainstream news, he or she would probably not be the subject of entertainment news. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that each group of celebrities, generally though not universally, has different available platforms of engagement. To control for these variations, this

study focused only on celebrity actors in film, since this group typically has the greatest overall visibility due to their presence in the platforms of film/television entertainment, news outlets, entertainment media (i.e. pop culture and lifestyle magazines), and social media. To further limit the scope of interest, I focus only on those celebrities in the domestic (U.S. based) market, although the worldwide gross sales were one of the factors in calculating influence, while the nationality of these elites need not be restricted to the U.S..

In order to identify the 5 cases for this study, the first step was determining the most influential celebrities. For this, I referred to The Numbers, a database of film finances operated by Nash Information Services, a research service specializing in the film industry, as well as data collected from the Internet Movie Database Professional Service (IMDbPro), Time Magazine, and Forbes. The Numbers generates an index that estimates how much value a particular celebrity adds to the film industry in a given year. This Bankability Index draws its data from the Hollywood Creative Graph, which contains a network of 100,000 people in the film industry who have worked together, representing over 4 million connections on creative projects. Using this data, the Numbers Bankability Index measures the annual value each celebrity adds to each creative project they are associated with (The Numbers, 2016c). However, since this list of celebrities includes other film industry professionals like directors and composers, I excluded from this list all non-actors, leaving 24 actors with a 2015 Bankability score.

Film revenue is closely associated with audience reach, where the gross revenue that a film brings in is the direct result of the numbers of people who buy tickets to see a film, which is in turn proportionate to the exposure that film (and consequently its actors) have to the public. Therefore, the Bankability Index was then cross-referenced with the list of top revenue generated in the United States by all the films a celebrity has appeared in over their lifetime (The Numbers,

2016a), in order to further determine overall influence, which produced a list of 26 celebrity actors.

In an effort to account for more recent audience reach, I also examined data on the actors associated with the highest grossing films of 2015, which was the most recent data available during the time of data collection (The Numbers, 2016b), yielding a list of 20 celebrity actors. Since the extent of one's activism is also tied to his or her resources, I then examined the list of the 28 highest paid actors of 2015, with data collected from Time and Forbes Magazines, as well as the Internet Movie Database Professional (IMDbPro) database, which offers a comprehensive resource for professionals in the entertainment industry (Time, 2016; Robehmed, 2015; IMDbPro, 2016).<sup>2</sup>

Although the majority of actors in these lists fell into more than one category, when cross referencing the list of the top 28 celebrity actors in 1) the 2015 Numbers Bankability Index, 2) the highest grossing actors in 2015, 3) the highest grossing actors of all time, and 4) the highest paid actors in 2015, only seven (7) actors made the list in all four categories. Those seven who fell into all four categories were then given a score based on their rank in each of the four categories, which was then tallied and divided by four to obtain an average score. The lower the average score, the higher the actor ranked on the lists overall. I have named the ranking (1 through 7) of these celebrities that resulted from an ordering of their cross-sectional average scores the Celebrity Influence Quotient, or CIQ, and will thus refer to these rankings throughout the remainder of this study. The results were as follows, in Table 3.1.

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<sup>2</sup> The full list of actors in each of the four categories can be found in Table C.1 in the *Appendix* section.

Table 3.1 Celebrity Scores						
	Name	Score #1	Score #2	Score #3	Score #4	Average Score
1.	Tom Cruise	4	8	7	7	<b>6.5</b>
2.	Robert Downey, Jr.	9	19	5	1	<b>8.5</b>
3.	Bradley Cooper	10	6	23	5	<b>11</b>
4.	Leonardo DiCaprio	7	7	24	12	<b>12.5</b>
5.	Matt Damon	11	14	9	18	<b>13</b>
6.	Mark Wahlberg	15	10	21	9	<b>13.75</b>
7.	Brad Pitt	5	20	20	27	<b>18</b>
The above scores are represented as follows: <i>Score #1: 2015 Bankability</i> <i>Score #2: Highest Grossing (Worldwide) Stars of 2015</i> <i>Score #3: Top Gross Revenue (U.S.) Generated by All Films a Celebrity Has Appeared in their Lifetime</i> <i>Score #4: Highest Paid Actors in 2015</i>						

Based on the average score of their ranks across the four categories, I was able to identify the top 5 most influential actors as defined by the combination of their bankability, revenue from their films (in 2015 and of all time), and income in 2015, in order to generate the population for this research, and provide the cases for study. The study population was therefore identified according to their CIQ with the following ranks:

Table 3.2 Celebrity Influence Quotient	
CIQ Rank	Name
1	Tom Cruise
2	Robert Downey, Jr.
3	Bradley Cooper
4	Leonardo DiCaprio
5	Matt Damon

At this point, it is important to note the demographic characteristics of the population generated. From each of the categories that contributed to the CIQ, the overwhelming majority of actors listed were Caucasian males born between 1962 and 1975 (ages 42-54 as of this writing). The percentage of women represented in each of the four categories ranged from 11% to 19%, which means that between 81% and 89% of the most influential actors in the United States are male (see Table 3.3).

<b>Table 3.3 Distribution: Male vs. Female</b>			
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Bankability*</b>	21	3	24
<b>Highest Grossing (Worldwide) Stars*</b>	17	3	20
<b>Top Gross Revenue (U.S.) **</b>	21	5	26
<b>Highest Paid Actors*</b>	25	3	28
* 2015 ** Generated by all films a celebrity has appeared in over their lifetime			

Similarly, calculations showed that between 15% and 18% of actors in each category were racial minorities, with eight actors across all categories identifying as African American, and two actors identifying as Asian (IMDB Pro, 2016). Furthermore, all actors belonging to a racial minority in these lists were male, with no minority women represented (Table 3.4). Understanding the characteristics of the celebrities deemed most influential can contribute to a more in-depth understanding of both the focus of activism and the power relations that exist within a particular cultural and/or media context. It is therefore valuable not only to the study of

high profile activism in the context of global health, but to activism in a multitude of social, cultural, and political arenas.

Table 3.4 Distribution: By Race			
	Caucasian	Non-Caucasian *	Total
Bankability (2015)	20	4	24
Highest Grossing (Worldwide) Stars (2015)	17	3	20
Top Gross Revenue (U.S.) **	22	4	26
Highest Paid Actors (2015)	23	5	28
* Self-Identified as African American and/or Asian			
**Generated by all films a celebrity has appeared in over their lifetime			

### A Healthy Perspective

Comparative case studies are useful in examining complex causal relations, as they allow a comparative analysis of two or more cases in which a particular outcome is reached in multiple ways (equifinality), as well as cases that exhibit multiple outcomes despite the presence of one consistent variable (multifinality). In the context of this study, cases chosen exhibit multifinality, where the consistent variable is their high celebrity status, with presumed variations in the type and extent of their global health activism (multiple outcomes). However, in order to more effectively engage in case comparison, there must be a set of general questions that will be asked in the cases being compared. Therefore, for all cases, data was collected on the global health causes each celebrity supports, how they support these causes, whether that support is publicized



to broad audiences, and whether this support is directed towards meaningful global health security outcomes.

Once the study population was generated, I identified the global health problems these five celebrities are engaging with (if any), using the framework established by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to determine which causes constituted global health issues. The SDGs are seventeen broad goals the United Nations has identified for the improvement of the overall human condition, intended to be met by the year 2030. These goals address issues targeting the natural environment, technological and economic development, social equality, peace, collaboration, and human health, and encompass a more ambitious agenda than their precursor, the Millennium Development Goals, whose target date was 2015.

Contained within the 3<sup>rd</sup> SDG, which is to “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages” (otherwise known simply as “Good Health and Wellbeing”), are 13 specific targets that address different aspects of this overarching goal (United Nations, 2017). These targets relate to the reduction of global maternal and infant mortality, communicable diseases, non-communicable diseases, substance abuse, and traffic accidents, as well as improved tobacco control, access to healthcare, and healthcare infrastructure development. Using this framework, each global health concern was issued a two-digit code formulated from the SDG it is associated with, in this case the number 3 for SDG #3 (Good Health and Wellbeing), followed by the specific target number as identified by the United Nations (number 1 through 13), separated by a decimal point. At this point it is important to note that for SDG #3, the United Nations identifies targets numbered 3.1 through 3.9, which comprise outcome targets, or “desirable change between outputs and impact”, while four more targets are identified as process targets, or “means of implementation, policy measures, etc.” and ordered 3.a through 3.d. (OECD, 2016). For the

purpose of consistency, in this study process targets 3.a through 3.d were issued numbers as well, in consecutive continuation of the outcome targets. The global health issues were thus defined and coded in Table 3.5:

<b>Table 3.5 Global Health Issues</b>	
<b>Code</b>	<b>Details</b>
<b>3.1</b>	Maternal mortality
<b>3.2</b>	Infant and under 5 mortality
<b>3.3</b>	Communicable diseases
<b>3.4</b>	Noncommunicable diseases
<b>3.5</b>	Substance abuse
<b>3.6</b>	Road traffic injuries/death
<b>3.7</b>	Reproductive health
<b>3.8</b>	Universal health coverage
<b>3.9</b>	Pollution and/or contamination of air, water, and soil
<b>3.10</b>	Tobacco control
<b>3.11</b>	Vaccines and medicines
<b>3.12</b>	Healthcare workers and financing for developing countries
<b>3.13</b>	Health infrastructure
<i>Data from the United Nations Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, Sustainable Development Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.</i>	

In order to identify which of these global health issues the top five actors in the celebrity population are engaging with (if any), and the form this engagement takes, I utilized data from celebrity charity tracker, Looktothestars.org. Look to the Stars is trusted by media outlets such as the BBC, the Associated Press, Forbes, Celebrity Society Magazine, and E! Online for up to date news on celebrities' association with charitable organizations, and offers a database searchable by name, organization, or type of cause (Look to the Stars, 2017). The site also offers

articles detailing the celebrity's engagement with certain organizations, although not all celebrity-organization associations listed are supported by such articles.

Using the Look to the Stars database, I identified all charitable and/or cause-driven organizations with which each of the five celebrity cases are involved, and conducted research using the Google online search engine to determine the mission and activities of each of these organizations. After analyzing the data provided by the official websites of each organization associated with each of the celebrities, all organizations that were not directly related to one of the 13 targets for U.N. Sustainable Development Goal #3: Good Health and Well-Being were eliminated from the results list. For more efficient categorization during data analysis, each remaining organization was then issued the appropriate global health code (3.1 through 3.13), based on the specific global health concerns they addressed.

Although this results list identifies the specific global health issues each celebrity is affiliated with, it does not provide evidence of the type or extent of this affiliation. For this reason, it was necessary to look to mass media sources for information describing the nature of this relationship. The specific sources selected for this information are detailed below.

## **Mediated Spaces**

High politics is the arena of hard facts, war and peace, international economics, and other “real, serious politics”, and the data used for its study is known as *high data* (Weldes, 2006). Elite institutions including the state or media provide the policy documents, speeches, current affairs magazines, and newspapers that constitute the main sources of high data. By contrast, elements of popular culture such as novels, films, television, and advertising are sources of *low*

*data*, and have been given less scholarly attention in the study of international relations.

However, in order to comprehensively examine political culture, it is important to recognize the value of both forms of data, both high and low, and the role low data plays in creating the discourses that shape high politics.

Mass media provides a space for the intersection of both high and low data, and is therefore ideally suited to serve as a window into representations of political culture. Mass media along with social media present celebrities as noteworthy figures, and afford celebrities a platform on which to express their political ideas and concerns. The media is also partly responsible for drawing parallels between celebrities and political figures, thus legitimating the opinions of celebrities who may not possess the political education or training of traditional politicians. Therefore, identifying the media through which the general public receives information connecting celebrities to global health issues was necessary before the specific content of messages conveyed through those media could be analyzed.

<b>Table 3.6 Preferred News Sources</b>	
<b>Source</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
TV	53%
Search Engine Sites	38%
Social Media Sites	33%
Print Newspapers	18%
Online Newspaper Sites	17%
Online TV News Sites	16%
Radio	11%
Print Magazines	8%
Online Magazine Sites	8%
Online Radio Sites	4%
*Data from the Nielsen Company Insights Report on Global Generational Lifestyles (Nielsen, 2015)	

To determine the preferred news sources of the general public, I consulted the Nielsen Corporation, a global marketing research firm that provides business insights based on data from consumer trends and habits. According to data from the Nielsen Company Insights Report on Global Generational Lifestyles (Nielsen, 2015), preferred news sources globally are as listed in Table 3.6. For the purposes of this study, and due to limitations imposed by finite resources, I chose to focus on print and online newspapers from among the top formats through which the public receives its news.

In order to better identify the reach that the study population has on the public, a list was compiled of the newspapers with the largest readership and circulation in the United States, using data generated by the Audience Snapshot Database of the Alliance for Audited Media. The Alliance for Audited Media, created in 1914 as the Audit Bureau of Circulations, is a North American non-profit, member-based organization that collects and provides independently-verified data on the print and electronic media environment (Alliance for Audited Media, 2016). Founded by the Association of National Advertisers, its mission is to promote media transparency, and its Audience Snapshot Database offered in-depth information on circulation, readership, and demographics associated with each newspaper in question.

After generating the list of newspapers and their websites with the highest circulation among adults aged 18 and over (see Appendix B, Table C.2), I then narrowed down the results according to cumulative scores, or the number of readers who have “read or looked into” an edition of the newspaper within the past month. After eliminating data showing only the past 7 days of readership, a single score was retained for each newspaper, which was the cumulative readership for the newspaper’s print and website combined over the course of one month. The combined net unduplicated circulation data for a 30-day period for print newspapers and their

corresponding websites (if applicable) yielded the following results for the highest readership in the US among adults aged 18 and over (Table 3.7):

Table 3.7 <b>Adult News/Website Readership</b> Sorted By: Proj - Adults 18+				
Rank	Source	Average/Cume	Measure	Adults 18+
1	National <b>The New York Times</b> Weekly	<i>5D/IS</i>	Proj	11,404,576
2	Los Angeles DMA <b>Los Angeles Times</b> /e-edition/LATimes.com Print/Website Net	<i>5D/IS/Web</i>	Proj	4,646,790
3	New York DMA <b>New York Daily News</b> /e-edition/NYDailyNews.com Print/Website Net	<i>5D/IS/Web</i>	Proj	4,134,345
4	Chicago DMA <b>Chicago Tribune</b> /e-edition/ChicagoTribune.com Print/Website Net	<i>5D/IS/Web</i>	Proj	3,078,558
5	Washington, D.C. DMA <b>The Washington Post</b> /Washingtonpost.com Print/Website Net	<i>5D/IS/Web</i>	Proj	2,816,375
<b>Codes:</b> <i>IS = Sunday edition</i> <i>5D = weekly</i> <i>DMA = "(Designated Market Area) - Specific geographic area to which a county in the United States is exclusively assigned on the basis of the television viewing habits of the people residing in the county. DMA® is trademarked by Nielsen Media Research" (AAM, 2016).</i> <i>Proj = the number of adults ages 18+ in the market that are reached by the newspaper</i> <i>Web = online newspaper site</i> <i>Source: Audience Snapshot Database of the Alliance for Audited Media, 2016</i>				

Therefore, the five newspapers with the highest reach among adults (age 18 and over) as identified by data from the Audience Snapshot Database were The New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, the Chicago Tribune, the New York Daily, and The Washington Post. Although newspaper reach calculations above refer to intentional purchase or active online engagement with the newspaper, it does not necessarily reflect overall circulation. A cross-reference between

the newspapers with the greatest reach and the newspapers with the highest overall circulation revealed that three (The New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, and the Chicago Tribune) ranked in the top five in both categories (see Appendix B, Tables C.3 and C.4). However, in order to account for the full list of top 5 newspapers in both reach and circulation, USA TODAY (Monday-Friday and Sunday editions combined) as well as The Detroit News and Detroit Free Press (Sunday editions), which ranked first and third respectively in highest circulation alone, were included into the pool of data for analysis as well. This resulted in a total of seven newspapers that were analyzed for this study.

### **Constructing Meaning**

In order to determine public awareness of celebrities as activists, a mixed-methods approach combining content and discourse analysis was employed. Both methodologies are suitable for analyzing texts, and although they differ in their ontology and epistemology, as well as philosophically in their reflexivity, validity, and reliability, they can be complementary in providing a more comprehensive representation of reality (Hardy, Harley, and Phillips, 2004). Based in the quantitative method, content analysis has a stronger emphasis on objectivity, so that the analytic categories can be transferred from one researcher to another, and yield similar results via intercoder reliability. Content analysis is also systematic in nature, with specific criteria of inclusion or exclusion of data, allowing for quantifiable data applicable to statistical analysis. However, in order to understand the relationship between celebrity activists, the causes they represent, and the expression of that activism, it is necessary to analyze the data from a more constructionist ontology, with attention to the discursive context that goes beyond the means of

content analysis alone. For this reason, thematic content analysis was used within a discourse analytic approach, providing a frequency count, or the number of texts in which all search terms occurred. However, these terms were also situated within the context of each article generated in the search, to ensure that their occurrences were meaningful within that text.

Specifically, I measured the celebrity's visibility in connection to a global health issue by assessing the frequency of the celebrity's mention in connection to that issue in articles printed by the above-mentioned major U.S. newspapers. Using Boolean operators to ensure that only results pertaining to the study population and their corresponding global health issues were generated, I utilized the Access World News database to retrieve results. This database was chosen for its comprehensive selection of national news sources relevant to this study, and for its up to date article availability. The search criteria included each celebrity's name and the organization(s) they are affiliated with for their global health efforts, limited to the ten-year time span of 2006-2016. This beginning date was selected since it aligned with the year that the Look to the Stars database was established (2006), meaning any public engagement celebrities undertook prior to that date would not necessarily be recorded in this database. The number of articles in each of the seven newspapers containing both the celebrity's name *and* each of the organizations was recorded for the purpose of a frequency count, and then each of these articles was analyzed in order to determine whether it made a direct connection between the celebrity and the organization's global health cause. Articles that contained both the celebrity's name and organization, but did not make an express connection between the two, were discarded from the search results, since these were considered arbitrary rather than substantive matches.

Remaining articles were further subjected to discourse analysis in order to determine the extent of the celebrity's involvement with each global health cause, as it related to the categories



of appearance, participation, or donation. Following the definition provided by Laffey and Weldes, discourses refer to the “structures and practices that are used to construct meaning in the world” (Herrera and Braumoeller, p.16, 2004). Particularly salient is the way in which discourse analysis considers the influence of power in creating meaning, with power and politics as a central theme. This methodology was selected since it is a qualitative, interpretive, and constructionist methodology that emphasizes the “intersubjective construction and interpretation of reality” (ibid., 2004), with particular attention to context. Furthermore, aligned with the central theme of this study is the significance of popular culture with regard to politics, based on the concept of intertextuality as explored by Weldes (2006). Intertextuality refers to the interconnection of all forms of text, where each text is received and interpreted according to their relation to others. Therefore, no text exists or can be understood without a contextual reality that directs the interpretation of that text. Weldes translates this concept to the study of high and low data, arguing that the two are not clearly distinct categories, but rather are constructed through their intertextual relationship, where each contributes to the meaning of the other. Since celebrity activity is an integral component of pop culture, which in turn has a direct relationship to political culture, it is essential to recognize and analyze this influence in the study of politics.

In order to understand the way in which celebrity activism becomes noteworthy, it is important to recognize the context that represents their activism as being more remarkable than efforts by the general population. For this reason, each article was analyzed to determine its focus, and how the context of the articles relates to the celebrity’s involvement with the global health cause. For example, does the article focus on cancer research? Does it focus on Robert Downey, Jr.’s involvement with cancer research efforts, specifically? Or does it briefly mention these efforts as it sets out to explore his personal life? The answers to such questions can help

construct the context in which celebrity activism becomes a part of public discourse. Similarly, the particular newspaper section in which each related article appears can also determine the way in which the global health issue is discussed, and was therefore also recorded (i.e. Front Page, Lifestyle, Politics, Gossip, etc.) based on available data in the Access World News database. In an effort to gain insight as to who constitutes the audience for these newspaper articles, readership demographics for each newspaper were also collected based on data from the Audience Snapshot Database. Only through the analysis of the unique combination of all of this information can research produce a more complete picture of the context in which messages about celebrity activism are both produced and disseminated.

### **Following Fame**

The textual resources found within mass media, and in this case specifically, newspapers, have an identifiable audience positioned to receive messages relating to each celebrity's global health activism. In consideration of today's media landscape, another platform of influence celebrities may utilize is social media. According to data from the Nielsen Company Insights Report on Global Generational Lifestyles (Nielsen, 2015), 33% of the population receives news from social media sites. This means that celebrities who present themselves and/or their causes on social media therefore have an opportunity to extend their sphere of influence beyond what is allowed by traditional mass media alone.

One reason people may become motivated to support a celebrity's cause is what is called "diffusion" (Tsaliki et al., 2011). Celebrities influence one another, so that as one celebrity adopts a cause, he may then enlist his social network to participate as well. Enabled by media

and social media, this social network has expanded beyond those with whom the celebrity has direct contact, and moved into the homes of strangers—the celebrity’s audience, Facebook friends and Twitter followers. Therefore, data on Internet presence and social media reach is also useful in understanding influence, due to the norm-activating potential of messages carried through these platforms.

There are specific numerical figures that detail how many followers each activist has in social media outlets, so there is therefore an identifiable audience for celebrity activists in social media. The social media analytics platform, Klear, was used to determine celebrity online impact based on their social media footprint across the three top-performing social media platforms, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. This particular analytics platform was chosen due to the depth of analytic insights it provided within the budgetary constraints of this study. A simple search within this platform for each of the five celebrities provided data on social media presence, activity, audience size and demographics, as well as audience active engagement as measured by re-tweets, replies, likes, and shares of the celebrity’s posts. Although the content of messages conveyed through these social media platforms was beyond the scope of this research, recognizing the characteristics of the customized platforms that represent each celebrity’s social media presence can contribute to a further understanding of existing avenues of influence through which a celebrity may advocate for global health causes.

## **Interviews**

Interviews can often help the researcher identify variables not previously considered. Personal interactions with open-ended questions in particular can offer new perspectives, ideas,

and information that can serve to enrich the research overall, and spark interest in new avenues for future study. In a search for more in-depth knowledge of “institutions, structures, rule-making, or procedural controls” (Hochschild, 2009), elite interviews are particularly useful in process-tracing of policy decisions or other changes of historical significance. In this context, elites are classified as those individuals who are leaders or experts in a particular field, or those who are intentionally sought due to the specific position they occupy in society that endows them with unique knowledge on a particular issue. The goals of elite interviews are to obtain generalizable knowledge from a sample of officials, obtain information about a particular topic or item, or to provide context for other data sources (Goldstein, 2002).

In an attempt to gain greater insight into the multiple motivations and avenues for celebrities to become activists for their causes, semi-structured interviews of cultural elites (and/or their representatives) were developed as a complement to the aforementioned open-source data<sup>3</sup>. In this respect, there was also an exploratory element to this study, allowing the subject’s responses to determine further avenues of inquiry that could elucidate the inner workings of high profile activism. Open-ended prompts directed the discussion, while grand tour questions offered the elite subjects an opportunity to present an overview of celebrity activism from their perspectives. In an effort to limit response bias, double-barreled questions, which are two questions in one, ambiguous questions, where concepts are not clearly defined, and leading questions, which indicate the interviewer’s expectations, were avoided during the interviews.

