



MEDIE
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Mediehistoriskt arkiv

SYMPOSIUM 2026

Networks, Infrastructures, Systems,
and Other Media Connectors

15–16 October, Stockholm University

A MARCUS WALLENBERG SYMPOSIUM

Programme

Mediehistoriskt arkiv Symposium 2026

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A Marcus Wallenberg Symposium

15–16 October, Stockholm University

Welcome to the third of the recurring symposia organised by the Swedish scholarly association Mediehistoriskt arkiv (Media History Archives). Previous events have been held at Uppsala University and Lund University. This year, the symposium is hosted by the Department of Culture and Aesthetics, Stockholm University.

Networks, Infrastructures, Systems, and Other Media Connectors

Networks, infrastructures, systems, ecologies, and similar concepts have become central to media-historical studies. What these terms share is a function as media connectors. They link media across temporal, spatial, and disciplinary boundaries. Whether at a global or local scale or over longer or shorter time spans, research that engages with these concepts sheds light on how media operate within interconnected structures. Here, media should be understood in the widest possible sense, encompassing objects (such as photographic prints, books, or manuscripts), display devices (loudspeakers, projectors, digital screens), and storage media (film reels, vinyl records, cloud servers). It may also refer to elements within larger media systems, such as electronic signals, fibre-optic cables, and radio waves, or to media practices, including, for instance, the logistics of news agencies, the writing, sending and circulation of letters, or the collecting of digital and analogue photographs. Finally, it includes all the users, developers, artists, audiences, and distributors across different historical periods and cultural contexts.

By focusing on the broad and fundamental issue of media connectors, this symposium both wishes to reflect the diversity of media-historical research and to promote a methodological discussion that enables us to understand past and present media in new ways.

Organising Committee

Sonya Petersson, Research Fellow of Art History, Stockholm University; **Johan Klingborg**, Assistant Professor of Swedish Literature and Culture, University of California, Berkeley; **Elina Druker**, Professor of Literature, Stockholm University; **Elin Franzén**, Research Fellow of Ethnology, Stockholm University/Postdoc Researcher in Media and Communication Studies, Södertörn University; **Staffan Bergwik**, Professor of History of Ideas, Stockholm University.

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About Mediehistoriskt arkiv

Mediehistoriskt arkiv (Media History Archives) publishes media related research from all over Sweden and includes anthologies, monographs, and collections of sources. The book series was founded in 2006 by Pelle Snickars at the Swedish National Archive of Recorded Sound and Moving Images; then moved with Snickars to the National Library of Sweden—

and was finally transferred in 2014 to Lund University with Patrik Lundell as editor. Since 2019 the non-profit association Föreningen Mediehistoriskt arkiv is the publisher of the book series—with Andreas Nyblom as editor. Mediehistoriskt arkiv publishes titles in both Swedish and English. All titles can be accessed here:

<https://mediehistorisktarkiv.se/bocker>

Image: The telephone tower in Stockholm in the 1890s. Unknown photographer. Tekniska Museet, Stockholm (National Museum of Science and Technology, Stockholm).



Schedule Thursday 15 October

The Auditory, Department of Culture and Aesthetics

9:20–9:30 Welcome Sonya Petersson, Mediehistoriskt arkiv, Stockholm University	
9:30–12:10 Session 1: Media, Society and Infrastructures Moderators: Elin Franzén and Staffan Bergwik	
9:30–9:50	Making Quality and Performance Observable: An Infrastructural Perspective on New Public Management, Johan Jarlbrink , Umeå University, & Charlie Järpvall , Linnaeus University
9:50–10:10	The Measured Audience: Survey Research Infrastructures and Swedish Mid-20th Century Public Service Media, Eskil Vesterlund , Lund University
10:10–10:25 Questions	
10:25–10:55 Coffee (The Library)	
10:55–11:15	The Vanishing Paper: Infrastructural Displacement at a Critical Juncture of Digitalization, Fredrik Stiernstedt , Södertörn University, & Anne Kaun , Södertörn University
11:15–11:35	Sonic Preparedness: The Air-Raid Siren as a New Media Connector in Interwar Sweden, Marie Cronqvist , Linköping University
11:35–11:55	A Leading Nation in IT: The Many Media of the Swedish IT Commission, Dennis Magnusson , Chalmers University
11:55–12:10 Questions	
12:10–13:20 Lunch (The Library)	
13:20–14:20 Keynote Speaker: Lori Emerson Moderator: Johan Klingborg	
13:20–14:05	From Technology to Techniques of/for Liberation Radio, Lori Emerson , Professor of Media Studies, University of Colorado Boulder
14:05–14:20 Questions	
14:20–15:15 Session 2: Operational Images Moderator: Sonya Petersson	
14:20–14:40	From Raster Point to Latent Space: Formatting the Infrastructural Image, Sebastian Rozenberg , Linköping University
14:40–15:00	Organizational Charts in the Manufacturing Industry: Visualizing Connections, Activities and Flows, Karolina Ugglä , Mälardalen University
15:00–15:15 Questions	
15:15–15:45 Coffee (The Library)	
15:45–17:00 Session 3: Publishing Infrastructures Moderator: Sonya Petersson	
15:45–16:05	The Origins of the Swedish-American Newspaper Economy, 1857–1873, Erik Thosteman , Uppsala University
16:05–16:25	Media as Connector: Georgian Press and the Transnational Circulation of Women's Philanthropy in the 19th Century, Ana Bakanidze , Sokhumi State University
16:25–16:45	In the Service of History: Mediated Archives and the Infrastructure of Historical Knowledge, Alexander Iscasson , Karlstad University
16:45–17:00 Questions	
18:00–20:30 Conference dinner (Himlen, Götgatan 78, floor 25)	

