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(De)constructing ‘refugeeness’: Exploring mediated discourses of solidarity, welcome and refugee (self)representation in New Zealand

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Abstract

The tragic photo of Alan Kurdi ignited protests of solidarity and compassion across the Western world in support of refugees. In New Zealand, refugee advocates and media commentators urged the government to increase the refugee quota and welcome in more refugees. Although discourses of solidarity and welcome stem from humanitarian concern, they also risk encouraging a regime of compassion and charity that speaks more about ourselves and how we feel. Refugees are framed as objects of 'our' moral responsibility, stereotyped as helpless vulnerable victims without agency. These discourses consequently produce a generic type of refugee – an imagining of 'refugeeness' – that consigns individuals to an anonymous presence, silenced and marginalised by the very act of solidarity and protest that is performed on their behalf.

Situated within a post-development and post-humanitarianism paradigm, and an actor-oriented approach to discourse and agency, this research aims to explore refugee representation and discourses of solidarity and welcome in the New Zealand mainstream media, and how people from refugee backgrounds experience and contest dominant discourses of 'refugeeness'. Using critical discourse analysis, this research critically examines the discursive constructions of refugees and solidarity in the New Zealand mainstream news media, and the power dynamics involved in the production of discourse. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews with refugee advocates and former refugees are employed to create spaces for participants to share their stories and experiences, enabling voices to be heard, misconceptions to be challenged, and new meanings to be constructed.

The emergence of themes in this research highlight the relationship between discourses of solidarity, humanitarianism, and imaginings of New Zealand national identity. Within these discourses, refugees are stereotyped in a particular way that calls on the New Zealand public to respond. However, as the title of this thesis suggest, meaning is not infinitely fixed. Refugees may be labelled by discursive structures, but they will also use their agency to deconstruct and redefine the refugee label for their own ends, creating space for the construction of their own identities in the process.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ARCC	Auckland Resettled Community Coalition
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CSO	Citizen Solidarity Organisation
HRNGO	Human Rights Non-government Organisation
ICCI	Inter-Church Commission on Immigration and Refugee Resettlement
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IRO	International Refugee Organisation
NZ	New Zealand
NZRC	New Zealand Red Cross
RFSC	Refugee Family Support Category
UDHR	United Nations Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNRRA	The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration

Chapter 1: Situating refugee solidarity

Something quite extraordinary occurred in September 2015 that transformed the global public response to the refugee crisis. As the Wall Street Journal reported, “Once in a while, an image breaks through the noisy, cluttered global culture and hits people in the heart and not the head” (Wall Street Journal, 11 September 2015). That image was the tragic photo of drowned toddler Alan Kurdi¹, washed up on a beach in Turkey after the boat he and his family were in capsized trying to reach Europe. Although thousands of refugees had already lost their lives trying to cross the Mediterranean in search of safety, Alan’s photo evoked feelings of outrage and sadness, becoming the defining image of the so-called European refugee crisis². Unlike other photos of the crisis, Alan’s photo created a groundswell of public support around the world for those seeking refuge.

This photo had far reaching impacts, mobilising ordinary citizens into action across Europe and the UK, protesting in solidarity with the plight of refugees under the banner of ‘Refugees Welcome’. In New Zealand (NZ), refugee advocates and media commentators from across the political divide called on the government to show a stronger, more empathetic and welcoming response in light of the current refugee crisis. As a former photojournalist, and now scholar, I was fascinated by the way in which this image galvanised such a response, when many other photos of the refugee crisis had not. It is in this context that my thesis research is positioned. While there has been much research on media representations of refugees and asylum seekers in other parts of the world, little is known about how refugees are

¹ Initially reported in the media as ‘Aylan’ Kurdi

² Throughout this thesis I refer to the event of 2015 as the ‘refugee crisis’ and ‘European refugee crisis’, as dubbed by the media. However, following Chouliaraki and Zaborowski (2017), I acknowledge the Eurocentric nature of these terms, which positioned the arrival of over one million refugees and asylum seekers as overwhelmingly problematic for European/Western countries. These terms also ignore the overstretched hosting capacities of neighbouring countries close to conflicts in the Middle East and Africa, and the wider structural inequalities at play that force people to flee in the first place (see also Franquet Dos Santos Silva, Brurås, & Beriain bañares, 2018; Georgiou & Zaborowski, 2017).

represented in mainstream NZ media, especially in relation to discourses of solidarity and welcome.

This research seeks to expand understanding of the relationship between the discursive construction of solidarity and welcome and refugee representation in the NZ mainstream media. It also aims to explore the role the media plays in shaping public perceptions of refugees, and how former refugees in NZ experience these representations and define themselves. Located within a post-development paradigm, post-humanitarian critique, and an actor-oriented approach, this thesis explores issues of power, knowledge production, agency, identity and social constructions of 'refugeeness', and contributes to wider scholarship concerning media representations, Western responses to the refugee crisis, and the lived experience of resettlement and identity formation among former refugees in NZ.

To begin the discussion, this chapter will outline my interest in this subject and how I came to choose the research topic, followed by the research aim and questions, rationale, and contribution to knowledge.

Research beginnings

As a former photojournalist who worked in the media for over a decade, and current development studies scholar, I am interested in the way refugees are represented in the media and in humanitarian campaigns. Over the last decade, I have followed with interest the Australian media coverage of asylum seeker boat arrivals and their detention. This coverage tended to oscillate between debates around humanitarian concern and border security (e.g. Augoustinos, Due, & Callaghan, 2018; Every, 2008, 2013; Gale, 2004; Lippi, McKay, & McKenzie, 2017; Mares, 2002; Mares, 2003; McKay, Thomas, & Kneebone, 2012; S. Pickering, 2001; Sulaiman-Hill, Thompson, Afsar, & Hodliffe, 2011). In comparison, NZ media coverage of refugees or refugee issues appeared to be isolated to local good news stories about resettlement (e.g. The Otago Daily Times covered the arrival of the first Syrian refugees to be resettled in Dunedin in 2016), asylum seeker policies in Australia (e.g. Sulaiman-Hill et al., 2011), or to world events, such as coverage of the European refugee crisis. Only a few major incidents involving asylum seekers made the headlines here in NZ, such

as the acceptance and resettlement of the Tampa refugees in 2001, the detention of Algerian asylum seeker and suspected terrorist Ahmed Zaoui between 2002 and 2008, and the 2013 Immigration Amendment Bill (also known as the Mass Arrivals Bill) that legalises the detention of mass arrivals of asylum seekers (Beaglehole, 2013). I also noted that media coverage tended to be fleeting and rarely focused on NZ's refugee resettlement quota or obligations under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention.

Then in 2015, as I was getting ready to start my PhD, I noticed a conversation emerging in the NZ media about what NZ could or should do for refugees in light of the ongoing Syrian civil war and media coverage of the European refugee crisis. The publication of Alan Kurdi's photo in early September 2015 was the catalyst for a change in conversation in Europe and around the world, including NZ. This was also a foundational moment in my research. For three weeks solid, media coverage here in NZ was all about NZ's response, or lack of, to the refugee crisis. Refugee advocates and media commentators across the political divide called on the NZ government to increase the refugee quota and show a stronger, more empathetic and welcoming response towards refugees.

Although I welcomed this debate and supported raising the refugee quota, I began to question how the refugee crisis was being reported here and what these media commentaries could possibly say about the welcoming and wider perception of refugees in NZ. What fascinated me with these humanitarian discourses was the focus on 'us' and 'our' response, and how this feeds into imaginings of NZ national identity and values. What appeared to be missing from most of the media that I had seen was the voices of those who had actually been refugees, who had gone through the experiences of displacement and resettlement. With this in mind, I was curious to know what former refugees in NZ, and those who were involved in the campaign to raise the quota from a communications advocacy perspective, thought about the media representations of refugees and the coverage of the double the quota campaign. It is these underlying questions and concerns which form the direction of my research.

Research Aim and Questions

The intent of this research is to understand how refugees, and notions of solidarity and welcome in relation to refugee resettlement, are discursively constructed in New Zealand mainstream media; and how people from refugee backgrounds experience, negotiate, contest and deconstruct these discourses.

The central questions and objectives of this thesis are:

1. How are refugees and refugee issues represented in the New Zealand mainstream news media?
 - Critically analyse the discursive construction of refugees and refugee issues within the New Zealand context.
 - Examine the approaches to refugee representation in the work of refugee advocates and communications specialists in NZ
2. What is the relationship between refugee representation, notions of solidarity and welcome and New Zealand national identity, with regard to refugee resettlement/refugee quota?
 - Explore discursive constructions of solidarity and welcome, and New Zealand national identity, in relation to the media coverage of the refugee crisis and calls to increase New Zealand's refugee quota.
3. How do people from refugee backgrounds in New Zealand experience, contest and construct spaces of identity and belonging within these mediated discourses?
 - Investigate what people from refugee backgrounds think about the representation of refugees in the New Zealand media, and whether they identify with these representations or not.
 - Examine the ways in which people from refugee backgrounds in New Zealand construct their own identities and understanding of what it means to be a refugee/former refugee.

Rationale and importance of research

The mainstream media plays an important role in shaping public perceptions and understanding of refugees and refugee issues. Media discourses engage audiences through particular choices of images and words, and in doing so influence how spectators feel, think and act towards distant suffering others (Chouliaraki, 2008). Therefore, how refugees are represented and labelled in the media is important. The media does more than simply report the news; it produces and reproduces social narratives, using words and images that convey a particular reality or truth (Jacobs, 2011).

Often dubbed the 'CNN effect', media coverage of humanitarian crises can help to create global awareness of humanitarian issues by capturing the public's attention and thus mobilise international solidarity and action (Barnett & Weiss, 2008; Moeller, 1999). This is exactly what happened after the worldwide publication of Alan's photo, signifying the tragedy of war and displacement for hundreds of thousands of refugees, and igniting calls around the world for action (Aiken, Einsporn, Greco, Landry, & Navarro Fusillo, 2017; Bozdag & Smets, 2017; Moreno Esparza, 2015; Vis & Goriunova, 2015).

While a lot of the media coverage of the European refugee crisis in 2015 was sympathetic to the plight of these refugees, there was also a prevalence of scaremongering about the security threat of refugees in the media. This alarmist coverage provoked fear and xenophobia, and added to rising populist nationalist rhetoric in Europe and many other Western countries around the world (Chouliaraki & Georgiou, 2017; Chouliaraki & Zaborowski, 2017; Franquet Dos Santos Silva, Brurås, & Beriain bañares, 2018; Georgiou & Zaborowski, 2017). The binary framing of refugees as either objects of humanitarian concern, or objects of fear is not a new phenomenon, with Western media representations of refugees tending to oscillate between discourses of securitisation and humanitarianism (Bleiker, Campbell, Hutchison, & Nicholson, 2013; Chouliaraki & Zaborowski, 2017; Devetak, 2004; Franquet Dos Santos Silva et al., 2018; Georgiou & Zaborowski, 2017; Pugh, 2004; Rajaram, 2002; Wright, 2014). Securitisation discourses, which aim to demonise the seeking of asylum in Western countries, routinely portray refugees

and asylum seekers as 'illegal', 'bogus' and a threat to 'our' way of life (Brouwer & Kumin, 2003; McNevin, 2007), and are often used by politicians for political gain (Devetak, 2004; McDonald, 2011; Pugh, 2004).

In contrast, humanitarian representations of refugees are designed to elicit empathy, compassion and a sense of our common humanity, with humanitarian campaigns and sympathetic media coverage often depicting sad, distressed individuals, especially women and children (Malkki, 1996; Rajaram, 2002; Wright, 2002). In these types of discourses, refugees are framed as innocent, suffering victims of war and persecution who need to be saved. The emotional response to Alan's photo formed a particular narrative and moral argument for helping refugees caught up in the crisis. No longer framed as illegal migrants, but as humanitarian victims of war worthy of empathy, solidarity and action (Fehrenbach & Rodogno, 2015a).

Solidarity with refugees

Discourses of solidarity and welcome are situated within humanitarian discourses. The heart-breaking photo of Alan Kurdi created a groundswell of public support and compassion for those seeking refuge, resulting in a number of solidarity campaigns urging governments to welcome in more refugees. These discourses of solidarity are motivated by feelings of empathy and an ethical and moral duty to help vulnerable others (Goodman, 2009; Wilson & Brown, 2009). However, they also risk encouraging a regime of compassion and charity that may speak more about ourselves as humanitarian actors than the very people we purport to help (Chouliaraki, 2013b).

Thus, humanitarian solidarity discourses involve a complex relationship of politics, power and ethics – who is visible and who is not, who gets to speak over others. Refugees are largely absent from decision-making and policy discussions at NGO (non-government organisation) or government level, and from Western advocacy initiatives (Barnett & Weiss, 2008; Rajaram, 2002). What voice they have is often mediated in a way that obscures their history, identity and agency, reducing them to a soundbite or sidepiece to a larger story. Often it is assumed that refugees are too vulnerable to speak for themselves or lack the power and capabilities to do so.

Stereotypes of refugees as helpless victims feed into the humanitarian imaginations of Western publics, while failing to address the root causes of forced displacement and ignoring the multiple experiences of those being represented (Chouliaraki, 2013b).

Therefore, while the outpouring of compassion and support for refugees in the wake of Alan's photo is heartening, it is important to critically analyse and deconstruct the meaning within discourses of solidarity and welcome in order to uncover the power dynamics involved in the representation of others. There is also a need for more stories told from the perspective of those seeking refuge, rather than from the perspective of humanitarian agencies or civil society movements. Personal narratives give voice to the individual experiences of displacement and resettlement, and help host societies to understand the complexities of what it means to be a refugee (Mannik, 2012).

While recognising the debate around the growing securitisation of refugees/migrants, this research focuses on wider humanitarian discourses and representations of refugees, and discourses of solidarity and welcome in relation to the raising of the refugee quota in NZ. Situated within a post-development and post-humanitarianism framework, and an actor-oriented approach towards discourse and agency, this thesis seeks to explore the relationship between refugee representation and humanitarian discourses of solidarity and welcome in the NZ mainstream media, and what these discourses may say about imaginings of NZ national identity and public perceptions of refugees. This research also aims to provide insights into the way refugees are portrayed in the media and their potential side effects, but also how people from refugee backgrounds choose to identify within and outside these discourses, thus contributing to development knowledge concerning the lived experience of resettlement in New Zealand.

Using qualitative methodologies, I employed critical discourse analysis to deconstruct the meanings behind refugee representations and discourses of solidarity in the media. In conducting semi-structured, in-depth interviews with refugee advocates and former refugees in NZ, I created spaces for participants to share their stories and experiences, enabling their voices to be heard, misconceptions to be challenged, and new meanings to be constructed.

Contribution to knowledge

To date, and to my knowledge, no research has been conducted in the NZ context about the relationship between media representations of refugees, discourses of solidarity, and how people from refugee backgrounds contest and transform these discourses. Previous research has studied negative representations of refugees in the media³ and the role of the media in humanitarian communication.⁴ In addition, the literature on the humanitarian representation of refugees has predominantly focused on visual discourses.⁵ Recent studies have also explored the coverage of the refugee crisis in the European media, and citizen-led refugee solidarity movements in Germany.⁶ Therefore, this thesis seeks to fill the knowledge gap regarding the representation of refugees in the NZ media, and add to the scholarly debate about the relationship between media representations of refugees and acts of solidarity driven by humanitarian concern, and the textual humanitarian representations of refugees within the NZ context.

Previous research on refugees in NZ has focused on the challenges of resettlement, health outcomes, and NZ's refugee policy and the history of resettlement.⁷ A few studies have also researched the representation of migrants in the NZ media.⁸ This research therefore adds to the scholarly knowledge of refugees in NZ, in terms of how they are represented in the media, and seeks to connect matters of representation with the lived experience of media representations and the 'refugee' label.

³ See Bleiker, Campbell, & Hutchison, 2014; Devetak, 2004; Gale, 2004; KhosraviNik, 2009; Lippi et al., 2017; Mares, 2003; McKay et al., 2012; S. Pickering, 2001; Pugh, 2004

⁴ See R. Anderson, 2017; Chouliaraki, 2006, 2010; de Waal, 1999; Höijer, 2004; Mortensen & Trenz, 2016; Orgad, 2013; Orgad & Seu, 2014a

⁵ See Dogra, 2007; Johnson, 2011; Malkki, 1996, 2002; Orgad, 2013; Rajaram, 2002; Szörényi, 2006; Wright, 2002

⁶ See Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017; Chouliaraki & Zaborowski, 2017; Franquet Dos Santos Silva et al., 2018; Georgiou & Zaborowski, 2017

⁷ See Altinkaya & Omundsen, 1999; Beaglehole, 2013; Binzegger, 1980; Choummanivong, Poole, & Cooper, 2014; Elliott & Yusuf, 2014; Ferguson, 2011; Kale, Kindon, & Stupples, 2018; Lawrence, 2007; Marlowe, Bartley, & Hibit, 2014; Mortensen, 2008; Ongley & Pearson, 1995; Sampson, Marlowe, de Haan, & Bartley, 2016; Slade & Borovnik, 2018; P. Spoonley & Bedford, 2012

⁸ See Spoonley & Hirsh, 1990; Spoonley & Butcher, 2009

The knowledge generated from the analysis of the media, and interviews with refugee advocates and former refugees, will help to inform the work of future researchers and refugee advocates, policy advisors, and grassroots organisation/NGOs who work within the resettlement sector in NZ. The combination of post-development, post-humanitarianism, and an actor-oriented approach in the theoretical framework extends post-development critiques on 'development as discourse', and highlights the role individual agency plays in the production/deconstruction of discourse. Therefore, this research contributes to the scholarship of development studies theory, and to development knowledge about the lived experience of refugee representation and the identity construction of people from refugee backgrounds.

Outline of thesis

Chapter 1 introduced the research topic, outlined the research aim and questions, discussed the rationale and context of the research, including the contributions to knowledge, and now concludes with an overview of the remainder of the thesis.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature on international refugee law, the global refugee crisis, and refugee resettlement as one of the durable solutions to refugee protection. The background to refugee resettlement in NZ is outlined, which leads into a discussion about the nature of humanitarianism and solidarity in relation to refugees and the Refugee Welcome movement in Europe.

Chapter 3 explores the literature on normative representations of refugees, with an emphasis on humanitarian representation, and the role of the media and humanitarian organisations and advocates in producing and disseminating discourses of suffering. The relationship between these discourses and solidarity with distant others is then discussed, followed by a critique of the implications of humanitarian discourses and acts of solidarity.

Chapter 4 places this study in its theoretical context, exploring post-development and post-humanitarianism critiques on discourse, specifically Escobar's (1995) 'development as discourse', and Chouliaraki's (2006; 2013b) analysis of post-humanitarian communication, and the power dynamics involved in representation

and acts of solidarity. I also explore Long's (1992) actor-oriented approach to discourse and agency, and the ways in which people deconstruct and transform dominant discourses. This chapter ends with an explanation of my conceptual framework on refugee representation and the intersection between discursive structures and agency, in order to address the research questions.

Chapter 5 outlines the methodology and research design employed in this research, influenced by the theoretical framework and epistemological position. An explanation of the research methods used, including critical discourse analysis and semi-structured, in-depth interviews is given, followed by a brief discussion of the limitations. I next discuss the data collection and analysis process, including a description of the media sample and research participants. This chapter ends with reflections on researcher positionality, the importance of reflexivity, and ethics during the research process.

Chapter 6 marks the first of three chapters that describe my key research findings from my media analysis and participant interviews. This chapter addresses the first research question on refugee representation in the NZ mainstream media. The dominant representations of refugees are examined, including the type of language, photos and photo captions used. A breakdown of the different voices in the media articles is also discussed. This chapter then moves on to the key themes that emerged from the interviews with refugee advocates and communications specialists on what they thought about refugee representation.

Chapter 7 evaluates the findings from the media analysis in relation to how discourses of solidarity and welcome are discursively constructed in the media (research question 2). This chapter examines the argument put forth by media commentators for raising NZ's refugee quota in light of the refugee crisis, and how these discourses are tied to societal perceptions of refugees and NZ national identity.

Chapter 8 is the last of the findings chapters. Addressing research question 3, this chapter highlights the voices of former refugees in NZ and what they think about media representations of refugees and the implications of stereotypes. Their perception of the 'refugee' label is also discussed, and how they choose to define themselves. Lastly, this chapter examines the various ways in which people from refugee backgrounds in NZ choose to deconstruct and redefine the word 'refugee'.

Chapter 9 analyses and discusses the collective research findings from Chapters 6-8 in order to understand the relationship between media representations and discourses of solidarity and welcome, and what this means for former refugees in NZ. Drawing from the literature and conceptual framework on refugee representation discussed in Chapter 2-4, this chapter critiques the discursive construction of refugees in the media analysed and how this ties into notions of NZ national identity and acts of solidarity, in relation to the media argument for raising the refugee quota. An actor-oriented approach to discourse and agency is then applied to the conceptual framework to analyse the response from former refugees in NZ, and how they choose to deconstruct dominant discourses of 'refugeeness'.

Chapter 10 reflects on how the thesis has addressed the three research questions, and offers some recommendations for moving beyond charitable responses to refugees towards a solidarity based on justice and empowerment. This chapter concludes with some reflections on the research process and analysis, and highlights the contributions this research makes to refugee policy, advocacy/solidarity approaches, and scholarship on refugee representation and humanitarian discourses of solidarity.

Chapter 2: Refugee protection and the principle of humanitarianism

This chapter forms the first of two literature review chapters exploring the relationship between refugee representation, humanitarian discourses, and acts of solidarity with refugees, thus informing research questions 1 and 2. This chapter places ‘the refugee’ into historical context, providing an understanding of the political, economic and legal background in which acts of representation take place. The first section of Chapter 2 outlines the origins of international refugee law, the formation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the drafting of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, under which the refugee definition falls. The next section discusses refugee resettlement as a durable solution to refugee protection, followed by an overview of the history of resettlement in New Zealand. The final two sections of this chapter explore the principle of humanitarianism in relation to refugees and acts of solidarity, using the recent Refugee Welcome solidarity movement as an example.

Origins of international refugee law

Refugee movements are not a new phenomenon. Throughout history, the poor and persecuted, and those fleeing from war could simply cross borders to a new country and start again (Skran, 1992). Groups of refugees tended to be small and most states allowed freedom of movement in lieu of immigration controls (Hathaway, 1984). It was not until the 20th century that refugees came to be perceived as an international problem that needed an international response (UNHCR, 2000). In the aftermath of the First World War, the Russian Revolution, the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires, the redrawing of national boundaries, and the emergence of new nation states, millions of people found themselves displaced, stateless, and on the move. Governments across Europe and North America responded by adopting more guarded immigration policies towards refugees, and migrants in general, in an effort to stem the flow of unwanted ethnic minority groups (Hathaway, 1984; Skran, 1992; Loescher, 2006; Marfleet, 2006).

The League of Nations and the interwar years

It was within this climate that the newly formed League of Nations established the first international response to refugee protection. In 1921, the League appointed its first High Commissioner for Refugees, Fridtjof Nansen, who was initially tasked with assisting over one million Russian refugees rendered stateless by the Russian Revolution (Waters, 2001). Over the following years, Nansen's role expanded to include other nationalities, such as Armenians, Greeks and Turks, as new refugee situations emerged. Throughout the interwar period, there was widespread disagreement among League members about how refugee assistance should be administered, with governments insisting that refugee protection be limited to specific refugee groups within Europe on a temporary and ad hoc basis (Loescher, 2006). The League recognised a more permanent system for refugee protection was needed, one which would set legal norms and impose obligations upon governments to protect the rights of refugees (Hathaway, 1984).

In 1933, the first refugee convention was drafted and although only eight countries became signatories, it constituted the first effort to differentiate refugees from other migrants, according them special protection under international law (Loescher, 2006; Skran, 1992). Despite best efforts, refugee assistance programmes remained limited in scope, and largely dependent on the financing of Britain and France and the political support of smaller European countries (Skran, 1992). Governments deliberately kept the mandate for the High Commissioner for Refugees narrow; declining to adopt a universal refugee definition for fear of opening the floodgates to refugees from further afield (Loescher, 2006).

The 1930s issued in a new era of refugees, as millions of people fled totalitarian regimes in Germany, Italy, Portugal and Spain. Most found asylum in neighbouring countries, but many governments around the world chose instead to close their borders to refugees and restricted immigration to all but a few select groups (Marfleet, 2006). Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Germany were particularly vulnerable to these restrictionist policies. The High Commissioner pleaded for countries to open their borders to Jewish refugees, but prejudice and a pervasive anti-Semitism in many countries meant these pleas largely fell on deaf ears (Waters, 2001). As Marfleet (2006) contends, states were simply unwilling to extend legal

protections for refugees, especially if it meant limiting their own sovereign rights to exclude or expel unwanted migrants. A lack of international cooperation during this period highlighted the weaknesses inherent in the League of Nations, and in the case of Jewish refugees, constituted a major failure in refugee protection as the world once again descended into war.

Refugee protection post-WWII

The international response to refugees was fundamentally changed in the aftermath of the Second World War. The United Nations, which officially replaced the League of Nations in October 1945, was faced with the repatriation or resettlement of an estimated 40 million refugees in Europe, with millions more displaced in areas that had been controlled by Japanese forces in China (Marfleet, 2006). The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) was created to repatriate as many refugees as quickly as possible. UNRRA was not designed to be a permanent refugee agency, but rather to assist with rehabilitation until Europe could stand on its own two feet again (UNHCR, 2000). The United States advocated for the formation of a new refugee organisation that focused on the resettlement of refugees, and in 1947, the International Refugee Organisation (IRO) was established.

Although IRO operations were limited in scope to Allied controlled areas of Europe, its mandate was the most comprehensive of any previous international refugee programme, encompassing every aspect of refugee protection, from identification and registration, to legal and political assistance, with resettlement a main focus (UNHCR, 2000). Perhaps most importantly, it established the most detailed definition of a refugee up to that point. For the first time, refugees were defined not only as individuals, but also as individuals who were fleeing from political persecution (Hathaway, 1984). Previous refugee definitions under the League of Nations had centred on specific groups of refugees, such as Russians or Armenians. At the time this had been an efficient way of dealing with large numbers of refugees, however it left space for political posturing over which refugee groups to assist, as happened in the case of the Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Germany (Skran, 1992).

The IRO managed to resettle tens of thousands of refugees but, much like UNRRA, it was only meant to be a temporary agency. By 1950, it was becoming clear that a more permanent international body and a universal refugee definition was needed to deal with present and future refugee issues. The onset of the Cold War and conflicts in other parts of the world, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the India-Pakistan partition, and the start of the Korean War caused millions more to be displaced (UNHCR, 2000). Refugees were no longer just a temporary post-war European problem.

UNHCR and the 1951 Convention

The IRO was finally replaced in 1951 by a new agency, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), with a core mandate to provide international refugee protection and to seek permanent solutions to refugee issues (Goodwin-Gill, 2014). The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, drafted alongside the creation of the UNHCR, re-defined the term 'refugee' and became the key legal document for refugee protection. Article 1 of the 1951 Convention defines a refugee as any person who:

[...] owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence ... is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it (UNHCR, 2000, p. 23).

The 1951 definition was initially restricted to those who became refugees as a result of events occurring in Europe before 1 January 1951. It was not until 1967 that the Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees amended the geographic and temporal limitations of the 1951 Convention, thus rendering the Convention universal in scope (Goodwin-Gill, 2014). The 1951 Convention, and its Protocol, remains the most comprehensive document on international refugee protection and refugee law, outlining who is eligible for refugee status (Field, 2010; UNHCR, 2000).

The right to asylum is enshrined in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (article 14). The 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol do not explicitly define asylum merely that individuals have the right to ask for asylum. An 'asylum seeker' is a person who has crossed an international border to seek protection and apply for refugee status, either through the UNHCR or the state authorities in which he or she has requested asylum (UNHCR, n.d). A 'refugee' is an individual who has been granted refugee status within the definition of the 1951 Convention (sometimes referred to as Convention refugees), and as such benefits from the rights due to that protection (Gil-Bazo, 2015). Every person is entitled to seek asylum, and every refugee has initially been an asylum seeker, however, not every asylum seeker will be granted refugee status.

Protecting refugees and finding permanent durable solutions for displaced people remains an integral part of UNHCR's mandate as a humanitarian agency. Since its inception, the UNHCR has worked with nation states to pursue three types of durable solutions for refugee protection: voluntary repatriation; local integration; and third country resettlement (UNHCR, 2015). While resettlement and local integration were the preferred options during the early years of the UNHCR's existence (due to Cold War politics), all three durable solutions today form a comprehensive approach to refugee protection and equally considered depending on the situation (UNHCR, 2011). Voluntary repatriation remains the favoured option for many refugees who want to return to their home country; however, they may return to a situation that is still fragile and unstable, causing them to be re-displaced. Where it is too dangerous for refugees to return home, local integration into the country of asylum may be a possibility. This durable solution requires the cooperation of the receiving country, allowing refugees the right to work, attend school, and participate fully in society (UNHCR, 2017a). Resettlement, in which a third country agrees to offer permanent residency to refugees, is the third durable option available to refugees who are unable to return home or integrate into the country of asylum.

Refugee protection and the global refugee crisis

This is not a crisis of numbers; it is a crisis of solidarity.

(Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General)

The rapid unprecedented growth in refugee numbers in the last few years poses unique challenges for the UNHCR and the refugee protection system, as more people are forcibly displaced and more countries choose to close their borders and restrict access to asylum procedures. At the end of 2016, UNHCR figures put the number of people displaced worldwide at 65.6 million (UNHCR, 2017). This number included 22.5 million registered refugees, 40.3 million internally displaced people (IDPs), and about 2.8 million registered asylum seekers awaiting their claim for refugee status. Refugee numbers have steadily increased since 2012, mainly driven by civil war in Syria, but also by conflict situations in Iraq, Yemen, and sub-Saharan Africa, and ongoing violence in Afghanistan, Somalia, and Central America. During 2016 alone, there were 10.3 million newly displaced people, and two million asylum applications, of which Germany received 722,400 claims (UNHCR, 2017). From Western media reports of the refugee crisis, it may seem like the majority of refugees are seeking safety in Western countries. However, developing countries disproportionately continue to host the majority of the world's refugees (at 84 per cent), while in 2016 only 189,300 refugees were resettled in Western countries (UNHCR, 2017).

In 2017, the UNHCR estimated that about 1.19 million people were in need of resettlement (UNHCR, 2017b). Unfortunately, more people are in need of resettlement than there are states willing to offer permanent resettlement. In response to the growing crisis in 2015, former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged countries around the world to show greater solidarity and compassion with refugees, and to provide refuge and safe passage in accordance with their international humanitarian obligations and responsibilities (Ki-moon, 2015). While the UNHCR has called on more countries to increase resettlement places and share the responsibility of hosting refugees, it cannot legally force states to offer permanent settlement (UNHCR, 2011). However, resettlement as a durable permanent solution is gaining attention as global refugee numbers continue to climb (UNHCR, 2017b), and with many local grassroots community movements and NGOs

calling on Western governments to welcome more refugees (Bluck, 2015; Connolly, 2015; Graham-Harrison, Waite, McVeigh, & Kingsley, 2015; Khomami & Johnston, 2015; Motal, 2016; Smith, 2016). The next section explores the resettlement of refugees in more detail.

Resettlement as a humanitarian tool of protection

Resettlement is an important tool that protects the legal and physical needs of refugees under the protection of the UNHCR when their fundamental human rights are at risk in the country of asylum (UNHCR, 2011). Resettlement is often described as the 'last resort', not because it is the least desirable option, but because it is the only option when the safety of refugees cannot be guaranteed through any other means (Troeller, 2002). The UNHCR selects refugees most at risk for resettlement, based on humanitarian needs, including those who have survived torture and violence, women at risk, the elderly, those with medical needs and children with special needs, and family reunification cases (UNHCR, 2011). Refugees cannot apply for resettlement, but must be interviewed and identified by UNHCR staff or NGO partners as to their suitability and need for resettlement (Bergtora Sandvik, 2009). If the UNHCR deems resettlement as the best option, refugees are transferred to a third country that has agreed to admit and grant them permanent residency. Resettlement provides refugees with protection and rights similar to those enjoyed by citizens of the resettlement country, and an opportunity for resettled refugees to apply for citizenship in that country (UNHCR, 2011).

Resettlement was the main protection tool used in the aftermath of WWII as a means of resolving European refugee displacement, and during the early years of the Cold War for those who did not want to return to communist controlled Eastern Europe (Piper, Power, & Thom, 2013; UNHCR, 2000). The following decades saw the UNHCR deal with several large refugee crises and resettlement programmes, including 200,000 refugees fleeing the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956; the forced displacement of some 40,000 Ugandan Asians in 1972; and the mass exodus of Vietnamese 'boat people' in the late 1970s, which saw over 700,000 people eventually resettled (UNHCR, 2011). Resettlement numbers dropped dramatically during the 1980s and 1990s as the focus shifted away from mass resettlement

programmes, such as the resettlement of 'boat people', to individual protection cases. However, the UNHCR remains focused on strengthening the strategic role of resettlement as an effective humanitarian protection tool, increasing the number of resettlement countries and resettlement places (UNHCR, 2011).

As the refugee crisis unfolded in Syria and across the Middle East, and many parts of Africa, the UNHCR appealed to resettlement countries to increase their refugee quotas and for new countries to open their borders and share the responsibility of hosting refugees (UNHCR, 2017a). Traditionally, the largest resettlement countries with established annual refugee resettlement quotas (500 or more places per year) include the United States, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Canada, Australia and New Zealand (Troeller, 2002). In 2016, the number of countries with resettlement programmes stood at 37, an increase from 14 countries in 2005. The increase of resettlement quotas and the establishment of new resettlement quotas enabled the UNHCR to double the number of refugee resettlement cases from 74,800 in 2012 to almost 150,000 in 2016 (UNHCR, n.d.). In addition, after high-level UN talks on global refugee responsibility sharing in 2016, several countries offered to increase their resettlement numbers, and a number of European and Latin American countries agreed to establish new resettlement programmes (UNHCR, 2017a). Despite the increase in the number of countries willing to resettle refugees, the number of resettlement places available did not keep pace with increased demand for resettlement. In 2017, the UNHCR estimated that about 1.19 million people would be in need of resettlement (UNHCR, 2017b). Unfortunately, more people are in need of resettlement than there are states willing to take in refugees, leading to protection gaps in the refugee regime (Piper et al., 2013).

However, with the world facing the biggest refugee crisis since the end of WWII, many countries are facing huge challenges in how to manage and welcome those in need, while others are increasingly choosing to securitise their borders. These challenges are made even harder by a prevalence of myth and misinformation about refugees in the media, often mired in discourses of security and threat, and a 'politics of fear', as states seek to protect their borders from a rise in global terrorism and

irregular migration⁹. These securitisation discourses (also known as the securitisation of asylum) aim to identify and demonise asylum seeking or irregular migration as a threat to the receiving society, and are often used by politicians for political gain (Bigo, 2002; Hammerstadt, 2014; McDonald, 2011; Pugh, 2004). Playing on societal fear, some governments in Europe, North America and Australasia have used the language of security and threat to legitimise and justify the implementation of harsh immigration policies that make it increasingly difficult for individuals to seek asylum (Devetak, 2004; Hammerstadt, 2014; Huysmans, 2000; S. Taylor, 2005; Tazreiter, 2004), thus placing the global refugee protection system at risk.

The preference by some countries to resettle certain groups of refugees over others, either for political, strategic or security reasons, also puts the UNHCR in a difficult situation as it seeks to find durable solutions for the most vulnerable refugees. For example, since the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001, refugees from Muslim countries are increasingly deemed high security risks. During the 2016 presidential campaign, President Trump vowed to ban all Muslims from entering the U.S. and implied that Syrian refugees could be terrorists (Siddiqui, 2017). This was followed in 2017 with an executive order banning Muslim immigrants from particular countries, which effectively put a halt to the resettlement of Muslim refugees in the USA (Amnesty International UK, 2018). Similarly, at the height of the so-called European refugee crisis in 2015, countries along the Balkan route closed borders and erected barbed wire fences (Aljazeera, 2015; Reuters, 2015; Smale, 2015). Hungary and Poland refused to take part in the EU mandated distribution of refugees, with Poland citing security risks (Dearden, 2017), and the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban arguing Christian Europe was under threat from Muslim extremists and terrorists (McLaughlin, 2017). While many other countries around the world agreed to only resettle 'Christian' Syrian refugees (Hackett, 2015).

Piper, Power, & Thom (2013) argue that refugee groups who are considered more favourable are generally those who are perceived to have similar attributes to the host society and therefore, easier to integrate and resettle well. However,

⁹ Irregular migration describes migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees who cross an international border by irregular means (i.e. without documentation or authorisation, often using people smugglers) (Brouwer & Kumin, 2003; McNevin, 2007).

discriminatory refugee selection processes can lead to those in equally vulnerable situations being overlooked for resettlement. According to Piper et al. (2013), this can mean that those most in need may not necessarily be top of the list in refugee resettlement identification or selection. Therefore, Troeller (2002) argues that it is important to ensure countries do not attempt to align their refugee hosting responsibilities with immigration and securitization policies, and that resettlement remains as a humanitarian protection tool for all refugees, and not a tool used by populist rhetoric to exclude certain groups of people. The competing discourses of securitisation and humanitarianism will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

For successful resettlement outcomes, resettled refugees require support to integrate into their new country of residence. Effective and successful integration is a major focus for the UNHCR and resettlement countries. Feeling welcomed by the local community helps refugees foster positive integration experiences and a sense of belonging. Negative attitudes towards refugees, including racial discrimination and intolerance, can make refugees feel unwelcome and influence their decision to return to their homeland, even if it means putting their life in danger in the process (UNHCR, 2011).

Although the total number of refugees resettled worldwide represents a fraction of the number of people who need protection, resettlement is an important durable solution that gives refugees an opportunity to rebuild their lives. Therefore, resettlement still plays a vital role in providing much needed humanitarian assistance to refugees, and provides an opportunity for countries like New Zealand to share the responsibility and contribute to refugee protection. The next section provides an overview of resettlement within the New Zealand context.

Refugee resettlement in New Zealand

As an early signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention (ratified in 1960), and later the 1967 Protocol, New Zealand showed its commitment to humanitarian obligations and responsibilities for the protection of refugees under international law (Marlowe & Elliott, 2014; Verbitsky, 2006). New Zealand is one of about 37 countries that takes part in the UNHCR refugee resettlement programme, and has

been officially resettling refugees since WWII. In that time New Zealand has granted refuge to over 33,000 people from a diverse range of countries across Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia (Immigration New Zealand, 2018a). Refugees considered for resettlement under the annual quota programme are referred to New Zealand by the UNHCR. New Zealand officials then interview the refugees, considering certain factors for resettlement, including the humanitarian aspect of each individual case, current New Zealand immigration policy, potential security risks, legal credibility, family reunification, health, and ability to find work and integrate (Gray, 2008).

Historically, New Zealand's refugee policy aligned with its immigration and foreign policy, alongside other economic, social, and political considerations (e.g. the need for skilled workers, preferably European). However, according to Binzegger (1980, p. 21), New Zealand's commitment to international justice and human rights is reflected in its "strong sense of moral obligation and humanitarianism" towards refugee protection. Some refugees were purely selected based on their humanitarian need, with New Zealand one of the first countries to accept refugees with a disability in 1959 (Binzegger, 1980). Today, New Zealand still remains one of the few countries to accept 'at risk' cases who may otherwise be passed over in the selection process, including women-at-risk, the elderly, and people with disabilities and medical issues (Altinkaya & Omundsen, 1999; McNevin, 2014; Spoonley & Bedford, 2012).

However, New Zealand has not always been so welcoming towards refugees. Before 1944, New Zealand did not distinguish between refugees and migrants. A small number of refugees arrived in the late 19th century, including Danes fleeing Prussian occupation in the 1870s, and Jews from Russia and Poland escaping religious persecution in the 1880s (see Beaglehole, 2013), but they were subject to immigration controls and selection criteria like any other migrant. New Zealand's approach to refugees in the 19th and early to mid-20th century was based on a discriminatory immigration policy, which favoured predominantly British or Northern European immigrants (Ongley & Pearson, 1995; Spoonley & Bedford, 2012). As a result, New Zealand was very cautious about what kinds of refugees it would accept, and was hesitant about letting refugees in who were racially different

to Pākehā New Zealanders (Beaglehole, 2013; Spoonley & Bedford, 2012).

In the 1930s, New Zealand reluctantly accepted a number of Jewish refugees escaping Nazi Germany and Chinese women and children fleeing Japanese occupation, although they were subject to strict immigration controls. The 1931 Immigration Restriction Amendment Act gave officials the power to bar non-British subjects from entering New Zealand unless they could prove they had employment, certain work skills needed in New Zealand, or considerable monetary resources (Beaglehole, 2013). Strong public opposition to the resettlement of Jewish refugees also influenced government policy, with fears that they would not assimilate or would steal New Zealand jobs (Beaglehole, 2013). The 1,100 Jewish refugees finally granted a permit to enter New Zealand found themselves subject to the Aliens Emergency Regulations 1940, which required them to register with police and severely restricted their freedom of movement. Some were even interned in enemy alien camps for the duration of the war (Spoonley & Bedford, 2012). The refugees from China were granted a temporary two-year permit, on the proviso that their Chinese relation in New Zealand pay a £500 bond to ensure they were not a burden on the state during their stay, and would go back to China when it was safe to do so (Beaglehole, 2013). Therefore, while the Jewish and Chinese groups were generally considered to be refugees, they were also subject to strict criteria that reflected a racial bias toward certain ethnic groups over others (Beaglehole, 2013; Binzegger, 1980).

The first major group of refugees accepted into New Zealand on humanitarian need alone were 732 orphaned Polish children, and their caregivers, who arrived in November 1944 (Beaglehole, 2013). The acceptance of these refugees was described by Prime Minister Peter Fraser as “an act of Christian philanthropy and kindness” (Binzegger, 1980, p. 13), and represented New Zealand’s first official involvement with refugee resettlement. Initially granted temporary visas until it was safe to return to Europe once WWII ended, the Polish refugees ended up staying in New Zealand permanently, due to the communist takeover of Poland after 1945 (Spoonley & Bedford, 2012; Verbitsky, 2006). Unlike the Jewish and Chinese refugees, the New Zealand public warmly welcomed the Polish children. As Beaglehole (2013) contends, perhaps this was because it was easier for New

Zealanders to feel compassion for children, and because many felt these children would assimilate more easily into New Zealand society.

In the years following WWII, under the direction of the IRO, New Zealand accepted more than 4500 refugees displaced by the war (described as displaced people or DPs) and those fleeing communism, including Hungarians, Poles, Slovaks and Czechs. The types of refugees accepted in the post-war years generally reflected New Zealand's (unofficial) 'white' immigration policy at the time (i.e. preferably British or European), and the need for young skilled workers who would 'fit in' to New Zealand society (Beaglehole, 2013; Binzegger, 1980; Ongley & Pearson, 1995). It also reflected 1950s Cold War politics, in which welcoming refugees from communist countries aligned New Zealand with its allies in the fight against communism itself (Beaglehole, 2013). While humanitarian concern played a part in accepting these refugees, economic and political considerations were also an important part of the selection process.

In the 1970s and 1980s, New Zealand's refugee intake diversified, with the resettlement of refugees from Uganda (Ugandan Asians), Chile, Iran (Baha'i), Iraq (Assyrian Christians), and significant numbers from Indochina (Vietnamese, Cambodians and Laotians fleeing the Vietnam War and its aftermath). From the early 1990s, the emphasis shifted from a focus on specific national, ethnic or religious groups to individual protection needs, as identified by the UNHCR. This led to a more global focus and an increase of smaller diverse ethnic communities, many of them from African and Middle Eastern countries (Beaglehole, 2013; Marlowe & Elliott, 2014; Spoonley & Bedford, 2012 - see Table 1 for a breakdown of the different nationalities of refugees resettled in New Zealand from 1944 – present).

This shift towards an ethnically diverse refugee policy in the 1970s aligned with a change in New Zealand's foreign policy, in terms of an increasing geopolitical focus towards the Asia-Pacific region, and an immigration policy based less on race and/or religion (Beaglehole, 2013). New Zealand also wanted to be seen as a humanitarian nation that prioritised the needs of refugees, rather than one who only accepted certain refugees based on ethnicity or economic/political interests (Spoonley & Bedford, 2012). At the same time, New Zealand was reluctant to accept large numbers of refugees for fear of a public backlash, compassion fatigue, and lack

of refugee integration, economically and socially. Thus, according to Beaglehole (2013), New Zealand's stance towards refugees in the 1970s became a fine balancing act between humanitarian concern, public opinion, and economic considerations.

Table 1: Nationalities of refugees resettled in New Zealand (1944-present)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Refugee group arrivals</i>
1944	Polish children and adults
1949-1952	European displaced persons
1956-1958	Hungarian
1962-1971	Chinese (Hong Kong and Indonesia)
1965	Russian Christian 'Old Believers' (from China)
1968-1971	Czechoslovakian
1972-1973	Asian Ugandan
1974-1991	Bulgarian, Chilean, Czechoslovakian, Hungarian, Polish, Romanian, Russian Jews, Yugoslav
1977-2000	Cambodian, Lao and Vietnamese
1979-1989	Iranian Baha'i
1991	El Salvadorian, Guatemalan
1985-2002	Iraqi
1992-2006	Afghan, Albanian, Algerian, Assyrian, Bosnian, Burundi, Cambodian, Chinese, Congolese, Djibouti, Eritrean, Ethiopian, Indonesian, Iranian, Iraqi, Kuwaiti, Libyan, Khmer Krom (Cambodian Vietnamese), Liberian, Myanmarese, Nigerian, Pakistani, Palestinian, Rwandan, Saudi, Sierra Leone, Somali, Sri Lankan, Sudanese, Syrian, Tanzanian, Tunisian, Turkish, Ugandan, Vietnamese, Yemeni, Yugoslav
2006-2007	(<i>Main source countries</i>) Afghanistan, Republic of Congo (i.e. Congo-Brazzaville), Democratic Republic of Congo, Burma/Myanmar
2007-2009	(<i>Main source countries</i>) Same as previous period plus Iraq, Colombia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Bhutan, Indonesia, Nepal
2010-2013	(<i>Main source countries</i>) Burma/Myanmar, Iraq, Bhutan, Colombia, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan (and 15 other countries)
2014-Present	(<i>Main source countries</i>) Burma/Myanmar, Afghanistan, Syria, Colombia, Bhutan, Iraq, Palestine, Sri Lanka (and 23 other countries)

Adapted from Marlowe & Elliott (2014) and updated with current source countries from 2014-present from Immigration New Zealand (2018b) statistics on refugee quota arrivals.

New Zealand's official refugee resettlement programme

Until the late 1980s, New Zealand's response to refugee resettlement was based on an ad hoc quota system that reflected changing global refugee needs (e.g. the Indo-Chinese conflict). New Zealand had no policies or structures in place to deal with large numbers of refugees for resettlement, and relied heavily on ethnic communities and church groups to help with the resettlement of people into the community (Beaglehole, 2013; Spoonley & Bedford, 2012). In 1975, the Inter-Church Commission on Immigration and Refugee Resettlement (ICCI) was formed to coordinate the resettlement programme (Binzegger, 1980). While the government provided the initial orientation for refugees on arrival, it was the responsibility of the ICCI to find sponsors, settle refugees into the community, and organise accommodation and jobs. In 1990, the ICCI officially became the Refugee and Migrant Service (RMS), later known as Refugee Services Aotearoa New Zealand, before combining with the New Zealand Red Cross (NZRC) in 2012 to form the current Pathways to Settlement programme.

In 1987, the New Zealand government formally established an annual refugee resettlement quota of 800 (which was lowered to 750 in 1997, and was increased to 1000 in 2018), signalling New Zealand's on-going commitment to refugee protection (Beaglehole, 2013; Immigration New Zealand, 2018a). In addition to the annual quota, New Zealand provides 300 places each year for family reunification, in which resettled refugees can apply to sponsor family members to settle with them in New Zealand under the Refugee Family Support Category (RFSC). New Zealand also receives a small number of asylum claims each year, of which about a third of claims are approved (Immigration New Zealand, 2018c)¹⁰. A fourth category of refugees accepted by New Zealand includes those in urgent need of resettlement due to a crisis in their country (Spoonley & Bedford, 2012). This category has included Kosovo Albanians (404, resettled in 1999), Zimbabweans (1800 accepted between 1992-2003) (Spoonley & Bedford, 2012, pp. 167–168), and most recently

¹⁰ Between 2008 and 2017, New Zealand received 3326 asylum claims, of which 918 or 29.5% of claims were approved (Immigration New Zealand, 2018c).

Syrian refugees (750 over three years, 2015-2018) (Trevett, 2015).

Upon arrival, quota refugees receive permanent residency, with the opportunity to apply for citizenship after five years. Their first six weeks is spent at the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre in Auckland learning about New Zealand society and the skills they will need to start their new life in New Zealand (Marlowe & Elliott, 2014). During this time, refugees receive English language tuition; undergo comprehensive health checks and counselling if needed; and are assessed for education, employment, housing and social needs (Ferguson, 2011). After 6 weeks, the newly arrived refugees move to one of the refugee resettlement areas in Auckland, Hamilton, Palmerston North, Wellington, Nelson, Christchurch, Dunedin, and Invercargill, where they will be supported in the community by Red Cross Refugee Services and volunteers for up to 12 months.

Despite this strong commitment, the government's approach to resettlement has been criticised for producing poor outcomes for refugees (Ferguson, 2011). There was concern about a lack of comprehensive services to help refugees with specialised needs, such as trauma, and to help them successfully integrate into New Zealand life. The idea to fold Refugee Services Aotearoa into the NZRC was to provide more of a wrap-around service and improved resettlement support for refugees¹¹. In 2013, the New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy was launched with the aim to improve the resettlement experience of all quota refugees, focusing on economic self-sufficiency, social integration, and a greater sense of well-being and belonging through participation in New Zealand life (Immigration New Zealand, 2012; Marlowe, Bartley, & Hibtit, 2014).

¹¹ In 2012 the NZRC became the primary refugee resettlement community provider, providing comprehensive settlement support through qualified social workers, case and cross-cultural workers, and trained volunteers. The NZRC Pathways to Settlement programme aims to support the successful integration of newly arrived refugees into NZ society, helping them to find work, access resources and services, and address trauma if necessary (Beaglehole, 2013; New Zealand Red Cross, n.d.).

New Zealand today: Refugees welcome

The 2015 refugee crisis sparked a media/public campaign urging the National government to raise the quota and welcome more refugees into New Zealand. After initially resisting calls to raise the refugee quota (Radio NZ, 2015), the National government announced it would resettle 750 Syrian refugees in response to the ongoing Syrian civil war, and promised to raise the annual refugee quota from 750 to 1000 in 2018 (New Zealand Government, 2016; Trevett, 2015). Of these 750 extra places for Syrians, 600 would be a special emergency intake above the annual quota, and 150 places within the quota. This response was largely met with disdain and criticism in the press for not doing enough to help refugees (Edwards, 2016; New Zealand Herald, 2016; The Dominion Post, 2016; The Otago Daily Times, 2016).

In 2018, the Labour-led government pledged to raise the quota again from 1000 to 1500 places annually from July 2020, with Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern saying it was “the right thing to do” and fulfilled “New Zealand’s obligation to do our bit” (New Zealand Government, 2018b). The government also announced it will increase support and resources for quota refugees and asylum seeker claims, which, according to Immigration Minister Iain Lees-Galloway, highlights “New Zealand’s humanitarian values” (New Zealand Government, 2018a), something that will be discussed further in Chapter 7.

In addition to the resettlement programme, the New Zealand government agreed to trial a new Community Organisation Refugee Sponsorship¹² category to complement the existing annual refugee quota programme (New Zealand Government, 2017). The pilot programme initially welcomed an additional 25 refugees into New Zealand in 2017/2018, providing a grassroots community approach to refugee sponsorship and resettlement. According to the government, New Zealand’s refugee resettlement programme reflects New Zealand’s humanitarian obligations and responsibilities towards refugees (Immigration New Zealand, 2018d). It is clear that humanitarianism is at the foundation of New

¹² The Community Organisation Refugee Sponsorship category enables community organisations to independently sponsor refugees and be actively involved in the resettlement process. Community groups are responsible for providing housing, and helping them learn English, find employment, and adjust to NZ society. The sponsorship programme provides an alternative pathway to resettlement alongside the NZ government annual refugee quota.

Zealand's approach to refugees, and therefore the next section will explore the notion of 'humanitarianism' in relation to refugee resettlement in more depth.

Refugees and humanitarianism

The concept of refugee protection is inseparable from the notion of human rights

(UNHCR, 1995, Chapter 2)

Although countries are not legally obliged to resettle refugees, the UNHCR views the permanent resettlement of refugees as an act of generosity and a way for states to express their solidarity with refugees, and their humanitarian obligations under international law (Piper et al., 2013; UNHCR, 2011). States who have ratified the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol, alongside other international human rights conventions, such as the 1948 United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), have accepted certain obligations towards upholding refugee and human rights law. Alongside these international legal instruments is the notion of customary law – the moral obligation to protect and uphold human rights regardless of whether states are signatories to certain conventions or not (Gibney, 2004; UNHCR, 2011).

Ethical and moral arguments for helping refugees play on what Gibney (2004) refers to as the 'ethics of hospitality', that is the humanitarian principle or moral obligation to help those who are suffering and in need. This principle is not a new idea and found in many religious traditions. In Christianity, for example, the parable of the Good Samaritan illustrates the duty to assist others in distress. This is a moral principle held between strangers who share nothing more than a common humanity (Gibney, 2004). Secular traditions of humanitarianism emerged in 18th century Europe, based on liberalism, universalism and cosmopolitan ideals of equality, universal rights, human dignity and common humanity, in which "each person is of equal moral worth and a subject of moral concern" (Barnett & Weiss, 2008, p. 12; see also Andersen & de Silva, 2017; Barnett, 2008; Calhoun, 2010; Wilson & Brown, 2009). Scottish Enlightenment philosopher and economist, Adam Smith, is a key figure in the establishment of these moral discourses. In *Theory of Moral Sentiments*

(1759), Smith concludes that benevolence towards vulnerable others is not only a fundamental moral good, but also what makes us human (Chouliaraki, 2013b).

Both secular and religious traditions appeal to what Silk (2000, p. 306) describes as an “ethic of universal solidarity”, informed by ideals of universal morality and altruistic benevolence, and the notion that we should stand in solidarity and care for our fellow human beings despite our ethnic, cultural or religious differences (Boltanski, 1999; Rorty, 1989). In the 19th century, ethical and moral commitments to distant strangers became institutionalised (e.g., the establishment of the International Red Cross and the abolition of slavery), and humanitarian and human rights discourses brought to the fore (Barnett & Weiss, 2008). This new humanitarianism reflected a sense of interconnectedness, and a desire to improve the human condition through poverty relief and institutional reform (e.g., health, prisons, education, mental asylums) (Calhoun, 2010). European imperialism in the 19th century also drew on humanitarian ideals as part of the rationale for colonisation, with a focus on ‘saving’ and improving the lives of indigenous peoples through Western education, health care, and missionary work (Calhoun, 2010), as was indeed the basis for the colonisation of New Zealand by the British, among other economic incentives (Sorrenson, 1975). Today, ethical and moral arguments used to justify humanitarian interventions and solidarity for distant suffering others manifest in the overseas activities of NGOs, UN institutions, humanitarian interventions in times of war and disaster, and charitable donations to worthy causes (Barnett & Weiss, 2008).

The principle of humanitarianism sits within the realm of the ethical and moral – that is, what one ought to do (Wilson & Brown, 2009). The 20th century French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas stated that humankind has an ethical responsibility and moral duty to look after each other (Fozdar, 2012). Responding to the needs of others, or a desire to help those in need, is what being human is all about. Levinas does not describe what the ethical response should be; only that the individual needs to consider his/her responsibility to others, and that the individual must not place him/herself above others. This, according to Levinas, is the moral foundation of all ethical responses. Because of our common humanity, we are duty bound to help other human beings, regardless of our proximity to each other (Butler, 2015).

Similarly, Kantian ethics suggest we are duty bound to help others if it is within our power to do so (Rorty, 1989). This rationale is based on the notion of common humanity and moral obligations to other human beings, and therefore, reason dictates, we will help other human beings in need because it is our duty. However, this moral duty goes beyond mere feelings of empathy and pity for the suffering of others. According to Kant, it is not enough merely to feel, identify and notice the suffering of others; we also have a moral duty to act (Rorty, 1989).

Contemporary humanitarian practices are grounded in the principles of humanitarianism, or what Vandevoordt (2017) calls a form of 'moral cosmopolitanism' that focuses on the responsibility we have towards distant suffering others. These concepts create an ethical foundation that justifies humanitarian practices and compel ordinary citizens to act in solidarity on behalf of others (R. Anderson, 2017; M. Barnett, 2008). Chouliaraki (2006) describes acts of solidarity as a form of cosmopolitan citizenship or politics that mobilises international public opinion and action on issues of suffering and injustice. Chouliaraki (2006) argues that the act of protest can draw attention to the moral issue of suffering, and thus bring people together in solidarity for a particular cause. Chouliaraki builds upon the concept of cosmopolitan solidarity, developed by Craig Calhoun (2008a). Calhoun views cosmopolitan solidarity as both the desire to help distant vulnerable others, motivated by an ethical response to humanitarian suffering, and a form of global connectivity that brings communities together in "shared projects", aiming for a "better future" (Calhoun, 2002, p. 171). The desire to ease the suffering of fellow human beings stems from liberal notions of common humanity and a "cosmopolitan political consciousness" (Rorty, 1989, p. 192). Thus, solidarity motivated by ethics and connectivity can propel Western publics to care for the suffering of distant others (Chouliaraki, 2008).

Solidarity movements appeal to the notion of shared humanity, dignity and human rights, and seek to evoke an emotional response from the public, which ideally translates into some form of action (Goodman, 2009; Lahusen & Grasso, 2018). As discussed above, humanitarian solidarity is informed by humanitarian norms, and motivated by feelings of empathy and an ethical and moral duty to help vulnerable others (Goodman, 2009; Wilson & Brown, 2009). Acts of solidarity can have both

charitable and political dimensions, and may involve people within one's own society (e.g. people with disabilities, children living in poverty, and the homeless), or supporting global causes (e.g. refugees and victims of famine or natural disasters). This can take the form of protest, petitions, opinion polls, letter writing, or donations of time and money (Chouliaraki, 2006). Stjerno (2004, p. 2) defines solidarity as the "preparedness to share resources with others by personal contribution to those in struggle or in need" and a "readiness for collective action". For Lahusen and Grasso (2018), collective actions, such as political protests and communication campaigns, mobilise publics to act in solidarity on behalf of others in order to challenge rights abuses and inequalities (for a rights-based concept of solidarity, see Giugni & Passy, 2001).

Emotions of pity, empathy and compassion also play an integral part in moral responses to the suffering of others. According to Varvin (2017, p. 5), compassion goes beyond empathy, relating to "an active desire to alleviate another's suffering". This draws on the idea of 'witnessing' suffering (Calhoun, 2010). By witnessing distant suffering, Western spectators can somehow help to make that suffering real by acting upon it. As de Waal (2015) points out, active forms of engagement with distant others are driven by emotions of empathy and outrage; and it is feelings of empathy and compassion that are at the heart of refugee solidarity movements (Goodman, 2009; Rosenberger & Winkler, 2014; Ticktin, 2011).

'Refugees Welcome': Western solidarity with refugees

When confronted with suffering all moral demands converge on the single imperative of action

(Boltanski, 1999, p. xv)

The 'Refugees Welcome' movement emerged in response to seemingly unjust restrictive migration policies of Western nation states, and collectively aimed to raise awareness about refugee rights, and challenge and transform restrictive asylum policies (Toğral, 2016). What started off as an informal citizens' initiative quickly grew into an organised transnational movement operating in over 20 countries around the world (Nikunen, 2018). After the tragic photo of drowned

Syrian toddler Alan Kurdi captured the world's attention in 2015, public support for those seeking refuge grew exponentially, with a number of grassroots movements and solidarity campaigns welcoming refugees and urging their governments to do the same (Bluck, 2015; Cooke, 2015; Smith, 2016). Citizens across Europe mobilised into action under the banner of 'Refugees Welcome', taking to the street in protest over restrictive EU policies and treatment of refugees, welcoming refugees at train stations, and held up banners of support for refugees at football matches (Connolly, 2015; O. Gibson, 2015; Graham-Harrison et al., 2015; Khomami & Johnston, 2015; Motal, 2016; Toğral, 2016). Nowhere was this more evident than in Germany, which welcomed close to a million refugees and asylum seekers during the summer of 2015, also known as the 'summer of welcome' (Becht, Boucsein, & Mayr, 2018), with thousands of people donating time and money, and helping to distribute food, clothing and other essential items at train stations and emergency shelters. Many more volunteers headed to Greece to help to provide emergency humanitarian aid to refugees arriving by boat from across the Mediterranean (Bernat, Kertesz, & Toth, 2016; Kalogeraki, 2018; Toğral, 2016).

Recent research cites a number of reasons why European citizens chose to get involved and stand in solidarity with refugees. For many, the media coverage of desperate people making the dangerous journey across the Aegean Sea, refugees living in makeshift camps, people beaten by police and stranded at train stations along the migrant route, and distressed children and families was enough to evoke a response (Karakayali, 2018). Bernat, Kertesz, & Toth (2016) identified three main motivations that propelled Hungarian volunteers to act. The first was a sense of altruism - feeling pity for refugees and wanting to help, either through donations or on the ground humanitarian/aid work. Others were politically motivated, outraged at the perceived cruelty of Hungarian government migration/refugee policy. The third motivation included feeling affected by the situation refugees were facing, either through a sense of duty to help based on their own experiences of migration or familial ties to the refugee producing countries represented.