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 1 for the following:

1. Informed consent form, approved by the University of South Florida Institutional Review Board.
2. List of questions for subjects.

Using an open-ended survey instrument may lead to and allow for the exploration of further concepts, events, and sources of data enabled by the respondent's freedom to deviate from predetermined boundaries set by closed-ended instruments. In this way, the researcher may benefit from the expertise of the elite interviewee, and incorporate new elements into the research that may not have been considered previously, thus enhancing the quality and comprehensiveness of the study overall. Limiting an elite interviewee with a closed-ended survey would not take full advantage of the expertise of that elite, or their unique knowledge of the context of the study's object of inquiry. Since human behavior, the focus of social science studies, is largely context-dependent, in-depth knowledge gained from case studies can benefit from an examination of such sources of unique contextual data. However, despite these benefits, two methodological issues with regard to elite interviewing, and that are considered further in Chapter 4, are validity and reliability due to self-reporting (Berry, 2002). Furthermore, access to this subject population is a challenge, and any participant recruitment for this study was either facilitated by channels of mutual contacts, direct electronic communication with them, and/or their official representatives as available in the Internet Movie Database Professional (IMDB Pro) subscription, with varying success.

Though I received a zero-response rate from the target population of the top five celebrity actors in the CIQ and their representatives for a formal, even if anonymous, interview, other actors were more willing to discuss their activism for this research. Because elite interviews are a form of human interaction, the rapport the researcher has with the interviewee can affect the quality of information the subject is willing to share. As a fellow member of the Screen Actors Guild – American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA), I was able to speak with certain actors in an informal capacity regarding their activism, yet in the formal role

as researcher, I received few responses. Furthermore, as previously mentioned, the two greatest methodological issues with regard to elite interviewing are validity and reliability due to self-reporting (Berry, Validity and Reliability Issues in Elite Interviewing, 2002). Due to the public nature of a celebrity's professional and personal activities, and the inextricable relationship between public image and professional opportunity, it was also important to consider any exaggeration in the subject's responses, missing information, and issues of subject credibility based on the way he/she responded. Therefore, probing was used in order to delve deeper into a topic, or when it was unclear if the subject's responses were headed in a helpful direction. However, despite these measures, responses received from the survey instrument did not yield any meaningful data, i.e. data that was not already available in public media forums. For these reasons of compromised validity and reliability, data collected during the course of elite interviewing was not included in the study results, though elements of these interactions have been incorporated throughout this dissertation as a complement to relevant data, rather than a meaningful addition.

### **What's Health Got to Do with It?**

Once the global health engagement and/or activism for each of the five actors in the study population was identified, it was cross-referenced with the data gathered on the most pressing global health concerns. The purpose of this was to determine if high profile activists' efforts are being applied for the greatest impact in global health, i.e. causes affecting the greatest number of people globally. Data from the United Nations agency specializing in global public health, the World Health Organization, was used to identify the global health issues affecting the greatest

number of people worldwide, while existing global health security literature and NGO, IGO, and government discussions of global health security issues were used to support this data (Beaglehole & Bonita, 2009; Brown & Zavestoski, 2005; Farmer, 2003; IOM, 1997; Lakoff, 2010; Rylko-Bauer et al., 2009; Wagstaff & Claeson, 2004; Whiteford & Manderson, 2000).

While data on prevalence is significant in determining the number of people affected by a particular disease or condition, high prevalence is not always an indicator of high mortality, and therefore it is possible that a global health issue can be represented by a high rate of mortality in concert with low prevalence. An example of this would be in the case of the Ebola virus, whose victims typically do not survive long enough for a high prevalence rate to accumulate, thereby resulting in high mortality but low prevalence. Therefore, data on both prevalence and mortality rates were collected. Another metric included for each global health issue were Disability-Adjusted Life Years (DALYs), or years of “healthy” life lost. DALYs are the quantifiable measure of the burden of disease, calculated by adding the sum of years of life lost (YLL) due to disease mortality to the years lost to disability (YLD) caused by a disease (WHO, 2017). This metric was useful in that it accounted for quality of life as affected by each of the global health issues with which the five celebrity subjects were engaging. Since each health issue examined did not necessarily have available data for each of the three metrics (prevalence, mortality, and DALYs), including all three allowed for a more comprehensive view of the number of people affected in some way by each global health issue.

## **Summary**

In order to address the research question(s) guiding this study, case study methodology

was deemed the most appropriate, since it offers comparative advantages in cases exhibiting multifinality. This methodology also allows for in-depth analysis of discourses that contribute to the development and expression of power, which is particularly salient in the study of celebrities as activists for any cause that influences public health on a global scale. Clearly defined parameters for case selection ensured that the celebrities chosen for study represented the most influential Hollywood celebrity actors, or the most elite members of this particular group of performing artists.

After first devising and then applying the Celebrity Influence Quotient (CIQ) to generate the sample population, I was able to identify the global health causes each of the five celebrity subjects were affiliated with, based on publicly available information about the organizations they support. Identifying the most influential newspapers vis a vis their circulation and readership data, a mixed-methods approach using content and discourse analysis was employed to evaluate the public connections made between the celebrity and his cause, with attention to the specific form this engagement took. Further data on social media engagement as well as elite interviews offered supplementary information on the scope of celebrity influence, and a more intimate view of celebrity activists' contextual realities, respectively. Finally, understanding the global health environment within which celebrity activists operate allowed for a clearer evaluation of the potential influence these celebrities have over the status of global health security overall.

After analyzing the aforementioned data, it was my expectation that my hypothesis would be confirmed; specifically, that celebrity activists, or persons of high visibility due to their social status or prominence in popular culture who become politically engaged activists, mobilize economic, social, and political resources that promote global health. However, it is also my



expectation that these resources are not allocated towards the global health issues that affect the largest population, and therefore have the greatest effect on global health security overall.

Understanding any inconsistency between resource allocation and global health security is a significant step towards creating a framework through which activists can be informed as to the most effective application of their resources, and help determine whether celebrities can be differently situated in their activism for greater impact in global health.

## Chapter 4

### The Famous Five: Celebrity Involvement in Global Health Initiatives

Celebrities negotiate their roles as both public figures and private individuals through the unique amalgamation of creative works, public engagement, and personal choices they choose to undertake, which collectively contribute to their celebrity persona. Such high profile figures express themselves as activists in a variety of ways, depending on the interests and resources they each have at their disposal. While no single discipline comprehensively addresses the complexity of celebrity activism, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary theoretical perspectives presented in Chapter 2 established a framework through which to understand various dimensions of this high profile activity, recognizing it as one thread that weaves together the current fabric of social, cultural, and political life.

In order to address one aspect of celebrity activism, the research question, *How do cultural elites prominent in U.S. media impact global health security?*, was developed for this study, while a mixed-methods approach was detailed in Chapter 3, utilizing a combination of content and discourse analysis in order to address the multiple dimensions of celebrity activism in global health. This chapter, Chapter 4, will provide an analysis of data collected through that methodology, including data on the engagement that the celebrity study population undertook with global health issues during a ten-year period, and situate that engagement in the context of global health needs.

Secondary research questions will provide insight into the representations of celebrity activism that then affect global health security discourses, perceptions, and priorities. In addressing the secondary research question, *How does celebrity activism affect global health security discourses?*, an analysis of the most influential newspapers (as determined in Chapter 3 by circulation and readership) will offer quantitative data on any substantive publicity the actors received for their global health activism during the ten year period of 2006-2016 in that media. Data on social media engagement for each actor will contribute to a fuller understanding of each celebrity's overall reach and potential realm of influence, while an analysis of the prevalence and content of articles published, along with data on the impact of global health issues on human mortality will provide a framework for answering the second secondary research question, *What "truths" are created by celebrity activism in global health?*, which will be fully addressed in Chapter 5.

Testing the hypothesis that celebrity actors' global health engagement is not most frequently allocated towards the global health issues that have the greatest effect on global health security, the secondary research question, *Are the issues these celebrities are advocating for, the most pressing global health concerns?*, must first be answered. Therefore, data on each of the 13 global health issues as determined by the U.N. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) for Good Health and Well-Being (SDG #3) targets will be analyzed in this chapter, and expressly connected to the celebrities who have supported them. In answering these questions, this chapter will present data collected on each of the five actors individually as cases, then proceed to analyze their activism as a collective representation of the impact the most influential celebrities have on global health security.

## **Descriptive Characteristics of Study Population**

The Celebrity Influence Quotient (CIQ) developed in Chapter 3 determined the most influential celebrity actors of 2015 based on the analysis of 1) the 2015 Numbers Bankability Index, 2) the highest grossing actors in 2015, 3) the highest grossing actors of all time, and 4) the highest paid actors in 2015. These calculations yielded, in descending order of CIQ, Tom Cruise, Robert Downey Jr., Bradley Cooper, Leonardo DiCaprio, and Matt Damon as the top five most influential celebrity actors in Hollywood for the year 2015. Despite the success of a few women and minority men in various blockbuster films in recent years (for example, Jennifer Lawrence in the *Hunger Games* and *X-Men* franchises, or Dwayne Johnson in *The Fast and the Furious* films), it is worth noting that all actors present across all four component categories of the CIQ were male, predominantly white, and in the same general age range of 40-55 years old (see Chapter 3).

As the celebrities each have their own unique range of interests and opportunities, so do they support a largely distinct set of organizations from one another, with only occasional overlaps with other top actors. Using the celebrity charity tracker database, *Look to the Stars* (Looktothestars.org), I identified all cause-driven organizations the five top celebrities have engaged with between the years 2006 and 2016, while an online search for each of these organizations then provided descriptive characteristics of issues and activities put forth by these organizations. Understanding the organizations' mission allowed them to be categorized based on their engagement with a global health cause as previously defined by a relation to one of the 13 global health targets expressed in U.N. SDG #3, Good Health and Well-Being. Once the organizations each of the five celebrities were involved with were divided into Global Health and Non-Global Health related (see Appendix D, Table D.1), those characterized as Global Health

related organizations were further classified according to the specific global health issues they address, and issued the code corresponding to their particular issue (3.1 through 3.13). Nine of the 13 global health issues were represented by the five celebrities studied, and analysis of global mortality rates for 2015 – the last year for which mortality data was available – showed that these celebrities are engaging with nine of the 20 leading causes of death in 2015, though not with the top four.

Understanding the character of these actors' involvement with the global health (and related) organizations is elemental to understanding how the celebrities' resources are being allocated to their chosen causes. Although identifying the specific global health issues directly connected to each celebrity provided clear search terms in the mass media outlet database, a frequency count of articles associating the celebrity to his cause in the top newspapers yielded few results. Furthermore, it is worth noting that of these few articles published, the overwhelming majority were featured in a single newspaper, USA Today, and its *LIFE* section in particular, which focuses on "entertainment, pop culture, and celebrity gossip" (LIFE, 2017). Since the focus of the newspaper section featuring each article on celebrity activism influences the focus of the articles contained in that section as well, thereby helping to frame the discussion of celebrity activism itself, these results help address the secondary research question, *What "truths" are created by celebrity activism in global health?*

However, the dearth of articles providing meaningful data on the nature of the connection between the celebrities and their global health causes necessitated a broader search that extended beyond these top newspapers, in order to gather sufficient data to categorize each actor's involvement with his causes according to three categories of involvement, *Appearance*, *Participation*, and *Donation*. To qualify under the *Appearance* category, the actor endorses the

cause or organization by either lending his name for promotional purposes, or attending as a guest at a particular event hosted by, or otherwise benefiting, the organization. The celebrity may have spoken to the media about the event or promoted it on their own social media pages, however, no further engagement was publicized. The *Participation* category requires the celebrity to more actively engage with the cause or organization than in the *Appearance* category, acting as an integral component of either planning, hosting, or fundraising activities. Examples of participation may include answering phones during a telethon, modeling for a cause, being featured in a documentary, meeting with a world leader to discuss the issue, serving as part of the governing body for an organization, or other forms of active engagement. Finally, in order for a celebrity to be listed in the *Donation* category, he must have made a public monetary contribution to the organization, although the specific amount of this contribution was not weighted. Although it is not always possible to identify one's personal contributions due to varied degrees of organizational transparency, for the purposes of this study, where celebrities were part of the governing body of an organization making charitable donations to global health related causes, the celebrity was included as a donor by association, since their roles with the organization presumes decision-making resulting in the active allocation of funds towards charitable endeavors.

Each instance of involvement within these three categories was tallied separately, and then a cumulative involvement score was generated based on the results. Involvement scores were generated for intra-case (within each case) and inter-case (between cases) comparative purposes. The data collected from online and print media connecting the actors to their global health causes showed that of these three categories, the celebrities' most frequently publicized form of engagement is Participation, followed by Appearance, and finally, Donation. The

sections below provide a detailed analysis of each actor's individual activities as related to global health issues and organizations during the ten year period of 2006-2016, in order to address the primary research question guiding this study, *How do cultural elites prominent in U.S. media impact global health security?*, and its secondary research questions. The five cases are then further analyzed collectively with regard to the types of global health issues with which they engage, the mortality rates of these issues, and finally, how this engagement manifests and is represented in the media.

### **CIQ 1: Tom Cruise**

*"I want a world without war, a world without insanity. I want to see people do well. I don't even think it's as much as what I want for myself. It's more what I want for the people around me. That's what I want." - Tom Cruise (GateHouse News Service, 2009)*

Occupying the highest score as determined by the Celebrity Influence Quotient was Hollywood veteran, Thomas Cruise Mapother IV, best known professionally as Tom Cruise. Contributing to his status on the CIQ is the longevity of his career, which spans four decades, as well as the number and box office success of films he has been part of. With 41 film credits and counting, some of the actor's most profitable box office hits that have cemented his status among the top earners in Hollywood include *Top Gun* (1986), *A Few Good Men* (1992), and the *Mission Impossible* franchise (1996, 2000, 2006, 2011, 2015, and 2018), which grace each of the four decades of his career (IMDB, 2017).

Using data from the Look to the Stars database for celebrity activism, supported by research into the organizations' own websites, it was determined that Tom Cruise was affiliated with five organizations involved in global health issues: Barbara Davis Center for Childhood

Diabetes, the Children's Hospice & Palliative Care Coalition, the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, Raising Malawi, and UNICEF. Table 4.1 below illustrates the broad global health issues with which the actor is connected by his association with these organizations, and the specific aspect of each issue on which he focuses.

<b>Table 4.1</b> Organizations and Global Health-Related SDGs <b>TOM CRUISE (TC)</b>			
<b>SDG</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>TC Focus</b>	<b>TC-Affiliated Organizations</b>
3.1	Maternal mortality	Prevention and treatment of HIV in pregnant women, mothers, and children	Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation
3.2	Infant and under 5 mortality	Under age 5	Barbara Davis Center for Childhood Diabetes Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation Raising Malawi UNICEF
3.3	Communicable diseases	HIV/AIDS Malaria	Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation Raising Malawi UNICEF
3.4	Non-communicable diseases	Cancer Diabetes	Barbara Davis Center for Childhood Diabetes UNICEF
3.11	Vaccines and medicines	N/A	UNICEF
3.12	Healthcare workers and financing for developing countries	Strengthening the health workforce	Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation Raising Malawi UNICEF
3.13	Health infrastructure	Strengthening effective local leadership, healthcare delivery systems, and healthcare financing	Children's Hospice & Palliative Care Coalition Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation UNICEF

Analysis of the mission and efforts of these organizations determined that between 2006 and 2016 Cruise has engaged with organizations devoted to 7 of the 13 global health issues as distinguished through the UN SDG for good health and well-being. Based on data gathered from



the mission statements of the organizations the actor has supported (Barbara Davis Center for Diabetes, n.d.; Children's Hospice & Palliative Care Coalition, n.d.; Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, n.d.; Raising Malawi, n.d.; UNICEF, n.d.), the global health issue with which Cruise was most frequently associated was infant and under 5 mortality (SDG 3.2), although he has publicly supported in some way programs that address seven distinct health issues.

There are various ways in which an individual may engage with these global health causes, from re-posting a Tweet to donating large sums of money to the cause, with multiple avenues for advocacy in between. In order to better understand the character and type of involvement Tom Cruise had with each of these causes, a search was conducted using the Access World News database for articles tying the celebrity to each cause. Within each of the five top circulation and five top readership newspapers and websites (a total of seven separate newspapers due to overlaps between these two categories), the parameters set for each search included keywords for each of the global health causes and/or organizations with which Tom Cruise was connected, the actor's full name, and the date restriction (2006-2016). To achieve optimum search results, for organizations that focused on one global health issue, search terms included the name of the organization, while a subsequent search also included the specific health issue as a search term as well. So, for example, to identify Tom Cruise's involvement with the Barbara Davis Center for Childhood Diabetes, a search was conducted for "Tom Cruise" and "Barbara Davis Center for Childhood Diabetes", in addition to a search for "Tom Cruise" and "diabetes". For organizations with multiple global health goals, such as UNICEF, for example, the search terms included the name of the organization itself, without additional searches for each health goal represented within that organization. Specifically, the Boolean

search terms used within each of the seven newspapers during the period of 2006-2016 for this case were “Tom Cruise” and:

- Barbara Davis Center for Childhood Diabetes
- diabetes
- Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation
- AIDS
- Children's Hospice & Palliative Care Coalition
- children's hospice
- Raising Malawi<sup>4</sup>
- UNICEF

Results showed that for the dates specified, not all of the global health issues and/or organizations the actor was associated with were given public attention in the highest profile U.S. newspapers. Specifically, based on the search results within these newspapers, there were only two global health issues and/or organizations connected to Tom Cruise between 2006 and 2016 (see Table D.2 in Appendix E), and they were both mentioned in the same single article published by USA Today (Freydkin & Mandell, Madonna knows, 2008). This article featured a star-studded joint Raising Malawi – UNICEF event in 2008, which was the only Cruise-affiliated global health event to receive publicity in any of the seven most popular newspapers, despite the involvement of international superstar, Madonna, co-founder of Raising Malawi, an organization whose global health activities focus on child mortality, infectious disease, and performing various “lifesaving surgeries” (Raising Malawi, 2017). Furthermore, as previously mentioned, this organization partnered with UNICEF for this event, the high profile United Nations

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<sup>4</sup> At this point it is important to note that in evaluating Raising Malawi’s categorization as a global-health organization, criticisms surrounding its use of funds (Smith, 2011), as well as an official website lacking transparency regarding leadership, programmatic costs, and program implementation, make it difficult to evaluate how much of the organization’s efforts are allocated specifically to global health initiatives. However, since the data required for this type of analysis goes beyond the scope of this study, the global health activities of Raising Malawi and every organization in this research were weighted equally, and based on self-reported data provided by the organization.

organization devoted to children's rights for health, education, protection, and well-being, and featured numerous celebrity supporters.

Analysis of the article showed that the actor's personal connection with Madonna, the event's host, was one of the factors that motivated him to participate, however, the extent of Tom Cruise's involvement with either Raising Malawi or UNICEF was not discussed. The article in fact focused primarily on the couture worn by the celebrity attendees and the social interactions they had (i.e. who talked to whom), with only one sentence in the entire article mentioning the goals of the Raising Malawi organization, in vague terms, as "aim(ing) to improve the lives of poor children in the African nation" (Freydkin & Mandell, Madonna knows, 2008). This is likely due to the section of the newspaper in which the article was published, USA TODAY's LIFE section, which features news in "entertainment, pop culture, celebrity gossip, movies, books and TV reviews" (LIFE, 2017).

Due to the relative dearth of information in the top newspapers connecting Tom Cruise to global health causes, a broader search was necessary in order to determine the nature of these connections. Using the same search terms in Access World News while removing the source parameters yielded additional results from other news sources, while the Look to the Stars database, and the organizations' websites also provided greater details on the actor's involvement with the specified global health causes (Mercedes-Benz to Present Carousel of Hope, 2012; Celebrities Go On Safari..., 2010; Miley Cyrus To Give Her Time For Heroes, 2009; NO PUFFING MAKES UMA PUFFY, 2008; Shen, 2010). The nature of Tom Cruise's global health engagement was thus determined, and characterized according to the three previously established categories of involvement, including *Appearance*, *Participation*, and *Donation*.

Tom Cruise received publicity for two instances of Participation, two Appearances, and one Donation, for a total of 6 publicized cases of global health activism. In each instance, the actor was connected to the organization through a type of high-profile fundraising event, featuring numerous other celebrities who would attract media attention as well. For example, an article in the New York Post mentioned Tom Cruise as one of the celebrities who answered telephones to collect donations for relief efforts following the devastating 2010 earthquake in Haiti (Shen, Buy George - Details of Haiti Telethon Still 'Up in the Air', 2010), where UNICEF was listed among the aid recipients. Similarly, Cruise supported the Barbara Davis Center for Childhood Diabetes by serving as one of the stars in the constellation of participants, joining celebrities including Denzel Washington, Maria Shriver, Scarlett Johanson, Sir Elton John, Goldie Hawn, and others (George Clooney To Be Honored At Carousel Of Hope Gala, 2012). The only exception to this observation relates to his involvement with the Children's Hospice & Palliative Care Coalition, for which details of his association were not available.

Although Cruise was also among high profile participants for the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, for which he sat in a dunk tank and read to children in the 2001 and 2002 *A Time for Heroes Celebrity Picnic* charity events respectively, this engagement was outside the temporal parameters established for this study, and was therefore excluded from results. For additional details of Tom Cruise's publicized cases of global health activism, see Table D.3 in Appendix E.

## **CIQ 2: Robert Downey, Jr.**

*"This is probably going to get quoted in every publication just because I said it. And I'm not even saying anything. I'm not talking about my films, I'm not talking about my life, and I'm not*

*talking about the world. And yet, the media will print it simply because I said it. And at this moment in time, I bet there is an artist around the corner of this hotel, on the street, with a mind far beyond ours, but we will never listen to him simply because he has not appeared in a movie. And that is what is (messed) up about our culture.” – Robert Downey, Jr. (quoted in Erik’s Review, 2016)*

Son of a filmmaker father and actress mother, Robert Downey, Jr. began his career at an early age as a child actor, and found success as he grew older in film and television. Despite his long-time public battles with drug addiction that led to a flickering Hollywood career, Downey continued his work in Hollywood. His sustained work in film since his debut in 1970 has made him the most prolific actor in the top five CIQ with 90 acting credits (IMDB Pro, 2016), thereby continuing to add to the revenue generated over his lifetime, one of the metrics used to calculate CIQ. By the age of 27, he had distinguished himself professionally as “one of the most gifted actors of his generation” (Editors, 2016), which increased his bankability on the Numbers Bankability Index, another metric of the CIQ. While his long acting career and bankability contributed to his status on the CIQ, it was his title role in the Marvel Comics’ high-grossing *Iron Man* franchise (2008, 2010, 2013), a role he also reprised for a series of related big-budget films in the Marvel Universe (2012, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018) (Robert Downey Jr. , 2017), that helped solidify his status as a Hollywood A-List actor, propelling Downey into the second spot for the Celebrity Influence Quotient.

Although he famously plays a superhero onscreen, his offscreen activism has received relatively little public attention. Based on data collected from the Look to the Stars database and cross-referenced with data from the organizations’ websites, Robert Downey, Jr. has been active with four organizations whose missions include global health priorities, corresponding to two separate broad global health issues illustrated by Table 4.2 below.

