

5 Why Narrative Is Not Enough

Immigration and the Genres of Journalism

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Long-form narrative¹ has become the sacred totem of American journalism and, to judge from some of the chapters in this book, of many non-American journalists as well. It is held up as the best way to balance journalism's contradictory pressures. On the one hand, constructing dramatic tales infused with emotion provides a way to attract and keep the easily bored audience. On the other hand, narratives go beyond the politicians' sound bites to humanize issues, to show the concrete impact that policies have "on the ground." As *New York Times* immigration reporter Nina Bernstein once publicly remarked, "individual stories are a powerful way to convey larger forces."²

Against this US journalistic conventional wisdom, I argue in this chapter that personal narrative and structural context are not so easily reconciled. In its search for melodrama, personalized narrative journalism can give short shrift to structural complexities, power dynamics, and diverse perspectives—such as those characterizing immigration. Even when narrative connects the individual to larger trends (as with the classic "she is not alone" transition paragraph), its register tends to be descriptive rather than explanatory.

But if these critiques are accurate, what are the alternatives to narrative? This is where the kind of international dialogue fostered by this book can be helpful. Comparative research can help make us aware of other possibilities, other ways of doing things. Building on the comparative French-American research I conducted for my book *Shaping Immigration News*,³ in this chapter I call attention to some differences in French and US journalistic practices, especially as they relate to newspapers. Despite their ongoing financial difficulties, newspapers continue to be leading providers of original news and commentary. My focus is on print versions of newspapers, but, as I will argue, similar questions of genre are highly relevant for the online versions as well.

Differing historical relations to political, market, and civic power have helped shape distinctive logics of practice—or forms of news—within the US and French journalistic fields. American newspapers are more dependent on advertising and more profit driven than French newspapers. On the other hand, French state press subsidies are second in Europe only to those

in Italy⁴ and have included “content-neutral” support to newspapers that add ideological diversity to the public debate. In the United States, narrative has emerged as American journalism’s accommodation—and limited form of resistance—to overwhelming commercialization. In France, a multigenre “debate ensemble” format has developed as a means of coordinating—and critiquing—the debate of ideas among the major political parties and intellectual currents.

While it also has its shortcomings, this French multigenre approach suggests one way of overcoming the limitations of narrative. Bringing together news, background features, commentaries, and interviews with experts, the debate ensemble is well equipped to address structural complexity, ideological diversity, and historical context. It provides a way of going beyond the “human dimension” of individual immigrants to address the hows and whys of immigration as a social process. It incorporates narrative but is not limited to it. The format is most strongly developed in French newspapers but is also evident in public media in other countries (such as the US Public Broadcasting Service).

Before saying any more about the debate ensemble, however, let us first examine more closely the strengths and weaknesses of personalized narrative.

PERSONALIZED NARRATIVE JOURNALISM

Narrative is endorsed by American journalism’s leading lights, from Harvard’s Nieman Foundation to the top editors of the *New York Times* to the Pulitzer Prize committee, which increasingly honors feature articles that emphasize “emotional story-telling.”⁵ This is not a new development but rather the intensification of a long-standing mode of writing in American journalism. In his ethnographic study of international foreign correspondents in El Salvador during the 1980s, Mark Pedely found that American journalists could be distinguished from their European counterparts by their emphasis on “dramatic narrative”; other comparative studies have called attention to the uniquely strong emphasis on narrative in American journalism.⁶ Michele Weldon’s detailed content analysis of multiple US newspapers showed that personalized narrative—marked by the anecdotal lead—has become even more common over the past decade.⁷

Is this a bad thing? Is not a solid narrative feature better than a sensationalistic crime story or a press conference report that reproduces only official sound bites? Compared to much of what we see online today—“snarky opinion pieces” and “top ten lists” being some of the favored genres—long-form narrative journalism can reasonably present itself as the quality alternative.⁸ The question on the table is what journalism’s “best practices” can or should offer to democratic public debate. It is important to candidly evaluate both the strengths and weaknesses of even the most prestigious genres.

