URBAN CATASTROPHE AND SHELTERED SALVATION
The media system of Swedish civil defence, 1937–1960

Peter Bennesved and Fredrik Norén

The Swedish civil defence organizations have a long tradition of balancing their messages to the public through diverse media use. Over the course of the early Cold War, however, the political and technical circumstances of the civil defence organizations changed, rendering old methods from the 1930s obsolete. To keep their relevance, the narratives of the civil defence organizations had to be carefully remodelled in accordance with the current situation, obscuring some facts while stressing others more clearly. By operationalizing the concept of media system, this article examines how the Swedish civil defence organizations used the media, broadly defined, to deal with the two main narratives that their practical work was based upon: urban destruction as war unfolds, and the safety of air-raid shelters. The article shows how these narratives were constructed and connected between various media, but also their changing and dynamic character over time. Over the course of the 1940s and 1950s, the narrative of urban destruction changed from a concrete to an abstract mediation, while the narrative of sheltered salvation took an opposite direction.

KEYWORDS Civil defence; media system; air raid shelter; Second World War; Cold War; cultural history; nuclear culture; fallout shelter; atomic age

In the autumn of 1958, the Swedish television programme Vårt behov av trygghet [Our Need of Safety] presented two hypothetical narratives for the future: the destruction of life above ground as a nuclear war unfolds, and the salvation and continuation of life, modernity, and national culture underground, all secured by the thick concrete of fallout shelters. The programme, made by Kungliga Civilförsvarsstyrelsen [The Royal Swedish Civil Defence Board] (henceforth referred to as the CDB) was the first of its kind on Swedish television and staged with these narratives the very raison d’être of their own organization: to save the Swedish population from total nuclear war.

Such aspirations were a balancing act on a knife’s edge. Nor could the threat and violence of nuclear war be emphasized too much, or life in the shelter be framed too truthfully, or the CDB’s messages would induce defeatism instead of underpinning confidence and trust. For a small country that had built its military credibility on a form of hedgehog defence strategy, much was at stake. A prepared and willing population and a well-planned civil defence organization was seen by the Swedish military strategists as...
pivotal in maintaining foreign confidence in Sweden’s neutral, and later alliance-free, stance vis-à-vis the superpowers of the Cold War era.

Foreshadowed by articles in TV-magazines and afterwards reviewed by a number of local and national newspapers, the CDB’s television show *Our Need of Safety* thus had all the markings of a nationwide event. Not only was it the first time a Swedish government agency had produced a major programme in collaboration with the only available TV channel (started in 1956), but the show was also a daring move on the CDB’s part to publicly launch their new and reformed strategies against the next generation of nuclear bombs. And all this in a decade when public criticism of nuclear technology and civil defence planning was on the rise. For the CDB, the show thus had the double purpose of showing that criticized older strategies originating from pre-nuclear warfare—such as family-sized air-raid shelter building—had not been in vain, while also showing that the CDB had heeded criticism and tried to adapt accordingly in the face of new and bigger threats.

The CDB’s focus during the show on urban catastrophe and sheltered salvation should, however, not be seen as a historically unique event. On the contrary, we argue that evocative mediation of urban destruction and air-raid shelters has been a recurrent strategy within the civil defence organizations since their genesis. Some were aimed at the national audience such as radio and television, while others were aimed at specific groups of people through films, exhibitions and books. The television programme from 1958 is thus an example of a tradition stretching as far back as the late interwar years, of presenting, balancing, and building the civil defence organization’s credibility vis-à-vis the whole population by fine-tuning these two narratives in accordance with the current political situation and technological circumstances. In an effort to show this, the aim of this article is to present a re-construction of the two narratives—urban catastrophe and sheltered salvation—through the CDB’s diverse use of media, to show their changing character, from the origin of a Swedish civil defence in 1937 to the years around the CDB’s major television debut at the end of the 1950s.