<b>Table 4.2</b> Organizations and GH-Related SDGs <b>ROBERT DOWNEY, JR. (RDJ)</b>			
<b>SDG</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>RDJ Focus</b>	<b>RDJ-Affiliated Organizations</b>
3.2	Infant and under 5 mortality	Prevention of birth defects, premature birth, and infant mortality	March of Dimes
3.4	Non-communicable diseases	Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) Cancer (general) Cancer (male-specific)	ALS Association Cahonas Scotland Entertainment Industry Foundation - Stand Up to Cancer

One of the organizations with which Downey is connected is the Entertainment Industry Foundation (EIF), a charitable organization established in 1942 by leaders in the entertainment industry to raise awareness and funds for a variety of health and social issues. However, since Downey’s involvement with the EIF has been through its Stand Up to Cancer initiative, only that initiative’s focus (cancer awareness and research) is listed here as representative of his work with the EIF. An analysis of the specific health issues contained within the broader SDG targets that each organization supports revealed that of the two global health issues Robert Downey, Jr. has engaged with between 2006 and 2016, the one to which he has been most dedicated is goal 3.4 (non-communicable diseases), and specifically, cancer.

Searching within each of the seven top circulation/readership newspapers to determine the nature of Downey’s partnership with these organizations and causes, surprisingly, yielded no meaningful results. Parameters set for the search included keywords for each of the global health causes and/or organizations with which Downey was connected, the actor’s full name, and the date restriction (2006-2016). To achieve optimum search results, in addition to the name of the organizations, search terms also included the specific health issue. So, for example, for Downey’s association with the organization, Cahonas Scotland, a search was done for Cahonas

Scotland as well as for cancer as a separate search item. Specifically, the Boolean terms used within each of the seven newspapers during the period of 2006-2016 for this case were “Robert Downey” and:

- ALS
- Cahonas Scotland
- cancer
- Entertainment Industry Foundation
- infant mortality
- March of Dimes
- Stand Up to Cancer

Any results containing the actor’s name and the global health cause/organization were featured in a collection of press releases for various films and celebrity events that happened to have all search terms collectively contained within the text, although these terms were otherwise contextually unrelated to one another. Therefore, this search resulted in no articles in the seven newspapers that made a meaningful connection between the actor and his global health causes. Due to the lack of substantive information within these seven news sources, a broader search retaining the original search parameters was extended to all news sources in the Access World News database, yielding more useful data with which to characterize Downey’s involvement.

From this new search, it was determined that Robert Downey, Jr. received publicity for his active participation on three occasions, including serving in a leadership role as Co-Chair of a fundraising event for the March of Dimes charity (2012), participating in a telethon to benefit Stand Up to Cancer (2014), and participating in the social media Ice Bucket Challenge to raise awareness for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) (2014). His support for the Entertainment Industry Foundation’s Stand Up to Cancer initiative also took the form of an appearance at a fundraising event in 2015, while a donation of his worn and signed tie for an e-Bay charity auction benefitted Cahonas Scotland, a male cancer awareness charitable organization.

Therefore, Robert Downey, Jr. received publicity for three instances of Participation, and one instance each of Appearance and Donation for global health related causes, for a total of five instances of global health engagement. The articles describing Downey’s connection to the above-mentioned organizations were not focused on him as a central theme, but rather cited the actor as one among many celebrity supporters involved with each high profile event or challenge (Hollywood Stands Up to Cancer, 2015; March of Dimes Announces Honorees for 2012 Celebration of Babies Luncheon, 2012; More Than USD \$109 Million Pledged..., 2014; Stars Donate Ties And Scarves To Cancer Charity Auction, 2013; Miller, 2014). A detailed table on Downey’s engagement is provided in Table D.4 in Appendix E.

### **CIQ 3: Bradley Cooper**

“I can’t even imagine how much more difficult it is for those patients and the families that are less fortunate than I was that simply can’t afford to pay for both treatment and rent.” – Bradley Cooper (*discussing losing his father to cancer, in Miller M., Bradley Cooper Gets Emotional, 2016*)

With a career spanning the realms of television, film, and theatre, Bradley Cooper has earned a spot among the most influential Hollywood actors, with a CIQ of 3 after Tom Cruise (CIQ 1) and Robert Downey, Jr. (CIQ 2), despite the fact that he began his career much later than the other actors in the top five CIQ. Following formal training through his Master’s Degree program at the Actors Studio Drama School in New York City (Editors, Bradley Cooper Biography, 2016), Cooper’s supporting roles in television ultimately led to larger roles in film, with eventual Academy Award nominations for his work in the films *Silver Linings Playbook* (2012), *American Hustle* (2013), and *American Sniper* (2014). Although this recognition increased the value he added to subsequent film projects, per the Numbers Bankability Index, it



was his role as Rocket the Raccoon (voice) in the *Guardians of the Galaxy* films and greater Marvel Comics Universe, as well as his role in *The Hangover* film franchise that placed him among the top paid Hollywood actors, greatly contributing to his overall success, fame, and high CIQ.

Of the 13 organizations with which Bradley Cooper was publicly associated, seven were superficially related to global health issues. However, a more in-depth analysis of the relationship between the actor and the organizations revealed that activities with only five organizations were in fact directly connected to one of the 13 global health issues, as illustrated in Table 4.3 below.

<b>Table 4.3</b> Organizations and GH-Related SDGs <b>BRADLEY COOPER (BC)</b>			
<b>SDG</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>BC Focus</b>	<b>BC-Affiliated Organizations</b>
3.4	Non-communicable diseases	Alzheimer’s Disease Cancer (general) Cancer (skin)	Alzheimer's Association Cancer Research Institute Cancer Research UK Entertainment Industry Foundation - Stand Up to Cancer Melanoma Research Alliance

Cooper was also listed in the Look to the Stars database as supporting the Clinton Foundation’s Clinton Global Initiative (CGI), whose mission is to bring together global leaders of government, industry, academia, and philanthropy “to create and implement solutions to the world's most pressing challenges” (Clinton Global Initiative Mission, 2017). Although the organization is committed to a variety of global health issues, Cooper’s involvement with the CGI is connected to the *Got Your 6* campaign, which was formed at a CGI America event as a campaign dedicated to veteran support (Stars Support Veterans And Military Families With Got

Your 6 Campaign, 2012). As such, Bradley Cooper's involvement with the CGI is not directly connected to one of the 13 global health issues analyzed in this research, and was therefore excluded from the list of the actor's global health related organizations. As evident in Table 4.3, Cooper's global health engagement was focused exclusively on organizations and/or initiatives dedicated to non-communicable diseases (SDG 3.4), four of which were specifically focused on cancer (general and skin), while the fifth was committed to Alzheimer's disease care and research (Alzheimer's Association, n.d.; Cancer Research Institution, n.d.; Cancer Research UK, n.d.; Melanoma Research Alliance, n.d.; Stand Up to Cancer, n.d.).

In contrast to the previous cases of Tom Cruise and Robert Downey, Jr., Bradley Cooper's activities with each of his associated global health organizations received greater coverage in the seven top circulation/readership newspapers. As with the previous two cases, parameters set for each search included keywords for each of the global health causes and/or organizations with which Cooper was connected, the actor's full name, and the date restriction (2006-2016). Since the name of each of the three organizations also contained within it the specific health issue, only the issue was included as a search term. So, for example, for Cooper's involvement with the organization Alzheimer's Association, a search was done for "Alzheimer's" only. Similarly, for his involvement with the Cancer Research Institute, Cancer Research UK, the Melanoma Research Alliance, and Stand Up to Cancer, the search was done for "cancer" as well as "melanoma", casting a wider proverbial net for possible search results. Specifically, the Boolean search terms used within each of the seven newspapers during the period of 2006-2016 for this case were "Bradley Cooper" and:

- Alzheimer's
- cancer
- melanoma

While most search results connecting Cooper to the issue of cancer were about the film *Guardians of the Galaxy*, in which one of the characters loses his mother to cancer (therefore unrelated to Cooper's activism), there were other results in these news sources that made a more meaningful connection between the actor and cancer engagement (see Table D.5 in Appendix E).

Cooper's activism for cancer awareness and research appears in the media following his father's passing from lung cancer in 2011, and he has since been an outspoken activist for cancer research and care, as well as patient and family support. In his focus on this global health issue, the actor has at times also assumed a leadership role, evidenced by the 2016 *Stand Up to Cancer* telecast fundraising event where he served as executive producer (Alexander, 2016). However, all relevant articles connecting Cooper to either cancer or Alzheimer's disease were written about events either attended or hosted by a number of celebrities supporting that particular cause, with both Cooper and the health issue as secondary features. The only exception was one article in USA Today whose main focus was the Alzheimer's Association's presence at a Rose Bowl football game, as well as other efforts put forth by the organization, rather than celebrity news (Marcus, All aboard the Alzheimer's Express, 2010). Three of the four articles connecting the actor to his global health causes originated in USA Today, specifically the LIFE section whose focus, as seen earlier in reference to Tom Cruise, is entertainment. The one article found in a different source among the top seven highest circulation and/or readership newspapers was featured in New York Daily, and listed the *Stand Up to Cancer* televised fundraiser among many viewing suggestions for readers that week (Stuff to Watch, 2016). The one-sentence section mentioning both Cooper and the cancer organization cited him as an executive producer of the event before quickly moving on to the next featured television show.

A broader search was also conducted in order to obtain more detailed data on the nature and extent of Bradley Cooper's involvement with the aforementioned global health organizations. Removing the source parameters while retaining the search terms in Access World News yielded additional results from other news sources for this case as well, while the Look to the Stars database was also useful in producing articles referencing the connection between the actor and his causes (Stars Team Up to Fight Alzheimer's, 2009; Last week stars from television, music and film came together for Stand Up To Cancer in the UK , 2012; Entertainment Industry Foundation, 2016).

Analysis of these articles revealed that Bradley Cooper's connection with Cancer Research UK was related to his involvement with the Entertainment Industry Foundation's Stand Up to Cancer (SU2C) initiative, for which he served as one of the celebrity hosts during a televised SU2C fundraiser. The event took place in the United Kingdom as a joint effort between the two organizations, with proceeds administered by Cancer Research UK to benefit SU2C (Stars Stand Up To Cancer In The UK, 2010). Similarly, his association with the Cancer Research Institute and the Melanoma Research Alliance was indirect, again through the Stand Up to Cancer initiative which serves as one of its partner organizations (Entertainment Industry Foundation, 2016). For this reason, data connecting the Cancer Research Institute, the Melanoma Research Alliance, as well as Cancer Research UK to the actor were merged with data for the Stand Up to Cancer initiative, since Cooper's connection to those organizations was exclusively the indirect result of his involvement with SU2C. It is unclear why the Look to the Stars database chose to mention these SU2C partner organizations while neglecting others such as the Dutch Cancer Society or the Prostate Cancer Foundation, among others. However, for the

purposes of this research the omission was unproblematic, since Cooper's association with them also appears to be limited to his activities with SU2C.

Cooper's public involvement with the Alzheimer's Association within the specified timeframe of 2006 and 2016 begins in 2009, when he joined forces with the organization and other celebrities to support the *Who Wears Purple Best?* campaign on the group's website (alz.org), earning him recognition for participation with the organization. The same year, he attended the fundraising event, *One Night at Sardi's*, which raised \$1 million towards Alzheimer's care and research. However, Cooper's individual contribution to these efforts are unclear from the available news sources, and therefore he is recognized in this study for his appearance only at this event. The actor took on a more active role in his engagement with the Stand Up to Cancer initiative, where he served as host (2012) and producer (2016) of the SU2C's televised fundraising events. Therefore, Bradley Cooper received publicity for three instances of Participation and one Appearance related to his two global health causes, Alzheimer's disease and cancer, between 2006 and 2016. For a table detailing Cooper's global health activism at greater length, please see Table D.6 in Appendix E.

#### **CIQ 4: Leonardo DiCaprio**

"I play fictitious characters often solving fictitious problems. I believe mankind has looked at climate change in the same way, as if it were a fiction." – Leonardo DiCaprio (*quoted in Carnegie Museum of Natural History, n.d.*)

Garnering his first on-screen credit at the age of five for his role in the children's television series *Romper Room and Friends* (1979), Leonardo DiCaprio has had a successful acting career spanning decades (Leonardo DiCaprio, n.d.), which has contributed to high

cumulative revenues generated for his work over the course of his lifetime. With more than 40 acting credits and 24 producing credits (and counting) to his name, DiCaprio has become an internationally recognizable celebrity having amassed 200 award nominations and 91 wins for his work, including an Academy Award for his role in the 2015 film, *The Revenant* (Leonardo DiCaprio, n.d.). His accomplishments in the entertainment industry have enabled the actor to become the 7<sup>th</sup> most bankable celebrity of 2015 (The Numbers, 2016), and the 4<sup>th</sup> most influential celebrity actor in the Celebrity Influence Quotient. But in addition to his successes in film, the actor is almost as well-known for being an outspoken activist for the environment. As discussed further in this chapter, DiCaprio has founded an environmental protection organization, written and produced a series of documentaries focusing on environmental protection and activism, and spoken before the U.S. Congress as well as global leaders and institutions on the issues he is passionate about.

According to Look to the Stars, Leonardo DiCaprio is active with 21 organizations focused on philanthropic causes. Since the actor is deeply dedicated to environmental issues, it was important to distinguish organizations addressing SDG 13: Climate Action, from the environmental concerns addressed in SDG Target 3.9, the health and well-being target that specifically addresses the environment. Although the two are undoubtedly related, Target 3.9 specifically addresses “substantially reduc(ing) the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination” (World Health Organization, 2016). For the purposes of this study, only parties addressing environmental issues related to Target 3.9 were included in DiCaprio’s environmental organization affiliations. Based on these criteria, five organizations are directly related to SDG 3: Good Health and Well-

being, as illustrated in Table 4.11, below, while details of the specific causes each organization addresses within the broader health issues are outlined in Table 4.4.

<b>Table 4.4</b> Organizations and GH-Related SDGs <b>LEONARDO DICAPRIO (LDC)</b>			
<b>SDG</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>LDC Focus</b>	<b>LDC-Affiliated Organizations</b>
3.4	Non-communicable diseases	Epilepsy, pediatric	Pediatric Epilepsy Project
3.9	Pollution and/or contamination of air, water, soil	Reduction of toxic chemicals in household products, and promotion of safe air, food, and water.	Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation Natural Resources Defense Council World Wildlife Fund
3.12	Healthcare workers and financing for developing countries	Provide training to caregivers for improved healthcare for children and mothers in underdeveloped areas	SOS Children's Villages
3.13	Health infrastructure	Supporting communities in establishing facilities that provide medical services, focusing on women and children	SOS Children's Villages

Founded by the actor in 1998, the Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation (LDF) was included in the list of DiCaprio’s global health-related organizational affiliations as it supports a number of organizations whose goal is the promotion of sustainable environmental practices, and the preservation of natural resources by various means. Although the nature of this support varies by organization, the LDF website lists more than 65 partners and more than 70 projects benefiting from the Foundation’s efforts, with impact spanning across 40 countries and five oceans (Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation, 2016). Similarly, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) also promotes a plethora of initiatives, with a focus on renewable energy, reducing emissions, and safe freshwater systems for healthy and sustainable consumption (World Wildlife Fund, n.d.).

Although all of these issues are related either directly or indirectly with good health and well-being, it is for the WWF's activities in the promotion of safe freshwater systems for healthy and sustainable consumption that it is most relevant to SDG 3.

The National Resources Defense Council (NRDC), on the other hand, has a more clearly defined mission as it relates to the promotion of good health and well-being, as it advocates for safe food and drinking water, the reduction of toxic chemicals in household products and the larger environment, and the disproportionate health problems affecting low-income communities as the result of fossil fuels (NRDC, 2016). Founded in 1970, the organization has a program dedicated to Health and the Environment, with attention to ensuring government accountability and corporate best practices to reduce the risk of environmentally-induced health hazards.

DiCaprio's commitment to the environment is complemented by his support of non-environmental health organizations such as the SOS Children's Villages International, whose mission is to provide "care, education, health, and emergency response" to "children, young people, and families" (SOS Children's Villages, 2016). Though the multinational organization undertakes a myriad of projects dedicated to improving the health, overall well-being, and physical conditions that present challenges to children's development and ability to thrive, its focus on providing training and financing for healthcare in developing countries, along with improving health infrastructure makes it most relevant in this study. Furthering the actor's support of children's health is his association with the Pediatric Epilepsy Project, whose name suggests dedication to children's epilepsy. Information gathered on the Pediatric Epilepsy Project in a broad internet search was both vague and scarce, with several hospitals and organizations incorporating this title into their programs without any apparent business ties between them. Therefore, data was insufficient to determine the scope of activities performed by



this organization, and its relevance to the United Nations SDGs was defined by its title rather than a substantive description of its mission.

In a search for articles within each of the seven top circulation/readership newspapers connecting DiCaprio to these organizations and causes, more meaningful results were generated than in the previous celebrity searches (see Table 4.13). Parameters set for each search included keywords for each of the organizations with which DiCaprio was connected, the actor's full name, and the date restriction (2006-2016). To achieve optimum search results, keywords contained within the organization's title were used when applicable. So, for example, the keyword used for the organization Pediatric Epilepsy Project, was simply "epilepsy", while for the World Wildlife Fund the keyword used was simply "wildlife". However, for organizations whose name was not as descriptive, the precise names of the organizations were used as search terms. Finally, since environmental issues are the underlying theme of much of DiCaprio's health-issue-related activism, the term "environment" was also included, with SDG 3 specific associations determined when possible through subsequent discourse analysis. Specifically, the Boolean search terms used within each of the seven newspapers during the period of 2006-2016 for this case were "Leonardo DiCaprio" and:

- Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- SOS Villages
- Epilepsy
- Wildlife
- Environment / environmental

Although articles about Leonardo DiCaprio's activism begin well before 2006, for the study's timeframe of 2006 through 2016, an initial total of 34 articles reference the actor in connection to his health-related causes (see Table D.7 in Appendix E). However, some articles

contained more than one of the keywords defined (Freydkin, 'Wolf of Wall Street'..., 2013; Kim, 2009; Apodaca, 2007), which brings the number of discrete articles containing mention of the actor and his causes down to a total of 31, all of which are specifically tied to the environment and/or natural resources. Due to the varied issues couched within environmental activism, however, it becomes difficult to disentangle the articles referring to DiCaprio's environmental activism as it relates to climate change, as opposed to how it relates to human health. The cursory mention of several articles connecting the actor to his activism, however, makes it clear that the media has not shown interest in this distinction, nor in the details of his efforts in either arena. For his association with the only cause unrelated to the environment, epilepsy, articles connecting DiCaprio to the cause were published prior to the 2006-2016 study timeframe (Keck, 2005), leaving unclear whether his commitment to this health issue continued beyond that year.

Analysis of the specific form this engagement took determined that through his eponymous foundation, Leonardo DiCaprio was involved in multiple ways with the global health issues related to SDG 3. As Founder and Chairman, he was an active participant and integral component of the Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation's establishment in 1998, and has been present at numerous events either sponsored by or partnered with the foundation since then. However, as a donor-advised fund, this foundation is not held to the same standards of transparency and accountability as a public charity, since donor-advised funds are not required to file Form 990 tax returns with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). As the American Institute of Philanthropy notes, "(t)his is problematic because Form 990 filings require that charities report not only financial information, such as revenue, expenses, and asset fund balance, but also information on grant-making activities, the board of directors, employee compensation, and related party transactions, among other operating details" (American Institute of Philanthropy, 2016).

Therefore, verifiable data on the foundation's operation, fundraising, and resource allocation is not available. Although through this foundation, he has presumably facilitated the funding of various programs with a view on environmental issues, the actor has also made personal donations to support his causes. As discussed in the Los Angeles Times (Apodaca, 2007), the "11<sup>th</sup> Hour" environmental documentary released in 2007 was partially funded, co-produced, co-written, and narrated by DiCaprio, making him essential to the project. Although the focus of articles written about this project call attention to climate change, they also connect the actor to his foundation and his commitment to preservation of natural resources in general.

DiCaprio has represented other organizations in an official capacity, as trustee of the Natural Resources Defense Council (Kim, 2009), and member of the Board of Directors for the World Wildlife Fund (Garvey, Niemietz, Carwright, & Friedman, 2013). His engagement with environmental activism has also carried into some of his personal consumer choices, including his occasional use of a hybrid vehicle, and purchase of Levi's organic cotton jeans with recycled buttons and zippers (Breznican & Knolle, Pre-Oscar bashes are cranking up, 2007; Freydkin, Red-hot with celebs? Green - Eco gifts are good to give and receive, 2006). However, in his effort to reduce his carbon footprint in some aspects of his daily life, he has also been criticized for contributing to environmental pollution through other lifestyle choices, including his extensive use of private jets and diesel-burning yachts (Rapier, 2016). Nevertheless, his activism and efforts to try and offset carbon emissions is notable.

Although articles relating the actor to environmental causes abound, the scarcity of information on the actor's involvement with certain non-environmentally-focused organizations as well as the World Wildlife Fund, necessitated a broader search to obtain more detailed data on the nature and extent of DiCaprio's involvement with these organizations. Removing the source

parameters while retaining the search terms in Access World News yielded additional results from other news sources. The Look to the Stars database was also useful in producing articles referencing the connection between the actor and his causes (Saunders, Taylor Swift Signs Elephant For Family Health International, 2009).

According to the Look to the Stars database, DiCaprio was connected to the SOS Children's Villages through his participation in a 2009 fundraising campaign for Project ZAMBI, an initiative by the toy-making Hasbro corporation to raise funds to provide care (including healthcare) for children orphaned by AIDS in Africa (Saunders, 2009). For this fundraiser, celebrities were asked to sign toys that would be auctioned to raise funds for the organization of their choosing, in DiCaprio's case, the SOS Children's Villages. His involvement with the World Wildlife Fund, however, was more extensive, as his Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation was reported to have donated \$3 million to the organization (Garvey, Niemietz, Carwright, & Friedman, 2013), while he also serves as member of the World Wildlife Fund's Board of Directors (Market Wire, 2016), adding participation to his categories of involvement for the organization. For further details on Leonardo DiCaprio's activism, please see Table D.8 in Appendix E.

### **CIQ 5: Matt Damon**

"I'm an actor and a writer, and I like making movies and great television if I can, if I'm lucky enough to be invited on. That's where I can help the most, I think. And so if I can find a way to marry those two things, I'm hoping that it can be effective in raising awareness." – Matt Damon (*discussing the intersection of acting/writing and his activism, in Chamoff, 2010*)

Although Matt Damon had his silver screen debut at the age of 18 in the film *Mystic Pizza* (1988), it wasn't until his Oscar-winning film, *Good Will Hunting* (1997), which he co-wrote with childhood friend and actor Ben Affleck, that his career truly began to take off. With more than 78 acting credits to his name, he is the second most prolific actor among the top five CIQ after Robert Downey, Jr., and his starring roles in a number of high-profile films opposite Hollywood heavy hitters such as Tom Hanks, George Clooney, and Michael Douglas to name a few, have increased his bankability as well as the overall box office revenues generated for projects with which he is associated, metrics used in this study to determine influence. However, Matt Damon's starring role as Jason Bourne in the multi-million dollar *Bourne* film franchise has significantly contributed to his earnings as well, and helped propel him to the 5<sup>th</sup> spot in the CIQ.