Clearly, narrative provides a powerful technique to “humanize” the immigrant experience and to make the public aware of otherwise hidden social worlds. For instance, in “Two Jobs and a Sense of Hope,”⁹ a *Washington Post* article captures the ironies of being an African immigrant in the American south. Presented as an example of a wave of sub-Saharan African immigration to the United States, this profile of Malian Adama Camara also provides a rare glimpse of the day-to-day experiences, feelings, and viewpoints of a janitorial worker, not the kind of individual who usually gets much opportunity to speak and be heard in the public sphere. In a far more daring approach to “get inside” the immigrant experience, the *New York Times* sponsored a reporter from the El Salvadoran newspaper *El Tiempo* to go undercover as a migrant on a smuggling ship (series title: “Dangerous Passage: From Ecuador by Sea”).¹⁰ In addition to gripping details about the voyage (“The rough waves and asphyxiating humidity quickly took their toll on passengers who have never seen the ocean before, much less ridden across it”), the story even includes lengthy conversations with the smugglers.

Perhaps the best-known example of a dramatic narrative approach to immigration is “Enrique’s Journey,” Sonia Nazario’s Pulitzer Prize-winning six-part series for the *Los Angeles Times*. It may be a cliché to say so, but “Enrique’s Journey” is truly heartbreaking. It is a story of a mother—one of many across Central America—who leaves her starving children behind in order to find work that will allow her to send money home to make their lives better. It is also a story of the child who sets out many years later in search of the mother, his harrowing journey, and the inevitable disappointments and difficulties of their reunion. In order to recreate this experience for readers, Nazario literally retraced Enrique’s travels from Honduras to North Carolina, even risking her life riding on the tops of the same trains, and conducted dozens of interviews with Enrique and his relatives, other migrants, and immigration officials and aid workers. The story’s ending is tragic. After having suffered so much because of his mother’s departure, Enrique feels compelled to do the same to his new baby child. As Nazario concludes her series:¹¹

One day [after arriving in the United States], Enrique phones Honduras. [His girlfriend] Maria Isabel is pregnant, as he suspected before he left. On Nov. 2, 2000, she gives birth to their daughter.

She and Enrique name the baby Katherine Jasmin.

The baby looks like him. She has his mouth, his nose, his eyes.

An aunt urges Maria Isabel to go to the United States, alone. The aunt promises to take care of the baby.

“If I have the opportunity, I’ll go,” Maria Isabel says. “I’ll leave my baby behind.”

Enrique agrees. “We’ll have to leave the baby behind.”

I do not mean to dispute the validity or importance of the emotional elements of Enrique's experience, powerfully conveyed by Nazario's writing. The question I want to raise is simply the extent to which this narrative—and narrative journalism in general—does what Nina Bernstein said it could do, that is, serve as a "powerful way to convey larger forces." In one of the many glowing reviews of the book version of *Enrique's Journey*, *Entertainment Weekly* wrote that "Nazario's impressive piece of reporting . . . turn[s] the current immigration controversy from a political story into a personal one." Yet something is lost in the translation. We experience in vivid detail what it would be like to live through Enrique's ordeal. We learn that he is one of many suffering the same fate. But we learn very little about why this is happening and what might be done to help him.

Despite Bernstein's insistence that the human dimension and social context can be interwoven, her reporting has also at times failed to make this connection. This is certainly the case in her profile of a Long Island immigration restrictionist activist.¹² In this article, the structural is doubly disadvantaged, both by the demands of narrative and by the failure of empathic understanding: from its opening paragraph, there is no doubt about the social distance between the reporter (and her likely elite urban audience) and the union member/restrictionist activist at the center of the story.

ELMONT, N.Y.—The streets where Patrick Nicolosi sees America unraveling still have the look of the 1950's. Single-family homes sit side by side, their lawns weed-whacked into submission to the same suburban dream that Mr. Nicolosi's Italian-American parents embraced 40 years ago when they moved to this working-class community on Long Island.

