

# Reflections on Sweden's Measures against Men's Violence against Women

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*The major reform package adopted by the Swedish Government in the late 1990s to counteract men's violence against women has now been evaluated seven years on. The original reform included legislative changes, as well as assignments to public authorities with an emphasis on improving encounters between abused women and representatives of the various authorities. The evaluation inquiry has identified pervasive shortcomings in the implementation of the reform package. Areas of special concern include the low priority given to the issue and the lack of guidelines, of continuity, of adequate resources, and, not least, of a 'shared perspective' on the causes and impact of men's violence against women. Future discussions and efforts will also be informed by, yet another, and slightly more recent government commissioned report on gender equality that includes an extensive discussion about men's violence against women and advocates a more eclectic approach than advocated by the evaluation inquiry.*

## Introduction

The 1990s marked a flurry of policy activity in Sweden in the field of violence against women. This culminated with the legislation and reform package referred to as 'Kvinnofrid', a term emanating from the Middle Ages and signifying an intention to 'leave women in peace'. In the modern usage, breaches of 'Kvinnofrid' refer to a series of gender-related physical, psychological and sexual abuses. A national government commissioned report 'Kvinnofrid' published in 1995 called for sweeping reforms and new legislation, including increased use of the criminal law in counteracting many forms of violence against women (SOU 1995:60). The ensuing reform package was preceded by decades of debate on gender equality and feminist issues, a strong and vocal women's shelter movement, feminist research with substantial impact on debate and praxis, and national and international developments that influenced the view of legitimate responses of the Swedish state to men's violence against women. All these developments made clear the need for a coordinated response to violence against women. The state was called upon to acknowledge its particular responsibility for promoting gender equality and to take measures to prevent and counteract men's violence.

Several years have elapsed since the Kvinnofrid reforms were introduced. A year-long evaluation of the Kvinnofrid innovations and measures resulted in a report in late 2004, the title of which could be translated as 'Vain endeavours' (SOU 2004:121, my translation). This article aims to give a brief overview of some central aspects of the Kvinnofrid reform, its evaluation, and discussions underway in Sweden in the field of men's violence against women.

## Background

In 1991, the Swedish government appropriated funds for a regional and local development project aimed at improving the cooperation among public authorities and between these authorities and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the field of woman battering. Woman battering was defined as when 'a woman is subjected to physical, psychological and/or sexual violence by a man who she knows and has or has had a close relationship with' (Länsstyrelsen Rapport, 1995: –11, p. 7). The target groups included the criminal justice system, social services, health care services and the women's shelter movement. The model to be followed in this five-county project included the establishment of multi-agency groups on a municipal level. It was shown at the beginning of this project that very little organised cooperation between the various bodies existed; those written action plans that had been developed were found primarily at women's shelters and hospital emergency rooms. The multi-agency groups were seen as a forum for representatives from the various organisations to meet and exchange information about how they should respond to gendered violence and cooperate in individual cases. The central idea was the improvement of official responses to violence against women and coordination of the overall efforts and resources. The goal was to ensure that battered and otherwise abused women would be well cared for regardless of which authority/organisation she first sought help from. The project ended in 1995.

Violence against women has long been officially recognised as a gender equality issue in Sweden. In a Government Bill in the early 1990s (Prop. 1990/91: 113), which in part led to the multi-agency project described above, it was stated that violence against women in various forms was a serious expression of inequality and, therefore, of the imbalance in power between women and men (p. 48). The overall objective of gender equality is to achieve a society in which women and men have the same opportunities, rights and responsibilities in all areas of life (Prop 1993/94: 147; Asklof, 2003). This implies, among other things, freedom from gender-related violence. The Government continued its efforts in 1993 when it appointed the Commission on Violence Against Women, to conduct an overview of issues concerning this violence from a so-called 'women's perspective' and to propose measures for counteracting this violence.

