

# The Syrian Refugee Crisis in Canadian Media

Vappu Tyyskä, Jenna Blower, Samantha DeBoer, Shunya Kawai,  
Ashley Walcott

RCIS Working Paper No. 2017/3

April 2017

**SERIES EDITOR**

Shuguang Wang

Ryerson Centre for Immigration & Settlement  
Ryerson University  
Jorgenson Hall, 620  
350 Victoria Street, Toronto, ON M5B2K3  
<http://www.ryerson.ca/rcis>

***RCIS Working Paper***

No. 2017/3

## **The Syrian Refugee Crisis in Canadian Media**

Vappu Tyyskä  
Jenna Blower  
Samantha DeBoer  
Shunya Kawai  
Ashley Walcott  
Ryerson University



Series Editor: Shuguang Wang

*RCIS Working Papers* present scholarly research of all disciplines on issues related to immigration and settlement. The purpose is to stimulate discussion and collect feedback. The views expressed by the author(s) do not necessarily reflect those of RCIS. For a complete list of RCIS publications, visit [www.ryerson.ca/rcis](http://www.ryerson.ca/rcis)

ISSN: 1929-9915



Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 2.5  
Canada License

## **Abstract**

This paper offers a critical analysis of Canadian media content (*The Globe and Mail*, *Toronto Star*, *National Post*, *Huffington Post*, *CBC*, and *CTV*), from September 2015 to April 2016, of the coverage of the Canadian resettlement effort of Syrian refugees, including representation of the refugees and the Canadian government and public. The analysis is informed by theories of orientalism, neocolonialism, neoliberalism, and feminism.

## **Introduction**

The Syrian crisis has a complex geo-political history, and the involvement of the international and Canadian governments has been influential (see RCIS Working Paper 2017/2 by Tyyskä et al.). The current refugees number close to 5 million worldwide, and Canada accepted and resettled 28,499 of them as of June 20th 2016 (CIC 2016).

While the resettlement and humanitarian efforts along with international involvement in the military and peace-making actions in Syria are ongoing, it is also important to reflect on the role of media in the coverage of the refugee crisis. Based on the much-debated premise that media both reflect and shape public opinion and government actions (Macnamara 2005), a group of Ryerson students from the Immigration and Settlement Studies MA Program, along with a faculty member, initiated the "Syria Project", the aim of which was to both provide background information on the Syrian crisis and the Syrian refugee resettlement in Canada (see RCIS Working Paper 2017/2) and an analysis of Canadian media content on the issue.

Our media content analysis is founded on the theories of postcolonialism and orientalism; in both theories, the "west" is contrasted to the "rest" (Breckenbridge & van der Veer 1995). Both theories rely on "othering" non-western people. Postcolonial theory specifically analyses and criticizes the ways in which the colonizers distort and assign inferiority to the colonized, and deny their agency and attempts to reclaim their "inevitable Otherness" while also presenting them as a threat to western values (Al-Saidi 2014). The theoretical framework of orientalism, put forth by Edward Said (1978) helps address the ways in which the inferiority of non-western cultures is expressed, and the "othering" that is specifically targeted at the Middle East, the Arabs, and Muslims/Islam. Based on these frameworks, we propose that the presence of Syrian refugees in the "west" is received with fear and apprehension and that this population will be subject to "othering" including negative stereotypes, criminalization (of men in particular – see below), and perceptions of the refugees' passivity and neediness.

In addition to these major theoretical frameworks, our analysis will take into account the political economy framework in situating Syrian refugees in a neo-liberal policy paradigm in advanced capitalist societies of the “west”. As summarized by Shields et al. (2016: 12):

...neoliberalism is based on belief in the value of the free movement and accumulation of capital, minimal state intervention in the private sphere of markets and individual rights, and a restructuring of the public domain with the aim of shrinking the state and undoing the Keynesian logic embedded in government after the Second World War...

A central part of neoliberalism is the reliance on the private sector and individuals for the delivery of services that used to be the domain of the welfare state. In keeping with this discourse, we anticipate that refugees are likely to be seen and depicted as a drain on government resources, and the emphasis is more likely to be on the private sector and individual citizens to volunteer to help them. Along with this goes a depiction of the Canadian public as generous and altruistic which are assumed to be superior “Canadian values”.

Additionally, feminist scholars provide an understanding of how gender relations are socially constructed and used to support patriarchal forms of oppression in which there are generally accepted differences between men and women, along with a hierarchy that privileges men (Randall 2010). Intersections with racialized status and other social identities provide additional hierarchies (Das Gupta 2000, Zayzafoon 2005). When this lens is applied to orientalism and neocolonialism, we can anticipate differential treatment and depiction of Syrian refugee men and women. Indeed, it has been argued that while Muslim asylum seekers are generally likely to be identified as security risks (Amin-Khan 2015), this depiction is more likely to be aimed at men while women and children are more likely to be seen as vulnerable and needy (Zayzafoon 2005). Orientalism and patriarchy work in conjunction with one another to produce gendered representations of Muslim women and men that both homogenize and “other” them. Accordingly, we expect to find images in our media analysis depicting Syrian male refugees as threats and Syrian female refugees as vulnerable.

Further, when we apply a feminist lens to neo-liberalism (Thobani 2000; Arat-Koç 2012), it has been argued that it is part of neo-liberalism to “invisibilize”, “individualize”, and “culturalize” women, and particularly immigrant and racialized women (Arat-Koç 2012; Nichols and Tyyskä 2015). In other words, it is assumed that gender inequality has been eradicated, when in reality women are absent from the public eye and public discussions, and immigrant and racialized women have been homogenized and othered, based on reductionist and negative depictions of “culture”. Based on this line of thinking, we are anticipating that women’s voices are heard less in media and that specifically Syrian women are depicted in keeping with cultural stereotypes of Muslim women (see Zayzafoon 2005) which see them as oppressed, silent, and needy.

## Research Design

Based on thematic qualitative media content analysis (Boyatzis 1998; Macnamara 2005), members of the research team analyzed the following print media content: 94 articles from the *Globe and Mail*; 80 articles from the *National Post*; and 130 articles from the *Toronto Star*. Additionally, 84 videos were analyzed as a cluster, including 16 from the AOL *Huffington Post* site, 57 YouTube site CTV videos, and 11 YouTube site CBC videos.

The main key words used in the media searches were: "Syria", "refugee", and "Canada". The final selection from a much larger number of hundreds of sources was made based on the article being of some length and substantive content (excluding short "newsflash" types of reports); having clear Canadian content relating to Syrian refugees; content with representation of Syrian refugees; content about public perceptions of the Syrian refugee crisis; and topics regarding the settlement of Syrian refugees along with actions of the Canadian government.

We utilized a "group process" for collecting, coding, and analyzing data (Wasser & Bresler 1996). While each team member worked independently on a particular media source, the research team met regularly to discuss the data collection process and the analysis and generation of themes, along with application of theory. This ensured that there was uniformity in the research process while it also brought out any differences in themes and interpretations arising from different media sources, as each team member brought out the nuances specific to the media sources they analyzed. This task was made easier by dividing the media sources by type, as listed above.

The research was a combination of a conventional and directed approach to media research (Hsieh & Shannon 2005), which is akin to grounded theory (Strauss & Juliet 1994) in that the themes arose both directly from the contents analyzed, and from group discussions of analytical and theoretical elements arising from the contents. The primary approach can be characterized as critical media analysis, aimed at researching media involvement in the social construction of reality (Macnamara 2005; Stocchetti & Kukkonen 2011). The final analysis was informed by the theories of orientalism, postcolonialism, neoliberalism, and feminism which will be discussed in relation to their applicability to the different thematic clusters.

