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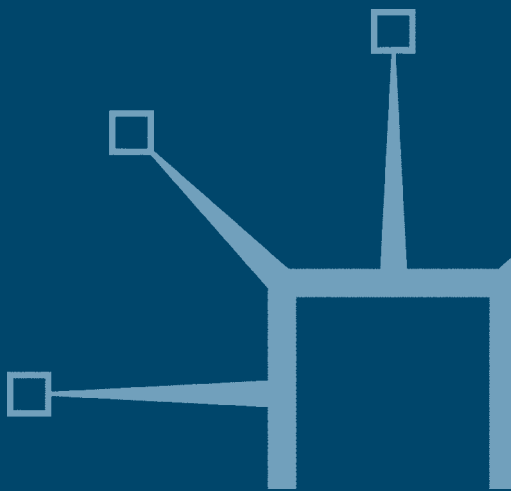
# Feminists Organising Against Gendered Violence

Lesley McMillan



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Lesley McMillan
*Lecturer in Sociology, University of Sussex, UK*

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# Introduction

Violence against women is a salient concern for the women's movement, but the aim of a society free of gendered violence is still to be realised. This book investigates the experience of the women's movement in Sweden and the UK in its attempts to organise against gendered violence, the responses it has given and the approaches taken in addressing the issue of violence against women. A central theme of the research is the dual roles of feminist anti-violence organisations such as women's refuges and crisis centres – that is, the provision of alternative welfare services and campaigning for social, political and policy change – and how these dual roles impact upon their relationship and engagement with the state and its agencies.

The state is a central focus for the women's movement. Second wave feminism has been critical of the state for failing to address male violence against women and has made demands on the state because it has the capacity to provide policy change and funding for welfare services. However, engaging with the state has both costs and benefits. State funding can provide stability for refuge and crisis organisations, but with it comes the risk that close relationships with the state will result in the institutionalisation and co-option of organisations into state social services, thus diminishing the political aspect of refuge and crisis work. The extent to which these organisations can engage with the state but at the same time avoid institutionalisation is a central question of this research.

This book investigates the complex relationship that women's organisations working around violence have with the state, and the strategies and tactics the movements in Sweden and the UK have adopted. It considers the successes the movements have had in terms of service provision and policy change, as well as the compromises they have

had to make and costs they have had to suffer. Organisations have a different relationship with the state when they are emphasising their role as service providers compared to when they are emphasising their role as agents for social change; each of these roles requires an appropriate strategy. Organisations are faced with the dilemma of working within or against the state to achieve their goals.

This introduction provides an overview of the contents of the book as well as a description of the empirical research that informs this book. A descriptive overview of the organisations involved in the research is also provided.

Chapter 1 provides an introduction to second wave feminism and violence against women. It discusses the importance of violence to the women's and feminist movements, detailing how they redefined male violence as a political issue, indicative of the subordinate position of women in society, rather than as a problem of individual men. After a discussion of the feminist response to the problem of male violence, it moves on to indicate the prevalence of violence against women in society today, illustrating why this is still a key issue for the women's movement. Thereafter, it discusses the history and development of women's refuges and crisis centres, detailing the changes the movement has experienced since its inception in the 1970s. It covers the importance of organisations' dual roles, before moving on to provide a consideration of the limitations of social movement theory for understanding the relationship between the women's movement and the state. The chapter concludes with a discussion of what social movement theory can offer us in trying to understand this complex relationship.

Chapter 2 discusses the structural elements that can impact upon the women's movement and how these affect its ability to influence policy and achieve wider social change. The chapter begins by reiterating the importance of the state to feminism and the women's anti-violence movement, as well as why the movement has historically been reluctant to engage with it. The demands the movement has placed on the state and the resultant conflict are central to the stories of refuges and crisis centres. The chapter includes coverage of the complexities involved in talking about 'the state', the differing feminist approaches to the state and how feminists have attempted to theorise about it. It moves on to consider how different 'types' of state produce different forms of social movements, and how differing feminist theoretical understandings of the state impact upon the development of the movement and the subsequent impact the movement is able to have on the state. This is exemplified in a discussion of the development of the movement in Sweden

and the UK. It concludes by considering how the paths taken by the women's movement in particular countries reflect historical differences in the struggle for gender equality and the social condition of women in the country concerned.

In contrast to the structural elements that can impact upon the women's movement's ability to influence policy and achieve wider social change, Chapter 3 considers the role of agency. It details how feminists have chosen to intervene in the state both by working within existing state structures, and by maintaining a critical distance from them and challenging the state from the outside. This chapter discusses the political opportunities and constraints faced by the women's movement, the strategies that are open to them and how this complex relationship might be negotiated. Concentrating on autonomous organisations of the women's anti-violence movement, it examines the ways in which they have sought to influence the state, and in turn, the ways in which the state has impacted upon the movement. It covers the role of political opportunity structure and political opportunity; the extent to which organisations have 'insider', 'outsider' or 'thresholder' status in terms of policy access, influence and acceptability; and the extent to which organisations may adopt 'insider' and 'outsider' strategies to achieve their goals. It utilises literature concerning the US movement to consider the impact that engaging with the state might have on the anti-violence movement, particularly through the provision of state funding, in terms of the transformation of the US movement from a network of 'pure' or 'ideal type' refuges and crisis centres, to an institutionalised movement with a social service orientation. It concludes by posing the question – central to this research – about the extent to which the anti-violence movement can adopt a pragmatic approach and engage with the state in order to achieve its goals, but at the same time avoid becoming absorbed into state structures and bureaucracies.

Chapter 4 addresses the motivations of women who choose to become workers in feminist organisations working around gendered violence, on both a paid and voluntary basis. The chapter also provides a discussion of the usefulness of social movement theories that attempt to explain women's participation and also women's experiences of working in these organisations.

Chapter 5 discusses the funding of feminist organisations working around violence and the dilemmas that state funding in particular can produce, with a specific concentration on the dual roles of these organisations and how the service-provider role can facilitate funding whereas the campaigning role may inhibit an organisation's funding chances.

Chapter 6 discusses the organisation, structure and function of feminist organisations working around violence. The assumption that organisations have to be collectivist to be feminist is challenged empirically, and the spectrum or organisational forms are discussed. The factors that influence organisational form, such as outside pressures and funding streams, are also assessed. In addition, this chapter discusses the perceived and actual functions of these organisations in terms of the service provider/campaigner dichotomy and how these distinctions are managed within organisations.

Thereafter, Chapter 7 addresses the emotional difficulties for the researcher when working on issues of sexual violence and the process of learning to listen to trauma stories. The practice of active listening is discussed as well as the process of silencing that surrounds issues of gendered and sexual violence.

The book concludes by returning to the questions central to the research about how the movement has engaged with the state and considers what the future for the women's movement is in terms of attempting to organise against gendered violence.

## Researching feminist organisations working around violence

The research that informs this book necessitated a comparative design, given that the main focus of the project was to look at the relationship between the state and the feminist movement. Existing studies tend to have a one-country focus (Margolis, 1993; Threlfall, 1997), so there is a gap in existing research for comparative work. Sweden and the UK were chosen as case study countries for the research because existing literature indicates that there are marked differences between the two in terms of social and political history, both from a feminist and mainstream perspective; the development and trajectory of the feminist movement; the paths taken by anti-violence organisations; and the strategies the women's movement has adopted over time. Despite these differences, in both countries the women's movement has made considerable policy gains that are positive for women on issues of violence. Therefore, comparative research involving these two countries offers the potential for deeper understanding of the complex phenomenon of states' and social movements' relationships, and how these gains have been achieved.

Furthermore, literature on the topic of states and feminist social movements is heavily US dominated, so comparisons with the US are difficult

to avoid, and often North American social scientists assume that all movements follow an evolutionary path, thus leading to a movement similar to the one that developed in the US (Margolis, 1993). Women's movements share a common concern with improving the position of women in society (Ferree, 1987), but this does not diminish the importance of economic, political, social and cultural differences. A comparison between Sweden and the UK allows us to investigate the importance of these differences in each country and the strategies the movement has adopted as a result.

From a practical perspective, Sweden and the UK offer a useful comparison because there are identifiable anti-violence movements in each country. Both have networks of refuges and crisis centres that developed from the women's movement and second wave feminism, and both countries have seen considerable policy change in the area of violence against women. The movements have followed different paths but are still in existence, offering the possibility of comparative empirical work.

The research utilised both qualitative and quantitative methods in the form of in-depth interviews and a questionnaire-based survey conducted with feminist organisations working around issues of gendered violence in Sweden and the UK. A total of 90 organisations from Sweden and the UK were invited to take part in the research, and 74 subsequently participated. A total of 675 questionnaires were distributed to staff working within them and of these 549 were returned completed. Twenty-eight organisations were selected to take part in the qualitative element of the research and a total of 25 individuals, each from a different organisation, were interviewed. Questionnaire data was subsequently analysed quantitatively using descriptive and inferential statistics, and the qualitative data was analysed thematically paying particular attention to previously identified research questions.

In conducting the research ethical issues were of great importance, and the issues that were particularly relevant to this research were ensuring informed consent; respect for privacy, confidentiality and anonymity; safeguarding data; adhering to a feminist methodology in order not to objectify respondents; causing the minimum disruption to women's working lives; and the dissemination of the research findings to those who participated.

## Feminist organisations working around violence

This section provides a descriptive overview of the networks of refuges and crisis centres operating in Sweden and the UK involved in the

research. There are two main networks in each country: Women's Aid and Rape Crisis in the UK, and Riksorganisationen för Kvinnojourer i Sverige (ROKS) and Sveriges Kvinnojourernas Riksförbund (SKR) in Sweden. All four networks developed out of the wider women's liberation and feminist movements; they continue to provide alternative welfare provision for survivors of violence and campaign and lobby on issues surrounding violence against women. The organisations differ within, and between, the two countries, as well as within each organisation itself, in terms of their status as 'insiders' and 'outsiders' in relation to the state. A brief history and overview of the current position of the organisations is discussed below.

## Feminist organisations working around violence in the UK

There are two main networks of anti-violence organisations offering alternative welfare provision in the UK. Women's Aid is a network of refuges for women and children who experience domestic violence that organises nationally in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Rape Crisis is a network of crisis centres offering services to women and girls who have been raped, sexually assaulted or abused. There are Rape Crisis centres throughout England, Wales and Scotland, and one in Northern Ireland.

Both organisations are run by women, offer services for women and identify with a feminist political outlook. The women's movement in the UK, because of its association with radical and socialist feminism and because of the 'closed' nature of the political system, organised autonomously at the outset and had little formalised contact with state structures. The local state has been one of the main political arenas that anti-violence organisations have interacted with, a strategy that has proved particularly successful for Women's Aid in particular.

### Women's Aid

The network of organisations now known collectively as Women's Aid grew from the women's liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s. Male violence against women was the subject of much activity for feminists, and the first refuge for battered women was opened in 1972 in London (Coote & Campbell, 1987; Kelly, 1988). Erin Pizzey, the founder of the first refuge, was a skilled publicist and succeeded in attracting considerable media attention for an issue that was almost entirely hidden from society. Pizzey eventually separated from the rest of the Women's Aid movement, after disagreements about the need to

set up a national coordinating body. She continues to be viewed as a leading authority on domestic violence, but her views diverge sharply from those of other Women's Aid groups. She sees male violence as a psychological problem and claims that some women are 'violence prone' and invite assault (Coote & Campbell, 1987). This is antithetical to a feminist analysis of violence.

The National Women's Aid Federation (NWAF) was formed in 1975 (Charles, 2000), by which time there were 28 groups in existence with a further 83 in the process of being established (Coote & Campbell, 1987). The founding groups of NWAF saw the need for a national body that could campaign on issues of violence against women and could coordinate the work of the ever-growing number of shelters across the country. Women's Aid had a non-hierarchical structure and explicitly feminist objectives. It insisted that all groups remain autonomous and maintain an 'open-door' policy. NWAF identified five aims:

> To provide temporary refuge for women and children suffering physical or mental harassment
>
> To encourage women to determine their own future, and to help them achieve it, whether that involves returning home or beginning a new life elsewhere
>
> To recognise and care for the educational and emotional needs of the children involved
>
> To offer advice and support to any woman who asks for it, whether she is resident in the refuge or not, and to offer aftercare and support for those who have left the refuge
>
> To educate and inform the public, the police, the courts, the social services, the media and other authorities on the issue of the battering of women, emphasising that this is a result of the general position of women in society
>
> (Schechter, 1982: 155)

It is clear from these five aims that the Women's Aid movement identified its dual role as both service provider and campaigner for political change from the outset (Stedward, 1987). In the beginning, NWAF organised refuges in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, but by 1980 each country had its own national organising body (Schechter, 1982). Across the UK there are now in excess of 330 Women's Aid groups. (Women's Aid Federation of England, 2001; Scottish Women's

Aid, 2001; Welsh Women's Aid, 2001; Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation, 2001).

Women's Aid has an explicitly feminist ethos in terms of how it organises its work and in its analysis of the roots and repercussions of violence, in that it recognises that

> 1. domestic violence is a violation of women and children's human rights, that it is the result of an abuse of power and control, and that it is rooted in the historical status of women in the family and in society
>
> 2. women and children have a right to live their lives free from all forms of violence and abuse, and that society has a duty to recognise and defend this right
>
> 'About Women's Aid', Women's Aid Federation of England, Homepage, 2002

The national organising bodies of Women's Aid refuges in the four countries of the UK assume the majority of responsibility for the organisation of campaigning efforts, providing consultation with national government and coordinating the work of the individual refuge organisations. The refuges assume most of the responsibility for service provision as well as engaging in local campaigning. The national organisations and individual refuges take part in consultation exercises, multi-agency working, community education and training for various bodies. Funding is applied for and administered on a local level, and refuges assume responsibility for securing funding. The vast majority of Women's Aid refuges now have service agreements with local authorities to provide housing provision for those leaving violent relationships. The movement identifies its agenda on domestic violence as having three strands:

> working at a strategic level to promote the protection of women and children by representing their needs to policy and decision makers
>
> working towards the long-term prevention of domestic violence through public awareness and campaigning
>
> working to provide services that meet the needs of all abused women and children
>
> 'About Women's Aid', Women's Aid Federation of England, Homepage, 2002

Women's Aid has changed somewhat since its outset in the 1970s and has sought to have its professional status recognised, as well as the comprehensive services it now provides for survivors of violence. Despite these changes, Women's Aid continues to aim to organise collectively and to adhere to a feminist ethos. It continues to emphasise the self-help element of refuge work and eschews the service provider/client dichotomy that characterises statutory welfare provision, and continues to seek both political reform and wider societal change on the issue of violence against women. As will be discussed in the following chapters, Women's Aid's service delivery element has allowed the opportunity for a close relationship with government despite having a feminist outlook and understanding of violence and relatively radical demands in terms of wider social change. This relationship necessarily comes with costs and benefits.

In the following chapters, it will be argued that Women's Aid has succeeded in establishing itself as a legitimate organisation in the eyes of state institutions in its role as service provider, and has succeeded in putting the issue of domestic violence onto the political agenda. At the same time Women's Aid has retained a feminist political analysis of violence and its autonomy from the state.

**Rape Crisis**

The network of Rape Crisis centres that now exists in the UK, like Women's Aid, also grew out of the women's liberation movement and second wave feminism. Women recognised a need for support services for women who had experienced rape and sexual assault, as well as the need for campaigning on issues of sexual violence, in particular surrounding the criminal justice system and its treatment of women complainants (Coote & Campbell, 1987). The first Rape Crisis centre was opened in London in 1976, and by 1985 a total of 45 centres were in existence throughout the UK (ibid.).

Like Women's Aid, Rape Crisis was not geared simply at gaining legal reform from the state; it also had the chief aim of providing a woman-centred framework for support. Women aimed to help each other, and their efforts were based upon the notion that the cause and problem of rape were deeply embedded in the social fabric and needed wider change than piecemeal reform (Coote & Campbell, 1987). As with the majority of anti-violence organisations, the Rape Crisis movement also had dual roles; service provision for survivors and campaigning for political change. The Rape Crisis movement had the wider aim of

achieving a rape-free society (Gornick et al., 1985). The movement's campaigns included slogans such as:

> We are walking for all women – all women should be free to walk down any street, night or day, without fear.
>
> (Spare Rib, 1978)

Rape Crisis also organised collectively and provided services in a way that adhered to feminist politics. The difference between helper and helped was intentionally minimised. Crisis centres provided counselling and a sympathetic environment to help women cope with the experience of rape (Coote & Campbell, 1987). The understanding that women were revictimised by the state institutions that were supposed to protect them meant that Rape Crisis demanded reform; however, those who advocated a feminist revolution understood that profound social struggle that attacked the sexism, racism and class domination in society would be needed to end rape. As a result, although Rape Crisis recognised that institutions needed to be changed, it also felt the need to take an oppositional stance to these institutions (Schechter, 1982). There was a strong commitment to the transformational and radical goals of the movement as well as the provision of services.

Today there are 55 Rape Crisis centres affiliated to the Rape Crisis Network in the UK (Rape Crisis Federation, 2001). Rape Crisis was slower to organise nationally than Women's Aid and formed a national network only in 1996. It does not have national coordinating bodies in each country of the UK that Women's Aid has, with the exception of the recent addition of Scotland. The Rape Crisis Federation operates as a networking body in England and Wales and a smaller network links the nine Rape Crisis centres in Scotland which has recently established funds and resources to form a national coordinating network. The level of national and regional organisation characteristic of Women's Aid is not found in Rape Crisis. The national bodies that exist take part in consultation exercises, multi-agency working, community education and training, where resources allow.

Rape Crisis continues to identify with the aims of the anti-rape movement as it did at the outset, with the national network in England and Wales stating its aims as

> To raise the profile of the Rape Crisis Movement
>
> To act as a national voice for female survivors of sexual violence and abuse

> To represent the interests of Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse services.
>
> Rape Crisis Federation of Wales and England, Home Page, 2002

It remains a key aim of Rape Crisis to have sexual violence and rape seen as crimes of violence and not as acts of sex, and to challenge rape myths such as 'women ask for it' and 'they say "no" when they mean "yes"'. Furthermore, they seek to continue to provide services for survivors of rape, and to document the impact rape has on women's lives.

Rape Crisis centres are responsible for securing funding for services, but lack the service agreements that Women's Aid have established with local authorities. It will be argued that because Rape Crisis do not provide statutory welfare services in the way Women's Aid do, the 'offloading' of welfare provision by local authorities does not happen to the same extent (Stedward, 1987), as a result Rape Crisis are far less well funded. Recent press coverage has documented this:

> Half of Britain's remaining rape crisis groups exist on less than £20,000 a year, raised entirely from donations, and operate without any paid workers at all, while one in five continues to function with less than £5,000.
>
> (Hill, 2002)

The lack of a service element that local authorities and state institutions recognise as legitimate, and therefore necessary to fund, has contributed to Rape Crisis's poorer funding situation and thus made it less necessary for the movement to organise nationally to the extent Women's Aid has in order to coordinate and negotiate that relationship. Rape Crisis has not engaged with the state in the same way that Women's Aid has. Whether this is a strategy on the part of Rape Crisis, and therefore a 'choice', or a consequence of the environment in which they operate, will be addressed in the following chapters.

## Feminist organisations working around violence in Sweden

There are two national networks of refuges and crisis centres in Sweden offering alternative welfare provision for survivors of violence. Both the national organisations in Sweden, ROKS and SKR, developed from the wider women's liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the Swedish women's movement was initially mobilised around issues of labour and came to the issue of violence

comparatively late in comparison with other Western European states. The women's movement in Sweden followed a distinct pattern from the movement in the UK, and women's organisations have had relatively close involvement with state structures and agencies. The movement followed this pattern because it developed from a political background of more liberal feminism, where feminist groups were more optimistic about the state's ability to provide change and reform, and where a history of social democracy and consensus politics characterises the Swedish state; therefore, there is a tendency to incorporate political interests.

The women's movement in Sweden has historically geared more of its efforts towards the provision of services for survivors of violence, with some scholars claiming the movement to be more philanthropic than those found in other Western states (Dobash & Dobash, 1992). In many ways this was because the women's movement had less work to do in Sweden, since significant legislation had been passed prior to the emergence of second wave feminism. For example, abortion was legalised in Sweden in 1937 (Charles, 2000) and marital rape was criminalised in 1962 (Dahlerup & Gulli, 1985). State funding was initially granted to women's organisations following legislation in the early 1980s, and more recently *Kvinnofrid* legislation (1998) included the provision of state funding for all anti-violence organisations and refuges. Both the national organisations in Sweden were developed from a concern about domestic and family violence. One of the main distinctions between Sweden and the UK, and indeed other Western states, is Sweden's lack of a rape-specific movement. In fact, only one particular movement developed at the outset, and that was the network of refuges that is known as ROKS. SKR began in 1996 following an ideological split between those feminists within the movement who endorsed a more 'radical' stance on the issue of violence, and those who endorsed a more 'liberal' view. The understanding of the causes and repercussions of violence also differs between these two organisations, as I discuss below, and, it will be argued, has implications for strategy and practice.

It is arguable that the differences between the two 'strands' of the movement are less apparent today, as I discuss in more detail in the following chapters, and to some extent the women's movement in Sweden is adopting a more 'radical' outlook in response to the institutionalisation of equality, making claims about the situation of women more difficult. The division between the two strands about the aims of the movement, in terms of whether organisations should seek to provide for the needs of the individual woman or seek a transformation of gender relations in society, is still evident.

**ROKS**

In Sweden, the first refuges for battered women and crisis lines for survivors of sexual violence opened in both Gothenburg and Stockholm in 1977 (Bolin, 1984; Eduards, 1992). These centres were established and run by feminist women who had previously been involved in consciousness-raising groups and had engaged with the personal as well as political salience of violence. Those involved had the aim of providing services for survivors of violence in order to address their needs. As in the UK, the number of shelters steadily increased throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, and women began to see the need for a national body to coordinate the work of the shelters. Following a number of national meetings, where in 1981 the claim was made for state support for all women's organisations (a claim that was successful with legislation in 1982), ROKS was established in 1984 with that aim of coordinating the work and strategy of the shelters (Eduards, 1997).

It became clear that there were ideological divisions within the movement early on in the work of the organisation. Two 'strands' of the movement developed, one of which regarded the other as being too charity oriented and not adhering to a perspective and of being too willing to work in concert with politicians. This group, in turn, regarded the other 'strand' as having too radical a feminist approach and considered their politics and actions too 'extreme' (Eduards, 1997).

It is the more 'radical strand' that today makes up ROKS. The national network organisation coordinates the campaigning work of the refuges as well as negotiates issues of funding and resources with the state on behalf of the refuges. ROKS have an explicitly feminist outlook, stating that they work:

> … in the spirit of feminism like the kvinnojourer [women's organisations] work against violence against women, and work against male dominance and superiority.
>
> (ROKS, Home Page, 2002; my translation)

The national organisation and refuges organise in ways that are compatible with feminist principles, although they do not explicitly state that this form of organisation is, or has to be, collective. The principle that underpins it, however, is equality and empowerment. The difference between helper and helped is also intentionally minimised in ROKS' work. ROKS now have a total of 125 refuges across Sweden and 26 'Tjejjourer' – centres for young women. The establishment of Tjejjourer has been relatively recent in Sweden, and these are distinct from

similar centres in other countries, in that they do not specifically relate to violence or physical violation. They are aimed at all young women who may require support and not only those who have been violated in some way.

'Knowledge' and 'Support' are the guiding principles of ROKS. Women are provided with expertise and resources but are urged to take their own decisions. A key element of ROKS' work is the empowerment of women. ROKS aim to create debate on the issue of violence against women and have it remain an issue of public importance. They produce and disseminate documentation and research, undertake community education and campaigning, and advise public and state bodies on violence against women. It will be argued in the following chapters that ROKS have had a relatively close relationship with the state and its agencies, and in many ways have enjoyed 'insider' status not only in their role as service providers, but because the movement has had a close relationship with and, indeed, influence on the state since the outset. The securing of public funds for refuges and crisis centres is indicative of this.

**SKR**

The more 'liberal'[1] strand of the women's refuge movement in Sweden, SKR, established itself as a national network in 1996. A number of organisations involved in the movement split from ROKS in the late 1980s and early 1990s and eventually organised their own coordinating body in the form of SKR. SKR is now made up of a national coordinating body with 32 refuges and 3 Tjejjourer. The national network is less well organised and far smaller than that of ROKS and does not undertake the campaigning and consultation activity that ROKS does. This is in part not only a result of more limited resources, both financially and in terms of personnel, but also a result of SKR's differing analysis of the roots and repercussions of violence.

The following extracts indicate how SKR describe themselves:

> 'non-profit, religious, political, autonomous' organisation of local women's shelters and other organisations concerned with the issues of male violence against women.
>
> A feminist organisation working for a democratic and equal society that is free from violence.
>
> (SKR, Home Page, 2002; my translation)

SKR's approach to anti-violence work is characterised and underpinned by a more philanthropic understanding than the work of ROKS. Refuges affiliated to SKR stress the importance of individual woman and her specific experiences and criticise ROKS' concentration on structural issues for being too 'feminist', claiming they are too concerned with the questions of women to the neglect of the problems of children. SKR conform to Hyden's (1995) understanding that the problem of violence cannot be understood simply by looking at the structural patterns of society. An adequate understanding, from Hyden's point of view, requires a combined consideration of the gendered power perspective as well as individual psychological explanations. Hyden (1995) claims a woman is not a victim but a person with great capacity and agency, and that to concentrate on structural explanations only removes the responsibility from the individual man and passes 'blame' to the patriarchal structure of society.[2]

The provision of services to survivors of violence is a key feature of the work of SKR. Children and teenage girls are priority groups for SKR as well as women with psychological or substance misuse problems. On the whole, SKR adopt a more welfare-oriented approach to their work as a network of organisations. SKR do not have a close relationship with state agencies, other than in terms of education and training despite their psychological approach being particularly compatible with the service provider/client model that characterises state welfare provision. I will argue that their lack of a close relationship is because of their smaller organisational network and limited resources rather than an incompatibility or unwillingness to engage with the state. SKR campaign on issues of violence against women and follow the liberal feminist approach of seeking reform through existing state structures; they tend to concentrate on issues such as physical and mental health and welfare resources for women rather than on wider political issues, a process the organisational network does not view as problematic.

# 1
# Violence Against Women and the Feminist Movement

## Introduction

This chapter discusses the feminist redefinition of violence and the responses the movement produced, with particular reference to Sweden and the UK. It moves on to discuss largely US-based literature concerned with the history and development of the movement detailing the supposed transition from a social movement stance to a service delivery orientation and the reasons why this occurred. Lastly, consideration is given to social movement scholarship discussing the usefulness and limitations of this for studying the women's and anti-violence movements.

## The feminist redefinition of violence

Violence against women is a salient concern for the women's movement and feminism. Although it is often seen as a relatively recent issue, first wave feminists campaigning in the nineteenth century were aware of its existence and significance, and more recent research has documented violence in women's lives over the past centuries, indicating that it is not a new issue. Pleck (1987) has charted violence against women over the last three hundred years in America, with Clark (1988) describing a similar situation in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Victorian feminists campaigned for a woman's right to divorce or legal separation from her husband on the grounds of his violence, with their efforts culminating in the Matrimonial Causes Act of 1878 (Walby, 1990). A similar pattern can be noted between the analysis of violence by first wave feminists at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, and that of second wave feminists in the 1960s.

First wave feminists argued that incest and wife beating were part of a generalised pattern of male violence that could also be seen in acts of rape (Hooper, 1987). However, at the turn of the century first wave feminists turned their attention to the issue of suffrage and concentrated largely on political and property rights, and as a result violence was to remain relatively hidden until the emergence of second wave feminism in the 1960s and 1970s (Maynard, 1993).

The feminist movement of the 1960s and 1970s made the claim that 'the personal is political' and demanded a re-examination of women's daily lives. The movement in the UK had seven main demands: women's equal right to education and employment opportunities; equal pay; free nurseries; free abortion and contraception on demand; women's right to define their own sexuality and an end to discrimination against lesbians; women's right to economic and legal independence from men; an end to male dominance and violence against women; and a change to the laws and assumptions that support male dominance and aggression. The movement's demands were focused on the state, the reason for which is twofold. Firstly, on the level of practical politics, second wave feminists engaged with the state and demanded a response from it in terms of policy change and secondly, at a more theoretical level, the movement considered the state as upholding oppressive gender relations (Charles, 2000) and therefore it had to be challenged if gender inequality was to be addressed.

More specifically where violence was concerned, the movement demanded that domestic violence no longer be considered something that women were responsible for, and that rape and sexual assault no longer be viewed as a sex crime with women partly to blame (Amir, 1971). Rather, the women's movement asserted that power was a central issue in violence against women and that sexual and domestic violence both reflect and determine gendered social structures. The distinction between the public and the private was challenged as well as the conduct of agencies in relation to sexual assault survivors and the reluctance of state agencies to intervene in 'domestic' situations. The movement aimed to have the under-reporting and high prevalence of male violence against women recognised, along with the acknowledgement that it can affect women at any stage of their lives and take many forms including physical, psychological, economic and/or sexual abuse. Overall, the aim was to have violence redefined as an issue of power that is both caused by and perpetuates gender inequality, recognising its systemic nature and pervasiveness and working to achieve an end to this violence.

## The feminist response to violence against women

The feminist response took two forms: political campaigns on issues of violence and alternative welfare provision in the form of refuges and crisis centres aimed at empowering women and challenging male domination (Charles, 2000; Lovenduski & Randall, 1993). The battered women's movement and the rape crisis movement were radical feminist branches of the women's movement that emerged as part of this response (Black et al., 1994; Collins et al., 1989; Matthews, 1994; Reinelt, 1994). It was feminist because it was begun by women for women, and radical because it aimed to dismantle the existing social order.

Despite their general ambivalence about the nature of the state – the movement recognised the state's ability to improve women's rights through policy change, and also its ability to pursue policies that restrict women's rights and concentrate power in the hands of men – the movement mounted campaigns on issues of violence against women. Women organised 'Reclaim the Night' marches in cities throughout the UK (Coote & Campbell, 1987) as well as campaigns around specific issues such as the treatment of sexual assault survivors by the criminal justice system and the courts. Their efforts bore fruit in parliament as throughout the 1970s a significant amount of legislation was passed that increased the rights of women experiencing domestic violence, rape and sexual assault (Charles, 2000; Dobash & Dobash, 1992). The Domestic Violence and Matrimonial Proceedings Act (1976) allowed women to apply for an exclusion order from their abusive partners and the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act (1977) defined women made homeless as a result of domestic violence as having the right to be permanently rehoused by the local authority (Charles, 2000). The Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act (1976) prohibited the use of women's sexual history as evidence in rape and sexual assault trials unless the judge ruled it relevant and therefore permissible (Coote & Campbell, 1987). Although not all legislation was particularly effective, it represented a shift in official thinking and a change in consciousness. As Charles states:

> Legal reforms and rights have to be translated into reality and it is here that the feminist politics of refuge and anti-rape groups is so important.
>
> (2000: 141)

There has been significant legislative change relating to violence against women in the decades since, and the women's and anti-violence

movements continue to seek change in relevant areas. In the UK, legislation relating to violence against women was antiquated and some had not been updated for centuries. The presumed 'right of access' of men to their wives meant marital rape was not added to the statute books until 1991 (Lees, 1997).[1] Other significant changes include the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994) that widened the definition of rape to include anal rape. The Protection from Harassment Act (1997), or so-called stalking act, introduced new criminal offences related to stalking and inducing the fear of violence. The Sexual Offences Act (2003) represents the most radical overhaul of sexual violence legislation in the UK for some years. This legislation has clarified the law in relation to the defence of consent in a rape trial and now the accused must prove they took steps to obtain consent rather than simply having an 'honest belief' in consent. The same legislation has also widened the definition of rape to include, for example, digital penetration and forced oral sex, and as such has significantly increased the number of sexual offences that can be prosecuted as rape.

The first refuge for battered women opened in London in 1972 (Coote & Campbell, 1987; Kelly, 1988) and the first rape crisis centre, also in London, in 1976 (Rape Crisis Federation, 2001). NWAF was formed in 1975 (Charles, 2000), by which time there were 28 groups in existence with a further 83 in the process of being established (Coote & Campbell, 1987). Women's Aid had a non-hierarchical structure and explicitly feminist objectives. It insisted that all groups remain autonomous and maintain an 'open-door' policy. The number of rape crisis centres in the UK also continued to grow and by 1985 a total of 45 centres were in existence throughout the UK (Coote & Campbell, 1987). Today there are 55 rape crisis centres affiliated to the Rape Crisis Network (Rape Crisis Federation, 2001), and in excess of 330 Women's Aid groups (Women's Aid Federation of England, 2001; Scottish Women's Aid, 2001; Welsh Women's Aid, 2001; Northern Ireland Women's Aid Federation, 2001).

