

WITH THEIRS MASTER'S VOICE

Men's use of violence against women has been discussed at length in the public debate today, in Sweden.¹ In the wake of this increased attention, specific groups of battered women have been brought into focus. Surveys have been carried out of male violence against elderly women, physically disabled women, mentally ill women, women addicts and non-ethnic Swedish women. The situation of children in a battered family has been a focal point too. However no one has ever paid attention to violence against animals.

In interviews carried out by myself and a colleague about battered women's breaking-up process, we found that violence against the family's animals was not unusual.² The animals, as an integral part of the family, were also subjected to the man's violence or threats of violence and, in one case, several of the family's domestic animals were killed during a quarrel. The women expressed concern for the animals' safety and, in one particular case, this concern actually delayed the woman's decision to leave her husband. I began to ask myself if this was an exceptional occurrence or not.

Talking to women in shelters for women in Sweden, and reading books mainly from the USA, I found that violence against animals was not uncommon in woman-battering relationships. The purpose of the following article is to give an account, from a feminist point of view, of Swedish men's violence against animals and the vulnerability of the animals in woman-battering relationships.

¹ I would like to thank The National Board of the Swedish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals for the stipend that allowed me to carry out this study. I also would like to thank all the persons who gave me helpful information with special thanks to Lisa Gålmark and Anna Johansson for their helpful comments on the Swedish text.

² Holmberg & Enander, to be published 2004.

EARLIER STUDIES

Carol J. Adams, an American researcher in the field of domestic violence and animal advocacy, demonstrated in a notable study in 1990³, the connection between women's subordination and the oppression of animals in western societies. In later studies⁴ Adams focused on the connection between men's violence against women and men's violence against animals.

Adams states that the conception of the word "manhood" is built on the assumption that "the others" are excluded from the category of humans. Adams writes:

*(...) the conception of 'manhood' – the public man, civic man – depends heavily on seeing women not merely as 'lesser humans than men but less-than-human'.*⁵

In this way women and animals is seen as something totally different to and also the opposite of what counts as humans and manhood. In principal "the others" encompasses all "humans and non-humans" that are not a part of the category of white Christian heterosexual male from the middle and upper classes.

Throughout history, the way women, children and animals have been treated has always been regarded as a private matter. And while women and children are slowly emerging from the private domain and into the public domain, the way we treat our animals is still regarded as a private matter more than a public issue.⁶ This in turn means that another way to break the male power structure and the artificial difference between "the others" and "the humans", is to

³ Adams 2000 (1990).

⁴ Adams 1995, and 1998.

⁵ Adams 1998, p 330.

⁶ There are of course laws and regulations governing the treatment of animals. But to claim that animals feel pain and suffer is controversial, just as it is to claim that it is improper to "mass produce" animals as a source of food for people. Animals' are, simply, attributed a lower status than human beings.

make animals visible as companions and lift them out of the private domain into the public domain.⁷

Adams points out the different ways a man in a close relationship, can get at a woman through the animal/animals. He can use the animal/animals as a way to isolate the woman; by showing her, either in a direct or indirect manner, that the animal will not get proper care and attention if the woman leaves the home. Another way is to mistreat the animal and not allow the woman to improve the animal's living conditions. Furthermore, the man can threaten to hurt and kill the animal in front of the woman and the children if there are any. Sometimes he turns his threats into actions. Finally the man can force the woman to engage in sexual acts with the animal or use the animal himself for sexual purposes.⁸ In other words there are many things the man can subject the animal to. The common factor in the man's actions is his apparent desire to consolidate his power and control over the woman but also over life and death in a broader sense.

In the same article, Adams underlines the importance of discerning the meaning of this dual control in the man's use of violence against animals.⁹

One, the man influences and harms the woman – and the children in the family – through acts of violence against the animal. Two, the man through acts of violence against the animal itself, influences and harms the animal, which has its own right to existence. One cannot reduce violence against animals to simply a question of indirect violence against a woman. One has to remember that it is the animal itself that is exposed to violence, otherwise there is a risk that the animal becomes merely an object used as an instrument in the man's violence against the woman, which can result in the animal's sufferings becoming secondary. Adams sums it up as follows:

⁷ For a deeper analysis of the division between us and them and the consequences of this for the animals; see Eriksson 2000.

⁸ Adams 1995, p. 70 and on. All these ways of mistreating animals can be found in this study.

⁹ Adams 1995, p. 59.