## Results

Based on continuous group-based content analysis and discussions, there was agreement that the main themes were:

- (1) "Canadian values", with the positive representation of Canadian government and public as humanitarian and generous;
- (2) representation of Syrian refugees as lacking agency, vulnerable and

needy amidst challenges; and

(3) gendered representation of Syrian male refugees as security threats, with an absence of women's voices.

(1) "*Canadian values*": *humanitarianism and generosity*

Of the 94 *Globe and Mail* articles, 28 urged the Canadian government to be more proactive in helping Syrian refugees, highlighting that it is a core Canadian value. A number of articles presented quotes from Canadian politicians and community leaders, to emphasize this moral duty. For example, B.C. Mayor Nancy Wilhelm-Morden is quoted as saying: "[I]magine if every town and city across Canada did this, just take three or four families. What a difference we could make" (Friesen et al. 2015). The public is praised for its generosity, as in a quote from Chris Friesen, director of settlement services for the Immigrant Services Society of B.C.: "[W]hat we're hearing constantly is the public would rather see them on cots, on church floors, rather than spend another night in a tent in a refugee camp" (Chase 2015).

Even as roadblocks occurred during the process of settling Syrian refugees, acts that were benevolent were attributed to Canadian values, and acts that were hostile could be characterized as un-Canadian. For example, after the incident of pepper-spraying of Syrian refugees by a man on a bicycle in Vancouver, the *Globe and Mail* issued an article including a tweet from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau stating "[t]his isn't who we are - and doesn't reflect the warm welcome Canadians have offered" (Jang 2016).

Showing its Conservative partisan political stripes, the *National Post's* attention to Canadian values and the duty to help refugees is evident in its criticism of the Liberal government's refugee plan. A total of 16 articles made reference to this theme. The refugee target of 25,000 was discussed in terms of its viability, moral obligation, and support, with criticism of the government-imposed deadline for refugee arrivals in the end of 2015, combined with criticism of delays in fulfilling the obligation. The focus was shifted towards the government's deadline, rather than the actual plight of the refugees, as the PC immigration critic Michelle Rempel is reported to have said that "Canadians are going to figure out that a lot of the Liberal platform was smoke and mirrors" (Berthiaume, 2016). Keeping track of the numbers of refugees was an ongoing theme until the target of 25,000 was achieved in February 2016. Questions about the sense of urgency for the target were raised, exemplified in the comment, "surely Canada's settlement agencies could now provide ample evidence of the folly of an immigration plan based on arbitrary deadlines. Perhaps it's time for the government of Canada to put the scorecard away" (*National Post*, January 28, 2016). The government is represented as not fulfilling its promises and failing to meet its randomly set target. The public is represented as questioning the broader plan for immigration (Berthiaume 2016).

In the *Toronto Star*, an opposing political view emerges, reflecting left of centre/liberal leanings. The focus of 26 *Toronto Star* articles was on the

Conservative Government's lack of moral values. Until the federal election, *Toronto Star's* coverage of the government's involvement in the Syrian refugee crisis mainly focused on undermined Canadian traditions. Burman (September 12, 2015) and Keenan (September 4, 2015) were critical of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's attitude, suggesting it was making Syrian refugees' situation worse, and violating Canadian values, with Keenan asking: "...what are elections for if not deciding what kind of country we are? And what helps define what kind of country we are than how we deal with the largest humanitarian crisis in generations?"

Notably, out of the 90 *Toronto Star* articles, 55 reflect on what represents Canadian values, in particular, generosity by Canadians and the need to meet humanitarian obligations. One particular trend in the *Toronto Star* reporting was frequent references to the record of humanitarian acts of Canadians and their government with regard to past refugee groups. In reference to a letter signed by hundreds of academics, demanding a positive response from the Harper Government to the global refugee crisis, Stephen Spencer notes that "the letter describes offering aid to displaced people as written into Canadian DNA, citing the country's assistance to displaced Hungarians, Czechs, Vietnamese and Kosovars, among others" (October 13, 2015). Similarly, after Harper's Conservative Government was replaced by Trudeau's Liberal Government after the elections, Minister John McCallum is reported to have said; "I suspect I'm the only immigration minister in the world who has the problem of having to struggle to keep up with the generosity of Canadians wanting to sponsor refugees" (Keung, April 8, 2016).

Similar positive terms were used by other media. Of the 84 video sources, 14 depicted Canadian communities as benevolent and caring, another 11 depicted Canadians as compassionate while 3 depicted Canadians as empathetic to Syrians' plight, and yet another few depicted Canadians and their government as humanitarian. When asked about the ability of smaller cities to provide affordable housing to Syrian refugees, Immigration Minister John McCallum is reported as having said that the government and the settlement sector were actively working together. He affirmed that Canadians were welcoming to Syrians, and said "I am assured that these refugee settlement agencies - they're very professional and they're very humanitarian. They are very caring about the refugees, they have devoted their lives to looking after the refugees" ("McCallum: some cities have asked for a slowdown", CBC News).

Many of the video stories contrast Canadians before and after the arrival of Syrian refugees. Community leader Elizabeth Dove is reported to have said: "we have a fear of the other coming from a violent place with a minority religion... [but] we have history on our side, we have a system on our side - a Canadian government system... and we have the moral imperative on our side. There are families in need of our help" ("Sleeping outside for Syrian refugees" CBC news). Additionally, 5 videos capture the views of children and their innocence as a way to assert the compassion of welcoming refugees. The focus on family and children seemed to justify the government's commitment and re-spark the

public's interest. Addie Tinhold, an 8 year old Canadian girl, was featured on CBC news, with the comment that "her big birthday wish this week was to sponsor a refugee family from Syria" ("Girl, 8, wants to sponsor Syrian family", CBC).

### *Analysis*

Our analysis supports the frameworks of postcolonialism and orientalism. Based on the above summary of the role of "Canadian values" in the reporting of the Syrian refugee situation, it is clear that the media engage in the process of "othering" Syrian refugees. In all of the media sources we analyzed, Canadian citizens, politicians, and other public actors speak on behalf of refugees and exemplify a "saviour complex" that marginalizes Syrian refugees while offering a narrative of humanitarian and generous Canadians. Any racist or anti-Islamic acts such as an incident of pepper-spraying of refugees, are dismissed as uncharacteristic of Canadians. The media reports seek to uphold Canada's role as a saviour of refugees. This is a common strand, despite differences in partisan-political slants between the media. Any criticism meted out at either Harper or Trudeau or their governments is reported as moral failures, not in keeping with Canadian values, and anything politicians say to praise Canadians' generosity, gets reported.

A central part of neoliberalism is the reliance on the private sector and individuals for the delivery of services that used to be the domain of the welfare state. This mentality is evident in the way that the media reports put emphasis on the role of Canadians as private citizens, whose volunteering and generous spirit saves the day. Neoliberalism is manifested in the emphasis of the role of individuals and the private sector to help Syrian refugees. The pressure put on the private sector is framed as a way that highlights positive "Canadian values" of generosity and community volunteerism.

### *(2) Syrian refugees as vulnerable and needy amidst challenges*

The theme of Syrian refugees as vulnerable, desperate and in need of saving emerged in 23 of the 94 *Globe and Mail* articles. Although the media intent may have been to show the depth of the humanitarian crisis, the articles in essence removed the agency and resilience of Syrian refugees by always portraying them as desperate and vulnerable. An article states "[T]he waiting time is way too long. People are losing hope; people are suffering dearly" (Dhillon, 2015). The sole article that addresses refugees' agency reflects on the difficulty of refugees leaving their country and coming to Canada; Saunders (2015) reports that it is "[r]eassuring, because it reminds us that refugees are not freeloading hordes seeking to break down the doors of the West, as some would portray it. Rather, they're badly jarred families trying to calculate the best path to safety and stability".