Commenting on the article a few years later, Bernstein told me, "Certainly, the working-class perspective, the white working-class perspective can be quite different. . . . I like the fact that I have the freedom as a reporter to lay out those contradictions and give voice to someone like this who in fact was coming from a union perspective, from a, at least in some ways, a progressive perspective."¹³ In the article, Bernstein gives Nicolosi his say, but always couched in relation to personal, even irrational emotions ("resentment," "worries," "working himself into a speech"), not to the kind of hard data that could either confirm or refute his arguments. The article continues:

It is the economics of class, not the politics of culture or race, that fires Mr. Nicolosi's resentment about what he sees in Elmont, which is probably as diverse a suburb as exists in the United States. Like many working-class Americans who live close to illegal immigrants, he worries that they are yet another force undermining the way of life and the social contract that generations of workers strived so hard to achieve. . . . "They're telling us Americans don't want to do these jobs,"

Mr. Nicolosi said. "That's a lie. The business owners don't want to pay. I know what my grandparents fought for: fair wages and days off. Now we're doing it in reverse. . . . It's either a country of law and order and what my parents fought for, or we just turn it over to big business," he went on, working himself into a speech that connected many dots.

Instead of opening up a discussion about the validity of the "progressive" critiques offered by Nicolosi, a third-generation union member, the story's underlying thrust is intensely personal, a melodramatic "parable about being careful what you wish for." Nicolosi's campaign to stop homeowners from leasing unregulated basement apartments to illegal immigrants ultimately results in the eviction of a Mexican family with two children, one disabled, living across the street. Nicolosi is shunned, even by his neighbors who share his views on immigration. The reason, Bernstein writes (echoing her reporting creed): "People forget the human dimension." Bernstein closes with a lament from Nicolosi's next-door neighbor: "For every problem, there's a solution. For every solution, there's another problem." Narrative thus serves not to supplement structural analysis but effectively to silence it. The article's closing sentence could be read as a verdict that any government action is ultimately futile or counterproductive.¹⁴

Not all narrative articles are the same. Narrative techniques have a strong affinity with investigative reporting, at which Bernstein has excelled¹⁵ and which is discussed by some of the journalists in this volume; narrative can also be more or less attuned to structural complexity and contradictions. With considerable effort, narrative journalism can weave together human agency and social context,¹⁶ as do some novels, nonfiction books, documentaries, and multilayered television series such as *The Wire*. Still, there seems to be an underlying rhetorical tension between personalized narrative and the "deliberative exchange of ideas."¹⁷ In the midst of telling a story, trying to inject "abstract political ideas" almost inevitably comes across as an inelegant, even tangential, disruption.¹⁸

Democracy's needs are multiple. Journalism, as its crucial handmaiden, also needs to be multiple. A central challenge for journalism is how to join narrative story telling with other approaches. It is a problem of the coordination of genres. I now turn to this question.

THE DEBATE ENSEMBLE FORMAT

When she transformed her newspaper series into a book, Sonia Nazario made one important change: she added an analytical "Afterword" in an attempt to answer the questions that her narrative did not.¹⁹ Drawing on a careful reading of the available scholarship, Nazario accurately summarizes: "Any calculus of the benefits and burdens of immigration depends on who you are. People who own businesses and commercial interests that

use cheap immigrant labor benefit the most from immigrants like Enrique and [his mother] Lourdes." These businesses "bitterly complain" whenever the government attempts to enforce laws prohibiting employment of illegal immigrants. On the other hand, Nazario adds, "those hardest hit by the influx of immigrants are disadvantaged native-born minorities who don't have a high school degree—namely, African Americans and previous waves of Latino immigrants. They must compete for the same low-end jobs immigrants take." For their part, "Most immigrants would rather stay in their home countries with their extended families. . . . What would ensure that more women can stay home—with their children, where they want to be? As [one] mother, says, simply . . . 'There would have to be jobs. Jobs that pay okay. That's all.'"

The problem, in short, is economic and global. Nazario points to suggestions for ways to "bolster the economies of immigrant-sending countries," such as forgiving foreign debt of poor Central American countries, implementing more favorable terms of trade for immigrant-sending countries, and increasing US foreign aid donations. Whether Nazario's proposals are adequate is not the issue here (though in fact, they do represent a commendable effort to suggest international policy solutions rarely voiced in mainstream political debate). The issue is what it takes to fully represent a complex issue like immigration. As Nazario's analytical afterword illustrates, it takes more than personalized narrative.