## The Commission on Violence against Women

The work of this Commission on Violence against Women and the resulting report 'Violence against women' (SOU 1995:60, *Kvinnofrid*) in 1995, and ensuing Bill, have been referred to as 'pioneering work' (SOU 2004:121). While many proposals from the Commission Report were modified in the Government Bill (Prop 1997/98: 55), the latter was adopted in its entirety in 1998. The Bill could be referred to as a programme of measures of both a legislative and a preventive nature to be enacted. The public authorities were, in part, to act jointly and, in part, were to implement changes within their respective administrations. In combination, this initiative was referred to as the *Kvinnofrid* reform package.

Inspired by the five-county project described above and inspiring other multi-agency initiatives such as Operation *Kvinnofrid* in the County of Stockholm which sponsored poster campaigns against gendered violence, multi-agency working was prioritised in the *Kvinnofrid* reforms. In general, the police, social services and health care services were instructed to give priority to issues surrounding violence within the family as well as sexual

Table 1 Kvinnofrid reforms

1998	Gross violation of a woman's integrity
1999	Criminalisation of prostitution customers
2001	Expansion of rape laws
2003	Intensification of Restraining Orders Act
2005	New chapter on sexual offences

assaults, to adopt action plans, further develop methodology for application in individual cases and train their personnel, all with the aim of improving the reception and treatment received by battered women – and women subjected to other forms of gendered-violence. While many other public authorities, agencies and organisations were identified in the Kvinnofrid reform package as important links in the struggle against violence against women (including immigration authorities), the police and social and health services were considered central. One of the explicit goals of Operation Kvinnofrid was to support the municipality-based multi-action groups to ensure their continuation. Thus, a clear directive to the public authorities was to participate in multi-agency cooperation on local, regional and national levels.

### **Kvinnofrid – the package reform**

Several amendments of the criminal law have been passed which have been seen as initiatives taken within the 'Kvinnofrid' (Violence against women) package, as seen in Table 1 (see also discussions in SOU 2004: 117; SOU 2004:121).

A new offence was introduced into the Criminal Code in 1998, (Chapter 4, §4a), which is officially translated as 'gross violation of a woman's integrity' but is referred to here as 'breach of woman's peace' (*kvinnofridskränkning*), or simply, 'domestic violence'. A branch of feminist research, which has played a central role in the understanding of domestic violence in Sweden, maintains that a concept of 'normalisation' best describes the process in which a couple 'perpetuates' the violence in various ways after the initial shock. Mechanisms that interplay to strengthen the bonds between a battered woman and a battering man include the man's strategy to isolate the women, the alternating of warmth and brutality, and the eroticisation of the domination and violence leading to sexual stimulation of the batterer. The latter is related to the sexual abuse that often accompanies or finishes a battering incident (Lundgren, 2004; Prop 1997/98:55, pp. 74–75). These mechanisms serve to break down the woman's resistance and self-esteem, and ultimately to the internalisation by the woman of the man's image of her. This dynamic and step-by-step process is related to the imbalance of power between the woman and the man, is greater than the sum of individual events, and evolves over a shorter or longer period where violence is often preceded by various forms of controlling behaviour. Ultimately, it becomes increasingly difficult for the battered woman to break out without intervention from outside of the relationship.

This breach of peace crime takes place if a man commits certain criminal acts (for example assault, unlawful threat or coercion, sexual or other molestation, sexual exploitation) against a woman with whom he is or has been married or cohabiting. The paragraph preceding the breach of a woman's peace crime is gender neutral so that similar

abuse committed in other relationships – such as same sex or against men, children, or other relatives – is also criminalised.

The batterer can be sentenced for this breach of peace crime, instead of for each of the separate crimes. It is punishable by imprisonment for at least six months and at most six years. Alternatively the batterer can be charged and sentenced with this crime in parallel with rape or aggravated assault or other crimes with harsher penalties than domestic violence. 'A necessary condition for sentencing for the new offence is that the acts were part of a repeated violation of the woman's integrity and were intended to seriously damage her self-confidence' (Asklof, 2003: 2). The intention was to make it possible for the courts to increase the penal value of these acts. Further, the fact that this violence is repeated, is part of a process, and is committed in a particular context, all make it more possible to take the entire situation of the battered woman into account.