Meanwhile, the refugee issue was individualized, with an overwhelming focus on the Kurdi family, with 20 *Globe and Mail* articles making reference to them, while an additional 9 out of 15 articles on refugee lives also focused on



them. Alan Kurdi was the Syrian boy whose drowned body on the shores of Turkey in September 2015 was blazoned throughout western media.

The Kurdi family tragedy was also a main focus of the *National Post*, with 20 of the 80 articles referring to it and the plight of the Kurdi family. Aside from this, only a small number of the *National Post* articles was focused on the specific stories of other refugees, and the small number that were profiled were mostly males, with only a few entire families. The only woman written about was Alan Kurdi's aunt who lives in Canada. This same aunt was interviewed by the *Globe and Mail*, to support the theme of generous Canadians, by saying (in response to the incident of pepper spraying of a group of Syrian refugees by an individual): "[t]o be honest, Canadian people would not do this, the majority of them... they are big supporters to the refugees" (Jang 2016). This same sensibility of "good Canadians" was bolstered with other quotes, such as housing developer Ian Gillespie, who articulated in a statement that "We had a well-earned reputation for being good citizens. I think we lost some of that and have lost the concept of [us all] being immigrants" ("Vancouver's 'Most Powerful Man' To Temporarily House Syrian Refugees", *Huffington Post*).

The focus on the Kurdi tragedy was particularly prevalent in the video arena. The media has tended to use the word "galvanize" to describe the public's reaction ("Alan Kurdi: HuffPost Canada's Newsmaker"). Even though one can argue that this type of reporting managed to bring public attention to the plight of refugees, the tragic images of the dead Syrian boy sidelined many other refugees' stories.

In the *Toronto Star*, this media trend of ignoring a wider range of Syrian refugees' voices continues. Instead, there were interviews with members of other ethnic communities who came to Canada as a part of other refugee flows; or families who have children of the same age (Benzie, September 12, 2015); or local students who are at around the same age (Brown, September 23, 2015); and even CIC officers who assess refugee claimants (Jimenez, October 31, 2015). In interviews with a Vietnamese refugee, Deschamps (December 16, 2015) shows a list of 12 pieces of advice for Syrian refugees to "settle into a new life", or as the interviewee also implies, to "do *normal Canadian* things" [emphasis added]. Among the instructions for how to live Canada, are: buying coffee at Tim Hortons, signing up for Air Miles or a Shoppers Drug Mart Optimum loyalty card, and picking a hockey team they could cheer for (Deschamps, December 16, 2015). At the same time, private refugee sponsors received more press, as "unsung hero[es]" (Douara, December 10, 2015; Black, December 19, 2015).

Out of the 90 *Toronto Star* articles, 37 focus on how Syrian refugees felt when they arrived in Canada and what they experienced on the way to Canada, and collectively who they are. In particular, the influence of the photo of Alan Kurdi was crucial in forming an impression of who Syrian refugees are. Keung notes this effect: "[t]he picture made people realize how helpless and vulnerable he and other people really are" (Oct 14, 2015). In comparison with the generous

Canadian subjects, refugees are depicted as helpless, voiceless, and vulnerable. However, the coverage of the *Toronto Star* is slightly more inclusive of Syrian refugees than the *Globe and Mail* or *National Post*. Though refugee presence in reporting is still low and the general focus remains on their general needs and plight, the *Star* includes Syrian refugees from a variety of backgrounds, including a seriously ill person and his family (Ward, November 28, 2015), children who recently went back to school (Brown, January 7, 2016), a rare story of a family in which a woman and children speak about themselves as a representative of the family (Goffin & Reynolds, January 21, 2015), and highly educated and skilled Syrian refugees who ended up in unskilled employment (Keung, March 1, 2016a). This is still only 4 articles out of a total of 90, making it a rarity.

It is noteworthy that – amidst the plethora of homogenizing the Syrian refugees as passive and needy – only one article stands out as being from a more critical perspective. Keung (December 18, 2015) goes against the general trend by stating that: “[t]hey came out of war, conflicts and atrocities. We need to promote their resilience and offer them proper post migration support. The big message here is resilience, not pathology”.

Of the video sources, 23 depict refugees as needy or destitute. The visual media frequently interviewed former refugees for their perspectives on the arriving Syrian refugees. When asked what inspired Reverend Majed El Shafie to help Syrians, he said “I used to be one of them. I came here to this great nation 13 years ago, I came with just \$100 in my pocket, I had no friends, no sense of community - so I know their pain, I know they’ve lost everything...and here in this great nation I would not be half the man I am today without Canada in my life” (“Former refugee helping new arrivals”, CBC news). Though we are happy to read of the gratitude of a person who has made his way in Canada, this is another situation where a non-Syrian is interviewed, and the overall message is clearly that Canadians are a saviour nation, a point that will be further explained in the analysis below.

In the video sources, there were only 11 personal stories, 9 of them with men and only two with women. One of the major themes within this group of videos is family reunification. Videos on families did not include the perspective of women or children. Instead, stories of family reunification were told from the perspective of the male head of family. The only two exceptions were an interview with Tima Kurdi (of Alan Kurdi's family) – following the obsessive focus on this family's experiences – and the story of Christine Youssef who along with her mother is sponsoring 43 of her family members in Syria (“Mother and daughter sponsor 43 family members to Canada”, CTV News). Again, these stand out as rare instances.

An additional theme that connects to the issue of needs among refugees, is attention to the challenges they face in the settlement process, including frustration over the backlog in private sponsorship cases, which was a major theme in the 11 personal social media interviews. Of the 14 *Toronto Star* articles on this theme, the majority were published after the federal election. The articles

were likewise critical of the preparedness of the government and private sponsors, exemplified in DiManno's (November 25, 2015) reports that “in only vague terms – no benchmarks, no processing schedule, no dates – Immigration Minister John McCallum said Tuesday, as the government finally got around to explaining (recalibrating) its resettlement plan in a media briefing, that government sponsors will nevertheless total 25,000 by the end of 2016”.

Frustration by refugees and the general public was expressed over the government's announcement over the abrupt shut-down of the refugee application process on March 31 (Keung, April 1, 2016), and further delays forthcoming in 2017 (Porter, April 22, 2016).

In addition, the gap between the expected and the unexpected or the prepared and the unprepared was seen in four fields in the *Toronto Star* articles: housing, healthcare services, education, and employment. Lack of affordable housing, and temporary but overlong housing of refugees in hotels (Goffin & Reynolds, January 21, 2016; Porter, November 13, 2015; Boutilier, November 10, 2015; Brown, December 3, 2015) were identified. Deficiencies were found in health care services, including lack of availability of mental health care (Ward, November 28, 2015; Noor, January 7, 2016; Keung, March 2, 2016), despite the long-established evidence regarding the prevalence of mental health problems among refugees (Keung, November 18, 2015). Prenatal care and daily walk-in services also emerged as pressing needs of Syrian refugees (Keung, March 2, 2016). Despite the well prepared public schools (Brown, December 3, 2015; Brown, February 9, 2016), long stays in temporary hotel residences delayed the process of schooling Syrian refugee children, with traumatized parents understandably anxious about busing their children to schools (Brown, February 9, 2016). Porter's (Feb 13, 2016) article also identified the uneven quality of Syrian refugees' education and background as an issue making it difficult to assess the grade levels of Syrian refugee children. In this reporting of these settlement problems – albeit only a dozen among 130 articles – the *Toronto Star* is unique compared to the other media sources.

