Introduction

The 2011 uprisings in Syria against President Bashar Al-Assad marked the start of

a civil war that would eventually lead to the displacement of an estimated 5

million Syrian people (BBC, 2017; UNHCR, 2017). Within the first few years of Syria's conflict,

violence in major cities such as Talkalakh (2011) and Damascus (2012) pushed tens of thousands

of Syrian people from their homes. By summer 2013, an average of 6,000 people fled their

homes each day (Syrian Refugees, 2017), most of whom sought refuge in neighboring countries

—namely Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan—while others traveled to Western Europe and North

America (UNHCR, 2015: 16). Among these destinations, Lebanon saw the highest concentration

of Syrian asylum seekers, with 183 refugees for every 1,000 inhabitants by

2015 (UNHCR , 2015: 18). That same year, the United States sought to raise its refugee

acceptance ceiling from 85,000 in fiscal year 2016 to 110,000 in fiscal year 2017, while Canada

vowed to accept 25,000 Syrian refugees by the end of the February 2016 (Migration Policy

Institute, 2017; Gordon et al., 2015; Government of Canada A, 2017).

Because many people do not have personal experience with refugees, the public's "visual

sense" of them is largely constructed by the mass media (Malkki, 1995: 9-10; Green, 2009: 524;

Banks, 2011: 2011), which has documented this global migration (van Schaik, 2015: 35; Sontag,

2003: 93; Kosho, 2016). But how are refugees in this crisis represented? This project examines

how the Syrian refugee crisis is visually and lexically framed in the news media. Frames have

implications for public opinion and can even influence the ways that people treat one

another (Nelson et al., 1997). That is because media frames "suggest a connection between two

concepts, issues or things, such that after exposure to the framed message, audiences accept or

are at least aware of the connection" (Nisbet, 2009: 46). For example, the news media's tendency to associate Muslims with danger or terror can influence public opinion and national discourse surrounding Muslim people, and in the case of this study, the Muslim Syrian refugee population. News coverage of Syrian refugees that focuses on Muslim identity may call to viewers' minds a connection between Islam and terror (Stone, 2017); the implications for the fates of these refugees in their new homes, and the acceptance or hostility that they encounter, is potentially at stake.

Literature Review

Framing

Framing is defined by Entman (1993) as "select[ing] some aspects of a perceived reality and mak[ing] them more salient in a communicating text […]" (p. 52). This selection process can take place in words and in photographs. In the news, the words that journalists "select" when producing news content may reflect individual or ideological attitudes towards the story or event being presented (Pan and Kosicki, 1993: 62-63; Kuypers, 2002: 10; van Dijk, 1988: 81). In this sense, word choice "signifies the presence of a particular frame" (Pan and Kosicki, 1993: 62). But at the same time, word choice might also reflect the influence of organizational structures and societal values on news content (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996). As a framing device, then, word choice allows journalists and news organizations to "categorize," focus on or give salience to certain elements of the subject or event they are covering (Kuypers, 2002: 10; Pan and Kosicki, 1993: 62). These frames are evident in the stories themselves, headlines and in captions accompanying photographs.

Frames can also act as a "central organizing idea […] that provid[e] meaning" to stories (Gamson and Modigliani, 1987: 143; Pan and Kosicki, 1993: 56). These assigned "meanings" act as guiding mechanisms for the audience by "suggesting what is at issue" in a story (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989: 143). Frames then have the potential to influence the audience's understanding and interpretation a story, the issue at hand, and the particular subjects or events comprising that issue (Kuypers 2002: 10-11; Entman, 1991: 7; Scheufele, 1999: 107; Price, Tewksbury, & Powers, 1997: 482).

Visual framing of refugees.

Like words in a story, every photograph is "subject to selection, interpretation and, often, alteration as it works its way through the news process" (Huxford, 2001: 48). Throughout the news process, photographers decide what and whom to include and omit (Goldstein, 2007: 75) and which images to send to news organizations (Perlmutter and Wagner, 2004: 104). Moreover, within each photograph, compositional elements, as Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) have observed—such as whether a subject is shown from above or below, and how near or far she is in the frame—determine whether a photograph's subject seems powerful or weak, a close relation or a distant stranger (p. 140). These compositional choices quite literally and figuratively frame the subjects.

Thus, for instance, previous studies show that refugees are frequently photographed from above and in crowds (Malkki, 1996: 387-388; Wright, 2004: 101; Fair and Parks, 2001: 44) such

that the viewers of the photograph are in a position of power over the refugees, who appear "small and insignificant" (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 140).

