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KONY 2012



Cultural and Communicative Aspects of Global Processes

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1. Introduction

A little over a year ago, the small NGO Invisible Children (IC) launched the documentary “Kony 2012” on the social video platforms Youtube and Vimeo. The video depicted the atrocities committed by an armed group in Uganda called the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) lead by Joseph Kony (Kony). The ultimate goal of the video was to make Kony ‘famous’, so the people would call for their governments to take action against the guerilla group.

The video was an immediate success. In less than a week, the video had accumulated over one hundred million views, and young people in particular eagerly shared the video on different social media platforms. Never before had a humanitarian video with such pressing issues seen that kind of popularity on the internet.

The unprecedented popularity of the documentary can be seen as a result of technological advancements and increasing opportunities as a consequence of globalization. New technology has not only given us tools for our everyday lives, but has also created interconnectivity throughout the globe. We are able to connect to others regardless of space and time. We have become global citizens of the world and are now ‘closer’ to distant suffering than ever before.

Through the news, the internet, or any other media, we are frequently reminded of distant suffering, thus we bear the *“moral responsibility of witnessing and, with it, the burden of complicity...”* (Chouliaraki, 2008, p. 331). We must take into disposition the fact that there are people suffering in other parts of the world, and weigh on whether to act upon this or ignore it. As such, the increasing globalization creates a more informed and morally aware population, paving the way for the cosmopolitan citizenship – people who generously aid others without the obligation of reciprocity or certainty of the outcome.

This is at least the optimist argument regarding the effects from globalization and advancements in technology. There is, however, also reason to be skeptic about the changing moral. For example, you can ask who ‘we’ are in the above-mentioned equation. It is commonly believed that wealthy people from the Western world benefit the most from globalization and, similarly, get access to the new technology.

In postcolonial theory, it is often argued that the rich countries exploit poor countries by taking advantage of their technological comparative advantage, while denying poor countries the same innovations. Relating this to the concept of power relations in Western discourse, we experience a Eurocentric and universalizing way of thinking, which generates situated knowledge produced on grounds of culture and history in Imperial Europe. The means of technology are able to move the discourse to ex-colonial countries, which can problematize the power relations, because of the tendency to look at Western produced knowledge as universal.

Skeptics of globalization also point to the fact that humanitarian media often stem from one culture while portraying another. Be it in the news, documentaries, or movies, the content is always aimed at viewers from a certain population, and is therefore subject to cultural relativism. Likewise, the content may fall under the pressure of marketization. News reports or documentaries will only be made and viewed if it is able to find an audience. The media may become sensationalist as a mean to catch the attention of potential viewers, and the content might be sanitized of the whole truth in order to protect the viewer's emotions.

In relation to our project, we wish to look upon Kony 2012, and research how these issues relate. We find Kony 2012 to be a very fitting case study for this due to the many reactions it sparked after its release. It can be seen as the quintessential example of how to, first of all, get a lot of attention and millions of viewers, and secondly, how to engage young people through smart use of discourse and strategy. The campaign, while successful at first, would soon receive much criticism, and as such the documentary suits even better as our case study.

For our project, we are interested in studying the communicative aspects of the Kony 2012 video. More accurately, we wish to examine the discourse used by IC to attain such a massive response from the millennial population, i.e. people born after 1980 in the Western world. What rhetorical devices did they use to reach these young people, long assumed to be self-absorbed and alienated from geo-politics? How did they use music, images, narration, and sound to create meaning?

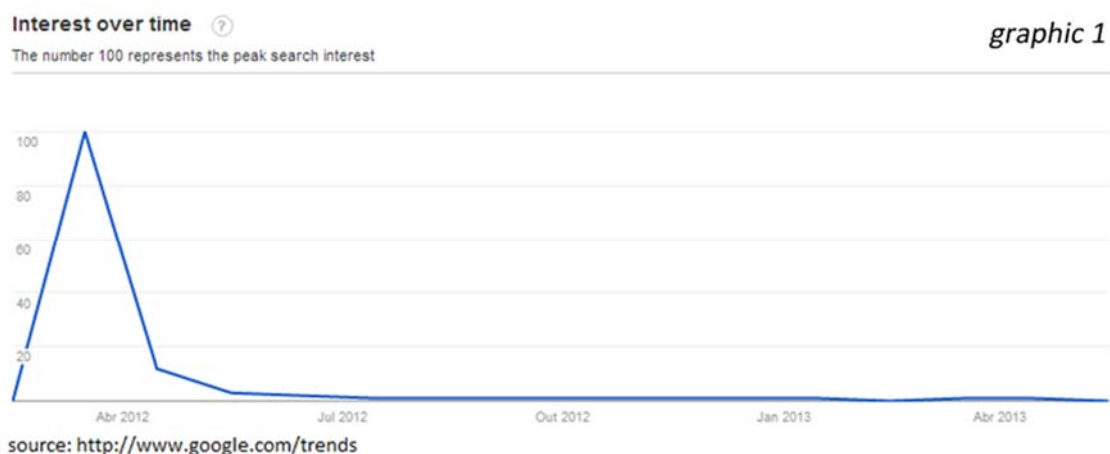
IC, like so many other human rights advocacy groups, cleverly incorporated social media platforms in their strategy. It has become a focal point for many organizations to

be seen and heard by young people in particular. Through smart use of social media in their campaign, Kony 2012 gained immediate popularity, but was later criticized for allegedly being populist and simplistic, amongst other things.

1.1 Kony 2012 Data

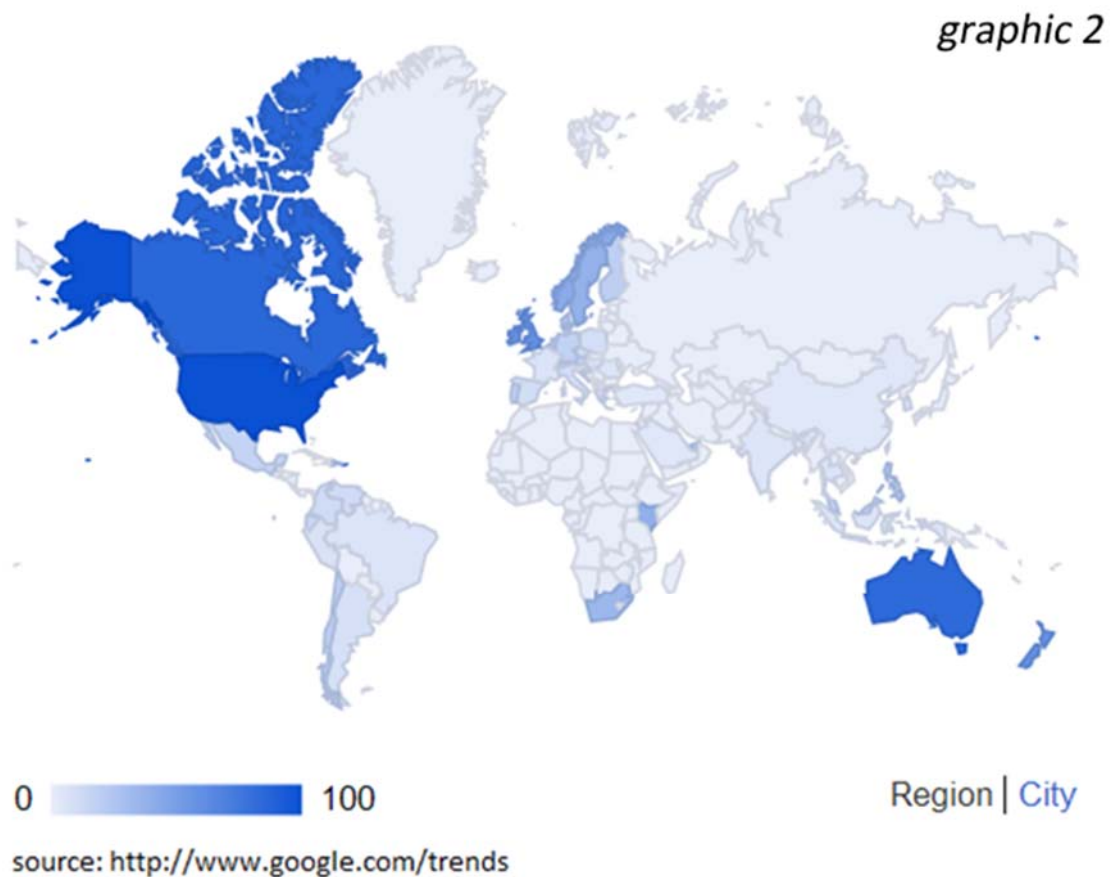
Kony 2012 is undoubtedly one of most viewed videos in the history of humanitarian communication. Its impact was felt especially among young American adults (18-29), who, according to a report from Pew Research (2012), were twice as likely to have viewed the video on either YouTube or Vimeo than other adults (p. 1) - becoming one of the most viewed videos on these two video platforms.

As of March 13, 2012, just eight days after the first appearance of the video on the internet, it had already been viewed more than 76 million times on YouTube and 16 million times on Vimeo. It is interesting to note that more than a year after, the viewing rate rapidly decreased. The video has totalized around 97 million views as of May 23, 2013, on Youtube (youtube.com), and 18.4 million views on Vimeo. In May 2013 on Vimeo, the video hit an average of 450 daily views (vimeo.com). As it can be seen in *graphic 1*, the peak of the search interest on Google for “Kony 2012” decreased exponentially after the first month of its publishing, clearly demonstrating an initial hype effect around it.



Through a national phone survey in American territory, Pew Research found that nearly 60% of young adults first heard about the video on social networks, with 40% saying they heard a lot about it. On the other hand, in comparison, only 20% of those aged between 30 and 49 said they had heard a lot about it. This difference clearly

demonstrates that Young adults (18-29) were by far the demographic group most engaged with the video. Young adults were also much more likely to have watched the video (23%), while only 11% of those between the ages of 30-49, 8% of those 50-64, and 13% of those above 65 (Ibid.).



Graphic 2 shows the search percentage by country of the keywords “Kony 2012” on Google. It can be observed that the interest in this video came mostly from Western developed countries in North America, northern Europe, and the Oceania region. In the African continent, South Africa and Uganda have a relatively high interest rate as well.

One of the factors that helped boost the spread of the video was the successful communicative strategy of engaging with celebrities on social networks. Twitter was one of the social platforms where celebrities, including Oprah Winfrey, Justin Bieber, Alec Baldwin and others, responded to the appeal. The campaign was also saluted by White House Press Secretary, Jay Carney, remarking that “*President Obama offered his congratulations for calling attention to the campaign to stop Kony and his army*” (Ibid, p. 2).

The unprecedented virality of the video can be seen by an ‘explosion’ of five million tweets about it in the week after it was published online (Ibid.). According to the Pew report, “a large amount of the awareness of the documentary can be traced to Oprah Winfrey” (Ibid, p. 4). After the celebrity began posting the first tweets supporting the campaign on March 6, the amount of views “skyrocketed” (Ibid.) with an increase of around 14,000% (Sheehy, 2012). This level of engagement with celebrities was certainly helped by the 3.6 million pledges (Sheehy, 2012) for Invisible Children’s Kony 2012 campaign posted on social networks.

1.2 The Critique

Even though Kony 2012 experienced an immediate popularity on social networks, it was soon met by an equally impressive negative backlash, in large part because of its discourse strategy. Several scholars and experts expressed their opinions and elucidated their criticisms about the video through blog posts and online newspaper articles.

“While the Invisible Children’s videos [Sic] are remarkable creations, and have a powerful impact on audiences – they are, in various ways, misleading...” This statement by the researcher Tim Allen (2012), head of the department of International Development at the London School of Economics (LSE), is illustrative of one of its main criticisms - being misleading in its discursive strategy. The author emphasizes that this misleading view of the conflict is accompanied with a very effective use of an appeal to emotions. Ironically, he praises the video for its effective *“emotional punch”* that other lobbyist groups should emulate (Ibid.).

Professor Charlie Beckett, director of the Department of Media and Communications at the same University, agrees with Allen by criticizing the video for its misrepresentation of reality. He also argues that the video *“reinforces the idea that ‘the West’ (or just America really) must ‘save’ Africa where people are helpless victims of Evil Men”* (Beckett, 2012), and that the sudden success of the video is proof that social media actually makes bad messages more effective (Ibid.). Beckett defends that *“it is wrong to ignore inconvenient facts. A degree of simplification is vital, but to reduce human rights to a man-hunt is to turn the truth into something else”* (Ibid.). This is a clear criticism of the simplification of the message in the video. On the other hand, Nicholas Kristof,

columnist of the New York Times and winner of two Pulitzers, has a different opinion about the simplification happening in the video. He states, *"The video doesn't contain errors, it does simplify things greatly to hold attention. Complexity is, er, complicated: It has been a leading excuse for inaction during atrocities"* (2012). The author ends up defending the use of simplification over complexity in order to hold attention and therefore engage activists. Nevertheless, the majority of the critics agree that simplification is a wrong course of action. Alexandra Buskie, Commissioning Editor at e-IR.info, a leading website in International politics, explains that *"rather than really educating the youth with the goal of raising awareness, IC was raising awareness without bothering to properly educate those interested, in order to persuade them to donate money, participate in lobbying efforts and get their own name out in public"*(2012).

There were also Ugandans raising their voice against the campaign. One of those critics was TMS Ruge, the cofounder of the Project Diaspora, an online platform for the engagement in the discussion of matters regarding the African Continent development, and also a frequent contributor to several online publications such as CNN, and the New York Times. The author defends that *"the campaign's short term goals and expectations are mismatched with the long term and sustained efforts that are needed to affect progress on the ground"* (2012). Ruge also disagrees with the presentation of capturing Kony as the solution, because *"no-one can foretell whether or not capturing Kony will really stop the violence perpetrated by the members of the LRA"* (Ibid.).

These are just some of the criticisms relating to Kony 2012. In our project we do not seek to confirm or disprove these claims, but rather to analyze the video in order to reasonably discuss the implications and outcomes of the discourse found in the video. In order to analyze this, it is imperative that we know some of the background information about the LRA and the Ugandan conflict.

1.3 The LRA and a brief history of the Ugandan conflict

The Lord's Resistance Army led by Joseph Kony has been actively destabilizing northern Uganda and later southern Central African Republic and eastern Congo since 1987, making it the longest conflict still ongoing in the African continent (Rice, 2007). The group led by Kony initiated an armed struggle against the current president Yoweri

Musevi's government who had usurped the previous ruler of Acholi origins, Milton Obot. The LRA emerged from a chaotic widespread violence, between Acholi rebel groups and the new government's forces that used anti-civilian violence as a strategy to prevent northern rebellions (Branch, 2012, p. 21).

Although having had initial support from the northern population, who was discontent with the government army's actions, the rebel group began to attack and exploit the Acholi civilians as well. They did so as a mean to obtain supplies and keep the army strong in numbers. The group soon started to become ideologically isolated and eventually lost all popular support due to its brutal tactics. Some of those tactics consisted of the abduction of children and forcing them to become soldiers and sex slaves. Moreover, they would mutilate 'false Acholi' (Branch, 2012, p. 25), who were supposedly cooperating with the government.

In an attempt to defeat the LRA and deprive the movement from sources of food and the possibility to abduct children, in 1991, the Ugandan government decided to create internal displacements camps, which since then have hosted around 2 million Ugandans. The conditions in these camps were terrible. Some reports cited one thousand deaths a week due to lack of proper sanitation and health provisions (Ibid, p. 18). In the same year, after a failed attempt by the government to defeat Kony's forces through a massive military Operation, the LRA sought refuge in southern Sudan and continued its actions with that country's government support. The group's tactics became even more violent with its easy incursions into northern Uganda.

The conflict between the LRA and the government forces have seen around ten thousand people killed in massacres and around 20 thousand children have been abducted and forced to work as sex slaves or soldiers (Rice, 2007). In 2005, Kony was the first war criminal indicted and targeted with an international arrest warrant by the International Criminal Court.

The open fighting in northern Uganda ended in 2006, and in 2007 the refugee camps started to empty, a process that still lasts until today. Nowadays, Uganda is a relatively peaceful central African country and its economy is slowly growing. Although Kony has not been captured yet, his numbers are fewer, and the guerrilla group is divided in small groups that have been luring escape in the difficult to access jungles of south

Central African Republic and eastern Congo. It is stated in the report *"Hidden in Plain Sight"*, by the Washington-based Resolve group, *"eyewitnesses testify that elements from Sudan's military actively provided Kony and other LRA leaders with periodic safe haven in Sudanese-controlled territory from 2009 until at least February 2013"* (AFP, 2013). UN observers have been monitoring the region since then.

1.4 Invisible Children

In order to understand the context in which the video was produced, we seek to explain who the producers are and what they do. The NGO Invisible Children was formed in 2004 and claim to exist in order to bring a permanent end to the LRA atrocities. *"Our goal is that the apprehension and subsequent trial of Kony and his top commanders will set a precedent for how conflict and mass atrocities are dealt with in the future"* (invisiblechildren.com). Their approach to the conflict is based on an integrated four-way model, which address both short-term and long-term issues and solutions. The four-way model consists of four keywords or 'pillars': Media, Mobilization, Protection, and Recovery.

With the media pillar they seek to produce films that document LRA atrocities, and introduce new audiences to the conflict with the intention of inspiration for global action. We connect this pillar to the narrator in the Kony 2012 video, Jason Russell, who graduated from the University of Southern California's Film School with a degree in Cinema Production. The production of the movie was inspired by Jason Russell's trip to Central Africa in 2003, where he experienced several horrifying aspects of a decade-long war going on.

The pillar of mobilization refers to the movement and mobilization of massive groups of people in order to gain their support both mentally and physically, and advance even further in international support to end the atrocities. The mobilization is dependent on the ability to reach out to people through media.

The protection pillar is concerned with the building and expansion of systems that warn the people against LRA attacks, and simultaneously promotes a peaceful surrender of the LRA members. An example of such a system is the rising of radio

antennas that can transmit warnings to people in certain areas of exposure to LRA attacks.

The last pillar deals with recovery. IC works for the rehabilitation of the 'commuting children' who are directly affected by the LRA. They invest in economic and educational recovery programs, which, for example, build homes and schools for the affected children. Recovery is a way of promoting lasting peace in the places affected by LRA attacks.

1.5 Problem formulation

The unprecedented popularity of Kony 2012 allowed the message of the video to be communicated to an unusually large number of people. In this project, we wish to investigate which discursive tools IC used in order to spread their message, and, furthermore, what implications the rhetoric generates. Considering the fact that experts have criticized the humanitarian video for being overly simplistic and emotional, we seek to explore how the construction of the specific discourse used in Kony 2012 can affect people's understanding of the issues portrayed in it.

1.6 Research Question

How does the narrative in Kony 2012 construct discursive representations of the issues portrayed in the video in order to motivate the audience to take action, and what are the possible implications of this rhetoric in the audience's perception?

2. Theory

In this section, we will cover the theoretical approach to be used in our project. These are the thoughts and concepts we will keep in mind when doing our analysis, and which are all prevalent in one way or another in Kony 2012. They will be applied in the discussion of the analysis.

2.1 Globalization and Postcolonialism

In this project we refer to Kony 2012 as a video displaying a trend of our time. For us to assume that the trend has origins and is affected by the structures of society, we must define and describe 'our time' according to theorists. Author Chris Barker (2012) refers to sociologist Anthony Giddens when dealing with the present globalized world. Giddens lists five institutions of modernity: capitalism, industrialism, surveillance, the nation-state, and military power. These are connected to globalizing powers, such as: the world capitalist economy, the global information system, the nation-state system, and the world military order. The institutions appear powerful, because they allow time and space to be separated, and therefore also allow social relations to be created in one location and re-occur in another. As an example of this, we enlighten how developments in money and communication possibilities allow social relations to travel through time and space. We experience how a money transaction from one account to another is done within few seconds and can travel around the globe (Barker, 2012, p. 157).

Giddens views modernity and its institutions as an enormous power originating in Western Europe, which will keep sweeping the globe. The relationship between modernity and globalization has been criticized in terms of being Eurocentric, because it is characterized by some as the only kind of modernity, which is the one of the West. The criticism also relates to how other parts of the globe have become increasingly modern in various ways. Therefore we have to speak of modernity in plural – modernities.

