

1

Introduction to Key Issues in Child Sponsorship

Brad Watson and Matthew Clarke

Introduction – The child sponsorship phenomenon

Child Sponsorship (CS) is a humanitarian phenomenon and its broad popularity combined with a prodigious ability to mobilize funds for international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) is unique in the humanitarian aid sector. Writing in the mid-1990s, Smillie (in Sogge et al, 1996, p.99) described CS as 'the bedrock of several of the older organizations' and 'one of the most enduring success stories in private aid agency fundraising'. In the same year that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were launched, Brehm and Gale (2000, p.2) noted that 'agencies which run such programmes report a year-on-year increase in both the number of children sponsored and the amounts of money raised'. The prominence of CS as a fundraising device has continued with the first decade of the twenty-first century witnessing sustained growth in what can be loosely termed the CS sector. In North America, Europe, the United Kingdom and Australia, INGOs that have invested in CS as a key marketing tool are amongst the largest private aid agencies in terms of annual funds raised. The volume of children assisted is especially noteworthy. According to Wydick et al (2009, p.1) in 2009 the number of children in the world who were sponsored was between eight and 12 million, and the subsequent flow of funds exceeded US\$3.1 billion. By such accounts it is possible that over two decades CS has generated international transfers in excess of US\$50 billion.

Although there are numerous INGOs utilizing CS, a small number of them tend to be more prominent in Northern countries. For example, in 2007 the three largest Canadian CS INGOs generated 'more than ten times as much money from the public as the three top non-sponsorship

2 Introduction to Key Issues in Child Sponsorship

organizations' (Plewes and Stuart in Bell and Coicaud, 2007, p.30). The situation in Australia, where World Vision is the largest INGO, is even more intriguing. World Vision Australia's annual 2008–2009 income was more than five times greater than the next largest INGO (ACFID, 2012). In the year 2010–2011, total international income for Save the Children, World Vision, Compassion, Plan, Children International and ChildFund exceeded US\$6 billion, at least US\$2.5 billion of which derived from CS. Far from being a spent force, CS is a tool that has paved the way in some INGOs for rapid growth and leverage to access government grants (Maren, 1997, p.145), a sustainable income stream, a more diversified funding base and the consolidation of a small number of INGOs into 'super-sponsors.' The success of CS in mobilizing public donations has elevated several CS INGOs (especially the early adopters) into an elite category of fundraisers. As a 'product' in the market place, CS can therefore be considered a great success and the fact that CS fundraising methods have remained relatively popular over time is remarkable.

Although CS activities across INGOs are not uniform, they do have a number of common characteristics including a historic emphasis on regular giving, the motivation of donating to benefit individuals, and the provision of regular updates for the benefit of sponsors. In linking individual children to geographically distant donors, CS is credited with personalizing giving and making, as Fowler (1992) suggested, distant obligation seem immediate and personal. Children are key to the enduring appeal of CS to donors and while there is a continuum of modes for utilizing the funds raised through CS (from direct cash handouts to beneficiaries, to larger community development activities and community mobilization) the child as core has remained largely intact over time. Consequently the reputations and identities of CS INGOs are inextricably and profoundly linked to children although the extent to which children serve INGOs as symbols of world harmony, seers of truth and embodiments of the future (Bornstein, 2003, p.7) is debatable.

The emphasis of CS INGOs on children and their needs has legitimized and depoliticized their activities historically. It is argued by Manzo (2008, p.632) that the iconography of childhood expresses institutional ideals and key humanitarian values of solidarity, impartiality, neutrality and humanity. However, there can be no doubt that as a motivator for private donors and a legitimizing imperative for INGOs, the sponsorship of children works. Commenting on aid appeals in general, Coulter (1989, p.1) observed that 'the wide-eyed

child, smiling or starving, is the most powerful fundraiser for aid agencies.' Notably, much of the contentious historic debate over CS fundraising has focussed on its truthfulness and the extent to which CS INGOs have portrayed developing country beneficiaries with respect and dignity (Mittelman and Neilson, 2009, p.64). This has led some to question whether the formation of a relationship based on exchange of money 'may perhaps be a source of dissonance in sponsors' (Yuen, 2008, p.50).