Like photographs, captions also act as a framing mechanism (Tankard, 2001: 101) because they further "fix" or reinforce meanings of photographs. In captions, words that may seem neutral may actually "hide underlying opinions and ideologies" (van Dijk, 1988: 172; van Schaik, 2015: 31). The words "refugee" and "migrant," for example, have very different meanings yet news organizations often use the two interchangeably when discussing the Syrian refugee crisis.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), for instance, defines a refugee as "someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war, or violence [and who] has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a particular social group" (USA for UNHCR, 2017). By contrast, it defines migrants as people who "choose to move not because of a direct threat of persecution or death, but mainly to improve their lives by finding work, or in some cases for education, family reunion, or other reasons" (UNHCR, 2016b). In 2016, the UNHCR stressed the importance of differentiating between these two terms:

> Conflating [the terms] refugees and migrants […] takes attention away from the specific legal protections refugees require. It can undermine public support for refugees and the institution of asylum at a time when more refugees need such protection than ever before (UNHCR, 2016b; van Schaik, 2015: 31).

Still, news organizations use "refugee" and "migrant" interchangeably. In Germany, for example, Holmes and Castañeda (2016) found that media representations of refugees in and

outside of the country "demarcate[d] the 'deserving' refugee from the 'undeserving' migrant and play[ed] into fear of cultural, religious, and ethnic difference in the midst of increasing anxiety and precarity for many in Europe" (p. 12). In this way, such seemingly neutral words demonstrate that lexical frames shape the public's understanding of refugees.

Representation of Muslims in the mass media

Western media has a history of stereotyping Muslims and associating them with violence (Ridouani, 2011; Schønemann, 2013). While this tension dates to the Middle Ages, as Edward Said (1978) wrote in *Orientalism,* it reached a peak during the 1950s: "Anyone resident in the West […] lived through an era of extraordinary turbulence in the relations of East and West. No one will have failed to note how "East" has always signified danger and threat during this period" (p. 34).

Such attitudes toward the "East" remain, where Muslim culture and Arabian people are often grouped together by the news media into one group. This overgeneralization of "Arabs and Muslims is a deliberate and conscious strategy which makes [it] easy for the West [to] stereotype both the race and its religion" (Ridouani, 2011: 12-13), which has become highly politicized in the West (Eriksen, 2001: 78; Schønemann, 2013: 10). Western attitudes toward the "Muslim world" can be observed in the way that Muslims and Arabs are subject to scapegoating and stereotyping in Western news media (Ridouani, 2011: 11-12) in photos and texts alike.

After the attack of the twin towers on 11 September 2001, themes of the "War on Terror" emerged in media representations of Muslims and Islam (Morey and Yaquin, 2011: 214) in print and on television. Wright (2004) looked at television news representation of Afghan

refugees and found that "the visuals featured a number of stereotypical refugee images: for example, […] there were media stereotypes of Islam: angry faces and clenched fists" (p. 102). This connection between Muslims and violence or terrorism has emerged in more recent research on news coverage of Muslims as well. Schønemann (2013), for instance, examined articles in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* and found that coverage depicted Muslims as violent and "unable to live in a Western Country" (p. 93). Likewise, Ridouani (2011) found that the Western media strips Arab Muslims of individuality, then frames them as one large group of violent, "religiously fanatic" people who "refus[e] to coexist with the other religions" (p. 13).

Representation of refugees in the mass media

The news media in the developed world frames refugees as invisible subjects of political policy. For instance, van Schaik found that in newspaper cover stories concerning refugees, politicians and other non-refugee actors were typically pictured while the refugees themselves were left out of the photographs (van Schaik, 2015: 55). In this sense, the mass media dehumanizes refugees by reducing them to faceless, voiceless subjects of policy.

In addition to framing refugees as subjects of policy, the mass media tend to dehumanize refugees by ignoring the reasons that they are in flight. In their analysis of media coverage and political discourse surrounding the European refugee crisis in and outside of Germany, Holmes and Castañeda (2016) observed the news media's tendency to blame refugees—many of whom were Syrian—for their own suffering while ignoring the historical, economic and political circumstances of the countries from which these refugees came (p. 12-13). This practice of overlooking political and historical circumstances is practiced in the mass media. According to

Malkki (1996), the mass media depicts refugees as speechless victims in a "sea of

humanity" or "passive objects of humanitarian intervention." (p. 377, 378, 390). Dehistoricizing,

on the other hand,

> […] occurs when [refugees] are presented in a way that does not take into account
>
> the temporal and geopolitical characteristics that make one humanitarian crisis
>
> different from another; as if the refugees from Rwanda, Bosnia, Iraq and now –
>
> Syria were all the same by the very fact of having fled their homes (Szczepanik,
>
> 2016: 31).

> Both dehumanizing and dehistoricizing contribute to the construction of refugees as

voiceless masses (Malkki, 1996: 378, 385). When refugees from several different countries are

grouped together in photographs whose captions provide no information regarding their

countries of origin, the individuality of each refugee is rendered irrelevant. In turn, such scenes

contribute to the public's expectations of what refugees should look like (Malkki, 1996: 386) and

perhaps makes such events easier to ignore.