According to data compiled from the Look to the Stars database (2017), Matt Damon is associated with more charitable organizations than those with the top four highest CIQs, for a total of 34 organizations with which the actor has been affiliated. Of those 34 organizations, 13 are directly tied to global health issues as they pertain to SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being, representing eight broad targets. Analysis of the SDG targets that each organization supports revealed that of the eight broader global health issues Matt Damon has engaged with between 2006 and 2016, he has been most frequently connected to non-communicable diseases, followed closely by child and infant mortality, and communicable diseases (primarily HIV/AIDS).

<b>Table 4.5</b> Organizations and GH-Related SDGs <b>MATT DAMON (MD)</b>			
<b>SDG</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>MD Focus</b>	<b>MD-Affiliated Organizations</b>
3.1	Maternal Mortality	N/A	Clinton Global Initiative ONE Campaign Save the Children
3.2	Infant and Child Mortality	Prevention of mother-to-infant HIV transmission Pediatric AIDS Diarrheal diseases	Celebs for Kids Clinton Global Initiative ONE Campaign ONEXONE Save the Children The Children's Center OKC UNICEF
3.3	Communicable Diseases	HIV/AIDS Malaria Infectious diseases (other)	Clinton Global Initiative DATA ONE Campaign Save the Children UNICEF
3.4	Non-communicable diseases	Arthritis Cancer (general) Lupus Mental health	Arthritis Society of Canada Entertainment Industry Foundation - Stand Up to Cancer Celebs for Kids Clinton Global Initiative LIVESTRONG Lupus Canada Save the Children UNICEF
3.7	Reproductive Health	N/A	Clinton Global Initiative LIVESTRONG Save the Children
3.11	Vaccines and Medicines	Immunizations (varied) Access to medicines and diagnostics for HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis	UNICEF
3.12	Healthcare Workers and Financing for Developing Countries	Training of medical professionals	Clinton Global Initiative ONEXONE Red Cross UNICEF
3.13	Health Infrastructure	Management of health emergencies Strengthening effective local leadership, healthcare delivery systems, and healthcare financing	Red Cross UNICEF

Data collected directly from the organizations' websites provided greater details as to the specific health issues contained within Matt Damon's organizational affiliations (Clinton Foundation, n.d.; LIVESTRONG, n.d.; Look to the Stars, n.d.; Lupus Canada, n.d.; Stand Up to Cancer, n.d.; ONEa, n.d.; ONEXONE, n.d.; Red Cross, n.d.; Save the Children, n.d.; The Arthritis Society, n.d.; The Children's Center, n.d.; UNICEF, n.d.), and are illustrated in Table 4.5 above, as related to each broader SDG target addressed.

Searching within each of the seven top circulation/readership newspapers to determine the nature of Matt Damon's partnership with these organizations and causes yielded fewer results than Leonardo DiCaprio's engagement, although more meaningful results were generated for Damon than in the searches conducted for Tom Cruise, Robert Downey, Jr. or Bradley Cooper, (see Table D.9 in Appendix E). However, this may be due to a greater number of search terms generated from the actor's association with a larger number of global health organizations, rather than public interest.

Parameters set for each search included keywords for the individual global health-related organizations with which Damon was connected, the actor's full name, and the date restriction (2006-2016). To achieve optimum search results, keywords contained within the organization's title were used when applicable. So, for example, the keyword used for the organization Arthritis Society of Canada, was simply "arthritis", for Stand Up to Cancer the keyword "cancer" was used, and for Lupus Canada the keyword used was simply "lupus". However, for organizations whose name was not as descriptive, the precise names of the organizations were used as search terms. When the actor was associated with a particular program contained within a larger organization, as with the Clinton Foundation's Clinton Global Initiative, both the name of the organization and the initiative were searched. Finally, since

HIV/AIDS is a strong theme of some of the organizations with which Damon engages, the terms “HIV” and “AIDS” were also included. Specifically, the Boolean search terms used within each of the seven newspapers during the period of 2006-2016 for this case were “Matt Damon” and:

- Arthritis
- Cancer
- Celebs for Kids
- Children’s Center
- Clinton Global Initiative
- Clinton Global Foundation
- Debt AIDS Trade Africa
- HIV / AIDS
- Livestrong
- Lupus
- One Campaign
- ONEXONE
- Red Cross
- Save the Children
- UNICEF

Even though Matt Damon outnumbered the top four actors on the CIQ in his engagement with global health-related organizations, the data shows that he only receives publicity for this engagement nine times in the top newspapers during the period of 2006-2016. Following a similar pattern to the previous cases, the newspaper that most frequently covered the actor’s global health engagement was USA Today with seven articles connecting the actor to the global health organization or cause, followed by the Los Angeles Times and New York Daily with one article each. However, of the 15 search terms paired with the actor’s name, the only causes that yielded results were Damon’s association with the Clinton Foundation, the ONE Campaign, ONEXONE, and HIV/AIDS. Any articles that discussed Damon’s relationship with the Red Cross or cancer were published prior to 2006, and were thus excluded from search results. Therefore, 11 of the 15 searched global health-related organizations and/or causes with which Matt Damon has engaged received no mention in the most popular newspapers during the specified period of time. In order to determine the nature of the relationship between Damon and all of his global health-related causes, a broader search was then necessary. Removing the source parameters while retaining the search terms in the Access World News database yielded



additional results from news sources beyond the seven top newspapers previously specified. Drawing from multiple sources allowed a clearer picture of the nature of Matt Damon's global health engagement, since where Access World News failed to produce meaningful results, the Look to the Stars database as well as the organization websites themselves were useful in producing articles referencing the connection between the actor and his causes.

Though some of the aforementioned organizations address multiple issues in global health and/or economic development (i.e. Clinton Foundation, Red Cross, Save the Children, and UNICEF, among others), Damon's engagement is at times in support of a specific global health issue, as was his participation in a fundraiser for pediatric rheumatology in Canada's B.C. Children's Hospital in partnership with Celebs for Kids, the Arthritis Society of Canada, and Lupus Canada (Willoughby, 2008). Damon also engages with infant and child mortality through his work as ambassador for the ONEXONE organization, for which he has participated in fundraising galas as a host (Freydkin, Damon makes time for charity, 2008). Other articles connecting the actor to the organization, however, make cursory mention of his support for ONEXONE, without meaningful attention to the organization's goals or the full extent of Damon's engagement with them (Ben & Matt: All in the family, 2009; Sidmane, 2010).

Furthering his efforts to help reduce infant and child mortality, Matt Damon has also supported the organization, Save the Children, by travelling to Zimbabwe to see the agency's work firsthand, as part of an initiative to raise money for the organization's relief efforts in the region (Chamoff, 2010). Although the focus of his efforts was relief from poverty and political turmoil, the organization's activities at the facilities he visited include the provision of health services. The actor is also connected to the Save the Children through donations made to the organization by the Not on Our Watch non-profit. Although Not on Our Watch, for which

Damon serves on the star-studded Board of Directors alongside George Clooney, Don Cheadle, Brad Pitt, and others, is committed to research and advocacy for human rights in conflict-ridden regions of the world, it does not itself explicitly address global health concerns in those regions. However, the non-profit has donated funds at various intervals to organizations targeting specific global health issues, including Save the Children for its efforts to reduce infant and child mortality. Damon has similarly engaged indirectly with UNICEF as well. Although as an organization it addresses a multitude of global health issues, Damon's engagement with UNICEF has been reported in newspapers as indirect, via funds donated by Not on Our Watch to help reduce maternal and child mortality (Not On Our Watch Awards Grant to U.S. Fund for UNICEF, 2010).

In keeping with his commitment to addressing the diverse needs on the African continent, through his DATA (Debt AIDS Trade Africa) organization, before it merged as a founding partner of the ONE Campaign in 2008, Damon visited Africa to learn about the way U.S. funds are used to address AIDS and extreme poverty on the continent (Matt Damon Visits Africa with DATA and ONE.ORG, 2006). After the merger, Damon continued his work with the ONE Campaign, participating in a video calling attention to the urgent need for adequate response to the Ebola virus (Stars Join ONE Campaign For Ebola Video, 2014). On behalf of ONE's (RED) product division, Damon also appeared in a televised Shop-A-Thon on ABC's Jimmy Kimmel Live! show to generate funds for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, which is the designated recipient of (RED) proceeds ((RED) Launches Star-Studded SHOPATHON, 2015). While other sources mention his general support for the ONE Campaign (Freydkin, Celebrity activists put star power to good use, 2006), there was insufficient data to

determine the extent of Damon's engagement with the organization beyond the above-mentioned activities.

Although the list of charitable organizations with which Damon engages is the most extensive among the five highest-scoring actors on the CIQ, he is at times affiliated only by making an appearance at a benefit event or movie premiere. For instance, Damon's engagement with The Children's Center OKC was through his appearance at a movie premiere in Oklahoma City for his film, *The Bourne Ultimatum*, an event that raised approximately \$192,000 to benefit the Center (Saunders, *Bourne for Charity*, 2007). Similarly, Damon's support of the Livestrong Foundation is visible through his appearance at Livestrong benefit events and his wearing the characteristic yellow wrist band prior to 2012 (Cause celeb: why on earth did they do that?, 2014). His cessation of public support for this organization coincides with professional cyclist Lance Armstrong's removal as Chairman of the Livestrong Foundation following a doping scandal, although there is no public mention of a connection between the two incidences.

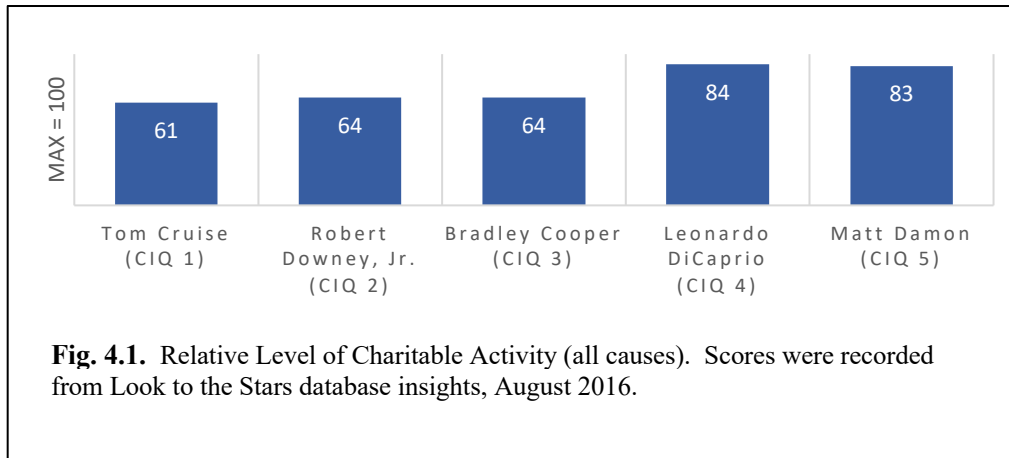
Despite Damon's association with numerous health-related causes, perhaps some of the most lasting public images of Matt Damon's activism are related to toilets. Including (but certainly not limited to) his humorous "toilet strikes" and use of toilet water for the ALS Ice Bucket Challenges, Matt Damon has done extensive work with the organization Water.org, which he co-founded in 2009 in an effort to provide access to clean water to underserved and/or resource-poor areas (Water.org, n.d.). However, while all Sustainable Development Goals are interrelated and interdependent, parameters were necessary to distinguish the SDGs from one another, and were set using World Health Organization indicators (World Health Organization, 2016d). Though there is a clear connection between water, sanitation, and good health, the efforts of Water.org more directly address the goals of SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation,

which concern the accessibility and safety of a resource (water) that impacts quality of life and the threat of disease. Furthermore, while SDG target 3.9 addresses “mortality due to unsafe water, sanitation, and hygiene” (World Health Organization, 2016d), Water.org focuses on affordable financing for access to water and sanitation (Water.org, n.d.), which is expressly connected to SDGs 6.1 and 6.2, addressing “access to safely managed drinking-water source” and “access to safely managed sanitation” respectively (World Health Organization, 2016d). While certainly related, the criteria used to define global health issues for this study place this organization’s activities clearly within the scope of SDG 6, while related secondarily to SDG 3. Therefore, although the improvement of the quality and availability of clean water and systems of sanitation certainly supports United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3: Good Health and Well-Being, it does not fit into the categories of global health issues as operationalized for this study through the 13 targets of SDG 3 and their indicators. Consequently, despite Damon’s extensive activities with Water.org, this organization was not listed among his global health organizations. Similarly, though Damon has been invited and has attended meetings for the Clinton Foundation’s Clinton Global Initiative, this has been as a representative of Water.org, and therefore these activities were also excluded from the data used in this research. For further details on Matt Damon’s global health activism, please see Table D.11 in Appendix E.

### **Global Health Matters**

The five celebrity case studies capture the distinct set of issues and organizations to which each actor devotes either time, energy, or money, or some combination of the three.

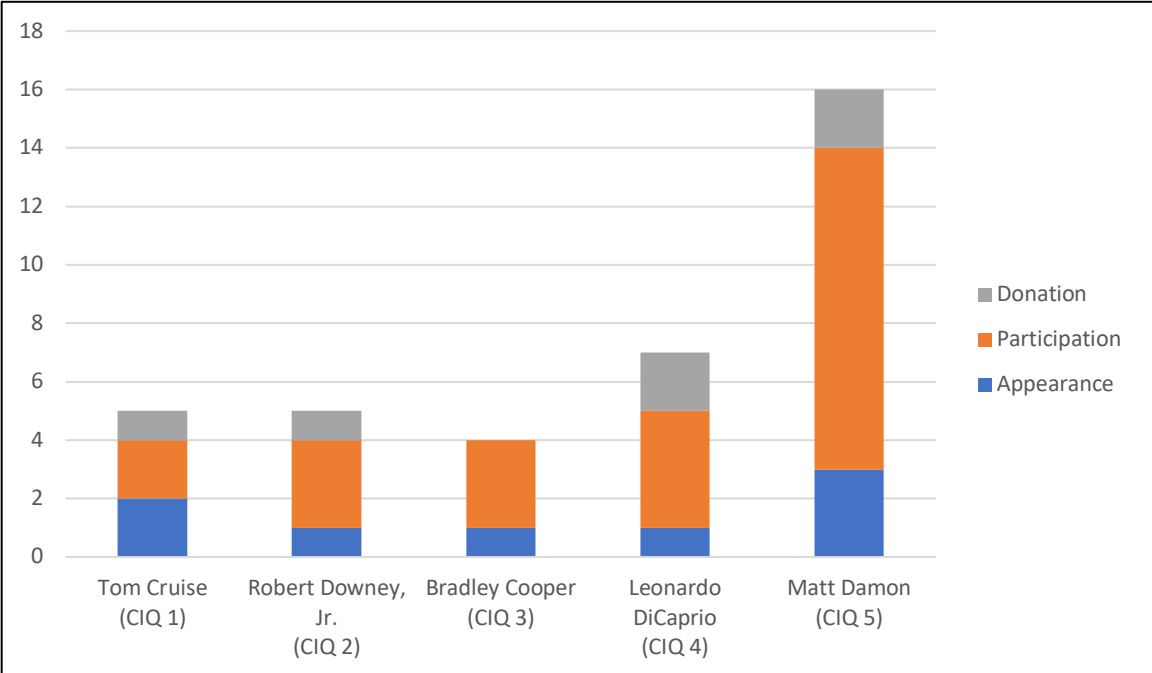
Furthermore, analysis of selected print/online newspaper sources showed that true to the burgeoning model of Hollywood elite, Tom Cruise, Robert Downey, Jr., Bradley Cooper, Leonardo DiCaprio, and Matt Damon are represented to various degrees in the media as socially-conscious activists for a myriad of causes connected to either social, political, environmental, or global health issues. As an extension of this media representation, the celebrity charity tracker, *Look to the Stars*, calculates the relative level of charitable activity for each celebrity listed in their database, awarding them a maximum score of 100. The bar is set by the most active celebrity in any field of entertainment, which the database lists as British musician Sir Elton John (as of June, 2017), with the site's only score of 100. In a comparison of these scores for the actors with the highest CIQ, however, somewhat of an inverse relationship was observed between CIQ and overall charitable activity, where the three actors with the highest CIQ were less active than the two actors with lower scores in the CIQ (see Fig. 4.1). Nonetheless, this observation in itself does not indicate causation, as it may simply express a chance correlation that this sample size is not suited to verify. Although this data generated by the celebrity charity tracker does not distinguish global health activism from activities targeting other issues when calculating their scores, it is worthy of mention as it sets these actors on a spectrum of engagement among their peers that speaks to their overall interest in supporting charitable causes. The assignment of scores for this sort of engagement furthermore produces a comparative context for celebrity activism, and a certain standard by which all celebrities may then be judged.



Global health engagement scores calculated for cross-case comparative purposes from the number of times the celebrities engaged in each of the three types of activity (Attendance, Donation, Participation) demonstrated a similar trend as that observed for overall charitable activity and CIQ. As Fig. 4.2 illustrates below, the engagement scores of the five actors showed that Matt Damon (CIQ 5) displayed the greatest activity at 16 instances of engagement, followed by Leonardo DiCaprio (CIQ 4) with seven instances of engagement. Therefore, the actors occupying the highest three spots in CIQ showed lower engagement, with scores of either four or five. Although as previously noted, this relationship may be spurious and would require research that extends beyond the parameters of this study to validate, such a comparative element can further lead to the recognition of patterns that exist in the varied forms of celebrity activism.

As previously mentioned, in order to answer the overarching question guiding this research, *“How do cultural elites prominent in U.S. media impact global health security?”*, the secondary question, *Are the issues these celebrities are advocating for, the most pressing global health concerns?*, must also be answered. To test the hypothesis that celebrity actors’ global health engagement is not most frequently allocated towards the global health issues that have the greatest effect on global health security, data on each of the 13 global health issues as determined

by the U.N. Sustainable Development Goal targets for SDG #3 was analyzed, and expressly connected to the celebrities who have supported them.



**Fig. 4.2.** Global Health (GH) Engagement Type, 2006-2016.

A frequency count of each celebrity’s broad global health causes was also conducted, using the codes established for each of the 13 global health issues defined in this study. Analysis of the data on each of these issues shows that most of their activity is connected to the broad global health issue of non-communicable disease (SDG 3.4), the most frequently-supported cause for three of the five celebrities, including Robert Downey, Jr., Bradley Cooper, and Matt Damon. Following SDG 3.4 was infant and child mortality (SDG 3.2), supported most frequently by Tom Cruise, along with environmental health hazards (SDG 3.9), for which Leonardo DiCaprio primarily engages. However, knowing that non-communicable diseases are the more frequent global health topic of engagement for our top celebrities in itself is insufficient

to address this study's research question, since there is variation in the effects caused by different health issues. In order to proceed to analyzing the number of people affected by each global health concern, it was therefore necessary to delve into the specific issues representing these overarching global health concerns. In the case of Tom Cruise's engagement with infant and child (under age 5) mortality, no embedded issues were observed, while Leonardo DiCaprio's engagement as it relates to global health was directed at reducing toxic chemicals in household products, and the promotion of safe air, food, and water. The remaining three celebrities were connected with the global health issue containing the most subcategories, non-communicable diseases. Specifically, the following issues represent the gamut of non-communicable diseases with which Downey, Cooper, and Damon have publicly engaged:

- ALS
- Alzheimer's Disease
- Arthritis
- Cancer (general, male specific, and skin)
- Lupus
- Mental Health

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), or Lou Gehrig's disease, is defined as a "fatal motor neuron disease (MND) characterized by degenerative changes" to motor function, progressive muscle weakness, fatigue, and difficulty swallowing, which can lead to "respiratory failure and death" (Chiò, et al., 2013). Though a relatively rare disease with a mortality of approximately 100,000 global deaths per year (ALS Association, 2016), those with ALS typically only survive 2-4 years after its onset, with only 5-10% surviving more than 10 years. Alzheimer's disease is also a degenerative disorder, although the effects are related to a progressive deterioration of brain function, memory, and thinking skills, and is the most common cause of dementia in older adults. Alzheimer's and other dementias claim 18.2 million disability-adjusted life years



(DALYs) globally every year (World Health Organization, 2016e), however, there is no available data on disease mortality at this time. Similarly, arthritis, an inflammatory disease of the joints comprised of more than 100 different conditions, lacks data on mortality, although it claims approximately 23.8 million DALYs for patients of all ages, genders, and ethnicities with rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis alone.

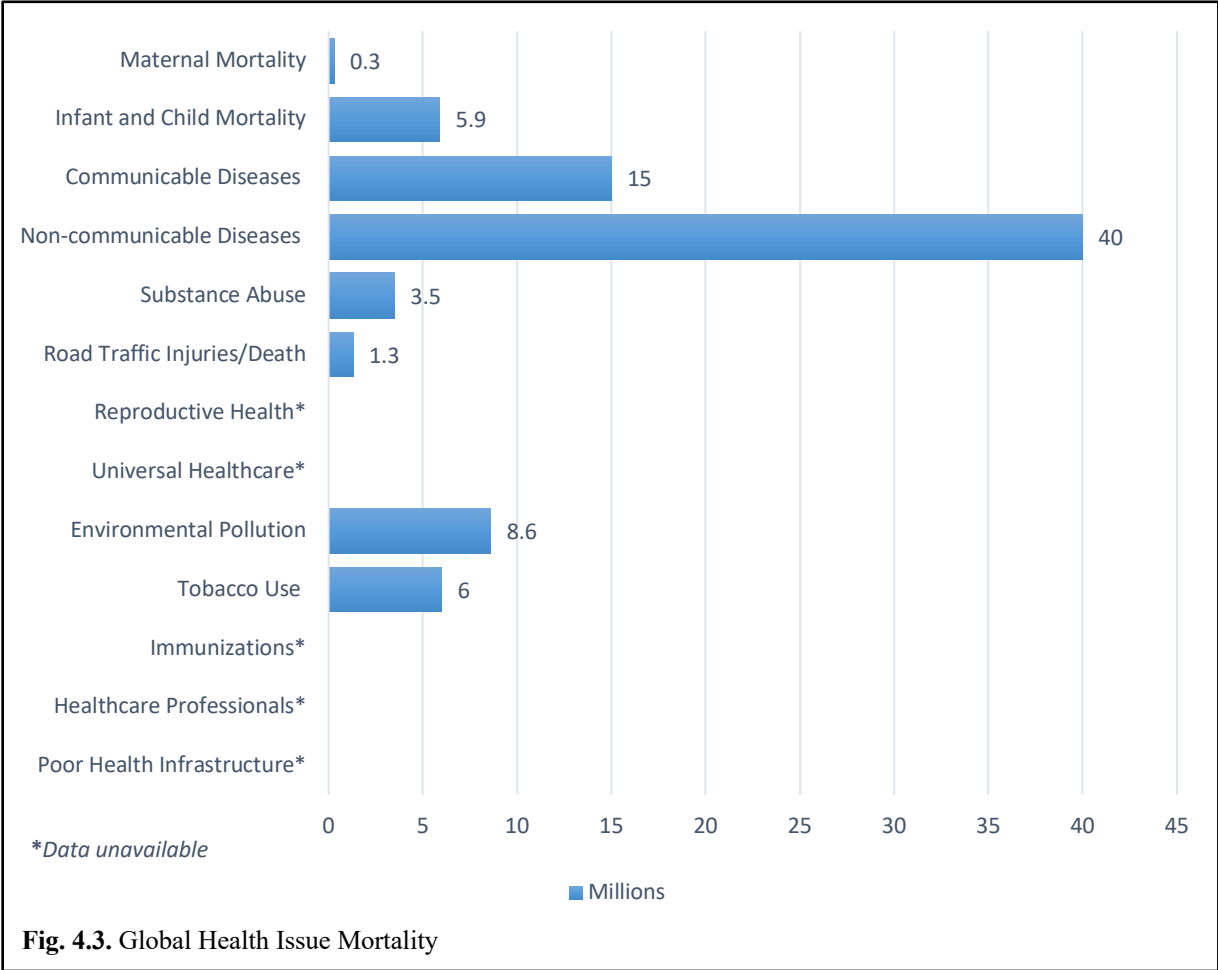
Cancer (general), however, has a documented yearly mortality rate of approximately 8.8 million (World Health Organization, 2017b), making it the second leading cause of death globally, with the number of DALYs at approximately 224 million (World Health Organization, 2014). The disease is characterized by the presence of malignant neoplasms, or the abnormal and rapid growth of cells that can impair proper functioning of organs. Though the celebrities may differ in the specific type of cancer capturing their interest, for the purposes of this study all cancers have been grouped as a specific class of non-communicable diseases whose data on mortality, DALYs, and prevalence are represented by referencing all cancers collectively.

