



UNICEF

United Nations Children's Fund

POPULAR CULTURE & NARRATIVES OF AID

What is UNICEF?

UNICEF is a humanitarian aid organization that supports less fortunate children across the world. This organization has 9 main concentrations:

- Child protection and inclusion
- Child survival
- Education
- Social policy
- Emergencies
- Gender
- Innovation
- Supply and logistics
- Research



For more info see: <https://www.unicef.org/what-we-do>

<https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Flogos-world.net%2Funicef-logo%2F&psig=AOvVaw2JuZuPdDqeWjxXfoxFFqGa&ust=1649727582957000&source=images&cd=vfe&ved=0CAoQjRxqFwoTCNior67wivcCFOAAAAAdAAAAABAD>

Barcelona's UNICEF sponsorship

September 13, 2006



Fernandez, M. (2006). *Barcelona's New Uniforms Have a Logo and a Message*
[Photograph]. New York Times.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2006/09/13/sports/soccer/13soccer.html>

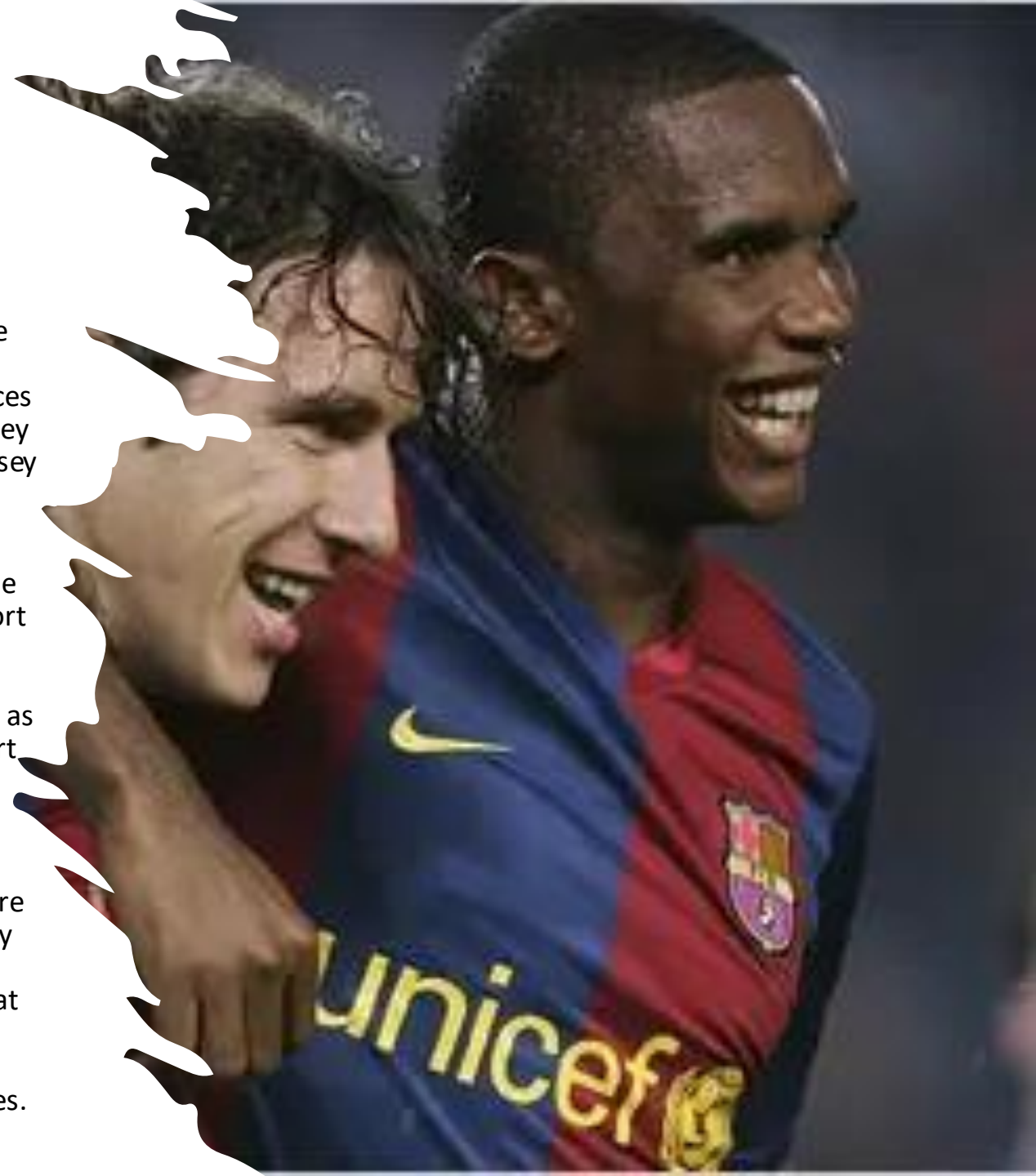
The media circulated from the popularity of European football and Barcelona's fanbase. Football players typically have sponsors for their team, however, this was the first time a football team was sponsored by humanitarian aid. The media also circulated because the team was not being paid to wear the logo. This is different from the traditional sponsorships in football, where they usually make millions of dollars and most of their profits from the sponsorships. The UNICEF logo was large and bold on their jerseys, making it clear to the viewer that they are supporting the organization. Barcelona paid €1.5 million yearly to wear the logo on their jerseys, further demonstrating their support of humanitarian aid. Barcelona's goal is to assist the work that UNICEF is doing and help raise awareness. Additionally, this is also done by supporting childhood development through sports activities, demonstrating the philanthropy Barcelona supports. Barcelona's funding has helped 16,000 schools, given sports training and equipment, and financial aid. This has also helped give sports, education, and other programs to 1.5 million children.