Of course, European journalists use narrative techniques as well. In this volume, the Italian journalist Guido Olimpio explains how his detailed portraits of colorful individuals living near (or trying to cross) the US-Mexico border provide an essential means—a sort of Trojan Horse—to draw in Italian readers otherwise indifferent to happenings so far away. The difference, at least in France, is that features, profiles, or other types of personalized narratives rarely stand alone: in coverage of major events and trends, multiple genres are closely counterposed. In his comparative study of *Le Monde* and the *Washington Post* during the late 1970s, the French sociologist Jean Padoleau singled out *Le Monde* for its distinctive multigenre format: a "pluralist" assemblage of multiple discursive genres and perspectives, anchored by its twin commitments to thoroughly "document" (via publication of diverse original source materials) and "comment" upon the issues of the day.²⁰ The French newspaper *Liberation* took this French multigenre approach to a new level beginning in 1981, with the launch of its *événement* format ["today's big news" or "topic of the day"]. In the words of its former long-time director, Serge July, "*Événement*" is about putting the emphasis on what we judge to be the day's most important news. . . . All the newspaper's desks contribute, and the topic is approached and problematized from as many angles as possible: whether through investigation or analysis, news reports or interviews, the point is to show, decode, explain, confront, give sense to the news. . . . giving rise to the newspaper's own editorial position."²¹ Concretely, this means that the first two to five pages are a mix

of genres—breaking news, analysis, background information, interviews, and editorial—all focused around a single topic. Virtually all of the major French national newspapers use some version of this format today.²² I have termed this format a "debate ensemble" because it tends to bring together diverse social actors in a single space in order to facilitate a debate of ideas. Debate ensembles can be reactions to breaking events, such as when (then interior minister) Nicolas Sarkozy proposed new legislation to encourage immigration of high-skilled workers (*Liberation*, May 18, 2006), or they can be explicitly thematic, as in an eight-page "dossier" on France's colonial history and its links to contemporary immigration politics (*Le Monde*, January 21, 2006).

Multigenre coverage exists in the United States, especially in response to major events, but it is far more common in France. About 73 percent of French page-one immigration "news packages" (lead article and any closely related inside articles) but only 20 percent of US news packages in my French-American comparative study consisted of multiarticle ensembles. Fifty-two percent of the sampled French news packages were multigenre, in that they incorporated genres beyond breaking news and features, such as guest commentaries, journalist-authored columns or analyses, official editorials, or interview transcripts; only 11 percent of the US sample was multigenre.

From a French perspective, it is not fair to critique an individual article's fairness or comprehensiveness; what matters is the entire "page" consisting of multiple articles and multiple genres of articles.²³ For example, in the wake of a recent party polemic about the "problem" of the replacement of traditional French butchers with Islamic halal butchers in the Paris region, *Le Monde's* Elise Vincent sought to bring the debate down to earth with a feature about a local butcher shop that had recently made such a transition (see her chapter in this volume). In order to put this narrative in context, Vincent conducted an interview with the demographer Patrick Simon that ran alongside the feature. When *The Guardian* reprinted the feature—but not the interview—English-language readers were effectively deprived of the context provided by the original multigenre ensemble.²⁴

The interview transcript can thus help provide the structural context too often underplayed in personalized narratives. Instead of reducing the views of a range of observers and actors in the immigration debate to short "sound bites," published interview transcripts allow them to articulate and defend their arguments at length. In contrast to the column or guest commentary, however, journalistic interrogation potentially forces the writer to directly engage with critiques and alternative framings (this can also be accomplished through comments on online articles or blogs, if the author is willing to respond, as discussed in Popkova's chapter). In my study of French newspaper coverage of immigration during the 2000s, interview transcripts appeared in 30 percent of news packages. Many interviews were of politicians, of course, but at *Liberation*, *Le Monde*, and *Les Echos*, academics

and other experts were the most frequently interviewed; at *L'Humanité* and *La Croix*, leaders of immigration associations and religious organizations were the most prominent.