Research with German volunteers revealed similar altruistic and political motivations. In a study on volunteers in the city of Bielefeld, Germany (Stock, 2017), some volunteers referred to a sense of moral duty to help alleviate people's

suffering, asking themselves what they would do if faced with a similar situation as the refugees faced. Others expressed a shared sense of precariousness or human vulnerability, times when they themselves have needed help or assistance; therefore, this 'shared' experience motivated them to volunteer. Volunteers in this study also spoke about their shock at the treatment of asylum seekers and their struggle at accessing social and legal services. It was through their personal interactions with asylum seekers that the volunteers came to understand or gain insight into what it was like to seek asylum, which propelled volunteers to establish "networks of solidarity" in order to seek justice for the people in their care (Stock, 2017). In another German study, Hamann & Karakayali (2016) found that volunteers became involved either as a form of protest against the rise of right-wing populism, or because they became aware of the inequalities and injustices faced by migrants and refugees in Germany and wanted to stand up for refugee rights.

Similar research with the refugee volunteer network in Hungary at the height of the refugee crisis in 2015 discusses the potential for the politicisation of charity (Feischmidt & Zakarias, 2018). Many of the volunteers interviewed got involved to provide immediate assistance to refugees and reduce their suffering, but also as a direct political response to the Hungarian government's policies at the time. This recent research out of Europe demonstrates that by exposing ordinary citizens to the realities of seeking refuge, refugee solidarity movements have the potential to generate new forms of political activism that seek to address global inequalities and injustices (Feischmidt & Zakarias, 2018; Hamann & Karakayali, 2016; Karakayali, 2018). What connects these refugee solidarity movements is the expression of humanitarian ideals and the links to human rights and social justice (Goodman, 2009; Tazreiter, 2010). It is these bonds of solidarity, according to Chouliaraki (2006) that tie Western publics to distant others, and which mobilized ordinary citizens into action during the European refugee crises.

Summary

This chapter has discussed the origins of international refugee law, provided a legal definition of 'the refugee', and outlined the resettlement of refugees in the New Zealand context. The norms of international refugee law lie in the principles of

humanitarianism and cosmopolitanism. The notion of humanitarianism in relation to refugee resettlement is an expression of these universal norms, often tied up with solidarity movements and national identity. It is this notion of solidarity, based on ethical and moral humanitarian principles and notions of common humanity, which this thesis draws on to explore discourses of solidarity and welcome towards refugees in the NZ media, in relation to raising NZ's refugee quota. This thesis also seeks to explore the relationship between these discourses of solidarity and how refugees are represented, thus addressing research question 2. As Silk (2000) argues, there must be a certain amount of emotional engagement in order to morally motivate people to care about vulnerable others in the first place. Therefore, the next chapter explores normative humanitarian representations of refugees within humanitarian/advocacy campaigns and the media, and how these representations feed into acts of solidarity for refugees.

Chapter 3: Constructing ‘refugeeness’: Humanitarian representations of refugees

This chapter begins by providing a brief outline of dominant representations of refugees, which tend to position refugees as either objects of fear or as victims, followed by an overview of normative discourses in humanitarian campaigns. This leads into a discussion on the visual humanitarian representations of refugees. The third section explores the mediation of suffering and the important role the media plays in producing and disseminating humanitarian discourses. The relationship between these mediated discourses and notions of solidarity with distant suffering others is discussed in the fourth section. This chapter finishes with a critique of humanitarian discourses in the way they frame, label and represent ‘the refugee’, thus influencing how Western publics respond.

Normative representations of refugees

Representations of refugees tend to sit within complex discourses of security and humanitarianism, with refugees predominantly framed as either victims: helpless, suffering and innocent people, seeking safety from war and persecution; or objects of fear: potential terrorists and security risks, and a threat to Western ‘ways of life’ (for example, see Photograph 1) (Bleiker, Campbell, & Hutchison, 2014; Chouliaraki & Georgiou, 2017; Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017; Devetak, 2004; Franquet Dos Santos Silva et al., 2018; Gale, 2004; KhosraviNik, 2009; Lippi et al., 2017; Mares, 2003; McKay et al., 2012; S. Pickering, 2001; Pugh, 2004; Rajaram, 2002; Sulaiman-Hill et al., 2011; Wright, 2002, 2014). The terms ‘refugee’, ‘asylum seeker’ and ‘migrant’ have become frequently conflated and used interchangeably, causing a blurring of the lines between who is perceived to be ‘real refugee’, thus ‘deserving’ of protection, and who is not (Devetak, 2004; Gale, 2004; Pugh, 2004). Consequently, a generic type of refugee has become produced and reproduced through these

discourses, creating a stereotypical notion of 'refugeeness' – what a 'genuine' refugee should look like (Malkki, 1996).

Photograph 1: An example of humanitarian and securitisation representation of refugees in the media



The blurring of the lines between refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants in the media is not new. Over the last three decades, negative representations of refugees and asylum seekers have grown in prominence as Western governments sought to protect their borders from a rise in global terrorism, and restrict access to growing numbers of asylum seekers, as discussed in the previous chapter (Devetak, 2004; Gale, 2004; Pugh, 2004). This securitisation discourse routinely portray asylum seekers and refugees who arrive in Western countries by irregular means as 'illegal migrants' or 'bogus refugees', trying to 'jump the queue' and exploit the system (Brouwer & Kumin, 2003; McNevin, 2007). Common themes of anxiety and fear dominate media discourses and public perceptions of asylum seekers and refugees as a problem and a potential security threat (particularly after the 9/11 terrorist attacks), reducing individuals into an anonymous, faceless group of people (Tazreiter, 2004).

The use of inflammatory headlines coupled with particular kinds of photographs reiterates and recycles negative stereotypes about refugees and asylum seekers (Gale, 2004). Images of overcrowded boats and stereotypical metaphors of natural disasters and national emergencies - such as 'floods', 'waves', and 'tides' - are

routinely used to describe refugees and asylum seekers, giving the impression that the receiving country is in danger of being 'engulfed', 'inundated', 'submerged', 'swamped' and 'overrun' by dangerous outsiders (Mares, 2011; Pugh, 2004; van Dijk, 1997 - see Photograph 2 for examples of inflammatory news headlines from the UK media).

Photograph 2: Securitisation discourses in the media



In response to these dominant discourses of fear, humanitarian agencies and refugee advocates have sought to contest stereotypes and dispel myths, utilising humanitarian discourses in order to promote better understanding and knowledge of refugee issues (O'Neill, 2010). Humanitarian discourses are designed to elicit empathy, compassion and a sense of our common humanity (Chouliaraki, 2013). Discourses of solidarity and welcome are situated within these humanitarian discourses, which stem from humanitarian principles, concern and a sense of ethical and moral duty towards helping refugees (as discussed in Chapter 2). Within these discourses, refugees are commonly portrayed as vulnerable victims, with images often depicting sad, distressed individuals (Wright, 2002, 2014), or as human interest stories, positioning refugees as people like 'us' (Franquet Dos Santos Silva et al., 2018; Steimel, 2010).

While acknowledging the securitisation framing of refugees, this thesis focuses on wider humanitarian discourses and representations of refugees in the media and by NGO/advocates, specifically discourses of solidarity with refugees, and the relationship between these discourses and refugee victim stereotypes. The next

section provides a brief background to the normative production of humanitarian discourses.

The production of humanitarian discourses

Photography and humanitarianism go hand-in-hand – photography is embedded in the very concept of ‘human’ that underlies humanitarianism.

(Sontag, 2003)

Narratives of suffering and human vulnerability, based on the notion of our ‘common humanity’, have historically informed Western humanitarian discourses and interventions (Musarò, 2017). The institutionalisation of humanitarianism in the post WWII era led to the normalisation of humanitarian discourses (Barnett & Weiss, 2008; Escobar, 1995). Through both textual and visual means, the humanitarian subject, typically from the ‘Third World’, came to represent the vulnerable victim of famine, war and poverty, in which Western governments and agencies sought to help (Barnett & Weiss, 2008; Escobar, 1995; Malkki, 1996; Nyers, 2006; Rajaram, 2002 - the discursive construction of humanitarian subjects, such as refugees, will be discussed within the theoretical framework of this thesis in the next chapter).

Governments, the media and non-government organisations (NGOs) in the Global North have all used (at one time or another) distressing images of refugees, victims of famine, war and natural disasters in order to justify humanitarian interventions and aid relief, or to raise awareness and money for humanitarian campaigns (Calhoun, 2010; Silk, 2000 - see Photograph 3 as an example). Humanitarian discourses, narratives and representations of distant others are powerful for their ability to generate emotions of compassion, solidarity and action. However, they also tend to be linked to discourses of victimhood and helplessness, with humanitarian campaigns portraying people in extreme forms of suffering who need to be saved by Western interventions (Chouliaraki, 2010; Wilson & Brown, 2009).

Photograph 3: UNHCR humanitarian campaign. Photo: UNHCR



Although knowledge of the Global South is disseminated via written accounts, photography tends to be the prime vehicle through which humanitarian discourses about the 'Third World' are produced and shared. As post-development scholar Escobar (1995) declared, humanitarian discourses are embedded in visual rhetoric. Like textual discourses, visual discourses are a powerful medium in the representation of refugees and other humanitarian subjects, shaping public perceptions and attitudes, political policy and practice (Bleiker et al., 2014). In regard to refugees, images play a key role in disseminating information and constructing certain norms and stereotypes about who is a refugee, and whose lives are deemed 'grievable', thus worthy of compassion (Bleiker et al., 2013; Butler, 2010; Wright, 2002). Sontag (2003, p. 22) describes images as "visual quotations" that shape how the viewer responds emotionally. Thus, photographs are one of the main rhetorical devices used to evoke empathy and moral outrage, in order to regard the pain of others (Fehrenbach & Rodogno, 2015a).

The use of photographs to highlight the suffering of distant others is not a new phenomenon. Humanitarian organisations have used photographs to highlight human suffering, raise public awareness and donations, and to influence political change since the advent of photographic technologies in the 19th Century (Fehrenbach & Rodogno, 2015b; Szörényi, 2018). Early examples of humanitarian

imagery include the atrocities committed against local people in the Belgian Congo (1880s to 1900s), the Armenian genocide during WWI, the starvation of Afrikaner's during the Boer War (1899-1902), and the vast displacement of people in post-1918 Europe. As Fehrenbach & Rodogno (2015a, p. 1125) explain, "humanitarian imagery gave form and meaning to human suffering, rendering the latter comprehensible, urgent and actionable for European and American audiences".

Fehrenbach & Rodogno (2015a, p. 1126) describe humanitarian photography as a "moral rhetoric", in which images of suffering are used to "enhance sympathy, empathy and a sense of responsibility or guilt in its viewers". Emotionally responding to distant suffering is one way of creating public awareness and solidarity for humanitarian issues, to raise money for charitable causes, and to provoke a political response. In this respect, humanitarian photography utilises the language of 'universalism' and 'common humanity' through sentimental narratives designed to induce empathy and sympathy, and emotionally connect Western audiences with the suffering of distant others (Dogra, 2015).

However, humanitarian imagery has been widely criticised for portraying humanitarian subjects as needy, passive, helpless victims in distressing situations. For example, coverage of the Biafran civil war and famine (1967-70) and Ethiopian famine (1984-85) largely depicted people with emaciated bodies with bloated stomachs, protruding ribs, half-naked and begging for help, or starving children with 'flies in their eyes' (Chouliaraki, 2010; Dogra, 2007, 2015; Lidchi, 2015; Orgad, 2013). Although these types of photos attracted international attention and donations, they were widely criticised for violating the dignity, identity and culture of the individuals depicted, and for producing and perpetuating a patronising, orientalist and dehumanising view of the Global South (Barnett & Weiss, 2008; Cohen, 2001; Dogra, 2007, 2015; Fehrenbach & Rodogno, 2015a; Lidchi, 2015). By the 1990s, NGOs tended to favour more positive imagery that highlighted the agency, dignity and resilience of humanitarian subjects, and sought to encourage solidarity with distant others based on social justice rather than charity (Dogra, 2015; Fehrenbach & Rodogno, 2015b; Orgad, 2013).

Regardless of whether humanitarian organisations decide to use 'negative' or 'positive' imagery, both discourses rely on 'grand emotions' to evoke a response to

action (Chouliaraki, 2013a). Humanitarian imagery communicates this concern for refugees, via the media or humanitarian campaigns, arousing empathy and compassion for refugees and appealing to Western publics for help and support (Nyers, 2006; Szörényi, 2006). Humanitarian agencies, such as the UNHCR, employ certain discourses to convey not only who is a refugee, but also what it is like to be a refugee – the desperation, fear, sadness, and loss of becoming a refugee (Szörényi, 2006 - see Photograph 3). These humanitarian discourses play an important role in constructing a particular image of ‘the refugee’ that dominates Western humanitarian imaginations of ‘refugeeness’ (Chouliaraki, 2013b; Malkki, 1996; Szörényi, 2006), as the next section discusses.

Visual representations of refugees¹³

The tendency to universalize the ‘the refugee’ as a special ‘kind’ of person not only in the textual representation, but also in their photographic representation.

(Malkki, 1995, p. 9)

Malkki (1996, p. 386) contends that visual representations of refugees in humanitarian and media discourses have created a “singularly translatable” imagining of “refugeeness”, a universal sense of what a refugee should look like that transcends national boundaries. As Liisa Malkki (1995, pp. 9–10) notes, most people “have a strong visual sense of what ‘a refugee’ looks like”, with certain images disseminated in the media of traumatised and helpless looking refugees fleeing some kind of horror. The images predominantly used by humanitarian agencies for fundraising purposes, for example, tend to typecast refugees as helpless, destitute, and suffering (Mannik, 2012). Malkki argues that refugees are defined exclusively by humanitarian need, as “globally recognizable images of the *refugee experience*” (Grubiša, 2017, p. 158). Certain narratives are developed and disseminated, such as the “the visual trope of the mourning mother and dying child”, that serve to evoke

¹³ While this thesis will analyse both textual and visual representations of refugees in the NZ media, the literature on humanitarian representation of refugees predominantly focuses on visual discourses (photography).

empathy among viewers and garner their support for humanitarian interventions (Fehrenbach & Rodogno, 2015a, p. 1141). Women and children embody that sense of 'refugeeness': the helpless, powerless, passive victim of war and oppression, innocent and vulnerable (Johnson, 2011; Malkki, 1995; Nyers, 2006; Rajaram, 2002).

These types of photographs embody a sense of the refugee as someone who is non-threatening, and worthy of support and empathy (Malkki, 1996; Mannik, 2012). Wright (2002) compares humanitarian imagery of refugees with biblical icons, such as the 'refugee women and child' (Madonna and Child), forlorn and destitute looking people carrying their worldly belongings (Mary and Joseph's 'Flight from Egypt'), and mass movements of people wandering through the countryside (the Exodus). Wright suggests that this type of visual framing has been historically used to elicit empathy and compassion for refugee causes, and has played a key role in constructing Western stereotypes of refugees. These representations have come to "express our preferred view of the suffering 'out there' that we judge to be worthy of response and remedy" (Fehrenbach & Rodogno, 2015a, p. 1155).

However, refugees have not always been represented as helpless, vulnerable victims. As Johnson (2011) explains, photos of refugees pre-1960 were of predominantly white European refugees displaced by WWII, and later fleeing communism and political persecution (see also Chimni, 1998). Refugees during this era were commonly represented as "political heroes" – intellectuals, artists and writers standing up for political freedom – not as traumatised victims (Pupavac, 2008, p. 273). It was during the 1960s that the dominant image of the refugee was transformed into the starving, poverty-stricken refugee from the 'Third World' fleeing war and violence. In the 1970s, images chronicled the exodus of refugees from Indochina, masses of desperate, vulnerable people in rickety boats. By the end of the 1970s and into the 1980s, the dominant image of the refugee became that of the 'Third World' mother and child. Through photos, the perception of refugees as vulnerable, poor, desperate, and helpless has been solidified in the Western imagination, "emblematic of the refugee condition" (Johnson, 2011, p. 1027).

According to Johnson (2011), this change from political dissident to vulnerable refugee has been strategic, aiming to mobilise empathy and public support for humanitarian interventions and campaigns. Refugees must be visible in order to

attract attention, support and funding. Johnson argues that constructions of representations are an act of power, in that they shape our understanding of the world, how they influence policymaking, and determine how we imagine and engage with certain kinds of people (Johnson, 2011). Therefore, the way refugees are represented in humanitarian discourses can influence refugee policy, and the reception and perception of refugees in host societies. However, while images of vulnerable refugees may make us feel empathy for their plight, they do not offer solutions or address the wider structural issues at play (Chouliaraki, 2006; Malkki, 1996). At best, photographs of suffering may influence public opinion and, in turn, affect political response.

In her book *Regarding the Pain of Others*, Susan Sontag (2003, p. 71) debates the uses and meanings of photos that depict suffering, wondering whether the repetitive nature of such images is an “exploitation of sentiment”, and merely ends up desensitising the viewer. Sontag argues that compassion is an emotion that can “wither” unless it is “translated into action”, but the danger is the viewer can become “bored, cynical, apathetic” before any action is taken (Sontag, 2003, p. 91). This raises the question whether mediated images of suffering refugees actually serve any social or political purpose other than stimulating empathy for those depicted (Wright, 2002). Sontag believes in the power of photography to shock the viewer, to elicit emotions, to create an opportunity to reflect on the suffering of others. However, in order for images of suffering to be useful, Sontag argues that photographs need captions and accompanying narratives in order to put those images into context (Sontag, 2003). The relationship between text and image creates knowledge and understanding, which in turn can generate possible political and ethical responses (Stern, 2012 - this will be explored in subsequent sections of this chapter).

The power of the single image: Alan Kurdi

As noted above, photography serves as a powerful medium that can break through the noise and reach out to people, resulting in public action. The photo of Alan Kurdi, introduced in Chapter 1, was one of those images. Although thousands of refugees had already lost their lives trying to cross the Mediterranean in search of safety,

Alan's photo evoked feelings of outrage and sadness, and unlike other photos of the crisis created momentum for action (R. Anderson, 2017; de-Andrés-del-Campo, Nos-Aldas, & García-Matilla, 2016; Szörényi, 2018). According to Fehrenbach & Rodogno (2015a), the emotional response to Alan's photo formed a particular narrative and moral argument: that of nurturer or parent. Alan could be anyone's child, peacefully asleep, and yet he is not. He is a little boy who drowned trying to reach safety in Europe, a victim of a humanitarian crisis that politicians seem unwilling to solve.

Alan's photo became the defining image of the so-called European refugee crisis, signifying the tragedy of war and displacement for hundreds of thousands of refugees (Aiken et al., 2017; Bozdag & Smets, 2017; Moreno Esparza, 2015; Vis & Goriunova, 2015). Up until that point, the media coverage of the refugee crisis was dominated by images of desperate people arriving in boats, scrambling over barbed wire fences, and trekking *en masse* through the European countryside (Fehrenbach & Rodogno, 2015a). Alan's photo in many ways gave refugees a name, an identity. No longer illegal migrants, but humanitarian victims of war worthy of empathy, solidarity and action (Fehrenbach & Rodogno, 2015a). A study by Bleiker et al. (2013) on the representations of asylum seekers in the Australian press, found that close-up photos of individual asylum seekers, who are named and whose stories are told, have a humanising effect on the viewer, and are more likely to invite compassion. Putting a human face to the refugee crisis enables viewers to identify with that person, creating space for empathy and acceptance, and even mobilising support for their cause, as was the case after the photo of the drowned toddler Alan Kurdi went viral around the world (Gallagher, 2015; Szörényi, 2018).

Moreno Esparza (2015) reminds us that 'iconic' or 'great' images of war and humanitarian crises have the ability to communicate human suffering and create momentum for action, for photos capture evidence of a reality that cannot be conveyed through words alone. For example, Nick Út's 1972 photo of naked 9-year-old girl Phan Thi Kim Phú fleeing a Napalm bombing during the Vietnam War defined the atrocities and brutality of that conflict. Similarly, Kevin Carter's 1993 photo of a starving Sudanese child collapsed on the ground while a vulture hovers in the background became an icon of famine, or as *Time* magazine described it, "the

picture immediately became an icon of Africa's anguish" (Moeller, 1999, pp. 147–148). Subsequently, this image has been used many times by humanitarian organisations to raise funds for refugee food programmes (Cohen, 2001). According to Kleinman and Kleinman (1997), this is a prime example of how an image can be used to mobilise empathy and support for social action. Don McCullin's 1969 photo of a starving albino boy during the Biafran war had a similar impact (Bozdag & Smets, 2017; Cohen, 2001; Moreno Esparza, 2015; Schlag, 2018).

Photographs are perceived to be documentary proof of a moment in time, a representation of reality (Sontag, 2003). When photographs are reproduced and recycled in the media as Alan's photo was, they become "influential agents in the formation of narratives", translatable across borders and through time and space (Mannik, 2012, p. 274). Therefore, the media plays an important role in the dissemination of humanitarian images. How stories of 'distant suffering' are portrayed in the media can influence 'our' moral response to distant others (Vandevoordt, 2017), as the next section explores.

The mediation of distant suffering

Words may give meaning, but in our visual era, images are essential to effective communication –especially in the telling of the news. Images have authority over the imagination.

(Moeller, 1999, p. 47)

The mainstream news media, which includes radio, television and newspapers, plays an important role in producing and disseminating images and stories about humanitarian suffering. Media discourses engage audiences through particular choices of images and words, and in doing so influence how spectators feel, think and act towards distant suffering (Chouliaraki, 2008). Coupled with the globalisation of communication technologies, global audiences are able to bear witness and empathise with "human suffering at a distance" (Tazreiter, 2004, p. 34). Often dubbed the 'CNN effect', media coverage of humanitarian crises can help to create global awareness of humanitarian issues by capturing the public's attention

and thus mobilise international solidarity and action (Barnett & Weiss, 2008; Moeller, 1999)¹⁴.

The media's ability to engage visually with audiences and mobilise empathy can serve as a catalyst for action (Calhoun, 2010). Orgad & Seu (2014) describe how the mediation of humanitarian crises renders distant suffering visible, evoking an emotional response in the viewing public, which in turn hopefully translates into action to alleviate the suffering of distant others. For example, the emotive response to the publication of Alan Kurdi's photo mobilised publics across the globe through protest, petitions, and charitable donations to organisations working with refugees (Anderson, 2017).

Chouliaraki (2010, p. 108) describes humanitarian communication "as the rhetorical practices of transnational actors with universal ethical claims, such as common humanity or global civil society, to mobilise action on human suffering". Thus, there is a strong correlation between humanitarian discourses, how refugees are represented, and acts of solidarity towards distant others. Humanitarian discourses propagated through the news media and by NGOs call on Western publics to care about and act in solidarity with distant suffering others. Viewed from afar, victims of war, famine, and other humanitarian disasters are frequently constructed as vulnerable and in need of saving. In the same respect, humanitarian discourses also encourage us to identify with this suffering other: they are just like 'us', they could be 'our' child, mother, friend or neighbour. This is what Orgad (2013, p. 297) describes as "visualizers of solidarity" – visual tropes that engage Western audiences and establish emotional connections with distant others.

However, as Silk (2000) argues, there are a number of ethical concerns around media representations of humanitarian subjects. First, media coverage of humanitarian disasters often depicts the Global South as dependent on a Global North response, while ignoring the wider structural injustices involved. Second, there is a tendency to represent people as passive victims rather than as agentic

¹⁴ Both Barnett & Weiss (2008) and Moeller (1999) describe the impact media coverage of the Ethiopian famine (1984-1985) had on the mobilisation of Western publics in support of this crisis. As Moeller (1999, p. 111) explains, "In one fell swoop, years of apathy about starving Africans were swept away".

individuals, raising questions about who is doing the representing and who gets to speak (Silk, 2000). Thus, as Szörényi (2018) argues, people affected by humanitarian crises become framed as the distant suffering other, objects of our compassion who need to be saved by 'us' (this will be discussed in more detail in the next Chapter).

Recent research analysing the European media coverage during the height of the refugee crisis in 2015 found that refugees were largely represented as anonymous, unskilled, helpless victims - masses of people distraught, vulnerable, helpless, without political agency, reliant on Western aid agencies to save them (Berry, Garcia-Blanco, & Moore, 2015; Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017; Chouliaraki & Zaborowski, 2017; Georgiou & Zaborowski, 2017; Giannakopoulos, 2016; Musarò, 2017). Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017) noted how media coverage was imbued with Western benevolence and "distinct moral claims to action", in what they call "regimes of visibility" (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017, p. 5). The argument for helping refugees was framed in terms of solidarity and moral obligation, with 71.7% of all articles analysed by Chouliaraki and Stolic during September 2015 mentioning that it was 'our' duty to save 'them' (2017). Within this argument, refugees were framed within a narrative of victimhood, where refugees were presented as biological life – or 'bare life' – masses of people distraught, vulnerable, helpless, without political agency, reliant on Western aid agencies to save them. This visibility of biological life positions refugees and Western audiences in a relationship of what Boltanski (1999, p. 13) calls, "generalised pity".

Another visual trope used by the media was the depiction of pro-refugee groups across Europe, notably the Refugees Welcome marches in September 2015, where citizens across European cities marched in solidarity for refugees, holding banners with messages welcoming refugees and highlighting their humanity. Chouliaraki and Stolic (2017) argue that this visibility of hospitality positions 'us' as the wrong-doer - not letting refugees in, letting them suffer. This kind of refugee advocacy critiques the establishment/government and helps create a platform for the perspectives and experiences of those being marginalised.

Therefore, the way the media choose to portray humanitarian subjects can influence how Western audiences choose to act and respond to that suffering (Chouliaraki, 2006; Orgad & Seu, 2014b). Indeed, Anderson (2017) highlights the interconnection between media representations of distant suffering others and action. This can be seen in a recent study on refugee-host relations in Canada (Kyriakides, Bajjali, McLuhan, & Anderson, 2018), where sponsor groups who were interviewed spoke about the news coverage of the Syrian refugee crisis as the impetus for action, in particular the photo of drowned toddler Alan Kurdi. However, just as representations of traumatised, helpless refugees may compel us to empathise with suffering others and perhaps donate money to the UNHCR, the representation of large groups of refugees actively crossing borders in search of safety may make us fear the other and support harsh deterrent strategies and policies.

Nonetheless, as Anderson (2017, p. 13) argues, “media representations of the world” are just that, representations, and cannot fully encompass all views, experiences, and stories. The media may, intentionally or unintentionally, misrepresent the full story, or only present one particular view. As discussed in the previous section, humanitarian subjects are often depicted as passive, innocent victims who are traumatised or helpless, or a mixture of all of these. Therefore, mediated “narratives of suffering” can reinforce a particular way of relating to, perceiving, and acting upon distant suffering others – as victims who need our help (Anderson, 2017, p. 13).

It is not solely the media that produce humanitarian discourses, but also NGOs and refugee advocates in order to raise support for refugees (Calhoun, 2010). Similar to media representations, Western refugee solidarity movements employ humanitarian discourses in order to mobilise public opinion and foster positive attitudes towards refugees (Every, 2008; Toğral, 2016). In research on refugee advocacy in Britain, Pupavac (2008) explored how refugees were portrayed either as traumatised victims or highly skilled and educated, outlining the relationship between refugee representation and refugee advocacy, in which sympathetic representations of refugees typically portray refugees as either skilled (i.e. as a benefit to society) or traumatised (i.e. in need of help). Human interest stories are also often used by refugee rights/advocacy organisations to portray refugees not

only as victims, but also as individuals with hopes and dreams for the future, just like 'us' (Franquet Dos Santos Silva et al., 2018; Steimel, 2010). Solidarity discourses that emphasise the benefits 'others' bring to society, and the similarities we share, is what Brecht et al. (2018) refer to as inclusive othering. Refugees may be portrayed in a more positive light; however, they are still normatively depicted as helpless victims who are in genuine need and are worthy of 'our' kindness (Franquet Dos Santos Silva et al., 2018).

The implications of humanitarian discourses: Constructing 'refugeeness'

In the first place, we don't like to be called "refugees". We ourselves call each other "newcomers" or "immigrants"

(*'We Refugees'*, Hannah Arendt, 1943)

She said, 'You cannot be a refugee.' But I told her 'I am one.' It is because I can speak English. [This] changes the image of a refugee from . . . the starving children posters to real people who used to manage their own affairs and then became displaced. This image . . . is so worldwide that I decided not to get angry . . . The fact that our status has changed does not mean that our abilities have gone down.

(Eritrean refugee, Ararat Ayoub, as cited in Harrell-Bond, 1985, p. 3)

Humanitarian discourses, although altruistic in intention, can be problematic in the way they frame, label and represent 'the refugee', as this above quote from Ararat Ayoub highlights. Mediated discourses, both textual and visual, play an important role in how we understand and construct the figure of 'the refugee', determining how we see and respond to refugees (Wright, 2002). As described earlier in this chapter, there is a tendency for humanitarian and media discourses to represent refugees as universal victims – helpless, sad, suffering, traumatised and desperate, a depersonalised "sea of humanity" (Malkki, 1996, p. 377) that obscures individual stories and experiences of displacement. When refugees are individualised in photos, they tend to focus on women and children, who Malkki (1995) and Nyers (2006) both argue embody a particular kind of 'refugeeness' – powerless, helpless,

non-threatening. This embodiment of 'refugeeness' thus creates the expectation that the 'ideal' refugee is necessarily "good and passive", and if they do not look like this then perhaps they are not worthy of 'our' compassion (Szörényi, 2018, pp. 160–161).

As discussed above, victim and trauma stories play a major role in the humanitarian discourses of both NGOs/advocates and the media. Mediated "narratives of suffering" are used to elicit compassion, pity and outrage for victims, in what Wilson and Brown refer to as "the mobilization of empathy" (Wilson & Brown, 2009, p. 19). Humanitarian action seems to rely on these powerful emotive narratives of victimisation and trauma to compel publics to rise up and act on behalf of suffering victims, whereas statistics alone fails to generate the same type of response. However, Kleinman & Kleinman (1997) argue that the media has appropriated and commodified personal experiences of suffering, turning it into sensationalised 'trauma stories' that provides evidence of refugee status. Complex stories and histories are thus reduced to homogenous images of victimhood, and refugees treated as objects of "condescending humanitarian sympathy" (Wilson & Brown, 2009, p. 23). As Cohen (2001) points out, in order to elicit empathy, the representation of humanitarian subjects need to demonstrate their vulnerability, suffering and innocence. The disempowering nature of these discourses, however, does little to address structural inequalities or social justice issues.

Tania Mead argues that humanitarian subjects have to "fit within a frame of vulnerability" (Mead, 2015, p. 20) in order to receive humanitarian aid. Within this frame, they are not "recognised as bearers of rights, but as victims in need of compassionate assistance" (Mead, 2015, p. 20). In other words, in order to be recognised as a 'refugee', individuals need to either perform their trauma and vulnerability, be associated with passivity, or look like a 'genuine' refugee in order to receive humanitarian support (Szörényi, 2006). In research on audience reactions to mediated suffering, Höijer (2004) discovered that compassion for distant others was dependent on ideal 'victim' images, predominantly helpless, innocent, and distraught women and children or the elderly, as opposed to images of men who were not regarded as helpless or innocent enough (Höijer, 2004). This implies that access to assistance programmes, such as refugee resettlement, may be dependent

on a credible “performance of suffering” on the part of the refugee, emphasising their genuine need and authenticity (Wilson & Brown, 2009, p. 24).

While refugee advocates recognise that personal stories of suffering are more likely to evoke sympathy from Western audiences, focusing on trauma narratives can exacerbate victim stereotypes (Pupavac, 2008). According to Pupavac (2008), unless refugees are depicted as helpless, suffering victims, then it is assumed they are not ‘genuine’ refugees. For example, Syrian refugees crossing into Europe were criticised for having smartphones, as if possessing such items automatically makes people “ineligible for help” (O’Malley, 2015, para. 1). Images of refugees and asylum seekers as helpless, passive victims are far more acceptable to the public. They offer a ‘convenient image’ (Wood, 1985) of the refugee as someone who is non-threatening and worthy of our empathy, support and understanding. Grubiša (2017) describes how volunteers would treat refugees arriving into Croatia during the so-called ‘European refugee crisis’ in 2015 with pity, especially women and children who ‘fit’ the prescribed notion of a refugee or vulnerable victim.

This need for refugees to look ‘genuine’ may be a cause and effect of the UN refugee definition (see Chapter 2), which emphasises fear and protection. Therefore, if an individual expresses too much agency, or does not express enough fear of persecution, then perhaps they do not need the protection that refugee status brings (Mannik, 2012). Ambrose, Hogle, Taneja, & Yohannes (2015) criticise the use of simplistic narratives that only portray one perspective of the wider story. Individual experiences of displacement are varied and complex, and comprise much more than stories of ‘trauma’ (Varvin, 2017). However, these types of narratives tend to emphasise the victimisation of the distant other, which generate the most emotive impact and connection with Western audiences.

Consequently, a generic type of refugee has become produced and reproduced through humanitarian and media discourses, creating a stereotypical or universal sense of “refugeeness”, an idea of what a ‘genuine’ refugee should look like and how they should act (Malkki, 1996, p. 386). Malkki (1996, p. 377) suggests that mediated images of refugees effectively transform refugees into “speechless emissaries”, a universal symbol of ‘bare life’ who are defined exclusively by their humanitarian need. The emphasis on refugees’ ‘bare humanity’ in humanitarian discourses, Malkki

(1996) argues, compels viewers to feel a empathy and pity for the plight of refugees, calling on our shared common humanity. These discourses consign refugee stories to a generalised “visuality ... of suffering and need” (Rajaram, 2002, p. 251), an anonymous presence that strip individuals of their history and humanity, and silence their personal narratives of displacement in the process. Refugees, as defined by ‘refugeeness’, are devoid of political agency or individualism, and deprived of the political space to act and think for themselves, let alone speak for themselves (Malkki, 1996; Nyers, 2006; see also Arendt, 1963/2006).

Therefore, how refugees are labelled is important. Moncrieffe & Eyben (2007) argue that we all use, transform and reject labels in order to construct different aspects of our identity. However, when labelled by someone else (e.g. the media, advocates), labels can restrict, define and impose certain categories onto us, and justify certain interventions and actions. They can also be used to influence how certain people are perceived, how they ‘fit in’ to society, and how they are treated. Even if labelling is deemed to be altruistic in intent, labelling can misrepresent, stigmatise, and stereotype whole groups of people, thus reinforcing inequalities (Gupte & Mehta, 2007). In terms of refugee resettlement, how refugees are labelled can influence how they are perceived and received by the host society, and can have very real implications for the way in which refugees act and present themselves. For example, in their research on refugee-host relations in Canada, Kyriakides et al. (2018) discuss the orientalist nature of host representations of refugees as victims incapable of rescuing themselves. The representation of refugees as victims who need to be saved undermines their “authority to act” and “eligibility to exist” on their own terms, denying them their individual histories, backgrounds, identities, hopes and aspirations (Kyriakides et al., 2018, p. 65). Labels are powerful in the way they assign meaning to people and relationships; in other words, how we engage with ‘the other’ (M. Pickering, 2001). Therefore, the way refugees are portrayed in the media is an important issue, and one which can seriously affect how refugees are received and welcomed in host countries, and the extent to which former refugees can foster a sense of belonging.

Humanitarian discourses as justice?

Humanitarian discourses consequently depoliticise the refugee experience, portraying the figure of 'the refugee' as a universal humanitarian subject, without history, name, agency or voice (Malkki, 1996). Humanitarian language can come across as paternalistic and neo-colonial, positioning the receiver of aid as an object of charity and pity (see Rajaram 2002). Rarely are humanitarian subjects described as active agents of change or collaborative partners in the process. They are more likely to be represented as passive recipients of aid, helpless and vulnerable. As a result, the disempowering nature of some humanitarian discourses strips individuals of their agency while failing to address wider structural inequalities (Wilson & Brown, 2009).

Despite good intentions, humanitarian discourses can function as a form of "colonisation of compassion" (Hyndman, 2000, p. xvi), where refugees tend to be represented by others, such as humanitarian and human rights organisations, and the media. Refugees are often reduced to statistics or homogenous representations by the people who purport to speak on their behalf. Hyndman (2000, p. xxii) refers to this representational practices as "a strange invocation of charitable humanity" that silences refugees, positioning them as voiceless and passive. Anderson (2017, p. 18) also talks about the "colonial gaze", in which a hierarchy or power imbalance exists between spectator and the other. Mediated representations of distant suffering invite us to act upon the other and relieve their suffering. The spectator holds all the power, while it is assumed the other sits passively by waiting to be saved. Within this dynamic, the other become an object of pity, dehumanised and disempowered, or what Bleiker and Kay (2007, p. 144) call the "iconography of anonymous victimhood".

Therefore, instead of being emancipatory, humanitarian discourses may only serve to uphold and enforce unequal power relations, deny heterogeneous narratives, and belie the individual strengths and voices of the refugees themselves (Every, 2008). By acting on behalf of refugees rather than with them, Chouliaraki & Stolic (2017) argue that the Refugees Welcome solidarity movement, despite good intentions in its desire to humanise refugees and defend their rights, may unintentionally perpetuate the exclusion and marginalisation of refugee voices. Refugees may gain

visibility, but they are not in control of the messaging, nor how they are represented. As a result, while seeking to counter negative stereotypes, raise awareness, and garner public support, refugee advocacy can end up stereotyping refugees in other ways (Pupavac, 2008), and potentially seriously affecting the perception and reception of refugees in host societies.

Thus, humanitarianism involves a complex relationship of politics, power and ethics – who is visible and who is not, and who gets to speak for others. Recipients of aid are largely absent from decision-making and policy discussions at NGO or government level (Barnett & Weiss, 2008; Rajaram, 2002). They may be perceived as too vulnerable to speak for themselves, or lack the capacity and agency to determine their own fate. Aid workers may also be seen as the more authoritative figure to seek comment about a particular situation (Rajaram, 2002). What voice aid recipients have is often mediated in a way that obscures their history, identity and agency, reducing them to a sound-bite or side-piece to a larger story (Chouliaraki, 2012). Harrell-Bond (2002, p. 60) explains that humanitarian agencies that do include refugee voices tend to simplify their stories, reducing them to expressions of “gratefulness”, “sadness” and “longing for home”, perpetuating the childlike, helpless image of a refugee who is incapable of helping themselves. In the words of Mamdani (1973, cited in Harrell-Bond, 2002, p. 60):

Contrary to what I believed in Uganda (before being expelled), a refugee is not just a person who has been displaced and has lost all or most of his possessions. A refugee is in fact more akin to a child: helpless, devoid of initiative, somebody on whom any kind of charity can be practiced, in short a totally malleable creature.

Harrell-Bond (2002, p. 59) describes this treatment of refugees as “undignified humanitarianism”, which degrades the identity and status of individuals who happen to be refugees. While feeling compassion for distant others is in itself not problematic, images of the suffering, sad refugee tend to obscure the wider socio-political-economic reasons that create refugees in the first place (Malkki, 1996). The capacity for humanitarian narratives to raise awareness and generate compassionate action is enormous; therefore, it is hardly surprising that storytelling comprises an essential part of humanitarian communication. However, it is

important to acknowledge the potential for these narratives to depoliticise the suffering by representing distant others as passive victims awaiting rescue, without addressing questions of historicity or injustice (Dogra, 2015; Schlag, 2018). Therefore, there is a need to highlight the historical, political and cultural context of humanitarian narratives, and the potential for the misrepresentation and misappropriation of these narratives (Wilson & Brown, 2009).

While the photo of Alan Kurdi evoked an emotional outpouring of solidarity for refugees, making their suffering visible in the public sphere, images of suffering can also reinforce the differences between ‘us’, those who are safe and able to respond, and ‘them’, those who are suffering over there. Humanitarian discourses can consequently reinforce stereotypes of distant suffering others who are vulnerable and need to be saved (Schlag, 2018), thus positioning the spectator as “good developed-world human beings” who help vulnerable helpless others in the ‘developing world’ (Dogra, 2015, p. 114). Therefore, Barnett & Weiss (2008, p. 44) question who is this help for? Is it make the situation better for vulnerable others in developing countries, or to make us (those in the developed world) feel better about ourselves through action? What are the motivating factors and potential consequences of our actions, and are we in fact doing more harm than good? Similarly, Szörényi (2006, p. 31) asks us to think about how images of suffering can benefit refugees themselves. Do these images address inequality and injustice, leading to political action and transformation? Or do they simply allow ‘us’ to feel ‘their’ pain? It is these concerns about the power dynamics involved in the production of humanitarian discourses and acts of solidarity that inform the conceptual framework of this thesis, which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Summary

Humanitarian discourses, while altruistic in intention, tend to position refugees as passive, helpless victims, without agency and voice, who need to be saved. Discourses of suffering are produced and reproduced through humanitarian campaigns and the media, constructing a stereotypical notion of ‘refugeeness’, or what a refugee should look like. There is a strong correlation between humanitarian

discourses, how refugees are represented, and acts of solidarity towards distant others. Humanitarian discourses propagated through the news media and by NGOs call on Western publics to care about and act in solidarity with distant suffering others 'over there'. However, the tendency for humanitarian and media discourses to represent refugees as universal victims – helpless, sad, suffering, traumatised and desperate – obscures individual stories and experiences of displacement, while ignoring wider structural inequalities and power dynamics. Thus, there is a need to deconstruct and critically analyse these discourses in order to highlight the power dynamics involved in the discursive construction of refugees in the media and by advocates.

The next chapter outlines the theoretical framework employed in this thesis, looking at post-development and post-humanitarianism critiques on Western discourses about 'the other', its relationship to acts of solidarity, and how dominant discourses can be contested and transformed through an actor-oriented approach to discourse and agency.

Chapter 4: Discourse and Theory

Drawing on post-development critiques of discourse, specifically Escobar's (1995) 'development as discourse', and Chouliaraki's (2006; 2013) analysis of post-humanitarian communication, this chapter aims to explore the power dynamics involved in discursive constructions of vulnerable others and acts of solidarity. Acknowledging the limits and criticisms of post-development and post-humanitarianism, this chapter also explores Long's (1992) actor-oriented approach to discourse and agency, and the ways in which people deconstruct and transform dominant discourses. At the end of this chapter I outline my theoretical framework, which aims to critically analyse how refugees, and notions of solidarity and welcome, are discursively represented in New Zealand mainstream media, and the various ways in which people from refugee backgrounds contest and redefine the refugee label (research questions 1-3).

The power of discursive constructions: why words matter (a post-development perspective)

Post-development theory critically examines the role that discourse plays in constructing and reinforcing Western perspectives and representations of the Global South. Influenced by post-colonialism and post-structuralism (especially the work of Foucault), post-development thinkers sought to critically analyse and deconstruct the language of development in order to highlight the power relations inherent within the practice of development, thus repositioning development as a discourse (Jakimow, 2008; McGregor, 2009). Proponents of post-development argue that development discourse is shaped and perpetuated by unequal power-knowledge relationships that act to justify certain actions and practices, while marginalising other worldviews (Crush, 1995; Escobar, 1995a; Rahnema & Bawtree, 1997; Sachs, 1992). In relation to refugees, Bleiker, Campbell, & Hutchison (2014) argue that discourse, knowledge production and power relations are integral components in contemporary Western representations of refugees, who are predominantly framed as either objects of humanitarian concern, or objects of fear.

Incorporating an eclectic mix of authors from a wide range of disciplines, post-development proponents question the assumptions, discourses, and knowledge that inform the post-WWII 'development project'. Important texts on post-development thought include Wolfgang Sachs' *'The development dictionary'* (1999); Arturo Escobar's *'Encountering development: the making and unmaking of the Third World'* (1995b); James Ferguson's *'The anti-politics machine: development, depoliticisation and bureaucratic power in Lesotho'* (1990); Jonathan Crush's edited volume *'Power of development'* (1995), and *'The post-development reader'* edited by Majid Rahnema and Victoria Bawtree (1997). These critics accuse mainstream development theories of being inherently Eurocentric, a form of neo-colonialism that imposes Western norms of 'development' and 'progress' upon the people of the Third World. Development, according to Rahnema (in Rahnema & Bawtree, 1997, p. ix) is "a new system of domination", and development discourse a "deceitful mirage" (ibid, p. x), a Western cultural construct of reality. The "true nature" of development discourse is revealed as a way of restructuring the Third World so that it meets the needs of the West (Ziai, 2004, p. 1047).

These arguments, often referred to as anti-development, draw from critiques of discourse and development. Cornwall (2007, p. 471) suggests, "words make worlds". Post-development theory enables the researcher to explore the relationship between language, people and places in order to highlight the socio-political-cultural norms that shape discursive constructions of others (including refugees), but also the power of discourse to create and normalise particular constructions of truth and reality (McGregor, 2009, p. 1692). These discourses do not merely reflect reality but construct a reality, a form of knowledge and power that ignores the multiple experiences and knowledge of those being represented (Kiely, 1999). This hegemonic worldview of development, Escobar (1995, p. 39) argues, functions as a mechanism of power and control "in which only certain things could be said or imagined" (e.g. refugees as only victims or threats, as discussed in the previous chapter), resulting in a "regime of representation" that dismisses alternative worldviews. In a Foucauldian sense, these discourses do not merely reflect reality

but construct a reality, a form of knowledge and power, about the Third World, that dismissing alternative points of view in the process (Kiely, 1999).

Foucault: Power-knowledge-discourse nexus

Post-development was heavily influenced by, and is closely aligned with, Foucault's concept of power and discourse (Foucault 1980). Foucault referred to discourse as the production of knowledge and meaning through language, in which particular world-views and 'truths' are constructed in order to justify certain actions and interventions (Hall, Evans, & Nixon, 2013, p. 29; McEwan, 2009, p. 146). He argued that discourse was strategic and tactical, and created systems of representation that defined and produced knowledge about a particular subject. Power relations are fundamental to this process, influencing how certain meanings are constructed and viewed, while delegitimizing and excluding others (McEwan, 2009). Discourse not only reflects perceptions of reality or truth, but also serves to regulate and control what we believe and how we behave towards others (Hall et al., 2013). Thus knowledge and power are intrinsically related, creating a "regime of truth", or type of discourse about a subject that is accepted as reality (Foucault, 1980, p. 131).

Foucault's (1980) analysis of the relationship between power and knowledge can be applied to the production of refugee discourse, whereby state actors, such as politicians and journalists, use their positions of power to construct representations of refugees. The power to represent has created binary oppositions between the West (self/us) and 'the other', with the West using categories to define what is normal and abnormal. Foucault (1970, p. xix) contends that categories are used to create order in the world, with each category assigned meaning according to their similarities and differences, thus creating dichotomies of 'us' and 'them'. Relations of power are integral to this process. Foucault (1980) argues that the state exerts its power through the process of normalisation, seeking to frame and label 'the other' in ways that discriminate and stigmatize. Such framing acts to problematise an issue, allowing powerful actors to use labels to decide who deserves assistance (e.g., 'genuine' refugees) and who does not (e.g., 'illegal' asylum seekers) (Moncrieffe & Eyben, 2007).

Thus, Barnett & Weiss (2008, p. 41) argue that normative humanitarian discourses (i.e. refugees as vulnerable helpless victims) "create, define, and map social reality".

These discourses are influenced and shaped by historical and social contexts. Mark Duffield (1998, as cited in Barnett & Weiss, 2008) contends that contemporary humanitarianism is influenced by liberal development discourses, which empower and legitimise Western humanitarian responses to crises, such as the refugee crisis. Humanitarian organisations are not only shaped by such normative discourses, but are also actively involved in producing and reproducing these representations of reality, regardless of intention (Barnett & Weiss, 2008). According to Nyers (2006, p. 131), refugees “are caught in a discursive web of power-knowledge relations that define them as human”. Therefore, the danger is that humanitarian agencies have the power to decide who is considered to be or look like a ‘real’ refugee, thus deemed worthy of help, and who is not. In this respect, these discourses normalise certain responses and action and “privilege some actors and disempower others” (Barnett & Weiss, 2008, p. 41), resulting in unequal outcomes.

Therefore, from a post-development perspective, the knowledge generated about refugees through discourse is inherently connected to power relations that construct a particular reality about the world, while excluding alternative viewpoints. These discourses problematise issues such as migration, and suggests the way forward is for professional agencies and experts to intervene (Kiely, 1999). Stereotypical images of refugees, proliferated through the media, have in many ways normalised how people seeking refuge are represented and understood. Escobar argues that these kinds of discursive practices have happened “not by ignorance but by controlled knowledge; not by humanitarian concern but by the bureaucratization of social action” (Escobar, 1997, p. 92). Thus, it is important to contest and deconstruct these dominant discourses. A post-development approach creates space for a re-imagining of forced migration and incorporates multiple experiences and worldviews of those seeking refuge (Escobar, 1992, 1995a, 1997, 2007).

Post-colonialism: Representations of the ‘other’

Another major influence on post-development is post-colonialism. Post-colonial theorist Edward Said, inspired by the writings of Foucault, argues that knowledge is never benign, but is enmeshed in relations of power between the West and the non-West (McEwan, 2009). In his book *Orientalism*, Said (1979) explores how the West

uses the power of discourse to produce and maintain certain knowledge and representations of the Orient as the 'Other', backward and inferior in comparison to the West. These geopolitical imaginings of the Orient came to be represented as 'truth' – a constructed reality – that served as a discourse of domination, enabling the West to exert its authority and control over the 'Other' during the colonial era (Said, 1979). According to Said, power and knowledge are intrinsically linked to discourse, which has been used to promote a sense of difference and superiority between the West and the 'Other', legitimising and justifying Western interventions (imperialism) in the non-Western world (McEwan, 2009, pp. 62–64).

However, Said maintains that socially constructed representations of the Orient say more about the West itself than about the real world it claims to represent (Said, 1979; also McEwan, 2009, p. 63), with the notion of Western identity inherently connected to binary oppositions of 'self' and 'other'. In a similar way, Fehrenbach & Rodogno (2015) argue that the consumption of humanitarian imagery says more about the producers and viewer of such images, than those whose suffering is depicted. The potential for political change through humanitarian discourses relies on the socio-political-cultural positioning of Western audiences.

Media representations of humanitarian subjects are considered problematic, because they produce unequal power dynamics between Western audiences and suffering others. These discourses shape our understanding or knowledge of distant suffering and how we perceive 'the other', creating binaries of 'us' and 'them', which in turn influence how we choose to respond (Cohen, 2001; Orgad & Seu, 2014b). Power relations are integral to representations of distant strangers as the 'other', different from 'us'. As Jensen explains, 'othering' is a:

discursive process by which powerful groups, who may or may not make up a numerical majority, define subordinate groups into existence in a reductionist way which ascribe problematic and/or inferior characteristics to these subordinate groups. Such discursive processes affirm the legitimacy and superiority of the powerful and condition identity formation among the subordinate (Jensen, 2011, p. 65, as cited in Becht, Boucsein, & Mayr, 2018, p. 58).

Regardless of intention, 'othering' involves deeply unequal power dynamics that privileges certain voices while silencing others, and where recipients of aid are normatively portrayed as the vulnerable, helpless other who is incapable of self-rescue. Victim stereotypes reduce refugees to a distant 'other', a symbolic sufferer in need of rescue, thus perpetuating the divide between 'us' who seek to help refugees, and 'them' who are seeking help (Franquet Dos Santos Silva et al., 2018; Grubiša, 2017; Szörényi, 2006). Humanitarian discourses may create empathy for distant others, but they can also be disempowering, orientalist, and reinforce unequal power dynamics between spectators and those represented (Kyriakides et al., 2018; Orgad, 2013). Said (1979) describes Western 'othering' as a discourse of domination, enabling the West to exert its authority and control over the 'other'. Therefore, we need to critique not only the consequences of speaking about and for others, but also how stereotyping defines, categorises, constructs and normalises certain discourses (M. Pickering, 2001).

Development as discourse

In his seminal text *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*, Escobar (1995, p. 9) argues that "the development discourse ... has created an extremely efficient apparatus for producing knowledge about, and the exercise of power over, the Third World". This discourse is linked to powerful Western institutions, such as the World Bank and other international development agencies, and the media, that disseminate forms of knowledge and reality about the 'Third World' (Ziai, 2007). Development discourses, including the type of imagery used in humanitarian appeals, can oversimplify representations of the Global South. Humanitarian subjects are framed as powerless, passive, poor, needy, oppressed, waiting for the West to save them (Escobar, 1995). These types of humanitarian narratives gloss over historical contexts and uneven power dynamics, producing a particular discourse about the 'Third World' that is perpetuated through choice of imagery (Dogra, 2007). It is Escobar's concept of 'discourse as development' that this thesis employs to analyse the discourses surrounding the representation of refugees.

Greatly influenced by Foucault (1980), Escobar (1995) contends that development (and humanitarian) discourses are not neutral, benign or innocent, but are bound up in power relations and knowledge production that reflect the interests of Western governments and institutions. In a similar vein, refugees become an “object of knowledge and management” (Malkki, 1992, p. 25), a subject of government policy and public discourse that is produced and reproduced in “Western ways of knowing” (Rajaram, 2002, p. 251). Contemporary refugee discourse uses the power of language and knowledge production to construct a sense of ‘refugeeness’, an idea of what a ‘real’ refugee should look like, as highlighted in the previous chapter (Malkki, 1996). These discourses also construct unequal power relationships between ‘them’, those who need help and ‘us’, those who seek to help.

To understand development as a discourse, Escobar (1997) argues that it is necessary to analyse the relationship between the strategies, agencies and practices of development, and how these work together to construct the Third World as an ‘object of concern’ that needs to be treated and reformed. It is this “apparatus of development”, Escobar contends, that defines the Third World as “underdeveloped”, “backward”, “deficient” and therefore in need of help from so-called development ‘experts’ (Escobar, 1997, pp. 86–87). It is this view of humanitarian ‘subjects’ that is then reproduced by the media and humanitarian agencies, creating an image of the vulnerable ‘other’ who needs to be saved by the West.

For example, the media coverage of Ethiopian famine (1983-1985) portrayed the crisis as an unidentified mass of starving ‘Africans’. Ethiopia became symbolic of generalised Western knowledge about Africa – underdeveloped, poor, unable to help themselves, and dependent on Western assistance (Lidchi, 2015). According to one Global South aid partner, “African people [were portrayed] as if they were not people at all” (as cited in Lidchi, 2015, p. 283). In this sense, Ethiopians were represented as objects of development - passive recipient of aid who had no voice, no identity, and no agency. Similarly, Cohen (2001, p. 178) argues that stereotypical images of the ‘Third World’ “perpetuated a patronizing, offensive and misleading view of the developing world as a spectacle of tragedy, disaster, disease and cruelty”. In contrast, Western NGOs, media and concerned citizens tend to be portrayed as superior, benevolent, agentic subjects, and saviours, with the power to come to the

aid of poor, starving, suffering distant others from the Global South (Cohen, 2001; Lidchi, 2015).

Much like development discourse, the institutionalisation of humanitarianism and human rights in the post-WWII era led to the normalisation of humanitarian discourses, in which humanitarian subjects, such as refugees, came to represent vulnerable victims in need of saving by the West (Barnett & Weiss, 2008; Malkki, 1996; Nyers, 2006; Rajaram, 2002). Western knowledge and understanding about refugees became bureaucratised within humanitarian institutions (e.g. the UNHCR and other aid organisations), contextualising the figure of 'the refugee' into a universal image of helplessness (Rajaram, 2002). For example, a UNHCR produced text 'Images of Exile' reinforces normative representations of refugees as passive recipients of aid (Szörényi, 2006). Images portray refugees as faceless, anonymous mass groups, waiting in refugee camps or on the move, "surrounded by signifiers of poverty [and] transience" (Szörényi, 2006, p. 28). According to Szörényi, these images perpetuate the role of the UNHCR (and other humanitarian organisations) as experts who examine, define and manage refugees. In contrast, refugees are positioned as "manageable objects", defined as a problem, and who "must wait patiently for aid" (Szörényi, 2006, p. 28).

Barnett (2011) argues that humanitarian discourses about refugees contain elements of domination and paternalism, enabling 'experts' (humanitarian/aid workers, the media, refugee advocates) to become the moral authority, allowing these 'experts' to act and speak on behalf of refugees. Despite the need for discourses that promote a more compassionate and empathetic understanding of refugee issues, Rajaram (2002) argues that refugee advocates can end up generalising refugees as helpless victims without agency. This paternalistic response positions refugees as reliant on Western 'experts' to speak on their behalf, while at the same time silencing the voices of those who know what it is like to become a refugee. Thus, "refugee lives become a site where Western ways of knowing are reproduced" (Rajaram, 2002, p. 247).

From a post-development perspective, the role of development 'experts', imbued with the moral authority of Western governments and international institutions, such as the World Bank and the United Nations, were historically viewed as having

the power and knowledge to identify problems and 'objects of concern', and determine the best strategies for intervention (Escobar, 1997; Rahnema & Bawtree, 1997; Sachs, 1992). Categories of development were established and solutions prescribed, often in relation to a particular institution. Thus, the discursive practices of these institutions of development were responsible for constructing categories, objects and successive strategies for intervention in the Third World (Escobar, 1997).

Barnett & Weiss (2008) argue that this power imbalance extends into 'expert' accounts of humanitarian crises. For instance, humanitarian agencies are perceived as an expert voice with specialised knowledge and skills, or "moral authority" (Barnett & Weiss, 2008, p. 39) to provide accurate accounts of the particular humanitarian emergency on the ground, and therefore justified to speak and act on behalf of the vulnerable communities they help. As Malikki (1996) notes, knowledge about refugees and refugee situation tends to come from so-called 'refugee experts' and 'relief officials', rather than from refugees themselves. According to Barnett & Weiss (2008), NGOs tend to operate in a top-down fashion with the people they purportedly seek to support, even if it is unintentional, and ask whether recipients of aid actively consent to being helped by these NGOs, or whether consent is implied or assumed on the part of agencies. Therefore, they argue, "power is best understood from the perspective of the recipient, not the deliverer" (Barnett & Weiss, 2008, p. 41).

Consequently, humanitarian agencies can have the power to formulate and transform discourses about 'the other', based on their perceived moral authority and ability to act on behalf of vulnerable others. They use this moral authority to produce and reproduce knowledge about 'the other' and recommend certain actions be taken (Barnett, 2008). For example, in the case of refugee resettlement determination and selection interviews, UNHCR legal officers have the power to decide who is selected for resettlement and whether they believe the refugee's story or not (Bergtora Sandvik, 2009). According to Bergtora Sandvik, the resettlement selection process or 'game' creates a situation that forces individuals to play into refugee stereotypes and come up with elaborate stories of suffering and trauma. Malkki (1996, p. 384) describes a similar occurrence in her fieldwork with Hutu

refugees in Tanzania, where the eligibility for refugee status was determined upon looking like a 'real refugee', such as displaying torn clothes and bullet wounds. These stories not only fit into the humanitarian categories for resettlement, as defined by the UNHCR (see Chapter 2), but also convinces the selection officer of their 'authenticity' and need. This demonstrates the power dynamic that exists between the humanitarian worker and/or UNHCR officer and refugees, where the "credible narrative" is vital to for successful resettlement selection (Bergtora Sandvik, 2009, p. 228).

Therefore, exploring the label 'refugee' is important. As discussed in Chapter 3, labels not only determine who is legally a refugee, but can also infer who is deemed to be morally deserving of refugee status, and all the rights and entitlements that ensues (Zetter, 1991). Labels are not neutral; instead they position refugees into moral categories of 'deserving' and 'undeserving' (Gale, 2004), and who is worthy of 'our' compassion and support (Kirkwood, Goodman, McVittie, & McKinlay, 2015). Wood (1985, p. 1) defines labels as "the way in which people, conceived as the objects of policy are defined in convenient images". However, these 'convenient images' act to reduce and simplify people into manageable categories, glossing over the complexity and diversity of individual experiences. Refugees do not always fit neatly into categories that define them in a certain way.

Malkki (1995, 1996, 2002) argues that bureaucratic labels fail to take account of the different histories and socio-cultural backgrounds that define individual experiences of forced migration (see also Gupte & Mehta, 2007). This "dehistoricizing universalism" (Malkki, 1996, p. 378) renders refugees speechless and without agency, reliant on others (e.g., the UNHCR and other NGOs) to speak on their behalf (Rajaram, 2002). Malkki (1996) argues that humanitarian discourses have objectified the refugee experience, representing 'the refugee' as a "mute body", an object of knowledge in which certain actions and responses are produced and justified. For this reason, it is important to critically analyse refugee discourses in order to acknowledge the power dynamic involved in the construction of these discourses, and the multiple meanings and experiences behind the label.

Critique of 'development as discourse'

Post-development theory has received much criticism for its unadulterated focus on discourse, and its seemingly reductionist view of development that ignores the diversity of development practices, people and places, in favour of presenting an over-generalised and homogenous critique of development and the societies/cultures involved (Escobar, 2000; Lie, 2007; McGregor, 2009; Nustad, 2001; Storey, 2000; Ziai, 2007). Corbridge (1998) criticises post-development theory for focusing too much on unhelpful binaries, positioning the 'West' against the 'Rest', and Kiely (1999) contends post-development romanticises traditional communities and social movements while ignoring the power dynamics at play at the local level. Others argue that post-development ignores the deeper historical roots of development that can be traced back to the early 19th century and the colonial notion of trusteeship (Cowen & Shenton, 1995). Additionally, Nederveen Pieterse (1998) and Kiely (1999) take post-development to task for criticising mainstream development theory and practice without offering any concrete alternative solutions.

Despite the severe criticism that post-development has faced, most scholarly critics agree with the two central tenets of post-development theory: (1) the idea of 'development' is an inherently Eurocentric construct, labelling Western countries as 'developed' and Africa, Asia and Latin America as 'underdeveloped'; and (2) the concept of development, and who gets to define what 'good development' looks like, implies a position of authority and power (Ziai, 2007). Post-development scholars advocate for a complete re-conceptualisation of development that is less Eurocentric, technocratic and depoliticising than the dominant development discourse (Ziai, 2004). For post-development thinkers, language and meaning play an important part in the creation of reality, and the focus on discourse analysis is a valid epistemological choice (Escobar 2000; 2007). Indeed, Storey (2000) concludes that the strength of post-development theory lies in its methodological approach to critical analysis and deconstruction of discourse, which McGregor (2009) argues opens up space for alternative voices and worldviews.