Schedule Friday 16 October

The Auditory, Department of Culture and Aesthetics

9:00–11:30 Session 4: Logistics and Adaptations Across Media and Disciplines Moderator: Elina Druker	
9:00–9:20	Digital Games as Media for Transdisciplinary Communication, Jonathan Rozenkrantz , Lund University
9:20–9:40	The Forgotten Side of Transcultural Storytelling: A Century of Swedish Film Adaptations of Foreign Literature, Anna Sofia Rossholm , Stockholm University
9:40–10:00	Ludifying the Hunt for Dracula: Adapting the Logistical Dimension of Bram Stoker's <i>Dracula</i> (1897) to the Board Game <i>The Fury of Dracula</i> (1987), Andreas Rovio , Uppsala University
10:00–10:15 Questions	
10:15–10:40 Coffee (The Library)	
10:40–11:00	Emerging Forms: Exploring South African Electronic Literature Through the Lens of Internet History, Jasmine Mattey , University of Bergen
11:00–11:20	The Roads of Realism: Literature and Logistics, 1770–1840, Thomas Götselius , Stockholm University
11:20–11:30 Questions	
11:30–12:40 Lunch (The Faculty Club)	
12:40–13:40 Keynote Speaker: Tiago de Luca Moderator: Sonya Petersson	
12:40–13:25	Hidden From View: Domestic Workers and the Politics of the Background, Tiago de Luca , Reader in Film Studies, University of Warwick
13:25–13:40 Questions	
13:40–14:35 Session 5: Practices and Cultures of Media Moderator: Elin Franzén	
13:40–14:00	Microfilm as a Media Connector for Book Lending and the Rationalization of the Swedish Library Sector During the 1950s and 1960s, Erik Florin Persson , Linnaeus University
14:00–14:20	Video Store Stories: Media Practice and the Everyday, Charlie Van , Lund University
14:20–14:35 Questions	
14:35–15:00 Coffee (The Library)	
15:00–15:55 Session 6: Humans and Technologies Moderator: Johan Klingborg	
15:00–15:20	Human as Medium: Caring for Machines in the Age of AI, Johan Fredrikzon , KTH Royal Institute of Technology
15:20–15:40	Romantic 'Data Processing' Around 1800: Love and Its Media Technologies in Goethe's <i>Die Wahlverwandtschaften</i> (1809), Lukas Lehner , University of Oslo
15:40–15:55 Questions	
15:55–16:30 Summary and Discussion Matts Lindström, Chair Mediehistoriskt arkiv, Uppsala University	

Abstracts: Keynote Speakers

From Technology to Techniques of/for Liberation Radio, **Lori Emerson**, Professor of Media Studies, Director of Graduate Studies, and Director of the Media Archaeology Lab, University of Colorado Boulder

In this paper, Emerson continues to work through shifting her long time engagement with a media archaeology-inspired excavation of technologies and networks from the past for the sake of re-enlivening future possibilities to the more overtly political project of excavating past techniques. Focusing on techniques in and around radio that range from jamming signals to mobile broadcasting and communal listening to static as much as voices, Emerson shows how approaching thinkers such as Frantz Fanon as media theorists illuminate the stakes of focusing less on excavating technologies and their determinisms to excavating techniques that may be harnessed for future liberation from oppression.