In Sweden, women had initially been mobilised around labour issues and came to the issue of violence slightly later than the UK women. In 1977 Gothenburg was the first municipality to grant space for a women's centre (Corrin, 1999), and the first centres for battered women and survivors of rape were opened in 1978 in both Stockholm and Gothenburg (Eduards, 1992). The number of centres for battered women increased throughout the 1980s and by 1992 there were 123 across Sweden. The increasing need for organisation became apparent and the national organisation of women's shelters, ROKS, was established in 1984. Today there are approximately 150 centres for battered women and survivors of rape across Sweden (ROKS, 2001; SKR, 2000).

In 1976 the Swedish government sex crime commission's report (SOU, 1976) proposed that 'rape' be eliminated from the statute books and replaced with the lesser crime of 'sexual assault'. This proposal was withdrawn after a successful challenge from women's organisations to both the committee's conclusions and its composition, as only one woman was on the committee (Corrin, 1999). In 1982 campaigns to the newly appointed sex crime commission were also successful when the committee's report (SOU, 1982) recommended that assault and battery against women, even if committed on private premises (that is to say violence at home in particular), would be subject to public prosecution and no longer be only a civil matter (Eduards, 1992; Gillberg, 1999). The same legislation also allowed for the provision of public funds for women's organisations. In 1998 a new law, *Kvinnofrid* (Women's Right to Integrity and Individual Space), was passed in parliament, which includes, among other things, the widening of the definition of rape, the criminalization of the sex buyer and increased financial provision for women's shelters. The legislation was proposed by women's organisations and is unique in that it has an ideology based on the conception of a male power order and recognises that violence emanates from gender inequality.

## Prevalence of violence against women

Women face a disproportionately high risk of domestic and sexual violence compared to men. Kessler et al. (1995) found that lifetime prevalence rates of rape for women were 9.2 per cent, and rates of molestation were 12.3 per cent. In comparison, the corresponding rates for men were 0.7 per cent and 2.8 per cent respectively. Male violence against women has become more apparent in most countries in the world during the 1980s and 1990s (Corrin, 1999). However, the extent of male violence against women is notoriously difficult to measure. It is widely accepted that official statistics massively underestimate the amount of violence that occurs. Women do not often report assaults to the police, especially if their abuser is known to them, which is most often the case (Koss, 1993; Koss & Heslet 1992), because they fear they will not be taken seriously or believed, and because they fear further violence from their abuser. The secondary victimisation experienced by women in the criminal justice system also serves to deter women from reporting sexual and domestic violence (Byrne & Kilpatrick, 1999; Chesney-Lind, 1999; Hudson, 1998). Furthermore, the reluctance of the police to intervene in what are regarded as 'domestics' is also a contributing factor in the 'hidden' nature of violence against women (Dobash & Dobash, 1980; Hanmer, Radford & Stanko, 1989; Hanmer & Saunders, 1984).

Research studies that have tried to estimate the prevalence of domestic violence have varied widely in their estimates from under 1 per cent of the female population (British Crime Survey, 2000) to approximately one in ten of the adult female population (Stanko et al., 1998). These variations can be explained by the differing methodologies and definitions of domestic violence. Lifetime prevalence rates for women experiencing domestic violence tend to cluster closer together, suggesting that one in four adult women will experience domestic violence by a partner or an ex-partner at some point in her life (Dominy & Radford, 1996; Henderson, 1997; McGibbon et al., 1989). The 'Day to Count' research (Stanko, 2000) estimates that a domestic violence incident occurs in the UK every 6 to 20 seconds.

The available data on prevalence rates for rape and sexual assault are also limited. Russell's (1982; 1984) research with a random sample of women in the USA found that 44 per cent of women had been subjected to rape or an attempt of rape during their lifetime. *The Progress of Nations* (UNICEF, 1997) states that between one in five and one in seven women will experience rape in their lifetime, and the UN Population Fund (1997) estimates that one woman in the US is raped every six minutes. In the UK between 1977 and 1997 the number of women reporting rape increased by over 500 per cent, but the conviction rate fell from 33 per cent in 1977 to 5.6 per cent in 2002 (Home Office, 2002). As *The Progress of Nations* report states:

> Violence against women and girls … is so deeply embedded in cultures around the world that it is almost invisible. Yet this brutality is not inevitable. Once recognised for what it is – a construct of power and a means of maintaining the status quo – it can be dismantled.
>
> (UNICEF, 1997: 41)

## The spectrum of violence against women

It should be noted that although this book is specifically concerned with feminist organisations that work around issues of gendered violence which predominately surround rape, sexual assault and domestic and family violence, the range of behaviours that constitute gendered violence against women are many. Kelly (1988) has described this as the spectrum of violence against women which ranges from behaviours such as use of inappropriate sexual language, flashing and sexual harassment, to acts such as sexual murder and rape. The feminist movement is concerned with gendered violence against women in all its forms including child abuse, sexual harassment and issues that have more recently come

to the fore such as female genital mutilation and trafficking of women for prostitution and the sex trade. Therefore although this book concentrates on organisations that deal with specific forms of gendered violence in the main and their efforts to organise against it, it is acknowledged that the problem of gendered violence against women stems far beyond the issues of rape, sexual assault and domestic and family violence.

## Myths about sexual violence

The prevalence figures highlighted above show the importance of the provision of support services for women who have experienced gendered violence. This is particularly pertinent when recent research has revealed significant proportions of the population hold views that are supportive of rape myths, for example. A recent poll conducted by Amnesty International reports that 34 per cent of people in the UK believe a woman is partially or totally responsible for being raped if she has behaved in a flirtatious manner (Amnesty International, 2005). Additionally, attitudes supportive of rape myths were found in relation to other issues such as clothing, perceived promiscuity and whether a woman has clearly said 'no' to sex. For example, the research found that one in four people thought a woman was either partially or wholly responsible for rape if she was wearing sexy or revealing clothing, and a further one in five people thought the woman was partially or wholly responsible if she had previously had many sexual partners. Another finding of the research was that 30 per cent of people attributed some responsibility to the woman if she was drunk at the time of the assault (Amnesty International, 2005).

The pervasiveness of these rape myths throughout society also impacts upon the post-assault experience of survivors of rape and sexual assault. Many individuals are not believed or fear they may not be believed, or may be blamed for the assault and this contributes to the trauma of the experience and potential lasting damage. In this respect support services for survivors provided by women's movement organisations can be of vital importance in undoing some of the damage that may have been done through the provision of support, counselling and advice and information.

## Impact of gendered violence

The potential short term and longer-term impacts of sexual and gendered violence are considerable. Women surviving sexual violence

may suffer a number of physical and mental health sequelae in the immediate aftermath of a sexual assault or sometime later (Koss, 1993; New & Berliner, 2000; Plichta & Falik, 2001), and domestic and sexual violence dramatically increase the risk of suicidal behaviour, depression, anxiety and psychosomatic disorders. (World Health Organisation, 2005).

The impact of gendered and sexual violence can also be worsened by the response survivors receive from their community and wider society. Survivors may contact a large number of agencies for support (Campbell, 1998) and a growing body of literature indicates that survivors often feel they are denied help by their communities, and what help they do receive can leave them feeling revictimised (Campbell, 1998; Campbell & Bybee, 1997; Frohmann, 1991; Madigan & Gamble, 1991; Martin & Powell, 1994; Matoesian, 1993; Williams, 1984).

In this respect the support role of rape crisis centres, women's refuges and other support services is of vital importance for positive outcomes for survivors as services provided by medical, mental health and legal systems can be difficult to access and often stressful (Campbell et al., 1999). It is these alternative forms of support provision provided by organisations of the women's and feminist movement that this book is concerned with.

## Refuges, crisis centres and the anti-violence movement

The majority of literature available on the women's movement and its related organisations concerns the US, and few studies compare women's movements in more than one country (see Threlfall, 1997). For this reason comparisons with the USA are difficult to avoid. Most anti-violence organisations in the USA, both rape specific and domestic violence specific, began as free-standing organisations in the 1970s (Gornick et al., 1985), although many centres became affiliated to other institutions in the 1980s (Byington et al., 1991). As the number of centres steadily increased, strategies were communicated through the wider women's liberation movement. As a result, centres embodied assumptions about ideology and goals and were therefore relatively uniform in character (Gornick et al., 1985). As Reinelt indicates:

> Those who speak of a battered women's movement generally share a feminist analysis of why this violence occurs and a commitment to organising for social and political change.
>
> (Reinelt, 1994: 165)

Given that the majority of centres received little or no government support, they were free to explore for themselves new ways of communicating that challenged, at least internally, the bureaucratic values and structures of power that dominate in our society (Reinelt, 1994). The majority of centres chose collective forms of organisation in order to challenge the social paradigm of traditionally organised hierarchies where equity is not a concern (Matthews, 1994). Centres that developed in the 1970s were generally small, unaffiliated groups, offering services to adult female survivors of violence. Centres usually undertook community education for lay audiences and aimed to change procedures in, and monitor, professional agencies dealing with survivors of violence.

Services that were provided were usually non-medical, low cost, short term and delivered by trained volunteer women who were not social service professionals, and who were often survivors of violence themselves. This has parallels with other branches of the women's movement that emerged at the same time, for example, health care for women, particularly surrounding birth control and abortion. The community education aspect of anti-violence organisations' work was structured to adhere to the overall goals and principles of the women's movement and the feminist analysis of the roots and repercussions of violence (Gornick et al., 1985). Many centres were started by women already involved in consciousness-raising groups; therefore empowerment was a key strategy. As Reinelt states, it was important that

> … those who have been oppressed learn to know their strength and recognise themselves as experts about their own lives.
>
> (1994: 688)

It is these features that are thought of as typifying the 'original model' of a refuge or crisis centre (Fried, 1994; Gornick et al., 1985; Matthews, 1994; Reinelt, 1994).

## Changes in the anti-violence Movement

Despite three decades of grassroots involvement, both scholars and activists disagree about the nature of refuges and crisis centres and their capacity to influence entrenched gender practices and structures (Fried, 1994). US literature suggests that growth in the number of centres also generated a radical change from a small homogeneous core to a large and diverse group of programmes that resembled the original ones less and less (Gornick et al., 1985; Matthews, 1994; Reinelt, 1994). Gornick

et al. (1985) claim that by 1985 in the US the 'original model' of a crisis centre was virtually extinct. This change is attributed to several events and developments since the 1970s, including an increase in public awareness of the issue of violence, the influx of state monies for violence-related services and an increasingly therapeutic society.

The demand for specific protocols for dealing with survivors of violence came from diverse sources, taking the pressure off refuges and crisis centres as sole agitators. With the influx of state monies, many centres were forced to comply with certain conditions in order to gain funding, for example the election of a board of directors or the institution of a bureaucratic structure. As Eliasson & Lundy (1999) explain:

> State-sponsored forums and consultations draw women away from grassroots organising and mobilisation into a bureaucratic direction that can have a deradicalising and demobilising effect. The state sets the agenda, with funding for activities that tend to contain and undercut the potential for more radical and independent action on the part of women.
>
> (1999: 85)

The mental health profession's awakening to the notion of rape and battering as clinical issues has also contributed to changes in the nature and role of refuges and crisis centres. The last two decades have seen a vast increase in the number of publications concerning the mental health impact of sexual and domestic violence. McCahill et al. (1979) claimed to document 'facts never before collected on what happens to mind and body' (p. xvii) post-rape. The legitimisation of rape trauma syndrome and battered women's syndrome in explaining the aftermath of violence for women can also be noted during this time (Burgess & Holmstrom, 1974; Dobash & Dobash, 1992). With a few notable exceptions, for example Judith Lewis Herman's *Trauma and Recovery* (1992), the majority have not been written from a feminist perspective, nor included a feminist analysis of why this violence occurs; rather, they have a more psychological or therapeutic slant and focus on the problem in terms of the individual victim and the individual violent man.

Literature also indicates that centres had to emphasise cooperation rather than conflict with community agencies (Black et al., 1994; Collins et al., 1989; Matthews, 1994; Reinelt, 1994). The relationship with the community changed and many centres altered services and formalised divisions of labour between newly recruited paid staff and volunteers. The staff of centres changed to include mainstream feminists and

apolitical women, who would previously have been neither welcome nor interested in the more radical feminist centres. The changes that centres have undergone have led to questions being raised as to whether comprehensive services for survivors of violence have been accompanied by the abandonment of social change goals and the original aim of a violence-free society.

## Dual roles of anti-violence organisations

Anti-violence organisations have a dual function – part service provision and part political change. In order to provide services for women, funding must be sought. This, in the most part, comes from the state. In order to address the issue of violence against women the movement must engage with the state and campaign for change. The extent to which organisations can adopt a pragmatic approach and engage with the state, while at the same time remaining autonomous in order to avoid institutionalisation, is now a key area of debate (Cuthbert & Irving, 2001; Stedward, 1987). Indeed, recent literature is turning to the dual roles of anti-violence organisations, and how both of these might be incorporated. Charles (2000) provides support for the argument that feminist welfare provision works; that organisations can in effect operate as part of the welfare state, but at the same time retain autonomy. Women's Aid in the UK is an example of this; it has engaged with the state in order to improve the material position of women, but resisted co-optation, institutionalisation and diminishment of a feminist political analysis of violence that has been witnessed in the US (Charles, 2000; Stedward, 1987). Similarly, the women's refuge and crisis movement in Sweden facilitated the passing of legislation in 1998 that provides for state funding for all anti-violence organisations offering services to survivors of violence, and despite their close relationship with the state and the existence of consensus politics in Sweden, the movement has retained its autonomy. The incorporation of the movement that has been witnessed in the US has not occurred in the UK and Sweden to the same extent. The circumstances and strategies which must be adopted for this approach to be successful, and for institutionalised movements to further resist this trend, are key areas of consideration.

## Social movement scholarship

When considering the changes and developments the women's and anti-violence movements have undergone since the 1970s, and in trying to develop a deeper understanding of these, it is necessary to consider

what scholarship on social movements can offer us in this respect. It is important to note that this book is not concerned specifically with social movement theory. It is concerned with the experience of the feminist social movement, exemplified in the form of the anti-violence movement, in terms of its history and trajectory, its relationship with the state, and the strategies and tactics it has employed in pursuing its goals and interacting with the state. Therefore, rather than analysing this large body of theory here, I will indicate the usefulness and limitations of such theories for understanding the experiences of the women's movement.[2] Charles's (2000) analysis of social movement theory in relation to the feminist social movement informs this section.

Historically, the study of social movements has been divided into two distinguishable clusters or traditions. The first is known as 'new social movement' theory (NSMT) and has European origins, and the other is referred to as the 'political process' approach or resource mobilization theory (RMT), which has US origins (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). Both of these approaches have limitations when studying the women's and feminist movement.

NSMT has limited applications for studying the women's and feminist movement. Charles (2000) points out that many critics have claimed that new social movements are not actually 'new'. There is both theoretical and empirical evidence for this assertion, in that new social movements do not necessarily resemble each other on many levels, often have considerable continuity with movements of the past, and are claimed to be 'new' as a result of structural transformations in society. However, these transformations are seen as occurring in capitalism, modernity or industrialism. They neglect to consider any changes in gender relations, and so have little application when attempting to explain feminist social movements (Roseneil, 1995 cited in Charles, 2000).

Charles (2000) also indicates that NSMT has been criticised for being ethnocentric, and its almost exclusive focus – although she notes the exception of Castells – on movements in the first, or industrial, world with the claim that new social movements are based on post-material values. She also states that the supposed decline in the importance of material production, which it is claimed has been replaced by the production of signs, has resulted from a process of theoretical abstraction that is itself gendered, and has in fact little in common with the material realities of women's lives, and those of many men. She argues that women are heavily involved in the production of both bodies and things, and that the labour of women and the working classes is necessary if material needs are to be met, an issue even more relevant to Third World societies where material scarcity is more evident. Therefore, the

claim that new social movements are unconcerned with issues of distribution of wealth and resources is unrealistic when they are in fact key features of many social movements, including the women's movement.

Touraine (1992), conforming to the 'action-identity' paradigm, makes the distinction between social and political movements. Charles (2000) says this obviously creates a difficulty for him when considering the women's movement, leading him to claim that it is not strictly a social movement in that it is concerned with both social and cultural change, as well as political change. She also discusses Melucci's (1985) difficulties in theorising about the women's movement within the framework of NSMT. In order to resolve these difficulties Melucci separates the women's movement from feminism. He claims that feminism concerns women who were involved in the emergence of second wave feminism who affected social policy and succeeded in getting institutions to adopt feminist practices: essentially an equal rights feminism or referring possibly to the women working within institutions now referred to as 'femocrats'. On the other hand, Melucci claims the women's movement is characterised by its concentration on cultural dimensions rather than any direct confrontation with political institutions: a more 'submerged' phenomenon. Charles says his claim is that visible public mobilisations no longer exist, with the exception of occasional single-issue campaigns, and that the women's movement is mainly symbolic in nature existing in submerged networks. By doing so, she claims, he manages to fit the women's movement into his theory of new social movements, thus conceptualising it as cultural and symbolic rather than political. It is clear, however, that in doing so Melucci neglects to address the political aspects of the women's movement, as Charles (2000) criticises most NSMT for doing, and does not incorporate the element of the women's movement that directs its activity towards the state, which has always taken equal importance with the desire for cultural change within the movement. Melucci criticises the US-dominated resource mobilisation perspective, which I discuss further below, for failing to realise that 'contemporary social movements, more than in the past, have shifted towards a non-political terrain: the need for self-realisation in everyday life' (1989: 23). However, Charles (2000) argues that there is no convincing evidence that what are considered 'old' social movements, in that they are not part of new social movement theory, were any less concerned with cultural change than they were with political change.

NSMT focuses predominately on issues of class, despite the claim that new social movements are not class based. Charles (2000) points out that scholars have considered the high numbers of the middle class in

new social movements, but has neglected to consider the gender dimension and the high numbers of women involved. If new social movements are not class based, but those arising from industrialisation were, then I would argue that from the NSMT perspective the women's movement is a new social movement in that it is concerned with issues of gender inequality while at the same time is interested in class-based inequalities. Charles indicates that women's involvement in new social movements has often been attributed to their marginal position in relation to the labour market, but that this does not wholly address the involvement of professional women, younger women and students. Furthermore, what is also ignored is the issue of collective identity and structural inequalities, not only in relation to gender but to 'race' and class as well. In fact, gender differences of participants in social movements seem infrequently tackled. McAdam (1992) studied male and female participants in the Mississippi Freedom Summer Project (promoting the civil rights campaign and votes for blacks), and was concerned with the extent of heterogeneity among participants, and the minority of women. He concluded that gender is the most important mediator of the activist experience, which is evidence to suggest that to neglect the gender dimension of social movement participation and the role of collective identity is a fundamental flaw. This seems especially pressing when the movement under scrutiny involves only one gender.

Further evidence of the importance of the political dimension in social movement participation is provided by Black et al. (1994), who studied a sample of movement participants in rape crisis centres and battered women's shelters in Texas. They hypothesised that the greater the influence of political motivations for social movement involvement, the greater the perceived acceptance of participants would be – in other words, the greater would be their sense of collective identity. The study found that psychic (for example, feeling good about oneself as a consequence of helping others) and altruistic (wanting to help others for its own sake) motivations were the strongest, but that political motivations such as 'helping to stop the problem of rape and battering' were also significant. The findings of the study suggest that the movement participants studied have altruistic or psychic motivations for becoming involved but that feminist political biases compel them to do so in women's movement organisations such as rape crisis centres and refuges for battered women. Blanton (1981) also indicates the importance of collective identity for movement participants, indicating that for women 'the level of commitment to an FMO (Feminist Movement Organisation) can be quite deep, since members may be seeking not

only a work setting or vehicle for social change, but also an experience of 'sisterhood' and personal acceptance' (Blanton, 1981 cited in Riger, 1984: 104).

From a resource mobilisation perspective a social movement is a 'set of opinions or beliefs in a population which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social structure and/or reward distribution of a society' and a social movement organisation is 'a complex, or formal, organisation which identifies its goals with the preferences of a social movement or a countermovement, and attempts to implement these goals' (McCarthy & Zald, 1977: 1218). RMT, then, emphasises structure over ideology and, when used to analyse the women's movement, produces what are known as 'collectivist' or 'bureaucratic' strands, and suggests that only the latter can facilitate policy change. A large number of women's movement organisations that organise collectively or democratically have been instrumental in achieving policy change along feminist lines (Charles, 2000), but by virtue of its concentration on bureaucratic forms of organisation, RMT neglects to encompass these organisations. The US-dominated approach of RMT is also problematic when used to analyse the women's movement, and as Charles (2000) indicates, this is largely to do with its focus on rational choice theory and organisation. She cites Ferree (1992), who argues that the centrality of rational choice theory to the RMT perspective creates a fundamental gender bias. This is because from an RMT perspective participants in social movements are seen as being devoid of social characteristics and therefore seen as rational actors encompassing 'universal attributes of human nature' (Ferree, 1992: 41 cited in Charles, 2000: 49). As Charles points out, feminists have long argued that these apparently 'universal attributes of human nature' are in fact attributes of white western middle-class males.

The centrality of rational choice theory to the RMT perspective is also problematic because it assumes the only motivation for those involved in a movement is self-interest. Not only is this problematic in that people may be motivated by a variety of things other than and including self-interest, as Charles (2000) notes as one of Ferree's (1992) main criticisms, but she also notes that many movements have developed a critique of instrumental rationality. The majority of resource mobilisation theorists have failed to incorporate this and have thus asserted a particular point of view as objective and universal, thereby neglecting to acknowledge that people's motivation for action is likely to be broader than self-interest.

For example, literature indicates that there are likely to be a number of motivations for people's involvement in a movement (Black et al.,

1994; Cnaan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991; Gluck, 1979; Rubin & Thorelli, 1984; Smith, 1982; Wiche & Isenhour, 1977). Indeed, social exchange theory has frequently been used to address this question. This refers to the actions of an individual being motivated by the returns those actions are expected to bring, although these may not be tangible or stipulated in advance (Blau, 1964). Altruism, the direct opposite of self-interest, is also often cited as a motivating factor, with Sills (1957) making the distinction between 'altruism' (other-oriented) and 'egoism' (self-oriented) motives. Kidd (1977) has also distinguished between 'intrinsic' motives and 'extrinsic' motives. Some scholars, for example Pittman and colleagues, feel social exchange theory is particularly well equipped for the study of women who participate in the women-specific organisations of the women's movement, stating that 'attracting and retaining workers, paid or volunteer, revolves around the worker's estimation of the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits of the job' (Pittman et al., 1984: 33). Obershall (1973) also used social exchange theory by developing a risk/reward ratio for estimating the likelihood of joining a social movement.

It should be noted that existing research fails to distinguish between the motivations of social movement participants to join a social movement and their motivations for continued involvement – the motivations behind both of these may be quite separate (Gidron, 1984). This is partly due to the fact that when researching social movement participants, the population of the research by its very nature consists of those who have continued their involvement, and those who have ceased their involvement are often not accessible.

Melucci (1989) is critical of social exchange theory and claims it is inadequate for studying volunteers participating in social movements because it fails to encompass the complexities, given that volunteering in a social movement involves multiple processes. McAdam (1992) also states that social movement participants, particularly in the women's movement, are a diverse rather than a homogeneous group, and that social movements are characterised by unstable memberships. In addition, it is probable that the reliance of women's movement organisations on volunteers in order to provide alternative welfare provision in the form of refuges and crisis centres – and few human service agencies rely on volunteers as much as those known as 'female enclaves' (Black et al., 1994) – means that conventional approaches to social movement participation fail to address the complexities of being involved in a movement that is both a campaigner for social change and a provider of welfare services. The motivations for volunteering in a social movement and being a member of a particular social movement organisation that delivers services may be distinct. The women involved may not

necessarily see it as a social service or social movement, or both (Pahl, 1979). Either way, it would appear that neither rational choice theory nor social exchange theory adequately address the complexities and multiple motives of women involved in the women's and anti-violence movements. There is a lack of fit between the theory and what happens on the ground in anti-violence organisations. The nature of 'doing' is not addressed.

Charles (2000) also indicates that the resource mobilisation perspective is problematic for studying the women's movement because of the concept of organisation that is used. By emphasising the organisational nature of social movements, RMT fails to encompass those movements that lack the resources to form organisations. Not only is this perspective class biased since it only includes movements with enough material resources to form organisations, as Charles (2000) indicates, but it also fails to include the women's movement that has eschewed bureaucratic and formal organisation, opting for forms of organisation more in line with feminist politics. Refuges for battered women and rape crisis centres often organise collectively (although it should be noted that an organisation does not have to be collective to be feminist [Martin, 1990]), use non-hierarchical forms of organisation and make decisions based on consensus and democracy. Such organisational forms were not stumbled upon accidentally, but were chosen to adhere to feminist politics (Matthews, 1994) where no one individual or group has power over another. This form of organisation is not exclusive to the women's movement and is also found among other social movements.

Literature also indicates that those women's movement organisations that are characterised by bureaucratic forms of organisation, and therefore combine qualities of a social movement organisation as defined by McCarthy & Zald (1977), are often criticised for becoming co-opted (Martin, 1990). In actuality, few feminist organisations reflect a 'pure' or 'ideal' type and 'feminist organisations range along a continuum, with actual structure and ideology not necessarily being consistent' (Matthews, 1994: 3). Martin (1990) believes scholars should exercise caution before labelling mixed types co-opted, institutionalised or no longer part of the women's movement. The assumption is made that for a group to be truly feminist it must be a 'pure' or 'ideal' type, and as such must have a collectivist internal structure, though Martin (1990) argues that few do so. In Chapter 3 I discuss in detail the body of literature that argues that the move away from collective organisation of rape crisis centres and refuges represents a process of institutionalisation and bureaucratisation, and with it an abandonment of social movement

status (Black et al., 1994; Byington et al., 1991; Collins et al., 1989; Gornick et al., 1985; Matthews, 1994; Scott, 1993). I also argue in Chapter 3 that distinctions and dichotomies such as 'collectivist' and 'bureaucratic' have not proven empirically evident. As a result, the centrality of organisational form to the resource mobilisation perspective renders it inadequate for studying the women's movement.

A further criticism that Charles (2000) notes of the RMT perspective is the concentration on strategy and the underlying assumption that all social movements develop some form of strategic action based upon the availability of resources and political opportunities, and ultimately that their success or failure can be measured in terms of their strategic effectiveness. Although some movements do develop strategies, or rather they may fall into a pattern of action that may subsequently be seen as a strategy, others in fact, and Charles (2000) cites Roseneil's (1995) discussion of the Greenham women's peace camp as an example, have no identifiable strategy and action may be based on 'affective and emotional impulses'. Strategies that groups employ are also diverse and differ over time and between issues. The case of the anti-violence movement is particularly interesting in this respect, as strategies that are adopted or the pattern that develops is likely to differ when those groups are emphasising their role as service provider compared to when they are emphasising their role as campaigners for political change (Stedward, 1987).

Furthermore, as I will argue – later in the book – is the case with Rape Crisis in the UK, the movement itself may not necessarily choose the strategy, but rather other key players such as the state may take actions that force a movement to adopt or pursue a particular strategy, or indeed may prevent them from pursuing certain ones. It is also the case, as is discussed in detail in Chapter 3, that movements may adopt different strategies at different times and achieve different outcomes. Charles (2000) goes on to say that it is also not straightforward that a movement's success or failure can be measured, and this is particularly pertinent when cultural change is considered. She cites Scott (1990) saying that a movement's decline or disappearance is not necessarily indicative of that movement's failure, but rather that the issue may have been successfully incorporated into policy and its goals achieved. Social movement goals are related to the ideology of the particular movement. For many involved in the women's movement, policy reform and adequate service provision are important, but the wider societal and structural change remains their main aim. As Stedward (1987) notes, it is not possible to easily fit the demands of the women's movement into

specific policy reforms in specific areas. It requires wider change and a reappraisal or working practices, policies and society.

Criticisms of the RMT perspective come not only from its concentration on issues of organisation, but also from its neglect of ideology and grievances, as it gives no attention to meaning, identity, solidarity, culture and the emotional basis of action (Charles, 2000). She cites Buechler's (1993) research on the US women's movement which suggests that grievances were equally important as resources in mobilising women in second wave feminism, and indeed feminist ideology and collective identity was developed through the process of politicising women's grievances. The consciousness-raising groups of the 1960s and 1970s that aimed to make 'the personal the political' are a prime example of this. Grievances often provide opportunities for the rise of a social movement as a focus for collective action.

It should also be noted that there are problems in relation to the presumed structure of women's organisations from the new social movement perspective as well. From this perspective, the 'original model', or the 'pure' or 'ideal' type of feminist organisation, is seen as typifying new social movements: that is, recruitment to a feminist group based on politics not skill, collective organisation and eschewing hierarchy, explicitly feminist ideology, decision-making by consensus and the use of volunteer or unpaid staff – also referred to as counter- or neo-bureaucracies (Charles, 2000). NSMT has limitations for studying the women's movement because it conforms to the notion that feminist organisations fit the 'original model' and that this is somehow 'quintessentially feminist' (Charles, 2000: 149). In reality, not all organisations conformed to this model at their inception (National Organisation of Women, for example), and even fewer do now. To accept this argument would be to accept the notion mentioned briefly above, and discussed in more detail below, that any other form of women's organisation is a deviation and no longer part of the women's movement (Martin, 1990; Reinelt, 1994).

## Conclusion

It is clear from Charles's (2000) discussion of social movement theory that neither NSMT nor RMT is sufficient for examining the women's movement. As she summarises:

> … feminist social movements can neither be defined unequivocally as new social movements nor do their forms of organisation and

> action correspond to those identified within RMT as characterising social movement organisations.
>
> (Charles, 2000: 52)

I would argue that the variety of approaches to the explanation of the phenomenon of social movements suggests that no one of them is able to explain everything. The different approaches may be applicable and correct in their local sphere, but stressing either specific types of social movements and then considering them to be universal, or putting all the attention on a single aspect of the phenomenon of social movements and ignoring others means no one approach adequately addresses this complex issue. Despite their inadequacy for analysing the women's movement as stand alone theories because they are compromised by their reliance on concepts which are gender blind, there are some useful aspects of each that can be helpful when studying the women's and feminist movement in relation to the state and policy change.

NSMT is useful, Charles (2000) notes, because movements are seen as being located in civil society as opposed to the economy, and those involved are not directly related to capitalist production and involve wider groups rather than just the industrial working class in a process of social reproduction rather than production. The emergence of movements is also seen as a consequence of state activity, for example the expansion of state control, and as a response to state policy. Furthermore, she notes that they challenge hidden power relations by naming them and, because they are primarily cultural in orientation, they challenge the inappropriate use of state power. Through the formation of collective identities, new ways of being within the world arise and challenge the values on which capitalist society is based.

The usefulness of the RMT approach, Charles (2000) argues, is that the construction of collective identities is part of the formation of social movements and that this is linked to structural inequalities. The RMT perspective focuses its attention on the social environments in which social movements operate, in particular the organisations that make collective action possible and the political opportunity structures that impact upon the emergence and form of social movements.

We have seen that social movement theory fails to acknowledge the dual roles of the anti-violence movement in terms of alternative service provision and campaigning for political change. When considering the history and development of the movement and the factors that

have influenced this, it is necessary to pay attention to both these roles. Failing to do so means social movement theory is inadequate for analysing movement participants' motivations for becoming involved, and by measuring movement outcomes in terms of policy reform it neglects to encompass much of the work of the anti-violence movement in the form of service provision and their aim of wider societal change. This dual role means those involved, the strategies adopted, the organisation of the movement and its relationship with social and political structures, such as the state, are distinct.

It is to the issue of the role of the state that I now turn: its importance for the anti-violence movement; the effect it has on the emergence and development of a movement (in particular the feminist movement in Sweden and the UK) and in what way it may facilitate or repress a movement's activities; and how the nature of the state in which a movement develops and operates may affect the impact it is able to have on policy.

# 2
# Feminism and the State

## Introduction

The dual roles of feminist movement organisations working around violence mean it is necessary to consider the role of the state not only in its capacity as abuser of rights and its potential to alleviate women's oppression, but also in its capacity as the main funding body for the organisations set up by the women's movement as alternative forms of welfare provision for women suffering male violence.