Refugee resettlement policies in the United States, Canada and Lebanon

> Despite the Obama administration's efforts to accept more Syrian refugees by fiscal year

2017 (Migration Policy Institute, 2017; Gordon et al., 2015), the United States has admitted far

fewer Syrian refugees than Canada and Lebanon since 2011. Between fiscal years 2015 and

2016, the United States took in just over 14,000 Syrian refugees (Syrian Refugees in the United

States, 2017; U.S. Department of State Refugee Processing Center, 2017). The number of Syrian

refugees accepted for resettlement in the United States is lower than Canada in part because the

U.S. government requires Syrian refugees to endure an especially extensive vetting process (Department of Homeland Security, 2015; Griswold, 2016). In order to be considered for resettlement in the United States, all refugees go through a complex multi-step process involving several interviews and background checks (Department of Homeland Security, 2015). Syrian refugees are also subject to an extra degree of vetting called "Enhanced Review for Syrian Applicants" (Department of Homeland Security, 2015). Should an applicant then receive approval for resettlement, the last vetting processes are carried out just prior to and upon the refugee's arrival in the United States (Department of Homeland Security, 2015).

Canada resettled more than 29,500 Syrian refugees over the course of just eight months from November 2015 to July 2016 (Open Government Canada, 2016). In Canada as in the United States, a refugee applicant can be referred by the UNHCR or a designated referral organization (Department of Homeland Security, 2016; Canadian Immigration and Citizenship, 2017). But Canada also resettles refugees referred by private sponsorship groups (Canadian Immigration and Citizenship, 2017). An individual who qualifies for refugee status in Canada is required to fill out an application package, pass a medical exam and pass a security and criminal background check (Canadian Immigration and Citizenship, 2016). The Canadian government also developed a program intended to expedite processing of Syrian refugee applications. In 2015, the Canadian government vowed to resettle 25,000 government sponsored and privately sponsored Syrian refugees by 2016 (The Globe and Mail, 2017). After having completed this goal by February 2016, Canada continued to put in this extra effort to process applications from Syrian refugees, eventually resettling 40,081 Syrian refugees by January 2017 (Government of Canada B, 2017).

Lebanon's relationship to the Syrian refugee crisis is much different than that of Canada and the United States. According to Lebanon's Crisis Response Plan created in collaboration with the United Nations, Lebanon is not a part of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. Moreover, Lebanon has not signed its 1967 Protocol of the Convention. (Government of Lebanon and the United Nations, 2014: 3). This means that, although Lebanon is neither a country of asylum nor a country in which refugees can be resettled, the Lebanese government has taken the initiative to implement some provisions of the Geneva Convention (Government of Lebanon and the United Nations, 2014: 3) such that by spring 2014 more than 1 million UNHCR-registered Syrian refugees were residing in Lebanon (Government of Lebanon and the United Nations, 2014: 3), at which point the Lebanese government ordered the UNHCR to suspend refugee registration in the country (UNHCR, 2016b).

Research questions

There is a great deal of research that looks at refugee representations in the news, but few papers analyze visual representation of Syrian refugees, and no paper that we have seen compares visual, Anglophonic coverage with coverage in Lebanon. Our project looks at texts and photographs because both act as framing mechanisms in the mass media (Perlmutter and Wagner, 2004), and both have the potential to shape the public's understanding of stories with which it is not familiar (Kuypers 2002: 10-11; Entman, 1991: 7; Green 2009). We analyzed photographs, captions and headlines from the online editions of the *Globe and Mail,* the *New York Times* and

Annahar because the United States, Canada and Lebanon have very different relationships to the Syrian refugee crisis.

Much of the existing research looks at refugee representation in the European news media. Such studies show that refugees—many of who are Syrian—are often framed as a mass of deviant people who threaten the existing social order in the West (Malkki, 1996; Banks, 2011: 293, 295, 299; Buchanan et al., 2003: 9; Elsamni, 2016: 73). Based on this literature, we ask the following questions:

RQ 1: How is the Syrian refugee crisis visualized?

RQ1a: Who is represented?

RQ1b: What is represented?

RQ1c: How are refugees visually framed in terms of point of view, distance and deviance?

Additionally, media frames can suggest that refugees are undeserving "trespassers" or "outsiders," especially when the words "migrant" and "refugee" are used interchangeably (UNHCR, 2016b; van Schaik, 2015: 31; Holmes and Castañeda, 2016: 13; Buchanan et al., 2003: 15, 25). In response to this research and the fact that captions act as framing mechanisms by "fixing" the meanings of photographs (Tankard, 2001: 101), we ask the question:

RQ 2: How are Syrian refugees lexically framed?