During this period, the Swedish civil defence organizations were characterized by intertwined corporatism. Hence, the government body, the CDB, worked closely with the voluntary organization, the National Air-Protection Association, while the state provided funding for both. In this partnership, the governmental body acted as the guarantee of authority and knowledge production, while the volunteer organization stood for the grass roots activities such as training and drills. In practice, this meant that the CDB developed the overarching media strategies of civil defence and produced the material that the volunteer organization then worked with. Given this division of labour within civil defence, it is thus difficult to categorically differentiate the activities of the government agency from those of the voluntary organization. Therefore, we use the term ‘civil defence organizations’ to capture the civil defence complex as a whole. This article is based on archival material from both organizations and focuses primarily on the CDB’s media strategies and practices rather than on their public reception. This choice depends partly on limited sources regarding the latter.

Put simply, this article uses the concept of *media system* from a cultural history point of view with the purpose of studying two aspects of the CDB’s media use (e.g. Harvard and Lundell 2010). Firstly, there is a horizontal dimension: how the ideas of urban catastrophe
and salvation were mediated in—and connected between—various media. Secondly, there is a vertical dimension with the purpose of displaying changes and continuities in these two narratives over the given period. The media system is thus used as a method to mirror changes in culture and society, at the same time as the media utilized by the CDB should be understood as a means to model and alter people’s perception of culture and society.

Within the historical field of civil defence studies, the focus on various forms of media as a means of understanding the civil defence organizations’ rationale has been a recurrent method since the 1990s. Well into the 2000s, the media focus amongst civil defence historians is still common, often emphasizing the visual imagery and rhetoric of civil defence organizations around the western hemisphere. The overall research project within this field has been trying to ascertain the purpose, implications, and connections between the civil defence organizations’ activities vis-à-vis the people, and to study government’s attempts to manage ‘emotion control’ of citizens as a means of underpinning the ideological rationale of the Cold War. Attempts to write the media history of civil defence in Sweden have followed a similar historiographical track.

It is, however, clear that, while previous research points out the use and role of media, few attempts have been made to describe longer-term developments and the wider extent of civil defence media operations and how these relate to different contexts that the civil defence organizations had to cope with. Moreover, studies of civil defence tend to use 1945 as a dividing line, either studying the Second World War or the Cold War. With this in mind, and by operationalizing the concept of media system, this article will therefore give examples of how histories of civil defence during the two periods can be knitted together and analysed as a whole.

Over time, the concept of media system has been used in various ways and, hence, implies different meanings. In his attempt to map out its conceptual history, the media historian Henrik Bastiansen traces the concept to studies from the mid twentieth century, such as Fred S. Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm’s as well as Raymond Williams’. These studies share a focus on different ideological and power structures that govern the production, distribution, and use of traditional mass media. However, Bastiansen also acknowledges a tradition originating from authors such as Harold Innis and Marshal McLuhan and their conceptualization of a pluralistic media landscape as an interconnected system, and not as histories of isolated media technologies. In his conclusion, Bastiansen differentiates between two traditions of media system studies: the social science approach (nomothetic, static and generalizable models) and the historic approach (ideographic, pragmatic and case study-based). Like Bastiansen, we draw on the later.

However, another media historian, Patrik Lundell, has rightly criticized Bastiansen’s model for being normative and limited to traditional mass media. Drawing on Lundell’s critique, the present study therefore turns to the field of cultural media history for a more inclusive concept of media system. This approach emphasizes a pluralistic sum of various media—empirically defined—and their interlinked relations at a certain time in history. These relations must further be understood as integrated within historical constellations such as technology, organizations, actors, and places. According to Asa Briggs and Peter Burke, the media system is a perspectival rather than the analytical focus itself, and should be used to increase historical explanation. Hence, by emphasizing a pluralistic
concept of media, and the reinforcement of an interplay between similar and circulated media content, this article aims to use the media system approach to provide new perspectives on CDB’s history.