Movements often make demands on the state and its agencies to change policies, and it is the resultant conflict that is central to their stories and the trajectories they have taken. The women's movement and second wave feminism have been instrumental in achieving profound changes in society and in social policies that support women's rights, as well as campaigning to protect women's existing rights, much of which has been achieved through demands for policy change. Given the changes that have taken place, and the fact that the movement recognised the state's power to grant women's rights, it is necessary to examine both how these changes have come about, and to develop a theoretical understanding of how states and social movements relate to, and interact with, one another. This is especially important when the state's social control functions intertwine with its social welfare functions (Gordon, 1988). Not only is the state shaped by social movements, it also provides the political framework from which social movements emerge (Charles, 2000; Gelb, 1989; Kaplan, 1992; Meyer &

Staggenborg, 1996). Therefore, the state is a central consideration because

> … the most salient differences … in addressing male violence can be found in the location of the struggle; the role of the women's movement; and the centrality of feminism in relation to the state.
>
> (Eliasson & Lundy, 1999: 89)

This chapter outlines the importance of the state to feminism and to this research, and the reasons why the movement has historically been reluctant to engage with it. It considers different feminist approaches to the state and how the nature or 'type' of state may affect both the emergence of the women's movement and the form that it takes, and subsequently how it develops. Lastly, the impact the movement is able to have on policy depending on the nature of the state in which it operates, as well as the nature of the movement itself, is discussed.

## Importance of the state to feminism and the movement against violence

The state is a key focus of demands by the women's and feminist movements against violence. On a practical level, it has the ability to promote women's rights and to improve the quality of women's lives through policy and legal change, as well as the ability to take steps to alter the actions and conduct of its bodies charged with ensuring women's protection from male violence. The state is one of the main organisers of the power relations of gender through legislation and policy and through the way it is implicated in the construction of the public and the private (Connell, 1990).

On a more theoretical level, the state is also identified by the women's and feminist movements against violence as one of the main oppressors of women's rights and as the institution that defines what is legitimate or illegitimate in terms of violence against the person, and in what circumstances such violence can be used. As Cohen (2001) and other scholars have documented, the state is one of the main abusers of women's rights, particularly in times of war when rape has been used as a form of attack. The alleged rapes of thousands of Bosnian women by Serbian forces are an example of this. Although the figures are still disputed, there is evidence to suggest that the rape of Bosnian women was a deliberate policy of Serbian forces during the war (Cohen, 2001: 254). It is the state's ability to define what is legitimate and illegitimate, and

its monopoly on the control of force, that ensures feminism must engage with it in relation to sexual violence (Franzway et al., 1989).

At the same time, the state is also the main sponsor of organisations that are part of the women's movement, such as refuges and rape crisis centres. The movement relies on the state to fund alternative welfare provision so that vital services for women can survive. Thus, like the feminist movement against violence, the state also has dual roles.

## The dilemma for feminism and the movement against violence

The dual roles of the feminist movement against violence as well as the state mean the politics of women's involvement with the state is complex. It is a site of both threats and opportunities for feminists (Connell, 1990; Eisenstein, 1991; Franzway et al., 1989). Historically, the women's movement has been reluctant to engage with the state. This has been to a greater or lesser degree depending on the women's movement and the state involved. This will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter.

With the advent of state funding for feminist organisations, the movement was forced to confront the potential costs and benefits of engaging with it. State funding is cited in literature about the movement in the USA (Gornick et al., 1985; Matthews, 1994; Reinelt, 1994) as a significant factor in the shift of refuges and crisis centres as a network of radical organisations mobilising for social change to a network of organisations with a social service orientation. In relying on the state for funding, the feminist movement against violence is seeking funding from a body whose policies it wishes to change. As a result, there is an inherent risk of compromising the opportunities or scope for that change. As Tilly (1978) notes, if the state is the focus of demands by a movement it becomes a significant player when it has the ability to facilitate or repress movements by making collective action more or less costly. As a result, feminists remain ambivalent and wary of the state, and activists have to face the compromises and dilemmas imposed by accepting government funding so that services vital to women can survive (Watson, 1990). Indeed, feminist commentators have remarked upon the ironies of 'appealing to a masculinist state for protection against the violence of individual men' (Pettman, 1996: 10).

There is a concern that when the feminist movement against violence engages with the state the feminist political understanding of the causes, impact and potential alleviation of male violence against women is marginalised. Even if social problems that have traditionally

been seen as private are successfully redefined as public issues, there is still the risk that these may be reframed in a way a movement does not intend (Matthews, 1994). There is a tendency for the state to dilute issues when it adopts them and, as a result, feminism loses control of definitions (Mackay, 1996). The state encourages a more individual model of violence against women, making it an ameliorative concern rather than seeing violence as symptomatic of male domination (Matthews, 1994). Funding has been a particular concern because the state's ideological preference can be instituted by imposing conditions on funding that impact on organisations' structures, working practices, and by encouraging a service orientation to their work.

Olsen (1981) notes that one of the major potential costs of participation is the loss of freedom, control and the pure ideological position organisations are based on. Benefits of engaging with the state for organisations can include legitimacy, status and the ability to influence policy, and for feminist organisations working around violence the ability to ensure basic service provision is met. The costs of the loss of ideological identity can be particularly high for some sections of the women's movement that are deeply suspicious of male-dominated society and refuse to play by the rules of the game (Stedward, 1987). Other sections of the women's movement have been more willing to engage with the state and see potential benefits as outweighing potential costs.

This complex relationship with the state means interactions with it must be negotiated carefully, given that the state is

> simultaneously target, sponsor, and antagonist for social movements as well as the organiser of the political system and the arbiter of victory.
>
> (Jenkins, 1995: 3)

This book is concerned with how the feminist movement around violence has impacted on the state and the extent to which they have been successful in achieving their goals of policy change, changes in gender relations and the provision of alternative welfare services. It is also concerned with how the feminist movement against violence has been impacted on by the state and how the negotiation of this complex relationship affects the strategies adopted. This is discussed in detail in Chapter 3. This problematic relationship between the feminist movement and the state requires us to look at both structure and agency (Waylen, 1998). This chapter largely considers the former, and the latter is addressed in Chapter 3.

## Different feminist approaches to the state

Feminists have theorised about the state in a number of ways (Watson, 1990), and different feminists conceive of the state, and women's actual and potential relations with it, differently. These distinct approaches offer more or fewer possibilities, as well as limitations, for feminist engagement with the state. Despite these differences, what all these approaches share is the commitment to include gender as a category of analysis when developing theories of the state, one that has been more or less excluded in traditional state theory emerging from liberalism and Marxism (Waylen, 1998). Indeed, in McLennan et al. (1984), *The Idea of the Modern State*, the index contains no references to 'gender', 'feminism' or 'sex', and there are only five pages listed in reference to 'women'. Feminists have sought to remedy the gender-blind nature of state theory.

Liberal or equality feminists seek an end to state-sanctioned discrimination against women and urge state action for women's equal rights. Although the state is male dominated, liberal feminists believe increasing women's access and power can alleviate gender inequalities. From this perspective the state is seen as a neutral arbiter between groups, but as Waylen (1998) points out, it cannot provide a sophisticated understanding of why the state has not always fulfilled this role for women. Nonetheless, liberal feminists are willing to interact with the state to achieve policy change that is positive for women and essentially see the state as 'good' and open to change. This approach is characteristic of the one adopted in Scandinavia, where there is a history of social democracy and consensus politics. As a result, some Scandinavian feminists argue that they are seeking a women-friendly state and that they are state-friendly feminists (Hernes, 1987). Liberal feminists see state structures as having possibilities for agency.

In contrast to the liberal approach, there are a number of feminist positions that are more wary of the state, and less optimistic about its potential for working in the interests of women. Socialist feminists see the state as propagating dominant class as well as gender interests and so are more ambivalent towards using the state for feminist goals. This approach has been criticised for adding women's inequality into a framework that was developed to analyse class inequality; therefore women's oppression is seen as functional for capitalism (Waylen, 1998). Despite seeking a transformation of the state, many socialist feminists also recognise the need to engage with the state in order to defend women's practical interests now (Molyneux, 1989).

Radical feminists, like socialist feminists, are also wary of the state and sceptical about its potential for benefiting the position of women. For radical feminists, women's oppression is a priority and the male state is part of that oppression. The state is seen as patriarchal and as reflecting the male-dominated nature of society in that it upholds the rights of men at the expense of the rights of women (Waylen, 1998). As a result, they are hostile towards further intrusion by the state in women's lives, but at the same time many urge state action in defence of women's rights.

There have been attempts to generate typologies of the state based on gender as well as class (Charles, 2000; Sainsbury, 1994), and a body of literature has attempted to redress the balance by incorporating the masculinist and patriarchal nature of the state into analyses (Gordon, 1988; Mackinnon, 1989; Pateman, 1988; Walby, 1986). Some feminists have attempted to develop dual system theories that combine both capitalism and patriarchy and see the state as mediating between these two systems and acting in the interests of both. I believe that one main problem with these attempts is their failure to provide a detailed explanation of the nature of the relationship between the two systems, or to address potential conflicts between the two systems. For example, it is likely that capitalism and patriarchy may compete for women's labour, and dual system theories currently offer no explanation of how this conflict may be resolved, or in whose favour.

The three approaches of socialist feminists, radical feminists and dual system theorists, although differing in their analysis of the causes and potential alleviations of women's oppression, share a strategic view that, on the whole, interaction with the state should be avoided. All three approaches see the 'power of structures as overwhelming, leaving little room for agency' (Waylen, 1998: 5).

In response to these categorisations of the state, some feminists criticised their functionalist analysis for viewing the state as acting in the interests of different groups in a relatively unproblematic way (Franzway et al., 1989). Pringle & Watson (1992) argue that interests that are articulated around the state, as well as feminist political strategies, need to be reconsidered from the perspective of post-structuralist theory (cited in Waylen, 1998: 6). This approach emphasises practice, discourse and process; rather than seeing the state as an arena where interests are given, it is seen as an arena where they are actively constructed, and where as a result the state is a by-product of political struggles. Therefore, post-structuralist feminists emphasise the internal workings and discourses of the state, which they see as a series of arenas constituted

through discourses. From this perspective a number of possibilities for change exist, but outcomes are largely unpredictable (Pettman, 1996). Waylen (1998) points out that this approach offers one way of transcending the dichotomy between structure and agency.

## Problems and complexities in talking about 'the state'

Talking about the state is typically problematic. Some feminists, who do not conform directly to the post-structuralist approach, have taken issue with the idea that both the state and women's interests are unitary (Waylen, 1998). Charles (2000) explains that, because the state is defined and experienced as both a set of institutions standing over us as well as something that permeates our daily lives and in which we participate – be this unwillingly or willingly, this has led to questions concerning both the existence of the state and its usefulness for feminist practice (Abrams, 1988 cited in Charles, 2000; Allen, 1990 cited in Charles, 2000). Judith Allen (1990) indicates that, because so many feminist objectives appear to hinge on policy or legal reform, for example rape and domestic violence, for many feminists this has warranted a focus on the state. However, she goes on to argue that 'the state' has not been an indigenous category of feminist theory, but rather it is an import with parameters and definitions designed for political positions other than feminism. Despite this uneasy use of the concept of 'the state', it must be grappled with if a deeper understanding of the feminist movement's impact on policy is to be further understood and analysed, simply because the movement identified it as a central focus of demands. Waylen's (1998) response to Allen's (1990) position is that

> The conclusion that the analysis of the state up until now has been too aggregative does not necessarily imply that trying to theorise the state is a worthless enterprise, but can imply instead that more sophisticated analyses are necessary.
>
> (Waylen, 1998: 4)

Previously, feminists who have attempted to theorise about the state have treated it as a coherent institution and have taken one aspect to count for the whole, for example Mackinnon's (1989) analysis of the law. However, 'the state' is an abstraction that refers to a set of relations, practices and institutions, ranging in Western states from warfare and policing to the provision of funding for community organisations (Pettman, 1996). Feminists also take up different positions in relation to

the state at different times, indicating both the complexity of the state and women's relations with it. Therefore it is not possible to see the state as a homogeneous category or a monolith, since it involves various levels, including the local and the national, and multiple arenas.

If we view the state as being heterogeneous and made up of a set of institutions and contested power relations, as not lying outwith society, and as a site of struggle, then it is possible to see the state as an institution that reflects gender relations and inequality, as well as creates them. For example, Charles (2000) argues that the state plays a part in constituting social divisions and categories through forms of representation and intervention, and through the way it operates its legal and social policy. She cites Esping-Anderson in illustration of this point:

> The welfare state is not just a mechanism that intervenes in, and possibly corrects, the structure of inequality; it is, in its own right, a system of stratification. It is an active force in the ordering of social relations.
>
> (Esping-Anderson, 1990: 23 cited in Charles, 2000: 28)[1]

Charles (2000) argues that social movements mediate this dialectical process between society and state. She argues that feminist social movements engage with the state in two ways: by confronting it and by working within it. The state both constrains and enables the movement and is both oppressive and responsive to demands for change. Therefore, when feminists engage with the state they take the risk that their interests will be incorporated and redefined in ways not concordant with a feminist political analysis, but at the same time there is the possibility that political demands will be met and feminist interests will be represented. She states that

> This means that the state has to be engaged with both internally and externally in order to change its policies and to challenge the gender order.
>
> (Charles, 2000: 28)

As a result, if the nature of the state or the relationship between the state and gender relations is not fixed, then it is possible that battles can be fought in the arenas of the state (Waylen, 1998). This perspective offers the possibility of investigating a situation where institutions defined as patriarchal are apparently pursuing feminist objectives (Savage & Witz, 1992), because if the state were simply a single entity

that supports the dominance of men and the oppression of women, how would we explain state policies that apparently pursue feminist objectives?

## 'Types' of state and the emergence of second wave feminism

Different types of feminism and the state both result in different approaches from feminist groups and movements. The approach followed emanates from their theoretical understanding of the state, and different types of state generate different types of collective action (Birnbaum, 1988).

The political terrain at the time of the emergence of second wave feminism was very different in Sweden and the UK. As a result, the women's movement took distinct forms in the two countries and has followed different trajectories since. As Margolis says, although the women's movement is global, 'within each country the movement follows a distinctive course, developing structures and agendas in response to local circumstances' (Margolis, 1993: 379–80). Bouchier (1984) indicates that the women's movement may be more successful in countries with strong constitutional guarantees of gender equality, going on to argue that right wing governments threaten repression but offer clear opposition, whereas left wing governments offer relatively safe environments for change but threaten debilitation through a lack of clear opposition. If rights are denied, or existing rights threatened, then social movements are likely to emerge (Kaplan, 1992), whereas if desired change is already institutionalised or being developed, then collective action is probably less likely (Gelb, 1989; Kaplan, 1992).

Most analyses of the women's movement focus on the experience of the US (Charles, 2000), and the vast majority of the literature documenting the feminist movement against violence is US dominated. Although this research focuses on Sweden and the UK, given that comparisons with the US about the trajectories, strategies, growth and decay of the feminist movement against violence and its organisations are difficult to avoid, it is necessary to look in more detail at the political circumstances in which the US movement emerged.

Gelb (1989) provides a useful analysis of the emergence of second wave feminism in relation to the type of state, comparing the US, Sweden and the UK. Gelb claims that the US is a society where strong pluralism prevails, whereas Sweden and the UK are both corporatist and centralist states, and that this in turn explains the different forms of second wave feminism that emerged.

The US is characterised as a weak state that is relatively open to, and can be easily influenced by, interest groups. As a result the women's movement had been encouraged to establish professional organisations that focus both on the provision of services to women, and also campaign and lobby on issues of importance to women with the aim of achieving policy change. Because political parties are weak, organisations can then influence government directly. Equal rights and liberal feminism have dominated in the US, and so movement action has mobilised primarily around policy change, state legislation and legal reforms. Ferree (1987) argues that equal rights and liberal feminism have dominated in the US because of a lack of a strong socialist tradition, as well as the movement's roots in the civil rights movement. Given its liberal stance, the US movement has been prepared to engage with state bureaucracies, leading to the claim that the movement has become institutionalised and co-opted, thus diminishing its efforts for social change (Gelb, 1989).

## Second wave feminism in Sweden

In Sweden in the 1970s, the state had made a commitment to gender equity, which included the right of women to be free from violence (Eliasson & Lundy, 1999). The idea that both women and men should have equal rights and responsibilities in society had been institutionalised, and women's traditional economic dependency upon men had to a large degree been transferred to the state (Hernes, 1987). Therefore, within the Swedish welfare state, an individual model of social policy had developed (Kaplan, 1992; Sainsbury, 1994), and significant legislation and policy changes took place despite the absence of a widespread feminist movement (Kaplan, 1992). In fact, the advanced nature of Swedish reform is cited as an explanation for the lack of a mass feminist movement in Sweden (Gelb, 1989; Kaplan, 1992). In Sweden,

> as a general rule women's organisations do not stand in a particularly strong position in relation to public authorities and in the main have no great influence on public policies. … women's organisations occupy a marginal position in relation to the established corporate system, although this varies greatly according to the organisation.
>
> (Dahlerup & Gulli, 1985: 34–5)

Gelb (1989) explains this in terms of the corporatist nature of the Swedish state, where politics is based on consensus. As a result there is

a tendency to incorporate political interests into the dominant social democratic party and trade union organisations. Given that gender equity is a commitment and has been incorporated into policy, the state pre-empted many feminist demands, making the need for collective action less pressing. Therefore, the Swedish women's movement did not emerge or develop to the same extent as the movements in the US and other parts of Western Europe. Eliasson and Lundy claim:

> It is ironic that the centrality of gender equity as a philosophy also contributes to the denial of gender differences and conflict in that country and thereby masks the need for separate organising by women.
>
> (1999: 87)

This gender equity commitment resulted in existing women's organisations being co-opted and transformed into interest groups similar to those found in the US (Kaplan, 1992). The need for special organising by women was not seen as urgent, and it was perceived that change would be more readily achieved through existing political channels rather than working from outside the system. As a result, most of the shelters for survivors of violence in Sweden conformed to the 'philanthropy model', with the emphasis mostly on helping without any conscious feminist emphasis (Dobash & Dobash, 1991). It also explains why, until more recently, most women's organisations have chosen the 'mainstreaming' strategy, as opposed the 'disengagement' strategy (Briskin, 1991). The extent of the action that was set in motion by the government in Sweden in the 1960s and 1970s (for example marital rape was criminalised as early as 1962) may partly explain why the women's liberation movement lost the initiative and became absorbed into the party system.

> The active public policy of equality between men and women in Sweden presumably meant that women concentrated on the traditional political institutions which allowed less room for alternative organisations …
>
> (Dahlerup & Gulli, 1985: 30)

Furthermore, feminism has been resisted in Sweden because it would polarise women and men (Eliasson & Lundy, 1999), so women were neither encouraged to nor comfortable with identifying as openly feminist. It has been more difficult to address specific feminist issues in Sweden

because there is an assumption that equality has already been achieved to a large extent. Gustafsson says:

> … virtually all men tend to interpret women's rights (such as having the right to vote, get elected, speak freely, and other formal rights) as significant indication of gender neutral citizenship.
>
> (1998: 48)

This has made it more difficult to address other specific feminist issues, like violence against women. Recent research suggests that this 'backlash' has resulted in an increasingly activist feminist outlook for Swedish women, with Eliasson's (1994) recent survey of women's shelters indicating that most have taken on a more consciously feminist-activist orientation.

## Second wave feminism in the UK

The situation in the UK was rather different. Social and welfare policy has historically been based upon the presumed economic dependence of women on their husbands (Charles, 2000), and at the same time the British state has been reluctant to intervene in the family (Lewis, 1992). However, like Sweden, the second wave feminist movement also emerged after significant legislation legalising abortion, and Gelb (1989) argues that the movement had little impact on equal opportunity legislation that was passed at that time. The 1960s was a time of reform and liberalisation in the UK, and it could be argued, as Melucci (1993) states, that the feminist movement emerged at a time of policy change that provided feminists with motivations as well as institutional resources.

Gelb (1989) argues that the UK is not very open to interest groups because the party system remains strong with politics still framed in relation to class issues. Therefore, the women's movement focused on autonomous organising rather than setting about influencing a state closed to external pressures. Kaplan (1992) also argues that because the UK women's movement was linked closely to the labour movement and trade unions, it always remained of secondary importance to class analysis. However, Berry (1984) claims that in the UK interest groups are very important as they can often influence or determine policy, although this relationship is rarely acknowledged. Berry (1984) does note that some groups tend to be more influential than others, for example labour unions are more influential than peace groups.

Stedward (1987) notes, 'Clearly, not all groups can gain access. Equally, not all groups wish access, if they feel so alienated from the political system or believe that the costs of participation are too high' (Stedward, 1987: 211). Nonetheless, the government in the UK is less susceptible to pressure groups than other countries such as the US.

Charles (2000) is critical of Gelb's (1989) typology because it fails to include the way in which feminists have worked, both collectively and individually, to put issues onto the policy agenda and the subsequent gains this has produced. It also fails to acknowledge the work done by feminists both within and outwith the state at the local level – an arena that has been particularly useful for UK feminists. Nonetheless, there is evidence to suggest that as a result of the nature of the state in the UK and the radical and socialist feminist approach that characterises the UK women's movement, the branch of the women's movement working against violence concentrated on autonomous organising, forming groups such as Women's Aid and Rape Crisis which operated in the most part outwith the state.

## Conclusion

It is clear that the distinct paths taken by the women's movement in the three countries, and with it their work to stop violence against women, largely reflect historical differences in the struggle for gender equality and the social condition of women in each country (Eliasson & Lundy, 1999). It is also clear that states affect social movements, the form that they take and the strategies they employ to facilitate change. These strategies will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

In Sweden, literature analysing the state and the development of social movements (Gelb, 1989; Kaplan, 1992) suggests no large scale women's movement developed because the state had incorporated equality politics at an early stage, therefore masking the need for autonomous organising outwith the state. As a result, networks of women's organisations have had a relatively close and institutionalised relationship with the state. The history of social democracy and consensus politics has meant the women's movement has adopted what appears to be a liberal feminist approach and sought change and reform within and from existing state structures.

In the UK, literature suggests that the closed nature of the political system and the marginal position of interest groups in terms of access to policymakers and influence over policy has meant the women's movement has focused on autonomous organising outwith the state, and has

considered the costs of institutionalised state engagement as too high in terms of the potential loss of control and ideological stance. The dual roles of women's movement organisations working around violence in both countries means a certain element of engagement with the state is necessary if service provision is to be funded, and if policy reform is to be sought. How organisations manage this complex relationship with the state is a central question in this book.

There are a number of questions this book seeks to address. Given the nature of the state in which these movements operate, what strategies are open to them for engaging with it? What differences are there in the way the Swedish feminist movement and the UK feminist movement have operated in relation to gendered violence, and what opportunities have been open to them? In turn, has the Swedish women's movement's close relationship with the state compromised feminist goals, as well as their autonomous organisational base, resulting in an institutionalised approach where women's movement goals are also compromised? And, for the UK, has the reluctance of the movement to engage with the state meant limited impact on policy and the exclusion from decision-making processes?

Stetson & Mazur (1995) offer a typology of the state that refers to the institutionalisation of feminist interests through the establishment of agencies such as ministries for women and equal opportunities commissions, with the aim of achieving 'feminism from above' through policy implementation that is positive for women. The typology is based upon equal employment policy (EEP). Stetson & Mazur (1995) identify four different types of state based upon policy influence – that is, the participation of women's policy offices in the formation of feminist policies that promote the status of women, and policy access – the degree to which women's policy machineries develop opportunities for feminist and women's advocacy organisations to exert influence on feminist policies.

Within this typology both Sweden and the UK are characterised as having high levels of policy authority, but low levels of access for women's organisations or feminist groups. However, the reasons for their categorisations are different. Lovenduski (1995) indicates that in the UK the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) harnessed the power given to it but has been reluctant to engage with women's and feminist organisations. This in turn has discouraged equal opportunities–oriented women's groups from pursuing close collaboration with the commission. Elman (1995) indicates that in Sweden, JÄMO, the Equality Ombudsmen, was charged with identifying problem areas for women,

taking cases to the labour courts and tackling sexual harassment. However, JÄMO failed to bring in feminists on its staff, or to empower feminist activists. When it has worked with political activists it has been those in political parties or trade unions who tend to focus on gender-neutral notions of equality – the approach that has characterised women's issues in Sweden.

The preceding discussion about the emergence and impact of social movements would not suggest Sweden and the UK would be likely to be found in the same category when considering movement organisations' access and influence over policy. It can be argued that Stetson & Mazur's (1995) typology is too simplistic. The criteria for categorisation within this typology – policy influence and policy access – are likely to be both complex and fluid, and a total of four final categories may be too few to categorise states effectively. Furthermore, this typology also concentrates on national policy machinery, and indeed machinery that deals with only one policy area (EEP), and as a result it excludes the main locus of state feminism in the UK: local government – a key arena for autonomous women's organisations as well as women's committees. In the UK local government is an important area of resistance (Watson, 1990) and is often the main provider of funds for women's organisations. Similarly, in Sweden regional government and the municipalities and Kommunen (local government or councils) are key areas for women's organisations in that they provide funding and are often the target of lobbying and campaigning (Dahlerup & Gulli, 1985).

This typology is of limited use for understanding the branch of the women's movement working around violence because Stetson & Mazur (1995) concentrate on state structures and their ability, or inability, to provide organisations with access and influence, and fail to pay much attention to the strategies and agency of these organisations and in what ways their actions determine policy access and influence. Analysing the problematic nature of states' and social movement organisations' relationships requires a consideration of both structure and agency. Their typology is also inadequate for addressing the dual roles of feminist organisations working around violence who may have a very different relationship with state structures and agencies in their role as service providers than in their role as campaigners for social change.

Another question raised by engaging with these debates is whether the experience of different branches of the feminist movement against violence within each country is the same. Existing typologies suggest that experiences of groups within a country are likely to be similar. Therefore, from Stetson & Mazur's (1995) typology we would expect the

experience of Rape Crisis and Women's Aid in the UK to be similar. If the nature of the women's movement from which the anti-violence movement developed, and the nature of the state in which it operates, determines the relationship between movement organisations and the state, then we would expect the opportunities and constraints faced by the branches of the movement within each country to be the same. However, it is not only the nature of the state and the history and development of the women's movement that determines this relationship. The agency of particular organisational groups, the subsequent strategy adopted and the extent to which they are able to capitalise on opportunities are also significant. These issues are addressed in the following chapter, as is the potential impact on organisations of engagement with the state – given the two-way nature of interaction – in terms of loss of control and feminist ideology, as well as potential benefits in terms of policy access and funding.

# 3
# Women's Anti-violence Organisations and the State

## Introduction

The previous chapters have outlined the importance of engaging with the state for the anti-violence movement in terms of accessing funding for alternative welfare provision and seeking policy reform. There are a number of factors that can facilitate or limit this interaction, and the basis on which it occurs. Feminists have chosen to intervene in the state and in turn to influence policy by working both within state structures and outwith them. The nature of the state, feminist political persuasion and the nature of the women's movement have impacted on the strategies adopted.

This chapter discusses the strategies open to the feminist movement, the constraints and opportunities that it faces and how this complex relationship with the state can be negotiated. It is concentrated largely on women's organising outside the state, in the form of the autonomous organisations of the women's anti-violence movement, and how they have sought to influence the state and, in turn, how the state has influenced the anti-violence movement. Women's movement organisations seek to influence the state;

> The difficult task then, is to turn political structures toward feminist goals without being absorbed in to the structure.
>
> (Margolis, 1993: 391)

## Political opportunity structures (POS)

The preceding chapters have provided an overview of some of the literature that details the importance of the political context in shaping the emergence, development and subsequent impact of social movements.

More recently, literature has included the concept of 'political opportunity structures' when considering the development and impact of social protest movements (Meyer & Staggenborg, 1996).

The concept of POS can be helpful when examining the strategies adopted by a movement (Kitschelt, 1986; Kriesi, 1995; Tarrow, 1994). Some studies of POS have viewed them as stable, referring to stable aspects of government structures. On the other hand, a number of studies have used a more dynamic approach and examined both the likely outcomes and costs of pursuing collective action. Some aspects of political opportunity are stable, for example traditions and institutions, whereas others are unstable such as public policy, political openness and elite alignment (Gamson & Meyer, 1996 cited in Meyer & Staggenborg, 1996).

It is necessary to consider POS as dynamic, because movements can affect political opportunity structure in a number of ways, for example by influencing policy, altering political alignments and raising public awareness of an issue (Meyer & Staggenborg, 1996). Social movements also alter the structure of political opportunity for subsequent challengers, including themselves. As McAdam discusses,

> … any event or broad social process that serves to undermine the calculations on which the political establishment is structured occasions a shift in political opportunities.
>
> (1982: 41)

POS can take the form of an opportunity that arises from openness, but can also arise from a threat. As Meyer & Straggenborg indicate,

> For some challengers, increased political openness enhances the prospects for mobilisation, while other movements seem to respond more to threat than opportunity.
>
> (1996: 1634)

For example, women's organisations in Sweden have capitalised on the institutionalisation of equal-opportunity politics and have functioned as specialists on public bodies concerning children, women and the family, and they have had considerable influence on the formulation of public policies in these fields (Dahlerup & Gulli, 1985). On the other hand, the women's movement in Sweden had to respond to the threat of the removal of rape from the statute books following the Swedish government's sex crimes commission report in 1976 (SOU, 1976); on

this occasion they adopted a strategy that criticised the workings of the state, the findings and the composition of the committee.

As a result of such government actions, movements adopt different strategies and tactics in response to changing opportunity structures, and given the dynamic nature of POS, this in turn changes the political opportunities available. Activists can frame issues in ways that are less confrontational and therefore can choose assimilation rather than a more militant strategy, depending on the nature of the opportunity.

One criticism of POS is that many theories include features as structures, which are in fact contingent (Rootes, 1997). For example, a political system may be structurally open or closed and at the same time there can be greater or lesser receptivity of political elites to collective action. Rather than considering *political opportunity structures*, it is more appropriate to consider *political opportunity*. Therefore, political opportunity has to be viewed in terms of openness – the extent to which groups can access the administration – as well as in terms of political receptivity to the claims being made. Access is typically necessary for success, but alone it is not enough to determine success: political elites and decision makers must be receptive to the claims being made. Additionally, political elites must also be receptive to those making the claims. For example, the anti-bureaucratic stance of the women's movement and its preference for alternative forms of organising can mean decision makers are not receptive to them as a group (Stedward, 1987).

Thus, the structure and nature of the social movement organisation making the claim also impacts on political opportunity. When movement organisations respond to the political opportunities available, they adopt structures that help them operate in those particular venues. For example, movements using direct action may adopt flexible structures, whereas those groups which prioritise challenges through the courts, for example, may adopt a specialised and professionalised stance and structure necessary for litigation (Meyer & Staggenborg, 1996). Therefore, political opportunity is not simply the openness, or not, of the political system; the receptiveness, or not, of elites; and the acceptability, or not, of particular groups. It is also determined by the movement organisations involved – the extent to which they themselves are able to be dynamic and adapt their structure, public image and strategy according to circumstance.

Activists select tactics from a limited repertoire in response to both organisational needs and the larger political context (Tilly, 1978). These may be institutionally oriented, or extra-institutionally oriented. Direct action is more likely when the political system appears closed (Oberschall,

1973), or when progress is lacking through institutional means. When adopting strategies, groups take into account the ideologies of their constituents, such as preference for direct action and not engaging with state bureaucracies, as well as learn to conform to the norms and practices associated with the venue in which they are operating.

Therefore, no one aspect of political opportunity is deterministic. Rather, the process of social protest is a dynamic one. It is true, as discussed in the preceding chapters, that the nature of the state in terms of openness to challenge, its stance on particular issues (for example the sanctions it can employ through fines and limiting protest opportunities and, as will be discussed in relation to anti-violence movement organisations, restrictions imposed through funding), is critical in influencing a movement's strategy and tactics. At the same time the nature of the movement affects the tactics and subsequent influence it is able to have, in that structurally it may be antithetical to the workings of state bureaucracies; some within a movement may make it more difficult for the movement to frame issues in ways that appeal to public opinion; and in some cases, once in place, structures can constrain the development of tactical repertoires (Freeman, 1975).

> Failure to innovate makes mobilisation more difficult and is a precursor to movement decline.
>
> (McAdam, 1982)

There are of course other factors that influence policy and political change. I am not suggesting that political opportunity is the only feature that impacts on the possibility of policy change; other factors such as wider political, cultural and socio-economic change are also likely to influence changes in state policy (Charles, 2000). For example, developments in equal opportunities and equal pay legislation are associated with the service sector expansion in industrialised economies after the Second World War and the accompanying labour shortage (Norris, 1987).