The autoimmune disease known as lupus, by contrast, tends to have more elusive symptoms that can affect any part of the body, making data collection more challenging. Data on lupus is scarce, though its prevalence is estimated at 5 million cases (The National Resource Center on Lupus, 2015). The final type of non-communicable disease focused on by the five celebrities is the collection of mental disorders. Though insufficient data exists on mortality resulting from mental health issues, its DALYs are estimated at approximately 199.9 million, with depression, bipolar affective disorder, schizophrenia, and dementia collectively prevalent in 428.5 million people globally (World Health Organization, 2017c). A frequency count of each instance of engagement for the eight above-mentioned global health issues identified the particular issues garnering the most celebrity support. Specifically, this count showed that each

issue had an equal number of involvement scores (1), with the exception of cancer (general), which had an overall involvement score of 3, making it the single issue for which the top five celebrities most frequently advocate.

Identifying the most supported health issues would then enable comparison between them and the most pressing global health concerns, or those health issues affecting the greatest number of people. In determining the most pressing global health concerns, records from the United Nations global health agency, the World Health Organization (WHO), supported by secondary professional journal articles and organization websites, provided the most recent data on the global yearly prevalence of each of the global health issues, their mortality rates, and issue-specific disability adjusted life years, or DALYs, though for the purpose of this study, mortality rates were deemed the most appropriate measures of effect (Arthur, et al., 2016; Dye, 2014; The National Resource Center on Lupus, 2017; International Alliance of ALS/MND Associations, n.d.). These records showed that of the global health issues for which mortality data was available, non-communicable diseases (SDG 3.4) claimed the most lives at 40 million (World Health Organization, 2017a), followed by communicable diseases (SDG 3.3) at 15 million (Dye, 2014), poor health due to environmental pollution including air pollution and environmentally fostered cancers (SDG 3.9) at 8.6 million (World Health Organization, 2016a), tobacco-related deaths (SDG 3.10) at 6 million (World Health Organization, 2017a), and infant and child mortality (SDG 3.2) at 5.9 million (World Health Organization, 2016b). Based on this data, the global yearly mortality rates for the three overarching health issues for which our celebrities most frequently advocate, non-communicable disease, infant and child mortality, and environmental health hazards, are among the top five highest of all global health issues as

focused on by the United Nations SDGs (see Fig. 4.3, below). For a detailed table including prevalence and DALYs, please reference Table D.12 in Appendix F.



This global health data shows that the issue resulting in the greatest number of lives lost prematurely per year, globally, is non-communicable disease (NCD) at 40 million or 70% of all deaths (World Health Organization, 2017a), suggesting at first glance that the majority (three) of our five celebrities are in fact engaging with the global health issue affecting the most people. However, as previously mentioned, this preliminary data requires further analysis to disentangle the overarching health issues from their components, since these celebrities’ advocacy is often issue-specific rather than general. Among the eight issues previously identified as the most

frequently supported causes, cancer (general) was at the top with three instances, followed by equal engagement for the remaining causes with one instance of engagement each. The celebrities' engagement in efforts to promote cancer awareness and funds for cancer research is therefore directed towards the global health issue with the second highest mortality rate among NCDs, as previously mentioned at a 8.8 million yearly mortality rate for all cancers combined (World Health Organization, 2017a). Respiratory disease and diabetes follow with the third and fourth highest NCD mortality rates respectively at 3.9 million and 1.6 million, although only diabetes made the list of causes for our celebrities, and for only one celebrity, Tom Cruise. Surprisingly, although the issue of cardiovascular disease is documented as having the highest global mortality rate, causing nearly 17.7 million yearly deaths (World Health Organization, 2017a) as well as the highest disability adjusted life years (DALYs) at 408 million (World Health Organization, 2015), it displays no engagement from the five celebrities in this study. Rounding out the top ten causes of death are Alzheimer's and other dementias at 1.5 million, diarrheal disease and tuberculosis at approximately 1.4 million each, and road injuries at 1.3 million (World Health Organization, 2017e). Of these remaining top ten issues, only Alzheimer's has received public support from our celebrities, and among them only from Bradley Cooper. Mortality data for ALS, with which Robert Downey, Jr. engages, indicated an approximate mortality rate of 100,000 (ALS Association, 2016), while mortality data for arthritis, lupus, and mental health issues was not available, indicating insufficient data that may be the result of either the lack of a causal relationship, difficulty isolating the causal relationship, challenges in measurement, or lower institutional interest in these particular diseases. Therefore, among the top ten causes of death globally, only cancer, diabetes, and Alzheimer's disease and other dementias command public attention from at least one of our celebrities.

**Table 4.6****Global Health Estimates 2015: 20 leading causes of death, 2015\*  
and Celebrity Involvement**

#	Cause	Tom Cruise	Robert Downey Jr.	Bradley Cooper	Leonardo DiCaprio	Matt Damon	Total Celeb
1	Ischaemic heart disease						
2	Stroke						
3	Lower respiratory infections						
4	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease						
5	Trachea, bronchus, lung cancers	X	X	X		X	4
6	Diabetes mellitus	X					1
7	Alzheimer disease & other dementias			X			1
8	Diarrhoeal diseases						
9	Tuberculosis						
10	Road injury						
11	Cirrhosis of the liver						
12	Kidney diseases						
13	HIV/AIDS	X				X	2
14	Preterm birth complications**	X	X			X	3
15	Hypertensive heart disease						
16	Liver cancer	X	X	X		X	4
17	Self-harm						
18	Colon & rectum cancers	X	X	X		X	4
19	Stomach cancer	X	X	X		X	4
20	Birth asphyxia & birth trauma	X	X			X	3
<b>Total Engagement</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	-----

\*Global Health Estimates 2015: Deaths by Cause, Age, Sex, by Country and by Region, 2000-2015. Geneva, World Health Organization; 2016.

\*\*Categorized as neonatal condition (World Health Organization, 2017d)

Table 4.6 above illustrates each of the top 20 causes of death for 2015, the last date for which data was available, and details which celebrities engaged with organizations addressing these causes. Although the WHO Global Health Estimates have created subcategories for the issue of cancer according to specific organ affected, the celebrities' involvement with organizations promoting broad cancer research, such as the Stand Up to Cancer foundation, qualifies them under all cancer subcategories for the purposes of this research.

Returning to the secondary research question in this study, *Are the issues these celebrities are advocating for, the most pressing global health concerns?*, I test the hypothesis that celebrity actors' global health engagement is not most frequently allocated towards the global health issues that have the greatest effect on global health security, as expressed by mortality rates. Data shows that the issue with the greatest level of engagement from the celebrity group, cancer, appears on the list of the top deadliest global health concerns, causing the fifth highest mortality through its effect on the trachea, bronchus, and lungs (World Health Organization, 2017d). However, the data also indicates greater celebrity engagement with global health issues 13-20 than with the top issues 1-12, while the majority of this engagement is in the form of support for broad cancer initiatives rather than the specific types of cancer listed by the Global Health Estimates. Similarly, the engagement with infant and child mortality displayed by Tom Cruise, Robert Downey, Jr., and Matt Damon is expressed in Table 4.6 through the 14<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> greatest causes of death, which are pre-term birth complications and birth asphyxia / birth trauma. Finally, other issues with which our actors most frequently engage under the broad global health concern of non-communicable disease, including ALS, arthritis, lupus, and mental health, did not make it on the list of top causes of death, just as environmentally fostered disease as its own category remains absent from the list as well. As previously mentioned, however, none of the

five celebrities were associated with the top four causes of death, which are related to cardiovascular or respiratory diseases.

### **Discursive Development**

In addressing the secondary research question, *How does celebrity activism affect global health security discourses?*, an analysis of the most influential newspapers (as determined by Chapter 3 by circulation and readership) offered quantitative data on any articles in that media discussing the actors' global health engagement during the ten year period of 2006-2016. Specifically, the newspapers referenced were the Chicago Tribune, Detroit News/ Free Press, Los Angeles Times, New York Daily, New York Times, USA Today, and the Washington Post. Results showed that there were a total of 49 articles in these newspapers making a meaningful connection between the actors and their global health causes, 34 of which were specific to Leonardo DiCaprio's engagement, who claims the fourth highest CIQ. Following DiCaprio was Matt Damon (CIQ 5), with nine articles, Bradley Cooper (CIQ 3) with four articles, and Tom Cruise (CIQ 1) with two articles. Despite Robert Downey, Jr.'s high influence quotient (CIQ 2), however, there were no articles connecting him to his health causes.

Of the seven top newspapers, USA Today featured the greatest number of articles discussing the actors' activism with a total of 28 articles, while the Los Angeles Times publishing the second highest number of articles at 14. The Detroit News/Free Press followed with five articles during the 10 year period, and the New York Daily with only two articles. The Chicago Tribune, the New York Times, and the Washington Post had no relevant articles connecting any of the celebrities to their causes (see Summary Table 4.7 below).

Table 4.7 Summary of Publicity ALL CAUSES 2006-2016						
	Tom Cruise	Robert Downey, Jr.	Bradley Cooper	Leonardo DiCaprio	Matt Damon	Total
Chicago Tribune	0	0	0	0	0	0
Detroit News / Free Press	0	0	0	5	0	5
Los Angeles Times	0	0	0	13	1	14
New York Daily	0	0	1	0	1	2
New York Times	0	0	0	0	0	0
USA Today	2	0	3	16	7	28
Washington Post	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>49</b>

Furthermore, the sections of the newspaper in which these articles were featured, when they were featured, were predominantly the LIFE section of USA Today, which covers the latest news in entertainment, pop culture, and celebrity gossip<sup>5</sup>. Besides the *LIFE* section, on three

<sup>5</sup> (Alexander, 2016) (Ben & Matt: All in the family, 2009) (Bowles, 2007) (Breznican & Knolle, Pre-Oscar bashes, 2007) (Freydkin, Celebrity activists put star power to good use , 2006) (Freydkin, Damon makes time for charity, 2008) (Freydkin, Damon reveals appetite for film , 2009) (Freydkin, 'Informant' star Matt Damon blabs, 2008) (Freydkin, Red-hot with celebs?, 2006) (Freydkin, 'Wolf of Wall Street' got its teeth into DiCaprio , 2013) (Freydkin & Mandell, Madonna knows how to pull in a star crowd, 2008) (Gundersen, 2011) (How Was Your Day?, 2016) (Hurwitz & Blas, 2015) (Levin, 2008)(Marcus, Purple-garbed stars support the fight against Alzheimer's, 2009)(Marcus, All aboard the Alzheimer's Express, 2010) (Weise, 2008)



occasions, articles were featured in USA Today's *NEWS*<sup>6</sup> as well as its *MONEY* sections<sup>7</sup>. The Los Angeles Times displayed some of the greatest variety in the newspaper sections chosen to discuss celebrity activism, utilizing their *Lifestyle* section<sup>8</sup>, their section titled *Entertainment, Television, and Culture*<sup>9</sup>, their *Financial* section<sup>10</sup>, *Commentary*<sup>11</sup>, and the *Domestic News*<sup>12</sup>. Similarly, the Detroit Free Press, which is part of the USA Today network and their parent Gannett Company, also published articles on the celebrities' activism in five different sections of their newspaper, including their *Front* section<sup>13</sup> featuring what they deem the most notable news, their *Business* section<sup>14</sup>, their *Features* section<sup>15</sup>, their *My Movies* section<sup>16</sup>, and their *Opinions* section<sup>17</sup>. Despite this variety in the above-mentioned news sources, however, the *Gossip*<sup>18</sup> section (part of the larger *Entertainment* section) and *New York Vue*<sup>19</sup> (a Sunday TV listings supplement) were the only sections mentioning celebrity causes in New York Daily News.

It is clear that the majority of articles connecting the celebrities to their health causes are featured in entertainment-focused newspaper sections, where social and political issues are overshadowed by an emphasis on arts, fashion, personal life, or scandal. A detailed discussion of the implications of couching global health discussions in the context of entertainment will be connected to this study's theoretical framework in greater depth in Chapter 5, in order to further

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<sup>6</sup> (Kim, 2009) ('I'd like to thank the Academy', 2007) (Freydkin, Celebrity activists put star power to good use , 2006) (Kluger, 2006) (Koch, 2014)

<sup>7</sup> (Onyanga-Omara, 2016) (Blais, 2007)

<sup>8</sup> (Keeps, 2007) (Daunt, Why Did AIDS , 2006) (Tschorn, 2009)

<sup>9</sup> (Crust, 2007) (Apodaca, 2007) (Daunt, Cause Celebre: 'Inconvenient Truth' Transforms Producer, 2007) (McNamara, 2009) (Movie Guide: Capsule Reviews of Current Releases, 2007)

<sup>10</sup> (Chmielewski & Bensinger, 2008) (Friedman & Munoz, 2007)

<sup>11</sup> (Stein, Can a Home Be a Green House?, 2007) (Stein, Celebrities: Beware the Print Journalist, 2007)

<sup>12</sup> (Hayasaki & Lozano, 2007)

<sup>13</sup> (Terlep, 2008)

<sup>14</sup> (Winton, 2007)

<sup>15</sup> (Graham, 2008)

<sup>16</sup> (Long, 2007)

<sup>17</sup> (Blogs hit pop tax, Kid Rock , 2007)

<sup>18</sup> (Garvey, Niemiets, Carwright, & Friedman, 2013)

<sup>19</sup> (Stuff to Watch, 2016)

address the secondary research question, *How does celebrity activism affect global health security discourses?*.

## **The Social Celebrity**

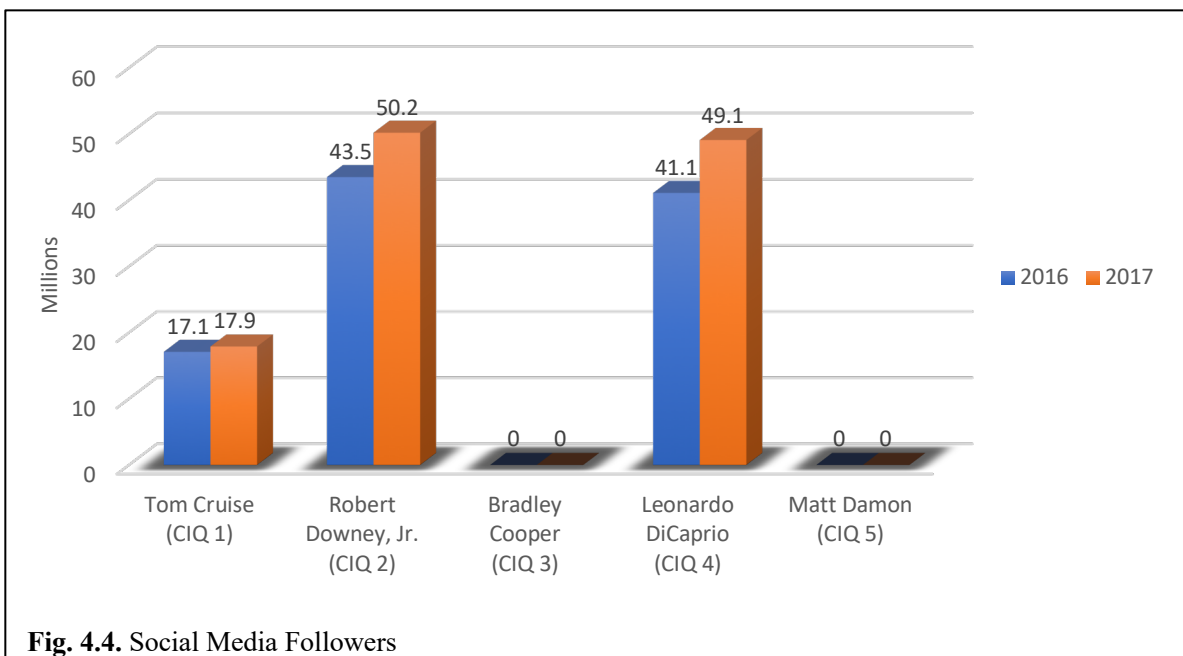
The exponential rise in technological innovation has enabled new forms of communication and socialization that could scarcely have been imagined in the past. In an instant, a woman in the United States can ask her friend in the Greek Islands how cold the water is on their favorite beach. A parent can keep track of their teenager who “checks in” at various spots about town. A student can organize a local service project and include as many participants as their friends’ friends. They who were once unreachable by either distance or acquaintance have now been made perpetually accessible to anyone who has joined the network of technologically-enabled communications.

The social media platform is as useful in disseminating ideas as it is in connecting people, and has been adopted as an efficient means of advertising by businesses, public figures, as well as the general public seeking to increase their value or social capital. Hollywood actors often take to social media as a promotional tool for their latest creative projects, marketing themselves and their work to an audience eager to form some sort of a connection, even digital, with those they admire. For celebrities seeking expiation from past indiscretions, the presentation of “good deeds” on the internet can help them regain the trust of their fans, and engender faith in the ability of even the “baddest” boys and girls to reform. The charitable spirit is contagious, transferring from the acts of reformed celebrities to the hearts of their fans who decide they are worthy of a second chance to be their idols. In an era where every item of clothing, every

relationship, and every performance is scrutinized and compared to another's, celebrities face pressures from the media and their audiences to display a dynamic combination of skills and activities that will distinguish them from their less ambitious peers. Having a cause for which to advocate, or a passion project, elevates celebrities from the meager ranks of fame to the respectable echelons of humanitarianism. The combination seems to be becoming not only more abundant, but more necessary for admission to the Hollywood elite, evident in the fact that the five most bankable celebrities of 2015 *each* supported between 12 and 42 charities, and between 15 and 32 causes (Look to the Stars, 2017). In analyzing another metric used to calculate CIQ, the same trend follows for the top actors starring in films with the highest worldwide gross revenue (all films), who *each* support between 15 and 31 charities, and between 14 and 32 causes (ibid, 2017). These figures demonstrate that all celebrities occupying the top ranks in Hollywood have become public advocates for multiple causes that contribute to their humanitarian portfolio, and while it is impossible to determine a causal relationship between their activism and their prominence in the entertainment industry in this study, there appears to be some correlation between them that warrants further research.

Social media is one way for celebrities to raise awareness about their charitable activities, and yet, despite the public relations opportunities enabled by a social media presence, only three of the five top actors in the Celebrity Influence Quotient (CIQ) are active on social media. A Pew Research Center study conducted on social media popularity between 2012 and 2016 identified Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter as the most popular social media sites (Pew Research Center, 2017), however, among these platforms the top celebrities on the CIQ only had an official presence on either Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram through which to communicate with fans. Specifically, according to data collected from the Klear data analytics

platform, only Tom Cruise, Robert Downey, Jr., and Leonardo DiCaprio were active on one or more of these platforms, although no correlation was found between CIQ levels and number of social media fans for the top five celebrities. Klear is used by top brands including Microsoft, Nike, and Coca Cola in their marketing research, and was accessed in July of 2016 and again in July 2017 in order to compare the growth of the five celebrities' social media presence over the period of one year. Specifically, the social media presence for this study's celebrities is illustrated in Fig. 4.4 below. For a detailed table of each actor's following on each of the three social media platforms, please see Table D.13 in Appendix G.



The changes in the number of fans and/or followers each celebrity has illustrates the mutable nature of such figures, which may be connected to the actors' creative projects emerging in a particular year, news about their private lives, or proactive measures they may be taking in enlisting more followers. Despite these fluctuations, the number of people who are potentially exposed to the information presented by these three celebrities on social media numbers remains

in the millions. According to a study published in the Royal Society Open Science journal, the typical Facebook user has an average of 150-155 connections by comparison (Knapton, 2016; Dicker, 2016). Similarly, in a survey conducted in 2015 of the most active Instagram user demographic in the United States, teenagers, the average follower count was 150 (Average number of Instagram followers, n.d.), while the typical Twitter account holder has only 208 followers (News, 2012). Although these are likely outdated statistics requiring recalculation, they are still well below the millions of followers commanded by top Hollywood celebrities.

Furthermore, there is great variation in the number of posts each user makes on his or her social media platforms, with some users more active than others. However, when examining influence, it is less important to ask how many times a celebrity posts than to ask how many people see each post, as frequent or infrequent as it may be. This is called the celebrity's social media *true reach*, and represents the number of users who actually see each post in their feeds. Although the average reach celebrities command is much lower than their total number of followers, it is still in the millions. The Klear analytics platform also provides a social media influence score, calculated by using a combination of factors including "a statistical analysis on engagement, reach, demographics, network and other factors" (Klear, 2017). Therefore, this score is a different measure than the influence calculated by the Celebrity Influence Quotient (CIQ), and shows that among the top five celebrities who are active in social media, each is within the top 10% of influence scores among all active users. In other words, the top celebrities who are also on social media have a disproportionately high (compared to the average user) following and influence score. This, of course, is expected, since fame in the entertainment industry translates seamlessly to fame on the internet. Such a social media presence enables high visibility of these actors' activities that may go beyond the scope of formal media channels,

allowing the actors to convey any messages they want directly to their audience without an intermediary. Although some actors' social media pages are managed by their staff rather than being personal communications, the platform nevertheless allows for a greater variety of information to be conveyed at the discretion of the user, providing an opportunity for any global health engagement to be shared with their followers.

## **Summary**

Limited to activities during the ten-year period between 2006 and 2016, this chapter analyzed the type of global health issues and nature of engagement that the celebrity study population undertook, and situated that engagement in the context of global health needs as represented most prominently by global premature deaths, or mortality. The five celebrities who served as cases for the collection of data in this study were identified by their high Celebrity Influence Quotient (CIQ) in descending order as Tom Cruise, Robert Downey, Jr., Bradley Cooper, Leonardo DiCaprio, and Matt Damon. As a group, these five actors were found to engage in a wide range of issues, including nine of the thirteen global health issues defined by the framework established by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Specifically, these nine issues with which the celebrities are involved to varying degrees include maternal mortality (3.1), infant and under 5 mortality (3.2), communicable diseases (3.3), noncommunicable diseases (3.4), reproductive health (3.7), pollution and/or contamination of air, water, and soil (3.9), vaccines and medicines (3.11), healthcare workers and financing for developing countries (3.12), and health infrastructure (3.13). Not represented by celebrity

involvement were the SDG target categories of substance abuse (3.5), road traffic injuries/death (3.6), direct advocacy for universal health coverage (3.8), and increased tobacco control (3.10).