Hidden From View: Domestic Workers and the Politics of the Background, **Tiago de Luca**, Reader in Film Studies, University of Warwick

Across the visual arts and media, the background must perform a paradoxical function: it is essential for providing context for the scene but must not solicit disproportionate attention, lest it detract from the figures. Designed to be partially overlooked by viewers, the background is overlooked once again in the literature, where it is rarely treated as an aesthetic category in its own right. Yet, precisely because of its ancillary role, the background can show how certain subjects are centralised and made visible at the expense of the obstruction and invisibility of others. This becomes especially evident when we consider the framing of historically marginalised subjects through visual culture. By focusing on the figure of the domestic worker in select examples drawn from painting, photography, film and digital cultures, this paper will treat the background as a media connector whose excavation reveals surprising formal correspondences and recurrent tropes across a wide geographical and temporal spectrum. It will combine feminist and phenomenological theoretical insights to ask how social relations produce a partitioning of space that, in turn, determines who gets to occupy the front and centre of the image and who is pushed to the back and its margins.

The paper will bring together a purposefully broad selection of case studies to allow for productive intermedial readings. from the prevalence of servants in early modern and Dutch Golden Age painting to the ubiquity of the domestic worker in contemporary Latin American visual culture, including online projects, fiction film and documentary. Across these otherwise disparate forms and formats, common visual patterns start to emerge, irrespective of the medium: workers are overwhelmingly relegated to the background, cut off by the frame, and occluded by other figures and objects. Placed and read alongside each other, these works reveal that the background is not simply where images consign what is superfluous to the protagonists, but the very site where power relations become, paradoxically, most visible.

Abstracts: Sessions

Session 1: Media, Society and Infrastructures

Making Quality and Performance Observable: An Infrastructural Perspective on New Public Management, **Johan Jarlbrink**, Senior Lecturer, Umeå University, & **Charlie Järpvall**, Senior Lecturer, Linnaeus University

What arrangements are needed to make the quality of social service visible from a distance? This paper examines the infrastructural foundation of New Public Management, as it was implemented in the governance of Swedish municipalities in the early 2000s. The decentralization of the welfare state in the 1980s and 1990s meant that it became difficult for the state to *see* whether the objectives were met, if local authorities delivered what they should. Around the same time, however, networked computers seemed to offer a solution: a network of connected municipalities providing decision makers with a continuous flow of data on the performance and quality of municipal services. Visionary system builders within several state committees worked to set the necessary infrastructure in place. Yet, they faced many challenges. In this paper we discuss three interconnected infrastructural components that needed to be developed: standardized measurements to make performance and quality observable as quantitative data; the technical synchronization of different local systems to facilitate a flow of data from the municipalities to the centre of calculation; and the enrollment of people feeding the system on a local level, to ensure the speedy delivery of reliable data. The analysis is primarily based on archives documenting the work of three government committees active between 2000 and 2009. Apart from publishing their investigations as Swedish Government Official Reports (SOU), the committees were also responsible for developing the infrastructure, the technological and organizational solutions as well as standardized measurements.

The Measured Audience: Survey Research Infrastructures and Swedish Mid-20th Century Public Service Media, **Eskil Vesterlund**, PhD, Lund University

This paper presents a new research project examining the infrastructural and methodological conditions that enabled the rise of audience measurement within Swedish public service broadcasting between the 1940s and the 1970s. While surveys are often approached as neutral tools for representing audiences, this study foregrounds them as media infrastructures: material, organisational, and epistemic systems that shaped how publics could be known. *Sveriges Radio*'s division for audience research has been extremely important for the development of media and communication studies in Sweden. Still, its historical roots, its survey infrastructures, and its position within the wider context of commercial market and opinion research have not previously been studied.

Drawing on science and technology studies and infrastructural media studies, the project conceptualises the surveys as a method with a "double social life": simultaneously embedded in social, technological, and institutional arrangements, while

also generative of such arrangements. Empirically, it builds on reports from the Section for Audience Research (PUB) at Sveriges Radio, externally commissioned market research reports, and archival documentation to trace how methods, survey technologies, and statistical knowledge travelled between contexts and re-configured the conditions for how media audiences could be known.

The paper argues that these infrastructures positioned public service broadcasting at a crossroads between the welfare-state communication apparatus and commercial market research. By analysing the infrastructural formation of audience knowledge, the project investigates how public service broadcasters operationalised their societal mission, how survey methods travelled across institutional domains, and how media research itself emerged through these infrastructural entanglements.

