

SANNA LÖGNER

*Carina Rydberg, Stig Larsson och
författarens medialisering*

Christian Lenemark

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ABSTRACT

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Christian Lenemark

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(True Lies. Carina Rydberg, Stig Larsson and the Mediatization of the Author)

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Department of Literature, History of Ideas and Religion, University of Gothenburg, PO Box 200, SE-405 30.

In recent decades, the mass media have come to play an increasingly important role in society and culture. Media of every kind permeate not only our politics but our private lives as well. This development has had a great impact on the position of literature and the role of the author. The author now to a large extent has to make him/herself visible both in the literature s/he writes and in an intimate, sometimes symbiotic relationship with the media.

The aim of this dissertation is to investigate the dynamic interplay between author, literature and mass media – here represented by newspapers, radio and television – that has manifested itself around the year 2000. In what ways do the media produce the image of the author? How does the author him/herself produce the image of a self through his/her writing and through participation in various media contexts? How do these images relate to one another, and what literary effects do they have on aesthetics and content? In what ways have critics and theorists reacted to this set of problems?

These issues are discussed in relation to two authors who in Sweden, indeed throughout Scandinavia, should be regarded as pioneers when it comes to the mediatization of the author in the so-called post-modern era: Carina Rydberg and Stig Larsson. In the dissertation it is shown how they enter the media scene and in their literatures examine the border zone between life and text, fact and fiction, private and public, and how this is received. Chapter 1 analyzes the way Rydberg entered the public arena and presented an image of herself with *Den högsta kasten* 1997, and subsequently with *Djävulsformeln* 2000, which both caused intense debate in the media. In Chapter 2 the new kind of hybrid literature that these texts represent regarding fact and fiction is discussed from both a historical and a theoretical point of view. Chapter 3 focuses in turn on Larsson and how he since his debut in the 1970s and especially in *Natta de mina* from 1997 has explored the thin line between fact and fiction, private and public, at the same time as a biographical legend was constructed around him in the media. Chapter 4 addresses the questions: What are the consequences of the mediatization of Rydberg and Larsson on their authorships? What does it mean to play the biographical card in a media climate in which the categories of fact and fiction, private and public are dismantled? It is shown that issues of gender and cultural position affect mediatization and lead to different outcomes. The dissertation ends with an epilogue concerned with the ways Swedish authors in the beginning of the 21st century are ever more frequently abandoning the purely fictional genres in order to investigate the unstable relationship between fact and fiction.

Keywords: *Literary aesthetics, literary theory, literary criticism, media theory, mediatization, Swedish literature in the 1990s and the 2000s, fact and fiction, private and public, the role of the author, media, autobiography, realism, auto fiction, faction, the double contract, performative biografism, gender, literature and ethics, literary debates, the docu-soap, Carina Rydberg, Stig Larsson*

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