We can connect Giddens' modern thinking to the approach of postcolonial thinkers who are concerned with the production of knowledge and power relations within our global and postcolonial society. Within postcolonial theory we can view the generation

of knowledge as affected by the situatedness of the production, and in specific, the production of universalizing knowledge produced mainly in Imperial Europe, or in a broader sense, the West. To emphasize this, Author Cheryl McEwan says, *"In essence, knowledge is never impartial, removed, or objective, but always situated, produced by actors who are positioned in specific locations and shaped by numerous cultural and other influences"* (McEwan, 2009, pp. 34–35). In addition, postcolonial thinkers problematize the view of situated production of knowledge, and how this generates power relations; because Western produced knowledge will be regarded as universal.

2.2 Cosmopolitanism and Transnational Activism

NGO's have been around for a long time, but IC in particular is a part of a new wave of cosmopolitan organizations acting out transnational activism. The two concepts of cosmopolitanism and transnational activism work coherently and must be defined in order to understand this type of action and the underlying aspects, which lead to action.

First, we need to clarify what cosmopolitanism is and why it is linked to transnational activism. Cosmopolitans are regarded as activists, who travel on a regular basis, read foreign books and journals, and are involved in networks abroad. The activists gather in groups or networks of individuals sharing the same interests, values, and passions. On a basic level, the technology links these people together. They meet on a physical level, but what is meant by the technology linking them together, is the domestic and international resources available to the group, and how they are able to interact and share these over great distances and time (Tarrow, 2005, p. 42).

To describe the cosmopolitan activists we must go back a step and define the term 'cosmopolitanism'. Cosmopolitanism actually lacks a universally accepted definition, but has been discussed by many scholars in a variety of literature. Some argue that cosmopolitanism has a strong connection to the ideas of a global civil society, linking people from all over the planet to each other through, not only the means of technology, but also the mindset that comes with the advancement of technology. It is suitable for the mindset, including ethics and politics, of the 21st century global life, but has also received criticism for being a mindset suitable only for the upper and middle classes of society (Roudometof, 2005, p. 113). Not all parts of society are affected by

new technologies in the same way. Third World countries are affected by the efforts being done to help their suffering, because of the risen awareness of the distant sufferer through the transnational use of technology. Most often they are not able to connect and be educated by others, mainly because of poverty aspects. Some argue that cosmopolitanism is a symbol of the concentration of values, attitudes, and lifestyles of the upper and middle class who fail to recognize their responsibility towards those less fortunate, and silently keeping to themselves (Roudometof, 2005, p. 116).

Cosmopolitanism is highly connected to transnationalism, which at first was connected to immigrant units settling down. When they returned to their home country to share their wealth with the community, and giving away for those in need, they turned into activists. Nowadays, we acknowledge how the interconnectedness of globalization plays an important role in the generation of global transnational spaces, where we are all citizens. Cosmopolitan and transnational citizens have more or less become the same. They are described as citizens with an intellectual or aesthetic stance of openness towards different cultural experiences, who can adapt to specific cultures and learn to understand new systems of meaning (Roudometof, 2005, p. 114).

Now we can return to describing the various aspects of transnational activism. The author Sidney Tarrow describes the transnational activists as,

“individuals and groups, who mobilize domestic and international resources and opportunities to advance claims on behalf of external actors, against external opponents, or in favor of goals they hold in common with transnational allies”
(Tarrow, 2005, p. 43).

She characterizes a group of people within the contemporary period, as a group of individuals, who seeks to combine efforts created by resources and opportunities with the work within a transnational network. Studies show that only a percentage of these characters become full-time international activists, but the phenomenon is still growing and has been over the past decades.

2.3 Communicating Social Change

Kony 2012 is a part of Invisible Children's communicative strategy aimed at young people to care and act upon the matter to stop the war criminal Joseph Kony, and return the abducted children to their homes. Therefore, we are dealing with an NGO's attempt to communicate social change in the Western world as well as areas affected by the LRA. First, we need to define social change in order to explain the theory of communicating social change. We identify different characteristics of social change, and can use these definitions to analyze how IC approaches this issue.

Throughout modern history, various scholars have been defining the concept of social change. Many seem to agree that social change is referred to as a process of modernization, where the goal is to change societies based on top-down interventions. These societies are identified in Third World countries and are usually subjected to problems of underdevelopment. The focus for solutions to the problems of Third World countries is not to change the existing structure, but to make changes in the lifestyles and behaviors of communities to create opportunities for development. It is important not to think that it is possible to change the infrastructures of the communities. The change has to happen on an individual level and create behavioral changes for those within the existing broader structure of the communities (Dutta, 2011).

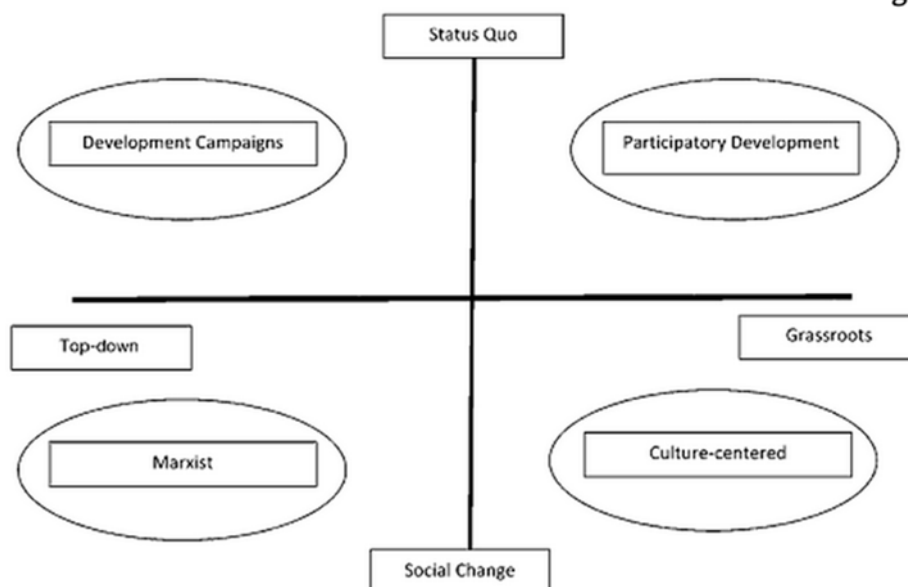
Another opposing aspect of social change is conceptualized by Marxist theories. These view social change as necessary in order to create structural changes, which can enlighten and consequently change inequalities in society. These theories base their definitions of the concept on the ideas of class struggle and excess labor, which feeds into the profits of the capitalists. The concept of social change turns into a concept of revolutionary possibilities within the broader structures of society, and usually involves some kind of transformation of the existing structures through proposed changes in the social organization within (Ibid. p. 31). These two views on the concept of social change also clearly differ when looking at the goals and how they are carried out. The conceptualization of social change as development issues is processed by international donor agencies such as United Nations and World Health Organization (WHO), whose overall goal is to address problems in challenged societies through acts of power and control of the global power structures. The Marxist view bases its ideology on material

inequalities, which are caused mainly by political and economic structures of the individual community and the global society, and can only be changed through transformations in social and economic structures, which marginalizes some classes.

With the conceptualization of social change, we can now proceed to address the concept of communicating social change. First, we conceptualize communication and then we look into four proposed approaches to communicating social change.

Communication is divided into two fundamental frameworks: message-based framework and process-based framework. The message-based framework of communication operates with the basic model of the sender and receiver, where the message must be carefully produced and sent out to a certain population or target audience. The aim is to persuade the population to engage or act according to the desired behavior of the message. The process-based framework of communicating social change focuses on the opportunity for the communication to create shared interpretations and meanings. These can constitute some sort of social realities for both the sender and the recipient. Communication is seen as an active and cultural process of meaning making, where individuals and societies comprehend their contexts and therefore act upon them (Ibid. p. 32).

graphic 3



There are many different approaches regarding communication for social change. These approaches can be arranged in axes of two tensions related to each other, which

have been theorized in the field of social processes. These tensions can be seen in *graphic 3*.

A theoretical framework can be established through the identification of the key tensions which constitute the framework. *Graphic 3* deals with the tension between individual-level approaches and the structural change approaches, and the tension between top-down approaches and participatory approaches. The tension between the individual-level approaches and structural change approaches appear with different communication strategies. The individual-level approaches emphasize the changes that appear in individual beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors, where the structural change approaches focus on restructuring and redistributive justice.

The tension between top-down approaches and participatory approaches occurs because top-down approaches focus on the mediation through networks in order to send and spell out messages of social change. Oppositely, Participatory approaches focus on creating opportunities for the members of the community to participate (Ibid. p. 32).

The intersection of these tensions generates four different approaches to communication for social change: development approaches, participatory development, Marxist approaches, and culture-centered approaches. Using the theory of communicating social change we will attempt to identify and locate Kony 2012 in this theoretical framework. We can bring this aspect into the analysis, and further use it as a perspective for the discussion.

2.4 Discourse Within a Cultural Context

In the project we will draw on assumptions from the theoretical field of Cultural Studies, specifically about the role of culture in regards to meaning creation, in order to apply it to the analysis. This will help us answer our research question by considering culture as having a part in meaning creation within discourse. Culture is an important element to take into consideration when analyzing discourse, because *“it is seldom, if ever, possible to separate the cultures of everyday life from practices of representation”* (Lister & Wells, 2004, p. 2). Society is not simply a context or background in which the documentary discourse is generated. The production of text is seen as a social practice

(Ibid.). Furthermore, culture has a constitutive role in maintaining, changing, or creating new power relations, which are enacted through issues of gender, social class, race and ethnicity, and the *“geopolitics of space and place within globalization”* (Ibid.).

Understanding the role of culture within this particular discourse is essential to our analysis, because it will enable us to look at the social practice of both the production and consumption within one or several cultures. Cultural context has implications on the ways of *“seeing, imagining, classifying, narrating and other ways of investing meaning in the world of experience, that cultural forms and practices provide”* (Ibid, p. 3). It is important to understand cultural practices and that these are what give meaning to our world.

Language is in itself a cultural practice, serving as a vehicle for the creation of meaning and knowledge about the world which exists outside language itself (Barker, 2012, p. 7). It gives meaning to social practices that are brought to us and made intelligible by it. The process of communicating through any type of medium such as audio, video, text, etc. is a process of meaning production, and in order to understand culture we need to regard language as a ‘signifying system’ (Barker, 2012 p. 9). *“To put it simply, culture is about ‘shared meanings’. Now, language is the privileged medium in which we ‘make sense’ of things, in which meaning is produced and exchanged”* (Hall, 2003, p. 1).

2.5 Discourse and Power

In our research, we turn to the French historian and philosopher Michel Foucault in order to explain and expand the terms ‘discourse’ and ‘power’. We connect two of his main concepts, because we assume that the humanitarian discourse used in Kony 2012 demonstrates power relations in several ways. The knowledge acquired in this section will afterwards act as basic knowledge when analyzing discourse.

Foucault was concerned with the production of knowledge through discourse. He spent time analyzing how human beings understand themselves in a specific culture, and furthermore claimed to work with the relations of power, not relations of meaning. His main work with the concepts of discourse, power and knowledge, and the question of the ‘subject’ gave him a noticeable and well-recognized role in the postmodern culture (Hall, 2003, p. 43).

Foucault does not refer to himself as a postmodern thinker, but other authors define the postmodern aspects of Foucault's work differently; they do not regard it as dependent of time. The work by Foucault reflects a new way of thinking and working with how language constitutes meaning and truth in local knowledge (Barker, 2012, p. 199).

Foucault's earlier work is described and defined as archeological due to the approach of exploring specific historical conditions, where statements form and define a certain field of knowledge. This archeological approach to the social practices also emphasizes the importance of the power of discourse over the human body, where rules of the formation of discourse affect the social practice (Ibid., pp. 196–197).

When dealing with discourse one may refer to it as the speech or writing of language. In this regard, Foucault changed his attention from language to discourse. He was interested in the rules and practices, which created powerful and meaningful statements that led to the change of discourse of certain historical periods. Discourse is a series of statements that regulates the language and therefore the way a group talks and writes about specific topics. This can also be referred to as the practice of producing knowledge and meaning. Since all practices involve meaning, which influence the way we act, all practices have a discursive feature (Hall, 2003, p. 44). Discourse produces and defines topics - the objects of our knowledge. It dictates how topics can be reasoned and talked about in a meaningful manner. We can connect this to the social practice, where the ideas of how it should be conducted, are governed by the discourse. As mentioned above, discourse is the rules connected to the practice that limits or leaves out other meanings.

2.6 Post-humanitarian Discourse

Humanitarian communication seems to have gone through a development in methods of appealing to others. We now see a post-emotional style in which humanitarians use discourse to affect the targets of their communication. Different styles have been identified by the scholar Lilie Chouliaraki and will be presented in this section.

Chouliaraki suggests a focus on the shift from the 'shock-effect' to 'humanitarian branding' appeals. Each of the styles displays suffering as a cause to emotion and

action, which enables the discourse to act as a public agency for vulnerable others. The shift in practice of humanitarian discourse is identified with characteristics of low-intensity emotions and short-term forms of agency (Chouliaraki, 2010, p. 108). We identify the power within this specific type of discourse by approaching it as a form of communication that aims at establishing a relation between the spectator and the distant sufferer. This will incentivize action within a certain cause through the emerged relation of the two.

We assume that humanitarian communication is a way of proposing action and a moral stand on a specific cause through the use of imagery of suffering. Therefore, we can look at the appeals used to 'morally educate' the spectators.

First, we deal with the 'shock effect', which is identified in early post-humanitarian communication like the campaigns of Oxfam, 1956 and the Red Cross, 1961. These relied on the documentary genre to generate raw realism, where the bodies of 'victims' are portrayed in horrific, starved conditions, in order to maintain the focus on the sufferer and furthermore create a distance between the spectator and the distant sufferer. This is the relationship the author intended. The relation of distance is created by the social contrast between the life of the sufferer and the life and health of the Westerner, which by some is associated with shame, guilt, and indignation (Ibid., p. 110).

These emotions relate to two aspects rendered by the distance created through the specific imagery displayed to operate as a moralizing logic of complicity. On one hand, the complicity is reasoned by the colonial past of the West, where European responsibility was to disengage and overrule the distant others. This historical complicity may now lead to Western 'collective guilt' and could therefore tend to the distant relation. On the other hand, the complicity evokes sentiment of the Westerner of social difference, because of the role as a witness to horrifying injustice and suffering. The inaction and inability to be responsible for the sufferer's well-being turns into a personal failure, which ultimately leads to shame. The logic of the complicities regarding the emotions of guilt and shame, can convert into extrovert beliefs of social indignation (Ibid.). The shift is made from a social relation of complicities to a political

problem with social injustice within global society, which needs to be dealt with. These are the thoughts and actions desired, when using the shock effect.

That being said, it is also important to understand the risks of using shock effect imagery. A known risk is the feeling of having seen this kind of appeal before and not responding as assumed. This emotion is referred to as compassion fatigue by Chouliaraki. The compassion might burn out or turn into negative emotions towards the campaign. Such outcomes are inevitable, and we must therefore recognize them as risks taken by the communicators in order to get their message across (Ibid.).

Secondly, we look at the resistance to the shock effect, which is a part of 'positive image appeals' (Ibid., p. 112). Campaigns using positive image appeals rely on photorealism, but take a different approach than the shock effect imagery. They reject the use of images of the sufferer as a victim. Instead, they choose to focus on the agency and dignity of the sufferers portrayed. Chouliaraki refers to Oxfam and Save the Children campaigns from 2008 as users of positive imagery. Here she identifies two specific characteristics.

The first one personalizes the sufferer by focusing the appeal on an individual and refers to them as actors. This could for instance be a participant of a certain development project. The second characteristic personalizes the individual donor. It creates a connection to each single individual, who can make a difference for the sufferer. The focal point is on the important role of the benefactor and what concrete contributions that person can provide to the sufferer. Emotions of empathy, tenderheartedness, and gratitude are connected to this kind of appeal (Ibid.). This kind of approach can empower both the sufferer and the spectator through the bilateral emotions in play when dealing with, for example, smiling children in photos in relation to child sponsorship. On one hand, the sufferer is given a voice – an opportunity to connect to the audience and tell them his or her story. On the other hand, the communication directed at the single spectator as a donor, who can actually make a difference, seeks to empower the possible donor to feel important as an actor in a life-changing experience for the sufferer.

We can relate Chouliaraki's theories to the idea of 'discourse of global compassion' presented by researcher Birgitta Höijer (2004). The cognitive emotion of compassion is

related to the common negative feelings regarding injustice and misfortune of the distant sufferer. Compassion is the reaction, we experience when exposed to discourse displaying the suffering of innocent victims, even over greater distances and across cultures (p. 514). The portrayal of the 'ideal victim', which generates feelings of compassion, is related to both the historical, social, and cultural context, when dealing with morality and injustice. Time and place dominate the ideas of what is right and what is wrong, as for instance, when dealing with violence. In the earlier Western world, it was not considered violence to beat your wife or your kids, which in the world of today would be considered dreadful. We can identify 'better' victims in the shape of women, children, and elderly people, because they appear weaker and defenseless in violent situations (Ibid.).

Another link to the post-humanitarian discourse is debated by assistant professor, Pierluigi Musaró. He focuses on how humanitarian agencies produce images of suffering in order to create the wanted emergency, which is intended to persuade the audience to take action. Images and emotions in humanitarian discourse have been connected since the early days of humanitarian work. The connection is used to emphasize the importance of the audience's attention towards the fate of the distant and complete stranger. The intended empathy is constructed through the humanitarian narrative, which creates a sense of emergency through a rhythm of images of suffering victims in connection to Western donors as the only heroes, who can make a difference for the victims (Musaró, 2011, pp. 14–15).

2.7 An Approach to Film Theory

Contemporary documentary and post-humanitarian advocacy videos draw on many of the same techniques first introduced in fiction filmmaking. Therefore, there is the need to elaborate on the definition of some of the concepts within film, in order to understand the characteristics of the genre(s) we will be working with. By drawing on film theory, we intend to become more familiarized with the art of documentary filmmaking in order to perform a more informed, and hopefully, objective analysis.

The documentary, as a film, is always a two-side phenomenon, because one should seek to explain both the perceived object and the perception of that object. (Metz, 1990, p. 6). On one hand, the reproduction of an object apparently resembles that

same object - it contains clues of reality. On the other hand, the audience has an organizing faculty through perception, making it possible to grasp the object being portrayed and make it real in his mind (Ibid.). This phenomenon of perception can be connected to the concepts of connotation and denotation within semiotics, introduced by Roland Barthes (1977), and fits with our methodological approach with Social and Visual Semiotics, as will be seen in the methodology section.

Clive Myer (2011) proposes a redefinition of the term *diegesis*, previously defined as the mental referent that connects the viewer to what is viewed, to *"a 'place between' and a 'place beyond' the binary concept of a representational world and a social world"* (p. 11). The author argues against the 'old' oversimplified definition of diegesis in current film theory, which divides it into diegetic (what appears to be natural within the film) and non-diegetic (what was added in post-production). There are more elements involved which add a layer of complexity:

"Diegetic is not a 'thing', it is a process ... If the imaginary presence of the diegetic is experienced when engaged in the act of viewing a film and it is the mental referent embedded in myth and locked between the subject-being in (permanent) transition and the object of desire" (Ibid., p. 17).

Similarly, the film theorist, Christian Metz (1990) defines the concept of diegesis as a reality that comes from within our perception, consisting of a mix of our projections and identifications (p. 10).

The film director and theorist, Laura Mulvey (1975) talks about an object of desire in *"Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema"*, by referring to Freud's Psychoanalytic theory and his Three Essays on Sexuality where he introduces 'scopophilia': the pleasure in looking at someone, and, in being looked at. It is a voyeuristic gaze associated with sexuality and the erotic look, by looking at other people as objects, *"subjecting them to a controlling and curious gaze"* (p. 3). The spectator has the illusion of looking at a private world. There is the realizing of a voyeuristic fantasy by looking at a hermetically sealed world which happens 'magically', indifferent to the presence of the audience (Ibid.). Scopophilia has a narcissistic constituent, which is intrinsically related with the construction of the ego (Ibid.). It *"is an image that constitutes the matrix of the imaginary, of recognition/misrecognition and identification, and hence of the first*

articulation of the 'I' of subjectivity" (Ibid.). This psychological component of the act of viewing can be articulated with the concept of diegesis given by Myer (2011), who considers it as a dynamic space where *"the self-perpetuating culture expands from the frame and the mind simultaneously. Intangible as it is fleeting, diegesis occupies the place of the Other and is enabling (desire) as it is disabling (fantasy)"* (Ibid. p. 17).