While using the SDG framework allowed for the classification of celebrity causes into global-health-related and non-global-health-related, a subsequent in-depth analysis identified the specific health issues contained within these broader SDG targets, that each celebrity is associated with. This was necessary, since categories such as communicable (SDG 3.3) and noncommunicable diseases (SDG 3.4), for example, each contain a large number of distinct illnesses with varying effects on global populations, and to conflate all issues within a target would render data lacking the specificity required to make meaningful connections between the celebrity, global health security, and media representations of engagement.

The specific global health issues and the corresponding organizations connected to each celebrity provided clear search terms in the mass media outlet database, *Access World News*, as it searched within the top circulation and readership newspapers for these meaningful connections. However, the search in these newspapers, previously identified through data from the *Audience Snapshot Database* as The New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, the Chicago Tribune, the New York Daily, and The Washington Post, USA TODAY, and the Detroit News and Detroit Free Press, yielded insufficient results to determine the nature of the celebrity's involvement with each cause. Therefore, a broader search that extended beyond these newspapers was necessary in order to determine the nature of this connection, and to categorize the types of involvement these celebrities pursued, as previously established as *Appearance*, *Participation*, and *Donation*.

Although elite interviews were attempted in order to gain greater insight into the celebrities' efforts to promote certain issues and organizations, as previously discussed in Ch. 3,

these attempts yielded no meaningful results, and therefore all data on their engagement with global health issues was collected from publicly available sources. Results generated from this broader open-source search showed that of the three categories of engagement, Participation was the most frequent form for which the actors received publicity in print and/or online media, followed by Appearance, and finally Donation. Analysis of online and print news media also showed that local news outlets often covered the celebrity's involvement in a charity event, public appearance, or efforts in their local news reports, if the activism took place in their territory. However, the news outlets with the largest readership and circulation covered this involvement at a much lower frequency, and when they did, it was predominantly framed as a parenthesis to their artistic endeavors, such as their newest film, or to their relationship with another celebrity obtaining publicity for *their* artistic works.

In assessing the celebrities' public engagement with issues having the greatest effect on global health security as reflected in mortality, I have demonstrated that collectively, between 2006 and 2016, the five celebrities were associated with efforts to alleviate nine out of the top 20 causes of premature death, most of which were by their association with broad cancer initiatives rather than specifically with the forms claiming the most lives. However, none were involved in efforts directed at the four global health issues that claimed the most lives, which are related to cardiovascular and/or respiratory diseases. Implications resulting from the celebrities' global health engagement, the publicity this engagement receives, and the way in which it is framed by public media are further explored in Chapter 5, where findings will be discussed in greater detail as they relate to the research questions presented in Chapter 1. Furthermore, data collected and analyzed in this chapter has elucidated avenues for continued research into the phenomenon of



celebrity activism and the power structures that direct it, which will be considered in the next chapter as well.

## Chapter 5

### Public Displays of Attention: Representations of Celebrity Activism

*“When the old gods withdraw, the empty thrones cry out for a successor, and with good management, or even without management, almost any perishable bag of bones may be hoisted into the vacant seat.” (Dodds, 2004)*

Human history has been marked by the adulation of those who display an uncommon level of strength, beauty, charm, or cunning. Ancient texts recount their conquests, Renaissance paintings hint at their mystique, and modern cinema glimpses into the most public and private moments of their lives. By turning our attention to these individuals, we have elevated them to the powerful status of kings and idols that we either aspire to be or be close to. Irrespective of the psychosocial needs or evolutionary advantages of aligning oneself with those deemed the most powerful, it remains characteristic of our society to endow certain people with a disproportionate level of attention that contributes to their power. These are the cultural elites to whom modern technological innovation has granted multiple platforms for promoting themselves and their interests, allowing them to become increasingly prominent fixtures in the daily life of the average citizen. However, it is important to recognize that the images conveyed to the audience are not always able to convey the depth or complexity of reality.

In this study, I argued that the way in which mass media frame celebrity activism risks trivializing global health security discourses, and that the choice of global health causes for which the most influential celebrities advocate reflects a shallow understanding of global health

security needs. To sum up my conclusions, I have demonstrated that the engagement of these cultural elites in matters of global health is typically presented as a parenthetical note in the most popular newspaper articles, while details of their physical appearance, their films, or their private lives take center stage. This representation frames health security issues as secondary concerns to the glamorous figures who publicly engage with those issues. Furthermore, though the actors examined are in fact engaging with pressing global health concerns, I demonstrated that they are not engaging with the issues that claim the most lives globally. In this concluding chapter, I will provide a brief overview of this study, discuss my findings and conclusions in greater detail, and situate them within existing literature that addresses the multifaceted nature of celebrity activism. Any implications resulting from the data analyzed will then be elaborated and connected to actionable measures for effective engagement, while I will also propose avenues for future research before concluding.

## **Overview**

The primary research question guiding this study was, “*How do cultural elites prominent in U.S. media impact global health security?*” However, to more effectively address this, a series of secondary questions were asked in order to inform the collection and analysis of data that would contribute to an understanding of the multiple dimensions of “impact”. Specifically, the secondary research questions in this study were: 1) How does celebrity activism affect global health security discourses? 2) What “truths” are created by celebrity activism in global health? and 3) Are the issues these celebrities are advocating for, the most pressing concerns?

As celebrity itself is phenomenologically grounded in the coalescence of cultural,

political, sociological, psychological, and business processes, I used an interdisciplinary approach in this study to critically analyze celebrity activism, and further our understanding of the influence celebrities exert over matters of social and political significance. Then, I employed case study methodology, narrowing the study population to the five most influential actors in Hollywood, as representatives of an elite subgroup of celebrities. I developed the *Celebrity Influence Quotient* (CIQ) as an instrument to measure this influence as expressed through the celebrity's bankability (i.e. how much value is added to a particular project by the actor's association), the funds generated by their body of work, and their individual incomes. A combination of actors' ranks across these categories of influence provided the criteria for inclusion and was used to generate the study population. Only the actors with the top five highest CIQs were retained for this study, identified in descending order of influence as Tom Cruise (CIQ 1), Robert Downey, Jr. (CIQ 2), Bradley Cooper (CIQ 3), Leonardo DiCaprio (CIQ 4), and Matt Damon (CIQ 5).

Once these subjects were identified, I evaluated the charitable causes with which they have been associated, using the comprehensive celebrity charity tracking database, *Look to the Stars*. A list of associated cause-driven organizations was compiled for each actor, and using the framework established by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in order to define global health issues, I categorized each celebrity's organizational involvement according to its relation to global health. All global health related causes were then further categorized according to the 13 broad types of global health issues defined by SDG #3: good health and well-being, including non-communicable disease, communicable disease, and infant and child mortality, among others. This broad categorization was complemented by a further subdivision into the specific type of health issue, including cancer, lupus, HIV/AIDS, and other health

concerns, for greater specificity as detailed in Chapter 4. This generated the search terms that would be used for content analysis and subsequent discourse analysis necessary in order to address the secondary research questions for this study.

## **Findings in Fame**

The way newspapers report on celebrity activism helps frame the way the public is exposed to global health issues, and therefore the way public understanding and discourse is shaped. The influence of low data (i.e. entertainment news) in high politics (i.e. global issues) is based on the intertextual relationship between the two, meaning the interconnection of all forms of text where none can exist or can be understood without a contextual reality that directs the interpretation of that text (Weldes, 2006). Therefore, its meaning is interpreted according to its relation to others. Popular culture contributes to the study of politics through intertextuality, where low data, including popular culture, is an essential component of social order. Celebrities both represent and define popular culture, and thus generate low data that interacts with the arena of high politics through their intertextual relationship.

In this study, I analyzed the way in which the intertextual relationship between celebrity and global health security manifests using the theoretical framework provided by agenda-setting, in order to better understand how cultural elites can use the media as advocacy networks to communicate their values and to promote certain global health causes to the public. As discussed in Chapter 2, the issues that the media chooses to convey to the public help structure a representation of reality that the public, as consumers of this information, uses to understand their world and consequently make decisions about how to navigate that world. However, what

is published is not always a complete nor accurate depiction of reality, but rather the aggregate of information selected for its commercial appeal.

As the socially-defined expectations of a successful celebrity portfolio have evolved to include advocacy for a social, political, or health matter (or any combination thereof), it is expected that the mass media will cover such activities, as they seek to appeal to the consumer's sensibilities. However, media representations of celebrity activism in global health offer a shallow representation of both the breadth and depth of Hollywood actors' engagement with health organizations, thereby implicitly attributing greater value to their celebrity status itself than to the ways in which they use that status for philanthropic endeavors. Through data collected in this study, I have demonstrated that published articles making a viable connection between the actors and their health causes were typically focused on the celebrities themselves, with attention to their artistic work, personal stylings, and relationships, and only sprinkled with mention of their activism.

The themed section of the newspaper in which these articles were placed also indicates that although these issues may have a social and/or political message, the involvement of celebrities is more noteworthy than the cause itself. Specifically, the majority of articles connecting the celebrities to their global health causes were designated to sections emphasizing entertainment and pop culture, which along with the emphasis (rather than mere incorporation) of each celebrity's current creative project in these articles, suggests that public interest in celebrities is focused on their celebrity status rather than their use of celebrity for social or humanitarian causes. Furthermore, a broader search of newspaper articles necessitated by a dearth of data in the top newspapers demonstrated that local news outlets most often covered the celebrity's involvement in a charity event or other global health related activities if the

engagement took place in their territory, although the focus of these articles was consistent with prior observations in that they too focused on the glamorous aspects of the activity, rather than the health issue that prompted the event to begin with. Larger news outlets covered this involvement at a much lower frequency, despite the national and international appeal of these actors as entertainers, and the global nature of health issues themselves.

Nevertheless, the inclusion of the celebrity's activism and association with such causes in pop culture oriented newspaper sections introduces a broader audience to global health issues and organizations that would otherwise overlook such activities featured in traditional news sections. This is consistent with the frame alignment process of *extension*, which as a recruitment strategy for movement support, seeks to broaden the movement's frame in order to draw support from persons or groups whose beliefs and values may not be explicitly tied to the movement's original goals. During frame extension, interests that are secondary to the movement's original frame, but of importance to the group the movement is seeking to recruit, are incorporated into the movement's strategic goals (Buechler, 2016). In the context of this study, actors have been enlisted to participate in the activities of the global health organizations, with the presumption that their visibility as celebrities would extend to the causes they support.

Greater legitimacy of celebrities as activists, however, cannot occur in a media environment that is unbalanced in its reporting. Framing celebrities' global health activism in the context of entertainment has the potential to detract from the gravity of the global health issues at hand, and undermine any meaningful contributions the celebrity may be making towards the cause either by raising awareness to a large fan base, establishing foundations that would further research and/or relief efforts, or by making financial contributions to existing organizations. Furthermore, the superficial acknowledgement of global health issues within such

news articles also fails to convey the significance of these issues whose multifaceted dimensions and intricate trans-border nature impact the global population. In this way, news media do not present the necessary information for readers to develop a mature understanding of these health issues in the body of the articles themselves, nor do they usually offer resources for further investigation of the issues and organizations that are mentioned in connection to the celebrity.

It is self-evident that only issues and organizations that were included in newspaper articles received publicity for their causes in that particular media, and by extension, exposure to those newspapers' audience. Consequently, of the 29 global health organizations with which our five celebrities engaged, I demonstrated that almost two-thirds of them and their associated health issues and initiatives were excluded from the media context that helps to shape opinions on matters of social and political significance. Through active selection of which health issues to include in publications and which issues to omit, along with the manipulation of the contextual dimensions in which these issues are presented, these newspapers help to set the agenda of public discourse not necessarily by telling people what to think, but instead by telling people what to think about and how to think about it.

With regard to the secondary research question, *How does celebrity activism affect global health security discourses?* then, I demonstrated that articles written on celebrity activism in the top newspapers fail to present their consumers with information on the global significance of the disease or illness their celebrities engage with, thereby neglecting an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to global health security discourse that would both educate consumers and potentially inspire them to become activists themselves. Though the media's contextualization of the actors' engagement within entertainment-centered news serves to expose a broader audience to global health issues requiring attention, it also risks trivializing these issues



by relegating them to the periphery of entertainment news. In this way, public discourses on matters of global health security are informed by a shallow representation of the issues in the most popular newspapers, thereby perpetuating a consumerist value system where glamour supersedes health. This also informs the “truth” created by celebrity activism in global health, as related to secondary research question 2, which is constructed through the intertextual relationship between the low data of entertainment and the high politics inherent in global health security matters. Specifically, one “truth” that is implicitly created by framing health issues in such a way is therefore that fame, beauty, art, and luxury are more noteworthy than the need to ensure healthy lives for all, and the efforts undertaken towards that goal. It must be noted that emphasis of commodified representations of celebrity activism in the media may be out of the direct control of social actors featured in that media, and may be connected to the fact that the United States has one of the most commercialized media markets in the world, generating approximately 80% of its revenue from advertising (Powers and Benson, 2014), although further research would be necessary to determine whether a stronger relationship exists.

The final secondary research question asked, “*Are the issues these celebrities are advocating for, the most pressing concerns?*” In analyzing the urgency of the health issues that the celebrities have chosen to engage with, I demonstrated that the most influential actors are not engaging with the top four leading causes of death globally. By compiling data on the most pressing global health concerns as determined by the World Health Organization and cross-referencing them with the health-related activism of the five most influential Hollywood actors, I determined that the actors are engaging with nine (9) of the 20 most pressing global health issues, although none address the top four conditions that claim the most lives globally. Specifically, though ischaemic heart disease, stroke, lower respiratory infections, and chronic

obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) collectively account for 38 per cent of all global deaths, none of the most influential celebrities engage in efforts to either bring awareness to these conditions, further research, or increase availability of medical interventions to address them. Furthermore, although four of the five celebrities engage with the fifth leading cause of death, which is cancer of the trachea, bronchus, and lung, their engagement is not actually directed towards these specific cancers, but rather towards the broader issue of (all) cancer. Therefore, it is only by virtue of its categorization under the broader issue of cancer that the fifth leading cause of death is addressed by the top celebrities. Similarly, three more of the nine leading causes of death with which the celebrities engage are also types of cancer, and therefore it is unclear to what extent their efforts are applied towards these specific cancers. It is important to note that this does not mean that efforts made towards general cancer research, prevention, and treatment do not benefit the specific cancers mentioned above. However, it does suggest that though there is an awareness of the significance of cancer in general as a global health concern, there is a lack of celebrity interest in publicly identifying and engaging with the specific cancers that claim the most lives.

### **Seeing Stars**

A range of factors can influence the types of global health issues celebrities choose to engage with, including the zeitgeist, manager recommendations, the media's preference for certain issues over others, urging from their social circles, their demographic characteristics, or personal experiences. Other factors including the outreach efforts of organizations devoted to particular health issues, or the topics of films or other creative projects with which the actors are

involved could also play a role in determining which causes and organizations they will support. While I did not intend to evaluate celebrity issue-selection processes here, comparative assessment of the celebrity-associated health issues to the leading causes of death globally suggests that these individuals either lack an awareness of global health needs or lack interest in addressing the specific health concerns that claim the most lives. Though the reasons for their choice of issues is beyond the scope of this study, future research examining these motivating factors can shed more light on the processes that contribute to the complex phenomenon of celebrity activism, and the ways in which their resources can be utilized by institutions and organizations seeking celebrity support.

Similarly, in analyzing the ways in which the five celebrities engage with global health issues, I demonstrated that a pattern exists in the type of engagement the top celebrities prefer. Of the three categories of involvement that were observed, including appearance, participation, and donation, a frequency count of their forms of engagement revealed that the preferred mode of engagement with global health is in fact participation wherein the actors contributed to the planning, hosting, fundraising or other activities for the events sponsored by organizations related to global health. During the period of 2006 to 2016, the cumulative participation count for the five actors was 23, while appearance and donations were carried out eight (8) and six (6) times respectively. Understanding how influential actors choose to publicly engage with health issues can inform institutional or organizational recruitment strategies targeting celebrity supporters, and encourage them to create opportunities that would appeal to celebrities' preferred method of engagement.

Active participation as through modeling for a cause, answering phones during a telethon, being featured in a documentary, meeting with a world leader to discuss the issue, being dropped

in a charity dunk tank, or other forms of participation afford celebrities a higher level of visibility than simply attending the event or making a donation. It is possible that this form of engagement offers greater incentive for celebrities as it provides an avenue of exposure for the public figure as well as the health issue, and an opportunity for the celebrity to claim a larger part of the event spotlight than those who simply show up or donate. Further research on the factors that contribute to the celebrities' choice of engagement type would be needed to determine the reasons for celebrity preference of participation, with elite interviews potentially providing the most valuable data on their motivations. However, as noted previously in Chapter 3, the public nature of the celebrity persona may influence the reliability and validity of data gathered during such interviews, making a true assessment of celebrity motivations challenging.

### **Redefining Roles**

When a career politician engages in public support of a global health focused event, their involvement might be mentioned alongside their political accomplishments, or perhaps ignored by the media altogether, depending on whether the health issue is the topic of political debate. However, a celebrity's association changes the dynamics of advocacy, if the celebrity's spotlight is big enough to encompass those people and issues close enough to him or her. And yet, despite the opportunity presented by both the platform and attention made available to celebrities, the newspapers reaching the most people in the United States chose to focus on the manufactured personas representing entertainment, idolized as "stars", rather than on the issues of global significance these stars care about. This illustrates the paradox of celebrity activism as a strategic tool for publicity, as it manages to direct media attention to global issues while

simultaneously (though possibly inadvertently) overshadowing these issues by bringing attention to themselves.

Nevertheless, celebrity activism has become a fixture in popular culture, and an integral component of the growing movement towards responsible celebrity. For instance, the recent rise of the #MeToo movement on social media and beyond, calling attention to the abuse of power and sexual exploitation that has permeated not only the entertainment industry, but social and professional settings across the globe, was popularized in 2017 by Hollywood celebrities. Although the phrase was originally used by civil rights activist Tarana Burke in 2007 as a campaign to show recognition and solidarity for women of color in the U.S. who were victims of sexual violence, it has now been adopted by women around the world (Garcia, 2017). This movement has galvanized the most famous celebrities in Hollywood, further blurring the lines between entertainment and social justice, as evidenced for example by integration of the #MeToo message in their attendance at award shows intended to honor artistic achievement.

Though the involvement of celebrities in the #MeToo movement is nuanced and subject to criticism, it is beyond the scope of this research. However, the expectation in Hollywood that celebrities will publicly support this movement is an illustration of the shifting roles they are playing as not only entertainers, but as intentional advocates for social justice. The inclusion of *causes célèbres* in an actor's portfolio is now part of the comprehensive package that elevates certain individuals to the ranks of Hollywood elite, though the weight of such activism within this portfolio still remains unclear.

## **Looking to the Future**

A 2007 poll conducted by CBS/New York Times News showed that “49 percent of Americans believed that celebrities should stay out of politics” (‘t Hart and Tindall, 2009, p. 14). Yet, the 2016 U.S. presidential election elevated a celebrity businessman and reality television star to one of the highest offices in the world. In a time when such a celebrity with no prior formal public service is able to claim the U.S. Presidency, the nature of celebrity involvement in matters of social and political consequence is a topic urgently deserving of scholarly attention. Although recent years have shown a growing academic interest in the relationship between celebrity and politics, the implicational depth of this relationship still remains largely underdeveloped. While I addressed a relatively small gap in the celebrity activism literature through this study, understanding the reasons for this shift in popular opinion regarding the roles of celebrities in society, if it is indeed a shift, is a challenge for future research.

Furthermore, while conducting research to determine the most influential celebrity actors via the CIQ, I discovered the overwhelming majority of these recognized and “bankable” celebrities are male, predominantly white, and in the same general age range (40-55 years old). Further research urgently needs to examine the reason for this disproportionate recognition, role availability, and compensation in the field of entertainment, since entertainment is both the product of audience demand and the reflection of the audience’s social and ideological constitution. Since there is also a connection between factors that contribute to the CIQ and the abusive power structures highlighted in the #MeToo movement, perhaps use of the movement as a framework through which to further study the way power is constituted, perpetuated, and even revoked would infuse questions related to “star power” with greater contextual salience for

public discourse, thereby potentially lending greater visibility to any findings resulting from the study.

## **Conclusion**

In this dissertation, I developed a measurement of celebrity influence, the Celebrity Influence Quotient, or CIQ, which I used to identify the most influential actors in Hollywood that would serve as cases for this study. By comparing the global health issues with which these celebrities engage to the global health issues that constitute the leading causes of death globally, I demonstrated that the most influential celebrities engage with few of the most pressing global health concerns, thus failing to address the majority of threats to global health security through their activism and proving my hypothesis that efforts by celebrities who are prominent in U.S. media are not most frequently allocated towards the global health issues that have the greatest effect on global health security. Furthermore, I determined the actors' most frequently chosen avenues of engagement for promoting global health, which may inform institutional and organizational strategies for celebrity recruitment in the future.

Using a mixed methods approach, I also demonstrated that the most influential newspapers in the United States as identified through circulation and readership, during the ten-year period studied, published articles connecting the celebrities to only approximately one third of all global health issues and/or organizations with which they engage. By further analyzing these articles, I determined that the majority of these articles were published in entertainment-based sections of the newspapers that relegated any information on the actual health issue or organization to the periphery, thus implicitly framing the discussion of global health security

matters (as consumed by the public) within the context of entertainment. This analysis also proved my hypothesis that media representations of celebrity activism detract from meaningful global health security discourses by extolling the famous persona rather than their engagement with significant global issues.

Although in this study I focused on Hollywood actors as the chosen subgroup of the cultural elite population, the framework established here can be applied to numerous other types of elites as non-state actors engaging with global issues, including professional athletes, singers and other entertainers, business leaders, or other high-profile individuals. Similarly, global health security constitutes one of a myriad of issues with which such high-profile individuals engage, and though each issue has its own unique set of challenges and opportunities, the frequency and manner in which these issues are discussed in the media can be analyzed according to the parameters established in this study as well. Understanding how other celebrity causes are represented in the media can also provide further insight to the relationship between celebrities and issues of global significance, and the consequent context in which public opinion is influenced. While the ephemeral nature of popularity means that the degree of influence each celebrity possesses is mutable from year to year, it is not a particular individual's personal engagement with these issues that is most significant. Rather, it is the collective action of influential celebrities as a group, and the representation of that action in the public sphere that is most valuable to understanding the role of celebrities in today's social and political environment.

Celebrities have adopted a range of social and political issues for which they advocate, while their visibility and/or influence as advocates is enabled by the resources available to them. Alluding to these resources, critics have deemed celebrity involvement in politics a form of plutocratic behavior (Boykoff and Goodman, 2009), wherein power rests with those possessing



material wealth. However, in the case of celebrity, it is not necessarily the material wealth that gives them their power, but rather their visibility across multiple media and their attractiveness to audiences that idolize them. Perhaps then a more accurate term than plutocracy would in this case be a *phemocracy* (from Greek φήμη/*pheme* = fame, and κράτος/*kratos* = rule), where power is awarded those occupying celebrity status, who embody the fame that so many either admire or strive to emulate. Consistent with this is the analysis of “star power” by ‘t Hart and Tindall (2009), who frame it as a force that “enables a form of leadership driven by fame, admiration and dramaturgy, rather than by election, representation, and accountability. It is leadership by the well-known, not necessarily leadership by the well-qualified” (‘t Hart and Tindall, 2009, p. 4). Though plutocracy and phemocracy are not mutually exclusive, and may in fact have a direct and reciprocal relationship, they derive from distinct processes that determine power relations. Greater scholarly attention to the influence of celebrity as an ideal can yield insight as to the rise, evolution, and implications of such a phemocratic system in which fame carries its own power. The field of celebrity activism is dynamic, evolving to accommodate the growing awareness of structural inequalities faced not only by the characters actors portray, but by the actors themselves. Paradoxically, these same actors also benefit from the structural inequalities that elevate them to positions of power. Although this dissertation chose to focus on the relationship between Hollywood’s most influential actors and global health security, there are a myriad of issues with which celebrities engage and a plethora of social processes that direct and enable that engagement, all deserving of further attention.