Media frames can also reflect the political views of the party in power (Page, 1996; Sigal, 1973; Gans, 1980; Hallin, 1986; Bennett, 1990; Soley, 1992). In Canada, the government has made extra efforts to resettle Syrian refugees and the country has accepted far more Syrian

refugees than the United States (Open Government Canada, 2016; Syrian Refugees in the United States, 2017; U.S. Department of State Refugee Processing Center, 2017). The United States has strict refugee acceptance policies with an additional vetting process for Syrian refugees (Department of Homeland Security, 2015; Griswold, 2016), and Lebanon is not legally a country of asylum of resettlement (Government of Lebanon and the United Nations, 2014: 3). Moreover, in Lebanon, political rhetoric surrounding Syrian refugees is hostile. In 2017, Lebanese President Michel Aoun said that Syrian refugees must return home, and that the country is not interested in waiting for their "voluntary return" (Associated Press, 2017). Anti-Syrian-refugee rhetoric was felt across the country by those seeking asylum in Lebanon leading up to the country's 2018 elections, when leaders in the primary political groups expressed overt disapproval of Syrian refugee presence in Lebanon (Sherlock, 2017). Bearing in mind the relationship between frames and political power and the contrasting acceptance policies in the United States, Canada and Lebanon, we ask the question:

RQ 3: Did the *New York Times,* the *Globe and Mail,* and *Annahar* frame refugees differently?

Methods

We conducted a quantitative content analysis to answer our research questions. Photographs and captions from the online editions of the *New York Times,* the *Globe and Mail,* and *Annahar* were the units of analysis.

In September 2015, three-year-old Aylan Kurdi's body washed up on the shore of Turkey (Barnard and Shoumali, 2015). A photograph of this scene brought the Syrian refugee crisis to

the forefront of international news (Barnard and Shoumali, 2015). Because the Syrian refugee

crisis garnered significant international after that incident, this study includes photographs from

articles published between 1 September 2015—the day before Aylan Kurdi's body was found—

and 31 March 2017. Photographs were cut and copied into a desktop folder, then corresponding

headlines and captions were logged into a Google spreadsheet. Cover photos from videos, still

images, and social media images embedded into articles were included in this study; maps,

illustrations, graphs and infographics were not. The user-generated text included with embedded

social media photographs were logged as captions in the Google spreadsheet.

To access articles—and ultimately photographs—relevant to the Syrian refugee crisis, we

used the search phrases "Syrian refugee crisis" and "Syrian refugee," adapted from Zhang

and Hellmueller's (2017, p. 9).

The search phrases were entered into the search engines on each newspaper's

website. Because the *Globe and Mail*'s website only allowed access to the first 100 articles

dating back to 24 September 2015, an additional search was conducted on Google to access

articles published before 24 September 2015. This supplemental search was conducted using

Google's site search tool by typing site:www.theglobeandmail.com "Syrian refugee crisis" into

the search bar. The search results were limited to articles published in the *Globe and

Mail* between 1 January 2015 and 24 September 2015. This supplemental search turned out 36

articles, one of which had already been accessed using the *Globe and Mail*'s official search

engine. The other 35 articles were published between 3 September 2015 and 24 September

2015. This search did not turn up any articles published before 3 September 2015. Eight articles

included videos, most of which were no longer available. The cover images, or images that

appear before a user presses the play button, were clipped from videos that were still available.

The second search phrase, "Syrian refugee," turned up 1,360 results when entered

into the *Globe and Mail*'s search engine. Because only the first 100 articles—all of which were

published in 2017—could be accessed, the entire search and data collection process was

conducted using Google's "site search" tool by typing site:www.theglobeandmail.com

"Syrian refugee" into the search engine. With the date range set to 1 September 2015 to 31

March 2017, Google turned out 680 results. The articles were sorted by date such that the first

page of results showed articles published in 2017 and the last page showed articles from 2015. In

order to collect and log photographs by date, the collection process started on the last page (page

68) and ended near the first page. A systematic sampling method was used, selecting the first

article on each page of search results. Images from articles on pages one through eight of the

search results were not collected because they included only articles published after March 2017.

This approach returned screenshots of 103 images from 56 articles.

Unlike the *Globe and Mail*'s website, the *New York Times'* website allows users to limit

search results to a date range of choice. After entering the search

phrase "Syrian refugee crisis" into the *New York Times'* search engine and setting the date

range as 1 September 2015 to 31 March 2017, images were collected from the 33 available

articles that included the phrase "Syrian refugee crisis." Several news agency headlines

from *Reuters* and *Associated Press* appeared in the search results, but many of them were no

longer accessible. Such was the case when the second search phrase, "Syrian refugee," was

entered into the *New York Times'* search engine as well.