The CS literature

Scholarly scrutiny of CS interventions has been very limited and there is an acute shortage of quality research regarding the impact of historic interventions. In one attempt at a literature review, Brehm and Gale (2000, p.1) observed that there was '...a scarcity of empirical research-based evidence about the impact of child sponsorship on recipient families and communities'. Unfortunately, the situation remains little changed at the time of writing this chapter. Available information about CS typically falls into the three broad categories of easily accessible journalistic exposé, carefully selected in-house publications (including consultancy reports) and a fragmented scholarly literature. Despite some exceedingly rare efforts to quantify the impact of sponsorship interventions (Wydict et al, 2013), and a small number of contributions from anthropologists (Bornstein, 2001, 2003), CS interventions are characterized by an abundance of anecdotal, often negative accounts dating to the 1980s. Such accounts have continued to inform the widespread criticisms of CS that emerged when the *New Internationalist* magazine addressed the topic in several issues during the 1980s (Stalker, 1982).

Generally speaking, CS is heavily contested, poorly understood and under-researched, a point made in Chapter 4 which deals with historic criticism of CS. That so few scholars and industry insiders have sought to interrogate the emergence, evolution and contribution of CS INGOs makes it difficult to evaluate their legitimacy, especially in the absence of a large body of evidence on the impact and effectiveness of non-CS INGOs noted by Edwards and Hulme (2002, p.6).

A technical approach to evaluating the legitimacy of INGOs involves comparative judgments based on perceptions of accountability, representativeness and performance (Lister, 2003, p.3). Fowler (1997, p.188) asserts for example that demonstrating satisfactory levels of achievement is the first step on the legitimacy ladder. Like other INGOs, CS



Figure 1.1 New Internationalist front cover

From the early 1980s the individual support of children through CS was increasingly questioned (Stalker, 1982, p.1).

organizations are eager to do good and consequently they are prone to critical self-reflection. Meadows (2003, p.109) asks, 'Does Child Sponsorship ever go wrong? Of course. Is that a good enough reason to abandon the concept?' It is perhaps the pre-eminent question that has occupied staff in CS INGOs for the past 20 years as they have considered both marketing imperatives and the impact of CS-related humanitarian interventions in terms of what really makes an impact. This question of efficacy and legitimacy is paramount. Harris-Curtis (2003, p.1) observes that in addition to INGO self-reflection 'The reality for NGOs today is that they are increasingly challenged by the media, public, governments and academia.' While this may be the case, large CS INGOs have been especially sensitive to criticism that programmes are out of step with 'best practice'.

At a time when the 'halo of saintliness' around INGOs is under threat (Racelis in Bebbington et al, 2007, p.203) can it be demonstrated that CS INGOs are thinking, learning organizations committed to improvement even though they may not have transitioned from a mind set of aid for individual welfare, to development as delivery beyond to development as leverage? (Edwards et al, 1999, p.15). Is CS an impediment to change or a vehicle for innovation? In Chapter 5 Moran and others argue that for Save the Children International CS has, over the past decade, become a flexible source of funding for creative, lasting change. Chapter 3, which features the evolution of the ChildFund and Plan International's programmatic approach, proposes a typology of CS funded activity. It suggests that change and critical self-reflection is a feature of large CS funded INGOs though to what extent expectations of sponsors contribute to mandates for change is unclear.

Keeping in mind Fowler's 'onion-ring' strategy for INGOs, we might ask if CS INGOs have a credible 'core' of projects and successive 'skins' or 'layers' of important activity including research, evaluation, advocacy, campaigning and public education, with a commitment to human rights and structural reform? Or are they merely 'ladles in the global soup kitchen', prone to choosing a path of least resistance? (Fowler in Edwards and Fowler 2002, p.22). In Chapter 9 of this book Sim and Peters discuss the Compassion model of intervention, an approach that places holistic child development at the centre or core of intervention logic. In keeping with UNICEF's argument that children living in poverty 'experience deprivation of the material, spiritual and emotional resources needed to survive, develop and thrive' (UNICEF in Minujin et al, 2006, p.485) Sim and Peters prod us to consider who

decides which CS core activities are credible and whether religion and child development are synergistic.

Although there appears to be a dearth of published research demonstrating CS INGO engagement in robust evaluation, most large CS INGOs do capture data to identify programme impact, flaws and tensions. Although such information has often been lost in the 'grey literature' of confidential INGO project records there is a recent, albeit limited trend to publicize findings and learnings, examples of which are found in Chapter 6 where the authors discuss the transition of Plan International's development programming from a traditional service delivery model towards a rights-based approach and how this strategic shift has interacted and is interacting with Plan's sponsorship model. Given its emphasis on rights-based interventions, Plan may be seen as an organization committed to a theory of change model in which 'capacity changes of young people and duty bearers are expected to trigger citizenship changes whereby young people become aware of their power and use this to effectively participate in decision-making processes' (Williams and Kantelberg, 2011, p.2).