Furthermore, the tally of all media connections does not constitute a static system but is constantly reshaping in both form and content. Siân Nicholas, for example, has studied how different media in the British interwar period adopted some media characteristics from each other.12 But while her article focuses on the form of the media, this article centres on the interlinked content of various media, that is, how an organization, the CDB, positioned itself in a pluralistic and changing media landscape and used it as a platform to construct—and protect—its self-written narratives.

**Urban Catastrophe**

The Swedish television programme *Our Need of Safety* portrayed the immediate catastrophe of a nuclear attack with visual imagery that underscored the CDB’s ambiguous attitude to civil defence in the atomic age. The prologue to the coming bomb strike put the viewer inside the safe control room at the CDB’s headquarters. By studying a map, the CDB officials monitor the enemy aircraft advancing towards the Swedish south-coast city Malmö. When the enemy drops the atom bomb, we see a short visualization of the explosion from a distance. In the next scene, the audience is presented with a ruined urban landscape as the camera slowly moves through the buildings destroyed by the attack. However, as the camera pulls back, the ruined city turns out to be a three-dimensional miniature landscape on a table, with models of residential buildings. An official stands beside the table and gives an aloof oration on the impact of the explosion (see Figure 1). In this manner, the scene captures the need for the CDB to, on the one hand, show the urban destruction of an entire city so as to demonstrate the seriousness of the situation and thus underpin the relevance of the agency, on the other hand, to hide the full consequences of nuclear war by mediated distance, like here, with house models on a map, far from the street-view horrors of burning bodies and housing blocks in complete ashes.

Since the 1930s, the city, understood as the life nerve of the modern nation, had always been the main problem to cope with for civil defence.13 For that reason, urban
destruction was an important theme for mediation, and the civil defence organizations circulated content of urban destruction in a multitude of ways so as to funnel their messages. Seen together, these related images, both material and imagined, can be interpreted as an interlinked media system that, due to their variety, managed to reach out to the whole nation.\textsuperscript{14}

In the nationally broadcasted radio lecture ‘Luftfara’ [‘Aerial Danger’] from 1938, for example, three civil defence officials and military men provoked the audience to imagine a city burning or a bomb piercing the roof of a building and the implications that would have. Very much like television during the Cold War, Sweden had only had one, state-controlled, radio channel during the 1930s, which meant that the lecture could reach a wide national audience. Similarly, in October the same year, the voluntary civil defence organization arranged a touring train exhibition that brought imagery of modern war to over 70 cities and communities nationwide. Some 100,000 people were reported to have seen it (see Figure 2). In 1939, the civil defence organizations used images of ruined cityscapes from Finland, Britain and Shanghai in the ‘best seller’\textsuperscript{15} civil defence guide \textit{Hemskyddet: Handledning} [Home Defence: A Guide], and in Stockholm, lorries were rolling around in the city with large posters showing images of bombed buildings in Spain (see Figure 3). The National Air-Protection Association even produced a board game in 1942, to combine duty and pleasure and to target the household, of which the first edition of 5000 games quickly sold out. In this way, propaganda material produced by the civil defence was filled with imagery of urban destruction early on, delivered through different media with varying target audiences.\textsuperscript{16}

One particular feature of the catastrophe narrative of this age, which also differs from its future successor, was the focus on the street-view destruction of individual houses, one at a time or—although less often—a housing block. An explanation for this would be the political circumstances and the volunteer character of the contemporary civil defence organizations. The fact that citizens had to enrol voluntarily emphasized the need for civil defence to steer their propaganda towards mobilization and individual initiatives. The purpose of the street-view foci was thus to create recognition between the citizen

![Civil defence on the train, a touring exhibition on aerial protection. Bäck and Morath, 50 års frivillighet (1987, 23)](image)
and the catastrophe as something very concrete and close by, urging citizens to take action regardless of where they lived. Real estate owners and industrial managers were an especially important target group, since they needed to implement protective measures such as buying fire-fighting equipment and building shelters out of their own pocket.17 There was also likely a practical side to this, because of the indiscriminate nature of a bombing raid, which struck more or less randomly with at that time very little accuracy.