In 1988 the first Restraining Order Act was passed. The Act was intended, among other things, to cover abusive behaviour that was not necessarily dealt with in other criminal law provisions, such as stalking, repeated phone calls or letters from a former partner and so on. In September 2003, these provisions were amended so that Restraining Orders could include the joint residence of the two parties (SFS, 2003: 484). In that case, the perpetrator is prohibited from entering or remaining in the residence that he shares with the victim. The measure includes some provisions for the perpetrator to collect his personal belongings. With the passage of this Act, it has been claimed that there was a clear shift in approach since the first Restraining Order Act was passed (Asklof, 2003). Initially, there was concern that the restrictions on the batterer's freedom of movement would be excessive. The concern now is how best to avoid restricting the woman's freedom of movement or violating *her* integrity while attempting to protect her.

Included in the modern reforms are laws criminalising prostitution customers. At the beginning of 1999, the Act Prohibiting the Purchase of Sexual Services took effect. The debates preceding the adoption of this law were wide-ranging. This new invocation of the criminal law was intended to be the strongest possible statement of the condemnation of the practice of prostitution. Criminal legislation targeting those that profit from others' prostitution, such as pimps, brothel-owners, and landlords who lease out premises for the purposes of prostitution, has long been in existence. Social legislation and services would continue to be used to assist prostitutes in various ways. Based on studies of prostitution, however, it was seen to be counterproductive to criminalise the 'resource-weaker' woman who engages in prostitution. With Sweden's membership of the European Union and the dissolution of the Soviet Union and ensuing opening of Eastern European and Baltic States, the law was also meant to serve as a disincentive to Sweden being viewed as a potentially profitable market for the international commercial sex trade. Further, a society sanctioning prostitution could hardly be viewed as a gender-equal society. Finally, prostitution was redefined in the public discourse into a form of structural as well as individual violence against women (see Fact Sheet, 1999).

The legal definition of rape has been successively broadened over the past two decades. In 1984, the law was amended to encompass oral and anal intercourse, and assaults between homosexuals and by women against men. According to the legislative history, the behaviour of the victim prior to the rape is irrelevant. Amendments under the Kvinnofrid reform implied that that additional forms of sexual abuse are equivalent to rape if the nature and circumstances surrounding these violations could be seen as comparable with coerced intercourse. At the same time, a Sex Offences Commission

was established with the directive of conducting a review of the regulations concerning sexual offences. The resulting legislation took effect in April 2005 (Criminal Code, Chapter 6). The changes once again entailed an expansion of the legal definition of rape. The required amount of violence or coercion for a rape charge was reduced, and greater consideration is to be given to the inability of the victim to defend herself due to intoxication or the threatening situation she found herself in. The purpose of this legislation is to further strengthen and make clear the absolute right of every individual to personal and sexual integrity and sexual self-determination as well as to highlight and strengthen in various ways protection for children and young people from sexual violations.

Other legal changes included amendments to the Social Services Act in 1998 which assigned local social welfare boards with the responsibility for providing support and help to battered women towards changing their situation, although the formulation fell short of making this responsibility mandatory (SSA, Ch. 5, §11). In addition, the law against female genital mutilation was strengthened (SFS 1998: 407); and in July 2002 the law against trafficking in human beings for sexual purposes was introduced into the Criminal Code (Ch. 4, §1a).

