

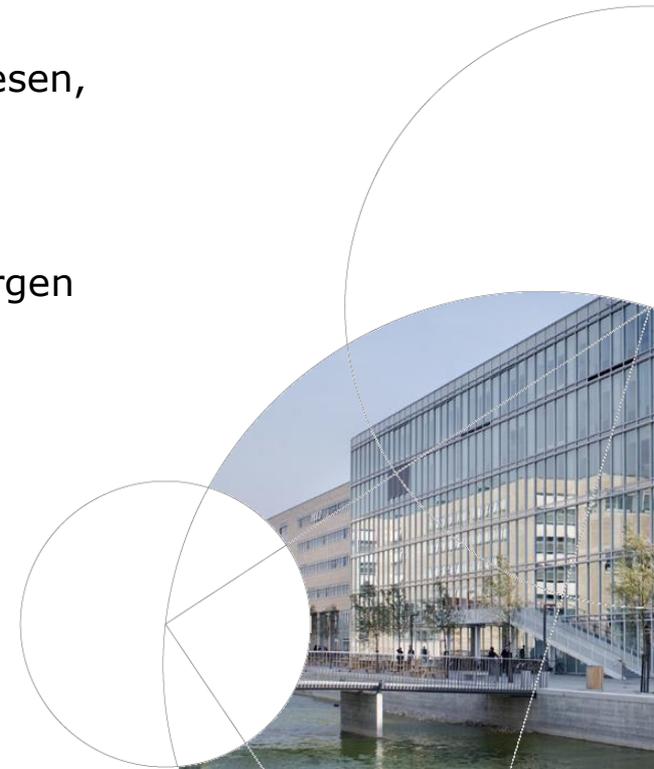


A Question of Quality?

Nordic cultural critique in the media and the negotiation of popular culture

- Denmark: Associate professor Nete Nørgaard Kristnesen, Copenhagen
- Sweden: Professor Kristina Riegert, Stockholm
- Finland: Dean Heikki Hellman, Tampere
- Norway: Associate professor Karl Atle Knapskog, Bergen

Norsk Kulturråd, Oslo 11. Feb. 2016



Main RQ

Analyses of the negotiation of quality in cultural articles and reviews in contemporary Nordic news media

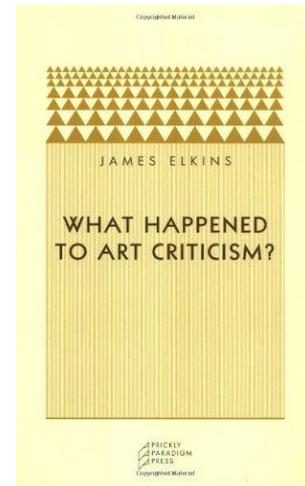
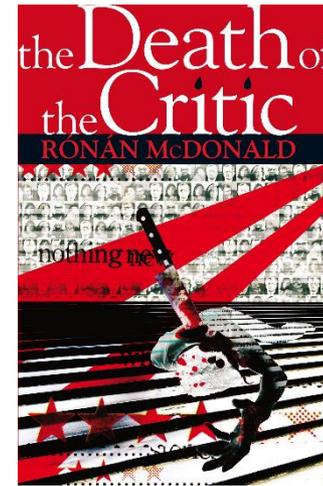
Main RQ:

- How are quality criteria discussed in Danish, Swedish, Norwegian and Finnish media when assessing and debating popular culture, such as bestsellers and TV-series?
- What national/transnational/Nordic quality parameters characterise the news media's analyses, debates and reviews of these two popular culture objects?
- Feeds into the broader question of *how media institutional, technological and professional changes have provided new ways of framing artistic and cultural quality in the Nordic news media?*



Relevance

- 1) the news media (arts and cultural journalism in particular) provide an important institutional setting for cultural critique and negotiations of artistic quality (e.g., Bordwell 1991, Said 1984)
- 2) but humanistic critique and arts reviews in these media contexts are increasingly put under pressure (e.g., Elkins 2003, McDonald 2007) from *within and outside*



Pressures from *within* and *outside*

- (Commercial) media logics: 'newsification' of cultural journalism and 'interpretive turn' of journalism, favoring of generalists at expense of specialists (e.g., Dahlgren 2012, Jaakkola 2015, Verboord 2013, Walsh 2003)
 - Participatory culture: increasing heterogeneity of non-institutionalized voices performing cultural critique bottom-up (Kristensen & From 2015a)
 - Mediatization: professionalization of cultural industries' news management in view of the news media as *marketing window* and platform for *public legitimation* of, e.g, popular culture (Baumann 2001, 2007, Béliard 2015, Kristensen & From 2015b).
- ➔ Put pressure on what, when and how cultural objects are discussed and reviewed in institutionalized news media

