Refugees welcome: Exploring mediated discourses of hospitality and refugee representation in New Zealand

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Overview

• Introduction
• Research outline
• Refugee representation and the media
• New Zealand media analysis
• Conclusion
• References
Introduction

• World facing biggest refugee crisis since WWII (UNHCR, 2016)

• Myth and misinformation about refugees and asylum seekers in the media (Gale, 2004; UNHCR, 2016)

• Politics of fear (Devetak, 2004; Gale, 2004; Pugh, 2004)
“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)
Introduction
Research Outline

• Critical discourse analysis - NZ Herald and Stuff, September 2015 (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 2008)

• How are refugees represented in the NZ mainstream media?

• Relationship between these representations and imaginings of hospitality and welcome
Refugee Representation

- Media representations sit within complex discourses of security and hospitality (Bleiker, Campbell, & Hutchison, 2014)

- Stereotypical notion of ‘refugeeness’ (Malkki, 1996)
Refugee Representation

Discourses of security, threat and fear

(Devetak, 2004; Gale, 2004; Pugh, 2004)
Refugee Representation

Discourses of compassion, empathy and humanity

(Rajaram, 2002; Malkki, 1996)
Refugees Welcome

Discourses of hospitality and welcome

(Derrida, 2001; Rosello, 2001; Mason & Hayes, 2012)
Role of the media

• Media shapes public perceptions about refugees
  (Lynn & Lea, 2003; O’Neill, 2010; Jacobs, 2011)

• Words + images = particular reality or truth
  (Wright, 2002; Bleiker et al, 2014)

• Can influence how refugees are welcomed
NZ Media Analysis

• Strong ethical and moral argument in media on raising refugee quota
  » Shaming the government
  » NZs long humanitarian tradition
  » Refugees as victims
  » Moral duty to help
NZ Media Analysis

• Ethics of hospitality – duty to assist those in need (Gibney, 2004)

  » Refugee as hurt and vulnerable stranger
  » ‘Colonialism of compassion’ (Hyndman, 2000, p. xxii)
NZ Media Analysis

• Imaginings of nationhood (Dauvergne, 2005; Bauder, 2015)
  » ‘Narcistic samaritanism’ (Kapoor, 2005)
  » Determines humanitarian policies
NZ Media Analysis

• Conditional hospitality – states control entry  
  (Derrida, 2001)

• Caring at a distance  (Hyndman, 2000)
Concluding Remarks

• Consequences of stereotypical representations of refugees
• Power relations involved in acts of hospitality
• Value and limitations of these discourses in resettling refugees
References