### **Has the peace been won?**

Over seven years have passed since the passage of the Violence against Women Act as part of the Kvinnofrid reform. In late 2003, a Commission was appointed whose terms of reference indicated 'the need to set out new guidelines for the work on men's violence against women' (SOU 2004: 121, p. 21). The inquiry was to evaluate the 'assignments' or directives outlined in the 1997/98 Government Bill and identify any hindrances and structural obstacles to effectively tackling men's violence against women. The inquiry was to be based on a 'gender power perspective' and aimed to make proposals for future work. After a year's activity, the inquiry led to the report *Slag i luften* (SOU 2004: 121), a difficult to translate idiom here called 'Vain endeavours' in the absence of an official translation.<sup>1</sup>

The emergence and use of a gender power perspective reflects the interpretation of men's violence against women as an aspect of gender power relations as is written into many international documents. Documents such as the 'Declaration on elimination of violence against women' adopted by the United Nations 1993 use this notion. This Declaration states that '[v]iolence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men' (United Nations, 1993). This concept of 'gender power relations' (*könsmaktsordning* in Swedish) can be linked to the notion of patriarchy utilised in some feminist analyses. In this context, patriarchy is the principal of societal organisation that explains remaining inequalities in states even where formal gender equality has by and large been attained. In public debate in Sweden, the concept of gender power relations has nearly entirely replaced the use of 'patriarchy', except in cases of what has been referred to as so-called 'honour-related violence', which primarily is used in cases of violence in families with certain immigrant backgrounds.

The Commission Report and Government Bill on Violence against Women from the 1990s – which constitute the Kvinnofrid reform – are identified as the point at which the gender power analyses took form. It was crucial that the initial inventory of what had been done and what needed to be done was to be analysed from a 'women's perspective',

that is, on the reality of women's lives and women's experiences, of women subjected to the violence. This perspective was defined as being synonymous with a women's research/feminist research perspective, which according to the commission implies that 'the violence must be observed from a gender-power perspective' (SOU 1995: 60, p. 35). The report 'Vain endeavours' inquiry used the concept of a 'gender power interpretation' instead (SOU 2004: 121, p. 47).

In the 'Vain endeavour' inquiry, the authors explain their use of the concept *men's violence against women* instead of the more general 'violence against women' or 'family violence' (there is no term directly corresponding to the English 'domestic violence'), by indicating their intention to stress *who is exercising* the violence and *who is subjected to* it. In some contexts in Sweden today, the term 'men's violence against women' is preferred even when violence within same-sex relationships and women's violence against male partners are consciously meant to be included. This is to stress the power component of the violence and abuse and due to the lack of a universally accepted concept of 'gendered violence' in Sweden. One effect of the 'Vain endeavours' report has been a greatly increased polarisation involving terminology.

The basic point of departure of the 'Vain endeavour' inquiry is that the violence focussed on is 'both an expression of a gender power hierarchy and a means of upholding it' (SOU 2004: 121, p. 22). The context in which this violence is to be analysed is one of discrimination and abuses of women in all areas of society. The interconnection must be seen between the many different forms of violence that are exercised in different arenas and in different relationships: 'for women, violence is part of everyday life, where there is no escaping their own or other women's exposure to violence, or the fear of being subjected to violence' (ibid.: 23). Ultimately this violence is a matter for democracy in that women's freedom to act is limited at various levels. Thus, the core of the problem is men's superior position and women's subordination. The authors maintain that using this interpretation as the basis for political practice brings many problems that would 'otherwise have remained hidden, into the open'. This enables resources to be more efficiently spent and permanent measures to be enacted that 'make the violence visible instead of marginal and temporary initiatives that focus on something else' (SOU, 2004: 121, p. 23).

Unfortunately, most actors have fallen short when evaluated against this background. Looking to the 1990s, the 'Vain endeavour' inquiry points out that the Violence Against Women Commission did identify men's violence against women as a matter of a lack of gender equality. While the ensuing Government Bill is also based on this approach, the latter applies other, conflicting interpretations of men's violence against women as well. The 'Vain endeavours' inquiry calls these further interpretations 'deviation-based interpretations', where, for instance, the violence is due to the man's sense of powerlessness, mental illness, socially determined use of violence, or ethnic or cultural background. The inquiry states that '[i]n one way or another, these approaches mark the perpetrator as a deviant, dissociating him from the average man, and the link between violence, gender and power disappears' (SOU, 2004: 121, p. 22).