The transition to the Atomic Age changed the relationship between citizens and the civil defence organizations, and therefore also how urban catastrophe was mediated. After the Second World War, Swedish civil defence became an institutionalized part of the state apparatus, and due to reforms in civil defence legislation in 1944, enrolling became mandatory for all non-military personnel. Moreover, shelter construction became obligatory in all new housing projects. Hence, the civil defence organization did not need to promote volunteer initiative either for enrolment or shelter building. Instead, the CDB’s media strategy was aimed at understanding their work as well as continuous underpinning of the people’s so called will to resist.18

Furthermore, the images from the Second World War did not suffice to present the next generation of war. However, images of the terrifying effects of the atomic bomb, coming from the US and Japan, were morally sensitive, since they could be interpreted as if resistance was useless, leaving defeatism as the only choice.19 To cope with this problem, various media—in different combinations—were again used to manipulate, steer, and control the content of the destructive reality of nuclear attacks. However, this time around, this was done in ways that tended to obscure the idea of urban catastrophe in various abstractions that were supposedly thought of as easier for the citizens to process.

One particular recurrent method was to employ statistics and imagined visualizations of destruction, thus moving away from the tangible street-view perspective. One example was the civil defence organizations’ touring exhibition Atomskydd [Atomic Protection] from 1959, which, among other things, visualized the gradual destruction of a city by an atom bomb explosion (see Figure 4).20 However, the street-view horror of mass killing
was hidden by formulae of rationality and statistics, staged with embedded media such as house models, maps, and text material. This technique also made the impression that even the atomic bomb had limits to its destructive power, thus reconfiguring the catastrophe to a surface of imagined safety. In the television show Our Need of Safety, for example, the CDB’s Director General, Åke Sundelin, explained the effects of an atomic bomb by adding circles on a map in the studio to visualize the spread of an explosion over Stockholm.21

In other words, while the civil defence officials in the radio lecture from 1939 tried to make the people imagine the concrete closeness and horror of destruction, the strategy twenty years later showed an opposite tendency, away from concreteness. The 1961 version of CDB’s brochure Om kriget kommer [If War Comes], distributed to all households in Sweden, even avoided displaying the material destruction of an atom bomb. Instead, three different house types were used to represent the impact of radiation at varying levels, a concept that is barely tangible in itself and thus difficult to portray realistically.22 Hence, in mediation of urban catastrophe, statistics became a tool for emotional control, a cure for panic, and also an argument for why civil defence was still needed. By reducing the mythological proportions of nuclear destruction to a comprehensible and abstract statistical threat, the agency could convince the audience that civil defence—after all—would be meaningful, at least outside those concentric circles.23

Another way of using abstraction to modulate urban destruction in the Atomic Age was to downplay realism in favour of artistic symbolism. Film served as a possible medium to efficiently avoid the naturalistic and destructive imagery, and thus a conversation about what nuclear war really was. An illustrative example is the short film Också ett storstadsproblem [Also a City Problem] from 1960. It was commissioned by the CDB, produced by Suecia Film, and circulated in cinemas as well in educational contexts within the civil defence organizations. The film presented a warning of ignoring threats of future wars, where the catastrophe is hinted at in the settings rather than explicitly present. Inspired by techniques of collage and montage, the film constructed an obscure symbolic imagery of not taking the threatening reality seriously. The final scene, for example, uses a close-up shot