Harming animals is in itself an act of violence against another living being. If the batterer executes the animal, he and everyone in his family perceive that matters of life and death are in his hands. Thus, he feels more powerful. Harming animals or using them sexually are also acts of instrumentalizing the animal to get to the woman. (Adams, 1995, p. 69.)

By using violence against the family's animals the man corroborates his power over life and death, and he can also manifest this power and actually feel it, too, without using direct violence against the woman or the children. It creates feelings of insecurity and fear in the family home and the whole family is thus aware that the man is capable of carrying out these acts of violence.

Adams states that when an animal is used as an agent of violence against women, the animal is degraded and given the same status that most of the other animals have in our culture.¹⁰ In other words, the animal's status is changed from a living-being in a close live-in relationship to an object you can treat anyway you like and in the end simply kill, using more or less violent methods.

In the USA, several empirical studies have been done to study the connection between violence against women and violence against animals.¹¹ They revealed that even in homosexual relationships violence against domestic animals occurred following the same pattern and for the same reasons as in heterosexual relationships.¹² The majority of these studies are based on development psychology and focus on the connection between children's violence against animals and their acts of violence as grown-ups.¹³

¹⁰ Adams 1995, p. 79.

¹¹ Arkow 1996., Ascione, Weber, & Wood 1997., Ascione 1998., and Flynn 2000.

¹² Renzetti 1992.

¹³ In the anthology compiled by Lockwood and Ascione (1998) most of the articles are about this subject.

In Sweden, the author Lisa Gålmark took up the connection between violence against animals and violence against women in a book about animal advocacy.¹⁴ And the lawyer, Helena Striwing, discusses in her work about animals as victims of crimes¹⁵, the exposed position of animals in the family. But as far as I know, no previous study has been done in Sweden similar to the one presented here below.

Hereafter I will discuss the questionnaire that was sent to the volunteers working in shelters for women and shelters, in order to discover whether or not they had come across incidents of violence against animals.

TERMINOLOGY

Here I would like to discuss a few definitions. What group of animals were included in the study. What terminology was used when talking about the animals, and how violence against animals was defined.

The animals included in my study are what we usually call domestic animals; i.e. pets or live-stock. Animals living around us, either within the family or on the farm. My study does not include animals farmed for meat production or animals living in the wild.

Instead of the word "pet", I prefer "companion animal", the term commonly used by animal advocacy organizations. This term is used to define animals living in a specially close relationship with humans. Terms like house-pet, domestic animal and live-stock create a certain distance as they define an application given to animals by people. Using the term companion animals underlines, as I see it, that these animals are both part of the family and also individuals in their own rights.

¹⁴ Gålmark 1998. Gålmark wrote already in 1995 an article published in the magazine of the Society for Animal's Rights (1995:3). This is probably one of the first times this subject was taken up.

¹⁵ Striwing 1998.

Another term used is "non-human animal".¹⁶ This term is used to show that a human is also an animal and that we can make the bridge between the human animal and the non-human animal, and thus break down the artificial language barrier we use to distinguish between them and us. This term, non-human animals, has a wider definition than companion animals, as it includes all animals as a group.

As I only studied animals living in close relationship with humans I decided to use the term companion animal or its synonym pet.

Joan Dunayer writes that the language of the gender of an animal with the use of the word "it", transforms the animal into a non-living object and denudes it of its own feelings.¹⁷ A chair and a dog are in terms of gender given the same value/non-value when it comes to experiencing pain or pleasure. Just by talking about animals in terms of "it" means that we regard them and value them as non-living objects and not as living beings. Because of this I will use personal pronouns when I refer to animal/animals.

WHAT IS VIOLENCE AGAINST ANIMALS?

In today's society this question is very delicate. Dorian Solot problemized this in an article.¹⁸ In studies of violence against animals in a family, the definition of violence is usually based on physical injuries like; "deliberately hurting and/or causing bodily harm to the animal". In other words, emotional or other psychological injuries originating from threats or other forms of violations are rarely discussed. Neither are the animal's need for food, water and warmth discussed when these are not met. The reason for not discussing these matters is that the

¹⁶ Dunayer 2001. Dunayer makes a brilliant analysis of how language objectifies and reduces animals in comparison to humans and thus facilitates all sorts of oppression and cruelty.

¹⁷ Dunayer 2001, p. 149.