Upon entering "Syrian refugee" into the *New York Times'* search engine, 269 articles published between 1 September 2015 and 31 March 2017 appeared. Over the course of a few days, photographs from most of the articles were collected until the *New York Times* website underwent what appeared to be an update. This supposed update caused the number of results for "Syrian refugee" to increase to 1,039. In reviewing some of the new articles that appeared, it became clear that the phrase "Syrian refugee" did not appear in all of these newly surfaced articles; rather, the words "syrian" and "refugee" appeared separately. Further, the update also caused the number of results for the first search phrase, "syrian refugee crisis," to grow to 611 articles.[1] Both searches provided a range of articles published between 1 September 2015 and 31 March 2017, so no supplemental searches were necessary.

After reviewing the data, many photographs proved irrelevant to the study. For example, photographs from a *New York Times* article titled *Pop and Jazz Fall Preview: 105 Albums, Shows and Festivals,* did not represent refugees. (The phrase "Syrian refugee crisis" appeared because a musician had written a song about it.) Articles whose primary focus was not the refugee crisis were removed from the sample; illustrations, maps and portraits of journalists were also removed. The initial sample comprised 866 photographs, but after cleaning the data, the final sample was comprised of 437 images.

To gather photos from *Annahar,* a translator entered the Lebanese translation of "syrian refugee" into the newspaper's website and logged every twentieth article that appeared in the search results. All of the articles logged by the translator were published between 1 September 2015 and 31 March 2017. The translator also logged the English translation of the headlines and captions, as well as the date on which each article was published. We assigned each photograph

an identification number and took screenshots of the photographs in each article. In total, we gathered 75 photographs from *Annahar.* The final sample was comprised of 512 images.

Coding Scheme

To create a codebook, we designed and adapted 18 variables from previous research. The variables are described below: Photograph identification, newspaper, date, full headline, full caption, distance, point of view, gender, age, deviance, veiled women, politicians, anonymity, welcoming, refugees behind barriers, caption key words, headline key words, and scene. It is important to note that the following four variables applied only to photographs of refugees: deviance, veiled women, anonymity and refugees behind barriers. We coded photographs in which only non-refugee actors appeared to the remaining 11 variables.

Newspaper. The newspaper variable indicated the news outlet in which each photograph was published.

Date. We coded each photograph according to the date when it was published.

Full headline. The headline of the article from which each photograph was clipped.

Full caption. The text directly beneath each photograph as it appeared in the article.

Distance. The shot type (distance) refers to the distance from which photographs were taken: close shots, mid shots, long shots and aerial shots. This was adapted from Zhang and Hellmueller (2017: 10) and Fair and Parks (2001).

Point of view. The second shot type variable focused on the angle from which the photograph was taken: above, straight on, and below.

*Gender***.** The gender variable consisted of five categories: male, female, both male and female, not clear, and no people pictured.

Age. We coded photographs according to the following categories: adult (over 18 years old), minor (18 and under) and no people present. If more than one category applied to the same photograph, we selected the category which applied to the protagonist of the photograph.

Deviance. We adapted the deviance variable from Ehmer and Kothari (2016), who defined "deviants" as refugees "who were not adhering to social norms" (p. 7) The deviance variable was broken down into three categories adapted from Banks (2011). After modifying those categories for the purpose of this project, we coded for the following categories: mug shots, refugees getting arrested or punished for criminal offenses, confrontation with guards or police, or none of the aforementioned.

Anonymity. Also adapted from Banks (2011), is the anonymity variable is defined as a person's face that is fully or "partly obscured, blurred or hidden" in shadows or a person whose back faces the camera (p. 294).

Veiled women. We adapted the "veiled women" variable from Ehmer and Kothari (2016), who coded for "exoticism," a variable which included categories such as traditional clothing or artifacts" (p. 7). For the purpose of this project, we narrowed "exoticism" to "veiled women," defined as the presence or absence of female refugees wearing a hijab.

Refugees behind barriers. We defined the refugees behind barriers variable as photographs in which refugees appeared behind caution tape, a window, sign, table or other obstruction.

Politicians. We adapted the politicians variable from van Schaik (2015) and comprised of

five categories: Western politicians, Middle Eastern politicians, United Nations officials, other

politicians (from neither the West nor the Middle East) and no politicians (van Schaik, 2015: 54).

This variable identified non-refugee actors to measure whether refugees are framed as the

subjects of policy in the developed world and whether the politicians who develop those policies

from Western countries or non-Western countries.

Welcoming. We defined the welcoming variable refugees being embraced by politicians

or citizens in receiving countries. This variable coded for the presence or absence of a refugee

who is embracing, hugging or shaking hands with a citizen or a politician.

Caption and headline key words. Also adapted from Berry and colleagues (2016), a

caption variable and a headline variable were both comprised of four categories: the presence of

the word "refugee," "migrant," "immigrant," or none of the above.

Scene. The variable titled "scene" indicated the setting and content of photographs. It

included the following eight categories: death, domestic, war/conflict/post-conflict, rescue,

portrait, daily life refugee camp, work or office scene, journey, daily life in Syria or other.

