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**Promoting gender quality:
a common issue for women and men**

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**Compilation of Council of Europe texts
dealing with the question of men and gender equality
1995-2000**

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# Introduction

For a number of years, the Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men has devoted specific attention to the question of men and gender equality. The main objective of its activities around this issue is to draw attention to and initiate a debate about the fact that gender equality cannot be achieved by women alone, but by women and men working together.

On the one hand, the advancement of women during the latter half of the 20$^{th}$ century has changed both women's and men's lives, and has sometimes created tensions between the sexes. On the other hand, it has become increasingly clear that the promotion of gender equality can no longer be seen as an issue exclusively for women. Progress in the future depends on a genuine dialogue between women and men, on the sharing of responsibilities between the sexes both in the private and the public sphere. At the same time, important structural problems concerning society as a whole, such as the question of male violence against women, cannot be solved unless men take responsibility for their own actions. In short, men are now expected to support and to take part in the promotion of gender equality.

The development of the strategy of gender mainstreaming has favoured this trend. This strategy has revealed that men can also expect an improvement in their lives from the achievement of gender equality. At least, it will help men to question their traditional roles, just as women have already done, and possibly help them to lead more satisfying and complete lives, through a greater involvement in the family and caring activities.

This publication contains a number of texts, which deal either directly with the question of men and gender equality or have a bearing on the issue. It is intended to give an idea about the work which has been conducted since 1995 in relation to men and gender equality. The texts are extracted from Council of Europe publications, which can all be obtained at the Equality Division, Directorate General of Human Rights. The extracts appear in chronological order.

**Extract from the speech of Mr Daniel Tarschys,
Secretary General of the Council of Europe,
at the United Nations 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women,
Beijing, 4-15 September 1995**

*Looking at equality in a new way – strategies forward*

A new approach to equality is being worked out within the Council of Europe, from which I hope this Conference will draw inspiration.

> **We must seize this opportunity to look at equality in a positive vein, that is: not in terms of the power struggle between men and women, but in terms of what each sex can contribute to the functioning of society and what society as a whole can gain from it. The aim should be to strive for a new social contract in which women can fully assert themselves, based upon solidarity between women and men, upon partnership and parity of the two components of humankind, equal in dignity and worth.**

It implies the redefinition of the traditional roles of women and men, overcoming obstacles to women's self-determination and reconciling family and professional life for both sexes, at individual level and in the organisation and structures of political and public life.

This approach also implies new methods to promote equality. Statistics, research, information on discrimination against women are, of course, important. But, for the future, our main aim should be to incorporate gender equality as a natural component in all areas of policy and at all levels (local, regional, national, supra-national, international). This means that the knowledge, experience, needs, interests and opinions of both women and men must form the basis for devising policies in all areas of society. This holds true for social affairs, culture and education, as well as in areas habitually labelled as "gender neutral", such as industrial, economic, financial, environmental, defence and foreign policy. This gender equality perspective must go hand in hand with measures to promote equality, such as equality machinery and legislation.

> **Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, we must acknowledge that equality between women and men is a matter for society as a whole: it concerns all walks of life. It concerns both women and men, and both need to work together to make equality successful.**
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> **We need to find ways and means of helping men understand what they, too, will gain from a genuine partnership and sharing of responsibilities in public, professional and private life, and, foremost, what they – and society – will lose without it**.

**Information forum on national policies in the field of equality between women and men Budapest (Hungary), 6-8 November 1995**

**"Making information available to sensitise women and men"**

**Introductory report by Mr Göran WIMMERSTRÖM (Sweden)**

My name is Göran Wimmerström and I come from Stockholm in Sweden. I have three educations. In the first place, I am a trained bootmaker but I left that behind many years ago, second, I am a bachelor of science in social work and recently, I became a family therapist. I also work with three things. In January 1988, I started a Crisis Centre for men in Stockholm and I have been working there since. It is called Manscentrum. Today we are three persons working there and it is run as a private foundation which gets money from the city, the health care, churches and other organisations. During these almost eight years, we have welcomed almost 5000 men. These are grown-up ordinary men and the problems they have can be divorce, problems relating to the children, violence against their wives or the children, harassment at work, grief over someone's death, sexual problems, abortion, incest, unfaithfulness or other things that can happen in life. We work on a short-term basis and the therapy is from 3 to 10 times. Sometimes, we bring in the woman or other persons who are related to the man but mainly we work individually with the man. The results are good and we are today well-known in the Stockholm area.

My second task is that I work with violent men. For the first three and a half years, we worked individually with the violent men and the result was so-so. During the last four years, we offer these men a different form of therapy. We put them in groups after meeting them individually for a couple of sessions. Our experience is that it is hard to suggest group-therapy to a man on the telephone at his first call. So, after a few sessions, we suggest the group make a contract and fill in a form. The contract says among other things that he can not threaten, scare or hit anyone on the earth while he is in the group, he has to be sober in the group, not be late or leave before it is finished, not kill himself while he is in the group and he is supposed to attend the group ten times in a row. If one of the rules is broken, he has to start all over again. This means that only 30% go ten times in a row. The average is 16-17 times. There was even once a man who came the tenth time and said: I have had a strong beer! I told him that he had to start all over again and he replied: Yes indeed! On the question why, he said that he did not feel secure and that he did not trust himself yet. He needed a couple of extra sessions which he got.

The man attends the group the first time as a newcomer and, in the group, there are already men who have attended the group maybe 5, 7 or 10 times. In short, what happens in the group is that we focus on the violence as a start, break down the defenses around the violence, such as: I was drunk, I lost control, she is so provocative, I had a bad day at work, I come from another country where it is okay to batter your spouse, and so on, which only are cover-ups trying to hide the fact that I am a violent man. Other themes in the group are childhood, relations to the parent, relations to women, communication, trust, sadness and sorrow.

During the first sessions, the men try to explain why they are violent but I and the other members of the group break down these defenses. But you know, my wife is so stupid. Well, does she get smarter when you hit her? After this, the man usually goes into a depression which is the psychological breakdown where about 50% do not show up for a couple of times. Here they are really depressed and are even thinking about ending their lives. That is why the rule that you are not allowed to kill yourself is in the contract. After the therapy is finished, I meet the men individually again for one or two sessions. We bring out the form which he filled in before entering the group and we go through it again. When he answers the questions this time, he responds totally differently and the feeling of change is very strong.

Afterwards, we meet the men 2-3 times a year and we also have contact with the women and, as far as we know, no man has ended the group during these four years and gone back to being violent. So far, almost all who have started the group have also ended it. This confused us quite a lot in the beginning. Maybe you have also heard people saying that a man who hits will always do it again? Or that a woman who has been hit always goes into a new relationship where she gets beaten? Or even that children who are sexually abused will be abusive themselves as grown-ups? For me this is fundamentalism. One truth. I myself have this word that carries me through all that I am doing, and that word is **change**. I believe that people can be changed as long as they are not brain damaged or total psychopaths. Hopefully, you feel the same.

I have now established this way of working with violent men in 6-7 places in Sweden and also in the north of Norway, and they will soon start it in Iceland. And it works just as well in other places, even though they work a bit differently. In a prison in Sweden, there are even two women working this way. It seems to be going all right, but they have big difficulties with their male employees at the prison. Typical.

The third task I have today is that I am a "daddy-education-educator". Do you understand? Well, I hardly understand myself. It all started in 1990 when I was asked by a woman in a community north of Stockholm if I could be a daddy-educator. The meeting was to gather "pregnant" men in groups before the birth and then to meet them regularly as long as they were willing to meet. She had the idea that maybe something would happen with the families if you did this.

I thought about this a lot. I myself had only gone through one pregnancy and one birth, so maybe I was not experienced enough. But I have a friend who had then made a study of 400 fathers in Stockholm who had taken parental leave. He had interviewed them and one question he had for them was: What advice would you give to those men who are expecting their first child? He got a lot of answers and I thought that, since I had all this advice, I had at least something to start with. The most common answer from 400 men was: hold on, things will get better.

I accepted and a midwife from the centre of Stockholm called me and said that she had a group of 8 men who were interested, she had read about this and told them, and she thought that I might need some practise. I agreed to meet her 8 men. So, one evening I met with the 8 men. I asked them if they were expecting their first child soon, they said yes and I thought that it would be nice if we showed our inner feelings for each other, so I said: I would like you to talk about your inner feeling of becoming a father for the first time. And I turned to the right and said to the man: Maybe you can start?

He got all paralysed, but this was a clever guy so he responded while looking at his watch: Oh, I forgot that I have another meeting booked, and he went right out the door. The other men sat quiet and the anxiety got real high in the room. And I thought that this was perhaps not such a good idea. Then we got started in the community and I had several meetings with the midwives. The midwives meet with the couples before the birth and they also have a course for the couple, 4 to 6 times before birth. The midwives liked the idea and I asked them if they could provide me with some pregnant men. And they said that they could. So we prepared an invitation where it said that Göran Wimmerström from the Manscentrum in Stockholm was coming to talk about the role of the modern man, sexuality, feelings of becoming a father, birth, the new life and so on. Then, the midwives printed this and of course they printed it on pink paper. They also drew some seagulls, clouds, grass, flowers and they even got a bloody balloon on the paper.

They distributed the invitation to 50 fathers to be. One showed up, 49 looked at it and threw it right into the dustbin. And it was not exactly Rambo who came. Then I told the midwives that we had to lie. They were not too keen on that, but I took the responsibility and, instead, the midwives distributed a little note which only said Göran, five o'clock and the date. And when they gave it to the men, they said that there is a man coming with specific information for the "pregnant" men. The men asked of course: What is it about? and the midwives said: Well, about your role at the birth and how you could squeeze the most money

out of the parental leave insurance. The little note was given to 13 men during two days one week before and they all showed up. Of course, they all had the little note in their hand and they asked when they came: Is this the place where we are supposed to discuss money? I said: Sure, step right in.

I did not speak a bit about money, instead I spoke about all the "soft" issues and not one of them was disappointed. They also laughed when I told them about the note. So I had my first group. During the following year of 1991, I met with almost 120 men. The invitation became something in between the two versions. But very strict, just black letters on white paper. The project with these 120 men went so well that I had another opportunity in 1993 in a part of Stockholm where I met with about 350 men. And I kept on doing this by giving out information in the community and in this particularly part of Stockholm, since all those who get children in these areas believe that daddy-education is something natural which you go to. So, in round figures, I have met approximately 700-800 men.

I ask them all some questions before the first meeting. I ask them, since they are expecting their first child in a couple of weeks, how they feel. They all answer Good, No problem or OK. Not a single man says: Well, I am a little bit worried about how things will turn out. Not one! So I have met 800 liars. I also ask them what they know about the first 6-12 months after the child is born and almost all of them say: Nothing. Don't you read books about this period? No. Have your wives not given you books to read about this period? Yeah, sure. A whole bunch. Have you read them? No. Have you asked other men who have children about this period? No. Maybe one or two have tried. You have three children and I am expecting my first, how will life be? And what is the most common answer in the male world? Well you know how it is, you have to take it as it comes, Good luck! BANG! (On the shoulder). And you stand there just as confused as before. And then I ask them: Have you asked your fathers? And then they start to laugh. Ask my father, are you stupid or something, he does not know a thing. But he got you, did he not? Yeah, well, you know it is all different now.

And, by all means, it is. Almost all men in Sweden who are becoming fathers today did not have their own fathers at their own birth. Their fathers did not spend one extra minute with them during their first years. They all worked full time during this period. And how is it today? Well, the fathers to be in Sweden attend the midwives education, not all the 4-6 times perhaps, but almost all of them attend a least 1-2 times. Almost 100% attend the birth in Sweden today and you have a right to take 10 days off from work the first month after the birth of the baby and 90% use these ten days. About 40% of the Swedish fathers take a couple of weeks or a month off from work to spend with their children, while their wife goes to work, and you can also stay home ten days a year from work if your child is sick and today men take almost 40% of this time in Sweden. Do you have any memories of your father sitting at your bedside when you where three years old and sick? So it is a completely new world and it has been formed in one generation. Swedish men are today in a sense pioneers since they are the first in the world to do this.

The groups I had in 1991 always ended with me asking: Would you like to meet again? They all said yes, so we met once a month until their children were 6-8 months old, then they said no, we have no time, we have children you know. Two hours a month, away. The themes in the groups were to deal with the child, sexuality, communication, the importance of taking parental leave, taking care of the relationship between the woman and the man, situations when she is giving birth and hundreds of other things. Personally, I think the most important thing was that they got to meet each other and were not able to notice that they were alone with their thoughts, since men often live like islands and do not talk to each other about how they really feel. And, of course, that it was a man holding the groups.

In 1991, about 24% of the fathers took parental leave in Sweden. And the ones who took parental leave stayed at home for an average of 32 days. In the group of 120 men, who constituted one third of all those who got children that year in this community (about 360 babies were born during that year), 63% took parental leave and stayed home for approximately 54 days. And this group did not only comprise those who had already made up their mind. The group was pretty average compared to the total population.

In Sweden, approximately 15% split up before the child is two years old. Now, four years later, of the 120 families in the group only four separated. 116 are still living together. And the men are positive about this and so are the women; the midwives and the nurses who work with babies are positive since they think that their work has been more interesting in that they also meet men. And when you ask the police and the social welfare (*socialbureau*), they have the feeling, as this is hard to prove scientifically, that reports of dysfunctioning families have gone down in this community. And it has gone up in the communities next door.

So, today I am working with a project for the Equality Board, attached to the Social Department, on training and educating 90 men as daddy-educators in four districts in Sweden. They have been doing this for 16 months and will continue doing this until the new year, and hopefully, the health administration in the district will take over in 1996. The project is being researched and the families will be followed in the districts to see what if anything will happen. Personally, I think something will. It seems that, when men get attached to their children, the sooner the better, something does happen. It seems that, if men have better relationships with their children, they understand relationships better and, in a way, they become more socially competent. And the families have less conflicts, less divorces, less violence and the children will be early grounded in a good manhood. New scientific research has shown that the most aggressive and violent boys in kindergarten and school often lack a good relationship with an adult man. Which also is a question of equality for women. But I hope that we will have time to discuss these things during the workshops.

During this project, daddy-education started in about 30 places in Sweden; they are starting it in Norway and they have plans to do something similar in Iceland.

**Information forum on national policies in the field of equality between women and men**
**Budapest (Hungary), 6-8 November 1995**

**Report of Working Group 3 on the theme**

**"Making information available to sensitise women and men"**

**Chair: Ms Ludmila BOJKOVA (Bulgaria)**
**Rapporteur: Mr Göran WIMMERSTRÖM (Sweden)**

A wide range of issues was raised and extensively discussed by participants on the question of making information available to sensitise women and men. The following points were considered to be crucial, although not exhaustive, for bringing about a real partnership between the sexes:

At the outset, it appeared that **relations between women and men** needed to be reviewed as they live in different worlds: practice shows that men experience as many problems in taking their place in the family as women have in obtaining their place in working life. It is essential that both women and men make an effort to allow each other into the other's world as a first step towards mutual understanding. Only then will both sexes be able to start building a real partnership. It also implies that, at the same time, each individual should try to preserve her and his own private sphere of close relationships (friends, etc.).

**Parental leave**, in the sense of paternity leave, will actually be taken by men if they are initiated - preferably in groups. It is also important to inform women and make them realise that such a measure is beneficial for themselves, the couple and the child.

The question of **divorce** was also extensively discussed. Participants shared their own experiences with divorce and discussed the legal systems applicable in their respective countries. It appeared that **joint custody**, which exists in several countries, can provide, in some cases, the best solution for the children involved. Participants agreed that steps should be taken both legally and politically to have this option created for divorced couples in member States.

In this context, work in the field with parents-to-be and couples who have recently become parents seems to indicate that informing women and men about parenthood - preferably separately - would curb the divorce rate. As to the sex of the child, participants found that the traditional wish for a boy (especially concerning the firstborn) - often of both the father and the mother-to-be - is no longer the rule.

Participants also examined relations in terms of **quantity versus quality**. They concluded that since quality seems to depend on quantity, in particular in the parent-child relation, fathers should be encouraged to spend time with their children. Both parental leave and joined custody seemed suitable instruments for different situations.

In terms of the work on and the promotion of **equality between women and men**, it is necessary to involve men, but not at the cost of losing the initial focus. This process of integrating men in the debate would be achieved in two stages:

1) the first stage is the current process of change; ideas about and attitudes towards equality between women and men are evolving, although at a different pace depending on the countries. Some participants expected this process to accelerate in Central and East Europe;

2)      at the second stage, women would have <u>more time</u> and would no longer have the burden of double work. To achieve this, men should participate and share rights and responsibilities.

The **financial aspect** was also thought to be important. Financial security has a clear positive impact on increasing communication and understanding, in reducing divorces, violence, insecurity, juvenile institutions or fosterhomes and, in the end, it saves money for society.

Finally, participants thought that it was crucial that information be made available to both sexes, not only to men. It was felt that, in general, the widespread approach consisting of sensitising men only is not adequate to achieve equality between women and men. Such an approach is too simple - but it is a start.

**International seminar**

**Promoting equality: a common issue for men and women**
**(Strasbourg, 17-18 June 1997)**

**"Equality: a factor for the positive development of men's roles and of society"**

**Keynote speech by Mr Bengt WESTERBERG (Sweden)**

The struggle for equality between men and women has traditionally been more important to women than to men. From a historic point of view that is quite easy to understand. Women have for a long time been subordinated and underprivileged compared to men, and they have not had the same opportunities for education, occupations, careers, positions of power, income, etc.

Thanks to gradual reforms, women have conquered many of these privileges. In some countries, my own for example, you can say that today women have obtained equality *de jure*. In other countries, even if steps have been taken in that same direction, differences even in formal opportunities still remain. And everywhere, also where women *de jure* are equal, there is still a long way to go before we have reached equality *de facto*.

It is also a fact that women are still much more involved in the debate and the struggle than men are. For example, seminars and conferences on equality are attended by women to a much larger extent than by men.