¹⁸ Solot 1997, p. 259 and on.

animal's needs are considered more difficult to determine and that control and violation are still regarded by some people as part of the animal's upbringing/training.¹⁹

But what really makes the question about what can be considered violence against companion animals such an intricate one is, as Solot points out, that violence against animals is an evident and accepted part of our culture. It makes it difficult to distinguish between acceptable and non acceptable violence. Solot writes:

*Raising and killing animals for meat or fur, fishing, experimentation, sport hunting, dissection, and killing insects and rodent 'pests' might all be considered clear examples of 'the willful infliction of harm, injury, and intended pain on nonhuman animal', yet these acts are practiced by millions of people annually and are not considered morally objectionable by most Americans.*²⁰

There are, in other words, a number of activities in our society that are aimed at raising and/or killing animals, sometimes under inhuman conditions. Solot's conclusion is that what we regard as violence against animals is more a question as what we define as a problem in our society, than what is actually done to the animals.

In this study, violence against animals is narrowed to pets and domestic animals only. Violence against a companion animal is defined in terms of basic needs for food, water and warmth being denied her/him, threats and other forms of abuse, and the inflicting of physical and/or sexual harm and pain, and finally killing her/him.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 260.

METHOD

My object with this study was to acquire an initial broad knowledge about whether or not violence against animals in woman-battering relationships was a known factor to the people who have to take care of the assaulted women.

I decided to send a questionnaire to a number of women's shelters.

I drew up a questionnaire based on information from an article where the authors had turned to the largest shelters for women in 49 states of the USA. They asked how many of these shelters had experienced incidents of battered women's animals being subjected to violence and/or threats of violence by the women's partners.²¹ Based on my knowledge of the amount of work the volunteers in these shelters have, I thought it was positive that the questionnaire had only six questions which could be answered by "yes" or "no" and an additional seventh open question with space for comments and general reflections.

I sent the questionnaire by ordinary mail and by electronic mail to 152 shelters for women. The questionnaire was also handed out to delegates at a conference for women who work in shelters. The delegates were able to answer the questionnaire during the week-end the conference occurred.

Now, afterwards, I realize I attached too much faith to the use of e-mail. It certainly is very fast but many error messages were sent back to me. And in one case all persons using the same net server never received my e-mail as the whole net server was corrupt. In other cases the e-mails were sent back as the recipient's letter box was full and some of the addresses too, were no longer valid. I decided to telephone thirty of the shelters to increase the number of replies.

²¹ Ascione and others., 1997, p. 212.

The total number of replies was 92 out of 152 questionnaires. The area of Sweden was covered from north to south and included sparsely-populated areas as well as small cities and larger cities.

THE SHELTERS' ANSWERS

In all, 92 questionnaires were answered. Five shelters said that violence against animals was not a burning question for them and three of those explained that they had started up recently. The fourth had no comment to make about it. The fifth said that, as they are a Young Women Shelter,²² this issue was not of direct concern to them. These five shelters were therefore excluded from the total number of shelters that answered the questionnaire, which was reduced to 87.

66 of 87 shelters said that the women who contacted them also told them that the family's companion animals had been subjected to violence or mistreatment by the man.²³ However, it is impossible from this to conclude the degree of violence. Occasionally the person filling in the answers added a: "it happens", "rarely" or "sometimes", but in most of the questionnaires no particulars were given. Others stated it was frequent and that the animals were often subjected to violence by the man.

Although it is well-known in many shelters that there is a risk for the animals to be subjected to violence or mistreatment, only 40 of 87 shelters regularly ask the question if there are any animals in the family. In 47 shelters that question is never asked at all. In my telephone interviews some sort of explanation to that was given. The majority of persons I interviewed said that the women voluntarily talked about the animal's situation only if the women needed help to place them or were worried about the animal's well-being and safety.

²² Young Women Shelters give shelter for young women subjected to physical and/or sexual abuse.

²³ The number of answers do not always correspond to the total population of 87. That is because I chose to not take into account "I don't know"- answers. Answers like: "it happens" and "sometimes" are accounted as affirmative answers.

This suggests that there might be a number of un-recorded cases of men's violence against the family's animals. However, it is possible that a woman who has already arranged for her animals to stay with a friend or a relative does not feel any acute worry for her animals and therefore does not mention their vulnerability.

In answer to the question whether the children said anything about the animals being subjected to any form of harm or violence, 37 of 87 shelters said the children did, while 50 of 87 said the children had not said anything about it. Here too the telephone interviews provided additional explanation. Some of the shelters only receive small children and they are not formally interviewed. One shelter said they never had had any children staying there and another said that the children staying there often spoke only very broken Swedish.