Therefore, post-development critiques on discourse and power lends itself well to the analysis of how refugees and notions of solidarity are discursively constructed

in the media, thus helping to answer research questions 1 and 2. Building on a post-development perspective, Lilie Chouliaraki (2006, 2013b) argues that an imbalance of power also exists between spectator and distant suffering other. The next section explores the problematic nature of refugee representation and solidarity with distant others from a post-humanitarian perspective.

Spectatorship of distant suffering and acts of solidarity (a post-humanitarian view)

This section draws largely on the work of Lilie Chouliaraki and her conceptualisation of post-humanitarianism, one of the main theoretical foundations of humanitarian communication (Anderson, 2017). Drawing on Boltanski's 'politics of pity' (1999), Arendtian notions of solidarity (1958/1998, 1963/2006), and Silverstone's 'proper distance' (2006), post-humanitarianism seeks to critique the communication of solidarity and how Western publics respond to, and act upon, the suffering of distant, vulnerable others.

According to Arendt, humanitarian discourses of suffering call on predominantly Western audiences "to create a community of interest with the oppressed and the exploited" (Arendt, 1963/2006, p. 88), using particular kinds of imagery to morally educate Western audiences and establish an emotional connection between spectators and distant suffering others (Chouliaraki, 2010). This 'moral education' teaches us how we should respond to the suffering of others, compelling Western audiences into action (Anderson, 2017). For example, the image of the 'good' refugee who is vulnerable may motivate people to volunteer and help refugees (Harrell-Bond, 2002). Here, the refugee symbolises the hurt and vulnerable stranger who we have a moral obligation to help, as per the ethics of humanitarianism discussed in Chapter 2 (see Barnett, 2008; Gibney, 2004). Thus, acts of solidarity rely on humanitarian communication that conveys moral discourses of pity and "grand emotions about suffering" (Chouliaraki, 2010, p. 108) that justify the imperative to help distant vulnerable others.

Chouliaraki (2013b) argues that humanitarian communication, although based on notions of cosmopolitan solidarity (as discussed in Chapter 2), has shifted away

from a traditional focus on common humanity and universal morality towards “a post-humanitarian disposition oriented at the self” (Paulmann, 2018, p. 6). In other words, the communication of distant suffering has become more about how witnessing and responding to that suffering makes ‘us’ (the spectator) feel. This form of humanitarian communication “relies heavily on the visibility of suffering and on its emotional language of emergency” (Chouliaraki, 2012, p. 165). Chouliaraki (2006, 2013) argues that emotionally driven discourses invite ‘us’ to engage with humanitarian solidarity campaigns – a “commitment to act on human vulnerability” (2013b, p. 14) – placing Western spectators at the centre of moral action. This is what Chouliaraki refers to as ‘post-humanitarian’ communication (Chouliaraki, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013b), and part of the theoretical framework I will be using to analyse NZ media representations of refugees and discourses of solidarity.

Chouliaraki calls this orientation towards the self and our emotions a form of “narcissistic self-expression” (2013b, p. 173) and “egoistic altruism” (2017, p. 51).¹⁵ Similarly, Barnett & Weiss (2008, p. 45) argue that discourses of solidarity risk becoming a form of “narcissistic, self-absorbed humanitarian[ism] that objectifies and silences beneficiaries”. While acts of solidarity rely on “sentimental stories of suffering that touch our feelings” (Chouliaraki, 2013b, p. 181), it does little to address the root causes of suffering. Therefore, solidarity discourses form a relationship between ‘how I feel’ and ‘what I can do’ to help suffering others. Emotion plays a central role in humanitarian and solidarity discourses, for example through shocking images of starving children and distressed individuals (as discussed in the previous chapter). Chouliaraki (2017) argues that we need to feel something in order to act, to get in touch with our feelings in order to express our solidarity with distant suffering others.

This is what Luc Boltanski (1999) refers to as the ‘politics of pity’. Similar to post-development critiques on development discourse, distant others in solidarity campaigns are portrayed as suffering, vulnerable, innocent victims. These discourses of pity pull on the heartstrings of the spectator and makes us feel empathy and

¹⁵ See also Kapoor, 2005, ‘narcissistic samaritanism’

compassion, imagining the suffering of that person. Boltanski notes that we need to see the suffering of the distant other before we believe that suffering to be true. If we do not believe the suffering to be true, then we will not feel compassion towards the 'other' or be moved enough to act. He argues that the portrayal of distant other as suffering, vulnerable victims is necessary in order for us to empathise, and act upon our emotions that are generated from those representations. Emotive representations of distant suffering play on our sense of morality, "for without morality there is no pity" (Boltanski, 1999, p. 13). Thus, the 'politics of pity' mobilises moral discourses of solidarity, and justifies calls for action.

Problematically, these discourses compel us to act in order to ease that suffering, without questioning the wider injustices involved or the dehumanisation of vulnerable others. Acts of solidarity are justified based on our moral concern for the suffering of others, yet in doing so perpetuates unequal power dynamics between 'us' and 'them'. Chouliaraki (2013b) argues that post-humanitarian communication focuses on "an individualist morality of 'feel good' activism" (p. 14), which "avoids politics and rewards the self" (p. 15). Therefore, by seeing distant suffering others as passive victims who need our help, rather than as agentic actors in their own right, we are perpetuating historically uneven power relations between the Global North and Global South.

Thus, the need to 'humanise' sufferers in humanitarian communication/campaigns (i.e. images that represent distant others as people with dignity, humanity, worthy of pity and aid) inevitably becomes about how we imagine and emotionally connect with the suffering of distant others (Orgad, 2012). According to Orgad and Seu (2014, p. 13), the mediation of distant suffering as a commodified spectacle, consumed predominantly by Western audiences, reduces the pain of distant others to "a voyeuristic gaze". The voyeuristic tendency of mediated suffering consequently turns the spectator into a passive consumer of suffering who may feel pity for distant suffering others, but may not necessarily act on that pity.

Discourses of solidarity may appeal to our sense of moral responsibility for the suffering of distant others, but it ultimately comes at the expense of stereotyping non-Western others, reducing individuals to objects of aid and protection, while ignoring structural inequalities at play in their suffering (Chouliaraki, 2012).

Chouliaraki acknowledges that some discourses of 'justice' are evident in post-humanitarian communications, but these discourses tend to emphasise why we should immediately act to alleviate that suffering, not why people are suffering in the first place. Therefore, discourses of solidarity may lead to some form of alleviation, but do not necessarily lead to social/political change (Chouliaraki, 2012).

Consequently, Chouliaraki (2013) argues, humanitarian discourses and acts of solidarity reproduce and reinforce inequalities and unequal power relations between the West and the 'rest', while stereotyping distant others as passive vulnerable victims. Post-humanitarian communication is about our own commitment to act upon the suffering of distant others. The representations of suffering others feeds into our humanitarian imaginations, thus justifying our actions. Discourses of solidarity thus become about how we feel, respond, and act upon vulnerable others, silencing the voices of those who are vulnerable and suffering in the process.

Humanitarian imagination

The humanitarian imagination is the imperative to act upon vulnerable others to alleviate their suffering, which relies on the power of humanitarian discourses (both in images and text) to represent the suffering of distant others in a way that compels us to act (Chouliaraki, 2013b). It is based on the capacity of spectacles of suffering to mobilise certain emotions and make us feel for distant suffering, to place ourselves in their shoes, so to speak, and compel us to act upon those feelings. Chouliaraki argues that the 'humanitarian imagination' explains the motivation behind humanitarian actions and ethical responses to distant suffering. In other words, when confronted by images of suffering and need, ordinary citizens are compelled into action to stop that suffering (Anderson, 2017). The media plays an important role in disseminating the humanitarian imaginary, inviting spectators to care, respond, and act upon images and descriptions of distant suffering, as happened in Europe with the 'Refugees Welcome' solidarity movement during 2015-2016 (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017).

Chouliaraki (2013b) contends that humanitarian discourses act like a performance of suffering that emotionally moves us to respond. These performances play into imaginations of solidarity based on what is morally right (i.e. moral responsibility for distant suffering others; see Chapter 2). Humanitarian discourses communicate this morality through the performance or spectacle of suffering. Mediated stories and images of suffering legitimise acts of solidarity, while “sympathetic identification” with suffering others allows us to imagine ourselves responding to distant others, through protesting, petitioning or donating, all in the name of morality and common humanity (Chouliaraki, 2013b, p. 49).

Chouliaraki & Zaborowski (2017) argue that mediated discourses of suffering do more than simply present the facts, but invite audiences to imagine the suffering of others, to feel their pain, and act accordingly. Chouliaraki describes journalism as a performance; it “is about doing things with words, not simply about using words to report facts” (Chouliaraki, 2013b, p. 268). Therefore, in relation to ‘European refugee crisis’ and resulting ‘Refugees Welcome’ movement, the media used words and images to represent refugees in a particular kind of way in order to engage with spectators’ humanitarian imagination, thus compelling them to act on behalf of refugee suffering (Chouliaraki & Zaborowski, 2017).

Humanitarian discourses of suffering invite us to act on behalf of vulnerable others, but in doing so these ‘others’ become objects of our humanitarian imagination. Normative humanitarian images of refugees create stereotypes or assumptions about what a refugee should look like, what their experiences should be, and how they should feel (Szörényi, 2006). We can only imagine them as portrayed through mediated discourses of suffering, such as humanitarian appeals, media coverage of crises, celebrity advocacy, that portray distant others as anonymous victims - traumatised, desperate, and in need of help (Chouliaraki, 2006). Similar to post-development critiques of discourse, Tascon (2018) argues that subjects of humanitarian images are invariably from and about the Global South, conveying imaginings of crisis, deficiencies, failures, helplessness, and thus create an uneven power dynamic between the subject and the spectator. Therefore, Chouliaraki argues, mediated discourses of suffering are problematic, not only in the de-humanising way they portray distant others, but also because they privilege Western

voices as the only authentic voice, while silencing the voices of those being represented (Chouliaraki, 2011, 2013b).

However, as de Waal argues (2015, p. 18), “there would be no activism without emotion, and no humanitarianism [...] without the emotions of outrage, sympathy, empathy and the personal fulfilment that comes through acts of kindness and solidarity”. Emotion is an important component to rouse publics and generate support for humanitarian issues, but as Chouliaraki (2013b) argues, compassion and empathy are not enough. Humanitarian campaigns should also address structures of inequality and injustice, and create platforms for political change. However, what often happens is emotions of pity end up driving humanitarian action, resulting in top-down charitable approaches (Chouliaraki, 2013b).

According to Chouliaraki (2006), humanitarian discourses tend to err on the side of charity, rather than questions of justice. Therefore, as Chouliaraki contends, solidarity for distant others needs to combine pity and justice for action, and not measure action on the levels of emotions felt by the spectator. Action on behalf of distant suffering requires the spectators to feel something in order to mobilise them into action; however, compassion alone is not a politically effective or motivating emotion. Thus, scholars argue that there needs to be a balance between pity and political action. Subsequently, questions arise regarding the ways in which spectators can or should respond to distant suffering, and what is a desirable and/or appropriate moral response.

Charity vs Justice

According to Chouliaraki (2006), there are two types of solidarity: one based on pity and charity, the other based on political questions of justice (see also Barnett, 2013). There are also two types of communication strategies employed by advocacy groups to morally engage spectators with the suffering of distant others. One denounces suffering as unjust and calls for political protest to end suffering. The other focuses on generating empathy and donations for charitable organisations to reduce suffering. Chouliaraki argues that both types of solidarity and communication strategies are informed by humanitarian principles, effectively highlighting the

suffering of distant others and calling for action of some kind. However, according to Chouliaraki (2006), pity can be a disempowering emotion and ignores questions of justice. Therefore, using 'pity' as the sole motivating factor for action can effectively side line wider political discussions of injustice and inequality.

Consequently, the spectacle of suffering raises ethical questions about what to do and how best to respond. Spectacles of suffering can both evoke empathy and call us to action. Orgad and Seu (2014) highlight the tensions that exist for humanitarian organisations in the way they represent humanitarian subjects. Representing humanitarian subjects as victims may help to elicit sympathy and support, and therefore much needed financial donations for their work. On the other hand, many of these organisations also want to represent their 'clients' as empowered active agents of change (Orgad & Seu, 2014b). Refugee solidarity movements face similar tensions. In their research on the 'Refugees Welcome' movement in Germany, Brecht et al (2018) found that some refugee advocates focused on a charitable approach to try and ease people's suffering, while others aimed more for a social justice approach towards an unequal world system that generated refugees. The work of the latter was connected with political action, whereas the work of the former was more driven by charitable actions.

However, Stock (2017) questions whether refugee solidarity movements create a platform for social justice (potential for transformative change), or whether they merely treat refugees as objects of compassion and aid, reinforcing the division between 'us' and 'them'. In her research with citizen solidarity organisations (CSOs), Stock contends that volunteers are more likely to concentrate their efforts in providing informal care for refugees, such as organising clothes, furniture, donations, and providing social support, rather than engage in political protest (Stock, 2017). Similarly, in her research with older middle-class women volunteers in Germany, Braun (2017) discovered elements of maternalism, orientalism, and uneven power relationships in the way they approached the refugee women they were helping. Braun described their attitudes as a form of charitable volunteerism, in which their desire to 'help' refugees highlighted the hierarchical and inegalitarian structures of that 'help'. Silk argues that we must move beyond benevolence and "wishing to do good" (Silk, 2000, p. 304), and transform our initial ethical and

emotional engagement into affirmative action that addresses social inequalities and injustices if we are to have any real impact on those in need. Therefore, whether solidarity movements can move beyond benevolent charity towards justice remains debatable.

According to Grubiša (2017), whether unintentional or not, humanitarian representations of refugees perpetuates the divide between ‘us’ who seek to help refugees (e.g. Western advocates and NGOs), and ‘them’ who are seeking help (e.g. refugees). Thus, humanitarian discourses clearly demarcate the unequal relationship between refugees and advocates from the start (Becht et al., 2018). While the Refugees Welcome solidarity movement calls upon the ethical and moral duty to care for vulnerable others, at the same time it reduces ‘the refugee’ to an object of ‘our’ moral responsibility worthy of ‘our’ attention and empathy (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017). Those who stand in solidarity with refugees occupy the privileged position as citizens with social, cultural, economic and political power. By positioning refugees as “objects of rescue” and host societies as “saviours who provide it” (Kyriakides et al., 2018, p. 60), humanitarian discourses reduce refugees to the ‘other’ – a passive, helpless victim and subject of pity who can never be equal to the citizen (Ticktin, 2011).

Humanitarian discourses aim to compel spectators to care enough to act on distant suffering, but they consequently deprive distant others the voice and agency to speak for themselves. Calhoun (2010) argues that charitable responses to suffering inevitably constitute unequal power relations between ‘us’ and ‘them’, creating “a relationship of dependency, not of equivalence” (p. 35). As David Levi Strauss contends:

[humanitarian discourses] may elicit pity, sorrow, or guilt in their viewers, but they will never provide information for change. They only work to reinforce the construction of the centre and the periphery: North and South, rich and poor, superior and inferior (as cited in Nyers, 2006, p. 16).

By placing Western benefactors at the centre of solidarity discourses (what can we do), distant others are reduced to “voiceless props [...] in someone else’s story” (Chouliaraki, 2013b, p. 187). Boltanski (1999) asks how then we can engage the spectator beyond passive voyeurism, and translate the pity we feel for distant

suffering others into outrage and thus political action (the potential of 'pity' as a political sentiment). Rather than stories about how distant suffering makes us feel and how we should respond, Chouliaraki (2013) argues that humanitarian communication should create a platform for the voices of distant others to be heard, and to enable spectators to ask questions and reflect on why we should act.

Agonistic Solidarity

In response to this dilemma, Chouliaraki (2013) proposes an agonistic solidarity that puts concerns of social justice for distant others above our private emotions about their suffering. Following Arendt (1963/2006), Chouliaraki argues for a discourse of solidarity that goes beyond the private self and a moral emphasis on pity, and towards the communication of suffering as a political question of justice (Chouliaraki, 2012). In other words, acts of solidarity should address and challenge inequalities and the reasons why people are suffering in the first place. A solidarity based on justice, according to Arendt (1963/2006), may be influenced by discourses of suffering, but is not guided by them. Instead, solidarity as justice invites Western publics to reflect on universal values of a common humanity/human rights and act accordingly.

Drawing on Roger Silverstone's (2007) concept of 'proper distance', agonistic solidarity enables us to both empathise with distant others and see their plight in terms of political injustice. 'Proper distance' requires the spectator of distant suffering to decentralise their feelings and themselves. In other words, it is not about how we identify with the suffering of others, or how it makes us feel, but about seeing distant others as fellow human beings and responding accordingly (Orgad & Seu, 2014b). Using the mainstream media as an example, Silverstone argues that the way the media tend to represent humanitarian subjects does not "invite us to engage with the other" in a way that gives the viewer the opportunity to consider structural issues and political action (Silverstone, 2007, p. 133). Even though humanitarian discourses appeal to the notion of common humanity, the focus on 'pity' fails to address the dehumanisation of vulnerable others. Instead of addressing the structural inequalities and injustices of suffering, these discourses centre on the emotional reaction to suffering.

Therefore, Silverstone (2007) argues there is a need for more holistic media representations that portray the commonalities between the viewer and suffering other, based on common humanity, morality, responsibility and duty of care (Silverstone, 2007). Silverstone's call for more holistic representations can also be applied to the humanitarian communications of Western NGOs and refugee advocates, which also have a tendency to position refugees as vulnerable victims in order to build support for solidarity campaigns. Viewing distant others with 'proper distance' allows us to see vulnerable others as people with agency and their own humanity. Imagining others is crucial for solidarity, but we need to move beyond imagining distant others as helpless, passive, powerless victims.

Chouliaraki argues that we need to hear their voice and see them as individuals with agency, and see their situation as an issue of injustice (Chouliaraki, 2012). The inclusion of alternative voices is considered crucial for the humanisation of distant sufferers, to hear their perspective and experiences, and make them the centre of the story about their own life, not just a passive victim in someone else story. Therefore, an important aspect of agonistic solidarity is to create a platform where distant others can speak to us directly through their own voice (Chouliaraki, 2013).

Another crucial element of agonistic solidarity is questions of justice. While empathy draws attention to and generates an emotional reaction to the plight of vulnerable others, questions of justice make us stop and reflect on why people are suffering, why this is an issue of injustice, and what can be done about it (Boltanski, 1999; Chouliaraki, 2006). Asking questions about justice puts the spotlight on human vulnerability as a question of social and political injustice, and prompt us to contemplate the ethical issues around acts of solidarity. This can lead to collective responsibility and transformative change. Whereas, a solidarity based on pity only focuses on the desire to end suffering, without considering why that suffering in the first place. Without questions of justice, emotional responses to suffering tend not to go beyond benevolence and pity (Chouliaraki, 2013).

While agonistic solidarity can potentially lead to collective action and transformative change (i.e. through public action, protest, etc.), there also needs to be an element of self-reflexivity in acts of solidarity with distant others (Chouliaraki, 2013b). We need to ask ourselves: why do I act and who is it for. Do acts of solidarity

simply make us feel good about ourselves, or does it address wider structural inequalities, and create some kind of political change for the better? These are crucial questions of justification that Chouliaraki (2013) argues we need to ask ourselves before acting upon the suffering of distant others. Humanitarian communication and acts of solidarity need to move beyond grand emotions of pity and “narcissistic self-expression” (Chouliaraki, 2013, p. 173), towards a form of self-reflectivity on the part of the spectator that listens to and includes the voices of others (Chouliaraki, 2017). Thus, agonistic solidarity is a fine balancing act between empathy and justice, self-reflexivity and representation.

Consequently, it is important to explore the role individual actors play in deconstructing and transforming dominant discourses, and creating space for the constructions of their own identity in the process. In Chapters 8 and 9, I examine how people from refugee backgrounds contest, construct or transform dominant discourses about ‘refugeeness’. The next section explores Norman Long’s actor-oriented approach to discourse, power and agency as a means of thinking about the construction of refugee identity through practices of self-representation.

Self-representation: contesting dominant discourses (an actor-oriented approach)

In order to understand the relationship between human agency and structure within an actor-oriented approach, it is important to analyse the role that power, knowledge and discourse plays in the structuring of actors’ social worlds, and the different ways actors construct and manipulate specific contexts for their own agendas (Long & Long, 1992). Actors are not passive recipients of aid and intervention, but use their agency to actively engage and strategise with various local and external actors and institutions (Long, 2001). Grounded in social constructionism¹⁶, an actor-oriented perspective considers the different social constructions, such as language, institutional frameworks, communication networks and socio-cultural-political ideologies that shape an actor’s understanding

¹⁶ Social constructionism views knowledge as socially constructed through language and interpreted by social actors, resulting in multiple realities (Burr, 1995)

of the world (Long, 2001). Actors define the issues that are most important to them, but as meanings and values are socially constructed, these issues can be perceived and interpreted differently depending on the actors involved, resulting in multiple contested realities (Long, 1990, 2001).

A useful way of exploring these encounters is through discourse analysis. Following Burr (1995), Long (2001, pp. 51–52) describes discourse as “a set of meanings embodied in metaphors, representations, images, narratives and statements that advance a particular version of ‘the truth’ about objects, persons, events and the relations between them”. Discourses can be written, verbal and even non-verbal, such as art and fashion. Discourses are socially constructed and shape our understanding of the world and provide certain representations of ‘reality’. Unlike post-development approaches, which view discourse as deeply embedded within power structures, an actor-oriented approach sees discourse as a social practice that is constructed, transformed and negotiated among actors (Long, 2001).

As discussed above, Foucault (1980) contends that knowledge systems have the ability to construct particular representations of truth. Although one can never escape power, it does not mean that one is doomed to an ‘inescapable form of domination’ (Foucault, 1980, pp. 141–142). There are no relations of power without resistances – constructed knowledge can be contested through the creation of alternative knowledge and other forms of resistance (McEwan, 2009). Escobar (1984) argues it is possible to develop new power relations through forms of resistance and counter discourses. Meaning is not infinitely fixed. No one has total control over words and images, allowing room for new meanings to be constructed (Hall et al., 2013; M. Pickering, 2001).

According to Long (1990), one cannot assume that actors necessarily succumb to external structures and forces, as post-development theory somewhat implies in its analysis of development discourse. Actors live within these structures, but they are not necessarily controlled by them. Long contends that there are always multiple discourses at work: “Since social life is never so unitary as to be built upon on single type of discourse, it follows that, however restricted their choice, actors always face some alternative ways of formulating their objectives, deploying modes of action and giving reasons for their behaviour” (in Long & Long, 1992, p. 25). In other

words, actors may be labelled and shaped by discursive practices, but they are also capable of restructuring those practices, using their power, knowledge, experience and agency to dispute and contest their identities (Lynn & Lea, 2003; Moncrieffe & Eyben, 2007). Actors will find ways to negotiate and transform these structures for their own ends (Long, 2001) and, as the following example show, refugees are quite capable of using the refugee label to their own advantage, if that label gets them what they need (Barnett, 2011).

For example, Malkki's (1995) research with Hutu refugees in Tanzania highlights how individuals and groups within this community utilised the 'refugee' label to suit their own purposes, in terms of access to resources and constructing their own sense of identity and belonging in and outside the UNHCR refugee camps. Similarly, Bakewell (2000) discovered that many Angolan refugees in Zambia believed the refugee categories imposed on them by outside agencies were largely irrelevant, as they tended to integrate themselves within the host community and carry on with life.

Correspondingly, as discussed above, Bergtora Sandvik (2009) found that refugees in Kampala, Uganda used their agency and entrepreneurship to construct the best 'trauma/victim' story they could in order to be selected for resettlement. Refugees choose certain narratives to construct "the perfect victim" or "ideal resettlement candidate" in order to increase their chances of success (Bergtora Sandvik, 2009, p. 223). A humanitarian worker in Kampala described how female refugees often played on their "woman-ness" to fit into the 'women at risk' resettlement category. Another aid worker described the different survivor skills and "agency tactics" used by Sierra Leonean refugee women to present themselves as victims and therefore "legitimate recipients" of humanitarian aid (Bergtora Sandvik, 2009, p. 236). The agency deployed here by refugees in this example demonstrated the various ways in which they contested the power dynamics between themselves and humanitarian workers and UNHCR officers.

Thus, an actor-oriented approach recognises the central role human actors play within the structures of development, and the on-going transformational relationship between these structures and actors' 'lifeworlds' (Long, 2001). It seeks to create space to analyse the multiple realities embedded within the structures of

development discourse. Actors are not mere passive recipients of aid and intervention, but individuals who experience, negotiate and construct meaning for themselves within humanitarian discourses (Long & Long, 1992). Therefore, humanitarian representations of refugees are just one conception of reality among many, and may not reflect the lived experience or reality of those represented.

Central to an actor-oriented approach is the concept of agency and the capacity of actors to construct and negotiate their own projects in life, and in relation to this research, how people from refugee backgrounds in NZ construct, contest and redefine 'refugee' for themselves. Long defines agency as the "capacity to process social experience and devise ways of coping with life" (in Long & Long, 1992, p. 22; see also Long 1990, 2001). Influenced by Giddens (1984) theory of structuration, which argues that structures both constrain and enable human agency, an actor oriented approach believes social actors are in part shaped by the structures in which they live, but possess the 'knowledgeability' and 'capability' to construct, reproduce and contest the meaning and values of those structures for themselves (Long, 2001, p. 16). This implies that all actors possess a certain amount of power and capability to actively change and construct their own social worlds (Long, 1990).

Discourse may be produced and utilised by institutional structures, such as the media and humanitarian and government agencies, but individual actors also manipulate discursive structures for their own ends, as the above example of Hutu and Angolan refugees illustrates. Therefore, an actor-oriented approach to discourse places emphasis on the encounters between actors and the discursive practices that perpetuate, negotiate and transform dominant discourses. The following section outlines some of the ways in which refugees seek to contest, transform and re-construct the refugee label in differing contexts.

De/Re-constructing 'refugeeness'

*I am a refugee and
I am a prisoner in your country,
I am a student,
I am political,
I am opposed to any military dictatorship,
I am the grandfather of two girls,
I am the father of four children – one girl and three boys,
I am a Muslim,
I am a good practitioner,
I am very happy with my teacher,
I am friendly, honest and serious.*

This poem by Mohamed Ali Aissaoui, 'I Am a Refugee And' (as cited in Nyers, 2006, p. 63), contests normative imaginings of 'refugeeness'. Here Mohammed is saying, I am more than just an anonymous 'refugee', a victim stripped down to 'bare life' (see Chapter 4); I am a person with agency, history, interests, and a family, among many other things. Mohammed's poem attempts to transform dominant perceptions of refugees as victims, helpless, anonymous beings without history. His poem attempts to create space for alternative identities, perceptions of 'refugees', on what it means to be a refugee.

Personal narratives give voice to the individual experiences of displacement, and help receiving societies to understand the complexities of what it means to be a refugee (Mannik, 2012). The tragic photograph of drowned toddler Alan Kurdi shocked the media, politicians and the general public, causing them to look beyond the debates about numbers and costs of the refugee crisis, and focus on the personal tragedies of forced displacement (Cooke, 2015; Gallagher, 2015). There is a need for more stories told from the perspective of those seeking or have sought refuge, rather than from the perspective of governments or humanitarian agencies tasked with distributing aid.

As Gupte and Mehta (2007) remind us, refugees are not ahistorical entities who lack social networks, skills and experiences. Nor are they necessarily all traumatised by

their experiences of forced displacement (Marlowe, 2010; Papadopoulos, 2007; Summerfield, 1999). At a 1984 international refugee humanitarian symposium, refugees in attendance were asked how they wished to be represented in the media. One responded by asking: "Why not publicize our energy and our power to help ourselves?" (Harrell-Bond, 1985, p. 4). The general feeling among refugees who attended this symposium was NGOs and the UNHCR forget to ask refugees their opinion, and forget that refugees have the power to help themselves. Refugees are individuals who will use their knowledge, experience, networks and agency to get where they need to go, just like anybody else. As a Liberian refugee residing in Ghana said, "Being a refugee doesn't mean that I am helpless and in need of assistance" (as cited in Gupta & Mehta, 2007, p. 74).

Similarly, in a study on private refugee sponsorship in Canada, Kyriakides, Bajjali, McLuhan, & Anderson (2018) discovered the different ways resettled refugees contested the 'refugeeness' (refugees as helpless victims) placed upon them by their sponsors. One woman, 'Rasha', asserted her identity as a proud 'home maker' by stripping the covers of one of the beds prepared by her sponsors, much to the consternation of her sponsors. However, Rasha could not live with the expectations and assumptions placed on her as a 'refugee', saying "I always try to think like a refugee, but I don't know how" (Kyriakides et al., 2018, p. 64). In other words, Rasha did not know how to be a 'helpless victim' who needed her sponsors to do everything for her. She did not leave her identity and agency behind when she became a refugee. Thus, refugees will always find ways to assert themselves as political agents and in the process contest normative imaginings of 'refugeeness'.

New technologies and the prevalence of social media is another way refugees can contest stereotypes. Social media enables refugees to share their stories and experiences online, thus creating an opportunity to put a personal face on forced displacement, and build connections and understanding with a wider audience (T. Wright, 2014). In the current refugee crisis, many Syrian refugees have taken to social media, using their smartphones, to document and narrate their personal journeys across Europe, and to keep in contact with family and friends. Images of Syrian refugees taking 'selfies' with their smartphones upon reaching safety in Greek Islands contradicts normative images of refugees as victims and in need of

rescue. Indeed, the very act of organising their own migration across the Mediterranean, rather than sit waiting passively in refugee camps, highlights their agency (Szörényi, 2018). Sadly, media coverage of refugees with smartphones has met with a backlash and criticism by some claiming these people cannot be 'real refugees' if they can afford a smartphone (Alter, 2015; Kozłowska, 2015; Whitty, 2015).

Acts of self-representation, such as the smartphone 'selfie', challenge how refugees are depicted in the media, and the identity forced on them by the international refugee regime (Chouliaraki, 2017; Risam, 2018). Photographs taken in 1948 by Estonian refugee, Maniveld Sein, of other refugees on a boat bound for Canada provide another alternative visual representation of the stereotypical notion of refugees (Mannik, 2012). In these photos, refugees are shown laughing, smiling, dancing, and playing games, completely opposite to how boat refugees are depicted today. Photography can therefore be a powerful medium through which refugees can contest prevailing stereotypes and labels, giving voice to their experiences of displacement and reclaiming their identity as individuals, and as human beings. Interestingly, a common response to these photos were that they did not look like 'real refugees', because they looked 'normal' and 'rich', and did not look like they were suffering at all (Mannik, 2012, p. 263).

Many refugees do not even identify with the refugee label, let alone allow it to define who they are, as the examples above of Hutu and Angolan refugees demonstrate. Individuals will use the refugee label to suit their own purposes, and will construct their identity and belonging within and outside the refugee 'label', depending on the situation (Malkki, 1995; Nyers, 1999; Vigil & Abidi, 2018). For example, in research with Iranian refugees in Australia, Aidani (2010) discovered that those he interviewed tended to construct their identity outside the refugee label. For them, the refugee label was not a meaningful category that expressed their experiences of displacement (Aidani, 2010).

All these examples above highlight the various ways in which refugees will use their agency to contest, transform and negotiate the refugee label placed on them by the international refugee regime, humanitarian organisations, solidarity movements, and the media. Far from being passive recipients of aid, or universal symbols of

victimhood or 'bare life', refugees and people from refugee backgrounds can be active agents of change in their own lives, deconstructing dominant discourses of 'refugeeness'. Using an actor-oriented approach to discourse, this thesis will investigate the meaning of the word 'refugee' with my participants from refugee backgrounds in the NZ context, and the various ways they might contest and redefine 'refugeeness' for themselves, if at all, thus exploring research question 3.

Conceptual framework: Post-development, post-humanitarianism, and an actor-oriented approach

This final section addresses the conceptual framework in relation to the research questions and aims of this thesis. Post-development and post-humanitarianism critique development and humanitarian discourses, and the embedded unequal power relations that create normative representations of humanitarian subjects as vulnerable victims who need to be saved by the West. Within these discourses, the suffering 'other' is positioned as helpless and without agency, reliant on 'experts', such as NGO workers or advocates, to speak on their behalf. Post-development theory emphasises the need to deconstruct the dominant discourse of development in order to allow new discourses and multiple worldviews to emerge. Post-humanitarianism stresses the need to move beyond grand emotions of pity towards questions of justice, opening up space for alternative voices to be heard. It is within the theoretical framework of post-development and post-humanitarianism that this thesis seeks to use critical discourse analysis (CDA – see Chapter 5: Methodology) to analyse media representations of refugees and discourses of solidarity and welcome in the NZ context (research questions 1 and 2).

However, post-development and post-humanitarianism are quite ambiguous about the role individual agency plays in relation to the wider structure of humanitarian discourse. The importance both theoretical perspectives place on the relationship between power, knowledge and discourse to construct certain representations of reality, tends to imply that individuals on the ground lack any kind of agency to contest, negotiate and transform these discourses (Lie, 2007; Nustad, 2001). Actors are not seen as active agents of change, but passive subjects that are produced and reproduced by the discursive structures of the development apparatus (Lie, 2007).

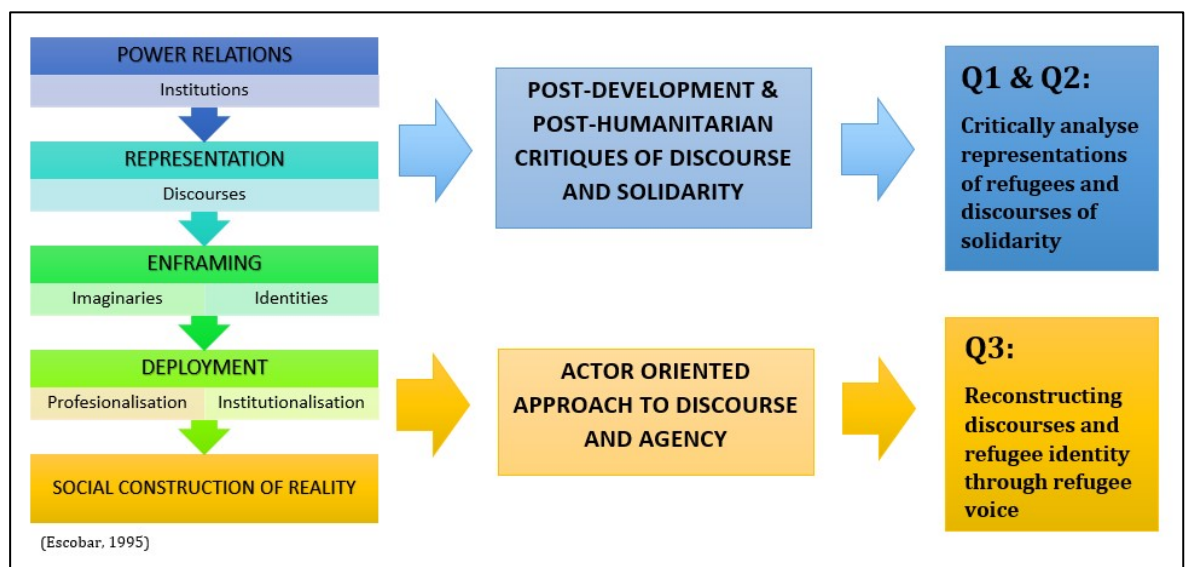
By concentrating on the formative power of discourse, post-development risks overlooking the capacity and agency of individual actors to affect change and challenge dominant discourses (Jacobs, 2011). In addition, post-humanitarianism is criticised for assuming all acts of solidarity are insincere, and makes no allowance for varying degrees of commitment from Western publics, advocates, and perhaps even humanitarian subjects themselves (Paulmann, 2018).

In order to overcome this apparent weakness in post-development theory, Nustad (2001) and Lie (2007) propose combining post-development with an actor-oriented approach that focuses on local processes of transformation and negotiation. An actor-oriented approach (Long, 1990, 2001; Long & Long, 1992) brings the notion of human agency to the forefront of research, and aims to analyse the different ways in which local actors manage and negotiate larger external structures within their 'lifeworlds', in order to create space to pursue their own 'projects'. It seeks to reconcile macro-scale structural discourses of development, and notions of 'knowledge', 'power' and 'agency', with the diverse knowledge and capabilities of individual actors at the micro level (Long & Long, 1992). This is why it is important to include alternative viewpoints and the voices of those who have experienced forced migration, and why I have chosen to combine a post-development/post-humanitarian critical analysis of the media with an actor oriented approach to agency. An actor-oriented approach to discourse and agency seeks to highlight and analyse the opinions and voices of participants from refugee backgrounds in NZ about their experiences of refugee representation (research question 3), through in-depth, semi-structured interviews (see Chapter 5: Methodology).

Including an actor-oriented approach, according to Lie (2007), helps to counteract post-development's tendency to privilege discourse over individual agency, while at the same time highlighting the contribution post-development can make to the critical analysis of development discourse. Although neither Nustad nor Lie include post-humanitarianism in their critique, I argue a similar case can be made for the inclusion of an actor-oriented approach with post-humanitarianism, helping to balance the critical analysis of humanitarian communication and acts of solidarity.

Figure 1 illustrates how a post-development/post-humanitarianism conceptual framework aims to critique the power relations involved in discourse and representation, analyse the discursive construction and enframing of refugees and discourses of solidarity deployed in the NZ mainstream media, and how this feeds into the social construction of ‘refugeeness’ (research questions 1 and 2). Acknowledging that all discourses are social constructed and contestable, an actor-oriented approach is included to explore the various ways in which people from refugee backgrounds use their agency to contest and transform dominant discourses, creating space for the construction of their own identities in the process (research question 3).

Figure 1: Representation conceptual framework



Adapted from Escobar's (1995) model of development discourse (in Peet & Hartwick, 2015, p. 249)

Summary

A certain reality about who a refugee is has been produced and reproduced through humanitarian and media discourses. From a post-development and post-humanitarian perspective, these discourses are deeply embedded within powerful relations of knowledge production, between those doing the representing and the represented. Both perspectives believe it is important to challenge and deconstruct dominant discourses, but do not allude to the role individual agency plays. An actor-

oriented approach brings the concept of human agency to the forefront of discursive practice, arguing that actors will find ways to negotiate and transform these discursive structures for their own end. It is within the intersection between post-development, post-humanitarianism and an actor-oriented approach that this thesis aims to challenge the dominant discursive constructions of refugees in the mainstream news media in New Zealand, and explore how people from refugee backgrounds contest, negotiate and transform these discourses, creating space for the construction of their own identities.

The next chapter outlines the methodology and research design used in this research, including critical discourse analysis (CDA) and semi-structured, in-depth interviews, and an overview of the chosen media articles and a description of the research participants.

Chapter 5: Methodology

This chapter addresses the methodological approach and research design employed in this research, including chosen methods, data/participant selection, and ethical considerations of the research process. As discussed in Chapter 1, this research seeks to explore the relationship between media representations of refugees and discourses of solidarity and welcome in NZ, and the various ways in which people from refugee backgrounds contest or transform these dominant discourses. In consideration of these research aims, Chapters 3 and 4 sought to examine the ethical and theoretical perspectives surrounding refugee representation and Western responses to humanitarian crises, such as the refugee crisis. It is these perspectives that inform the chosen methodology of this research.

The first section of this chapter outlines the overall methodological approach to this research, explains the rationale for my chosen methods, and briefly discusses the limitations of these methods. The next section describes the data collection and analysis processes, including choice of media and participant selection. The remainder of this chapter reflects on my positionality as a researcher and the ethical considerations of doing research with people from refugee backgrounds, particularly the ethical dilemmas of representing the voices of those deemed to be 'vulnerable'.

Research design and methods

The methodology of this study is informed by a social constructionist epistemology, which acknowledges that one's understanding of the world is constructed and interpreted by social actors, resulting in multiple realities and forms of knowledge (Burr, 2015; Crotty, 1998). A social constructionist perspective takes a critical stance towards positivist and empiricist worldviews based on scientific knowledge alone, arguing that all knowledge is relative and historically and culturally specific (Burr, 2015). Social constructionism also draws upon critical social theory, in regard to how wider socio-historical-cultural factors and power relations affect the

way individual actors construct and shape their own realities (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Merriam, 2002). Language is integral to this process, constituting social identities and relations, and systems of knowledge and belief that help construct our perceptions, knowledge and experiences about others and the wider world (Burr, 2015; Fairclough, 1995a).

Social constructionism sits within an ontology of critical realism and relativism (Crotty, 1998). Although social constructionism takes the position that all meaning is constructed, this does not mean that it is not real. It is important to acknowledge that different worldviews and multiple realities exist alongside each other, embedded within “diverse ways of knowing” (Crotty, 1998, p. 44; see also Braun & Clark, 2013). A critical approach to knowledge construction challenges binaries and dominant discourses, rejects absolute truths, and focuses on issues of social justice (Mason, 2018; Stewart-Withers, Banks, McGregor, & Meo-Sewabu, 2014), which in turn links into the theoretical framing of this study (i.e. post-development and post-humanitarian critiques of discourse, and an actor-oriented approach to agency).

A qualitative approach lends itself to a social constructionist methodology, as qualitative methods aim to explore and understand social complexities, particularly the interactions, processes, and socio-cultural-political structures that are part of the everyday lived experiences of actors (Mason, 2018; O’Leary, 2014; Stewart-Withers et al., 2014). Qualitative research is “richly descriptive”, constituting a wide variety of textual and visual methods that enable the researcher to convey and make sense of social phenomena from the perspective of the research participant (Merriam, 2002, p. 5). Therefore, a qualitative approach, grounded in social constructionism, is well suited to answering the research questions of this thesis, and contributes to knowledge and understanding towards discursive constructions of solidarity and welcome, and refugee representation and identity in New Zealand.

This research employed qualitative methods, including critical discourse analysis (CDA) and in-depth semi-structured interviews. Using a mixed qualitative methods approach offers more than one perspective and will allow for triangulation of data (O’Leary, 2014). I also kept a written fieldwork journal, as Stewart-Withers, Banks, McGregor and Meo-Sewabu (2014) suggest this can be useful for analysing data in the field, to practice self-reflexivity, and can help sharpen one’s research focus. The

next two sections describe the main research methods employed in this research in more detail.

Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) sees language “as a form of social practice” and considers the socio-cultural context of language, and its relationship to power, to be crucial in that they “help produce and reproduce unequal power relations [...] through the ways in which they represent things and position people” (Fairclough & Wodak, 2009, p. 258). According to Burr (2015, pp. 74–75), “a discourse refers to a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements and so on that in some way together produce a particular version of events”. Thus, discourses help to construct a particular form of reality that is dependent on how objects, people and events are represented and by whom, and speaks to issues of power and knowledge production. CDA is closely linked to the work of Foucault, particularly his critique of discourse and power, and therefore is an ideal method to use alongside a post-development and post-humanitarian framework in the analysis of refugee representation.

CDA aims to examine and deconstruct the embedded power relations within discourse, specifically the ways in which discourses are used to construct, reproduce, or contest existing social realities and relations of power and dominance in the public sphere (Fairclough, 2015; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; van Dijk, 2008; Wodak & Meyer, 2009). CDA questions who within society regulates and controls the production and reproduction of discourses, and what can or should be said. Thus, CDA seeks to bridge the gap between individual language use at the micro level, and the discursive practices of organisations and institutions at the macro level, with a particular focus on the role powerful entities play in the reproduction of discourse and social power (van Dijk, 2008).

Drawing on the work of Norman Fairclough (Fairclough, 1995b, 1995a, 2015) and Teun A. van Dijk (2001, 2003, 2008), this research follows a macro-sociological approach to CDA that views discourse as a social construction of reality, and a form of knowledge and power. This approach focuses on the links between language

(visual and textual), the socio-cultural-historical-political contexts to discourse and the power dynamics involved (Angermuller, Maingueneau, & Wodak, 2014). I also draw on Foucault's (1970, 1980) approach to discourse (see Chapter 3), which focuses on a macro analysis of the relationship between knowledge production, discourse and power, rather than a micro analysis of text (Braun & Clarke, 2013, pp. 189–190).

For van Dijk (2001, 2003, 2008), knowledge is constituted within discourse – discourse defines, produces, and represents knowledge. Discourses are also interpreted through the specific knowledge we possess about a particular event (socio-cultural-historical knowledge), and how that knowledge is shared by members of a particular community (shared assumptions about what we know and understand of the world). The different types of knowledge are vast and varied, and depending on the situation can be implied, assumed, addressed, used or asserted differently. Therefore, our knowledge of the world influences how we understand and interpret different discourses (e.g. knowledge about refugees) (van Dijk, 2003).

Fairclough (1995a, 1995b, 2015) sees discourse as both constitutive and constituted. In other words, discourse both influences and is shaped by social structures, social practices, and power relations. Discourse contributes to the construction of social identities, social relations, and systems of shared knowledge, meaning and common assumptions. The analysis of discourse as a communicative event (e.g. a newspaper article) consists of three dimensions: the text (what is said/written), the discursive practice (the production and consumption of text), and social practice (the context in which text is produced/consumed) (Fairclough, 1995b, 1995a).

News media discourses

Both Fairclough and van Dijk were particularly interested in the analysis of media discourse as a site of knowledge production and social practice (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002). They see the news media as a powerful player in the control and dissemination of knowledge and information, particularly in the way it chooses to present and emphasise certain types of stories over others (Fairclough, 1995b, 2015; van Dijk, 2008). CDA considers news reports to be socially and culturally

constructed, rather than a neutral or objective representation of the facts (Caldas-Coulthard, 2003, p. 273). For example, how news headlines, lead paragraphs, use of photos and photo captions can “be used and abused to ‘define the situation’” (van Dijk, 2008, p. 23).

What is considered to be ‘newsworthy’ and therefore reported will always depend on who is interviewed and whose opinions and commentary is sought, what kinds of images are used, and how that information is recontextualised (van Dijk, 2008). As an example, Van Dijk (2008) argues that minorities, including refugees and those from developing countries, tend to be described in stereotypes and positioned as needing our help, understanding and support. This power to represent others, according to van Dijk, implies alternative voices, opinions and information about world events are excluded from the mainstream mass media, or at least less quoted than “white majority speakers” (van Dijk, 2008, p. 75).

In the media, words and images work together to mutually enhance the other. The relationship between text and image can be a very powerful one in the production of knowledge about refugees (Wright, 2002). When photographs of refugees are reproduced and recycled in the media they become “influential agents in the formation of narratives” (Mannik, 2012, p. 274). Accompanying captions and words can also place the photograph within a particular context, giving the photograph meaning (Berger & Dyer, 2013). Therefore, Wright (2002) argues that there is a need to analyse the relationship between text and image in media constructions of refugees.

Thus, the media does more than simply report the news. It is part of the “machinery of representation” (Klocker & Dunn, 2003, p. 74), which plays a central and powerful role in the dissemination of information, producing and reproducing particular narratives that influence the way we understand and see the world (Gale, 2004; Jacobs, 2011; Lynn & Lea, 2003; Sulaiman-Hill, Thompson, Afsar, & Hodliffe, 2011; van Dijk, 1997). The power of such discourse lies in its ability to be repeated, transformed, and reactivated (Ibrahim, 2005).

Therefore, CDA is an appropriate method to analyse news media representations of refugees (text and image). It enables the researcher to critically examine the “hidden power” of the media (Fairclough, 2015, p. 27) in the way the media constructs,

conveys and recontextualises 'expert' knowledge about refugees, and the different ways this knowledge could be perceived by wider society (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 2). Using CDA, this thesis aims to analyse online mainstream news articles and images about refugees in New Zealand, specifically in relation to debates surrounding raising the refugee quota and welcoming in more refugees due to the ongoing Syrian refugee crisis, in order to help address research questions one and two.

Approach to CDA

There is no one single, prescribed method or way of collecting and analysing data in CDA, and can involve various theoretical, methodological and interdisciplinary approaches, depending on what is relevant to the particular research being undertaken (Meyer, 2001; van Dijk, 2008; Weiss & Wodak, 2003). However, underpinning all CDA approaches are the concepts of power, history and ideology, stemming from the critical perspective that all knowledge is socially constructed (Teun A. van Dijk, 2008; R. Wodak, 2001). Furthermore, theory and method are intrinsically entwined in CDA, informed by the epistemological, ontological, and socio-political stance of the analyst (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002). The CDA approach utilised in this thesis is informed by a social constructionist epistemology and post-development and post-humanitarianism theoretical perspectives.

CDA includes analysis of both microstructures (local meanings) and macrostructures (global topics and themes), which may be expressed directly or indirectly throughout the whole discourse (Bell & Garrett, 1998). Microstructures, or local meanings, are words and images chosen to express values or opinions or facts, and are dependent on presupposed knowledge or value systems. The macrostructures, or global topics, represent the over-arching meaning of the discourse, and are most often expressed in headlines, and in opening/closing sentences or paragraphs (van Dijk, 2001). Macrostructures play an important role in knowledge production and provide a good overview of what a discourse is all about. Macrostructural analysis can also be applied to a larger selection of text, and therefore a good starting point for analysis (van Dijk, 2001).

The next level of analysis van Dijk suggests is looking at the microstructures or local meanings, such as word choice, image use, quotes, rhetorical devices, and propositions (statements that express a judgment or opinion). Both macro- and microstructures may be used strategically to infer meaning (meaning implied without being explicitly said; presumed to be known or true), enabling the author to influence the way an issue is understood by the general public (van Dijk, 1998). Analysing the macrostructures (global topics) and microstructures (local meanings) provides the socio-political-cultural-historical context to the discourse being studied (van Dijk, 2001). For example, news stories tend to express both local and global opinions situated within local/global political/social contexts, and may express or imply certain political positions or ideology (van Dijk, 1998).

Van Dijk (2001, p. 99) contends that “there is no such thing as a ‘complete’ discourse analysis”, as discursively analysing everything in a large selection of text would take too long. Instead, the researcher must decide which elements of the text are most relevant for the study at hand. Similarly, Fairclough (1995) suggests including other forms of analysis, such as content analysis, to broaden the analysis across a wider selection of texts, as language analysis tends to concentrate on a few selected texts. Therefore, rather than drilling down and micro-analysing a handful of media articles, I chose to combine both content and thematic analysis, alongside CDA, to analyse the macrostructures across a larger media sample. In addition, I analysed selected microstructures (propositions, quotes, rhetorical devices) to ascertain local meanings (see ‘Data analysis’ section below for more detail). This method enabled me to gain a better insight into the major themes implied directly and indirectly, with regards to the wider sociocultural contexts of NZ’s response to refugees and the refugee crisis in order to answer research questions 1 and 2.

In-depth, semi-structured interviews

In addition to CDA, I used in-depth, semi-structured interviews to address the second aim under research question 1 (what refugee advocates and communications specialists think about refugee representation) and research question 3 (how people from refugee backgrounds in NZ contest and experience refugee representation). As discussed in the previous Chapter, uneven power

relations play an important role in the production of refugee discourses and representation. Therefore, it is important to include the voices of those being represented, and why I wanted to give people from refugee backgrounds in NZ a voice in this research. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews are useful for drawing “out rich descriptions of lived experience[s]” (O’Leary, 2014, p. 139), which can allow interviewees to talk freely about their experiences and how they feel without being constrained by too many questions. Semi-structured interviews give both researcher and participant the flexibility to pursue other areas of interest or importance to them during the interview process. Rubin and Rubin (2005) describe qualitative interviews as extended discussions or conversations that are gently directed by the researcher, allowing the conversation to naturally flow and perhaps even go in unexpected directions, thereby potentially producing different kinds of knowledge and meaning in relation to the research project (see also Brinkmann, 2013; Hesse-Biber, 2017; O’Leary, 2014). Therefore, it is important to be flexible and to tailor-make each interview if and when appropriate, or use interview topics rather than set questions to help prompt the conversation (Mason, 2018).

The interviews conducted for this research all started with particular questions about media representation, but then changed questions and/or direction depending on the person, situation, and topic of conversation during the interview. Brinkman (2003) contends that interviews should be flexible enough to enable participants to insert their own questions, concerns, or stories, even if it deviates away from the researcher’s agenda. For example, during a couple of my interviews with former refugees, participants decided to take the interview in a different direction, telling me stories that they wanted to tell. In these cases, I let the interview run acknowledging the agency of participants and their desire to tell their story the way they wanted to. While not necessarily answering particular questions, these stories told me a lot about what was important for these participants in this given situation, thus generating interesting and unexpected data (O’Leary, 2014). As Rubin and Rubin (2005) explain, qualitative interviewing as conversation is not just about gathering data, but also building a relationship between researcher and participant. Of course, the interview process may also be determined by how much and what kind of information a person is willing to share, and therefore may affect the kind of data the researcher can collect (Stewart-Withers et al 2014).

Limitations

It is important to acknowledge and address the criticisms directed at the qualitative methods selected for this study. Qualitative research is often criticised for not being rigorous enough, and of being biased or selective with data (Maxwell, 2013; Stewart-Withers et al., 2014). Participants may only share information that they think the interviewer wants to hear. Similarly, the researcher may ignore data that does not fit into a particular interpretation, theory or preconception. In this research, I acknowledge that the voices of the participants can only convey their own personal experiences, and therefore cannot speak to the experiences of all advocates, communication specialists and former refugees in NZ. Likewise, the media analysis is situated within a particular time in history, covering a particular event (the 2015 refugee crisis). A different period of time or selection of articles could produce different results. However, as Maxwell (2013, p. 122) points out, qualitative researchers are not required to attain “some ultimate truth” for the research to be considered trustworthy, reliable or credible (see also Stewart-Withers et al, 2014).

From a social constructionist perspective, all knowledge is socially/historically/culturally specific and contestable, therefore it is inappropriate to judge the reliability of qualitative research based on positivist, empiricist perspectives (Burr, 2015). As O’Leary (2014) argues, the strength of qualitative research is in its ability to deepen our understanding of social issues in a particular context and inform wider knowledge and theory. Therefore, the themes that emerged through both the media findings and interviews with participants provide “rich learning” and insights into refugee (self)representation and responses to the refugee crisis in NZ that can be applied or transferred to other contexts within development studies (O’Leary, 2014, p. 61).

The eclectic nature of CDA is also criticised for lack of rigour in research, in terms of researcher bias and ideological interpretation (social, political and cultural). The positionality of the researcher and choice of theoretical framework and methodology can influence the analysis of discourses, thus prejudicing the sample (Meyer, 2001; Wodak, 2001). If all knowledge is socially constructed and bound by unequal power dynamics, then the researcher in analysing and interpreting discourse is equally complicit in the production of discourse (Burr, 2015). Hence,

researchers are accused of ‘cherry picking’ examples that best fit the researcher’s assumptions or preconceived notions (Wodak & Meyer, 2009, p. 11). However, Weiss and Wodak (2003, pp. 8–10) argue that the eclectic interdisciplinary nature of CDA can be a strength, helping us to understand the world around us, and create new innovative approaches to discourse analysis that draw on a variety of theoretical and methodological frameworks. Fairclough also argues that researchers who conduct CDA are always upfront about their positionality in the collection and analysis of data (Meyer, 2001).

To strengthen the credibility and rigour of this study, I sought to triangulate my research using a variety of methods and data sources, conducting several iterations of analysis, and seeking feedback from interview participants (during interviews and afterwards via transcription) (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). For example, I discussed with interview participants some of the themes that emerged from the CDA, especially around refugee representation and the notion of solidarity with refugees. These discussions helped inform my analysis of the media articles and led me to new emerging themes. I also remained reflexive and responsive to issues of representation and bias throughout the research process (Stewart-Withers et al., 2014).

Data collection and analysis

Fieldwork was carried out in New Zealand, in the refugee resettlement centres of Auckland and Wellington. These cities were chosen due to their large contingent of refugee background communities, and active refugee organisations within those communities. Contact was made with ChangeMakers Refugee Forum in Wellington, Auckland Resettlement Community Coalition, Red Cross Refugee Services in Wellington, and with several individuals from refugee backgrounds in both Wellington and Auckland. I also made contact with refugee advocates and communications specialists who were either involved in the campaign to raise NZ’s refugee quota, or who work with refugee background communities. I conducted 26 face-to-face, in-depth, semi-structured interviews. The CDA component of this research examined online news articles from the New Zealand Herald and Stuff

websites during September 2015 (see Table 2 for a breakdown of data collection methods).

Table 2: Data Collection Methods

Method	Data Sources
Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)	76 articles from nzherald.co.nz (n30) and stuff.co.nz (n46), September 2015. Includes editorials, opinion pieces, and news articles.
In-depth, semi-structured interviews	26 face-to-face interviews (one via Skype, one with two participants together) 4 refugee advocates 3 communications specialists 18 people from refugee backgrounds 1 person from ChangeMakers Refugee Forum (former CEO)

Media articles

The media analysis draws on 76 articles from the mainstream news websites nzherald.co.nz (the website of The New Zealand Herald NZH) and stuff.co.nz (covering all Fairfax publications in NZ - Stuff) during the month of September 2015, which coincided with the public reaction to the photo of drowned toddler Alan Kurdi (see Appendix 1). I initially started looking at all media coverage (newspaper, radio, TV) of the campaign to raise the refugee quota for the whole of 2015 until June 2016, when the former National government announced an increase in the quota from 750 to 1000 places. As this was proving to be quite a big task, I narrowed my search to the mainstream newspaper organisations NZH, Stuff and Otago Daily Times (ODT)¹⁷. I also chose the NZH and Stuff because of their high readership statistics.¹⁸ Using the

¹⁷ NZH and Stuff represent the two major mainstream newspaper organisations that cover most of NZ, except Dunedin. The ODT is an independent newspaper based in Dunedin, but with links to the NZH.

¹⁸ The June 2018 online readership statistics (average daily unique browsers): stuff.co.nz – 1,451,215; nzherald.co.nz – 1,020,612. Three-month average, May-July 2018: stuff.co.nz – 2.1 million audience; nzherald.co.nz – 1.7 million audience (Nielsen, 2018).

search engine Google News, and also the search engines within the NZH, Stuff and ODT websites, I searched for the terms 'Syrian refugees NZ', 'refugee crisis NZ', 'double the quota', and 'refugee quota NZ' within the time period 2015-June 2016. This time period gathered 65 articles in the NZH, 139 articles in Stuff, and 59 articles in the ODT.

As a way of making the CDA manageable, I decided to focus on September 2015, directly after the photo of Alan Kurdi made headlines around the world (2 September, 2015). There were also a greater concentration of articles in Stuff and the NZH at this time on Alan Kurdi and NZ's response to the refugee crisis. I decided to drop the ODT as there were not many articles published in the ODT during September 2015 in relation to Alan Kurdi or raising the quota. The majority of the ODT articles in my initial search concentrated on the decision to make Dunedin a new refugee resettlement city and the arrival of the first Syrian refugees to Dunedin. I felt that this was a separate subject matter and would make a good analysis for another research project. It would also warrant a separate discourse analysis, and a separate research question, which is outside the scope of this research.

This decision to narrow my focus not only helped to manage the discourse analysis, it also represented an interesting snapshot in time (i.e. reaction to Alan Kurdi's photo and the refugee crisis, and the debate in NZ about raising the refugee quota). Although not specifically classed as a case study per se, the reaction to Alan Kurdi's photo can be described as "a particular instance" (O'Leary, 2014, p. 194) or a detailed study of an episode or event that is "bounded by time and space" (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 96), or influenced by media focus on a contemporary event (Yin, 2014).

I then went through the NZH and Stuff articles collected and sorted out any articles not directly related to NZ's response to the refugee crisis and the campaign to raise the refugee quota. This left 30 NZH and 46 Stuff articles. This set of media articles contained a number of editorials, opinion pieces and news stories. Table 3 gives a breakdown of the number of NZH and Stuff articles:

Table 3: Breakdown of Media Coverage

	NZH	Stuff
Editorial	2	4
Opinion	12	10
News	16	32
TOTAL	30	46

Editorials represent the voice of the newspaper, while opinion pieces are the perspective of the person(s) who have written it (Van Dijk, 1998). The opinion pieces here included a variety of views from different people – church leader (1), Labour politician (1), NGO (1), historian and former refugee (1), academics (2), members of the public (2), refugee advocates (2), columnists (6) and journalists (6). The news articles (written by journalists) contained a number of interviews and opinions from people and organisations who were commenting on NZ's response to the refugee crisis. Although the media articles analysed here were written by a variety of people, two journalists wrote several news articles and opinion pieces during this period. They are Claire Trevett (political journalist for the NZH – authored 6 articles) and Andrea Vance (political journalist for Stuff – authored 5 articles). Efforts have been made to separate and identify the various different pieces written by these two journalists in order to avoid any confusion.

Research participants

As shown in Table 2, I conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 4 people who were involved in the campaign to raise the quota from an advocacy perspective, 3 people who work with former refugees in a communications role (journalists and communications specialists), 18 people from refugee backgrounds (of which one is the general manager of grassroots NGO Auckland Resettled Community Coalition, and also a strong advocate for former refugees in NZ), and one person who was the CEO of ChangeMakers Refugee Forum (at time of interview) and also a strong advocate for refugee issues. All interviews were conducted face-to-face (one via

Skype, one with two participants interviewed together), and ranged from 1-1/2 hours long, with the longest lasting 1hr45min (see Appendix 2 and 3 for interview schedules).