FIGURE 4.
A showcase from the touring ‘Atom protection’ exhibition from 1959, displaying the extent of nuclear destruction over the city Ystad by means of concentric circles and statistic estimates. Tidskrift för Svenskt Civilförsvar (1959, 132)
tinted in yellow, to give a historic and authentic connotation, and to display buildings damaged by an external force. Then, the tinted colour fades out, and it becomes evident that the ruined buildings are—again—models. As the camera pulls back, we see a child sitting in a room and playing with the models. Next, the child gets up and, in a couple of shots, walks like Godzilla through the houses that tumble down, suggesting the dropping of an atomic bomb (see Figure 5). As in the aforementioned scene from *Our Need of Safety*, the film shows an ambiguous play with closeness and distance and uses the house models as a tool to deal with the balance between frightening reality and the safe milieu.

**Sheltered Salvation**

As with the visual narrative of urban catastrophe, images of air-raid shelters evolved over time. Whereas the narrative of urban catastrophe constituted the threat of material and existential destruction, the air-raid shelters—later complemented by population shelters—were presented as the object of the act. They represented the thing to build and stay in and, eventually, became the symbolic refuge of the nation from nuclear bombs. As such, they literally became a manifestation of the CDB, and in extension, the ability of the Swedish social democratic welfare state—at this time also known as ‘Folkhemmet’ [*The People’s Home*]—to care for its citizens with modern technological and social means. Naturally, then, mediation of shelters was from the beginning equally as important as that of the urban catastrophe, and was used to induce comfort, trust, and public participation.

However, during the interwar period, and throughout Second World War, shelters were crude and simple and had not yet acquired a concrete form as they would later. This situation was reflected in the fact that the early civil defence organizations often employed blueprints to mediate the meaning and use of shelters. These conceptual models can be viewed as parts of a connected system with shared thematic characteristics, orchestrated and mass-distributed by the civil defence authorities (see Figure 6). For example, they appeared in construction guides in the shape of intricate guides aimed at real-estate owners, or in a more popular format at the general public. Like the imagery of the catastrophe, the blueprints were reprinted and circulated in the volunteer organization’s own magazine *Air-Alarm*, alongside articles and photographs that promoted completed shelters in Stockholm, and in the previously mentioned booklet *Home Defence*. Moreover, they surfaced during public lectures, either on the radio or during educational lectures.

**FIGURE 5.**

Också ett storstadsproblem [Also a City Problem] (Österström, 1960), displaying the artistic symbolism used to portray urban destruction in the atomic age.
settings that stressed the individual’s role in producing shelters. For example, in the aforementioned radio lecture ‘Aerial Danger’ the civil defence managers suggested how citizens could prepare themselves and their basements by buying equipment to convert them into shelters and using the guidelines available.

The focus on blueprints within the media system is important. For a civil defence organization that was not yet institutionalized, and thus reliant on volunteer participation, the evocative blueprints can be understood as means of trying to mobilize the public in shelter construction. As abstract and generic sketches, they encouraged citizens to imagine the shelter as part of their home and everyday life, thus having a suggestive function. The key to success was the technological simplicity of the construction in order to keep a threshold for action low, in terms of both cost and workload. Ads in newspapers, urging the citizen to buy ‘state-approved’ equipment, was complemented with the civil defence authorities’ advices and guidelines, and emphasized individuals’ own moral responsibility.25

There was also a practical dimension to the focus on blueprints that reflected the civil defence organizations’ political circumstances of the period. During the late interwar years and early Second World War, when the urgency of organizing civil defence reached its peak, there were very few completed shelters to display, thus leaving the abstract and imaginative blueprints and sketches as the only choice for mediation. The few that were completed were, however, quickly mediated with pride, often combined with a moral message underscoring how these shelters had been built by responsible and upstanding citizens (see Figure 7).26

![Figure 6](image_url)

**FIGURE 6.**

During the late 1930s and early 1940s, detailed blueprints and designs like this one were spread in technical guides, magazines and booklets by the civil defense organizations (Hemskyddet 1939, 137)
With the advent of the Atomic Age and the Cold War, the blueprint model began to be materialized in an impressive number of shelters of all sizes. In fact, during the 1950s and 1960s, shelters became an integral part of the Swedish urban landscape and as such, literally a concrete part of the social democratic People’s Home, to a great extent because of the fact that the preparedness doctrine in Sweden never really ended after 1945. While other countries dismantled their old organizations or had not even begun building air-raid shelters that could match the new weapons, the Swedish government rather decided to consolidate the state’s efforts in civil defence further and continue to build air-raid shelters.