The Vanishing Paper: Infrastructural Displacement at a Critical Juncture of Digitalization, **Fredrik Stiernstedt**, Professor, Södertörn University, & **Anne Kaun**, Professor, Södertörn University

The starting point of this presentation is the discontinuation of printed news and distribution of letters as empirical examples of current deep-seated societal changes. As a direct outcome of large-scale digitalization as an all-encompassing societal project that has been implemented since the 1970s, today printed news and letters are disappearing as critical networks of distribution for news and information. The presentation engages with the concrete implementation and outlook of the disappearance of paper-based media infrastructures. It also links to broader questions of the common good, shared public orientation and how we come together as societies.

The postal system and newspapers have been identified as key infrastructures of public life connecting individuals across long distances and providing grounds for a shared orientation or public connection. This contemporary moment of digitalization emerges as a breaking point or critical juncture in how societies emerge based on shared public orientations. In order to capture this large-scale change conceptually we propose the notion of infrastructural displacement and argue for the need to explore the “doing”, i.e. practices around infrastructural displacement empirical. In the presentation, we outline a proposal of a research design to do so, namely to a) trace and document how infrastructural displacement of printed news and letters is implemented b) develop a conceptual language and methodology to grasp displacement as a necessary part of digitalization as a large-scale societal project and c) highlight and make visible the implications of infrastructural displacement.

Sonic Preparedness: The Air-Raid Siren as a New Media Connector in Interwar Sweden, **Marie Cronqvist**, Professor, Linköping University

The interwar decades saw a profound reconfiguration of European urban life as governments, city planners, and civilians faced the new realities of aerial warfare. In this time of apprehension, the air-raid siren emerged as a new and defining technology of sonic preparedness. As states began to establish and consolidate civil defence systems in

the 1930s, sirens were incorporated into and became key nodes in broader infrastructures of preparedness including blackout regulations, shelter construction, evacuation plans, and public education campaigns.

Building on media-historical research on early 20th century urban soundscapes (Thompson 2004; Bijsterveld 2016, Birdsall 2012) and combining this with historical research on European civil defence infrastructure and air-raid protection (Cronqvist, Farbøl & Sylvest 2023; Bennesved 2020), and using military archival documents as well as media representations, this paper analyses the air-raid siren as a new medium in 1930s and 1940s Sweden. Against the backdrop of fierce competition from noisy trams and automobiles, the development and testing of siren technology became a priority for the Swedes as urbanisation accelerated. However, as this paper will demonstrate, it was hardly a smooth transition or journey. The negotiations and social protocols (Gitelman 2006) surrounding this new medium were intense, and displayed different imaginaries of urban everyday life, and how sirens could and should be linked to existing media infrastructures such as radio and telephone.

A Leading Nation in IT: The Many Media of the Swedish IT Commission, Dennis Magnusson, PhD Student, Chalmers University of Technology

During the 1990s and early 2000s, the so-called information technologies were much debated. Sweden was no exception to this, and in 1994, Prime Minister Carl Bildt created the Swedish IT Commission with the objective of transforming Sweden into a leading nation in IT through a ‘new generation of infrastructure’. His government lost the elections the same year, but the Social Democrats maintained the Commission format, which endured until 2003. The Commission’s mandate became something of a paradox: they were to ponder the consequences of information technology and at the same time push IT use in society.

Through what media did different audiences encounter the IT Commission? Scholars have analysed official reports, but they represent only a fraction of the media through which the Commission communicated the IT nation. Communicating Sweden as an IT nation called for a broad portfolio, and the Commission’s hitherto untapped archive reveals a logistics of enthusiasm. Competitions, lobbying campaigns, and study tours were only a few tools at hand for raising Internet awareness. Commission members also appeared on television, debated on the radio, and authored books. In fact, the Commission relied on a heap of projects and media to bolster Internet enthusiasm. This paper discusses some of these projects and what the archive can tell us about Swedish Internet history and the role of media in the construction of an IT infrastructure.

Session 2: Operational Images

From Raster Point to Latent Space: Formatting the Infrastructural Image, Sebastian Rozenberg, Doctoral Researcher, Linköping University

Every regime of image reproduction rests on an infrastructure for making visual information repeatable – a system that determines what can be transmitted and under what conditions of fidelity. This paper examines two such regimes – halftone printing and generative AI – not as teleological endpoints but as structurally related formations whose comparison reveals how image infrastructures organise visual knowledge.

Halftone printing solved the problem of photographic reproduction by decomposing continuous tone into a grid of discrete dots, formatting it for the printing press. Generative models solve a different problem – not the transmission of a given image but the synthesis of novel ones from the statistical regularities of a corpus. Just as the halftone dot is the minimal unit from which the printed image is composed, the noise seed is the substrate from which the generated image is progressively resolved. Both are points of visual indeterminacy that the system's infrastructure organises into pictorial coherence.