The tensions evident in CS advertising have received considerable attention from academics however given that CS is one of the primary portals through which private donors in the North may view (and to an extent experience) the South, how can CS INGOs not only educate their supporters, but deepen understanding of structural causes of poverty so that sponsors become partners, advocates and activists? In her chapter Tallon addresses the issue of global citizenship education for school students and asks how CS INGOs can engage in development education in ways that dignify the poor, avoid harmful stereotypes and deal with the causes of poverty rather than the symptoms. Critical to such an approach is avoidance of aid discourses that rely on the benevolence and politics of poverty associated with charity and what has been disparagingly referred to as the White Man's Burden (Jefferess, 2008, p.34). Accordingly, CS INGOs are said to embrace a test of their credibility when moving beyond the self-serving task of marketing children as passive products, to the more complex task of advocating with children and their communities, for the realization of child rights as a purposeful way of reducing poverty.

Child: Product or purpose?

The post-World War Two era saw the United States and Western Europe prosper, an acceleration of globalization, and a growing interest

in the conditions of the poor in 'undeveloped nations' accompanied by the running down of the era of traditional missionary endeavour and direct colonialism. In this nexus of events, it had never been so easy to offer direct support to individuals in far-flung places. The widespread dissemination of a note, found pinned to a small child by either journalist John Langdon-Davies or relief volunteer Eric Muggeridge during the Spanish civil war in 1937, is characteristic of many post-World War Two appeals for sponsorship that would prove popular: 'This is Jose. I am his father. When Santander falls I shall be shot. Whoever finds my son, I beg him to take care of him for my sake' (in Mittelman and Neilson, 2011, p.371). This emotive, brief request contains several potent themes of past CS marketing including urgency, appeal to paternal or maternal instinct, lost innocence and a sense of very personal need. This poignant message first informed, then sought compassion and finally urged action, enlisting members of the general public in the ongoing provision of food, shelter, education and child-oriented services for the benefit of individual children. However, this was certainly not the first foray into CS.

It is interesting that to date there has been a lack of consensus on which organization pioneered CS. The origin and characteristics of early CS programmes are discussed by Brad Watson in Chapter 2, which traces early CS practice to at least 1919, in a joint sponsorship programme run between the newly established Save the Children Fund in the UK and the Society of Friends in the Austria. There it was initially used for the provision of food rations to middle-class children who were not eligible for aid provided by the American Relief Administration feeding programme. The common perception that CS did not emerge until the late 1930s and early 1940s is incorrect. Referring to Save the Children Fund sponsorship of British children, Freeman (1965, pp.49 & 89) observed that during the Great Depression there were British children 'with limbs like broomsticks' and 'grotesque swollen abdomens'. Save the Children UK responded indicating that 'individual children put forward by teachers or medical officers as in great need of help were "adopted" by benefactors who not only paid the sponsorship subscription, but took an interest in the child or family or school with letters, presents and even visits'. It would seem that in the 1930s CS was offered to a small number of citizens in the UK and USA for the support of children in their own countries.

Freeman notes that by 1963 there were just 715 individual children and 169 families being helped by UK friends in 'other' countries. Nevertheless, despite its humble beginnings, popular support for

international CS increased dramatically and was adopted with great success by other organizations such as World Vision, featured in Chapter 7. This may be attributable to a combination of effective marketing and the fact that although many donors have been overwhelmed at the seeming futility of addressing global poverty, 'the genius of sponsorship is that it links a caring donor with a needy child in the Third World' (Waters, 2001, p.5). In some cases it has nurtured direct contact with families of sponsored children. Freeman (1965, p.142) remarks on the personal link forged between some sponsors and adult beneficiaries, quoting a letter from a widow in a German refugee camp to her sponsor: 'It is thanks to you that I did not lose my courage... What a comfort to know that someone, however far away, knows your name and that of your children. Around here is no one, only misery, but your help is a solid rock beneath my feet.'

Bornstein (2001, p.601) reminds us that the western perception of children as valuable for their innocence and emotional value may not be consistent with the way children are viewed in their community of origin. Commentators have also observed the potential for negative impacts of some CS funded interventions on recipients, referred to in media exposés as formation of unrealistic expectations, development of dependency and arousal of divisive jealousies. In her study of a faith-based CS INGO Bornstein (2001, p.609) writes, 'The irony of child sponsorship is that as much as child sponsorship links people across nations in transnational relationships of a global 'Christian family', it divides people locally and has immense potential to inspire jealousy.' The success of CS fundraising has not been without more pointed criticism. CS INGOs are said, especially in the 1980s, to have made repetitive, extensive, though not exclusive use of babies, starving children and graphic, emotive imagery of supplicant, helpless 'others' to elicit donations in what Smillie (1995, p.136) refers to as the 'pornography of poverty'.

