

A notice about a textual analysis book by Max Scharnberg

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Title Textual analysis of a recovered memory trial assisted by
computer search for keywords
[Volym 121 av Uppsala studies in education](#)
(no longer available as a book), but is available at

<http://www.yakida.se/max/start.html>

and for free downloading at

<http://www.yakida.se/max/maxbok.pdf>

Author [Max Scharnberg](#)
Publisher Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, 2009
ISBN 9155474098, 9789155474096
Length 205 pages

The legal system in Sweden may be important for international science for several reasons. Very few documents are classified, and even these are usually handed out to researchers. There is no jury, and it is the obligation of the judges to produce a written justification of both the verdict and the sentence. Strictly speaking the concept of “impermissible evidence” is not recognised, although it has since 1993 tried to creep in through the backdoor. As a consequence, much information of great significance for several sciences (witness psychology, judicial evidence evaluation, textual analysis etc.) is readily available, while in most countries it is either non-existent or unobtainable or classified.

Associate professor Scharnbergs’ book has two aims: to describe techniques for the analysis of legal evidence, which are valid and independent of specific features of the investigator; and to apply these techniques to the Södertälje case, which has hitherto neither been subjected to a logical nor a critical analysis. All pre-trial information,

inter alia 40 police interrogations of the injured party (“Elvira”), was scanned into one single document of 245,000 words.

The most interesting result is that the foster mother (Mollbeck) “knew” literally everything that the injured party (Elvira) had experienced, before Elvira knew it herself. This is a clear indication that Elvira’s allegations were not recollections of authentic events.

Max Scharnberg’s book is a highly interesting and valuable work, rich of ideas, in the area of investigative methods. He shows that computer search for keywords in police interrogations can facilitate the analysis of cases. The book also refers to other cases and other results and theories. This book can be recommended not only to researchers in the field of investigation of allegations of sexual abuse but also to all who in their professions have to handle this type of cases.

This book has been examined and approved by the Swedish Council of Sciences.