Political opportunity is useful for understanding the relationship between women's anti-violence organisations and the state because it allows for an understanding of this relationship as dynamic, and therefore incorporates the impact the movement can have on states, how this might be achieved and what may prevent it, as well as the impact the state may have on the movement. Political opportunity also incorporates the notion that states are not monolithic but are a site of struggle and conflict, at the same time incorporating the notion that organisations

are also dynamic and may adapt in response to different circumstances. In turn, their ability and willingness to adapt contributes to their effectiveness in seeking change from the state. The following section considers the features that may contribute to movement organisations being insiders or outsiders in terms of their relationship with the state, and the strategies they may adopt as a result, as well as the potential costs and benefits of doing so.

## Feminist intervention in the state

Feminists have sought to influence policy in a number of ways. Some feminists have chosen to work within state structures and bureaucracies, and new structures have been created, such as ministries for women, with the aim of benefiting women. Some states, for example Australia and Canada, have incorporated feminist inputs into policymaking and have created 'femocrats', professional feminists working within state bureaucracies at local and national level (Eisenstein, 1995; Watson, 1990). Elsewhere, feminists who have been appointed to policy machinery charged with ensuring gender equity may have few relationships with feminists or feminist organisations (Pettman, 1996). Many states, including Sweden and the UK, have developed women's sections and policy machinery for putting women's rights on the agenda. However, issues are often translated into welfare issues and often deal with women as a category rather than analysing the gendered impact of state policies. This is a risk that is common to all feminist intervention in the state, be it from within or outwith the state.

The state has a tendency to transform or dilute political issues when it adopts them. The *Zero Tolerance* campaign, initially developed by Edinburgh District Council Women's Committee and taken up by other authorities and countries (the recent *Kvinnofrid* campaign in Sweden is a development of this) does not follow this pattern. This radical campaign, which used empowering images of women, and not victim imagery, received widespread support. Mackay (1996) attributes this in part to the increased visibility of women in popular politics and the local state, as well as the social, political and personal salience of the issue of violence. All of these features contributed to the political opportunity for a successful campaign. It is clear that strategies of feminist women working within the state can be successful for feminist goals. However, the Scottish Office later adopted the *Zero Tolerance* campaign for a series of television campaigns that were widely criticised by feminist groups for their use of victim imagery, indicating the state's ability

to redefine feminist issues as apolitical, individual issues, and the need for feminists not to be complacent and to remain watchful for this. A success for feminism may become a risk when the arena in which the issue is located changes.

Eduards's (1997) research also indicates the importance of the increasing visibility of women in popular politics in terms of achieving feminist goals. Municipalities with low levels of female representation had no shelters for battered women, and there was a positive correlation between female representation and shelter provision. Scandinavian feminists insist on the possibility of a woman-friendly state, and some dismiss the idea that it is patriarchal given that it has increased women's empowerment and emancipation. All Nordic parliaments have a critical mass of women members, and this may contribute to their optimistic view of the role of the state. As Arnlaug suggests, 'The increasing representation of women in elite politics suggests a power base to build a women-friendly state or, more precisely, a base from which to advocate women's interests' (1993: 49). However, caution should always be exercised, as Eduards (1997) also notes the ability of the state and its agencies to rename political demands concerning violence against women, thus effectively eradicating the political aspect.

One of the risks of engaging with the state for the anti-violence movement is that states prefer the individualised treatment model of addressing male violence, rather than the more political analyses (Eduards, 1997; Matthews, 1994). Dobash & Dobash (1992) also emphasise the government's tendency to adopt the 'individual pathology angle' when addressing violence against women, and therefore to be willing only to recognise anti-violence organisations for their practical and material solutions. The state redefines demands to quell protest and maintain legitimacy. Evidence suggests that the increased visibility of women in the political arena may go some way to preventing this, or at least providing the opportunity to challenge it. Dahlerup & Gulli (1985) argue that what is required is institutionalised attempts (women in politics, women's organisations and pressure groups), as well as a separate women's movement, to make radical claims and not play by the rules of the game. Therefore, autonomous women's groups organising outwith the existing political system which are willing to both interact with the state as well as challenge it can mount a significant campaign to improve the unequal position of women in society. Which political environment and strategy must be adopted to make that possible while at the same time avoiding co-option and institutionalisation is a main question of this research.

## Insiders, outsiders and thresholders

It is likely, as with the emergence of distinct forms of second wave feminism in different states, that different types of feminism produce different approaches to the state, based both on their theoretical understanding of the state and the specifics of the country in which the movement develops. As discussed in the preceding chapter, liberal feminists, in the US and Australia for example, where there are more 'femocrats', see the state as gender-neutral and therefore open to influence. Conversely, radical and socialist feminists, who characterise UK feminism more, see the state as embodying repressive class and gender relations and are therefore more likely to maintain a critical distance from it.

However, the reality of feminist engagement with the state is not that simple. Both socialist and radical feminists have engaged with the state. Socialist feminists have done so in the arena of local government, engaging with it on its own terrain, whereas radical feminists have done so through the formation of refuges for women engaging with the state from an autonomous organisational base (Charles, 2000).

In considering the position accorded to groups in terms of policy access and the extent to which implementation of that policy is possible, exemplified through an analysis of Women's Aid in Scotland, Stedward (1997) uses Grant's (1977)[1] distinction between 'insider' and 'outsider' groups, which recognises that some groups have difficulty gaining access to policymakers. Groups can be classified in terms of access and acceptability, which relates back to the distinction drawn between political opportunity structures and political opportunity. Grant's (1977) approach is useful because it incorporates both the perceptions of decision makers as to which groups are acceptable, and therefore legitimate, as well as the strategies adopted by the groups themselves as a determinant of access (Stedward, 1987).

Insider groups are those which are recognised as legitimate and are part of the regular consultative framework. Such groups deliberately pursue strategies that are more likely to gain insider status and develop a perception of the 'rules of the game' (Eduards, 1992; Stedward, 1987). Those groups considered outsiders are not usually involved in consultation processes and, though outsider status does not necessarily mean they will have no influence, groups with this status appear to have little influence in practice. Stedward (1987) argues that this is because it is likely they have not *chosen* their status as outsiders. The extent to which the adoption of a particular position as outsider or insider is a *choice* is discussed in more detail below.

Stedward (1987) goes on to suggest that the incorporation of May & Nugent's (1982)[2] categorisation of some groups as 'thresholders' is a useful extension of Grant's (1977) dichotomous model. Thresholder groups are those that adopt a variety of strategies and achieve a status in the policy process that places them on the threshold of insider status. Such groups exhibit strategic ambiguity and oscillate between insider and outsider strategies, on some occasions seeking close relationships with the state and on others adopting a more hostile and distant strategy. This typology is useful because it recognises that some groups may be excluded, some included, and others may have an ambiguous position depending on the role of the organisation and the issue they are pursuing. As a result, it is particularly useful for considering the anti-violence movement, which has two distinct roles and may adopt different positions at different times.

On the whole, it is a reasonable presumption that most groups would prefer insider status, given that 'The advantage of being on the inside track of social policy seems overwhelming' (Stedward, 1987: 213). However, not all types of participation are to the advantage of a group, and the particular form of participation can be crucial in determining whether a group's interests will be best served by maintaining a critical distance from state structures, or by engaging in enthusiastic participation. There are obviously costs and benefits of formalised participation (debates about these in relation to literature on the US women's movement are discussed below). Benefits can come in the form of policy influence, cartelisation, efficiency, legitimacy and funding; costs can come in the form of the loss of freedom, control, purity and ideological positions (Olsen, 1981). As a result,

> Benefits and costs are neither mutually exclusive nor exhaustive, but they characterise the differences among forms of coordination. These effects pose dilemmas for an organisation, because benefits seem inextricably bound together with costs.
>
> (Olsen, 1981: 157–8)

This is the dilemma for feminism. In particular, the risk of co-option and institutionalisation can be very high for the women's movement because of its feminist ideological stance and the likelihood that state involvement in an issue will result in its redefinition, diminishing its political analysis.

Anti-violence organisations identified their dual roles as service providers and as agents campaigning for political change from the outset

of the movement. Stedward (1987) indicates that in the case of Women's Aid, some demands are quite radical, but the service delivery element of their work has opened up the prospect of a close relationship with government in the implementation of public policies. Consequently, Women's Aid are a thresholder group because when emphasising their service delivery role they are able to employ insider strategies, and when challenging the fundamental nature of male-dominated society, they inevitably have to adopt an outsider strategy.

For anti-violence organisations to successfully negotiate this complex relationship and to adopt strategies appropriate to the claims they are making, and the arena in which they are making them, a pragmatic approach must be adopted in relation to the state. The ability to adopt a pragmatic approach, and for it to be successful, relies firstly on being accepted by the state as an insider by virtue of service provision status, as well as a willingness on the part of the organisation to adapt strategy. Organisations are required to weigh up the relative costs and benefits of adopting a pragmatic approach, and with it sacrificing elements of ideological purity.

The dilemma for organisations in adopting a pragmatic approach and therefore risking ideological purity has become a salient one as organisations have adapted to the changing political climate in which they operate (Cuthbert & Irving, 2001). As a result of these dilemmas, despite more than three decades of grassroots involvement, scholars disagree about the nature of rape crisis centres and refuges and their ability to influence entrenched gendered practices and social structures. For some organisations, the adoption of a pragmatic approach has allowed them to influence the state and in turn facilitate policy reform. This has inevitably required the modification of a purist ideological stance.

For example, adopting a pragmatic approach requires groups to establish themselves as having appropriate expertise, thus encouraging groups to adopt a professional stance, something which they have long resisted. Furthermore, as Stedward (1987) notes, using the example of Women's Aid, if groups are to be included and to be involved in the policy process and receive funding as insiders, then they inevitably have to entertain the idea of compromise.

> Women's Aid is faced with one overwhelming problem: to be in on the act one has to be invited, and to be invited one may have to compromise.
>
> (Stedward, 1987: 230)

Additionally, state welfare provision is based upon the client/service provider model, a dichotomy that is far from the 'women helping women' philosophy that the anti-violence movement adopts. Conversely, collective working and the involvement of battered women in service provision are antithetical to the state's view of welfare provision. In order to adopt a pragmatic approach, women's organisations must be willing to adapt, or appear to adapt, some of their positions in relation to these issues. They must also be willing to fiercely defend those positions they are not willing to compromise on.

The changes that centres have made when adopting the pragmatic approach (and some organisations have changed more than others, as will be discussed in the following chapters) have contributed to the debate as to whether such organisations can be viewed as social movement organisations or social service organisations, a debate that also stems from their dual roles as campaigners for change and providers of alternative welfare provision. This argument has arisen because, in pursuing the objective of service provision and in seeking funding to do so, organisations have had to adopt insider strategies and engage with the state, which, in turn, has impacted upon their ability to campaign for wider social change and to adopt outsider strategies.

Accepting the women's movement's analysis of violence requires far-reaching welfare and policy reform, and these are changes the state is reluctant to make. The women's movement is then faced with the choice of engaging to seek policy reform to benefit the immediate and material position of women, or maintaining a critical distance. It is possible to gain further understanding about the tendency to view women's movement organisations as either social service organisations or social movement organisations if we make the distinction between *reform* and *reformism* (Bunch, 1981). Organisations accused of abandoning social movement status may have adopted the ideological position of *reformism*. That is, the belief that women's liberation is achieved by a process of institutional changes that will ultimately bring women equality within the existing social, economic and political order. This ideological stance may also be called a liberal feminist stance. This is distinct from *reform*, which refers to a change or strategy that can be employed for either radical or reformist ends. However, some organisations accused of abandoning social movement status may not be reformist, but may be seeking reform. Such groups recognise that freedom for the oppressed comes not through reformism leading to equality, but only through a radical restructuring of the ideology and institutions of society. Reform strategies may be useful in that struggle (Collins et al.,

1989), a position the social movement/social service dichotomy does not recognise.

Distinguishing between anti-violence organisations in terms of social services or social movement organisations is not empirically evident, as I discuss below, as crisis centres and refuges take multiple forms and pursue multiple goals, developing appropriate strategies in response to local circumstances. The argument about the nature of rape crisis centres and refuges has stemmed from the realisation that refuges and crisis centres no longer resemble the form they took at the time of their emergence in the 1970s, a form which is regarded by some as a 'pure' or 'ideal' type. This change is seen as indicative of a move away from radicalism and the diminishment of social change goals in favour of service provision for survivors, and attributed in the most part to the advent of state funding for violence-related services.

## The 'original model', and an 'ideal' or 'pure' type

The structural or organisational form of women's movement organisations is a key area of scholarship, and collective forms of organisation are often regarded as the 'ideal' or 'pure' type of feminist organisation. A dichotomy is created between conventionally structured organisations, such as the National Organisation for Women (NOW) in the US, and the collective groups that operated through networks of activists. From an RMT perspective it is upon this basis that the distinction between 'collectivist' and 'bureaucratic' types is drawn (Ferree & Hess). The difference between the two types is summarised thus:

> … bureaucratic organisation … is characterised by a formal division of labour, written rules, universal standards of performance, hierarchical offices, impersonal relationships, technical expertise, and individualistic achievement norms. In contrast, the ideal type of collectivist organisation is a community of like-minded persons, with minimal division of labour, rules, or differential rewards. Interaction among staff is holistic, personalised, informal, and designed to achieve consensus.
>
> (1985: 49)

Adopting an RMT perspective that emphasises structure over ideology, Freeman (1975) claims that a group's structure is key to its survival. She claims that bureaucratic groups are more likely to be able to mobilise resources and therefore survive, whereas collective groups are more innovative but have a tendency to be short-lived and ineffective. She also

claims that the bureaucratic groups implemented the collective groups' innovations, while the collective groups adapted to their environments and transformed their goals from radical social change to ameliorative social service projects that were 'politically innocuous' (Freeman, 1975: 145). However, Matthews's (1994) research on the rape crisis movement in the US led her to claim the opposite. She found that feminists with a bureaucratic orientation were most likely to conform to the ameliorative approach and concentrate on service provision, whereas the collective groups created a new form of action in the form of activist service provision, which they implemented themselves rather than relying on the bureaucratic organisations to do it for them. Matthews (1994) claims that in the US it was institutions and groups outside the movement that depoliticised crisis work and conformed to the social service approach. I will argue in the following chapters that dynamic and adaptable 'hybrid' groups, which adapt their structure and approach according to opportunity and circumstance, are more likely to survive and fulfil movement goals than either bureaucratised groups, which run a high risk of co-option, or 'purist' groups, which run the risk of being excluded and therefore short-lived or unable to facilitate change.

US literature suggests the majority of rape crisis centres and refuges for battered women that emerged during the 1970s were grassroots, non-hierarchical, collectivist centres run by volunteers. The majority of centres were free-standing and not affiliated to other agencies or bodies (Byington et al., 1991; Gornick et al., 1985). US literature suggests that few centres fit this model, and they are often criticised for abandoning social change goals and conforming to a social service approach (Matthews, 1994; Reinelt, 1995). The centres that emerged at this time were generally small, unaffiliated groups offering services to adult female survivors of violence. Centres generally undertook education to lay audiences and aimed to change procedures in, and monitor, agencies dealing with survivors of violence. Services that were provided were generally low-cost, non-medical, short term and delivered by trained volunteer women who were not, and did not regard themselves as, social service professionals, and who were often survivors of violence. This has parallels with other branches of the women's movement that emerged at the same time, such as health care for women, particularly surrounding birth control and abortion. The community education aspect of anti-violence organisations' work was structured to adhere to the overall goals of the women's movement and the feminist analysis of the roots and repercussions of violence (Gornick et al., 1985). Many centres were started by women already involved in consciousness-raising groups; therefore, empowerment was a key strategy.

As noted above, those with an RMT perspective emphasise an organisation's structure over its ideology. However, this poses a problem when analysing the women's movement. Feminists did not stumble upon collective organisation by accident, but rather it was chosen as a radical critique of existing social organisation and was part of a larger cycle of protest that challenged existing paradigms (Kriesi, 1989). For feminists involved in collective organisations, not only the goals were important, but the means by which they achieved them were equally important (Matthews, 1994). The RMT approach suggests only bureaucratic organisations can facilitate policy change. This is clearly not the case with Women's Aid, where a collectivist organisation has achieved significant policy change (Charles, 2000; Stedward, 1987).

Collective organisation was not without its problems, though. Women with more charismatic personalities were able to impose ideas on other women, particularly if they had the support of wider friendship networks (Charles, 2000). Therefore, the organisational structure that was designed to eliminate the concentration of power in the hands of the few often did not work in practice. Practically, too, collective organisation in its purist sense, which involves decision making by consensus, was often time consuming and impractical in the day-to-day running of an organisation. Freeman (1975) also argues that collective organisational structures were often unwelcoming and exclusive and resulted in a 'tyranny of structurelessness' that was not more or less anti-democratic than a traditional hierarchy. It is also argued that the original collective model of crisis centres failed to incorporate difference between women, and in fact caused differences to be suppressed. Although collectivist groups were regarded as being good at innovation, more formally organised groups are more stable and able to put innovation into practice (Staggenborg, 1995). Literature is too inclined to view organisational structure as being polarised and as an either/or situation. In doing so, literature fails to incorporate the multiple forms and strategies a movement may adopt. Freeman (1975) argued for an organisational structure that combined the positive elements of each form, essentially a 'hybrid' form of organisation that is part hierarchy and part collective. This organisational structure would mean that groups would be more formalised and centralised but without necessarily being hierarchical.

## The move away from radicalism and the 'pure' or 'ideal' type

US literature suggests that, as the number of centres grew in the 1970s and 1980s, there was also radical change from a small homogeneous core to a large and diverse group of programmes which resembled the

'original model' less and less (Gornick et al., 1985; Matthews, 1994; Reinelt, 1994). These changes are attributed to several events since the 1970s. As discussed in the opening chapter, the increased public awareness of violence as an issue took the pressure off crisis centres and refuges as sole agitators. Furthermore, the mental health profession's awakening to the issue of violence and its clinical implications widened the scope of discussion away from feminist politics and towards the experience of violence for the individual. Many US organisations hired clinical psychologists and social workers as counsellors, and this move was accompanied by a notable rise in the number of publications concerning rape trauma syndrome and battered women's syndrome, something that Matthews (1994) believes is a manifestation of an increasingly therapeutic society, and an increasingly therapeutic state (Polsky, 1991). Not all organisations incorporated professionals, but many took on a professional air and began screening potential staff and volunteers as well as formalising recruitment procedures. States certainly prefer the individualised therapeutic model of welfare work, and state provision is based upon a service provider/client model that views the providers as experts and professionals, therefore best placed to serve the needs of the individual. This approach is antithetical to the approach and goals of the women's movement who prioritise *how* the service is delivered, as much as the service itself.

One of the most significant changes is thought to be the influx of state monies for rape and domestic violence–related services. This allowed for the hiring of professional staff, contributing in turn to the professionalisation of the movement (Matthews, 1994). Many centres had to comply with certain regulations in order to gain funding, such as the election of a board of directors or management committee. Funding requirements meant that centres had to make themselves more attractive to legislators, thus encouraging an emphasis on service provision rather than social change and radicalism. Centres also had to emphasise cooperation with community agencies rather than conflict. The staff of many centres changed to include mainstream feminists and apolitical women who would have been neither welcomed nor interested in the more radical feminist centres. These changes that centres have gone through have also led to questions being raised as to whether they have resulted in comprehensive services for survivors of violence but the abandonment of social change goals and the original aim of a violence-free society (Collins et al., 1985; Matthews, 1994; Reinelt, 1994). I will argue in the chapters that follow, in the case of Sweden and the UK, changes are indicative of dynamic organisational approaches

and strategies, with organisations seeking to project a particular image and to exploit material resources, while at the same time retaining movement goals.

It is also argued that state funding encourages professionalisation through centres identifying as 'experts' on rape and battering in order to achieve legitimacy (Staggenborg, 1995). As a result, many organisations came to believe themselves better equipped to provide services to women survivors than mainstream social services. There is a concern that such therapeutic frameworks often disguise social ills as personal trauma (Polsky, 1991). As a result of funding requirements, many centres adopted hierarchical structures and instituted routine bureaucratic practices, and in the US some organisations expanded into crime centres, therefore neglecting the gender-specific approach to their work. The influx of 'new victims' into these centres meant a feminist political analysis seemed less pertinent, which has also led to claims in the US that many rape crisis centres and refuges for battered women were no longer agitators for social change but had been transformed into social service organisations.

## Dichotomies and distinctions

It is certainly true that rape crisis centres and refuges for battered women do not fit the 'original model' of the 1970s, and that the second wave feminist movement does not now exist in the form it did at its outset (Charles, 2000), but there is little evidence to suggest that the dichotomies and distinctions drawn between different 'types' of feminist organisation are particularly powerful, nor even observable in reality. Furthermore, given the, at best, thresholder status, at worst outsider status, anti-violence organisations may inhabit, and the necessity for those engaging with the state to adapt to political opportunity and the dynamic nature of the relationship, it is unrealistic to expect organisations to retain the form they supposedly did at the outset. Given the literature on political opportunity, social movement organisations and the state, to do so would be likely to preclude successful policy change.

We must be careful not to view the relationship between the state and social movement organisations as deterministic or to see organisations as being 'done to' by the state, and therefore passive actors. To adopt such a position would allow no room for agency on the part of organisations, and would fail to see the relationship as dynamic. Not all change is necessarily bad, and to assume it relies on dichotomies that are not empirically evident, and assume there is an 'ideal form' of

organisation and those that do not conform to this model are somehow not feminist and are not pursuing feminist goals. Although the state can exert control over organisations to an extent, by encouraging them to work in a particular way, movement organisations can also manage their interaction with the state and, as a result, decide what level of compromise is acceptable or unacceptable.

Although feminism became associated with collective organisation which was largely critical of existing masculine power structures, not all feminist organisations fit easily into this model (Matthews, 1994), neither in the 1970s nor now. For many feminists in the US, organisational structure was not of great importance, and adopting a conventional organisational structure was a matter of convenience. Empirical observations, Matthews (1994) argues, indicate that any rigid differentiation between collectivist and bureaucratic strands is unrealistic.

Ferree & Hess (1985) argue that in the US, as the number of centres grew, the distinction between collectivist forms and bureaucratic forms rapidly diminished and US feminism came to embrace a spectrum of forms, although it should be noted that the critique inherent in collectivist organisation remained. It is misleading, Matthews (1994) argues, to think that collective groups simply became more bureaucratic, because in actual fact the collectivist critique still influenced groups that adopted more hierarchical approaches and they still retained non-bureaucratic practices despite becoming more formalised and professionalised. Charles (1995) also indicates that Welsh Women's Aid adopted an organisational form that allowed for the specialisation of tasks but that did not involve power differentials. Therefore, adaptations to collective working do not necessarily equate to the adoption of a bureaucratic structure, although for some organisations, in the US in particular, they do. Stedward (1987) also indicates that Scottish Women's Aid were encouraged to establish a national coordinating body by the Scottish Office because '… when an umbrella organisation does not exist government goes out and assists its emergence, suggesting that governments need these coordinating bodies with whom they can negotiate and consult' (Stedward, 1987: 219). At the same time, they have retained their collectivist structure and not become institutionalised in the way literature suggests is the case in the US. She also argues that

> From the policy-makers' perspective, it is much more difficult to consult, let alone negotiate with, a group whose leaders cannot act as authoritative spokespersons and who cannot make agreements stick. (Stedward, 1987: 222)

Bureaucratisation is not an inevitable consequence of engagement with the state, and it does not necessarily compromise the aims of an organisation (Staggenborg, 1995).

Fried (1994) also indicates that the controversy over the character of anti-violence organisations has not proven theoretically powerful. Martin (1990) argues that the dichotomising of groups as feminist or non-feminist on account of structure relies on an organisational paradigm that may not actually exist, and in any case fails to acknowledge that the relationship between organisations and social structures is both complex and conditional. There is no consensus about what the essential qualities of a feminist organisation are, and this is problematic given the differences among feminists themselves. Liberal feminists may not see hierarchy and bureaucracy as anti-feminist, but radical and socialist feminist often do. Martin opts for a definition of a feminist organisation as being

> … any relatively enduring (exists for more than a few sessions or meetings) group of people that is structured to pursue goals that are collectively identified.
>
> (1990: 185)

It must also have feminist ideology, feminist guiding values, feminist goals, produce feminist outcomes or be founded during the women's movement as part of the women's movement. Apart from this, Martin (1990) claims that groups are otherwise diverse and can be for-profit or non-profit, collectivist or hierarchical, national or local and legal or illegal. An understanding of feminist groups along these lines allows for the spectrum of organisations to be considered, rather than creating a hierarchy of more or less feminist groups.

Martin (1990) argues that a more intricate analysis is needed, one that encompasses the many ways that feminist organisations vary, and how social movement organisations express ideologies, goals and outcomes that are positive for women. The assumption is often made that feminist organisations can be equated with collective organisation. However, although collective organisation is often chosen because it is compatible with feminist politics, it is not necessarily a condition of being a feminist organisation, and although scholars would rarely argue that an organisation has to be collective to be feminist, many activists often make that claim (Martin, 1990). I believe that literature has concentrated too much on what differs between feminist organisations rather than what they have in common, and that is, for most, a desire to

improve the position of women in society. The ways in which that can be achieved and the strategies adopted can take different forms.

Any attempt to divide organisations into bureaucratic or collectivist strands is unrealistic and succeeds in producing organisations that exist at two levels, both of which are ideal types and to which few organisations will ever conform (Rothschild-Whitt, 1979). Matthews (1994) indicates that the collectivist form of organisation became an ideal and a standard that many groups tried to embody, and it is from this that the passionate criticisms of supposedly 'failed' collectives stem. This also raises questions about how we define social movement success or failure. For some, whose commitment to a radical or socialist feminist perspective is strong, failure to retain a collective structure and loss of that ideological stance is a cost too high. For others, who see policy reform as important and as a measure of success, those costs are justifiable if sufficient reform is achieved. Accepting the dual roles of anti-violence organisations means accepting that gains and outcomes can take a number of forms, all of which may contribute to the feminist struggle.

Arguments over the nature of refuges and crisis centres often occur within the movement itself as a result of ideological divisions rather than among social movement scholars. For example, in Sweden the two national networks conform to a different feminist political understanding. The ROKS network regards the SKR network as too liberal, and SKR regards ROKS as too radical. Matthews (1994) indicates, and this book intends to address in part, that the questions of most importance are not the extent to which organisations are 'pure' types, but to what extent do organisations adopt features associated with collectivist and bureaucratic types? Do organisations become more bureaucratic gradually or inevitably, or is it a combination of external pressures as well as internal political processes? What forms do organisations that comprise the women's movement today actually take, and how do they self-identify? The position of organisations as thresholders with dual roles is significant in addressing these questions because engagement with the state, particularly in terms of funding for services, has necessitated internal change, in terms of organisational activity and structure.

## State funding, institutionalisation and co-optation

State funding is often cited as one of the main reasons for the transformation of crisis centres and refuges from the 'original model' – despite the fact that it is unlikely that it ever existed in this 'pure' form – to a

more diverse network of social service agencies. Certainly, in the US, as Matthews (1994) indicates, the rape crisis movement has been influenced by a more conservative social service approach that has threatened to submerge the radical political analysis that inspired the movement. Indeed, in the US movement the distinction is drawn between 'feminist' groups and 'social service' groups (Dobash & Dobash, 1992; Matthews, 1994). However, this has not been the case in the UK (as this book will argue). Engaging with the state has costs, but these are not always as extreme as those experienced in the US, where some groups have adopted reformist strategies, and will depend upon the strategy adopted by a movement and how fiercely they are willing, and able, to defend certain positions.

The initial lack of outside funding for the anti-violence organisations meant that groups were free to explore new organisational forms that challenged bureaucratic structures of power, and, because of the women's movement's ambivalence towards the state, they scrutinised possible funding sources. The influx of state monies for these services had an effect on organisational practice given that funding was contingent upon certain restrictions, bureaucratic practices and the provision of particular kinds of services. In the US, this often involved electing a board of directors, formalising divisions of labour and adopting a client/counsellor approach rather than minimising the difference between helper and helped.

Matthews indicates the irony of state funding for anti-violence organisations, claiming that in the US

> The movement aspect of anti-rape work is now less apparent than its character as a network of social service agencies, which are often integrated into the very institutions the early movement opposed.
>
> (1994: xi)

The movement against violence was in part a critique of the state not addressing male violence, and the same movement now relies on it for funding, and therefore survival. She claims that

> … over time, increased reliance on state funding has a contradictory effect on the movement, both effectively promoting the movement's survival and contributing to its transformation from grassroots activism to professionalised social service provision.
>
> (Matthews, 1994: xii)

Support for this argument is offered by Reinelt. She discusses the battered women's movement in the US, and states that

> … state funding has provided resources for movement work and stabilised the funding of many local shelter programmes. On the other hand it has threatened movement solidarity by expanding the organisational field based on the availability of resources not shared philosophical connection.
>
> (1994: 692)

Matthews (1994) and Reinelt (1994), among others, draw attention to the state's ability to co-opt social movements because of their reliance on the state financially and the restrictions inherent in competing in the state's grant economy. Despite state pressure for conformity though, many US organisations choose not to view themselves as representatives of the state agencies that fund them, and therefore push the state towards new interpretations of their work. Simon (1982) claims that government funding provides stability for organisations but does not necessarily undermine feminist goals. The loss of a feminist stance is not inevitable.

The experience of the Swedish women's movement also offers support for this argument. The women's movement in Sweden has always had a close relationship with state structures, and anti-violence organisations have succeeded in achieving core funding for all organisations, but at the same time the movement has succeeded in achieving significant policy reform in line with radical feminist claims. For example, in 1998 the Swedish women's movement successfully campaigned for, and indeed helped devise, legislative change that guaranteed core state funding for organisations, and also included clauses that criminalised the sex buyer, thus significantly altering the state's political stance on prostitution. Gould states that

> Sweden's popular form of radical feminism has shown itself to be highly effective in mobilising support and creating consensus on an issue which can be very divisive.
>
> (2001: 437)

Such legislative change can certainly be viewed as a movement success; however I would disagree with Gould that it is 'radical feminism [that] has shown itself to be highly effective' (Gould, 2001: 437). I would

argue that the claim was a radical feminist one, but that it was achieved through more liberal channels in line with the strategy the Swedish women's movement has adopted from the outset, and has proven successful because it was achieved through consultation with the state in a formalised manner where women's organisations used their insider status to achieve change. ROKS has attained a position of influence as a result of its work during more than a decade of lobbying political women and government agencies on issues bearing on domestic violence, rape and violence against women in general.

This said, the concern remains that professionalism and institutionalisation of the anti-rape and battered women's movements lessens rather than expands efforts for social change, a process that has been considerably more marked in the US, but is a concern for all women's movements because engaging with the state comes with the inherent risk of capture. As Scott claims,

> … the formal organisation of social movements inevitably produces oligarchy and conservatism leading to the decline of militant tactics and ultimately to the demise of social protest.
>
> (1993: 344)

In Sweden, there is evidence to suggest that the movement is adopting an increasingly radical stance and choosing increasingly not to play by 'the rules of the game' (Eduards, 1997; Eliasson & Lundy, 1999). The movement has historically chosen the mainstreaming instead of the disengagement strategy (Briskin, 1991). However, the history of equality politics has made issues specific to women more difficult to pursue. As a result, a recent survey of shelters suggests that, over time, many have taken on a more consciously feminist activist orientation (Eliasson, 1994) and have diverged from the traditionally philanthropic model that has characterised the movement in Sweden (Dobash & Dobash, 1992). Therefore, close engagement with the state has resulted in a different situation in Sweden than it has in the US, effectively increasing the social movement orientation of shelter work. Women have recognised that gains have been achieved through formalised participation and are now adapting to the possibility that further change might have to be sought using outsider strategies. In Sweden, 'Many shelters have made a point of resisting professionalisation of shelter work and allow only limited appointments of paid workers' (Eliasson & Lundy, 1999). It can be argued that the movement is reacting to a political threat,

because despite their insider status and the openness of the state, their reliance on it for core funding and the strength of equality politics may compromise campaigns for change that challenge the gender order. In turn, this offers further support for the understanding of relationships with the state as dynamic and fluid, and requiring different strategies at different times.

## 'Managing violence' and redefining violence as an individual issue

Matthews (1994) claims this process of co-optation of the anti-violence movement is a deliberate attempt on the part of the state to centralise control of programmes by instituting routine bureaucratic practices. She indicates that 'as the state became involved in the anti-rape movement it recast the feminist definition of rape as a political issue into a problem of the individual victim' (Matthews, 1994: 8). She calls this process 'managing rape'. The state has the ability to make collective action more or less costly and therefore repress or facilitate movements. This is especially the case where the state is the focus of demands by a movement. When the state became involved in the issue of violence it redefined it as a problem of the individual victim, again consolidating the concentration on service provision and funding aimed at maintaining that approach. Effectively this takes the issue of violence out of the political arena.