3. Methodology

With the theoretical framework in place, we will now work our way to the methodology. In this part we will go in depth with the tools for our analysis. These are all primarily linked to the field of semiotics, discourse analysis, and the study of visual culture.

The study of visual culture cannot be confined to the study of images. The centrality of vision has to be taken into consideration in our everyday experience of the world and how meaning is generated (Lister & Wells, 2004, p. 4).

Visual Cultural Studies suggests an approach to the content as belonging to a circuit of culture. It goes through a number of stages all contributing to the creation of meaning(s) (Ibid.). In short, the content is socially produced, distributed, and finally consumed. The focus is on the process and the transformations that take place and also on being critical about what is meant and how the video has been used (Ibid.). As Bordwell (1991) puts it, there is the need to “interpret ‘interpretation’” (p. 1).

Spoken language cannot be taken into account without considering non-verbal communication. Moreover, many forms of contemporary written language cannot be understood in its total, unless both text and images are taken in to consideration (Theovan, 2011, p. 2). Kony2012 is a multimodal text, because it includes several other non-verbal communicative aspects such as: body language, Computer Generated Imagery (CGI), and sound. For example, sound by itself, can be divided into: dialogue, narration, music, and sound effects, both diegetic and non-diegetic.

3.1 Semiotics

In our semiotic analysis we will need to closely investigate how messages in the video are conveyed by a system of signs. The French linguist, Roland Barthes (1980) has written extensively on many fields of sciences, but for our research we are especially interested in his work on semiotics, in particular his essay called “*The Rhetoric of the Image*”. Barthes identifies three classes of a message within an advertisement: the linguistic message, the symbolic message, and the literal message. Even though Barthes analyzes a still picture in his essay it can still be used for a video analysis since the theories apply just the same to video as it does to picture.

The linguistic message refers to the text on the picture. Barthes analyzes an advertisement of pasta, and observes two kinds of messages in the text: the denoted message, which refers to the caption and the label on the product, and the connoted message, where the brand *Panzini* implies 'Italianicity' (*illustration 1*).

The symbolic message, or the connoted image, comprises the non-linguistic symbolic message of the picture. For example, the tomatoes and peppers once again symbolize Italianicity, and the half open bag signifies a return from the market and the values a traditional market represents.



illustration 1

The literal message, or the denoted image, is the non-coded parts of the image. The tomato represents a tomato and the pasta represents pasta. Here the signifiers and the signified is precisely the same.

In reference to the linguistic message of a picture, Barthes points out two functions - anchorage and relay. A picture can often be interpreted in many different ways and have different meanings, and as such anchorage occurs when the text guides the viewer to a particular interpretation or meaning. Relay occurs when the text and picture works together to form meaning. An example of this is comic strips. Relay is very often apparent in video since images are often accompanied by character dialogue or narration, etc.

When analyzing a picture or other media, Barthes sees the image as a collection of connoted and denoted elements. Some parts of a picture are placed deliberately to connote a message, while others are simply denoted elements within the picture. The visual elements that symbolize a message are called 'connotators', and it is these particular elements that jointly create the *rhetoric of the image* (pp. 269-285).

Social Semiotics and Cultural Studies share common assumptions on how the social world works, more specifically, on the relationships of power and how it is enacted

through certain social allegiances, which promote some values over others. (Iedema, 2004, p. 7). By focusing on several layers, from micro to macro, we will be able to see the structure of the video in detail and all the meaning creation strategies behind it. As Iedema (2004) puts it, *"Films and television products construct times and spaces which obey and bear out those media's logic(s), and which are therefore representations. Our concern here is with re-presentations"* (p. 8).

The subfield Visual Semiotics goes in depth with visual signs and representations. The pictorial sign is considered in a Triadic Model, in which three correlates have to be considered: the sign, the referential object and its meaning (Nöth, 2011, p. 7). According to Nöth (2011):

"In the context of visual semiotic, that which 'stands to somebody for something in some respect' is the picture. It is not necessary that the sign should have a material form. A sign, according to Peirce, can also be an idea, a mere thought. Hence, a mental image can also be a sign. The visual sign refers back to previously seen visual perceptions (its object) and it causes an interpretation, a reaction, a new thought, or mental image as its interpretant. Thus defined, signs occur in semiotic processes" (p. 8).

Therefore, the object of representation by the pictorial sign can be the 'thing' depicted in the picture, but can also be the memory of something previously seen or experienced, or even something purely out of imagination of who is reading the sign (Ibid.). The notion of semiotic process depicted both in social and visual semiotics is a focal point in our analysis, because it creates a basic framework for understanding the process of meaning production.

According to the American philosopher Charles S. Pierce, pictures are iconic signs, in the sense that they are similar to the object they represent. Nevertheless, they only acquire meaning by our own interpretation of them. The associations between an iconic sign and its representative object are arbitrary and conventional. The knowledge to interpret it must have been previously acquired (Ibid. p. 9). Furthermore, iconicity is not only related to the visual arena but also to acoustics and the verbal.

Pictures are also indexical when they serve to identify an object, person, or culture. They are produced by a chemical or electronic action which serves to identify the object they depict (Ibid.). The indexical nature of the sign, adds identification to the object, whereas the iconic nature does not necessarily relate to something that exists, it can be a mere possibility. Furthermore, pictures can also be symbols. For example, a road sign is an icon (abstract picture) with the intent to be an index of an object or an action.

Contemporary cultures are also visual cultures, which represent and are themselves represented innumerable times in documentaries, media, films, photography, etc. Pictures cannot be considered without the cultural background they were produced in, therefore the need to understand the cultural context in order to perform an adequate analysis. The meaning of a picture, sound, or word cannot be properly understood without the previous knowledge of the culture in which it was produced.

“Reading pictures is a semiotic process (a process of semiosis). Images are signs that do not only have meanings but also create meanings. The meanings they have are related to the objects of the visual signs; the meaning they create to their interpretants” (Nöth, 2011, p. 26).

The interpretant is a combination of meanings that can take the form of information, ideas, concepts, beliefs, desires, mental beliefs, and habits created by the complexity of the picture in the reader’s mind (Ibid.).

Lister and Wells (2004) excellently sum up the mimetic capacity of photography to

“be a trace or an imprint of the real is that it can borrow and carry all of the sign systems and codes (of dress, style, architecture, objects, body language etc.) which, together with speech and the written word, sound and smell, make the living world meaningful” (Lister & Wells, 2004, p. 77).

3.2 Discourse Analysis

With the previous description of Foucault’s theory on discourse, we acknowledge the connection between discourse and power in knowledge production and consumption. In this section, we seek to apply a methodological toolbox for analyzing discourse in text and images. We choose to operate with the British linguist Norman Fairclough’s

toolbox for Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), due to the concern with textual discourse. The textual analysis tools will be described in short below, and they will be used when appropriate.

Vocabulary – How specific words are chosen and applied instead of others. We look at what alternatives of words are used to represent particular persons, events, terms, etc., or if specific areas of interest are highlighted by vocabulary choices (Fairclough, 1992, p. 190).

Word meaning – Dealing with the potential meaning of the word that is defined by the social practice in which it is produced. By choosing a specific word in a specific textual and social context, the producer has the opportunity to decide the meaning and interpretation of the word (1992, p. 185).

Transitivity – Look at how events and processes are connected to particular objects and subjects in order to see if some are emphasized. You also look at how the actors are connected to activities and who or what the text focuses on (1992, p. 178).

Modality – Dealing with affinity to a statement or argument displayed in text, and what consequences it has. There are four terms to work with: 1. Modal auxiliary verb: can, must, may, might, will, shall. 2. Indication of time: using present tense to fully support statement. 3. Modal adverbs: Maybe, of course, etc. 4. Reservations/conditions: some, a little, a bit, etc. (1992, p. 158).

Grammar – How the perception of meaning and reality is constructed and constituted through the creation of sentences and subordinate clauses. Grammar is also capable of directing or redirecting focal points in text through the creation of active or passive sentences (1992, p. 75).

Cohesion – Deals with how parts or full sentences connect with other sentences or larger textual structures. We will look for the use of words from the same semantic system, use of near synonyms, and repetition of words (1992, p. 77).

Text structure – We will look at the textual structure and style, the ‘architecture of text’ (1992, p. 77).

Politeness – Dealing with the producer’s use of politeness as a strategy in the construction of social relations in text, in order to show dominance. The term ‘face’ is

used in both a negative and positive manner. If the producer wants to be respected, admired, or cared for, it is called 'positive face'. Display of unfriendly manner – 'negative face' in text - can be regarded as a dominance strategy to shut down other points of view (1992, p. 162).

Metaphor – Can be applied to persuade the reader. Metaphors are expressions used by the producer, displaying how he/she perceives and constructs reality. An example: The typical teenager's room is a disaster area (1992, p. 194).

Ethos – Deals with the construction of identities and subject positions through discursive and non-discursive features in text (1992, p. 166).

Intertextuality – Inserting history into text, and text into history. The text is constructed by texts from the past, while it establishes its own place in history. Two terms are differentiated. 'Manifest intertextuality' draws directly from other texts, whereas 'interdiscursivity' appear when the text refers to other discourses (1992, p. 101).

3.3 Research Design

In order to have a structured analysis, we decide to divide it in to three sections: Context of Viewing, Context of Production, and Form and Meaning (Lister & Wells, 2004, p. 5).

3.3.1 Context of Viewing:

When analyzing this audiovisual material, firstly, we will need to ask what the locations (social or private) inside the physical and social world are. Secondly, we ask where the content is consumed, because different interpretations can appear in different contexts. The consumption of the material depends on where we meet it, and how concentrated the consumption is allowed to be. Great difference can be observed, when we understand whether the video was met in public or private places, if the audience has to search for it, or if it came to them through random use of the Internet, or social platforms within. The context of an image, and the discourse within, generates certain expectations towards the image (Lister & Wells, 2004, p. 7).

Kony 2012 was first published on two social video networks, Youtube and Vimeo, and thereafter spread to other social networks through the sharing and 'liking' of its users. It is important to understand the impact of this new paradigm of distribution and

consumption, which allowed the massive popularity of this particular video, both in and outside the virtual world. It is also important to understand the advantages and limitations of social networks and how these factors help shape its consumption.

3.3.2 Context of Production

In the context of production, there is a shift of focus from how the video is encountered and viewed, to how and by whom it has been produced and distributed. We must understand the productive motives behind the creation of the video in order to fully comprehend how the context can affect, what we are going to find in the analysis of the video. We need to enlighten the NGO as a specific actor with presumably specific use of discourse concerned with humanitarian work. The social context of the producer affects the production (p. 11).

It is also important to define the genre used by the producer(s), what the purpose of this is, and how it is being applied in Kony 2012. Moreover, by defining the characteristics, both advantages and constraints, of the applied genre, we will be able to make assumptions about the intentions of the video authors.

3.3.3 Form and Meaning

This is the stage where the analysis will go in to the nitty-gritty by looking and analyzing in detail the several components of the Kony2012 video: photography conventions, video conventions, social conventions, and how all these contain power relations within.

This set of conventions, such as the ones in photography, are already very familiar to the viewer, falling below the *“threshold of our conscious attention”* (Lister & Wells, 2004, p. 19). Therefore, it is important to analyze those conventions, within a culture, as the natural way of doing something such as sharing a video on Facebook or even portraying a person or an entire culture.

The analysis will be performed by applying semiotic theory and concepts, and critical discourse analysis, while looking at the properties of the image, sound, narration, graphics, and text when considered apart from the act of looking at it and making sense of it (Lister & Wells, 2004, p. 68).

In order to have a structured and objective analysis we draw from the Visual Anthropology approach to visual data guidelines suggested by Collier (2004). Firstly, it is necessary to observe the video as a whole, looking and listening to what is noticeable and all the subtleties, in order to start uncovering otherwise easily overlooked patterns (p. 7). We will take note of questions that rise in the moment of viewing in order to give guidance to the more detailed analysis (p. 8).

Thereafter, we will divide the video in to themed sections, which will not necessarily be in accordance with the 'natural' narrative sequence. This 'open viewing' suggested by Collier (2004, p.8) allows an open immersion, where we will have the opportunity to let the cultural circumstances speak to 'us' for themselves (ibid.). This approach suggests the viewing of the video repeatedly, as a group, and thereafter, once the 'natural' set of relationships within the narrative has been understood, the material will be grouped into sections and analyzed individually. The content resulting of this division, combined with the questions that arose through the first stage of the analysis, will be subjected to a structured analysis. With a critical eye we will try to detect patterns and analyze how conventions are being used at the micro level. Within this stage we will be 'manipulating' the video and sound using techniques such as repetition, stop action, slow motion, and high-speed viewing, in order to get into different spans of attention, which are important to go in depth and detect patterns otherwise difficult to see.

Collier explains, *"Visual records may be viewed in ways that are often impossible while observing 'real life,' a characteristic that is often crucial to analysis"* (2004, p. 20). Repetition is at the foundation of all direct visual analysis (ibid). Only by looking at the same data repetitively we will be able to detect complex details, otherwise difficult to see. Similarly, slow motion, will allow the uncovering of micro patterns, especially of non-verbal behavior. Fast motion, on the other hand, will reveal macro patterns difficult to see at normal speed. It can be considered *"somewhat similar to juxtaposing two contrasting still images"* (Collier, 2004, p. 22). We will be looking at individual aspects of individual frames, but more often of shots (unedited camera movements), scenes (when the camera remains in one time-space, usually consisting of more than one shot), and sequences (the camera moves with specific characters or sub-topics across time-spaces). Within these narrative components, the visual semiotic analysis

will be focused on aspects such as frame, gaze, camera angle and level, light quality and source, tone, contrast, depth of field, and composition. Regarding sound, we will be analyzing, narration, effects and music, both of diegetic and non-diegetic nature. The analysis will also take in to consideration the constructed rhythm, regarding how *"meanings are sequenced and integrated into dynamic text"* (Iedema, 2004, p. 15). The intertwine of speech, narration, sound, movement, and film editing are what organizes the narrative. Therefore, these cadences have significative consequences on how we read the text (Van Leeuwen, 1984 as cited in Iedema, 2004, p. 16).

Finally, we will go back to look at the video at the macro level, and try to respond to the data in an open manner, so that the analysis can be put in to the video's context again. This will help define the signifying practices. We will also be looking how identities are constructed within the discourse.

4. Analysis

As mentioned in the research design from the methodological section above, we seek to clarify specific contexts of Kony 2012, in order for the reader to understand the conditions, which might have affected the production, distribution, and consumption of the video.

4.1 Context of Viewing

The Kony 2012 video is a special case study. Since it is a humanitarian video that went viral on the internet, it is important to consider the context of viewing. The video was marketed and shared through social media like Facebook and Twitter, and this makes the viewing experience unique. The video was never fed to the viewer via commercials, but more likely through recommendations by personal friends on Facebook or Twitter. This means that the viewer will be less critical towards the video after pressing the link to YouTube or Vimeo. In this day and age, people are naturally critical towards new campaigns, but since Kony 2012 was shared through social media, people were more positive towards it. It is, of course, important to note that the events following the release of Kony 2012 up until today may have changed people's perception on the issues raised.

When people choose to press the link to watch Kony 2012 it is their own choice to do so, and the location is set within the private environment of the viewer's own device. The video was hosted on Vimeo and YouTube. These sites are well known for hosting many different types of videos, both serious and silly. It is not unheard of for a humanitarian video to be posted on YouTube. For example, there are already thousands of educational videos uploaded on YouTube, and the White House regularly posts video updates on Vimeo. While these platforms are often used for silly home videos or similar, it is safe to say, they can also be used for serious content. Furthermore, it is important to notice that Kony 2012 portrays social media in the video, so using YouTube and Vimeo underlines the message of the video.

The fact that Kony 2012 is explicitly dealing with social media in the video makes the context of viewing appropriate. It makes sense for the video to be posted on a social media platform, because the viewer will be able to reflect on many of the themes

presented in the video. The very first words of the narration in the video refer to Facebook, and as such, the viewer will most likely be able to relate, since he or she was referred to the video from Twitter or Facebook.

It is interesting to notice that a screening of Kony 2012 in Uganda turned into a riot, because the Ugandan people were so repulsed by the content of the video (Lawino, 2012). Is it really surprising that the video was not popular in Uganda? The discourse in the video is aimed at a Western audience, as seen on page 6, and presumably the Ugandan people will relate to a lesser degree to the discourse and themes of social media, transnational activism, etc.

4.2 Context of Production

As explained in the research design section, we need to understand the surrounding context of the video regarding the productive motives in order to clarify how the context of production can affect what we find in the analysis. First, we will focus on the social context of IC and how it may affect the discourse presented in the video. Secondly, we will specify how the genre, as a context of production, can impact the production and outcome of this specific discourse.

When looking at the social context of IC, the characteristics of an NGO appear to be the main traits that can affect their production of discourse. We are aware of the cause they fight for and how that affects how they choose to construct the discourse of the video. The areas of concern of an NGO will affect the discourse of certain matters within, but we need to specify how the humanitarian work as a discipline can affect the construction of discourse. The work related to NGO's typically concentrate on transferring money from the hand of those who can spare a little into the hands of those who need it for survival, development, human rights preservation, animal rights, etc. IC is working with two main goals – create awareness in public and political arenas, and raise funds for development in areas affected by the LRA. They have to generate discourse, which will exert this specific kind of power over the audience for them to react and act as proposed. The discourse will be affected by the desire of persuasion. With humanitarian discourse, we expect to encounter representations of the sufferer (Chouliaraki and Höijer), which will be used to appeal to the humanity of the audience and representations of action – IC telling us what we need to do for the sufferer and

how. Humanitarian discourse relies on the persuasion of the audience, which means that the discourse presumably has been shaped through the use of different kinds of tools of appeal in language and imagery.

The genre is also an important aspect of the context of production. The video can be characterized as a non-fictional video, constituted by the representations of reality and the particular issues emphasized within. The genre related to this type of audiovisual material is the documentary. We do not perceive the video as a full-blood documentary, but a video with traits of a documentary, which presumably affects the outcome of discourse within. The idea for a documentary, and therefore the motives of the producer, are to persuade the audience to believe that they encounter the unproblematic truth about the world they live in when viewing. Truth is connected to the producer's claim of reality, which for the documentary is challenged by the production process (Chapman, 2009, p. 4). The claim of absolute truth of a subject, which here is the need to stop Joseph Kony, is deemed an impossible mission, because even though we are dealing with non-fictional footage, we still experience subjectivity in the selective choices in editing, where the documentary and the form of discourse are created. We assume that IC seeks to represent the truth through raw footage depicting the problem in need for humanitarian action, but the discourse created will be affected by the editing of this material and how it is intertwined with fictional material like illustrations (CGI). This issue of context can affect how the viewer perceives and reacts to the video.

4.3 Visual and Textual Analysis

The visual and textual analysis of Kony 2012 is divided into three sections: Preamble, Presentation of the Conflict, and Action Plan. This division happened naturally according to the main themes found in the narrative. As explained before, narration, dialogue, music, and images were analyzed together or separately, according to how important their role is in the creation of meaning and representations.

4.3.1 Preamble



image 1 (Appendix a, 1.1)

The first image showed to the viewer (*image 1*) is of a dark wall with the following sentence in capital letters: "NOTHING IS MORE POWERFULL THAN AN IDEA WHOSE TIME HAS COME" (Appendix a, 1.1), in which the two last words change to "IS NOW" through CGI effects. By having this kind of introductory sentence as the first thing the viewer sees, it connotes an intention to create a sense of emergency. This effect is amplified with the quick change of the last two words, which also connotes an intention to educate the viewer. What he is about to see is something he has to act on "NOW". The first part of the sentence is quite affirmative. The adverb "NOTHING" emphasizes an idealistic way of viewing the power of an 'idea'. It can later be connected to the "IDEA" of a grassroots movement, who, through the power of one idea, can create a big impact in what it proposes to do. This initial image and the changes in the text, connotes an intention to create an immediate sense of awareness.