As many as 69 of 87 who answered the questionnaire reported that they saw a connection between the woman who was battered by her partner and the family's animals who were subjected to violence or mistreatment. 66 of 87 shelters stated that they had cases of women who had not left the batterer because they were worried about their animal's safety.

People working at the shelters were also asked if they knew of any municipal or any kind of emergency shelter for animals. From the answers, I deduced the question had been interpreted in different ways. 36 of 87 said there were emergency shelters for animals while 45 of 87 said there were none. Those who said there was somewhere for the animals to stay, generally meant privately run kennels or the local veterinary's surgery. Others answered that there were non-profit organisations like Friends of the Animals, The Samaritan's Society for Animals or a home for abandoned cats that could take care of a cat at short notice. Nobody said that they knew of any municipal emergency shelter for animals.

On rare occasions women with animals have been sent to stay at a hotel, since it is not possible to let them stay in the shelter as more and more children are suffering from more and more allergies. Staying at hotel is too expensive and less safe as a solution for most women.

But there are other ways to help a woman and her animals. In some cases the woman was allowed to bring her animal/animals to stay at the shelter. Sometimes an individual shelter volunteer would take the animal/animals home with her for a shorter or longer period.²⁴

The animals' vulnerable position is illuminated twofold. Even though they are the victims of violence and mistreatment there is no social safety net for them. In some places there are benevolent benefactors, often women, who take care of animals in need and at their own expense. In other places there are non-profit animal organizations that can step in in a crisis situation. But there is no evident local authority to turn to for an animal that needs an emergency shelter.

COMMENTS FROM SHELTERS

The answers to the seventh open question revealed several different aspects of violence against companion animals in woman-battering relationships. Their comments and their observations are confirmed in other research too. The shelter volunteers' answers underline the result obtained from the other questions in the questionnaire; that mistreatment and violence against animals is not an unknown phenomenon.

At the same time, it should be added that a small number of shelter volunteers had never given any thought to violence against animals before receiving the questionnaire. Some wrote that the questionnaire made them aware of the problem and added that they were going to take up the subject of animal violence when talking to battered women.

In shelters contacted mainly by non-Scandinavian immigrant women or located in areas populated mainly by immigrants, the volunteers stated that immigrants rarely live with animals in the same way as native Swedish people do.²⁵ One volunteer stated that second and

²⁴ One volunteer said that because of this she had been threatened by the battered woman's husband.

²⁵ This is something that is indirectly confirmed in an American research done by Flynn (2000). Flynn writes that battered women who have animals and who contacts shelters are mainly "white, married, employed, and have a partner/batterer who is employed", p. 167.

third generation immigrants tended more and more to have companion animals, so violence against companion animals could be a future problem for them.

Some of the shelter volunteers pointed out that violence against a companion animal depends on who owns and cares daily for the animal. If it is the man's dog she/he is not at risk of being subjected to violence. One volunteer describes how the man can set his dog on the woman. In this particular case the man threatened the woman with a trained fighting dog.

It is only if it is the woman's or the child's animal that the man can use the animal to demonstrate his power and/or as an instrument of psychological violence. One way to use the animals against the woman is to threaten to hurt them. Another way is to mistreat the animals by not giving them food or water when the woman is not at home and/or by not allowing them to go outside for their needs.

Many volunteers have written describing how the man has killed the family's companion animal: Cats thrown from the balcony; Cats and birds with their neck wrung; Birds in cages left out in the blazing sun; Puppies thrown against the wall; Badly assaulted animals that the volunteers had to take to a veterinary surgery to have put down; and in some cases when the animals disappeared from home they were found mutilated not far from the family home. Occasional cases were mentioned where the man had sexually abused the animal or forced the woman into sexual acts with the animal.

Children and companion animals often have a very close relationship and the child often identifies her/himself with the animal. In numerous cases the children are so worried about the animal left behind that the woman decides to go back to the man. In several cases the father threatened to kill or actually did kill the child's animal. One example given was of the father who phoned the shelter, spoke to his son and threatened to kill the boy's guinea-pig as they were talking on the phone, unless the boy saw to it that the mother returned to the home instantly. Another example is of the man who promised his children a cat and allowed them to

chose one of the newborn kittens. A few weeks later the man shoots the kitten in front of his wife and children.