At the same time, one finds a greater mixing of news and opinion on the same page in France than in the United States, with official editorials, columns, and guest commentaries often appearing alongside news articles in the front portion of the newspaper. News analyses or commentaries can potentially explore issues and perspectives not already in the mainstream. In their event news reports or features, reporters often feel constrained to represent the range of opinion expressed by authoritative and powerful sources. Guest commentators and columnists have the autonomy to go beyond official accounts in order to broaden and deepen the public debate.²⁵

In-depth, multiperspectival coverage is facilitated by professional practices that break down barriers between news and opinion as well as between different types of news. At the *New York Times*, news and opinion editors work on different floors and conduct their own separate meetings to choose the day's top news stories and editorials; at *Le Monde*, however, the topic and position of the day's editorial are decided at the same meeting where page-one decisions are made.²⁶ At US newspapers, immigration reporters are generally part of the general information "metropolitan" or "national" news desks. In France, most immigration reporters are part of the "social problems" (*société*) desks. In contrast to political reporters focused on the day's events, the social problems desk editors and reporters have "a more magazine-like conception of information . . . understanding events as illustration of broader problems."²⁷ As a result, the pages allotted to this desk consist of "thematic dossiers, mixing analyses, reportages and testimonies, less strictly tied to breaking news."

At a macro level, the multigenre debate ensemble format seems to be closely linked to public or other noncommercial funding and ownership, whereas the narrative approach is more dominant among commercial media. In part because the French journalistic field is less commercialized than the US field, French newspapers are more likely to use the multigenre approach. However, even in the United States, noncommercial media such as the PBS *NewsHour* also tend to organize news as a debate ensemble.²⁸ Thus, while shaped by distinctive national histories, journalistic practices can and do cross national boundaries (with or without overt attempts to export them). What works "elsewhere" may in fact work "here" as well, with all due adaptations to local circumstances.

THE CIVIC BENEFITS OF MULTIGENRE NEWS

Fair enough, some American journalists might say. But does the public really want this kind of journalism? Isn't it boring? Multigenre journalism does not have to be. French newspapers rely mostly on newsstand sales, so they

use dramatic headlines and images to entice buyers. The debate ensemble is a kind of "daily magazine" that tries to both "reflect upon" and "convey the emotion" of the news.²⁹ The French format is not without its own types of sensationalism. It is simply another way of accommodating journalism's competing needs to attract audiences and serve civic functions.

On the basis of my research, I can only concur with the British media scholar Simon Cottle that news formats "play a critical role in either enabling or disabling the range of viewpoints and discourses sustained by vying social interests."³⁰ I find that narrative articles with classic "anecdotal" leads present fewer substantive critical statements than other types of news articles. On the other hand, in both France and the United States, I find that multigenre news provides a wider range of voices (speakers) and viewpoints (issue frames) than narrative news, even when word length is held constant. Because a much higher proportion of its coverage is multigenre, French news tends to be significantly more pluralist and critical.³¹ Whereas American immigration coverage has increasingly focused on the dramatic humanitarian and public order frames, French coverage continues to make substantial room for complex conceptual aspects of immigration, such as its links to the global economy. What effect does this kind of multiperspectival news have on public knowledge or civic empowerment? Recent audience research suggests: "When people are exposed to several competing interpretations [or frames] they are able to think about the political situation in more complex and original ways," and this translates into citizens who are better able to "perform their civic duties."³²

Journalists should not underestimate their audiences. Even if they are enticed by melodramatic story telling, many readers clearly want more than that. In the days and weeks following the publication of "Enrique's Journey," the *Los Angeles Times* published 17 letters to the editor. It is almost certain that many more letters were submitted; it is likely that the *LA Times* opinion page editors made some attempt to print a representative sample. Thus, the series clearly caught people's attention and opened up a space for public debate. But what did the readers—or at least this small sample of readers—want to talk about? Only two letter writers focused on the compassionate humanitarian elements emphasized in Nazario's account. All the other letter writers raised structural and policy questions: Why are the immigrants coming? Who or what is causing this mass exodus? What are the social costs and benefits? What are the best policy solutions? About half of these letters were strongly against illegal immigration, though in many cases the writers put the blame less on the immigrants than on ineffective border control or news media who failed to focus on the larger problems. The other half either sought to defend undocumented immigration's economic benefits or to redefine the problem in terms of Central American poverty and economic underdevelopment.