Matthews argues that 'State funding for social movement organisations is inherently problematic if part of the movement's agenda is to change social and political relations' (1994: 105). This is especially evident if the state has the ability to withdraw resources if recipients are not compliant. Reinelt offers support, suggesting that

> ... movement activists also recognise the potential political and financial benefits of engaging with the state. This strategy is full of contradictions in that it has the potential to threaten movement solidarity and autonomy, even while it gives movement activists greater access to local shelter organisations and to the structures of state power.
>
> (1994: 701)

By focusing on 'managing' victims of violence it suggests that 'the state is enmeshed in gender relations not outside them, and incorporates feminist goals only in a limited way' (Matthews, 1994: 149).

Charles (2000) argues that this is not the case in the UK, where the majority of organisations are affiliated to national networks of crisis centres or refuges, and are therefore relatively homogeneous. Further, autonomy from the state has been carefully guarded and organisations in the UK have not been co-opted in the way those in the US have. Nonetheless, the nature of state funding still impacts on the activities of anti-violence organisations. Stedward notes,

> Women's Aid finds itself in a position where it can barely keep refuges and administration running. This has meant the concomitant neglect of broader campaigning. Government funding of the 'service' function has siphoned off much of Women's Aid's energy into less controversial and less confrontational pursuits.
>
> (1987: 224)

The main distinction between this and Matthews's (1994) position is that Stedward (1987) does not include the element of design that Matthews implies on the part of the state. It is seen as happening as a consequence of state funding, rather than by design.

Similarly, anti-violence organisations in Sweden have also remained autonomous despite a close relationship with the state in terms of service provision. In addition, the voluntary status of movement organisations and the fact that they engage most often with the local rather than the national state has meant that autonomy has been easier to preserve in the UK, where state control is loose and organisations are free to develop women-centred approaches. The downside is that organisations are poorly funded, but, in contrast to the US, organisations can set the terms of how they work.

Nonetheless, the tendency to 'manage violence' can also be noted in the UK. Labour's election pledge in 1995, for the 1997 election, was to give financial support to rape crisis centres. However, this provision was directed to Victim Support instead, which effectively tightened state control and succeeded in focusing the issue on the individual pathology angle therefore marginalising other provision. Selective funding such as this means the social service approach is institutionalised and a feminist political outlook marginalised (Charles, 2000; Matthews, 1994). By focusing on individual solutions to crime – the Victim Support approach – the state focuses on control or management of the situation rather than elimination of the problem of male violence against women, thus having the effect of 'managing violence' rather than 'challenging violence'.

## Strategy and tactics – the dilemma for feminist organisations

It is clear that the way in which feminist organisations choose to engage with the state is of key importance given that they risk sacrificing their autonomy and feminist political principles, but have the opportunity to influence policy and to secure material resources for women. Without state financial provision the movement would struggle for survival, but with it comes the risk of co-optation and institutionalisation. The trajectory of the women's anti-violence movements in the US, Sweden and the UK have been different because, as we saw in Chapter 2, they started from different positions and have had to react to different political opportunities and circumstances. At the same time, differences between the movements in terms of internal organisation and feminist ideological stance have also meant the trajectories have been different. The current situation of each movement and strand of the movement within each country is a result of a complex process of negotiation of dual roles and subsequent thresholder status.

Debates about the women's and anti-violence movements tend to focus on what has changed, and why those changes are potentially undesirable. Focusing on the resultant differences between groups characterises them as either 'better' or 'worse' than one another. It is important to consider what is common to the women's movement in all three countries; why is it that many organisations choose to resist this trend towards co-option, and exploit state resources in whatever ways they can while maintaining a feminist perspective and approach to their work. How organisations might achieve this and resist co-option is a more appropriate area of focus. For example, Charles (1995) and Stedward (1987) argue that this is the case with Welsh Women's Aid and with Scottish Women's Aid respectively. Eliasson and Lundy (1999) argue that the Swedish women's movement has resisted professionalisation (although they note that ROKS are ambivalent about this given they describe themselves as having 'expertise in the field'). Not all organisations manage to negotiate this relationship with the state as successfully, as I will argue is the case with Rape Crisis in the UK, who have not been successful in achieving insider status in terms of service provision, and therefore are more outsiders than thresholders. These successes and failures raise the question: what features allow this autonomy to be retained while allowing organisations access to the state? To what extent are these strategies actively chosen or defined by other environmental and political features?

## Conclusion

Matthews (1994) and other commentators have noted that, in the US, engaging with the state has meant that refuge and crisis work has been influenced by an increasingly social service-oriented approach, threatening to submerge the radical political analysis that inspired the movement at the outset. Not all changes are indicative of co-option though, and it should be noted that many centres have also maintained their feminist political goals even after they have structurally adapted for survival (Byington et al., 1991; Collins et al., 1989; Fried, 1994; Matthews, 1994). Cocks (1984) indicates that the ideology of feminism encourages individuals with different feminist perspectives to enter organisations, which may result in different strategies being adopted. Collins et al. (1989) also say that as staff turned over and got younger during the development of anti-violence organisations, their commitment to feminism and the original goals of the anti-violence movement diminished. However, I will argue that this is a commitment to one type of feminism, whereas in reality feminist political persuasion ranges along a continuum. I will go on to argue that it is not the case that feminist goals are any less pertinent, but that the strategies adopted to pursue these goals have altered.

For example, Katzenstein (1990) indicates that US feminism of the 1990s involved unobtrusive mobilisation within institutions, and that this has superseded political activism. I will argue that this is not the case in the UK where most organisations have adopted a more pragmatic strategy but have retained their feminist political goals and have not become incorporated into institutions. Nor is it true for Sweden, where there is evidence to suggest the movement is becoming increasingly radical and recognising the need for activism (Eliasson, 1994). Katzenstein et al. (1987) also argues that one of the women's movement's greatest strengths is the emergence of local and therefore less visible feminist organisations. Martin also believes 'that even the most institutionalised feminist organisation helps to perpetuate the women's movement through, at the very least, exploiting the institutional environment of scarce resources' (1990: 183). I will argue in the following chapters that political goals remain a commitment of the women's movement and feminism, and the provision of comprehensive services to survivors of violence should not be seen as antithetical to this. Empowerment of women through this provision is a key aim for the women's movement, and successful gains in this area are especially important when state provision and responsibility for survivors remains inadequate and revictimisation is inherent in its processes.

Although Katzenstein's (1990) claim that unobtrusive mobilisation has superseded political activism is not true for Sweden and the UK, it is true that *less* obtrusive approaches have been employed. Swedish movement organisations have always adopted insider and mainstream strategies, and in the UK some organisations have included these approaches in their strategic repertoire over the last two decades. Therefore, there are some parallels for Sweden and the UK with Katzenstein's (1990) argument about unobtrusive mobilisation within institutions in the US. But I believe it is more appropriate to describe this as *with* institutions rather than *within* institutions, and to see it as a 'pragmatic' approach as defined by Cuthbert & Irving (2001), since although the approach is less openly radical, there is no evidence to suggest that the approach is *un*obtrusive as such, nor is it institutionalised. An easier way to view this distinction is that US organisations have tended towards a more *reformist* stance and become incorporated into state structures, whereas those in Sweden and the UK have adopted a strategy of *reform* choosing to work *with* state structures. Also, in Sweden, the 'pragmatic' approach has continued rather than been adopted since it has characterised the movement from the outset, and in fact there is evidence to suggest the movement is becoming increasingly more radical than it has been in the past. In both countries, movement organisations have retained their autonomous position and feminist analysis of violence and have not become co-opted like many of the organisations in the US.

Rape crisis centres and battered women's shelters have succeeded in producing extensive services for survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence.

> The feminist component of the service institutions will continue to push the boundaries of what is possible when working in concert with the state, but the extent to which they are able to articulate opposition and resist co-optations depends upon the existence of a broader feminist movement. Only in that context will new activists continue to emerge who have a feminist vision of rape crisis work as a broader project than just managing victims of violence.
>
> (Matthews, 1994: 166)

The same applies to those working in the battered women's movement, as Reinelt indicates,

> The affects of state funding are mitigated when the movement leadership has a feminist vision and engages in feminist practices that

> challenge the bureaucratic and hierarchical practices of the state's decision making structures by empowering movement participants to work together collectively towards common goals.
>
> (1994: 685)

Variations in ideology and politics of groups are often translated into the organisational structures of refuges and crisis centres in the US, whereas in the UK most organisations are affiliated to national networks that retain autonomy and also provide solidarity, and therefore a certain amount of homogeneity in ideology and practice (Charles, 2000). Differing feminist ideologies result in differing organisational structures, just as different states produce different forms of social movements that in turn adopt a variety of strategies. However, just as organisations do not have to be collective to be feminist, they also don't have to be bureaucratic, as resource mobilisation theory asserts, to influence policy. Indeed, few organisations fit into such rigid categories. I will argue, though, that anti-violence organisations that are dynamic can successfully manage their dual roles as service provider and campaigner for social change, and engage with the state to facilitate change, while at the same time retaining their autonomy and feminist political analysis of violence.

# 4
# Working to End Violence: Staffing the Anti-violence Movement

## Introduction

In line with what literature on working and volunteering in anti-violence organisations suggests (Black et al., 1994; Gidron, 1984), altruistic reasons, that is the desire to help others, and psychic benefits, that is feeling good about oneself as a result of helping others, were strong motivations for the women working in refuges and crisis centres in Sweden and the UK. Furthermore, and again consistent with literature, political motivations were also strong among the women and frequently cited not simply as a motivating factor to do human service, care or voluntary work, but as significant in determining the type of that work and the location in which they did it. The research found that women's motivations in terms of altruistic, psychic and political motivations were not mutually exclusive categories; for example, psychic benefits were not forthcoming simply as a result of helping other women, but that these benefits were related to *how* that help was provided, that is from a feminist political perspective. Similarly, women's altruism was strongly related to their feminist politics in that they felt the need to help others *because* those others were women and experiencing something that was gender specific, and desired not only to help the individual woman but in doing so to help *all* women.

The research found differences in the motivations of those working in refuges and crisis centres in Sweden compared to the UK. The motivations of workers were, in part, related to the feminist theoretical perspective that has characterised the movement in each country respectively, with women in UK organisations citing more explicitly feminist motivations than those in Swedish organisations. As a result, workers in Sweden were more likely to cite philanthropic motivations

and place more weight on the helping aspect of their work, which they regarded, in the main, as service provision. 'Helping' had a broader definition for those in the UK where women regarded service provision and campaigning on political issues as 'helping'. Differences were evident in the number of women who worked in refuges and crisis centres that were also employed elsewhere as social service, care or therapeutic professionals. This was more often the case in Sweden, which offers some support for literature that suggests the movement in Sweden has a more philanthropic base. Personal experience of violence was also cited as a strong motivating factor for many women in both Sweden and the UK. Again this was also related to altruistic motivations, psychic benefits and political motivations.

## Altruistic motivations and psychic benefits

Consistent with the literature on working and volunteering in women's anti-violence organisations (Black et al., 1994), women indicated that altruistic motivations and psychic benefits were significant in their decision to do refuge or crisis work. Altruistic motivations, for example the desire to help other people, were often cited by respondents in both the questionnaire-based and interview-based elements of the research. A total of 78 per cent (428) of respondents cited altruistic motivations as significant in their decision to pursue refuge or crisis work. The following questionnaire responses are representative of this.

> Desire to make a difference – albeit small!
>
> To help others.
>
> To make a difference and help people.

For many women these altruistic motivations were also underpinned by the psychic benefits of pursing anti-violence work. The majority (90 per cent/385) of those who cited altruistic motivations indicated that the psychic and emotional benefits that were forthcoming as a result also motivated them to do refuge and crisis work. On the whole women indicated that their work, and in particular helping other women and children, gave them a tremendous sense of satisfaction. The following comments from respondents' questionnaires illustrate this.

> Satisfaction in helping others – seeing women and children move on from violence to living a safe life.

> Satisfaction in knowing you have helped a family to regain their self-esteem and start life again knowing they are a valued member of society.
>
> When I see women change their lives around completely I just grin with pride – pride in myself and pride in them.

Women's responses in interviews also offer further evidence for their altruistic motivations and the psychic benefits that come from fulfilling those desires. The following story provided by 'Sarah', a Rape Crisis worker, about her experience of helping a young woman who had been raped, illustrates the important role this plays in keeping her motivated to do crisis work.

> It's hard sometimes not to get despondent and well, just really angry. I can keep going because I know the feeling I get from helping someone can lift me so much. I remember having that feeling for the first time when I'd only been working here about 3 or 4 months. This young woman phoned, well I discovered that after a while because she didn't say anything for what felt like ages, probably I'd say maybe 10 minutes of silence – trust me, that's a long time on the phone when they're not saying anything. I talked though – couldn't stand the silence because I was nervous too. I tried to make it ok for her to speak and eventually she did. I talked to her for such a long time. She'd been raped a month before and felt so awful she wanted to kill herself – she'd already tried but it hadn't worked. She said she couldn't go on living with what had happened and couldn't see that it would ever get better. I got her to talk about how she felt and I listened to her. She sounded distraught and I was scared she would kill herself. She felt worthless and dirty and couldn't see that there was a point in her living anymore. She agreed to come in and talk to me the next day – I wasn't really supposed to be working on the Wednesday, I still remember the day and everything!, but I came in to see her. I counselled her for months and watched her transform from someone who felt destroyed to someone who wanted to live and learned to live with what had happened to her. The feeling of that was so amazing I can hardly explain it. To know that I had helped her just from talking to her – I didn't 'do' anything I just let her talk. It makes me smile still ['Sarah' is smiling as she tells me this part of the story] and that's why I do it, it makes me feel good about myself and the world.
>
> ('Sarah', Rape Crisis Worker, Scotland)

Altruistic motivations for refuge and crisis work were particularly strong for those Swedish workers interviewed. It was evident that there was a charitable element to their work and their motivations to begin and continue refuge and crisis work had stemmed in part from a desire to do philanthropic work. This is not to suggest that a feminist approach was lacking. The research findings have already illustrated the extent to which feminism continues to firmly underpin refuge and crisis work (and is discussed further below), but women often expressed a desire to help people who, as a result of no fault of their own, found themselves in difficult positions and vulnerable. As I outline in Chapter 5, the ideological base of the two Swedish networks are considered to be distinct. SKR is supposed to have a more 'liberal' approach and ROKS a more 'radical' approach. Therefore, given that SKR are considered to conform to a more individual and psychological understanding of the causes and repercussions of violence than ROKS, who take a more structural view, we would expect SKR workers to express sentiments that corresponded with a philanthropic approach to a greater extent than ROKS workers. This was not the case and there were no marked differences between those working in SKR refuges and those working in ROKS refuges. Again, in line with other findings from the research, this indicates that distinctions between groups as more or less feminist are not empirically or theoretically sound. The following comments indicate the similarities between workers in the two networks, and are indicative of responses as a whole.

> I wanted to do something to help other people because I feel strongly that we should help one another if we can. There is that saying, 'there for the grace of god …' and that's important to me because if we can't help each other then why do we live together at all.
>
> ('Kerstin', SKR Worker, Sweden)

> I think we should all give something back to society if we can and I do that by working here. I'm lucky because I've never had anything very bad happen in my life but others are not so lucky.
>
> ('Jessica', ROKS Worker, Sweden)

## Political motivations

Literature on social movements from the NSMT perspective fails to acknowledge that the women's movement directs action towards the state and as such is a political movement as well as a social and cultural

one (Charles, 2000). Social movement theory from the NSMT and RMT perspectives has limitations for understanding the women's and feminist movements because when considering the motivations of social movement participants, they do not have the scope to incorporate the dual role of anti-violence organisations and how this may impact upon an individual's motivation to volunteer, or become involved. Thus, neither rational choice theory nor social exchange theory can adequately address the nature of 'doing'. As a result of the limitations in existing theory, and literature about empirical work on motivations for volunteering in social movements (with the exception of Black et al., 1994), this was an area the research addressed. Women very often cited strong political motivations for engaging in refuge and crisis work, but problems with regard to meaning, similar to those that arose in relation to the collectivist/bureaucratic distinction discussed in the previous chapter, were also evident with the terms 'feminism' and 'feminist'.

The majority (97 per cent/532) of women identified as feminists and as having a feminist political outlook in general, and in relation to their work with survivors of violence. What was surprising was that a smaller proportion (89 per cent/488), although representing only a 9 per cent reduction, described the organisation in which they worked as a feminist organisation. Of the 74 organisations that took part in the research, workers in 8 (11 per cent) of them would not describe the organisation as feminist. This is surprising in the most part because the networks to which these organisations are affiliated have explicitly feminist objectives.

Furthermore, contradictions were evident because the same eight organisations deliver services in a way that is compatible with feminist politics, with feminist goals in mind, and their descriptions of the organisations' stance on violence against women was in line with a feminist political perspective. These organisations were more prevalent in Sweden (six) where naming oneself or the organisation in which one works as 'feminist' can have derogatory associations (Dahlerup & Gulli, 1985; Eliasson & Lundy, 1999; Gillberg, 1999). One Swedish respondent offered the following explanation for these apparent contradictions.

> These women and these organisations are feminist in terms of what you and I would call 'feminist'. There's a fear of naming yourself a feminist here because it can be seen as promoting women not promoting equality. Does it matter what we call ourselves? … actually I think it does, but what you call something is less important that what you do, and if they better women's lives then that's a good

> thing. Some of the organisations see themselves as 'helpers', not as 'feminist helpers'!
>
> ('Ingrid', ROKS Worker, Sweden)

The concentration on equality politics in Sweden has meant that emphasising difference is often seen as a 'bad thing'; this 'backlash' is cited as a significant feature in the increasingly 'radical' outlook of the Swedish refuge movement (Eduards, 1992 & 1997). Feminist political motivations were evident in the response women provided about their motives for doing refuge and crisis work. This was also particularly noticeable in responses to what women liked most about working in their particular organisation. In more than 90 per cent of questionnaire responses women cited feminist politics as a motivating factor. Examples of responses to specific questions about motivations are provided below.

> To support women and children fleeing domestic violence in all its forms.
>
> To be able to work with women and children and use mine and their skills and experience to enable survivors to continue surviving. It's about being a feminist.
>
> Working on a topic that I'm passionate about. I'm standing up for what I believe in and trying to make a difference to women's lives. Not just some women but all women.

It was clear from questionnaire and interview responses that women derived a lot of satisfaction from engaging in work that was related to their feminist politics and beliefs. Often women cited this as what they liked most about their work. The following comments are taken from questionnaire responses about what women liked most.

> Women helping women helping women.
>
> It's women-only, it's political, it's caring and honourable.
>
> Knowing I'm doing something to change women's lives, to empower them and allow them to make their own destiny. We work together and together we're stronger.

During interviews women were asked whether they saw their refuge or crisis work as directly related to their feminism. The response from all

25 women interviewed was that it was undoubtedly related. Engaging in anti-violence work, often on an unpaid basis, was done not simply for helping in itself, but because it was specifically helping women. The following interview comments indicate the importance of helping women specifically, and helping them with something that is in the most part perpetrated by men.

> I do this because I want to help women – I want to change their lives and see them move onto a life that doesn't involve getting beaten by men on a regular basis. It's very much related to my feminism and I can't understand why all women aren't feminists. How can you not be?
>
> ('Bronwyn', Rape Crisis Worker, Wales)

> I'm here because I want to see a world where rape and beating doesn't happen. A world where power isn't exerted over women in that way, where men can't use it to stay in control and keep women scared.
>
> ('Rhona', Women's Aid Worker, Scotland)

The strength of political motivations indicate that there is little support for the argument that refuge and crisis work has been influenced, and is now done by, apolitical women. Although women expressed their feminism to a greater or lesser degree it was clearly a significant motivating factor. When I say women expressed their feminism to a greater or lesser degree, this was in terms of how often they would actually use the term 'feminist' and how outspoken they would be about it. Feminist values and politics clearly informed the work of all 25 women, some of whom stated this explicitly, some of whom made statements with more implicit feminist content.

Different feminist theoretical perspectives obviously exist and, as we have seen from the literature in Chapter 2, these can be significant in determining the strategies adopted by a movement organisation. Respondents rarely identified with a particular branch of feminism when asked what 'type' of feminist they regarded themselves as. In order to gain further insight into what feminism meant to the women working in these organisations I asked in interviews what being a feminist meant in terms of their own life and work. The response to this question indicated that feminism has no one distinct meaning for women working in refuges and crisis centres. There was one feature that connected all responses: the desire to change women's lives; what

differed was the ways in which this could be achieved. For example, 'Birgit', an SKR Worker in Sweden, responded:

> For me feminism means being committed to helping women and helping them through a difficult time. It's about making a difference and encouraging women to turn their back on violence.
>
> ('Birgit', SKR Worker, Sweden)

In contrast, 'Ingrid's' and 'Margo's' responses indicate a more explicitly stated feminist perspective.

> It's about having a feminist[ic] understanding and knowing that we all experience the same things and that it's because we share the world with men!
>
> ('Ingrid', ROKS Worker, Sweden)

> What does being a feminist mean to me? … I think being a feminist isn't just about 'pie in the sky' kind of politics, it's about practical politics, actually *being* a feminist in how I live everyday. … Well, that means working here for a start, and it means challenging things I see that contribute to the oppression of women – the small things that no one notices are almost the worst ones, I mean, … right violence is in your face, isn't it?, and I know there's all the rape myths and all, and horribly people believe them, but most people when it's out in public would find it hard to make a decent case for violence against women wouldn't they? It's the wee things that are important on a day-to-day basis, like the ways women are made to feel bad about their bodies, made to feel they're 'sexual' only when a man says it's OK to be, told they have to be thinner, prettier etc. etc. etc. I think it's also about being part of something bigger 'cause you have to do it on different levels because it's ingrained … about being part of a collective who'll stand together and say we won't take it anymore. It's the way we do it, and the support and the fact I, well all of us, won't just take it, you know?
>
> ('Margo', Rape Crisis Worker, Scotland)

The research found one difference between respondents in Sweden and the UK in respect of the importance of feminism in relation to the work done. Those working in organisations in the UK were more likely to express the sentiment that it was not only the service provided and helping women in itself that was important, but the *way* in which the

service was provided was equally important. 'Mary', a Women's Aid Worker in England, explained that helping women was important but it was equally important that she felt empowered and able to help herself.

> Helping isn't enough. It's not just about helping a woman, it's about helping her to help herself. The police *could* help a woman by taking her husband away, neighbours *could* help a woman by phoning the police when they hear him hitting her … it's not just about that – she's had someone making decisions for her, making her live in fear – it's more important that she's allowed to decide what happens to her. Living with violence like that destroys your sense of self, you can't see how to make decisions anymore because your life isn't yours. To *really* help women you have to help them take their lives back.
>
> ('Mary', Women's Aid Worker, England)

Similar sentiments were expressed by Rape Crisis workers:

> Rape has such a devastating impact on a woman and as a society we don't see that because we don't want to. All the time women are made to think it's their fault, the old 'she asked for it' thing. Counselling doesn't stop that, I've seen women here who've had counselling from Victim Support, from doctors and private therapists and they make it about the woman, about what she did or didn't do and they try to make her feel better. So many decisions are taken out of women's hands by these people and it's like being raped all over again. We're different because it's not just about stopping them suffering it's about seeing that it's not about them, it's about power and control and that's what they've lost more than anything … that's what we have to help women find again, to see that it's not about them.
>
> ('Nessa', Rape Crisis Worker, Northern Ireland)

> We're good at what we do because we do it our way. We don't tell women to report it to the police if they don't want to, we don't make them see doctors, we don't force them to talk about it if they don't want to, we work very hard not to reinforce the idea that she's responsible and bad. Just because she's been raped doesn't mean she's impotent for the rest of her life, men want women to be impotent. We encourage women to take responsibility for their health and happiness but not for the violence. We support women to make their own decisions about their lives.
>
> ('Cara', Rape Crisis Worker, Scotland)

Therefore, women involved in the UK anti-violence movement are more likely to express sentiments about their work that are in line with a radical feminist theoretical perspective, in that the nature of the process, in that they aim to empower women, is as important as the outcome. This is indicative of the radical and socialist feminist outlook that has characterised the women's movement in the UK. It became clear when analysing the interview data that the definition of 'helping' was wider for women working in UK organisations than it was for those in Sweden. 'Helping' for women in the UK not only included the provision of services for survivors of violence, and providing them in a way compatible with feminist politics, but 'helping' also included campaigning for political change, challenging existing ideas and raising awareness of violence against women. As 'Alison' explains:

> People working in the centre at first feel they aren't doing anything unless they're counselling women or running some sort of group therapy session. Everything that gets done here is important though – if the refuge isn't clean and safe then the women living in it don't have such a good quality of life. But people often think this is only about the service, it's not – we do community education, training for police, social workers, doctors – and we stand up for things we believe in and we try to get changes. All the work we do is important and we need all of us to do it. No one is more important than anyone else.
>
> ('Alison', Women's Aid Worker, England)

Although for the majority of organisations service provision is often prioritised due to a lack of core services elsewhere, women did not regard the service provision aspect of their work as being more important in terms of individual contributions. Those women actively engaged in the political work of the organisations, for example one woman who had responsibility for collating information about women's experience of the police in order to lobby their local force for change, indicated that their work was equally about 'helping' women with the difference being they may not meet the women they help.

> When women come in they often tell us about the police and the way they've treated them. It was so common it disturbed me. We want rape to stop but until that happens we want raped women treated better. I decided to use the information women were giving us to challenge their behaviour. We don't use women's details of course, and I tell the women what I'm doing and ask if I can use their

> experience as evidence. I'm very careful to take out the main problems and not tell them anything that would identify her. When I meet with the community policeman I say things like 'some women have told us …' then list the particular difficulties. There's a long way to go but they've changed some things since I've been going to them and pushing for change. They now let women take a shower after their physical exam and they didn't before I told them it was difficult for women to feel dirty and contaminated and that she has the right to a clean body. It's change on a minor scale I know, but it's change – and it helps the next woman who has to go in there and that makes it worth it for me.
>
> ('Elaine', Rape Crisis Worker, England)

## Social service professionals

Literature from the US that discusses the transformation of refuge and crisis organisations from grassroots social movements to institutionalised social service provision cites the influx of social service professionals as significant in this process (Matthews, 1994; Reinelt, 1994). The research addressed the extent to which organisations in Sweden and the UK have seen the increased involvement of social service professionals. Questionnaire responses indicated that a significant number of women working in refuges and crisis centres were often employed as social service professionals. Of the 549 women that responded approximately one-quarter (134) did paid work in a caring, therapeutic or human service occupation. It should be noted that women are often over-represented in care and social service work since their participation in the public sphere mirrors their role in the private sphere where they assume most responsibility for domestic labour and the care of dependants. However, interview respondents indicated that there had been a greater influx of women into refuges and crisis centres who were working in such professional careers over the last decade.

> We're far more likely to get social workers, psychologists, professional counsellors and so on wanting to join us than we are lawyers and accountants, though we get some of them too! I think they're tuned into the helping idea and see themselves as having a professional expertise to offer.
>
> ('Roisin', Women's Aid Worker, Northern Ireland)

Those questionnaire respondents who were social service professionals indicated that their motivation to work in the organisation came in

part from their desire to use their training and skills. It was evident that refuge and crisis work is seen by some women as requiring a greater level of professionalism and expertise than it was considered to need at the beginning of the anti-violence movement in the 1970s. Questionnaire respondents indicated that they felt they had a particular expertise by virtue of their professional occupation, and although no respondent suggested they were in any way better qualified than women who did not work in that field, they also suggested that their professional training provided them with particular expertise, not simply their position as a woman helping other women. For example:

> I have all this training and I want to use it to help people. I volunteer with professional counselling and psychotherapy training and it means I can offer those skills to women. That makes my role here very important to me because I can use the skills I've learnt to help other women.
>
> ('Gun', ROKS Worker, Sweden)

> You see the effect it has on a woman and especially the children. I know I can help them by working through the trauma with them, by helping her build coping strategies, helping her release the pain of that. When I work here I can use that to change their lives.
>
> ('Katja', SKR Worker, Sweden)

Respondents had mixed feelings about the influx of social service professionals as volunteers.

> It's good in that we always need more volunteers and they do have particular skills to offer which is good. They do have a tendency to deal with the individual though and see it more as being about therapy than some of us do. It's a difficult one, because some women really need that psychological care, but I do worry that it becomes about fixing the particular woman and not about helping all women.
>
> ('Roisin', Women's Aid Worker, Northern Ireland)

> I'm not sure to be honest. Yes I suppose it's good because they can offer help and knowledge that's good for the women but they also think they know what women need more than the women themselves and that's not good. That individual-psychological-therapeutic model is not what Women's Aid is about.
>
> ('Mary', Women's Aid Worker, England)

> Funders like those sort of women and we do play up to it when we're applying for money. We need to list our expertise and having those kind of skills on the list is a money winner. We don't place the same importance on it within the organisation because every woman has a distinct set of skills to share. Those sort of skills are welcomed but all skills are and they're all important.
>
> ('Caroline', Women's Aid Worker, Scotland)

The response from Swedish respondents was overwhelmingly positive, which offers further evidence that a charitable approach has historically influenced the movement. There were a greater number of women working in Swedish organisations that were also employed as social service professionals, compared to the UK. Of the 134 women working in those fields and volunteering in refuges and crisis centre, approximately two-thirds were in Swedish organisations. The therapeutic aspect of refuge and crisis work in terms of the benefit for the individual woman is valued very highly and increasing an organisation's expertise on that front was desired by many of the organisations.

> It means we can offer them more help and counselling. We used to send women out to a psychologist in the town if they needed it but we now have one who volunteers and that's much better. She's also helping the others do counselling courses and monitoring them which means the help we can offer a woman is much more.
>
> ('Birgit', SKR Worker, Sweden)

> It's not enough to only be here. We need to have the skill to help them and a lot of them need the psychological treatment. We need more of those women here.
>
> ('Ingrid', ROKS Worker, Sweden)

It was clear from responses in both questionnaires and interviews that the 'helping model' in Sweden was a far more individual and therapeutic model than the one adopted in the UK. Concentration was placed upon ensuring the well being of the individual woman rather than women as a collective group. This is not to imply that Swedish organisations were unconcerned with women's situation as a collective group, political motivations were present, nor that UK organisations were unconcerned with the well-being of individual women, but rather that the weight of motivations and their own view of their work was

weighted more towards the individual in Sweden, with feminist politics being more explicitly stated in the UK.

Although there was increased involvement of social service professionals in refuge and crisis work, this has not occurred in the UK to the extent it has in the US. This is a likely result of the lack of co-option in the UK movement and the fact it retains an autonomous organisational base despite pragmatic engagement with the state. It is also likely that increasing levels of funding might exacerbate this trend in that regular funding, and the employment of paid staff, necessitates that workers gain qualifications in order to justify the funding and to fulfil the expectations of those to whom they are held accountable (Cuthbert & Irving, 2001).

## Personal experience of violence

Women often indicated that their own personal experience of violence had motivated them to become involved in anti-violence work. Often this was direct personal experience, and for some women it was the experience of a close relative or friend. The significance of this personal experience fell into four categories: the desire to 'give back' after receiving help themselves; an awareness of the impact of violence on women's lives and knowing how vital services are; a commitment to campaigning for change in procedures of the police, courts and other professionals dealing with survivors of violence; and exorcising the anger and sharing the pain they felt about their own experience of violence.

Of those that responded to the questionnaire, 45 per cent (248) of women had personal experience of either rape, sexual assault or domestic violence. There were no significant differences between women in the two countries with 43 per cent (106) respondents in Sweden reporting rape, sexual assault or domestic violence and 47 per cent (142) in the UK. The questionnaire did not address the continuum of violence against women (Kelly, 1988) but asked only about rape, sexual assault and domestic violence specifically. Personal experience of violence was explored in greater depth in interviews. On all occasions women's experiences were shared voluntarily and not asked about directly. Most often experiences were disclosed in response to questions about motivations for working in a refuge or crisis centre. Many women also expressed that they felt it was important to tell their stories and to challenge the silence and ignorance that surrounds violence against women. In order to facilitate this aim and to report the experiences for why they were

shared, longer interview extracts that include personal stories are included here.