It is important to note that all kinds of animals are involved. In the answers to the questionnaire the volunteers mention birds, hamsters, guinea-pigs, rabbits, cats and dogs. There is a risk that because of the close relationship of the family's companion animal to the woman and/or the children she/he will be hurt.

The biggest problem for the volunteers, which in some cases appears insoluble, is to arrange help for the big animals like horses and cows, sheep and other farm animals. These animals need daily care and you can't simply take them with you. The volunteers mention women leaving the shelter and going back to the farm to milk the cows and feed the animals when their husbands are at work.

To organize transport and accommodation for the bigger animals is of course very expensive and not many persons can do it or afford to do it. One example mentioned, which ended successfully, was of a man who threatened to cut the fetlocks of his wife's horse if she left him. The wife spoke to a volunteer at the shelter but hesitated to leave her husband as she was afraid he would put his threat into action. The volunteer at the shelter managed to arrange accommodation for the horse in another place with help from the Swedish Society for Protection of Horses and the wife was able to leave her husband.

Some of the volunteers write that, as they see it, the assaults on companion animals are part of an escalating violence. Violence against animals and killing animals is interpreted as a very strong warning to the woman that the man might use increasing violence and perhaps even kill her. This observation is confirmed in other research.²⁶

²⁶ Ascione and others, 1997, p.213 and Adams 1998 quoting Bonnie Bestow.

Animals, just like children, act as a detaining factor somewhere along the process of breaking up from the man.²⁷ The woman is worried about their safety, worried where she can place them and worried about what is going to happen to them. Later on in the process the woman realizes she has to break up and leave the man at all costs. Sometimes even if this means she has to leave the animal with the man.

Many shelter volunteers point out that it is often easier to help the women with their animals if the flight is planned. Then it is often possible to arrange for an emergency shelter for the animals. When the woman literally bolts then it is more difficult to help her. But they point out that usually something can be worked out. These situations would naturally not occur if the municipalities established animal shelters or gave subsidies to non-profit animal associations and animal advocacy associations so they can take in animals at short notice.

A COMPARISON WITH THE AMERICAN STUDY

The idea for my questionnaire came from reading an article by Ascione, Weber & Wood (1997). They made a questionnaire and sent it to 49 shelters in 49 states. I would like to present a comparison of the result from the two studies.

Ascione, Weber & Wood's answer frequency was 96% while mine was only 61%.²⁸ To the question did women talk about violence against companion animals 85% gave affirmative answers in the American study as against 76% in mine. 63% of the American women questioned in the USA said that children spoke about violence against animals while only 42% of the Swedish children mentioned it. About the connection between men's violence

²⁷ For a discussion about battered women's breaking up process see, Holmberg & Enander (2003).

²⁸ The total population differs and is in the former study 49 shelters and in this study 87 shelters, which is almost twice as many. But one can assume that the number of women turning to the biggest shelters represented in 49 of the states in USA are far more numerous than those turning to a shelter in a sparsely-populated rural area in Sweden. In some other respects the two studies differ. Ascione, Weber & Wood turned only to shelters in cities and the violence against animals was limited to having taken place during the last twelve months. In this study there is not time limit to when the violence should have been made known to the shelter volunteers. This study is about occurrences irrespective of time period and the shelters are in the countryside as well as in the cities and in densely populated areas.

against animals and men's violence against women about the same number of shelters observed such a connection; 83% and 79% respectively.

Finally, it seems that the Swedish shelter volunteers more often ask the women seeking shelter, if their animals are also subjected to violence. Only in 27% of the American shelters were questions about companion animals asked, while in Sweden these questions were asked in 46% of the shelters.

Neither the American shelters nor the Swedish ones seem to have any across-the-board co-operation with local animal protection organizations to offer emergency shelter for animals subjected to violence. In Ascione, Weber & Wood's study, 6 shelters had an on-going co-operation with a home for animals or a veterinary surgeon, whilst only one Swedish shelter wrote that they now had the possibility to arrange emergency shelter for companion animals through such a co-operation.

When it comes to violence against animals in woman-battering relationships it appears there are no great differences between the two countries. In general the volunteers observed a connection between men's violence against animals and violence against women. The greatest difference, when you compare the two studies, is that children staying in Swedish shelters talk less often about the violence. A reason for that might be that the Swedish shelters do not have enough resources to be able to develop a special dialogue activity with the children, and also that many of the children are said to be too young for this kind of conversation.