One of the major challenges for adults, presented in the *Toronto Star*, is finding employment, especially in the context of different Canadian requirements and habits (Keung, March 26, 2016), and the language barrier (Porter, February 13, 2016; Keung, March 1, 2016 a; Keung, March 1, 2016 b). Keung (March 26, 2016) also notes that the work available to the refugees is predominantly unskilled, with the danger of exploiting refugees as a cheap source of menial labour. Local employers are reported as showing their appreciation for getting naive workers for undesirable jobs. A Syrian refugee in the same article says that “I have met with two employers. They asked me about my work experience and if I would be available. They both had labour jobs available, but they are far from Mississauga and it would take me two hours to get there by bus. I'm a bit disappointed, but hopeful.” In contrast to the implied exploitation of the refugee population, one local Arab employer is reported as saying in an interview that “[i]t's hard to find Canadians to work in upholstery. Not many young Canadians are interested in learning the skills. We do have a training program. I think this is

a win-win for employers and our Syrian newcomers” (Keung, March 26, 2016).

In the videos, interviews conducted with Canadians who are sponsoring refugees or members of their family used the lens of the community and their support for these newcomers. The community support angle was also used as a critique towards the lag in processing of support for government sponsored refugees. In 13 videos, the focus was on affordable housing opportunities, jobs and other settlement challenges. After the Paris attacks in November, reporters prompted the public and politicians to address issues such as the costs associated with the transport of refugees and their settlement services, with 9 videos addressing this.

### *Analysis*

The assigning of neediness and passivity to refugees, combined with the low numbers of interviews with them, in favour of other expert or insider informants, reflects how the media engage in the process of “othering” Syrian refugees. It was pointed out in the previous section that the reports in general rely on reports by Canadians and non-Syrians. This reinforces the idea of a “saviour complex” that marginalizes Syrian refugees.

The lack of presence of Syrian refugees in their own stories was noted in February 2015, and comes from Ryerson University's journalism professor, Kamal Al-Solaylee, in Denette's (Feb. 21, 2016) *Canadian Press* article “How Syrian refugees arriving in Canada became ‘extras’ in their own stories”. Al-Solaylee expresses his gratitude for the warm welcomes but fears that the feel-good stories are “‘suck[ing] the oxygen’ out of important stories about what life in Canada is really like for immigrants and refugees after the welcome is over” (Denette, 2016). He shines light on the fact that newcomers struggle for the first few years to find employment and to adjust to a new pace of life and argues that “the media needs to do a better job at balancing lighter stories about refugees with stories about the harsh realities in their pasts and futures” (Denette, 2016).

The initial stories of Syrian refugees are touching but fail to explore their harsh realities of resettling in Canada. Where reports addressed barriers to resettlement, they emphasized language and cultural issues which can be seen as shortcomings of the refugees. Syrian refugees are more commonly depicted as vulnerable and needy victims. While a very small proportion of the reporting focuses on the structural barriers of finding employment and housing, or access to health care services and education, the bulk of the reporting focuses on needs and vulnerability, without a critical eye toward solutions. The advice given is individualized, leaving the impression that all that is required is to “do normal Canadian things” (Deschamps, 2015). At the same time, the theme of helpful Canadians as private sponsors continues. In our team's analysis, this overwhelming focus on individual responsibility directly reflects a neoliberal ethos with its emphasis on managing independently or with the help of the private sector. The valorization of individuals and the private sector also bolsters the idea of “core Canadian values”, elevating the “west” over the “rest”.

Further, a feminist analysis can be applied here. Only a handful of media interviewed women themselves, and none interviewed children. While refugees overall were underrepresented, in the selected articles, only Syrian male refugees and members of the Kurdi family were given any voice. This reflects an acceptance/endorsement of a patriarchal reality to the Syrian crisis, along with the hierarchies evident between silenced Muslim women and children compared to the slightly more visible men, something that also has a negative emphasis, as will be seen in the next section.

### *(3) Gendered representations: Syrian male refugees as a security threat*

In the *Globe and Mail*, 12 articles discussed Syrian refugees as security threats while 14 of the *National Post* articles manifest this fear, especially after the Paris terrorist attacks in November 2015 and the sexual assaults of local women by a group of men (some of whom were refugees) in Cologne in January 2016. These numbers are significant because no stories presented Syrian men in a positive light.

In the *Globe and Mail*, attention was brought to the policy that forbids single male refugees from entering Canada because Canadian refugee selection is based on “vulnerability”, giving preference to women, families, and LGBTQ people. While many members of the public were reportedly outraged by this decision, Aziz (2015) wrote: “the government has decided that the lives of some refugees are worth more than others...single men travelling alone will have their applications denied or deferred - as will orphans without relatives already in Canada - while families, religious minorities and LGBT individuals will be prioritized”. Moreover, McLaren (2015) commented on Prime Minister Trudeau’s actions, calling him out on his hypocrisy as he espouses ideals of “openness, egalitarianism and fairness” while closing the doors to some refugees. At the same time, The *Globe and Mail* reported many public leaders speaking out on behalf of the restrictive measures as a necessary safety precaution. For example, Raymond Louie, president of FCM stated: “The minister offered further assurance that the security of Canadians continues to be the priority for the government. We remain confident the government will meet its security obligations” (Leblanc et al. 2015).

Security concerns were also raised in the *Globe and Mail* articles, after the Paris attacks in November. Slater’s (2015) article feared that right-wing, anti-immigrant parties would use this as leverage to gain public support against the movement of Syrian refugees. However, the Canadian government is shown in a positive light, not letting world events deter them from helping refugees. Andrew Gee (2015) reflects on the fact that “[T]he head of the International Organization for Migration praised Canada’s welcoming stance toward refugees at a time of growing xenophobia in Europe and the United States, as he offered new details about the Liberal government’s plan to airlift thousands of Syrian asylum seekers into the country in the coming months”.

*Globe and Mail* reporters continued to stress that Canada, despite the chaos going on in the world, is not in harm’s way. In this process, the presence of

women and children serves as a reassurance that terrorism is not a threat. For example, an article by Friesen (2015) noted that Canada “will focus on resettling vulnerable refugees it assumes are a lower security risk, such as women at risk and complete families”. Laura Dawson, director of the Canada institute at the Wilson Center, a think tank in Washington D.C., was reported as stating: “Refugees coming to Canada are from low-risk groups- families with children, single mothers, LGBT men... Sixty percent are women and twenty-two percent are children. This is not an ISIS demographic” (as cited by Koring, 2016). MacKinnon (2016) confirms: “The Syrians arriving in Canada pose almost no security threat”. Nevertheless, Cheung and Muscati (2016) reported an instance where a sixteen year old male, Mohamed, was put in solitary confinement upon arrival in Canada, affirming the perception of a potential threat by Syrian males.

17 media videos depict Syrian refugees as security concerns or risks, along with sub-themes of responsibility, careful selection, and screening. After the Paris attacks in November 2015, the Canadian public was represented as cautious, but still generously compassionate for the French whereas there was a change in tone in reporting about refugees. Following this terrorist event, the words “tragedy” and “security” began to be used in the context of the government pledging to bring 25,000 Syrian refugees to Canada. When asked during an interview about the security concerns, Michael Molloy is reported as having said: “The whole security concern begins with how we frame who we are going to bring... [Our refugee resettlement system] focuses on the most vulnerable... the average terrorist is a single young man with weak family ties and very, very alienated. The people we are targeting are running for their lives” (“Trudeau committed to refugee goal”, CBC). The latter statements contribute to a narrative that Syrians are resourceless and vulnerable to exploitation by terrorist actors.

In a minor strand of reporting, the *Toronto Star* parts somewhat from the other media analyzed in this study, by returning to the theme of how the Canadian government can improve its humanitarian refugee regimes based on the “tradition” revived through the election. This attitude was seen to have been clearly demonstrated after the terrorist attack on Paris on November 13, 2015. While European countries became more exclusionary towards Syrian refugees, Canada and Canadians were depicted as gentle subjects who demonstrated generosity even during such turmoil. For example, a report mentions that “[w]e have a prime minister who remembers there was an election, and what he promised voters he would do. It appears we live in a democracy that is respected by our national leadership, and not undermined. How incredibly novel” (“After Paris, how Canada can be a leader”, November 21, 2015). At the same time, the *Toronto Star* maintains that the Trudeau Government statements of compassion were a strategy mainly taken to soothe the anxiety increased by the terrorist attacks in Paris while there was a continued emphasis on the “strong and robust” screening process of refugees (Spurr, November 16, 2015).

