Book reviews

Rodney Benson, *Shaping immigration news: A French-American comparison.*
New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013, 296 pp., ISBN 9780521887670

Reviewed by: Karina Horsti, *University of Jyväskylä, Finland*

This book is an exploration of how news journalism succeeds in producing multiperspectival, critical, and in-depth news in two countries, France and United States. The study takes a broad view to the issue of how immigration is covered in the news by focusing on media systems and practices in the journalistic field. As the title *Shaping Immigration News* suggests, the examination of news is not limited to framing or representation, but includes an analysis of the journalistic field and media policy. In so doing, the study adds context to the rich body of news coverage research that pays attention to the varieties of immigrant categories and their intersections with other categories such as class, ethnicity, age, and gender. Moreover, the study contributes to research on comparative and global media studies, media policy, and sociology of journalism.

The two journalistic contexts – France and the United States – differ in systematic ways and therefore they make an appropriate comparison. The journalistic environment in France is more restrictive and less commercialized compared to the United States. Moreover, the state intervenes in media policy, particularly in ways that aim to ensure plurality of the public debate. Diversity of views is also valued in the American media field. However, this normative aim is addressed differently in policy and practice. Media policy in the United States relies on commercial competition to protect plurality and leaves public service media and state intervention to a margin.

Pierre Bourdieu's field theory inspires the theoretical and methodological foundation of this book. Using primary and secondary sources, Benson traces the histories of journalistic field formation and the contemporary professional standards. In addition, he draws on 80 interviews with journalists and other professionals he conducted between the years 1995 and 2012. Moreover, the book has chapters on news frames and their development in newspapers and television news over the period from early 1970s to 2006. The empirical analysis reads well since details about the data and methods are in a separate online appendix.

Towards the end of the book, Benson makes a strong argument for the value of public service media and calls for a reform to expand and strengthen public media in the United States. The comparative research shows how public intervention has different trajectories in the two countries. The long history of publicly supported television has shaped

French journalistic fields in ways that set standards also for the commercial media. For instance, similar to many other European countries, the French commercial television was developed only when the public system had established its position. Traces of these origins remain in the journalistic values of commercial providers. In the United States, however, the public service television PBS grew out of educational networks only in the 1960s, and it remains a small and decentralized player in the field.

While the regulatory framework produces the meta-level difference for the two journalistic fields, Benson also pays attention to the 'field logics', that is, to the more practical and professional differences between the two countries. One such example is the 'forms' of news: modes of articles and news packages. Narrative news, 'shaping of information as a "story" with clear characters and plot' (p. 49) is typical for the American news genre. In France, on the contrary, newspapers organize topics as a 'multigenre debate ensemble', which is a collage of different genres and voices. This format allows various agents such as civil society actors and academics to present their views on an issue, and according to Benson, this form tends to afford more multiperspectival, critical, and in-depth news coverage on immigration.

While the book makes future recommendations particularly towards American journalism, claiming for a stronger public service media, the comparative study nevertheless offers future perspectives also for European journalistic fields. The European public service media face pressure from commercialization and digitalization, perhaps more so than Benson's rather optimistic account suggests. Studies such as *Shaping Immigration News* that carefully compare the strengths and limits of different systems and outcomes of different media policies are crucially important also for the future development of the struggling public service initiative in Europe and elsewhere.

Patrick Burkart, *Pirate politics: The new information policy contests.*
Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2014, 240 pp., ISBN: 9780262026949

Reviewed by: Maria Löblich, *Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, Germany*

Pirate Politics studies the emergence of the Pirate Party as a cultural and political movement and explains the democratic potential of pirate politics. Patrick Burkart, an associate professor of communication at Texas A&M University, regards the Pirate movement as an 'umbrella cyberlibertarian movement that views file sharing as a form of free expression and advocates for the preservation of the Internet as a commons'. Having previously worked on file sharing mainly in the United States, the author now turns to Europe where, contrary to the United States, pirate politics has institutionalized in the political systems. Centring analysis on Sweden and Germany is natural because the history of the Pirate Party began in Sweden, and in Germany, it has succeeded in terms of elections and getting seats in communal and state parliaments.

The book consists of three parts. Part 1 sets out the theoretical foundation and details the formative years of the Pirate Party in Sweden. Burkart uses Jürgen Habermas' theory of communicative action to place pirate politics within a broader context: the open Internet is seen as a 'lifeworld' that is increasingly colonized by state regulation and