Smillie (2000, p.121) notes that the CS format of marketing has emerged as 'the pre-eminent lens through which a very large and growing number of Northern citizens view the South.' Because of their significant reach, and the level of trust extended by private donors, CS INGOs continue to exercise considerable influence, shaping the public's perception of what causes poverty, what works, how children are best helped and what is sustainable. It is not surprising then that CS INGOs have faced a high level of scrutiny regarding their marketing and public communications strategies which has led to heated debate at times. The extent to which these observations can be applied across

CS INGOs is however questionable. For example, Mittelman and Neilson's (2011, p.387) study of 1970s Plan Canada print advertising concluded that the organization '...did not cross the delicate line between showing the hardship and realities of life in the developing world...and what became known as "development porn."' Arguing that CS organizations have historically been the biggest users of negative images, Plewes and Stuart (in Bell and Coicaud, 2007, p.30) acknowledge that there has been a shift in CS fundraising, 'from miserable, starving children' to 'picking winners', a view partially echoed by Cameron and Haanstra (2008, p.1478) who observe a growing preference for images of self-reliant and active people. The strict codes of conduct designed and embraced by leading CS INGOs have played a role in this trend.

Historic criticism of CS endorsed the view that pre-1990s CS advertising was often paternalistic, misleading or dependent on 'a particular construction of the relationship between the First World and the Third World' (Maddox, 1993, p.91). Although not specifically commenting on its own advertising, the Save the Children UK website (2012) acknowledges that coverage of famines in the 1980s '...perpetuated negative and destructive stereotypes of people in developing countries, who were seen as dependent and helpless.' In his analysis of sponsorship telethons Jefferess (2002, pp.6–7) warns of the potential construction of a neo-colonial discourse in which viewers may identify more with the spokesperson describing the suffering than with the victims themselves. Although most sponsors have little interest in questioning their mental constructs of poverty and the Other, this issue is deeply important from a development education perspective.

Writing at a time when many of the large CS INGOs were modifying the way they communicated with the public, and the ways in which they intervened through projects, Smillie (1995, p.136) gave voice to the commonly expressed concern that although CS had proven to be exceptionally successful as a form of fundraising 'Direct correspondence with a child is very expensive.' In his scathing journalistic exposé of the domestic sponsorship programme of Save the Children USA, journalist Michael Maren (1997, pp.144–147) argued that, 'The total of the sponsors' dollars that actually went in grants to field programs was...less than 50%.' Echoing this concern with cost efficiency, the 1993 Human Development Report (UNDP, p.89) unilaterally declared that, 'Agencies that receive money from child sponsorship organizations...have to spend much of their time collecting copious quantities of personal information about the sponsored children and

employ large teams of “social workers” for this.’ The extent to which such generalizations were or remain valid is debatable, especially for smaller, more cost-efficient organizations. Some CS INGOs clearly did not employ large teams of social or administrative workers and diversity in historic CS is evident. Currently it would be difficult to maintain the claim that the projects of large CS INGOs are small and parochial. Indeed, in Chapter 7 Pierce explores the shift to long-term capacity building and integrated community development in World Vision’s very large Area Development Programs (ADPs) and beyond to a development programming approach.

CS INGOs as partners in poverty reduction

CS is firmly rooted in forms of western philanthropy preoccupied with the innocence of children. In choosing a symbol for her work, Eglantyne Jebb used the same swaddling-clothed child for the Save the Children Fund that had been created in 1419 for the Foundling Hospital in Florence where care was provided for the city’s destitute children (Freeman, 1965, p.139). Jebb herself famously observed that, ‘The only international language in the world is a child’s cry’ (Jebb and Save the Children Australia, 2008, p.17). This emphasis on children and child poverty by contemporary INGOs that utilize CS is rarely contested. It is estimated, for example, that more than 30 per cent of all children in developing countries live in absolute poverty, characterized by an income of less than US\$1 a day (UNICEF, 2011). CS INGOs argue that life for these 600 million children, and a further 500 million who live on less than US\$2 per day, is precarious. It is characterized by multi-dimensional facets of disadvantage, often including ill health, illiteracy, violence, inadequate shelter, limited access to clean water or sanitation, economic uncertainty, exclusion from vital services and higher rates of premature death. To date the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child is the most widely endorsed human rights treaty in history, ensuring that ‘Children’s survival, development and protection are now no longer matters of charitable concern but of moral and legal obligation’ (UNICEF, 2006, p.1). CS INGOs have often, with broad public approval, placed child welfare at the centre of a moral framework of action and increasingly place them at the centre of a rights-based theory of change.