In this seminar we are talking about equality between men and women. This project has long been regarded as an issue exclusively for women. There has been much talk about feminism, emancipation of women, female policy, etc. The lack of equality has been seen as a problem only concerning women. Their situation has to be changed in order to expand their life chances and their economic independence and to give them the same opportunities as men. Many countries still stick to this approach.

But where women's issues have been renamed "equality issues", this has proved to be a way to include men in the process of change. This is the perspective of this seminar and it has also been adopted in some of our countries. It is an indication that some people realise that not only women but also men have to change their lives if we want to lead more equal lives. In practice, however, this knowledge has so far not made many marks in the real lives of men, not even in countries where, for some decades now, this has been the point of departure in the debate.

In some countries, the conditions for women have changed dramatically during the post-war period and especially since the 1960s. The rate of employment for women, also women with small children, has approached that of men. As a consequence, women have become economically more independent which has contributed to increasing their personal freedom. Today, in all parts of life traditionally dominated by men, we also meet women.

However, at the same time, women usually keep the main responsibility for home and children. They still perform two thirds or more of the unpaid work at home. Time studies have shown, again and again, that the talk of women doing double work is not groundless.

I guess that the Swedish debate and experience may be of some general interest. In the 1960s, it was feared that Sweden would run the risk of becoming short of labour. One way to meet this threat was to mobilise women. Recognising that women did a lot of work in their homes, we discussed how to relieve them in order to free their labour force for the labour market. The main solution chosen was to extend

childcare and care for elderly people in the public sector. But when studying the use of time in the 1990s, after three decades of incomparable expansion of those services, the amount of unpaid work done by women was about the same. The time spent on running the household is not much shorter now than it was in the 1930s!

Noticing this does not mean that the extension of childcare and care for the elderly has not been of utmost importance to create more equal opportunities. It has been a prerequisite for the increased presence of women in the labour market. But on the whole, extended services have not unburdened women as much as was expected. And there are, of course, explanations.

Even with childcare centres taking care of the children while the parents are at work, children must be delivered to and picked up from the centre. Parents are often expected to attend meetings with the staff, performances made by their children, etc. And when getting home after a long day's separation from their children, many parents feel that they should spend an hour or two playing more actively with them than most parents ever did 60 years ago.

Not only services have improved but also the technology used in homes, washing machines and the like. But we do not use the new rational technology only to do the laundry more efficiently than we did in the 1930s - we have many more clothes, we usually do not wear the same shirt two days running, so we have to wash more often. In many families with children, the washing machine works several times a week, perhaps more or less every day. And the laundry must be put into the machine, taken out of it, be put into the tumble drier or the airing cupboard, etc etc. Everything takes time, even in a modern household!

I am telling you this because I think it leads us to an important conclusion. Extended services and new techniques will not reduce the unpaid work necessary to run a home to the extent we might have thought it would. So, if we aim at relieving women of their traditional domestic responsibilities, we men must be prepared to do a larger part of the unpaid work. I feel convinced that the inequalities between men and women that we can still find in business life, universities, politics and elsewhere to a large extent reflect inequalities within homes and families. So I would like to say that equality at home is a prerequisite for equality in society as a whole.

So far, apparently men have not felt the same motivation as women to change their ways of living in order to promote equality. We must merely state that men have not found gender equality to be in their interest. And no wonder about that: few groups voluntarily refuse privileges, especially if they do not feel that they get nothing else in exchange.

Irrespective of the absence of men in the struggle for equality, there has been progress - although it has not been as successful as some of us may have wished. Everything points towards continuing steps forward. But I think it is time we asked ourselves if it is only a question of time or if there are other, less visible, more subtle obstacles to real equality. My answers are "yes" to both questions.

I think it is, of course, partly a question of time. There have been vast changes from my father's generation to my own, or further to my children's - and more changes are to come. But I am convinced that it is not only a question of time. Besides rules and other formalities which historically have discriminated against women, and which have now been corrected in other countries, there is also what we can call an informal power structure that contributes to the survival of the traditional gender system. Women have long experienced this informal power structure but have not always realised its importance, or have at least underestimated it. We men have not recognised it. I think this is at least part of the answer to the question of why progress in equality has been limited.

The Swedish historian Yvonne Hirdman has formulated what she calls two logics that constitute this informal power structure: the general separation of the male and female worlds - clearly seen in both the

labour market and the domestic area - and the primacy of male norms in the world that is common to men and women. The informal power structure is, not surprisingly, much more difficult to discover and even more difficult to change than the formal structure. The informal structure has impact on our individual lives, our relations to each other, our way of living in our families and so on. The different expectations of boys and girls, men and women, is part of this informal structure. Let me give you a few examples of how it works.

Some years ago, when I was Minister of Equality for Sweden, I initiated an investigation to increase the understanding of why there are so few women in the top positions of business companies in my country. When asking male managers for an explanation, the investigator got several answers, among them that between the ages of 25 and 32 when you have to give everything if you plan for a business career, women tend to have a family and children. *Women* tend to! How do they do it? Usually there are also men involved. But for us, family and children are evidently not seen as obstacles.

We can see that the claims laid to a chief executive, or even managers on a lower level, are much easier to comply with for a man without many other obligations than his work. For him, it is easier to come early, stay late, work at weekends, go for a trip abroad at short notice and so on. Leadership positions are impregnated with male norms. It has gone so far that leadership in itself has a sex. It is male. There are hundreds of books written about leadership in general and some about female leadership, which is looked upon as a special form of leadership. But I suppose few of you have ever seen or read a book about male leadership. Male leadership is a kind of tautology, isn't it?

As a Minister, I also proposed in 1994 a father's quota in the Swedish parental leave insurance. You cannot guess how many men I met then who could never imagine taking a month's leave, because they were irreplaceable at their workplaces. It is a blessing in disguise that there are almost no irreplaceable women in the labour market -they only seem to be irreplaceable at home.

And when the father's quota was mentioned in the newspapers, it was regularly called compulsory or coercion. Have you heard of compulsory maternity leave, or the terrible coercion that forces mothers to stay at home with their small children? Of course the entire parental leave system is voluntary, for both men and women. But the wording reflects the male norms still prevailing in society.

It is important to see how patterns of society often reflect this informal power structure. But this insight is not enough. Of course, there must also be a true desire to change the social patterns and a readiness to discuss the informal power structure, even at the cost of demand for change in our own ways of living. Our experience so far is, however, that men have neither been driven by a strong desire to change the patterns nor been willing to recognise the informal power structures. Perhaps the preparedness to accept reforms *de jure* has partly been because many men have felt that it is not that important in real life.

If we want the struggle for equality to accelerate, I think it is urgent that we men recognise the existence of the informal power structure and, of course, are ready to do something about it. But why should we? What is in it for us? There is no doubt that equality has improved the life chances and the situation for women. But are we men not condemned to lose as equality develops: to have less power, more competition for jobs and positions, more responsibility for unpaid work, a male role that is questioned? Why should we take part in the struggle?

In spite of these possible consequences, there are men who have already been actively involved in the struggle. We might ask ourselves what their driving forces have been. Let me point out five that I have found referred to when studying this issue:

The first is the feeling many men have that groups with both men and women are more effective, efficient and nicer to be part of than groups dominated by men. There are several reasons for this. One is

that men and women, because of their cultural differences, have often had different experiences and have different perspectives on things. That means that as women get into a previously male-dominated group, new competence is added. Of course, this is also true when men get into female-dominated groups, for instance in day care centres. Another reason for the positive effects of mixed groups is that men and women can often have disciplining and encouraging effects on each other. We can describe this as a sexual tension that can be productive in working life.

A third apparent rationale for mixed groups is that most teams work towards a market where there are both men and women. The effectiveness as they try to meet the needs of their customers, clients, patients, pupils or whatever category, in which there are both men and women, should be better if there are both men and women also in their own team.

One example can illustrate this thesis. A few years ago, as the Swedish Parliament celebrated that it was 75 years since women in Sweden got the right to vote and to be elected to Parliament, a Swedish historian, Professor Ann-Sofi Ohlander, gave a lecture in which she tried to show what the entry of women had meant to the political agenda and to the decisions made. She had found that both had been influenced to a large extent. New questions, especially concerning women and children, had been raised. Of course, these women added new experiences and perspectives to the Parliament which thus became more sensitive to many of the real problems of the Swedish citizens.

A second possible motive for men to take part in the struggle for equality will be touched upon more deeply by the next keynote speaker. Let me just note that in recent years many male networks have been founded which are based on the conviction that a more equal society will also be more peaceful.

I recently read a book, recommended to me by Eva Moberg, who you will hear more from this afternoon and who is a kind of prime mover of this seminar. The book is written by Riane Eisler and was published some ten years ago. Its name is "The Chalice and the Blade". Eisler shows that there is quite a high probability that Europeans in prehistoric times, until a couple of thousand years before Christ, lead more partnership-like lives than during the several thousand years of patriarchy.

Of course we cannot know for sure what things were like so long ago, but I find Eisler's hypothesis, based on an analysis of archaeological data, very credible. And at the same time very hopeful, as it shows that there is an alternative to the kind of society, based to a high degree on violence, that we now live in. Violence is, according to Eisler, not more natural for human beings than peace.

I suspect that Riane Eisler was also an inspiration to Eva Moberg when some years ago she started her campaign for a UN Conference on the male role. This seminar is a big step towards her goal, which is now also mine and many others.

Let me now leave the anti-violence motive and turn to three others that are all found in the research of the Norwegian sociologists Oystein Gullvag Holter and Helene Aarseth. Holter and Aarseth have studied a group of men who belong to the equality avant-garde in Norway. The researchers have tried to find out what the motives of these men were and they point out three archetypes of men.

The first one is what they call *the man of justice*. They note that in principle, many men are in favour of justice. But in individual cases, there are often obstacles to living according to the accepted principles. The man of justice, however, follows the principles also in practice simply because he finds it just to do so.

The second archetype is called the *careerist*. His point of departure as he looks at the family is his job. He might have observed that organisations in the modern world are changing. They are becoming less hierarchical. He has learned that these new organisations may be more fitting for women and he thinks, for

his future competitiveness in the labour market, that he should learn more of the kind that women know. One way to do that, he thinks, might be to stay home with his children for a while. So he makes his contribution at home hoping that in the future he will profit from that in his work. This type may sound a little suspect to you, but the researchers point out that he is closer to his children than others. It is from those contacts that he hopes to learn more about relationships, not from washing, cleaning or even golfing.

The third, and last, archetype is the *caring man.* His involvement in the family is not limited to his role as father. He thinks family life is really part of real life. To be an active and committed part of the family, and not only the breadwinner, adds to what he finds to be the quality of life.

All the five motives I have mentioned - and perhaps others - might be important in mobilising men for gender equality, but I feel that this last motive, let us call it to be a good father, is probably quantitatively the most important, the one motive that might make men march for equality. But I still say, *might*, not *will* make us march, because I do not think that even this motive is as strong a driving force as those that women have had.

More and more men realise, however, that they are important for their children. The absence of fathers is a social problem discussed in many countries. We know that the absence of a father will not necessarily mean social problems but we also know that young boys with social problems often miss their fathers. And among our male prisoners (and most prisoners are men) the absence of fathers during their adolescence seems to be a very common problem. So more fathers have become conscious of their significance for their children.

There is an interesting observation in the Norwegian study, which has been made also in other similar studies, that many of the men who endeavour to be more equal do that in a kind of protest against their own fathers who they perceived as absent.

But men do not want to be present only for their children's sake, but also for their own. A life where we stand all the time with both feet in working life has its limits. I think that many men look at the double-working women with somewhat divided feelings. On the one hand it looks tiring, of course, but on the other they may find that those women lead a more complete life, with one foot in production and one in reproduction. And many men probably envy that.

I find it desirable to encourage a debate on the terms of life. I hope such a debate will make many men question their traditional role and become more open to change it. We must also support those men who want to become more equal partners both at home and in the workplace. My proposal about the father's quota, which was accepted by Parliament and is now part of the Swedish parental insurance, was a very moderate step.

It must be followed by many more if we really want to achieve equality between men and women. What I am now waiting for is the first CEO to state that he expects all men in his company who become fathers to share the parental leave with their wives and that not doing so must be understood as a serious lack of responsibility that in the future will limit their chances for a career in the company.

Women have for a long time now been questioning their traditional role. In many countries they have also had the guts to change it. The time has come for us men to do the same. And we have many good reasons to do it. I feel convinced that a society built on partnership between men and women will mean progress for humanity and will be better prepared to meet all kinds of threats to the human race.

I hope that this seminar will be an important stimulus for an intensified discussion on these matters all over Europe.

# International seminar

## Promoting equality: a common issue for men and women
### (Strasbourg, 17-18 June 1997)

## "Men and violence: the logic of inequality[1]"

### Keynote speech by Professor Alberto GODENZI (Switzerland)

Inequality between men and women and violence of men against women are worldwide phenomena.

Although the extent both of inequality and of violence varies between the different countries, it is now widely acknowledged, as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) states, that "there is no country in the world in which women are as well treated as men".

In this context one cannot but ask if men are superior - and as they are obviously not - if they are dominant and exploitative by nature.

Bertolt Brecht had one of his characters say in a novel: "No man is born a butcher". To become a hardened "tough guy" takes time and is costly. Such a personality has to be acquired. Although we have the biological apparatus that makes us capable of committing violent acts (men perhaps a little more so than women), biology itself is only in a few pathological cases the cause of acts of violence. If it is not biology, it can only be the social world.

The composition of the social world exerts influence on the interpersonal inclination to commit acts of violence and consequently also on the violence of men against women. In this speech I shall focus on this topic - taking into account the factor of inequality. The connection between inequality and men's violence cannot be fully comprehended on a one-dimensional basis. Of course, there are other variables which can have an influence on the use of violence (such as cultural norms and their effect on interpersonal behaviour or overall level of violence). Nevertheless, inequality seems to be the crucial factor which influences violence.

We are - through comparative-cultural research - familiar with groups in which men's intimate violence against women belongs to the standard behaviour repertoire, and we know of groups in which men use less or even no violence against their partners (Levinson, 1989).

Groups with less violence are characterised by cooperation and equality amongst their members. Equality is attributed considerable importance.

We know today that control over income and possession, that is, over economic power, is not only the primary variable affecting sexual equality but is logically also the very foundation of violence against women. We also know that although women make up half of the world population and work considerably more than men, they receive in return only a fraction of income and their global possessions make up less than one per cent.

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1. This paper is constructed on the invaluable work of various scholars, amongst whom I would like to emphasise Catarine MacKinnon and Pierre Bourdieu (who are not liable for any fallacies in this text). I also wish to thank Mary Heine for her help in editing the final draft of the text.

In all the groups characterised by sexual equality known through anthropological research women wielded at least half the economic power (Blumberg, 1984). It is interesting to note that in the observed groups there exists no linear relation between sexual equality and gender differentiation. Sexual equality occurs when women and men do the same things and do not overtly stress their biological features, that is to say, gender differentiation does not exist. But sexual equality also occurs when there is a clear gender differentiation and when the fields of activities are segregated according to gender. And finally there is sexual equality in groups with higher gender differentiation and at the same time more cooperation between the genders in relation to different fields of activity. Once again the decisive factor in all three constellations is the economic parity of women.

Of course, these observations must be relativised as all of these groups are small in numbers. Their group structures are easily comprehensible as are their organisational and technical levels. In all more populous human associations whose political, economic and stratification systems are correspondingly more complex, throughout the various stages of development male dominance - especially the control of economic power - has asserted itself in no uncertain way.

I will not go into the possible reasons for this seizure of power but wish merely to stress that sexual equality can hardly be achieved without undoing male control of economic power. The control of economic power exerts influence on such varying and relevant areas as fertility, marriage, divorce, premarital sex, (...), freedom of movement, access to education (Blumberg, 1984). We can be certain about one point: "The lower women's relative economic power, the more likely they are to be oppressed physically, politically and ideologically" (p. 75.).

The following observations exemplify the connection between equality and violence:

Physical oppression of women, especially men's violence against women, occurs less in the anthropologically investigated groups in which women have organised themselves into separate economic entities which men do not enter or control.

Men's violence is also less frequent when the future prospects of women facing divorce are good.

Finally, men's violence also occurs less often when men solve their conflicts with other men in a peaceful way.

You can see the work that lies ahead of us and you can also see that perspectives which show up the connections between inner- and extra-family violence are needed.

The relation between sexual inequality and men's violence is obvious and operates both ways. Firstly, insofar as inequality promotes and encourages violence, it is to be interpreted as an expression or consequence of inequality and secondly, inequality is perpetuated and promoted by violence. Here violence is the means, the instrument to maintain and assert inequality. The connection between inequality and violence has been summed up aptly by the Canadian Panel on Violence against Women: "Ending Violence - Achieving Equality".

Although it is certain that unequal structures provide an ideal breeding ground for violence, they are not per se a precondition of violence. Violence is thinkable without inequality. Inequality is, on the other hand, always inextricably bound up with violence, not so much in a physical or psychological sense but more in a structural, that is, economic sense.

Through the means of inequality and dominance it has often been tried to solve the tasks of distribution social groups are faced with. The tricky question is how scarce or finite resources ought to be distributed. Scarce resources include especially material wealth, prestige and power.

Inequality means a social disparity in power, opportunity, privilege and justice between groups. Therefore, inherent in the concept of inequality is a relation in which one or more groups exploit or expropriate another or other groups. "(...) [T]he advantage that one group enjoys depends inextricably on the disadvantage that another suffers. (...) if one group enjoys a larger portion of a finite resource, the only place from which it can have come is the other group or groups who reside in the same social system" (Jackman, 1994, p. 2) respectively in the same social field.

In these struggles for resources or capital there are winners and losers. The winners are defined as dominant groups, the losers as subordinated groups.

Particular fields are marked more by structural violence (for example, the fields of justice or economics); in others physical and psychological violence dominate (as, for example, in the area of couple relations).

Physical violence (the most obvious form and therefore often the only identified, acknowledged and condemned form of violence) only needs to be practised when structural and psychological violence no longer suffice to maintain the unequal relations.