Refugee. We defined the refugee variable as the presence or absence of refugee(s) in

photographs. This variable included four categories: not a refugee, non-Syrian or "other"

refugee, Syrian refugee, and unclear.

Once we had collected and logged all of the data from the *New York Times* and the *Globe

and Mail,* we selected 50 photographs—or then 6% of the sample—at random in order to test

inter-coder reliability. The level of agreement between the coders was measured by Cohen's

Kappa values. The initial Cohen's Kappa values were below .7 for the "age" and "shot type

(distance)" variables, which indicated a high level of disagreement between the coders. These initial values called for changes to the codebook, including collapsing and designing new variables. After making the necessary changes, another 6% of the sample was coded again by the same two coders. Cohen's Kappa values over .7 were achieved all of the variables.

Results

RQ 1. Our first research question asked how the Syrian refugee crisis was visualized.

RQ 1a. First, we asked who was represented in this visualization of the refugee crisis. In terms of gender, males appeared in 40.6% of the photographs; 13.3% featured only female subjects. Both male and female subjects appeared in 35.9% of the photographs while the gender of the subject(s) was unclear in 2.7% of the photographs. There were no people pictured in 7.4% of the photographs.

In terms of age, adults were pictured in most (67.0%) of the photographs. Minors appeared in just over a quarter (25.6%) of the photographs. There were no people in 7.4% of the photographs.

Western politicians appeared in 16.8% of photographs from the sample, while only 3.9% of photographs featured Middle Eastern politicians, .4% included United Nations officials, and .2 included politicians from neither Middle Eastern nor Western Countries. The rest (78.7%) of the photographs did not show politicians at all.

RQ 1b. We also asked what was represented in these three newspapers' coverage of the Syrian refugee crisis. As for the "scene" variable, most (54.1%) of the 512 photographs in articles concerning refugees featured portrait images. Some (9.4%) of the photographs showed

"journey" scenes, while others (4.3%) displayed refugee camps or domestic settings (3.1%). A few of the photographs showed work or office scenes (2.9%), war, conflict or post-conflict scenes (5.3%), rescue scenes (1.2%), death scenes (1.4%) or scenes representing daily life in Syria (1.0%). The rest (17.4%) of the photographs did not fall into any of the above categories.

RQ 1c. Finally, we asked how distance, point of view, and representations of deviance visualized the Syrian refugee crisis. In terms of the distance from which photographs were taken, most were long shots (44.7%) followed by mid (41.2%), close-up (13.5%) and aerial shots (.6%). As for point of view, the vast majority were straight on (75.2%). Some (15.6%) images were photographed from above the subject, and in few (9.2%), the subject was photographed from below.

The vast majority (97.3%) of the photographs did not show refugees engaging in deviant acts. A small fraction (2.3%) showed refugees in confrontational situations with guards or police, and only one photo showed a refugee getting arrested or punished for criminal offenses.

Of all 437 photographs, most (81.3%) of the female refugees pictured did not appear wearing hijabs. In only 18.8% of the photographs, female refugees were featured wearing hijabs.

Refugees were mostly not shown in "welcoming" settings. In 96.7% of the photographs, there were no refugees being embraced, hugged, or shaking hands with a citizen or politician.

In 7.4% of the photographs, refugees appeared behind barriers including windows, walls, tables and other obstructions.

In terms of anonymity, about a fifth (20.7%) of the photographs showed refugees whose faces were partially or fully blurred, obscured, hidden in the shadows or hidden by another

obstruction or whose backs face the camera. The rest (79.3%) of the sample did not demonstrate anonymity.

RQ 2. Our second research question asked how Syrian refugees were lexically framed. In terms of captions, 29.7% included the word "refugee," while 5.5% included the word "migrant" and 1.0% included the word "immigrant." The majority (63.9%) of photograph captions did not include any of the above words. As for headlines, nearly half (47.5%) included the word "refugee" while some (7.2%) included the word "migrant" and very few included the word "immigrant" (1.0%). The rest (44.3%) of the headlines did not include the word migrant, refugee or immigrant.

RQ 3. Finally, we asked whether the *New York Times, Globe and Mail,* and *Annahar* framed refugees differently. To answer this question, we collapsed some of our variables, and in some cases we removed categories within our variables altogether.