Research participants from refugee backgrounds were initially selected based on my observation of their involvement with the New Zealand media, either as people who have been interviewed by journalists about their refugee experience, or as a member of a refugee background organisation that actively engages with the mainstream and/or alternative media. Contact with potential refugee background participants was initially made through established contacts and people I met at refugee resettlement related events. I also used snowball sampling to recruit further participants in order to widen the selection of refugee background participants and opinions/experiences.¹⁹ Refugee background participants were a mix of ages (17-50s), gender, ethnicities and time spent in NZ (from 2-10 years). They were all NZ citizens or permanent residents. Most participants, bar four, had resettled in NZ through the refugee resettlement programme. One had moved to NZ from America (they had resettled in the USA and then became a US citizen). One had successfully applied for asylum in NZ. Two others had arrived in NZ under the family refugee reunification programme. The aim of these interviews was to find out how people from refugee backgrounds felt about the representation of their stories and of refugee issues in the media, how they felt about the 'refugee' label, and how they choose to identify inside or outside that label (research question 3).

For the refugee advocacy and communications interviews, I spoke to Murdoch Stephens, the spokesperson for Doing Our Bit (grassroots campaign to double NZ's refugee quota); a spokesperson from Action Station (an independent, crowdfunded, community campaigning organisation); a spokesperson from a Human Rights Non-government Organisation (HRNGO) based in NZ who campaigns on refugee related issues; columnist and refugee advocate Tracey Barnett; and the New Zealand Red Cross (NZRC) communications manager. To give some background information, Murdoch, Action Station, and the Human Rights NGO worked together on the double

¹⁹ Snowball sampling involves recruiting further participants through referrals from other research participants. Although a good way to access hard to reach populations, snowball sampling can result in a lack of representativeness (O'Leary, 2014, p. 190).

the quota campaign. Murdoch and Tracey also wrote opinion pieces for Stuff and NZH on why NZ should raise its quota. The NZRC supported the raising of the quota but were very politically neutral, and acted as gatekeepers for media access to former refugees for news stories.²⁰

I also interviewed Kristin from Access Radio and Lynda from Radio NZ, who were not part of the communications/advocacy campaign to raise the refugee quota, but do work with former refugees in their jobs. Kristin is the station manager at Access Radio in Wellington, a community radio station that provides an alternative media platform for former refugees and other community groups to produce their own radio shows. Lynda Chanwai-Earle is a Radio NZ journalist who produces and presents 'Voices', a programme which highlights the voices and stories of ethnic communities in NZ, including former refugee communities. The purpose of the interviews with refugee advocates and communications specialists was to ascertain what they thought about refugee representation from an advocacy/communications perspective (second aim under research question 1), and what they thought about the campaign to raise NZ's refugee quota (research question 2).

Data analysis

Qualitative research is not a fixed linear process, but rather an iterative and circular process that allows the researcher to move back and forth between data collection and analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Mason, 2018). Miles et al. (2014) strongly advise combining data collection with analysis, as it helps the researcher to reflect on existing data and what needs to be done to fill the gaps. My approach to data analysis was a reflexive, iterative and ongoing process that enabled me to highlight emerging themes and findings, and provide direction for further data collection (Grbich, 2011; O'Leary, 2014; Stewart-Withers et al., 2014).

Data collected through the media analysis and transcription of interviews involved a process of reflective thematic analysis grounded in the conceptual and methodological frameworks of this thesis, and informed by the literature review

²⁰ The NZRC is the primary provider for the official NZ government refugee resettlement programme.

(see Chapters 2-4). My analysis looked for relevant themes, patterns, and interconnections in order to create “meaningful understanding” around the research questions and aims (O’Leary, 2014, p. 304; see also Braun & Clark), in particular the relationship between discourses of solidarity and welcome, the representation of refugees in New Zealand media, and the different ways in which people from refugee backgrounds choose to contest and/or transform these discourses.

Following Braun and Clark (2013, pp. 202-203), the data was analysed using a systematic and iterative approach to analysis that included both manual and digital process (NVivo), and involved familiarisation of the data through field notes, transcription, reading and note-taking; several rounds of coding; searching for themes, then reviewing, defining and (re)naming themes; and writing up findings as part of the final analysis.

Field journals, transcribing and writing memos can be useful places to start the analysis and identify emerging themes and patterns, helping the researcher to facilitate, capture and stimulate analytic thinking while continuing to collect data (Maxwell, 2013; Stewart-Withers et al., 2014). Immediately after interviews, I made notes in my fieldwork journal observing what struck me as an interesting point or recurring issue. These notes and observations formed an initial stage of my interview analysis, where I started to develop preliminary ideas about emerging themes (Maxwell, 2013; Stewart-Withers et al., 2014). All interviews were transcribed verbatim (minus non-verbal utterances) to familiarise myself with the data (see Bazeley & Jackson, 2013; Braun & Clarke, 2013), and to ensure I did not miss any significant information (Maxwell, 2013). Once complete, I printed out the transcriptions and manually went through them with a highlighter and pen, noting interesting quotes and themes that aligned with my research questions and aims.

For the media analysis, I used thematic analysis to code the macro themes and then employed CDA to critically analyse these themes, including the use of microstructures, such as headlines, photos and photo captions, word choice, quotes, rhetorical devices, and propositions (statements that express a judgment or opinion). Informed by my research questions and the literature, I was interested in who was speaking and how refugee were represented. Braun and Clark (2013, p.

218) suggest first coding broadly across the data to highlight the macro emerging themes (the macrostructures), “followed by selective coding to extract excerpts of interest” (the microstructures). After coding for themes, I went back into the data to code for sub-themes that illustrate the properties of CDA, e.g. who is talking, what is being said, how is it being said, etc. (refer back to the section on ‘critical discourse analysis’ earlier in this chapter).

I also used content analysis to delineate and distinguish between editorial, opinion pieces, and straight news stories, to breakdown who was speaking/ interviewed/ quoted, and to calculate what kinds of photos were used (see Chapter 6). According to Grbich (2011, p. 112), content analysis provides a useful “numerical overview” and, combined with thematic analysis, “adds depth of explanation as to why and how words have been used in particular ways and what the major discourses are”. Quantifying some data can also help to clarify and support qualitative findings (Maxwell, 2013).

For both the interview transcripts and media articles, the first iteration of analysis consisted of manually searching for themes using a highlighter and pen (preliminary data analysis). I then uploaded the media articles and interviews into NVivo, coding the initial preliminary themes and any others that were found in the second round of analysis. Using a data analysis software programme, such as NVivo, can help to manage, sort, code, visualise and link large amounts of qualitative data in one place, making the analysis of data more efficient (Creswell & Poth, 2018). However, NVivo is but one tool among many that helps support the analysis of qualitative data, and is not meant to supplant all forms of data analysis (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). I used NVivo as a way to collate and manage my data set, including attaching memos and annotations to the coded data. It also enabled me to run queries about my data in order to visualise and make sense of the information I was collating, which in turn helped me to answer my research questions. For example, I ran a word frequency query on the words ‘migrant’ and ‘refugee’, as I was curious to know which term was used most often to describe refugees in the media articles I was analysing. This query helped me analyse the data on refugee representation, and in turn feed into research question 1 on refugee representation in the NZ mainstream media (see Chapter 6).

Although good qualitative analysis requires the researcher to demonstrate a degree of flexibility, openness, creativity and fluidity in order to create “meaningful understanding” around the data, O’Leary (2014, p. 304) strongly advises researchers to balance and manage creativity with rigour. In other words, be innovative and imaginative but also logical, methodical and deliberate with the analysis of data. Conducting several iterations of analysis and reflection reinforced the credibility and trustworthiness of this research by “showing that the analysis has been carried out systematically and that the interpretation has been soundly argued” (Burr, 2015, p. 178).

Reflexivity in research: Positionality and ethics

According to Long (1992a), it is vital that the researcher understands the different ways in which knowledge is negotiated and created, and the power dynamics involved in this process. In this regard, the researcher needs to also consider their own role in the construction and interpretation of knowledge, and the power relations at play between researcher and participant (Stewart-Withers et al., 2014). Ethical research requires “reflexive awareness of our worldviews” throughout the research process (O’Leary, 2014, p. 50). Therefore, it is important to acknowledge one’s own position (including gender, religion, class, sexual orientation, age, race or ethnicity), and how our experiences, values, assumptions and socio-cultural background influences and shapes our collection and interpretation of the data (Burr, 2015; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Hesse-Biber, 2017; Stewart-Withers et al., 2014). Braun & Clarke (2013, pp. 36-37) contend that personal reflexivity acts as a form of “quality control”. Mosselson (2010, p. 493) suggest researchers use reflexivity as an “ethical tool” to critically reflect on their positionality and, in the case of this research, the power dynamics and ethical tensions involved in doing research with people from refugee backgrounds.

My positionality in this research is informed by my theoretical framework of post-development and post-humanitarianism, with an emphasis on critiquing Western representations of ‘others’ in the humanitarian space. Following post-development and postcolonial critiques on the nature of ‘doing’ development in the Global South (Stewart-Withers et al., 2014), ethical concerns about going to a developing country

to conduct research “on other people” has increased (Unwin, 2006, p. 105). This ethical critique influenced my decision to conduct research at home in NZ. I questioned what place or right I had as a middle-class, white/Pākehā New Zealander to go to another country and ‘do’ research on others. NZ is my home country and I felt I could contribute to research here on a more ethical footing.

Unwin (2006, p. 106) outlines several moral and practical advantages to undertaking research ‘at home’: the insider knowledge that one has of their own society and culture; the benefits of working in one’s own language; the potential practical value to one’s own society; the opportunity to gain more, richer data by being able to go back to participants more than once over a longer period of time. However, researching within one’s own society can have its own set of ethical issues, depending on the nature of the research conducted and with whom. For example, researching marginalised or different ethnic communities within one’s own society when the researcher is not from those communities can produce unequal power dynamics and cross-cultural issues. To overcome any potential ethical dilemmas, it is important for the researcher to critically reflect on their own positionality and chosen research field, and how the knowledge that is produced will be used (Unwin, 2006).

My media background and experience working as a photojournalist for over a decade also informs my positionality, and influenced my decision to focus on media and how I analysed the data. In this regard, I could be considered an ‘insider’ researcher, in that I am familiar with this environment and participant’s situation (Hesse-Biber, 2017). I was very comfortable interviewing those from a communications background, as I felt we were on an equal footing as media people. I also felt very comfortable interviewing those involved in refugee advocacy, as they were also white/Pākehā New Zealanders, just like me. Being an ‘insider’ researcher can bring advantages, such as greater access and understanding, but also disadvantages, including accusations of bias and subjectivity (Toy-Cronin, 2018).

However, when it came to interviewing the people from refugee backgrounds, I was acutely aware of my position as an ‘outsider’ researcher (Hesse-Biber, 2017), and the potential power imbalance between myself and research participants, and the fact that these were not my stories or experiences. We may be all NZ

citizens/residents, but I come from the dominant ethnic group in NZ society. I am a middle class, Pākehā/white New Zealand woman who has never experienced what it is like to be a refugee, to leave everything you know and love behind, and start your life over again in a foreign country not of your choosing. Therefore, what right did I have to represent the stories of the refugee background people or speak on their behalf? This ethical dilemma became a source of great tension for me considering my chosen theoretical framework and perspective on refugee representation. However, as Burr (2015) and Chacko (2004) argue, the very act of acknowledging one's positionality and the power dynamics involved in representing the voices of others can create space for a discussion about power and knowledge production. It is these considerations that has "set the tone" (Chacko, 2004, p. 52) and informed my approach to this research and analysis of the data, as the rest of this chapter discusses.

Representing former refugee voices

Mason (2018) stresses the important role ethics and reflexivity play in the process of analysing, interpreting and presenting the voices of participants. Burr (2015, p. 176) asks if a researcher, no matter how well intentioned, ever has the right to speak on behalf of others, and interpret and analyse their experiences. As a qualitative researcher, I cannot avoid the fact that I will be analysing and interpreting the stories and opinions of my participants through a particular theoretical lens, which could potentially transform the original meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2013). I also felt a great weight of responsibility to ensure I do justice to their experiences, thoughts and opinions.

The aim of this research is to highlight the voices of former refugees and their personal stories and experiences of refuge and resettlement, but I worried I may end up framing them as the 'other'. I am interviewing them based on the fact they are from a refugee background, and I am speaking on their behalf through my analysis, interpretation, writing and presenting of their stories. This is the very issue I criticise in this thesis, and the very reason for choosing my theoretical framework on power dynamics and representation. Thus, by using the terms 'former refugee' and 'people from refugee backgrounds', am I in effect reproducing or re-positioning

them as 'other' (Mosselson, 2010), or treating them as "objects of research" (Pittaway, Bartolomei, & Hugman, 2010, p. 236)?

Cupples and Kindon (2014) suggest one way of checking for potential unethical representation is to write with your participants in mind. They challenge the researcher to consider whether they would feel comfortable with their participants reading their research. In addition, Pittaway et al (2010) argue that researchers need to ask themselves what value, if any, they are adding to participant's lives through their research. Participants must feel that they have ownership of their life stories and are able to control how their stories are used and passed on (Pittaway et al, 2010).

Reflecting back, the former refugees I approached to be interviewed for this research were agentic in the process, in terms of what message they wanted to get across and how they wished to be perceived. For example, as part of the interview process I initially wanted to use Photovoice²¹ alongside my interviews with the former refugee participants. While everyone I asked said that it sounded like an interesting exercise, most declined because they either did not have the time or they simply did not want to do it. Other contacts that I made in the early stages of my PhD had initially expressed interest in my research and verbally agreed to be interviewed. However, when it came to setting up an interview time they did not return my emails or messages. After several unsuccessful attempts to get in contact, I assumed that this was their way of declining the invitation to be involved in my research (Banks & Scheyvens, 2014).

Another example of refugee background participants using their agency is the editing of interview transcripts. I gave all participants a copy of their full transcript and the opportunity to omit or change anything they had said. One participant completely edited her transcript, as she did not like the way she came across when she read it over. Her editing did not change the essence of what she had initially said, but she wanted to make sure she came across as eloquently as possible. Another

²¹ Photovoice is a collaborative and participatory research method that encourages participants to take control in the process of recording their own experiences, realities, identities and worldviews through photography, thus challenging assumptions and stereotypical representations (Wang & Burris, 1997).

participant got all dressed up for our interview in her finest African outfit, including jewellery and makeup, as she thought I was going to be taking photos of her during the interview (this misunderstanding was probably due to my less than comprehensive explanation of the Photovoice method). Because I did not have my photography gear with me at the time, I rearranged to come back and take her photograph. The second time she was just as dressed up and we worked together in her garden to photograph her the way she wanted, including with her cat. These are a few examples of how my research participants exercised agency within the interview process.

The ethics of consent, confidentiality and vulnerability

A researcher has moral and ethical obligations towards his or her interview participants, which includes being honest and transparent about the details of the research project, and prioritising the interests and wellbeing of the participants at all times (Banks & Scheyvens, 2014; O'Leary, 2014). This includes thinking ahead about the kind of ethical issues that may arise during interviews, such as the interview style and the framing of questions, and how the researcher will keep participant information confident (Banks & Scheyvens, 2014; Mason, 2018; O'Leary, 2014). Creswell and Poth (2018, p. 151) outline three principles that should guide ethical research: respect for participants (privacy and consent); concern for their welfare (minimise harm); and issues of justice (equality and inclusivity). In addition, Pittaway et al. (2010, pp. 231–232) identify some key ethical concerns in regards to research with refugees, including unequal power relations between researcher and participants, and issues of consent, confidentiality, trust, and harm. As O'Leary (2014) states, ethics should always take precedence over the researcher's preferences for collecting data.

An internal ethics process, required by Massey University's Institute of Development Studies, was undertaken with my research supervisory team. After this initial consultation, I applied and was approved for a Low Risk Notification. However, after further discussion about my research during my confirmation procedure, it was suggested that I should apply for full ethics through the Massey University Ethics Committee (MUHEC), because I was interviewing people from

refugee backgrounds who could potentially be considered vulnerable. The full ethics application process is a comprehensive rigorous process that allows researchers to systematically identify any potential risks and harm for both researcher and participants (Banks & Scheyvens, 2014). This research fully adhered to MUHEC's 'Code of ethical conduct for research, teaching and evaluations involving human participants' (Massey University, 2015).

Informed consent

Mason (2018) discusses the importance of informed consent and making sure participants fully understand what they are consenting to in terms of time commitment, topics that will be covered or questions that will be asked, their rights, and the potential emotional risks that may be involved. In previous studies on refugees (Hugman, Pittaway, & Bartolomei, 2011; Pittaway et al., 2010), researchers discovered that the meaning of 'informed consent' for refugees could be understood in quite a different way from the researcher, depending on their knowledge and cultural understanding of what consent means and their rights in the research process. Participants also need to be fully aware of the implications that can arise from sharing their stories with researchers, in terms of future publications. For example, Pittaway et al. (2010) discuss the shock expressed by refugees resettled in Australia when they found out their stories and images that had been collected in the refugee camp with their consent, were widely published in the public domain. Informed consent can also be subject to change if participants have reservations or change their mind down the track. Therefore, it is important to double check informed consent throughout the research process, not just at the beginning of an interview or as a one-off agreement, to make sure the participant is still happy to continue (Mason, 2018). The researcher also needs to allow for flexibility during the research process and address participant's concerns (Hesse-Biber, 2017).

For this research, all interview participants were first provided with a letter of invitation asking them to participate in this research (see Appendix 4). If they consented to be interviewed, they were then given an information sheet outlining the nature of the research and what their participation involved (see Appendix 5 and 6). At the beginning of each interview, I had a discussion about the information

sheet and my research with participants, and answered any questions they had about the process. I also asked permission to record the interviews. Written consent was sought at the start of the interview, and again via email when I sent full transcripts through for approval and/or amendment (see Appendix 7 and 8). This was done in order to double check participants were still happy for their information to be used in the final thesis and any future publications. Maxwell (2013, p. 126) contends it is important to solicit feedback and receive what he calls “respondent validation” from your participants, in order to identify potential misinterpretations or misunderstandings of what was discussed and observed in the interview.

Confidentiality

Because this research involves participants from refugee backgrounds who may divulge sensitive information about their experiences, it is important that every participant is fully aware of their rights throughout the research process, and how their information will be used. Ethical research practices include requirements for confidentiality and anonymity. However, although anonymity can protect participants, it can also obscure their voice, which might contradict the aims of the research (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Braun and Clark suggest a balance needs to be found between protecting participants’ identity and giving them the choice to be named, if it is appropriate to do so. As Banks and Scheyven’s (2014) point out, not all participants want to remain anonymous, and should be given the option to disclose their identities if they want to. All participants in this research were given the option of using a pseudonym or using their first names. In some cases, anonymity could not be offered or guaranteed (e.g. refugee advocates and communications specialists who are in the public eye). These participants gave consent for their names to be used, and confidentiality was ensured where necessary. For those who did not wish to be identified, a pseudonym has been used and all effort has been made to exclude any identifying details, including storing data in a private and confidential manner, and password protected.

Vulnerability

As van den Hoonaard (2018, p. 305) points out, the concept of vulnerability does not necessarily correspond “to the lived experience of most research participants deemed vulnerable by ethics committees”. Van den Hoonaard further argues that instead of assuming vulnerability of certain groups, researchers and ethics committees should reflect on whether people will be made vulnerable through their participation in the research. The participants from refugee backgrounds I interviewed did not see themselves as being ‘vulnerable’. They were New Zealand citizens with strong opinions about refugee representation and were keen to share their experiences and stories. I approached these participants because of their public presence in the media and/or their advocacy work with refugee background grassroots organisations. Mackenzie et al. (2007) contend that researchers need to respect the agency, resilience and capacity of refugee participants, while at the same time acknowledge the potential ongoing effects of trauma and displacement without descending into paternalism. This is not to ignore the concerns of ethics committees altogether, but rather to carefully ascertain what is meant by ‘vulnerability’ and who constitutes as ‘vulnerable’, and seek to mitigate/reflect on the potential harms and risks associated with the research itself (van den Hoonaard, 2018).

Reciprocity

It is important for the researcher to consider how they can give back to those who have given their time to be interviewed, or have helped you in the research process (Banks & Scheyvens, 2014). Mackenzie, McDowell, & Pittaway (2007) argue that while it is difficult to promise the research will deliver direct benefits to participants, it is unethical for researchers to simply document the stories of refugees without offering some form of reciprocity. For this research, participants received a small koha/donation (\$20 supermarket or petrol voucher) as a sign of appreciation and to thank them for their time and participation. I also offered my skills as a photographer to give back in some small practical way to the communities who had helped me with my research. For example, I photographed community events for ChangeMakers Refugee Forum, and as noted above, I photographed one participant who had dressed up for our interview on the expectation of being photographed. I will also feed back research findings by preparing an executive

summary of my thesis for all participants and organisations that were involved in my research.

Summary

This thesis employed a qualitative methodology, grounded in social constructionism, to explore and analyse the relationship between discourses of solidarity and the representation of refugees in New Zealand media, and the various ways in which people from refugee backgrounds experience and negotiate these discourses. Using CDA enabled me to critically examine how the New Zealand media constructs, produces and reproduces knowledge about refugees, especially in relation to discourses of solidarity and welcome, and how these discourses compare to the literature on refugee representation. Data collected from in-depth interviews helped to create understanding around how people from refugee backgrounds choose to engage with discourses about refugees in the media, and how they construct spaces for their own identity within and outside these representations. The data analysis is informed by post-development, post-humanitarianism, and actor-oriented perspectives on relations of power, knowledge and human agency, and the social construction of reality. Throughout the research process, Massey University ethical guidelines were strictly adhered to in order to provide a safe space for participants to share their experiences of resettlement in New Zealand.

The next chapter is the first of three chapters that describe my key research findings from my media analysis and participant interviews. Chapter 6 addresses the first research question on refugee representation in the NZ mainstream media, and explores the themes that emerged from the interviews with refugee advocates and communications specialists on what they thought about refugee representation.

Chapter 6: Refugee representation in the New Zealand media

The first of three findings chapters, this chapter explores how refugees were represented in the Stuff and New Zealand Herald articles selected for this study, which predominantly focused on the campaign to raise the refugee quota, thus addressing research question 1. The chapter examines the visual and textual representations of refugees within this media sample, firstly exploring representations of refugees in the European refugee crisis, and then the way in which former refugees who have been resettled in NZ are represented, as reported in the Stuff and NZH articles selected for this research. I then examine whose voices are present in the media analysed, including whose opinions are sought and how often former refugee voices are included in the discussion. The second half of this chapter delves into my interviews with refugee advocates and communication specialists the ways in which they present the stories of former refugees, and the messages they communicated to the NZ public.

Refugee Representation

This section discusses the representation of refugees in the media articles selected for this research, and what role these representations play in the moral argument put forth by the media, as described in the previous chapter. What kind of language, terminology, metaphors and photos are used to describe refugees? As this section demonstrates, there was a difference between how refugees overseas were represented (i.e.: refugees in the European refugee crisis) and former refugees who had resettled in New Zealand, both of which have significant implications for how refugees are perceived and received here in NZ.

However, before exploring these representations, it is important to decipher the terminology used in the media to describe refugees. As Table 4 shows, in the articles analysed for this research, the terms 'migrant' and 'refugee' were used interchangeably at times, but the term 'refugee' was used by far the most. Running

a word frequency query in NVivo brought up the total number of times both terms were used throughout the NZH and Stuff articles, including the body of the text and photo captions.

Table 4: Migrant vs Refugee

	Migrant	Refugee
NZH (n30)	25	479
Stuff (n46)	111	1497
TOTAL	136	1976

These figures were interesting for two reasons. Firstly, the word ‘migrant’ is often used to neutralise or delegitimise the claims of refugees, i.e.: these people are not ‘genuine’ refugees but economic migrants seeking a better life (Devetak, 2004; Gale, 2004; Pugh, 2004). During the height of the refugee crisis in 2015, there was some discussion and controversy in media circles about the correct terminology to use (see Malone, 2015; Marsh, 2015; McKernan, 2015; Ruz, 2015; Sengupta, 2015; Taylor, 2015). However, in my NZ media sample, this was not the case. The term ‘migrant’ was used, but more in a descriptive or neutral fashion (see section on *Photo and photo captions*). Overwhelmingly, the word ‘refugee’ was used to describe the people fleeing Syria and across the Mediterranean. This is most likely because the media argument was based on a strong ethical and moral argument for responding to the refugee crisis – these people are victims of war and deserve our help, as will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 7. The representation of refugees in the refugee crisis is explored below.

Refugees overseas (the European/Syrian refugee crisis)

The framing of the refugees in Europe during the European/Syrian refugee crisis is linked to an ethical argument used by the media in my analysis for helping refugees (this will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter). Even though some articles referred to the global refugee crisis, and spoke about refugees in the general sense, most media commentators were talking about Syrian refugees and the ‘Syrian

refugee crisis'. This conversation was sparked by the photo of drowned toddler Alan Kurdi and, according to this editorial from the NZH, "*encapsulated the reality and the tragedy of the world's worst humanitarian crisis since World War II*" ('Crisis is tragic, and we have a duty to help', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 4, 2015).

For media commentators across the Stuff and NZH articles analysed, the photo of Alan Kurdi became "*a wrenching symbol of an unfolding calamity*" (Editorial, '*In present crisis, New Zealand could afford to do more*', stuff.co.nz, Sep 7, 2015) that "*epitomise[d] the crisis engulfing Europe as a tide of humanity flees the horrors in the Middle East.*" (Kurt Bayer, '*John Key on refugee crisis: We're not ruling out doing more*', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015). This one photo highlighted the tragedy and desperation of the refugee crisis, and in turn framed and contextualised the media's argument for raising the quota, with commentators using terrible descriptions of the refugee crisis, such as 'wrenching', 'calamity' and 'engulfing', to make their point.

Journalist and commentator Rachel Smalley described the "*horrendous*" images coming across our screens of the refugee crisis: "*Dead Syrian children washing up on European beaches. Distraught mothers holding their babies and looking through razor wire. People dying suffocating in trucks trying to flee their desperate and dead-end situations*" ('*John Key has got it wrong on refugees – doing nothing is not an option*', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 4, 2015). Descriptive words such as desperate, distraught and horrendous paint a picture of a truly awful situation that, as the headline implies, NZ simply cannot ignore. In a similar fashion, the opening paragraph in this editorial from The Press leaves no doubt as to their position on the refugee crisis:

"The plight of thousands fleeing Libya, Syria and other war-torn places is harrowing. The number who have drowned as they have taken to rickety, unseaworthy craft in desperate attempts to get away from Libya and reach Sicily and Italy is now in the thousands. Many more have perished making a similar trip to try and escape the hideous strife that is tearing Syria apart." ('*In present crisis, New Zealand could afford to take more refugees*', stuff.co.nz, Sep 7, 2015).

It is clear from these examples media commentators felt that the refugee crisis was a terrible situation that NZ could not ignore, and the portrayal of refugees is closely linked to these depictions of the refugee crisis. The refugee crisis is a 'tragic', 'harrowing', 'hideous', 'horrendous', and 'desperate' situation for those people

caught up in the ‘unfolding calamity’. Refugees in general, but particularly Syrians, were clearly cast as victims of the refugee crisis – vulnerable, helpless and desperate. Fairfax political journalist Andrea Vance described Syrian refugees as the “*hopeless millions*” who are fleeing the “*daily misery*” of their homeland and “*joining the largest migration crisis in living memory*” (*‘John Key shifts stance on refugees as hospitable Kiwis make a point’*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015). In another article, Vance described those stuck in refugee camps in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey, or trying to survive outside of the camps near the Syrian border as living a “*miserable, and often unsafe, existence*” (*‘Nevermind the comments, here’s the Syrians’*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 13, 2015).

Various media commentators, journalists and members of the public described refugees caught up in the crisis as “*some of the world’s most vulnerable people*” (nzherald.co.nz, Sep 7, 2015); the “*doomed and despairing, trailing along European railway lines, too exhausted to run from harrying police*” (nzherald.co.nz, Sep 2, 2015); “*clamouring at train stations*” (nzherald.co.nz, Sep 6, 2015) to reach safety; and they have “*nothing and nowhere*” to go (nzherald.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015). The depiction of refugees and the refugee crisis is clear: this is a humanitarian crisis and these people are victims of war, through no fault of their own. They are desperate, and they need our help. As *The Dominion Post* pointed out in an editorial: “*The desperation of those fleeing war and genocide in the Middle East is plain to see*” (*‘We have a duty to offer a home to more than 750 refugees’*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015). Therefore, as the editorial headline spells out, there was a strong belief that NZ had a duty to help these vulnerable victims.

Alongside the victim portrayal, refugees were also described as ordinary people like us who find themselves in a dangerous and desperate situation. They are “*millions of innocent everyday people ... running for their lives*” (nzherald.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015), and “*ordinary families*” (stuff.co.nz, Sep 16, 2015) who are fleeing their home countries to seek shelter and safety elsewhere. The implication is that these people could easily be you or I.

Interestingly, metaphors such as ‘waves’ and ‘floods’ are used, but not in a negative way as other media overseas have used it (see Chapter 1 and 3), but as a way of describing the enormity of the refugee crisis, and the situation that refugees find

themselves in, and to emphasise the claim that these people need our help. Political commentator Brian Rudman tells the reader that not since WWII has the world been *“awash with so many refugees on the move”*. He then used a biblical metaphor to describe the refugee crisis as an *“exodus of biblical proportions”*, and then described the people fleeing Syria as a *“burgeoning flood of victims”* (*‘Smart money is on opening doors to refugees’*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 2, 2015). Syrian refugees were also described by ... as *“the flotsam of a cruel civil conflict”* (stuff.co.nz, Sep 16, 2015), implying that refugees are the wreckage or debris from civil war, abandoned and washed up on the shores of Europe.

While the majority of editorials and opinion pieces I analysed depicted refugees as vulnerable victims who need our help, there were a couple of cautious or questioning voices in the mix. Columnist John Roughan wondered whether the people fleeing on boats to Europe were in fact *“refugees in urgent need or real peril”* and not merely economic migrants in search of a good life (*‘Compassion blinds us to real refugee story’*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 12, 2015). An editorial from *The Press*, also suggested that not all the people heading to Europe were *“genuine refugees fleeing from intolerable circumstances rather than those simply seeking a new life in a richer country”* (*‘In present crisis, New Zealand could afford to take more refugees’*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 7, 2015). According to the opinion of these two articles, there is a clear difference between real refugees (those in genuine need) and economic migrants (those merely seeking a better life), and NZ needs to be careful that it helps the right kind of refugee.

As will be discussed in the next Chapter, the portrayal of refugees overseas as helpless victims feeds into the media’s ethical argument for raising the refugee quota, and provides justification for the argument that NZ has a duty to do more. These representations also feed into stereotypes of refugees as helpless, passive victims who need others to speak on their behalf, as described in Chapter 3 (see Malkki, 1996; Rajaram, 2002). However, in the media sample I analysed for this research, a few articles did go beyond this simple representation and interview people from refugee backgrounds in NZ about their stories of escape and resettlement. The next section will discuss the representation of former refugees in NZ in these articles.

Former refugees in New Zealand

The 13 articles within my media sample that did contain interviews with former refugees in New Zealand tended to frame them as a mixture of traumatised victim and success story (see the section below 'Who is speaking?' for a breakdown of refugee voices verses non-refugee voices). Five of the 13 articles used the term 'refugee' to describe the former refugees interviewed, despite the fact that many of them had lived in New Zealand for years and were now NZ citizens, and even though refugees who come in on the quota programme are automatically given permanent residency. The 'trauma story' – the traumatic story of escape – featured quite prominently in four of the articles with former refugees, especially in the lead or opening paragraph of the article. There was also a significant focus on what they have achieved since being resettled in New Zealand – education, career, etc. – and how they have contributed to New Zealand society, which is linked to the 'contribution verses cost' argument for raising the quota, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

One such article in *The Press* told the stories of four 'New Zealand refugees' – from Bhutan, Somalia, and Sudan – about their refugee journey and '*what they've brought to New Zealand*' (Tess McClure, '*Why we left: Refugees tell the stories of their journeys to New Zealand*', suff.co.nz, Sep 13, 2015). Former refugees Mitra Rai from Bhutan, Dr. Hassan Ibrahim and Zeinap Hussein from Somalia, and Aklilu Tekley from Eritrea each tell their story of escape from the horrors of their home country, and the loss, shock and hardships they faced starting again from scratch in a foreign country. They also talked about how grateful they were to be given the opportunity to resettle in NZ and how hard they had worked to achieve their goals. There is a heavy focus on trauma and loss in each of these individual stories of refuge, hence the headline '*Why we left*' and a sad opening quote from Mitra Rai that states '*I still don't know where my brother is buried*'. However, there is also some strong statements about the benefits of resettling refugees from the perspective of former refugees themselves. Aklilu Tekley, who himself worked with Syrian refugees in Egypt, said people forget how educated many refugees are: '*These people were plastic surgeons, GPS, psychiatrists, professors. They are very educated*'. Dr. Ibrahim said he believed people are simply not aware of the contributions refugees make to countries like New Zealand and the skills they bring with them. So, while this article

focuses on their trauma story and how they became refugees, it also emphasizes their contribution to NZ, and attempts to balance the trauma story by including the opinions of former refugees on resettlement.

Another article which included a strong perspective from a former refugee is the interview with former ‘Tampa boy’²² Abbas Nazari, who was asked for his opinion on NZ’s response to the refugee crisis (*‘Tampa refugees call for government to act on Syria crisis’*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 6, 2015). The article discussed the Tampa incident and Abbas’ journey to NZ with his family, and listed his education and sporting achievements as a child growing up in NZ. Abbas talked about the opportunities that opened up for him and strongly believed NZ should raise the refugee quota so other refugees too can have a chance to flourish. He sees refugee resettlement “*as a long term investment*” that society will benefit from. At first refugees will need help, but “*five or ten years down the road they will be contributing to New Zealand society. That is what adds to the fabric of NZ society*”. This is one of the very few opinions garnered from former refugees in NZ during the media campaign to raise the quota, and clearly demonstrates Abbas’ thoughts on the matter. It is also contrasts with the passive representations of refugees as vulnerable victims, as described above. Although the headline still refers to Nazari and others in his community as *‘Tampa refugees’*, the article does not focus on his traumatic journey to NZ and presents the voice of someone who has actually experienced what it is like to be a refugee.

Several media commentators emphasised the contributions refugees make to NZ society, highlighting the long-term benefits of refugee resettlement (this will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter). For example, in response to comments former Prime Minister John Key made about the cost of increasing the quota, journalists Shabnam Dastgheib and Jack van Beynen decided to show that “*refugees contribute far more to our economy than what they cost – and here’s the evidence*”. The article *‘Payback time: What refugees are really worth’* (stuff.co.nz, Sep 13, 2015)

²² In August 2001, 438 asylum seekers trying to reach Australia from Indonesia were rescued at sea from a sinking fishing boat by the Norwegian freighter MV Tampa. The rescue sparked an international standoff between the Tampa captain and the Australia government who refused to admit the asylum seekers, labelled as the ‘Tampa refugees’, into Australia territory. The New Zealand government waded into the debate and accepted 131 Tampa refugees for resettlement.

showcased this ‘evidence’ through the stories of four former refugees, and asked ‘*What would our country be without refugees?*’. Iranian-born Golriz Ghahraman is a successful human rights lawyer, and now the first refugee MP elected to Parliament. John Roy-Wojciechowski, one of the Polish ‘Pahiatua children’, co-founded construction company Mainzeal and served as Honourary Consul for Poland. Wondim Gebreyesus trained to become a nurse as a way of giving back to the community, both here in New Zealand and in Ethiopia where he is from. Rachel Ibambasi, from the Republic of Congo, is pursuing a career in welding so she can give back to her community in any practical way she can. Her long-term ambition is to become a human rights lawyer. Each are very thankful and grateful for the opportunity that NZ gave them to start their lives again, and keenly feel the ‘*sense of responsibility of living up to the gift that New Zealand has given us [...] for the benefit of New Zealand*’ (Golriz), and ‘*not wasting a new found freedom*’ (Wondim). Indeed, according to this article, they have well and truly ‘paid back’ NZ’s ‘gift’. The tone of the article implies that no one could argue that these four former refugees are a cost or a burden to society.

The voices of these former refugees in ‘*Payback time*’, ‘*Tampa refugees*’ and ‘*Why we left*’ represent the successes and positive benefits of resettlement. Their stories highlight not only the trauma they faced, but also the contributions they made to NZ, and therefore the benefits of resettlement, adding to the media argument for raising the quota. Their stories also emphasised the importance these former refugees placed on giving back to the country that gave them refuge, and to make the most of the opportunity NZ has given them. Framing refugees in terms of their trauma (victim status), their ‘worth’, or what they ‘pay back’ to NZ over time is one way of increasing support for the refugee quota and combating potential negative comments about refugees, but it also potentially feeds into alternative problematic representations and stereotypes as will be discussed in Chapters 8 and 9.

The above discussion has so far focused on the analysis of articles about former refugees who have been in NZ for many years. Considering the overarching theme in the media sample was the Syrian refugee crisis, how were the stories of newly resettled Syrians in NZ represented? Three articles I analysed involved interviews with newly arrived Syrian refugees (one NZH, two Stuff). The voices of these Syrians

were front and centre – the main feature of the story. Each article discussed the trauma that these families had faced, but in varying degrees.

For example, the first half of the article in the NZH (Simon Collins, *'The Forgotten Millions: Syrian kids find peace at last after the horrors of war'*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 8, 2015) was dedicated to detailing the trauma the Slik/Alfuol family suffered in Syria, and then in Egypt where they first sought refuge before being resettled in NZ. We are told one of their children was hit by shrapnel from a bomb that killed their neighbour; that Mr Slik was beaten by soldiers simply because of where he came from; that some people were reduced to eating grass to survive; and even after escaping to the relative safety of Egypt the family were forced to sell all their assets just to feed themselves. The second half of the article then discussed the housing shortage in Auckland (where this family was settled), and the difficulties of resettling Syrians near others in the community.

Although the Slik/Alfuol family was the main feature of the article and had a voice, the focus of the story was on their trauma, suffering and difficulties. The headline of the article emphasises the trauma focus – they are part of the *'Forgotten Millions'*²³ and they have gone through *'the horrors of war'*. There was no coverage of this family's life before the civil war and very little about their hopes for the future, except that their two young children are now in a safe place and they dream of being reunited with their family. They are still referred to as refugees, even though they have now found refuge and *'peace'* in NZ.

In contrast, the interview with Syrian Nazeh Diab in *The Dominion Post* (Matt Stewart, *'The road from Damascus: a refugee's journey from Syria to Strathmore'*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 12, 2015) focused much more on the whole journey *'from civil war to sanctuary'*, as the article put it. The opening sentence sets the context for why Diab and his family had to flee Syria (he had helped wounded protesters during the uprisings of 2011), but then goes into some detail about his life in Syria before the civil war started, told to the journalist over *'traditional Syrian cardamom coffee'*. Diab, *'himself the son of Palestinian refugees'*, was a political columnist and interior

²³ 'The Forgotten Millions' was a fundraising campaign run in conjunction with World Vision and the New Zealand Herald to help Syrian refugee children and their families.

decorator, his wife Mirvat Hassan was a teacher, and they lived a '*prosperous middle-class*' life in their hometown of Sayyidah Zaynab, just outside the capital city of Damascus. Diab goes on to explain that he and his family had to flee after a government-backed militia found out that he had helped care for wounded anti-government protesters. The article goes on to explain the process of resettlement in NZ for refugees like Diab and his family, including the support role government agencies, the NZRC, and volunteers play.

Nazeh Diab's voice is the central voice in this *Dominion Post* article, telling the story of his journey – the whole story from his life in Syria to the start of his new life in Wellington. Including details about the traditional Syrian coffee, his Palestinian refugee background, and his middle-class status gives context to Diab's history – he is not 'just' a refugee or a passive victim. He had a good career and a '*prosperous*' life back in Syria, and the act of serving the journalist coffee is an act of dignity and agency – an act of hospitality in his new home. The additional information about the NZ Refugee Resettlement Programme also helped to expand his story, and put it into the wider context for those members of the public who do not know anything about refugee resettlement in NZ. *The Dominion Post* still referred to Diab as a 'refugee' in the headline and the body of the story, the terms 'ex-refugee' and 'former refugee' are also used.

The third article featuring former Syrian refugees is also by journalist Matt Stewart from *The Dominion Post* ('*Syrian ex-asylum seekers in Wellington urge Government to up refugee quota*', stuff.co.nz, Sep 4, 2015). However, in sharp contrast to his previous article, this feature largely focused on the trauma this family suffered during the civil war, much like the NZH article. The opening paragraph is quite shocking, describing the atrocities they witnessed:

'Gihan Alarayshi's disabled toddler son watched a man shot to death in front of him as he went to the physiotherapist in his war-torn hometown of Damascus. The violent incident left Mohie, now 5, traumatised and terrified and the rest of his family – sister Nebal, 3 and father Kutaiba Alakkad – in fear for their lives. "A man was shot in front of my son, his brains were all over the street," Gihan said.'

The article goes to describe in more detail the family's experiences in Syria during the war before they escaped, and goes on to discuss the government's seemingly indecision about raising New Zealand's refugee quota. There are no other details about Gihan and her family's life in Syria before the war, or much about their hopes for the future beyond her husband Kutaiba's goal to retrain as a chef and open a Syrian restaurant in Wellington (and this is only mentioned in the photo caption). Although this article focuses on Gihan's trauma story, one distinguishing feature is that she gives her opinion on increasing the refugee quota, which is not something that is included in many of the articles featuring former refugees.

All three articles from the NZH and *The Dominion Post* have put former Syrian refugee voices front and centre. However, the NZH article and *The Dominion Post* interview with Gihan largely focus only on one part of the story – the trauma story – although Gihan's opinion on the quota increase was included, whereas *The Dominion Post* article featuring Diab focused more on the whole story – from refugee to resettlement – and included much more detail about his life in Syria before the war. The other articles discussed in this section also focused on the trauma story in varying degrees, and emphasised the achievements of former refugees and what they have done with the opportunity NZ has given them, and the societal benefits to refugee resettlement in the long term. Most of the articles analysed in this section included strong refugee voices, but the danger is that those voices can end up buried due to the focus on the trauma story upfront. Therefore, while former refugees may be the centre of the story, the framing of their story can be an issue. The continuation of the 'refugee' label to describe them also adds to the confusion. These concerns are also reflected in the visual representation of refugees in the photos that accompanying/illustrate the articles, and how these photos were captioned, as will be discussed in the next section.

Photos and photo captions

Almost half of the photos (61 out of 125) that accompany the NZH and Stuff articles are from overseas photo agencies (e.g. Reuters, Getty Images, AP, AFP, etc.) and depict the migration of refugees across the Mediterranean between Turkey and Greece, and then into Europe. Most of the photos are descriptive, illustrating the

refugee crisis, particularly the scale of the crisis (e.g. large groups arriving in boats, walking along the road, waiting at train stations or in refugee relief centres). These photographs included a few close-up shots of individual people and intimate moments shared between parents and their child/children. The rest of the photos used are either of non-refugee New Zealanders who are commenting on the crisis (a mixture of politicians, church leaders, and members of the public) or of former refugees in New Zealand who feature in some of the articles. There were also a few archival photographs of refugees in NZ (e.g. Polish, Hungarian, and Tampa refugees). Table 5 gives a breakdown of photos used in my sample size, and of those photos how many depicted overseas refugees/refugee crisis, NZ former refugees, non-refugees, and archival photos:

Table 5: Photograph subjects

	NZH (n30)	Stuff (n46)
Refugee Crisis	34 (77.3%)	27 (33.3%)
NZ Former Refugees	2 (4.5%)	15 (18.5%)
Non-refugees	8 (18.2%)	33 (40.7%)
Archival	N/A	6 (13%)
TOTAL	44	81

Table 5 shows that the Stuff articles contained almost twice the number of photos that the NZH articles had, but this is not surprising considering the higher number of articles than NZH (Stuff – 46, NZH – 30). Stuff used many more photos of non-refugees – 33 photos out of 81 in total, or 40.7% of the total number of images used. In comparison, the NZH only had eight photos of non-refugees out of 44 photos in total (18.2%). The NZH used a much larger percentage of photos from the refugee crisis than Stuff – 34 photos out of 44 (77.3%) to Stuff’s 27 photos, or 33.3% of the total number of photos used.

However, Stuff used many more photos of former refugees in New Zealand – 15 out of 81 photos (18.5%). Whereas the NZH only had two photos out of 44 (4.5%). This figure can be contributed to the fact that Stuff pools together coverage from many

more newspapers in New Zealand, including *The Dominion Post* in Wellington and *The Press* in Christchurch (which also happen to be resettlement centres), than the NZH which largely covers Auckland. Although with Auckland being one of the largest population sizes and a resettlement centre, I was surprised that there were not more articles featuring former refugees in Auckland in my sample period.

What is striking about these numbers is the large percentage of non-refugee photos in the Stuff articles, compared to that of the refugee crisis and former refugees in New Zealand. The dominance of non-refugee photos gives an indication of those predominantly interviewed for news articles, and whose opinions and perspectives were sought. In other words, the focus was largely on New Zealanders and New Zealand's response to the refugee crisis, rather than the refugees themselves. I will go into this in more detail in the section below "Who is speaking?"

Within the subset of photos from the refugee crisis, I also analysed the types of photographs of refugees that were used – were they largely anonymous mass groups of people or sad, distressed images of women and children, as some of the literature in Chapter 3 suggested (see Johnson, 2011; Malkki, 1996; Wright, 2002). As Table 6 shows below, the majority of the photos of refugees used in the NZH and Stuff were anonymous - large groups of people walking along the road or waiting at train stations, or moments caught between people taken from afar with a telephoto lens (for example see Figures 2 and 3). Where photos were taken in close proximity to the subjects with a wide-angle lens, language barriers may have been a factor for the anonymity, or perhaps people did not want to give their names. However, whether people were captured from afar, unbeknown to them, with a telephoto lens, or up close with a wide-angle lens, the anonymous nature of the majority of these photos does give a sense of voyeurism to some extent. It potentially could also represent a sense of entitlement on behalf of the photographer whose job it is to illustrate and document the crisis, and as a result arguably appropriate the lives of others (Sontag, 1973). The only photographs in which refugees were named were either photos of Alan Kurdi and his family, or former refugees in New Zealand. The photos of former refugees in NZ were taken close-up with either a wide-angle or telephoto lens, and mostly depicted people as smiling/happy (for example see Figure 4), bar one which depicts former Syrian refugee Nazeh Diab as sad (his story

focused quite a lot on the trauma he and his family suffered in Syria, as discussed above).

Figure 2: Photo of anonymous refugees/migrants (screenshot from Stuff.co.nz, 3 Sep 2015)



Figure 3: Example of a photo taken with a telephoto lens (screenshot from nzherald.co.nz, 5 Sep 2015)



Figure 4: Example of a photo of former refugees in NZ (screenshot from stuff.co.nz, 4 Sep 2015)



Table 6: Refugee representation (NZH and Stuff)²⁴

	Named	Anon	Happy	Sad	Neutral
Mass Groups		16		1	15
Mum/Child	3	8	2	3	6
Dad/Child	2	5	2		5
Individual	15	5	10	2	7
Children	2	12	4	2	8
Alan Kurdi	8	4			
TOTAL	30	50	18	8	41

²⁴ Photos were judged 'happy' if the person/people in the photos were smiling and/or laughing, and 'sad' if people were crying or looked distressed. Photos were judged 'neutral' if it was not possible to visibly ascertain the emotion of the person depicted.

The high number of emotionally neutral (i.e. the viewer cannot tell whether the person is upset or happy) photos of refugees was surprising as the literature (see Chapter 3, section 'Visual representations of refugees') indicates that most photographs of refugees show sad or distressed looking individuals, which feeds into victimhood stereotypes (see Johnson, 2011; Malkki, 1995; Mannik, 2012; Nyers, 2006; Rajaram, 2002). It may be that you cannot tell what kind of emotions people are showing because many of the photos are taken from afar and are of large groups of people.

Of the photo captions used, those captions accompanying photos of overseas refugees and the refugee crisis are also largely descriptive and anonymous, describing the situation in the photo (eg: *'Migrants protest outside a train in Bickse, Hungary'*). The terms 'refugee' and 'migrant' are used interchangeably, both in captions and headlines, although 'refugee' is used more frequently (see Figure 5). Sometimes more personal terms are credited to people, such as 'parent', 'family' or 'mother' and 'child', but largely remain impersonal (see Figure 6). The exception to this are photos of Alan Kurdi and his father, who are named. The photos of former refugees in New Zealand are clearly named, but are often still referred to as 'refugees' in the caption, even if that term is not used in the body of the story. Where photo captions of the refugee crisis have been changed and personalised, it is to reiterate New Zealand's role or what the writer thinks New Zealand should be doing (e.g. *'New Zealand has pledged to take Syrian refugees but we could be doing more'* nzherald.co.nz, Sep 15, 2015).

This section on representation has discussed the various discursive ways refugees have been portrayed in the media articles chosen for this research. This analysis has highlighted the differences between how the media describe refugees overseas caught up in the refugee crisis and former refugees who have been resettled in NZ. What has also become clear over the course of analysis is the dominance of certain voices over others, and who is largely representing refugees (i.e. speaking on behalf of refugees – see Rajaram, 2002). The next section examines the different types of voices that are present and most prominent in this media sample.

Figure 5: Example of the terms refugee/migrant used in both headline and caption (screenshot from stuff.co.nz, 6 Sep 2015)



Figure 6: Example of photo taken with a wide-angle lens and a semi-personalised caption (screenshot from nzherald.co.nz, 4 Sep 2015)



Who is speaking?

As shown in Table 1 in the methodology chapter (Chapter 5), the 76 media articles selected for this research included six editorials (2 NZH, 4 Stuff), 22 opinion pieces (12 NZH, 10 Stuff) and 48 news stories (16 NZH, 32 Stuff). As discussed, editorials represent the voice of each individual newspaper, and opinion pieces are written by members of the public and represent their personal views. Out of the 22 opinion pieces, only one was written by a former refugee (historian and former Hungarian refugee Ann Beaglehole).

Because editorials and opinion pieces are generally one person's opinion on a given subject, I was interested to examine the 48 news articles (straight reporting of the news) and find out who was predominantly interviewed and whose opinions were sought to comment, not only on the refugee crisis, but also how New Zealand should be responding. Table 7 provides a breakdown of those interviewed in the news articles for NZH (16 articles) and Stuff (32 articles), and Table 8 provides a breakdown in the percentage of non-refugee vs refugee voices:

Table 7: People interviewed for news articles

	NZH (n16)	Stuff (n32)
Politician	24	31
NGO	4	17
Church	3	6
Public	5	10
Academic	1	3
Commentator	2	3
Celebrity	2	
Former Refugee	4	18
TOTAL (133)	45	88

Table 8: Non-refugee vs former refugee voices (news articles)

	Non-refugee Voices	Former Refugee Voices
NZH (n45)	41 (91.1%)	4 (8.9%)
Stuff (n88)	70 (79.5%)	18 (20.5%)
TOTAL (n133)	111 (83.5%)	22 (16.5%)

From Tables 7 and 8 one can see clearly that the dominant voices in the news articles are non-refugee people, particularly politicians. Non-refugee voices in the NZH make up 91.1% of all those interviewed (41 out of 45 people), and for Stuff it is 79.5% (70 out of 88 people). The percentage of former refugee voices in the NZH news articles totals 8.9% (4 out of 45 people), and for Stuff news articles 20.5% (18 out of 88 people). The higher number of former refugee voices in Stuff, compared to the NZH, can be accounted for a series of news features about former refugees in NZ that Stuff ran (five articles out of their 32). There were another three Stuff news articles where former refugees were interviewed as part of the wider story, but not the feature of that article. So out of 32 Stuff news articles, there were eight articles where former refugees were interviewed, five of those being features on refugee resettlement. Out of the 16 news articles in the NZH, there were only four articles where former refugees were interviewed as part of the wider news story (i.e. they were not the centre or feature of the story).

Looking at the total number of articles analysed (76), including editorials and opinion pieces, only 4 out of 30 NZH articles and 9 out of 46 Stuff articles (including the opinion piece from Ann Beaglehole), included former refugee voices. That means only 13 out of 76 articles, or 17.1% of articles, involved former refugees in the discussion about NZ's response to the refugee crisis (see Table 9 below).

Table 9: Non-refugee vs former refugee voices (all articles)

	Non-refugee Voices	Former Refugee Voices
NZH (# of articles)	26 (86.7)	4 (13.3%)
Stuff (# of articles)	37 (80.4%)	9 (19.6%)
TOTAL (76)	63 (82.9%)	13 (17.1%)

It is clear looking at the numbers in Table 9 that non-refugee background people wrote the vast majority of articles analysed for this research (82.9%) – people who feel qualified or justified to speak on behalf of refugees and about refugee issues. An example of a piece written about the refugee experience by a non-refugee background person is an article by political journalist Andrea Vance (*‘Nevermind the comments, here’s the Syrians’*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 13, 2015). In this opinion piece, Vance responded to negative comments made by members of the public about the refugee crisis. However, it is unclear where Vance is getting her information. Vance argued: *“Refugees are easier to place, because they don’t have existing ties or preferences”* – while this may be true to some extent, no evidence it provided to support this statement. *“Refugees don’t plan – many don’t even pack. They take their chances with no idea where they will end up”* – again, while this may be true for some, especially those fleeing immediate danger, others may well plan their escape to some extent. Refugees who use people smugglers is a prime example of this. Every story and every individual’s experience is different, so it is hard to generalize, although this is what Vance is doing when she states that refugees *“are often deeply traumatised”*. Yes, some will be deeply traumatised, but not all refugees suffer from trauma, as previous studies have shown (Marlowe, 2010; Papadopoulos, 2007; Summerfield, 1999).

Although it is clear that Vance is deeply passionate about this issue, and obviously shocked by some of the negative comments from the public, it is unclear how she is qualified to talk about the refugee experience. As the previous chapter

demonstrated, the refugee crisis and NZ's response to it was an issue people felt very passionately about. Yet, as the above figures show, the discussion in the media included very few former refugee voices. This begs the question, why do the opinions of non-refugee background people feature more so than those who have actually experienced what it is like to be a refugee? I will come back to this question in Chapter 9.

Advocates on refugee representation

As the first half of this chapter demonstrates, the voices and opinions of those who have actually been refugees, who had gone through the experiences of displacement and resettlement, is largely absent in the articles analysed for this research. The few articles that did interview people from refugee backgrounds tended to focus on their trauma story, which may only serve to emphasise the victim stereotype and reiterate NZ's role as saviour.

This section delves into my interviews with advocates, journalists and communications specialists who were involved in the campaign to raise the refugee quota, and examines how they see their role in advocating and speaking on behalf of refugees, breaking down stereotypical refugee representations, and communicating their message of refugee solidarity to the NZ public.

Breaking down stereotypes

Really our key messages were very simple and it was just about seeing people as people and celebrating the contribution they make to our communities and recognising their journey, and they're ordinary people with ordinary circumstances – mums, dads, teachers, gardeners, people like you and I. (NZRC Communications manager)

While the discussion thus far in this chapter is based on the media sample, I also interviewed several key informants involved in communications and advocacy, in order to examine the approaches taken by refugee advocates in NZ with regard to refugee representation. All the advocacy and communications people I interviewed

for this study agreed that refugee stereotypes, both as a threat and as victims, existed in the general media and in public knowledge. Overall, there was a real genuine attempt to break down stereotypes and to bring through refugee voices. As the above quote from the NZRC communications manager²⁵ illustrates, one of the main things the NZRC tried to focus on was ‘our’ commonalities - shared values and shared humanity – “seeing people as people” and using personal stories to create understanding, awareness and empathy. The NZRC communications manager wanted to emphasise how ordinary refugees are, “people like you and I”, and to celebrate the contributions they make to society. As the spokesperson for the Human Rights NGO (HRNGO)²⁶ stated, it was also about humanising and celebrating the kind of people refugees are - resilient, survivors, strong:

We should be celebrating the people that have arrived here from war-torn countries, because they show the most strength of human nature in having escaped and then travelled vast distances to get here. They are the types of people who will go on to be amazing members of the community. It's that kind of framing. (HRNGO spokesperson)

The spokespeople for the HRNGO and Action Station²⁷ acknowledged that the way advocates had been talking about refugees was ineffective, that instead of talking about people advocates continue to talk about ‘refugees’ as some sort of anonymous group. As the HRNGO spokesperson argued, in the past the sector was very much part of the problem:

[W]e didn't talk about people - people are fleeing, we talked about refugees fleeing [...] we talked about people as refugees even once they were here. We didn't talk about the positive aspect. These are people who are seeking to rebuild their lives,

²⁵ The NZRC communications team work behind the scenes with the media, sourcing former refugees for interviews, providing background information on international refugee law, the role of the UNHCR and refugee statistics, and informing journalists about correct terminology. At the time of the interview, the NZRC was working with The Dominion Post in Wellington to produce a series of features on newly arrived Syrian refugees. This series unfortunately did not fall within my media catchment period.

²⁶ Human Rights NGO based in NZ who campaigns on refugee related issues

²⁷ Action Station is an independent, crowdfunded, community campaigning organization in NZ

who are looking for a new start and future for their family. We talked about these are people fleeing terror, these are people who are fearful, these are people who need safety. So we talked about victims rather than survivors. (HRNGO spokesperson)

Action Station noted that if you keep talking about the danger and violence people are escaping, they are not just seen as victims, but as associated with those negative outcomes, instead of people who are escaping violence and seeking refuge:

[I]f we keep talking about these violent dangerous oppressive places that people come from, those qualities get attached to those people, and in a very unconscious way, we start to think they're bringing that stuff with them here. So it's like just stop talking about that all the time, because that is not who they are. Who they are is like just humans who happen to live in a country where that shit is happening. So talk about what they're coming here for. (Action Station spokesperson)

According to the Action Station spokesperson, this kind of bad messaging creates an assumption that refugees are dangerous or unstable, or at the very least “*they’ll be dysfunctional. That’s the response we get from people. They’re like, well these people are all traumatised, they can’t get jobs, they’re all traumatised.*” The HRNGO and Action Station representatives were quite reflective about their role as advocates and communicators, and were very aware about not falling into the trap of re-victimising or re-stereotyping the very people they wanted to help.

Personal stories were another way of combating negative stereotypes of refugees, and used frequently by the NZRC, the HRNGO and Action Station. The NZRC communications manager believes personal stories work are a win-win for both the NZRC, in terms of gaining support for their work and creating positive public sentiment, and for refugees helping them to resettle into their new communities. The NZRC communications manager shared an example of some stories shared through the Pathways to Employment programme:

[W]hen we’ve had stories in the paper about people being in work or looking for work I think that also sends a really positive message out. Because I think lots of

people think that refugees just come here and they don't have jobs, you know, they've never been anywhere where there's been benefits and they really want to work, and working is a great way getting to know a community, it's like really positive for resettlement. (NZRC Communications Manager)

In this regard, personal stories help to create understanding and a welcoming environment for refugees, which in turn is positive for resettlement. Radio NZ journalist Lynda Chanwai-Earle, who often works with and interviews refugee background people for her programme 'Voices', also strongly believes in the importance of personal stories. Lynda argued that to hear about the personal experiences of seeking refuge is to put yourself in their shoes, to create empathy, and to realise that anyone could become a refugee, even New Zealanders:

It is the personal stories that helps break that down, because it means that you are understanding that it's a person you are hearing from. This could be your brother, your sister, your child ... this could be your 13 year old daughter who was going to be arrested by the secret police, alongside with her school friends ... that could be me. That's what horrifies me, is that you just change a few things, and if NZ was, you know, what if we all became refugees. It could happen to anybody. That could be me, and then I would be on the run with my two little girls. (Lynda)

For Action Station, personal stories are powerful because they have the ability to reach out to us, help us to relate to that person's experience in some way, and are much more effective at creating empathy and understanding, than say myth busting or a whole lot of statistics and facts:

[I]t's much more helpful to do what I think some of the media coverage did, which was like, here's this lovely man and his lovely wife and their lovely kids who look a lot like us, who talk about their hopes and aspirations and dreams for their family [...] So I think it's cliché, but it's true that those stories that don't spend a whole lot of time on the terrible things that happened before, but really focus on the building a new life and they're aspiring to the very ordinary things that we all aspire to, like being together as a family and being able to work to support your family, and

being able to see your children go to school. I think that's very simple, very powerful, and very effective. (Action Station spokesperson)

The spokesperson from Action Station believes personal stories help to break down stereotypes and help to show *“that these people are like us, and they have the same values as us, and they want the same things as us [...] because there's an underlying assumption they're not like us, they're different to us”*. The messaging from NZRC, Action Station and the HRNGO emphasised the point that refugees are ordinary people, just like you and me, who are going through extraordinary times, and need our support to rebuild their lives.

Columnist and refugee advocate Tracey Barnett also works hard to combat refugee stereotypes, and believes that *“the best way to break the refugee stereotype mold is to have their refugeeeness being asterisked to the story”*. In other words, do not minimise the fact that this person was a refugee. Highlight who they are and what they have achieved since resettling in NZ, and oh look, they happen to have been a refugee too – see, not all refugees are bad or dangerous. However, Tracey conceded that one of the problems with writing ‘refugee’ stories in order to try to break down stereotypes is that:

[T]he first time you put ‘refugee’ in the headline, it becomes a refugee story, instead of a story about a human rights lawyer, for example [...] if you are writing a refugee story you are already in that headline reinforcing a certain kind of reductive framing.

Therefore, it is a bit of a Catch-22 situation. On the one hand writing ‘refugee’ stories is a way of educating the public about former refugees in NZ, but as soon once the word ‘refugee’ is used the person in the story is automatically labelled as ‘the refugee’. As a way of trying to transform that label, Tracey decided to organise and curate a photographic exhibition about former refugees in NZ, called *‘Transplanted’*. The idea of the exhibition was to break down stereotypes of what people may think refugees look like, ‘erase’ that refugee label, and see people for who they are, people just like us. Tracey explains:

It was incredibly successful in kind of breaking down the stereotypes, seeing that a refugee was potentially a human rights lawyer who'd been here since she was ten who had a far more Kiwi accent than I ever did, to seeing a transvestite who'd come here at high school level, to seeing a Queen's award winning community worker who'd been here since she was a child from WWII as a Polish orphan [...] I would go from portrait to portrait and I would tell their stories [...] and it was important for me to put, for example, [...] two lawyers that happened to be refugees. And I think it's those small touches that people walked away hearing about their lives here [...] this was about changing the narrative. (Tracey)

As part of the exhibition (which at the time of writing had been shown in Dunedin and Wellington), Tracey also organised sessions where former refugees and members of the public would come together and just talk, human being to human being. Tracey strongly believed that this small action of conversation, alongside the photographic portraits, was a powerful way of breaking down perceptions around what people think a refugee looks like.