### *Analysis*

Critical anti-colonialist authors make clear links between migration and

securitization. The rights of migrants in their countries of arrival have deteriorated, and particularly Muslim asylum seekers are identified as security risks (Amin-Khan 2015). This is clear in our analysis of Canadian media content, and is also combined with gendered considerations, based on the depictions of Syrian male refugees as potential terrorists, and Syrian women and children as vulnerable. Media reports that describe Syrian refugees in relation to vulnerability and threat, can be attributed to the “semiotic subject that is produced and reproduced by Orientalist, Islamic, feminist, and nationalistic discourses” (Zayzafoon, 2005: 2). Orientalism and patriarchy work in conjunction with one another to produce gendered representations of Syrian refugees, women as vulnerable and males as security threats, and overall as inferior to Canadian residents and Canadian-born citizens. This literature notes that power relations work to homogenize and ‘other’ “cultural and gender difference” in such a way that “cultures are imposed, invented, and transformed” (Zayzafoon, 2005: 2-3; also see Arat-Koç 2012).

In sum, feminist, orientalist, and neocolonial frameworks are evident in the media representation of Syrian refugees in Canada, reflecting views of Muslim men as security threats. Because men are depicted as more dominant and more of a risk than women, the rhetoric put forward is that men are not as vulnerable as women, indicating that they are less deserving of refugee status in Canada. Thus, the few isolated critical voices among journalists may celebrate Canadians' presumed “openness” to Syrian refugee resettlement while also increasingly cautioning Canadians to be watchful.

## **Conclusions**

Our thematic analysis covers a relatively large segment of the Canadian media content over 9 months (September 2015 till May 2016), in relation to the Syrian refugee crisis. The main conclusion is that the media both produce and reflect a mainstream and uncritical view that endorses neo-colonial, orientalist, neoliberal, anti-Islamic and patriarchal perspectives to both the refugees and the Canadian government and public. Indeed, Kamil El-Solaylee's call for a more critical approach by Canadian media is well taken.

The media both mirror and reinforce the government's and public's identity confusion in relation to the Syrian refugee issue. While media make soothing noises about the openness and generosity of Canadians, they also continue to depict refugees along an inaccurate and misleading continuum between being needy and lacking agency, and as a possible threat. The focus on public volunteerism in relation to refugee resettlement is commendable, but media reporting directly reflects, endorses and promotes the government's abdication of its responsibility through transferring social responsibility to private individuals and groups. The glorification of “Canadian values” directly feeds into the neoliberal conceptualization of individuals as makers of their own fortunes. This conclusion reveals the role of Canadian media as anything but an uncritical conduit for upholding dominant values and ideologies.

What we need to further investigate as the Syrian crisis unfolds on the

world stage are the real issues related to settlement and displacement. It is evident that there are still millions of people trying to migrate from Syria to a new home. It is necessary that as time passes the settlement of Syrian refugees in Canada be observed and documented, to report on the successes and shortcomings of Canada's refugee system and settlement services. These reports should focus not on what Canada perceives to be the settlement experience of Syrian refugees, but stories that come from Syrian refugees themselves.



## Bibliography

- Al-Saidi, A. A. H. A. (2014). Post-colonialism literature the concept of self and the other in Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*: an analytical approach. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 5(1), 95+. Retrieved from [http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.lib.ryerson.ca/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA358699632&sid=summon&v=2.1&u=rpu\\_main&it=r&p=AONE&sw=w&asid=0003b70b0447b2c5022f9aa82a0b0215](http://go.galegroup.com.ezproxy.lib.ryerson.ca/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CA358699632&sid=summon&v=2.1&u=rpu_main&it=r&p=AONE&sw=w&asid=0003b70b0447b2c5022f9aa82a0b0215)
- Amin-Khan, T. (2015). Security and its impact on immigrants and refugees. In H. Bauder & J. Shields (eds.). *Immigrant experiences in North America. Understanding Settlement and Integration* (pp. 118-143). Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.
- Arat-Koç, S. (2012). Invisibilized, Individualized, and Culturalized: Paradoxical Invisibility and Hyper-Visibility of Gender in Policy Making and Policy Discourse in Neoliberal Canada. *Canadian Woman Studies*, 29(3): 6-12.
- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. Sage Publications.
- CIC (2016b). #WelcomeRefugees: Key Figures. Government of Canada. Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/welcome/milestones.asp>
- Das Gupta, T. (2000). Families of native peoples, immigrants and people of colour. In B. Crow and L. Gotell (eds). *Open Boundaries: A Canadian Women's Studies Reader* (pp. 215-230). Toronto: Prentice Hall Canada.
- Denette, N. (2016, February 21st). How Syrian refugees arriving in Canada became 'extras' in their own stories. The Canadian Press.
- Evans, B., & Shields, J. (2010). The Third Sector and the Provision of Public Good: Partnerships, Contracting and the Neo-liberal State. In C. Dunn, (Ed.), *The Handbook of Canadian Public Administration*, 2nd edition (pp. 305-318). Oxford University Press, Toronto, 2010.
- Hsieh, H., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15(9), 1277-1288. doi:10.1177/1049732305276687
- MacNamara, M. (2005). Tense and discourse topic in a corpus of le monde political articles. *Journal of French Language Studies*, 15(1), 49-66. doi:10.1017/S0959269505001912

- Nichols, L.J., & Tyyskä, V. (2015). Immigrant and racialized women in Canada and the United States. In H. Bauder & J. Shields (eds.). *Immigrant Experiences in North America. Understanding Settlement and Integration* (pp. 248-272). Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, Inc.
- Randall, V. (2010). Feminism. In D. Marshall and T. Stoker (eds.). *Theory and Methods in Political Science* (pp. 112-135). London: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Stocchetti, M., Kukkonen, K. (2011). *Critical media analysis. An Introduction for media professionals*. Frankfurt-am-Main: Peter Lang Publishers.
- Said, E. W. (1979). *Orientalism* (1st Vintage Books ed.). Vintage Books.
- Shields, J., Drolet, J., & Valenzuela, K. (2016). *Immigrant settlement and integration services and the role of nonprofit providers: A cross-national perspective on trends, issues and evidence*. Ryerson Centre for Immigration and Settlement, RCIS Working Paper, No. 2016/1.
- Strauss, A., & Juliet, C. (1994). Grounded Theory Methodology: An Overview. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln *Handbook of Qualitative Research. 1st ed.* (pp. 273–284). Sage.
- Thobani, S. (2000). Closing Ranks: Racism and Sexism in Canadian Immigration Policy. *Race and Class*, 42(1): 35-55.
- Wasser, J. D., & Bresler, L. (1996). Working in the interpretive zone: Conceptualizing collaboration in qualitative research teams. *Educational Researcher*, 25(5), 5-15. doi:10.3102/0013189X025005005
- Zayzafoon (2005). *The production of the Muslim woman; negotiating text, history, and ideology*. Portland: Ringgold Inc.