What will be asked from the viewer is meant to be done “NOW”. The use of capital letters increases the impact of this message, as if, despite having no narration, these words were being said in a powerful and loud way.



image 2 (Appendix a, 1.1)

An interesting and subliminal aspect of the following sequence is the appearance of an inverted triangle (*image 2*) for a few milliseconds (Appendix a, 1.1). This frame only becomes noticeable after playing the section in slow motion. Nevertheless, after noticing it for the first time, the triangle can be perceived even at normal speed. This can be associated with an intention to create a conscious viewing, as in a secret message directed at the viewer. The message, an inverted triangle, can be associated with an inversion of the order, which can be connected with the idea of trying to create a grassroots ideology, as in power to the people. This small detail, can also be associated with an intention to create a 'cult' around the video, to make it somehow mythical. The inverted triangle can also be seen as a foreshadowing of later parts to come.

The very first sentence of the video sounds, *"Right now there are more people on Facebook than there were on the planet 200 years ago..."* (Appendix a, 1.2). In this opening line, Jason uses the analogy of Facebook to demonstrate the rapid globalization that has happened and changed our world completely. He continues his narration:

Jason Russell [N]: *“Humanity's greatest desire is to belong and connect. And now we see each other, we hear each other. We share what we love, and it reminds us what we all have in common... And this connection is changing the way the world works...”* (Appendix a, 1.2).

Kony 2012 uses the Facebook timeline to navigate the viewer through its narration. This approach is ingenious, not only in its narrative capacity, but also in the symbolic meaning it represents. It is evident right from the beginning of the video that Jason puts special emphasis on the role of globalization and social media in the present day world. We see the first two minutes of the video as the preamble (section 1 in the transcript). In this two-minute segment, Jason introduces his view on globalization and the underlying philosophy behind the video. In order to reinforce the global perspective and concept of interconnectedness, footage of the earth as seen from space is shown (*image 3*).

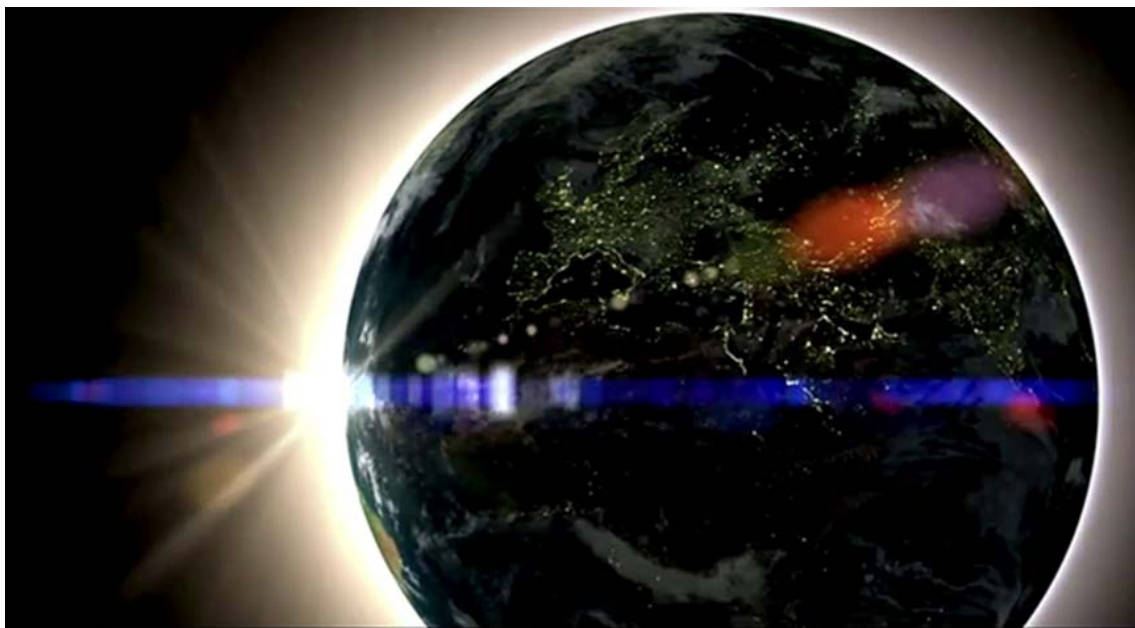
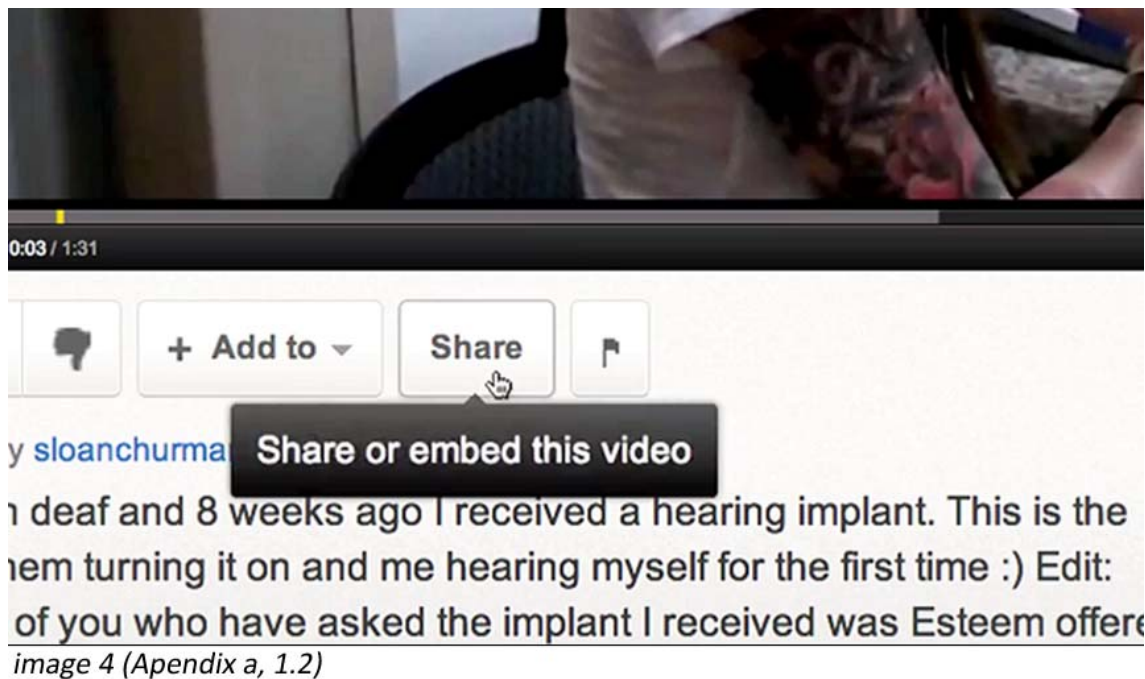


image 3 (Appendix a, 1.2)

This narration is supported by images of a mouse cursor guiding its way through various YouTube videos. One video shows a news report of a Haitian boy being rescued from beneath the earth. Another is an amateur video of a kid proudly demonstrating his bicycling skills. A third is shown depicting a woman hearing her own voice for the first time in her life. All of these videos are positive and emotional, but other than that they do not appear to share any thematic similarities.



There is, of course, a connection between these videos. When you see the cursor hover over the 'Share' button on YouTube (*image 4*), it becomes clear that what connects these videos is the interconnectedness of people throughout the world as a result of the new social media.

The narration in this part serves as anchorage to bolster this particular interpretation of the videos. In Appendix a, 1.2, Jason repeatedly uses the word and words relating to 'connect'. In doing so, Jason puts even further emphasis on the connection between humans in the new world with social media. Words and clauses like 'belong', 'connect', 'see each other', 'share', 'in common', 'us', 'we', and 'connection' all relate to community and interconnectivity. "*We share what we love...*" (Appendix a, 1.2) gives the whole sentence a positive feel, love being the focal word here. Social media instantly becomes synonymous with love and sharing. We will now compare this positive portrayal of the power of social media to the portrayal of governments in the following quotation.

Jason Russell [N]: "... Governments are trying to keep up. And older generations are concerned. The game has new rules" (Appendix a, 1.2).



image 5 (Appendix a, 1.2)

Image 5 is only shown very briefly in the video. Even still, this is particularly interesting, because everything about this brief moment in the video is portrayed in a negative light. In terms of the denoted image, most notably there is a man in a suit in the foreground sitting down. Behind him is another man in a suit and behind both of them is a graph showing a decline of some sort.

More importantly for the analysis, we can extract several meanings from the connoted image. The two men are sitting down and the one in the front is speaking, presumably in front of other people. This makes them appear inactive and immobile. They both wear suits, and there is a stale name tag in front of them. All in all, they seem very formal. This can be seen in contrast to the segments where Jason and IC are doing activist work in Uganda or the U.S., where they are usually dressed informally and being active in one way or another. This begs the question if the government and the older generation still hold the power to change, or if they are all talk.

"The game has new rules", Jason states, and questions if the older generation can keep up. As it appears, the dark haired man is looking concerned and doubtful over the other man's shoulder. The two are not 'connecting', 'sharing', or 'loving', as we saw people do in the earlier parts of the video. The fact that they are not sitting next to each other further demonstrates how they lack interconnectivity.

The graph in the background is rapidly declining with negative growth, and therefore the older generation is associated with negativity as well. The context of the graph is incomprehensible. For all we know, it could as well be a graph showing a rapid decline in famines across the globe, but because of the anchorage of Jason's narration, as well as the worrisome nature of the two persons, we are led to believe that the graph is showing distressing progress rather than comforting progress.

Ultimately, the rhetoric of this image is characterized by a negative portrayal of the two men in the picture, and thus a negative portrayal of the older generation and governments in general.

The next frame draws on intertextuality, as a brief moment of a news report is shown with a headline asking, *"THE COMING COLLAPSE?"* Once again, we do not know the context of this headline, but the anchorage "are concerned" gives highly negative connotations with how the *"older generations"* are worried about how social movements are gaining power through social networks. This association is established, because the viewer is shown shots of the Arab Spring in the previous sequence, where people celebrate freedom, intercalated with images of tweets about freedom. This way, the message also gains a 'revolutionary' and 'rebel' connotation to it. There is also an intention to create a differentiation between an older generation and a younger generation, who by now becomes the target audience of the video.

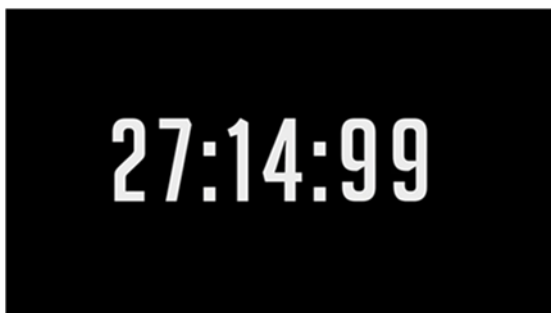


image 6 (Appendix a, 1.2)



image 7 (Appendix a, 2.5)

Jason Russell [N]: *"...The next 27 minutes are an experiment but in order for it to work you have to pay attention"* (Appendix a, 1.2).

Jason Russell [N]: *"...this movie expires on DECEMBER 31st 2012"* (Appendix a, 2.5).

Images 6 and 7, although presented at different times in the narrative, both connote the intention to instill a feeling of emergency in the viewer. The first incites emergency in the message of the video. The second adds to the sense of emergency after the problem has been presented. Having such a short deadline for the resolution of this problem is introduced with the intention to lead the viewer to take action immediately. Using the verb 'expires' creates a metaphor. The video will not expire, neither the possibility to do something after this date. Nevertheless, the authors chose to use this rhetoric in order to create a sense of emergency in the narrative and consequently in the viewer.

The preamble ends with a cliffhanger. A countdown on 27 minutes is displayed (*image 6*), and the preamble ends the same way it started, with footage of the earth from space before the screen turns into black. This adds to the idea that this video is a new way of looking at the issues it portrays. By referring to the viewer as 'you', the authors choose to engage directly, demonstrating the intention to create an informal mood, where the younger audience might feel more comfortable and "*pay attention*" (Appendix a, 1.2).

As mentioned earlier, the preamble serves as an introduction to the underlying philosophy of the video. The philosophy is strongly cosmopolitan. Jason argues that social media has reminded 'us' what 'we' all have in common. He makes no effort in explaining who 'us' and 'we' refers to, and as such it is implied that he refers to all people around the globe. The use of these inclusive words is prevalent throughout the documentary. This gives a sense of belonging and identification to the viewer.

This notion of a 'global civil society' is a product of increased technology and globalization. It is, however, not limited to technological globalization, since the global civil society changes the mindset of people. You are no longer just a citizen of the U.S., Bolivia or China, you are a citizen of the world, and as such you believe in universal ethical claims (Chouliaraki, 2010, p. 108). Only if the viewer shares this philosophy, he or she is emotionally prepared to commence the experiment.

4.3.2 Presentation of the Conflict

After the screen fades to black, the music shifts from dark and ominous into light and uplifting, as you can hear the sound of a heartbeat monitor manifest itself. This alteration placidly marks the end of the preamble and the introduction of the video's conflict. Once again, the narrative is analogous to the sound and images, as the heartbeat beeping sound is revealed to come from a hospital at the birth of Jason's son Gavin. The birth of Gavin is also the birth to a very important question, as Jason presents a paradox (Appendix a, 2.1.).



image 8 (Appendix a, 2.1)

Jason Russell [N]: *"Every single person in the world started this way, he didn't choose where or when he was born but because he's here he matters"* (Appendix a, 2.1).

With the philosophy of cosmopolitanism and the idea of a global civil society in mind, this paradox is highly interesting. If people are really citizens of the world, then how can it be fair that the place of birth determines whether you matter or not in this world? It is interesting to notice that at this point in the video, not a single word has been mentioned about the conflict in Uganda, but Jason choose to present the paradox anyway. It seems that Jason wants the viewer to reflect on the paradox as the video goes on to show various happy memories of him and his son. These memories are,

however, later contrasted by gruesome pictures of poverty and misery in Uganda, as Jacob tells the story of how his brother was killed by the LRA.



image 9 (Appendix a, 2.2)

The first time Jacob is introduced to the viewer, is in a photograph pinned to what appears to be the fridge in Jason's own house in an informal and intimate scene. The viewer is being shown what can be considered an otherwise private and very personal part of Jason and Gavin's relationship as father and son. The footage also appears to have been shot with an amateur handheld camera, which increases the sense of informality and natural interaction. This narrative context has the potential to make the viewer feel closer to these two intervenients. Having Jacob's picture on the fridge highlights the importance he has in this family, as he figuratively becomes part of it. This is reinforced by how Jason introduces the scene: *"Years before Gavin was born, the course of my life was changed entirely"* (Appendix a, 2.2). The two adverbs in this sentence 'before' and 'entirely' serve to increase the drama and emotion. The adverbial clause 'before' intensifies the emotion and Jacob's importance in Jason's life. He met him even before his own son was born. Similarly, by using the adverb 'entirely', it gives the viewer a sense of a radical and deep change in Jason's life. The second part of the sentence is a metaphor, which adds a hyperbolic sense to the change in Jason's life. This is how Jacob is introduced to the viewer. In a very intense and emotional way, as being an important part of Jason and Gavin's life, almost like a family member.

The next transition is illustrative of how the montage constantly changes between the 'real' (Jason's own world), and the virtual (Facebook profile). It consists of a transition slide effect in which, at one moment, both 'worlds' are in the frame, connoting a sense of connection and of continuity between both. It represents the globalized world as consisting of two interdependent parts.

The viewer is then led to a Facebook profile timeline while listening to Gavin saying, "*Jacob is our friend in Africa*" (Ibid.). The sense of interconnectedness is reinforced as his voice can be heard in both spaces. At the same time, this scene (*image 10*), is now transferred to the Facebook timeline, becoming one of the 'posts' in the form of a YouTube video. This change is a visual metaphor representing connectedness through an unreal and digitally manipulated event.



image 10 (Appendix a, 2.2)

The Facebook timeline, made to represent Jason's real profile, is in fact a blend of reality and a CGI effect. In order to help achieve a higher sense of 'realism' each post has comments and 'likes'. Through the building of this tailored timeline, the audience is brought closer to Jason's personal life. Once again, this adds a sense of familiarity and potentializes the drawing of an empathic feeling from the viewer. Moreover, it is as if the viewer is being shown Jason's 'real' Facebook profile. By doing this, a younger and more computer literate audience, who spends an increasing amount of time on social networks, becomes the obvious target audience of the campaign. Additionally, Jason is

portrayed as a member of their 'tribe'. In the continuation of this scene, the viewer is transported to 2003, through a fast and unrealistic scrolling effect. This is the year Jason first met Jacob. There is an obvious adaptation and adulteration of the standard Facebook timeline look and behavior. It isn't possible to have a post in 2003 because Facebook was only created in 2005.

In the next transition, the viewer is, once again, smoothly transferred from the virtual to the 'real' world, through a CGI effect, which first zooms in to a video with the map of Africa, and then gradually into a street in Uganda.



image 11 (Apendix a, 2.3)

The viewer is suddenly presented with a younger and scared Jacob on a dirt road with no lights (Image 11). There is an immediate sense of danger. The footage is once again handheld and low quality, which gives it a greater degree of realism.

The viewer is put 'in' the action through a medium close up shot, which adds to the degree of emotion that can be drawn from the scene. Jacob is not smiling as in the first images the viewer was shown. He is clearly younger and he is scared. His expression shows a degree of uncertainty about the people who he is talking to and his surroundings. He is clearly in immediate danger.

The viewer is then transferred to a seemingly safer place, where Jacob now seems more relaxed and open to talk to Jason. There is a constant use of extreme close ups

focusing on Jacob's face, capturing his expression of sadness and grief very closely, while he tells the tragic story of how his brother was violently killed in front of him. The close up shots of Jacob's face, combined with the poor and limited lighting conditions, adds to the sense of the precariousness of his life, and once again, a sense of immediate danger.



image 12 (Appendix a, 2.3)

Jacob: *"My brother tried to escape, then they killed him using a panga. They cut his neck."*

Jason Russell: *"Did you see it?"*

Jacob: *"I saw"* (Appendix a, 2.3).

The viewer is confronted by the testimony of a horrific story, where Jacob saw his own brother being brutally killed with a panga (a broad heavy knife). Furthermore, Jason wants to keep exploring this gruesome scene by asking, *"did you see it?"* Jacob responds with a firm and hurtful, *"I saw"* as an answer. There is a clear intention of using Jacob's story, and his vulnerability, in order to increase the dramatic charge of the scene, and raise emotions in the viewer which eventually might lead to a vulnerable state.

Since the beginning of this sequence (Appendix a, 2.3 - 2.4), when the viewer is first presented with real footage of Uganda, there is a non-diegetic soundtrack of dramatic

slow playing violins. This clearly connotes an intention to add another layer of emotion and drama to an already very dramatic footage. There is a clear intention of engaging with the viewer's compassion towards a young, helpless Ugandan boy who is all by himself in the middle of the night. There is a sense of immediate danger, and one can perceive a clear distinction between a Western, technological developed world, and a seemingly dark and underdeveloped central African country. At the same time, Jacob's story is meant to represent the one of other Ugandan boys in the same situation.

Three categories of 'actors' can be differentiated in this story. The first, Jason and his team in Uganda who are reporting the suffering of these children - the heroes. Second, Jacob and the helpless Ugandan children, who are the victims. Third, the rebels, who take the children to the bush - the villains. The 'plot' is now complete as in a classic film narrative. Anew, by constructing this emotional and 'good versus evil' story, the role of each of the intervenients becomes well defined.

The sequence continues with a set of short, wide shots of large groups of children in what could be associated with a migratory action. It then changes to a shot of a large group of children sleeping, stacked against each other on the floor. It is a dark environment where the only source of light is the one used to do the filming. Moreover, there is a predominant use of upwards tilted shots to portray the Ugandan children, which simultaneously, connotes a more dramatic tone, and increases the sense of importance these children's stories have in the narrative.