Physical violence states the highest claim for legitimisation. Therefore, dominant groups try to secure their access to and control of scarce resources for as long as possible without having to apply physical violence. The more established and the more institutionalised the inequalities are, the easier it is to do so. The sooner a group can play down their control as being normal (a matter of concealment), meaning "that's just the way things are", the less they need to legitimise their dominance. And the less need there is for physical acts of aggression "to claim one's due as a member of the advantaged group: benefits simply fall into one's lap" (Jackman, 1994, p. 8). In order to prevent this arrangement of expropriation being called into question, ideologies that cover up the true nature of the arrangement must be created and upheld.

Jackman (1994, book cover) says: "Ideology becomes the velvet glove, as dominant groups use "sweet persuasion" and thus delimit the moral parameters for political discourse with subordinates. Dominant groups (...) are drawn especially to the ideological mould of paternalism, where the coercion of subordinates is grounded in love, rather than hate. (...) Love, affection and praise are offered to subordinates on strict condition that the subordinates comply with the terms of the unequal relationship". If the subordinates no longer wish to comply with these terms, alternative methods of persuasion must be found. These include open, direct uses of violence.

The institutionalisation of the relations of inequality, the system of varying ranks is known as stratification. A stratified society organises its members according to their access to scarce resources. "Sexual stratification refers to the extent of difference between the overall status of women and men within a society" (Chafetz, 1980, P. 105).

Weber differentiated between three levels of stratification: the economic (wealth and income), the political (power) and the social prestige dimension (status). In all dimensions the inequality of women to men is striking. I have already referred to the economic inequality. I wish to add - in agreement with what has been said so far - that economic inequality is the "pièce de resistance" of sexual inequality. While compared to the rest of Europe, the Nordic countries have made great progress towards equality on the second dimension, i.e. the political, they have experienced unparalleled difficulties on the economic level. The Group of Specialists on Equality and Democracy of the Council of Europe 1996 states in the final report (p. 15): "Nordic women are still strongly under-represented in administrative and commercial elites, and although there is a large presence of women on the labour market, they play only a very minor role in the control of this market".

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With regard to the political dimension of stratification, one could mention for the EU the (under-)representation of women in parliaments, which amounted in 1994 to 16.4% (varying from a maximum of 40 to a minimum of 5%).

The social dimension of inequality is also worth a closer look. This dimension has to do with what people think of you. If people think poorly of you, you have a low level of prestige. As already mentioned, by definition, prestige is a finite resource, too.

Inequality on the social dimension is perhaps less obvious and less tangible. Here I wish to refer to a study carried out by Broverman and others (1972). In this study psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers were asked to describe the characteristics of a mentally healthy human being, of a mentally healthy man and of a mentally healthy woman. The image of the mentally healthy human being correlated to a large degree to that of the mentally healthy man. However, the image of a mentally healthy woman deviated in essential points from the other two images. This means nothing other than that according to the persons questioned, many of the characteristics considered desirable in a woman were in fact those of a mentally unhealthy person. Or put differently: women are mentally healthy when they are sick compared to a human being, that is, a man.

The logic of the different attributions has been summed up by MacKinnon (1994) in a critique of the Aristotelian theory of law (which constitutes to a large extent our understanding of law): Equals are to be treated equal. Unequals are to be treated unequal. The legitimatisation of unequal treatment is based on the attribution of different features. These features (which are of a social and not biological nature) are reproduced in our minds and bodies daily in the sense of the *doing* gender. This is about the differences in a society "on the extent and degree to which males and females are *expected* to differ, regardless of whether or not they do in fact, on traits of behaviour, personality, interest, and intellect" (Chafetz, 1980, p. 106).

Here I wish to refer to a survey, which is worth mentioning although I am well aware that any conclusions which can be drawn from it are limited as it involved interviewing a special sample of men, namely readers of a fashion magazine for men.

4,000 men were asked last year which characteristics they wished women to have:

> self-assertion
> domesticity
> intelligence
> an attractive appearance
> reliability
> a sense of humour
> faithfulness
> self-confidence

Here are the answers of the men:

We wish women to have the following characteristics:

| | |
|---|---|
| an attractive appearance | 94% |
| faithfulness | 87% |
| reliability | 84% |
| domesticity | 48% |

| | |
|---|---|
| a sense of humour | 36% |
| self-confidence | 28% |
| intelligence | 19% |
| self-assertion | 17% |

The study is, as I said, not above criticism from the methodological point of view, yet can be considered as an indication that men wish women to be different from themselves.

These desired or ascribed characteristics or resources of women can obviously not be transformed so easily into status, as "If status is based on resources and women have lower status than men, then we have to assume that women have fewer resources or that their resources are not easily converted to status" (Nielsen, 1990, p. 240).

Which resources are most likely to lead to status: origin, education, class (income, wealth), race, ethnicity, age and of course, gender?

When, however, women cannot transform the same acquired resources (e.g. university degrees) or inherited resources (e.g. origin) or other attributed resources (gender) into the same proportion of status (e.g.income) and - should this connection be revealed - then a problem of justification arises.

This problem in relation to unequal opportunities and the unequal treatment is legitimised by the constructed otherness.

Inequality does not correspond - as MacKinnon (1994) shows - to difference (as Aristotle thought) but to hierarchy. Whoever is below may be treated *unequally*, and not: whoever is different.

Gender differentiation which is, in fact, a measurement of stereotypes "does not imply inequality". It is *logically* possible to talk about "separate (different) but equal". *Empirically*, it appears [at least as far as complex societies are concerned] that being different is strongly associated with unequal, that is, that degree of gender differentiation and degree of sexual stratification are highly correlated" (Chafetz, 1984, p. 106).

To treat unequally means: not to grant the same rights, not to bestow the same privileges, to block access (official or unofficial), to exclude from spheres of influence, decision-making processes, discussions, to keep down, to use, to exploit, to put people in their place, in short: to treat badly. This also includes violent behaviour.

Violence and unequal treatment are closely connected. If - with regard to the aforementioned studies - self-assertion is important for men and an attractive appearance is important for women, men have few reservations about using violence against women in the struggle for control over economic, cultural and social capital. That is the logic of inequality. That they get away with it is part of the logic of the fields in which men encounter women, here especially in connection with relations between the particular fields (e.g. family, justice, economics).

Violence appears in this logic not so much as an individual personal act or decision (although violence is also this to a certain degree) but acts of violence are prescribed strategies in body and mind, they are day-to-day practices for solving conflicts or for pushing through distribution among members of groups of special features. The logic of inequality is a logic of practice. Therefore, it is not so much a matter of trying to determine the motives of individuals, but more importantly of looking into the logic of relations between groups.

Inequality and its relation to power has been examined in a study by Yllö (1983). Sexual inequality was measured by a status index of women. This consisted of 4 dimensions: of an economic

dimension (e.g. median income), of an educational dimension (e.g. post-secondary enrolment: % female), of a political dimension (e.g. members of state house) and of a legal dimension (e.g. equal pay laws).

On the basis of this index, the status of women in 30 states in the US was determined. Then severe violence against wives was measured and was correlated with the status index. The result of that study appears in appendix.

The curvilinear relation between the status of women and the rate of severe violence against wives first shows a reduction of violence with the growing status of women, that is, decreasing inequality. However, with increasing equality this trend reverses. One can only speculate as to the further development of the curve. It would seem plausible to assume that with continuing decreasing inequality the rate of violence will fall again, as then women will be in a better position (thanks to their higher overall status) to take counter-action and to lead their lives independent of a man. In parallel, the ensuing larger participation of women in spheres of power in society would then seriously question the societal acceptance of domestic violence.

The results of Yllö confirm that the highest level of violence occurs precisely where the highest level of inequality prevails. Nevertheless, with decreasing inequality there is not a linear drop in violence (at least not within this range of status differences).

It appears that with the increasing influence of women, the privileges of men are being challenged and threatened, all that was taken for granted in the arrangement between the sexes is beginning to falter, the pressure on men to do something is rising. Men as a group are likely to attempt to restore the previous state of inequality. Everyday practices are sluggish and are not flexible in their response to social change. The struggle for attractive capital continues also in a society where there is less inequality.

Likewise, in sexually equal societies, violence will not be obliterated. But, and that is a decisive difference - the struggle - or if you prefer, the postmodern term "dialogue" - for power, influence and resources such as self-determination and freedom of movement will be carried on under equal conditions.

Critics of a gender democracy think that if violence still continues anyhow in more egalitarian societies (even at a reduced level), why invest in equality at all (particularly with the risk of a backlash)? The answer is: on the one hand, democracies without gender equality are not true democracies and, on the other hand, the costs of violence for women, and in turn for society, are enormous.

According to an estimation of a study carried out by the World Bank "the global health burden from gender-based victimisation among women age 15 to 44 is comparable to that posed by other risk factors and diseases already high on the world agenda, including HIV, tuberculosis, sepsis during childbirth, cancer and cardiovascular disease" (Heise, 1993a, p. 17).

Empirical analysis has shown that the economy is also affected by absenteeism from work due to the number of days women are off sick as a result of acts of violence. A study by Gelles and Strauss (1988) in the USA shows that women subjected to severe violence are unable to work because of illness for double the annual average of registered sick days.

"Violence poses a powerful obstacle to achieving other goals that are high on the development agenda" (Heise, 1993b, p. 21).

To sum up:

Violence of men against women is at one and the same time a means and expression of the conditions of inequality between men and women.

Systems of inequality must - unless they want to collapse - be reproduced daily. The rules of inequality must be recalled and confirmed. The actors must remain in the fields of unequal relations, as where there are no actors, the rules become obsolete and the field loses its power. From this we can see the explosive potential of segregated worlds (spheres over which the excluded have no control), likewise the threat to heterosexual arrangements from homosexuals' constructions of social life.

If the relations between the groups struggling for control of capital *change* and consequently the logic underlying the social fields, then the means of upholding these relations inevitably change too.

History is not the result of rational decisions (a fact which could give reason for hope). This means, for example, that even if men as a group joined up with women - there is no sign of this at present - this would not automatically result in gender equality and by no means a violence-free society. But even if men continue to back away from gender equality, it is not only up to them to keep up these relations.

Men will not give up the advantages of the present arrangement between the genders without a fight, despite the resulting disadvantages of this arrangement for themselves.

Men have incorporated the experience of hegemonial dominance and have deduced everyday practices from it. The practical sense used within the gender relationship has, all in all, paid off for men. Men belong even in the worst of cases to the privileged gender, that is to the gender which is granted more status/power/influence *per* gender.

This practical sense is extremely slow to change. Only when the structure of a field (the relations between the particular groups, the economic rules and regularities) is radically different; only when the schemas of perception, of thinking and of behaviour (in short: Bourdieu's habitus) seem to be seriously inadequate, only then will the habitus attempt to change or will men change over to a different field while clinging onto the usual habitus.

Inequality is from a humanist or radical point of view not only undesirable, but is to be condemned in all forms. Yet from the position of the dominant groups, inequality is logical and practical.

Equating difference with inequality provides men with an instrument to use violence against women when other forms of control no longer suffice.

It would be worth, leaning on Yllö, investigating whether there are signs in the European countries of a trend towards more gender equality and if this implies a reduction of violence against women.

As there is no way of by-passing sexual equality on the way to less violent social interaction, any registration of a short-term rise in violence could be interpreted as a desperate flare-up of the dominant groups, perhaps even as a sign of an approaching and long-awaited social change.

In this sense I wish the female public perseverance in their struggle for equality.

And I wish the male public, myself included, the mastery of paradoxical action which is what is required if men are to relinquish their privileges.

**Promoting equality: a common issue for men and women**
**(Strasbourg, 17-18 June 1997)**

**Conclusion of the General Rapporteur, Mr François DE SINGLY (France)**

I.        I should like to begin by recalling a scene that was shown on French television in early June 1997. It was during the general election campaigns and the leader of the extreme right-wing party had come to support his daughter, who was standing as a local candidate. There he saw a left-wing party candidate, went up to her with his bodyguards and verbally and physically attacked her. On the screen, he looked as though he were enjoying himself immensely. He picked a fight with people who protested at his behaviour, then once again got angry and shouted "faggot" at someone -the ultimate insult for him, meaning "you're not a man, even if you look like one". End of scene.

The episode deserves comment in this seminar on "promoting equality: a common issue for men and women". It is no coincidence that the party leader who is calling for the abolition of the 1970 law in France recognising parental authority and for the re-establishment of paternal authority should express fierce homophobia. The two attitudes are consistent; they reflect an attachment to a traditional concept of masculinity - one of virility based on power over women, who are regarded as weak beings, and on the legitimacy of physical violence as an exaltation of strength.

During this seminar we condemned this social construct of the "male", masked by the evidence of natural differences, and observed how virility - a symbol of masculinity - operates on two related levels:

• in opposition to the world of women;

• in opposition to the world of men who are not considered "real" men.

Michael Kimmel has pointed out how, all too often, men define themselves as such by inventing another contrasting group or category, namely homosexuals, thereby reassuring themselves that they deserve to belong to the group or category of "real men".

During childhood and adolescence, boys are haunted by the fear of being called "sissy" or "poof". This is to some extent reassuring; it is a sign that masculinity is fragile and results from a long socialisation process - and hence an indication that men are not completely convinced by, or fit into, these rigid categories. In public, and especially in the presence of other men, they are governed by this "masculine" definition of themselves. But underneath it all they are not quite so sure; they are, to some extent, ready to be defined differently.

In a survey conducted in France, men were asked what qualities they believed to be most important in a man (*Nouvel Observateur* opinion poll, May 1991). Honesty and will-power came first, while 37% chose affection and 10% virility. In another survey, participants were asked to state the qualities of a "good mother" and a "good father". In the latter case, "willingness to spend time with the family" obtained 40% of votes; "authority" received only 10%. These are signs - not that the world has changed, but that it *can* change.

I think that all participants, male and female, share this belief. This does not mean that obstacles should be underestimated or ignored. Equality is a lengthy process.

II.       Before summing up the recommendations made in the introductory papers, the four reports and the very informative discussions, I would like to recapitulate some important points.

The main question is <u>what benefit men could derive from change</u> - in other words, what they stand to gain by taking an interest in the issue of equality between women and men.

As one participant asked, "why are the men here interested in promoting equality?"

There were few personal responses, but some answers to this question are available from research. Men become involved in the issue in several ways:

-       <u>either</u> with reference to particular women they know, e.g. their mother, sister or girlfriend - the women in their life;

-       <u>or</u> in times of crisis when their lives are disturbed, e.g. divorce or redundancy;

-       <u>or</u> when they have children and are trying to become "good fathers".

These are times which prompt men to be more sensitive to the question of masculinity and in the way in which they or others behave as men. There remains the question of what they stand to gain if they change - a difficult question since, as has been pointed out on several occasions, men do have <u>something to lose</u> by changing. After all, we could not speak of male domination if men gained nothing from the inequality that is tipped in their favour. Yet men also have <u>something to gain</u> by changing. Many firmly believe this.

In the final reckoning, what would men gain and lose in a situation of equality? This is a crucial question, since the kind of answer chosen determines the kind of solutions envisaged and the form of co-operation that could be established with men. Several answers, both theoretical and practical, exist; one seemed to take priority at the seminar, disregarding certain differences in how it was expressed.

To understand it, let us look at the theory on which games are based. In <u>zero-sum games</u>, one player necessarily loses what another wins. The theories of domination - of class or gender - can be considered from this perspective. The male group exploits another group, ie the female group. Alberto Godenzi states that inequality is based on "a relation in which one or more groups exploit or expropriate another or other groups... the advantage that one group enjoys depends inextricably on the disadvantage that another suffers." (Jackman quoted by Godenzi). The dominant group can win by using various strategies, which may or may not be violent. Love and affection can be regarded as clever tools used by the dominant to make the dominated appreciate serving their superiors. Symbolic violence serves as much as physical violence to maintain inequalities. The subordinate group must be wary of the "velvet" tactics used by the dominant. What counts is the struggle of the dominated, who have an objective interest in rebelling. From this standpoint, one of the best ways of helping women is to denounce inequalities on the one hand and the forms, velvet or otherwise, taken by domination (love as well as violence) on the other hand. Every effort must also be made to ensure that women have enough resources - material and symbolic - and power to be "free", "equal" individuals on the same level as men.

The majority of participants in the seminar did not endorse this model. Support was stronger for a <u>"non-zero-sum" game</u>, in which the benefits that women win will allow men, in both the short and long term, to win as well (even if they lose certain advantages). Equality is therefore a worthwhile aim for men too. As Bengt Westerberg said at the beginning of the proceedings, equality enables everyone, male and female, to live a fuller life.

In non-zero-sum games, players need to co-operate in order to win. The model underlying the non-zero-sum game of co-operation between women and men with a view to achieving equality is as follows. Firstly, women have masculine sides to their identity and men have feminine sides - in the former they are hidden and masked, while in the latter they are repressed. Secondly, equality provides the opportunity to break away from the social repression that affects both sexes.

Eva Moberg expresses it very well: "men can just as easily develop their so-called feminine side as women can develop their so-called masculine side - which, obviously, in both cases, are actually their human sides". Walter Hollstein also holds this view; he notes that "men are reintegrating their feminine side and developing feelings, sensuality, passivity, vulnerability and the capacity to ask for help. Men are striving for a wider repertoire of emotions and human possibilities, but still remain male".

Perhaps it is not as easy as all that for women and men. As we saw at the beginning, there is the fear of being judged by others: for men to admit to a "feminine" side is perhaps to risk not being considered a "real" man?

The theory that men have, or can have, feminine sides and that women have, or can have, masculine sides involves a kind of paradox. To become oneself, to be fully human, women and men must recognise otherness in themselves - they must accept in themselves the qualities of the other group. As a male psychologist stated, there is a huge feminine reservoir in men.

Women and men therefore have a similar task - to recognise in themselves the qualities socially regarded as specific to the other sex. Let us look at some of Eva Moberg's helpful comments in this connection. She points out that some women "are alpine ski champions, ... orchestra conductors, ministers of state and elite chess players, while still being women"; and goes on to ask: "why on earth should men be unable to change ... why should they be unable to unfold their capacity for empathy, sensitivity, patience and intimacy? To remove their armour?"