According to the 'Vain endeavours' inquiry, the 'assignments' that were to be performed by public governmental agencies were at best only partially fulfilled. Much of these shortcomings are blamed on the failure of the Violence against Women Commission report and ensuing Bill to be clear about which interpretation of men's violence against women was to be applied. In other words, it was the combination of gender power and

deviation-based interpretations (discussed above) that made consistent and efficient work against men's violence against women impossible in practice. This is evidenced by the lack of action plans or broad policy documents on 'the conduct of work on men's violence against women' (Ibid.: 23) by central government agencies, the lack of crime prevention work, the lack of outreach activities in form of dissemination of information or opinion formation, and the lack of the improvement of knowledge and skills.

The 'Vain endeavours' inquiry reviewed the work of the 'National Group of Authorities for the Protection of Women against Violence', which was established in the spirit of the Kvinnofrid reform and was chaired by the Minister for Gender Equality. Its final report was submitted to the government in 2003 and included recommendations to each member of the Cabinet (Nationellt råd för Kvinnofrid, 2003). In sum, the Group maintained that alarmingly few changes had been effected in the field of violence against women, despite the parliamentary decision made in 1998. It identified a resistance at several levels of society, from local to national authorities. Still influencing the state of affairs was a broad lack of insight and a disinclination to give priority to violence against women. While a process of change had most likely begun, full responsibility had not been accepted, and the process was incomplete. Vital concerns were more education and research and a focus on men's responsibility.

The National Authorities Group was, in its turn, criticised by the 'Vain endeavours' inquiry for ultimately merely serving as a forum for information exchange and as the keeper of the Kvinnofrid web portal. It was unclear how great an impact the multi-agency approach had overall. Again, the inquiry pointed out that effective collaboration is hampered by 'different views and interpretations of the problem of men's violence against women' (SOU 2004: 121, p. 24). Changes in the organisation of work on men's violence against women are needed at all levels. The temporary and project nature of many regional and local initiatives, as well as inadequate resources, were also identified as important obstacles to the full enactment of the Kvinnofrid proposals. Even training programmes, which often received considerable financial support, were rarely mandatory, rarely evaluated, and reached very few employees of the relevant authorities.

### **The role of the criminal justice system**

Many components of the Kvinnofrid reform sought to address the criminal law, criminal statistics, criminological research (which lacked a gender power perspective), and the application of the criminal law. Figure 1 compares the number of rapes reported to the police with convictions for rapes over the period 1950 to 2004. The explanations for the increasing gap between reports and conviction may be many. Criminal statistics are designed so that all acts are recorded as separate crimes, even though one conviction can then subsume a multiple number of reported crimes. Conviction can be under other crime categories, such as for 'sexual assault' rather than 'rape'. The legal definition of rape has been successively broadened. Nevertheless, a substantial proportion of reported rapes are dropped on the grounds of 'insufficient evidence'; in 2003, the proportion of rapes reported to the police explicitly dropped on this basis was close to two-thirds.

Table 2 shows the number of selected crimes that were reported to the police in 2004 and the number of convictions for each crime category that year.

For comparison purposes, of all crimes reported to the police in Sweden in 2004, 9 per cent led to a finding of guilt, in the form of conviction, prosecutorial fines, or waiver