Refugee advocate Murdoch Stephens agreed that there was a need to reframe refugee representations. However, he argued that it was a fine balancing act between challenging victim stereotypes and building public support for why we need to raise the quota:

I mean, we do have to recognise with refugees, particularly before they get to NZ, they are vulnerable. They don't have the protection of the state. That does make them a victim, but that victimhood is not necessarily a prolonged identity [...] It's tough, because I don't want to underplay the persecution which is the very basis of their being here. (Murdoch)

Murdoch voices the very dilemma that all the advocates and communications people I spoke to faced – how to challenge victim stereotypes while trying to build support for refugee resettlement. One of the main ways to garner support is through pity and empathy, portraying refugees as victims who need our help, as the media analysis in the previous chapter demonstrated. So one can understand why some advocacy organisations may be tempted to play on that traumatised image. However, the

NZRC communications manager thinks that sometimes there is too much emphasis on the trauma that people have suffered, and “*that creates a negative assumption that they are going to be traumatised*”. The NZRC communications team prefers to frame refugees as survivors, about “*celebrating that person*”, but they are careful not to “*romanticise stuff*”:

I'll say to journalists and people, well they are survivors and if they can blimmin' walk out of Syria carrying what they can and a child... But it's normal, we try to normalise it a bit, if that happened to us we'd be traumatised too, but not kind of stigmatising them, and I think naturally we just aired on the side of survivor mode and the positive stories, because they worked for us. (NZRC Communications manager)

The positive stories the NZRC used as a way of reframing refugees as survivors, instead of victims, focused on the strengths and capabilities of survivors – what refugees can contribute to society. The next section explains the pros and cons of using a strength-based approach to breakdown stereotypes, as experienced by NZRC and Action Station.

Strength-based messaging: What refugees contribute

The strength-based approach emphasises the contributions refugees can make to the host society, highlighting their resilience. They are survivors, not victims. As the NZRC communications manager explains in the below quote, it was a fine balancing act to move away from ‘victim’ framing, while at the same time trying not to downplay the traumatic experiences refugees have been through:

It was about getting refugee background people in the media to be seen, kind of celebrating who they are and they're survivors from a real strengths-based perspective. But we were keen not to romanticise the journey cos it's bloody tough [...] it was more about getting positive stories about resettlement and refugee background people. (NZRC Communications Manager)

While NZRC are keen to emphasise capabilities and strengths, the spokesperson from Action Station sees this kind of framing as potentially problematic. They argue

that this is a humanitarian issue and we should be talking about “*the fullness of human life*”, welcoming everyone who needs refuge, not just the ones who have strengths and skills that we can use. It is not about what people can potentially contribute to society. The Action Station spokesperson cautioned that there is a risk of only relying on strength-based storytelling to break down stereotypes: “*I think the strength based storytelling does need to be really cautious around suggesting that's why we welcome refugees, because they're the brightest*”. In other words, it is not about how exceptional refugees are, it is also about their ordinariness, that all refugees deserve to be here. As the Action Station spokesperson explained:

I'm not completely against a strength-based storytelling, I just think we have to be careful, because I said to somebody once like, grumpy old men who are never going to work again are also entitled to seek refuge when they've been forced to leave their home. Like we're not only looking for the orthopedic surgeons from Aleppo. That's not how the refugee system works. We don't get to say, NZ will take refugees, but we'd like only young people, or only people with tertiary education, and only the ones who'll do the jobs that we want. That's not a refugee system, that's an immigration system. So I do feel there's a kind of a line I feel like we want to be cautious around. (Action Station spokesperson)

For Action Station, it is a humanitarian argument that should come from a place of empathy for what refugees have gone through, rather than what they can contribute. It is about connecting on a human level, putting yourself in their shoes and saying, ‘that could be me’. Although it is good to move away from the victim stereotype and focus on people’s strengths, the danger is that kind of framing may lend itself to another form of stereotype – the stereotype of the ‘deserving refugee’. As the Action Station spokesperson stated, “*You don't have to be special, you don't have to be exceptional, or you don't have to be the first refugee All Black. You can just be a woman who is really grateful that her daughter can go to school.*” After all, according to Action Station, this is a humanitarian issue, and should not be about what people can contribute - even “*grumpy old men*” deserve refuge too. This highlights the tension advocates face in the way they choose to represent humanitarian subjects such as refugees (Orgad & Seu, 2014b). Following on from this humanitarian

argument, the spokespeople from Action Station and the HRNGO argued for a value-based approach to refugee advocacy, as the next section will explain.

Value-based messaging: Why we should care about refugees

Both the HRNGO and Action Station employed value-based messaging in their campaign, which speaks to the idea that we need to activate shared values, a sense of common humanity. Both spokespeople that I interviewed from these organisations argued that this was a humanitarian crisis and there was a need to tap in to the values New Zealanders hold dear, because as the HRNGO spokesperson stated:

You can't myth bust and you can't give people bullet points, you have to talk to them about people and stories, and make them really understand what it's like and why they should care. (HRNGO spokesperson)

For the HRNGO, it was about promoting the values that we all share, a common humanity, and framing refugees in a way that would draw on people's empathy and understanding:

[R]eally it's just the humanising. It's the talking about people who have shown amazing resilience. We should be celebrating the people that have arrived here from war-torn countries, because they show the most strength of human nature in having escaped and then traveled vast distances to get here. They are the types of people who will go on to be amazing members of the community. It's that kind of framing. (HRNGO spokesperson)

It is also trying to get people to relate with refugee's experience, human to human, which is much more successful than trying to evoke pity, or shock and shame people into action:

[I]f you can humanise something and make people associate it with people and themselves and their own experiences in life, that's much more successful than horror, than shock, than pity, than a lot of the other things that we tend to use in situations like this. (HRNGO spokesperson)

The Action Station spokesperson also talked about effective messaging and how best to reframe refugee issues and representation in an empathetic manner: “[W]e were really looking for language, and images and stories that would give people a value-based, empathy-based way in”. They argued that it was important to “evoke values” that move us in the direction of a more “compassionate” and “inclusive” society, because:

If I can relate to somebody who's had to leave their home because of war or violence or oppression, if I can look at them and feel like they're like me, in a way that I could understand myself, imagine myself in that situation, and imagine what I would want. (Action Station spokesperson)

The argument here is that facts need to fit with someone’s values or they will not listen. We need to reach out to people’s values so that they can truly understand and empathise about why they should care, effectively putting ourselves in someone else’s shoes. One way of doing this is through the personal stories of refuge, highlighting the similarities refugees and New Zealanders share, and emphasising the values of compassion, fairness and equality that appeal to New Zealander’s sense of self. Tapping into this idea of ‘Kiwi values’ was an argument also used by the media analysed for this research (see Chapter 7). However, unlike the value-based messaging used by the HRNGO and Action Station in their campaign messaging, as will be discussed in the next chapter, the media tended to emphasise the shaming and victimhood argument, which Action Station described as “*not a great way to motivate people who aren’t already convinced*”.

In terms of appealing to Kiwi values, both Murdoch and Tracey also tapped into this notion of a Kiwi sense of shame – an understanding that ‘we’ are better than that (referring to the government’s perceived inaction on the refugee crisis). The arguments Tracey and Murdoch used were framed in a way that speaks to the things we believe are right and good. From Tracey’s perspective, this line of argument appealed to “*a Kiwi sense of shame that we are good folks, and we should do better than this, and that's an important self-image that needs to be tweaked*”. Murdoch agreed, saying:

Our framing has been ok well the good thing is we believe this to be true about ourselves, so this is something of an Achilles heel, where we can say ok how do we live up to this self-image. It's great that we've got this self-image [...] at least it gives us a rhetoric or a narrative or a frame to work on to say let's live up to these things we believe are good. (Murdoch)

Value-based messaging employed by the HRNGO and Action Station was about humanising the 'other' and representing refugees in a relatable way (i.e. they are just like us), and about tapping into NZ values in an empathetic way – why 'we' should care. However, by appealing to 'our' values as a way to garner support for refugees, the danger is that it becomes more about 'us' and how we should respond, rather than about the very people who are at the heart of the campaign – refugees. It also becomes about others from non-refugee backgrounds talking about and on behalf of refugees, whose voices may be minimised or excluded from the conversation, as the earlier section 'Who is speaking?' demonstrates. The next section explores how the refugee advocates interviewed for this study saw their role speaking about refugee issues and advocating on behalf of refugees.

Speaking on behalf of others

As mentioned above, genuine attempts were made by advocates to break down stereotypes and humanise refugees, but most of the discussion led by the media I analysed for this research tend to focus on 'us' and 'our' response, and was led by people who were not from refugee backgrounds. There were very few refugee voices included in the discussion. The representatives that I interviewed from the NZRC, HRNGO, and Action Station were very aware of this imbalance and tried very hard to include refugee voices where they could in their own campaigning. The NZRC communications manager, for example, was adamant that the media coverage the NZRC did during the debate about raising the quota was not about them, but about the communities they work with. The NZRC communications manager argued that we need to see less 'experts' talking and more refugee voices:

[...] like the less of the Red Cross talking, and the less of us, like the white kind of saviour and kind of academic speak, and saying about our responsibilities at the UN, and all this kind of stuff. (NZRC Communications Manager)

NZRC see their role as a media facilitator, supporting refugees to tell their stories the way they want to, and getting out positive stories about resettlement in NZ. It is the voices of former refugees in NZ that count, not the NZRC. As the communications manager said:

It was about getting refugee background people in the media to be seen [...] but also taking a few cues from them because I'm not there to determine how they want to tell their story [...] ultimately it's up to the individual, like I'm not spinning their story for them. (NZRC Communications Manager)

The NZRC communications manager saw their role as creating a platform for people from refugees backgrounds to tell their story to the media, if they so wished to. Some people wanted to tell their stories, they wanted people to know what they went through, and for some it was a cathartic process. From the NZRC perspective, it was about giving them the right tools and advice, to *"be like their agent, look out for them a little bit"*, because at the end of the day, *"...it's their stories, and their right and they can do what they want [...] it's just about them more than anything, I think"*.

Action Station, Murdoch Stephens from Doing Our Bit, and the HRNGO worked quite closely together, combining their voices to call for a doubling of the refugee quota. However, for Action Station, it was also important to form their own personal relationships with people and organisations from refugee backgrounds to make sure their work was informed by former refugee voices: *"It was important for me to know that those relationships were in place [...] because I was just constantly emailing them and asking questions and running things by them."*

This was also an important element in the HRNGO's campaign to raise the quota, who formed a close relationship with the Auckland Resettled Community Coalition (ARCC) behind the scenes. The HRNGO also created a cross organisational platform called 'Our Voices', which included a range of religious, non-governmental and refugee background organisations calling for a quota increase. For the HRNGO

spokesperson, bringing a multitude of voices through was important, and was not necessarily about the HRNGO per se:

[...] we very much tried to focus on the breadth and depth of voices that were calling for this change, and that meant that for us amplifying former refugee voices was really crucial too [...] it was very much about amplifying everyone.
(HRNGO spokesperson)

However, both Tracey and Murdoch felt justified speaking on behalf of former refugee communities in NZ. They argued that they were in a privileged position as media spokespeople and had a responsibility to use their skills as advocates and journalists to educate the public on behalf of refugee groups, who may not necessarily have the resources, expertise or confidence to do it themselves. Murdoch reasoned that it is easier for someone like him to stand up and take any abuse:

[...] because if I was a refugee [...] I can't think of much scarier than speaking on national television about like fleeing my country [...] [Others] get a lot more resistance speaking about these issues than I do, so as a Pākehā guy it's kind of a lot easier. I mean get harassed and attempts at getting personal, but I think [others] get it a lot more viciously. (Murdoch)

Murdoch argued that until former refugees felt comfortable and willing to stand up in public and speak out on such issues, then it is up to people like himself to raise the flag, so to speak, as not everyone wants to stand up and be visible in the public domain. Tracey saw her role as a journalist to help breakdown stereotypes, educate the public on refugee issues, and “*present those arguments that people don't hear*”. She too felt it was unfair to place that burden onto former refugees in NZ, because:

[...] refugee communities are often - the newest refugee communities are in strain, which is they're adapting, and their comfort at coming forward in the media is sensitive when they're potentially starting to adjust to new lives themselves. But another issue is that the sector is very small and, as I said, the heads of these different organisations often didn't have a communications person

or a specialist to say what we really need to do is put out these voices more. The intention was certainly there, but often capability isn't there. (Tracey)

Tracey also felt the New Zealanders overall knew very little about the differences between refugees, asylum seekers and migrants. She also saw a resettlement sector that was completely stretched and under-funded, and as she had the experience, knowledge and capabilities to write about these issues, she felt a duty and responsibility to speak out. Therefore, she used her skills to advocate on behalf of these communities:

I thought that that was a small contribution that I could make. My expertise wasn't servicing clients; my expertise was actually helping in the media to get some messages out there that simply haven't been heard loud enough or heard at all. (Tracey)

Tracey strongly felt her work made a valuable contribution to reframing the refugee narrative, to provide information and dispel “*misconceptions of prejudice*”, and to create “*empathy and awareness*” through profiling refugee stories. By doing this she not only hoped to breakdown stereotypes, but to also create a “*national self-awareness*” of who we are as Kiwis – good people who welcome refugees – thus creating a “*collective goodwill and knowledge*” about what refugees have gone through. For Tracey, “*that is worth everything to me, everything*”. She too hopes that one day she will not need to talk on such issues, that people from refugee backgrounds will feel comfortable enough to speak for themselves:

I would hope that there would be a big portion of them that would say, Tracey let us talk instead, and I hope that there will be more and more that will supplant my voice, and that I will no longer be necessary to be a conduit. That would be my ultimate success. (Tracey)

Tracey and Murdoch’s argument is based on the idea that they inhabit a privileged place in society as Pākehā, journalists, and advocates. Therefore, they have a duty to speak out on these issues, on behalf of former refugees who may not want the media attention. Tracey and Murdoch do not necessarily have to speak out on behalf of refugees, they do it because they can and they want to. For example, when Tracey was talking about the photo exhibition ‘*Transplanted*’, it felt like it was all about

what she had achieved in challenging refugee stereotypes. The quote used above about this exhibition revealed a lot of 'I' statements: *"I would go from portrait to portrait and I would tell their stories [...] and it was important for me to put, for example, [...] two lawyers that happened to be refugees"*.

In contrast, creating the space for former refugees to share their voice was an important aspect of the work of Access Radio²⁸ station manager Kristin and Radio NZ journalist Lynda Chanwai-Earle, who were largely critical of the representation of refugees by other people. Kristin in particular was very conscious not to influence or represent the views of former refugees in any way, because:

I don't want my Pākehā, middle class, straight, binary woman filter to be effecting how they're represented. I know nothing about their culture, I haven't been to these countries, I haven't been through a civil war and then spent years in a refugee camp, anything like that. (Kristin)

Kristin was also involved in a media-training workshop, organised by ChangeMakers Refugee Forum in Wellington, to provide advice and training for people from refugee backgrounds who wished to tell their stories in the media. She said the feedback they got from former refugees in the workshop is that *"we're not seen, we're not heard, and it's not contextualised in our own way, it's through someone else's filter"*. For Kristin, Access Radio at least gives people an alternative space outside of the mainstream media where they can be themselves, play any music and talk about anything they want, and most importantly be able to control their story by making a radio programme that is *"by, for and about"* them.

As a journalist, Lynda was also very conscious about providing the space for people to tell their own stories how they want to:

[It's] important for me as a journalist to represent and to do it in a way that is not sensationalised, not jumping on the stereotype, opening up and creating that platform again that is really neutral to present all these amazing stories [...] You

²⁸ Access Radio is a community radio station in Wellington that provides an alternative media platform for former refugees and other community groups to produce their own radio programmes.

do it strength-based, within the community, from the community to the community [...] and that will also help to break down negative stereotypes.
(Lynda)

Lynda acknowledged that she does need to make editorial decisions as part of her job producing the Voices programme, but *“at the end of the day it’s their story ... [and] it’s so important that we do hear these stories”*. For Lynda, her job is not just *“about defying and exploding those stereotypes”*, but also about reflecting *“where they are right now, today, present and moving forward, what’s happening next, and also how do they feel?”*. It is about celebrating the here and now – what they have achieved, what they have survived, but also their hopes and dreams for the future. Lynda talked about the tension she faces in her work covering the stories of former refugees in NZ, while respecting their wish not to be seen as refugees: *“I hear it time and time again, please accept us as people, we’re not the label, we’re more than just the label refugee. And yet here I am doing these stories [about refugees]”*.

Tracey respects people’s decision not to be referred to as a refugee, but also believed that it was *“important that the word refugee is due the respect it should be afforded”*, and by avoiding using the word refugee *“you’re actually disrespecting the idea of being a refugee”*. What Tracey means here is the word ‘refugee’ has become so politicised that people want to avoid causing any offence or harm to people who are refugees. The legal status of refugee represents the hardships that person has been through, therefore avoiding using that term minimises the status.

The advocates and communications specialists I interviewed were mostly very aware and reflexive of their positionality speaking out on behalf of refugees and refugee issues. Some tried very hard to include the voices of former refugees in their campaign messaging, while others felt it was their duty to speak on behalf of those who may not be able to speak for themselves. While Tracey and Murdoch may feel a sense of responsibility to speak on behalf of refugees, as NZRC points out, it is important that former refugees are given the space to share their stories if they want to. Regardless of altruistic intentions, representing refugees and refugee issues on their behalf may risk silencing their voices entirely.

Summary

This chapter has analysed how refugees are represented in the media, and who is predominantly doing the representing. It has shown that refugees overseas are depicted as vulnerable, desperate victims who need to be saved by 'us'. In comparison, former refugees in NZ are represented as a mixture of victim and success story, often emphasising a person's 'trauma story', what they have achieved since resettlement, and the benefits to NZ. Both representations play into the moral and ethical argument raised by the media for increasing the refugee quota, but risk stereotyping refugees and helpless victims or 'deserving' refugees.

An analysis of who is speaking in the media revealed an overwhelming majority of non-refugee voices representing refugees and refugee issues, compared to a minority of former refugee voices. This trend also manifested in some of the interviews with the communications/advocacy people. Most were quite reflective in their practice and acknowledged their privileged position as advocates and the need to bring through more refugee voices. They genuinely wanted to do the very best for refugees and refugee background people, and challenge negative refugee stereotypes. However, regardless of altruistic intentions, some used that sense of privilege, duty and access to the media to justify speaking out on behalf of refugees.

The positioning of refugees as helpless victims and/or a benefit is linked to the media's argument for why NZ should raise the refugee quota and do more to help refugees. The next chapter addressed the second research question in relation to refugee representation and discourses of solidarity and welcome, and how these arguments are tied to notions of NZ national identity.

Chapter 7: Welcoming refugees is “the Kiwi way”

This chapter explores the findings in relation to media discourses of solidarity and welcome as put forth by the media analysed for this research. The previous chapter explored the dominant media representation of refugees, which presented refugees as victims who need to be saved or as a benefit to society. This chapter outlines the connection between refugee representation, discourses of solidarity, and NZ national identity, as analysed in the selected media articles, thus addressing research question 2. It builds on the findings presented in Chapter 6, in particular the way refugees were represented in the media’s argument for raising NZ’s refugee quota, and how this relates to imaginings of NZ values and moral responsibilities towards refugees and to humanitarian issues, such as the refugee crisis.

In NZ, public support for refugees gained momentum in 2015 (during the time period sampled for this study), with a number of grassroots movements and solidarity campaigns calling for a doubling of the annual refugee quota. As this chapter will show, the mainstream media also took up this call, with media commentators urging the government to show a stronger, more empathetic and welcoming response in light of the current refugee crisis. After providing an overview of the articles analysed for this research, this chapter will discuss the main moral and ethical arguments used by the media, and different rhetorical devices employed, followed by a discussion on the notion of Kiwi hospitality and the welcoming of refugees to NZ. The last section of this chapter will explore the notion of NZ’s national identity in relation the arguments used by the media for raising NZ’s refugee quota and responding to the refugee crisis.

Overview of media articles

The findings in this chapter draw on 76 articles from nzherald.co.nz (NZH) and stuff.co.nz, including a number of editorials (6), opinion pieces (22) and news stories (48) (refer back to Table 1 in Chapter 5). The majority of the articles analysed

for this research were wholly in favour of helping refugees, whether that be raising the refugee quota or sending more aid, and were critical of the National government's perceived inaction or reticence. Out of 76 articles, only one opinion piece and one editorial cautioned against any rash decisions. In his opinion piece for the NZH, columnist John Roughan commented that NZ should be careful not to confuse economic migrants looking for a better life with *"refugees in urgent need or real peril"* (*'Compassion blinds us to real refugee story'*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 12, 2015). An editorial from *The Press*, while supportive of raising the quota, did suggest that priority should be given *"to those in the worst state – genuine refugees fleeing from intolerable circumstances rather than those simply seeking a new life in a richer country"* (*'In present crisis, New Zealand could afford to take more refugees'*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 7, 2015). However, these two pieces represent a fraction of caution amidst an otherwise overwhelming ethical and moral argument in the media for welcoming more refugees to NZ. The next section unpacks this argument further and details some of the rhetorical devices (shaming, facts and figures, contribution vs cost) used by the media to illustrate why NZ, and specifically the NZ government on behalf of the NZ public, should show a more compassionate response to the refugee crisis.

Ethical and moral arguments

New Zealand has a proud record of being a responsible global citizen but on the issue of refugees we are sadly lagging behind the rest of the world, and have done so for quite some time [...] The time has come for our nation to [...] [show] our compassion to the Syrian people who have been forced to leave their country. (Adrian Rurawhe, *'We must help ease misery'*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 15, 2015)

Take them in, soothe their wounds, and allow them to live the kind of life everyone has a right to. Perhaps they will one day 'give back' to the community that took them in - but even if they don't, a life will be saved. (Andrea Vance, *'New Zealand is to take an extra 600 Syrian refugees'*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 7, 2015)

As these two quotes highlight, there is a strong moral and ethical argument running through the media articles, which is two-fold. Firstly, the Syrian refugee crisis is the biggest humanitarian crisis since the end of World War II and NZ has a moral duty to help as a good global citizen. Secondly, as decent, kind, compassionate human beings we must help and support vulnerable refugees. It is an emotive argument, with an emphasis on the 'tragic' and 'heartbreaking' that draws on our sense of moral duty and our values to help those less fortunate than us. Many of the editorial and opinion piece headlines encapsulate this sense of moral duty, with headlines such as '*We must help ease misery*'; '*Crisis is tragic, and we have a duty to help*'; '*Tragic image should shock us into action*'; and '*Now to really open your hearts*' leaving the reader in no doubt where the author of the article stands on this issue. The 'we' and 'us' the media refers to is sometimes directed at the NZ government, sometimes the NZ nation, and other times the NZ public, depending on the context and tone of the article.

As mentioned above, the majority of the opinion pieces, editorials and news articles analysed in this sample were pro-refugee, many calling on the NZ government to double NZ's refugee quota because, in the words of Murdoch Stephens, it is the least we can do "*in the face of unimaginable suffering*" (Murdoch Stephens, '*They're not migrants, double the refugee quota now*', stuff.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015). This 'suffering' of refugees, and in particular Syrian refugees, is described in very emotive terms. Political commentator Brian Rudman describes the refugees coming out of Syria as "*processions of the doomed and despairing*" and as a "*burgeoning flood of victims*" ('*Smart money is on opening doors to refugees*', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 2, 2015). Journalist and broadcaster Rachel Smalley's emotive description of the Syrian refugee crisis leaves little to the imagination:

Distraught mothers holding their babies and looking through razor wire. People dying, suffocating in trucks trying to flee their desperate and dead-end situations. The situation has deteriorated and rapidly. It is nothing, if not emotive. (Rachel Smalley, 'John Key has got it wrong on refugees – doing nothing is not an option', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 4, 2015)

Of all the images and stories about the Syrian refugee crisis, the photo of Alan Kurdi highlighted the scale of the tragedy and brought the reality of the crisis closer to home for New Zealanders, as this editorial from the NZH demonstrates:

Nobody could have been left untouched by the picture of a little boy's body being carried from the beach of a Turkish holiday resort after his family failed in an attempt to escape war-torn Syria for Europe. It encapsulated the reality and the tragedy of the world's worst migrant crisis since World War II. (Editorial, 'Crisis is tragic and we have a duty to help', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 4, 2015)

The power of Alan Kurdi's photo is that he could have been anyone's child and, as the media in this analysis reported, people in NZ had a very strong, emotive reaction to the publication of this photo and what it stood for. Reporting on a public protest calling for the NZ government to raise the quota, Nicholas Jones from the NZH interviewed Nureddin Abdurahman, originally from Ethiopia and a father of children aged 3 and 5, who said that he was deeply moved by the photograph of Alan: "*Last night after I came from university I was looking at my boy laying down on the bed, comparing with that boy on the coast. What is the difference between that boy and my boy?*" (Nicholas Jones, '*Tragic photo rallies New Zealand protesters*', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 4, 2015). In the same article, Green Party MP, Gareth Hughes, whose wife organised the protest, tells the reporter he believed the photo of Alan "*has touched many*" New Zealanders:

A picture paints a thousand words, and in this case it is telling a thousand stories around the thousands who are dying in the Mediterranean. As a parent, it is heart-breaking to see that image, and I think it resonates with Kiwis who hate to think that something like that is happening, and that we could be doing something about it. (Nicholas Jones, 'Tragic photo rallies New Zealand protesters', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 4, 2015).

It was this photo of Alan, and the public reaction to it and the wider refugee crisis, that sparked the media reviewed in this research to argue for a moral and ethical response to the refugee crisis, not only from New Zealanders but also from the government itself. It is based on the notion that 'we' as Kiwis 'hate' the thought of not doing anything in the face of such suffering, as mentioned in the above quote. Within this argument, various rhetorical devices were used including emotive

language, statistical information, shaming, comparisons, and drawing on NZ's political moral duties and privileged position, as will be outlined in more detail below.

The moral imperative to act

As mentioned above, there was a strong moral and ethical theme running through the articles reviewed for this research. One of the rhetorical devices used by the media in this analysis is that of moral duty – NZ had a moral duty to act as a prosperous and wealthy nation, and with the capacity, resources and capabilities to do more. In an open letter, mayors from around the country joined together to tell the government (as reported in the NZH) *“our moral duty is to help the human family far away from our relatively peaceful and prosperous country”* (Jimmy Ellingham, *‘Pressure mounting on NZ to increase refugee quota’*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 4, 2015). When asked by a Stuff reporter if NZ had a duty to raise its refugee quota and overseas humanitarian assistance budget, Vivien Maidaborn, executive director of Unicef NZ, replied: *“Yes. New Zealand is [a] wealthy and developed destination. There is no reason not to”* (*‘Tampa refugees call for the government to act on Syria crisis’*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 6, 2015). These quotes invoke a sense of privilege – that NZ is in a privileged position due to its relative wealth and capacity to act, and therefore has a moral duty to act.

Alongside this notion of privilege, was the argument that NZ also had certain political moral duties to help refugees, due to its position on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and various military deployments overseas. In an interview with Libby Wilson from Stuff, University of Waikato law professor Al Gillespie argued that NZ has a *“moral imperative”* to take refugees from Syria because of our military involvement in Iraq and elsewhere, and because of our role on the UNSC, and *“to do nothing is just unconscionable”*. He went on to argue:

We're just very lucky because we live in the most geographically isolated, beautiful part of the planet. We don't have refugees streaming over the border so we have got the luxury to think about it and do the right thing. We shouldn't use this luxury of geographical isolation to do nothing [...] Politically [taking

more refugees] is the right thing to do as well, because we're on the Security Council. We went forward on a campaign [...] saying that we were out there to change things, that we were going to stand up for what was right. And this is what's right. (Libby Wilson, 'Waikato academic calls John Key out on refugee quota', stuff.co.nz, Sep 2, 2015)

Again, this idea of being in a privileged position is invoked here. NZ is in a luxurious position of being 'geographically isolated' and therefore able to control who comes across our border. Therefore, NZ needed to use this privileged position to welcome more refugees. Alan Gamlen, an academic in migration studies, also argued in an opinion piece for the NZH that NZ has a 'moral duty' to do 'the right thing'. As a Western nation involved in military operations overseas, we are part of the problem, so we have to be part of the solution:

New Zealand should act because it has helped create a world in which there are more refugees than ever before ... We are part of the problem and we have a moral duty to help to fix it [...] With a seat at the United Nations Security Council and a former Prime Minister at the head of UNDP, New Zealand is on the centre of the world stage at a pivotal moment [...] We should fulfill our role on the Security Council by showing moral leadership and commitment to multilateral action [...] In service of our values and our interests, it is the right thing to do. (Alan Gamlen, 'Why NZ should raise the refugee quota', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015)

Gamlen too echoes this idea of privilege, not so much about our privileged position as a geographically isolated wealthy nation, but as a nation who has been given the responsibility as an elected member of the UNSC, who has a former prime minister heading the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and therefore is in a powerful position to act. According to Gamlen, NZ needs to use this position and show 'moral leadership', because it is the right thing to do, but also because it speaks to 'our values', harking back to the notion of national identity.

Building on this idea of the relationship between national identity and moral duty, Derek Burrows suggested, "*New Zealanders are justly proud of a national history that has been enriched by social conscience at home and responsible global citizenship*", and it was this reputation for social justice and fairness that helped NZ win a seat on

the UNSC. Burrows then argued that showing moral leadership on the refugee crisis *"is the chance for us to live up to our reputation"* (Derek Burrows, *'Refugee crisis a chance for New Zealand to live up to reputation'*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 16, 2015).

Other commentators corroborate this view of NZ's moral obligations and duty on the global stage, and criticised the National government for not taking action and showing leadership in the face of such a large-scale humanitarian crisis. Former Greens co-leader Metiria Turei was quoted in an article by Jim Chipp accusing the government of embarrassing NZ by its inaction, and *"has not reflected pride ordinary New Zealanders have always taken in shouldering their global humanitarian responsibilities"* (Jim Chipp, *'Red Cross, Greens call for New Zealand to take more Syrian refugees'*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 6, 2015). *The Dominion Post* also criticised the government, saying that NZ had lobbied hard to chair the UNSC, pushing its credentials as a *"champion of human rights"*, but is now happy *"to do the barest minimum"* (*'We have a duty to offer a home to more than 750 refugees'*, Sep 3, 2015). In another editorial, the NZH proclaimed countries such as NZ who are *"in that select position should be setting an example to the international community"* and *"to do nothing is to invite scorn. ('Crisis is tragic and we have a duty to help'*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 4, 2015).

There is clearly a strong assertion from media commentators that NZ had a moral duty to act in the face of the largest refugee crisis the world has seen. The arguments used by the media in this section draw on the notions of privilege, political responsibility, and values. NZ should be leading the way in refugee protection because it is in a privileged position as a relatively wealthy nation, sells itself as a humanitarian leader, is involved in military operations overseas, and most importantly holds a seat on the UNSC. Therefore, NZ has a responsibility as nation and good global citizen. To do nothing is morally wrong, goes against NZ values, and reflects badly on our 'good' international reputation. Morality plays a major role in the media's argument for raising the quota and responding to the refugee crisis. Analysis of the articles has shown that there is a huge shaming element to this argument, especially towards former Prime Minister John Key, as the next section will describe.

Shame on you

This section describes the emotive argument put forth by the media in the articles analysed, which used ‘shaming’ as a rhetorical technique, largely directed at the National government, accusing them of lacking empathy and moral leadership on the refugee crisis. Former Prime Minister John Key was specifically targeted in these criticisms. Through the media, Key was accused of being heartless, cold, spineless, gutless, and considering his family history (his mother was a Jewish refugee who fled to Britain after Hitler annexed Austria), he should really have known better. As one protester at a rally for increasing the refugee quota was reported to yell out “*do unto others as we did to your mother*” (Nicholas Jones, ‘*Tragic photo rallies New Zealand protesters*’, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 4, 2015).

The Dominion Post suggested in an editorial that perhaps the reason former PM John Key was “*so granite-faced*” on responding to the refugee crisis is because he did not want to be accused of “*being soft on people like his mother*” (‘*We have a duty to offer a home to more than 750 refugees*’, stuff.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015). On first impressions, this editorial may come across simply trying to explain Key’s response to the refugee crisis up to this point. However, digging deeper into the choice of wording used here, by calling Key ‘granite-faced’ and suggesting he does not want to be seen as ‘being soft’, *The Dominion Post* is suggesting Key is cold hearted and that this is surprising considering his family history. This editorial is therefore making a value-based judgement on Key’s seeming lack of response to the refugee crisis.

Other commentators accused John Key of lacking empathy and moral leadership in his response to the refugee crisis. Former Labour leader Andrew Little was quoted as saying: “*There are times in politics when you are faced with stark moral choices between right and wrong. This is one of those times*” (Jo Moir, ‘*Refugee crisis: John Key softens on refugee quota*’, stuff.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015). Philip Matthew wrote, “*John Key seemed puzzled and unmoved by the crisis. That he seemed incapable of a sincere emotional response*” (Philip Matthews, ‘*What is a New Zealander?*’, stuff.co.nz, Sep 12, 2015). According to Murdoch Stephens, spokesperson for ‘Doing our Bit’, John Key “*seems desperate to be on the wrong side of history, forsaking those fleeing the terror of Syria’s leader Basha al Assad*” (Murdoch Stephens, ‘*They’re not migrants, double the refugee quota now*’, stuff.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015). As these quotes highlight,

there was a real sense in the media that John Key and his government had got their response to the refugee crisis totally and morally wrong.

Much of this contempt for John Key and the National Government was sparked by the reaction to the photo of Alan Kurdi and the governments' perceived inaction. For example, Columnist Eva Bradley was strongly moved by the photo of Alan Kurdi, and equally disgusted at the government for sitting on their hands, as people continue to risk their lives and die in the face of the worst refugee crisis in history:

NERO fiddled while Rome burned and I fear the same thing is happening right now in New Zealand as we wait for due process before stepping up and helping with the Syrian crisis. As the bodies of babies continue to wash up on beaches and thousands of ordinary people just like you and me keep taking unspeakable risks in favour of staying put in their homes, the people who need to stand up and make change happen are flapping about wondering if it's "right". ('Tragic image should shock us into action', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 6, 2015)

Bradley goes on to argue that as a mother she simply cannot understand how John Key, a parent himself, can waste time debating the issue. Alan, in his little red t-shirt and blue shorts, reminds her of her own toddler, loved by his parents, but “*now he [is] dead. Washed up on a beach alone. The hopes and dreams his parents had for him swept away*”. Bradley asks,

[I]s there any doubt that opening up our borders to give people like this a chance at life is right? ... How many other little boys will wash up on the same shores before we are prepared to share the good fortune of our birth with those who drew the short straw?

These rhetorical questions did not need an answer, because obviously the expected answer was yes. NZ needed to open up its borders and welcome more refugees, because it was considered the right thing to do and the government's inaction, or 'flapping about' as Bradley suggested, was morally reprehensible. Others shared this sentiment. As journalist Rachel Smalley argued, “*doing nothing is not an option ... there can be no defence for doing nothing ... our government got it very, very wrong*” (*'John Key has got it wrong on refugees – doing nothing is not an option'*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 4, 2015). *The Dominion Post* added to this view claiming that the photo of

drowned Syrian toddler Alan Kurdi, washed up on a Turkish beach, *“is an image which brooks no argument and allows no excuses. No civilized government can stand by and allow this to go on”* (Editorial, ‘*We should take more than a few hundred extra refugees*’, stuff.co.nz, Sep 8, 2015). According to the media, responding to the refugee crisis was not about politics, but about basic humanity and common decency.

Other commentators felt the John Key government was completely out of touch with the reality and scale of this humanitarian crisis. In an opinion piece, Anglican Bishop of Wellington Justin Duckworth reflected on the government’s response to the unfolding crisis: *“[I]t is interesting to see how far removed our government is from the values of care and compassion expressed by its people”* (Justin Duckworth, ‘*Let more refugees in*’, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 10, 2015). Columnist Tracey Barnett *“watched in amazement”* as John Key, without hesitation, announced that NZ was unlikely to increase quota, and wondered *“how completely out of touch the New Zealand response looked on the world stage”*. Considering the government’s *“dogged refusal”* to raise the quota, columnist Brian Rudman suggested that perhaps an alternative flag was in order, *“one with a black background, decorated with rolls of razor wire”* that *“would leave the world in no doubt what we thought of the ‘huddled masses yearning to breathe free’ of Statue of Liberty fame”*. Rudman accuses the government of keeping *“the drawbridge firmly up”* while still insisting that the annual refugee quota of 750 people, which has not changed for 30 years, *“is fair”* (‘*Smart money is on opening doors to refugees*’, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 2, 2015).

The most scathing criticism of Prime Minister John Key came from political journalist Andrea Vance (‘*New Zealand is to take an extra 600 Syrian refugees*’, stuff.co.nz, Sep 7, 2015). Labeling his inaction as shameful, she says:

There but for the grace of God go you, or I, or John Key. That you are not one of the hopeless millions joining the largest migration crisis in living memory is only an accident of birthplace. You go home at night to a safe, dry warm home not because you worked or saved hard, but because you were lucky enough to be born in a developed country. A place that has not been torn apart by warfare.

Vance goes on to accuse the government of turning its back on refugees who need our help, allowing no more than 750 refugees “*to rebuild their shattered lives in New Zealand*” and “*coldly refus[ing] to even consider an emergency quota.*” She argues that Key’s “*defence of doing nothing was weak*” and “*wore thin as a reel of heart-breaking images played daily*” on our T.V. screens and in our newspapers. Vance’s highly emotive attack leaves no doubt what this journalist thinks of John Key – cold-hearted, weak, and morally lacking. Vance argues that it is only by pure luck that Key was born in NZ, and not in a war-torn country. Again, here the notion of privilege is evoked to convey the difference between ‘us’ – a wealthy, peaceful and lucky nation, and ‘them’ – the helpless, vulnerable, desperate victims of the refugee crisis.

In a slightly less scathing, but no less critical, response to John Key’s argument that NZ couldn’t “*offer a proper ‘service’ to a larger number*” of refugees, *The Dominion Post* commented that this was “*an oddly corporate way*” of referring to a humanitarian issue (‘*We have a duty to offer a home to more than 750 refugees*’, Sep 3, 2015). Referring to the Key’s response as ‘oddly corporate’ implies John Key lacked empathy and understanding for those caught up in the refugee crisis.

However, even when the National Government finally bowed to public pressure and announced an emergency intake of Syrian refugees, this still was not enough for some journalists. Political reporter Claire Trevett was rather cynical about John Key’s sudden change of heart, which she described as “*a rather acrobatic about-flip*” compared to his “*shoulder-shrugging press conference*” of the week before where “*he dismissed even contemplating any action*”. But in the face of growing public pressure and a “*PR hit*”, Key had to be seen to be doing something (Claire Trevett, ‘*Key bowing to the opinion of others*’, *nzherald.co.nz*, Sep 8, 2015). Trevett’s response denotes a rather cynical or even sarcastic appraisal of the government’s sudden about turn.

As the quotes in this section demonstrate, the media is standing in real moral judgment of the government, especially in their criticism of former Prime Minister John Key. Where the previous section highlighted the line of argumentation based on political moral reasoning, the moral argument here is one based on highly emotive language. According to a range of media commentators, the government’s response was inadequate, shameful and out of touch with the majority of New Zealanders, and John Key had shown a real lack of moral leadership on this issue.

This emotive argument was often supported by facts and figures of the refugee crisis, comparing NZ's record on resettlement with other countries in order to highlight what NZ should be doing, as the next section details.

Facts and figures: the weight of evidence

Statistical information about the refugee crisis, such as the number of people displaced and hosted by other countries, were used by the article writers not only to criticise the NZ government for not doing enough (shaming), but also to emphasise the reasons why NZ should do more, including raising the refugee quota. NZ's global ranking on refugee resettlement is compared with other countries, which serves to highlight what NZ *is not* doing. Statistics highlighting the size and scope of the refugee crisis were presented to highlight the gravity of the situation for Syrian refugees, and the disproportionate hosting burdens of countries bordering Syria. Experts and global organisations (e.g.: IOM, UNHCR, Amnesty International) are called upon to clarify these facts, and add weight behind them. It is a strong ethical and humanitarian argument that criticises NZ for not doing its 'fair share'.

Many of the articles drew comparisons with other countries around the world that were seemingly doing far more to help refugees, especially the countries next to Syria, as political journalist Andrea Vance pointed out:

The borders of Syria's neighbours are overwhelmed. Turkey is sheltering up to 2 million Syrians, spending \$4bn. One in five people living in Lebanon is a refugee. Jordan is now home to well over 600,000 Syrians, and Egypt 1350,000. Infrastructure in these countries is creaking under the pressure. (Andrea Vance, 'Nevermind the comments, here come the Syrians', stuff.co.nz, Sep 13, 2015)

What Vance is implying here is that these countries are doing far more than their fair share, 'creaking under the pressure', and NZ's annual refugee quota of 750 people is miniscule in comparison. Therefore, NZ really should be doing more to share the burden.

NZ is also compared with other western nations, and how few refugees we take per capita. According to a political opinion piece by Andy Fyers:

New Zealand's total refugee population in 2014 was 1349, equivalent to about 0.3 refugees per 1000 people. That is five times fewer refugees per head of population than Australia and about 47 times fewer than Sweden. This places New Zealand 87th in the world for refugees per head of population. (Andy Fyers, 'How New Zealand's refugee quota stacks up internationally', stuff.co.nz, Sep 9, 2015)

NZ's record on refugee resettlement is broken down bit by bit in the next section of this opinion piece, outlining how little NZ is doing, especially for a country, which according to this opinion piece in the *Manawatu Standard* prides itself on doing the right thing:

But the most important number to New Zealand is 750. That's the country's quota for how many refugees it will take each year, a number that is not always reached. More importantly that number, 750, has not changed since 1987. In that time New Zealand's population has grown from about 3.3 million to 4.6 million, which means New Zealand now accepts, at best, one refugee for every 6000 residents. That ranks New Zealand 90th in terms of refugees taken in per capita, which for a country that prides itself as a leader in the field of human rights is pitiful. (Opinion, 'New Zealand must take in more refugees', stuff.co.nz, Sep 5, 2015)

Doing the right thing is something columnist Tracey Barnet is quite scathing about, in terms of NZ's global ranking for hosting refugees. The word 'paltry' leaves the reader in no doubt about what she thinks of NZ's annual refugee quota, indicating that NZ should be ashamed of such a small annual intake, especially compared to 'our relative wealth'.

This paltry 750 in-take number has landed New Zealand 90th in the world for the total number of refugees we take per capita (it's worse if you measure it by our relative wealth, then we fall to 116th by GDP). (Tracey Barnet, 'Would you host a refugee?', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 4, 2015)

Even the Act Party, a right-wing conservative party, felt NZ's refugee quota did not compare favourably well with other countries, in terms of NZ's wealth or GDP. When asked by a journalist whether the government should raise the refugee quota, leader David Seymour replied:

It's interesting - international comparisons of the number of refugees settled considering our comparative wealth puts us at 115th out of 200 countries, which is pretty unusual - normally when you see an international ranking New Zealand is usually in the top 10, if not the top 5, for most things. (Aimee Gulliver, 'Increase NZ's refugee quota, Government's support partners say', stuff.co.nz, Sep 2, 2015)

Seymour also suggests that NZ's international rating on refugee resettlement, in comparison, is '*pretty unusual*', because NZ is normally known for being better than that '*for most things*'. This ties in with the idea that NZ is usually known for punching above its weight on the globally stage, especially for such a small country at the bottom of the world (for examples of the different ways in which NZ national identity is constructed see Cain, Kahu, & Shaw, 2017; Liu, McCreanor, McIntosh, & Teaiwa, 2005). The fact that New Zealand's not in the 'top five' for refugee resettlement is not only 'unusual', but perhaps even embarrassing for NZ, because the country is normally known for being much better than this.

The following comment from political journalist Andrea Vance in another article highlights the generosity of other countries compared to NZ, and even takes this one-step further by suggesting NZ should be aghast that Australia of all places is doing better than us when it comes to resettling refugees:

Generous Icelanders have opened up their hearts and their homes, offering to take 10,000. Tiny Lebanon and Jordan are providing shelter for their Syrian neighbours. Pakistan has taken 1.6 million from Afghanistan. Per capita, Australia - Australia! - gives homes to five times more refugees than New Zealand. (Andrea Vance, 'John Key shifts stance on refugees as hospitable Kiwis make a point', stuff.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015)

By emphasizing 'Australia!', Vance is implying that even Australia, with its well publicised poor record on asylum seeker rights (e.g. Burnside, 2015; Farrell, 2015;

Mares, 2001; Marr, 2003; Mumford, 2015), is doing a better job than NZ when it comes to resettling refugees, based on a per capita measure. Therefore, the argument is made that NZ should be doing more to help refugees, if only because we are better than Australia.

This argument, based on statistics and comparisons to other countries draws on the notion that NZ should be doing more, not just because we have the resources, capacity and capability to do more, but also because it is the morally right thing to do, and that is who 'we' are as a nation. 'We' are better than this, certainly better than Australia of all places, and we should be doing more to help. The next section highlights the final rhetorical device used in the ethical and moral arguments put forth by the media in my sample size – the contribution refugees make to society verses how much they cost to resettle.

Contribution vs cost

Adding to the moral argument for bringing more refugees to NZ, several commentators (in 12 articles) made comparisons between the contributions refugees make to society in the long run, versus the initial cost of resettlement. Those who focus on the benefits to society of refugee resettlement emphasised what refugees bring to NZ (skills, education, motivation, and entrepreneurship) and how they will contribute to and enrich NZ society. A key argument here is that refugee resettlement is a long-term investment, with commentators noting that although there is an upfront cost, the benefits far outweigh the initial cost, with some arguing that refugees will give back tenfold to the country that gave them this opportunity of a second life. They argue that most refugees are generally highly educated, or their children will go on to be highly educated, they may set up businesses and employ others. Therefore, spending money on resettling refugees should be seen as an investment for the future.

This argument can be seen in an article featured in the business section of stuff.co.nz (*'Refugees are good for NZ's economy'*, Sep 9, 2015), in which economist Shamubeel Eaqub was interviewed about the long-term benefits of increasing the quota. He argued that international evidence suggests that refugees have a positive impact on

the economy, but that in NZ the debate only focused on the upfront cost of refugee resettlement. He compared this to the benefits of spending money on sporting events where, for example, the long term benefits were “trumpeted”, noting that, “[I]f the Rugby World Cup is worth so many billions of dollars to the economy, I bet refugees are worth a lot more”. Massey University Distinguished Professor Paul Spoonley, interviewed in the same article, agreed that migrants contributed “more to tax coffers than they took out”, and that refugees were more likely to make a positive contribution to the economy over time, citing the economic contributions made by Jewish refugees who arrived here during and after World War II and the Vietnamese ‘boat people’ in the late 1970s.

Brian Rudman also uses this argument, writing that we need to be smart enough to see the benefits that refugees can bring to this country (*‘Smart money is on opening doors to refugees’*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 2, 2015), and that refugees represent a whole spectrum of society – doctors, teachers, nurses, businessmen, engineers, and the list goes on. Rudman argues that one refugee NZ let in “even produced a son who became a Prime Minister” (referring to former Prime Minister John Key who is the son of a refugee). His point is that many refugees have gone on to have very successful careers and have greatly enriched NZ society, and they can again, but only “[i]f we’re smart enough to let them in”. Wellington City’s Mayor Justin Lester corroborates this view, quoted in the NZH as saying that increasing the quota can only be beneficial, because refugees “add and contribute to society, and give us a cultural understanding and awareness, making our country much stronger and richer” (Emily Norman, *‘Mayors back increase in refugee numbers’*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 9, 2015).

In an opinion piece, Donna Mojab also argues NZ should look beyond the initial cost of resettlement and instead see the potential contributions refugees can make, and cites the example of former Prime Minister John Key. Mojab argued that New Zealanders would be surprised to learn that:

[M]any of the current refugees are highly educated and skilled people, surgeons, engineers, academics etc., who will be able to offer their talents and skills, paid-for by their home country, to the benefit of our society. Refugee families are usually highly motivated to make the best of the precious opportunities that are given to them. (Donna Mojab, ‘Refugee fear mongering must stop’, Sep 7, 2015)

The fact that media and commentators feel the need to emphasise the benefits of refugee resettlement and the various skills refugees bring, suggests that New Zealanders generally must think that refugees are uneducated, unskilled and a burden to society, and that refugee advocates feel the need to prove that this is not the case. In their article *'Payback time: What refugees are really worth'* (stuff.co.nz, Sep 13, 2015), Shabnam Dastgheib and Jack van Beynen set out to prove to the reader the real cost-benefit of refugee resettlement: *"The Prime Minister says 750 Syrian refugees will cost the country a cool \$50 million. We say they will contribute far more to our community than what they cost – and here's the evidence"*. The article goes on to tell the stories of several former refugees, and hold them up as examples of refugees *"who have done their bit"* for NZ. Those interviewed included a human rights lawyer (and now Green Party MP), a successful businessman, and a nurse who is 'giving back' to the NZ community.

Other former refugees also added their voice to the mix, noting the contribution and benefits refugees make. In an interview with stuff.co.nz (*'Tampa refugees call for the government to act on Syria crisis'*, Sep 6, 2015), former Tampa refugee, Abbas Nazari, stressed the need to see refugee resettlement as a huge benefit for NZ overtime:

You have to see this as a long-term investment. We are a small country, we need migrants and refugees. In the short term they need assistance. If you look five or ten years down the road they will be contributing to New Zealand society [...] That is what adds to the fabric of NZ society.

In another article, Dr. Hassan Ibrahim (from the Canterbury Refugee Council), stressed the importance of seeing the bigger picture. If people think refugees are a burden, *"[t]hey are simply not aware of the role migrants have contributed in developed countries, like the USA, UK. They have brought much to those countries and made them better, and they will make New Zealand better too"* (Tess McClure, *'Why we left: Refugees tell the stories of their journeys to New Zealand'*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 13, 2015).

Some commentators use historical precedent to build this argument, noting that NZ has been built on the back of migrants, and refugees have contributed immensely to the arts, politics, sciences, and to the general culture of this country, and that

therefore, NZ should not hesitate to welcome more refugees. As Alan Gamlen puts it:

As a nation of immigrants that has been enriched by past flows of refugees [...] New Zealand should be in the very vanguard of global action to protect refugees. But it isn't. (Alan Gamlen, 'Why NZ should raise the refugee quota', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015)

However, despite these arguments, the National Government defended its decision not to raise the annual refugee quota, citing cost and the potential strain on services if the quota should rise. In response to criticism that NZ should be welcoming more Syrian refugees under an emergency quota, former Immigration Minister Michael Woodhouse, quoted in the NZH, argued that the government's response was "appropriate" and a higher number of refugees "could put unreasonable strain on services, affecting the quality of resettlement outcomes for all refugees in New Zealand" (Claire Trevett, 'NZ to take 750 Syrian refugees over three years', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 7, 2015). Prime Minister John Key also defended the government's response to the Syrian refugee crisis saying it was important that NZ could handle the extra numbers coming in on the emergency intake and to ensure resettlement was successful. Responding to a suggestion that NZ could take in 10,000 more refugees, Key said:

With the greatest respect, do they actually understand what that would do to the system in New Zealand? [...] we have to actually house people, we have to be able to give them services [...] I have a responsibility to do what's right for New Zealand and what works for New Zealand. ('Syrian crisis: John Key says extra refugees will put strain on services', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 8, 2015)

While the government used cost and stretched services as a reason for not raising the refugee quota, media commentators took to this argument like a red bull to a flag, accusing the government of caring more about spending money on a flag referendum, subsidising big business, or on the Rugby World Cup than refugees in need. In an opinion piece for *The Timaru Herald* ('Refugee crisis a chance for New Zealand to live up to reputation', stuff.co.nz, Sep 16, 2015), Derek Burrows argued that for Key to keep bringing up the cost of raising the quota as a reason for us not to do our bit for refugees is "risible":

This is a government prepared to spend \$26 million on deciding whether New Zealanders are in favour of adopting a new flag even though only John Key seems to have been asking the question. This is also the administration that handed Warner Bros Entertainment \$150 million in tax breaks to make the Hobbit trilogy in New Zealand. And let's not forget the \$36 million that was stumped up for an America's Cup challenge [...] Are flags, flims and a millionaires' yachting tournament really more important than the lives of people who have lost their country, their homes and, in many cases, members of their family?

Other media commentators shared this view. Political columnist Brian Rudman argued that the government is “happy to spend \$25.4 million on sending 143 soldiers to stir up the Iraqi hornets’ nest, but has no extra money to assist the burgeoning flood of victims” (*‘Smart money is on opening doors to refugees’*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 2, 2015). Refugee advocate Murdoch Stephens declared that there was no excuse for NZ to not do our bit for refugees, especially when the government is “prepared to spend millions on a flag referendum and bribing Saudi businessmen” (Murdoch Stephens, *‘They’re not migrants, double the refugee quota now’*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015).

What these commentators, and others, contend is that the government’s argument that increasing the quota will put a strain on services and cost too much is a misnomer. The implication is that services are stretched because they have been chronically underfunded for years, and if the government increased funding then it could afford to bring more refugees here. However, the government is more than happy to spend money on a flag referendum, the Rugby World Cup, and to keep foreign businessmen happy. As the Green Party co-leader, James Shaw, was quoted as saying in the NZH: “*It is a matter of prioritisation*” (Claire Trevett, *‘NZ to take 750 Syrian refugees over three years’*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 7, 2015).

Donna Mojab also shared this argument for prioritisation. It does not have to be a zero sum game – we can look after our own and resettle more refugees at the same time. It is about prioritising the spending of public money, as Donna Mojab argues:

But what about the argument that we cannot afford to take on more refugees and that we should look after our own needy people first? It is a shame that people who make this argument did not apply it to the deployment of our troops to the Middle East. The cost of sending our soldiers to the Middle East for two years happens to be exactly the same cost as doubling our refugee quota; \$60m. On the face of it, \$60m seems like a lot of money, but don't forget that we are spending almost half as much on the flag referendum alone. The total cost of a new flag is estimated at \$70m. Then there are our government's subsidies and various tax credits to big businesses that, by comparison, will dwarf Government's required contribution to the refugee crisis. Simply put, the money argument doesn't stand up to close scrutiny because we are asking the government to get their priorities right, not to spend more money. (Donna Mojab, 'Refugee fear mongering must stop', stuff.co.nz, Sep 7, 2015)

The analysis of the media in this section used the contribution vs cost argument to suggest that NZ has historically benefited from refugees, to rebut the government's arguments for not resettling more refugees, and to shame the government's inaction on the current refugee crisis. It is implied that because NZ has benefited culturally and economically from refugees in the past, that somehow the NZ government should know better. The strong ethical and moral arguments analysed in the above sections link very strongly to the idea of 'Kiwi' hospitality – the NZ tradition of welcoming refugees. This theme will be explored in the next section.

Kiwi hospitality

People up and down the country called for Kiwis to open their hearts and homes to these families, and the Government had to respond. Although it is not as generous as we could be, we welcome this response, because at least it will be an additional 100 people that New Zealanders will now be helping, and that is a good thing. (Adrian Rurawhe, 'We must help ease misery', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 15, 2015)

Our geographical isolation from the rest of the world has never before prevented New Zealanders from opening their homes, hearts and resources to the displaced [...] Let Kiwis do what we do best - providing generous hospitality. (Justin Duckworth, 'Let more refugees in', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 10, 2015)

The arguments used by the media outlined so far in this chapter focus on NZ's ethical and moral responsibility to help refugees, which is tied to the notion of Kiwi hospitality – the welcoming of refugees. As these two quotes above highlight, the main hospitality arguments for raising the quota and welcoming more refugees to NZ are linked to the idea that New Zealanders are kind and generous. According to the above opinion pieces, New Zealanders open their hearts and supposedly, their homes. New Zealanders want to help vulnerable people, because that is who 'we' are as Kiwis – 'providing generous hospitality' to vulnerable people is 'the Kiwi way'.

According to the media articles analysed in this research, hospitable New Zealanders were largely dismayed by the perceived government inaction and slow response to the Syrian refugee crisis. Political commentator Bryan Edwards warned in his column that the government could expect "*plenty more heat*" from the general public over its response to the refugee crisis, and that the government will be judged on how well it "*deals with those we do let in*" (Bryan Edwards, 'Political roundup: NZ is part of the refugee problem', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 6, 2015). In an opinion piece for stuff.co.nz ('John Key shifts stance on refugees as hospitable Kiwis make a point', Sep 3, 2015), political reporter Andrea Vance claimed, "*hospitable Kiwis have made it clear their anger at the Government's feeble response*". These two commentators believe that the government were on the wrong side of 'hospitable Kiwis', or at the very least has severely misjudged public reaction to the refugee crisis. New Zealanders want to help and welcome refugees, and expect their government to do the same.

In a NZH news story covering an Auckland rally calling for the government to welcome 10,000 refugees, former refugee and rally attendee, Laila Saber, was quoted as saying "*there was no excuse for not having 10,000 refugees here. We really need to save them [...] We have to open our borders. We are not doing nearly enough*". Another attendee interviewed for the story, Campbell Larsen, said that although he appreciated that resettling people is not easy, NZ's "*hardline approach to welcoming*

such a small number of refugees is disappointing" (Russell Blackstock, *'Rally calls on Key to increase refugee quota'*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 19, 2015). The organizer of another rally in Wellington told Stuff that the event represented all those New Zealanders who wanted to see the quota increase, with the crowd chanting "*say it loud and say it clear, refugees are welcome here*" (Aimee Gulliver, *'Protesters at Parliament call for refugee quota increase'*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 4, 2015). There were other vigils and protests held up and down the country in support of refugees and, as Amnesty International executive director Grant Bayldon told Stuff "*I think it's showing that New Zealanders are welcoming of refugees here*" (Laura Walters, *'Thousands call for increased refugee quota at vigils'*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 10, 2015).

Other news articles detailed how 'hospitable' New Zealanders took to social media to express their dissatisfaction with the government's response, signed petitions, and offer to host refugees in their own homes. New Zealander Urs Signer was interviewed by the NZH after he set up the Facebook page 'Open homes – open borders – we will host a refugee – Aotearoa', which called on ordinary New Zealanders to open up their homes and host a refugee (Scott Yeoman, *'Hundreds of Kiwis pledge to help refugees'*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015). Signer was quoted as saying that he had received an "*amazing outpour [sic] of solidarity and love*" from people all over the country who wanted to show that "*refugees were welcome here*". The journalist then reported on other comments that had been left on the Facebook page by other 'hospitable' Kiwis. One person in Invercargill wrote, "*I don't have much, but I don't care, because they have nothing and nowhere. I'll happily take a family*". A person in Canterbury offered up their spare rooms, even though they weren't "*flash*" and the "*curtains are not sorted*". Others offered to help with food, furniture, clothing, English lessons, and other basic needs and skills that would help "*a displaced family integrate into NZ society*".

According to this news article, hundreds of Kiwis have offered to host refugees and fill the gap where the NZ government will not, even though they 'don't have much' and their spare rooms may not be 'flash', but it is better than doing nothing, especially because Syrian refugees have 'nothing and nowhere'. This show of Kiwi hospitality is what Manawatu Muslims Association president Zulfiqar Haider Butt described to Stuff as reflecting "*the true nature of Kiwi – welcoming and soft-hearted*"

(Kelsey Wilkie, 'Manawatu agencies welcome additional refugees', stuff.co.nz, Sep 8, 2015), and ties into the representation of refugees as helpless victims who need to be saved.

Anglican and Catholic Church leaders also called upon NZ's hospitable nature and tradition of welcoming refugees. In an open letter to the government, and reported in the NZH, church leaders urged the Prime Minister to make sure NZ "*play its part and to respond with the compassion and hospitality for which we are renowned*" (Kurt Bayer, 'John Key on refugee crisis: We're not ruling our doing more', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015).

Columnist and refugee advocate Tracey Barnett also drew on this idea of 'the true nature of Kiwis' when she asked the NZ public in an opinion piece whether they would consider personally hosting a refugee (*'Would you host a refugee?'* nzherald.co.nz, Sep 4, 2015). Barnett argued that the National government's response to the refugee crisis does not reflect, in her opinion, the "*real views of Kiwis*", the "*quiet majority*", who see this crisis as a fundamentally humanitarian issue and who, at the end of day, believe NZ should be doing more. She said:

I'm putting my money on the New Zealand people. Because quietly, every single one of us understands one thing: New Zealand's greatest richness has nothing to do with money. New Zealand holds two things in the palm of its hand that most of the world can only envy; safety and peace. Isn't it time we unclenched our fist just a little to share?

Barnett's argument here is not just that New Zealanders are on the whole kind hospitable people who want to help refugees caught up in this crisis, but also because New Zealanders realise that we are in the privileged position of being a peaceful and safe country. Therefore, we have a duty to be hospitable – both the government and the NZ public – to 'unclench' our fist as Barnett puts it, open up our border, and share our good fortunes with those less fortunate than us.

The notion of NZ hospitality that is evoked in these media examples speaks to the idea of New Zealanders as compassionate, welcoming people who are keen to help vulnerable victims of war, which also feeds into a sense of NZ national identity – helping refugees is who we are as Kiwis. This picture of Kiwi hospitality from

ordinary New Zealander who are willing to pitch in and help out, literally by hosting a refugee in their own home, is in sharp contrast to the government's response, which is represented by the media as being almost inhospitable. According to the media, the government's response is not only out of touch with the wishes of ordinary New Zealanders, but goes against NZ's historic tradition of welcoming refugees, as the next section highlights.