It seems that men's violence against animals is a strategic part of the assault and threat against women and children, irrespective of if it takes place in the USA or in Sweden.

A CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

The empiric study shows clearly that violence against companion animals in woman-battering relationships is not an un-known phenomenon among the volunteers at the shelters that answered the questionnaire. On the contrary, men seem to aim their violence against the

family's animals, which can lead to a deadly outcome. There is a clear connection between violence against animals and violence against women and children. Or, as Phil Arkows puts it: "When animals are abused, people are at risk – and vice versa."²⁹

When animals are subjected to violence it can be a sign that the violence is escalating and that the woman's life can be in danger. This underlines how important it is that shelter volunteers ask if there are companion animals in the family, and ask about their life and living conditions. This could be especially important in cases where there is only telephone contact with the woman, in order to get an idea of how serious the violence used against her and the animal is.

A few results that appeared through this study are important to highlight. 76% of the questioned shelters had had cases of women talking about violence against animals or threats to them and 42% also had cases of children talking about violence against the family's animals. This indicates that animals, to a great extent, are exposed to violence in woman-battering relationships and that also both women and children can suffer from traumatic ordeals because they were unable to protect and/or had been forced to leave their animal. Emotions that it is important to get help to deal with.

It is clear from the study that there is a need for municipal animal homes or alternatively that the local authorities support non-profit animal protection and animal advocacy organisations. It must be possible to place an animal in urgent need of emergency shelter in temporary accommodation. It is probably easier to arrange that for the smaller companion animals, while the big domestic animals create another form of problem and the need for greater resources. As I see it, it should not be non-profit women shelters that have to shoulder the responsibility for the animals. It should be a communal responsibility.

²⁹ Arkow 1996, p. 33.

That doesn't exclude non-profit shelters and local animal protection and animal advocacy organizations from establishing contacts with each other, so that the shelters have somewhere to turn to. At the same time, one has to remember what some of the volunteers wrote in the questionnaire; that some women can find it difficult to relinquish their animals because they are worried their husbands will find them.³⁰

A few questions that need to be answered are; whether there are any legal obstacles about removing the animal if the woman doesn't have proof of ownership? And can the volunteers of a non-profit organization be reported to the police by the husband if they take in the animal for its own protection? And how can the woman prove that the animal was abused by the man if he "just" threatened and/or in a small way mistreated the animal?

Another strictly legal question is when the man subjects the animal to sexual violence or forces the woman into sexual acts with the animal, as sex with animals is not forbidden in Swedish law. It falls under the law of cruelty to animals but then you confront the problem of proving that the animal actually suffered. This, from a legal point of view, might be difficult to prove.³¹ As I stated earlier there is still disagreement in our society about what is considered as inflicting pain to animals.

Of course one should take up the question of men using violence against animals with veterinary students and animal handlers so they may be able to identify the problem in their future work. Perhaps in the end, they can prevent the mercy killings of healthy animals and/or identify injuries that can be related to systematic violence.

IN CONCLUSION

Part of the feministic theoretical debate has pointed out that "modern" heterosexual couples, in relationships that claim to be built on equality between the sexes, are more "traditional"

³⁰ Also see Arkow 1996, p. 33.

upon closer examination. For example, the more traditional sharing of household chores is still as it was typical in the fifties in Sweden. Women have problems to get men to share equally the responsibility for home and children, despite the fact that they are both wage-earners working outside the home. This has led researchers to the conclusion that "modern" couples de facto remain "traditional" in many areas and that the changes in the sharing of household chores are not as "modern" as is assumed in the public debate.³²

If one wishes to take to extremes the results of this work, one could say that in Swedish society today, with its presupposed equality of the sexes, pair relationships are not only still built up in a traditional manner, but that there also still exists a master domination with its roots in the Swedish agrarian tradition and history. A system that is dominated by "home chastisement" which gave the master of the house the right to chastise/abuse all those in his household. In today's society men still seem to consider themselves as lord and master over life and death, with the wish to rule over their own women, children and companion animals.

It is clear from this study that it is very important to examine in greater depth the theoretical understanding about the relationship between violence against animals and violence against women. All with the aim to further reveal and, if possible, radically change the power structure of the sexes as it is expressed by their master's voice.

³¹ Private correspondence with Roger Pettersson, responsible for political questions in the Federation for Animal Rights.