**Globe and Mail Sources:**

- Al-fattal, R., Europe may be failing Syrians, but Canada shouldn't boast yet, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Alphonso, C., Toronto school boards welcome refugees, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Andrew-gee, E., Do non-Syrian refugees get a fair shake?, March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Andrew-gee, E., Head of migration organization applauds Canada's refugee plan, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Andrew-gee, E., Resettlement aid organizations overwhelmed by outpouring of public support, November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015

- Atkey, R., How real is the security threat? September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Aziz, O., Trudeau's refugee bias is unjust, November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Burgmann, T., Mayor 'honoured' by haircure at Kurdis' salon, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Chase, S., & Leblanc, D., Ottawa to miss deadline on asylum seekers, November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015.
- Chase, S., 10,000 refugees have applied to Canada, November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Cheung, C., & Muscati, S., A travesty: Canada sent a Syrian minor to solitary confinement, February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Choise, S., Universities step up to welcome Syrians, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Chowdhry, A., Sponsors face daunting rental market, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Clark, C. Response a symptom of Canada's shrinking role on the world stage, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Curry, B., Leblanc, D., Bailey, I., & Thanh Ha, T., Harper rejects calls to take in more Syrian refugees, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- D'allesio, R., & Andrew-gee, E., Lack of transparency stymies sponsors, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Davis, R., Refugee math, November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Dhillon, S., Sponsorship process deemed 'ridiculous', September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Douglas, D., & Dench, J., The right way to settle refugees, February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016
- Doyle, J., We create our own story out of terror news, November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Globe and Mail, A migrant crisis, a moral crisis, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015
- Globe and Mail, Drowned Syrian boy's father says he blames Canada, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Globe and Mail, Talking point, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Globe and Mail, Why can't we meet our (modest) goals?, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Globe and Mail, Get them in quickly, but do it properly, November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015

- Globe and Mail, On refugees, Canada should not waver, November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Fine, S., Bureaucratic hurdles litter once model sponsorship system, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Finnie, R., & Mueller, R., Immigrants value education- so we should value them, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Friesen, J., City staff tried to keep aid effort private, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Friesen, J., Jones, J., & Perreux, L., Mayors from across the country vow to lead in settling refugees, September 5<sup>th</sup> 2015
- Friesen, J., Path to Canada may run through Jordan, November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Gagnon, L., By denying entry to some men, Canada betrays its better instincts, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015
- Galloway, G. & Thanh Ha, T., Cities struggle to house Syrian refugees, January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016
- Gee, M., Solving the refugee crisis is pretty simple for these kids, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Greenhill, R., & Fisher, N., A Canadian opportunity for global leadership, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Guterres, A., Canada, you're needed. Help more Syrians start a new life, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Hager, M., Kurds to protest Ottawa's refugee limit, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Hager, M., Montreal, Toronto to get most refugees, November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Hager, M., Thankful Kurdi family arrives in Canada as their year of tragedy takes hopeful turn, December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Hill, L., A moment to revisit our Canadian values, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Howlett, K., Toronto man anxious to help Syrians, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Hui, A., One Syrian family's happy ending, September 5<sup>th</sup> 2015
- Hume, M., Islamophobia hotline launched, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Hunter, J., 'Always a refugee', January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Hunter, J., Community support pours in for refugees, January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Hunter, J., Refugees are on the way, but will the support be here to greet them?, November 30<sup>TH</sup>, 2015

Hunter, J., Refugees still stuck in limbo, January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Hunter, J., Syrian newcomers find support in refugees already accustomed to Canada, January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Ibbitson, J., Canada is on target to achieve something big, January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016

Ibbitson, J., Role of Canada and its allies in Iraq and Syria has been made murkier, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Jang, B., Vancouver pepper-spray attack condemned by leaders, January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Johnston, T., Closed-door policy, November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Koring, P., More agents sought for U.S. border, February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Leblanc, D., Taber, J., & Curry, B., Ottawa seeks to ease fears over refugees, November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015

MacKinnon, M., 'I was only hoping to provide a better life for my children', September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015

MacKinnon, M., Refugee crisis is a demographic time bomb, February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Mason, G., Atrocities in Syria: The whole world is watching- and doing nothing, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Mason, G., Does welcome to Canada have a limit?, December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015

McLaren, L., Single brown man doesn't equal "terrorist", November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Merringer, I., Toronto school sparks support for refugees, November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015

Molloy, M., Bringing refugees to Canada must be done well, not quickly, November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Morrow, A., & Perreux, L., Provinces call for more welcome of refugees, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Omand, G., Aunt of drowned Syrian toddler invited to make another refugee bid for family, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015

Omand, G., Aunt says policy change is too late to save her Syrian nephews, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015

Omand, G., Refugees unfazed by pepper-spraying, January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Omand, G., Tima Kurdi says sentencing of smugglers won't stop conflict, March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Omidvar, R., Practical solutions flow from political will, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Omidvar, R., Private sponsors build a nation- and leave a legacy, November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Omidvar, R., Putting refugees to work requires all hands on deck, December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015

Peritz, I., Quebec towns hoping for more refugees, November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Petrolekas, G., However Canada takes in 25,000 people, military must be involved, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Quinn, S., Yes, let's help our own- but without forgetting to help the refugees, November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Ross, S., & Peritz, I., Rebuilding a Syrian-Canadian community, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Sachgau, O., & Chowdhry, A., Canadians search for ways to assist refugees, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Saunders, D., No surprise: Some refugees aren't thrilled about Canada, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Simpson, J., A calamity for many years, and many reasons, to come, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Simpson, J., The refugee discussion is just beginning, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Slater, J., Generous refugee policies in jeopardy, November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Taber, J., & Silcoff, S., Ottawa speeds up refugee process, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015

Wente, M., We embrace our Syrian newcomers-for now, December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Wente, M., What Canadians really think about asylum-seekers, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015

White, P., & Chowdrhy, A., Newcomers exhausted but happy after long journey, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Woo, A., & Stueck, W., Privately sponsored refugees fare better in the short term, research says, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015

Woo, A., Hunter, J., & Bula, F., All options are open in scramble to find housing for 3,000, November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015

Woo, A., Immigration process sparks debate, November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Woo, A., Refugee advocate gives voice to youth, December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Younglai, R., & Nelson, J., Until now, Syria a hard sell for donations, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Younglai, R., Privately sponsored refugees fare better in job market, December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015

Zilio, M., Group urge private sponsors to be patient, April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Zilio, M., Ottawa move makes refugee sponsors hurry up and wait, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016

Zilio, M., Sponsors frustrated by slowing pace of resettling Syrian refugees, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Zilio, M., Liberals restore health care to refugees, February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016

### **Toronto Star Sources**

Ballingall, A., Refugees vulnerable being scapegoated, November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Benzie, R., Woods, A., & Robinson, M., First wave of refugees to arrive on Thursday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Black, D., 'Unsung hero' sponsors 18 refugees, December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Black, D., A long road from turmoil to freedom, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Black, D., Canada to open doors to 305,000 newcomers in 2016, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016

- Black, D., Former refugees paying it forward, December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Black, D., Full house for the holidays, December 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Black, D., Ottawa urged to double Syrian refugee intake, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015
- Black, D., Syrians in Toronto mark 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the uprising, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Black, D., Toronto's Armenian community steps up for Syrian refugees, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Boutillier, A., 'It's war. And we can't tolerate it anymore', December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Boutillier, A., Cabinet committee meets to bring in refugees, November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Boutillier, A., Liberals to hash out Syrian refugee plan, November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Brown, L., 'The best thing about my first day? I made a friend', January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Brown, L., Fleet of helpers eagerly await Syrian students, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015
- Brown, L., Hospitality knows no boundaries in new homeland, March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Brown, L., Immigrant kids fare best in classroom, study finds, December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Brown, L., Refugees thrilled to be back in classroom, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Brown, L., Teachers play a primary role in helping refugee kids adapt, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Burman, T., On refugees, Canada learns its history lesson, November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Coyle, J., The remarkable vision of Hany al Moulia, November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Davis, S., Academics urge 'radical expansion' of refugee aid, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- DeMara, B., Free clothing, toys for refugees, January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Deschamps, T., Clothing drive to help refugees needs new space, December 4<sup>th</sup> 2015
- Deschamps, T., Family imparts hard-won wisdom to newcomers, December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015