With the invention of the atomic bomb, the envisioned scope of the catastrophe became, however, something entirely different, and the shelters—both in mediated form and the real thing—had to grow accordingly to match the nuclear arsenals of the major superpowers. As a consequence, the scale and material side of shelters became a more prominent feature in civil defence organization’s media output during the 1950s, which illustrates how changes in material and political conditions related to the mediation of the narrative of sheltered salvation.

This new setting did, however, bring other problems with it and resulted in a new turn in mediation of shelters that worked to support the new changes in civil defence planning. For example, the new shelters required state financing on an unprecedented scale. As a consequence, when the CDB presented shelters for the Swedish public, it was not enough to convey just a safe underground existence. Shelters also had to appear to be economically feasible in the eyes of the taxpayers, and just as usable in peacetime as in wars.27 Hence, in contrast to the late 1930s, the Cold War and the atomic bomb forced the civil...

FIGURE 7.
Stockholm’s supposedly first ever civilian produced air-raid shelter, proudly displayed by the initiator and his son. Here presented in the civil defence magazine Flyglarm (1938, 10)
defence organizations’ to focus their media strategies on scale and economic efficiency, instead of on blueprints and make-shift solutions.

The massive population shelters built in Swedish cities during the 1950s were perfect for this new task, and thus formed the basis of a literally concrete narrative of sheltered salvation during the late 1950s. Films, radio, magazines, exhibits, drills among other media were produced and used by the civil defence organizations to pick up and intertwine these huge shelters with topics such as Cold War-preparedness, the technological prowess of the nation, and the modern car-borne city life in the welfare state. Especially shelters like Katarinaberget in Stockholm, presumably the world’s largest shelter at that time, was often used as the model of the shelters’ seamless integration into the everyday environment. During a crisis, the shelter could supposedly host 20,000 people, a huge number in itself, but more importantly, during peacetime it could house 500 cars, a fact stressed just as often. This mega structure also included a petrol and service station, something that the CDB emphasized heavily in different media activities during inauguration of Katarinaberget in 1957, as well as following touring exhibits and films, including Our Need of Safety (see Figure 8).

Another example, Mariaberget in Västerås (inaugurated in 1958) was a popular shelter for the civil defence organizations to mediate. Built into the hill under an old girl’s school, this shelter was also one of the biggest in Sweden and could house 5000 people during a crisis. However, in comparison with Katarinaberget, the organizations’ mediation of it often focused on the shelter’s ability to facilitate citizens’ cultural and physical development instead of car-borne life. When presented to the public, for example in the film Vi går under jorden [We Go Underground], Our Need of Safety, or in the volunteer organization’s own magazine, they showed that the shelter included facilities such as gymastics for girls, sewing, airplane model building for boys, a soda bar, and a theatre (Figure 9). These activities were supposed to connote tradition and Swedishness according the ideas of the People’s Home and thus make the shelters’ integration into modern life seem less arbitrary. Simultaneously, the CDB also made sure to maintain the economic argument. The range of activities displayed showed that this was not underground space wasted. In fact, from the realistic and natural imagery, it seemed as if it was already in good, practical use.

