

ABSTRACT:

Marina Ghersetti, 2000. **Sensationella berättelser.** En studie av nyheter från Angola 1987 och om prinsessan Diana 1997 i dagstidningar, radio och TV. (**Sensational Stories.** A study of news coverage on Angola 1987 and on Princess Diana 1997 in daily newspapers, radio and television). ISSN: 1101-4652. ISBN: 91-88212-37-8.

This study is based on two events that gained extraordinary large attention in Swedish media, the kidnapping of three Swedish aid workers in Angola in 1987 and the death of Princess Diana in 1997.

The main aim of the dissertation is to analyse how the major news media in Sweden report these kinds of events, as well as to discuss some possible causes as to how news stories are developed. An other central aim is to study aspects of relevance and objectivity in the media stories.

Additional aims are i) to *describe* a few essential characteristics as to content and form in the news on the kidnapping in Angola 1987 and on the death of Princess Diana 1997, as well as to discuss these characteristics on the basis of aspects of relevance and objectivity, ii) to *compare* the news in these case studies with regard to similarities and differences between media with different characteristics and iii) to *explain* characteristics from the point of view of content and form in the news coverage on the two events from a classic narrative structure.

The analysed media 1987 and 1997 are seven large daily newspapers, three national television news programmes and one national radio news broadcast. The research methods employed are quantitative and qualitative analyses of content and form in the texts and illustrations of the news bulletins.

The *first conclusion* of the content analysis is that both cases of news reports were structured and moulded according to a traditional and standardised narrative technique. The dramaturgical adaptation transformed the real persons, events and conditions on which the news reported into characters, intrigues and conflicts in two separate but in many respects simplistic, poignant and dramatised stories. The real stories were fitted to the dramaturgy of the news, only to a different degree in various media.

The *second conclusion* is that the news dramaturgy contributed in at least two ways to a standardisation in the reports. On the one hand, both courses of events were structured and moulded in similar fashion, despite differences in the character of the developments and the fact that they occurred ten years apart and in different societal and media contexts. On the other hand, basically the same story was told in all the studied media, independent of format, periodicity and means of expression.

KEY WORDS: journalism, news, newspapers, radio, television, Swedish media, Angola, Princess Diana, news content, news form, narrative structure, news dramaturgy, stereotypes, relevance, objectivity, commercialisation, globalisation, quantitative content analyses, qualitative content analyses.