- Deschamps, T., Syrian family reunited in Toronto, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- DiManno, R., We shouldn't be satisfied with Canada's refugee plan, November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Doura, D., The quiet heroes of refugee resettlement, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Fiorito, J., Sponsored Syrian family has yet to arrive in Canada, October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Gallant, J., 'Hopefully we'll celebrate Christmas together', November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Gallant, J., T.O. couple forgo dream wedding to help Syrians, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Goffin, P., & Reynolds, C., Five-day pause on refugee arrivals, January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016
- Harper, T., Refugee backlash will strengthen, November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Jimenez, M., 'There are no barriers; you are like family', January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Jimenez, M., 'We are the voice of the voiceless', October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015
- Jimenez, M., Syrian refugees get call to come to Canada, November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015
- Kestler-D'Amours, J., & Amal Ahmed, A., Refugees thrilled to begin new lives, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Kestler-D'Amours, J., Refugees reunite with families, December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Keung, N., "Touched by the kindness of Canadians", March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016
- Keung, N., Boy's legacy a groundswell of giving, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Keung, N., Canadian in charge of managing EU crisis, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Keung, N., From HOMS to HOME, February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Keung, N., From seizures to sniffles and fevers, hotel clinic tends to refugee health, March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2016
- Keung, N., Ottawa moves to fast-track Syrian refugee sponsorship, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Keung, N., Reaching new land is just first step for Syrian refugees, December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Keung, N., Refugee family thanks sponsors for 'making everything perfect', February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Keung, N., Refugee sponsors made to scramble, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016

Keung, N., Syrian newcomers tell prospective employers they're 'flexible, willing', March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Keung, N., The faiths, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015

MacCharles, T., Officials tout robust refugee checks, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Mallick, H., 100 days of Trudeau an antidote to cynicism, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016

May, W., 10 major changes since little Alan Kurdi died, December 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Noor, J., Health services stand ready for surge of refugees, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Noor, J., Helping refugees on the move, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Otis, D., The apartment building, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015

Porter, C., Midwife delivers on a big need, February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Porter, C., One night in a tent gives family a future, December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Porter, C., Private sponsors necessary to help refugees, November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Porter, C., Welcomed, but bewildered, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Porter, C., Why can't they come to Canada, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016

Potter, M., Money papers over desperation in Syria, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Rider, D., Refugee arrivals are expected to increase quickly, November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Rushowy, K., Greenwood school, young refugees fear losing their sanctuary, March 12<sup>st</sup>, 2016

Spurr, B., & Keung, N., After years on the run, Syrian family starts new life in Canada, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Spurr, B., Ottawa waives loans for Syrians, November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Spurr, B., Screening will be 'strong and robust': Goodale, November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Starr, S., Two lonely deaths in the Mideast's forgotten war, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Taekema, D., 'I know their pain, this is my pain', December 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Timson, J., Christmas or not, we need to feel like we belong, December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Toronto Star, Classrooms are key, February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Toronto Star, Focusing on our strengths, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Toronto Star, Heed this appeal, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016

Toronto Star, A special day to renew hope, December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Toronto Star, Not all refugees are created equal, December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Toronto Star, Was Trudeau's refugee delay justified?, November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Toronto Star, Focus on family could backfire, November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Toronto Star, After Paris, how Canada can be a leader, November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015

Toronto Star, Violence only begets more violence, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Toronto Star, A bold, complex rescue, November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Toronto Star, Stand firm after attacks, November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Toronto Star, Trudeau faces first big test, November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Toronto Star, How to sponsor and resettle Syrian refugees, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015

Toronto Star, Time to move past promises on Syrian refugees, October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Toronto Star, Starting with 100, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2015

Toronto Star, Refugee crisis: Charity begins at home, October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Ward, O., Leaving Homs: a Syrian refugee's tale, November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Winn, P., As West focuses on Syria, Rohingya crisis flares again, January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016

Woods, A., 'Airbnb' for refugees, December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015

### **National Post Sources**

Barnard, A., Kurdi family's tragedy a symbol of Syria, December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Berthiaume, L., Liberals accused of reneging; Syrian Refugees; Say privately sponsored part of 25,000 target, November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Berthiaume, L., & Carman, T., GTA to receive more than 2,600 refugees; First wave, November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Berthiaume, L., Another election vow delayed; Won't double family intake limit right away, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Berthiaume, L., Canada to boost intake of immigrants; 300,000 Target; More refugees means cuts to skilled workers, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Berthiaume, L., Liberals change refugee plan; push back deadline; need until end of February to resettle 25,000, November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Berthiaume, L., Ottawa to miss 10,000 target; Syrian refugees, December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015

Berthiaume, L., Pay refugee travel costs, Ottawa urged; new report; debt load an obstacle to rebuilding lives, December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015

Berthiaume, L., Refugees lukewarm on Canada, officials say, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015

Berthiaume, L., Trudeau hails approach of first refugee airlift; Arriving Thursday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Blackwell, T., Refugees bring health nightmare; stress, depression, November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Blatchford, C., Reason before passion, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Boesveld, S., Road blocked; Immigration staff shortage, red tape impede refugee claims, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Bond, J., In search of answers on the refugee file, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015

- Brean, J., 'We can do much more and we're not doing it', September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Brean, J., Cracks emerge in refugee plan; 'Political will' in Canada up against complicated reality, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Carman, T., A perilous reunion; two generations of Syrian refugees find sanctuary in Vancouver, December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015
- Charles, F., Tallying the butcher's bill, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Chen, B., How to help refugees now, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015
- Corcoran, T., Refugee plan needs a rethink; Take in more over longer period, November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Corcoran, T., Open our doors to the world, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Coyne, A., It is past time we act on Syria, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Crawford, T., PM condemns pepper spray attack on Syrians; 'This isn't who we are,' he says on Twitter, January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- De Souza, R. J., Resettling the refugees, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- De Souza, R. J., Should Canada favour Syria's Christian refugees?, November 24<sup>th</sup> 2016
- Den Tandt, M., Chretien gets his history wrong, September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Dharssi, A., As Syrians flood in, others await hearings; Bolivian refugee family in limbo for four years, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016
- Dharssi, A., Tight timelines for refugee vow, experts say; Screenings can take months, October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Farber, B., Shurman, P., Canada must set up, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Fekete, J., Boys' father did not apply to come to Canada: Alexander, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Fekete, J., Millions spent on upgrades for refugees; Bases readied, but facilities were not needed, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016
- Fekete, J., Paris changed refugee plan: Trudeau; doing it 'right', November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015

- Fisher, M., Canadian generosity's reality check, December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Fisher, M., Culture shock in store for incoming refugees, November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015
- Fisher, M., Odds of coming to Canada like winning the lottery; Refugees line up for 'million-dollar ticket', November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Fisher, M., Resettlement showing to be a fluid situation, November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Glavin, T., Chance at refugee status comes too late for Alan, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015
- Glavin, T., Staring into the mouth of a tragedy, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Gurney, M., Take the time, do it right, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015
- Hopper, T., A family chased by war to sea, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Hopper, T., No easy task to screen for true gay refugees, November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Howard, A., Alboim, N., & Molloy, M., Questions on refugees, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Iverson, J., Feds to tout refugees as 'National Project'; Plan envisages 900 Syrians flown in every day, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Iverson, J., Getting it right on refugees; Resettling Syrians no longer partisan project, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015
- Iverson, J., Tories plan to fast-track refugees, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Kassenaar, L., & Bochove, D., Business leaders jumpstart Syrian resettlement; 'A Canadian Thing', December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Kay, J., Why we shouldn't take more migrants; We cannot accept more newcomers than our society can assimilate, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Keating, J., How to help the refugees; Any why we don't do it, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Kennedy, M., & MacLeod I., Making space for Syria's displaced; Refugee plan exempts gay men from ban; no single men, November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015
- Kingbell, A., Calgary hotel now a Syrian resettlement centre; A refuge from war, February 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Kirkey, S., 25,000 Syrians: Are we ready?; finding homes for refugees just the beginning, November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Leuprecht, C., & Speer, S., Meeting the refugee crisis, December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Levitz, S., Canadians against refugee plan, February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Loriggio, P., Cities prepare to welcome refugee influx; Arrival imminent, December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015