³² Haavind 1985 and Holmberg 1993.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adams, J. Carol, "Woman-Battering and Harm to Animals" i, C.J.Adams & J.Donovan (Eds.), *Animals and Women – Feminist Theoretical Explorations*. Durham, Duke University Press 1995.
- Adams, J. Carol, "Bringing Peace Home: A Feminist Philosophical Perspective on the Abuse of Women, Children and Pet Animals" i, R. Lockwood & F. R. Ascione (Eds.), *Cruelty to Animals and Interpersonal Violence – Readings in Research and Application*, Indiana, Purdue University Press 1998.
- Adams, J. Carol, *The Sexual Politics of Meat – A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory*, New York, Continuum, 2000 (original 1990).
- Arkow, Phil, "The Relationships Between Animal Abuse and Other Forms of Family Violence" i, *Family Violence & Sexual Assault Bulletin* Vol 12 1996:1-2.
- Ascione, R. Frank, Weber, V. Claudia and Wood, S. David, "The Abuse of Animals and Domestic Violence: A National Survey of Shelters for Women who are Battered" i, *Society and Animals*, vol 5 1997:3.
- Ascione, Frank, R., "Battered Women's Report of Their Partners' and Their Children's Cruelty to Animals" i, R. Lockwood & F. R. Ascione, (Eds.), *Cruelty to Animals and Interpersonal Violence – Readings in Research and Application*, Indiana, Purdue University Press 1998.
- Bekkengen, Lisbeth, *Man får välja – Om föräldraskap och föräldradedighet i arbetsliv och familjeliv*, Stockholm, Liber AB 2002.
- Dunayer, Joan, *Animal Equality – Language and Liberation*, Maryland USA, Ryce Publishing 2001.
- Eriksson, Helena, *Mellan kvinnor och djur – mötet som utmanar antropocentrismen*, D-uppsats vt 2000, Religionsvetenskapliga institutionen, Göteborgs universitet, Göteborg 2000.
- Flynn, P. Clifton, "Woman's Best Friend – Pet Abuse and the Role of Companion Animals in the Lives of Battered Women" i, *Violence Against Women* vol 6 2000:2.
- Gålmark, Lisa, *Djurrätt – En fråga om frihet, jämlikhet, solidaritet*, Nora, Nya Doxa 1998.
- Haavind, Hanne, "Förändringar i förhållandet mellan kvinnor och män" i, *Kvinnovetenskaplig tidskrift* (6) 1985:3.
- Holmberg, Carin, *Det kallas kärlek – En socialpsykologisk studie om kvinnors underordning och mäns överordning bland unga jämställda par*, Göteborg, Anamma förlag 1993.
- Holmberg, Carin & Enander, Viveka, *Varför går hon – Om misshandlade kvinnors uppbrottsprocesser*, Ystad, Kabusa Böcker 2004.

Renzetti, Claire, M., *Violent betrayal: Partner abuse in lesbian relationships*, Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1992.

Solot, Dorian, "Utangling the Animal Abuse Web" i, *Society and Animals*, vol 5 1997:3.

Striwing, Helena, *Djur som brottsoffer*, Nora, Nya Doxa 1998.

With the Master's Voice

I denna artikel presenteras ett empiriskt material om svenska kvinnojourers kunskap om mäns våld mot djur i kvinnomisshandelsrelationer samt en jämförelse med en liknande amerikansk studie.

Ett tydligt mönster framträder. När en kvinna utsätts för våld eller hot om våld är risken stor att också hennes djur är utsatta för misshandel och/eller vanvård, också med dödlig utgång.

Studien visar med stor tydlighet att i Sverige finns det inte ett samhälleligt skyddsnät för de djur som behöver ett akut boende. Studiens mer teoretiska del understryker, såsom titeln antyder, att Sverige sin jämställdhetspolitik till trots ännu präglas av mäns makt över gruppen kvinnor.

WITH THE MASTER'S VOICE

In this article the author presents an empirical study about the knowledge in the Swedish women's shelter movement about men's violence against animals in violent relationships. The author also does a comparison with a similar American study.

A distinct pattern appears. When a woman is abused her animals also run the risk of abuse; sometimes in form of neglect of proper care and/or psychological mistreatment, sometimes in form of violent behavior even proved fatal.

This study shows that in the Swedish society there is no protection for animals in acute need for a shelter. The theoretical claim of the study is, as the title underlines, that although the government's politics for gender equality the Swedish society still can be characterized by male power structures.