



Australian  
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## Culture and Humanitarian Crisis: An Interdisciplinary Workshop 24 August 2012



With the rise in civil wars and natural disasters in the 1990s and 2000s, refugee camps, extreme poverty, and chronic violence are now the norm for millions. New global genres representing humanitarian crisis are emerging within fiction, memoir, film, art, theatre, and the internet, while humanitarian groups increasingly mobilize the arts, popular culture, and celebrities as new actors in development advocacy and relief work. How do the arts and popular culture respond to, and engage with, humanitarian crisis? What political work do such cultural representations and interventions perform in the public sphere? What new politicized cultures and cultures of politics do they create? This workshop aims to bring together ideas across disciplinary perspectives to shed new light on culture and humanitarianism.

This 1-day workshop seeks papers from a range of disciplines that illuminate the relationship between culture and humanitarian crisis. Please send abstracts (300 words) and short biographies (100 words) to Shameem Black ([shameem.black@anu.edu.au](mailto:shameem.black@anu.edu.au)) and April Biccum ([april.biccum@anu.edu.au](mailto:april.biccum@anu.edu.au)) by 1 March 2012.

### Plenary speaker:

Professor Joseph Slaughter

Department of English and Comparative Literature  
Columbia University

Possible contributions might address, but need not be limited to:

- > Artistic and cultural responses to disaster
- > Humanitarian groups' sponsorship of arts and artists
- > The heightened visibility of development advocacy in popular culture
- > The role of the arts within disaster zones
- > Disaster, cosmopolitanism, imperialism, and globalization
- > Celebrity advocacy and political branding
- > Emerging genres, such as survivor narratives and aid worker memoirs
- > Disaster, social media, and digital culture
- > Disaster, consumerism, and consumption
- > Cultural theories and histories of humanitarianism
- > Theoretical reflections on the links among culture, politics, and crisis

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Presented by

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