Attending to this formatting layer – raster grid, latent space – as the infrastructural connector between image and system reveals how different image formats distribute the relationship between exemplar and copy, original and variation, across fundamentally different substrates. Where halftone printing introduces a single infrastructural layer between image and press, generative models distribute the formatting operation across cascading levels of connection – from skip connections and attention layers to the statistical calibrations between corpora and embeddings. The medium itself is less substrate than connector. What changes between regimes is not simply the technology of reproduction but the infrastructural logic through which images are formatted, connected, and made possible.

Organizational Charts in the Manufacturing Industry: Visualizing Connections, Activities and Flows, **Karolina Ugglå**, Senior Lecturer, Mälardalen University

Getting a picture of an organization is a form of expression, but it poses real challenges when trying to obtain an overview of the complexity of a business. Industrial operations are in constant motion, carried out by people with a variety of skills and dependent on various pieces of inventory and machinery. Some elements are distinctly tangible, others more difficult to grasp. This case focuses on the metaphor of creating an image of an organization including its intangible components. It focuses on the kind of empirical material in an industry archive that contains visual elements. A recurring category of visual material in the public historical archive of AB Bolinder-Munktell in Eskilstuna is the organizational chart.

Lines, boxes and arrows bind together or demarcate bits of textual information into a visual organization on a two-dimensional surface. Such visual organizations, ensembles or configurations can be called visual schemas, diagrams or graphs. What they have in common in this example is that they serve as a way of gaining an overview of hierarchies and flows in an organization, creating some clarity in the organization of people, machines and time, from financial transactions between units to showing responsibilities and hierarchies.

The purpose of this presentation is to discuss the meaning and use of organizational charts from the 1920s to the 1970s, a time that preceded and co-existed with technological transitions. This example provides a backdrop for a discussion on the terminology of organizational charts and their place in the field of visual studies.

Session 3: Publishing Infrastructures

The Origins of the Swedish-American Newspaper Economy, 1857–1873, **Erik Thosteman**, PhD, Uppsala University

This paper examines the formative decades of Swedish-language newspaper publishing in Chicago between 1857 and 1873, focusing on how media infrastructures became key sites for negotiating internal boundaries among Swedish immigrants. Through a comparative analysis of *Hemlandet* and *Svenska Amerikanaren*, the study investigates how these papers were organized, how they managed to persist financially, and how their conflicts shaped the everyday lives of Swedish immigrants. The findings show that both newspapers were deeply embedded in distinct social, religious, and economic networks: *Hemlandet* functioned as an extension of the Lutheran Augustana Synod, while *Svenska Amerikanaren* was tied to the secular-liberal Svea Society.

The papers constructed the other as a threat: Lutherans depicting secular businessmen as immoral sectarians, and secular editors portraying Lutherans as power-hungry conservatives. These conflicts drew internal boundaries, reinforcing a religious-secular divide within the Swedish population. Adding to previous scholarship on immigrant community formation, the paper demonstrates that a shared national origin did not unify Swedish immigrants. Instead, “Swedishness” became a contested resource in securing hegemony in the Swedish-American newspaper economy.

Despite chronic financial instability, the newspapers survived through their integration into social and economic networks, functioning simultaneously as ideological platforms, business mediators, and potential profit-generating enterprises. By the 1880s and 1890s, both papers had reorganized, attracted powerful Swedish-American investors, and transitioned toward more commercialized forms, evolving beyond their initial roles as organizational mouthpieces.

Media as Connector: Georgian Press and the Transnational Circulation of Women’s Philanthropy in the 19th Century, **Ana Bakanidze**, PhD Candidate, Sokhumi State University

From the second half of the nineteenth century, when Georgia was under Russian imperial rule, the Georgian press played a crucial role in shaping public discourse and stimulating social processes. This study examines Georgian newspapers and journals as media connectors – networks that linked local society to global experiences and facilitated the transnational circulation of knowledge and ideas.

The article argues that the Georgian press functioned as a dual instrument: it enabled women's emergence into the public sphere and supported their engagement in philanthropic and educational activities, while systematically disseminating information about women's philanthropic practices abroad, creating opportunities for comparison, adaptation and inspiration.

The research is based on an analysis of nineteenth-century Georgian periodicals, including – *Iveria*, *Droeba*, and *Tsnobis Purtseli* – with particular attention to sections covering foreign news. Information circulated through a multilayered infrastructure, encompassing translations from Russian and European press, telegraphic reports, and correspondence from abroad.