CS INGOs have shaped, and are being shaped by the international child rights agenda. Save the Children has been at the forefront of child rights campaigning and advocacy since 1919. In Chapter 2 of this

book Save the Children is recognized as a world leader in child rights, the earliest pioneer of CS and recent innovator in use of CS funding. As a network with partners which have both rejected and embraced sponsorship, Save the Children exemplifies the experience of many CS INGOs as they have sought to transition individual support of children to inclusive models of community development (Gnaerig and MacCormack, 1999, pp.145–146). For INGOs that function in a loose federation, with high levels of autonomy for various country offices, it has been especially difficult to coordinate policy development and new programmatic interventions incorporating CS.

Change is by nature divisive, a fact not lost on Hickey and Sell, of Baptist World Aid Australia. In Chapter 10 they explore the complexity and ethics of a small, Australian organization moving rapidly from individual child support to interventions based on ideals of community development and empowerment. It should be noted that while many of the larger CS INGOs have transitioned to community development utilizing sponsorship as a fundraiser, the extent to which smaller CS organizations should, or can follow, poses interesting dilemmas. Micro-sponsors, defined here as CS organizations with less than 1,000 supported children, may not have the resources to transition or upscale. How should their legitimacy be measured?

The bigger CS INGOs in Northern countries are cognizant that the international community has embraced its legal and moral obligation to poor children by prioritizing them in four out of the seven nation-based MDGs. Children or young people are expressly targeted in goals relating to the reduction of poverty, provision of universal education, achievement of gender equality and improvement of child health. UNICEF’s (2006) claim that poverty reduction begins with children is widely endorsed by CS INGOs for pragmatic reasons, if not for the moral imperative of helping first those who suffer most, yet wield least power. Though they are motivated by the plight of children, and operate in a paradigm of international aid preoccupied with concepts such as sustainability, capacity building and rights-based development, the reality is that contemporary CS INGOs maintain different ways of responding and have evolved over time. Quoting personal correspondence with World Vision staff, Jefferess (2002, p.5) notes, ‘eventually, as development experts discovered putting money in to one person’s hands was not the ideal formula for improving a person’s situation, the idea of a full community development project was hatched’.

Taking exception at such simplistic analysis, and the lack of a typology of CS interventions, Watson (Chapter 3) proposes four basic types

of sponsorship funded intervention: individual support of children in institutions such as orphanages or schools where the large majority of funding benefits a child; individual support of children in a community setting where children and immediate family benefit from a majority of funding via cash transfers, provision of goods or direct service delivery; support of children in community development projects where individual children might ultimately benefit from pooled funding; and support of children in rights-based development activities where all members benefit from community development and community empowerment initiatives. To some extent Watson's typology reflects David Korten's generations of INGO (see De Senillosa, 1998, pp.2–3), beginning with welfare and progressing to development of sustainable systems. A critical question is, are all four types of CS INGO identified in this book effective partners in this multi-pronged quest to improve children's lives? To what extent do CS INGOs catalyse poverty reduction with what UNICEF refers to as quick impact initiatives, rights-based approaches and deeper structural reform, policy change and international networking? Further, does such a typology stand up to scrutiny or is it overly simplistic?

The intersection of faith and religion with CS is a rich area of inquiry. It is notable that the majority of early CS INGOs began their work in an era when many Northern countries were still classified as Christian. In one review of 1,600 secular and religious private voluntary organizations (PVOs) that registered with the US Federal Government between 1939 and 2004, it is possible to see the decline of Jewish and Catholic PVOs after World War Two, the rise of Evangelical PVOs and then rapid growth of secular PVOs in the mid-1980s to mid-1990s (McCleary and Barrow, 2008, p.512). In keeping with this trend there are two notable areas of interest explored by David King in Chapter 12. First, the common but not exclusive popularity of CS within Christianity. Second, and more importantly, the transition of some leading CS INGOs from direct evangelism to humanitarianism informed by religious principles. King's case study of World Vision's transition illustrates this well.