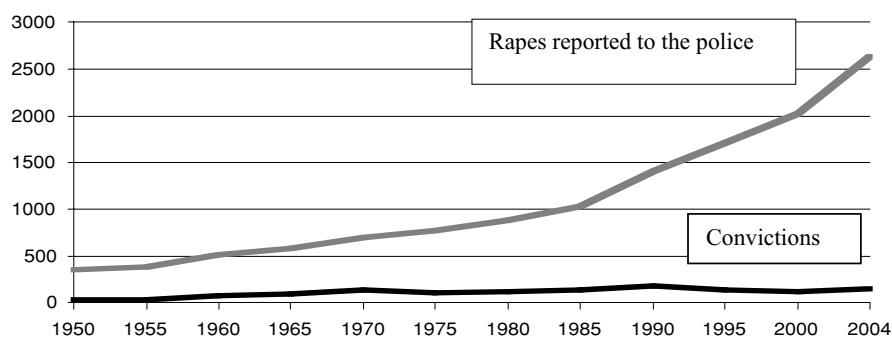


Figure 1. Rape crimes reported to police and persons convicted of rape in Sweden 1950–2004.

Source: National Council for Crime Prevention.

Table 2 Number of selected crimes reported to the police and number of convictions, 2004, Sweden

	Woman battery*	Breach of women's peace	Rape (incl. aggravated rape)	Purchase of sexual services	Violation of restraining orders
2004					
Reported crimes	13 477	2068	2631	156	3752
Convictions	**	269	153	48	126
% of cases convicted	(23)**	13	6	31	3.4

Notes: \*Assault against women, 'indoors, by assailants known to victim'.

\*\* Based on tables, it is impossible to calculate how many reported crimes lead to conviction. Convictions for assault, in contrast to reported crimes, are not broken down by victim's gender or other variables. This percentage reflects proportion of reported cases for which decisions were made to prosecute.

Source: National Council for Crime Prevention.

of prosecution. For crimes against the Criminal Code in total, the figure was close to 5 per cent. What is interesting here is the dissonance between the efforts made to improve the criminal justice system and the 'outcome'. There is not sufficient space here to consider fully the reasons for this gap. However, statistics are often the background to discussions about violence against women in Sweden, and they are often presented incorrectly. Some highlights from various sources in Sweden reveal the following:

- Between one-fifth and a quarter of all non-fatal assaults reported to the police can be attributed to the statistical category that most closely corresponds to domestic violence against women. This sub-category of assaults is second in size only to assaults against men in public spaces by assailants unknown to the victim.
- Whereas men constitute the majority of victimised persons according to many sources – often 60–80 per cent of all victims of violence – women make up the overwhelming majority of victims when the violence is committed at home or between intimates, 80 per cent according to assault and homicide statistics, and various victim surveys.
- A controversial prevalence study within the directives from the Violence against Women Commission concluded that 46 per cent of women in Sweden over the age of 15 have



been subjected to some form of violence from any man (Lundgren, 2001). The concept of violence includes physical, psychological, and sexual violence. The victimisation was captured by a series of questions concerning concrete situations: for example, any forced sexual activity by a man threatening, holding or hurting the woman in any way; about being touched in a sexual way against the woman's will, for example, by means of grabbing, holding, kissing or hugging; physical violence in form of being struck on the face or body, being pushed, forced against a wall, kicked, bitten, shot, or knifed; face to face or telephone threats to harm the woman physically. All positive answers were combined to produce the lifetime prevalence figure. Other interesting results include the high rate of women threatened in the home who are also actually beaten, high rates of abuse against young women, often outside the family, and how phenomena such as controlling behaviour and sexual harassment are closely linked to other forms of violence. A notion of the 'continuum of violence' is used in the study. While the lifetime prevalence figures are similar to those produced by corresponding studies in Finland and Canada, yearly rates for physical abuse by male partners were quite similar to rates found in other Swedish victim and public health surveys, around 3 per cent (Statistics Canada, 1993; Heiskanen and Piispa, 1998; Leander, 2005).

### **What is the right approach?**

Work is continuing towards improving our knowledge about men's violence against women and towards improving the encounter between victims, public authorities, and the state. At the same time, the current situation could be described as one of a stand-off, regrouping or a lull. After several years of the 'Kvinnofrid' discourse being rather prominent in the public debate, the 'Vain endeavours' inquiry report has been published and powerfully identifies all the shortcomings and gaps in the efforts being made. Nearly everyone has been getting it wrong, according to the report. Some national, as well as local, initiatives were praised for most consistently adopting and applying the gender power perspective but most actors have made the fatal mistake of mixing their metaphors, so to speak, or combining perspectives.

