

Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly

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Book Review: *Shaping Immigration News: A French-American Comparison*
, by Rodney Benson

Sandhya Rao

Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly 2014 91: 597
DOI: 10.1177/1077699014541786a

The online version of this article can be found at:
<http://jmq.sagepub.com/content/91/3/597>

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Anderson also hypothesizes that traditional journalism's industrial work model erected barriers to cooperation: "Reporters and editors still worked to build news stories in an assembly line-like fashion, and news organizations struggled to collaborate with people and groups outside their formal institutional walls." Insurgent news organizations empowered by digital technologies had no such constraints, however.

The book's final theme is the "non-diffusion of collaboration." As the Philadelphia public became more fragmented with the rise of the Internet, Anderson says, it would have made sense "to 'network the news' through institutional collaboration, hypertext linking, and formal and informal partnerships." But that never happened.

Anderson says,

Ultimately, I conclude that the difficulties in networking the news stem as much from journalistic culture—journalism's vision of "its" public and the importance of the act of reporting in the journalistic imaginary—as they do from logistical or transaction-cost difficulties that can be easily remedied through managerial solutions.

As *Rebuilding the News* was published, the Philadelphia daily newspapers have continued to founder financially; they may go back on the auction block. But they have attempted some of the collaboration Anderson advocates—giving start-ups free office space in exchange for developing useful apps, including one to help people choose candidates based on issues.

If Anderson's book seems prescient, so does Kennedy's: the *New Haven Independent* continues to flourish, lauded not just for its journalism, but also for its business model; it is the focus of a Columbia University case study. And the competing *New Haven Register* has adopted some of the *Independent's* practices—vetting online comments and adopting a strategy that emphasizes community engagement and digital content.

Shaping Immigration News: A French-American Comparison. Rodney Benson. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013. 281 pp. \$121.74 hbk.

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DOI: 10.1177/1077699014541786a

Immigration is an important aspect of society both in the United States and in France, but it has always been a sensitive issue especially depending on factors such as political leadership and the health of the country's economy. Rodney Benson's book, *Shaping Immigration News: A French-American Comparison*, is based on extensive cross-cultural analysis of immigration coverage in leading newspapers and television channels of the United States and France from the 1970s-2006; in-depth interviews with journalists, scholars, political officials, immigration activists; as well as information from various relevant reports. It is a serious attempt to look beyond the pro- and anti-immigration coverage. The author states that "the test for journalism is how well it helps citizens and policymakers understand the causes and consequences

of immigration, as well as the backlash against it.” He emphasizes that focusing on civic-cultural issues rather than commercial or political ones results in stories that shed a better light on immigrant issues.

The book provides many insights on the similarities and differences in the news coverage in the United States and France in general as well as the immigration news coverage in the two countries based on the structural changes in the field. The author states many reasons for comparing these two countries. For one thing, they are both in the top five migrant-receiving countries in the world and during the three decades examined in this book, the immigrant population has increased in both countries, reaching 10% in France and nearly 13% in the United States in 2006.

Journalists in both countries are not ethnically diverse and belong to a similar social class and educational background, and media audiences tend to be elitist in both France and the United States. The differences Benson points out are that the United States follows a more business-driven model, while French newspapers publish politically engaged essays. Another difference he mentions is that journalism is viewed as investigative and personalized narrative in the United States, but in France it is seen more as “ideologically diverse analysis and debate of ideas.”

The author identifies ten immigration frames that portray immigrants as victims, heroes, and as a threat. Overall, in the United States, he found that immigration stories were more about racism, as a threat to public order, and humanitarian narratives on immigrant problems. In France, in addition to the racism and humanitarian frames, the global economy frame remained in the forefront unlike in the United States. Benson also points out that although the government offers greater financial support to newspapers in France, French immigration stories had more critical statements than did the U.S. coverage. And although French newspapers are not dependent on advertising, they did not criticize businesses any more than did the U.S. newspapers.

Benson’s holistic approach to understanding immigration coverage based on a field model he developed is to be lauded. He states that previous research has been mainly focused on the commercial models in the United States and Great Britain with the assumption that the findings could be generalized to other countries in the world. Applying field analysis would encompass mezzo-level examination of the world of journalists and news organizations within the geographical and sociopolitical context of the issue being examined. The inclusion of non-market forces or the civic field known as the “non-profit” sector in the United States adds an important dimension to the study. Benson observes that the best stories are generally found at the intersection of civic and market logics.

The author compares newspaper stories in the two countries in terms of factors such as frame diversity, whether it was political field generated, and whether it was journalistic field generated, and concludes,

Over the course of several weeks, an American newspaper might cover a topic from as many angles as a French newspaper, but the multiperspectival approach in a single day’s edition of a French newspaper offers the civic advantage of seeing the world whole, in all its complexity, rather than as a succession of seemingly unrelated fragments.

That said, Benson gives generous praise to America's Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), which he says provides by far the best coverage of immigration news reflecting various perspectives. He compares PBS's in-depth coverage to the French debate ensemble format that is a combination of news, commentary, and analysis. Benson's approach to the study of immigration news coverage serves as a useful model for researchers who wish to study media coverage of other issues as well.

The book is divided into nine chapters and contains many charts and tables that are useful. The appendices on additional news content data, sources and methods, and the immigration context provide more information on the author's research process. The book makes a valuable contribution to the field of international journalism and may be used by scholars as well as various members of the society, including journalists, immigration and political officials, and others to better understand immigration issues.

Data Journalism: Mapping the Future. Edited by John Mair and Richard Lance Keeble. Bury St Edmunds, UK: Abramis Academic Publishing, 2013. 187 pp. \$26.50 pbk. £15.95 pbk.

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DOI: 10.1177/1077699014541786b

With vast amounts of data now openly accessible online, and the new infographic technologies available to visualize data, news media are increasingly making use of these valuable mines of data to source and produce their stories. Data journalism—the use of numerical data in the production and distribution of news—is an emerging sub-area in our field but so far little has been written about it. Scholarly narratives on data journalism are still rare, not to mention published books devoted to this subject. The January 2014 release of *Data Journalism: Mapping the future* is a welcome addition to this nascent body of literature, after the seminal *Data Journalism Handbook* (2012).

Defining “data journalism” is not an easy task, given its confusion, or overlap at least, with “online journalism,” “digital journalism,” “computer-assisted-reporting (CAR),” “investigative journalism,” and so on. The book sets out with its first section, “What precisely is data journalism,” to track the philosophical and conceptual foundation for data journalism as a stand-alone subject area. This collection of essays from four academics and industry experts certainly answers more questions than it raises. One may walk away with a “bio-like” understanding of the data journalism identity: data journalism evolved from “precision journalism (which Phil Meyer has advocated since 1970s),” and is a development of CAR in the online context; it combines reporting with programming of data; its features may include interactivity, statistics, a multi-modular approach, and audience participation. Despite this wealth of information, the book asks questions that remain unanswered—Is it realistic to expect journalists to be programmers? Should all reporters be required to be data literate? Is data journalism good for the general public audience or for the elite audience only?

As mentioned in the book, the notion of journo-coder, programmer-journalist, hacker-journalist, or journo-programmer is still novel and the terminology is as yet