Findings show that the Georgian press not only reported on women's philanthropic activities – such as educational initiatives, healthcare support, wartime medical aid and social welfare – but also helped construct a model of womanhood as socially active, responsible and engaged. Representations of foreign women functioned both as informative accounts and as normative, inspirational frameworks.

Thus, the Georgian press can be understood as a media infrastructure and transnational network that significantly shaped women's activism and mediated global ideas in a local context.

In the Service of History: Mediated Archives and the Infrastructure of Historical Knowledge, Alexander Iscasson, Senior Lecturer, Karlstad University

In the late eighteenth century, the royal librarian and publicist, Carl Christopher Gjörwell, published an archive. *Svenska Archivum* (1790) was a repository of documents and knowledge, though it was not spatially and architecturally made up of walls, cabinets, or shelves but of covers, headings, and pages. Rather than a building, the archive was an activity: just as Gjörwell wrote ephemeral periodicals, he published enduring archives. His aim was to promote truth, enlightenment, and knowledge by making available to the public and lovers of history documents that risked destruction or dispersion.

Source publications and critical editions represent portable archives ("archive qua concept"), operating as media with a particular relation to the "archive qua institution", which in turn intervenes as a medium between the past and the present. These movable and immovable archives were connected in the historical culture of the nineteenth century, forming a knowledge infrastructure that enabled historiography and contributed to its disciplinary evolution. Wolfgang Ernst suggests that to consider history from the point of view of media demands thinking about memory and historical culture in terms of infrastructure. This presentation builds on this understanding to discuss how the remediation of historical documents in the media of source publications made up systems of transportation, transmission, and control of (historical) information. Agents, ideologies, and shifting historical contexts are considered to highlight the editions as media-specific utterances about the past that enable the forging of history.

Session 4: Logistics and Adaptations Across Media and Disciplines

Digital Games as Media for Transdisciplinary Communication, **Jonathan Rozenkrantz**, Senior Lecturer, Lund University

The paper presents two ongoing and interconnected projects: the monograph *Cinematic Games: A Case for Intermedial Archaeology* (Palgrave Macmillan, forthcoming) – a work-in-progress that will synthesise the results of a two-year research project (Swedish Research Council, 2024–26) – and the *Gaming Intermediality* initiative (2025–) that grew out of it, dedicated to building a network of scholars coming from a range of fields (film studies, literary studies, game studies, digital cultures, rhetorics and more) whose common denominator is that they study games from intermedial and/or multimodal perspectives. The paper begins by outlining the objectives and outcomes of the first two *Gaming Intermediality* workshops (Linnaeus University Centre for Intermedial and Multimodal Studies, 2025 and Lund University 2026). It then goes on to present its founder's forthcoming monograph. The aim of the book is two-fold: to study how cinema came to qualify games both in theory and practice, and to use this particular media combination as a test case for a new, more widely applicable method for the historical study of intermedial relations. Both *Gaming Intermediality* and *Cinematic Games* are premised on a realisation that emerged during their interlinked development, namely that *digital games are ideal media for transdisciplinary communication*. The paper's aim is to discuss how, and why this is important.

The Forgotten Side of Transcultural Storytelling: A Century of Swedish Film Adaptations of Foreign Literature, **Anna Sofia Rossholm**, Associate Professor, Stockholm University

This paper examines the presence – and notable absence – of Swedish film adaptations of foreign literature across the 20th and 21st centuries. It presents data that shows to what extent this form of transcultural adaptation is far less common today than it was during the first half of the 20th century – a development that appears paradoxical, given that other forms of transcultural adaptation, such as remakes of television programs and series, have proliferated alongside the intensification of cultural globalization in the 21st century.

Today, a growing imbalance can be observed between dominant cultural spheres, such as the American, and smaller ones, such as the Swedish, in relation to this type of film adaptation. The American *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (2011), based on a Swedish novel, exemplifies this largely one-directional flow; the reverse phenomenon – a Swedish adaptation of an American novel set in the United States – is now almost inconceivable. This, however, was not always the case. During the first half of the 20th century, Swedish filmmakers more frequently adapted foreign literary works, producing films such as the silent classic *Erotikon* (1920), based on a Hungarian original; the 1931

Swedish version of the French *Marius*; and the 1945 Swedish adaptation of Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment*.

Drawing on archival metadata, the paper offers a historical overview of transcultural adaptation in Swedish cinema and explores selected case studies as points of departure for a broader discussion of the phenomenon.