To conclude, Åke Sundelin, the aforementioned CDB General Director of the CDB, and acclaimed guest of the television show, is yet another an example of the new role of shelters. His persona and speeches at media events, conferences and ceremonies reflect the civil defence organizations—especially the CDB’s—attempt to spread these messages within the media system, in some cases reaching outside Sweden as well. Sundelin made several international visits, and as an example, in 1959, he held a talk in Sunningdale, UK, at an international civil defence conference, presenting the logic of the by then world famous Swedish civil defence system. Here, in an effort to motivate the state of Sweden’s huge investment in shelters, he stated the short and simple facts, and above all, the shelters’ peacetime use: ‘And what do the Stockholmer’s get out of their money?—In short, four new garages.’ The shelters now seemed to be less about war and more about leisure, economy and statecraft. He also returned to this narrative of the shelters when speaking to a domestic audience. During the inauguration of Trossöberget in Karlskrona in 1960, two years after the television show Our Need of Safety, Sundelin
captured perfectly how the table had turned in shelter mediation after 1945, both in terms of the scale of protective potential and its integration into urban life. Lest we forget, he claimed:

the shelter is also something other than a facility for leisure, namely a concrete – realistic – practically designed and technically first-class symbol of the Swedish Spirit of Defence – the Swedish Spirit of Survival.30

Concluding Remarks

Starting from the television show Our Need of Safety, broadcast in 1958, this article has re-constructed a media system around two important Swedish Civil Defence Board narratives: urban catastrophe and sheltered salvation, and traced them over time in order to uncover how the civil defence organizations framed and used them in accordance with current circumstances.

The result shows—besides the variety of media use (such as speeches, board games, plays and public exhibits)—how the civil defence authorities over time shifted the perspectives on these mediated narratives to fit into current needs and cope with the current state of war technology, political climate, and resources at hand. What other civil defence scholars have described as ‘emotion control’ of citizens can also be applied here.
Although the civil defence organizations built on the same story and argument in the 1930s as in the 1950s, they constantly remodelled their vision of destruction and rescue through various media so as to control both how themes would appear and be perceived by the people.

**FIGURE 9.**
A spread from the civil defence journal in 1958, with photographs displaying the varying leisurely facilities built into the Mariaberget shelter. Only a few wordings in the text reveal the facility’s true purpose as a shelter, *Tidskrift för Svenskt Civilförsvar* (1958, 104)
In this dynamic mediation, we have in particular identified the civil defence organization’s use of abstraction and concretion in their media language. Regarding the urban catastrophe, at first the civil defence organizations used the realism of the threat of aerial bombing as a means of urging and pushing individuals to voluntarily engage in civil defence. Then, after 1945, a move to abstraction took place in order to obscure the true effects of the atomic bomb and, perhaps more importantly, to show that citizens will to resist—and the organizations themselves—was still an important factor in the post-war world. The move resulted in an abstract visual language that employed both symbolism and statistics as methods to achieve its goal. The mediation of sheltered salvation was transformed in a similar way, but in the opposite direction. Over the course of the early Cold War, mediation of the shelter moved from abstract blueprint-oriented visions that were meant to spur individual initiative, to focus on the concrete characteristics of the huge population shelters of the 1950s, all in an effort to gain support for both the civil defence organizations themselves, as well as for their ongoing mega-projects.