These comments show that while men and women need to change, they must do so in different ways. Women need to add to their feminine qualities, to their "interiority", the qualities traditionally designated as male. Men need to remove - at least provisionally - their armour and their "exteriority" in order to reach an interiority hidden within them.

It is possible for men to do this, but there is a very specific resistance to it owing to fear of the void, as identified by Michael Kimmel. Casting off male habits and the most masculine and virile aspects of maleness is all very well, but what if underneath it all there is nothing but emptiness? Walter Hollstein also used this image of the void, which results from the abandoning of inner values and creates the energy to overinvest in work and the power struggles that engender violence.

Ways of dispelling this fear must be proposed (we shall return to this in the recommendations). One solution would be to bring up boys in such a way that they can learn to have and express "inner values" (while at the same time bringing up girls to have and express "outer values"). Men could express themselves in men's groups, in which each can see that he possesses this interiority and feelings while by no means losing his identity as a result.

After the process of changing and reducing inequalities, all individuals - male and female - can finally be themselves, which is the aim of our western societies. Gradually, social labels should also change; "exteriority" and "interiority" should no longer be automatically labelled "male" and "female". These may be practical designations but they can be dangerous, because they reflect male domination. Jørgen Lorentzen and Per Are Løkke are aware of this and stress the necessary distinction between expressing feelings and expressing femininity. There has long been a link between these two terms, but this link must be broken:

men can and must find their own ways of expressing their feelings and emotions, just as women can and must create their own ways of exercising power in the public sphere. Equality means reconciling dualities.

Men and women can therefore co-operate in order to live more fully. This will have significant repercussions: the use of each individual's full potential should result in the development of a more harmonious society.

Scilla Elworthy offers us such a vision - one of a peaceful, open, tolerant, playful world, in which everyone dances because they are happy and well-adjusted.

A close reading of "Patriarchy, war and violence" shows that the culture of peace is not based on a model strictly equivalent to the one just outlined. Indeed, there is a conflict between two visions of the world and two ways of governing: exterior, vertical power, which is typical of the dominant, ie men, and internal, horizontal power, which tends to be preferred by women. For Scilla Elworthy, it is clear that peace will only come from a defeat of the external power and a renaissance thanks to internal power. Here there is no question of combining masculine and feminine sides, as in the preceding model; there is a rejection of verticality, dissuasion and intimidation. This model does not integrate but excludes; it is based on the premise that co-operation and confidence are incompatible with threats and punishment.

In this concept of the game, the aim is above all the way in which the game is played. One group of players (women) must impose on the other group (men) a way of being which undermines men's preferred approach, ie vertical power. It is a game in which non-violence must prevail over violence without employing the means used by the dominant group in order to win.

This interesting theory deserves to be explored in more depth. Disagreements as to the concept of male domination do not preclude agreement on recommendations. The different theories have at least two things in common, which are essential for action to be taken:

a)       the recognition of "female" values - values of interiority - for all, including men. The question left unanswered is that of the role left to male or exterior values;

b)       the rejection of violence as a legitimate form of expression with regard to all humans - women, children and men alike.

These two points are important. They show that equality between women and men cannot be achieved by conforming to the male model of the world.

III.      What recommendations can we make to promote equality and at the same time actively involve men?

1.       *Develop research on how masculinity is constructed*.

   1.1    With emphasis on relationships between men, especially during childhood and adolescence.

   1.2    With emphasis on pluralism - on the ways in which men express their masculinity. Issues relating to homosexuality must therefore be included. Stereotypes which attribute specifically "male" characteristics to all men should be avoided.

   1.3    With emphasis on European diversity. Even if male domination is the rule in all countries, it does not always take the same forms. Approaches to promote equality may vary.

   1.4    With emphasis on the ways and means whereby violence against women is practised.

1.5    With the creation of a European observatory on violence against women.

1.6    With the production of national statistics on violence.

2.    *Organise meetings and seminars at which men and women together discuss and develop a post-patriarchal vision of the future.*

2.1    These meetings, which should be attended by representatives of NGOs, associations, universities and governments, should take the form of specific groups focusing on one field: childcare, the media, trade, social security, international relations, defense and so on. Each of these groups must design the post-patriarchal society.

2.2    These meetings should analyse how we do things just as much as what we do. Changes in how we function can also be made - eg in our willingness to listen during meetings and to stress other, less vertical forms of organisation.

3.    *Develop and support new ways of bringing up boys.*

3.1    For a non-violent education, an education that brings up boys to be men who do not use violence but are able to express themselves in other ways.

For a non-stereotyped education. Role-plays could be promoted as an interesting way for boys and girls to discover the way in which the opposite sex functions.

3.2    More male instructors and teachers should be provided for in creches and schools.

4.    *Combat acts of violence by launching measures at two levels.*

4.1    Unceasing condemnation of violence, especially male violence and the culture of violence in our societies. This condemnation must be established in and reflected by legislation. Violence must be condemned - it is a crime and its perpetrators must be punished.

4.2    Treatment of violent men: therapies should be developed for violent men, e.g. men's groups.

5.    *Aid facilities for the victims of violence, especially battered women, should be reinforced.*

These are of two kinds:

5.1    Immediate aid in centres, hostels, counselling services, medical care services, etc.

5.2    Support for these women so that they can sever relations with a violent man and break the bonds of dependency.

6.    *To encourage equality and fight inequality in all its forms, awareness must be raised among individuals and groups at several levels.*

6.1    At the level of public opinion, with the help of the media.

Why not extend to Europe as a whole the white ribbon campaign, which is both a personal and public pledge to combat violence?

6.2    At the level of <u>professionals</u>: teachers, judges, police, social workers and so on.

6.3    At the level of national policies.

7.    *<u>Increase</u> male participation in domestic work, especially in bringing up children. The <u>role of the father</u> must be enhanced, not in the traditional but in a modern form. Fathers must be <u>closer</u> to their children.*

7.1    This requires action aimed at company and administrative directors. They must recognise that men's commitment to their role of father is a positive quality, at work as well as at home. It is the sign of a more complete man, someone who is more sensitive to and caring towards those around him.

7.2    This requires numerous public measures, such as creating or increasing parental leave for fathers. Such leave is important if the man is to be an effective father when the mother is absent. A man must be alone in the house with his child or children without his companion or wife in order to establish a direct relationship with his child and carry out domestic tasks unsupervised.

7.3    This requires <u>specific action</u> so that the father, after separation, continues to play his role, not only as breadwinner but also in bringing up his children.

8.    *Ask the Council of Europe, more specifically its Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men:*

8.1    To continue the work begun in <u>combating violence against women</u> by drawing up a <u>convention</u> on the subject. An international convention on combating violence against women drawn up by the Council of Europe would fill a legal loophole at international level and would be useful at national level.

A monitoring system should be set up to ensure that the convention is implemented.

In the closely related field of human rights protection, the Council of Europe could draw up a recommendation on combating trafficking in human beings - especially women - for sexual purposes. Fighting against this <u>appropriation of women's bodies</u> is one way to combat the patriarchy and men's right to consider themselves "owners" of women.

8.2    To consider <u>studying fundamental issues</u> relating to the promotion of equality, in particular the characteristics of male power in all its forms (as Alberto Godenzi and Scilla Elworthy expressed it). Who wields male power? What is its nature? How is it used? What are its alternatives? Economic power too must be borne in mind. This study could be carried out by a <u>group of experts</u> and disseminated and discussed in the member states and by governments.

8.3    To co-ordinate the work carried out by the Council of Europe with that of associations or grassroots groups and international non-governmental organisations which, as in the past, can play an important role in promoting equality between women and men.

The wealth of information in the introductory papers and reports, the high-quality organisation provided by the Section on Equality of the Council of Europe's Directorate of Human Rights and the way in which each participant contributed and was listened to have shown us that it is possible to build a <u>shared world</u> that respects difference and that equality and the sharing of tasks and responsibilities at all levels between men and women is a source of a high quality of life for individuals and the community.

**4<sup>th</sup> European Ministerial Conference
on equality between women and men
(Istanbul, 13-14 November 1997)**

**Declaration on equality between women and men
as a fundamental criterion of democracy**

The Ministers of the States participating in the 4<sup>th</sup> European Ministerial Conference on equality between women and men

(…)

Agree on the following:

The strengthening of democracy requires that its principles be deepened and clarified in a never-ending dynamic process of search for and commitment to the full promotion and protection of human rights - civil, political, economic, social and cultural - for all people;

The achievement of equality between women and men is an integral part of the process leading to a genuine democracy. As a prerequisite, the participation of all members of society, women and men, in all walks of life, has to be fully secured. Democracy must become gender aware and gender sensitive;

This includes gender-balanced representation as a demand for justice and a necessity for attaining genuine democracy, which can no longer afford to ignore the competence, skills and creativity of women;

Some of the barriers which women face in connection with their participation and gender-balanced representation in political and public life are due to the structure and functioning of electoral systems and political institutions, mainly political parties. Change in this field can only come about through the empowerment of women and a constructive dialogue with men, leading them to understand the urgency of deep reform in the forms of political representation and decision-making which now show under-representation of women;

The marginalisation of women in public life and democracy is a structural factor that is linked to the unequal distribution of economic and political power between women and men and to attitudinal stereotypes regarding the social roles of women and men. These stereotyped social roles limit the scope for both women and men to realise their potential;

Equality requires a positive, dynamic challenge to the established power structures and to stereotyped sex roles so as to achieve structural change at all levels and, ultimately, a new social order;

Men have an important part to play in achieving equality between women and men, especially when they are decision-makers;

Greater participation by men in the sphere of private life, in caring responsibilities, especially the everyday care of children, family and home, as well as a more equal sharing of responsibilities for decision-making in political, public and professional life with women would improve the quality of life for all.

**4<sup>th</sup> European Ministerial Conference
on equality between women and men
(Istanbul, 13-14 November 1997)**

**Appendix to the Declaration**

**Multidisciplinary strategies aiming at promoting equality between women and men
as a fundamental criterion of democracy**

*D.        Promoting equality in a democratic society: the role of men*

Governments are invited to:

In order to favour the mainstreaming of equality and the understanding of the fact that equality is an issue for society as a whole:

-        encourage men to promote equality within their areas of responsibility by incorporating a gender perspective in their work;

-        encourage men to assess the consequences and the impact of political initiatives on the balance between women and men within the area concerned;

-        undertake activities aimed at heads of enterprise or administration, in order that they recognise that men's commitment to their role as fathers is a positive sign, including for their work;

-        encourage high standards of conduct for all those engaged in public life and, in particular, promote non-discriminatory behaviour among members of government and high-level public officials;

In the field of awareness-raising among men on the equality issue:

-        develop awareness among members of government and high-level public employees on equality between women and men, for example by organising training courses;

-        integrate into training of administrative officers training courses on equality between women and men;

-        highlight the changing role models for men and women so as to generate public acceptance and support for men who are following non-traditional role models;

-        encourage activities, such as conferences and campaigns aimed at making equality between women and men a concern for men. This would include encouraging men to be aware of their role in the family, professional life and society with the goal of giving their own input into more equality and partnership and, for the same purpose, women to be aware of their new role in the family;

In the field of training and education:

-        favour mixed-sex composition of education teams at all levels and of staff assisting families;

- support training and educational programmes already in Kindergartens and primary schools in order to develop and support new ways of socialising girls and boys and prevent stereotypes concerning the traditional roles of women and men;

- support training and educational programmes for men aimed at ensuring the sharing of responsibilities in the upbringing of children, and for women to accept the participation of men;

- reduce and aim to eliminate men's violence against women by initiating education ensuring respect of the other person and as concerns violent men, by supporting practical and therapeutic initiatives;

In the research field:

- improve knowledge on men and women in all their living conditions by promoting studies and statistics on men in a gender perspective;

- promote studies which examine the consequences for the identity of men of changes in women's careers, lives and aspirations.

- promote research on relationships between men and on the ways in which they perceive their masculine identity.

**International forum
"Guaranteeing freedom of choice in matters of reproduction, sexuality and lifestyles in
Europe: trends and developments"
(Tallinn, 27-29 November 1997)**

**Sub-theme 1: Adolescents and their right to reproductive health**

**Conclusions of Working Group 1**

**Chair: Ms Ludmila BOJKOVA (Bulgaria)
Rapporteur: Dr Elise KOSUNEN (Finland)**

The discussion in this Working Group was based on the introductory report by Ms Elise Kosunen. There was a clear consensus as to the fact that adolescents are sexually active. Taking this as a starting point, the Group focused mainly on adolescents' need for appropriate sex education and information about services related to reproductive health. One of the major questions raised was how to organise and target this education. The Group thought that it should be organised in a gender sensitive way, as boys and girls might have different needs. Many participants emphasised that adolescents receive misleading messages about sexual life from the mass media, and this needs to be counterbalanced by an information closer to real life.

It was agreed that sex education and information should be given both by schools and by parents. Medical services also have an important role to play in this respect. It was pointed out that the media could be used to inform adolescents about issues of reproductive health. Sex education should be given in a positive way, not overemphasising the risks, but rather focusing on mutual respect and responsibility of both partners.

Some participants pointed out that the diversity of cultures in Europe, both between countries and within multicultural societies, should be taken into account where sex education is concerned. They drew attention to problems such as the dangers of adolescent prostitution, which is increasing in some countries, female genital mutilation and other types of sexual violence, and agreed that these should be condemned as a violation of human rights.

Sex education should not only consist in informing adolescents about their reproductive health and rights, but should also include a gender equality perspective and education aiming at helping them to become responsible parents in the future.

The discussion then focused on how to ensure the quality of sex education and information. It was thought that it should become a full part of the professional training of teachers and medical staff. As far as parents were concerned, it was underlined that they should be prepared to break the "sex taboo" and give their children information about sexual and family life. As far as boys were concerned, it was pointed out that there was a need to involve more men in giving them sex education. The important issue is how to empower adolescents and to ensure that they can actually use their theoretical knowledge.

Young people should not only have the right to be informed about contraceptives and have access to health services, but these services should also be tailored for them. Services must be organised in such a way that young people like to use them. It is not enough only to distribute information leaflets. Adolescents need qualified people with good communication skills who can listen to them, understand their problems and needs.

The Group also discussed the question of respecting adolescents and their right to privacy and confidentiality in matters regarding reproductive health. Reference was made to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989, as well as to the adopted texts of the Cairo and the Beijing Conferences. It was pointed out that parents and adolescents need to be informed about the contents of these international agreements in order to ensure full respect for the rights of children and adolescents in the family and in society at large.

The Group agreed on the following recommendations:

**1.     At the national level:**

-       adolescents should have the right to sex education and information;

-       the quality of this education should be ensured by an adequate training of teachers and of medical staff;

-       sex education should be gender sensitive and take into account the needs of both boys and girls;

-       reproductive health services should be made available to adolescents and be easy to access;

-       counselling should be free of charge and contraceptives of a low cost;

-       reproductive health services should be tailored to the needs of adolescents;

-       sex education and information programmes targeted for boys and men should be developed;

-       international legal instruments and agreements setting out the rights of the child should be fully respected and implemented;

-       research on adolescents' sexuality and their reproductive health with their participation, - including on how to prevent adolescent pregnancy - should be developed;

**2.     In the framework of the Council of Europe:**

The Steering Committee for equality between women and men (CDEG) should consider undertaking an activity together with the Education Committee (CC-ED) aiming, e.g., at defining guidelines for gender sensitive sex education.

The Steering Committee for equality between women and men (CDEG) and the Steering Committee on social policy (CDPS) should actively co-operate on issues related to the rights of adolescents.

The Council of Europe could play an important role in the pooling and exchange of experience between member States as far as methods of research on the reproductive health of adolescents and sex education material are concerned.

It was mentioned that some sectors of the Council of Europe might organise a Conference on Health and Human Rights, in 1998, in which case one of the sub-themes should be devoted to reproductive rights.

<div align="center">
**International Forum**
**"Ending domestic violence: action and measures"**
**(Bucharest, 26-28 November 1998)**

**Sub-theme 3: "Working with perpetrators"**

**Rapporteur: Mr Per ISDAL (Norway)**
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**I.       Violence against women**

Violence against women is a major health problem. Research has found a very high frequency of violence within the frame of intimate relationships. In the USA, research has given variable frequency of violence against women, varying from 5% to 25%. Norway has a population of 4 million, and research has estimated that each year 10,000 Norwegian women seek medical treatment because of physical damage due to domestic violence. We estimate that 10% of the Norwegian male population who live in some kind of a relationship with a woman will use some kind of physical violence against her.

50% of all women killed in the western world are killed by their husband or partner. In Russia 13,000 women are killed each year, mostly by husbands or boyfriends. As a comparison, 14,000 Russians were killed during the war in Afghanistan, which lasted for 10 years.

The frequency of violence against women has great cultural variations; for example it is estimated that 99% of all married women in Pakistan are victims of violence from their husbands. The frequency of violence is dependent on the level of women's rights and equality within each country. The most important way to fight violence against women is the fight for equal rights and opportunities for women. A difference in power creates violence, because violence is a way to create and maintain power difference.

Research has also documented the severe and long-lasting consequences of violence and suppression. There is a very strong connection between the experience of violence and abuse on the one side, and psychological symptoms or disorders on the other side. Modern, gender-oriented psychologists will understand power, violence, suppression and abuse as the main causes of psychological problems, and see individual symptoms as a way of coping with power and abuse of this kind.

The violence against women and children constitutes a major health problem, and must be fought. How you choose to approach a problem is a question of beliefs and priorities. When it comes to violence against women, the priority should of course be to help and protect women and children, which means for example to establish crisis-centres for abused women, to give women economical and social possibilities for independence, and to change the priorities of the legal system so that they actually protect women and children.

Protecting and helping victims or potential victims is not enough to stop violence and abuse. In fighting against violence we will have to address the violent man. It must be important to develop agencies for men to help them stop their violence, domination and abuse. I believe in the necessity of establishing treatment centres for violent men.