Yuen (2008, p.46) observes that sponsorship enables Christians to, 'find a way to actively enact their faith; the compassion one feels...is actually the voice of God speaking to Christians to act.' The role of sponsorship in the lives of sponsors, and the meaning derived from the act is explored in more length by Rabbitts in Chapter 13. Clearly, the spiritual dimension and meaning making attached to giving for some sponsors is sometimes matched by a spiritual interpretation of receive-

ing on the part of sponsorship beneficiaries. Bornstein (2001, p.599) relays the words of Albert, a boy who had been sponsored in Zimbabwe and was interviewed as an adult: 'then came the sponsor and everything looked up...the Lord came to my rescue in the form of a sponsor and He was there as a provider.' Though Christian CS INGOs do not claim a monopoly on CS, the widespread promotion of sponsorship within faith-based organizations has resulted in mixed expectations of child-saving and they have often struggled with an ongoing tension between direct evangelism and faith-based foreign aid. David King's (2011) exploration of the transition of World Vision from evangelical to a faith-founded and faith-inspired Christian organization is a case in point. Whaites (1999, pp.410–412) describes World Vision in its early days as 'missionaries fighting Marxism' whereas by the 1990s it had become a diverse partnership exhibiting a shift away from a 'homogenous set of evangelical core beliefs'.

Despite a historic dearth of information about CS from the 1950s to the 1990s, there is a resurgence of interest in the topic, informed perhaps by the continued growth of CS INGOs, emergence of codes of conduct regulating CS INGO activities (see Chapter 15 for a discussion of the future of CS), willingness of large CS INGOs to publish evaluations and emerging scrutiny of academics. A startling omission is the lived experience of sponsored individuals, and the sponsors themselves, whose voices have largely been absent in debate and marginalized in discussion over the complex meaning making that occurs in the construction of transnational relationships. For this reason Chapter 11 gives voice to six sponsored individuals while Chapter 13 by Frances Rabbitts calls for a more nuanced appraisal of the impact of sponsorship on donors. Chapter 14, by Tallon and Watson, calls for more effective development education in schools by CS INGOs marked by a more holistic understanding of poverty and the poor, rather than paternalistic charity.

Conclusion

In *State of the World's Children* (2006, p.1), UNICEF called for immediate action on child poverty at three levels. First, a massive push to boost access to essential services, dubbed 'quick impact initiatives' that 'provide a vital kick-start to human development and poverty reduction'. Second, longer-term initiatives rooted in rights-based approaches to development and national capacity building. Third, deeper approaches that integrate policy reform with governments, civil

society, donors, international agencies and media. This focus on children is implicit for many CS INGOs whose international programmes seek to improve the lives at the community level through direct welfare, child development, service delivery or capacity-building activities and advocacy. However, as a whole the CS literature is fragmented, disjointed, prone to generalization and reliant on anecdotal evidence. While CS critics would rightfully decry any stereotyping of the poor, CS INGOs routinely find themselves subject to ongoing stereotyping and critique that neglects their evolution over time. This is partially the fault of the CS INGOs themselves. Although a number of the larger organizations have produced quality books about their own work, these are often dated and academic case studies of change in CS INGOs are rare. Hopefully, this book will play a role in furthering discussion and awareness.

CS advertising seems to have provided a minor field of inquiry for communication and semiotics specialists (Manzo, 2008), but the literature is largely populated with dated analysis of advertising from an era of CS that may well have passed for larger CS INGOs bound by self-enforced codes of conduct. A small number of anthropologists have turned their attention to CS (Bornstein, 2001) however there is little recognition in the literature of the historical diversity in CS interventions, the stance of progressive CS INGOs and current CS advertising, advocacy and programmatic interventions. Like many issues in CS, the portrayal of Southern children in Northern nations is overdue for review. Further, abundant, largely anecdotal criticism of individual CS in the 1980s and 1990s (see Chapter 4) is contrasted with a tremendous shortage of research-based evidence regarding the impact of CS on recipient families and communities (Brehm and Gale, 2000, p.2). The few studies that do exist (such as Wydick et al, 2013) are as interesting for their findings as for their rarity.