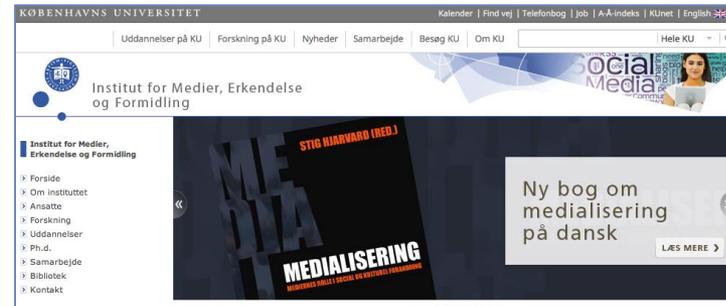


Nordic comparison

Nordic media (welfare) model (Hallin & Mancini, 2004)

- *Similarities*: media and communication services (and cultural critique) are public goods, institutionalised in ways to secure diversity and quality (Syvertsen et al. 2014)
- *Differences*: conceptions of art and culture are traditionally closely connected to national identity and cultural institutions (Janssen et al. 2008, 2011)

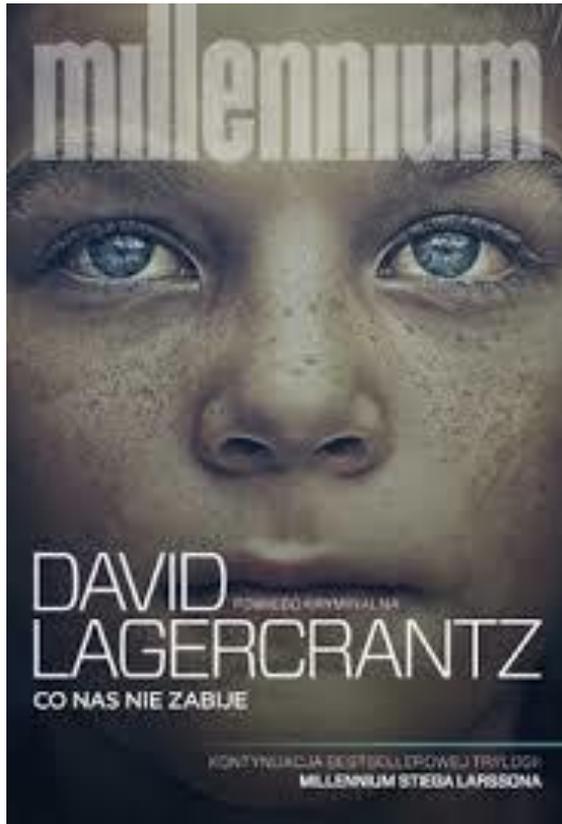
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Two cases - four empirical studies

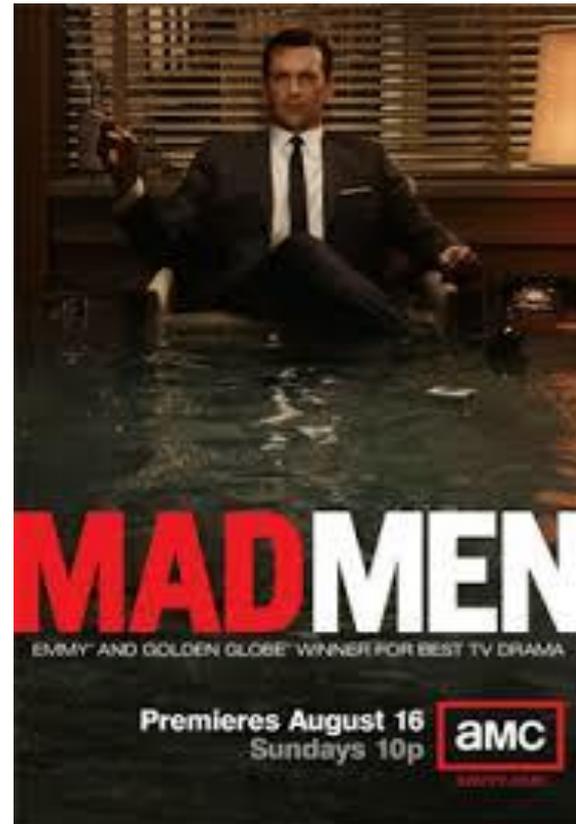
Bestseller-case:

The 2015-Millennium-book



TV-series-case:

Mad Men 2007-2015



Millenium-case

- 1) Critique perspective:
 - How was the Millenium book reviewed in the four Nordic countries – how was 'quality' addressed in the reviews?