And what did the *LA Times* do with this emerging debate? Almost nothing. In the weeks that followed, the newspaper published only one

oped article—by the University of Southern California sociologist Pierre Hondagneu-Sotelo—that provided any additional social context. As far as I can determine from database searches, the newspaper never published an official editorial taking a position on the causes and consequences of and the solutions to the problems identified by the series. It declined to try to shed light as well as heat on the issue.

And yet the public is interested: this hunger for explanations rather than just stories is surely part of what is driving the growing audiences for openly partisan news outlets like Fox and MSNBC. But they deserve better than the partial truths that these outlets often provide. In my interviews, some American journalists have told me they are hesitant to enter into the debate about causes, consequences, and solutions because the research itself is so conflicted. In fact, as Nazario showed in her book's afterword, immigration scholars agree on most of the crucial issues. The links between immigration and neoliberal economic policymaking are especially strong: these are “inconvenient truths” that need to be heard by the public and policymakers.

Journalists who are not afraid to cover the dangerous stories on the border need not be afraid to wade into the academic research thicket and work with scholars to make these findings accessible and interesting to the public. Instead of succumbing to a cynical relativism, journalists should pay closer attention to the social conditions underlying the production of expertise: there is a crucial difference between the packaged sound bites (often with hidden agendas) mass-produced by many think tanks and the critical knowledge produced by careful academic scholarship subject to rigorous peer review.³³

People want to connect the dots. Journalists ought to help them. There are signs that journalists in the United States as well as in France are beginning to realize this. Interview transcripts are increasingly appearing in the *Los Angeles Times*, in both the opinion and news pages. The *New York Times*' long-standing *Week in Review* has been transformed into a “Sunday Review” that makes ample room for the voices of writers, artists, and scholars alongside journalists.³⁴ In the online versions of the *New York Times* and other leading newspapers, opinion is no longer relegated to the back pages but is featured at the top of the homepage. The Internet has become a laboratory for experimentation and mixing of genres and formats. In-depth articles about immigration are easily retrievable years after their first publication and can also be linked to databases, maps, interactive graphics, expert debates, and other genres and types of information, analysis, and commentary. NYTimes.com also now has a regular feature called “Room for Debate” in which various experts and activists discuss topics of the day and readers submit comments. On the Web, at least some of the format differences between French and US newspapers are decreasing rather than increasing, as news, opinion, and other genres mix more freely online.³⁵

Over the course of several weeks or months, any good newspaper is likely to cover immigration from a variety of angles. The multigenre format's extra

contribution is clear: in a single day's edition, it helps its readers break out of the endless news cycles of seemingly unrelated events, factoids, and dramas in order to see how the many moving parts might just fit together. If one civic purpose of journalism is to help the public understand issues such as immigration in all their multiplicity, then journalism must also become more multifaceted. In the long run, this will require resources, as several journalist contributors to this book rightly emphasize; it will also require improving journalistic working conditions in ways that allow for the production of intellectually autonomous knowledge. But the first step is to see that there are in fact alternatives to the dominant narrative-based practices. The challenge for journalists—as well as scholars, policymakers, and activists—is to find new ways to work together to enrich and expand the public debate.

NOTES

1. At a metaphorical level, much if not all of human knowledge can be characterized as narrative; even structural accounts can be analyzed in relation to classical narrative forms such as tragedy, comedy, romance, and irony. See, e.g., Ronald Jacobs, *Race, Media, and the Crisis of Civil Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 11–12. My use of the term narrative is narrower: I call attention to personalized dramatic narrative articles aimed at telling the “stories” of nonelite individuals.
2. Nina Bernstein, remarks to French-American Foundation conference “Covering Immigration,” Paris, November 2009.
3. See Rodney Benson, *Shaping Immigration News: A French-American Comparison* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). The book draws on more than 70 interviews with French and American journalists, historical/archival research on media institutions and policies, and discourse and image analysis of more than 2,000 newspaper and television “news packages” about immigration from 1973 to 2006.
4. Rasmus Kleis Nielsen and Geert Linnebank, *Public Support for the Media: A Six-Country Overview of Direct and Indirect Subsidies* (Oxford: Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, 2011).
5. Karin Wahl-Jorgensen, “The Strategic Ritual of Emotionality: A Case Study of Pulitzer Prize-winning Articles,” *Journalism* 14 (2012): 6. While emotional storytelling is especially prevalent in US journalism, it is certainly used by journalists in other countries as well. See, e.g., Mervi Pantti's study of Finnish and Dutch television journalists, “The Value of Emotion: An Examination of Television Journalists' Notions on Emotionality,” *European Journal of Communication* 25 (2010): 168–81.
6. Mark Pedely, *War Stories* (London: Routledge, 1995). See also Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini, “Speaking of the President: Political Structure and Representational Form in US and Italian Television News,” *Theory and Society* 13 (1984): 829–50; Jean Padoleau, *Le Monde et le Washington Post* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1985); and Myra Marx Ferree, William Anthony Gamson, Jürgen Gethards, and Dieter Rucht, *Shaping Abortion Discourse: Democracy and the Public Sphere in Germany and the United States* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
7. Michele Weldon, *Everyman News* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2008).