Treatment centres for men are important because:

1.       The violence continues: Even if we help the woman, the violence will continue if she stays in or goes back to the same relationship. If she leaves the man, he will have a tendency to follow her

and continue his violence towards her. Most of the women killed by their husbands, are killed when they try to separate or divorce. If he leaves her alone, he can meet a new woman and continue his violence in the new relationship. In order to stop men's violence you have to do something with the man.

2.      Existing interventions are not enough: Police, the court system and the prison system has never been effective in stopping men's violence against women. In some ways, we can say that these structures have supported men's violence, overlooking the violence, normalising it and blaming the women. Help to victims is not enough in order to stop violence. Society, its legal system and psychology/psychiatry has a long history of not reacting to the suppression of women, concealing the violence, normalising it and re-defining it to be a female responsibility. Many couples in which the man uses violence against the woman have probably sought family therapy, and family therapy has probably heightened the risk of violence and helped the man to keep the woman within the destructive relationship.

3.      Men and the male culture are the source of violence and we have to go to the source.

4.      Men are not happy with their violence, and even the violent offender tends to suffer from his violence, which is often behaviour that he does not understand and does not manage to control even if he would like to stop it.

## II.     Treatment of violent men

Prevention of violence against women is the aim. Prevention must be done on many levels and with many means. As mentioned earlier, equality between the sexes must be the most important means to fight violence against women. If we want to prevent violence against women, we have to know something about this violence. Violence against women is a common problem among all kinds of men, on all levels of society. Most of this violence is never reported to the police or to other social agencies. Violence against women is characterised by its invisibility.

Punishment is a potentially preventive strategy. We will have to learn from history that punishment is not an effective solution to major health problems. And it can be very destructive if this is to be the only strategy. Still I believe that violence against women should be punished in the same way as all other forms of violence. Treatment should not become an alternative to punishment, but rather another possibility to prevent violence.

In Norway we chose to establish a treatment centre for men based on self-referrals in order to specifically reach the great amount of violence which never comes in contact with our legal system.

"Alternative to Violence" is a research and treatment centre for men who act violently or abusively towards their wives or partners. Situated in Norway (Oslo and Drammen) it started its work in 1987 as the first European centre of its kind. "Alternative to Violence" is financed 20% by payment from the clients, 40% by the city of Oslo, and 40% by the social department of Norway. Our organisation employs at the present time 8 psychologists and aims at offering qualified professional help through skilled psychotherapists.

Our centre has a pro-feministic ideology. This ideology implies that we see violent and abusive behaviour from men against women as behaviour that aims at getting or maintaining power within the relationship, but which also aims at coping with a feeling of powerlessness within the man himself.

"Alternative to Violence" is an offer to men who want help, so it is based on self-referrals, but we also receive a small portion of clients who have to attend the therapy from, for example, child protection or the courts.

"Alternative to violence" aims its work at 3 main areas:

♦   Treatment, both individually and in groups ;
♦   Research, psychological or sociological, and
♦   Education, for professionals and for the public in general.

Since the start in 1987, 1,700 men have contacted "Alternative to violence" for help. Each year we receive more than 200 new clients.

First we offer our client a 3-hour assessment, which is an evaluation of his violence and his motivation for therapy. Most of our clients are not properly motivated for therapy if we understand motivation as a wish to change them. The therapist's main aim is to work in a way that creates this kind of motivation.

After the period of assessment we start the therapeutic period. This period can vary from 10 hours up to 1 hour each week for 4 years. Our clients are understood as individuals and their need for therapy varies a lot, so the therapeutic work has to be individually designed.

We offer both the opportunity for individual therapy or for group therapy. Group therapy in our experience is the best, most effective, method for most of our clients.

Our most important and difficult task is to get the man to view his violent behaviour as a problem, and a problem for which only he has the responsibility. Our therapeutic style is characterised by being very active and structured, but of course also empathic and non-judgmental. We have 4 main therapeutic principles, and these principles also describe the therapeutic progression.

Our first principle is to focus on his violence. This means talking about the violence in detail. It means reconstructing the violent events piece by piece. Helping the man to relate to his own violence, and to understand the severity of his problems.

Our second principle is to place responsibility on the man for his actions, helping him to understand that violence and dominance is his own choice and his own way of coping with his feelings.

Our third principle is to work with the man's understanding of his violence, creating a new understanding where he can see the violence as a result of his own personal history and the influence of our patriarchal culture. Our clients' experience of violence in their childhood might be an issue on this level.

Our last principle is to understand the consequences of his violence, seeing it from his wife's and children's perspective. It is necessary to go through the 3 first levels in order to achieve such understanding.

My experience is that changing men is difficult but possible. It takes time. Our results are good; most of our clients will change and stop acting violently.

Alternative to violence means learning to act non-violently. It means co-operation instead of competition. It means respecting instead of degrading, it means equality instead of dominance. Dialogue instead of monologue. Communication instead of control. And it means love instead of fear, hate and contempt.

Men must take responsibility for their violence and dominance. A treatment centre for violent men is also an important communication to the public about violence, responsibility and masculinity.

# International Forum
## "Ending domestic violence: action and measures"
### (Bucharest, 26-28 November 1998)

## Report of Working Group 3

### Chair: Ms Violeta NEUBAUER (Slovenia)
### Rapporteur: Mr Per ISDAL (Norway)

The discussion in this working group was based on the introductory report by Mr Per Isdal on working with the perpetrators of violence against women. There was a clear consensus as to the fact that violent men had to be addressed directly in order to help them to stop their violence, domination and abuse.

Violence against women and children constitutes a major societal and health problem, and must be fought. The first priority in the work to combat men's violence should be to help and protect women and children, which means for example to establish crisis centres for abused women, to give women economical and social possibilities for independence and to create a sound legal basis for the protection of women and children.

The notion of men's responsibility for their violence against women must be the basis for all interventions to combat this phenomenon. A characteristic of men's violence against women and children is its secrecy and invisibility; focus should be put on interventions that contribute to less secrecy and greater visibility.

Prevention of violence should take place on many levels, not only on the level of the individual man but also on the level of society as a whole, creating better knowledge through education and greater awareness of the problem and its causes. The media could play an important part in influencing the changing of attitudes.

The discussion showed that there is still little experience and few intervention programmes directed at violent men in Europe. There is a need for more experience combined with research and a sharing of information at European level. The Council of Europe should play an important role as a forum for the exchange of such research and information.

Many participants were in favour of setting up centres dealing specifically with violent men and their patterns of behaviour. It was stressed that intervention programmes directed towards men must be drawn up in co-operation with those dealing with the protection of women. The aim of both kinds of interventions must be the same: to stop and prevent violence and abuse against women.

Some participants pointed out that the diversity of cultures in Europe, the progress achieved towards gender equality and the resources available for interventions should be taken into consideration. It was emphasised that programmes aimed at men should not be set up to the detriment of projects aimed at assisting women victims of violence.

All interventions directed towards men's violence against women and children should be evaluated in view of their effectiveness in securing protection and preventing violence. In this respect, a critical discussion is needed on intervention directed at the family as a unit, for example family mediation.

The Group agreed that:

**1.    Research and awareness-raising on male violence needs to be increased**

- Studies and research work on men's violence against women, taking into account the overall social context, should be promoted.

- Awareness-raising on domestic violence, e.g. campaigns, should be aimed specifically at men.

**2.    Violent and abusive men's behaviour against women must change**

Intervention programmes directed at violent men should be set up and evaluated. They should correspond to certain standards or criteria, for example:

- safety of women and children victims of domestic violence should be the primary concern;

- good understanding and co-operation between women's programmes and intervention programmes for men;

- effective information strategies about intervention programmes that reach all those concerned;

- responsibility for the violence must be understood fully as the man's;

- availability and a quick response by experienced personnel.

- Intervention programmes should not become an alternative to punishment, but rather an additional strategy to prevent violence.

**3.    Education on non-violent behaviour and equality between women and men should be available, especially in schools**

**Seminar on "Men and violence against women"**
**(Strasbourg, 7-8 October 1999)**

**Conclusions by the General Rapporteur,**
**Dr. Renate KLEIN (Universtity of Maine, USA)**


Mesdames et Messieurs, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The seminar on men and violence against women provided an unusual opportunity to bring together over one hundred researchers, practitioners and policy makers to discuss a wide range of topics related to men's violence against women. In the course of two days we addressed exceedingly complex issues, explored layers of meaning around men's violence, and raised many more questions for future meetings of this kind.

I applaud and sincerely thank the Council of Europe, and in particular the Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men, and Ms. Ólöf Ólafsdóttir and her formidable team for making this meeting possible and providing a forum for the necessary interdisciplinary and international debate that needs to happen around men's violence against women. Because the details of the reports presented at the seminar are available in print, I shall focus my conclusion on recurring themes and contested understandings.

**1.      Methodology and the Evaluation of Research**

Several experts addressed the need for quantitative surveys in order to obtain data on the extent of violence against women. Ideally, such data would be reliable, valid, and comparable across different regional and national contexts. Although there has been a development in surveys from an early focus on crime in general to a recent, more specific focus on violence against women, survey design and use are far from perfect. As a minimum, a good survey needs to pay careful attention to the wording of its questions and incorporate language that makes sense to the women who respond to it. Terminology and language are extremely important. One example for this is the differential estimates of sexual assault when women are asked if they have experienced 'rape' or 'coerced sex'. Other important issues in survey research include the matching and training of interviewers, the use of various response formats including closed and open questions, sampling frames, and access strategies that do not exclude those women who are marginalised and particularly at risk of being attacked or assaulted (e.g. elderly women, women belonging to ethnic minorities, immigrants, or the disabled).

The meaning of violence can vary considerably within individual respondents who reflect on different experiences with violence. It can vary within countries and across countries and, last but not least, between men and women. While there are some examples of strategies to address the meaning of violence in the context of survey research, there are also many examples of surveys that do not address such variability of meaning but presuppose that violence means the same to women and men. Therefore, caution needs to be exercised in the uncritical design of surveys, and in the uncritical interpretation of their findings.

This note of caution needs to be extended to the evaluation of research in general. No research produces facts that speak for themselves. Data, whether quantitative or qualitative, need to be interpreted and organised within frames of reference. Therefore, it is also important to interrogate those frames of reference and ask to what extent they contribute to gender equality and the dignity of women. This is particularly important with regard to statistical data, because most of us are used to thinking of numbers as something 'objective', and considering the privileged position of the notion of 'objectivity' in contemporary science, numbers can be powerful tools of influencing the decision making of scholars,

practitioners, or policy makers. It is also necessary to weigh the need for more data on women's victimisation against the need of those women for safety, and to be careful not to 'plunder' women's experiences with violence in the name of science.

## 2.      Gender as a Fundamental Social Division

Several experts noted that research on violence as well as research on the development, maintenance, and change of feminine and masculine identities needed to be gendered in a way that recognises gender as a fundamental social division. This includes recognising that thinking in relatively rigid dichotomies of male and female difference may itself obscure our understanding of how gender identity develops, is solidified, or can be reconceptualised. It also includes recognising that adding women to masculine social contexts does not automatically deconstruct rigid notions of gender difference, as the example of women in the Israeli military shows.

## 3.      Focus on the 'Imaginary'

Another recurring theme concerns the inclination to interpret men's violence against constructions of imaginary femininity or masculinity as compared to what women and men  actually do or experience. For example, traditional psychoanalytic theory as well as some strands in recent men's literature seem focused on imaginary notions of women, in which women and in particular mothers are constructed as overpowering, omnipotent beings. Such notions of female power are at odds both with the lack of power women in abusive relationships experience and with the perception of teenagers who grew up with violence in the home and who, even under considerable adversity, can have very positive images of their mothers that acknowledge the real-life dilemmas of mothers living with violent husbands or partners.

A second example is the rhetoric of men as the protectors of women during warfare, which is at odds with the reports of men leaving women (as well as children and elderly men) behind in villages where they are attacked and/or sexually assaulted by male soldiers from the enemy camp. No doubt, individual men seriously wish to protect their families from harm. And yet, it is painful to witness how often women find themselves unarmed in war, and vulnerable in peace.

## 4.      Four Perspectives on Explanations for Men's Violence

The experts presented many complex explanations and social theories to explain men's violence that can be highlighted from at least four different perspectives: explanations focusing on internal processes of the integration of violence into masculine identities, explanations focusing on external circumstances presumed to encourage male violence, the risk factor approach, and explanations focusing on the deliberate social construction of institutions that foster those masculine identities in which violence takes a central place.

### a.      *Internal Processes: Gender Identity Development and Social Learning*

At this meeting we have addressed explanations that detail internal processes underlying violent behaviour and that draw on psychoanalytic theory, socialisation theory, and to some extent learning theory.  Psychoanalytic concepts tend to focus on early childhood experiences around the differentiation of Self and Other that lead to complex patterns of the construction of Self and Other. More recent psychoanalytic work includes experiences during adolescence in the formation of gender identity and posits the possibility that, during this period of life, gender identities may in fact be revised.

Similarly, notions of social learning tend to focus on early childhood experiences, although social learning continues into adulthood and indeed happens everyday throughout our lives. In fact, we usually do not enter some settings for social learning, such as the workplace or volunteer organisations, until we are adults and other settings, such as the family, may stay with us throughout our lives.

If socialisation experiences and the construction of Self and Other do indeed contribute to the formation of violence-identified masculinities and men's violence against women, we need to be open to the possibility that such processes continue throughout life, and likely in settings that are crucial for other purposes as well such as earning a living, or being integrated into the community. That is, it becomes increasingly difficult to separate the 'normal' institutions of daily life and social organisation from the formation of masculine identities, including those identities that are ingrained with violence. What this means is that throughout life there is considerable opportunity both for reinforcing violence-identified masculinities and for revising them.

### b.        *External Circumstances: Rapid Social Change, Instability, and War*

The experts also addressed explanations that relate men's violence implicitly or explicitly to social circumstances, in particular to notions of rapid social change and social instability, as well as to warfare and its societal aftermath. It is important to acknowledge the hardship that warfare and social upheaval create for those who have to live through it, and to investigate the potential role of international inequality in creating or perpetuating localised instability or war, and to understand the toxic effects on civic society 'at home' of wars waged in neighbouring territory. It is also important to explore how social change and war influence people *differently* and to examine who benefits from such changes and who becomes more vulnerable.

A largely unexplored area concerns the transitions from periods of relative stability to relative instability and on to relative stability. For example, how do we come to terms with reports that individual men who appeared to be 'peaceful' before war seem to turn into violent women haters during the war? The experts debated whether violence against women during armed conflict was primarily a matter of permission to be violent and access to vulnerable victims, or whether there are other things going on in terms of gender relations and the construction of Self and Other, friend or foe. Such explanations are probably not mutually exclusive. Brutalisation of men in the context of armed conflict may be a multifaceted process that may include permission to be violent as well as training to be violent and training to dehumanise and objectify those who, by official propaganda or the memories of deep-seated humiliation, become the designated enemy.

In this context, the experts discussed the role of shame, and the silence around shame, which may continue across generations. As mass rapes of women during warfare have happened throughout history and continue to happen to the present day, women have been carrying a suffocating burden of shame that manifests itself in deep depression and is cloaked in silence. It is necessary to create conditions in which *we* learn to listen to those who learned to live with their shame in silence.

It is unclear how women's experiences of shame compare to the shame that they bring onto their families and countries in those contexts where family honour is defined through women's chastity. While the connections between the shame of individual women and the shame attached to notions of idealised femininity are not well understood, we noticed that the shame of individual women seems to contribute to their isolation and being outcasts of society, and is related to loss of control, whereas men in such contexts seem to have the option to clear their families' names of shame through the honour killing of women and thus remain a respected member of their communities. That is not to say that individual men in such contexts are not conflicted over the issue of honour killings. It was also noted that sexual violence against women in situations of armed conflict involves attacks that may be tools to shame their husbands,

fathers, and brothers, but are still attacks on the women themselves and their sexual and national identities.

*c.*       *Risk Factors*

The concept of risk factors derives largely from research on public health. When applied to men's violence against women, we need to distinguish between risk factors for being violent (such as believing that women are subordinate to men) and risk factors for being victimised (such as separating from a violent man). Our discussion of stress as a risk factor showed that the relationship between men's experience of stress and their violence against women is controversial. In part, this controversy seems to result from the different perspectives different experts take on stress, the wide range of men's stress experiences in different settings such as family, work, the military, or combat as well as the frequent observations of those who work with violent men that violent men do not seek out such programmes until they are experiencing sufficient stress. To advance this fruitful debate, it seems necessary to distinguish between different forms of stress (e.g., career-related stress versus the fear of losing one's wife) and to analyse the relationship between stress and violence for different groups, not just for men, but for women as well.

With all risk factors we need to pay attention not only to the correlation between risk factor and men's violence, but to the patterning of that violence and thus to the targets of potentially stress-induced violence. To illustrate the importance of attending to the patterning of violence, so-called random sprees of violence by individual violent men often turn out to be directed rather systematically against individuals who may not have had any personal relationship with the aggressor but happen to belong to groups that the aggressor defined as worthy of being attacked or killed.

*d.*       *Explanations Focusing on Deliberate Social Enterprises*

Finally, the military is an example of an institution that deliberately and systematically constructs masculine identities in which violence plays a crucial role. A gendered analysis of the military also makes clear that, at least in the case of Israel, men's successful participation in the military, and thus their likely adoption of a violence-identified masculinity, is rewarded with considerable perks in civil society such as access to prestigious jobs and political influence. Mentioned only cursorily was the role of organised religion in the construction of gender identities and gender hierarchies, and the relative acceptance of violence against women.

We heard more of efforts to *reform* deliberate social enterprises such as the police and the legal system with the goal to reduce violence against women. Police training by battered women's advocates has been instrumental in beginning to change the police response to violence against women, at least as far as violence in the home is concerned. Similarly, there have been many impressive, if recent, efforts towards changing laws and legislation so as to acknowledge more fully women's right to safety, dignity, and integrity.

However, there is an important difference between the examples of the military, the police, and the legal system. Legal reforms and reforms of police response for the most part are directed at the *punishment* of the perpetrator. In contrast, we saw how the military is instrumental in the construction, and subsequent reward, of violence-identified masculine identity, and thus in the *production* of potential perpetrators. So far, there has been no comparably developed, defined, and resourceful social enterprise instrumental in the construction of non-violence-identified masculinity.