Ludifying the Hunt for Dracula: Adapting the Logistical Dimension of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) to the Board Game *The Fury of Dracula* (1987), **Andreas Rovio**, PhD Student, Uppsala University

Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula* (1897) puts a plethora of media and infrastructures on display – a fact which has been extensively written about. Since both the material conditions and the aesthetic practices and conventions of different media limit and guide the way infrastructures are (re)presented, I turn my attention to *The Fury of Dracula* (1987) in order to investigate the ways in which the logistical dimension of *Dracula* become ludified. In this 1987 board game one player takes on the role of Dracula, moving in secret on the map of Europe, while the other players act as the Hunters, openly travelling around and trying to deduce Dracula's location.

Ludification is here used to describe how elements take on a certain shape and properties by virtue of the requirement that they should work within a gamic system. As such, the concept is a media-specific analytical tool for analysing the adaptation of elements from one media expression to another. When the novel *Dracula* is adapted into a board game, it is done so in a way that re-shapes the material and form to fit the target medium. My argument is that *The Fury of Dracula* primarily latches onto the logistical dimension of *Dracula*, how “the novel is essentially about one – particularly dangerous – body moving through space and attempts to collect more information and accelerate its exchange in order to track and control that body,” and this paper seeks to investigate how the logistical dimension of *Dracula* (1897), including the novel's form, is ludified.

Emerging Forms: Exploring South African Electronic Literature Through the Lens of Internet History, **Jasmine Matthey**, PhD Candidate, University of Bergen

Web pioneer Tim Berners-Lee once declared that ‘the web is not just a technology, it's a conversation – a global conversation where people can share their ideas, opinions and experiences.’ In spite of Berners-Lee's utopian aspirations for the internet, it is evident that, in a creative context at least, the ‘global conversations’ happening online have not historically been conducted on the basis of equal access to online resources and that these inequalities still very much remain. As a result, creative works that have emerged and been disseminated online are not always afforded equal attention or preservation.

The particular focus of this paper is on South African electronic literature and how it has been shaped by developments in technological infrastructures. Drawing on the excellent scholarship of Dinesh Balliah, this paper gives a brief overview of the early history and development of the internet in South Africa to provide further historical contexts to the

aesthetic and thematic development of these forms. This discussion will further outline some of the reasons why electronic literature from the nation remains under-studied and seldom preserved in archival initiatives.

The Roads of Realism: Literature and Logistics, 1770–1840, **Thomas Götselius**, Professor, Stockholm University

‘A novel is a mirror carried along a high road,’ as Stendahl writes in *Red and Black* (1830). This phrase is famous and is generally regarded as a manifesto for the realist novel. The novel should be a reflection of the world as it is, not as it ought to be. By extension, this means that realism abandons absolute idealism in favour of empiricism, which presupposes that the only knowable world is the one we actually experience and which reveals itself through the senses. The passage thus appears as the epitome of realism’s quest for truth and fidelity to reality, not only in Stendahl’s work but in realism as a whole. The object in the text that indicates this is, of course, the mirror. Consequently, when this passage has been discussed, the mirror metaphor has taken centre stage. The road, on the other hand, has been relegated to the status of a traditional symbol of the course of life and the path that humankind must tread. This paper tests the hypothesis that it is possible to understand this phase in the history of the novel by reversing the perspective. It is the road, not the mirror, that is essential, and this is because it does not constitute a metaphor, but a new material condition of possibility. During the period in question, Europe’s road network underwent a revolution. The motif of the road in the novel, which according to Mikhail Bakhtin is fundamental to the genre, consequently constitutes an infrastructural prerequisite for realism, as interpreted by Stendhal.

Session 5: Practices and Cultures of Media

Microfilm as a Media Connector for Book Lending and the Rationalization of the Swedish Library Sector During the 1950s and 1960s, **Erik Florin Persson**, Senior Lecturer, Linnaeus University

Within media history, microfilm is often thought of as a technology for the preservation of printed material in libraries and the cultural heritage sector. However, it has also been used for other purposes, for example as a way of rationalizing the mid-20th-century office (cf. Lindström, 2017). This paper investigates the use of microfilm for book lending within the library sector in Sweden during the 1950s and 1960s and how such technologies were part of broader discussions on the rationalization of administrative work within this sector. At the time, several microfilmbased technologies for book lending were available, both internationally and in Sweden (cf. Shaw, 1953). This paper focuses on one specific technology invented by the Gothenburg cinematographer and lens-based media engineer Andrej Gavrjusjov in the late 1950s, which during the 1960s was distributed by the U.S. company Remington Rand to a number of libraries in Sweden and abroad. Drawing on insights from a previous study on a microfilm book-reading device for hospital patients which Gavrjusjov developed in the mid-1950s

(Florin Persson, 2024), the paper discusses the technical solutions used in the device's construction, Gavrjusjov's work in promoting it to the library sector, as well as reported problems and constraints in its everyday use. In conclusion, the paper speculates on the reasons why the use of microfilm devices for book lending was rather short-lived, with many libraries in Sweden abandoning these types of technologies in the second half of the 1960s.