Chi-squared tests showed statistically significant differences in representation between the three papers. Relative to the number of photographs published in each paper, the *New York Times* and the *Globe and Mail* showed an equal amount of images taken straight on (75.5% of their photos), while 73.3% of *Annahar* photos were taken straight on; $X^2 = 6.25$, $p = .181$. The *Globe and Mail* also showed more mid-shots (46.6% of its photos) than the *New York Times* (40.6%) and *Annahar* (34.7%); $X^2 = 19.45$, $p = .001$. *Annahar* was far more likely to show photos of only men (52.7% of its photos) than the *New York Times* (40.9%) and the *Globe and Mail* (37.8%); Gender: $X^2 = 17.60$, $p = .007$. The *New York Times* showed the bulk of the photos in which people did not appear (63.2%). The *New York Times* showed the majority (71.1%) of

the total number of photos of refugees behind barriers; $X^2 = 3.95$ $p = .138$. Relative to the number of photographs published in each paper, *Annahar* showed more images in which refugees did not appear (68.5% of its photos) than the *Globe and Mail* (57.0% of its photos) and the *New York Times* (47.7% of its photos). The majority of photos of Syrian refugees appeared in the *New York Times* (22.5% of the total, while the *Globe and Mail* showed only 9.1% of the total and *Annahar* showed only 3.4%); $X^2 = 11.26$, $p = .024$. The *Globe and Mail* showed more images (2.0% of the total) of refugees being welcomed than the *New York Times* (1.4% of the total) and *Annahar* (0.0% of the total).

There were also differences in the papers' lexical framing. In captions, *Annahar* refrained from using the terms refugee, migrant, and immigrant 95.9% of the time; the *New York Times* refrained from using these labels in 63.1% its coverage, while the *Globe and Mail* refrained from using them in 51.4% of its captions. Still the *New York Times* was more likely to not use any labels at all; it accounted for 35.7% of the total number of times none of the labels were used. The *New York Times* was also more likely to use the word "migrant" (3.7% of the total) and "refugee" (17.2% of the total) than the *Globe and Mail* (Migrant:1.8% of the total; refugee: 12.2% of the total) and *Annahar* (Migrant: 0.0%; refugee: 0.6%). Moreover, the *New York Times* accounted for a statistically significant, greater percentage of the word "migrant" (73% of the 37 times this word was used in headlines) in its headlines. Also in headlines, the *New York Times* was more likely (58% of the total) to use the word "refugee" than the other newspapers; $X^2 = 10.12$, $p = .038$. Anonymity is approaching statistical significance, with the *New York Times* (23.1% of its photos) and *Annahar* (21.3% of its photos) showing more images of anonymity than the *Globe and Mail* (15.1% of its photos); $X^2 = 3.33$ $p = .190$.

Discussion

Our findings showed that the bulk of the story was told as a story of adults, and mostly from long shots and straight on. The large number of photographs of adults and the small number of photographs of female refugees refutes previous research on refugee representation, much of which shows that while adult women and children are disproportionately affected by refugee crises (Malkki, 1996: 388; UNICEF, 2015), they are typically over-represented in photographic representation of refugees because they fit the public's expectations of how refugees should look (Malkki, 1996: 388; Malkki, 1995: 10-11).

Males and females appeared together in photographs of refugees being welcomed more often than males only or females only appeared. This may be a result of the large number of photographs in which families or small groups of people appeared. These findings support previous research by Malkki (1996), Wright (2004) and Fair and Parks (2001), all of who observed that refugees were typically photographed in groups or crowds.

Our findings also showed that the refugee crisis was visualized through long shots more than it was through mid shots or close up shots. As Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) argue, distance suggests the relationship between the photograph's subjects and its viewers (p. 124). Our definition of long shots corresponds with Kress and Van Leeuwen's definition of photographs taken from a "public distance," or "the distance of the 'stranger'" (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 125). Overall, photographs in our study suggested a distant, weak relationship between the viewer and the subject, but the *Globe and Mail* was more likely to publish close up photographs than the *New York Times.*

Most of the photographs in our study were taken straight on. These results refute previous research that refugees are typically photographed from above (Wright, 2004: 101; Fair and Parks, 2001: 44). But according to Kress and Van Leeuwen, power dynamics are expressed through the camera angle, and photographs in which subjects at "eye level" of the viewer suggest that "there is no power difference involved" and that the subjects are represented as equal to the viewer (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 141).

Some of our findings differ significantly by newspaper, which may reflect the contrasting policies currently in place in Canada and the United States. For instance, the *Globe and Mail* was more likely to publish photographs of refugees being welcomed, especially by politicians including Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Immigration Minister John McCallum. This finding may be representative the Canadian government's refugee acceptance policy, which expedited the resettlement process for Syrian refugees (The Globe and Mail, 2017).

In the United States, the *New York Times* was more likely to publish photographs of refugees behind barriers than the *Globe and Mail.* These findings are consistent with those of Fair and Parks (2001), who looked at television news coverage of Rwandan refugees in the United States and found that refugees were often depicted behind physical barriers (p. 39). Such depictions "reinforce the physical and cultural distance" separating viewers from the Syrian refugee subjects (Fair and Parks, 2001: p. 39).