Historic record

In the same spirit in which these past refugees were welcomed and valued and given access to public-sector employment and state housing, New Zealand should now welcome today's refugees, and adequately fund the organizations providing services to help them heal, adapt and thrive here. (Alan Gamlen, 'Why NZ should raise the refugee quota', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015)

Various journalists and commentators used NZ's past record on welcoming refugees to argue why NZ should welcome Syrian refugees, and to point out the government was on the wrong side of history. In an opinion piece for *The Timaru Herald*, Derek Burrows argues that the government's reluctance to welcome Syrian refugees is in "*sharp contrast to the public attitude displayed by Kiwis in 1944 when 838 Polish refugees arrived by ship in Wellington and were welcomed with open arms ... most of whom went on to become loyal and successful New Zealand citizens*". And, according to Burrows, much like the Poles, the Syrians "*with public goodwill and the support of their communities ... will also become useful, contributing members of New Zealand society*" ('*Refugee crisis a chance for New Zealand to live up to reputation*', stuff.co.nz, Sep 16, 2015).

The welcoming of Polish refugees in 1944 was another example cited by political commentator Bryce Edwards who noted that "*Of course there have been times when New Zealand has been more compassionate*" (Bryce Edwards, '*Political roundup: NZ is part of the refugee problem*', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 6, 2015). A *Dominion Post* editorial also used the resettlement of Polish refugees to remind readers that NZ has a long tradition of hosting refugees. This is a tradition that New Zealanders should be

proud of, and government inaction over the refugee crisis goes against this tradition, and against our reputation as an upholder of human rights:

[New Zealand] has often prided itself as a global citizen and a champion of human rights ... Sometimes New Zealand has been generous to refugees – the Fraser Government brought 750 Polish children into the country in 1944 – and we are proud to recall that generosity. It is true that New Zealand is also a small country and can't make much difference to the current problem. But it can play its part. ('We have a duty to offer a home to more than 750 refugees', Sep 3, 2015)

More recent history is called upon by political reporter Claire Trevett, who asked former Prime Minister Helen Clark what she thought the NZ government should do in regards to the Syrian refugee crisis. Clark replied "*Think Tampa*", referring to the 150 Afghan refugees NZ agreed to resettle after they were rescued by the Norwegian container ship Tampa in 2001, a moment she has since described as one of her proudest as Prime Minister (Claire Trevett, '*Helen Clark urges PM to follow her on refugees*', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 5, 2015).

However, this argument was not unanimous. In an opinion piece for *The Dominion Post*, historian and former Hungarian refugee Ann Beaglehole gives a different account of NZ's hospitality towards refugees, questioning the myth that New Zealanders are necessarily always warm, kind and welcoming to all refugees ('*New Zealand has long had a mixed record on refugees*', stuff.co.nz, Sep 8, 2015). Beaglehole argued that some refugees are more welcome than others are, and this often came down to the colour of their skin and the skills they had to offer. She recounts how Polish and Hungarian refugees that were resettled during and after World War II were welcomed because they were white, and had the work skills NZ needed at the time. Whereas during the 1930s, NZ turned away most Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Germany as they were seen to be at odds with NZ's "*cultural life*". Similarly, many Chinese refugees fleeing the Japanese in the 1930s, bar a small number of women and children, were also not wanted. Therefore, Beaglehole went on to ask, will Syrian refugees coming in on the emergency quota "*find a welcoming community? We will have to wait and see*".

The media here have portrayed this idea of Kiwi hospitality as one that is traditionally very welcoming towards refugees, and plays on notion of national identity and warm and generous people. However, as Ann Beaglehole points out, that hospitality has not always been particularly forthcoming, and was often conditional on whether refugees will fit into NZ society and what they will contribute. This suggests there may be a tension between humanitarian discourses of hospitality, of the like seen in the media articles reviewed for this research, and the actual practice of hospitality in reality. The notion of conditional hospitality, or at least caution around rushing into opening up the borders to more refugees, was alluded to in some media articles during the September 2015 sample, as will be discussed below.

Conditional hospitality

Although the articles analysed predominantly supported the idea that NZ could and should do more to help refugees, there were a few instances where this support was questioned, not only by the author of the article, but also from some of the people that were interviewed. In a news article covering the perspective of the government's coalition support partners on raising the refugee quota (Aimee Gulliver, *'Increase NZ's refugee quota, Government's support partners say'*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 2, 2015), the Maori Party, United Future and the ACT Party agreed that NZ had the capacity to welcome more refugees. However, all three parties cited some conditionalities to that support. Maori Party co-leader Marama Fox asked whether NZ was *"able to care for them and their needs"*, because we also need *"to be aware of domestic issues such as homelessness and poverty"*. ACT leader David Seymour believed that the quota should be raised, but should also be *"pegged to our ability to support refugees"*, and refugees who come here should *"have to sign up to the values of New Zealand"*. United Future leader Peter Dunne said that New Zealand should prepare *"to accept a modest number of refugees who would fit in well and make a positive contribution to our country"*.

These quotes illustrate that although welcoming more refugees is a nice gesture, and one that NZ could potentially do, one must also think about the impact on other New Zealanders, whether the support is there to resettle more refugees, and whether

they will fit in and adhere to the ‘values’ of NZ society, whatever those ‘values’ may be. An editorial from *The Press* (*‘In present crisis, New Zealand could afford to take more refugees’*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 7, 2015), although largely supportive of welcoming more refugees, also puts forward some reasons why NZ needs to be careful who resettles here:

Efforts need to be made to try to give priority to those in the worst state – genuine refugees fleeing from intolerable circumstances rather than those simply seeking a new life in a richer country. Some effort needs to be made to ensure that those who come will, after an appropriate time, will fit into life here and to exclude criminals who might be among them. New Zealand also needs to have proper support structures for people we accept. They will need to be housed and employed without displacing local people.

Columnist John Roughan also urged caution around blindly succumbing to the compassionate outpouring towards the people depicted risking their lives to reach Europe. In an opinion piece for the NZH, Roughan commented that NZ should be careful not to confuse economic migrants looking for a better life with “*refugees in urgent need or real peril*” (John Roughan, *‘Compassion blinds us to real refugee story’*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 12, 2015). It was not that he was opposed to those seeking a better life, “*good luck to them*” he said, they show “*energy and pluck*” and “*will probably be productive citizens*”. However, that does not mean we should rush to include them in our refugee quota above those “*in urgent need of refuge*”.

What is alluded to here is that not all ‘refugees’ are equal; some are more genuine than others, while others are merely economic migrants who will take advantage of our good nature. Therefore, NZ needs to make sure it is taking in the genuine refugees who need our help, selecting those who will fit in, and excluding those who might do us harm. We also need to be sure that they do not have a criminal background, and do not take precedence over New Zealand citizens, especially those who are already struggling to find secure housing and work, as *The Press* editorial states.

Former Prime Minister John Key also asserted this viewpoint when he said: “*I think New Zealanders would broadly want an assurance that they're probably some of the people they're seeing displaced at the moment - not that their plight is any better or*

worse than others" (Kurt Bayer, *'John Key on refugee crisis: We're not ruling out doing more'*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015). This statement from Key alludes to a hierarchy of humanitarian need, and a justification for the government's response to the Syrian emergency intake. In another article, Key also questioned whether this "enthusiasm" for welcoming more refugees would wane once Syria dropped out of the news (*'Syrian crisis: John Key says extra refugees will put strain on services'*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 8, 2015). This form of conditional hospitality is often dressed up in the language of humanitarian concern, as former Immigration Minister Michael Woodhouse was quoted as saying that we need to make sure we are helping those "who are in serious need" (Claire Trevett, *'Immigration Minister Michael Woodhouse: Syrian refugees will be screened'*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 8, 2015).

The government also justified their response by saying that there was only so much NZ could do, and that it is very easy for opposition parties or the general public to call for doubling the quota. Limits needed to be placed on our hospitality in order to cope with the increased numbers coming in, and anything NZ did would only be a drop in the ocean anyway. Former Prime Minister John Key stated that although "our hearts go out" to those people displaced and "we understand the pain and suffering people are going through", and opening the door to a few more refugees would be "utterly crucial" for those individuals, it would "still be somewhat symbolic" considering the scale of the crisis (Kurt Bayer, *'John Key on refugee crisis: We're not ruling out doing more'*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015).

However, these justifications did not sit well with some in the media, who turned the argument back around to one about moral duty to welcome more refugees. Comedian and columnist Raybon Kan pointed out that it is not a symbolic gesture to the refugees that we do take in, and although it will not make any overall difference to the refugee crisis and number of people displaced, "to the people we pluck from the ocean it is pretty real". (Raybon Kan, *'Taking refugees is not a talent quest'*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 13, 2015). In an interview for Stuff, University of Waikato law professor Al Gillespie also believed that it was important to do something, however small, because "[e]very one of those numbers is a human being ... taken from a helpless situation to one in which they're going to have a much better life" (Libby Wilson, *'600 refugees "only a start" for New Zealand: Waikato academic'*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 8, 2015).

As former Labour opposition leader Andrew Little pointed out “[t]his is not a time to be grudging in our generosity. Another 750 over the course of next year might be a drop in the ocean to the problem in Syria, but it’s a significant contribution on our part” (Andrea Vance, ‘Prime Minister bows to pressure to accept more refugees’, stuff.co.nz, Sep 7, 2015).

However, moral arguments aside, it is not merely a “selfless gesture” to welcome refugees; commentators argued it is also in NZ’s national interests to open the door to refugees who have skills that we need, as this editorial from the NZH alludes:

But this is not simply a selfless gesture on any country's part. Most of the Syrians walking into Europe are clearly young, vigorous, probably well educated and resourceful. Given new opportunities this far from their homeland they may stay and add a great deal to New Zealand. We have the room, we need a growing population and we will be glad to receive them. (‘New stance on refugees not just for show’, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 8, 2015)

The perception of NZ hospitality presented by the media in this analysis points to the notion of a generous and compassionate Kiwi hospitality that plays into a strong moral argument for welcoming refugees. NZ has successfully welcomed refugees in the past and it has the capacity and capability to help now. However, as the above quote highlights, welcoming refugees is not just a ‘selfless gesture’, but one which will have benefits for NZ society in the long term. Therefore, according to the media, the governments perceived inaction in the face of the worst humanitarian crisis in history is morally reprehensible, shortsighted, and goes against Kiwi values. The argument for ‘Kiwi’ hospitality and values also feeds into a sense of national identity – helping refugees is who ‘we’ are and what ‘we’ stand for as New Zealanders (our values), as the next section explains.

National identity: “the Kiwi way”

How Kiwis react to desperate people fleeing terror on the other side of the world is about who we are as a people. (Andrew Little)

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the humanitarian argument made by the media drew on the notion of NZ national identity. As the above quote from

former Labour opposition leader Andrew Little suggests (as reported in a news article by Kurt Bayer, *John Key on refugee crisis: "We're not ruling out doing more"*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015), how New Zealanders choose to respond says a lot about who we are as people and as a nation.

Who New Zealanders are and what we stand for as a nation was a running theme throughout the articles analysed in this research, highlighting NZ's values and long tradition of welcoming refugees, and the willingness to help those less fortunate than us. According to political journalist Andrea Vance, New Zealanders have a reputation for being kind, welcoming and generous, and are proud of their humanitarian record:

Kiwis have a "track record" of opening up borders to help. "There is something in our nature - we are people of conscience and compassion - to offer help and do something about it." ('Prime Minister bows to pressure to accept more refugees', stuff.co.nz, Sep 7, 2015)

NZH journalists Patrice Dougan and Claire Trevett reiterated this point, arguing that: *"Our response in situations like this says everything about who we are as a nation"* ('Syrian crisis: NZ to take in hundreds more refugees', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 7, 2015). Who we are as a nation and what it means to be a New Zealander, is in former Labour politician David Shearer's opinion, about *"compassion"*, and according to economist and author Shamubeel Eaqub *"about our moral values"* (Sophie Ryan, *'Refugee crisis – what can NZ do'*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 8, 2015). Expanding on this idea of NZ moral values, Eaqub argued in a different article in Stuff that NZ's reaction to the refugee crisis and the desire to help comes from a moral starting point, because fundamentally *"[...] we're good people – we have compassion and empathy."* (Richard Meadows, *'Refugees are good for NZ's economy, say economists'*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 9, 2015).

Compassion and empathy is exactly what New Zealander's feel towards refugees, according to Oxfam NZ's executive director Rachael Le Mesurier, who argued that: *"Accepting a paltry 750 people into New Zealand annually while children wash up on the shores of Europe is an absolute affront to the decency and kindness of the New Zealand people"* (Jimmy Ellingham, *'They must increase the quota'*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 5, 2015). The argument here that New Zealanders standing by and watching

people suffer while politicians quibble about raising the refugee quota is an “*affront*” to the “*decency and kindness*” of New Zealanders. It also infers that it is not who ‘we’ are as Kiwis and as a nation of compassionate people.

Government arguments about the cost of raising the refugee quota are also “*not the Kiwi way*”, according to refugee advocate Murdoch Stephens, spokesperson for Doing Our Bit (*‘They’re not migrants, double the refugee quota now’*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015). Stephens does not elaborate exactly what he means by ‘the Kiwi way’ in his opinion piece, except to imply that morally Kiwis are better people than to succumb to arguments of cost verses saving lives. Academic Alan Gamlen also draws on this idea of what it means to be a Kiwi in his opinion piece, suggesting, “*we are a small and distant country with few chances to make a difference on a global scale, but we have always tried to punch above our weight. Now is our chance to do so*” (Alan Gamlen, *‘Why NZ should raise the refugee quota’*, nzherald.co.nz, Sep 3, 2015). Gamlen’s point lends itself to the notion of NZ national identity. The refugee crisis should be no exception where NZ can make a difference, because ‘we’ can and that is who ‘we’ are as a nation.

These arguments, which are presented in the media by a range of different writers, point to this idea of NZ as a nation of people who care very deeply for refugees, and the desire to help others is what defines us as New Zealanders. It is also, according to this editorial from the *Manawatu Standard*: “*how we see our role on the world stage when it comes to helping those in less fortunate situations than ourselves*” (*‘Now to really open your hearts’*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 8, 2015). How NZ chose to respond to the refugee crisis became a strong ethical and moral argument about NZ values and what we stand for as a nation – are we the kind, generous and welcoming people we like to think we are? As newsreader and journalist Mike McRoberts said on Twitter, “*it’s not a flag that defines us as a nation, it’s how we treat others*” (reported by Philip Matthews, *‘What is a New Zealander?’*, stuff.co.nz, Sep 12, 2015) (see Liu, McCreanor, McIntosh, & Teaiwa, 2005; Spoonley & Bedford, 2012 for examples of NZ national identity and hospitality).

Summary

This chapter has discussed the main arguments put forth by the NZH and Stuff during the month of September 2015, at the height of the refugee crisis in Syria and Europe. The news articles, opinion pieces and editorials analysed during this period demonstrate overwhelming support for raising the quota and welcoming more refugees to NZ. There is a strong moral and ethical argument running through the articles, which draws on notions of NZ identity tied to its response to the refugee crisis, as put forth by various media commentators and journalists. Facts and statistics are used to compare where NZ stands on refugee resettlement globally; NZ's international reputation and role on the UNSC is used to shine a light on NZ's moral duty towards refugees; and a huge shaming element was used to criticise the inaction of former Prime Minister John Key and his National government. It is a highly emotive argument that focuses on NZ's role and duty as a humanitarian nation, and tends to cast 'the refugee' as a vulnerable victim who needs to be saved.

The overarching argument of the media analysed is one based on a humanitarian standpoint, and the morality of doing 'our bit' or our 'fair share' - this is the largest humanitarian crisis the world has seen, and we *should* be doing more, because we can and it is the right thing to do. It is our moral duty to help refugees, and to do nothing is morally reprehensible. This argument draws on NZ's long-standing humanitarian tradition of helping refugees and the notion of 'Kiwi values' – what we stand for as a nation and the kind of people we think we are. This argument is very emotive, and very critical of the National government's response or perceived inaction in the face of such human suffering. Throughout this argument, 'the refugee' is positioned as the desperate, vulnerable, victim who needs to be saved by 'us'.

The lack of former refugee voices in the analysis of the media for this research raises the question why their opinions are not included more in stories about refugee issues. What do people from refugee backgrounds in NZ think about the representation of their experiences by others who may not be qualified to speak on their behalf? The next chapter explores the voices of former refugees interviewed for this research – what the word 'refugee' means to them, how it has been represented, and what role that word plays in the resettlement of refugees in NZ.

Chapter 8: Deconstructing and redefining ‘refugeeness’

Chapters 6 and 7 examined the way refugees were represented in the NZH and Stuff articles chosen for this research, the dominant voices ‘doing’ the representing, and the humanitarian argument for welcoming more refugees to NZ. The second half of Chapter 6 also explored the perspectives of advocates and communications specialists who were involved in the campaign to raise NZ’s refugee quota, and who worked with people from refugee backgrounds to help tell their stories of resettlement. What is largely missing from the conversation are the voices, opinion and perspectives of people from refugee backgrounds. This chapter draws on my interviews with former refugees²⁹ in NZ and their perceptions of refugee stereotypes and representations, their feelings of acceptance, belonging and identity in NZ, and the various ways in which they are contesting and redefining the refugee label (research question 3).

Representations, stereotypes, and the ‘refugee’ label

They don’t know the long term impact on the word[s] they use, or the language they use towards those people, you see. (Abann, ARCC)

As discussed in the first findings chapter, refugees overseas were largely represented in the media analysed for this research as helpless victims who need to be saved, and those who had been resettled in NZ were still referred to as refugees. I wanted to know what former refugees thought about media representations of refugees in NZ, and how they felt about the ‘refugee’ label. As the above quote from Abann, the general manager of the Auckland Resettled Community Coalition (ARCC), illustrates, words matter. Abann believes that people who want to help refugees

²⁹ For ease of reference, this thesis uses the terms ‘former refugee’ and ‘people from refugee backgrounds’ interchangeably to describe people who have been resettled in NZ. However, I want to acknowledge that some of the people I interviewed for this research reject the refugee label completely and do not even want to be associated with the terms ‘former refugee’ or ‘refugee background’. This will be discussed in more detail under the section “Deconstructing ‘refugeeness’”.

have good intentions, but they do not realise the long-term implications of the refugee label on those who have resettled in NZ and how it makes them feel.

The 17 former refugees I interviewed for this research all felt that the mainstream media tended to represent refugees as helpless victims, potentially unskilled and uneducated, and this in turn fed into public perceptions about refugees. Therefore, four of my participants did not necessarily want people to know that they are former refugees, because they felt it changed people's opinion towards them. For Mariam³⁰, who is originally from Afghanistan and arrived in NZ as a teenager, the refugee label stigmatises people, sets you apart from the rest of society and former refugees are scared "*that people will look at you in a lower position [and] you don't want to be seen, you know, lower than others, so like different.*"

That fear of being seen as different is something Rez remembers growing up in NZ and not wanting anyone to know she was from a refugee background. She did not want to be singled out as the 'refugee kid', because people treat you differently, and then you are stuck with that label:

And it changes everyone's opinion. During school [...] I refused to acknowledge where I was from completely. So I just tried to be Kiwi, and I would have had a panic attack if someone found out I was a refugee. [...] You just want to be a normal kid growing up. So I understand why they don't want those kind of titles. It follows you. (Rez)

Ali argued that different perceptions that arise from the use of the refugee label could have different implications. For example, if refugees are constantly represented as helpless victims, it can affect how people from refugee backgrounds are seen in business or by potential employers – can they do the job? Therefore, people from refugee backgrounds are very wary of being seen as something that they feel they no longer represent. They want a new beginning and rebuild their lives without the stigma of the refugee label. Even Ali, who is not ashamed of his refugee background and sees it as an opportunity to start a conversation and educate others, is cautious about who he tells about his background because of the

³⁰ Pseudonym

stereotypes: *"It personally happened to me a few times – people ask me, how did you end up in NZ? I don't tell all the story, just say oh well migrated to NZ somehow. Not go into the details just to avoid those preconceptions."*

Preconceptions about refugees was an issue of concern for all of the former refugees I interviewed, who felt that refugee stereotypes were reinforced due to a lack of public knowledge about who refugees are and why they are in NZ. This lack of knowledge and understanding can lead to assumptions and certain perceptions about refugees, such as their capabilities, skills, education, and English comprehension. Two of the main assumptions that the people I spoke to thought the public made about refugees are, a) refugees are 'welfare bludgers', unskilled, and uneducated; and b) refugees are victims, poor, and dependent on aid. The remainder of this section explores these two assumptions in more detail.

Public perceptions: Refugees as a 'welfare bludger', uneducated

The first assumption assumes that refugees who are resettled in NZ are unskilled, uneducated, and/or live off the benefit. Ali talked about the preconceptions or assumptions he has experienced from other New Zealanders about his skills and capabilities: *"I have been asked quite a few times [...] you came as a refugee, how come your English is good? That's actually a very common question. Or about my study or my work – you came as a refugee, how come you're working in this place, something like that."* Ali also told me how he was asked about his ability to send money every month as a refugee. He described being quite shocked at the assumption that because he was from a refugee background, *"I'm not entitled to or perhaps maybe earning enough money to be able to support my family"*, and having to explain, *"I'm not on [a] benefit or something. I work and I earn money"*. He said it made him feel like a victim, *"rather than a producer as well"*. Ali believes these kinds of assumptions stem from a general lack of knowledge and preconceptions that every refugee comes from an uneducated or troubled background, which for Ali are the *"biggest sore points"*. Ali argues that just because someone comes from a refugee background, it *"doesn't mean that person would lack the skills or would lack the potential to achieve"*. However, in Ali's opinion, as soon as someone finds out you were a refugee they draw on certain biases and stereotypes that *"form in our head"*.

John³¹ thinks the general public form an idea in their head about what a refugee looks like by what they see on TV, which is usually an image of a traumatised person, and the inferences that refugees are somehow deficient because of this experience. 'John' said he hated "*this social construction*" of what a refugee looks like, and felt it really impacted on him in his early years in NZ. He gave the example of studying at university and feeling that some people did not think he could "*handle*" it, because "*I couldn't express myself in English*" in class. John also spoke about the disempowering experience of his first job when his employer assumed that he could not speak English that well because he came from a refugee background, as if the two were mutually exclusive. John argued that although these assumptions about his capabilities came from a place of empathy, they could actually be quite harmful and stigmatising for the person on the receiving end. John said he wants people to see him for his skills, experience and education, not as a victim or someone to be pitied.

John and Ali argue that people from refugee backgrounds need to be acknowledged for the skills and capabilities they bring to NZ. They believe the assumption that refugees are uneducated and unskilled is wrong and feeds into negative stereotypes. Instead of focusing on what refugees cannot do, how about focusing on what skills they bring. As John explained, "*I'm using [my] skills and qualifications to do the job. I'm not using refugee qualifications!*"

Public perceptions: Refugees as victims, poor

Another assumption that the former refugees I interviewed spoke about is the preconceived notion that refugees are poor, helpless victims. Mariam talked about the stereotypical image of the refugee as victim – "*shattered, looking horrible, miserable*" - that in order for people to come to your aid you need to look/act the victim, "*otherwise people are not going to do anything for you*". Mariam also commented on the criticisms in the media overseas that the Syrians fleeing across the Mediterranean cannot be refugees because they have "*flash iPhones*" and "*branded clothing*" (see Chapter 3, 'Implications of humanitarian discourses'). This

³¹ Pseudonym

speaks to another stereotype of refugees as poor and destitute, and if you happen to be wearing nice clothes or have a smartphone then of course you cannot be a 'real' refugee. Mariam, who fled her country as a small child with the rest of her family, thought this was a ridiculous argument made by these critics, saying:

What do you expect? When you have got bombing on your head, and you can only take a few things, would you take the worst things, like would you wear your dirtiest [clothes], like you know, lots of holes in them, or would you take the best that you have got? Because you no longer [have] a choice that you go back to that same house. Would you take your TV, or would take your iPhone? iPhone is easier to carry, and obviously you live in a modern country. (Mariam)

Rez, who arrived in NZ as a child, had a similar experience with assumptions about her ability, or her family's ability to afford nice things, "*like being poor is what makes you a refugee*". She described how, if she dressed nice or had an iPhone or a MacBook, people at university would ask her "*how do you afford that kind of stuff, didn't you come as a refugee?*" Rez argued that people think that because you come from a refugee background that you are needy, on welfare, and you are not going to be working or studying, but her family did not come here because they were poor, rather they were persecuted for their political beliefs. Unfortunately, in Rez's opinion, the international image of the poor, vulnerable, distressed refugee, the type of image that appears on campaign posters, does nothing to combat refugee stereotypes. She argues that the victim image "*obviously sells, but it is wrong*", because it simply reiterates and embeds the kinds of negative assumptions people have about refugees.

The assumption that refugees are poor, or come from poor backgrounds, is unfounded, according to Ibrahim. Ibrahim thinks that people may look at refugees as "*someone who doesn't work, someone who lives in social house and depends on the government, [...] someone who is here to suck the tax payer's money*". However, he argues, the public do not see how hard refugees work or the skills and education they bring with them. He talked about how people he meets tell him he must be really grateful and glad to be in NZ, but people do not realise that he had a good life back in Eritrea. He did not grow up in a poor family, but because of the political situation, he was forced to become a refugee: "*I wasn't hungry, I [had] enough clothes,*

I was dressing well, I was eating well. But there was a risk, I was at risk, my life was in danger, and I decided to leave and I became a refugee”.

The assumptions made about people from refugee background is something Yohanna has also experienced, more so she feels because of the colour of her skin. Yohanna, who was born in NZ to parents who were former refugees from Eritrea and has a Kiwi accent, feels that people make assumptions about her background because she looks African and, therefore, probably think she is a refugee. She told me a story of how an older woman approached her at the supermarket where she worked, and began talking about her experiences of death, and then said to Yohanna that she probably knew all about death. Yohanna was shocked: *“I was like, how would I know more about it than you, you know? And when I asked her she realised that I wasn’t from, like I didn’t come from a war-torn family, and so she was sort of embarrassed and she walked away”.*

The majority of people from refugee backgrounds I spoke to for this research did not blame the NZ public for their lack of knowledge about refugees. They reasoned that if someone has never met a refugee or perhaps has not travelled widely, then their knowledge is limited to what they know. The former refugees I interviewed believe that the mainstream media plays a major role in producing these refugee stereotypes, which in turn influences public perceptions, knowledge and understanding of who a refugee is and what a refugee looks like. They argued that there needed to be more positive, holistic representations that told the full story from refuge to resettlement. However, the mainstream media, according to the former refugees interviewed, continue to represent a very one-dimensional perspective of the refugee story, as the next section explains.

Media representations: What do former refugees think?

The preceding findings chapters discussed the normative ways refugees were represented in the media sample selected for this research. This section explores what people from refugee backgrounds think about these normative media representations. A key response to the media representations was the feeling that the mainstream media tended to simplify refugee stories, positioning ‘the refugee’

as a helpless victim. This reductive framing, according to Adorate, creates and reinforces a “*stereotypical narrative*” about what it is like to be a refugee, “*you know, that story of, oh I went on a boat for 40 days and then I got rescued, and it's hard for me to learn English*”. Adorate explained that while this may be some people's experience, and there may be similarities with every refugees' story, people are individuals with different experiences, and by focusing in one only one part of the 'refugee' story “*you miss that richness*” of stories.

Sakina believes the way refugees are portrayed in the media dehumanises them by labelling refugees like objects. Sakina was a small child when she came to NZ as one of the 'Tampa refugees'. Reflecting back on the media coverage at the time, she felt they had lost their identity, just labelled as anonymous 'refugees' or simply the 'Tampa refugees', which “*made it seem all unreal, like we were some fiction characters in a film, or even possibly just some objects thrown into the ocean*”. Sakina argued that it is easy for the media to just label a group of people as refugees, but “*each individual has their own stories [...] you don't know what their life has been like*”, the personal stories of refuge and resettlement are missing from the media.

Rahil³² also felt that the media here in NZ and overseas presents a very one-dimensional and stereotypical representation of refugees as vulnerable victims, which does not acknowledge their individuality:

[T]hey don't focus on who they are, they only focus on that they run away from their country and they're vulnerable and they're weak, they need us and they need safety, and that's all they focus on. They don't focus who those people are, they don't try to get to know their culture, their traditions, who they are, you know. (Rahil)

Media representations of refugees as helpless victims, according to Rez, repeatedly reinforce a homogeneous view of what a 'real' refugee should look like, so the only image of a refugee the public knows is the one perpetuated by the media. The problem with these stereotypes, Mohammed³³ argued, is that they do not represent

³² Pseudonym

³³ Pseudonym

that person's entire life, and the *"danger of just showing that, is that they get to be identified by that, by their circumstances, rather than their own humanity"*. Therefore, Mohammed reasoned, if a person has a very narrow perception of what a refugee is, for instance as a victim, then *"they don't go beyond asking about [or] really understanding the worldview of this person, [...] the values [and] core beliefs of this person"*.

From Abdul's³⁴ perspective, the NZ mainstream media campaign to raise the refugee quota played on the global stereotype of the refugee as *"helpless brown folk from war-torn countries"*, which portrayed refugees as *"poor almost disabled folk"* that NZ should be saving. Abdul argued that these stereotypes label people as victims, which is very limiting, because *"that label stick[s] with you. So oh man, you're a refugee"*, and being labelled as a refugee makes people feel like *"I'm going to be like this forever, always on the back foot, always just trying to catch up with the rest of society right, [...] that you are behind, that you've got a long way to go."* For Abdul, who resettled in NZ as a small child, the refugee experience is but one part of your whole life experience, and it should not limit you in any way. It is these negative connotations – deficit, backward, trying to catch up – that Abdul believes many people from refugee backgrounds do not want to be associated. However, he argued, this speaks volumes to how the word 'refugee' is constructed in mainstream discourses, because:

[B]y and large it is very negative. If you think of refugee, the image that conjures up is someone quite poor and destitute and in a bad way, and you don't really want to affiliate yourself to that, unless you told the full story and say, yeah we were like that but look at us now, and they use that source of strength as a narrative. (Abdul)

Not everyone I spoke to had negative experiences with the media. Ibrahim spoke about his positive experiences with the media, which he saw as an opportunity to educate the public and to provide a good example for other former refugees who might want to share their story. However, he conceded that the media still tends to label you as a refugee, even though you are now a NZ resident or citizen, and focuses

³⁴ Pseudonym

too much on the traumatic part of your journey, which discourages many people from sharing their story. Ibrahim explained:

[T]he media really pays attention to the traumatic part of the whole journey and that stigmatise a lot of refugees, and also stop them from coming and sharing their stories, because people will always treat them like victims. Not as humans who happen to be refugee for something that's out of their control [...] [but] the media still gonna call you a refugee. (Ibrahim)

Ibrahim thinks this is a shame, because the trauma focus takes away many positive elements and successes about former refugees in NZ. Both Ibrahim and Mohammed believe the media should provide the whole story, because no refugee is the sum total of their trauma, it is just one part of their story, and as Ibrahim commented, “no one becomes a refugee for life.” For this reason, John had decided not to do any more media interviews, because he felt that the media only wanted to focus on his trauma story, rather than acknowledge what he has achieved in NZ:

They talk about negative, negative, negative, oh! It's horrible. That's not helping people from refugee backgrounds, and that's not helping NZ. It maybe brings some type of awareness, but [...] to keep saying, I've lost my parents - so what? Everyone in NZ has their own story to tell. (John)

When I asked other refugee background participants what they thought about the media's tendency to focus on the trauma story, and how helpful it was, I received a similar response to John's 'so what'. Yibeth reflected that trauma stories could help to some degree by creating support, empathy and awareness for refugee issues, but then “everyone just feels sorry and they just cry like, oh, and then what? You know.” Ali too feels that the media need to move away from the trauma story as the only story worth telling, because not only does it not reflect a person's whole story, it is also unhelpful in the long-run for positive resettlement outcomes:

[F]or the sake of resettlement at least, we need to also tell the other side of the story, that yes, we refugees are all traumatised, all have been victimised, but that's the story of the past and the new story is something progressive, something contributing as well. (Ali)

However, as Mariam pointed out, it does not help that the media are always after a 'refugee' news story or angle to the story and just want *"to show oh these poor refugees, you know"*. Mariam thinks people like to hear sad refugee stories, to listen to that person *"giving all the emotion, all the trauma that person has been through, sharing their really deepest thoughts and emotion"*, in order to pity that person and their situation. She said that sometimes it is good to hear about what has happened in order to do something about it, but argued that all those kinds of stories do is victimise and disempower people. Therefore, like John, this makes her reluctant to share her refugee background and experiences.

Being labelled a refugee in the media long after resettlement and the uptake of citizenship or residency is something that upset Gatluak. He recalled a recent experience when he was interviewed about refugee resettlement in NZ, and the article referred to him as a refugee, even though he had been resettled in the USA many years ago, was an American citizen, and now a resident of NZ. He argued, *"[how] would you feel if someone described you as a refugee?"* By continuing to call someone a refugee when they are no longer that *"would bring those memories back"*, and in Gatluak's case, painful memories of the years he was a refugee before resettlement. Gatluak argued that there is an impact on former refugee communities when stereotypes are used, and believes the media has an important role in educating people, framing issues and creating perceptions, so they should use the right terminology, because *"[i]t starts with the media. So whoever will get that information will believe what the media has put out"*.

Even though the former refugees I spoke to thought the mainstream media were responsible for reproducing refugee stereotypes, they also felt the media has an important role to play in breaking down stereotypes because, as Ibrahim stated, *"people listen to the media"*. However, they agreed that there needed to be more positive refugee stories told in the media to educate the public about refugee resettlement, and to acknowledge the skills, capabilities and successes of people from refugee backgrounds in NZ. Yohanna believes the media is in a powerful position to influence how people see refugees. Instead of stereotyping refugees as deficient and poor, Yohanna argued the media needed to provide portrayals that are

more positive, *“not just they need our help, but how we can gain, how can we as a society, how can we as a country gain from bringing in refugees.”*

Rez talked about some of the media press releases that she had written herself where she tried to highlight the contribution that refugees can make to NZ society, both economically and socially. Rez argued that it does not mean that every refugee that comes to NZ has to be exceptional, but if the media can show the benefits of resettlement then perhaps it will change people’s perceptions as well, because:

[Y]ou see a lot of comments on those media articles that go on about how refugees just come here and they’re lazy and they’re not going to do anything. So if we can somehow change that image from vulnerable people who are escaping for x y z reasons, but then they come to NZ and look at all the positive benefits they have and how they can contribute to our society. I think that message is really important. (Rez)

The media can play an important role in highlighting the personal stories of refugees, and for Sakina this meant showing that refugees have dreams, goals, and ambitions in life like the rest of us. These personal stories can then help to influence public opinion and perceptions, and make people feel welcomed and accepted. Mohammed believes there needs to be a more holistic representation of refugees, which combats stereotypes and focuses on people’s capabilities, skills, and knowledge, *“so that again they can find their space, not only to survive but also to thrive.”* Rez also felt that there needed to be more coverage of refugee issues here in NZ and abroad, *“so people have an understanding of, ok, why are we letting them in to NZ and then what are they doing when they get here and their progress”.*

Sakina, Mohammed, Rez, and other former refugees I interviewed, felt that the media needed to get away from the stereotypical ‘trauma/victim’ story and focus more on people’s strengths and successes in NZ. They argued that representations that are more positive would help with resettlement outcomes, by changing public perceptions about refugees and helping former refugees feel more welcomed and accepted in NZ. Tayyaba, the former CEO of ChangeMakers Refugee Forum, argued that there needs to be more balanced reporting of refugee stories – less labels and less focus on trauma and more on what they are up to here, what is happening in NZ. Because otherwise, what the media tends to do, according to Tayyaba, is embed

“those labels, and entrench them in people’s minds, which is not helping [...] us to then move beyond.”

The people from refugee backgrounds I interviewed for this research spoke about how the ‘refugee’ label makes them feel, and believe there is too much focus on the refugee trauma story in the media. They believe that there is a relationship between media representations and public perceptions about refugees in NZ, and argued that there needs to be more positive stories that breakdown stereotypes and tells the full story of resettlement, highlighting the skills, capabilities and successes of former refugees in NZ. By continuing to refer to people as refugees, the refugee background people I spoke to felt that they are stereotyped and stigmatised, which they argued is detrimental to resettlement. Refugee stereotypes and labels can also affect feelings of belonging, and acceptance of former refugees as New Zealanders, which in turn has implications for successful resettlement outcomes, as the next section explains.

Refugee or Kiwi? Feelings of (un)belonging

I think there's always this idea that we're different, we're in this refugee box, we're not a 'real' New Zealander. Because people ask, where are you from? I'm a New Zealander. But no, really, where are you from? There's always that [...] we don't have some passport that says 'refugee', not 100% New Zealand. (Rez)

When refugees are resettled in NZ under the Refugee Resettlement Programme they are automatically granted permanent residency, with a pathway to citizenship in five years. However, many of the former refugees that I spoke to felt other New Zealanders did not really see or accept them as being New Zealanders. The continual usage of the word ‘refugee’ in the media to describe people from refugee backgrounds living in New Zealand is part of the problem, alongside perceived public perceptions of refugees, as discussed in the previous section. Refugee stereotypes can make people feel that they do not truly belong here, and make it very hard to shake off the refugee label, as the quote from Rez illustrates above.

Several former refugees I interviewed expressed their frustration with the question 'where do you come from?' Ali believes that people are not interested in knowing where you are from when they ask that question, because they have already formed an opinion, bias, or stereotype about you right from the start. Adorate and Mariam talked about how it was not nice to be constantly asked where they are from, simply because they look different. Adorate felt that question was weird and actually, *"I don't have to answer those questions [...] like this is my home, I'm local here, this is familiar to me"*.

Both Rez and Adorate came to NZ as children and grew up here, were educated here, and have Kiwi accents. Yet they feel sometimes that other New Zealanders do not see them as being from NZ, mainly because they look physically different (Rez is Kurdish and Adorate is Burundian) and they do not have Anglicised names. That question 'where do you come from' may seem innocent enough, perhaps even genuinely curious, but to Rez, Adorate, and other former refugees I interviewed, that question infers that the person asking is assuming that they are not or cannot be from NZ. Mariam argued that those sorts of questions are not ok, and make her and other former refugees feel less like a New Zealander, *"I mean, do I ask you when I see you? No. I assume that you are a New Zealander"*. Mariam asked, why bring us here and offer us permanent residency if you are not going to treat us like New Zealanders?

I mean aren't we here for that reason? Aren't we here to integrate with the New Zealand society? Aren't we having a passport of New Zealand, so we are called New Zealanders, and we should believe it. But the fact that others are not believing it just gives us a very smaller change to believe it ourselves. (Mariam)

For John and Gatluak, to be labelled a refugee when you are in fact a New Zealander is a human rights issue. They argue that former refugees have a right to define themselves as New Zealanders, and believe the word 'refugee' is used to deny people their rights as New Zealanders. Gatluak, referring to the refugee background communities he works with, said people do not want to be called refugees anymore, they say, *"I'm a New Zealand citizen, I vote, I work, I contribute to the taxes, so why would you call me a refugee when I have the same rights as you?"* John believes the word refugee is not inclusive; instead, it excludes people from NZ society, and makes

people feel that they are still refugees, that they do not belong here. He feels that the label 'refugee' infers that there is something wrong with you, that you are different to other New Zealanders. For John:

What I need to hear is that I am a New Zealander, I am a resident, that's important. So by saying refugee, refugee, refugee, it's excluding them to claim their rights, because we are not defined as refugees we are New Zealand residents. And I have to tell you that's a very crucial point. (John)

For the former refugees who participated in this research, it is not just about what kind of label is used to describe someone – refugee or Kiwi – but also about feeling that you belong and are accepted by the wider New Zealand society, whether that be finding work, volunteering in the local community, or making 'Kiwi' friends. Joseph³⁵ talked about not feeling that he truly belongs here, even though by many accounts he has successfully integrated – he has a good job, a good salary, but “*still I don't feel 100% belonging to New Zealand, you know. Because, for example, I have no much Kiwi friend [...] I feel kind of isolation, I feel kind of misunderstanding, I feel there is lack of trust and confidence of me, you know.*”

Ali and Gatluak also alluded to the lack of trust and confidence that Joseph described when they spoke of the difficulties in finding work. They felt that it was hard to get your CV past the door and even get an interview because of having a 'funny' sounding name, questions around your citizenship, NZ work experience, and your skills and capabilities to do the job. Gatluak described a situation as experienced by a former refugee he knows:

[T]hey say no you have to have a NZ qualification, NZ experience, all of that. Where would you get that? Then some of them will see they don't fit in to the society [...] they see themselves different. Even one guy told me, I changed my name several times, because when they see the name, oh we will call you back. Never. When I changed my name and then I would be called for an interview. Then when they see me, ah again they will drop me off. Yeah, like that. A lot of these stories. (Gatluak)

³⁵ Pseudonym

I asked Joseph if name and qualification discrimination was also something that he had experienced or heard from others. He laughed and replied, *“Yep, it’s enough to ignore it”*, meaning that your non-Anglo name was enough for potential employers to ignore your CV altogether. Ali talked about the assumptions people make based on your name. He described getting professional advice on his CV, and he was told the first question prospective employers would ask is about his citizenship, because *“your name will raise that question – how did you enter the country, what are you doing, something like that”*. Ali believes that there are many factors that people form biases on, but your name and accent are definitely two of the biggest factors.

These insights from the refugee background people I interviewed speak to a level of disconnect between the initial welcome of refugees on arrival and the long-term realities and challenges of resettlement, such as job discrimination. Many of the former refugees I interviewed felt that refugee stereotyping and labelling was part of the problem, and contributed towards perceptions of refugees as being different and perhaps less capable than other New Zealanders. The above quotes then highlight the work still to do before former refugees feel truly accepted by New Zealand society, as Abdul argued:

“[I]t’s one thing to bring in hundreds of people and welcome them at the airport, but [...] what happens in the months and years afterwards. How successful are we helping them to integrate into society, [...] into the, quote unquote, ‘NZ way of life’? [...] it’s not just a matter of bringing in more people; it’s actually how you treat them once they arrive.” (‘Abdul’)

It is easy for NZ and New Zealanders to say refugees are welcome here, or refugees should be welcomed, but for former refugees to feel welcomed and accepted is another matter. Tayyaba, the former CEO of ChangeMakers Refugee Forum, argued that issues former refugees face – of not feeling like they belong, of struggling to find work after years of being in NZ, or choosing to go back to their war-torn country or move to Australia instead – are not going to change *“just because we’re using a hashtag that we’re welcoming them”*. Tayyaba believes NZ society ultimately needs to change how it responds to refugees. She argued that resettlement, the welcoming of refugees, should be about inclusion and actually accepting and valuing them as New Zealanders who are equal and have the same rights as other New Zealanders,

because “*the moment they stepped in to NZ that’s who they become [...] so why would they be considered inferior to anyone else?*”. Otherwise, Taysyaba argued, offering refugees permanent NZ residency is “*just a superficial tokenistic status*”.

This highlights a paradox between the discourses of hospitality, as discussed in the previous chapters, and notions of belonging. New Zealanders may say refugees are welcome here, but do former refugees truly feel welcomed and accepted as New Zealanders once they arrive? Abann from the ARCC argued that continuing to label people as ‘refugees’ once they had resettled in NZ effectively excludes them from the wider society and suggests that they do not belong here, which has long-term implications for successful resettlement outcomes. He said that people needed to ‘*mind their language*’; because by continuing to use that word ‘refugee’ many people feel they are being rejected:

Because the more you refer me to my background, the more you are telling me I'm not part of here. In another hand you are saying you are welcome [...] and within a different element of the general communication you are rejecting me, you see. (Abann)

Not every former refugee I spoke to had negative things to say. Some participants expressed their deep gratitude for the support they received from resettlement services and volunteers, and for the most part had good resettlement experiences. Margaret, who is originally from South Sudan and came to NZ in 2003, spoke of feeling truly welcomed here and accepted. She said she “*feels free*” here, settled, that she belongs. However, the majority of refugee background people I interviewed felt that there was a connection between media representations and public perceptions of refugees as helpless victims or deficient in some way. All agreed that more positive refugee representations were needed in the media, but how do people from refugee backgrounds choose to define themselves outside of these dominant media discourses? The next section explores the many different meanings of the word ‘refugee’ from the perspective of the former refugees interviewed for this research, and the different ways they choose to redefine refugee.

Re/Deconstructing ‘refugeeness’

So to answer your question about what it means to be a refugee, a lot of people they choose [...] to say no, you know what, I'm a Kiwi, I'm a New Zealander, I've citizenship here, I've grown up, I've spent more of my life here, [...] I've got education and a career ahead of me here, I'm a Kiwi [...] they tend to reject any connotation of what we see as refugees. And then there are others who are saying no, that experience shaped me and I'll never be able to cut all ties to my home country and leaving it and going through this perilous journey to get to NZ, that's part of who I am, so I will embrace that word and use it as a source of strength as I move forward. So there is both, and I know people in both camps.
(Abdul)

Previous sections of this chapter have discussed the stigma and negative connotations attached to the word ‘refugee’ and how many former refugees do not want to be stereotyped or associated with a word that does not represent who they are. However, not every former refugee I spoke to associates the label ‘refugee’ with negativity, and whether they chose to be associated with the ‘refugee’ label or not really depended on how they saw the word ‘refugee’ in the first place, as the above quote from Abdul illustrates. While some of the former refugees I interviewed completely rejected the refugee label, others chose to embrace their refugee identity. Those who rejected the label tended to view the word ‘refugee’ quite negatively, whereas those who chose to embrace it associated the word with strength, resilience and power, and described how it has shaped who they are today. For example, although Abdul did not personally want to be associated with the negative connotations of the refugee label, he did want to be associated with the “*hardworking, the struggles, the strong-willed aspects of that word*”.

For all of the former refugees I interviewed, their refugee experience and journey will always be a part of their history and influences or informs their identity. However, the extent to which they choose to identify with the refugee label differed from person to person. For Ibrahim, being a refugee is part of his life story, but it is not the whole story so he chooses not to let it define him, as he is no longer a refugee. Ibrahim sees himself as a proud New Zealander, but the refugee identity will always

be a part of him, as he explained:

To me it's always gonna be in my mind, because it was part of my identity [...] at a very important stage of my life actually when I was going from a young boy to a teenager I became a refugee, and that's really a very important age for so many people. So I carried that nickname for quite a few years at a very important stage of my life. So it is going to be stuck with me, it's stuck in mind, it's going to be with me. But I'm determined that I'm not refugee anymore, I don't want to identified as a refugee. Rather I'm happy to be called, ok former refugee, fine, because I was. But I refuse or I reject to be called refugee today because I am a proud New Zealander. (Ibrahim)

Ibrahim is not ashamed of his refugee background, and like some of the other refugee background people I interviewed, sees it as a way to start a conversation about refugee issues. Margaret also believes that there are “*a lot of things we need to discuss [about] refugees*”, in relation to refugee issues and resettlement in NZ. Therefore, she is happy to put herself out there and talk about her refugee experiences, because she feels this will help people understand what it is like to be a refugee. Margaret does not mind being referred to as a refugee, or as a former refugee, because that is the very reason why she ended up in NZ. Otherwise, she said quite pragmatically, “*if I not lost my country, I'd not be here; I'd be in my country*”. Margaret said that although she is a New Zealand citizen now, she is also from a refugee background, therefore, “*I've got two things*” – both Kiwi and refugee identities.

Every person I spoke to was very clear about how they chose to define themselves, inside or outside the refugee label. While both Ibrahim and Margaret were comfortable with their refugee identities sitting alongside their new Kiwi identities, John was very adamant that he does not want to be defined as a refugee at all, which he associates with victimhood. Instead, he chooses to define himself based on his achievements and capabilities, and his African-NZ identity, of which he is very proud:

I'm very proud to be who I am today, I'm contributing, have Kiwi friends [...] I know, where I come from, I can go there, but actually this is home. [...] I don't define as a former vulnerable person, former poor person [...] I actually define

myself, based on my quality as a person, and person in [the] society where I live [...], and those who guide me and work together in collaboration. That's how I define. (John)

John strongly believes former refugees need the freedom to define who they are, that the host society need to start seeing refugees as capable people with skills and talents to offer, because there are implications for resettlement by continuing to equate the word 'refugee' with 'vulnerable victim'. Ali too argued that the definition of 'refugee' needed to shift away from the trauma towards a focus on the skills, capabilities and opportunities refugees bring. Ali acknowledged that former refugees do need help initially in the resettlement process, but keeping them victimised limits their potential. Like Ibrahim and Margaret, he personally does not mind people knowing he is from a refugee background, because he also sees it as an opportunity to educate people about refugee issues in NZ. At the same time, he understands why others do not want to be identified as former refugees due to stereotypes associated with that word, such as the traumatised victim. To Ali though, the word refugee means experience, resilience, ability, flexibility, and that experience has built who he is today:

Well to me personally it means an experience. I'm grateful to that experience, to be honest. It built me. The resilience that, I thank my god for that, the resilience that I have in my day to day life at the moment, that ability and flexibility that I built through those years I think now I'm seeing the benefit in my day to day life, at my work, at my studies, everywhere I can see the results of that paying back. But the same time, it's of course it's a sad memory as well, and there is a lot that I left behind [...]. So it's more of the experience that refugee status is offered me. (Ali)

While the word 'refugee' also represents sadness for what Ali has lost and left behind in his home country, he said he is "*a positive person*" and "*a proud member of this community*", therefore, does not like to dwell on the negatives. Ali prefers to see refugees and refugee resettlement as an opportunity, for both former refugees and the host society. Joseph also spoke about the need to see the opportunities and potential within refugee resettlement, and instead of viewing refugees as victims, concentrate on people's skills, experiences, knowledge and achievements. He

believes the word 'refugee' can be both positive and negative depending on how people perceive it.

Joseph spoke about how the word 'refugee' for him represents *"humanity in general"*. What Joseph meant by this is anyone could become a refugee through no fault of their own. None of us can know what is around the corner, and there can be no guarantee that you or I will be secure from outside influences that force people to flee their home. This is the reality of life. Joseph personally chose to become a refugee because of his political beliefs and said he did not want to live under political persecution. He sees no shame in it and is proud of the choices he made, proud of his political activism and upholding his beliefs, and of his resilience and survival: *"I want to present myself as a human rights activist who [was] forced because [of] the system to leave his home town. I choose to be a refugee because I think there is no shame in it. This is my honour, because I put my humanity first"*. Joseph argued that refugees are not always going to be passive victims of circumstance, that like him, other refugees also choose to leave their country rather than stay and face persecution.

For Rahil, the word 'refugee' means *"people in need of other people's help [...] who needs to find safety somewhere"*. She explained what it felt like to be a refugee – your life is on hold, waiting, you do not belong, everything is temporary, and it is not a normal life:

I didn't go to school at all, so I feel, like for a child, when they don't go to school their life's on hold, and my dad wasn't working, my mum wasn't working [...] we were like holding on, we were waiting you know. So that's why I felt, when I don't have a normal life, I am going to feel like I don't belong there you know, just temporary. That's why I felt like an actual refugee, because I knew I wasn't going to stay there and I don't belong there you know, and I wasn't living a normal life, like other people, so that's how I was a refugee. (Rahil)

When Rahil's family found refuge in NZ a few years ago, she said she no longer felt like a refugee, because *"I had everything every refugee needed. I had a home, [...] I started going to school, I started having a normal life, just like other people"*. For Rahil, her life could start again. NZ is home now, but the country where she was born and raised, and spent the first 10 years of her life, is also home, and feels like she belongs

to both. Rahil said that she wants New Zealanders to know that she is a normal girl with dreams, goals and ambitions, like anyone else her age, but does not feel like she needs to prove how grateful she is to be in NZ to anyone but herself and her family.

Out of all the people from refugee backgrounds I interviewed, Sakina felt most akin or comfortable with the word 'refugee'. Sakina strongly identifies with the refugee label as it forms a very important part of her story. When her family fled Afghanistan, Sakina believes they lost their identity, and being granted refugee status gave them another identity. Therefore, she sees her refugee identity as a big part of who she is, and *"it is because of the whole refugee journey, I am who I am and where I am today"*. Sakina explained:

For me, it gives me a sense of identity. Because when we were back in the boat and on the Tampa [...] we had forgotten everything 'cos we were in so much pain and stress to get to somewhere at least. We had left our whole family behind. [...] So thinking about it now, back then we actually felt like no one. So the word refugee did give us an identity, since our passports and everything that we had with us had drowned in the ocean. The word gave us a name. (Sakina)

Sakina does not see 'refugee' as a negative word, and believes it gives her a sense of *"purpose"* and an identity when her previous identity had been lost. In other words, her very reason for being in NZ and everything she has achieved since resettlement is due to her refugee experience; therefore, she does not mind being referred to as a refugee. Sakina said that she understands why some people do not want to be associated with the refugee label, as it can bring back bad memories or they feel it *"downgrades them"*. However, she firmly believes people should not be ashamed or *"hide the fact that you were a refugee, because it was that name or that word that got us to where we are now"* in NZ. Sakina stressed that refugees are not passive victims; they are humans striving to survive and live a better life, and given the chance, most refugees will take every opportunity to give back to the society that has granted them refuge.

Others I spoke to also did not mind being called a former refugee. Adorate explained that even though she came to NZ as a young child and grew up here, it is part of her identity. Her parent's refugee journey and story is important to her, because it

informs who she is and where she is going in life. At the same time, Adorate feels as if she cannot really claim a refugee identity. Adorate explained:

I am from a refugee background but at the same time, because I came here so young it's almost I feel sometimes like I can't claim that, you know, 'cos I didn't necessarily experience what other refugees have gone through, because I was so young it doesn't apply to me. But, at the same time I feel like it does, I don't know, because I would not be here if I had not been a refugee with my parents, even though I don't necessarily have very vivid memories of what happened and what I went through. (Adorate)

Identifying with her parent's refugee background and journey to NZ is something Yohanna also strongly associates with. Although Yohanna was born in NZ and does not personally identify with the word 'refugee', she does not hide her parent's background, as she sees a lot of power in it. For Yohanna, a refugee "*is someone who, despite the experiences, still moves on, and doesn't give up, still keeps going and strives for the best*". She is proud of her parent's achievements and strongly defines herself as an Eritrean-Kiwi who comes from a refugee background. Yohanna believes that if former refugees see power in the word then they will want to identify with it to "*show and reflect*" who they are. However, she noted that most former refugees in NZ are "*sort of sick and tired*" of being labelled a refugee by society and just want to be seen as a New Zealander. Yohanna argued that the only reason her parents still identify as refugees is that is how society sees them, otherwise they see themselves as New Zealanders.

Teenagers Yibeth and Thomas believe that society in general need to start seeing refugees as heroes – people who are resilient, survived great hardship, are resourceful, and "*[i]f you truly think about it, superheroes!*" (Thomas). Thomas and Yibeth co-host a radio show for former refugee and migrant youth on Access Radio in Wellington, and are both strong advocates for refugee youth. Thomas was born in NZ to refugee background parents and Yibeth, originally from Colombia, arrived in NZ with her family in 2014. Yibeth really wants to show NZ that she is making every opportunity of life here and is working hard to achieve her dreams. She argued that yes, NZ does help and support refugees, but refugees "*take opportunities and make the best of it*", and she wished there was more recognition for how hard they worked.

Yibeth said the media should show former refugees as courageous and brave people, because:

[R]efugee doesn't mean feel sorry for me. It means, I ran out of my country, I am brave, I'm looking for a new future. [...]. That's what a refugee is. Refugee means being brave, being a good person, a fighter. Refugee means let's do it, we can do it! Refugees are heroes! (Yibeth)

The idea of refugees as superheroes sits alongside Mohammed's call for a more holistic representation of refugees, as discussed above. Although he used to see being a refugee as a very negative thing, because it made him feel inferior to others, he has since changed his perception of the word. Mohammed said that he sees himself as a person who followed his dreams, goals and ambitions, despite being forced to become a refugee, but he decided a long time ago to not let the word 'refugee' define who he is or what he can achieve – *"if there is a definition, I define it"*. However, Mohammed did not always feel this way: *"[T]here were occasions when I first got my refugee status, when I said I was a refugee, I wasn't the same strong person anymore, I wasn't the same confident person anymore"*. He believes many other former refugees feel this way too, and that is why Mohammed is adamant that *"if there is a definition, you should define it, you shouldn't allow others to define you based on your status."*

Regardless of whether people chose to identify with, embrace or reject the refugee label, all the former refugees I spoke to were very clear about who they were and how they chose to define themselves. Each had a real sense of purpose about their identity, their place in NZ, and what they are striving to achieve. They are active agents of change within their own lives and within their different communities, challenging and transforming dominant discourses and perceptions of refugees. Many described the need to take back control of the narrative and work in partnership with others to redefine the word 'refugee', as the next section explains.

Redefine 'refugee': Controlling the narrative

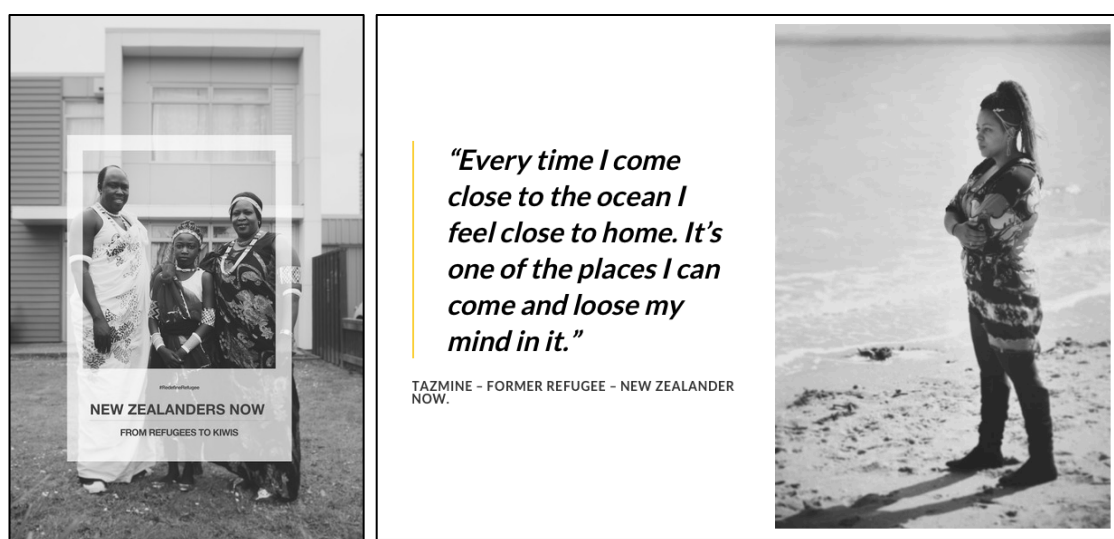
[I]f you ask the question who give them that authority, or who give them the right to describe other people [...] they know how to describe themselves. Doesn't mean that I need your help and you take my dignity. No human right there. Simple things can change a lot of meaning. So for me just need to get it right. That is the simple answer for me; they need to get it right.
(Abann, ARCC)

As the above quote from Abann, former refugee and general manager of the Auckland Resettled Community Coalition (ARCC), illustrates, words matter. The ARCC is a grassroots, refugee background led, community organisation that advocates very strongly for the rights of former refugees in New Zealand. More recently, they have been working on a series of campaigns to change the narrative around the refugee label, which will be discussed in more detail below. Abann argued that government agencies, resettlement providers, NGOs, and the media needed to “*mind your language*” and use the correct terminology when referring to people from refugee backgrounds. Because, according to Abann and the advocacy work of the ARCC, continuing to refer to people as refugees when they are resettled and no longer refugees takes away their dignity and the right to define themselves. Abann argued that it was important to change the narrative and redefine the word ‘refugee’, as it has become associated with negative stereotypes, which in turn ends up stigmatising people and making them feel that they are not accepted as New Zealanders. That is why Abann and the ARCC team are advocating for change, changing the “*negative to the positive*”, and encouraging refugee background people to stand up and say this is not right, correct people, and redefine the word for themselves. In terms of the ARCC’s own use of language, they choose to use the terms ‘newcomers’ and ‘resettled communities’ to describe people from refugee backgrounds. This change of terminology is reflected in the organisations name, Auckland *Resettled* Community Coalition, which they decided to change from Auckland Refugee Community Coalition.

The ARCC have run three campaign projects (at time of writing) to redefine ‘refugee’ that included a photo exhibition, a book about the stories of resettlement in

Auckland, and an art installation that highlighted the stories from the book. The photo exhibition *'New Zealanders Now: From Refugees to Kiwis'*, aimed to raise awareness around the word refugee, that it is a temporary classification and not a permanent status, to educate the public and change perceptions, and illustrate the contributions former refugees have made to NZ. Photographer Nando Azevedo worked in collaboration with the former refugees photographed for the project about how they wished to be photographed, and what kind of quote about themselves they wished to accompany their portrait in the exhibition (see Photograph 4). The ARCC also self-published a book called *'Beyond Refuge'* that told the stories of resettlement from the perspective of former refugees. The impetus behind this project was to highlight the challenges and issues former refugees face, but also the contributions that they make to NZ as new Kiwis.

Photograph 4: New Zealanders Now - From Refugees to Kiwis exhibition.
Photo: Nando Azevedo



The ARCC then worked with local artist Tiffany Singh to transform these stories into an art installation called *'The Journey of a Million Miles – Following Steps'*, that was part of the Sculpture on the Gulf, Waiheke Island in 2016, and was later displayed at the Auckland Maritime Museum in 2017. The voices of actors were used to record the stories, which then played through upended rowing boats. The underside of the boats were decorated with colourful sari material where people would sit, and the hull was covered in hundreds of little silver paper boats that reminded me of barnacles glistening in the sun. Members of the public were encouraged to lie down

under the boats and listen to the stories of refuge and resettlement, while gazing out across the Hauraki Gulf back towards Auckland (see Photographs 5 and 6).