Despite the popular misconception that there has been relatively minor change to the CS model of marketing and to programmatic interventions, the larger sponsorship organizations are best seen as ethical organizations, committed to child poverty reduction as they continue to grapple with complex issues. As a fundraising tool, CS has successfully raised billions of dollars that have been used with differing degrees of success by INGOs to work towards improving the living conditions of children and more recently, their communities. That many CS INGOs have shifted from a paradigm of individual welfare to community development is reflective of a broader shift in the evolution of humanitarian aid and indicates that CS INGOs are receptive to, and in

some cases are leading change. That there are still 600 million children in desperate material poverty suggests that poverty is more ingrained and difficult to overcome than allowed for in the optimism of the MDG timeline. CS INGOs will continue to be important partners in the twenty-first century quest for a world in which all children may develop to their full potential. Arguably, the impact of their contribution will ultimately be determined by the extent to which they have, or continue to 'move beyond charity-based partnerships – seeking out children and their families as partners and rights-holders to be empowered and enabled in making their capacities and vulnerabilities known and acted upon' (UNICEF, 2006 p.88). To what extent child sponsorship fundraising complements this move is perhaps the central question facing all CS INGOs as they seek to maximize impact and pursue sustainable change.

Bibliography

- ACFID (2012) *Facts and Figures in 2008 and 2009*, <http://www.acfid.asn.au/resources/facts-and-figures>, date accessed 12 October 2010.
- Archer, D. (2010) 'The evolution of NGO-government relations in education: ActionAid 1972–2009', *Development in Practice*, 20, 4–5, 611–618.
- Bebbington, A., Hickey, S. and Mitlin, D.C. (2007) *Can NGOs Make a Difference? The Challenge of Development Alternatives* (New York: Zed Books).
- Bell, D.A. and Coicaud, J.M. (eds) (2007) *Ethics in Action. The Ethical Challenges of International Human Rights Nongovernmental Organisations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Bornstein, E. (2001) 'Child Sponsorship, evangelism, and belonging in the work of World Vision Zimbabwe', *American Ethnologist*, 28, 3, 595–622.
- Bornstein, E. (2003) *The Spirit of Development: Protestant NGOs, Morality, and Economics in Zimbabwe* (New York: Routledge).
- Brehm, V. and Gale, J. (2000) 'Child sponsorship: A funding tool for sustainable development?' *Informed: NGO Funding and Policy Bulletin NGO Sector Analysis Programme Bulletin*, 3, November, 2–6.
- Cameron, J. and Haanstra, A. (2008) 'Development made sexy: How it happened and what it means', *Third World Quarterly*, 29, 8, 1475–1489.
- Coulter, P. (1989) 'Pretty as a picture', *New Internationalist* <http://www.newint.org/features/1989/04/05/pretty/>, date accessed 17 April 2012.
- De Senillosa, I. (1998) 'A new age of social movements: A fifth generation of non-governmental development organisations in the making?' *Development in Practice*, 8, 1, 40–53.
- Edwards, M. and Fowler, A. (2002) *The Earthscan Reader on NGO Management* (London: Earthscan).
- Edwards, M. and Hulme, D. (2002) *Non-Governmental Organisations: Performance and Accountability Beyond the Magic Bullet* (London: Earthscan).
- Edwards, M., Hulme, D. and Wallace, T. (1999) 'NGOs in a global future: Marrying local delivery to worldwide leverage', *Public Administration and Development*, 19, 17–136.