Video Store Stories: Media Practice and the Everyday, Charlie Van, PhD Student, Lund University

Home video in Sweden has not been sufficiently explored by media historians. Historical research on video has predominantly focused on the 'video violence' debates of the early 1980s. This bias has hindered a deep understanding of an important media network, skirting the basic question: How did home video actually function? This paper suggests one way of answering that question.

By analysing answers to a qualitative questionnaire, I explore how home video was understood by the people using it. Ethnographic research on media often highlights how media use is embedded in contexts of everyday life. Such contexts can lay the ground for 'cultural fixings', the process whereby particular media uses become ritualised (Löfgren, 2007: 12). With these perspectives in hand, the analysis reveals how the act of renting feature films at the video store was both *formative of* and *informed by* a range of matters such as relationships, habits, leisure time, coming of age, the domestic sphere, and local geography. The paper also discusses how the practice facilitated by the video store was similar to yet distinct from that of the cinema, as I relate my investigation to previous ethnographic research on cinemagoing (see Kuhn 2002; Sjöholm 2003).

The primary material consists of answers to a qualitative questionnaire created in cooperation with the Folklife Archives at Lund University (LUF 272 2025) and published online. Secondary material consists of contemporary records and press clippings from popular magazines. The main focus is on the 1980s, though adjacent years will be considered as well.

Session 6: Humans and Technologies

Human as Medium: Caring for Machines in the Age of AI, Johan Fredrikzon, PhD, KTH Royal Institute of Technology

What happens when the human becomes the medium? In the spiritualist tradition of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, trance mediums served as physical go-betweens, connecting the living with the dead. As technical media – telegraph, photography, radio – emerged around 1900, the human medium receded while the concept migrated to apparatuses. This paper argues that with contemporary artificial intelligence (AI), the human is returning to the middle. In many organizations, machine-to-machine transactions now lead, while people function as connective media or 'middleware': formatting inputs, routing exceptions, attesting compliance, and maintaining the

material wrappers around automated systems. Following John Durham Peters' observation that a medium is 'in the middle ... for something and for someone (and neither of those need be human),' I propose that humans increasingly serve as media *for machines*.

I trace this inversion through a longer media history of manual switchboards, punch-card census operations, and weather-forecasting chains, showing how human mediation has always been constitutive of supposedly autonomous infrastructures. Yet with AI, three developments mark a break: primacy inversion (models negotiate with models; people trail as exception-handlers), system opacity (outputs resist verification even by engineers), and a care shift (humans attend to machines rather than the reverse. They become what Amanda Lagerkvist, not referring to people, has termed 'caring media'). In closing, I ask whether repair- and maintenance studies can still embrace acts of caretaking as critique when the object of care is the machine itself.

Romantic 'Data Processing' Around 1800: Love and Its Media Technologies in Goethe's *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* (1809), **Lukas Lehner**, Doctoral Research Fellow, University of Oslo

'There are', writes Friedrich Kittler, 'media technologies without love, but there is no love without media technologies.' Taking this statement as a point of departure, this paper will examine how two concrete media technologies – the camera obscura and the pantograph (a device employed in the production of so called 'Schattenrisse', i.e. silhouettes) – can be tied to the aporetic 'phenomenology' of love around 1800: Focusing on key scenes in Goethe's novel *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* (1809), I aim to analyze structural parallelisms between the media technological status quo of data processing and the aporetic tensions infusing the 'structures' and 'code' of love.

Before the advent of photography, 'scriptoral' and optical media could not yet automatically inscribe the stochastic, empirical excess of the Real in all its wealth, but only schematically trace an image by hand, either from nature; from the mediating screen of a camera obscura; or by way of literary description through the nominal universality of words. I view the mediation between the idea of the beloved and his/her empirical, bodily individuality, as structurally parallel to the media technologies of its time: Just as media could not yet subsume the wealth of the empirical in its representations, the idea of the beloved can be understood as an ideal matrix of filtration or smoothening, that can never subsume the empirical, bodily existence of the beloved individual.

On the background of more recent debates regarding the delimitations of the concept of 'cultural techniques', this paper attempts to view and historicize the interrelations of media technologies and other cultural structures and codes.