Photograph 5: *The Journey of a Million Miles - Following Steps* installation on Waiheke Island. Photo: Natalie Slade



Photograph 6: *The Journey of a Million Miles - Following Steps* installation on Waiheke Island. Photo: Natalie Slade



As Abann explained, these three ‘redefine refugee’ projects were about doing things differently, taking control of the message, and contesting and transforming dominant narratives about former refugees in NZ, “*in a way how we want to see that [and] how it need[s] to be done*”. Abann argued, “*we need to move that label*” and show NZ that “*we’re not just refugees*” but “*New Zealanders who contribute to this country*”. Abann argued that if the resettled community want things to change, to be considered part of NZ society, then they must share their stories as a way to build understanding and acceptance. For Abann, the advocacy work of the ARCC team through these projects was about creating space in the resettlement sector for former refugee voices, and empowering resettled communities to stand up and speak out. Because, as Abann argued, those who are from a non-refugee background tend to dominate the discussion about refugee resettlement sector in NZ, and internationally in multilateral organisations such as the UNHCR, which is very disempowering for the communities affected.

During my fieldwork in 2017, I witnessed what Abann meant by this first-hand. In February 2017, Auckland hosted the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR), which aims to bring together government partners, NGOs, and the UNHCR to strengthen global approaches to resettlement. As part of the ATCR, I attended the Working Group on Resettlement: Communications and Social Media workshop. During the workshop, I noticed the room was full of people from Western countries who worked in the resettlement sector (both government and NGOs), and Abann was the only person from a refugee background present in the room representing the voice of the resettled communities in NZ. At one point, Abann stood up to comment on the fact that community voices were largely absent from the discussion and stressed the need for NGOs and government resettlement services to work in partnership with resettled communities. Later on when I interviewed Abann for this research and asked him about this encounter, he said that although it was good for all involved to get together and discuss resettlement issues, nothing ever changes; it is the same people talking about the same issues. Abann argued that the conversation should be “*driven by the people*” who experience resettlement, because “*communication is about participation*”. If all the parties involved in the ATCR are serious about developing successful policies for resettlement then, according to Abann, “*the voice of the community should be party*”

to those discussions.

Abann said that he and the ARCC are not trying to criticise anyone, but urged, *“please do it with us, not to us”*, work in partnership with resettled communities to bring about positive change. Abann believes that those who work or speak on the behalf of former refugees in NZ have good intentions, but they do not realise the negative or disempowering impact it can have on former refugee communities. In particular, he gave the example of the campaign to raise NZ’s refugee quota saying, *“I want to talk about the [person] who [is] talking about doubling the quota. What do you know about the resettlement?”* What Abann meant is those speaking about raising the quota are not necessarily the best placed to speak on these issues, and should be talking to the *“right people”* – those former refugees who have actually experienced refuge and resettlement.

Abann was not the only refugee background person I spoke to who was critical of other non-refugee New Zealanders speaking on behalf of refugees, especially during the campaign to increase the refugee quota. Adorate felt that *“like the loudest voices [...] were not necessarily people from refugee backgrounds [...] yeah, very few former refugee voices, and that’s what I see all the time”*. In other words, the loudest voices in the media calling for doubling the quota were non-refugee New Zealanders. Like Abann, Adorate believes there needs to be more voices from those who actually know what it is like to be a refugee. John argued that advocates needed to let former refugees speak for themselves, because it makes him feel *“funny”* when he sees people talking *“about something they don’t understand”*. John questioned how non-refugee people could talk about something they have not experienced. Tayyaba, the former CEO of ChangeMakers Refugee Forum was also quite critical of non-refugee New Zealanders representing refugees and refugee issues. She argued that the person telling the story needed to change, because:

I’m really tired of seeing the white Pākehā male or female talk about somebody else’s story, you know, and then they get the respect and all of that to be able to be invited to the table, when actually why aren’t you inviting that very person who’s story it is? (Tayyaba, ChangeMakers Refugee Forum)

Other participants from refugee backgrounds that I interviewed also expressed frustrations at hearing non-refugees speak about the refugee experience, inevitably

represent refugees in a stereotypical way, and felt there was a need to control, contest and transform the narrative for themselves. Adorate decided to take matters into her own hands and created a series of short videos on YouTube about former refugee youth sharing their stories of growing up in NZ, stating that she just wanted to start a conversation and hoped people would be open-minded and accepted that there are many different kinds of New Zealanders from diverse backgrounds. According to Adorate, *“if you're wanting to redefine the word, then you have to show, I feel like the complexities or the different facets of the person”*, such as their background, interests, and the story of how they got here and what they are doing now.

For Abdul, it was about taking *“ownership of your own story, because as soon as it's out there in the public it's out of your control [...] and people can interpret it however way they feel like [...] So that's why you've got to be very clear about how you frame the story”*. He said that he made a conscious decision to take control of his story and not end up as *“a side piece”* in a larger news story, or risk being quoted out of context. He has been involved in a TED Talk, written opinion pieces for newspapers, and has given public talks at local clubs and community groups. In his public speaking role, Abdul said he talks about his own experiences to provide context, but prefers to focus on the wider issues at play in the refugee crisis, such as international law and NZ's role as a resettlement country. He believes personal stories are a powerful medium to connect with people and open up dialogue and discussion, as the refugee label carries certain negative connotations. Therefore, talking to people and starting a conversation is a way of breaking down those stereotypes, challenging perceptions, and making people more aware of what it is like to be a refugee.

Sakina wanted to personalise, embrace and reclaim her story of refuge through her own voice, and break away from the labels put on her and the other ‘Tampa refugee’ by the media back in 2001 at the time of the Tampa incident. In her final year project for her visual arts degree, Sakina created a short film *‘Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea’* which was screened inside a shipping container to give the effect of what it would have been like for the refugees sheltering on board the Tampa. Her video used media coverage of the Tampa affair, overlaid with Sakina's voice narrating her experience (see Photograph 7). She wanted to publically share her refugee

experience and show what the Tampa refugees went through, and how much she and others appreciated the chance given to them by NZ. Sakina believes personal stories help people to relate to other's experiences, and through her art, she hoped to change some people's views about "*these people*" and "*those refugees*" in a different way from the media coverage most people would have seen:

I wanted to embrace it in my own voice and where I am with life right now. I wanted to share that feeling with everyone else, especially for people who didn't know me personally. I just wanted to share it with the public to show that we went through a lot to get to where we are. Just to give a different insight to the story. While also, to appreciate and be grateful for everything. (Sakina)

Photograph 7: Sakina outside the shipping container where she screened her short film and a screen shot from the video. Photo: Sakina



Telling her story through photographs and video, and appropriating media coverage from the time, helped Sakina to take back control of her story and transform the media representation of the Tampa refugees. Because, as Sakina argued, as soon as you type 'Tampa refugees' into Google, "*you only get those specific images*" as told by the media. She wanted to highlight that everyone has their unique story, and "*you won't know unless you actually talk to them and discover what their life has been like. To simply find out about their experiences really gives you something to think about.*"

Taking back control of how she defines herself was important to Rez, after a NZH news article in 2016 referred to her as a refugee who meet former NZ Prime Minister Helen Clark, with a headline that read: 'Refugee rubs shoulders with world leaders'. This really annoyed Rez, not only because "*it's wrong, because I've been in New Zealand since 1998. Like it's a long time!*", but also because it made her feel like this

“insignificant little refugee who’s happened to have the chance to meet a world leader”. Rez describes herself as *“someone that’s refugee background, Kiwi and proud”*, who also identifies strongly with her Kurdish background. She is a successful human rights lawyer, a refugee background youth mentor, and was named the 2017 Young New Zealander of the Year. Through her mentoring roles, and the media platform the Young New Zealander of the Year award gives her, Rez aims to change the perception of refugees. Because, as she argued, if people did not know she was from a refugee background, or did not know what she looked like, and they just heard her ‘Kiwi’ accent, they would assume she was a New Zealander like anyone else, no different. Rez would like NZ society to be more aware of these things, to accept that people from refugee backgrounds are the same as other New Zealanders, *“we’re people, we have similar ambitions, we have similar life goals, [and] we all want to just live a happy safe life”*. For Rez, relaying that message is important.

Rahil believed that sharing her story of resettlement in the media would be a good thing, that it would show people who she was and why her family sought refuge in NZ. She thought it would help to counter negative refugee stereotypes and might make a difference to the perception of refugees generally. For Rahil, actions speak louder than words, and therefore, *“action not words”* will redefine the ‘refugee’ label. She gave an example of one of her school assignments where she walked around the city with a big poster thanking NZ for welcoming and supporting refugees and handed out flowers to passers-by. She said she also wanted to set up an event in town with food and music and bring together Syrians, other former refugees and the NZ public to meet and get to know each other, in order to *“get them out of this refugee umbrella [and] show who they actually are”*, to show that people are more than just ‘refugees’.

Other participants believed it was important to share your story so the NZ public can get to know you and understand why you are here. Because, as Margaret argued, people may not know anything about refugees or refugee resettlement; therefore, sharing your story is the only way people will get to know you, and will help to create understanding, tolerance and acceptance of refugees in NZ. As Margaret explained:

You need to raise your voice and you need to show yourself I’m here, you know. Show yourself and say I can do this. So people they can face and see. But

if you're hiding with things, who going to know? [...] So this is very important. Don't be inside, don't be quiet. If you want to do something, get up and go and tell people! People want to know. (Margaret)

Although New Zealanders are largely accepting and welcoming of refugees, Joseph believes that there is unfortunately a lack of understanding and knowledge about refugees in the public domain, which causes mistrust and stereotypes to flourish. He noted that part of the problem is *"we don't know each other completely. [...] If we know each other better we will trust each other more and we will build our relationship based on more confidence and trust."* Yahya thinks it is a good idea former refugees in NZ tell their stories so people will understand what it is like to be a refugee, because *"we all have our own idea about people"* which is influenced through the media and other sources. He argued that personal stories help to counter the media narrative, overcome barriers between refugees and host society, and help people understand that refugees are not so different to them. As Yahya said, *"when you start to listen to people, you start to see and start to think it, they're not really different to us".*

The power of personal stories to breakdown stereotypes and build tolerance and understanding is something Gatluak believes in, and on some level can help New Zealanders understand what it is like to be a refugee. Gatluak argued that it is important to talk to people, *"because if you don't know me, [...] and one day maybe you read my story and say, oh. Because through these stories you might find some connections. You might be able to relate to that."* Gatluak was involved with the ARCC's 'Redefine Refugee' advocacy projects, and strongly believes the stories told through these projects will slowly help to change people's *"mindset"* towards refugees, and offers an opportunity to open up dialogue between the resettled communities and NZ society. Gatluak argued that they could not rely on the media to do this, so they need to do it for themselves. He said that NZ has changed many lives, but the question is how will the rest of New Zealand know that? For Gatluak, it is through stories, and then NZ will know *"we have done something good"*.

These stories of contesting and redefining 'refugee' illustrate the various ways in which the refugee background people I interviewed for this research have chosen to take back control of the dominant discourses surrounding the refugee label. They

have decided to be active agents of change within their own lives, aiming to transform the negative into the positive through stories, words, art and action, either through their own individual projects or in collaboration with others. As Abann from the ARCC argued, *“if we don’t introduce ourselves to NZ, which is the thing we want to be part of, they will not know us. So they will know us through our stories, because the stories speak louder than anything else”*.

Summary

This chapter has sought to highlight the voices of the former refugees interviewed for this research and what they think about media representations and public perceptions of refugees; the relationship between refugee stereotypes and notions of belonging and acceptance; and how they choose to define the word ‘refugee’. For many of those I interviewed, the refugee label had negative connotations that they did not want to be associated. For these participants, the predominant representation of refugees as helpless victims made them feel stigmatised and deficient in some way, and different to other New Zealanders. These refugee stereotypes, they argued, were unhelpful and actually detrimental to integration and long-term successful resettlement outcomes. However, others I spoke to choose to embrace the word refugee, as they saw power and strength in it, and they felt the refugee experience is part of their life story and identity, and informs who they are today. Regardless of whether people chose to associate with the refugee label or not, what became apparent through the interviews with former refugees was their clear desire to take back control of the narrative and define themselves. Each had a real sense of purpose about their identity, their place in NZ, and what they are striving to achieve, in terms of challenging and transforming dominant discourses and perceptions of refugees. As Mohammed declared, *“if there is a definition, I define it”*.

The next chapter brings the findings together in a discussion using the conceptual framework from Chapter 4 in order to highlight the relationship between media representations of refugees, discourses of solidarity and welcome, and refugee self-representation, thus addressing the three main research questions.

Chapter 9: Analysing constructions of solidarity and representation

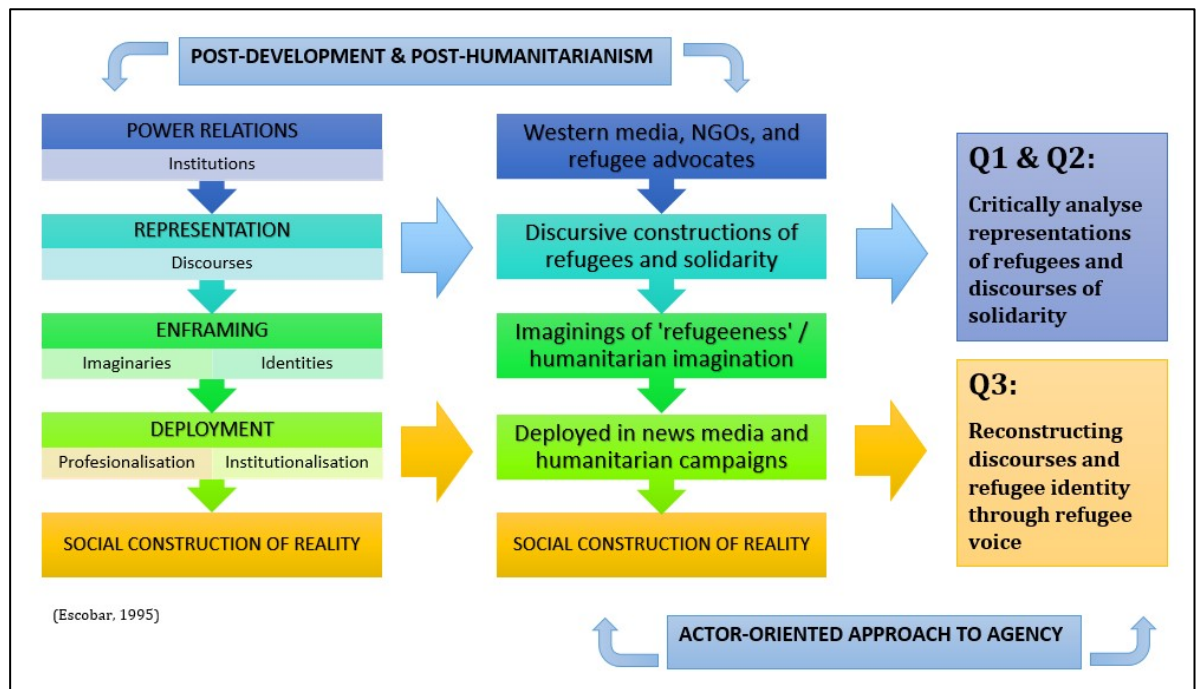
The aim of this chapter is to analyse the findings presented in Chapters 6-8 in relation to the conceptual framework (outlined in Chapter 4) and the literature on refugee representation and discourses of humanitarian solidarity. This chapter is divided into three sections drawing on the theoretical components of post-development, post-humanitarianism, and an actor-oriented approach (see Chapter 4). The first section discusses how refugees were represented in the NZ media analysed for this research in relation to post-development critiques of discourse. The next section analyses the relationship between humanitarian discourses, the representation of refugees, and acts of solidarity towards refugees through the lens of post-humanitarianism. This is followed by a critique of advocacy, solidarity discourses and the labelling of refugees. Lastly, this chapter will draw upon an actor-oriented approach to discourse and agency to discuss the voices of the refugee background participants I interviewed, and the various ways they are deconstructing and redefining the refugee label for themselves.

The discursive construction of refugees

Post-development and post-humanitarian theory critically examine the role that discourse plays in constructing and reinforcing particular representations of the Global South by the Global North (Chouliaraki, 2006, 2013; Escobar, 1995). Both theoretical perspectives argue that development and humanitarian discourse is shaped and perpetuated by unequal power relations between the West and the 'rest' that act to justify certain actions and practices. Following the refugee representation conceptual framework outlined in Chapter 4 (Figure 1), and expanded in Figure 7 (below) to align with the findings of my research (middle column), these types of discourse are linked to powerful Western institutions, such as humanitarian organisations and the media, that enframe and deploy forms of knowledge and reality about distant vulnerable others (Ziai, 2007). In relation to the analysis of this research, these Western institutions include the mainstream news organisations

NZH and Stuff, the NZRC, Action Station, the HRNGO, and the refugee advocates Tracey and Murdoch who advocated on behalf of refugees in the campaign to raise NZ's refugee quota.

Figure 7: Refugee representation and solidarity conceptual framework



As discussed in chapter 3, humanitarian discourses can oversimplify representations of humanitarian subjects, such as refugees, who are framed as powerless, passive, suffering, vulnerable victims in need of saving by the West (Barnett & Weiss, 2008; Escobar, 1995; Malkki, 1996; Nyers, 2006; Rajaram, 2002). These types of humanitarian narratives are discursively constructed and deployed by media and humanitarian campaigns, producing an imagining of 'refugeeness' – a socially constructed reality of what a refugee should look like. From a post-development and post-humanitarianism perspective, the knowledge generated about refugees through the NZ news media (specifically the NZH and Stuff) and advocacy campaigns (e.g. the campaign to raise NZ's refugee quota) is inherently connected to unequal power relations between those doing the representing (i.e. refugee advocates, the media) and those being represented (i.e. refugees).

Therefore, mediated discourses play an important role in constructing a particular narrative or stereotypical image of 'the refugee' that dominates Western

humanitarian imaginations of 'refugeeness' (Malkki, 1996). This in turn shapes how Western publics perceive and respond in solidarity to distant suffering others (Chouliaraki, 2013; Cohen, 2001; Orgad & Seu, 2014b). In relation to the media articles analysed for this research, and in response to research question 1 (how are refugees represented in the NZ media), the next section discusses and critiques the findings regarding the representation of refugees in the NZ media.

Constructing 'refugeeness' in the NZ media

As discussed in Chapter 6, the representation of refugees in the articles I analysed for this research clearly positioned 'the refugee' as someone who was a) a helpless, traumatised victim who needed NZ's help; and b) the successful refugee who is a benefit to NZ society.

Refugees as victims

The 'victim' trope dominated the representation of refugees in the media articles analysed, which portrayed refugees caught up in the refugee crisis overseas as helpless, distressed victims that needed to be saved. Refugees were described as 'hopeless', 'desperate', 'doomed and despairing', and 'vulnerable' (see Chapter 6). The stereotypical representation of refugees as victims echoed the literature on refugee representation in Chapter 3, in which a particular image of the helpless, passive, traumatised refugee has come to dominate Western humanitarian imaginations of 'refugeeness' (Chouliaraki, 2013; Johnson, 2011; Malkki, 1996; Mannik, 2012; Wright, 2002). However, instead of photographic images of suffering, it is the type of language used by media commentators that reinforces the view of refugees as passive victims, rather than as people with agency. Textual discourses, including news headlines and main body of text, paint a picture of 'the refugee' as a traumatized distant suffering other, a helpless victim who needs to be saved by the NZ government and public (Chouliaraki, 2006, 2013b).

From a post-development perspective, stereotypes of victimhood feed into the notion of 'the other' as backward, deficient, or in the case of refugees 'traumatised' and 'helpless', and needing to be saved by the West (Escobar, 1995), or in this case,

NZ. Victim stereotypes also fit into the narrative of humanitarianism, as discussed in Chapter 2, which is the humanitarian principle or moral responsibility to help distant suffering others (Barnett & Weis, 2008; Calhoun, 2010; Gibney, 2004; Wilson & Brown, 2009). Escobar argues that these types of hegemonic discourses function as a mechanism of power and control “in which only certain things could be said or imagined”, resulting in a “regime of representation” that dismisses alternative worldviews (Escobar, 1995, p. 39), and silences the voices of those being represented (Malkki, 1996).

Emotions of pity, empathy and compassion also play an integral part in moral responses to the suffering of others. Viewed from afar, victims of humanitarian crises, such as refugees, are frequently constructed as vulnerable and in need of saving (Chouliaraki, 2006). In the same respect, humanitarian discourses also encourage us to identify with this suffering other: they are just like ‘us’, they could be ‘our’ child, mother, friend or neighbour. This is what Orgad (2013, p. 297) describes as “visualizers of solidarity” – visual tropes that engage Western audiences and establish emotional connections with distant others, and invite spectators to act upon their suffering (Chouliaraki, 2013).

However, instead of visual images of suffering, it was the type of language used by the NZ media analysed that framed refugees as victims. I found that the photographs of refugees used to illustrate the news articles, opinion pieces and editorials online did not necessarily conform to the stereotypical image of the traumatised, distressed refugee, as suggested by the literature in Chapter 4 (see section ‘Visual representations of refugees’: Fehrenbach & Rodogno, 2015; Johnson, 2011; Sontag, 2003; Wright, 2002). As described in Chapter 6, most of the photos of refugees used by the media analysed were of the refugee crisis in Europe and were largely descriptive, depicting refugees arriving by boat in Greece and their trek through the Balkan region towards central Europe. While some of the images did depict distressed looking individuals, and the mother/child visual trope (Fehrenbach & Rodogno, 2015; Johnson, 2011; Wright, 2002), most of the images were emotionally neutral. In other words, the viewer could not make out whether those depicted were sad or happy (see Table 4, Chapter 3).

All of the images analysed in this research from the refugee crisis were however anonymous and taken from afar with a telephoto lens, reducing the intimate lives of distant others to “a voyeuristic gaze” (Orgad and Seu, 2014, p. 13), consumed predominantly by Western audiences. Malkki contends that media coverage of refugees tends to reduce their presence to a depersonalised “sea of humanity” (1996, p. 377), obscuring individual stories and experiences of displacement in the process. Thus, the images used in the NZ media coverage of the refugee crisis do not tell the spectator anything about who these people are, where they have come from, or what their lives are like now, beyond the fact that they are ‘refugees’ who are seeking refuge from war and/or persecution. Instead, in order to engage with the NZ public, the media analysed used the textual descriptions of suffering to explain why NZ should care about doing more to help refugees.

It is interesting to note that the NZ media analysed for this research chose to frame the plight of refugees from a predominantly humanitarian angle, rather than as a security issue (see Chapter 3), as other media overseas have done (Bleiker et al., 2013; Gale, 2004; Georgiou & Zaborowski, 2017). This may be because of NZ’s relative geographic isolation and the fact NZ does not have to contend with thousands of asylum seekers crossing its border to seek asylum. This particular framing also speaks to a strong narrative of NZ as a compassionate country with a long humanitarian tradition of welcoming refugees (I will discuss notions of NZ national identity, in relation to refugee solidarity, later in this chapter). Consequently, the ability to control the border, and control how many refugees are admitted via the official refugee resettlement programme, perhaps allows NZ to take a more generous approach towards refugees (Devetak & True, 2006; McNevin, 2014), which in turn is reflected in the media. This does not mean that opposition towards refugees does not exist in NZ (e.g. see Beaglehole, 2013); however, it is outside the scope of this thesis to explore anti-refugee sentiment in any great depth.

Refugees as a benefit to society

Another argument used by some media commentators was the long-term benefit of refugee resettlement. NZ should raise the refugee quota because refugees contribute to society in the long run. Examples of ‘successful’ refugees were then given, or interviewed, to corroborate this view (see Chapter 6). The trauma of displacement

(the 'trauma' story) also featured quite highly in these articles, in which their stories of success were accompanied by an account of the trauma they suffered before arriving in NZ. This also feeds into the humanitarian argument for helping refugees and raising the quota – they were once helpless, suffering victims, but NZ gave them a second chance of life and now look at what they have achieved.

This reflects the findings of research by Lippi, McKay, McKenzie (2017), Every and Augoustinos (2008) and Pupavac (2008), who suggest that sympathetic representations of refugees typically oscillate between portraying refugees as 'gifted' (talented and skilled people who will contribute to society) or 'traumatized' (a symbol of suffering and victimhood, therefore worthy of support). This approach is often used by refugee advocates as a way of soliciting support for refugees/asylum seekers in the receiving society. However, these types of representations can create alternative problematic stereotypes of refugees, such as the 'deserving' refugee. The implication is that if refugees do not fit these frames, if they are not obviously 'traumatized' or look like 'victims', or are "exceptionally talented" (Pupavac, 2008, p. 272) then they may not be seen to be deserving or legitimate enough for Western publics to help (Pupavac, 2006, 2008).

In reference to the media findings in this research, the process of framing refugees as a benefit to society is one of garnering support for raising the refugee quota, and may help to combat some negative comments around refugee resettlement. However, not all refugees are going to be human rights lawyers, or start a successful business, or give back to their communities in various meaningful ways (refer to Chapter 6, section 'Former refugees in New Zealand'). As Action Station pointed out in their interview, even "*grumpy old men who are never going to work again*" deserve refuge. Similarly, not every refugee is going to be traumatized and in need of counselling (Papadopoulos, 2007; Summerfield, 1999).

The framing of refugees as a benefit to NZ society is not a new argument. As Beaglehole (2013) explained, refugees were historically chosen by the NZ government in relation to their skill-set, education, and how well they would assimilate into NZ society (see Chapter 2: History of Resettlement in NZ). However, representing refugees in terms of what they are 'worth', or what they will eventually 'pay back' to NZ, risks becoming more about how New Zealand could benefit, rather

than about the very people who are at the heart of the argument. Comedian Raybon Kan sums this up quite nicely in an opinion piece for the New Zealand Herald when he said, “[t]aking refugees is not a talent quest. It’s not *Masterchef*” (Raybon Kan, ‘Taking refugees is not a talent quest’, nzherald.co.nz, Sep13, 2015). In other words, increasing the quota should focus on NZ’s humanitarian obligations towards helping refugees, and not be about what a refugees can bring to this country. Humanitarian discourses that emphasise the benefits ‘others’ bring to society may portray refugees in a more positive light; however, they are still normatively depicted as helpless victims who are worthy of ‘our’ kindness (Franquet Dos Santos Silva et al., 2018).

Thus, despite good intentions, these kinds of discourses used by refugee advocates can actually end up marginalising those they seek to support. Refugees may be recognised as human beings in the protest banners, but their humanity and agency is undermined by the very fact of others speaking for them (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017). The next section discusses the findings around refugee advocacy and representation (both in the media articles analysed and from the perspective of the refugee advocates interviewed), and the potential problematic nature of speaking on behalf of refugees.

Advocacy and representation: Speaking on behalf of others

The power to represent others is an issue both Escobar (1995) and Chouliaraki (2013) critique in their theorization of development/humanitarian discourse. In relation to the conceptual framework of this research, mediated discourses play an important role in constructing a particular narrative about refugees that in turn influence how Western publics respond. This also leads into questions of power about who gets to speak, and who is doing the representing. Van Dijk (2008) argues that how news events are framed will always depends on whose opinion is sought. In this respect, minorities, such as refugees, tend to be described in stereotypes and positioned as needing our help, understanding and support. This power to represent others, according to van Dijk, implies alternative voices, opinions and information are excluded, or at least less quoted than “white majority speakers” (van Dijk, 2008, p. 75).

The debate about why NZ should respond to the refugee crisis was very much a discussion between 'experts' in the media about how NZ should respond to the 2015 refugee crisis, mostly led by people who were not from refugee backgrounds (journalists, columnists, media commentators, NGO 'experts', etc.). There was a distinct lack of refugee voices, and those who were interviewed tended to be positioned as either traumatised victims or a benefit to society. As discussed in Chapter 6 (section 'Who is speaking'), non-refugee voices in the media articles analysed far outweighed those of former refugees in NZ (82.9% compared to just 17.1%). The conversation was mainly aimed at New Zealanders, and covered the process of resettlement and the role of volunteers, city councils, churches, and the general public in welcoming refugees. Out of 133 voices counted, only 22 were the voices of former refugees in NZ, and only 13 articles, out of a total of 76, involved former refugees in the discussion about NZ's response to the refugee crisis. These findings correspond with recent research by Chouliaraki & Zaborowski (2017) on the media coverage of the 'refugee crisis' in Europe, which found that the media argument lacked refugee voices and personalisation, and mainly focused on the voices of politicians. This leads to the question, why do the opinions of non-refugee people matter more or feature more than those who have actually experienced what it is like to be a refugee?

As noted in Chapter 4, that the institutionalisation of development and humanitarianism in the post-WWII era created a plethora of development/humanitarian 'experts' who were endowed with the power and knowledge to identify problems and 'objects of concern', and determine the best strategies for intervention (Barnett & Weiss, 2008; Escobar, 1997). Thus, humanitarian agencies (e.g. UNHCR) are perceived as an expert voice with specialised knowledge and skills, or "moral authority" (Barnett & Weiss, 2008, p. 39) to provide accurate accounts of the particular humanitarian emergency on the ground, and therefore justified to speak and act on behalf of the vulnerable communities they help. Often it is assumed that humanitarian subjects, such as refugees, are too vulnerable to speak for themselves or lack the power and capabilities to do so. Western advocates may be seen as the more authoritative figure to seek comment about a particular situation (Rajaram, 2002; Chouliaraki, 2013). As Malikki (1996) notes, knowledge about refugees and refugee situations

tend to come from so-called 'refugee experts' and 'relief officials', rather than from refugees themselves, leading to an imbalance of voices that are heard.

Of the refugee advocates I interviewed, Tracey and Murdoch (who are also both media commentators and opinion piece writers), felt justified speaking on behalf of former refugee communities in NZ, because those communities may not have the skills, capabilities, confidence or expertise to do so for themselves. They also argued that they are in the privileged position as media spokespeople and Pākehā/white New Zealanders, and felt they had a duty to use their skills as journalists and activists to speak up on behalf of others and educate the public. One could argue that it is not Tracey or Murdoch's place to tell other people's stories or speak about an experience they know nothing personally about. Although Alcoff (1991) questions the validity of advocacy on behalf of distant others, she also asks whether not speaking out on issues of injustice and inequality is effectively abandoning one's political responsibility and privilege. Therefore, perhaps Tracey and Murdoch make a valid point regarding their privileged place as advocates in NZ.

The other refugee advocates and communications specialists that I interviewed were very aware of the uneven power dynamics involved in their privileged position as Western advocates and the platform they were given to speak on behalf of refugees. They felt a great responsibility to do justice to the stories of the people they were advocating for. It was very important for them to ensure they worked in collaboration with refugee background communities in NZ, communicating the message that they wished to be communicated. As the communications manager at NZRC argued, we need to see less 'experts' or 'white saviours' talking and more refugee voices. The NZRC saw their role as a facilitator to help former refugees tell their story if they wanted to, because it is their voices that count: *"I'm not there to determine how they want to tell their story [...] like, I'm not spinning their story for them"*. Thus, for the NZRC, it was about how former refugees wished to be seen, and what they wanted to say.

This position taken by the NZRC communications manager, as well as from the Action Station and HRNGO spokespeople I interviewed, speaks to Chouliaraki's (2013) concept of agonistic solidarity and Silverstone's (2007) concept of 'proper distance', in which the communication of distant suffering goes beyond our private

emotions towards questions of social justice. For these advocates, alerting the NZ public to the plight of refugees was more than simply evoking emotions of empathy and pity; it was also about social justice and human rights, and hopefully creating a platform for some kind of political change. This is why working in partnership with refugee background communities and highlighting the voices of those who had been refugees was so important to their campaign strategies. The inclusion of alternative voices is a crucial aspect of agonistic solidarity, where the voices, perspectives, and experiences of distant others (in this case, former refugees living in NZ) are put front and centre of campaign communications, instead of being framed as a passive victim in someone else's story, as post-development posits.

Becht, Boucsein, & Mayr (2018) found a similar occurrence in their research with German refugee advocates. While some advocates descended into victim stereotypes to raise awareness and support for the plight of refugees in Germany, others acknowledged the power inequalities that existed between themselves and the refugees they were helping. They identified themselves as occupying a place of 'white privilege', and acknowledged that refugees were in a less privileged situation to themselves. These activists were highly aware of the potential for paternalism and rejected refugee stereotypes, wanting to connect with refugees on an equal platform. The authors found that these advocates tended to take a value-based approach, adhering to the idea of a common humanity (Becht et al., 2018, pp. 65-66), a similar approach taken by the NZRC, Action Station, and the Human Rights NGO in their communication campaigns to raise support for refugees in NZ.

Human interest stories are also often used by refugee rights/advocacy organisations to portray refugees not only as victims, but also as individuals with hopes and dreams for the future, just like 'us' (Franquet Dos Santos Silva et al., 2018; Steimel, 2010). Rorty (1989) suggests that solidarity with distant suffering others may be strongest when we can identify with those we stand in solidarity with as someone like 'us', what he calls "imaginative identification" (Rorty, 1989, p. 191). Solidarity discourses that emphasise the similarities we share, is what Becht et al. (2018) refer to as inclusive othering. The refugee advocates I interviewed for this research were very aware of the stereotypical representation of refugees in the media, and were committed to breaking away from normative representations of

refugees as traumatised victims needing to be saved. As discussed in Chapter 6, their aim was to frame refugees as people like ‘us’ – ordinary people with hopes, dreams, aspirations for the future. Using personal stories as a way to humanise and celebrate the kind of people refugees are (strong, resilient, survivors), the skills and capabilities they bring with them, and to create understanding, awareness and empathy (i.e. that could be me, or that could be my child, etc.). Focusing on the strengths and capabilities of refugees also falls into the realm of agonistic solidarity and ‘proper distance’, enabling Western publics to move beyond imagining distant others as helpless, vulnerable victims, and instead seeing them as individuals with agency and their own humanity (Chouliaraki, 2013; Silverstone, 2007). Moving beyond victimisation is also a tenet of hopeful post-development (e.g. Gibson-Graham, 2005; McKinnon, 2007), which prefers to focus on the resiliency, strengths, capabilities and assets of development/humanitarian subjects.

Despite the desire to frame refugees as strong and resilient, advocates also expressed a desire to not downplay the seriousness of forced displacement, and the fact that some refugees will be vulnerable and traumatised. I felt a real tension existed for them between wanting to avoid refugee stereotypes, while at the same time getting the message out in the mainstream media in the most effective way about why the NZ public should care, and why raising the quota is a good idea. This tension is not an uncommon occurrence within humanitarian campaigns. In their research on the communication strategies of humanitarian organisations, Orgad and Seu (2014) highlight the tensions that exist in the way these organisations wish to represent humanitarian subjects. While representing people as vulnerable, suffering victims can help to elicit sympathy and support, many of these organisations also wanted to make sure their ‘clients’ were represented as empowered active agents of change within their own lives, and not just passive victims waiting to be saved (Malkki, 1996; Rajaram, 2002).

However, regardless of good intentions by refugee advocates, Becht et al. (2018) argue that all refugee representation ends up ‘othering’ refugees. Refugees may be portrayed in a more positive light; however, they are still normatively depicted as helpless victims who are in genuine need and are worthy of ‘our’ kindness (Franquet Dos Santos Silva et al., 2018). Becht et al. (2018) analysed the way the German

'Refugees Welcome' movement deployed humanitarian discourses to justify their actions. They argued that despite good intentions, activists often ended up 'otherising' refugees as anonymous vulnerable recipients of aid, rather than seeing them as individuals with agency. Thus, refugee advocates may actually end up marginalising those they seek to support. Refugees may be recognised as human beings in the protest banners, but their humanity and agency is undermined by the very fact of others speaking for them, or not being allowed to speak for themselves, despite being the ones who have the knowledge and refugee experience (Chouliaraki & Stolic, 2017).

In a world of increasing anti-refugee/migrant and nationalistic sentiment there is a need for alternative discourses that promote a more compassionate and empathetic understanding of refugee issues. However, regardless of intention, efforts to speak on behalf of refugees by someone who is not a refugee, and has never been through that experience, is potentially problematic. Refugee stories are still framed by someone else, told through someone else's filter. Ambrose, Hogle, Taneja, & Yohannes (2015) question the legitimacy of Western solidarity movements who advocate on behalf of distant others, especially if the people on whose behalf they wish to advocate do not sanction them. Alcoff (1991) also asks the question if speaking on behalf of vulnerable others is ever justifiable or valid, a point well made by not only some of the advocates I spoke with, but also those I interviewed from refugee backgrounds.

For example, as discussed in Chapter 8, Abann from the ARCC questioned the validity of those who were campaigning to raise NZ's refugee quota saying, "*What do you know about the resettlement?*" In other words, those speaking about raising the quota are not necessarily the best placed to speak on these issues, and should be talking to former refugees who have actually experienced refuge and resettlement. Adorate, John and Tayyaba also questioned the legitimacy of non-refugee people talking about an issue and an experience they know nothing about, and felt that the loudest voices in the media calling for a doubling of the quota were not in fact people from refugee backgrounds. Abann believes that those who work or speak on the behalf of former refugees in NZ have good intentions, but they do not realise the negative or disempowering impact it can have on former refugee communities. John,

Abann and Tayyaba argued that advocates need to create space for former refugees to speak for themselves.

As Rajaram (2002) warns, the danger is that refugee advocates can end up generalising refugees as helpless victims without agency, reliant on Western 'experts' (e.g. refugee advocates, media commentators) to speak on their behalf. Barnett (2011) argues that humanitarian discourses about refugees contain elements of domination and paternalism, which may consequently render refugees 'speechless', obscuring individual experiences, histories and stories (Malkki, 1996). Therefore, Ambrose et al. (2015, p.1) believe advocates need to be "more self-reflective and accountable to the people and the situations they represent", include multiple voices and perspective, and try to address the wider structural causes of the situation they are advocating.

Thus, from a post-development/post-humanitarian perspective, humanitarian discourses involve a complex relationship of politics, power and ethics – who is visible and who is not, who gets to speak over others (Chouliaraki, 2013; Escobar, 1995; Foucault, 1980). Refugee voices are largely absent from the media analysed for this research. What voice they do have tended to be positioned within the frames of 'gifted' or 'traumatised' (Pupavac, 2008), mediated by others, and reduced to a sidepiece in a larger story. Following the refugee representation conceptual framework, informed by post-development and post-humanitarianism critiques of discourse, humanitarian representations of refugees can be seen as a social construction of reality that shape and determine what becomes defined, perceived and understood as 'truth'. These discourses then determine what type of actions are necessary and desirable, and who is best placed to respond (Barnett & Weiss, 2008).

With regards to the NZ media analysed for this research, refugees caught up in the 2015 refugee crisis were framed as helpless victims who needed to be saved. Former refugees in NZ were defined as a benefit to society. In both cases, 'the refugee' is constructed by non-refugee 'experts' as an 'object of knowledge' to be understood and responded upon (Malkki, 1995; Rajaram, 2002). Chouliaraki (2013) argues that there is a strong correlation between the representation of distant others and acts of solidarity, which relies on emotionally driven discourses that invite Western spectators to engage with humanitarian solidarity campaigns. This was certainly

found to be the case in my analysis of the NZ media articles chosen for this research (see Chapters 6 and 7), in which representations of refugees as ‘victim’ and ‘benefit’ fed into the overall humanitarian argument for raising the refugee quota (i.e. NZ must respond and save these helpless, vulnerable refugees; refugee resettlement is a benefit to society). Within these discourses, it is the NZ government and NZ public who are identified as best placed to respond to this humanitarian crisis. The next section discusses the relationship between refugee representation and discourses of solidarity, in relation to the media campaign to raise NZ’s refugee quota (research question 2).

Acts of Solidarity: ‘Refugees Welcome’

According to Chouliaraki (2006, 2013b), post-humanitarian communication relies on emotionally driven discourses that invite Western publics to act in solidarity with distant suffering others. Although drawing on the language of humanitarianism and cosmopolitan solidarity (common humanity, moral duty to help suffering others, etc), Chouliaraki argues that the communication of distant suffering has become more about how witnessing and responding to that suffering makes ‘us’ (the spectator) feel, placing the spectator at the centre of moral action. Solidarity discourses form a relationship between ‘how I feel’ and ‘what I can do’ to help suffering others, with emotional language and visual suffering playing a central role. Thus, acts of solidarity rely on humanitarian representations that convey moral discourses of pity and “grand emotions about suffering” (Chouliaraki, 2010, p. 108) that justify the imperative to help distant vulnerable others.

This is what Luc Boltanski (1999) refers to as the ‘politics of pity’ (see Chapter 4). Distant others are portrayed as suffering, vulnerable, innocent victims; a portrayal designed to pull on the heartstrings of the spectator and makes us feel pity, empathy, and compassion, and to imagine the suffering of that person. Emotive representations of distant suffering play on our sense of morality, “for without morality there is no pity” (Boltanski, 1999, p. 13). Thus, the ‘politics of pity’ mobilises moral discourses of solidarity, and justifies calls for action. As discussed in Chapter 6 and 7, within the media analysed for this research, refugees were predominantly represented as helpless, suffering victims who needed to be saved.

These types of representations fed into the arguments used by refugee advocates and media commentators to urge the NZ government to show a stronger, more empathetic, and welcoming response towards refugees in light of the global refugee crisis. These discourses of solidarity and welcome stem from humanitarian concern and an ethical and moral duty towards helping refugees, but they can feed into discourses of national identity and imaginings of humanitarian values (Bauder, 2008, 2009, 2014; Rosello, 2001). They also risk encouraging a regime of compassion and charity that speaks more about how 'we' feel and how 'we' should respond, positioning refugees as helpless, vulnerable victims - objects of 'our' moral responsibility (Chouliaraki, 2006, 2013).

This section draws on the findings from Chapter 7 in relation to the moral argument put forth by the media for raising the refugee quota, and analyses the relationship between discourses of solidarity and welcome towards refugees, refugee representation, and notions of national identity (research question 2) through the lens of post-humanitarianism.

Distant suffering and the moral duty to act

Accepting a paltry 750 people into New Zealand annually while children wash up on the shores of Europe is an absolute affront to the decency and kindness of the New Zealand people. We cannot stand by and watch this crisis unfold while pictures of such incredible suffering flood our screens. (nzherald.co.nz, Sep 5, 2015)

Media findings strongly revealed an overwhelming ethical and moral argument for raising the refugee quota that draws on a particular narrative of New Zealand national identity and nationhood – NZ as a warm, welcoming, compassionate country with a long humanitarian tradition of welcoming refugees. As the above quote highlights, it is an emotive argument that focuses on “*the decency and kindness*” of New Zealanders and our responsibilities as a humanitarian actor and as a good global citizen who cannot ignore “*such incredible suffering*”. As discussed in Chapter 4, Chouliaraki (2013) contends that post-humanitarian communication puts the spectator at the centre of moral action, in which responding to distant

suffering becomes more about how witnessing that suffering makes ‘us’ feel, as this quote from the NZH alludes to. This moral standpoint was reiterated in many of the editorial and opinion piece headlines, such as ‘*We must help ease misery*’; ‘*Crisis is tragic, and we have a duty to help*’; ‘*Tragic image should shock us into action*’; and ‘*Now to really open your hearts*’, which leaves the reader in no doubt where the author of the article stands on this issue.

Within this argument, refugees were typically portrayed as vulnerable victims who are traumatized, distressed, and in need of saving (as discussed above). As Chouliaraki (2006, 2013) argues, humanitarian discourses of suffering invite Western audiences to act on behalf of vulnerable others, whether that be protesting, donating to a charity, or writing opinion pieces in the media. However, in the process these distant suffering others are reduced to objects of Western humanitarian imaginations, portrayed as anonymous, traumatised, helpless victims. The humanitarian imagination relies on the power of humanitarian discourses (both image and text) to represent the suffering of distant others in a way that mobilises certain emotions, such as pity and empathy, and compel us to act upon those feelings. The imperative to act upon vulnerable others to alleviate their suffering is based on what is considered to be morally right (i.e. moral responsibility for distant suffering others; see Chapter 2).

The media plays an important role in disseminating the humanitarian imaginary, inviting spectators to care, respond, and act upon distant suffering, not only because helping refugees is the right thing to do, but also because helping refugees alleviates ‘our’ own suffering, or in the case of the above NZH quote, to alleviate the “*affront*” to ‘our’ “*decency and kindness*”. Chouliaraki (2013) describes journalism as a performance that utilises emotional words and imagery in order to provoke a response from audiences. In relation to the NZ media analysed, particular representations of refugees and emotional rhetoric was used to shame the NZ government and engage with the NZ public’s humanitarian imagination, urging them to act in solidarity with refugee suffering.

These ethical and moral arguments used by the media play on what Matthew Gibney (2004) refers to as the ‘ethics of hospitality’, or a form of unconditional hospitality, that draws on the humanitarian principle or duty to assist those who are suffering

and in need. This is a moral principle between strangers who share nothing more than a common humanity. There is a strong correlation between these discourses of hospitality/solidarity and humanitarianism and how refugees are represented. In the NZ media, ethical and moral arguments for raising the refugee quota strongly aligned with the representation of refugees as vulnerable victims in need of saving. The refugee here symbolises the hurt and vulnerable stranger whom the New Zealand government and society has a moral duty to assist. Hyndman (2000, p. xxii) speaks of this as a form of “charitable humanity”, a “colonialism of compassion” that purports to speak for others while at the same time silencing refugee voices.

Humanitarian descriptions of refugees are often used as moralising discourses, for example ‘there but for the grace of God go I’ (e.g. Andrea Vance “*There but for the grace of God go you, or I, John Key*”, stuff.co.nz, Sep 7, 2015), or ‘this could happen to you’ (Silk, 2000, p. 307). These kinds of discourses are an attempt to (re)humanise distant others and raise support for humanitarian interventions or help (e.g. raising the refugee quota). The media articles analysed utilised a number of moralising discourses or rhetorical devices (e.g. facts and figures, cost verses contribution – see Chapter 7), and used language of guilt, disgust, contempt, privilege and disadvantage (e.g. ‘we don’t know how lucky we are’, ‘how can we sit by and watch such suffering’, etc). The ‘shaming’ trope was a particularly strong theme, aimed directly at the NZ government who was criticised by various media commentators for not doing more to respond to the refugee crisis, as discussed in Chapter 7.

This shaming trope is an example of what Boltanski (1999) calls ‘shame-filled compassion’. This type of compassion is about feeling guilty or bad for witnessing the suffering of others while we, the spectator, live a comfortable and safe life away from danger. We see it as our moral duty to help those who are suffering, because it is the right thing to do. According to Boltanski, we may even direct anger at oneself or others who are seemingly not doing anything to help. This is what the media commentators implied when they were accusing the National-led government of not doing enough to help. They argued that the refugee crisis is a humanitarian crisis of epic proportions; NZ is in a privileged position due to its relative wealth and capacity to act. Therefore, NZ has a moral duty to act, and to do nothing is shamefully wrong.

The language, practice and consequences of shame and shaming in refugee advocacy often draws on the emotions and values of national identity, when certain actions or inactions, are considered 'shameful' and reflect badly on the nation state in question (Every, 2013). In the case of the NZ media analysed, the perceived inaction of the National/Key government and initial refusal to raise the refugee quota, according to various media commentators, reflected badly on NZ's reputation as a warm, welcoming and compassionate country with a long tradition of welcoming refugees. Kiwi values, or imaginings of 'Kiwi values' and NZ national identity, were called upon in the argument for raising the quota, as the next section discusses.

The "Kiwi way": National identity and the humanitarian imagination

How Kiwis react to desperate people fleeing terror on the other side of the world is about who we are as a people. (Andrew Little, former Labour leader)

The ethical and moral arguments used by the media and analysed in this study were tied to the notion, and perceived tradition, of Kiwi hospitality (the welcoming of refugees) and NZ identity. This argument drew on NZ's historic track record of welcoming and resettling refugees, implying that NZ is a compassionate, humanitarian country with a long tradition of welcoming refugees. Both the media articles I analysed, and the refugee advocates that I interviewed referred to Kiwi values and national identity in supporting and welcoming refugees. Helping refugees is about our moral values, our compassion and empathy, our humanity, and basically what it means to be a New Zealander. Therefore, how NZ chooses to respond to the distant suffering of others says a lot about "*who we are as a people*" and a nation, as the above quote from former Labour leader Andrew Little alludes to.

Journalists Patrice Dougan and Claire Trevett argued, "*Our response in situations like this says everything about who we are as a nation*" ('Syrian crisis: NZ to take in hundreds more refugees', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 7, 2015). Similarly, journalist Andrea Vance noted that helping refugees is "*in our nature - we are people of conscious and compassion*" ('Prime Minister bows to pressure to accept more refugees', stuff.co.nz, Sep 7, 2015). Therefore, not doing all we can to help refugees, or arguing over the

cost, is “*not the Kiwi way*”, according to Murdoch Stephens. It was suggested that New Zealanders are proud of their humanitarian tradition, with examples citing NZ’s welcoming of refugees in the past. NZ international reputation as a fair, just, welcoming society that stands up for human rights, has a seat on the UNSC, and is known for punching above its weight on the international stage.

This was a running theme throughout the media articles analysed, that helping refugees is an intrinsic part of NZ’s national identity and values (i.e. welcoming refugees is who we are as Kiwis), and not doing anything was an “*absolute affront*” to that identity and those values. This relationship between national identity and welcoming refugees feeds into the idea of ‘collective identity’ – a shared sense of identity tied to certain attributes (real or imagined), and/or the moral and emotional connections we make within society that compel us to stand with/for a particular group, practice or institution (Polletta & Jasper, 2001; Snow & Corrigall-Brown, 2015). Thus, the notion of NZ as a warm, compassionate, fair, just and welcoming country with a proud humanitarian tradition, as per the media articles analysed (see Chapter 7), acts as a ‘collective identity’ – helping refugees is “*the Kiwi way*” (for examples on the construction of NZ national identity see Cain, Kahu, & Shaw, 2017; Liu, McCreanor, McIntosh, & Teaiwa, 2005).

Goodman (2009) argues that refugee solidarity movements, such as ‘Refugees Welcome’, are an expression of national identity, an affirmation of national humanitarian values that says “‘we’ welcome ‘you’ because we are people who are inclusive and caring” (Goodman, 2009, p. 274). Research on refugee solidarity movements in Germany (Hamann & Karakayali, 2016; Karakayali, 2018), the U.K. (Toğral, 2016), Sweden (Dahlgren, 2016), and Australia (Goodman, 2009) suggest that these movements are based around national humanitarian traditions of welcome. Similarly, media analysis of the Italian Navy humanitarian search and rescue operation, ‘Mare Nostrum’, revealed a dominate narrative of Italian “humanitarian national benevolence” that positioned rescuers as “saviours” and migrants as the ‘other’ (Musalò, 2017, p. 18). Thus, refugee solidarity movements not only reflect humanitarian principles and norms, but also imaginings of national identity and national psyche, where welcoming refugees becomes part of a nation’s collective self-image and identity (Goodman, 2009).

Discourses of refugee advocacy, such as the type used in the media analysed, often employs the language of humanitarianism to justify why the state has a moral and ethical duty to protect distant vulnerable others. These discourses play on imagined geographies of nationhood (B. R. O. Anderson, 1991), calling on the citizen and politician to uphold the principle of humanitarianism we hold so dear as a nation. Harald Bauder (2008, 2009, 2014) argues that the national imagination – who we think ‘we’ are as a national community – fundamentally shapes migration and refugee politics and debate, and in turn shapes national identity. The way a nation imagines its identity then plays a key role in formulating immigration/refugee. In settler nations, like NZ, the national identity has been built on migration, and in turn influences the perception of national hospitality and the welcoming of others, as was described in Chapter 7.

The refugee advocates that I interviewed for this research also tapped into the idea of Kiwi values and identity in their campaigning to raise the refugee quota. They believe value-based messaging is about reaching out to people’s perception of Kiwi values so they can understand and empathise with refugees and why we should care enough to act. Both Murdoch and Tracey tapped into the idea of a Kiwi sense of shame – an understanding that *“we are good folks, and we should do better than this”* (Tracey). Murdoch also called on the narrative of Kiwi identity - the belief that New Zealanders are good, humanitarian people, and welcoming in more refugees would ensure NZ lives up to that self-image (i.e. helping refugees is ‘the Kiwi way’).

This kind of messaging speaks to ‘our’ shared values on humanity and moral duty towards refugees as New Zealanders, but it is also often tied to representations of refugees as helpless victims who need to be saved by ‘us’. According to Chouliaraki (2013b, p. 181), this type of humanitarian communication relies too heavily on “sentimental stories of suffering that touch our feelings”, and does little to address the root causes of suffering and inequality. However, the refugee advocates I interviewed were adamant that value-based messaging was not about evoking pity, but evoking values that moved the NZ public towards a more compassionate and inclusive society. They wanted Kiwis to relate to refugees on a personal level, effectively putting themselves into someone else’s shoes. As Action Station said, *“if I can look at them and feel like they’re like me, in a way that I could understand myself,*

imagine myself in that situation, and imagine what I would want". Said (1979) maintains that socially constructed representations of the Orient (in this case refugees) say more about the West itself than about the real world it claims to represent, with the notion of Western identity inherently connected to binary oppositions of 'self' and 'other'. Thus, humanitarian solidarity discourses situate 'ourselves' in relation to those 'we' advocate on behalf of.

Catherine Dauvergne (2005) argues that humanitarianism is about identity – not so much about the identity of the person in need of help, but more so about how helping the other reflects back on us. Humanitarianism then serves as a way to define the nation as compassionate and caring. By helping others we are effectively giving ourselves a pat on the back. Kapoor (2005) describes this as a form of 'narcissistic samaritanism'. So, by representing refugees as vulnerable victims who deserve our help, the media in its own way contributes to the imagining of NZ as a compassionate and welcoming country. From a post-humanitarian perspective, this 'narcissistic samaritanism' reflects an orientation towards the self (in this case a focus on New Zealanders and the NZ nation state) and 'our' emotions, in what Chouliaraki describes as a form of "narcissistic self-expression" (Chouliaraki, 2013b, p. 173). Therefore, although this outpouring of solidarity and compassion towards refugees appears admirable and altruistic in intention, as Chouliaraki argues, it becomes more about 'us' and how responding to the refugee crisis makes 'us' feel, rather than about the very people we purport to help.

Arguments in the media and by refugee advocates about what New Zealand can and should do ties to a particular shared narrative of New Zealand national identity and nationhood. The conversation therefore becomes more about 'us' and 'our' sense of national identity and values in relation to welcoming refugees, but at the expense of stereotyping refugees as helpless victims who need to be saved. As Chouliaraki (2013b, p. 181) argues, acts of solidarity (i.e. the welcoming of refugees) rely on the power of humanitarian discourses, on "sentimental stories of suffering that touch our feelings", a performance of suffering that emotionally moves us to respond, which in turn plays on imaginings of solidarity and morality. This humanitarian imagination - the imperative to act upon vulnerable others in order to alleviate their suffering - is based on the capacity for us to feel for the suffering of others, to place

ourselves in their shoes, so to speak, and act upon those feelings (Chouliaraki, 2013b). Thus, solidarity discourses form a relationship between 'how I feel' and 'what I can do' to help suffering others. Helping refugees will make us feel good about ourselves, because welcoming refugees is the morally right thing to do, and that is who we are as Kiwis. As one Anglican parish put it, "*How can we possibly say no?*" (Justin Duckworth, '*Let more refugees in*', nzherald.co.nz, Sep 10, 2015).

However, Orgad and Seu (2014, p. 15) contend that dismissing these types of responses as "inappropriate" and "undesirable" overlooks the diverse responses to humanitarian crises and potential acts of solidarity. As de Waal (2015, p. 18) argues, "there would be no activism without emotion". Emotion is an important component of solidarity and advocacy campaigns – advocates need people to care enough to act. According to Orgad & Seu, responses to humanitarian crises based on national identity (e.g. 'helping refugees is who we are as New Zealanders') appeals to national sentiments and may be significant for people's sense of belonging. Therefore, drawing on imaginings of national identity in humanitarian campaigns is not necessarily a negative thing if it prompts members of the public into action, for example protesting, petitioning, and volunteering or donating money to a particular cause.

The humanitarian argument in the media largely focused on NZ's moral duty to respond to the refugee crisis, which was tied to imaginings of national identity and positioned refugees as vulnerable victims. What was missing from these discourses were the voices of those who had actually been refugees, who had gone through the experiences of displacement and resettlement. What did they think? The few articles that did interview people from refugee backgrounds tended to focus on the trauma story, which only served to emphasise the victim stereotype and reiterated NZ's role as saviour. The next section discusses the implications of refugee stereotypes from the perspective of former refugees in NZ, and the various ways in which they chose to contest their identity inside and outside the 'refugee' label.

De-constructing ‘refugeeness’

The discussion and analysis in the previous sections has focused on the media and refugee advocacy – how refugees are represented by others. This section draws on the findings from Chapter 8 about what people from refugee backgrounds in NZ think about media representations of refugees, the refugee label, and the ways they are contesting and/or redefining stereotypes of ‘refugeeness’ (research question 3).

As discussed in Chapter 4, theories of post-development and post-humanitarianism argue that representations of ‘the other’ are bound up in unequal power relations between the West and the ‘rest’. Western institutions (e.g. the media, NGOs) produce particular discourses about vulnerable others (e.g. refugees), which is then disseminated by the media and influences how Western publics understand and perceive ‘the other’ (e.g. refugees as helpless, vulnerable victims – see the Refugee Representation Conceptual Framework, Figure 7). However, from an actor-oriented perspective, one cannot assume that actors necessarily succumb to external structures and forces, as post-development and post-humanitarianism implies in its criticism of development/humanitarian discourse (Long, 1990, 2001), and hence why I have added this approach to the conceptual framework (as discussed in Chapter 4).

Central to an actor-oriented approach is the concept of agency and the capacity of actors to construct and negotiate their own projects in life. Referring back to the conceptual framework (Figure 7), an actor-oriented approach acknowledges that actors are not mere passive recipients of aid and intervention, but individuals who experience, negotiate and construct meaning for themselves within humanitarian discourses (Long & Long, 1992). In other words, actors may be socially constructed by discursive practices, but they are also capable of restructuring those practices, using their power and agency to contest and transform dominant discourses (Lynn & Lea, 2003; Moncrieffe & Eyben, 2007). In relation to this research, people from refugee backgrounds in NZ may be framed in a particular way by the media, government and NGOs but, as the next section discusses, they are also constructing, contesting and redefining ‘refugee’ for themselves in various ways.

Redefining 'refugee'

Who give them that authority, or who give them the right to describe other people [...] they know how to describe themselves. (Abann)

While post-development and post-humanitarianism critique development/humanitarian discourses and how 'the other' is portrayed, it does not account for the individual agency of those represented. According to Long (2001) actors will use their agency to find ways to contest, transform, and negotiate discursive structures for their own ends. This research sought to explore what former refugees in NZ thought about the 'refugee' label and the way refugees are represented in the media, how they chose to define themselves, and in what ways were they contesting or transforming the word 'refugee' (research question 3).

As noted in Chapter 8, all the interviewees from a refugee background were very clear about how they chose to define themselves, and whether they chose to identify with the refugee label or not really depended on how they saw the word in the first place. Some completely rejected the refugee label as they saw it quite negatively, while others were happy for their refugee identities to sit alongside their new Kiwi identities. Regardless of whether people chose to embrace or reject the refugee label, what became apparent through the interviews with former refugees was their clear desire to take back control of the narrative that is created by the media and other organisations, and define themselves, and in the process challenge and transform dominant discourses and perceptions of refugees. As the above quote from Abann highlights, people from refugee backgrounds know how to describe themselves.

Long (1990, 2001) argues that actors define the issues that are most important to them, but as meanings and values are socially constructed, these issues can be perceived and interpreted differently depending on the actors involved, resulting in multiple contested realities. The term 'refugee' attempts to describe a vast array of diverse groups under the one homogenous umbrella for legal, political and ethical purposes, but in doing so, fails to acknowledge the diverse socio-political-historical-cultural contexts that force people to flee in the first place (Malkki, 1995, 1996, 2002). Therefore, humanitarian representations of refugees are just one conception of reality among many, and may not necessarily reflect the lived experience or the

diversity of those represented. As Ibrahim told me in his interview, *“no one is a refugee for life”*.

As Gupte and Mehta (2007) remind us, refugees are not ahistorical entities who lack social networks, skills and experiences. Nor are they necessarily all traumatised by their experiences of forced displacement (Marlowe, 2010; Papadopoulos, 2007; Summerfield, 1999). Refugees are individuals who will use their knowledge, experience, networks and agency to get where they need to go, negotiating and transforming discursive structures for their own ends (Long, 2001). Thus, refugees will always find ways to assert themselves as political agents and in the process contest normative imaginings of ‘refugeeness’, as the examples given in Chapter 3: De/Re-constructing ‘refugeeness’ highlight (e.g. Bakewell, 2000; Bergtora Sandvik, 2009; Kyriakides, Bajjali, McLuhan, & Anderson, 2018; Malkki, 1995).

As discussed in Chapter 8, many former refugees do not even identify with the refugee label, let alone allow it to define who they are. Whereas others will use the refugee label to suit their own purposes, and will construct their identity and belonging within and outside the refugee ‘label’, depending on the situation (Bakewell, 2000; Malkki, 1995). For example, research with Iranian refugees in Australia (Aidani, 2010) discovered that they chose to construct their identity outside the refugee label, as for them the refugee label was not a meaningful category that expressed their experiences of displacement. Similarly, for Syrian refugee women interviewed for a study in Lebanon, the term ‘refugee’ had many negative associations that went beyond their current experiences of exile (Gissi, 2018). Because of the stigma and loss attached to the word ‘refugee’ for these women, many instead chose to refer to themselves as ‘displaced’. In both cases, this contestation or rejection of the refugee label is an act of agency in itself, as it does not reflect their identity or experiences of displacement.