- Fowler, A. (1992) 'Distant obligations: Speculations on NGO funding and the global market', *Review of African Political Economy*, 26, 55, 9–29.
- Fowler, A. (1997) *Striking a Balance: A Guide to Enhancing the Effectiveness of Non-Governmental Organisations in International Development* (London: Earthscan).
- Freeman, K. (1965) *If Any Man Build: The History of Save the Children Fund* (London: Hodder and Stoughton).
- Gnaerig, B. and MacCormack, C.F. (1999) 'The challenges of globalization: Save the Children', *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 28, 4, 140–146.
- Harris-Curtis, E. (2003) Northern NGOs, Inclusion and Extreme Poverty, paper presented to IDPM Chronic Poverty Conference 'What Role Do NGOs Play in Alleviating Chronic Poverty?' Manchester University, April 2003.
- Jebb, E. and Save the Children Australia (2008) *Lessons in Leadership from a Spinster in a Brown Cardigan/Eglantyne Jebb* (East Melbourne, Victoria: Save the Children).
- Jefferess, D. (2002) 'For sale – Peace of mind: (Neo-) colonial discourse and the commodification of third world poverty in World Vision's "telethons"', *Critical Arts*, 16, 1, 1–21.
- Jefferess, D. (2008) 'Global citizenship and the cultural politics of benevolence', *Critical Literacy: Theories and Practices*, 2, 1, 27–36.
- King, D.P. (2011) 'World Vision: Religious identity in the discourse and practice of global relief and development', *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, 9, 3, 21–28.
- Lister, S. (2003) 'NGO legitimacy: Technical issue of social construct?' *Critique of Anthropology*, 23, 2, 175–192.
- Maddox, M. (1993) 'Ethics and rhetoric of the starving child', *Social Semiotics*, 3, 1, 71–94.
- Manzo, K. (2008) 'Imaging humanitarianism: NGO identity and the iconography of childhood', *Antipode*, 40, 4, 632–657.
- Maren, M. (1997) *The Road to Hell: The Ravaging Effects of Foreign Aid and International Charity* (New York: The Free Press).
- McCleary, R.M. and Barrow, R.J. (2008) 'Private voluntary organizations engaged in international assistance, 1939–2004', *Nonprofit & Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 37, 512–536.
- Meadows, P. (2003) *Rich Thinking about the World's Poor: Seeing the World through God's Eyes* (Carlisle, Cumbria: Spring Harvest Publishing Division and Authentic Lifestyles).
- Minujin, A., Delamonica, E., Davidziuk, A. and Gonzalez, D. (2006) 'The definition of child poverty: A discussion of concepts and measurements', *Environment and Urbanization*, 18, 481–500.
- Mittelman, R. and Neilson, L.C. (2009), 'I saw a picture of a child living on 14¢ a day and I nearly choked on my \$12 Scotch', Plan Canada's marketing of child sponsorship programs: A content analysis of print advertisements from the 1970s and 1980s in T.H. Witkowski (ed.) *Rethinking Marketing in a Global Economy: Proceedings of the 34th Annual Macromarketing Conference*, Kristiansand, Norway.
- Mittelman, R. and Neilson, L.C. (2011) 'Development porn? Child sponsorship advertisements in the 1970s', *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing*, 3, 3, 370–401.
- Plewes, B. and Stuart, R. (2007) 'The pornography of poverty: A cautionary fundraising tale', in D. Bell, and J. Coicaud (eds) *Ethics in Action. The Ethical Challenges of International Human Rights Nongovernmental Organisations* (UK: Cambridge University Press).
- Racelis, M. (2007) 'Anxieties and affirmations: NGO-donor partnerships for social transformation', in A. Bebbington, S. Hickey and D. Mitlin (eds) *Can NGOs Make a Difference? The Challenge of Development Alternatives* (London: Zed Books).
- Save the Children (2012) *History: Save the Children*, <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/about-us/history>, date accessed 17 April 2012.
- Smillie, I. (1995) *The Alms Bazaar: Altruism under Fire – Non-Profit Organisations and International Development* (London: IT Publications).
- Smillie, I. (2000) 'NGOs: Crisis and opportunity in the New World Order', in J. Freedman (ed.) *Transforming Development: Foreign Aid for a Changing World* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press).
- Sogge, D., Biekart, K. and Saxby, J. (eds) (1996) *Compassion and Calculation: The Business of Private Foreign Aid* (London: Pluto Press).
- Stalker, P. (1982) 'Please do not sponsor this child', *New Internationalist*, <http://www.newint.org/issues/1982/05/01/>, date accessed 17 April 2012.
- UNDP (1993) *Human Development Report* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- UNICEF (2006) *State of the World's Children 2006*, <http://www.unicef.org/mdg/poverty.html>, date accessed 16 April 2012.
- UNICEF (2011) *Millennium Development Goals*, <http://www.unicef.org/mdg/poverty.html>, date accessed 8 May 2012.
- Waters, K. (2001) 'The art and ethics of fundraising', *Christianity Today Magazine*, http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/article_print.html?id=7970, date accessed 19 January 2010.
- Whaites, A. (1999) 'Pursuing partnership: World Vision and the ideology of development – A case study', *Development in Practice*, 9, 4, 410–423.
- Williams, L.G. and Kantelberg, R. (2011) *Evaluation of Plan UK-DFID Partnership Programme Agreement: The Governance Program*, The IDL Group, http://www.plan-uk.org/resources/documents/Plan_UK-Governance_evaluation.pdf, date accessed 8 May 2012.
- Wydict, B., Glewwe, P. and Rutledge, L. (2013) 'Does international child sponsorship work? A six-country study of impacts on adult life outcomes', *Journal of Political Economy*, 121, 2, 393–436.
- Wydict, B., Rutledge, L. and Chu, J. (2009) *Does Child Sponsorship Work? Evidence from Uganda Using a Regression Discontinuity Design*, <http://emlab.berkeley.edu/~webfac/bardhan/wydict.pdf>, date accessed 11 September 2013.
- Yuen, P. (2008) '"Things that break the heart of God": Child sponsorship programs and World Vision International', *Totem: The University of Western Ontario Journal of Anthropology*, 16, 1, 39–51.