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## **Appendices**

## Appendix A – Factors of Influence

Rank	Bankability*	Highest Grossing (Worldwide)*	Top Gross Revenue (U.S.) Generated by All Films**	Highest Paid Actors*
1.	Samuel L. Jackson	Jennifer Lawrence	Samuel L. Jackson	Robert Downey Jr
2.	Adam Sandler	Vin Diesel	Harrison Ford	Jennifer Lawrence
3.	Johnny Depp	Dwayne Johnson	Morgan Freeman	Jackie Chan
4.	Tom Cruise	Channing Tatum	Tom Hanks	Vin Diesel
5.	Brad Pitt	Hugh Jackman	Robert Downey, Jr.	Bradley Cooper
6.	Tom Hanks	Bradley Cooper	Liam Neeson	Adam Sandler
7.	Leonardo DiCaprio	Leonardo DiCaprio	Tom Cruise	Tom Cruise
8.	Morgan Freeman	Tom Cruise	Elizabeth Banks	Scarlett Johansson
9.	Robert Downey, Jr.	Morgan Freeman	Matt Damon	Mark Wahlberg
10.	Bradley Cooper	Mark Wahlberg	Bruce Willis	Dwayne Johnson
11.	Matt Damon	Chris Hemsworth	Johnny Depp	Johnny Depp
12.	Will Smith	Jeremy Renner	Alan Rickman	Leonardo DiCaprio
13.	Angelina Jolie Pitt	Shailene Woodley	Cate Blanchett	Channing Tatum
14.	Sandra Bullock	Matt Damon	Scarlett Johansson	Chris Hemsworth
15.	Mark Wahlberg	Chris Evans	Helena Bonham Carter	Daniel Craig
16.	George Clooney	Bruce Willis	Robert De Niro	Matthew McConaughey
17.	Liam Neeson	George Clooney	Ben Stiller	Will Smith
18.	Robert De Niro	Melissa McCarthy	Will Smith	Matt Damon
19.	Denzel Washington	Robert Downey, Jr.	Adam Sandler	Hugh Jackman
20.	Helena Bonham Carter	Brad Pitt	Brad Pitt	Melissa McCarthy
21.	Steve Carell	N/A	Mark Wahlberg	Ben Affleck
22.	Hugh Jackman	N/A	Sandra Bullock	Liam Neeson
23.	Ben Stiller	N/A	Bradley Cooper	Chow Yun Fat
24.	Seth Rogen	N/A	Leonardo DiCaprio	Russell Crowe
25.	N/A	N/A	Seth Rogen	Seth Rogen
26.	N/A	N/A	Dwayne Johnson	George Clooney
27.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Brad Pitt
28.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Jonah Hill

\*Ranks are for 2015  
\*\* That a celebrity has appeared in over their lifetime

## Appendix B – News Readership and Circulation

<b>Table C.2</b> Adult News/Website Readership			
Sorted By: Proj - Adults 18+			
	Average/Cume	Measure	Adults 18+
National The New York Times Weekly	5D/1S	Proj	11,404,576
National The New York Times Weekly	5D/1S	Reach %	4.60%
Los Angeles DMA Los Angeles Times/e-edition/LATimes.com Print/Website Net	5D/1S/Past 30 Web	Proj	4,646,790
Los Angeles DMA Los Angeles Times/e-edition/LATimes.com Print/Website Net	5D/1S/Past 30 Web	Reach %	33.00%
New York DMA New York Daily News/e-edition/NYDailyNews.com Print/Website Net	5D/1S/Past 30 Web	Proj	4,134,345
New York DMA New York Daily News/e-edition/NYDailyNews.com Print/Website Net	5D/1S/Past 30 Web	Reach %	24.80%
Chicago DMA Chicago Tribune/e-edition/ChicagoTribune.com Print/Website Net	5D/1S/Past 30 Web	Proj	3,078,558
Chicago DMA Chicago Tribune/e-edition/ChicagoTribune.com Print/Website Net	5D/1S/Past 30 Web	Reach %	41.60%
Washington, D.C. DMA The Washington Post/Washingtonpost.com Print/Website Net	5D/1S/Past 30 Web	Proj	2,816,375
Washington, D.C. DMA The Washington Post/Washingtonpost.com Print/Website Net	5D/1S/Past 30 Web	Reach %	53.50%
<p><b>Codes:</b>  <i>1S = Sunday edition</i>  <i>5D = weekly</i>  <i>DMA = “(Designated Market Area) - Specific geographic area to which a county in the United States is exclusively assigned on the basis of the television viewing habits of the people residing in the county. DMA® is trademarked by Nielsen Media Research”(AAM, 2016).</i>  <i>Proj = the number of adults ages 18+ in the market that are reached by the newspaper</i>  <i>Reach % = The percentage of adults ages 18+ in the market that are reached by the newspaper</i>  <i>Web = online newspaper site</i></p> <p><i>Source: Audience Snapshot Database of the Alliance for Audited Media, 2016.</i></p>			



**Table C.3**

Top News Circulation  
Adults 18+

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Day(s)</b>	<b>Location (base)</b>	<b>Circulation</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>USA TODAY</b>	MON-FRI	DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA Washington	3,723,295
<b>2</b>	<b>USA TODAY</b>	SUN	DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA Washington	3,465,322
<b>3</b>	<b>THE NEW YORK TIMES</b>	SUN	NEW YORK New York City	1,092,368
<b>4</b>	<b>THE DETROIT NEWS and DETROIT FREE PRESS</b>	SUN	MICHIGAN Detroit	869,664
<b>5</b>	<b>LOS ANGELES TIMES</b>	SUN	CALIFORNIA Los Angeles	809,415
<b>6</b>	<b>CHICAGO TRIBUNE</b>	SUN	ILLINOIS Chicago	794,015

*Data from the Audience Snapshot Database of the Alliance for Audited Media, generated Jan. 2017.*

**Table C.4****Adult News/Website Readership**

<b>Title:</b>			
Sorted By: Proj - Adults 18+			
	Average/Cume	Measure	<i>Adults 18+</i>
National The New York Times Weekly	<i>5D/1S</i>	Proj	11,404,576
National The New York Times Weekly	<i>5D/1S</i>	Reach %	4.60%
National The New York Times Sunday	<i>Cume</i>	Proj	9,954,095
National The New York Times Sunday	<i>Cume</i>	Reach %	4.10%
National The New York Times Daily	<i>Cume</i>	Proj	9,180,515
National The New York Times Daily	<i>Cume</i>	Reach %	3.70%
National The New York Times Sunday	<i>Average</i>	Proj	5,774,578
National The New York Times Sunday	<i>Average</i>	Reach %	2.40%
Los Angeles DMA Los Angeles Times/e-edition/LATimes.com Print/Website Net	<i>5D/1S/Past 30 Web</i>	Proj	4,646,790
Los Angeles DMA Los Angeles Times/e-edition/LATimes.com Print/Website Net	<i>5D/1S/Past 30 Web</i>	Reach %	33.00%
National The New York Times Daily	<i>Average</i>	Proj	4,206,430
National The New York Times Daily	<i>Average</i>	Reach %	1.70%
New York DMA New York Daily News/e-edition/NYDailyNews.com Print/Website Net	<i>5D/1S/Past 30 Web</i>	Proj	4,134,345
New York DMA New York Daily News/e-edition/NYDailyNews.com Print/Website Net	<i>5D/1S/Past 30 Web</i>	Reach %	24.80%
Los Angeles DMA Los Angeles Times/e-edition/LATimes.com Print/Website Net	<i>5D/1S/Past 7 Web</i>	Proj	4,123,439
Los Angeles DMA Los Angeles Times/e-edition/LATimes.com Print/Website Net	<i>5D/1S/Past 7 Web</i>	Reach %	29.30%
New York DMA New York Daily News/e-edition/NYDailyNews.com Print/Website Net	<i>5D/1S/Past 7 Web</i>	Proj	3,714,914
New York DMA New York Daily News/e-edition/NYDailyNews.com Print/Website Net	<i>5D/1S/Past 7 Web</i>	Reach %	22.30%
Los Angeles DMA Los Angeles Times/e-edition Sunday	<i>Cume</i>	Proj	3,547,521
Los Angeles DMA Los Angeles Times/e-edition Sunday	<i>Cume</i>	Reach %	25.20%
Los Angeles DMA Los Angeles Times/e-edition Weekly	<i>5D/1S</i>	Proj	3,283,012
Los Angeles DMA Los Angeles Times/e-edition Weekly	<i>5D/1S</i>	Reach %	23.30%
New York DMA New York Daily News/e-edition Weekly	<i>5D/1S</i>	Proj	3,249,696
New York DMA New York Daily News/e-edition Weekly	<i>5D/1S</i>	Reach %	19.50%
Chicago DMA Chicago Tribune/e-edition/ChicagoTribune.com Print/Website Net	<i>5D/1S/Past 30 Web</i>	Proj	3,078,558
Chicago DMA Chicago Tribune/e-edition/ChicagoTribune.com Print/Website Net	<i>5D/1S/Past 30 Web</i>	Reach %	41.60%
New York DMA New York Daily News/e-edition Daily	<i>Cume</i>	Proj	2,847,482
New York DMA New York Daily News/e-edition Daily	<i>Cume</i>	Reach %	17.10%
Washington, D.C. DMA The Washington Post/Washingtonpost.com Print/Website Net	<i>5D/1S/Past 30 Web</i>	Proj	2,816,375
Washington, D.C. DMA The Washington Post/Washingtonpost.com Print/Website Net	<i>5D/1S/Past 30 Web</i>	Reach %	53.50%

**Table C.4 (cont'd)**

Chicago DMA Chicago Tribune/e-edition/ChicagoTribune.com Print/Website Net	<i>5D/1S/Past 7 Web</i>	Proj	2,806,449
Chicago DMA Chicago Tribune/e-edition/ChicagoTribune.com Print/Website Net	<i>5D/1S/Past 7 Web</i>	Reach %	37.90%
Washington, D.C. DMA The Washington Post/Washingtonpost.com Print/Website Net	<i>5D/1S/Past 7 Web</i>	Proj	2,612,335
Washington, D.C. DMA The Washington Post/Washingtonpost.com Print/Website Net	<i>5D/1S/Past 7 Web</i>	Reach %	49.60%
Chicago DMA Chicago Tribune/e-edition Sunday	<i>Cume</i>	Proj	2,580,320
Chicago DMA Chicago Tribune/e-edition Sunday	<i>Cume</i>	Reach %	34.80%
Los Angeles DMA Los Angeles Times/e-edition Daily	<i>Cume</i>	Proj	2,514,606
Los Angeles DMA Los Angeles Times/e-edition Daily	<i>Cume</i>	Reach %	17.80%
New York DMA New York Daily News/e-edition Sunday	<i>Cume</i>	Proj	2,502,226
New York DMA New York Daily News/e-edition Sunday	<i>Cume</i>	Reach %	15.00%

*Source: Audience Snapshot Database of the Alliance for Audited Media, generated Sept. 2016.*

## Appendix C – Institutional Review Board Documents



RESEARCH INTEGRITY AND COMPLIANCE  
Institutional Review Boards, FWA No. 00001669  
12901 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., MDC035 • Tampa, FL 33612-4799  
(813) 974-5638 • FAX(813)974-7091

11/5/2014

Holly Gerardi, M.A.  
USF Department of Government and International Affairs  
4202 East Fowler Avenue  
Tampa, FL 33620

RE: **Expedited Approval for Continuing Review**

IRB#: CR1\_Pro00015101

Title: Power, Pandemics, and Politics: The Role of Cultural Elites in Global Health Security

**Study Approval Period: 11/25/2014 to 11/25/2015**

Dear Ms. Gerardi:

On 11/5/2014, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed and **APPROVED** the above application and all documents outlined below.

**Approved Item(s):**

**Protocol Document(s):**

[Dissertation Proposal](#)

**Consent/Assent Document(s)\*:**

[Informed Consent Form.pdf](#)

During this continuing review it was discovered that an unstamped version of the valid consent form was used to consent subjects. This was determined to be not serious and not continuing. No further action is needed.

\*Please use only the official IRB stamped informed consent/assent document(s) found under the "Attachments" tab on the main study's workspace. Please note, these consent/assent document(s) are only valid during the approval period indicated at the top of the form(s) and replace the previously approved versions.

The IRB determined that your study qualified for expedited review based on federal expedited category number(s):

(6) Collection of data from voice, video, digital, or image recordings made for research purposes.

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

As the principal investigator of this study, it is your responsibility to conduct this study in accordance with IRB policies and procedures and as approved by the IRB. Any changes to the approved research must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval by an amendment.

We appreciate your dedication to the ethical conduct of human subject research at the University of South Florida and your continued commitment to human research protections. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call 813-974-5638.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John A. Schinka, Ph.D.".

John Schinka, Ph.D., Chairperson  
USF Institutional Review Board



## **Informed Consent to Participate in Research Information to Consider Before Taking Part in this Research Study**

### **IRB Study # 15101**

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You are being asked to take part in a research study. Research studies include only people who choose to take part. This document is called an informed consent form. Please read this information carefully and take your time making your decision. Ask the researcher or study staff to discuss this consent form with you, please ask him/her to explain any words or information you do not clearly understand. We encourage you to talk with your family and friends before you decide to take part in this research study. The nature of the study, risks, inconveniences, discomforts, and other important information about the study are listed below.

We are asking you to take part in a research study called:

*"Power, Pandemics, and Politics: The Role of Cultural Elites in Global Health Security"*

The person who is in charge of this research study is Holly Gerardi. This person is called the Principal Investigator. However, other research staff may be involved and can act on behalf of the person in charge. She is being guided in this research by Dr. M. Scott Solomon.

The research will be conducted at the location of the participant's choosing.

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### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study is to:

- Better understand the influence of celebrity engagement in global health. Celebrity participants will be interviewed regarding their interest and involvement in global health related causes. Representatives of celebrities will be interviewed regarding the celebrity's public activities related to these causes. Organizational leaders will be interviewed regarding their organization's engagement with celebrities for these causes. Data collected through this study may help improve the effectiveness of celebrity activism, as well as the success of health and human rights initiatives.
- Complete the research requirement for a doctoral dissertation by a Ph.D. candidate.

## **Study Procedures**

If you take part in this study, you will be asked to:

- Allow the researcher to interview you one time for approximately 30 minutes regarding your involvement in global health and human rights causes, with allowances for unforeseen demands on your schedule.
- Meet the researcher at a location convenient to you. Distance interviews via Skype or telephone are also possible, if this is more practical for you and the researcher.
- Agree to allow me, the researcher, to audio record our interview, so that I may revisit your responses to ensure better accuracy of data. I will also manually record notes of all responses during the interview. You may decline to be recorded, in which case I will rely solely on my written notes of our interview. Written communication (i.e. email) may also be used. Any collected data will be stored securely, and accessible only by me. Any information the subject wishes to remain anonymous will be coded, so that only I am able to identify it. Records will be kept for no less than 5 years, and then destroyed by the researcher.

## **Total Number of Participants**

A total of 30 individuals will participate in the study at all sites.

## **Alternatives**

You do not have to participate in this research study.

## **Benefits**

We are unsure if you will receive any benefits by taking part in this research study.

## **Risks or Discomfort**

This research is considered to be minimal risk. That means that the risks associated with this study are the same as what you face every day. There are no known additional risks to those who take part in this study.

## **Compensation**

You will receive no payment or other compensation for taking part in this study.

## **Cost**

There will be no additional costs to you as a result of being in this study.

## Privacy and Confidentiality

We will keep your study records private and confidential. Certain people may need to see your study records. By law, anyone who looks at your records must keep them completely confidential. The only people who will be allowed to see these records are:

- The research team, including the Principal Investigator, study coordinator, research nurses, and all other research staff.
- Certain government and university people who need to know more about the study. For example, individuals who provide oversight on this study may need to look at your records. This is done to make sure that we are doing the study in the right way. They also need to make sure that we are protecting your rights and your safety.
- Any agency of the federal, state, or local government that regulates this research. This includes the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Office for Human Research Protection (OHRP).
- The USF Institutional Review Board (IRB) and its related staff who have oversight responsibilities for this study, staff in the USF Office of Research and Innovation, USF Division of Research Integrity and Compliance, and other USF offices who oversee this research.

We may publish what we learn from this study. If we do, we will not include your name, or publish anything that would let people know who you are, without your permission.

## Voluntary Participation / Withdrawal

You should only take part in this study if you want to volunteer. You should not feel that there is any pressure to take part in the study. You are free to participate in this research or withdraw at any time. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits you are entitled to receive if you stop taking part in this study.

## You can get the answers to your questions, concerns, or complaints

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this study, or experience an adverse event or unanticipated problem, call Holly Gerardi at 813-326-9024.

If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this study, general questions, or have complaints, concerns or issues you want to discuss with someone outside the research, call the USF IRB at (813) 974-5638.



### Consent to Take Part in this Research Study

It is up to you to decide whether you want to take part in this study. If you want to take part, please sign the form, if the following statements are true.

**I freely give my consent to take part in this study as agreed above.** I understand that by signing this form I am agreeing to take part in research. I have received a copy of this form to take with me.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person Taking Part in Study

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Person Taking Part in Study

### Statement of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

I have carefully explained to the person taking part in the study what he or she can expect from their participation. I hereby certify that when this person signs this form, to the best of my knowledge, he/she understands:

- What the study is about;
- What procedures will be used;
- What the potential benefits might be; and
- What the known risks might be.

I can confirm that this research subject speaks the language that was used to explain this research and is receiving an informed consent form in the appropriate language. Additionally, this subject reads well enough to understand this document or, if not, this person is able to hear and understand when the form is read to him or her. This subject does not have a medical/psychological problem that would compromise comprehension and therefore makes it hard to understand what is being explained and can, therefore, give legally effective informed consent. This subject is not under any type of anesthesia or analgesic that may cloud their judgment or make it hard to understand what is being explained and, therefore, can be considered competent to give informed consent.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person Obtaining Informed Consent / Research Authorization

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Person Obtaining Informed Consent / Research Authorization

**Interview Questions for Dissertation Research**  
**SUBJECTS: CULTURAL ELITES AND/OR REPRESENTATIVES**

**Principle Investigator:**

**Holly Gerardi**, Doctoral Candidate, University of South Florida

**Dissertation Title:**

Power, Pandemics, and Politics: The Role of Cultural Elites in Global Health Security

The following questions will be used to guide elite interviews conducted as part of this dissertation research. Further information gathered during the interview beyond what is outlined below may also be included in the data. Subjects may request that any portion of this interview be made anonymous. The term “you” refers to the cultural elite. If the interviewee is a representative of an elite, answers should reflect the perspective of the elite being represented.

**QUESTIONS**

- Name
- Occupation (include the cultural elite you represent, if not self)
- Global health cause you are affiliated with: (if more than one, the following questions will be asked for each cause separately)
- In what capacity are you affiliated with this cause? (i.e. official representative of an organization that promotes this cause; independent activist; private donor, etc.)
- How long have you been affiliated with this cause?
- How/why did you become involved in this cause?
- If you are partnered with an organization that promotes this cause, did you approach them or did they approach you initially to form a relationship?
- What specific activities do you engage in, in order to promote this cause?
- Do you consider yourself an effective advocate for this cause? Do you believe your involvement has led to increased public/governmental/other support? (i.e. increased donations, increased membership, increased governmental attention, etc.) Please explain.
- What, if any, limitations exist to your activism? (i.e. time, money, knowledge, networks, risks, etc.)
- Do you ever provide support for global health causes that is not made public?
  - If so, what type of support do you provide in these cases, and why do you not make this support public?

**Interview Questions for Dissertation Research**  
**SUBJECTS: ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERS ENGAGED IN GLOBAL HEALTH CAUSES**

**Principle Investigator:**

**Holly Gerardi**, Doctoral Candidate, University of South Florida

**Dissertation Title:**

Power, Pandemics, and Politics: The Role of Cultural Elites in Global Health Security

The following questions will be used to guide the elite interviews conducted as part of this dissertation research. Further information gathered during the interview beyond what is outlined below may also be included in the data.

**QUESTIONS**

- Name
- Occupation (include name of organization and division)
- Global health cause you are affiliated with: (if more than one, the following questions will be asked for each cause separately)
- Have you or your organization worked with a cultural elite and/or celebrity for the promotion of this cause? If yes, in what capacity? (if more than one, the following questions will be asked for each celebrity separately)
- How long has this celebrity been affiliated with you and/or your organization?
- If you are partnered with a celebrity that promotes this cause, did you approach them or did they approach you initially to form a relationship?
- In the context of your professional relationship, what specific activities does this celebrity engage in, in order to promote this cause?
- Do you consider this celebrity an effective advocate for this cause? Why or why not?
- Do you have any evidence that the celebrity's affiliation with your organization and/or cause has led to increased public/governmental/other support? (i.e. measurable outcomes such as increased donations, increased membership, increased governmental attention, etc.)
- Do you believe there are any risks to you or your organization partnering with a celebrity for the promotion of global health causes?