At the end of this shot, the dramatic music increases in volume until it becomes prominent, followed by a longer than usual fade to black and gradual decrease in music volume and intensity. The next shots are shaky and low quality, the viewer follows their journey in to what looks to be another precarious sleeping shelter. The audience is once again confronted with inhumane living conditions, very different from the ones they would imagine to encounter in the Western developed world, they presumably live in. This adds to the sense that these children are helpless victims, whose best solution is to take refuge in such a dark and cold place. During the ride in the car on the way to the shelter, the viewer gets almost no visual information but a few shades and a dirt road ahead (*image 13*). Nevertheless, the producers of the video chose to include this footage, which, besides reinforcing the image of an underdeveloped Uganda, was

also included because of what Jason says. *"If that happened one night in America it would be on the cover of Newsweek"* (Appendix a, 2.3).

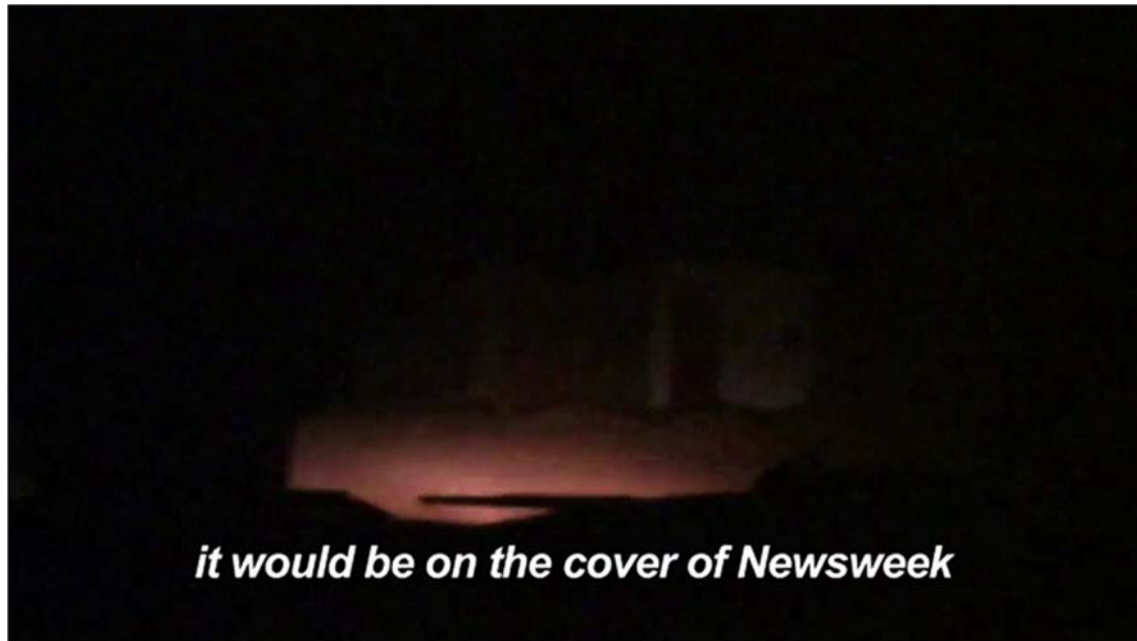


image 13 (Appendix a, 2.3)

This sentence connotes an intention to create a contrast between the U.S. and Uganda by telling how this situation would be treated differently and given much more attention to in the US. Moreover, by specifically mentioning the Newsweek magazine, it becomes clear that there is an appeal to a cultured American spectator.

The viewer is then taken out of the sleeping shelter scene through another slow deep to black transition, with a change into a more relaxed and positive music. The succeeding shot is another extreme close up of Jacobs face. This time, his expression is a more tendering one. He has a humble and 'sweet' attitude, which is easy to empathize with. He is asked about what he wants to be when he grows up, to which he answers, *"I wanted to be a lawyer but I don't have money to pay my school fees so that I learn and then become a lawyer"* (Appendix a, 2.4). Jacob has dreams and goals just like everyone else; he is not so different from the viewer. Nevertheless, the sense of powerlessness to control his future and have the same opportunities as any of 'us' is evident. There is a distinction between 'them', the powerless Ugandans, and 'us', the lucky Westerners.



image 14 (Appendix a, 2.3)

Following this ‘rollercoaster of feelings’, the viewer is then taken to another intense, but this time, negatively charged scene. The setting changes, but the close up shots of Jacob’s face are kept. The frame inclination also changes from a leveled shot to a vertical tilted shot from below. This change in perspective has an impact in the viewer’s perception. A tilted perspective increases the dramatic sense of the scene by putting the viewer gazing at Jacob from below. Now, he is in a position of power, above the viewer – everything he says from this perspective will have a greater impact and be more dramatic.

Jason Russell [N]: *“After spending a few weeks with Jacob, he told me something that I would never forget.”*

Jacob: *“It is better when you kill us and if possible, you can kill us, you kill us. For us, we don’t want now to stay – because”*

Jason Russell: *“You don’t want to stay on earth?”*

Jacob: *“We are only two, no one is taking care of us. We are not going to school, so...”*

Jason Russell: *“You would rather die than stay on earth?”*

Jacob: *“Yes.”*

Jason Russell: *“Now, even now?”*

Jacob: *“Even now. How are we going to stay in our future? You see.”* (Appendix a, 2.4)



image 15 (Appendix a, 2.4)

The viewer watches the unfolding of a very intense conversation. Jacob admits that he would prefer to die by saying, *"it is better if you kill us."* While saying these words Jacob's gaze is directed to the left upper corner of the frame. The viewer can deduct that he is talking to Jason, but because Jason is not included in the frame, the viewer might feel targeted by these words, especially because he or she is placed so close to Jacob's emotional face.

Jason tries to explore this 'death wish' further by interrupting Jacob: *"You don't want to stay on Earth?"* This demonstrates an intention to steer the conversation into an even more dramatic tone, by reinforcing what Jacob had just said. This is probably unconscious, but a self-reflexive technique usually used in psychotherapy. Furthermore, Jason makes use of a dysphemism: *"You would rather die than stay on Earth?"* Once again, an intention to create self-reflection can be detected, not only in Jacob, but also in the viewer. The purposeful decision of using the word Earth also denotes an idea of a cosmopolitan world to which all human beings innately belong to. It might make the viewer reflect on how he or she and a Ugandan child, who lives thousands of kilometers away in another continent, are connected. Furthermore, you can interpret a religious connotation. On one hand, the division between the 'Earth' and 'Heaven' are existing concepts a religious viewer can associate with. On the other, Jacob refers to the fact that he might meet his brother in Heaven further in the

conversation, demonstrating that Jason already knew this child's religious beliefs, and decided to use them in order to create a more emotional response.

Jacob's answer to these inquisitions is convincingly affirmative, connoting a great deal of despair, and consequently increasing even further the dramatic effect of the whole dialogue. Furthermore, Jason's voice tone is slow and inquisitive, adding even more intensity to his own words, creating ideal conditions for self-reflection. This self-reflection increases the emotional intensity of the scene, opening the way for an emotional breakdown which will be observed further in the conversation.



image 16 (Appendix a, 2.4)

Jacob: *"I love you. But now I miss you. So it is better when we meet we are going to – even if – we are not going to meet, but we may meet in heaven, you see? So it is better. I will not talk much, it will start something because if I saw my brother once again. I don't (cries)".*

Jason Russell: *"Humh..."* [Gradual fade to black]

Jacob: *(cries)* (Appendix a, 2.4).

This part of the conversation ending with the sound of Jacob's deep crying in the background after a fade to black is arguably the most emotional intense scene in the whole video. Although Jacob covers his face with his hands, the sound of his crying is sad and deep, raising a visceral feeling of true sadness and helplessness. This moment is of most importance for the continuation of the narrative, because the extreme emotionality of this scene has the potential to deeply engage the viewer emotionally.

Jason Russell: *"That's okay, Jacob, it's okay."* [Melancholic Music starts] (Ibid.)

Jason becomes a father figure, a protector. He tries to calm Jacob down and somehow disconnect him from the immediate emotions that are rushing through him.

It is interesting to note that Jacob is the only element in the frame, although it can be observed that the conversation involved at least one other child who partially appears in the image. This is confirmed in the dialogue. Jacob: "We are only two." Nevertheless, the other child is never fully shown or has his story told. The final editing decision was to leave his voice off the narrative and focus on Jacob's emotional story.

It has already been established that Jason holds a cosmopolitan philosophy, so by witnessing the atrocities in Uganda, he instinctively begins a quest of transnational activism to spread the story of Kony for the rest of the world to see. If other people witness what is happening in Uganda, they will perhaps share his grief and join his quest to stop him. In a very emotional scene he makes a promise to Jacob.

Jason Russell [N]: *"Everything in my heart told me to do something and so I made him a promise."*

Jason Russell: *"We are also going to do everything that we can to stop them."*

Jacob: *"Okay."*

Jason Russell: *"Do you hear my words?"*

Jacob: *"Yes."*

Jason Russell: *"Do you know what I mean?"*

Jacob: *"Yes."*

Jason Russell: *"Huh?"*

Jacob: *"Yes."*

Jason Russell: *"Huh? We are, we're going to stop them. We're going to stop them" (Appendix a, 2.4).*

There is a repetition of *"going to stop them"* with an echo effect in the background after a fade to black. At the same time the music gets a more hopeful tone. Once again, the use of pronoun 'we' reinforces the idea of a group, a global community of a developed Western world helping the underdeveloped African country. The purpose of his promise is clear: to stop the rebels – *"them"*, the villains. Jason is making a promise to Jacob, and the viewer, having observed the conversation, now shares complicity.



image 17 (Appendix a, 2.5)

Joseph Kony is first introduced as the leader of the rebels in *Appendix a, 2.5*. This is achieved through a graphical presentation, where the viewer is gradually shown the ranks of the L.R.A, in a pyramidal structure (*image 17*), progressively leading to the picture of Kony at the top. The connecting lines between the group members are hand drawn, giving it the look of a working document of a security agency, almost as a capture list. Furthermore, it is in black and white and has an old typewritten scratched look, showing that he has been hunted, even before computers were widely used. The way the camera navigates through the document (CGI) is dynamic, and once again, very appealing to a younger, and more technology savvy audience.

When the camera starts moving to the top of the pyramid, there is a sudden zoom in on a photograph of the rebel leader. This space transfer is synchronized with the narration to coincide with the group leader's name: "*Joseph Kony*" (Ibid.), narrated by Jason. The next shot is a photograph consisting of a close up of Kony's face, manipulated through CGI, in order to appear to have camera movement and change in the depth of field. The dimension of depth is 'artificially' added to a still shot. This aesthetical adulteration of the 'real' medium achieves a hyperrealist and more dynamic shot. There is a constant use of close up shots of the participants. In this case, it is used to capture the viewer's attention to the perpetrator's face. It adds to his evilness, and he becomes almost like a cartoonish book villain.



image 18 (Appendix a, 3.2)

Jason Russell [N]: *“Mm. I couldn’t explain to Gavin the details of what Joseph Kony really does. Because the truth is, Kony abducts kids just like Gavin”* (Appendix a, 3.2).

Jason introduces what Joseph Kony “*really does.*” It is so terrible that the details would disturb Gavin. Furthermore, the children that are abducted are just like Gavin, creating a parallelism between both ‘worlds’.

This connection is accentuated, because a shot of a Ugandan child being abducted is shown while Jason narrates, “*Kids just like Gavin*”. This shot is again a close up shot of an unidentified Ugandan boy, around the same age as Gavin. He is being violently grabbed (kidnapped) by what looks to be an adult man’s hand. The footage is clearly fictional and very emotional, giving an, otherwise impossible to film, perspective on the kidnaping. It is also interesting to note that there is a very narrow depth of field with emphasis on the child’s eyes, increasing the emotional charge. The next shot starts from an extreme close up of a photograph of Kony. Similar to the previous shot, the first thing the viewer is shown is a close up of Kony’s left eye with an oblique camera movement, until reaching a traditional medium chest shot. The focus on the eyes in both shots creates two different connotations. On one side, the child’s eyes connote fear, making him the victim. On the other, Kony’s eyes are red and black

connoting a sense of evilness. There is also a transition from the rebel's actions (group) to Kony (individual). The villain acquires a face.



image 19 (Appendix a, 3.2)

Jason Russell [N]:“...For 26 years, Kony has been kidnapping children into his rebel group, the LRA... ...turning the girls into sex slaves... ...and the boys into child soldiers. He makes them mutilate people’s faces. And he forces them to kill their own parents” (Appendix a, 3.2).

This is the first time child soldiers are referred to and portrayed. In *image 19* they look evil and have a cold threatening look in their eyes. There is once again the use of a different media (photography), which artificially introduces the third dimension by adding camera movement from a leveled to a low angle shot. This makes these two children look even more threatening. They become stripped of their normal child traits, and even more shocking, “*he makes them mutilate people’s faces. And he forces them to kill their own parents.*” They are literally being portrayed as cold heartless murderers at the hands of the ‘villain’.

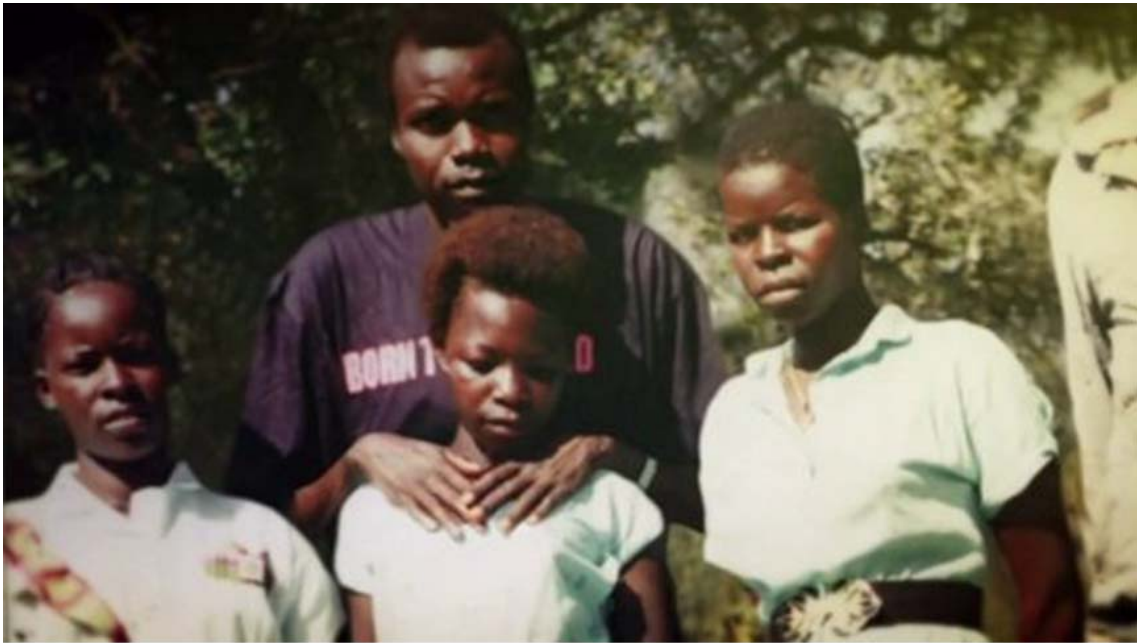


image 20 (Appendix a, 3.2)

In the following picture (*image 20*), there is a photograph of Joseph Kony hanging on to the neck of one of three girls, who the reader can deduct to be sex slaves. This time, the artificial camera movement is in the opposite direction, from a low angle to a high angle. This movement creates a sense of size reduction. The girls become smaller, and consequently lose power by being subdued to Kony, who, through the positioning of his hands, has an immense power over them.

The word 'slaves' is strongly associated with the colonial slavery period - when the white man used to 'own' the black man. This particular word, although seemingly innocent, has the potential to raise a postcolonial subconscious guilt in the white spectator, and this guilt might trigger an acting mechanism.



image 21 (Appendix a, 3.2)

It is relevant to note that the mutilated victims (*image 21*) are portrayed through very quick shots, with less than half a second. As can be seen in *image 21*, the pictures are graphical and shocking, demonstrating a 'shock effect appeal' (Chouliaraki, 2010). The quick sequence avoids shocking the viewer more than necessary, in order to not lose their attention. On the other hand, these pictures have close up framings and are shot with wide angle lenses, which amplifies their shocking potential. The decision to show so few potentially shocking images can be associated with the intention to create a more spectacular and sometimes surreal narrative. This is done in order to, not only create awareness, but also maintain the spectator entertained while viewing this unusually long, for a social network, 30 minutes video.

After introducing the underlying cosmopolitan and grassroots philosophy, and establishing what the problem is, and who the participants are, the narrative evolves into the next stage. This stage consists of an action plan, which will allegedly lead to the resolution of the problem.

4.4.3 The Action Plan

In the third section of the video, we are met by narrative themes concerned with what has been done and by whom, and what IC proposes to do now. We will look at the

specific discourse regarding these matters, and also analyze how the visuals connect in order to send the message.

The main focus of the video is presented several times and in different ways, but we choose to look at the following discourse, because it sends a clear message, which presumably is the intention.

Jason Russell: *"What do you think we should do about him?"*

Gavin: *"We should stop him."*

Ocampo: *"The criminal here is Kony. Stop him and then solve other problems."*

(Appendix A, 3.2)

These two suggestions and discourses regarding what should be done to solve the problem, are presented in a similar and simple manner through the use of the verb 'stop'. This verb tends to be the main verb when calling for action in the entire video. The way of portraying the solution is simplified by using this single verb, which presumably involves many other aspects of action in order to do so. Another important measure to deal with in this discourse is the representation of Joseph Kony. Earlier in the analysis we dealt with the representation of a group of 'villains' in this context, and here we have them represented as a single person. Representing Kony as a *"criminal"* relates to the speaker using this representation, because we are listening to the words of the head prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. One might say that we expect him to use this kind of representation, but what is interesting then, is how the solution connected to the criminal is stated with the simplicity of the verb 'stop'.



image 22 (Appendix a, 3.3)

We can argue for the simplicity of the discourse by acknowledging how the editing of the shots can affect the wording and how they seem to want the same thing, even though they are from different demographics. Cutting back and forth between shots of Gavin and Ocampo saying the same in similar words, creates a link between two very different individuals, who assumedly are of importance to Jason and can explain how the plan is simple to him and to anyone. This interpretation is furthermore backed by the effect created in (*image 22*) with the picture of Gavin and Ocampo next to each other. The zoom-out effect places them among everybody on the planet, but they are the only ones still remaining illustrated in color and placed on the globe where Uganda is geographically located. This graphical effect of placement can easily be overlooked, but serves its purpose in creating connection between all parts of Jason's argument. The meaning created can also relate to the global perspective displayed in the *preamble*. A globe created by pictures of people can form different meanings. It can be interpreted as to how people constitute the world we live in, and how we all are connected.

In Appendix a, 3.3, the video turns its attention and thereby the audience's attention towards the politicians of Uganda, and how the politicians of the U.S. will not help as long as it does not threaten the safety of the U.S. This sequence is followed by the explanation of what IC have done by themselves, which ensures that the audience

knows that they were responsible for these changes. We will return to this specific discourse later in the analysis. What is interesting is how the imagery here can reflect the use of sectional 'positive image appeals' by Chouliaraki (2010). After claiming the refusal of help from the U.S. government, we experience positive settings through the use of images and narration exemplifying what specific steps has been taken by IC, which empowers the experience of the message through an 'emotional rollercoaster'. We meet the distant sufferer again in Appendix a, 3.4, but now we experience them as actors taking action, advocating, and educating in both the U.S. and Uganda. Instead of connoting them with sufferers, we see progress changing them into educators and messengers taking action. We hear Jacob advocating on stage.

Jacob: *"I'm here so proud advocating for the people who are back at home and this change we are going to make is going to last forever"* (Appendix a, 3.4).



image 23 (Appendix a, 3.4)

By looking at this specific discourse, we can see a change in Jacob, even by focusing on his own words describing how he feels. Jacob is 'proud' when advocating, which sets an immense change from when we first met him in the interview with Jason in Uganda. 'Change' becomes the focal point in accordance to other active campaign words in the video, such as 'stop', as mentioned above. 'Change' and 'Stop' acts as semantic opposites, creating tension. 'Change' is used as a noun, but it can also be used as an active verb. Here Jacob connects 'change' as the solution to something that will last

forever, which is a positive and powerful connotation created by a boy, who used to be portrayed as the distant sufferer. A change in discourse is definitely detected. The sufferer is therefore given a voice and is empowered through this voice instead of being represented as a victim in this section. The discourse of efforts made by IC is presented as a part of the plan to get the politicians to take action, but can definitely also be identified as a positive imagery appeal at both the feelings (pathos) level and trust towards the effective work of IC (ethos) (Zhu, 2005, p. 13).