This sense of agency was reflected in my interviews with former refugees in NZ, in terms of whether they embraced or rejected the refugee label as a defining marker of their identity in NZ. They are using their agency in various different ways to negotiate and construct meaning for themselves within and outside the refugee label (Long & Long, 1995), and in doing so (re)define their identity as former refugees and New Zealanders. As Vigil and Abidi (2018) argue, how the term

'refugee' is viewed by refugees themselves is very personal and depends on an individual's experiences. For some of my participants, 'refugee' is a homogenous term that presents refugees as both vulnerable and resilient, yet fails to represent the multiple identities of individuals. Others see the word as an expression of their identity or life story. For example, Joseph saw the word as a marker of his humanity, and for Sakina, the word refugee gave her and her family "*a name*", an identity (see Chapter 8). Suzuki (2016, p. 1) describes 'refugeeness' as "a site of contestation" where a diverse range of socio-political-cultural contexts diverge to construct what it means to 'be a refugee'. Thus, the meaning of the word 'refugee' is not fixed, but discursively socially constructed by a range of experiences/worldviews, including by refugees themselves (Malkki, 1995; Nyers, 2006). Therefore, it is important to critique and deconstructing the term 'refugee', how it is normatively used to describe a diverse range of people, and how refugees themselves identify with that word, or not as the case may be (Vigil & Abidi, 2018), as this thesis has shown.

The former refugees I interviewed for this research were in many ways contesting, transforming and redefining the refugee label, either as individuals choosing to define themselves in their day-to-day life on a personal level, or trying to effect change at a more macro societal level. For example, the ARCC 'redefine refugee' projects were about creating space in the resettlement sector for former refugee voices, and empowering resettled communities to stand up and speak out. Because, as Abann argued, people from a non-refugee background, although well-meaning, tend to dominate the discussion and speak on behalf of refugees, which is very disempowering and frustrating for resettled communities. Abann said that he and the ARCC are not trying to criticise anyone, but urged, "*please do it with us, not to us*", work in partnership with resettled communities to bring about positive change.

Other former refugees that I spoke to also expressed frustration at hearing non-refugees speak about the refugee experience, and felt there was a need to control, contest and transform the narrative for themselves. Abdul felt it was important to "*take ownership of your own story*" and not end up as "*a side piece*" in someone's else's story. Their stories of contesting and redefining 'refugee', as described in Chapter 8, illustrate the various ways in which the refugee background people I interviewed for this research have chosen to take back control of the dominant

discourses surrounding the refugee label, often motivated by media stereotypes. Far from being passive recipients of aid (Escobar, 1995; Long & Long, 1992), or universal symbols of victimhood or 'bare life' (Malkki, 1995), they have decided to be active agents of change within their own lives. However, at the same time they are reacting to these dominant discourses and stereotypes. Indeed, one could argue that their agency is driven by, or is a result of, these discourses. As a result, through stories, words, art and action, either through their own individual projects (e.g. a TED Talk, a YouTube video series, an art installation) or in collaboration with others (e.g. ARCC 'Redefine Refugee' projects), they have set out to contest and transform dominant discourses of 'refugeeness'.

As Foucault (1980, pp. 141-142) argues, although knowledge systems have the ability to construct powerful representations of truth, it does not mean that one is doomed to an "inescapable form of domination". Meaning is not infinitely fixed and actors are not passive subjects of discursive structures (Lie, 2007). Following an actor-oriented approach to discourse and agency, refugees may be labelled and shaped by discursive practices, such as media coverage of humanitarian crises and NGO/advocacy campaigns, but they are also capable of restructuring those practices to suit their own means, using their agency to dispute and transform stereotypes and contest their identities (Long, 2001; Lynn & Lea, 2003; Moncrieffe & Eyben, 2007). As Mohammed declared in his interview, "*If there is a definition, I define it*".

Refugee labelling and notions of (un)belonging

While acknowledging the agency and capacity of refugees to contest dominant representations, the continual use of the 'refugee' label in the media can have negative consequences for those who have resettled in NZ. The inclusion of former refugee voices in this research has highlighted the lived experience of the 'refugee' label. This knowledge could not have been gleaned from the media analysis alone, and adds an alternative perspective post-development and post-humanitarianism critique of discourse. Some of the former refugees I interviewed for this research felt stigmatised by the refugee label, and felt that other New Zealanders did not necessarily see them as Kiwis. Thus, from a post-humanitarian perspective, mediated discourses of solidarity and suffering, although well-meaning, are

problematic in the way they frame, label and represent ‘the other’ (Chouliaraki, 2006, 2013b). Preconceptions of refugees, due to particular narratives disseminated in the media (e.g. refugees as vulnerable victims), can negatively influence how Western publics see and respond to refugees (Wright, 2002). Victim stereotypes reduce refugees to a symbolic sufferer in need of rescue, a distant ‘other’ who is not like ‘us’ (Franquet Dos Santos Silva et al., 2018; Szörényi, 2006). As the interviews with former refugees here in NZ indicated, media representations of refugees can have implications for resettlement and notions of belonging (see Chapter 8).

Moncrieffe (2007) argues that labels are powerful because they assign meanings to a particular person or situation, and thus can influence relationships (see also M. Pickering, 2001). When labelled by someone else (e.g. the media, advocates), labels can restrict, define and impose certain categories onto us, and justify certain interventions and actions. They can also be used to influence how certain people are perceived, how they ‘fit in’ to society, and how they are treated. Even if labelling is deemed to be altruistic in intent, labelling can misrepresent, stigmatise, and stereotype whole groups of people, thus reinforcing inequalities (Gupte & Mehta, 2007). Drawing on post-development and post-humanitarian critiques of discourse, the framing of refugees as helpless, vulnerable victims who need to be saved reinforces and perpetuates unequal power dynamics between ‘us’ and ‘them’ (Chouliaraki, 2013b; Escobar, 1995). Thus, by positioning refugees as “objects of rescue” and host societies as “saviours who provide it” (Kyriakides et al., 2018, p. 60), humanitarian discourses reduce refugees to the ‘other’ – a passive, helpless victim and subject of pity who can never be equal to the citizen (Ticktin, 2011).

For example, in research with former refugees and Canada, participants shared stories about how other Canadians still see them as refugees, regardless of the fact that they are now Canadian citizens, and how this feeds into their sense of non-belonging (Vigil & Abidi, 2018). Likewise, Bosnian refugees in the USA felt that their ability to successfully resettle hinged on how other people saw them, and struggled to contest the image of the poor, grateful refugee (Mosselson, 2010). Therefore, the way refugees are portrayed in the media and by humanitarian organisations is an important issue, and one which can seriously affect how refugees are received and

welcomed in host countries, and the extent to which former refugees can foster a sense of belonging.

Many of the former refugees I interviewed felt that the mainstream media tended to simplify refugee stories, presenting a very one-dimensional representation of refugees as poor and helpless. They felt these stereotypes repeatedly reinforced a homogeneous view of what a 'real' refugee should look like, so the only image of a refugee the public knows is the one perpetuated by the media (see Chapter 8). Some of my participants shared stories about their experiences of public perceptions of refugees, such as refugees are poor and therefore cannot afford a MacBook computer or nice clothes. Similarly, Ibrahim noted how people do not seem to realise that many refugees had good lives back in their home country, but because of war or political persecution, they had to flee, sometimes with nothing. Rez felt that this image of the poor, vulnerable, destitute refugee is one that is not only perpetuated by the media, but also by international campaign posters, which simply reiterates negative assumptions about refugees (see Chapter 3 - Dogra, 2007; Fehrenbach & Rodogno, 2015; Lidchi, 2015; Orgad, 2013).

Similar to post-development critiques of discourse (Escobar, 1995), it is those negative connotations, of being poor, helpless and destitute that, according to some of my participants, many former refugees do not want to be associated. Normative depictions of refugees as victims, traumatised, passive, helpless, desperate, or damaged in some way through their experience, can lead to a very narrow perception of who a refugee is and what they are capable of. These discourses shape our understanding or knowledge of distant suffering and how we perceive 'the other', creating binaries of 'us' and 'them', which in turn influence how we choose to respond (Cohen, 2001; Orgad & Seu, 2014b). For example, Ali said that he had experienced assumptions about his skills and capabilities from other New Zealanders (see Chapter 8). What is often missing from these stereotypes is the individual experiences, stories, and voices of those who have been through the refugee experience (Malkki, 1996; Rajaram, 2002). As Adorate explained, while there may be some similarities with every refugees' story, by focusing in one only one part of the 'refugee' story (i.e.: trauma and victimhood) "*you miss that richness*" of stories.

The stigmatising nature of refugee stereotypes can also hinder the ability of former refugees to foster a sense of belonging and acceptance in the country of resettlement. While discourses of solidarity and welcome, as expressed by the media articles analysed, may appeal to the notion of New Zealand as a warm and generous host, it does not always follow that resettled refugees are necessarily accepted into their new society. New Zealand's official resettlement programme emphasises the importance of integration and belonging, giving quota refugees permanent residence on arrival and a pathway to citizenship (Immigration New Zealand, 2012; Marlowe, Bartley, & Hibbit, 2014). However, many of the former refugees I interviewed said they found it difficult to shed the 'refugee' label and be seen as 'new Kiwis'. This suggests that the welcoming of refugees is limited to, and conditional on, the goodwill of the host society (Derrida, 2000; Rosello, 2001). New Zealanders may initially welcome refugees out of humanitarian concern, but do not necessarily accept them as being 'real' New Zealanders, even long after resettlement and the uptake of citizenship.

Many of my participants felt that refugee stereotypes were part of the problem, contributing to the perception of refugees as being different, perhaps less capable than other New Zealanders. They felt that because of the refugee label, they will always be seen as being different, 'the other'. Notions of belonging and acceptance can be further hampered by a seemingly innocent question: 'where do you come from'. Several former refugees I interviewed also expressed their frustration with being asked this question by other New Zealanders (see Chapter 8). The question 'where are you from' can remind people of their status as an outsider/stranger who is not like 'us', a form of citizenship denial that singles people out because of the colour of their skin, and therefore people feel they have to answer that question in order to affirm their status of belonging (Hatoss, 2012). Thus, regardless of proximity, former refugees can still be seen as, and feel like, the 'distant other'.

Nyers (2006, p. 9) contends that to be a refugee is to inhabit a space of 'non-belonging'. In other words, having lost the protection of one's state, refugees are subjected to a feeling of un-belonging – they do not belong to any country. However, refugees who are resettled in NZ are given permanent residency on arrival and all the rights of citizenship and protection that entails. Therefore, those who resettle in

NZ are no longer refugees; they no longer inhabit a space of 'non-belonging'. They are permanent residents or citizens of NZ. Additionally, the former refugees I spoke to were very adamant about their place in NZ society. They felt that they belonged here, and they choose to call NZ home. However, whether other New Zealanders see them as belonging is another issue altogether, and when the media continue to refer to people from refugee backgrounds as 'refugees', it insinuates that they do not belong fully here, that they are not New Zealanders. Pickering (2001, p. 79) states that "otherness is a denial of belonging; it is the unrelenting sign of not belonging". In this respect, by continuing to label people as refugees, even long after resettlement, according to Abann, the general manager of ARCC (refer back to Chapter 8), what you are really saying is they do not belong here. As Cornwall (2007, p. 471) suggests, "words make worlds". This is why Abann argued that it was important to change the narrative and redefine the word 'refugee', as it has become associated with negative stereotypes, which in turn ends up stigmatising people and making them feel that they are not accepted as New Zealanders.

These experiences of non-belonging and acceptance, as voiced by some of the refugee background participants, speak to post-development and post-humanitarian critiques of discourse and representation (Chouliaraki, 2013b; Escobar, 1995). Humanitarian discourses may evoke an emotional response from Western audiences, but it comes at the expense of stereotyping non-Western others, reducing individuals to objects of pity, rather than as individuals with agency, skills, and capabilities (Chouliaraki, 2012). Thus, stereotypes of refugees as victims who need to be saved creates an unequal power dynamic between 'us' (host societies) and 'them' (refugees) (Escobar, 1995). Victim stereotypes frame refugees as the 'other', different from 'us', which can have implications for the successful resettlement and integration of refugees into their new society, as the experiences of former refugees in this study highlight.

The intersection between discourse, solidarity, and agency

This thesis brought together post-development and post-humanitarian critiques on discourse, and an actor-oriented approach to discourse and agency in order to analyse the discursive construction of refugees and notions of solidarity and welcome, in relation to the NZ media campaign to raise the refugee quota (research questions 1 and 2), and to explore the experiences of these discourses among former refugees in NZ (research question 3).

Post-development and post-humanitarian theory critically examine the role that discourse plays in constructing and reinforcing particular representations of humanitarian subjects by powerful Western institutions, such as the media and NGOs/advocates (Chouliaraki, 2006, 2013b; Escobar, 1995). Both theoretical perspectives argue that development and humanitarian discourse is shaped and perpetuated by unequal power relations between the West and the 'rest' that act to justify certain actions and practices. Within these discourses, the suffering 'other' is positioned as helpless and without agency, waiting to be saved by the West. Thus, humanitarian discourses not only shape our understanding or knowledge of distant others, but also create binaries of 'us' and 'them', which in turn influence how we perceive and respond to the distant suffering 'other' (Cohen, 2001; Orgad & Seu, 2014b).

Following the refugee representation and solidarity conceptual framework (Figure 7), from a post-development and post-humanitarianism perspective, the knowledge generated about refugees in this research through the NZ news media (specifically the NZH and Stuff) and advocacy campaigns (e.g. the campaign to raise NZ's refugee quota) highlights the unequal power relations between those doing the representing (i.e. refugee advocates, the media) and those being represented (i.e. refugees). Refugees were framed by the NZH and Stuff as either traumatised, helpless victims who need to be saved, or as a benefit to NZ society, with both types of representation justifying calls to raise NZ's refugee quota. These media discourses construct and disseminate a certain knowledge and reality about refugees, an imagining of 'refugeeness' (Malkki, 1996) – what a real refugee should look like. From a post-humanitarian perspective, normative representations of refugees as helpless vulnerable victims feed into the humanitarian imaginations of Western

audiences, justifying action on behalf of vulnerable others (Chouliaraki, 2013b). The humanitarian imagination relies on emotive discourses that compel Western audiences to act. Thus, there is a strong correlation between the representation of humanitarian subjects and acts of solidarity – the imperative to help distant suffering others, such as the call to raise the NZ refugee quota and welcome in more refugees.

However, while discourses of solidarity and welcome may appeal to our sense of moral responsibility for the suffering of refugees, they also risk encouraging a regime of compassion and charity that speaks more about ‘us’ and how ‘we’ feel, than it does about the very people we purport to help (Chouliaraki, 2013b). Helping refugees may make us feel good, but as a consequence refugees are stereotyped as helpless victims who need to be saved by ‘us’. As discussed in the second section, the humanitarian argument in the media for raising the quota largely focused on NZ’s moral duty to respond to the refugee crisis. Within this argument refugees were predominantly framed as traumatised and vulnerable. It was argued that helping refugees is ‘the Kiwi way’, based on perceived notions of NZ moral values, compassion, empathy, and common humanity. What was missing from these discourses were the voices of those who had actually been refugees, who had gone through the experiences of displacement and resettlement.

A critical analysis of discourse through the lens of post-development and post-humanitarianism highlight the power dynamics involved in representation and acts of solidarity, specifically who gets to speak, who is visible, and who is not (Escobar, 2000; Storey, 2000). For example, while the media articles analysed were overwhelmingly in support of refugees, the debate about raising the refugee quota was mostly led by people who were not from refugee backgrounds (e.g. journalists, commentators, and NGO ‘experts’. Refugee and former refugee voices were largely absent from these discussions. Post-development theory argues that people in the Global South (e.g. refugees) are stereotyped as victims without agency, reliant on others, such as refugee advocates, to speak on their behalf, effectively silencing their voices in the process (Escobar, 1995; Malkki, 1996; Rajaram, 2002). Regardless of good intentions, efforts to speak on behalf of refugees by someone who is not a refugee, and has never been through that experience, is problematic. Refugee stories

are still framed by someone else, told through someone else's filter, and advocates can still end up 'otherising' and marginalising those they seek to support (Becht et al., 2018).

As discussed above, theories of post-development and post-humanitarianism argue that representations of 'the other' are bound up in unequal power relations between those doing the representing (e.g. media and advocates) and those represented (e.g. refugees). However, post-development and post-humanitarianism are quite ambiguous about the role individual agency plays in relation to the wider structure of humanitarian discourse. The importance both theoretical perspectives place on the relationship between power and discourse, tends to imply that individuals lack any kind of agency or capacity to contest, negotiate and transform these discourses (Lie, 2007; Nustad, 2001), and suggests that all acts of solidarity are insincere or all Western advocates employ disempowering discourses (Paulmann, 2018). Ironically, while post-development and post-humanitarianism critique the stereotypical representation of humanitarian subjects, by ignoring the role of individual agency it is also homogenising all Western advocacy responses as disempowering and paternalistic. For example, the majority of refugee advocates and communication specialists interviewed for this research acknowledged the disempowering nature of normative refugee representations and the power dynamics involved in advocacy, and strove to avoid stereotypes, collaborate with refugee background communities, and include their voices in their campaign strategies. Their approach to refugee advocacy erred on the side of agonistic solidarity and 'proper distance' – a move away from a focus on the 'self' towards questions of justice, as recommended by Chouliaraki (2013b).

Including an actor-oriented approach to discourse and agency in the conceptual framework, alongside post-development and post-humanitarianism, helps to balance the critical analysis of discourse and brings the notion of human agency to the forefront, in order to analyse the different ways in which actors negotiate and transform discursive structures (Long, 1990, 2001; Long & Long, 1992). While highlighting the contribution post-development and post-humanitarianism can make to the critical analysis of refugee representation and discourses of solidarity, it is important to include the voices of former refugees in NZ about their experiences

of refugee representation and the refugee label, and the various ways they sought to contest and redefine stereotypical notions of 'refugeeness'. Because, from an actor-oriented perspective, one cannot assume that actors necessarily succumb to external structures and forces, as post-development and post-humanitarianism implies (Long, 1990, 2001).

As discussed above, my participants from refugee backgrounds responded to the refugee label in various different ways. While some embraced their refugee identity as an important part of their identity, others completely rejected it, citing instances of discrimination and stigmatisation because of their refugee background. All of my participants agreed that the mainstream media tended to portray a very one-dimensional and stereotypical view of refugees that ignored individual experiences. An actor-oriented approach highlighted the different ways in which the former refugees in my research used their agency to contest refugee stereotypes, and in the process construct and redefine their own identities. It is interesting to note that this was often because they were affected by media stereotypes, and therefore their contestation was motivated by and in direct reaction to these dominant discourses. Thus, discourse and agency are interrelated. Actors may be shaped and labelled by discursive practices, but it is these discourses that inevitably drive their agency.

Therefore, while post-development and post-humanitarian theories critically analyse the power relations involved in the representation of distant others, I argue that these theoretical perspectives only present one side of the coin, or half the story. Critically examining the discursive construction of humanitarian subjects in advocacy campaigns is important, but in order to get the full picture it is vital to include an actor perspective and explore the role agency plays in the construction and deconstruction of humanitarian discourses.

Summary

Using the refugee representation conceptual framework, this chapter has analysed the relationship between refugee representation and discourses of solidarity and welcome, in relation to NZ media arguments for raising the refugee quota. Media findings revealed an overwhelming moral and ethical argument for responding to

the refugee crisis, which drew on imaginings of NZ national identity and values as a humanitarian country with a long tradition of helping refugees. Within this argument, refugees were predominantly portrayed as either helpless victims who needed to be saved, or as a long-term benefit to society, highlighting the connection between representation and acts of solidarity, and the potentially disempowering narratives of refugee advocacy. However, a post-development and post-humanitarian tendency to privilege discourse over individual agency glosses over the diversity in Western refugee advocacy practices, and risks overlooking the capacity and agency of refugees to affect change themselves. Therefore, combining post-development and post-humanitarianism with an actor-oriented approach enabled the critical analysis and deconstruction of refugee representation and solidarity discourses, while opening up space for multiple realities and experiences of the refugee label, as shared by my participants from refugee backgrounds in NZ.

The next and final chapter brings the discussion together to demonstrate how the three research questions have been addressed, to draw conclusions about the relationship between refugee representation and acts of solidarity, highlighting the contribution to knowledge, and to make recommendations for moving forward in a positive direction.

Chapter 10: Solidarity as justice

This research set out to explore how refugees were represented in the NZ mainstream media (research question 1), the relationship between refugee representation and discourses of solidarity and welcome in relation to the media campaign to raise NZ's refugee quota (research question 2), and the various ways in which people from refugee backgrounds in NZ experienced, contested and (re)defined the 'refugee' label (research question 3). As discussed in the previous chapter, media findings revealed a strong moral argument for raising the quota that is tied to imaginings of NZ national identity and values. Within this argument, refugees are largely stereotyped as helpless, vulnerable victims who need to be saved. Interviews with former refugees in NZ revealed their personal experiences and opinions of refugee stereotypes, and the ways they sought to contest and redefine the refugee label for their own purposes.

This final chapter presents the conclusions of this research, bringing together the key discussion points of the research findings in the first section. While acknowledging the main criticisms of refugee advocacy and solidarity discourses, the second section discusses ways forward and the potential for solidarity movements to create positive political change. Finally, I offer some reflections on the research process, including the limitations of this research. I summarise the ways in which this research contributes to knowledge and identify areas for further research.

Responding to the refugee crisis: Representation and solidarity

The outpouring of empathy for the plight of refugees following the publication of Alan Kurdi's photo in September 2015, resulted in a groundswell of public support around the world for refugees. Here in NZ, media commentators and refugee advocates called on the NZ government to raise the refugee quota and show a stronger, more compassionate response to the refugee crisis. Although I welcomed this response, I began to question how refugees and the refugee crisis were being represented in these media discourses. There was a lot of discussion from media

commentators about what NZ should do in the face of this humanitarian crisis, but very few refugee voices were included. I was fascinated about the focus on ‘us’ and ‘our’ response, and how welcoming refugees fed into notions of NZ national identity and values. As discussed in Chapter 2, discourses of solidarity and welcome are largely driven by humanitarian concern and a sense of common humanity and moral duty towards refugees. Drawing on the principles of humanitarianism (Gibney, 2004), ‘the refugee’ represents the hurt and vulnerable stranger who we have a moral obligation to assist, if it is in our power to do so (Rorty, 1989). Emotions of pity, empathy and compassion play an integral part in moral responses to distant suffering, and it is these feelings that drive refugee solidarity movements, such as the NZ media campaign to increase NZ’s refugee quota (Goodman, 2009; Rosenberger & Winkler, 2014; Ticktin, 2011).

It is this notion of solidarity, based on ethical and moral humanitarian principles and notions of common humanity outlined above, which this thesis drew on to explore discourses of solidarity and welcome towards refugees (research question 2). However, solidarity discourses have been criticised for encouraging a regime of compassion and charity that may speak more about ourselves as humanitarian actors than the very people we purport to help (Chouliaraki, 2013). Goodman (2009) and Chouliaraki (2006) argue that refugee solidarity movements, such as ‘Refugees Welcome’, not only reflect humanitarian principles and norms, but also imaginings of national identity and values, where welcoming refugees becomes part of a nation’s collective self-image and identity that says “‘we’ welcome ‘you’ because we are people who are inclusive and caring” (Goodman, 2009, p. 274).

This notion of national identity tied with refugee solidarity was reflected in the NZ media articles analysed for this research. In the campaign to raise the refugee quota, media commentators called upon a certain narrative of NZ identity and values (i.e. NZ as a warm, welcoming, compassionate country with a long humanitarian tradition of helping refugees). They argued that welcoming refugees was the ‘Kiwi way’, ‘who we are as people’, and to do nothing was shameful and reflected badly on NZ’s international reputation as a good global citizen and humanitarian country. Within this argument, refugees were predominantly portrayed as either helpless

victims ('hopeless', 'doomed', 'despairing') who needed to be saved, or as a 'successful' resettled refugee who is a benefit to NZ society.

From a post-development and post-humanitarianism perspective (Chapter 3), refugee representation and discourses of solidarity, such as the campaign to raise NZ's refugee quota, ultimately involve unequal power dynamics that privilege Western voices while silencing others, and where refugees are normatively portrayed as the vulnerable, helpless other who needs to be saved by 'us' (Chouliaraki, 2013; Escobar, 1995). Thus, the need to 'humanise' refugees in the media campaign to raise the quota inevitably becomes about how New Zealanders imagine and emotionally connect with the suffering of distant others (Orgad, 2012). Therefore, there is a strong correlation between humanitarian discourses, refugees representation, and acts of solidarity towards distant others. Humanitarian discourses, disseminated through the news media and humanitarian campaigns, call on Western publics to care about and act in solidarity with distant suffering others. However, this call for moral action relies on stereotypical images of suffering others who need 'our' help, thus place Western publics at the centre and silencing the voices of distant others in the process.

Following the refugee representation conceptual framework (Chapter 9, Figure 7), humanitarian discourses are linked to powerful Western institutions, such as the media, that construct and disseminate particular narratives about refugees. Therefore, the way the media choose to portray refugees can influence how audiences choose to act and respond to the suffering of distant others (R. E. Anderson, 2017; Chouliaraki, 2006; Orgad & Seu, 2014a). Michael Pickering (2001) contends that the politics of representation involves the power to define, categorise, construct and speak of and for others. This raises questions about who is doing the representing and who gets to speak (Escobar, 1995; Malkki, 1996; Rajaram, 2002).

The debate about whether and how NZ should respond to the 2015 refugee crisis was very much a discussion between 'experts' in the media, mostly led by people who were not from refugee backgrounds (journalists, columnists, media commentators, NGO 'experts', etc.). There was a distinct lack of refugee voices, and those who were interviewed tended to be positioned as either traumatised victims or a benefit to society. While these discourses of solidarity and welcome may appeal

to NZ's sense of moral responsibility for the suffering of refugees overseas, it ultimately comes at the expense of stereotyping non-Western others, reducing individuals to objects of aid and protection, and ignoring the multiple experiences of those being represented (Chouliaraki, 2013; Escobar, 1995; Rajaram, 2002). Consequently, humanitarian discourses of solidarity have produced a stereotypical or universal sense of 'refugeeness' – an idea of what a genuine refugee should look like – in this case, predominantly as vulnerable victims of the refugee crisis, but also as people with skills who have the ability to contribute to NZ society. These discourses, although altruistic in intention, homogenise the refugee experience and reduce individuals to passive victims who are reliant on 'experts' (e.g. the media, refugee advocates) to speak on their behalf (Rajaram, 2002; Malkki, 1996).

From my media analysis, and my conversations with people from refugee backgrounds, there seems to be a real disconnect or paradox between discourses of solidarity and welcome and experiences of belonging among former refugees in New Zealand. It is easy to say that we must welcome refugees. It is easy to show compassion and sympathy, or to 'care at a distance', for those not directly at our border (Hyndman, 2000). It is easy to be welcoming towards refugees who embody a particular kind of 'refugeeness' – these unfortunate people whose spectacle of suffering is reproduced in the media at a convenient distance to ourselves. However, what happens when quota refugees arrive here and the initial welcome is over, and the real work of resettlement begins? And what does this say about how New Zealand society regards people from refugee backgrounds? Will they ever be seen as 'real' New Zealanders, or is it just a superficial tokenistic gesture? As one of the former refugees I interviewed for this research, Abdul, argued:

[I]t's one thing to bring in hundreds of people and welcome them at the airport, but [...] what happens in the months and years afterwards. How successful are we helping them to integrate into society, [...] into the, quote unquote, 'NZ way of life'? [...] it's not just a matter of bringing in more people, it's actually how you treat them once they arrive. (Abdul)

Disempowering and stigmatising nature of humanitarian discourses

These mediated discourses of solidarity and suffering are problematic in the way they frame, label and represent 'the other' (Chouliaraki, 2006). Particular narratives disseminated in the media can negatively influence how Western publics see and respond to refugees (Wright, 2002). As discussed in Chapter 8, many of the former refugees I interviewed felt that the mainstream media reinforced a particular view of refugees as poor, destitute and helpless, and so the only image of a refugee the public gets to know is the one perpetuated by the media. These types of homogenous representations can lead to a very narrow perception of who a refugee is and what they are capable of, and potentially negatively influence public perceptions about refugees.

The stigmatising nature of refugee stereotypes can also hinder the ability of former refugees to foster a sense of belonging and acceptance in the country of resettlement. Many of the former refugees I interviewed felt that refugee stereotypes were part of the problem, contributing to the perception of refugees as being different, perhaps less capable than other New Zealanders. This is in line with the international literature, for example Nyers (2006, p. 9) contends that to be a refugee is to inhabit a space of 'non-belonging', in that losing the protection of one's state means that refugees do not belong to any country. However, this is not the case with former refugees in NZ, as they are given permanent residency on arrival. In addition, the former refugees I spoke to felt that they belonged here, and they choose to call NZ home. However, continuing to be 'othered' as a refugee by the media, government agencies, refugee advocates and other New Zealanders, insinuates that people from refugee backgrounds do not belong here, and are not accepted as 'real' New Zealanders.

However, refugees do not always fit neatly into categories that define them in a certain way. Refugees may be labelled and shaped by discursive practices, but they are also capable of restructuring those practices, using their power and agency to contest and transform dominant discourses (Long, 1990, 2001; Lynn & Lea, 2003; Moncrieffe & Eyben, 2007).

Discourse and agency

As discussed in Chapter 3, while post-development and post-humanitarianism critique the disempowering nature of development and humanitarian discourses, they do not account well for the individual agency of those represented. This is why I included an actor-oriented approach to discourse and agency into the refugee representation conceptual framework in order to capture the voices of people from refugee backgrounds. Long (2001) argues that actors will use their agency to find ways to contest, transform, and negotiate discursive structures for their own ends. Therefore, I wanted to know what former refugees in NZ thought of the way refugees were represented in the media, how they chose to identify, and the different ways they were contesting or redefining the 'refugee' label for themselves.

The people from refugee backgrounds that I interviewed were very clear about how they chose to define themselves, and regardless of whether people chose to embrace or reject the refugee label, what became apparent was their clear desire to take back control of the narrative that is created by the media and other organisations. The former refugees that I spoke to had embarked on a number of projects both individually and collectively, including the ARCC's 'redefine refugee' projects, a TED Talk, a YouTube series, and an art installation. Far from being passive recipients of aid (Escobar, 1995; Long & Long, 1992), they had decided to be active agents of change within their own lives, and in their own ways contesting, transforming and redefining dominant discourses of 'refugeeness' in response to media stereotypes.

As Vigil and Abidi (2018) argue, how the term 'refugee' is viewed by refugees themselves is very personal and depends on an individual's experiences of what it means 'to be a refugee'. Humanitarian representations of refugees are just one conception of reality among many, and may not necessarily reflect the lived experience or reality of those represented. Thus, the meaning of the word 'refugee' is not fixed, but socially constructed, resulting in multiple contested realities and identities (Long, 1990, 2001; Malkki, 1995; Nyers, 2006).

Solidarity as justice: Moving forward

The warm welcome refugees received at train stations across Europe, and the media/public support for raising the refugee quota here in NZ, was heartening. The 'Refugees Welcome' movement and media coverage may be fleeting, but it demonstrated the potential for some kind of political transformation. In relation to NZ, the campaign to raise the refugee quota was both a moral and politicised response to the refugee crisis that challenged and eventually transformed government refugee policy, in terms of numbers and financial support for refugee resettlement agencies (New Zealand Government, 2018a, 2018b), but in doing so positioned refugees as helpless, vulnerable victims. As discussed above, the way 'distant suffering others' are portrayed in humanitarian discourses can be disempowering, orientalist, and shaped by uneven power dynamics between those who want to help and those who need help. How then can advocacy for refugees move beyond a 'politics of pity' (Boltanski, 1999) towards a political response that puts concerns of social justice for distant others above our private emotions about their suffering?

Barnett (2013) and Chouliaraki (2013) distinguish between two definitions of humanitarian solidarity: one that is charity driven and concerned with alleviating suffering, and the other which aims to address the structural/political causes of suffering (justice). The media campaign to raise the refugee quota in the NZ media tended to err on the side of charity, which focused on NZ's moral duty to help suffering refugees, rather than addressing wider questions of injustice and inequality that underpin forced migration. According to Chouliaraki (2013), while empathy with victims is important, solidarity based on empathy and charity alone is not enough. In order for solidarity to be a transformative process, acts of solidarity also need to address, contest and challenge existing inequalities. This can lead to collective responsibility and transformative change. Whereas, a solidarity based on pity only focuses on the desire to end suffering, without considering why that suffering in the first place. Without questions of justice, emotional responses to suffering tend not to go beyond benevolence and pity (Chouliaraki, 2013). This is what Chouliaraki (2013) refers to as 'agonistic solidarity' (see Chapter 3), a solidarity based on justice that goes beyond our private emotions about witnessing and acting upon distant suffering.

The position taken by some of the advocates and communications specialists I interviewed, particularly the NZRC communications manager and the spokespeople for Action Station and the HRNGO, pointed towards a form of agonistic solidarity in their campaign strategies. For these advocates, alerting the NZ public to the plight of refugees was more than simply evoking emotions of empathy and pity; it was also about social justice and human rights, and hopefully creating a platform for some kind of political change. They strove to work in partnership with refugee background communities and highlight their voices. The inclusion of alternative voices is a crucial aspect of agonistic solidarity, where the voices, perspectives, and experiences of distant others are put front and centre of campaign communications, instead of being framed as a passive victim in someone else's story, as post-development posits. According to Ticktin (2011), this does not mean we should separate morality from politics, or that political action cannot involve moral imperatives. However, in order to move beyond paternalism and an ethics of care based on empathy alone, it is important to acknowledge the power dynamics involved in constructions of solidarity in order to create a platform for positive political transformation that includes the voices of distant others.

Holistic representation

The portrayal of distant suffering may be necessary to garner empathy for distant others; however, Boltanski (1999) asks how then we can engage the spectator beyond passive voyeurism, and translate the pity we feel for distant suffering others into political action. This raises questions about the ways in which the media elicit compassion for suffering distant others. Rather than stories about how distant suffering makes us feel and how we should respond, Chouliaraki (2013) argues that humanitarian communication should create a platform for the voices of distant others to be heard, and to enable spectators to ask questions and reflect on why we should act. Chouliaraki argues that we need to hear their voice and see their situation as an issue of injustice (Chouliaraki, 2012). This is why I chose to interview people from refugee backgrounds about their experiences and feelings about the word 'refugee' and how it has been used in the media and by refugee advocates, rather than simply analyse the media discourses in isolation.

Representing 'the other' is fraught with difficulty, as no media report can ever fully encompass what it is like to be a refugee. Similarly, tensions exist for NGOs and refugee advocates in how best to communicate their message without descending into disempowering stereotypes (Orgad, 2013), as highlighted by the refugee advocates and communications specialists I interviewed for this research. At the same time, it is important to create the right conditions for the plight of refugees to be seen, heard, understood and welcomed (Franquet Dos Santos Silva et al., 2018).

Therefore, Silverstone (2007) suggests we need to engage with the suffering of distant others with 'proper distance' and in the process decentralise our feelings and ourselves. Viewing distant others with 'proper distance' allows us to see vulnerable others as people with agency and their own humanity. For example, the advocates I interviewed tried to focus on the strengths and capabilities of refugees, presenting them as ordinary people like us, highlighting their individuality and humanity, rather than as anonymous victims who need to be saved. Moving beyond victimisation is also a tenet of hopeful post-development (e.g. Gibson-Graham, 2005; McKinnon, 2007), which prefers to focus on the resiliency, strengths, capabilities and assets of development/humanitarian subjects.

Imagining others is crucial for solidarity, but we need to move beyond pity and imagining distant others as helpless, passive victims, and towards a form of self-reflectivity on the part of the spectator and advocate that listens to and includes the voices of others (Chouliaraki, 2017). While it is impossible to control how the media choose to cover and frame humanitarian crises, such as the refugee crisis, advocates can control the type of language and images used in advocacy campaigns, and include the voices of those they wish to support. Thus, a solidarity based on justice is a fine balancing act between empathy and justice, self-reflexivity and mindful representation of others.

Responsible advocacy

While agonistic solidarity can potentially lead to collective action and transformative change (i.e. through public action, protest, etc.), there also needs to be an element of self-reflexivity in acts of solidarity with distant others (Chouliaraki,

2013b). Before acting upon the suffering of distant others, we need to ask ourselves: why do I act and who is it for? From a post-development and post-humanitarian perspective, Western solidarity movements tend to co-opt the narratives of distant others for their own ends, speaking for and on their behalf, and thus silencing the voices of those they purport to represent (Chouliaraki, 2013; Escobar, 1995; Malkki, 1996; Rajaram, 2002). In comparison, responsible advocacy seeks to empower the subjects of their advocacy, taking direction from those they wish to support, and promoting political and social change (Hogle, Taneja, Yohannes & Ambrose, 2015). Ambrose, Hogle, Taneja, and Yohannes (2015, p. 1) argue that the core principle of responsible advocacy includes the adage 'nothing for us without us'. In other words, as my conversations with refugee advocates have highlighted, it is important for advocates to work in partnership with the subjects of their advocacy, avoid simplistic narratives and stereotypes, and include the perspectives, experiences and voices of refugees in their campaign communications (de Waal, 2015). As Abann from the ARCC said, advocates mean well, but "*please do it with us, not to us*", collaborate with resettled communities to bring about positive change.

My research analysis demonstrated that the challenge for Western advocacy is to avoid top-down approaches, unequal power dynamics, and discourses of 'self-fulfilment'. Instead, the job of advocates, according to de Waal (2015), is to ensure the voices, experiences and perspectives of humanitarian subjects are heard, respected and actioned. Hogle et al. (2015) also advise advocates to acknowledge the voice, agency and capacity of humanitarian subjects, and to accurately represent the humanitarian issue they wish to address. Brecht et al. (2018) recommend that advocates who wish to work with refugees take self-awareness training (awareness of own privileges), and open up space for refugees to get involved in activism. The authors argue that this would decrease power inequalities and create a more equal playing field between refugees and advocates.

As this research has revealed, it is also important that researchers and other actors within the field of humanitarianism critically reflect on their positioning, privilege, and the power dynamics involved in relation to the work they do with refugees (Brecht et al., 2018; see also Hogle et al., 2015). Alcoff (1991) argues that if advocates wish to speak for others they must strive to create space for multiple

voices and perspectives. Speaking *with* and *to* others can help lessen the danger of misrepresentation and paternalism. Alcoff also suggests advocates need to be accountable for what they say and open to criticism, as speaking on behalf of others carries great responsibility. Similarly, Ambrose et al. (2015, p. 1) contend that responsible advocacy requires advocates (and I would also argue researchers) to be “accountable to the people and the [...] situations they represent”.

Refugee advocates interviewed for this research were quite reflexive in their practice. They acknowledged their privileged positionality and strove to avoid disempowering stereotypes, and consult with and include the voices of refugee background communities. Therefore, while this research has largely focused on the negative impact of refugee representations and discourses of solidarity, there is a glimmer of hope – not only in the attitudes of the advocates interviewed, but also in highlighting the voices and actions of former refugees themselves, which suggests that it is indeed possible to challenge and transform dominant discourses.

In addition, research out of Germany on the Refugees Welcome movement suggest that the act of volunteering with refugees, although starting from a place of charity, can open up space for political transformation and new forms of sociality (Braun, 2017; Hanman & Karakayali, 2016; Stock, 2017). Increased interaction between the host society and refugees can create greater awareness and understanding of refugee rights, inequalities and injustices, and help foster a more open and welcoming society.

Reflections on the research process

Throughout my research process I have personally grappled with the ethical considerations involved in doing research on or with people from refugee backgrounds. As a Pākehā New Zealander, and as a person with a media background, I felt comfortable analysing my chosen media sample and interviewing the refugee advocates and communications specialists about their work. However, when it came to interviewing former refugees, I questioned the validity of my position in analysing and sharing their stories of refuge and resettlement. I have not experienced what it is like to be a refugee. Therefore, I hope I have done justice to their stories and

experiences of resettlement in NZ, and what that word 'refugee' means to them. I hope my analysis of their thoughts, words and experiences will help to inform the work of other academics, refugee advocates, journalists, government policy, and future advocacy campaigns.

I would also like to acknowledge the limitations of this research. I acknowledge that the voices of the participants can only convey their own personal experiences, and therefore cannot speak to the experiences of all advocates, communication specialists and former refugees in NZ. Likewise, the media analysis is situated within a particular time in history, covering a particular event (the 2015 refugee crisis), and therefore a different period of time or selection of articles could have produced different results. The eclectic nature of CDA is also criticised for lack of rigour in research, in terms of researcher positionality, choice of theoretical framework, and accusations of 'cherry picking' examples that suit the researcher's ideological interpretation (Meyer, 2001; Wodak, 2001).

However, as O'Leary (2014) argues, the strength of qualitative research is in its ability to deepen our understanding of social issues in a particular context and inform wider knowledge and theory. Similarly, the strength of CDA lies in its eclectic interdisciplinary nature and its ability to create new innovative approaches to discourse analysis that help us to understand the world around us (Weiss & Wodak, 2003). Therefore, the themes that emerged through both the media findings and interviews with participants provide "rich learning" (O'Leary, 2014, p. 61) and insights into media representations of refugees and discourses of solidarity, including refugee advocacy and imaginings of NZ national identity; the deconstruction and redefining of the 'refugee' label; and notions of identity and belonging among former refugees in NZ.

Contribution to knowledge

The knowledge generated about refugee representation and discourses of solidarity in the NZ context through my media analysis, and through the lens of post-development and post-humanitarianism, highlights the unequal power relations between those doing the representation (i.e. the media and refugee advocates) and

those being represented (i.e. refugees). This analysis also highlights the relationship between refugee representation (i.e. victims and benefit) and acts of solidarity (i.e. the campaign to raise the refugee quota), in which solidarity with/for refugees relies on emotive discourses of suffering and victim stereotypes, and draws on a particular narrative about NZ national identity. However, the interviews with refugee advocates/communications specialists demonstrate the various strategies employed to avoid stereotypes, collaborate with refugee background communities, and create space for alternative voices. The interviews with former refugees highlight the multiple experiences of refugee stereotypes and refugee identity, and the various ways former refugees deconstruct and redefine the refugee label.

This research therefore adds to the scholarly knowledge of refugees in the NZ context and more widely, in terms of how they are represented in the media and advocacy campaigns. Rather than focus on discourses of fear and securitisation (the predominant focus of previous research on media representations of refugees), this thesis focused on both textual and visual humanitarian representations of refugees, thus adding to the existing literature on visual humanitarian discourses. Combining critical discourse analysis with the voices of former refugees highlights the lived experience of the 'refugee' label, providing a deeper understanding of what it is like to be a refugee.

This thesis also adds to the scholarly debate about the relationship between media representations of refugees and acts of solidarity driven by humanitarian concern, and highlights the role national identity and values play in solidarity/advocacy campaigns. Labelling can impose certain categories onto people, justifying certain actions. They can also influence societal perceptions of refugees, how they 'fit' into society, and how they are treated, potentially reinforcing inequalities and feelings of (un)belonging among resettled communities. The inclusion of former refugee voices demonstrates the positive and negative effects of humanitarian discourses on the experiences of resettlement and belonging among refugee background people in NZ and beyond, and the complex and nuanced ways in which the term 'refugee' is constructed and deconstructed. Therefore, this research adds to the scholarship around refugee resettlement, integration, belonging and identity in NZ, and can help to inform the work of policy makers in the resettlement space. This knowledge can

also be applied to other Western societies with refugee resettlement programmes, especially in the wake of the Refugees Welcome movement and rising nationalism in Europe, the UK, the USA, and elsewhere.

One of the strengths of this thesis is its interdisciplinary nature, bringing together development studies, refugee studies, and media studies, helping to inform the work of future researchers across these disciplines. Knowledge gained from this research can also be applied or transferred to other academic contexts, including sociology and human geography. Specific learnings include the lived experience of representation/stereotypes, the framing of refugees and other humanitarian subjects in advocacy campaigns, and the ways in which actors use their agency to contest discourse and create space for alternative voices and identities.

This research will also help to inform the practice and reflexivity of NGOs, refugee advocates, and grassroots organisations within the resettlement sector in NZ and beyond, especially in the type of language and imagery used in advocacy campaigns, and the importance of collaborating and consulting with refugee background communities. Findings also show how leveraging value-based messaging, and imaginings of national identity/values, can be used to raise money and support for refugees. The challenge for development and humanitarian practitioners, researchers, advocates, and communications specialists is how to balance the tension between raising support while avoiding disempowering narratives.

Combining post-development and post-humanitarianism with an actor-oriented approach enabled the critical analysis and deconstruction of refugee representation and solidarity discourses, while opening up space for multiple realities and experiences of the refugee label. Post-humanitarian critiques of humanitarian communication also give an extra dimension to post-development critiques on 'development as discourse', highlighting the interrelation of refugee stereotypes and acts of solidarity, and the role national identity plays in the humanitarian imaginations of Western advocacy (in this case, NZ national identity). However, as discussed previously, post-development and post-humanitarianism are quite ambiguous about the role individual agency plays in relation to the wider structure of humanitarian discourse. Including an actor-oriented approach to discourse and agency in the theoretical framework helps to balance the critical analysis of

discourse, while highlighting the role individual agency plays in the production and deconstruction of discourse, and in the case of this research the agency of former refugees and the diverse advocacy strategies of refugee advocates.

This research broadens the notion of what is considered a 'development studies' topic. Forced migration is a development issue, but is often encapsulated by refugee studies, or as a development issue in a 'developing' country. Similarly, analysis of media representations of refugees, or communication for development in general, tends to fall under media or communications studies. This thesis highlights the importance of studying development/humanitarian communications from a development studies perspective, as it provides a more nuanced understanding of how Western countries respond to development/humanitarian issues on their doorstep. This research also extends the concept of 'development as discourse' – 'the other' is no longer 'over there', but amongst us. The refugee crisis brought humanitarian/development issues to the Global North, bringing the idea of 'development' to the so-called 'developed world'. No longer are development or humanitarian issues something academics study 'over there'. Nor is it only about the Global North 'doing development' in the Global South, an issue the global Sustainable Development Goals brings to the fore.

Therefore, this research contributes to the scholarship of development studies theory, including the development of a refugee representation and solidarity theoretical framework that highlights the power and usefulness of combining post-development, post-humanitarianism and an actor theory. This thesis also contributes to development knowledge about refugee advocacy and the lived experience of refugee representation and its effects, and the identity construction of people from refugee backgrounds in NZ and beyond.

Future research

The media analysed for this research contributes knowledge about refugee representation in NZ within a particular time in history, covering a particular event (the 2015 refugee crisis). A different period of time or selection of articles could produce different results. Therefore, for future research, it would be interesting to

see how refugees have been represented in the NZ media over time, and whether this has changed or been influenced by other political or world events (e.g. the arrival of Indochinese ‘boat people’ in the 1970s and 1980s, the Tampa incident in 2001, the 9/11 terrorist attack, etc.). This would build on my research and add to scholarly knowledge about the history of refugee representation in the NZ media landscape. I would also recommend further research on humanitarian solidarity discourses and representations of humanitarian subjects, in both media and advocacy campaigns, and in other development contexts more generally.

The interviews I conducted with people from refugee backgrounds in NZ highlighted the need for more stories told from the perspective of those seeking refuge and who have been resettled, rather than from the perspective of humanitarian agencies or civil society movements. Therefore, I recommend further research with former refugees in NZ about their experiences and thoughts on refugee representation, what the refugee label means to them, and the various ways in which they construct their own identities inside and outside the ‘refugee’ label. Personal narratives give voice to the individual experiences of seeking asylum, and help receiving societies to understand the complexities of forced migration and what it means to be a refugee (Mannik, 2012). Therefore, there needs to be more stories told from the perspective of refugees and former refugees, rather than from the perspective of governments, humanitarian agencies, or advocates. As Abann from the ARCC said, *“they will know us through our stories, because the stories speak louder than anything else”*.

Concluding remarks

It is easy to criticise and say all acts of solidarity are forms of ‘egoistic altruism’ or ‘narcissistic samaritanism’. But this implies that all advocates are paternalistic, or that all recipients of solidarity lack agency, or are passive in the process and cannot speak for themselves, which the findings from this research clearly state is not the case. The majority of the refugee advocates and communications specialists interviewed were self-reflexive in practice, and every former refugee I spoke to has forged their own paths ahead and has chosen to call NZ home. They are active agents of change within their own lives, and within their different communities, challenging

and transforming dominant discourses and perceptions of refugees in their own various different ways. This is why the inclusion of an actor-oriented approach towards discourse and agency was important. It provided an alternative perspective on the representation of refugees that highlighted the multiple experiences and voices of those who had actually been refugees, and added an extra dimension to the critical analyse of dominant discourses in the media.

I also do not want to denounce solidarity movements. The recent literature from German scholars suggests that there is potential for these movements to move beyond mere charity towards a more social justice approach (Braun, 2017; Hanman & Karakayali, 2016; Stock, 2017). However, it is important to critically analyse the dominant discourses involved in acts of solidarity and advocacy, not just with refugees, but all subjects of humanitarian aid and intervention. As has been argued, stereotypical representations and paternalistic responses to the refugee crisis do not address the wider structural inequalities and injustices at play in forced migration. Instead, disempowering stereotypes may end up reinforcing and reproducing unequal and unjust power dynamics between host and refugee. That is not to say that all solidarity movements need to move into the political realm. Perhaps the very act of engagement between the host society and refugees can bring about transformative social change, breaking down barriers of perceived difference, creating social awareness, and creating a more welcoming society, as Hanman and Karakayali (2016), Stock (2017), Braun (2017) suggest.

It is important that humanitarian practitioners, advocates and other actors within the field of humanitarianism, including academic researchers, critically reflect on their positioning and privilege in relation to the work they do with refugees, remain self-reflexive in practice, work in collaboration with refugees and former refugees, and acknowledge participants' agency, capabilities and voice. Responsible advocacy seeks to empower the subjects of their advocacy, taking direction from those they wish to support. The core principle of responsible advocacy includes the adage 'nothing about us, without us'. By working in partnership with the subjects of their advocacy, listening to the perspectives and narratives of the people they purport to help, and avoiding stereotypes, advocacy/solidarity movements can potentially address and transform the structural inequalities and injustices at play in forced migration today.

Appendix 1: Media articles analysed

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Appendix 2: Semi-structured interview schedule: Former refugees

1. What are your experiences with the media?
 - Being interviewed/photographed
 - A friend or family member who has been interviewed/photographed
 - How participant was treated by the journalist
2. How do you feel your story was represented and published in the media? *(For participants who have been interviewed)*
 - Accuracy of representation
 - Focus (eg: is the focus of the story just on the trauma of becoming a refugee, or does the story cover other aspects of the participants life)
 - How they were quoted – in context or out of context?
 - How the story was edited, ie: what may be missing
3. What did you think of how you were photographed and how your photo was used in the media? *(For participants who have been photographed)*
 - Did they have any control over how they were photographed?
 - Did they feel comfortable about how they were photographed?
4. What do you think of how refugees and refugee issues are generally represented in the media?
 - In New Zealand and overseas
 - Stereotypes
 - Misrepresentations or misconceptions
 - Negative/positive stories
5. What do you think the media should do differently, if anything?
 - Working more closely with communities/refugee organisations?
 - Allowing participants to see the article before it goes to print?
 - Use of language?
6. If you could control how the media represented refugees and people from refugee backgrounds, what would that look like?
 - Use of language and photos
 - What kind of stories the media should focus on, eg: a move away from a focus on trauma?
7. What does the word 'refugee' mean for you?
 - Negative/positive feelings
 - Is it a word that they have ever identified with? Or perhaps to a certain

degree still do in New Zealand?

8. How do you think other people in the community see you?

- Own ethnic community
- Wider former refugee community
- Wider New Zealand society (work, school, non-refugee background friends, general population, etc)

9. How would you like/choose to be represented?

- E.g. by your ethnicity, as a Kiwi, or a mixture of both, as a teacher/student/lawyer/mother/father, as a former refugee, etc

10. What kinds of things do you identify with?

- E.g. family, friends, ethnicity, school, work, clothes, religion, art, language, etc
- Refugee experience?

Appendix 3: Semi-structured interview schedule: Refugee advocates and communications specialists

1. What are your experiences with the media?
 - Dealing with the media
 - Putting up people from refugee backgrounds for media interviews
 - Community members' experiences of the media
2. How do you think the media represents refugees and refugee issues?
 - Positive/negative
 - Stereotypes
 - Refugee stories/voices – are they quoted correctly or in context?
3. How would you like the media to report on and represent former refugees and refugee issues in New Zealand?
 - Use of language
 - Use of photos
 - Focus of stories
4. Why did you decide to run/be involved with a media campaign to challenge refugee representations and stereotypes?
 - Community involvement
 - Feedback
5. What were your experiences of this campaign?
 - Positive/negative
 - Outcomes
6. How would you engage with the media in the future?
 - Strategies
7. What about social media?
 - Experiences with social media vs mainstream media
 - Pros/cons

Appendix 4: Letter of invitation

[Address]

[Date]

Dear _____

Re: Request for assistance to access participants for Massey University research

My name is Natalie Slade and I am a PhD student in Development Studies completing my thesis through the School of People, Environment and Planning, Massey University, Palmerston North. My research, titled:– *Constructing ‘refugeeness’: Exploring mediated discourses of hospitality, welcome and refugee (self)representation*, aims to understand how refugees are represented in the New Zealand media, and what people from refugee backgrounds think about these representations and how they choose to represent themselves. I would like to kindly ask you for your assistance in recruiting participants for this research.

I am hoping to interview between 20 and 30 people from refugee backgrounds about their experiences with the media and/or their opinion on how the media represents refugees and refugee issues. The interviews will take place at a venue, date and time that is convenient for participants, and will take between one and two hours. I would also like to invite participants to take part in a photography project called Photovoice. This project would involve participants taking photographs over a period of approximately two weeks that illustrate how they feel about the way people from refugee backgrounds are represented and how they choose to represent themselves. This exercise would then be followed by a second interview with the participants (1-2 hours long) to discuss with me what these images represent for participants. Participants who agree to be interviewed are under no obligation to take part in the Photovoice project if they prefer not to.

It is hoped that the perspectives of former refugees in New Zealand will help to provide a deeper understanding of how refugees are perceived by the media and wider community in New Zealand, and the various ways in which people from refugee backgrounds are choosing to challenge refugee stereotypes. In turn this information may help inform and transform perceptions of refugees in New Zealand, and help refugee background organisations engage with the media in different ways.

Information collected through the interview and Photovoice process will be stored in a secure manner, and only accessed by myself and my supervisors for the purpose of this study. Participants will be offered the opportunity to choose pseudonyms to help protect their identity. The information gleaned from this research will be presented in my final thesis and other research publications and conference presentations. All photos taken remain the property of the participant and will not be reproduced in any way or form without their permission. Participants will be offered the opportunity to review their interview transcript and receive a summary of the research when it is completed.

[Name of organisation] is under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to assist me with this request, you have the right to:

- withdraw from providing assistance at any point in time,
- ask any questions about the research and your involvement at any time during participation,
- be given a summary of the research finding when it is concluded.

This research will be carried out under the supervision of Dr Maria Borovnik (m.borovnik@massey.ac.nz) and A/Prof Juliana Mansvelt (j.mansvelt@massey.ac.nz).

If you are willing, I would very much like to discuss with you how your organisation could assist with recruiting participants. Thank you very much for considering this request. I look forward to hearing from you.

If you have any questions about the project, please feel free to contact either myself or my supervisors.

Yours sincerely,

Natalie Slade

Email: n.slade@massey.ac.nz

Phone: [REDACTED]

Appendix 5: Information sheet: Former refugees



Massey University

Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa

Constructing 'refugeeness': Exploring mediated discourses of hospitality, welcome and refugee (self)representation in New Zealand

INFORMATION SHEET

Hello, my name is Natalie Slade and I am a PhD student in Development Studies completing my thesis through the School of People, Environment and Planning, Massey University, Palmerston North. I would like to invite you to participate in my research topic, titled: *Constructing 'refugeeness': Exploring mediated discourses of hospitality, welcome and refugee (self)representation*. This research aims to understand how refugees are represented in the New Zealand media, and what people from refugee backgrounds think about these representations and how they choose to represent themselves.

I am contacting you because you have been identified as having a refugee background. I would like to ask you to participate in an interview where I could talk to you about your experiences with the media and/or your opinion on media representations of refugees, and what the term 'refugee' means for you. For this study, I hope to conduct in-depth interviews with 20-30 people from refugee backgrounds. This interview will take between one and two hours. A translator will be present if required or preferred.

As part of the interview process, I would also like to invite you to participate in a photography project called Photovoice. This project would involve you taking photographs over a period of approximately two weeks that illustrate how you feel about the way people from refugee backgrounds are represented and how you choose to represent yourself. This exercise would then be followed by a second interview (1-2 hours long) to discuss with me what these images represent for you.

Data collected through the interview and Photovoice process will be stored in a secure manner, and only accessed by myself and my supervisors for the purpose of this study. A pseudonym will be used to help protect your identity. Your name

will only be used if you wish to be identified. Data collected will be used in my thesis and other research publications and conference presentations. All photos taken remain the property of the participant and will not be reproduced in any way or form without your permission. You will be offered the opportunity to review your interview transcript and receive a summary of the research when it is completed.

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate in the interview and/or Photovoice process, you have the right to decline to answer any particular question; ask any questions about the study at any time during participation; provide information on the understanding that your real name will not be used; and if you allow the interview to be recorded, ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

Thank you very much for considering this request.

Natalie Slade.

If you have any questions about the project, please feel free to contact either myself or my supervisors.

Researcher details:

Natalie Slade, Phd Candidate, Development Studies Programme, School of People, Environment and Planning, College of Humanities & Social Sciences, Massey University, Palmerston North. Phone: [REDACTED]. Email: n.slade@massey.ac.nz

Supervisor details:

Dr. Maria Borovnik, Development Studies Programme, School of People, Environment and Planning, College of Humanities & Social Sciences, Massey University, Palmerston North. Phone: (06) 356 9099 x83643. Email: m.borovnik@massey.ac.nz

A/Prof. Juliana Mansvelt, Human Geography, School of People, Environment and Planning, College of Humanities & Social Sciences, Massey University, Palmerston North. Phone: (06) 356 9099 x83640. Email: J.R.Mansvelt@massey.ac.nz

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application 16/39. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Rochelle Stewart-Withers, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 06 356 9099 x 83657, email humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz

Appendix 6: Information sheet: Refugee advocates and communications specialists



Massey University

Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa

Constructing 'refugeeness': Exploring mediated discourses of hospitality, welcome and refugee (self)representation in New Zealand

INFORMATION SHEET

Hello, my name is Natalie Slade and I am a PhD student in Development Studies completing my thesis through the School of People, Environment and Planning, Massey University, Palmerston North. I would like to invite you to participate in my research topic, titled: *Constructing 'refugeeness': Exploring mediated discourses of hospitality, welcome and refugee (self)representation*. This research aims to understand how refugees are represented in the New Zealand media, and what people from refugee backgrounds think about these representations and how they choose to represent themselves.

I am contacting you because you work for an NGO that engages with the mainstream media and/or social media on refugee related issues. I hope to conduct semi-structured interviews with 5-6 people from organisations who have run media campaigns about refugee representation, and would like to invite you to participate in an interview with me. This interview will take approximately 1 hour.

Data collected through the interview process will be stored in a secure manner, and only accessed by myself and my supervisors for the purpose of this study. Pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity and the identity of your organisation. Data collected will be used in my thesis and other research publications and conference presentations. You will be offered the opportunity to review your interview transcript and receive a summary of the research when it is completed.

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to decline to answer any particular question; ask any questions

about the study at any time during participation; provide information on the understanding that your real name will not be used; and if you allow the interview to be recorded, ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

If you have any questions about the project, please feel free to contact either myself or my supervisor. Contact details are on the next page.

Thank you very much for considering this request.

Natalie Slade.

Researcher details:

Natalie Slade, Development Studies Programme, School of People, Environment and Planning, College of Humanities & Social Sciences, Massey University, Palmerston North. Phone: [REDACTED]. Email: n.slade@massey.ac.nz

Supervisor details:

Dr. Maria Borovnik, Development Studies Programme, School of People, Environment and Planning, College of Humanities & Social Sciences, Massey University, Palmerston North. Phone: (06) 356 9099 x83643. Email: m.borovnik@massey.ac.nz

A/Prof. Juliana Mansvelt, Human Geography, School of People, Environment and Planning, College of Humanities & Social Sciences, Massey University, Palmerston North. Phone: (06) 356 9099 x83640. Email: J.R.Mansvelt@massey.ac.nz

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application 16/39. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Rochelle Stewart-Withers, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 06 356 9099 x 83657, email humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz

Appendix 7: Consent form: Former refugees



Massey University

Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa

Constructing 'refugeeness': Exploring mediated discourses of hospitality, welcome and refugee (self)representation in New Zealand

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM (Interview/Photovoice)

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature:

Date:

.....

Full Name:
(printed)

.....

Would you like to read your interview transcript? Yes/No

Would you like to participate in the Photovoice project? Yes/No

Would you like to receive a summary of this study? Yes/No

If you have answered ‘yes’ to either of the above questions, please provide me with your contact details in the box below:

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Appendix 8: Consent form: Refugee Advocates and communications specialists



Massey University

Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa

Constructing 'refugeeness': Exploring mediated discourses of hospitality, welcome and refugee (self)representation in New Zealand

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM (NGO INTERVIEWS)

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature:

Date:

.....

Full Name:
(printed)

.....

Would you like to read your interview transcript? Yes/No

Would you like to receive a summary of this study? Yes/No

If you have answered ‘yes’ to either of the above questions, please provide me with your contact details in the box below:

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