Of those women interviewed 16 had personal experience of either rape, sexual assault, domestic violence or child abuse. If violence is viewed as a continuum as Kelly (1988) suggests, therefore including acts such as coercion, flashing, inappropriate comments and emotional abuse, then all 25 women interviewed had personal experience of sexual violence. All 25 women knew someone, not in connection with their work, who had experienced rape, sexual assault, domestic violence or child abuse. These included mothers, daughters, sisters, nieces, friends, neighbours and colleagues.

Of those interviewed with personal experience of rape, sexual assault, domestic violence or child abuse, ten were in the UK and six in Sweden. Seven respondents had experienced domestic violence (which often included rape and sexual assault but occurring specifically within a domestic relationship), six women had been raped and another two women had experienced childhood physical and sexual abuse that had also been accompanied by the domestic abuse of their mothers.

Those women with personal experience of violence indicated that their motivation to engage in refuge or crisis work had stemmed from the desire to 'give back' after receiving help themselves. 'Margo's' experience illustrates this.

> It's such a devastating experience – you always think it won't happen to you, but it happens to someone … and it's hard to believe it's happened to you. I felt like a dead person for weeks afterwards – I wouldn't admit to anyone I wasn't coping. I didn't get help until 5 months afterwards. I called the ***** Rape Crisis Centre … I felt such relief just to talk to someone who understood. I didn't think anyone *could* understand how I felt, I thought I was alone. I know the difference that made to me and I remember how hard it was to call. Working here feels like saying 'thanks' in some way – if she hadn't been on the end of the line when I called then who would have been there for me. I feel like I should pay back that by being there for someone else.
>
> ('Margo', Rape Crisis Worker, Scotland)

'Lotta' and 'Bronwyn' also expressed the importance they placed on 'giving back' and on offering support to women in similar circumstances.

> I don't think his family believed me – I know they didn't believe me. They had never liked me very much and thought I wasn't good enough for him. I'm from the country and he was from the city and

well educated. So when I left him they blamed me and said I was probably making it up. They said ***** was never violent – his mother even said I must be losing my mind and it was probably post-natal depression. I took the girls with me of course and this made them [his family] very angry. … – what was I supposed to do, leave them with him? I asked them for help and they turned their backs on me, they refused to believe what was happening. I had nowhere to go when they rejected me … miles from my family and my home, I didn't know anyone in the city apart from his family and friends and they wouldn't help me, they didn't believe me. I went to the shelter with my girls and it's the bravest thing I've ever done, and probably ever will. I was so frightened that they would say I was mad and take the children from me. I must have been holding it all inside myself because when I got there and began to feel safe the feelings all came out. I didn't understand there was so much pain inside me. The support I got at the shelter changed my life completely. The fact that it was there at all changed my life because I had nowhere to go, but the help I got meant I could move on. I know what it's like to have nowhere to go and I want to make sure some women have somewhere to go because, that I can repay and help some women be safe.

('Lotta', ROKS Worker, Sweden)

I was raped when I was 21, when I was at university. I was at a party at my flatmate's boyfriend's house. I'd had too much to drink so decided to walk home because I thought I was going to throw up. He must have followed me … I knew he was a friend of my flatmate's boyfriend … he pulled me onto the football pitch, pushed me face down on the grass and raped me … I just froze. I did what many of us do and told no one at first. Eventually I told my flatmate because she knew something was very wrong with me, and I was bleeding still but I was too scared to leave the flat by myself to get help. She came with me and I went to the University health service and saw the nurse. I wouldn't tell her what had happened to me – she knew though. She asked me if I'd been raped but I couldn't even answer her … to be honest I'm not sure I'd called it rape in my head at that point. When I was leaving she handed me a card for rape crisis. I didn't phone for a while, I still had to call it rape I think. It was the best thing I ever did. Sorry, you maybe didn't want to hear all that – but that's why I work here, I want to be here when someone else does the best thing they ever did.

('Bronwyn', Rape Crisis Worker, Wales)

Those women with personal experience of violence also indicated that a motivating factor was their awareness of the need for services and the impact violence has on the lives of women. Furthermore, their own experience had drawn attention to the poor provision of services for survivors as well as the silence that surrounds violence against women. Women indicated that seeking help after their own experience was problematic because of a lack of availability of support services as well as society's tendency to encourage women to 'forget' about their experience making it more difficult to demand support. 'Helen's' experience illustrates this.

> I didn't know who could help me and I hadn't actually heard of Women's Aid. I was very young though and there was even more silence about domestic violence then. I think I'd heard of a refuge but for some reason couldn't imagine it was for people like me. A friend eventually said to me I should go there to get away from him, and eventually I did. Before that I thought I was trapped there forever.
>
> ('Helen', Women's Aid Worker, England)

Questionnaire responses documented similar experiences for the women involved in refuges and crisis centres.

> There's nothing else for women in *****. We are unique. It took me too long to find them.
>
> If we don't provide these services then no one else will do it – I know what it's like to be raped and have nowhere to turn. I came here for help when it happened to me, and want to make sure that the services stay to help other people in the same situation as me. I am sure I would have killed myself if I hadn't had the support I got from here, I could see no way to deal with the awful feelings myself – I didn't think I could even begin to, my life was over until I came here. I looked for help before finding here, but there wasn't anything. No one to listen to me.

Women indicated they felt strong motivations to continue to provide the service that had helped them, and their memories of the difficulty of accessing services encouraged them to fulfil this. This also indicates that statutory provision for survivors of violence has changed very little over the last decades and it is still the case that refuges and crisis centres provide a unique service for survivors of violence. The service is of

course unique in that it is organised and delivered from a feminist perspective, but it is also unique in that it is the only service available to many women given the dearth of statutory provision.

When discussing women's personal experience of violence during interviews and why this had influenced their decision to do refuge and crisis work, it was not only the service provision element that was important to them but also the political element and the desire for wider political and social change in the area of violence against women. This was related to their feelings of anger and frustration about what had happened to them personally and what continues to happen to women, and the further victimisation they can experience at the hands of statutory agencies. For many women 'doing something' was important, and by working in a refuge or crisis centre they were not accepting the current position of women but attempting to change it.

> I was so angry about it and kept thinking how dare he!, but not just that, how dare *they*! I needed to do something, needed somewhere to channel my anger or it would eat me up.
>
> ('Margo', Rape Crisis Worker, Scotland)

> I called the police lots of times and they never really did anything. He never hit me where people would see and they didn't think he was the 'type' to hit his wife. He wasn't an immigrant, wasn't poor, wasn't a drunk. I wouldn't have called them if it wasn't true but they didn't really do anything, they talked and joked with him. When I left I went to the police and reported the abuse, I wanted him punished. They told me it would be hard now I had left to do anything about it and they would just say I had post-natal depression if it went to court. Now that makes me very angry but then I just accepted it as what my life was. It's not acceptable.
>
> ('Lotta', ROKS Worker, Sweden)

> I've never felt so humiliated. I went to them for help, for them to do something. They tell you to forget about it, they really do, so you get no redress. I had to do something to change that if I could.
>
> ('Nessa', Rape Crisis Worker, Northern Ireland)

Women also indicated that working in an anti-violence organisation allowed them a channel for the pain they felt about their own experience of violence and helped them transform that experience into something positive. Working with like-minded women helped some individuals

come to terms with their own experience of violence and allowed for a more open exchange about their feelings. This is discussed more detail below.

It is clear that personal experience of violence and the impact that has on women was significant in their decision to engage in refuge or crisis work, and in continuing to do so. The research does not offer support for Eliasson's (1994) claim that those working in the Swedish movement are unlikely to have experienced violence themselves. The statistics and projections about the actual level of violence against women would suggest this would be unlikely anyway given the endemic nature of such violence, although the research findings do offer support for Eliasson's (1994) and Dobash & Dobash's (1992) claims that the anti-violence movement in Sweden is more philanthropically motivated than other anti-violence movements.

## Motivations as complex and interconnected

In analysing the interview material it became clear that women's motivations for engaging in refuge and crisis work were not mutually exclusive, and they were influenced by the dual roles and functions of the organisation. Therefore, just as anti-violence organisations have more than one function, women working in the organisations have several motivating factors for their engagement. It was not necessarily possible to separate altruistic motivations from political ones, nor psychic benefits from feminist political beliefs. For example, feeling good about oneself as a result of helping others was often related to helping other women in a particular way; a way that was compatible with feminist politics. For example,

> I'm standing up for what I believe in and trying to make a difference to women's lives. Not just some women but all women.

Furthermore, not only did the desire to help others often stem from feminist politics, women also indicated they felt good about themselves for pursuing and standing up for their political beliefs. For example, 'Mia's' comments show that in pursuing her political beliefs and acting upon her political motivations, in turn she felt good about herself.

> It's satisfying to do something that I believe in and to know I'm not just accepting the way things are. I'm challenging something and it feels good to know I am.
>
> ('Mia', SKR Worker, Sweden)

## Women's experience of work

Literature about women's involvement in refuge and crisis work suggests that women may become involved because they are seeking an experience of collective identity (Blanton, 1981, cited in Riger 1984). As such, the nature of women's interpersonal relationships with those involved are likely to be significant factors in the recruitment and retention of workers (Black et al., 1994).

### Interpersonal relationships

For those women involved in the research, relationships with their colleagues in refuges and crisis centres were deeply important to them. Not only is the quality of these relationships important in retaining workers, both volunteer and paid, the perceived benefits of working with like-minded and supportive women were significant motivating factors in the decision to become involved.

In response to what women liked most about working in their particular organisation, women often cited the satisfaction they gained from working with colleagues who shared their political and social beliefs. It was clear that women were seeking not just a work setting but also an experience of 'sisterhood'; the desire for connection with other women who were fulfilling the same political goals. The following responses to what women liked most about their work given in questionnaires illustrate this.

> Working with fantastic like-minded women.
>
> Working with women in an environment of equality.
>
> Working with women, collective working – feeling that we are (in some small way) really making a difference.

These motivations were explored in more detail during interviews and it was clear that feeling accepted by colleagues was very important in terms of work satisfaction. Furthermore, women felt they were more committed to their work as a result of having positive interpersonal relationships with their co-workers and the feeling of pursuing collectively defined goals also increased their work satisfaction.

> I work with women who understand where I come from and that's amazing. I don't get that at my paid job because people aren't particularly committed to the company or what it stands for, at the end of the day I can still sleep at night if the company hasn't made as

> much money as it wanted. Here it's different though; I'm here for a reason and I do it for no money – if things are hard then they're hard for all of us and we all pull together to make it better. It's not about individuals here, it's about all of us together. We have the same goals and we work for them, all of us are committed to that and I feel I belong.
>
> ('Bronwyn', Rape Crisis Worker, Wales)

> I'm paid to work here but I don't do it for the money. Of course I have bills to pay but I could always get another job and pay them. I volunteered here first and then took a paid job when we got money for it. In some ways it doesn't feel like 'work' to me … I mean it's hard, it's not that it's easy, a lot harder than other jobs – but it's because I work with such great women who believe in what I do and want the same things for all women, we share that in common so we're similar kinds of people. I learn something from them everyday and know their support is invaluable for keeping me going sometimes.
>
> ('Anne', Women's Aid Worker, England)

Furthermore, in relation to personal experience of violence, women indicated the support they felt from colleagues simply because they shared the same experience, and regardless if experiences were openly discussed on a regular basis. Women's comments about the importance of their own experience of violence in contributing to their decision to volunteer, and to continue to volunteer, in refuge or crisis work, in terms of the connection they felt to the other members of the group, offers support for Judith Lewis Herman's (1992) claim that 'commonality' is a vital part of the longer term process of coming to terms with traumatic events involving human cruelty. Her book *Trauma and Recovery* is one of the few texts on the impact of trauma to be written from a feminist perspective and to make the link between sexual violence and abuse and political power. She states that

> Traumatic events destroy the sustaining bonds between individual and community. Those who have survived learn that their sense of self, of worth, of humanity, depends upon a feeling of connection to others. The solidarity of a group provides the strongest protection against terror and despair, and the strongest antidote to traumatic experience. Trauma isolates; the groups re-creates a sense of belonging. Trauma shames and stigmatise; the group bears witness and

> affirms. Trauma degrades the victim; the group exalts her. Trauma dehumanises the victim; the group restores her sense of humanity.
>
> (Lewis Herman, 1992: 214)

**Emotional pain and coping mechanisms**

It was clear from the research that women relied heavily upon their fellow colleagues for emotional support. Frequently during interviews, women indicated that they did not regard their workplace as a 'normal' or 'conventional' workplace in this respect. The central coping mechanism women used in dealing with the emotional pain and difficulties of refuge and crisis work was to talk to colleagues and to rely on their support. Furthermore, they indicated that without such support they did not think they would have continued to work in the organisation. Women also saw this reliance on colleagues as related to notions of 'sisterhood' and feminism and saw their organisations as being based on the ethos of mutual support.

> We're always there for each other and that's very important. We always make sure there's time for us to 'debrief'. It can be very hard listening to this kind of thing all the time, at the end of the day violence is dead depressing. I find it hard when women go back time and time again and get beaten every time. It's really hard for me to remember all the time that it has to be the right time for them to leave completely. Talking it over helps because I can express my anger and frustration that way and stop myself from expressing it to the women themselves. I've tried talking to my partner about it but it's not the same, he doesn't really understand that I just need him to listen, he wants to solve it for me.
>
> ('Caroline', Women's Aid Worker, Scotland)

> I thought about giving up 3 years ago because I was so stressed up. It took me a while to talk it through with the women here but it was good when I did. They made time to talk my day through with me when I was in, and reminded me I was never on my own.
>
> ('Mia', SKR Worker, Sweden)

Women also indicated that this support was invaluable when their work caused them to re-experience pain and emotions they felt about their own experience of violence. The very nature of anti-violence work means there are constant reminders for women with personal experience

of such events and coping with these reactions was facilitated by supportive colleagues and an 'open' approach to the sharing of feelings and emotions. Some interview respondents also indicated that they felt this was not only due to the nature of anti-violence work and its connection to feminism, but also a result of the women-only working environment.

> Sometimes it reminds me – especially if there are similarities. That's not so much of a problem though. I mean I've come to terms with it. I think it would be hard anyway – you know, maybe harder even because it would seem so alien, so overwhelming, the feelings are so intense … it's just very hard sometimes, probably for everyone … but seeing the change in women just from listening to that pain – sharing it with them helps them start to heal. I talk it through with my supervisor – we all have someone who supervises our work, the supervisors get supervised too. We share our feelings more generally too, the fact we're all women helps that because women are more open with emotion I think.
>
> ('Mary', Women's Aid Worker, England)

> It's easy to share it with the other women even if hard to feel. Sometimes you can literally see their pain and it's hard to listen to. There's much emotion in the room and it took me practice to be able to stay with it. I think my emotion was still too near the surface and it hurt it to hear it. Other women understand that so I could talk with them on it.
>
> ('Ingrid', ROKS Worker, Sweden)

The research findings indicate that the secondary trauma experienced by workers in anti-violence organisations can also be helped by 'commonality' of the group. Women relied heavily on mutual support that indicates that commonality may not just be supportive in the case of individual experience of trauma, but is also related to an experience of 'sisterhood' and a shared understanding of the subordinate position of women, and as such offers commonality in addressing the oppression, violation and loss of power that women may experience in the course of their 'everyday' lives.

## Conclusion

The research findings have shown that there is no one motivating factor for women working in refuges and crisis centres. Consistent with Black's et al. (1994) findings, altruistic and psychic benefits were

significant in women's decision to engage in crisis work, but political motivations and their feminist understanding of women's oppression and gendered violence, were significant in their decision to work in a refuge or crisis centre in particular. It suggests that NSMT's failure to acknowledge the political element of the women's movement, as Charles (2000) suggests, means it fails to engage with the specifics of involvement in the movement, and the RMT perspective's concentration on rational choice, seeing movement participation as motivated only by self-interest, means it does not capture the complexities of social movement participation when the movement has more than one function, and therefore a helping aspect and a wider social and political aspect.

Women's personal experiences of violence were significant motivating factors for their involvement in anti-violence work. This was, in part, related to the desire to 'give back', partly a response to their awareness of the dearth of services and therefore the need for alternative feminist welfare provision, and for some the desire to work with like-minded women with similar experiences and understanding of violence.

The research also found that women's interpersonal relationships with their colleagues were viewed as positive aspects of their work and that women involved were often seeking a sense of 'sisterhood' or commonality and found the women-only working environment rewarding, suggesting again, the importance of feminist politics in their work. Interpersonal relationships were also significant in helping women deal with the emotional pain that inevitably comes with anti-violence work.

# 5
# Funding Feminist Movement Organisations Working Around Violence

## Introduction

The issue of access to funding and resources has been a salient one for women's refuges and crisis centres. Organisations began in the 1970s with little or no state funding and were therefore free to explore new ways of working that were not curtailed by the restrictions and influence of other agencies. The advent of state funding for refuges and crisis centres offered the possibility of financial security but the risk of impacting upon organisations' way of working and activities. The research has found that funding continues to be a key area for organisations in both Sweden and the UK. Debates about whether to accept state funding still occur within the movement and there have been notable changes over time in the methods used by organisations to secure resources. In addition, the results have shown that the level of funding provision is still highly variable and insecurity of funding is a major area of concern for organisations, even those with core state funding. For organisations in Sweden and the UK, applying for and accepting state funding restricts organisations' activities but at the same time can provide stability for organisations on a longer-term basis and allow the provision of services to women. The research has also found that changes to activities and services come from pressures both within and outwith the organisations. This is discussed further in the themes that follow.

## State funding provision

Given the impact that state funding can have on anti-violence organisations, detailed in US literature (Collins et al., 1989; Gornick et al., 1985; Matthews, 1994; Reinelt, 1994), in terms of the state's ability to

suppress political aspects of a movement by imposing restrictions on funding, this area was of considerable importance to the research. Investigation of state funding provision in Sweden and the UK also sheds light on the movement's relationship with the state and the extent to which it has engaged with it.

**State funding in Sweden**

All Swedish organisations receive funding from the state. As of 1998 the principle of the provision of state monies for women's organisations and groups was included in the *Kvinnofrid* ('Women's Peace': Women's Right to Bodily Integrity and Individual Space) legislation meaning all are entitled to funding if certain criteria are met. Women's organisations themselves were heavily involved in defining this legislation and viewed the successful passing of the act as a victory, in terms of securing their own financial provision as well as the changes that were made to laws on violence against women, prostitution and trafficking. As 'Ingrid', a worker in a ROKS refuge, said when asked about this state funding:

> Having money from them is important for us. Of course we need the money to work, but having that money a *guarantee* is very important to us. When they give us money and guarantee us money it makes us valid and seen as important. They can give it to you once, twice, for some years maybe, and then 'slut'! [finish]. Now they must pay for our services – they cannot say 'no money left' – they must find it now.
>
> ('Ingrid', ROKS refuge Worker)

Guaranteed state funding provided a certain level of stability for organisations and enabled them to provide more comprehensive and regular services for women.

> We use it for a lot of things. The best thing for us was that it meant we could employ a cleaner and a caretaker to keep our safe house clean and good. We women would spend a lot of our time cleaning and fixing and problem sorting and not doing what we have been trained for. We want to help the women here – of course they need a safe and clean house for them and their children but now we can pay others for that and we have more time for counselling and working to help the women change their lives and to help the children to live with what they have witnessed so young.
>
> ('Mia', SKR refuge Worker)

> Oh yes, it is very useful. We have a child psychologist that comes to see the children here, we moved to bigger offices and can do more counselling because we have many more rooms here, oh there is many a thing … for me the biggest is spending more time with the women because I don't spend so much time trying to find a way to pay the electric or the telephone or looking at the bank accounts.
>
> ('Jessica', ROKS refuge Worker)

Interviewees felt positively about core state funding on the whole indicating that they regarded it as a 'right' rather than a 'gift'. The women said they felt it was the responsibility of the state to provide the financial support for women's refuges and services for survivors of violence. It is likely that Sweden's social democratic history is significant here in that the women see the state as having responsibility for its citizens and their welfare (Dahlerup & Gulli, 1985).

> … and it is their responsibility to protect women from violence so of course they should give us the funds. Women need to have a safe place to go for help and that is what we give them. If the state money was not there we wouldn't be able to help all the women that we do. It is not so bad for us because we are in the city but other smaller refuges in the north, for example, would not be there at all without the money, and communities there are so small it is difficult for women to leave. Women have the right to leave and the state should provide ways for them to do this.
>
> ('Jessica', ROKS Worker)

> They should give us more money for what we have here. But I think they should also have help for women themselves. They are better with the children because they have more rights than the women and they are taken out of the home to somewhere safe but the women can be left there if no refuge in the town or no space in it.
>
> ('Mia', SKR worker)

> We in Sweden take pride in our welfare services but beaten women fall through the … , how do you say it … fall through the net? We women provide it for them because it is their right and they should have the choices. It's our right to have the money to do this and it is the government who should pay.
>
> ('Katja', SKR Worker)

However, it was also evident that workers in the organisations were aware of the potential problems and drawbacks of accepting state funding. Several interviewees indicated that although they felt positively about it on the whole, they were aware of the potential impact accepting state funding has on the approach to their work and the way that the organisation operates. Autonomy emerged as a key issue here. Although organisations in Sweden have the guarantee of state funding they are not, as a result, affiliated or incorporated into any state agency. The funding they receive is not contingent upon them becoming incorporated into state welfare services in a formalised way, as has often been the case in the US (Collins et al., 1989; Gornick et al., 1985; Matthews, 1994; Reinelt, 1994). Those interviewed for the research discussed the importance of this to the organisations and that it had been a key aim to secure state funding but not to sacrifice autonomy.

> We were aware of the risk we were taking and we had to make sure we knew what we would and wouldn't accept. The problem was that not all the women could agree about what we would accept. Some thought it was OK for the reports and accounts and some were happy to agree to training – they thought that if we were doing the training of police then it would be done in the right way and we could change their minds on violence to women – yes, ok, but not to have to do this for the money, for me it was important to get the money for the services to women, the training is ok, but separate, we are not working for the police but for the women, you see? For me these had to be not together.
>
> ('Gun', ROKS Worker, Sweden)

> Keeping autonomy is very important and no amount of money could buy that. I think the government is trying better with violence over women – it has the new research centre on violence now and the laws are better. But we're outside of that, we want them to incorporate our ideas and to fund the safe houses, but not own us.
>
> ('Jessica', ROKS Worker, Sweden)

> They can have too much control over us. We have always to be careful I think. We are stronger because we are together in our network and we can pressure them together, by ourselves we don't make so much noise so they can ignore what we are saying.
>
> ('Mia', SKR Worker, Sweden)

Currently within the ROKS network of refuges there is an ongoing debate as to whether organisations should continue to push for funding from the lower municipalities (Kommunen), and debates about the trade off between the potential gains and losses of state funding are evident here. Respondents indicated that their main concern was that current state funding comes from a national source, though it is distributed locally, and therefore the networks deal with one agency in relation to this funding. As a result they can negotiate as a network of organisations and not as individual groups, with the National Organisations taking the majority of responsibility for this. Funding from the lower municipalities would mean individual organisations or smaller local networks would each negotiate with their own Kommunen. Many of the women indicated they had concerns in three areas: firstly, the possibility of being dragged into time-consuming negotiations; secondly, that differential outcomes for organisations could mean some were better resourced than others and this would risk creating 'magnet' organisations to the detriment of smaller ones; and thirdly, that the lower municipalities would expect them to work or provide services in a particular way.

'Åsa', a ROKS worker in a refuge in the north of Sweden said,

> I'm worried that we will spend a lot of our time on this for nothing at the end. The Kommunen here does not have much money for community things and they are old-fashioned. They give the money to 'nicer' things than refuges … things like music groups and handicapped children's groups.
>
> ('Åsa', ROKS Worker)

> If we get the money I can see them demanding on us, making us do things the way they want and not how we want. The money is not given to us to spend our way but they say this amount of kroner is for this thing, and you can't spend the money on this and that thing. But I know we need it so I can see the other groups' reasons for thinking we should try for it. It's different for us in a small community where we have to do it all by ourselves.
>
> ('Åsa', ROKS Worker)

Organisations in larger towns and cities also had concerns about applying for funding from the Kommunen. They were concerned that the lower municipalities would grant funding to some organisations and not to others creating competition between groups. A similar situation

occurred in the UK after local government reorganisation when more than one Women's Aid refuge group or Rape Crisis centre was seeking funding from the same local authority. This had the effect of creating competition not only between the network and other applicants for funding, but between the network organisations. Competition for resources was increased in some authority areas whereas others had no refuges or crisis centres within their boundaries to seek funding from them.

> We ended up in the same local authority as another refuge and we knew they weren't going to pay for two – even if they had the money. It was a difficult time and we argued a lot with the other group about what we should do. We eventually merged the groups so we could split the money at least but we couldn't keep all the stuff running. Now women in ***** don't have a refuge to go to so they come here – we can't turn them away although the authority funds us only for local women.
>
> ('Mary', Women's Aid, England)

The Swedish respondents indicated very similar concerns, but were also concerned that the lower municipalities would target specific organisations to the detriment of others.

> I am never sure about these matters, … many reasons to ask for the money but I always see the bad angle of things too. Will they fund the refuges for immigrants or just for the Swedes?
>
> ('Ingrid', ROKS Worker)

> My worry is if we dispute with them or they don't like what we do over some issue – they could use the money to punish us or make us do things their way. It's different from the money we all get because we all have to fight our battle in different Kommunen.
>
> ('Jessica', ROKS Worker)

It is clear from these responses that women working in refuges in Sweden are concerned about how the state may act in ways that support one 'type' of organisation, to the detriment of another. It indicates that those involved in the movement are aware that one group's political opportunity may directly impact upon that of another. Furthermore, it also indicates that women do not see the state as monolithic but have an understanding that battles can be fought in different arenas, with

distinct outcomes, costs and benefits, and the particular strategies appropriate to that arena and the claims being made must be considered and then used appropriately.

**State funding in the UK**

There is no guaranteed core funding for refuges and crisis centres in the UK. One of the major findings of the research is that all Women's Aid organisations in the UK received some form of state funding whereas only half of Rape Crisis centres do. One of the key differences here is in the nature of the services each organisation provides. Women's Aid organisations received core funding administered at local authority level, often in the form of agreed service contracts. Women's Aid offer refuge services for women leaving violent relationships, and as a result they provide key welfare services that otherwise would be the responsibility of the state. Local authorities are responsible for housing individuals, and in the most part have recognised the important role provided by Women's Aid in this capacity.

> We've got a service agreement with them to provide safe accommodation for women in this area. We've agreed to house women who come to us if we can find them a space and in return we get money from the council.
>
> ('Mary', Women's Aid, England)

Organisations were also asked about other funding provision, and Women's Aid organisations cited housing benefit as their second largest income. This is important because housing benefit can be regarded as effectively a form of state funding in that the money comes from state institutions and the organisations provide a service on the state's behalf. Therefore, Women's Aid organisations were receiving two forms of state funding, whereas only half of Rape Crisis centres were receiving core state funding, and by the nature of the service provided by Rape Crisis centres, they are not eligible for funding via housing benefit payments.

> We get some money from the council for our hotline but it's not much. They don't have service agreements with us because they don't see us as a service. They have to house people but they don't have to counsel them so we're not a service to them.
>
> ('Elaine', Rape Crisis Worker, England)

Rape Crisis workers indicated their resentment and anger at their funding situation. Several reasons were given for why they thought they

were not well funded. These fell into three main themes: society's attitude towards rape compared to domestic violence; a narrow and naive view of the work Rape Crisis do; and their women-only approach.

During the interviews with Rape Crisis workers they frequently talked about society's negative view of rape and of those who experience it, citing this as a reason why the state, local and national, was reluctant to fund rape-related services. Several respondents indicated that they felt public awareness of domestic violence had increased greatly over the past years, but that attitudes towards rape remained stereotypical and that myths about rape persisted. This suggests that Rape Crisis do not have favourable political opportunity in terms of the receptiveness of political elites and decisions makers, as well as society as a whole.

> People are more sympathetic about domestic violence than they used to be and realise now that it happens, but that's not happened so much with rape. It's still seen as something that only happens to women who 'ask for it', and these are not the kind of women they want to give money for.
>
> ('Margo', Rape Crisis Worker, England)

> … domestic violence happens in the home and there's now less tendency to blame the woman for it. It's accepted that we should do something about it and help women to leave. Rape isn't quite the same for folk because it's still thought to be strangers in dark alleys attacking women who're out on the streets.
>
> ('Sarah', Rape Crisis Worker, Scotland)

Rape Crisis workers also stated that limited knowledge of the impact of rape, and therefore the importance of their service to women, and a naive view of the work that they do also contributed to their poor funding.

> The impact rape has on women is quite astounding and it's not recognised for what it is so our service isn't recognised for what it is.
>
> ('Cara', Rape Crisis Worker, Scotland)

> It's about understanding the need – and it's not understood. They think we're just women sitting around chatting to each other about our lives, because we're not viewed as a specialised service we're not funded as one.
>
> ('Nessa', Rape Crisis Worker, Northern Ireland)

The women-only and feminist approach of Rape Crisis was also cited as a factor in relation to its level of funding. Respondents stated that the

nature of the service Rape Crisis provides does not appeal to funding bodies, in particular to the state, because they do not share their analysis of violence and why it occurs. However, Women's Aid also have a feminist understanding of violence; therefore we would expect their experience to be similar, and this is not the case. The research findings indicated that the POS open to Women's Aid are not open to Rape Crisis.

The fact local authorities now organise human service and care work through 'service level agreements' provides a political opportunity structure for Women's Aid in that they can provide statutory welfare services. Rape Crisis do not have this opportunity since states do not have a responsibility to provide rape counselling, but they do have a responsibility under legislation to provide housing for those suffering domestic abuse. It is also clear from the research that Rape Crisis does not enjoy the same political opportunity as Women's Aid. So, not only do they not have access in the same way as Women's Aid, the issue of rape and their organisation are also not as acceptable to political elites and decision makers. Indeed, the current Labour government's election pledge of 1997 to grant £1 million of funding for rape counselling services was granted to Victim Support rather than allocating this funding to Rape Crisis.

> Because we're women-only and feminist they think we're anti-men and sexual assault isn't thought of as something that's a women's issue and usually committed by men. Child abuse gets put together with sexual assault and rape and there's still the idea that it's only 'bad' women who're raped and that people who really deserve help can get it at Victim Support or from a normal counsellor.
>
> ('Sarah', Rape Crisis Worker, Scotland)

> We're here to help women who have been raped but we want rape to be seen for what it is. What we do isn't just about fixing the individual – anyway you can't – but about trying to help women by challenging the ideas about them and about rape … helping them take control back, not seeing their reaction to it as their problem and that they need fixed.
>
> ('Cara', Rape Crisis Worker, Scotland)

It is also likely that Rape Crisis's success at receiving funding is different from Women's Aid, not only because the former provides statutory welfare services and because rape and its impact is misunderstood, but also because of the level of organisation and coordination of the two networks. Women's Aid organisations in the UK are affiliated under the

banner of 'Women's Aid', and organise nationally in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. However, Rape Crisis has not developed into a network of organisations with a national body in the same way. Women's Aid began national network organisations in the 1970s shortly after the first refuges opened, when the need for coordination and the sharing of resources became evident. Stedward (1987) has noted the role of the Scottish Office in establishing the national network of Scottish Women's Aid, hypothesising that when these organisations do not exist, state agencies facilitate their inception. She indicates that state agencies prefer to have a 'body' they can interact with directly rather than a group of organisations whose structure appears, to them, to be disorganised and antithetical to efficient interaction. Rape Crisis has only more recently pursued the idea of national networks, with Rape Crisis centres in England setting up a national organisation recently and Rape Crisis centres in Scotland currently organising to do so. One respondent noted that Rape Crisis does not have the same national recognition as Women's Aid does, but that they perceive this as a pressing need.

> We don't have the same level of organisation as Women's Aid and that doesn't help us pitch for funding I don't think. We're setting up a network just now because we only have a very loose one at present. We want to try and pool our resources and our ideas because we're all fighting by ourselves just now and we should be sharing what has and hasn't worked with each other.
>
> ('Sarah', Rape Crisis Worker, Scotland)

Rape Crisis remains a far more disparate group of organisations both on a national scale and in terms of their position when applying for, and being granted, local authority funding. As a result of the lack of state funding Rape Crisis centres relied far more heavily on other forms of funding that in most cases took the form of charitable donations and organisations' own fundraising activities.