MacLeod, I., Canada can vet refugees quickly, expert says; November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015

National Post, Open the doors but guard them, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015

National Post, Support ebbs for refugee plan; Two polls, November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015

National Post, Taking leadership on the migrant issue, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015

National Post, The sun rises in Davos, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016

National Post, Top-down challenge inspired CAMH staff, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016

National Post, We can do more, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015

National Post, What it takes to bring a Syrian to Canada, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015

National Post, What to do with all these refugees?, January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016

O'Connor, J., The other refugees; 26,000 arrive annually without fanfare or prime ministerial greeting, December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Pugliese, D., Private security to join refugee mission, November 21<sup>st</sup>, 2015

Quan, D., Refugee hotel bill \$2 million; Liberals; Figure revised, December 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Quan, D., Refugees uprooted for music fans; Moved out of hotels for Garth Brooks concert, March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Robertson, D. C., Canadian agency grows respect; Religious Freedom, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016

Selley, C., Continuity on the immigration file, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Selley, C., It's not racist, it's a reasonable question, January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Selley, C., Our not-so-selfless refugee policy, November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Selley, C., When the Liberal honeymoon ends, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Selley, C., Why such haste on Syrian refugees?, November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Solomon, L., The next great expulsion, February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Son, D. C., Beirut refugee center closes after marathon 24/7 Canadian effort, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Spencer, C., Canadians ready to take in thousands; poll, Refugee crisis, September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Strub-Epstein, D., Protecting Christians, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016

Urback, R., The cost of rushing, November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Warnica, R., The gift of giving; Sponsors of Syrian refugees face a challenging- but potentially rewarding- task in months ahead, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015

### **Video sources**

CBC News, 15 Syrian refugees have landed in Winnipeg and can now call this country home, November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, A group of 20 Syrian refugees arrived at Montreal's Trudeau airport, November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Alan Kurdi's family opens hair salon in Canada, January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016

CBC News, Armenian community rallies to help new Syrian refugees, December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Calgary Syrian refugee vigil, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Canada accepting a 'puny number' of refugees, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Canada to make room for 10,000 privately sponsored Syrian refugees, March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016

CBC News, Canada's governor general on Canada's response to the Syrian refugee crisis- The exchange, December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Canada's response to Syrian refugee crisis, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015



CBC News, Canada's year-end Syrian refugee target in doubt, December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Canadian family welcomes Syrian refugee, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, CFB Trenton prepares for Syrian refugees, November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, City of Sanctuary: clearing Syrian refugee hurdles, November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Couple cancels wedding to help Syrian refugee family, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Covering the Syrian refugee story: CBC Vancouver reporter's notebook, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016

CBC News, Exclusive: Canada's Syrian refugee plan; no single men, November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Family of Syrian 'boy on the beach' coming to Canada, November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, First Christmas in Canada for Syrian refugee family, December 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, First refugees receive warm welcome, December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Former refugee helping new arrivals, December 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Girl, 8, wants to sponsor Syrian family, October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Health Minister Jane Philpott says Canada will be 'responsible' with Syrian refugee intake, November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Health workers prepare for arrival of refugees, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, How do Canadians feel about the refugee plan?, November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, John Tory says Toronto is 'ready' for Syrian refugees, December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Justin Trudeau on whether the Paris attacks altered the Syrian refugee timeline, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015

CBC News, McCallum mindful of negative refugee sentiments, January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016

CBC News, McCallum: some cities have asked for a slowdown, January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016

CBC News, Meet the sole Syrian refugee in Salmon Arm, B.C., February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016

CBC News, Naheed Nenshi on refugee crisis, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, New Canadians have advice for refugees, January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016

CBC News, Nova Scotia neighbourhood steps up to help refugees, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016

CBC News, Philpott worried about TB among refugees, November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Refugee family checks out Tim Hortons for the first time, February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016

CBC News, Refugee security concerns, November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Refugee's escape from Syria, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Refugees and social media: smartphones become a critical tool for refugees, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Sleeping outside for Syrian refugees, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Soldiers return to home from helping Syrian refugees, January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016

CBC News, Stephen Harper reflects on the Syrian refugee crisis, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Stephen Harper's thoughts on refugee crisis, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Syrian family reunited in Edmonton, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Syrian refugee child piano prodigy, February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016

CBC News, Syrian refugee crisis panel gets heated, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Syrian refugee housing shortage in Ottawa & Vancouver, January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016

CBC News, Syrian refugees arrive in Fredericton, December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Syrian refugees face big airfare bills, January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016

CBC News, Syrian refugees talk about how it feels to be in Canada, December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Syrian refugees: Finding their financial footing in Canada- The exchange, December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Syrian refugees: to have and have not, January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016

CBC News, Tears and joy as Syrian family reunited in B.C., December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, The family of Alan Kurdi, the Syrian 'boy on the beach', is coming to Canada, November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, The journey from Syria to Canada, September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, This is just right for us: Newlyweds look to sponsor Syrian family of 4, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Trudeau committed to refugee goal, November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CBC News, Wheels for refugees, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016

CTV News, Canadian winter 101: Young Syrians get fun, cold lesson, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016

CTV News, Finding home: Centre helps refugees resettle here in Canada, September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CTV News, Gratitude and grief: Emotional reunion for Kurdi family, December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CTV News, Knitters creating 25,000 toques to welcome Syrian refugees, December 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CTV News, Lifeline Syria: Grassroots efforts to assist Syrian refugees, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CTV News, Mother and daughter sponsor 43 family members to Canada, December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CTV News, Pepper spraying of Syrian refugees deemed a 'hate crime', January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016

CTV News, Questions being raised over Trudeau's ambitious refugee plan, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CTV News, Strings attached: loans for refugees come with interest, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CTV News, Syrian refugee could be kidney donor for sister in Edmonton, September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015

CTV News, Toronto Armenian community rallies to support refugees, November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Huffington Post & Anonuevo, E., Canada's Syrian refugee plan to exclude this group of people: report, N/A

Huffington Post, Alan Kurdi: HuffPost Canada's newsmaker of the year, December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Huffington Post, Canada to fast-track Syrian refugees, N/A

Huffington Post, Harper: Syrian refugees important issue to Canadians, N/A

Huffington Post, Here's how Canadians can help incoming Syrian refugees feel at home, December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Huffington Post, How Canadian aid could end up helping ISIS, N/A

Huffington Post, How do you screen for gay Syrian refugee men?, November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Huffington Post, How should Canada respond to the Paris attacks, November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Huffington Post, John McCallum says not 'vast majority' of Syrian refugees are 'super happy', December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Huffington Post, Justin Trudeau doesn't think military intervention is the answer in Syria, N/A

Huffington Post, Liberals falter on deadline for Syrian refugees to Canada, November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Huffington Post, Syrian married couple get warm reception in Saskatoon, December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Huffington Post, Syrian refugees experiencing snow is pure joy, N/A

Huffington Post, Trudeau's message to Canadians ready to greet Syrian refugees, N/A

Huffington Post, Vancouver's most powerful man to temporarily house Syrian refugees, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Huffington Post, Watch these new Canadians skate in Toronto for the first time, N/A