Analysis

The UNICEF football shirt sponsorship is a way the humanitarian aid can gain recognition amongst normal citizens across the world. This makes humanitarian aid a commodity, where the logo becomes something individuals can purchase even if they are not specifically interested in the organization. People who are Barcelona football fans will purchase the jersey in support of their team. Having the logo placed on the jersey forces individuals to buy and continue the sponsorship of UNICEF. Now the jersey is not just worn by the team, other members of society will wear this jersey and display their support for the team and the organization.

Furthermore, the sponsorship might influence people to cheer for the team since they are sponsored by a prolific organization. This furthers the idea that individuals can purchase the jersey to demonstrate their support for the humanitarian organization. The jersey then becomes a token of exchange, where individuals can show off their support for their gain. People are now able to purchase their humanitarian identity and wear it as a logo. The jersey becomes a fetishization of commodities where the shirt becomes more than just a shirt but a symbol of saviourism and philanthropy.

This also adheres to the saviourism complex, where individuals feel the need to save the less fortunate. The jersey helps serve this purpose where individuals in developed countries are forced to feel like they are the only people who can 'fix' the issues in other countries. This disregards the issues that are happening in their own countries and creates the idea that other countries are helpless victims that can only be saved by the white middle class. Western societies are forced to believe they are gifted everything and because of that, they need to save "third world" countries. This is understood as a humanitarian beneficiary.



Understanding the sponsorship also includes understanding how the Barcelona athletes are portrayed. Athletes must wear humanitarian aid to support, it's their only option in this narrative. This forces the idea that it is the consumer's choice to save the "less fortunate". Moreover, using the vulnerable is a common act amongst celebrities and public figures. The sponsorship allows the football players to create a persona to display their philanthropy, however, they do this for their gain. By doing this the teammates create an appearance of being charitable and doing so makes them feel like a better person. This is also understood as performativity, where there is a regulation of normative performance. The celebrity is seen to have had the choice to be sponsored by UNICEF, making them look like a good person. However, the team was forced to wear this jersey even if they don't know anything about UNICEF since the team management chooses their sponsorships. This leans on the idea of entrepreneurial moralism, where celebrities and big corporations use humanitarian aid to improve their public image and likeability.

No child should die of hunger

May 10, 2018

<https://youtu.be/zmVFTNqoiwk>



The UNICEF organization created and published this YouTube video under their account May 10, 2018.

The media circulated through YouTube demonstrating ads like this one to gain sympathy from the viewers and touch their heartstrings.

The video attempts to raise awareness of the malnutrition children are facing in Congo, resulting in death caused by the violent conflict they are facing. The video depicts a vulnerable 3-year old who has not been receiving the proper nutrition because of the conditions in Congo. UNICEF brings Marie to a treatment centre, funded by UNICEF to help save her life and other children that are suffering. In this video, the viewer will notice the struggle the parents and the child are going through. They're displaying sadness making the viewer feel sympathetic. Even though the clinic was able to support Marie's needs she still passed away because of the lasting effects of malnutrition. The video states that 1/10 of children in Congo will pass away from malnutrition if they don't get help. In total this video depicts vulnerable people in poverty, making the viewer feel like they need to save Congo.

Analysis

The YouTube video “No child should die of hunger” expresses the malnutrition crisis in Congo. In the video the editor used techniques to draw in the viewer, gain an emotional connection to the issue, and then make the viewer feel like they are the only option to save the unfortunate families.

Firstly, this video makes a spectacle out of the suffering through iconography. Though the individuals in the video are facing difficulties, the video uses this family to represent all families in the Congo. The video uses the most vulnerable, a child, to advance the helpless narrative making the viewer feel more empathetic. Portraying that the child did not choose to be put in this situation, they were born into it. This displays the African stereotype that everyone in third world countries like Congo all suffer from malnutrition, poverty and lack of resources when this is not entirely true. Western narratives portray this idea that all African countries look the same and all need our help. Victim frames are also created through this idea of stereotypical appearances of third world individuals, making it seem like all African families are victims and suffering.





Additionally, the editor uses these victims to create a narrative that these individuals are helpless and the viewers are the only option. Creating the narrative that viewers are safe and privileged therefore we have a duty to support those in need. This plays a role in the white saviour complex, where white-dominant countries must provide relief to the less fortunate, coloured countries.

Since the video makes the viewer feel guilty for being privileged it creates a political atmosphere where the viewer must feel remorseful and this feeling must make them take action. This creates a sense of us versus them, with a one-sided view. Stating that we are the only solution, yet never stating how western societies have caused the issue. The video does not address how the issue arose in the first place or what we could have done to prevent it from happening. However, it focuses on how we can fix it. In the video, the editor uses phrases like "They require **urgent assistance**". This wording and font choice imply that we must help the crisis right now, creating pressure on the viewer. Moreover, the video uses proximity, stating that issues are only far away from us however the solutions are close. The video fails to acknowledge the issues of malnutrition and hunger in more developed countries. Resulting in a power dynamic between Western countries and third world countries.

Ultimately this video causes a misrepresentation of individuals in third world countries, done through victimizing individuals and generalizing it across the country, politicizing the issue. The video causes politics of pity, where the viewer is forced to see the problem as unfortunate luck. This influences the viewer to believe that they must take action immediately.