> We apply to the local council for money every year but we never know if we'll get it or not. Last year they cut our grant in half with no explanation for why. We're not high on their priority list. … The local Women's Aid group get a lot more than us but they've got a service agreement with them – the council don't think they should have to deal with rape victims – but every woman that's in the refuge is one less on their housing list.
>
> ('Cara', Rape Crisis Worker, Scotland)

> They [Women's Aid] get the housing money too, housing benefit or whatever it's called, but we don't house folk so we don't get it. We don't get any money to help women in domestic abuse but we help them anyway, … they've often been raped for a start and when they come to us for advice or call us we don't turn them away, but because we're seen as *only* doing rape we don't get any of the cash that's there for domestic abuse, you see?
>
> ('Elaine', RCC Worker, England)

We have seen that Women's Aid has been far more successful in applying for and being granted state funding. However, this process has not been unproblematic for organisations and has caused debates within the organisations and the network as to the appropriate path to take. Similarly to refuges in Sweden, the funding issue is a salient concern and debates about the potential benefits and risks of engaging with the state on this level continue to occupy the movement. Centres were initially wary of accepting state funding, despite the acknowledged need, because doing so would challenge feminist politics because the state is implicated in gendered violence.

> It was a difficult decision in many ways, though it seems a long time now since we made it – but I remember us arguing about it at the time. There wasn't much money available then because there weren't any service agreements in those days but there were civic funds we could apply for. It caused a split in the group politically – we all knew the reasons not to take the money but no one was suggesting many alternatives.
>
> ('Anne', Women's Aid Worker, England)

> There were two women involved then who felt very strongly about it – they were both Catholic so it offended their Nationalist principles as well as their feminist ones. The idea of taking money from the people who condone violence against women and those who they see as a protestant occupying power was out of the question. They never voiced as much of course because we had a collective agreement that religious politics had no place in our refuge – we were a refuge for all women and religion didn't matter, but although they would have objected I don't think they would have objected as strongly to asking Dublin for money.
>
> ('Roisin', Women's Aid Worker, Northern Ireland)

A clear theme in the interviews was that Women's Aid refuges have come to acknowledge the need for regular funding, although this is rarely secure as will be discussed below, and have taken the decision to pursue state funding for their organisations despite their objections and concerns. A 'pragmatic' approach was adopted by many organisations that chose to seek funding from their local authority in order to provide services, and respondents acknowledged that the 'grassroots' tactics they had initially pursued had to be reassessed in the longer term. It was the acknowledged need for services that was the most compelling feature for them.

> In the end there seemed little choice but to accept the funds. The refuge was full to capacity and we were turning women away because we had no room for them and that was devastating for many of us. Most of us have been there and know what it's like to have nowhere to turn. When we started a big part of it was that we were doing this ourselves – that it was our idea and our vision and we were going to do it, and we were going to do it our way. … the collective discussed it for a long time and it caused many divisions before we got the money.
>
> ('Helen', Women's Aid Worker, England)

> We were squatting in our refuge and we couldn't go on that way – it takes too long for squatters' rights! Doing that was part of our statement – we would fight to provide a refuge. But we couldn't be sure we would always have a space so we needed to find something more permanent and that needed money. We didn't put our politics to the side but when women are experiencing violence they need to know they have somewhere to go and we needed to be sure we could give them that.
>
> ('Susan', Women's Aid Worker, Northern Ireland)

As discussed above, it is also the state's acknowledgement of Women's Aid's ability to provide these services that has contributed to its success at gaining state funding. In the UK the state has become more involved, and funds more highly those organisations that provide statutory welfare functions at a low cost. The acknowledgement of this both on the part of Women's Aid and on the part of the state has impacted upon the approach Women's Aid has adopted. It has chosen to accept state funding in order to pursue the goal of providing refuge for women

experiencing violence; however it has remained vigilant in terms of the potential costs of doing so.

## Level of funding provision

When assessing the state's involvement with anti-violence organisations it is necessary not only to look at whether state funding is available, and on what terms, but the level at which funding is provided. Especially when, as literature suggests (Matthews, 1994), low levels of funding provision, and high levels of insecurity result in the quelling of protest as states then have the ability to make collective action more or less costly (Tilly, 1978). Organisations were asked to provide detailed information about the amounts and sources of funding; however, very few responded to these questions. The majority of respondents indicated that they were unaware of the exact amounts they received from various bodies. As a result, it was therefore necessary to establish another measure of organisations' income and resources. The number of paid workers was used as a measure for this given that an organisation's ability to use paid labour is likely to be indicative of its relative wealth. Furthermore, it also provides an insight into whether organisations still rely as heavily on unpaid and voluntary labour as they did at the outset.

UK organisations were more likely to have paid workers than Swedish organisations. For example, 94 per cent of the Swedish organisations had between zero and three paid workers compared to only 27.5 per cent (11) of the UK organisations having this many, with the remainder being spread between four paid workers up to as much as 26 ($X^2$=21.656, d.f=3, $p$=.001). In Sweden the majority of paid workers provided their labour on a part-time basis whereas the UK had a far higher level of full-time paid staff. Half of all the Swedish organisations had zero full-time workers, and of the remaining 50 per cent, the majority (38 per cent/13) had only one. The maximum number of paid full-time workers reported in Sweden was three. In contrast, only 17.5 per cent of UK organisations reported zero paid full-time workers, and the remainder were relatively evenly spread between one full-time worker and eight full-time workers. The one notable exception in the UK was the organisation that reported 25 paid full-time workers, meaning it fits the description of a 'medium-sized firm' in terms of labour power.

Indeed the pattern of paid work in each of the countries' organisations is very distinct. The graph below (Figure 5.1) clearly illustrates the considerable differences in the number of paid workers employed in Swedish and UK organisations. It is evident that there is a greater

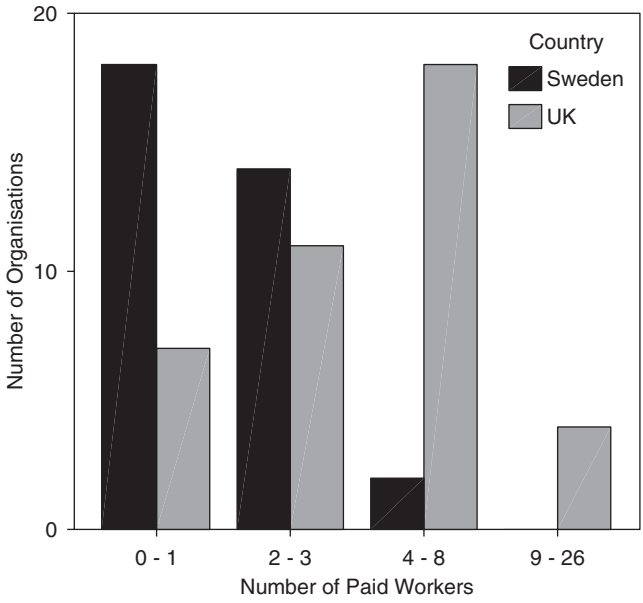


*Figure 5.1* Number of paid workers by country

likelihood of having between one and eight paid workers in the UK than there is in Sweden.

Given Swedish organisations have core state funding, and therefore a relatively secure funding base, the fact that UK organisations have more paid workers is counterintuitive. Therefore, the findings suggest that either core funding in Sweden is provided at a low level, therefore preventing the employment of many paid workers, or alternatively it may offer support for Elisson & Lundy's (1999) claim that the Swedish women's movement has been actively resisting the moves towards professionalisation and the employment of paid workers that has been witnessed in the US. There is also the possibility that the lower level of paid staff is indicative of a lower level of need in Sweden. State provision of welfare services is far higher in Sweden than other Western European states and as a result voluntary bodies are not used for 'off loading' (Stedward, 1987) to the same extent (Eduards, 1997).

If the lower level of paid workers found in Swedish organisations were indicative of resistance of professionalisation and organisations having a more radical feminist ideology, then it suggests that using number of paid staff as an indicator of access to wealth and resources

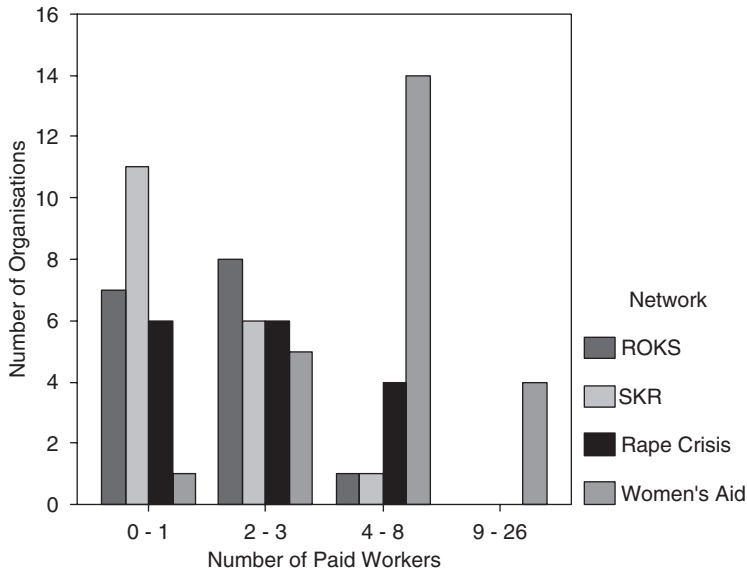


*Figure 5.2* Number of paid workers by organisational network

for an organisation is flawed, since it relies on not only the ability to purchase labour, but the willingness to do so. However, using this measure produced interesting findings in the UK.

Further analysis of the between country data on the number of paid workers indicates that the difference between Sweden and the UK is explained by the high numbers of paid staff employed by Women's Aid in the UK. In fact, Rape Crisis centres follow a very similar pattern in terms of the employment of paid staff to the two Swedish networks. Figure 5.2 below illustrates this point clearly ($X^2$=34.322, d.f=6, $p$=.000). For Rape Crisis, ROKS and SKR, as the numbers of paid staff per organisation increases, the number of organisations reporting this level of staffing decreases. The opposite is the case for Women's Aid organisations. As a result, this raises the possibility that core state-funding provision in Sweden is actually provided at a low level, therefore preventing the employment of larger numbers of staff. It is possible that this is the case because we know the funding situation of Rape Crisis in the UK is poor. Furthermore, the ideological split between ROKS and SKR would lead us to hypothesise that SKR would be less likely to eschew the possibility of employing staff on a paid basis, given their more liberal feminist ideology. By extension, we might expect ROKS to resist employing paid

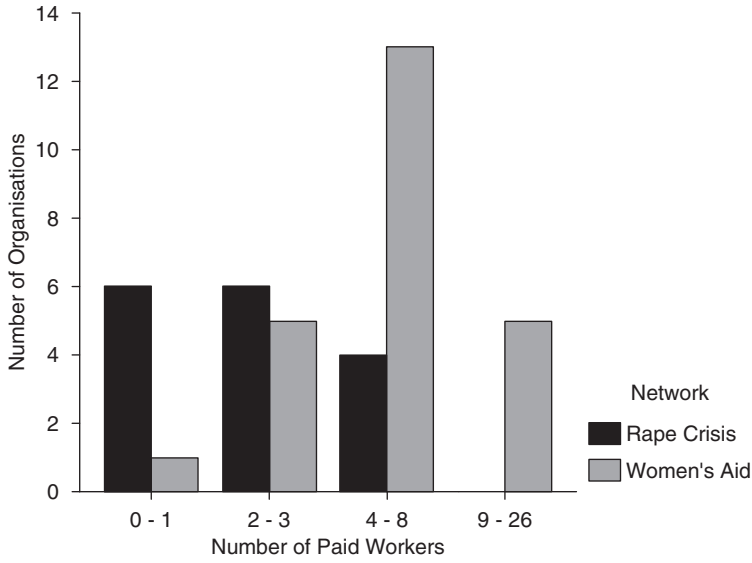


*Figure 5.3* Number of paid workers by UK national organisation

staff more strongly, but the two organisations do not differ considerably on these measures.

The differences between Women's Aid and Rape Crisis are more easily understood and are indicative of the different funding situations of the organisations. The greater provision of core funding for Women's Aid has resulted in their ability to employ a greater number of paid workers. Figure 5.3 illustrates the difference between Women's Aid and Rape Crisis in terms of paid workers ($X^2$=14.385, d.f=2, $p$=.001).

From the graph (Figure 5.3) we can clearly see that Rape Crisis is far less likely to have paid workers than Women's Aid. Rape Crisis organisations are concentrated at the lower end of the graph and follow the opposite pattern in terms of number of organisations with high numbers of paid workers than Women's Aid. All of Women's Aid organisations that participated had at least one paid worker, whereas this was not the case for Rape Crisis centres as some reported no paid workers at all. In addition, for Women's Aid organisations the numbers of paid workers extended up to 26, compared to Rape Crisis organisations who had no more than eight paid workers. Essentially then, the data indicate that if paid workers are used as a measure of an organisation's wealth,

then Women's Aid are far better off than Rape Crisis and the two Swedish networks, ROKS and SKR.

Again, in the absence of specific data on levels of funding, a further indication of an organisation's income and resources can also be taken from their reliance on unpaid and voluntary labour. This measure again has the problem of not being able to account for agency of organisations, in that they may prefer not to employ paid workers, but is a useful measure nonetheless, and also gives us an insight about the extent to which organisations conform to their historically volunteer base. Just as the employment of paid staff is potentially problematic for feminist ideology, so is the use of volunteer labour. Volunteering has been a controversial issue in feminist organisations because of feminist politics (Riger, 1984). Using the unpaid labour of women is seen as perpetuating the reliance society has on the unpaid labour of women for doing care work. However, as Riger (1984) notes, the exception was made for women volunteering to help other women.

The number of unpaid workers in the organisations in both countries was spread between 1 and 40, with no concentrations at any particular point. Unpaid staff working on a part-time basis accounted for the majority of staff in women-oriented crisis centres and refuges, and the number of unpaid staff also provides a valid indicator of organisational size. It is clear from the data that women-oriented anti-violence organisations in both countries still rely heavily on the labour of unpaid workers indicating that in this respect they do adhere to one of the features of the 'original model', and it is also indicative of their relative lack of funds. There were, however, considerable differences between the countries and organisations.

In Sweden the number of unpaid workers ranged from 1 to 40, with all organisations reporting at least one unpaid worker. There were no significant differences between ROKS' and SKR's reliance on unpaid staff.

In the UK the number of unpaid workers ranged from 0 to 40. The majority (92.5 per cent/37) of organisations reported having at least one unpaid worker. Again, most labour was provided on a part-time basis with the majority of organisations reporting zero full-time unpaid staff. The most significant difference between the national organisations was that Women's Aid accounted for all the organisations reporting that they had no unpaid staff at all (three), as well as all those reporting numbers of unpaid staff of three or less. Therefore 29 per cent (7) of Women's Aid organisations have three or less unpaid members of staff, compared to no Rape Crisis centres reporting this. Furthermore, only one Women's Aid organisation reported having between 20 and 40 unpaid members

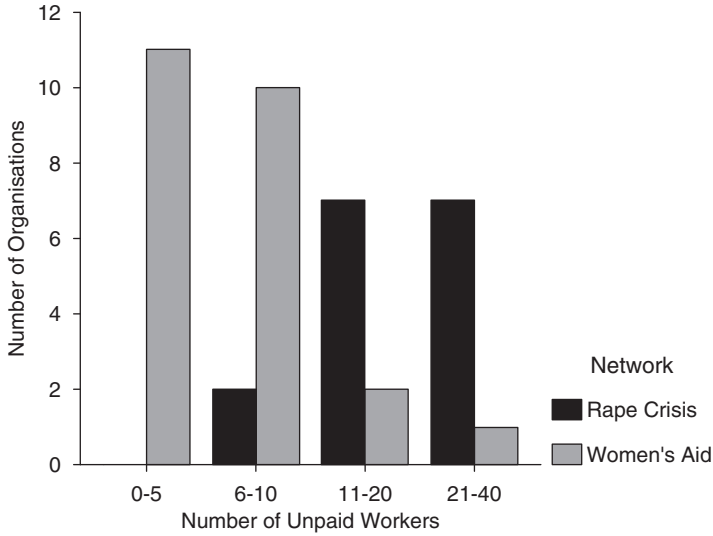


*Figure 5.4* Number of unpaid staff by UK national organisation

of staff, whereas 69 per cent (11) of Rape Crisis centres reported they had this many. It is clear that Rape Crisis in the UK rely far more heavily on the labour of unpaid staff than do Women's Aid, again something that is indicative of the poorer funding situation of Rape Crisis. This is illustrated more clearly in the graph below (see Figure 5.4).

Rape Crisis are clustered at the high end of the graph with a larger number of their organisations reporting a higher number of unpaid staff than Women's Aid. Although it is important to note that Women's Aid also continue to rely on a considerable amount of unpaid labour, it is not to the same extent as Rape Crisis ($X^2$=26.516, d.f=2, $p$=.000).

We can be confident that differences in the reliance on unpaid labour are indicative of distinct funding levels from the analysis of qualitative data. Interviewees from Rape Crisis centres indicated the lack of funding and resources meant many of their services had either been terminated or were at risk. Levels of service provision will be discussed in more detail below, but the following comments from Rape Crisis workers illustrate their lack of resources.

> We can only afford to open our crisis line for 2 hours a week now … we just can't afford to open it for longer. We offer women long-term counselling in principle, but we've had to put it on hold.
>
> ('Elaine', Rape Crisis Worker, England)

> We've currently a rape survivors' group and we were planning to start one for child abuse survivors, but we just don't have the money for it. We're barely scraping by as it is.
>
> ('Sarah', Rape Crisis Worker, Scotland)

Therefore, the research findings clearly show that there are considerable differences between the two countries in terms of reliance on unpaid labour and their ability to employ paid workers. The political opportunity structure of service level agreements open to Women's Aid means they can exploit the state's funding provision. Rape Crisis cannot access this political opportunity structure because they do not have the access needed to do so, nor do they have the acceptability and political opportunity in terms of the receptiveness of decision makers and wider public opinion on the issue of rape and sexual assault. This indicates that the experience of organisations within the same state, and therefore macro political framework, is not comparable and that other factors impact upon their ability to access resources.

## Changes in funding provision

The anti-violence movement's historical reluctance to engage with the state has meant significant changes have taken place in terms of funding since the advent of state provision and the willingness of organisations to exploit this. During the interviews women frequently talked about the changes they have witnessed over the years of working in their particular centre in terms of how funding and resources are sought. There has been a move away from what many women called 'grassroots' techniques for obtaining resources to more conventional approaches.

During the 1970s and early 1980s when women were setting up refuges and crisis centres they relied heavily on their own fundraising activities and charitable donations. The need for refuges and crisis centres had not been widely recognised and access to funding and resource opportunities were limited. Also, because the movement was a political movement and stemmed from left wing politics it was as much a statement against established ways of working as much as a statement against violence against women. The women interviewed, in the UK in particular, indicated that they felt this aspect of the anti-violence movement was now less apparent and that the movement in general was now more conventional in its approach.

Respondents described the techniques their organisations used during the 1970s and how these differ from the approach taken now. For example, 'Susan', a Women's Aid worker in Northern Ireland, described how their refuge group had squatted in a house in order to use it as a refuge.

> We didn't have a refuge so we moved into an empty house and basically squatted in it. It's unbelievable to think about it now – I'm not sure we'd be brave enough these days! It was different then, we really had a battle to fight to get space and there weren't the funding opportunities there are now. In many ways we were much more radical in those days – we still have the same political beliefs but we act upon them differently now. It was part of the whole culture then, everyone was pushing the boundaries and so were we.
>
> ('Susan', Women's Aid Worker, Northern Ireland)

She went on to discuss the techniques the refuge used to gain funding and resources now and the extent to which procedures have changed. The refuge in which she works applied for state funding in the 1980s and has been successful every year since in applying for it, to greater or lesser degrees. The refuge also received a grant from the National Lottery Charities Board (NLCB) in 2001 to start a young women's project and also receives funding from a number of civic and charitable grant-awarding bodies.

> It's so different now – it feels like a different era for the refuge. We get money from the authority for the refuge as part of our service agreement with them and we get funded from the voluntary organisation fund. This year we got a lottery grant to start a young women's project, with money for the salary of our outreach worker for the project. We get other bits of money here and there too – we apply for everything going because it all adds up – it's really so different from how we started out.
>
> ('Susan', Women's Aid Worker, Northern Ireland)

'Susan's' comments echo those made by other respondents who had been involved with their organisation since the 1970s. In the case of Women's Aid, squatting in houses in order to have accommodation for a refuge was not uncommon. This was also cited by a Rape Crisis worker as a technique used to gain space for counselling sessions. Respondents

in the UK indicated that their 'grassroots' approach stemmed from their roots in left wing politics, feminism and the women's movement.

> It was about solidarity and sisterhood. We were all doing it together and in the political climate it didn't feel so radical – to do that now would I think.
>
> ('Mary', Women's Aid Worker, England)

> I worried that I'd get caught and my Dad would find out, I was shitting myself a lot of the time. I couldn't tell the other women because I didn't think it was very feminist to be caring what my Dad thought about what I was doing, but I was secretly shitting myself! I knew he wouldn't approve because he didn't approve of my left wing politics and feminism wasn't a word he liked to hear under his roof. He thought I was doing charity work and that was fine for him, if he'd known I was squatting in a refuge when I was at work he'd have flipped!
>
> ('Susan', Women's Aid Worker, Northern Ireland)

Respondents indicated that they had mixed feelings about the changes the organisations had gone through in this respect. It was clear that the security provided by regular funding and the increased service provision as a result of it was viewed as an improvement, but respondents also indicated that they also missed the solidarity and 'sisterhood' of the early activities.

> It was so much fun a lot of the time, and you need that when you're doing this kind of work. Some of the things we did, and the marches we went on – it was such a great feeling of solidarity, togetherness. We still have that but it's different now. We don't have so much to fight against, or we have different battles to fight now, and in different ways. There isn't the same binding between us I don't think.
>
> ('Anne', Women's Aid Worker, England)

> It's great that we have money for a refuge like this. When I think of the one we had back then I wince, it really was very basic. Now we can give women and their kids a nice place to stay and a choice of somewhere to go to when they need it. … it's a lot more conventional now though – it feels more professional I suppose – we've been accepted a lot more and that's changed what we do, well it's changed how we do it more I think.
>
> ('Caroline', Women's Aid Worker, Scotland)

It was also clear that respondents thought the changes in funding and the success they now achieved when applying for state funding and to more 'conventional' sources of funds was as a result of the increased acceptance of domestic violence and of their organisations. At the outset domestic violence was largely hidden, and the domestic sphere was very much seen as a male domain where a man should head his household. Interviewees reported that although they felt there was still some way to go in terms of challenging the silence around violence, and making domestic abuse less hidden, it was the gains already achieved in this respect that contributed to the wider availability of resources.

> It's seen differently now from how it was, not so much something we deny anymore. It's been recognised as something we should do something about now. I'm not sure it's seen exactly how we see it, you know about it being about male dominance in society, but it's *seen*. It's now recognised that we should help these women.
>
> ('Alison', Women's Aid Worker, England)

Therefore, this is evidence to suggest that the state is more amenable to the claims of anti-violence organisations in relation to domestic violence. Again, it offers support for the idea of political opportunity, in that the increased public awareness and acknowledgement of domestic violence prevalence and impact, means the state is more open and responsive to the claims being made. This also supports the argument that organisations in the UK are not co-opted like their US counterparts, but that the state's openness has provided the possibility of adopting a more pragmatic approach but at the same time retaining organisational autonomy and a feminist definition of violence.

UK respondents frequently talked about the changes they had experienced since the 1970s in terms of funding and the actions taken to gain resources. Responses such as these were less frequent from the Swedish respondents. It was clear from the interviews that the Swedish organisations had not adopted such 'radical' or 'grassroots' techniques at the outset, but had always pursued more conventional approaches to accessing funding and resources. This is partly because the Swedish women's movement came to the issue of violence later than the US and other Western European countries because they had initially been concerned largely with issues of labour. It is also a result of the fact the Swedish women's movement was far more incorporated into existing political parties because of this association with labour concerns. Swedish respondents indicated that their initial funding often came

from these political groups and other more 'mainstream' women's organisations as Dahlerup & Gulli (1985) suggest is the case.

> When we started we got money from the Women's Political Union and the rest we raised ourselves and we got some from the Municipality too. There wasn't much money of course but it was enough for us to start with a small refuge.
>
> ('Cristina', ROKS Worker, Sweden)

In response to the approaches adopted by many UK organisations, such as squatting in houses for refuge space, 'Ingrid', a ROKS worker, said,

> We didn't do that sort of thing because that wasn't how we went about it. It was about helping the women I think maybe more than politics. That was important but a lot of the women involved were not particularly radical, we used the paths that already existed for us. A lot of women involved in the refuge I worked at then were older, their children had left home and they didn't work. It was charity work for them not political work. … they wanted to help the women because they knew what it was like to be a woman in a man's world but violence was not their particular concern, … how can I say? It was about the woman they were helping not about all women.
>
> ('Ingrid', ROKS Worker, Sweden)

'Birgit', an SKR worker, also indicated that the approach of the initial refuges in Sweden had not followed the pattern of those in the UK. The organisation she was involved in did not view itself as particularly 'radical', although they were aware they were providing a needed and currently unavailable service for women. She also indicated that the political climate in Sweden did not encourage 'radical' approaches, but that they were prepared to work within the existing system.

> It was doing something different and needed. Not the way of other countries though … Sweden has always been more open to equality and to gender issues and we tried to work in that system, not against it. I think we work against it now more than we did then, …
>
> ('Birgit', SKR Worker, Sweden)

As a result respondents talked less often of the changes in funding and resources in terms of a move from 'grassroots' or 'radical' approaches, but

more in terms of unstable state funding provision towards a guaranteed or regular funding provision. Swedish respondents also attributed this in part to the increased public awareness and acceptance of the issue of violence against women. They also viewed the increase in public awareness and the acceptance of their organisations as a measure of their success.

> Violence is not so secret anymore and people must accept that it happens. We are not thought of in the same way now, it is somewhere where we have succeeded. Now we have money regularly and it has been agreed that it is important.
>
> ('Kerstin', SKR Worker, Sweden)

Therefore, political opportunity in the form of increased public awareness and receptiveness of decision makers worked in the favour of Swedish organisations as well as the UK. The difference though is that this was not in terms of gaining access to funding, so not in terms of creating political opportunity structure as such, but in terms of increasing the receptiveness of elites in existing structures that already allowed for access, to the claims of the anti-violence movement seeking to improve their funding position. Indeed, the women's movement has made significant gains in terms of the guarantee of funding being enshrined in legislation.

## Security of funding

It is clear that the Swedish refuges view their regular and guaranteed funding from the state as a success. The security of organisations' funding has always been a concern for the anti-violence movement. The dual roles of these organisations, as part service providers and part campaigning organisations, places them in a distinct position when compared to other social movement organisations. The security of funding is crucial to the continuation of services and the level of funding also determines the level of services that can be provided. Funding is sought not only to support an organisation that campaigns for political or social change, as do all social movement organisations, but also to provide welfare services for women experiencing violence that are delivered with these political and social goals in mind. Although the Swedish movement is considered in literature (Dobash & Dobash, 1992; Eduards, 1997; Eliasson & Lundy, 1999) to be more philanthropic and to have a more liberal base, it still engages in lobbying and campaigning, therefore still fulfils a dual function.

As a result, in most countries, the threat of the removal of funding is a constant concern for refuges and crisis centres. In both Sweden and the UK there is no equivalent service to refuges and crisis centres in state provision, nor is the existing counselling provision able to meet demand (although it should be noted that Swedish statutory welfare provision is more advanced than the UK). Without the services provided by the anti-violence organisations of the women's movement many women would not be able to seek the help they need, and there is a need to extend the provision that is currently available. Therefore, security of funding for organisations in both Sweden and the UK is a key issue.

Issues of funding security were addressed in both the questionnaires and the interviews. Respondents were asked to indicate how long their centre had secure funding for. The longest time an organisation had secure funding for was three years. The length of time organisations had secure funding for in Sweden ranged from six months to two years and in the UK from six months to three years. Those reporting secure funding for two or three years were very much in the minority, and the majority of organisations (91 per cent/67) reported they had secure funding for one year or less. In the most part organisations were required to reapply on an annual basis to their funding body.

In Sweden, despite the guarantee of state funding for women's refuges, organisations were still required to submit annual applications stating the work they do, the numbers of women they see and the services they provide. This was also the case in the UK, where there is no guarantee of state funding, where Women's Aid refuges and Rape Crisis centres have to apply annually for funds. Refuges and crisis centres in the UK compete with other voluntary, charitable and community organisations for limited funding resources and there is no guarantee that another year's funding will be granted. Respondents indicated that this caused them deep concern and that it curtailed the organisation's activities.

> It's difficult to plan for things because we don't know if we'll get funded again, or how much we'll get. It's horrible to feel so insecure. It effects what we do because we never know if the money will come in. Do you start a service, or extend a service, then to find out you can't run it anymore? We're reluctant and wary a lot of the time because we have no security.
>
> ('Bronwyn', Rape Crisis Worker, Wales)

The climate of concern created by insecure funding is cited in literature as a way in which the state is able to exert control over organisations (Collins et al., 1989; Matthews, 1994; Stedward, 1987). If funding is not secure and must be reapplied for on an annual basis, organisations will be forced to comply with any funding regulations, which will be discussed in more detail below, but also with what they think is expected of them. The issue was raised frequently in interviews with respondents in both countries, and those reporting the highest levels of concern about future funding security also reported the greatest impact on their activities. It is clear from the research findings that organisations attempt to promote an acceptable public image and are starkly aware of the risk of appearing too 'radical' in terms of their activities. Women working in Rape Crisis centres most often expressed these sentiments, which highlights the lack of access and acceptability Rape Crisis experiences.

> We're aware that we can't piss them off or we're not going to be high up their priority list.
>
> ('Cara', Rape Crisis Worker, Scotland)

> Oh yes, we're careful. We can't always afford to be as forthright as we might want to be because they hold the key to funding. We need to behave in a way that makes us acceptable to them and that means not being too radical.
>
> ('Elaine', Rape Crisis Worker, England)

In some ways this is counter to what US literature suggests about state involvement and co-option and in some ways it supports it. Rape Crisis do not enjoy 'insider' status by virtue of their role as service providers, whereas Women's Aid can be considered 'insiders' in this respect (Stedward, 1987). Therefore, Rape Crisis's lack of access heightens their insecurity that what little provision is granted to them will cease should they behave in a way counter to what is considered acceptable. As a result they are acutely aware of the risks. In contrast, although Women's Aid also has an insecure funding base, their insider status as a provider of statutory welfare services, allows them more freedom because the state relies on them to provide a service on its behalf. Therefore, rather than organisations with a close involvement with the state curtailing their activities in order to protect their funding as US literature suggests, in the UK those organisations with outsiders status

seeking funding from the state are more aware of the need to behave in a particular way and to project a particular image. It should be noted that I am not suggesting that Women's Aid are free to behave in any way they choose without risking their funding and potentially closing off their routes of access. This is not the case. What I am arguing is that by virtue of their insider status and the state's reliance upon them, they enjoy more freedom than Rape Crisis.

It was clear from respondents in both countries that the issue of funding was an area of dispute and concern within organisations. Several respondents indicated that they resented the amount of time it took up both for them personally and as an organisation. A significant amount of worker's time was devoted to either fundraising or worrying about the organisation's lack of funds and resources.

> I've run out of ideas for getting money. I've exhausted all my ideas and we're always asking the same people for money. I feel like I'm constantly selling raffle tickets, baking for fetes and pestering my family and neighbours to come along to things. I'm sure they hide when they see me coming you know! When I'm not doing all that stuff I'm wondering when someone's going to turn round and say we're bankrupt.
>
> ('Elaine', Rape Crisis Worker, England)

> We undertake vital, much needed work. Much of our effort is expended upon fundraising – often with little success because charitable organisations are already overstretched. A great deal of government funding goes into the penal system (justified perhaps) but the victims of sexual offences receive no government money – this must change!
>
> (Questionnaire comments from a Rape Crisis Worker, England)

> The agency has a refuge and aftercare centre and outreach projects – it also has training days and education stuff – we appear well funded and secure but we are not at all and would like to get on with bigger tasks of offering services to women and children and developing good practice however we are very distracted and constantly nervous of not being able to because of lack of core funding and the arbitrary nature of government interventions!
>
> (Questionnaire comments from a Women's Aid Worker, England)

Respondents indicated that a considerable amount of time in meetings, and working time was taken up with the issue of funding and

resources and in developing plans for the organisation's survival. The time-consuming nature of these discussions was often attributed to the creativity required for funding applications and the more diverse places they were applying to.