In connection to the representation of the distant sufferer, and how that representation changes with Jacob, we must emphasize how the filmic connection of shots can create a relation of power, or a distinction between groups of people. For instance, we observe the repeated display of images of Caucasians and Ugandans interacting – black and white. The Caucasian is recurrently portrayed as the ‘hero’ of the image, which leaves the Ugandans as the weaker participant. We see them hugging in *image 24*.



image 24 (Appendix a, 3.7)

The Ocampo quote *“It’s not important just for Ugandan people. It’s important for everybody”* (Appendix a, 3.7), indicates the focus on the Western people as well, mixed with an emotional image, where the Caucasian woman is crying. Another way of portraying the Westerners as heroes can be viewed in *image 25*, where they are

displayed with power through military representation, and also the educational component of the image.



image 25 (Appendix a, 3.7)

The American soldier is positioned in the front as the focal point of the image. The gesture suggests that he is informing/educating the Ugandan soldiers, which leaves him as the leader and the 'hero' sent by the American President. It can be connected to the discourse in the following quote: *"The U.S. President's decision to commits troops to help"* (Appendix A, 3.6).

The political aspect of the movie is greatly emphasized, not only by the American flag displayed several times in the video, but also by the images shown of the American institutions, such as the Senate, the Military, the President, and Wall Street (economy). The American politicians are an important part of the plan to stop Kony. We return to politicians as a second effort to get them to understand the problem and appeals of IC. At first, the politicians are characterized through the resistance to do anything for the Ugandans, but in Appendix a, 3.6 we suddenly see a change.

"So, with hundreds of thousands of people with us, we went back to Washington, D.C., and we met with congressmen and senators one by one on both sides — Republicans, Democrats — and they all agreed with us. Joseph Kony's crimes had to be stopped" (Appendix a, 3.6).

The plan to stop Kony is, as explained by Jason, to persuade the politicians to make use of their actual influence on American foreign policy. Through this narration, the discourse can be interpreted as somewhat exaggerated, when depicting, what allegedly happened. The link created between the opposing parties in America is once more defined by the simple suggestion of stopping him, but it still had to be forced by the support of 'hundreds of thousands of people'. The discourse creates links and unifies groups of people, creating bipartisanship.

The section is created by several images, where the handshake between a member of IC and a politician is the focal point. Here the handshake serves as a sign of approval or an agreement being made.



image 26 (Appendix a, 3.6)

Each of the shots is framed from an angle creating the profile of both actors in the shot and making sure that the handshake is centered. What is interesting is how the audience only hears narration across this sequence and not the diegetic sounds of the shot. One has to wonder what they are actually agreeing upon in the scene or if they are merely saying 'hello' or 'goodbye' to each other. The sequence is definitely edited to tell the audience that the politicians agree that Kony must be stopped, and are therefore a part of the plan. Looking at it critically, it does not tell what their handshake meant, if they agreed upon something, or if they were just being friendly. We must

view it as a strategic choice in editing, where the use of images of politician's handshake with IC can enforce the credibility of IC and the plan suggested (ethos).

The plan for Kony's arrest is illustrated by the plan portrayed in Appendix a, 3.7, where pictures are juxtaposed, to create a domino-effect, resulting in the eventual apprehension of Kony.



image 27 (Appendix a, 3.7)

Since the video is loaded with information, this illustrative strategy can be seen as a smart and powerful way to take the audience by the hand and explain the plan step by step where each domino brick represents an argument, which ultimately leads to the last domino with Kony on it. The apprehension of Kony is illustrated by IC starting a chain reaction, knocking over dominos. The colors of the dominos and the surroundings are black and dark, which set the mood and also make sure that the audience focuses on the images connected to each domino and each part of the plan. When the last domino is knocked over, the scene changes to an imaginary front page of a newspaper displaying Kony captured, the narration goes:

"This is the dream. Kony arrested for all the world to see, and the abducted children returned home" (Appendix a, 3.7).

Jason is referring to the solution as 'the dream' - the connection created between the success of the plan, and the dream to arrest Kony and return the abducted children to

their homes. We associate this discourse to the saying, ‘a dream come true’, which is a strong wish for success, and can furthermore represent Jason and IC’s dedication to the cause.

The first domino piece, creating the motion of the dominos, is the image a Kony 2012 poster, which forces into motion the second domino of young people doing activism, who continues the domino effect. This represents emphasis of the power of the people, which are symbolically represented in *image 28* and *image 29*.



image 28 (Appendix a, 3.11)

image 29 (Appendix a, 3.11)

The reverse triangle symbolizes IC’s view of how this kind of humanitarian work needs a new strategy in order for the dream to come true. The triangle is displayed in red and white colors, which is cohesive with many others parts of the video. A new section is added, representing interconnectedness throughout the globe, and the triangle is inverted. The humanitarian discourse, or at least some of it, of this particular NGO and the campaign related can be recognized in this illustration. They illustrate it by placing the power of the people in the bottom – the global society - of the triangle, instead of the power of decisions being held by the top – the people with money. They reveal a changed humanitarian discourse, where the power of the people is the focal point. The people’s power to do something for others is connected to their ability to create (social) change and justice.

In connection to the analysis of how they suggest action for the campaign against Kony, we can also analyze the portrayal and discourse of the targeted audience. Jason narrates:

“All of this was funded by an army of young people who put their money toward their belief in the value of all human life. They gave a few dollars a month of what little they had to a program called TRI and proved that a bunch of littles could

make a big difference. And as a result, the unseen became visible” (Appendix a, 3.5).

The receiver of the message plays an important role in communicative strategies. In this particular video, the producers emphasize who they consider the audience for their message, and why they are special to the campaign. In Appendix a, 3.5, Jason refers to them as an *“army of young people”*. Through this kind of allusion we experience a reference to war – an army fighting another army. We can connect this discourse to the imagery depicting the ‘army’ in *image 30*, where the image of a large group of young Westerners wearing campaign t-shirts stand together.



image 30 (Appendix a, 3.10)

In this image, activists are displayed with their fists or ‘peace signs’ in the air. This gesture, or sign, can generate different connotations. Interpreting it from a humanitarian perspective, which is probably the one desired by IC, this gesture is used to display power and belonging within a group. An opposite connotation, which the video actually creates by displaying images from World War II, is how you can connect the gesture to the ‘heil’ gesture used by Nazis to praise Hitler and their common beliefs. Both connotations are related to the power of an idea, as previously seen in the analysis on page 37. Moreover, this is related to the power of many, which we also met in the analysis above regarding the new world order, illustrated by the inverted triangle in *image 28*. The connection between *image 30* and the discourse in Appendix a, 3.5

portrays the activists as “*young people*”, which can be deducted to be people in their twenties or younger.

The narration following *image 30* goes: “*And that’s just what we intend to do*” (Appendix A, 3.9). We can look the pronoun ‘we’ creating three relations. These are between the activists and Jason/IC, the audience and Jason, and the audience and the activists. By targeting young people through images of young people in groups, and caring for others, it generates a specific discourse. IC does not only tell the audience what they want them to do and who to care for, but also who they should be. IC calls for the audience to get involved with activism. Activists are most often portrayed in groups in different shots of the video (disregarding the specific interviews). This forms the identity of activists as group members, which is desirable for any human being according to what Jason stated in the beginning of the video (Appendix a, 1.2).

The discourse of IC’s plan to stop Kony is also connected to the symbols and colors used as a repeated signature of the campaign and their plan, achieved through posters, stickers, the action kit, illustrations, street images, etc. The repeated use of red, blue, black, and white colors serves as a straight line of connection between the campaign, what they are fighting for, and how they propose to achieve the goal. In Appendix a, 3.9, after an introductory scene with Jason talking to Gavin about how Joseph Kony is invisible, the plan for action is presented specifically. The non-diegetic background music changes in relation to the change in the narrative. *Image 31* below is an example of how they apply color cohesion in the video.



image 31 (Appendix a, 3.9)

Image 31 illustrates how they intend to involve 20 influential culture makers and 12 influential policy makers from around the globe. It is significant for the plan, because of the use of blue and red colors. The use of famous faces in the campaign as a part of stopping Kony relates to the slogan displayed in the transition between informative and directional narrative in *image 32*: “MAKE HIM FAMOUS”.

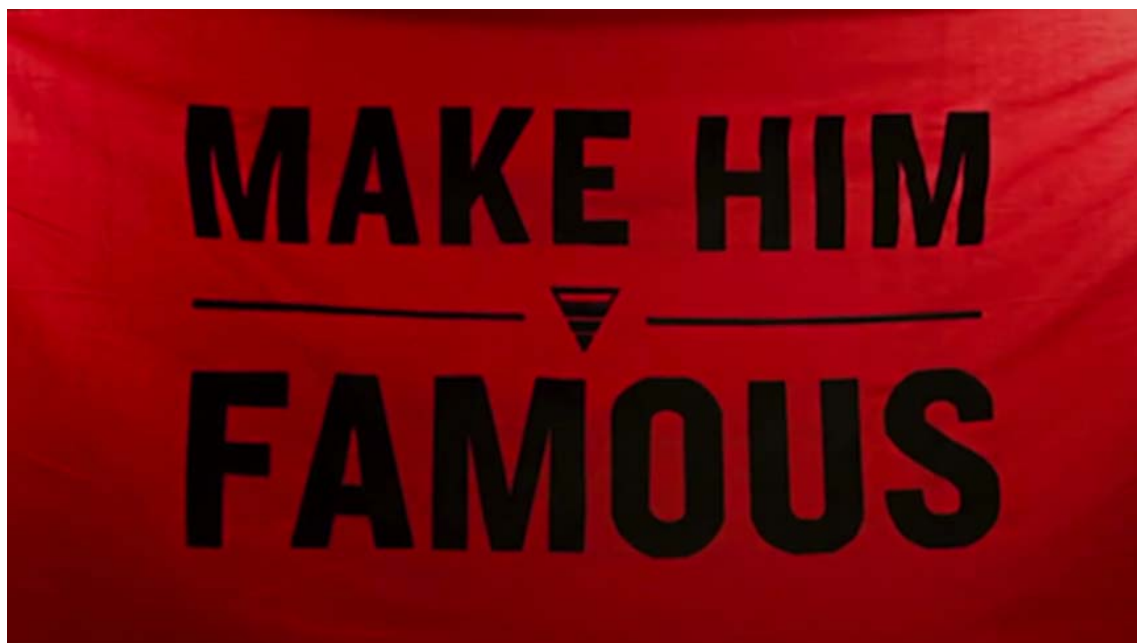


image 32 (Appendix a, 3.9)

The words in this particular discourse are actually somewhat contradictory. If we take the words out of the context, they mean nothing to the receiver, because of the word

“him”. So if we do not know who “him” is, there is no possibility of making him famous. This discourse can definitely represent an emphasis of the message. The meaning here is provocative and meant to make people think. Once again, this simple solution refers to one person only, while seemingly disregarding the rest of the LRA group.



image 33 (Appendix a, 3.10)

In addition, we can analyze the campaign poster display (*image 33*), which includes the face of Kony in red colors in front with Osama Bin Laden and Adolf Hitler behind him in blue colors. A connection between famous faces is made, and here the connotation is clear – they want Joseph Kony to be just as famous as the two world-known war criminals and impose the same justice for him as for them. We see how the representation of the ‘villains’ have changed from “rebels” and “LRA” to Joseph Kony, and now he is connected and represented in accordance to two of the worst criminals in recent history. The connection to Adolf Hitler is also presented in Appendix a, 3.7 with the narration:

“It’s hard to look back on some parts of human history. Because when we heard about injustice, we cared, but we didn’t know what to do. Too often we did nothing” (Appendix A, 3.7).

This quote supports our analysis of *image 33*, because Jason refers to human history and the injustice within. He does so in correlation with multiple uses of “we”. He creates a context in which the audience, IC, and everyone else are connected and

supposedly agree on the matter of injustice in the world. By drawing on common knowledge of history and by placing Joseph Kony in the foreground in *image 33*, the video refers to the emotions of anger and sadness connected to events of history.

5. Discussion

In our analysis we examined the discourse and rhetoric used in Kony 2012 through a semiotic analysis. In the discussion section we will sum up the recurrent themes and topics found in the video, and discuss the video's discursive strategy in relation to the various theories we summed up earlier in our project. We will explore how the video portrays and represents the Ugandan population, Kony and the LRA, Jason Russell, and the millennial population. This will allow for a discussion about the positive and negative consequences of using humanitarian discourse such as the one used in Kony 2012.

5.1 Cosmopolitanism / Interconnectedness

As seen in the analysis section, Kony 2012 works with many recurring themes represented in a specific context. One of the repeated themes in the video is that of cosmopolitanism and the global civil society.

The narrative in Kony 2012 is a prime example of a new way of communicating social change in a cosmopolitan world, where we meet a tendency to care and show compassion for the misfortune of distant strangers. The technological advancement allows the video and message to travel across continents through a single click of a mouse. This represents the possibilities of the globalized world. The repetitive use of representations connected to cosmopolitanism, global civil society, and the means of technology, emphasizes the importance of using the resources available to make a difference for those in need. As shown on page 40 with the analysis of *image 4*, the 'Share' button on Facebook becomes synonymous with strong human emotions like 'love' and 'belonging'. One can argue that the simple act of sharing is like a sixth sense, since it has become so common in everyday life. This representation holds the audience responsible for using their ability to spread the message.

The use of narrative tools such as CGI effects to manipulate the Facebook timeline, as dealt with on page 45 of the analysis, clearly shows an intention to engage with a global Western community who will immediately grasp what is happening in the screen. This global narrative is not entirely global, because the discourse is shaped to target a Western audience. People from other cultures will look at this in a different

perspective. In the theory of Cultural Studies, on page 17-18, we similarly show the importance of culture and how it plays a role in the shaping of meaning. In addition, Facebook is subject to cultural relativism, due to the fact that it is not equally distributed and consumed in other parts of the world.

The activist TMS Ruge contested this discourse of an allegedly developed North assuming an underdeveloped South, who is unable to resolve its own problems. When the video was publicly projected in Uganda it raised so much anger in the audience that it had to be interrupted.

This relates to Giddens' view of modernity and its relationship with globalization as being Eurocentric, and still very much considered a characteristic of the developed North (Barker, 2012). Western produced knowledge is still regarded as a universal truth (McEwan, 2009). The producers of the video explore the youth's longing for connectedness across borders, made possible by the advent of the internet. This type of cosmopolitan rhetoric can be regarded as intent to exercise power, and therefore, of trying to shape the public's perception, attitudes, and actions on a global scale (Burke, as cited in Dechaine, 2002 p. 356). This idea of universal cosmopolitanism is misleading. There are different degrees of interconnectedness around the globe, especially with the differences in internet access penetration. For example, in 2012, only 13% of Ugandan population had internet access (Freedom House, 2012), while in the U.S. the penetration rate was 78.1% (Internet World Stats, 2012).

5.2 The Distant Sufferer and Child Representation

It is important to note that this humanitarian product flourished within a specific culture, as it can be observed throughout the video. The author's take pride in their country and how the solution is directly connected to the actions of its leaders. We detect a mythical characteristic in the discourse about how the U.S. is portrayed as a powerful hegemonic nation and somehow has the power to fix the world's problems, if its ruler's decide to intervene. This allegory to America's greatness is evident in the predominant colors (red, black, white and blue), the display of American institutions, and how Americans are repeatedly displayed doing good deeds and activist work. This is displayed on page 64 of our analysis section. This purposeful elevation of the country and its citizens' greatness is an effective way to influence potential activists to take

action because of nationalist feelings. As Rorty puts it, there is solidarity of irony. It flourishes within a specific culture with specific situational meanings, and not in the form of a *“‘universal’ truth but in the form of stories of suffering that, by way of ‘sentimental education’, mundanely cultivate the virtue of ‘being kind to others as the only social bond that is needed’”* (as cited in Chouliaraki, 2011, p. 11).

A deeper level of engagement is achieved by involving the activist in the solution. He is being self-empowered with a set of tools that will make him and his actions matter. However it can be argued that this discursive strategy distributes the quality of humanity in an unequal way, where young Americans are given agency, but Ugandans are not. With a promise of self-empowerment comes what Chouliaraki (2011) refers to as a certain over-humanization of the Western activist, be it a celebrity who posts a tweet or an activist who buy's the action kit. This emphasizes that the solution will come from the Western world, removing the voice of the vulnerable others and thereby dehumanizing those who live outside the Western sphere of power (p. 17).

Another interesting way of engaging with the audience is by creating an emotional relationship between the Westerner and the distant sufferer (Chouliaraki, 2010). The focus on the relationship between Jason, his son Gavin, and Jacob is intentionally emotional, and has the potential to create an emotional link between these 'characters' and the person who is subjected to this narrative. If there is success in creating this emotional link, there is an increased predisposition to want to become involved in the campaign and become an activist. The initial conversation in Appendix a, 2.4 between Jason and Jacob is, by far, the most emotional scene in the whole video. In the analysis on page 53, we see how it clearly connotes an intention to shock the viewer and to raise a visceral feeling of both sadness towards the tragic story of Jacob, and anger towards the perpetrator. This emotional connectivity, achieved through the exploration of the victims' suffering, raises a number of issues. To what degree is it ethical to explore a child tragedy and expose him to this level of vulnerability for millions of people to see? One could argue that the way Jason tried to instigate an emotional response from this child is unethical. Jacob is somehow used to raise the viewer's emotional engagement. Jason exercises what Chouliaraki (2010) calls 'moral

education' by raising a series of proposals as to how the viewer should feel towards suffering (p. 110).

This is clearly a victim-oriented campaign in the way it portrays the distant sufferer as an object of our contemplation. It is interesting to analyze how there is an ambiguous relationship between the spectator and the victims, which is being mediated mostly by Jason, throughout the narrative. This ambiguity manifests itself through an obvious intent to bring the sufferer closer to the spectator. The use of close up shots, besides giving more intensity to the scenes, also brings the viewer and the victim (Jacob) to the same level (page 45). This is also presented in the narrative, through the way Jason tries to create parallels, sometimes contrasting between him, his son, Jacob and the viewer.

5.3 Celebrity Advocates

Kony 2012 targeted 20 culture makers to help spread the message of the video, which is illustrated on page 70 of the analysis, *image 31*. This approach proved to be very successful, most evident due to the fact that Oprah started a chain reaction of re-tweets of the video after she endorsed it on her Twitter profile as mentioned in the introduction on page 7. One must applaud IC for their strategy to spread their message through celebrity endorsements to make the video go viral, but at the same it raises questions about the 'sheep-culture' it entails. One has to wonder if people share the video because their celebrity idol posted it, or because they are genuinely interested and involved in the LRA conflict. The use of celebrity endorsements to spread the humanitarian message is not a new phenomenon, just think back to Band Aid's "Do They Know It's Christmas?" released in 1984. The use of celebrity endorsements can potentially bring a lot of attention to a subject, but at the same time it is obviously a marketing tool and you will have to look past the glamorous exterior to gain insight to the real subject of the conflict.

5.4 The Power of Social Media

The portrayal and use of social media is prevalent all throughout Kony 2012. Social media, e.g. Facebook and YouTube, is even used as part of the narrative, and Jason repeatedly emphasizes the power of the social media, and how it changes power

relations. Even though many people probably perceive social media as a trivial and ordinary thing, Jason accentuates its impact on our lives. As explained on page 40 of the analysis, he connects words like 'love' and 'belonging' to the use of social media, and a press on the 'Share' button on Facebook represents interconnectedness to the rest of the world. JR argues in his narration that there has been a change in the rules of the game. He argues that the global community, connected on the basis of social media, has shifted the power and ability to change from a few people at the top to the many people connected through social media. The motion of this change in power relations is referred to on page 67 of the analysis, where the shift is illustrated through the reverse triangle.

Following this logic, there is a great burden on the shoulders of the people who watch the documentary. All of a sudden they hold the power to change, and it is imperative that they decide whether to take action or not. This relates mostly to the millennial population who are the population with the most widespread use of social media.