8. See, e.g., Mallory Jean Tenore, "What Do We Mean by 'Longform Journalism' and How Can We Get It 'to Go'?", Poynter.org, March 1, 2012, <http://www.poynter.org/latest-news/top-stories/165132/what-do-we-mean-by-longform-journalism-how-can-we-get-it-to-go/> (accessed February 26, 2013).
 9. Anne Hull, "Two Jobs and a Sense of Hope: A Young Man from Mali Discovers a Tough Life on a Time Clock," *Washington Post*, December 11, 2002, A-1.
 10. Ginger Thompson and Sandra Ochoa, "By a Back Door to the US: A Migrant's Grim Sea Voyage," *New York Times*, June 13, 2004, 1.
 11. Sonia Nazario, "Enrique's Journey/Chapter 6; At Journey's End, A Dark River, Perhaps a New Life," *Los Angeles Times*, October 7, 2002, A-1. The complete series was published in slightly adapted form as Sonia Nazario, *Enrique's Journey* (New York: Random House, 2007).
 12. Nina Bernstein, "On Lucille Avenue, the Immigration Debate," *New York Times*, June 26, 2006, 1.
 13. Author telephone interview with Nina Bernstein, June 14, 2008.
 14. For Bernstein's own interpretation of this article, see Nina Bernstein, "The Making of an Outlaw Generation," in *Writing Immigration*, ed. M. M. Suárez-Orozco, V. Louie, and R. Suro (Berkeley: University of California Press), 31–34. See also Yale law professor Peter Schuck's chapter in the same volume ("Some Observations about Immigration Journalism," 82–88), for a listing of the "structural" stories and "invisible victims" generally ignored by US immigration journalists, whom he sees as primarily driven by a "passion for narrating the drama of individual lives."
 15. See, e.g., Nina Bernstein, "Few Details on Immigrants Who Died in Custody," *New York Times*, May 5, 2008, 1, the first of a series of reports that was awarded the Hillman Prize for outstanding "social justice" journalism. Regarding the links between personalized narrative and investigative reporting, see James Ertema and Theodore L. Glasser, *Custodians of Conscience: Investigative Journalism and Public Virtue* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).
 16. See, for instance, the *New York Times* series "Remade in America" (March–April 2009), which makes links between the "newest immigrants and their impact on American institutions" (the family, social services, businesses, politics, hospitals, workplaces, and schools). Notably, however, the series' structural analysis is substantially bolstered online through links to other genres, especially expert debates and interactive databases (<http://projects.nytimes.com/immigration/>, accessed May 29, 2013).
 17. See Hartmut Wessler, "Investigating Deliberativeness Comparatively," *Political Communication* 25 (2008): 8.
 18. Hallin and Mancini, "Speaking of the President," 845.
 19. Nazario, *Enrique's Journey*, 255–60.
 20. Padioleau, *Le Monde et le Washington Post*, 92–98.
 21. Serge July, "Libération encore plus Libé," *Libération*, October 11–12, 2003. Over the years, *Libération* has modified its *événement* formula in various ways, but the basic elements remain the same.
 22. This claim is based on my own periodic observations and conversations with journalists across a range of French newspapers, including not only the French contributors to this volume but also, among many others, Philippe Bernard of *Le Monde*, Jean-François Fogel of *Libération* (who subsequently served as a page one "design" consultant for *Le Monde*), Pascale Egré of *Le Parisien* (and formerly of *L'Humanité*), and Jean-Jacques Rouché of *La Dépêche du Midi* in Toulouse.
 23. See Sandrine Boudana, "Journalistic Objectivity as a Performance: Construction of a Model of Evaluation and Application to the Case of the
- French Press Coverage of the Second Intifada" (PhD diss., Humanities and Social Sciences, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 2010), Appendix I, viii. On the basis of her interviews with French newspaper journalists, Boudana summarizes the French approach as follows: "Each article only represents a piece of the puzzle . . . no article can pretend to completeness, each one offers an angle. Completeness should emerge from a corpus of texts considered as a whole."