Considering the frequent references to societal turmoil and warfare during this meeting we may note that the deliberateness of the construction of violence-identified masculinity may become invisible

over time, and that such violence-identified masculinity in due time may appear to be an 'inevitable' response to social change.

**5.      Role of Community**

Several experts spoke of the role of community in either encouraging or discouraging men's violence against women. Communities include real people and the messages they send about men's violence against women. Community includes family members and pre-school teachers, social workers, police officers or those who run intervention programmes for violent men. Community also includes the media and the imagery of men's violence against women that is perpetuated by the media such as notions of stranger rape. Community also includes supranational organisations such as the Council of Europe, and the messages that come from such prestigious international communities.

Community provides, or withholds, support structures. We discussed which support structures communities provide for women and men, respectively, and to what extent communities encourage or discourage men's violence and non-violence. Several experts argued that such structures change as communities move from periods of relative stability to periods of upheaval or war, and may not revert entirely to the original levels of stability after periods of crises. What happens to women and men's support networks during such changes? For example, to what extent does the formation of armed militias or guerillas erode social support from men for men's *non*-violence? Occasional reports suggest that there are individual soldiers who try not to participate in organised rape, and who implore the women they encounter to pretend they had been raped so as to protect the soldier from being killed by his male peers for not raping.

From a different angle, the role of community support becomes chillingly clear in the lives of children and teenagers who have none. We heard about children who grew up in violent homes or in complete societal neglect. Too many find themselves with no support network, alone with their legacy of violence, shame, and confusion, and without a trustworthy adult role model who might be able to help them with the transition from fantasising a life of respect and harmony to actually living it.

Finally, communities bear some of the societal costs of violence against women. While cost estimates are fraught with methodological and ethical problems, putting monetary values on individual suffering may convince reluctant policy makers to invest more money in the prevention of violence against women.

**6.      Non-Violence and Non-Violent Masculinities**

We need to know more about the creation of non-violence and the conditions under which non-violent masculinities flourish, just as we need to conceive of different trajectories towards violent masculinities. Not all men are violent, and not all men rape, even if they could. Why not? As research and practical work with violent men is just beginning, we also need to pay attention to non-violent men, their experiences, and their strategies of non-violence.

With regard to the individual or psychological level, recent psychoanalytical work highlights the creative potential of the tension between the assertion of the Self and the mutual recognition of the Other. While this tension may arise for the first time in infancy, it likely will continue throughout life. Some experts suggested that men's ability to tolerate such tension might be related to their non-violence, whereas the 'resolution' of that tension through the construction of rigid gender or ethnic identities may encourage violence. With more fluid approaches to gender identity boys may be able to identify with mothers and feminine role models without ridicule, and girls may be able to identify with fathers and masculine role models without rejection.

On a societal level, creative potential may arise from sustaining the tension between privilege and equality. Often, this tension is resolved in the form of hierarchies and pecking orders, which leave some men relatively privileged and protected, and most women, as well as many men, relatively vulnerable. Most of us have lived within hierarchical social institutions for our entire lives, from the family, through formal schooling, to the workforce. That makes it difficult to conceive of less hierarchical social organisations. Nevertheless the efforts seems worthwhile so that "knowledge will *not* be subordinate to power".

The promise of sustaining the tension between self-assertion and mutual recognition is also to fully realise one's human potential. But why be fully realised if you can be partially realised and be president of a large corporation and drive an expensive car? The answer is, once you have tasted this creative tension, everything else is bland.

I thank the Council of Europe for organising this meeting, and I thank all participants for coming together and sharing their invaluable knowledge and insights.

**Seminar on "Men and violence against women"**
**(Strasbourg, 7-8 October 1999)**

**Recommendations**

Violence against women is one of the major obstacles to the achievement of real equality between women and men. The phenomenon has its roots in the very structure of European societies, based on patriarchal values and principles. Although male violence can also be directed against other men and incidents concerning violent women are reported, the vast majority of victims of violence in the Council of Europe's member States are women and children.

Most European societies remain tolerant towards violence against women, considering it acceptable according to tradition. They continue, directly or indirectly, to lay the blame on the victims by suggesting that they would not have been assaulted if they had or had not acted in a certain way. Men are often excused by saying that they are subject to stress from overwork or unemployment, under the influence of alcohol or drugs, sick and so on.

Women suffer from violence resulting in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering, both in private and public life. Violence can take different forms, such as sexual assault, violence within the family or in the domestic unit, sexual harassment and intimidation (in education, at work, in institutions or in any other place), denial of reproductive rights, genital mutilation, trafficking in human beings for the purposes of sexual exploitation and sex tourism, rape or assaults in (armed) conflict situations, honour killings and forced marriages.

*Being conscious of the above, the participants at the Seminar on "Men and violence against women", organised by the Council of Europe in Strasbourg on 7 and 8 October 1999, agreed on the following recommendations.*

**Recommendations to Member States of the Council of Europe**

Research and in particular surveys are essential because there is still denial of the phenomenon of violence against women: they can be used as tools to convince the decision makers of the *real* extent of violence against women. In order to have a better understanding of the prevalence of violence, standardised instruments are necessary in order to obtain *valid, reliable, comparable data* as well as results which are representative of the reality*.* This effort should be pursued at the *local, regional, national and international level* and in this perspective Governments should:

▪ Encourage and support national and transnational research projects and surveys on different forms of violence against women taking into account the following parameters which, if neglected, may alterate the results of the research:

- the gender perspective including the element of gender conflict which is present in all European societies;
- the variability of meanings and of the perception of concepts in different contexts determined by various factors (such as differences in social classes, as well as in regional, cultural and linguistic backgrounds): different groups or persons may have different understanding of the same notion, such as violence;
- the stigmatisation of concepts (such as rape), encouraged notably by the mass media;
- the developments and changes in cultural values;
- the changes in society especially where instability has arisen (be it due to socio-economic reasons or to a conflict): even if the source of instability disappears, the level of violence does not decrease;

- Encourage the standardisation of research methodologies by using, among others, the following elements:

    - a representative sample of the population (1,000 respondents minimum);
    - a scale with very detailed descriptions of acts of violence;
    - input from battered women and victims of violence (also to design questionnaires);
    - training for interviewers and researchers which should include information on how to take into account cultural, ethnic, social and economic differences, as well as on how to have access to isolated or marginalised groups;
    - precautions in order to prevent the dangers that the respondents of surveys or of case studies could encounter;
    - for research conducted at European level, recourse to language specialists in order to avoid translation problems;

- Encourage and support national and transnational research into the following aspects:

    - what prevents a person from becoming violent;
    - ways to reach violent men and how to bring them into education programmes;
    - the prevailing polarisation in the construction of gender identities, with a view to promoting a more open perception of feminities and masculinities;
    - to what extent and in what way do social instability and social change affect gender relations and violence against women;
    - the consequences violence in the home has on children and adolescents and how it affects their socialisation and their future integration into work, as well as their relations with peers and partners;
    - ways to prevent elder abuse and violence among elderly people;
    - the financial costs of violence;

- Improve interactions between the scientific community, the NGOs in the field, political decision-makers and legislative bodies in order to design co-ordinated actions against violence;

- Encourage the diffusion of all relevant information (results of studies and research, statistical data, etc.) on violence against women at all levels and across the life course;

- Ensure that statutory agencies which respond to men's violence convey clearly to the men that their behaviour is unacceptable and develop further strategies for repeat offenders, including multi-agency approaches at the community level;

- Making use of the gender mainstreaming strategy, involve all the relevant actors normally involved in policy-making, in order to fight violence against women, even if they are not currently working on the issue;

- Reinforce national legislations and measures aiming at fighting violence against women, also by introducing innovative approaches based on experiences conducted in other European countries: the pooling of experiences is essential to progress on this issue;

- Adopt or reinforce social protection measures so that injuries caused to women and children by violent acts are provided for under social protection schemes;

- Promote training of those involved with young people, as well as health personnel, to identify children and adolescents growing up in violent homes and to take the necessary measures to help and assist them;

- Ensure training of medical personnel to enable them to identify victims of violence;

- Promote the participation of women in politics and decision-making: a higher number of women in politics is important in order to adopt an increased number of measures to combat violence against women;

- Promote human rights education, and especially education on equality between women and men, in all member States of the Council of Europe, especially where there is social instability;

- Create a more proactive police response to violence against women;

- Promote training for the judiciary regarding violence against women;

- Enhance research on, and take all possible measures to prevent, development of gender dichotomy and inequality as well as male aggressiveness in the army and all military contexts (especially during military service), including armed conflicts;

- Condemn all forms of violence against women and children in situations of conflict;

- Condemn systematic rape, sexual slavery, enforced pregnancy of women and young girls and all forms of violence against women and children, as these, as shown in recent conflicts, tend to be used as a weapon of war;

- In post-conflict regions, promote a public debate and disseminate information concerning abuses of women and children in order to prevent repetition of violence.

## Recommendations to the Council of Europe

The participants emphasised that the international community – especially international organisations such as the Council of Europe – have a major ethical role to play in promoting zero tolerance towards violence against women. By condemning this violence, they can give an important political signal to governments and to policy-makers.

The participants noted that the continuous work achieved by the Council of Europe, and in particular by its Steering Committee on Equality between women and men (CDEG), to combat violence against women have substantially assisted in increasing the visibility of the problem. The Action Plan published in 1997 was considered as an effective platform on which to formulate national measures.

The Council of Europe should continue to play a key role in the combat against violence. The need for transnational actions to be undertaken at legislative, policy and research level to enhance international co-operation can be the basis for the future action of the Council of Europe.

**The following activities could be conducted in the Council of Europe or with its assistance:**

- Continue and complete, as rapidly as possible, the preparation of the draft Recommendation on protecting women and young girls against violence, which is being prepared under the aegis of the Steering Committee for equality between women and men (CDEG). Once adopted, the Recommendation may serve as a reference for national policies on actions against violence;

- Prepare as soon as possible a study on the position as regards legislation in the field of violence against women in the member States; ensure the translation and diffusion of this document in member States;

- Organise, possibly in co-operation with other competent bodies and International Organisations, regular meetings involving in particular policy-makers, researchers, practitioners and police, in order to take stock and exchange information on the current stage of research and practice in the area;

- Compile country reports, based on research and information collected at national level, focusing on violence against women and the measures taken to combat it;

- Following the recent conflicts in South-East Europe, contribute to the efforts undertaken at European level to foster peace and stability in countries of the region by organising activities aiming at combating violence against women in all its forms;

- Foster research on the development of violence against women in its different forms during and after the conflicts which have recently affected South-East Europe, including the increase in domestic violence.

**"Equality between women and men: priorities for the future"**

**Final Report of Activities of the Group of Specialists on future priorities, strategies and working methods in the field of equality between women and men**

**Part I "Guiding vision for a future that has overcome gender inequality"**

The search for future priorities and strategies should be guided by the vision of a society that has overcome gender inequality – a vision that can inspire not only women, but men as well, not only those who know through experience the damage done by discrimination, but also young people who feel the need for a future worth striving for. The Group of specialists on future priorities, strategies and working methods in the field of equality between women and men (EG-S-FP) has found, in its search for fresh approaches and working methods, that in all European countries, innovative groups, organisations and individuals draw upon elements of such a vision to generate the creativity, enthusiasm and effort needed for their work. The terms of reference of the Group of specialists, which include describing ways to raise awareness, involve men as active participants and tap the potential of youth in working towards gender equality, demand that we envisage equality as a richer, more humane, more fulfilling and more truly democratic state of society and way of life.

In the past, issues of inequality have typically been addressed as the claims of groups to scarce resources. This remains a valid approach to countering deprivation and exclusion; legal remedies are fundamental to this effort. Yet at the same time, gender inequality runs deeper than the competing interests of groups. Men and women are uniquely interdependent, and real change requires putting the relationship between them on a new foundation, enabling women and men to work together in all areas of life. Merely redistributing rights and resources, as essential as this can be, will in the long run only lead to new inequities if European society fails to achieve a new "gender culture", that is, an interlocking web of values, norms and socialisation practices open for developing the full potential of all its members, and supporting new forms of social solidarity that transcend current gender relations.

A new understanding of the many possibilities of being a woman or a man is central to the project of preserving and valuing diversity in an increasingly closely-woven Europe. Inequality affects different groups of women – and of men as well! – very differently. Ideals of femininity that directly oppress some women may be seen as a resource by others, depending, *inter alia*, upon their class and ethnic backgrounds and their personal life histories: this is true, for example, of the norm that all women should be mothers. Expectations of masculinity that confer power and privilege on some men may rob others of any chance to attempt self-realisation: an example is the assumption that a man must be the breadwinner. Yet in all of these diverse situations there has been a common thread, an implicit guiding principle that the masculine represents the norm, the standard. As a result, there is a widespread confusion between working for full equality between women and men, and working for full recognition of women's interests and self-realisation. Both are vital, but they are not the same.

The Group found that many blockages and points of resistance to approaching gender equality arise from the prevalence of a zero-sum perspective and the habit of thinking of policies in terms of winners and losers. The future priority must be to develop policies that transform the existing gender contract and the gender division of labour for both sexes. This cannot be done by simply adding questions related to men into policies focused on women's interests, or by adding more and more special interest groups to the agenda. Achieving equality means overcoming the *relationship* of dominance and subordination inherent in gender inequality. Often, this will not be a matter of inventing new measures, but of reframing existing approaches in terms of a dialogue, within which both women and men take on

the challenge of change. The change that is needed affects both women and men to an equal degree, if in different ways, and thus must involve both women and men in order to succeed.

There is no one formula for realising the ideal of gender equality. It must rather be thought of as a dynamic equilibrium within each community, with the essential condition that the boundaries remain open to communication, compromise and change. The common element within diversity will be a new awareness, a profound shift in ideas, feelings and identities so that differences between women and men, however else they may be defined, do not privilege one as primary or superior by virtue of sex/gender.

The existing divisions of labour, of power and of responsibilities according to gender are not only harmful to women in particular and – less obviously – to men as well; they are also patently dysfunctional for the complex world of the next millennium. An apparent impasse with respect to many old and new social problems is symptomatic of societies unable to adapt to the challenges of the 21$^{st}$ century. Inequality is inefficient and costly; institutions of economic research and policy need to work seriously towards estimating its costs. Redressing discrimination against women is not the problem, it is a vital element of the solution. The achievement of equality will enrich society as a whole.

Implicit in the strategies and projects which will be summarised in the following chapters, the Group has identified a vision of a society which would:

- recognise and value the work and the responsibilities taken on by women equally with those of men;
- assure the full reality of equal rights for women and men, translating this fundamental principle into elaboration of the law, in particular considering the repercussions on equality of all existing or proposed legal norms;
- eliminate prejudice, stereotypes and discrimination related to sex/gender;
- actively bring about equal participation of women and men in all spheres of society and areas of life.

With the necessary reservation that a new gender contract does not necessarily signify the absence of other, or even perhaps new, forms of social inequality, it is nonetheless possible to suggest what such a transformation could offer. It can be envisioned on three levels: the interpersonal, the organisational and the level of the whole society.

On the individual level, it will be a society that offers greater personal liberty to all individuals, free of the psychosocial and normative constraints attached to sex/gender. The necessary correlate of liberty is wider and deeper education for all, since gender can no longer be taken to confer ability or aptitude "naturally", or to exclude anyone from any field.

With gender equality, institutions, groups and organisations will be empowered to address the problems now "hidden" in quasi-natural gender roles. Collective actors, no longer identified with masculine domination in the public sphere and feminine representation of the domestic sphere, will seek rational, humane and democratic ways to reconcile the organisation of work, of schools, of family responsibilities, of care for the sick, disabled and ageing, as well as the organisation of political and social participation.

And on the level of the *polis*, of concern for the common good, transcending gender relations challenges society to reframe the great questions faced by humanity and re-evaluate the relative importance accorded to their elements, such as:

- the allocation of resources to food, education, promoting social solidarity, armaments, technology;

- privileging dialogue or conflict in finding solutions for the clashes between interests, needs and beliefs;
- the relative weight given to knowledge, know-how, knowing how to live, communication skills and ability to present and represent.

This transformation will have far-reaching consequences. Work, family life, social and political participation will no longer be shaped by collective actors which represent and privilege gender roles and gender interests. The field of work will gain from utilising a much greater pool of aptitudes and abilities, both in the market sector and in the work which responds to collective needs. Social protection will be independent of family status; a new equilibrium of work, leisure and interpersonal responsibilities can be developed. Within the home, the definition of roles will emerge from the aptitudes and preferences of each member, and it will be recognised as a vital need of the society that all of its members have responsibilities, and have time available, to care for others and for relationships within their families and informal social networks. The public sphere will be based on a new understanding of the interrelationships of caring and justice, of community and citizenship.

A society based on gender equality will be, without doubt, a far healthier environment with a much greater potential for well being. It promises to enable individuals, families and social networks to regain control over the resources and conditions of their lives throughout the life cycle. Beyond eliminating immediate gender-related causes of ill health (such as significant sources of stress, deprivation and violence), equality is empowering in many ways. The range of choices, the potential both for social participation and for personal development will expand for many individuals. A healthy environment is one in which the complex demands of modern society are not burdened onto individuals beyond their ability to act.

Finally, the restructuring of society to eliminate every form of discrimination, exclusion, deprivation or disadvantage based on gender is not only a challenge but also a unique opportunity to revitalise democracy. This will mean reconsidering the very process and organisational forms of decision-making to which women have had so little access for so long. While overcoming resistance to their participation still requires active political and legal measures, it is also evident that both women and youth are often critical of the conditions of decision-making and choose not to take part. Rekindling the belief in participation as a path towards social justice is a challenge to be taken up.

**"Equality between women and men: priorities for the future"**


**Introduction to Part II**

**"Current state of equality efforts and exemplary strategies in specific areas"**


Policies and methods of working towards equality have often based their approaches on a critical assessment of attitudes, beliefs, and patterns of behaviour which maintain inequality. The Group agreed that much valuable work has been done and that it is important to preserve what has been gained. However, there have also been negative reactions in public opinion, in part due to the fact that equality policies have tended to focus on the rights and claims of groups, and to a much larger extent on women than on men. For the future, strategies need to aim at changing the pattern of inequality within gender relations.