5.5 Millennials and the Exclusion of Ugandans

The narrative directs the message to young people throughout the video. The portrayal of activists is created through representations in images of young people in groups, and in action, as pointed out on page 68 of the analysis. Relating to this example, we are presented with *"an army of young people"*. Additionally, the narration following image 30, claims that *"we"* – meaning collectiveness, not just the connection between IC and the audience - the global society, are a part of the action already taken and the wish for present and future action. Therefore, the audience is presented as a collective group of young Westerners. Here we can refer to the numbers presented in the section of the introductory section called *"Kony 2012 Data"* on page 5. It provides us with the knowledge that the majority of the engaging public was the young adults – age 18-29. We refer to this age group as 'millennials'. People of the Western world, born in 1980 or later, are believed to have a different perspective of greatness, where they are not locked into the greatness of wealth, fame, and power alone: *"Instead, if a Millennial does achieve wealth, fame, or power, it is a means to a greater good than an end in and of itself"* (Rainer, 2011, p. 17). The targeted and portrayed millennials in Kony 2012 can show a greater understanding from IC as to how they most effectively gain support

for their cause. According to researcher Thom S. Rainer (2011), millennials are deemed more hopeful in the work for the greater good and are synonymous with technology. They are commonly known to have the means and knowledge of technology, which allow them to reach further and have an opinion upon matters around the globe. There is a sense of marketization when choosing the targeted receiver, but IC also demonstrates power relations through their choices in production. As mentioned earlier, the connection to discourse and knowledge produced and affected by the situatedness of production, such as Western people and culture, shows a tendency to exclude the Ugandans and all 'others'. The young Ugandan people appear several times as activists as well, but are connected to the same level of activism, which the audience is supposed to withhold. The reason for looking differently at the young Ugandans travelling to America advocating the cause is connected to the transformation of representation through the video. The audience meets the young Ugandans as victims at first and experiences the transformation they go through. They evolve into activists, but the portrayal points to them as advocates. For example, Jacob is most often portrayed on his own; in pictures; in interviews; on stage, but not in groups, whereas the Western activists are most often portrayed in groups.

Other ways of representing the difference between the Western people and the Ugandans in the video are relevant to discuss. A way of viewing the gap difference is by looking at how the tendency to display Caucasian people next to Ugandans. The distinction appears relatively often, which leaves the impression that the distinction is clear to the producer and should be for the audience. The representations are roughly divided – black and white, hero and victim, hero and villain.

5.6 Hero, Villain, and Victim

Throughout the video, Jason uses Jacob to represent the struggle that all of the 'invisible children' faces. The discursive representations analyzed on page 57 of the analysis displays how he in a similar manner uses Kony to represent all the crimes of the LRA. This technique of pars pro toto helps create the dramaturgy, but has also been a point of critique in many blogs and columns.

The advantage of representing the problems in Uganda through these two characters is that the conflict becomes easier to understand, and the viewer will be able to relate to

the two characters. Like in a traditional filmic setting you have Kony as the villain and Jacob as the victim. The millennial population is used to watching Hollywood-style movies where this relationship is often prevalent, and because of this they know there is a part missing - the hero. Jason Russell fills this persona, but only to an extent. He has somewhat improved the conditions in Uganda, but to reach the ultimate goal, to stop Kony, he needs the audience's help. This is reminiscent of Chouliaraki's concept of positive image appeal. Following the logic of this concept, each individual donor has the power to change and can affect the situation of the sufferer positively (Chouliaraki, 2010 pp. 110-111). When the audience feels like they hold this power, they are more encouraged to take action.

While this representation of the conflict gives the audience a chance to feel like heroes, there are also several disadvantages and ethical dilemmas linked to the simplistic representation. One of these ethical dilemmas is that the discourse presented in Kony 2012 and how they portrayed the Ugandan conflict affects the audience's worldview.

The humanitarian narrative is determinant because... it shapes a political discourse that has profound consequences for the production of social reality, in our rich countries as well as in the so-called third world" (Musrò, 2011 p. 15).

What this means is that there is a distinct connection between discourse and the production of social reality. Since Kony 2012 was viewed by so many people and was the topic for such extensive discussion, it must be concluded that it also helped shape people's perception of social reality.

5.7 The Emergency Imaginary

In relation, we can discuss the topic of emergency, as analyzed on page 37 of the analysis. The chance for the heroes, in the role of the audience, to act is highly pressured through images and discourse in the video. Musarò refers to "*emergency imaginary*" as a humanitarian narrative where we find ourselves in a world of constant emergencies. In the Western world we are constantly bombarded with emergencies of issues like human rights, social injustice, and poverty (Musrò, 2011 p. 22). When the video shows images of great suffering, like the pictures of mutilated pictures (*image 21*), the interview with Jacob, and the footage of the night commuters (Appendix a,

2.2), it might create a 'shock effect' and lead to 'compassion fatigue' as referenced by Chouliaraki on page 21.

The 'emergency imaginary' is also seen in Kony 2012, as it is explicitly stated that 2012 is the year Kony *must* be captured (Appendix a, 3.7). In the video, they do not argue why it must be 2012 even though the title refers to the year. Nevertheless, it helps create a sense of urgency, and as Musarò states, "... *we are more moved by acute crises than by chronic crises...*" (Musarò, 2011 p. 23). The sense of crisis is prevalent when dealing with a humanitarian video like Kony 2012. The first image the audience sees, as analyzed on page 37, is interesting. "*Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time is now*" puts an emphasis on connective words – 'time' and 'now'. When seeing this time reference as the first thing, the sense of urgency has already been formed.

The urgency is not only demonstrated in discourse. *Image 7* sets a deadline for the video and somehow also the campaign and efforts, which can lead the audience to wonder what IC is going to do with the entire project when that date passes. In connection to this, we find *image 6*, where the digital countdown in the video can be argued to be a stressful feature. The audience is put under pressure by IC, which might lead some to action, but could annoy others.

5.8 The Simplification of the Conflict

The 'creation' of urgency is used to gain attention for a campaign and make people act, but there are negative aspects to this approach as well. The LRA conflict is a complex and nuanced issue, and by switching all the attention to stopping Kony as soon as possible you neglect every other factor that causes problems in Uganda and surrounding countries. For example, nodding disease is a bizarre and often fatal disease that has sickened over 4000 children in Uganda since 2010. Since Uganda is a poor and technologically underwhelming country compared to the western world, they do not have the necessary tools to stop this disease. They will need aid from technologically advanced pharmaceutical companies, not available in Africa. However, since the discourse presented in Kony 2012 focuses most, if not all, its attention to stopping Joesph Kony, other problems like nodding disease gets ignored (York, 2012). This traces back to the concept of discourse affecting social reality. Since the discourse focuses so much attention on stopping Kony, the production of social reality follows the same line;

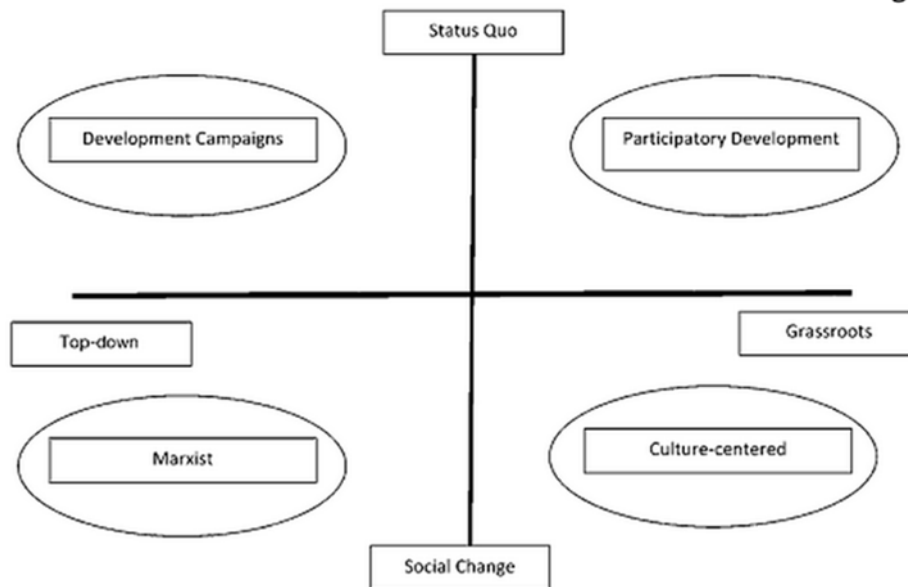
many people who watch Kony 2012 will get the impression that stopping Joseph Kony will mark the end of problems in Uganda.

On page 60 of the analysis, we see how Jason Russell implicitly acknowledges the simplicity of the narrative when explaining to Gavin (and the viewer) that his job is to stop "*the bad guy*" (Appendix a, 3.1). In a way you can say that the audience is being asked to join the campaign on the basis of a narrative of a five year-old. Jason explains the situation in an overly simplified manner, and when Gavin is asked about what we should do about him (Kony), he answers, "*We should stop him*" (Appendix a, 3.2). The narrative of the conflict is extremely simple, and consequently, the solution to the problem is equally intelligible. The fact that the narrative is so simple makes it compelling and easily disseminated on social media. Thus, you can say that the simplification of the LRA crisis makes it easy for almost everyone to digest what would otherwise be too complicated for people to understand or care about. On the other hand, it creates a misleading representation of the conflict, which can ultimately have dire consequences.

As we explained earlier in the project about the LRA and a brief history of the Ugandan conflict on page 9, Kony's forces are not located in Uganda anymore. This makes the documentary seem outdated, because it relates to events that are not happening in Uganda anymore. However, the LRA is still active, although primarily in Congo and Sudan, so the ultimate goal to stop Kony remains a commendable mission. On the other hand, the widespread discourse of Kony 2012 can cause the unintended consequence of supporting the corrupt presidency of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni, as a mean to stop the LRA. It is important to consider if the best way to strengthen and rebuild northern Uganda is to eliminate the threat of the LRA through support of Museveni, or rather through efforts to rebuild the economy of the region. Perhaps the strategy should focus on establishing human rights for women and homosexuals and not portray the region as a war zone since this might have serious consequences for the economy. Of course, this narrative would be a lot harder to disseminate through the social media and is much more unlikely to go viral.

5.9 The Discourse on Social Change

graphic 3



We can use the theoretical framework for social change communication to discuss where Kony 2012 is placed on this outline and understand the nature of this particular communication strategy. The graph presents two tensions: social change – status quo and top-down – grassroots. The Y-axis refers to whether the aim of a campaign is to create social and political change or help in the development of a country while keeping the status quo. The Top-down approach on the X-axis comprises when a campaign uses top-down communication to create changes. Contrarily, if it is a grassroots campaign, you focus on participatory communication where you engage with the local population in order to reach your goal (Dutta, 2011 p. 32-35)

At first glance, you would think Kony 2012 places itself to the far right with the immense focus on the campaign as a grassroots movement. Continually throughout the video, the young, millennial, generation is put in contrast to the older generation, as seen on page 41. The new generation holds the power to create social change because of the new possibilities of technology and the internet. On page 39 and 67 we notice that social media has changed the world we live in so it is now the global community that holds the power to change instead of just a few powerful people. In theory, this worldview is Marxist in the sense that the introduction of social media has served as a catalyst for a revolution to happen. The only difference is that Marxism is traditionally seen as the proletariat of a country or region participating in a revolution

against the bourgeoisie, whereas in the case of Kony 2012, the revolution is happening on a global scale (*Ibid.*). The argument made is that the introduction of social media has brought the world together to connect and share ideas. As this is happening, people get a sense of cosmopolitanism, and will demand justice.

This is ironic in a way, since the approach IC uses is to gather people and demand action from the U.S. government. If the revolution really did happen, and the common people now hold the power to change, why must they go to the U.S. government for support?

More likely, the introduction of social media in the world has not created a revolution per se, but rather serves as a platform for people, through communicative processes, to be able to transform social structures, and in doing so give agency to the subaltern to bring about social change. This approach is similar to the Culture-centered field in the lower right corner in *graphic 3 (Ibid.)*. When the Kony 2012 video shows the power relations being turned completely upside down, see *image 28*, it may be hyperbolic. Most likely, it is being used to show that the new global interconnectedness can bring people together to jointly demand actions and thereby create social change. However, to argue that the power relations have turned completely upside down is a bit of a stretch. The strategic idea to plant this notion in the viewer's head is to reinforce the audience in that they hold great power to create a change.

Neither of the two upper fields in *graphic 3*, Participatory Development and Development Campaigns, imply the creation of social change at the macro level. Instead, they aim to change the individual-level beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, etc. of the region to comply with western-world values, e.g. gender-equality, freedom of speech, etc. Development Campaigns seek to do it through a top-down approach, whereas the Participatory Development field seeks to do it through interaction with the population. This is meant as 'education' for the region to modernize and catch up to the western-world (*Ibid.*)

Interestingly, in Kony 2012 they do not seek to change the individual-level beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, etc. of the Ugandan population, but instead the young people of the Western world, the millennials. As explained on page 41, the video promotes cosmopolitanism and strives to get the millennial population to join the campaign

through donations and activism. This approach towards the millennials fits into the Participatory Development field. The fact that the video's discourse towards participation and engagement is aimed at millennials and not Ugandans is highly interesting to point out. This can help explain why the screening of the video in Uganda turned into a riot since the local population was offended by the content of the video. The Ugandans does not receive any agency through this approach. The only way this conflict will be solved, according to the video, is if the millennials share the video and join in activism to get the U.S. government's attention so they can help with military intervention.

It is hard to place Kony 2012 in the theoretical framework for social change communication. The communicative strategy can be connected to different fields in different degrees, and it is impossible to pinpoint one specific field in the graph. Ultimately, this just goes to show that the video is not a standard humanitarian video and that the discourse is unique, which could lead us to think that IC is setting a new trend for humanitarian communication.

6. Conclusion

Through the work of the analysis and the following discussion we can now answer the research question presented in the introduction. The question is the following:

How does the narrative in Kony 2012 construct discursive representations of the issues portrayed in the video in order to motivate the audience to take action, and what are the possible implications of this rhetoric for the audience's perception?

The first part of the research question is answered mostly in the analysis section of the project. Through the use of semiotic, discourse, and visual analysis, we identified several discursive representations, specifically constructed to influence a certain interpretation to the audience. First, the representation of the global world creates a context involving the audience through the discourse and images revealing a cosmopolitan view. The images of the globe and the portrayal of the social media, such as Facebook and YouTube, shapes a discursive style of global interconnectedness, where the narrative is presented several times through a Facebook timeline, and the 'share' button is presented as a 'sixth human sense'. The constructed notion that we are all connected and enlightened through the internet creates a cosmopolitan identity, where humanity's greatest desire is to belong and connect. If the viewer can relate to this worldview he or she accepts the responsibility to act when confronted with injustice.

The next line of discursive representations is connected to the representation of the conflict. We identified humanitarian representations as predicted by the literature on post-humanitarian discourse. The representation of the distant sufferer, in this case Jacob, appeals to the emotions of the audience, and can be regarded as the voice of the victims. Joseph Kony is the villain of the narrative, and he represents the LRA. Jason Russell is the hero of the video, and the voice who leads the audience through the narrative. Like in traditional filmic storytelling, Kony is the villain, Jason is the hero, and Jacob is the victim. The millennials can relate to this type of narrative because they are used to seeing this narrative in movies.

The audience sees Jacob as the victim, so they wish to help him. Similarly, they see Kony as the face of the problem, so they wish to stop him. Jason Russell comes up with the solution to the problem, so the viewer wishes to join him in his cause. These representations are all emotional appeals, which will help lead the audience to take action.

In the video, there is a distinction between the developed Western world, and the poor, conflict-ridden Uganda. The citizens of the Western world are portrayed in light, untroubled settings. They appear independent and powerful, and have the innate ability to change the world. Ugandans, on the other hand, are usually portrayed in dark, precarious spaces. They are not given any agency. This creates a sense of responsibility to the millennials, or 'Western guilt', since they have the power to change, while the Ugandans have none.

The proposed solution is to stop Kony. One can argue that this is a simplistic approach to the resolution of a much bigger and more comprehensive problem, as argued by various experts and scholars from all parts of the world. The road to achieving the ultimate goal, to stop Kony, is illustrated as a domino effect initiated by Invisible Children and the millennials, who hold the power to influence policy making.

We have discussed various representations presented in the video, which all impacts the audience's perception of the issues portrayed. This is interesting, because the discourse produced by IC actively intends to shape the viewer's perception and social reality. The discourse represents power relations. Therefore, we discuss the implications of how IC represents the issues raised and its participants.

A sense of emergency is brought up in the video through 'ticking clocks' and countdowns, in both images and narration. This is putting pressure on the viewer to take a stand, and since there is an illusory emergency, which may cause the viewer to act irrationally. The narration in the video never argues for why it is an emergency, and therefore the concept of emergency is misleading.

The portrayal of Kony as the source of all problems in Uganda, gives the viewer the perception that capturing Kony will end all problems in Uganda. This approach is problematic and does not consider the complexity of the situation. Uganda is portrayed

as a war-zone, which is in fact not true anymore since Kony and the LRA has moved into other regions of central Africa. Furthermore, this portrayal of Uganda in such a negative light can possibly help reinforce the stereotype of African countries as helpless, poor, dark, war-ridden places.

Ultimately, Kony 2012 proved to be unprecedentedly successful at engaging young Westerners through social media. They achieved this extraordinary awareness through the use of unique discourse and engagement strategy. Thus, IC successfully managed to create awareness about Joseph Kony and the LRA conflict. The rhetoric used in order to achieve this goal can be criticized, since we have found in our analysis that it is simplistic and misleading. After studying and writing for this project we believe we have answered our research question in a satisfactory manner. Nevertheless, we are left with many ideas and questions which could be elaborated on in a future project.

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8. Appendices

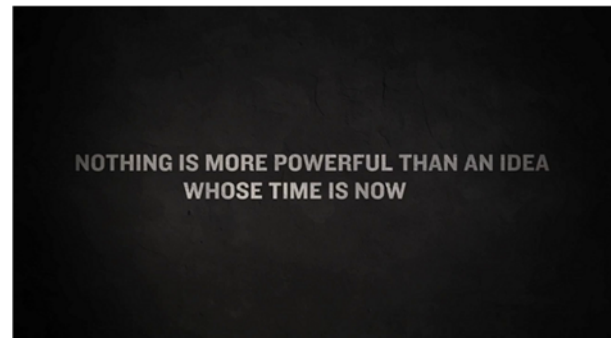
8.1 Appendix a

The transcription is divided into three sections in accordance to the natural flow of narrative themes. In the three sections, we divide into smaller sections, where the division is made on grounds of a clear change of sequence in the movie.

Section 1 – Preamble

1.1

NOTHING IS MORE POWERFUL THAN AN
IDEA
WHOSE TIME HAS COME
WHOSE TIME IS NOW



1.2

Jason Russell [N]: Right now there are more people on Facebook than there were on the planet 200 years ago. Humanities greatest desire is to belong and connect and now we see each other. We hear each other:



Grandpa I love you

I love you

Why – why won't it take a picture?

Jason Russell [N]: We share what we love and it reminds us of what we all have in common.

Alive and well after 7 1/2 days.

If you believe in yourself you will know

how to ride a bike. Rock n' roll.

So not technically your device is on. Can

you tell – oh it's exciting.

Jason Russell [N]: And this connection is changing the way the world works.

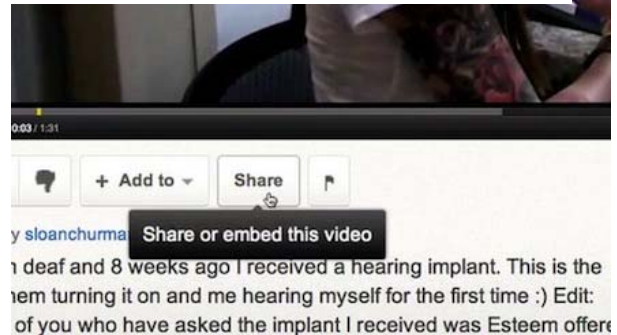
Governments are trying to keep up.

Now we can taste the freedom.