## Appendix D – Celebrity Causes

<b>Table D.1</b>		
<b>Celebrity Causes</b>		
	<b>Global Health</b>	<b>Non-Global Health</b>
<b>(CIQ 1) Tom Cruise</b>	Barbara Davis Center for Childhood Diabetes Children's Hospice & Palliative Care Coalition Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation Raising Malawi UNICEF	Friars Foundation H.E.L.P. Jackie Chan Charitable Foundation Lollipop Theater Network Mentor LA Motion Picture and Television Fund Foundation Stockings With Care
<b>(CIQ 2) Robert Downey, Jr.</b>	ALS Association Cahonas Scotland Entertainment Industry Foundation (EIF) / Stand Up To Cancer March Of Dimes	Clothes Off Our Back Communities in Schools DonorsChoose.org Midnight Mission Motion Picture and Television Fund Foundation Orca Network Robin Hood
<b>(CIQ 3) Bradley Cooper</b>	Alzheimer's Association Cancer Research Institute Cancer Research UK EIF / Stand Up To Cancer Melanoma Research Alliance	Clinton Global Initiative / Got Your 6 Screen Actors Guild Foundation THORN Tibet House US United Service Organization
<b>(CIQ 4) Leonardo DiCaprio</b>	Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation Natural Resources Defense Council Pediatric Epilepsy Project SOS Children's Villages World Wildlife Fund	African Wildlife Foundation Cinema For Peace Declare Yourself Feeding America Film Foundation Global Cool Global Green International Fund For Animal Welfare Motion Picture and Television Fund Foundation Onyx and Breezy Foundation Reef Check Foundation Stop Global Warming The Gorilla Organization TreePeople Unite for Japan WildAid

<b>Table D.1 (cont'd)</b>		<b>Celebrity Causes</b>	
	<b>Global Health</b>	<b>Non-Global Health</b>	
<b>(CIQ 5) Matt Damon</b>	Arthritis Society of Canada Celebs for Kids Clinton Global Initiative DATA LIVESTRONG Lupus Canada ONE Campaign ONEXONE Red Cross Save the Children Stand Up To Cancer The Children's Center OKC UNICEF	African Children's Choir American Humane Association Ante Up For Africa Boys' and Girls' Clubs of Canada Child Find Ontario Clothes Off Our Back ENOUGH Project Feeding America H2O Africa Love Our Children USA Motion Picture and Television Fund Foundation Not On Our Watch Right To Play Satellite Sentinel Project Stand Up For Gus Unite for Japan War Child Water.org Willow Foundation World Food Programme Yéle Haiti Foundation	
<i>Note. Data from LooktotheStars.org, accessed August 22, 2016</i>			



Table D.3 GH Activism Details (Tom Cruise)				
Organization	Type of Event	Year	Involvement	Details
Barbara Davis Center for Childhood Diabetes	Carousel of Hope Gala (fundraiser)	2012	Participation	Served on Blue Ribbon Committee
Children's Hospice & Palliative Care Coalition	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation	A Time for Heroes Celebrity Picnic	(2001-2002)	N/A*	N/A*
Raising Malawi	Fundraiser (joint with UNICEF)	2008	Appearance Donation	Ticket cost: \$2,500 Personal donation of \$100,000
UNICEF	Fundraiser (joint with Raising Malawi)	2008	(see Raising Malawi details)	(see Raising Malawi details)
	Hope for Haiti Telethon (UNICEF was one of the beneficiaries of proceeds)	2010	Participation	Answered phones during telethon
<p>* Activities connecting Cruise to this organization took place prior to 2006, and were thus not included here..</p> <p>Sources:</p> <p>Celebrities Go On Safari at the 21st Annual A Time for Heroes Celebrity Picnic Sponsored by Disney to Benefit the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation. (2010, June 8). <i>PR Newswire (USA)</i>.</p> <p>Freydkin, D., &amp; Mandell, A. (2008, February 8). Madonna knows how to pull in a star crowd - Celebs galore join her to raise money for UNICEF and Malawi. <i>USA TODAY(LIFE)</i>, p. 4E.</p> <p>Johnson, R., &amp; Moussavian, A. (2008, February 7). Gucci Galore - Party of the Year - At the UN. <i>New York Post</i>(New York Pulse), p. 065.</p> <p><i>Mercedes-Benz to Present Carousel of Hope.</i> (2012, May 23). Retrieved from Children's Diabetes Foundation: <a href="http://www.childrensdiabetesfoundation.org/mercedes-benz-to-present-carousel-of-hope">http://www.childrensdiabetesfoundation.org/mercedes-benz-to-present-carousel-of-hope</a></p> <p><i>Miley Cyrus To Give Her Time For Heroes.</i> (2009, May 26). Retrieved from Look to the Stars: <a href="https://www.looktothestars.org/news/2574-miley-cyrus-to-give-her-time-for-heroes">https://www.looktothestars.org/news/2574-miley-cyrus-to-give-her-time-for-heroes</a></p> <p>No Puffing Makes Uma Puffy. (2008, February 8). <i>New York Post</i>(Page Six), p. 012.</p> <p>Shen, M. (2010, January 19). Buy George - Details of Haiti Telethon Still 'Up in the Air'. <i>New York Post</i>(TV Tuesday), p. 064.</p>				

Table D.4 GH Activism Details (Robert Downey, Jr.)				
Organization	Type of Event	Year	Involvement	Details
ALS Association	Ice bucket challenge on social media	2014	Participation	Person douses themselves with ice water, then challenges 3 friends (his were celebrities) to do the same.
Cahonas Scotland	e-Bay charity auction	2013	Donation	Donated signed and worn ties and scarves to the Cahonas Scotland e-Bay charity auction
Stand Up to Cancer	Stand Up to Cancer Fundraising Special (telecast)	2014	Participation	Participated in one-hour telecast for SU2C
	Fundraiser	2015	Appearance	N/A
March of Dimes	7th annual March of Dimes Celebration of Babies, a Hollywood luncheon	2012	Participation	Co-chair of fundraiser event
<p><b>Sources:</b></p> <p>Hollywood Stands Up to Cancer. (2015, January 30). <i>Targeted News Service (USA)</i>(Public Policy).</p> <p>March of Dimes Announces Honorees for 2012 Celebration of Babies Luncheon. (2012, December 29). <i>Targeted News Service (USA)</i>(Interest Groups).</p> <p>Miller, M. (2014, August 20). Celebrities, citizens alike embrace the chilly social media dare and the cause it benefits - Challenge is no joke for ALS charities. <i>The Buffalo News (NY)</i>(Local), p. 1.</p> <p>More Than USD \$109 Million Pledged So Far In U.S. And Canada In Connection With Sept. 5 Stand Up To Cancer Fundraising Special. (2014, September 7). <i>PR Newswire</i>.</p> <p><i>Stars Donate Ties And Scarves To Cancer Charity Auction</i>. (2013, November 27). Retrieved from Look to the Stars: <a href="https://www.looktothestars.org/news/11155-stars-donate-ties-and-scarves-to-cancer-charity-auction">https://www.looktothestars.org/news/11155-stars-donate-ties-and-scarves-to-cancer-charity-auction</a></p>				





Table D.6 GH Activism Details (Bradley Cooper)				
Organization	Type of Event	Year	Involvement	Details
Alzheimer's Association	Who Wears it Best? Campaign	2009	Participation	Among the stars modeling purple clothes with the organization's catch phrases on their website
	122 <sup>nd</sup> Rose Bowl Parade	2010	N/A	The organization entering a float in the Rose Bowl parade to raise awareness for Alzheimer's disease
	A Night at Sardi's (fundraising event)	2009	Appearance	Attended the annual fundraising event benefiting Alzheimer's care and research.
Entertainment Industry Foundation - Stand Up to Cancer	Stand Up to Cancer in the UK	2012	Participation	One of the hosts at the live televised fundraising event co-sponsored by SU2C and Cancer Research UK
	"Roadblock" – an SU2C Telecast Fundraiser	2016	Participation	Served as Executive Producer for the televised fundraising event.
<p><b>Sources:</b></p> <p>Alexander, B. (2016, September 12). Backstage at 'Stand Up to Cancer' - Stars hobnob in green-room for gala fundraiser. <i>USA Today</i>(LIFE), p. 3D.</p> <p>Marcus, M. B. (2009, September 24). Purple-garbed stars support the fight against Alzheimer's. <i>USA Today, Final</i>(LIFE), p. 4D.</p> <p>Marcus, M. B. (2010, December 30). All aboard the Alzheimer's Express - Association raises its profile at Rose Bowl. <i>USA Today, Final</i>(LIFE), p. 7D.</p> <p><i>Stars Stand Up To Cancer In The UK</i>. (2010, October 22). Retrieved from Look to the Stars: <a href="https://www.looktothestars.org/news/9139-stars-stand-up-to-cancer-in-the-uk">https://www.looktothestars.org/news/9139-stars-stand-up-to-cancer-in-the-uk</a></p> <p><i>Stars Team Up to Fight Alzheimer's</i>. (2009, March 20). Retrieved from Look to the Stars: <a href="https://www.looktothestars.org/news/2230-stars-team-up-to-fight-alzheimers">https://www.looktothestars.org/news/2230-stars-team-up-to-fight-alzheimers</a></p> <p>Stuff to Watch. (2016, September 4). <i>New York Daily News (NY), Sports Final</i>(New York Vue), p. 2.</p>				



Table D.8 GH Activism Details (Leonardo DiCaprio)				
Organization	Type of Event	Year	Involvement	Details
<u>Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation</u>	Founding / Acting Chairman	1998-present	Donation Participation	Through LDF has funded numerous projects and environmental organizations.
	Annual LDF Galas	2014 - present	Appearance Participation	Attends, speaks at annual LDF galas as official representative.
<u>Natural Resources Defense Council</u>	N/A	≤ 2004-present	Participation	Trustee of the NRDC.
<u>Pediatric Epilepsy Project</u>	Hollywood's Helping Hands Fundraiser	2005	Donation	He donated a painting he made to the fundraiser.
<u>SOS Children's Villages</u>	Project ZAMBI	2009	Participation	He signed a toy elephant to be auctioned in a fundraiser.
<u>World Wildlife Fund</u>	N/A	≤ 2010	Participation	Member of the Board
	N/A	2013	Donation	\$3 million donation made from the LDF to the WWF.

\* Although deviating from the study's timeline parameters, the dates of engagement are significant as they establish a long-term relationship between DiCaprio and the various organizations, and were thus included in this table.

**Sources:**

*About the Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation.* (2017, January 1). Retrieved from Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation: <http://leonardodicaprio.org/about/>

Apodaca, R. (2007, August 20). It Takes a Village to Make '11th Hour' Documentary. *Los Angeles Times*, pp. Entertainment, Television, Culture.

Freydkin, D. (2013, December 19). 'Wolf of Wall Street' got its teeth into DiCaprio - A long career spent in Hollywood gives the star insight into the perils of excess. *USA Today, Final(Life)*, p. 2D.

Garvey, M., Niemietz, B., Carwright, L., & Friedman, M. (2013, November 22). 'Today' Booker Shelved. *New York Daily News, Sports Final Replates(Gossip)*, p. 23.

How Was Your Day? (2016, January 29). *USA Today, Final(Life)*, p. 6D.

Hurwitz, D., & Blas, L. (2015, September 15). Web to Watch. *USA Today, Final(Life)*, p. 6D.

Keck, W. (2005, June 6). Lost, 'Alias' casts do sweet charity. *USA Today, Final(Life)*, p. 2D.

Kim, S. M. (2009, May 6). Celebs use star power to spotlight pet causes - Environmental issues rate high on activist actors' lists. *USA Today, Final(News)*, p. 5A.

Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation. (2015, July 23). *2nd Annual LDF Gala Raises Over 40 Million*. Retrieved from Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation: <http://leonardodicaprio.org/2nd-annual-ldf-gala-raises-over-40-million/>

Saunders, T. (2009, October 9). *Taylor Swift Signs Elephant For Family Health International*. Retrieved from Look to the Stars - News: <https://www.looktothestars.org/news/3217-taylor-swift-signs-elephant-for-family-health-international>

Weise, E. (2008, April 21). Begley acts on his eco-beliefs - Actor makes a big impact with his tiny carbon footprint, HGTV show. *USA Today, Final(Life)*, p. 1D.

World Wildlife Fund. (n.d.). *Leadership*. Retrieved January 3, 2017, from WWF: <https://www.worldwildlife.org/about/leadership>

Table D.9 Publicity for MATT DAMON and (see below)*								
	Chicago Tribune	Detroit News / Free Press	Los Angeles Times	New York Daily	New York Times	USA Today	Wash. Post	Total
Arthritis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cancer**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Celebs for Kids	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Children's Center	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clinton Global Initiative / Clinton Foundation	0	0	0	0	0	1 <sup>a</sup>	0	1
Debt AIDS Trade Africa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HIV/AIDS	0	0	1 <sup>b</sup>	0	0	2 <sup>c, d</sup>	0	3
Livestrong	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lupus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ONE Campaign	0	0	0	0	0	1 <sup>e</sup>	0	1
ONEXONE	0	0	0	1 <sup>f</sup>	0	3 <sup>g-i</sup>	0	4
Red Cross**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Save the Children	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
UNICEF	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>

\*2006-2016

\*\*Results were prior to 2006

<sup>a</sup> (Gundersen, 2011) <sup>b</sup> (McNamara, 2009) <sup>c</sup> (Kluger, 2006) <sup>d</sup> (Freydkin, Celebrity activists put star power to good use, 2006) <sup>e</sup> (Freydkin, 'Informant' star Matt Damon blabs, 2008) <sup>f</sup> (Sidman, 2010) <sup>g</sup> (Freydkin, Damon reveals appetite for film , 2009) <sup>h</sup> (Ben & Matt: All in the family, 2009) <sup>i</sup> (Freydkin, Damon makes time for charity, 2008)

<b>Table D.10</b>			
<b>Involvement Type MATT DAMON</b>			
<b>GH Affiliations</b>	<b>Appearance</b>	<b>Participation</b>	<b>Donation</b>
Arthritis Society of Canada	-	X	-
Celebs for Kids	-	X	-
Clinton Global Initiative	-	X	-
DATA	-	X	-
LIVESTRONG	X	-	-
Lupus Canada	-	X	-
ONE Campaign	-	X	-
ONEXONE	X	X	-
Red Cross	-	X	-
Save the Children	-	X	X
Stand Up To Cancer	-	X	-
The Children's Center OKC	X	-	-
UNICEF	-	X	X
<i>*via Not on Our Watch organization (for which Damon is co-founder and Board Member).</i>			

Table D.11 GH Activism Details (Matt Damon)				
Organization	Type of Event	Year	Involvement	Details
Arthritis Society of Canada (ASC)	Series of fundraisers organized by partnering organizations, Arthritis Society of Canada, Celebs for Kids, and Lupus Canada.	2008	Participation	One of the celebrities who participated in activities (i.e. poker tournament) with event guests/donors at fundraiser for a pediatric rheumatology research center at Canada's B.C. Children's Hospital.
Celebs for Kids	(see info for ASC)	2008	Participation	(see info for ASC)
Clinton Global Initiative	Hollywood Bowl benefit concert	2011	Participation	Participated in a video spoof for a live-streaming benefit for the Clinton Foundation.
DATA	Organized trip to the African continent	2006	Participation	Visited Africa with DATA and the ONE Campaign
LIVESTRONG	Annual Livestrong cancer benefit events	N/A (<2012)	Appearance	N/A
	N/A	2004-2012	Appearance	Seen wearing a yellow bracelet in support of Livestrong and the fight against cancer.
Lupus Canada	(see info for ASC)	2008	Participation	(see info for ASC)
ONE Campaign	<i>Ebola: Waiting</i> video	2014	Participation	Appeared in a video by The ONE Campaign, calling attention to the Ebola response in West Africa, and urging world leaders to do more.
ONEXONE	ONEXONE Annual Gala	2008	Participation	Damon is an Ambassador to ONEXONE and acted as host for the gala that took place during the Toronto Film Festival.
	3 <sup>rd</sup> Annual ONEXONE Foundation Benefit	2010	Appearance	Attended the benefit gala.
Red Cross	Unite for Japan	2011	Participation	Joined a PSA for <i>Unite for Japan</i> , an organization created to raise funds for relief organizations after the 2011 tsunami in Japan. The benefiting organizations included the Red Cross.

Table D.11 (Cont'd)		GH Activism Details (Matt Damon)		
Organization	Type of Event	Year	Involvement	Details
	Charitybuzz 3 <sup>rd</sup> Annual Mother's Day Auction	2011	Participation	Offered to record a voicemail for the highest bidder, with proceeds benefiting 75 charitable organizations, among which was the Red Cross.
Save the Children	N/A	2008	Donation	Via the <i>Not on Our Watch</i> organization co-founded by Damon, made a donation of \$250,000 (plus equivalent matching) to Save the Children's relief efforts following Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar.
	Fundraising activities	2010	Participation	Traveled to Zimbabwe to meet people affected by poverty and political unrest, and to see the organization's efforts firsthand.
Stand Up To Cancer	SU2C Telethon	2012	Participation	Was among the stars that participated in the telethon to raise money for the organization.
The Children's Center OKC	The Bourne Ultimatum film premiere.	2007	Appearance	Attended the movie premier in Oklahoma City for one of his Bourne films, and money raised from the premiere (approx. \$192,000) benefitted the center.
UNICEF	N/A	2009	Donation	Not on Our Watch awarded the U.S. Fund for UNICEF a grant of \$438,000 to help reduce child mortality on the South-Africa - Zimbabwe.
	UNICEF Ball	2009	Donation	Along with his celebrity co-founders, on behalf of Not on Our Watch, donated \$250,000 to UNICEF for efforts in the reduction of child mortality.
			Participation	Acted as one of the dinner hosts for 2009 UNICEF ball.
	N/A	2010	Donation	Not on Our Watch awarded the U.S. Fund for UNICEF a grant of \$250,000 to fight South Sudan's maternal mortality.



Table D.11 (Cont'd)

## GH Activism Details

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## Appendix F – Global Health Issue Details

<b>Table D.12 Global Health Issue Details</b>					
<b>M=million</b>					
<b>B=billion</b>					
<b>SDG 3</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Celebrities Associated</b>	<b>Prevalence*</b>	<b>DALYs<sup>12</sup></b>	<b>Mortality*</b>
<b>3.1</b>	Maternal Mortality	Bradley Cooper Matt Damon	N/A	20.1 M (maternal conditions)	<b>303,000</b> <sup>7</sup>
<b>3.2</b>	Infant and Child Mortality (under 5yrs)	Tom Cruise Robert Downey, Jr. Matt Damon	N/A	257.3 M (combined neonatal conditions and childhood-cluster diseases)	<b>5.9 M</b> <sup>2</sup>
<b>3.3</b>	Communicable Diseases (general)	Tom Cruise Matt Damon	N/A	432.5 M	<b>15 M</b> <sup>16</sup>
	HIV/AIDS	Tom Cruise Matt Damon	36.7 M (w/ HIV) <sup>8</sup>	91.9 M	<b>1.1 M</b> <sup>8</sup>
	Malaria	Tom Cruise	214 M <sup>5</sup>	55.1 M	<b>438,000</b> <sup>5</sup>
<b>3.4</b>	Non-communicable diseases (general)	Tom Cruise Robert Downey, Jr. Bradley Cooper Leonardo DiCaprio Matt Damon	N/A	1.5 B	<b>38 M</b> <sup>1</sup>
	Cancer (malignant neoplasms, general)	Tom Cruise Robert Downey, Jr. Bradley Cooper Matt Damon	14 M (new cases/year) <sup>9</sup>	224 M	<b>8.2 M</b> <sup>1</sup>
	Diabetes	Tom Cruise	422 M <sup>1</sup>	59.3 M	<b>1.5 M</b> <sup>1</sup>
	Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis	Robert Downey, Jr.	222,801 <sup>13</sup>	N/A	<b>~100,000</b> <sup>18</sup>
	Alzheimer's Disease (& other dementias) <sup>14</sup>	Bradley Cooper	47 M	18.2 M	N/A
	Mental Health Issues	Bradley Cooper Matt Damon	428.5 M (combined depression, bipolar affective disorder, schizophrenia, and dementia) <sup>6</sup>	199.9 M	N/A

<b>Table D.12 (cont'd) Global Health Issue Details</b>					
<b>M=million</b>					
<b>B=billion</b>					
<b>SDG 3</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Celebrities Associated</b>	<b>Prevalence*</b>	<b>DALYs<sup>12</sup></b>	<b>Mortality*</b>
	Epilepsy	Leonardo DiCaprio	50 M <sup>3</sup>	20.6 M	N/A
	Arthritis	Matt Damon	0.3% - 1% of population <sup>17</sup>	23.8 M (rheumatoid and osteoarthritis)	N/A
	Lupus	Matt Damon	5 M <sup>15</sup>	N/A	N/A
	Pediatric Lupus /Arthritis	Matt Damon	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>3.5</b>	Substance Abuse	N/A	16% of world drinkers (=heavy episodic drinking, ages 15+)	32 M (alcohol use disorders)	<b>3.3 M (alcohol related)<sup>21</sup></b>
			15.3 M (drug use disorders)	15.2 M (drug use disorders)	<b>187,100 (illegal drug related)<sup>20</sup></b>
			27 M (problem drug users) <sup>20</sup>		
<b>3.6</b>	Road Traffic Injuries/Death	N/A	50 M (non-fatal injuries)	78.7 M	<b>1.25 M<sup>22</sup></b>
<b>3.7</b>	Reproductive Health	Bradley Cooper Matt Damon	24% of women have unmet family planning needs	N/A	N/A
<b>3.8</b>	Universal Healthcare		400 M (lack access to ≥1 of 7 essential services, excluding NCDs) <sup>23</sup>	N/A	N/A

<b>Table D.12 (cont'd)</b>		<b>Global Health Issue Details</b>			
			<b>M=million</b>		
			<b>B=billion</b>		
<b>SDG 3</b>	<b>Issue</b>	<b>Celebrities Associated</b>	<b>Prevalence*</b>	<b>DALYs<sup>12</sup></b>	<b>Mortality*</b>
<b>3.9</b>	Environmental Pollution  (via toxic chemicals, hazardous waste dumping, pesticides, fertilizer, noise and light pollution, unsafe food or water)	Tom Cruise Leonardo DiCaprio Matt Damon	3 B (use solid waste fuel indoors) <sup>11</sup>	N/A	<b>1.3 M</b> (due to environmentally fostered cancers)
					<b>3 M</b> (outdoor air pollution related) <sup>10</sup>
					<b>4.3 M</b> (household air pollution related) <sup>11</sup>
<b>3.10</b>	Tobacco Use (and related deaths)	Bradley Cooper	1.1 B (use tobacco) <sup>1</sup>	N/A	<b>6 M<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>3.11</b>	Immunizations (lack of)	Tom Cruise Matt Damon	19.4 M (infants)	N/A	<b>N/A</b>
<b>3.12</b>	Educating Healthcare Professionals	Tom Cruise Matt Damon	N/A	N/A	<b>N/A</b>
<b>3.13</b>	Poor Health Infrastructure	Matt Damon	N/A	N/A	<b>N/A</b>

## Appendix G – Social Media Presence

<b>Table D.13 Social Media Presence</b>					
<i>Figures shaded white are for July 2016 Figures shaded blue are for July 2017</i>					
	<b>Tom Cruise</b>	<b>Robert Downey, Jr.</b>	<b>Bradley Cooper</b>	<b>Leonardo DiCaprio</b>	<b>Matt Damon</b>
Facebook	11.1m	28.6m	-	16.5m	-
<b>Facebook</b>	<b>11.7m</b>	<b>28.9m</b>	-	<b>17.1m</b>	-
Twitter	6m	7m	-	15.6m	-
<b>Twitter</b>	<b>6.2m</b>	<b>7.9m</b>	-	<b>17.8m</b>	-
Instagram	-	7.9m	-	9m*	-
<b>Instagram</b>	-	<b>13.4m</b>	-	<b>14.2m</b>	-
Total Fans	17.1m	43.5m	-	41.1m	-
<b>Total Fans</b>	<b>17.9m</b>	<b>50.2m</b>	-	<b>49.1m</b>	-

*Note. Fan numbers have been rounded to nearest decimal.*

*Sources:*

*Klear analytics platform, 2016-2017.*

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## **About the Author**

Holly Lynne Swayne received her Bachelor's Degree in English – Creative Writing from the University of South Florida (USF), after which her interest in the multiple dimensions of the human experience led her to obtain her Master's Degree in Bioethics and Medical Humanities from USF's College of Medicine. Her experience living and traveling abroad enabled her to gain both language skills and multicultural insight from an early age, and she began her teaching career by serving as a language tutor for English, Greek, and French. During her doctoral studies, she furthered her teaching as she developed and taught courses in Biopolitics, Bioterrorism, Global Health Policy, and Comparative Politics, and worked with USF's Program in National and Competitive Intelligence on the intersection of health and security.

Holly is also active in the performing arts community. While studying for her Ph.D., she wrote and performed as an actress in stage plays and short films, earning her membership in the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA). The themes of these artistic works have challenged and provided insight to the complexity of social norms, with proceeds from performances benefiting local charities. The relationship between the arts, health, and security continues to inspire Holly's academic and personal pursuits.