For the first stage of its work, the Group agreed to focus on selected areas and to look at the achievements, obstacles and innovative strategies in a concrete way. The choice of areas was guided by the expertise of the members of the Group, as well as by the terms of reference and by strategic considerations. With the aim of integrating the whole, the Group then decided to centre its report on education in the broadest sense of the word and to describe methods of, and approaches to, awareness-raising in all of the specific areas discussed. Six areas were investigated more closely during the work of the Group; three of these have been selected for a more extensive discussion in this report.

In the area of formal education, the focus of the Group was particularly on schools, as a central location for raising awareness among young people, and for encouraging both boys and girls to recognise how gender equality can meet their needs for respect and self-realisation and respond to their sense of social justice. Furthermore, education will be of increasing importance in the future while societies adapt to wide-reaching economic and social change; it will be a central site for developing ethics of social responsibility and citizenship.

Promoting health and preventing violence are generally perceived to be important for the quality of life, both for individuals and communities, yet their relevance to gender equality is not fully recognised. They are also characteristic issues about which women have articulated very important concerns, while very little work has addressed how they affect or involve men. In such areas it seems particularly difficult to develop strategies which do not fall back on the competing interests of groups, playing them against each other.

Combining work and family has been a major issue for policy discussion in all the European countries and on the European level for many years. Yet, progress often seems painfully slow and the Group felt that there was a widespread sense of "fatigue". Perhaps this is due to the fact that the problem has been defined narrowly; the focus needs to be widened to include the balance between professional and personal life in the broadest sense. There has also been an exclusive approach to organising daily life within given structures of the economy, of responsibilities for dependent care etc.; achieving full equality calls for a shift in focus, putting people first.

The influence of the media in shaping attitudes and beliefs, in selecting images of reality and of possibilities is an element both of stability and of change in gender relations. Although the increasingly transnational structures of the media make them less sensitive to national or local viewpoints, the media *per se* do not determine opinions or attitudes. Closer attention to distinctions such as those between information, communication and opinion, or between the press and advertising is necessary to develop policies that support awareness of the greater human potential offered by gender equality without colliding with basic human rights and freedoms.

New developments in <u>information technology</u> are interacting with social transformations to produce changes that are both profound and often unexpected. New threats and new opportunities, yesterday only a matter for debate among specialists, are now entering into daily life, and both women and men have no choice but to come to terms with them. Efforts towards gender equality need to have an early and active engagement with the forces that are transforming both work and personal life.

The search for innovative strategies was guided by the following ideas:

- equality will enrich society
- equality benefits men as well as women
- equality can help solve major problems of society
- inequality is a waste of human resources
- gender equality is an attainable objective.

The Group gave particular attention to examples of strategies which give concrete meaning to these ideas.

Finally, it is important to recognise that gender relations exist on three levels:

- on the level of the individual: attitudes, gender identities, habits of behaviour;
- on the level of the whole society: economic structures, social policy, institutions;
- on the intermediate level of organisations, which also have a gender culture.

Strategies for change need to address all three levels.

The first phase of the struggle for gender equality rightly focused on discrimination against women. In almost every sphere, women were at a disadvantage relative to men. This continues to be the case, and until it is no longer the norm, the central thrust of the law and policies must be to build a consensus on measures to eliminate discrimination against women.

There are a number of reasons why men might support measures which promote women's equality:

- they may recognise that "women's liberation" is men's liberation too, as in the freedom to share in parenting and household responsibilities, and removal of the need to be the sole breadwinner;
- they may yearn for a fairer society for their sisters, wives, daughters and friends;
- they may recognise the economic inefficiency of gender-based discrimination;
- they may perceive gender equality as an inalienable part of social justice.

Such acceptance will be facilitated, however, if it is acknowledged by women – and policy-makers – that discrimination against men should not be trivialised, ignored or condoned.

In practice, opposing interests of women and of men can, and often do, obstruct progress towards achieving equality. The temptation to demean and ridicule the other group is inherent in such conflicts, and when gender is involved, its sexual connotations provide a strong motive for the media to highlight or exaggerate them. Thus exclusionary debates, in which – today – women participate as well as men, have been in the foreground of media attention. Inclusive strategies recognise the unavoidability of diverging and contradictory practical interests, but are grounded in understanding conflict as a productive force which can sharpen awareness of common needs, for example the shared interest in social cohesion and democracy.

Inclusive strategies towards equality will aim to transform conflicts non-violently and in doing so, to employ them constructively.

**Seminar**
**"A new social contract between women and men: the role of education"**
**(Strasbourg, 7-8 December 2000)**

**Conclusions by Isabel Romão (Portugal),**
**General Rapporteur**

*Why do we need a new social contract between women and men?*

The on-going struggle to improve women's lot, and the abundant legislation in place at national and international level to ensure equal opportunities have, in practice, failed to achieve sufficiently rapid progress. Serious disparities in fundamental areas continue to exist between the two sexes. These compromise human rights for both women and men, including the right to participate fully as equal partners in all aspects of life. These disparities also have consequences for our societies, which are consequently too often deprived of women's contribution in the public arena, and men's contribution in the private sphere.

These disparities eventually result in various forms of dysfunction that impact on women's and men's lives, and will tend to be perpetuated unless we succeed in **bringing about a change in the relationship between women and men and in involving men into the struggle.**

**Consequently, it is necessary to take steps to overcome gender inequalities and give practical form to a new social contract between women and men.**

The fact is, it is no longer enough to combat discrimination or fight for power-sharing between the sexes. We must ask what may be lost if women and men do not become involved in building a democratic society, and what kind of democracy does not ensure balanced participation by its two main components.

It is clear that the existing gender model or social contract has proved inadequate in responding to collective needs and must be replaced by a new contract that can produce a society based on partnership and the equal distribution of rights and responsibilities between women and men. Such a contract would be inclusive, but would be based on both sexes' contributions, reflect their respective needs and be capable of restoring their full rights as citizens.

This model aims to build a society in which women and men will participate more equally in all spheres and will share family responsibilities, work and power. In short, a new model, capable of meeting the needs of contemporary women, men and society. As was emphasised several times during the seminar, this is a political issue.

*What is education's role in the process of building a new social contract between women and men?*

In recent years we have witnessed a significant increase in the standard of education reached by young women and girls and growing numbers of young women in higher education.

The existence of mixed-sex education in many countries and the improvement in women's general position with regard to education are resulting in a situation where we frequently confuse these facts with a genuine democratisation of education.

However, whilst acknowledging the importance of formal equality, we cannot forget that it still serves to legitimise the disparities between women and men with regard to vocational guidance, training, employment, participation in society as a whole and, in particular, decision-making; it ascribes these disparities to a natural imbalance in gifts and skills, dependant on sex or social group, and perpetuates them.

Schools do not exist in isolation from the society around them: they transmit that society's models and, since society is characterised by discriminatagainst and domination over women, these models are inevitably repeated in schools. **Accordingly, the absence of formal discrimination is insufficient to guarantee that the school system is a vehicle for *de facto* equality.**

*The process of social change must be speeded up, and schools can be powerful agents for change*.

**It is only by promoting genuine co-education throughout the education process that we can achieve equality between girls and boys and prepare them for the future and their role as full citizens**.

This prompts us to consider the role of teachers and teaching.

As mentors, or as models with whom pupils identify, **teachers** can become agents for perpetuating systems that practise gender-based selection or agents for social change.

We need to involve schools and the various participants in the educational process in combating stereotyped images of femininity and masculinity, so as to enable each individual to make **real choices**: this involves learning new roles, based only on each human being's individuality, for the purpose of greater and better participation by women and men at all levels of family, professional and social life.

*A comprehensive pedagogical challenge*

This task cannot be viewed as a supplementary subject, that might or might not be covered by the school depending on interest, time, financial resources, or the goodwill of all those involved in the educational process. It is a **comprehensive teaching challenge** which must be taken up by all who wish schools to be places that enable girls and boys to enjoy genuinely equal opportunities for participation in society.

This is not a question of creating new school subjects, but rather of **developing a new approach to teaching**, integrating these new objectives at all levels, in all contexts and in all subjects, each of which will enable various aspects of this issue to be covered and which, taken together, will contribute to a through reappraisal of current and future female and male roles and the exercise of democratic citizenship.

*"Gender blindness"*

No-one will wish to change until they have felt the need for change, analysed the underlying reasons for this need and created the circumstances for change. But teachers often believe their teaching is neutral. They must therefore be enabled to "reformulate the universal model presented to them as neutral, but which is impregnated by gender".

Accordingly, our primary objective should be **to encourage teachers and pupils to think, and to make them aware of their role as agents for change**.

**Valuing equality and diversity**

Equality between women and men is a requirement for justice, democracy and respect for human beings. However, we frequently forget that these human beings are women or men. Accordingly, they are not neutral. Women and men are equal beings, but are not identical, just as women's and men's realities are not the same, with differences existing within each sex. **Respect for equality implies respecting these differences not ranking either higher than the other.**

The way in which each society perceives and treats women and men, assigning them different roles, results from a social construction of gender. This social construction not only impacts on women's and men's lives, it also influences how institutions operate. The school institution is no exception.

We frequently hear that "our education system does not discriminate. In fact, it helps girls more, since they do better than boys in school and account for the majority of those completing higher education every year". Teresa Pinto has reminded us that this question of girls' success, sometimes considered the "central question of inequality between the sexes" can lead to educational systems focusing their efforts on "improving boys' results", rather than ensuring sustainable success for girls in terms of their transition from school to working life and their "participation in political and economic decision-making". In other words, ensuring that their **academic success** is reflected in **social success**, and thus helping to reduce the gulf between these two forms of success.

The fact is, education systems rarely discriminate formally between young people as boys and girls. In many countries, schools are mixed and both the curricula and teaching standards are the same for both sexes at all educational levels. Simultaneously, however, schools obliquely and subtly replicate traditional models for attributing social roles and depictions of masculinity and femininity. By drawing attention to the process of school socialisation, Teresa Pinto helps us move beyond the over-simplistic discourse of academic success or failure, and adds a third dimension to our analysis, namely the concept of **educational success**.

Discussion and research on integrating gender equality into **educational success** could become key elements in re-defining **academic success** in terms of **social success** and in helping the education system assume its role in bringing about social change.

Indeed, many elements influence academic socialisation. They were amply emphasised by Elena Prus, and have been raised time and again during the seminar:

- **Teaching materials, particularly school textbooks**, which Annamaria Dudik has also studied, contain several kinds of sexist distortions, such as stereotyped values and images of femininity and masculinity. These hidden messages are transmitted via the language, illustrations and subject-matter that is used or omitted, and are rarely challenged.

Several countries have carried out research into the school textbooks used for different teaching levels and subjects.

Research shows that textbooks are fairly conservative and often out-dated in terms of reality. Their characters tend to be characterised in a stereotyped manner – female characters are fragile, passive, submissive, while there is a strong preponderance of male figures, characterised by sharper and stronger personality traits. Girls and women are portrayed as objects rather than subjects, in private rather than public contexts, with no identity of their own – X's mother, X's sister, X's wife…. History teaching is based on men and their military exploits and conquests, and women's presence and contribution become invisible. In language teaching, the authors selected are frequently male novelists or poets, with their particular view of reality and experience.

The effects of these sexist distortions, even unintentional, are inevitably reflected in the image that pupils build of themselves and the depiction of the group to which they belong. It is therefore essential that teachers analyse and challenge textbooks, and find ways of overcoming the sexist distortions that they contain. Particular attention should be paid to drawing up and selecting textbooks.

- **Teachers' behaviour and expectations** are a source of unequal treatment for young girls and boys which must be recognised and corrected, even if it is often unconscious and involuntary, at least initially. Teachers do not usually believe that they treat girls and boys in their classes differently and are accordingly surprised to discover that they do not communicate with girls and boys in the same way. At most, they may also recognise that they discipline boys and girls differently, and are more likely to punish boys than girls in the same circumstances. They may also admit that they sometimes give boys more time and attention, but this is because boys make themselves heard more often, speak to the teacher more frequently and cause more trouble if they are not given immediate attention: girls tend to disrupt the class less.

Teresa Pinto cites the example of mathematics to illustrate the "Pygmalion effect", i.e. how maths teachers' differing expectations with regard to girls and boys could lie behind girls' lack of success in this field, "considered in many countries as an indisputable key to social success" - and consequently to social progress. This is a subject area which girls opt for less frequently than boys and in which they are less successful.

It is therefore important for teachers to analyse their expectations and behaviour with regard to both sexes and to understand that these factors influence their relationships with pupils of each sex, and even pupils' success. They should be aware of the patterns of interaction that they establish with each sex, bearing in mind that the quantity and quality of teacher attention that each pupil receives will necessarily have an effect on his or her identity, behaviour, confidence, self-esteem, the learning process and academic success. These comments are especially relevant with regard to technical and scientific subjects.

- **Classroom organisation and unequal distribution of tasks** between boys and girls. Classroom decoration, especially for the youngest age-groups, frequently includes posters showing children in stereotyped roles, organised games often pit girls and boys from the same class against each other, toys are reserved for girls or boys, girls and boys are encouraged to take part in different activities or to play an active role in the tidying and up-keep of classrooms and playgrounds. It goes without saying that family habits do not always facilitate the task of teachers wishing to influence the tide of events.

- **School organisation** reproduces the traditional patterns in the sexual division of labour and social roles: the clearest example is the fact that the teaching staff are unequally distributed by gender at each level and in each area of education, and the imbalance between the total number of women in teaching and their representation in school management positions and in management posts in Education Ministries.

- **Academic curricula and subjects** target girls or boys. Whether or not these are formally differentiated for each sex, practice shows that segregation often occurs. For example, home economics and less competitive sports are reserved for girls, whilst technical work usually linked with manufacture and the more competitive sports are more frequently associated with boys.

In many countries, segregation of girls takes place subtly, through curricular development in various subjects – via the subject-matter taught, which ignores women's knowledge and interests, and via the methodological approaches and language used, which sometimes make it difficult for girls and boys to identify with the subjects under consideration. A study of school options by sex, particularly where

scientific and technical subjects are concerned, is revealing. Teaching curricula are not developed in a way that would break down sexist social and professional representations.

Teresa Pinto drew our attention to research confirming that this is not a problem of mixed or single-sex education. Single-sex education would appear not to affect girls' performance. The question of single-sex v. mixed education needs to be studied further.

Accordingly, particular attention should be given to curriculum content, especially curriculum development, laying greater emphasis on the emotional and social dimensions of learning, seeking to implement changes in how these subjects are taught and their image, so that more girls are attracted to them and are guaranteed a greater chance of success.

Girls' and boys' preferences with regard to teaching and learning styles should also influence the curriculum.

Adapting subject-matter to meet humanistic concerns and including the social implications and human applications of science and technology as an integral part of these programme might be ways of helping to increase girls' interest in these areas and their success in them. So long as the sciences are viewed as the study of conceptual structures, and technology as the study of skills for controlling and dominating the environment, with no need to establish any kind of emotional link with the subject, these areas of study and training will attract more boys. Indeed, we even believe that a more humanist approach to the sciences and technology could help reverse the academic failure shown by pupils of both sexes in these fields, and generate greater interest in them.

A technological culture should be developed from the first years of school education. This would mean making technological training an integral part of training for basic and primary education teachers.

However, academic curricula could also be a starting point for changing attitudes and mentalities. If the challenge is to be successfully met, this activity must be integrated into all aspects of teaching practice, and discussion of these themes should not be dissociated from the regular teaching programme. Languages, history, mathematics, etc, are all opportunities for teachers to refer to distinct aspects of the issue, each contributing to an overall approach to the problem.

In considering diversity in study methods, we should not overlook diversity in cultures and traditions, particularly with regard to minorities, as Mihaela Miroiu reminded us.

**Consequently, teachers should above all be aware of their potential role in perpetuating and in changing mentalities and attitudes.**

This brings us to a question that has been central to our discussions throughout the seminar, namely **teacher training**.

This is a decisive factor in promoting teaching innovation and teacher trainers are key figures in ensuring that equality is integrated into educational practice. Training should enable teachers to analyse the whole of the teaching process and school organisation from the perspective of gender, equality and diversity. It should also contain elements enabling them to identify and combat various forms of demonstrable sexism in schools, to react when faced with discrimination and to help pupils to identify it.

**Integrating a gender perspective into teaching practice presupposes that initial and in-service teacher training is based on the "critical model"**, which recognises that education reflects

the social construction of gender and influences it in turn. It requires awareness of this models' intrinsic educational and social implications.

**Accordingly, it is essential to include consideration of the issues of gender, equality and diversity in curricula and programmes for initial and in-service teacher training.**

**Study plans for initial and in-service teacher training should therefore contain explicit reference to elements and "specific curricular areas"** that will enable trainees to reflect on the causes and results of the traditional division of feminine and masculine roles. This means lessons that cover knowledge and analysis of gender issues and are aimed at providing specific training on co-education and equal opportunities; they should take the historical emergence of the issue into account, and help teachers to identify the social representations to which they are attached. They should also deal with the topic's historical and sociological dimensions.

**Equality, diversity and gender perspective should therefore be integrated into the various areas of initial and in-service teacher training and the academic process**, particularly **knowledge**, both in terms of its production and its reproduction and transmission; into teaching dynamics: teaching materials, methodologies, interaction, evaluations; and into **the institutional culture**: academic schedules and fields, leisure activities, posters, decorations.

The shortage of trainers in these fields was also highlighted on numerous occasions. Accordingly, training of trainers should be developed.

For teachers, however, critical self-analysis and analysis of the socio-cultural context in which they work are also key factors in correcting discriminatory practices and in "the emergence of a wide range of representations that can support a willingness to take action". **Initial and in-service teacher training should therefore lead to an analysis of their own identity and involve examining and challenging their own beliefs, values, prejudices, expectations, attitudes and concepts of femininity and masculinity**, both in terms of personality traits and the skills commonly associated with masculinity and femininity, and the kind of relationship they have with pupils of each sex.