(FACEBOOK)

Jason Russell [N]: And older generations are concerned. Many people are very concerned about tomorrow. Cause it could get worse next year. (THE COMING COLLAPSE?)

Jason Russell [N]: The game has new rules. The next 27 minutes are an experiment but in order for it to work you have to pay attention.



Section 2 – Presentation of the Conflict

2.1

Nurses: *baby cries* Oh he's cute. He's really cute. Wow! Congratulations. Oh I can hear him.

Jason Russell [N]: Every single person in the world started this way, he didn't choose where or when he was born but because he's here he matters.



Jason Russell: We've been waiting for you. You made it.

Jason Russell [N]: My name is Jason Russell and this is my son Gavin. He loves jumping on the Trampoline, being a Ninja and dancing.

Jason Russell: What are you doing?

Gavin: Making a snow angel.

Jason Russell: How do you do that?

Gavin: You do this: de de de – de de de

Jason Russell [N]: Just like his dad, he likes being in movies. ACTION!

Gavin: Look up people look up – RUN!!~~ It's a bomb.

Jason Russell [N]: And he likes making movies.

Gavin: Daddy watch this. I think we got the video.

Jason Russell [N]: But he was born into a pretty complicated world. And as a dad I want him to grow up in a better world than I did. And because of the course of events in my life I see a way to get there. It has become my job.

Jason Russell: Who are you to end a war? I'm here to tell you: Who are you, not to?

2.2

Jason Russell: Hey Gavin, what's up?

Jason Russell [N]: Years, before Gavin was born the course of my life was changed entirely by another boy.

Jason Russell: And who's this right here?

Gavin: Jacob.

Jason Russell: Who's Jacob?

Gavin: Jacob is our friend in Africa.

Jason Russell [N]: It's almost been ten years since Jacob and I became friends.

Jason Russell: it's okay they're nice, they are different than sharks.

Jason Russell [N]: But when my friends and I first met him in Uganda in central Africa it was in very different circumstances. He was running for his life.



2.3

Jason Russell: Ah – you go to school here?

Jacob: Yes

Jason Russell: That's how you know English so well.

Jacob: I know

Jason Russell: Ya.

Soldier: Hello.

Jason Russell: How many nights have you stayed here?

Jacob: Yes

Jason Russell: That's how you know English so well.



Soldier: You are making our work here very difficult. You stop that.

Jason Russell [N]: The night I met Jacob he told me what he and other children in Northern Uganda were living through.

Jacob: We worry the rebels when they arrest us again then they will kill us. My brother tried to escape then they killed him using a panga. They cut his neck.

Jason Russell: Did you see it?

Jacob: I saw.

Boy: We fear that if we sleep at our home we can be abducted by the rebels because our home is far away from town. They will catch us then they will take us there in the bush. We come here to save our life.

Jason Russell: I cannot believe that.

(You cannot believe it?)

(This has been going on for years?)

Jason Russell: If that happened one night in America it would be on the cover of Newsweek.

2.4

Jason Russell: What is it that you want to be when you grow up?

Jacob: For me, I wanted to be a lawyer but I don't have money to pay my school fees so that I learn and then become a lawyer.

Jason Russell [N]: After spending a few weeks with Jacob, he told me something that I would never forget.



Jacob: It is better when you kill us and if possible, you can kill us, you kill us. For us, we don't want now to stay – because

Jason Russell: You don't want to stay on earth?

Jacob: We are only two, no one is taking care of us. We are not going to school, so...

Jason Russell: You would rather die than stay on earth?

Jacob: Yes.

Jason Russell: Now, even now?

Jacob: Even now. How are we going to stay in our future? You see.

Jason Russell [N]: He told me more about his brother and what he would say to him if he were still alive.

Jacob: I love you. But now I miss you. So it is better when we meet we are going to – even if – we are not going to meet but we may meet in heaven, you see? So it is better. I will not talk much, it will start something because if I saw my brother once again. I don't (cries)

Jason Russell: Hummh?

Jacob: (cries)

Jason Russell: That's okay, Jacob, its okay

Jacob: (cries)

Jason Russell [N]: Everything in my heart told me to do something and so I made him a promise.

Jason Russell: We are also going to do everything that we can to stop them.

Jacob: Okay.

Jason Russell: Do you hear my words?

Jacob: Yes.

Jason Russell: Do you know what I mean?

Jacob: Yes.



Jason Russell: Huh?

Jacob: Yes.

Jason Russell: Huh? We are, we're going to stop them. We're going to stop them.

2.5

Jason Russell [N]: I made that promise to Jacob, not knowing what that would mean but now I do. Over the past 9 years, I have fought to fulfill it. And the fight has led me here, to this movie you're watching because that promise is just not about Jacob or me it's also about you, and this year 2012 is finally the year we can fulfill it, and if we succeed we can change the course of human history but time is running out, to level with you, this movie expires on DECEMBER 31st 2012 and it's only purpose is to stop the Rebel Group The L.R.A. (Lord's Resistance Army) and their leader Joseph Kony. And I'm about to tell you how we are exactly gonna do it.

KONY 2012



Section 3 – The plan

3.1

Jason Russell [N]: So the thing is – my son Gavin – I’ve never really explained to him what I do, he knows I work in Africa but he doesn’t know what the wars about or who Joseph Kony is. So I’m gonna explain it to him for the first time, today. That’s what we’re doing.

Jason Russell: So Gav, are you ready?

Gavin: Ya.

Jason Russell: I’m gonna ask you some questions

Gavin: Ok.

Jason Russell: And you can just look at me and answer the questions, today.

Gavin: I’m kind of nervous.

Jason Russell: What do I do for a job?

Gavin: You stop the bad guys from being mean.

Jason Russell: Who are the bad guys?

Gavin: Umm...

Jason Russell: Do you know where they –

Gavin: “Star Wars” people.

Jason Russell: “Star Wars” people? -

Gavin: Yeah.

Jason Russell: - Those are the bad guys?

Gavin: Yeah.

Jason Russell: Can I tell you the bad guy’s name?

Gavin: Yeah.

Jason Russell: This is the — This is the guy, Joseph Kony.

Gavin: He’s the bad guy?

Jason Russell: Yeah. -Who's this? -

Gavin: Jacob.

Jason Russell: Joseph Kony — He has an army, okay? And what he does is he takes children from their parents and he gives them a gun to shoot and he makes them shoot and kill other people.

Gavin: But they're not gonna do what he says because they're nice guys, right?

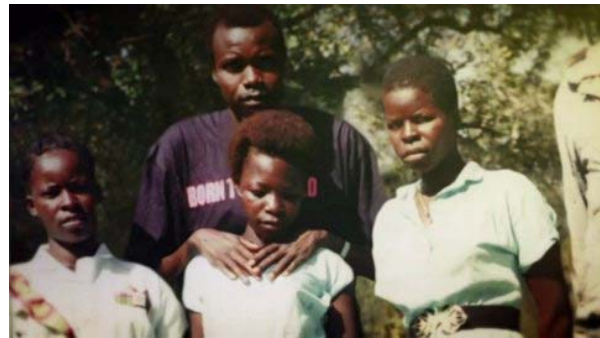
Jason Russell: Yeah, they don't want to do what he says, but he forces them to do bad things. What do you think about that?

Gavin: It's sad.

3.2

Jason Russell [N]: Mm. I couldn't explain to Gavin the details of what Joseph Kony really does. Because the truth is, Kony abducts kids just like Gavin. For 26 years, Kony has been kidnapping children into his rebel group, the LRA... ..turning the girls into sex slaves... ..and the boys into child soldiers. He makes them mutilate people's faces. And he forces them to kill their own parents. And this is not just a few children. It's been over 30,000 of them. And Jacob was one of those children. As if Kony's crimes aren't bad enough, he is not fighting for any cause, but only to maintain his power. He is not supported by anyone, and he has repeatedly used peace talks to rearm and murder again and again.

Ocampo: Kony different times proposed peace and then just regained strength and attacked.



Jason Russell [N]: This is the head prosecutor for the International Criminal Court. In 2002, when the court was started, their job was to find and demand the arrest of the world's worst criminals. Although there are a lot of warlords, murderers, and dictators in the world, the perversity of Kony's crimes made him first on the court's list.

Ocampo: Kony is the first guy indicted by the ICC. The crimes basically are crimes against humanity and war crimes committed against the civilian population including murder, sexual slavery, rapes, abductions. We need to plan how to arrest Kony. Start to plan and it has to be serious. In fact, the only way to stop Kony is to show him we're going to arrest you.

Jason Russell: What do you think we should do about him?

Gavin: We should stop him.

Ocampo: The criminal here is Kony. Stop him and then solve other problems.

Jason Russell: We should stop who?

Gavin: Him.

3.3

Jason Russell [N]: It's obvious that Kony should be stopped. The problem is, 99% of the planet doesn't know who he is. If they knew, Kony would have been stopped long ago.



Lapolo: Let the world, let the international community take justice to him there. Follow him wherever he is. First to rescue our children, and secondly, to deliver justice.

Mao: We are determined to cooperate with any friend of Uganda. To ensure that this mindless killing and slaughter is ended.

Jason Russell [N]: When my friends and I came home from Uganda, we thought that if the government knew, they would do something to stop him. But everyone in

Washington we talked to said there is no way the United States will ever get involved in a conflict where our national security or financial interests aren't at stake.

Prendergast: No administration — Republican, Democrat, Obama, Bush, Clinton, doesn't matter — would do enough because it's simply not an important-enough issue on the radar screen of American foreign policy.

3.4

Jason Russell [N]: Since the government said it was impossible, we didn't know what else to do but tell everyone we could about Jacob and the invisible children.

Jason Russell: Show this movie to as many people as possible in such a way that we can't be ignored.

Jason Russell [N]: And when we did, people were shocked, and their awareness turned into action. We started something — a community.

Woman: I have friends that have been living in this conflict their entire life. Fight for that because that is what is gonna change this world, and that is what defines us.

Jason Russell [N]: We got creative, and we got loud.

Crowd: It's not over! It's not over! It's not over!

Jason Russell [N]: And as the LRA began to move into other countries, Jacob and other Ugandans came to the U.S. to speak on behalf of all people suffering because of Kony. Even though Uganda was relatively safe, they felt compelled to tell the world that Kony was still out there and had to be stopped.

Jacob: I'm here so proud advocating for the people who are back at home and this change we are going to make is going to last forever.



Jason Russell [N]: We built a community around the idea that where you live shouldn't determine whether you live. We were committed to stop Kony and rebuild what he had destroyed. And because we couldn't wait for institutions or governments to step in, we did it ourselves with our time, talent, and money. So we rebuilt schools.

Okot: The best you can offer a child is by letting them be independent and that was providing education.

Jason Russell [N]: We created jobs.

King: I have seen the lives of those who have been hopeless. Now they have hope.

Jason Russell [N]: And we built an early warning radio network on the front line of the war to protect villages from rebel attacks.

Man: To update real time what's happening on a war zone 8,000 miles away.

3.5

Jason Russell [N]: All of this was funded by an army of young people who put their money toward their belief in the value of all human life. They gave a few dollars a month of what little they had to a program called TRI and proved that a bunch of littles could make a big difference. And as a result, the unseen became visible.

Crowd: We've seen these kids. We've heard their cries. This war must end! We will not stop. We will not fear. We will fight war!

Song: ♪Mumford & Sons "Roll Away Your Stone" playing♪

Stars hide your fires

These here are my desires

And I won't give them up to you this time around

And so

But you...

...rightfully mine.

Male activist: I've talked to people from Mexico, from Canada, from every other state that I can think of. We're all doing this for the exact same reason and we're all coming from completely different places. This is what the world should be like.

3.6

Jason Russell [N]: So, with hundreds of thousands of people with us, we went back to Washington, D.C., and we met with congressmen and senators one by one on both sides — Republicans, Democrats — and they all agreed with us. Joseph Kony's crimes had to be stopped.



Inhofe: With all the problems that are out there, none is more severe than one that — that mutilates and takes the lives of little kids.

Davis: These young members of the Invisible Children Organization know that no child should live in fear of being abducted or killed.

McGovern: So they were determined to become their voice. They realized that these African children and families were invisible to Washington policymakers. So they decided to make them visible.

Jason Russell [N]: And what I was told would never happen suddenly became possible.

Jason Russell: "In furtherance of the Congress's stated policy, I have authorized a small number of U.S. forces to deploy to Central Africa to provide assistance to regional forces that are working toward the removal of Joseph Kony from the battlefield. Sincerely, Barack Obama."

[Cheers And Applause]

TV announcer: The surprise announcement came in a letter from the White House.

The U.S. President's decision commits U.S. troops to help.

Rice: Through advice and assistance — not putting Americans into combat — to help the countries of the region end this threat once and for all. And that was a worthwhile investment.

[Cheers And Applause]

Okot: We used to think we could not do it and now when I see we can do it I am overwhelmed.

[Ululating]

Jason Russell [N]: After eight years of work, the government finally heard us. And in October of 2011, a hundred American advisers were sent into Central Africa to assist the Ugandan army in arresting Kony and stopping the LRA.

It was the first time in history that the United States took that kind of action because the people demanded it. Not for self-defense, but because it was right.

3.7

[HIGH FREQUENCY RADIO REPORT FROM CENTRAL AFRICA -DATE: 2 DECEMBER, 2011

A 14-year old boy who just escaped reports that “Joseph Kony now knows of the United States’ plan to stop the LRA and he is going to change his tactics to avoid capture, now that the great power is after him.”]

Jason Russell [N]: We’ve come so far. But Kony is still out there. He’s recently changed his tactics, making it even more difficult to capture him. And international support could be removed at any time.



Inhofe: If we take the pressure of, if we are not successful he is going to be growing his numbers. People forget and you got to remind them, and it takes numbers to remind them [...] and if interest wanes, then it’ll just, it’ll go away, and I’d end up standing out there alone trying to do something to support completing the mission [...] It’s got to be 2012.



Ocampo: It's not bad for the youth, it's bad for the world if we fail. It's not important just for Ugandan people it's important for everyone.

Jason Russell [N]: It's hard to look back on some parts of human history. Because when we heard about injustice, we cared, but we didn't know what to do. Too often we did nothing. But if we're going to change that, we have to start somewhere, so we're starting here with Joseph Kony because now we know what to do. Here it is. Ready? In order for Kony to be arrested this year, the Ugandan military has to find him. In order to find him, they need the technology and training to track him in the vast jungle.

That's where the American advisers come in. But in order for the American advisers to be there, the U.S. government has to deploy them. They've done that, but if the government doesn't believe that people care about arresting Kony, the mission will be canceled. In order for the



people to care, they have to know. And they will only know if Kony's name is everywhere. This is the dream. Kony arrested for all the world to see, and the abducted children returned home.

3.8

Jason Russell: Here's the biggest problem.

Gavin: Yeah.

Jason Russell: Do you want to know what it is?

Gavin: Yeah.

Jason Russell: Nobody knows who he is.

Gavin: Nobody knows, but — but I know who he is because I see him on this picture right now.

Jason Russell: He's not famous. He's invisible. Joseph Kony is invisible.

3.9

Jason Russell [N]: Here is how we're going to make him visible. We are going to make Joseph Kony a household name not to celebrate him, but to bring his crimes to the light. And we are starting this year, 2012.

We are targeting 20 culture makers and 12 policymakers to use their power for good. Let's start with the 20 culture makers. Celebrities, athletes, and billionaires have a loud voice, and what they talk about spreads instantly.



Clooney: I want, I'd like indicted war criminals to enjoy the same level of celebrity as me. That seems fair. That's our objective, is to just shine a light on it.



Jason Russell [N]: If our goal is to get Kony's name known, the known should join us. We are targeting 20 of the most diverse and influential culture makers to speak out about Kony and make him famous.

Man: Oprah.

Woman: Mark Zuckerberg.

Man #2: Ryan Seacrest.

Women #2: Bono.

Jason Russell [N]: Then we're going after policymakers — the ones that have the authority to see Kony captured. They decide if the advisers stay or leave. So we need to remind them that in this election year of fighting and name-calling, no matter what side you're on, this is something we can all agree on.

Feingold: If a senator or congressman notices 25 phone calls on any issue on any given day, it is noted.

Predergast: When citizens by the hundreds of thousands start demanding that our government do something, suddenly it becomes in the national interest of the United States government to respond to this problem.

Jason Russell [N]: We've identified the 12 policymakers that could change the game regarding Kony, so we're targeting them. On our Website, we've made it easy to write them directly, call them, meet with them, and get their attention. If my son were kidnapped and forced to kill, it would be all over the news. So we are making Kony world news by redefining the propaganda we see all day, every day that dictates who and what we pay attention to.

Fairey: A lot of people feel powerless to communicate their ideas. They think that: Okay, you know, I'm not a corporation. I don't own my own magazine or news station. I just don't have any say. But seeing what I've done, I think it's empowered a lot of people to realize that one individual can make an impact. And I actually want to demystify and say, "Here are these really simple tools. Go out and rock it."

Jason Russell [N]: And that's just what we intend to do.

3.10

[♪Flux Pavilion's "I Can't Stop" playing♪] I can't stop

Jason Russell [N]: Our goal is to change the conversation of our culture and get people to ask, "Who is Joseph Kony?"

We have printed hundreds of thousands of posters, stickers, yard signs, and fliers that are right now, today, being put up in major cities all over the world.

We have thousands of "Kony 2012" bracelets that we want everyone to wear

this year only. Each bracelet has a unique I.D. number. Input that number and you enter the mission to make Kony famous. You can geotag your posters and track your impact in real time. Everything you need is in a box called the Action Kit. It has two



bracelets — one for you and one to give away. And if you want to help fund our lifesaving programs, donate a few dollars a month through TRI and you can have the Action Kit for free. Start making Kony famous today, but all of these efforts will culminate on one day — April 20th — when we cover the night. This is the day when we will meet at sundown and blanket every street in every city till the sun comes up. We will be smart, and we will be thorough. The rest of the world will go to bed Friday night and wake up to hundreds of thousands of posters demanding justice on every corner.

[♪Flux Pavilion's "I Can't Stop" playing♪] I can't stop x3

3.11

Jason Russell [N]: It's always been that the decisions made by the few with the money and the power dictated the priorities of their government and the stories in the



media. They determine the lives and the opportunities of their citizens. But now there is something bigger than that. The people of the world see each other and can protect each other. It's turning the system upside down, and it changes everything.

Ocampo: We are living in a new world, Facebook world, in which 750 million people share ideas, not thinking in borders. It's a global community, bigger than the US. Joseph Kony was committing crimes for twenty years and no one cared. We care.

Jason Russell [N]: We have reached a crucial time in history where what we do or don't do right now will affect every generation to come. Arresting Joseph Kony will prove that the world we live in has new rules, that the technology that has brought our planet together is allowing us to respond to the problems of our friends.

Jacob: When it ends finally by bringing Kony to justice, it should be celebrated worldwide.

Jason Russell [N]: We are not just studying human history. We are shaping it. At the end of my life, I want to say that the world we've left behind is one that Gavin can be

proud of, a place that doesn't allow Joseph Kony and child soldiers, a place where children, no matter where they live, have a childhood free from fear.

Gavin: I'm gonna be like you, Dad.

Jason Russell: When you grow up?

Gavin: Yeah.

Jason Russell: Are you sure?

Gavin: I'm gonna come with you to Africa.

Jason Russell [N]: The better world we want is coming. It's just waiting for us to stop at nothing.

3.12

[NOTHING IS MORE POWERFUL THAN AN IDEA WHOSE TIME HAS COME]

[NOTHING IS MORE POWERFUL THAN AN IDEA WHOSE TIME IS NOW]

[NOW]

3.13

[THERE ARE THREE THINGS YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW]

[1. SIGN THE PLEDGE TO SHOW YOUR SUPPORT]

[2. GET THE BRACELET AND THE ACTION KIT]

[3. SIGN UP FOR TRI TO DONATE A FEW DOLLARS A MONTH]

[AND JOIN OUR ARMY FOR PEACE]

[ABOVE ALL SHARE THIS MOVIE ONLINE - IT'S FREE]

[FIND IT ALL AT KONY2012.COM]

8.2 Appendix b

The video on this DVD is only for use by the supervisor and censor when reading the project and examination time. We acknowledge the copyright of the video belonging to Invisible Children, Inc.