Notes
3. Davis, Stages of Emergency; Masco, “Survival is Your Business”; Grant, After the Bomb; Burtch, Give Me Shelter; Deville et al., “Concrete Governmentality”; Maartens, “To Encourage, Inspire and Guide”; Berger Ziauddin, “(De-)Territorializing the Home”.
4. E.g. Cronqvist in, Vowinckel, Payk, and Lindenberger, Cold War Cultures; Cronqvist in Ingi-mundarson and Magnúsdóttir, Nordic Cold War Culture. Regarding ‘emotion control’ see Oakes, The Imaginary War; Davis, Stages of Emergency; and Masco, “Survival is Your Business”.
5. For interesting exceptions, see Masco, “Survival is Your Business”; and Berger Ziauddin, “(De-)
Territorializing the Home”.
7. Innis, Empire & communications; McLuhan, Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man.
8. Bastiansen, “Media History and the Study of Media Systems”.
9. Lundell, “Participation, Representation and Media System”.
10. Harvard and Lundell, 1800-talets mediesystem. For a similar example, see Darnton, “An Early Information Society”.
12. Nicholas, “Media History or Media Histories?”
13. For works on the origins of civil defence, see Hippler, Bombing the People; Holman, The Next War in the Air; and Lindkvist, A History of Bombing.
14. Swedish civilian Aerial-Protection arose during the late 1930s in the shape of local volunteer organizations. In 1937, these local organizations were put under a national umbrella association under political control called Riksluftskyddsförbundet [National Aerial-Protection Association].
15. Civilförsvarsförbundet, *Tidskrift för Sveriges civilförsvar*, year 1947, 95–97. The booklet *Hemskyddet* was said to have been printed in over 150,000 copies in 1939, and in 1941 another 25,000 copies were printed.


17. See for example, 1939 års luftskyddsutredning, *Betänkande med utredning och förslag*, 22.


21. Participants’ manuscript for the television show *Our Need of Safety*, 1958, Åke Sundelin’s archives, file 5, Military Archives (Krigsarkivet), Stockholm.


23. See also Oakes and Masco; Cronqvist in ‘Bilder från nollpunkten’ in Österberg and Lindstedt Cronberg, *Våld*.


25. For a telling ad-page, see ‘Dom som kan’ (Dagens Nyheter, March 18th 1940).

26. Riksluftskyddsförbundet, *Flyglarm: Riksluftskyddsförbundets tidskrift*, year 1938, 10–11. The event was also reported in several other print media such as daily newspapers and technical journals.

27. The CDB’s drive towards the new population shelter doctrine began in early 1950s. See 1948 års skyddsrumsutredning, *Skyddsrum för civilbefolkningen*.

28. Regarding such representation in Swedish CDB movies, see also Cronqvist, “Vi går under Jorden”, in Hedling & Jönsson, *Välfärdsbilder*; Norén, Fredrik, “Filmen i statens tjänst”.

29. Speech manuscript for the Annual meeting of Association of Civil Defence Officers in Sunningdale, UK 1959. Åke Sundelin’s archives, file 6, Military Archives, Stockholm.

30. Speech manuscript for the inauguration of Trossöberget, Karlskrona, Sweden 1960. Åke Sundelin’s archives, file 6, Military Archives, Stockholm.

**Disclosure Statement**

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

**ORCID**

*Peter Bennesved* [http://orcid.org/0000-0003-0080-3324](http://orcid.org/0000-0003-0080-3324)

**Bibliography**


Bennesved, Peter. “Sheltered Society: A Century with the Swedish Air-raid Shelter”.
Berger Ziauddin, Silvia. “(De-)Territorializing the Home. The Nuclear Bomb Shelter as a Malleable Site of Passage.” Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, Online First 12 November 2016.


Norén, Fredrik. “Filmen i statens tjänst”.
Sources
Printed Media
Radio and Television
Ivar Ivre & SVT1, Vårt behov av trygghet: civilförsvarets möjligheter att ge skydd och ofreden kommer. SR, TV1, Broadcast November 24th, 1958.
Films
Archival Sources
Åke Sundelin’s archives, Military Archives (Krigsarkivet), Stockholm.
Swedish Radio Administration (Sveriges Radios Förvaltning), Document Archive (Dokumentarkivet), Stockholm.

Peter Bennesved (author to whom correspondence should be addressed), Department of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies, Umeå University, Biblioteksgränd 3, 907 36 Umeå, Sweden. Tel: +46907866348; E-mail: peter.bennesved@umu.se
Fredrik Norén, Department of Culture and Media Studies, Umeå University, Biblioteksgränd 3, 907 36 Umeå, Sweden. Tel: +46907869834. E-mail: fredrik.noren@umu.se