 24. See Elise Vincent, "Yves Béguin et Lahcen Hakki, un passage de témoin en douceur dans la boucherie: A Pantin, le dernier boucher 'traditionnel' a cédé son pas de porte à un artisan 'halal'" and "Une forme d'intégration locale assez réussie," transcript of interview with Patrick Simon by Elise Vincent, both in *Le Monde*, March 6, 2012, 12. An English-language translation of Vincent's article appeared online in *The Guardian* on March 13, 2012, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/mar/06/le-medi-bospolder-housing-multiculturalism>, accessed May 29, 2013.
 25. For example, *New York Times* columnist (and Nobel Prize-winning economist) Paul Krugman has raised insightful critiques of US immigration policies that are uncomfortable for the left as well as the right. See, e.g., Paul Krugman, "North of the Border," *New York Times*, March 27, 2006, 19. On the important and often overlooked civic contributions of opinion journalism, see Ronald Jacobs and Eleanor Townsley, *The Space of Opinion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
 26. These conclusions are based on my own observations and interviews at these newspapers. Former *Times* executive editor Bill Keller said at a Columbia Journalism school event held on February 3, 2011: "The editorial page is not my domain. The editorial page answers to a different boss. I'm not aware of what they're doing" (author notes). See also Eugénie Saitra, "Le Monde, vingt ans après," *Réseaux* 131 (2005): 191–225.
 27. Nicolas Hubé and Nicolas Kaciak, "Les pages 'société' ou les pages 'politique' en creux: Retour sur des confits de bon voisinage," in *Les frontières journalistiques*, ed. I. Chupin and J. Nollet (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2006), 192–204. Consistent with this thematic understanding of the beat, it should not be surprising that when leading French immigration journalists write books they are often not narrative epics (as in *Enrique's Journey*) but rather short and snappy compendiums of the scholarly literature. See, e.g., two such books by *Le Monde* journalists: Philippe Bernard, *L'immigration: Le défi mondial* (Paris: Gallimard, 2002), and Laetitia Van Eckhout, *L'immigration mondiale* (Paris: La Documentation française, 2007).
 28. See Benson, *Shaping Immigration News*, chap. 8.
 29. Jean-Claude Perrier, *Le roman vrai de Libération* (Paris: Julliard, 1994), 123–24, 202.
 30. Simon Cortle, "The Production of News Formats: Determinants of Mediated Public Contestation," *Media, Culture and Society* 17 (1995): 279.
 31. While my emphasis is on genre in this chapter, obviously other factors are important in explaining French-American differences, notably France's multiparty political system and the contingent historical legacies of relations among journalism, political parties, civil society associations, and the academy. Even if US newspapers fully adopted French-style news formats, these historical and structural differences would ensure that news content in the two countries would continue to differ at least in some ways.
 32. Mauro Porto, "Frame Diversity and Citizen Competence," *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 24 (2007): 312–18; see also Dennis Chong and James N. Druckman, "Framing Theory," *Annual Review of Political Science* 10 (2007): 110.

33. See Thomas Medvetz, *Think Tanks in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).
34. See Arthur S. Brisbane, "Surrounded by Opinion, The Times Raises Its Voices," *New York Times*, July 3, 2011, Sunday Review, 10.
35. Rodney Benson, Mark Blach-Orsten, Matthew Powers, Ida Willig, and Sandra Vera Zambrano, "Media Systems Online and Off: The Form of Print and Online News in the United States, France, and Denmark." *Journal of Communication* 62, no. 1(2012): 21–38.

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