The directive to the 'Vain endeavours' inquiry was to follow up and, based on a gender-power perspective, evaluate the authorities' joint and individual directives to public authorities that were outlined in the Government Bill *Kvinnofrid*. The National Council on Crime Prevention (BRÅ) was criticised for lacking a gender power interpretation, as well as for deficient skills development in research based on gender theory. Violent men are still primarily analysed from the point of view of alcohol consumption, marginalisation, mental disturbances, and previous criminal records. The correctional services lack a model based on a gender power interpretation in their development of national programmes for men who have committed violent crimes against women. Such a model would be one like the Norwegian Alternatives to Violence where the emphasis is placed on men taking responsibility for their violence. The introduction of risk assessment programmes was seen as encouraging but disturbing nonetheless since the assessments of the perpetrators are not based on a gender power perspective.

At times in the inquiry report, the concrete consequences of a lack of gender power interpretation are highlighted. For example, the National Board of Health and Welfare (the body responsible for all social and health services) is claimed to endorse couple counselling in families where the man uses violence against the woman, a

practice that is condemned from many quarters. The questions of how to operationalise macro-explanatory perspectives (gender-power and so on) onto the individual level, of why some men are violent and not others, and of the practical usefulness of identifying risk groups for prevention purposes are left unanswered. The tool adopted and further developed by the World Health Organisation, the so-called *ecological model* is rejected outright. Even though the ecological model could clearly accommodate greater emphasis on role of the gender power relations in society, the inquiry report repeats that combining perspectives leads to the invisibility of the gender power perspective, inhibiting any real inroads to be made against men's violence against women.

All this has been complicated by the fact that in late spring 2005, two television documentaries were broadcast on a public service channel, under the title of 'Gender War' where actions of what was portrayed as a lunatic fringe of the women's shelter movement were exposed, with strong links being made between these activists, certain public officials, and the research tradition that had so strongly informed the introduction of the breach of peace offence and the Kvinnofrid reform package. So the summer of 2005 began with the makings of what could be called a broad-based backlash against the gender power perspective. During the summer break, however, a new government commissioned report was submitted outlining broad proposals aimed at strengthening gender equality (SOU 2005: 66). A central proposal was the establishment of a new public agency for gender equality. Further, the lengthy discussion on men's violence against women distanced itself, in part, from the 'Vain endeavours' inquiry and called for a broader analysis of men's violence against women and an integration of several perspectives. A new 'Feminist Initiative', at present attempting to enter parliamentary politics, has also felt the brunt of a backlash.

The real value of recent reports and discussions is the identification of persistent resistance to the general 'institutionalisation' of efforts against men's violence against women, referred to in 'Vain Endeavours' as 'resistance and structural obstacles to gender power-conscious work'. Nevertheless it could be argued that demands for 'a shared perspective' serve to devalue some important work against men's violence on the practical level, as well as some critical discourses on the theoretical and structural level. It is interesting to note that we are still facing issues such as whether it is new perspectives in existing institutions or new institutions that would be most useful. Also, questions remain in terms of the impact of viewing gendered violence and other controlling behaviour as 'normal' or 'deviant'. It is also unclear whether all the variations of gendered violence ought always to be treated together or whether prevention cannot instead be facilitated through some separate interventions. Perhaps one measure of progress so far though would be to reflect upon how discussions about men's violence against women have already influenced our view of violence as a contextualised, instrumental expression of power imbalances and injustice even in other contexts (Stanko, 1999).

## Note

1 Perhaps the illustration on the cover of the report should be described: Boxing gloves floating in the air like balloons, each painted with a cross and the word 'Kvinnofrid' on its back.

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