On top of that, the *New York Times* published the majority of anonymous photographs. As Banks (2011) argued, "photographs of one or more asylum seekers with their face and/or body obscured, partly obscured, blurred or hidden" construct refugees as faceless, deviant and

dangerous individuals (p. 294). Male and female refugees together appeared anonymously more often than only male refugees or only female refugees did. This finding refutes previous research showing that male refugees are typically represented as anonymous and/or dangerous threats (Rettberg and Gajjala, 2016: 179-180; Buchanan 2003: 22-24), but it supports research showing that Syrian refugees are most often photographed in groups (van Schaik, 2015: 51).

In terms of lexical framing, our findings showed that all three news outlets favored the term "refugee" when labels were used in captions and headlines, but the *New York Times* was less likely to use labels than the *Globe and Mail*. The *New York Times'* propensity to not use labels was in part a result of having published several articles about the experiences of specific refugees or refugee families and about policy concerning refugees. In framing individual refugee families, the *New York Times* often used the refugees' names instead of labels. The *Globe and Mail,* on the other hand, tended to post articles about the refugee crisis at large and about political policy concerning refugees.

Finally, our findings for the scene variable showed that most photographs in all three newspapers fell into the portrait category followed by the journey category. There were few photos of death or war, conflict or post-conflict settings, meaning that the actual conflicts from which refugees are fleeing and the deaths that occur during the journey were not visualized. In this sense, our findings support Malkki's assertion that refugees are often dehistoricized (Malkki, 1996). Individual refugee stories regarding the history and political circumstances of their homes were largely left untold by news photographs in the *Globe and Mail,* the *New York Times* and *Annahar.*

Implications

While our findings revealed that refugees were often visually framed as "equal" to viewers through straight-on photographs, they also raised concerns about how other dominant frames may affect how the public perceives refugees.

For example, in telling the stories of individual refugee families, the *New York Times* often refrained from dehumanizing by using the refugees' actual names instead of the labels "refugee" or "migrant." This practice is uncommon in the media representations of refugees (Malkki, 1996). At the same time, it is possible that by not using the label "refugee," the *New York Times* diminished the urgency of the refugee crisis, thus making it easier for readers to dismiss the story and its subjects. Moreover, when the *New York Times* did use labels, it was more likely to use the word "migrant." Both of these findings matter because, as the UNHCR declared in 2015, when referring to refugees, word choice "can have serious consequences for the lives and safety of refugees" (UNHCR, 2016b; van Schaik, 2015: 31). In this sense, the *New York Times* may have drawn attention away from the millions of other Syrian refugees (BBC, 2017; UNHCR, 2017) in need of resettlement, thus putting refugee acceptance in the United States at risk.

In Canada, on the other hand, the *Globe and Mail* tended use word "refugee" rather than "migrant" in captions and headlines, thus framing refugees as people who are fleeing unrest and who now are in need of resettlement. This narrative framing strategy may encourage readers to empathize with Syrian refugees. Moreover, as our findings showed, the *Globe and Mail* was far

more likely than the *New York Times* and *Annahar* to show refugees being welcomed. Such photos may be reflective of the Canadian government's refugee acceptance policy, which is far more welcoming than that of the United States and Lebanon. Photographs of the nation's leaders —including Prime Minister Trudeau and Immigration Minister McCallum—welcoming Syrian refugees may have the potential to promote a positive attitude among Canadian viewers because the refugees are being framed as "deserving" of acceptance and welcoming.

Yet, in all three newspapers, the small number of death and daily life in Syria photographs puts refugee acceptance at stake as well. The actual Syrian conflict from which refugees are fleeing and the deaths that occur on their journeys were not visualized, so these news photographs may not attest to the reality of the Syrian refugee crisis. Instead, refugees are framed as masses of people in flight through the large number of "journey" scenes captured in photographs. When viewers in receiving countries see refugees but no danger, they might make underestimate the urgency of the crisis and the dangers that led Syrian refugees to flee in the first place.

Despite the increasingly dire circumstances in these countries, the Trump administration's "travel ban" on individuals traveling to the United States from Syria—among other predominantly Muslim countries—was recently approved by the Supreme Court (Liptak, 2017). Moreover, the Trump administration recently announced its plan to cut the refugee acceptance ceiling from the Obama administration's proposed 110,000 to a mere 45,000 (Gordon et al., 2015; Rose, 2017). These developments, paired with the administrations overtly anti-refugee attitudes, may indirectly encourage the press to frame the Syrian refugee crisis in a manner that reflects the Trump administration's nativist beliefs. This is a plausible concern because the news

media tends to frame stories in such a way that reflects the political stances of government officials (Page, 1996; Sigal, 1973; Gans, 1980; Hallin, 1986; Bennett, 1990; Soley, 1992) and frames influence the way that the public understands issues with which they do not have first-hand experience (Green, 2009: 524) such as the Syrian refugee crisis. Anti-refugee framing could potentially result in nativist attitudes toward Syrian refugees and refugees from other countries.

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