

True Crime on the Air. The Representation of Crime, the Law, and the Justice System in Swedish Public Service Radio's P3 Documentary 2005–2020

Project Abstract

How does true crime, aimed at a young audience, depict crime, the law and the justice system? This question needs to be addressed, considering the enormous popularity of the format. The project will analyze approximately 180 crime documentaries, aired between 2005–2020, by Swedish Radio's *P3 Documentary*, a program that reaches more than 500,000 young listeners weekly. In a country of only 10 million people, its influence goes without saying.

The selection of cases will be analyzed as well as the narration and structure related to an implied listener. It will be demonstrated how the listener is moved by narrative traits, the narrator, music, and interviews with experts, family and friends. A pilot study on 19 P3 documentaries on murder showed a strong influence from horror and melodrama—does this apply to all programs? The study also made clear the necessity to investigate how gender, race, age and class intersect.

Semi-mixed methods will be used. Based on a quantitative study—a sequence analysis of temporal ordering, voice and other sounds—specific programs will be selected for qualitative readings. There is no research on true crime on radio/podcasts, why the project contributes to several fields—radio research as well as true crime research within Law and popular culture and Film Studies.