- 2) Cultural industries perspective:
 - What kinds of debates did the Millenium book spur, including debates about the interplay of the cultural industries (publisher) and the news media?

 - Sample: national/regional newspapers, 2013-2015
 - Interviews with publishers



Salander genoplivet

I modsetning til Stieg Larsson skriver Lagercrantz glædeligt, men til gengæld beroliger han ikke Larsson's energi. Første bind i Millennium serien er ikke nogen god kritikform.

Millenium-serien er en af de mest populære i Sverige. Den er blevet oversat til over 30 sprog og har solgt mere end 100 millioner eksemplarer. Lagercrantz er den eneste forfatter, der har skrevet alle bøgerne i serien.

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En stor begivenhed
Millenium-serien
den kvindelige
Lisbeth Salander
Rødder og helt
foryngende er
hendes kamp
for at beskytte
og forsegle på sit
forbudsforbud
med den
særligt August
Bakur

Swedish reviews

SVENSKA DAGBLADET

Start > Kultur • **Litteratur** • Under st ☰ Meny

Litteratur Recension

Det som inte dödar oss ”Man glömmer att det står Lagercrantz på bokryggen”

Josefin Holmström läser ”Det som inte dödar oss”
och tänker på ”Don Quixote”.



Sted og dato
Dias 9

DN Bok

Nya Millennium är skicklig och respektfull

PUBLICERAD 2015-08-28



David Lagercrantz. Foto: Beatrice Lundborg.

Johan Svedjedal recenserar David Lagercrantz ”Det som inte dödar oss”.

Deckare

David Lagercrantz

”Det som inte dödar oss”

Norstedts

Potential contribution

By focusing on specific cases on the fringes of traditional conceptions of art and high culture, the studies will provide new empirical grounds for theorizing **which terms, concepts and genres are used to describe the artistic or cultural quality of areas** that have recently come to be viewed as topics of cultural importance and quality, and where cultural journalists' and reviewers' intellectual discourses on the qualities of these subjects have contributed to their cultural legitimation (e.g., Bauman 2007).

By including media technological and commercial as well as cultural industry frameworks, the studies contribute new knowledge on **how media logics and cultural industry interests influence and transform the news media's negotiation of cultural quality**



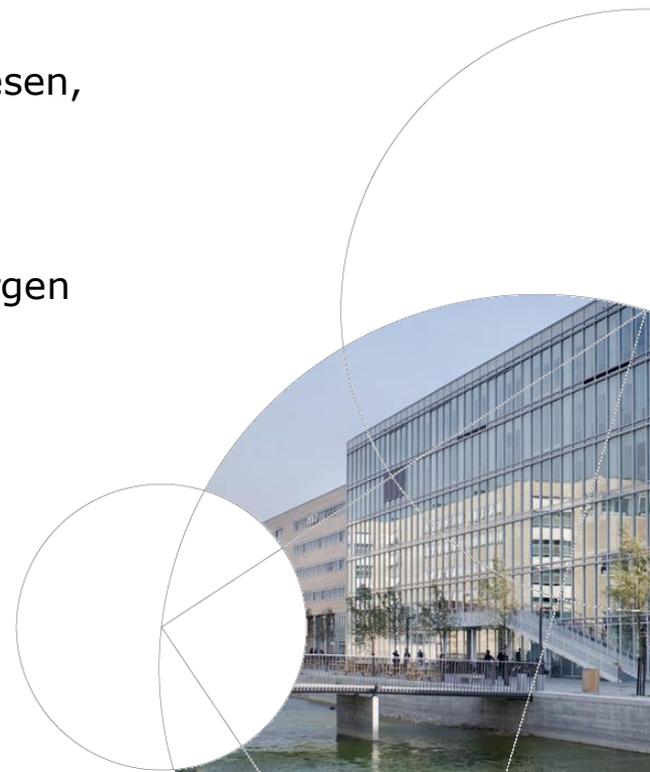


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Theoretical perspectives

The heterogeneous cultural critic (Kristensen & From, 2015a):

Typology of four rivalling yet converging ideal-types of critics, engaged in and influencing the negotiation of artistic and cultural quality in today's media today, based on different types of authority

The review genre in transition:

Generic backbone of cultural critique and negotiation of artistic quality in the media (e.g., Janssen 1999, Knapskog & Larsen 2008, Kristensen & From 2015b, Hellman & Jaakkola 2012) but

- increasingly service-orientated (Eide 1995, Kristensen 2009)
- analytical approach has diffused into kindred genres, competing with the review in defining cultural quality
- blurring boundaries between aesthetic quality parameters and subjective preferences of taste

Value, quality in art/culture