**Analysis of co-education can, in fact, become a model for developing equal opportunities,** relegating the debate on single-sex v. mixed education to a secondary level. If we succeed in achieving true co-education, this issue will become less relevant.

Several needs or recommendations emerge from the discussions on the first theme:

- adopting education policies and practices aimed at **transforming social gender relations** in the processes of socialisation and identity construction for both sexes.

- **developing research,** in order to understand better the socio-cultural processes that determine the differences or dichotomies between girls and boys.

- encouraging co-ordination between **researchers and teachers**, in order to further curriculum development, innovative pedagogy and teacher training that will develop their professional skills profiles so that they can take account of equality and diversity.

- encouraging **co-ordination between researchers, teachers and political decision-makers**, so that education policies will reflect achievements and needs in the equality field.

- improving support for teachers, so that they can **share information and exchange experiences on in-class strategies**, and incorporate research findings on teaching procedures into their

own practice. This should also end the isolation still experienced by those who attempt to develop equality.

- **preparing and disseminating teaching materials** for teacher training, based on the variety of ways of understanding, learning and knowing, to help teachers incorporate analysis and action for change into their teaching practice.

- promoting projects to **enable young people to be aware of life's various dimensions**.

- putting in place "multidisciplinary networks of specialists on questions of gender and equal opportunities, in education and teacher training, at national and European level, **supported by Internet sites and the creation of databases** on research, projects and materials in this area".

- informing teachers about international agreements and trends.

- promoting **partnership between schools and parents**.

Finally, "with reference to Women's Studies, which play an important role in renewing scientific thought and production, we must not forget (a) to take account of their epistemological and methodological contribution to critical questioning of the dominant scientific paradigms, particularly as regards teacher training, and (b) to promote their legitimacy at national and European level".

### Building new identities

The social construction of gender moulds the collective imagination. It also moulds our way of being, resulting in the development of gender roles, and these are everywhere associated with asymmetrical and hierarchical value judgements. Masculine personality traits and behaviour are seen as superior and more socially desirable than those traditionally attributed to women. In particular, they are taken as the norm and reference.

The acquisition of knowledge, models, values, symbols and sex roles that influence the construction of our identity is a process that begins at birth and continues throughout our lives. However, the most intense socialisation period is during infancy and school years, when the roles attached to gender assume their social content and become structured. It is during this period that the stereotyped ideas of masculinity and femininity can become more rigid. However, women and men have an active role to play in the construction of their gender identity, and gender relationships are open to negotiation and change.

Schools should therefore contribute to this **negotiation and change** by helping pupils **become aware** of the influences exerted by adults and society in general regarding conformity with gender roles. They can help pupils **to think, analyse and challenge these influences and, most of all, to exercise freedom of choice**.

The wide body of research and theory referred to by Agnès de Munter illustrates how **teachers' behaviour can influence the development of pupils' identities**. Experiences of failure and the reasons given for it, together with teachers' expectations, have a bearing on the way they deal with individual pupils, influencing their self-image, behaviour, academic performance and, of course, identity. She also highlights the need for teachers to be aware of the effects of these behaviour patterns and the importance of making pupils understand that they have options and are free to challenge the models presented to them and expectations that are based on stereotyped prejudices.

Accordingly, a teaching methodology should be developed that will enable pupils to "enhance their abilities and self-confidence", so that they will be able to contradict the various forms of conditioning to which they are subjected and make "ethical judgements".

This requires that initial and in-service teacher training, and the media, pay particular attention to the impact of teachers' expectations and communication styles on pupils' identity-building and on the establishment of a new social contract between women and men.

Elina Lahelma and Annamaria Dudik talked about the **relationship between the sexes in schools**, and reminded us of a dimension that is frequently overlooked when trying to identify the school's role in building identities, namely, the **informal and physical environment**, which is just as important as the formal sphere. The way in which girls and boys use language and occupy school time and space, together with many gender-related factors, have a decisive impact on how sexuality and feminine and masculine identities develop. For girls, this refers to the teasing and harassment to which they are subjected on account of their sex. It is reflected in the insults or humiliating behaviour addressed to girls in general or to certain groups of girls, via physical intimidation or by restricting their space or time for speaking in class.

Young boys are also affected. Men take themselves as the norm, consider feminine personality traits and behaviour to be inferior and refuse to adopt them. They also experience the consequences of rigid and pre-conceived ideas of masculinity. This is the main reason for the bullying suffered by boys and, perhaps, for the rejection of academic success. Feminine and masculine identities are conditioned, regardless of whether boys or girls experience these forms of bullying directly.

**"These practices are both forms of social control aimed at maintaining separation lines between the two sexes and an expression of male power" and of masculinity's predominance over female values.**

Indirectly, informal practices in classrooms and playgrounds invade formal teaching and the learning process. Teachers and other participants in the educational process are unaware of this; pupils who are not themselves direct victims of these practices are sometimes also unaware. Conflict, arguments between girls and boys and sexist comments are more likely to be considered as normal and not identified as bullying: where they are identified as such, the difficulty of changing the subject or a lack of time tends to make teachers adopt a neutral attitude.

If this kind of practice is to be checked or eliminated, we cannot limit ourselves to an attitude of so-called neutrality: we must be able to alter the entire school culture, characterised as it is by gender. To do this, it is also important that the presence of sexuality in schools be discussed in the context of learning and teaching and that the topic of sexual harassment be integrated into sex education.

**Physical models reinforce gender construction**. Once again, gender stereotypes determine the models to which girls and boys must conform, **rejecting the diversity between and within the sexes** and shaping self-image, identity-building, gender relationships and social integration. In seeking to conform to continually changing models of femininity, girls subject their bodies to changes that affect their identity development and frequently their health.

In this regard, physical education's influence on these models has also been noted: this is one of the areas where segregation continues to be most persistent, based on the biological differences between the sexes.

Physical education lessons, sport, areas such as schoolyards or extra-curricular activities enable young people to develop co-ordination skills, persistence, initiative, leadership skills and physical strength, and also contribute to developing good health habits and the capacity for teamwork.

Good physical condition also has a positive impact on intellectual and social development and on each individual's self-image. Being able to control one's body through mastery of a sport increases self-esteem, self-confidence and the feeling of individual freedom.

However, pupils of each sex have unequal opportunities for experimenting, showing their abilities to others and enjoying positive experiences in these areas or fields. Frequently, girls continue to be relegated to a limited number of sports, which receive less support in terms of grants, equipment, subsidies and publicity.

This segregation reflects differing expectations, which result in distinctive treatment for the sexes. Boys are encouraged or even forced to take part in sports. They experience constant pressure to compete and win. Success on the sports field brings prestige among their friends and adult approval. At the same time, girls often receive less encouragement to develop new abilities and to take part in sports activities. They sometimes choose not to participate, for fear of not conforming to the established body image or performance ideal, with the adverse impact that we have seen on identity development and reinforcement of prejudice.

In addition, we cannot overlook the fact that the most frequently shown sports broadcasts favour men and undervalue women.

However, the body can also be a means of affirming one's difference and defying the dominant norms. Alternative youth culture is an example.

**Language** determines the structure of collective representations and our way of thinking, and contributes to building self-image. However, oral and written language is not neutral. Here again, masculinity is not only valued, but is the norm, grammar and our discourse become channels for the invisibility, subordination, and even negation of femininity. As noted above, it is therefore essential to analyse the ideological charge carried by academic texts and language.

Analysis of **communication forms between young people** shows a rejection of or even contempt for the communication forms most commonly used by girls and women. Promotion of traditionally male communication styles forces girls and women to adopt strategies that are alien to them and that are damaging to their identity development.

As we have already emphasised, the majority of our school systems are characterised by a body of knowledge that was drawn up by men and by a ubiquitous masculine model that excludes feminine experiences, interests and knowledge from academic culture. Women's absence from **historical** subject matter, preparation and interpretation means that their presence and contribution become invisible, thus reinforcing their subordination.

**Girls and boys are also evaluated differently on the basis of gender stereotypes.** Characteristics attributed to boys are valued more highly than those attributed to girls, with consequences for their evaluation. The same behaviour in girls or boys gives rise to different interpretations by teachers, both as regards discipline and academic success.

The debate on this sub-theme leads us to identify the need to promote innovative projects on gender stereotypes and pupil behaviour, representations of masculinity and femininity, behaviour models

for girls and boys, new identities for girls and relations between the sexes, particularly as regards aggressive and insulting behaviour, and to challenge the values attached to gender.

**Promoting democratic citizenship**

Integration of equality is essential if we are to encourage young people to adopt the values of justice and participation needed for the effective exercise of democratic citizenship, the construction of private and public partnerships between women and men, and democracy. However, this is far from being common practice in education systems.

The choices made by both sexes in terms of education, occupation and lifestyle are subject to strong cultural pressures based on stereotyped concepts of femininity and masculinity. These have repercussions on the distribution of family tasks and responsibilities between the sexes, the division of roles in the labour market and female and male participation in society in general and decision-making in particular.

**Young people are exposed to many socialisation contexts that influence their willingness and ability to participate and their understanding of the partnership that could exist between women and men.**

Participants at this seminar have mainly considered three socialisation contexts: the family, school and informal groups.

Mihaela Miroiu showed us the close link between the way in which the male-female partnership is experienced in the private sphere and how it is viewed in the public sphere when it comes to promoting democratic citizenship.

**Education for democratic citizenship begins in the family**. It is here in particular that children should be educated for independence, freedom of choice, decision-making, participation and assertiveness. In the longer term, however, girls' and boys' family socialisation, focused on what she describes as the "**symbolic patriarchy**" that dominates the private sphere, frequently results in **actual patriarchy in the public domain**.

In family contexts, the values underlying the education of each sex differ profoundly: girls are educated in a spirit of obedience and hard work, while discipline, independence and freedom of choice are more appreciated in boys.

The stereotypes associated with feminine roles in the private sphere have a greater impact on perceptions of women's public role than women's actual abilities to play a decisive role in this area. Democracy and justice are regarded as values that apply to the private rather than the public sphere.

**Thus, the prejudices that underlie depictions of the sexes and the values that guide their education influence how girls and boys participate.**

Ms Miroiu then asked to what extent schools train girls and boys so as to provide them with equal opportunities in terms of careers and participation in decision-making, and claimed that the proposed model for teacher training is reactive and focused on preservation of the status quo rather than emancipation.

Indeed, education for democratic citizenship is not included in school programmes in many countries and, where it exists, is confined to a specific school-subject and does not necessarily cover equality explicitly.

*What educational policies should be encouraged to prepare young people to confront social changes and to promote democratic citizenship in terms of gender partnership?*

Carol Hagemann-White places education for equality at the heart of an education for democratic citizenship that will enable young people to respond to the needs arising from the rapid changes that characterise our societies. **This kind of education calls for a wide range of changes in the educational process, curricula and school culture.**

Firstly, equality and other key democratic concepts such as education for peace, citizens' private and public responsibilities, diversity and intercultural relations should not be perceived as secondary: they should be present **in the rules** underlying education systems as **objectives to be attained**, and should therefore be integrated into **the content of teacher training** and inextricably tied in with a school's various subjects and teaching practices. Rather than creating new subject areas and allotting them a specific amount of time, **teaching procedures and methods** need to be changed, and **learning contexts should be promoted that make the link between school and society and life**.

Schools can create situations in which girls and boys are likely to learn new skills that they have not learnt from traditional forms of socialisation. For girls, these skills involve team-work, presenting ideas, being competitive, occupying space, being daring and using new territory, all skills that are needed in public life. Boys need to acquire skills such as a greater sense of inter-personal responsibility and the attitudes, knowledge and abilities necessary in private life. Schools can train children for partnership, shared decision-making that respects diverging opinions and for their required contribution to social cohesion and justice.

Carol Hagemann-White also reminds us that flexibility of thought, imagination, creative co-operation and the ability to take initiatives are important skills for dealing with changes in modern society and will be even more necessary in the future.

Citizenship is a learned role. **Education for citizenship, aimed at developing the knowledge and skills needed for taking action, for confronting change and for partnership should therefore be provided by schools, as a criterion for full exercise of citizenship in a democratic context.**

This involves acquiring knowledge about democracy, the institutions that uphold it and contemporary history, but primarily the creation of a democratic social culture. This assumes a comprehensive approach to the subject, involving schools and teaching practice; developing "projects that encourage initiative, stimulate the wish to acquire skills and knowledge and establish a relationship between learning and life", giving priority to young people's interests and the issues that affect our societies; and valuing learning more than teaching. These projects can be carried out as part of the multi-disciplinary curricular fields being developed in several countries.

**Education for citizenship involves the creation of learning contexts that enable young people to develop and exercise democratic citizenship, and acknowledgment that young people are agents for current as well as future social change.**

We have seen that these skills and willingness are acquired in the family and at school, but they are also acquired through informal groups – students' associations, political and religious groups and the like - or extra-curricular activities.

**Extra-curricular activities** provide an equal number of socialisation contexts and play an important role in this area, insofar as they enable pupils to have contact with diverse realities and experiences that go far beyond educational programmes. Being based on voluntary participation, they can

tend to perpetuate girls' and boys participation in separate activities, thus reinforcing traditional images of the most appropriate roles, vocations and behaviour for each sex.

It is still common to see boys dominating in activities such as athletics, competition, school management, practical activity workshops, technology classes and computing clubs. One still frequently sees boys playing football in schools while girls support one of the teams, or boys chairing students' associations while girls fill treasurer's posts. In particular, we recognize the longstanding contribution that students' associations have made to forming the political class.

It is therefore essential to seek to minimise these divisions and to encourage girls and boys to participate and to learn to work together.

**The role of the media** in constructing, disseminating and consolidating negative and stereotyped images that influence the exercise of democratic citizenship and gender partnerships was also addressed during the seminar. Here, teachers must intervene to help pupils develop a sense of distance and analysis with regard to the media.

*How can schools educate girls for sustainable success, or ensure their successful transition from education to the labour market? How can they educate young boys to enter traditionally feminine spheres, which are likely to develop in the future?*

There is a correlation between the sexual divisions of labour observed in the manufacturing sphere and in the educational sphere. The social disparities that influence the education system mean that removing premature academic options or options likely to lead to gender segregation is not enough to ensure far-reaching changes in the differences between girls and boys in terms of academic orientation and vocational choices. In the same way, mixed education or even co-education, legally instituted in several countries but not necessarily implemented, has proved inadequate for generating changes in the sexual division of labour, which is reflected in different educational and vocational guidance for girls and boys.

The concepts of democratisation and mixed education seem to give women sole responsibility for their choices, and gender is viewed as a simple descriptive variable, although statistics confirm the on-going inequalities between women and men in terms of guidance, training and employment. Women are also perceived primarily as a specific group, defined essentially in terms of their family situation and reproductive role, which is commonly used to justify their difficulties in vocational integration.

Research has shown that greater tolerance is habitually shown to boys' independence and initiative and to their independence vis-à-vis socially-imposed norms, while girls are more constrained by these norms. Indeed, we believe that it is this greater conformity to school norms that enables them to adapt better to the school system, itself a vehicle for these traditions.

*So, how can we break this vicious circle, how can girls be encouraged to be ambitious, how can schools be changed so that they become socialisation contexts that allow everyone to reach the position in society to which they are entitled, irrespective of their sex?*

Mentalities evolve slowly. These objectives will be achieved only through the **adoption of deliberate policy** that alerts all participants in the educational process to the necessity of eliminating all forms of discrimination. This does not mean searching out discriminatory intentions on the part of participants in the education system but instead looking for factors that play a key role in the wider processes of formulating vocational and educational representations, so that, once they are identified, measures can be taken to offer girls better vocational integration, in an world of technological change and unemployment that tends to affect them more.

We know that preconceived ideas of what is appropriate for girls and boys and representations of the roles to be assumed by adult women and men often act as a filter, obscuring alternatives that are seen as unsuitable, and are powerful obstacles to freedom in choosing an occupation. Sexual roles often influence an individual's interests and motivations. When the moment of decision arrives, young people are usually unaware that their aspirations, expectations and behaviour are strongly determined by gender: their choice is be limited by ideas and interests that began to develop long before school age, and is in fact the result of a long process of interiorising their present and future roles. Many wrong choices are made because the person concerned lacks self-knowledge.

Aspirations, perceptions of motherhood and fatherhood, children's needs and demands, the mother's and father's responsibilities and family, social and occupational roles cannot be dissociated from the discussion of academic and occupational choices. The very concept of guidance should be redeveloped, since it should go further than traditional educational and vocational guidance and focus more on building identities and developing aspirations. It is important that all young people be supported in analysing their values and motivations, broadening their horizons and contemplating a wide range of options, irrespective of their sex, and that they are encouraged to take an active part in this process.

**Schools, teachers, educational and vocational counsellors should therefore be able to counteract the effects of a sexist socialisation that begins well before the first years of school, by giving young people plentiful and diverse information on these subjects and promoting discussion.**

It is clear from examining the third theme that we should promote longer-term and more comprehensive initiatives that influence the entire school career and beyond, focused not only on attitudes but also on results. We need innovative projects on vocational teaching, academic training, extra-curricular teaching or higher education; on subject options, lessons, academic study, careers; on horizontal and vertical sexual segregation in the labour market; on ways of entering the labour market. We should also invest in teaching skills for life and for personal and professional equality.

To quote Teresa Pinto again, citing the report by the Council of Europe's Group of Specialists on Gender Mainstreaming: "Gender mainstreaming is a fundamental strategy for seeing gender equality as a new approach that enhances complementarity and partnership between women and men in the sustained and humane development of society and democracy".

I should also like to repeat that equality promotion should be an integral part of school development or improvement plans, since equality can contribute to enhancing teaching quality and joint quality of life for both women and men.

I will finish by referring to a sentence from a report drawn up in the United Kingdom in 1975, which I believe is still relevant to our discussions over the past two days.

"Change is inevitable in our society… We can choose to bridge the gulf that exists between schools and the world that surrounds them, or choose to widen this gulf: there is no other choice".

That choice is ours.

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