> We take a lot of our time to make letters and forms for things. I had to fill in a very long form once to tell the local hypermarket that we could use free underwear, clothes for the women and children's clothes. They have a 'community wing' part of their business and say they will give things to the communities where they have stores. It felt quite silly to spend so long on a form for knickers!
>
> ('Maria', SKR Worker)

> We argue a lot about whether it is worth applying to certain places for money or not. I think we 'clutch at straws' too much of the time, and those forms take so long it is devastating when they turn you down. If I've spent hours trying to convince someone we'll start a service for, oh I don't know, … black women aged from 14 to 17 who've been in care and have a dog called Spot say! – well, you know what I mean – you try to fit into their rules but you know you've not a chance in hell. I've been surprised too though so we can't afford not to try. Last year we had to pretend to sell half our office equipment to ourselves so we could get cash out a grant to spend on other things. We'd gotten money for the stuff in a grant to target young women who'd been raped, not much money either, but we had all the stuff already so pretended to buy it and used the money for other things.
>
> ('Cara', Rape Crisis Worker, Scotland)

The future of refuge and crisis centres' finances was an area of considerable concern for the women working in them. Almost 60 per cent (329) of the 549 who responded to questionnaires indicated that they were either concerned or very concerned about the financial situation of the centre in which they worked. A further 13 per cent (72) indicated that they were slightly concerned. The remainder either did not know or were not concerned. Women working in Swedish organisations reported lower levels of concern than did women working in UK organisations. Of those who were concerned or very concerned, more than two-thirds (68 per cent/224) were from UK organisations, this represents 74 per cent of all the UK workers that responded. This difference can be attributed to the guarantee of state-funding provision in Sweden

where organisations are ensured core funding provided they submit annual reports and accounts, therefore its potential withdrawal is not the source of concern that it is to UK organisations. The level of concern reported in the two countries is shown in the table below.

The difference in the level of concern between the two countries is even clearer when those reporting concern at any level are grouped and compared to those reporting no concern, or that they did not know. The following charts illustrate the higher level of concern experienced by women working in organisations in the UK compared to those in Sweden ($X^2$=36.884, d.f=1, $p$=.000).

Although women working in refuges and crisis centres in Sweden reported less concern than women in the UK, a sizeable proportion of the women working in Swedish organisations still reported concern about the future of their centre's finances. The research found that funding remains a key area of concern despite the guarantee of state funding. Forty-two per cent (105) of workers reported they were concerned or very concerned, and a further 18 per cent (44) were slightly

*Table 5.1* Level of concern about funding by country

| | **Sweden** | **UK** | **Total** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Concerned/Very concerned | 42% (105) | 74% (224) | 60% (329) |
| Slightly concerned | 18% (44) | 9% (28) | 13% (72) |
| Not concerned/Don't know | 40% (98) | 17% (50) | 27% (148) |

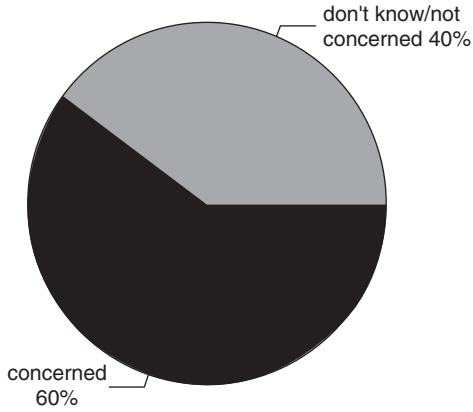


*Figure 5.5* Concern about funding in Sweden

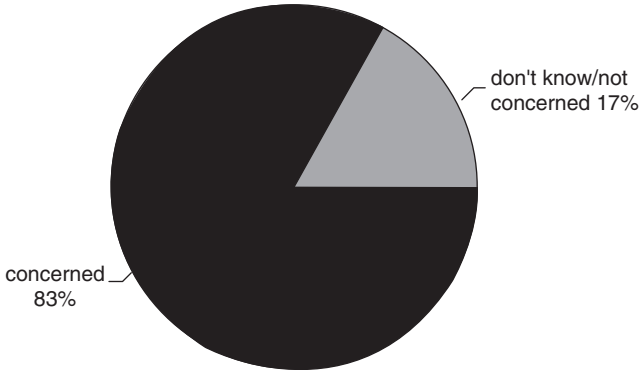


*Figure 5.6* Concern about funding in the UK

concerned. The current level of funding provision from the state is not enough for organisations to survive on alone. Furthermore, state funding encourages the provision of particular services over others and funding still has to be sought to continue providing other services for women.

> I worry about our money a little. We have the core funding now but it isn't enough for us to do everything, we still have to make sure we earn enough other ways to keep going. We would need a lot more core funding for us to stop raising money other ways and the money we raise ourselves we can spend however we want. That way we can try and give the women quality of life rather than just a chance to stay alive.
>
> ('Katja', SKR Worker)

> Having the money does not mean we do not worry. I worry that they won't accept our accounts or our review of our work and decide we don't fulfil the criteria. I have worked in women's organisations long enough to know that you can never relax about these. We may have it now but it can easily be taken away with a change in the [government] bill. I never trust where money is involved.
>
> ('Ingrid', ROKS Worker)

In Sweden there was no significant difference between the two networks, ROKS and SKR, in the level of concern reported. However, in

*Table 5.2* Level of concern by UK network

| | **Women's Aid** | **Rape Crisis** |
|---|---|---|
| Concerned | 75% (132) | 96% (120) |
| Not concerned/Don't know | 25% (45) | 4% (5) |

the UK there were significant differences between the level of concern experienced by Rape Crisis workers and Women's Aid workers. Women working in Rape Crisis centres were more likely (96 per cent) to report concern than those working in Women's Aid refuges (75 per cent) ($X^2$=24.339, d.f=1, $p$=.001).

These findings are not surprising when considered in relation to the different funding situations of Rape Crisis and Women's Aid discussed above. Rape Crisis's lack of service agreements with local authorities and the fact they do not provide statutory welfare functions means chances of longer-term funding are more precarious. Interviewees indicated the difficult situation Rape Crisis centres face in the UK when applying for funding and the depth of concern it causes for those involved.

> Funding causes me deep worry. It's frustrating too because we want to help women but we're fighting all the time for money. The local authority cut our funding in half this year and it's been really hard to keep going. I try to get on with the work I'm really here to do but, yes, it does prey on my mind.
>
> ('Margo', Rape Crisis Worker, England)

> I get angry, depressed, upset and quite stressed out about it. I work here the most hours of everyone so spend a lot of time with the accounts and looking at what we can and can't afford to do. I can honestly say that from year to year I never know if we'll still be here … it's something I dread – I feel sick if I think on it too long – and angry. They [local authorities] fund lots of other things that don't seem important to me, or not *as* important as what we do.
>
> ('Bronwyn', Rape Crisis Worker, Wales)

The women working in the organisations were asked what they liked most and least about working in their refuge or crisis centre. A prevailing theme in response to the latter was the issue of funding and resources. Two-thirds (369) of the 549 who returned questionnaires cited

anxiety over funding, lack of resources or the constant cycle of funding applications as what they liked least about their work. The following comments are indicative of the responses as a whole.

> Very stressful at times. Need more staff.
>
> (Women's Aid Worker, Scotland)

> Lack of money for further training, employment, which enables us to run workshops, education etc. etc. etc.
>
> (Women's Aid Worker, Wales)

> Having to constantly think of ways to fundraise and apply for grants.
>
> (Rape Crisis Worker, Northern Ireland)

> Not having the resources to see it reach its full potential.
>
> (ROKS Worker, Sweden)

Funding is also an important area with regard to the recruitment and retention of staff. As noted above, problems and the concern over the security of funds were often cited as what women liked least about working in their particular organisation. Fundraising activities were described as being time consuming, frustrating and stressful for workers. The impact of this on workers is significant in that it affects the retention of staff. Several interviewees said that their organisation had lost valuable members of staff because of the frustration and stress they experienced in the constant worry about funding. It was a significant factor in 'burn out'.

> We lose a lot of people because they burn out. The work is hard going and I don't blame them for leaving because I know what it's like, I worry myself sick sometimes. I have sleepless nights over it [funding], and we've had women working here who just couldn't stand the stress anymore.
>
> ('Bronwyn, Rape Crisis Worker, Wales)

> A lot of volunteers give up eventually because they're not doing what they expected to be doing. They wanted to help people and they're spending their time trying to get money or trying to make do with what little we have.
>
> ('Anne', Women's Aid Worker, England)

> No money to reach its full potential. I feel like giving up a lot of the time because I don't have energy for it.
>
> (ROKS Worker, Sweden)

Such an environment of insecure funding and a significant level of 73 per cent (401) of all workers that responded reporting feeling at least some concern about the financial situation and future of the centre in which they work indicates that funding remains a key area for women's organisations. Given that the state is the main source of funds for organisations it is clear that it has, through its control of these resources, a significant impact on the day-to-day workings of organisations and can influence their activities considerably. The research finding support the point made by Stedward (1987) that chronic underfunding has the effect of siphoning off energy away from campaigning work and into service provision.

## Funding restrictions

The state's influence over anti-violence organisations is most apparent in the restrictions placed upon organisations through funding procedures and regulations. All of the organisations contacted had restrictions placed upon them by the state bodies that fund them. These ranged from the submission of annual reports and accounts to the requirement to appoint a board of directors or management committee, and the level of restrictions were dependent upon the state body that funded the organisation. In all cases in both countries those organisations in receipt of state funding were required to submit annual reports and accounts to the funding provider. Less frequently occurring responses included statistical information on users; having to work from specific locations; having to deliver services to a particular population or having to provide a particular kind of service, or provide it in a particular way.

Interestingly, when responding to items in the questionnaire asking about funding restrictions, the Swedish organisations rarely reported that they had restrictions placed upon them. Only 24 per cent (7) organisations indicated that this was the case when asked directly. However, further analysis of data indicated that when asked more specific questions about requirement set by funding bodies a total of all but two (97 per cent) of the organisations in both countries combined had restrictions placed upon them by the state body that funded them. It is possible that the Swedish respondents did not regard these measures, which in most cases was the submission of annual reports and accounts

and statistical data on the centres' users, as being restrictions as such. Swedish refuges have a longer history of engagement with the state than those in the UK, and operate in a society with a well-developed welfare state that does not necessarily see state involvement as restrictive or oppressive. These requirements of state funding bodies may not be regarded as restrictive in that they are not seen as oppressive or an attempt by the state to exert control. There was further evidence for this in interviews with women working in Swedish refuges.

> I think it's right that we have to do it. They should check that it is being spent how we say it will be.
>
> ('Jessica', ROKS Worker, Sweden)

It was clear that workers in Sweden did not regard these measures as 'restrictions' and recognise that organisations in receipt of public funds should have to be accountable.

In the UK, respondents did not view restrictions as favourably, and they also did see them as restrictive rather than simply requirements. Nonetheless, UK respondents viewed them as a necessary evil in terms of the need to be accountable, and were therefore willing to comply to ensure funding.

> If they're giving away public money they want to know someone is ultimately responsible.
>
> ('Rhona', Women's Aid Worker, Scotland)

> It takes up a fair bit of time but we have to do it. We used to do it anyway but not quite so rigorously! We get fined if they're late though [the accounts] and that annoys me because most of us are working here for nothing and we've not the time for everything. If a woman phones or comes in who's been raped, I can't say 'sorry, I have the annual accounts to do, could you come back later?'
>
> ('Margo', Rape Crisis Worker, England)

The impact state funding has on organisations extends beyond official restrictions and requirements. Participating in the state's grant economy encourages organisations to behave in a particular way and to project a particular image. Refuges and crisis centres are in a unique position compared to other social movement organisations in that they perform the dual roles of both campaigning for social or political change and providing alternative welfare services for women who have

experienced violence. Both of these are key aims of the organisation. However, when receiving state funding refuges and crisis centres do so in their capacity as service providers not as campaigners for social and political change. The state is not interested in funding social movements, whereas it does have a responsibility to provide welfare services for its citizens. These dual roles make engaging with the state problematic in all areas, and especially with regard to funding.

The state has the ability to contribute to the success or failure of refuges and crisis centres through the provision of funds. As a result organisations have to make themselves attractive to funding bodies, whereby they must concentrate on their role as service providers. This has a considerable impact on the activities of organisations, and relates back to the concern experienced by Rape Crisis about their funding security discussed earlier. These dilemmas have been less marked in Sweden where involvement with the state has always been viewed as less problematic than it has in the UK; however, engaging with the state has also affected organisations in Sweden.

An issue that emerged in interviews with women in relation to this was 'formalisation'. By this I mean the extent to which those within the organisations had instituted their own formal working practices. Women indicated that since the advent of state funding for their organisations they felt their activities and services had become more formalised, both as a result of external pressures as well as internal change. An example provided by one interviewee in Sweden was that they now kept certain amounts of 'data' about the women using their services, and although information had always been kept, she indicated that the procedures for doing so were now more formal.

> When I see a woman I fill out a paper that tells us certain things about her and her children. We used to keep information but now we have forms for it and each woman has a file … it's so we can report back about who we see, what is the kind of woman who is being beaten. We always kept this for ourselves, but we keep it differently now someone else wants it too.
>
> ('Lotta', ROKS Worker, Sweden)

This change was a result of external and internal factors. ROKS organisations agreed to provide the government with data on violence against women derived from data gathered about women seeking help at their shelters. This was already done in the majority of shelters as part of monitoring their own work and services, and although the Swedish

government set no rules as to how the data should be kept and collated, ROKS instituted their own formalised procedures for doing so. Data are submitted by each of the centres to the national network organisation via computer upload where it is then collated for the government. Therefore a relatively informal procedure done in-house was formalised and structured when the state became involved.

Women's Aid indicated they self-monitored and placed restrictions on their activities as a result of funding. These were similar to the modifications of activities detailed in relation to Rape Crisis in response to a lack of funding and trying to gain access. Organisations emphasised their role as provider of welfare services rather than the political aspects of their work, reiterating the point made earlier about capitalising on 'insider status'. So, although Women's Aid enjoy an insider status, and the state has a reliance upon them, this does not equate to complete freedom and security. Women's Aid have capitalised on their insider status by emphasising their service-provision role. Refuge space, counselling services, advice services and services provided specifically for children were emphasised and further developed. Funding was also specifically sought by many organisations in order to further develop these.

> We pushed what we could provide for them. We're the best people to provide these services for women because we have the experience and the knowledge. This is what we emphasised. We're also the best people to provide it because of *how* we provide it, with our feminist politics as a backbone, but that's not what we push to them, we push that we're experts and professional and well equipped, … and well, cheaper too.
>
> ('Helen', Women's Aid Worker, England)

> It's about weighing up the benefits of what you're doing. It's not selling out I don't think, but we always have to be careful that we don't. … We can play their game but we have to make sure *we* don't get played and sacrifice too much in the process.
>
> ('Helen', Women's Aid Worker, England)

This is indicative of the pragmatic approach adopted by Women's Aid to its engagement with the state. The organisation attempts to 'manage' its interaction with the state and takes a strategic approach by emphasising the features of its work that appeal to the state. The potential benefits of engaging with the state in terms of financial security and service

provision have been strived for, but organisations have sought to retain control over their work and services and to retain their autonomy. Women's Aid organisations remain affiliated only to their own national networks and continue to define themselves as feminist organisations. They provide services on behalf of the state but are not affiliated or incorporated into any state bodies, and therefore manage to remain autonomous with a feminist political approach to their work. Women's Aid organisations in the UK have adapted from their 1970s form and approach in order to gain an element of stability and have made themselves more acceptable to funding bodies by emphasising their role as service provider, but in doing so have neither sacrificed their autonomy nor allowed their analysis of violence against women, and why it occurs, to be altered or diluted.

## Conclusion

Rape Crisis in the UK has not had the same success when engaging with the state if we view 'success' in terms of gaining state funding for their services. However, there are inherent problems in measuring social movement success (Staggenborg, 1995) because this depends on the theoretical base from which goals are defined at the outset. Therefore, for more liberal feminists funding for service provision is a key goal, and for more radical feminists wider social change may be the only measure of 'true success'. In terms of policy reform, as the opening chapter to the book detailed, both Rape Crisis and Women's Aid have made significant gains in the UK. Again, policy reform can be seen as a liberal feminist goal if feminist positions are adhered to strictly, but Molyneux (1989) notes, both radial and socialist feminists have recognised the importance of seeking policy reform to defend women's practical interests now, and as such have made considerable gains.

In Sweden there is no distinct anti-rape movement or network of rape crisis centres. Both ROKS and SKR primarily deal with family or domestic violence, of which rape may be a part, but they do not have any rape-specific centres or organisations. Furthermore, all centres in Sweden are eligible for core state funding; therefore distinct experiences are less likely. However, ROKS and SKR are considered to differ in terms of their feminist theoretical perspective with the former being more 'radical' in outlook and the latter more 'liberal'. Nonetheless, both organisations are in receipt of state funding because it is guaranteed in legislation, and the movement as a whole has made considerable policy gains, not least their success in gaining core funding as a

guarantee. Therefore, the differential experience of Rape Crisis and Women's Aid in the UK, given their concentration on different aspects of violence against women means they are more susceptible to the costs and benefits inherent in engaging with the state as neither legislation nor the 'type' of gendered violence they deal with ensures equitable treatment.

On this note Rape Crisis have been less willing, or possibly able, to adapt their image and to emphasise their role as service providers than Women's Aid have. This is partly a result of the fact that they do not provide statutory welfare services at a low cost, and also lack the same network organisation that characterises Women's Aid. In addition, the increased public awareness and acceptance of domestic violence as a legitimate issue compared to rape and sexual assault has also contributed to their distinct experiences. The findings of the research show that the strategy adopted by a particular movement, and its ability to pursue a pragmatic approach is not simply about choice, other structural and contingent features impact upon its ability to do so.

# 6

# Organisation, Structure and Function of the Feminist Movement Working Around Violence

## Introduction

Feminist organisations are often associated with collective organisation. Historically this has been the case, largely to do with feminist politics and finding alternative ways of working that challenge existing and accepted bureaucratic values. However, this research has found, as literature suggests, that feminism is not necessarily synonymous with collective working and that women's refuges and crisis centres take a variety of organisational forms. Although the majority of centres in Sweden and the UK did continue to organise collectively, and stated that this was in line with their feminist politics, a significant minority also organised hierarchically or traditionally, and a smaller number indicated alternative forms of organisation such as democratic or co-operative.

The research found that a number of organisations in both countries had changed their organisational structure as a result of funding regulations, and had subsequently adopted a more traditional or 'hierarchical' form. Another key finding of the research is that the terms 'collective' and 'hierarchical' are ambiguous and cannot be used to imply that organisations clustered under the same heading will have the same working practices and procedures. Although there were considerable similarities in the working practices of those calling themselves 'collective' or 'hierarchical' there were also considerable variations within the groups, as well as between the groups. The nature of these variations and reasons for them are discussed below, as well as women's experiences of working within particular structural forms.

## Current organisational structure

Centres were asked to indicate what form of organisation they used. The majority of the centres that responded (62 per cent/46) indicated that they used a form of collective organisation. A further 24 (32 per cent) organisations indicated that they used a form of hierarchical organisation and the remaining centres described the system of organisation as being either 'democratic' or 'cooperative'.

In Sweden the majority (68 per cent/23) of centres indicated that they organised collectively, and a further 29 per cent (10) indicated that they used a hierarchical form of organisation. The remaining centres described their organisational structure as 'democratic'. ROKS were far more likely to organise hierarchically with 50 per cent (8) of their organisations indicating that they did so, compared to only 11 per cent (2) of SKR groups indicating that they used this form.

This is a surprising finding given the ROKS network is considered the more 'radical' network and SKR the more 'liberal' network. We would have expected the opposite to have been a more likely scenario given that collective organisation is traditionally associated with more radical forms of feminism. These findings can be understood in two ways. They can be viewed as offering support for the argument that the relationship between structure and ideology is not empirically evident. In addition, it could also be viewed as offering support for the argument that networks of women's organisations have become 'institutionalised', or more 'mainstream', as a result of their increasing involvement with the state and its agencies. If the latter were the case, then how would we explain the differences between the two networks? Why had the movement's historical engagement with the state and both organisations' receipt of state funding not had a similar impact on both organisations?

Firstly, SKR operate as smaller, more loosely organised network of organisations. As a result, they have less formalised engagement with the state in terms of the network as a whole. ROKS as a national network has close connections with the central Swedish state and its agencies, and operate in a consultative capacity on policy forum and issues surrounding violence against women. This may, then, account for the increased likelihood that they will have become institutionalised and therefore adopted more bureaucratic structures. Although funding does not impose particular organisational structures upon refuges and crisis centres in Sweden, we saw in the discussion of funding, that organisations noted the internal moves towards more formalised working practices.

The sentiments expressed by women were not necessarily indicative of the adoption of bureaucratic structures though, rather they showed more similarity to the changes Welsh Women's Aid have adopted in terms of the specialisation of tasks but without the power differentials (Charles, 1995). Furthermore, SKR have a greater number of younger organisations than ROKS do, and it would seem likely that organisations developing some time after the initial second wave feminist movement would potentially have less of a commitment to collective organisational structures, particularly if as US literature suggests is the case for refuges and crisis centres, the 'ideal' type of collective organisation rarely existed, and in reality organisations were often mixed types (Martin, 1990), with those that did conform to the collectivist model altering their structures during the 1980s (Byington et al., 1991). Again though, Eduards's (1997) and Eliasson & Lundy's (1999) claims that Swedish refuge organisations are resisting professionalisation and 'mainstreaming', and adopting a more 'radical' outlook may explain the network of younger organisations' increased likelihood of having a collectivist structure. Clearly, there are a number of explanations for the differences between ROKS' and SKR's organisational structure. However, as I will argue below, further analysis of the research findings suggests that the distinction between bureaucratic and collectivist organisational types is not empirically evident (Martin, 1990), and the question that requires to be addressed is the extent to which organisations incorporate features associated with these types. Rather than seeking to answer this problem here, I return to it below and attempt to shed light on this issue in the context of a discussion of the merits of the collectivist/bureaucratic distinction.

In the UK, 59 per cent (23) of organisations indicated that they organised collectively, and a further 35 per cent (14) organised hierarchically or traditionally. The two remaining organisations described their organisational structure as cooperative. (There was one non-response.) Rape Crisis centres were only slightly more likely at 62.5 per cent (10) to organise collectively than Women's Aid organisations were at 56.5 per cent (13). However, Women's Aid organisations were more likely (43.5 per cent/10) to organise hierarchically than Rape crisis Centres were (25 per cent/4). Indeed, if we view the data at face value, and given that both organisations describing themselves as 'co-operatives' were Rape Crisis centres, then the Rape Crisis network appears to have a wider spectrum of organisational forms than Women's Aid Refuges. Again, it is likely that the distinction between bureaucratic and collectivist types is not a powerful one, as further data analysis indicates below.

## Changes and adaptations to organisational structure

A change in organisational structure is often cited as an indicator of 'institutionalisation' or 'co-optation' of an organisation, particularly if this change can be linked to the advent of state funding for that organisation (Byington et al., 1991; Collins et al., 1989; Gornick et al., 1985; Martin, 1990; Matthews, 1994; Reinelt, 1994). Therefore it was investigated whether organisations had always had the structure currently reported. In Sweden there were considerable differences between the two networks with all the SKR organisations indicating that this was the case whereas only 50 per cent (8) of the ROKS organisations had changed from their original structure, which had previously been collective organisation. In the UK the difference between the networks was not so marked with 29 per cent (7) of Women's Aid organisations indicating they had changed structure and 19 per cent (3) of the Rape Crisis centres. In all cases, in both countries the change was from collective organisation to a more hierarchical or traditional form of organisation. These findings are illustrated in the table below.

As literature suggests, it is possible that change in organisational structure is a result of complying with state-funding practices. However as I discussed above, in Sweden there were no restrictions or stipulations reported with regard to organisational structure of the centres, nor the requirement for a board of directors or other 'overseeing' body. In any case, under the 1998 *Kvinnofrid* legislation, all women's organisations dealing with violence are granted state monies. Therefore any 'requirement' to organise in a particular way would be universal, and we would expect all centres to resemble each other quite closely in terms of organisational structure, which, as illustrated above, is not the case.

However, specific requirements in terms of organisational structure imposed as a condition of funding, particularly in terms of electing a board of directors, was the case in the UK. Particularly with Women's Aid organisations, a requirement of receiving funding was to appoint a

*Table 6.1* Changes in organisational structure by network

| **Name of the organisation** | **Percentage (no.) reporting change in structure** |
|---|---|
| ROKS | 50 (8) |
| SKR | 0 (0) |
| Women's Aid | 29 (7) |
| Rape Crisis | 19 (3) |

board of directors from the local community and to adopt some sort of management structure. An explanation for this was offered by a Women's Aid worker:

> They make you do it so they know the buck stops somewhere. I suppose it's all to do with accountability and all that. If they're giving away public money they want to know someone is ultimately responsible. Basically so if something goes wrong they can say 'it wasn't us!'
>
> ('Rhona', Women's Aid Worker, Scotland)

> They do restrict what we do – mainly through the constant form-filling and boring management committee meetings. I feel like I could have eradicated violence single-handed for all the time I've been sat in there!
>
> ('Mary', Women's Aid Worker, England)

The requirement to have some sort of 'conventional' management structure was less likely in the case of Rape Crisis centres, although it did occur in some cases. This difference can, in part, be attributed to the different funding situations of the two networks. Nonetheless, for those who did not have to make a structural change it is clear that increasingly bureaucratic working practices are encouraged when working with the state, particularly when participating in its grant economy.

The requirement to organise 'traditionally', or to institute more 'traditional' management practices, is cited by Matthews (1994) as a deliberate attempt by the state to exert control over women's organisations, and in turn to diminish the political aspect of their work – a process she calls 'managing rape', or 'managing violence'. When questioned about this, the majority of respondents did not believe this to be the case. For example,

> I really don't think they're clever enough to do that, are they?
>
> (Women's Aid Worker, Scotland)

> I don't think it's intentional but it probably happens. It's more about them having to justify what they do with money I think. As I said before, it's all about accountability.
>
> ('Mary', Women's Aid Worker, England)

> You have to play by their rules. I'm not sure they know why they have the rules though.
>
> ('Rhona', Women's Aid Worker, Scotland)

The research findings show that women working in refuges and crisis centres do not see the state as a rational actor. Although respondents did not believe that it was the *intention* of funding bodies to attempt to exert control over the organisations that they fund, and in turn to diminish the political aspect of their work, they believed that this happened nonetheless. One Women's Aid worker stated:

> They have us over a barrel because we need the money and the only way to get it is to comply. We either shut our refuge or have a management committee – it's as simple as that. We spend a lot of time jumping through hoops. In the end you just have to do what they want if you need the money.
>
> ('Caroline', Women's Aid Worker, Scotland)

It was clear from workers' responses that having a management committee or a board of directors was rarely seen as a good thing in itself. In some cases, like the example above, they were accepted as a 'necessary evil', and this was more likely to be the case in Women's Aid organisations. This is similar to the discussion of funding restrictions above, and the acceptance on workers' part that they are required to be accountable. However, managing to be accountable without it becoming burdensome is more difficult. In other organisations there was a significant amount of resentment directed towards them, and this was more likely in the case of Rape Crisis centres. In the majority of cases where resentment was evident, it was often related to the perceived inexperience and a lack of a feminist political analysis on the issue of violence against women, of those making up the management committee. Workers indicated that decisions were often made, or actions taken, that were not in the best interests of the organisation, or not in line with its feminist guiding values. The following comment written in response to what workers liked least about working in their particular organisation clearly illustrates this point.

> Lack of support/awareness from Manager and Management Committee. Interference with counselling work – management committee have no counselling background and like to make changes that effect cases and clients' well-being. Management Committee – all social work background. Making decisions that are working against the values of the centre. Management Committee – unavailable, do not meet deadlines for doing a job, funding applications, or funders' requests – but still make decisions that are unrealistic about what we can do for clients, rather than looking at clients' needs.
>
> (Rape Crisis Worker, England)

This point is further illustrated by the following comment written by a Rape Crisis worker at the end of the questionnaire.

> I work for an all-women organisation – our management committee and manager in theory seem to think that they are working towards empowering women (core values of the organisation) but it's quite disempowering – your views and opinions are not heard – as a counsellor I am very much aware of power and control in a relationship and also where rape and sexual assault is concerned – sadly; same type of pattern occurs with the decision making behaviours of the committee – in the end it's the clients who suffer – e.g. decisions made by management to stop therapy group, some counselling sessions due to budget cuts – but end of financial year we had more than enough money left which had to go back to the funders.
>
> (Rape Crisis Worker, England)

Another Rape Crisis centre indicated that they had been prohibited from joining a national network of organisations because their management committee insisted on having male committee members. Despite stressing the importance of a women-only working environment, and the place of feminist politics within the organisation, the committee insisted on retaining the male members. During an interview a worker in this organisation commented:

> They don't listen to us. They're not feminists – some of them aren't even women for god's sake! We tried to explain to them that we can't have men walking all over the place because we want women to feel safe and comfortable coming here. These women have no reason to trust anyone – least of all men. We're exempt from sex discrimination law for a reason. If they could convince me that they were necessary, had some skill or other? … but they're not. There's nothing that they do that a woman couldn't. These people think this is about wiping tears and saying 'there, there' – it's about feminism – it's about being women and helping women who suffer at the hands of men.
>
> (Rape Crisis Worker, Northern Ireland)

This also offers support for the argument that I introduced above, that the link between structure and ideology is not empirically evident and the decision to organise in a particular way may not be at the sole discretion of the organisation itself.

Respondents offered alternative explanations for state-funding bodies' requirements to organise in a particular way, and to establish boards of

directors or management committees. Several respondents indicated that they believed it to be a lack of understanding of why feminist and women's organisations had chosen to organise collectively. Furthermore, respondents also indicated that they believed those not involved in collective working themselves tended to consider it an ineffective form of organisation, and somehow not 'organised' at all. This is in line with Steward's (1987) position, when she asserts that state bureaucracies find it difficult to interact with an organisation when those they engage with are unable to make decisions on the organisations behalf, or able to make them stick. For example,

> They just don't get it. I mean, … well … , they think we're just playing at it. Most people never question what goes on in their day-to-day lives really. They don't understand that it's a choice to do this. I think they think we aren't organised at all – all over the place or something – they don't understand that it's about our feminism.
>
> ('Helen', Women's Aid Worker, England)

> We scare them I think. They've no idea what we're about and don't understand why someone's not in charge. I've told people before that we're a collective and they still ask me for the Director's name!
>
> ('Alison', Women's Aid Worker, England)

> Funders think it means that it's a free for all and that we're a liability. It's quite funny really … the forms for example – always have a space for 'Director', 'Manager', or some such thing. Here, I'll show you – see! They don't know what to do when you write 'not applicable' in there.
>
> ('Elaine', Rape Crisis Worker, England)

It was also evident that not all changes in organisational structure were externally motivated. This was particularly true of the Swedish organisations where there was no requirement to adopt particular management structures, but also occurred in some UK organisations. Respondents indicated that the decision to alter their existing form of organisation and decision-making had often been made on the grounds of practicality. Although collective working adhered to the individual women's and organisations' feminist principles and guiding values, it was not effective on a day-to-day basis for many of the organisations. This is in line with the discussion Cuthbert & Irving (2001) offer when considering the adoption of a more pragmatic approach by Scottish Women's Aid.

Several issues were raised in relation to collective working, one of which was its time-consuming nature. Not all organisations with a collective form used the same decision-making procedures, some organisations could only reach a decision based on consensus whereas others had procedures in place that allowed for a majority vote to agree on an issue if a consensus could not be reached. It was organisations that adhered to the former way of decision-making that found collective working the most problematic.

> We all have to agree and on a lot of things we do, but there's a lot of issues that we clash on and it can take ages, I mean weeks sometimes, to finally decide either way on something. It's not an efficient way of working when we don't agree, when we do it's fine.
>
> ('Rhona', Women's Aid Worker, Scotland)

> Getting everyone there at one time is difficult and when you decide by consensus it makes it difficult to decide on anything. That's not practical when you've got a job to do.
>
> ('Margo', Rape Crisis Worker, England)

Respondents also indicated that personality clashes were also problematic, or where more charismatic women in the group were able to dominate and have their ideas dominate in discussions. The interpersonal relationships between the women were a key issue with regard to the success of collective working. Power was also a frequently occurring theme when discussing decision-making procedures in relation to collective working.

Some respondents indicated that they felt some members of their collective would pursue an issue just to be 'difficult', or because the person putting the case for the alternative or opposite was someone with whom they had a difficult relationship. This is illustrated by the following comment made during an interview.

> There's two women in our group who don't get on but pretend to on the surface. But it's very clear in meetings that they won't agree, we know that before we start and everyone else sighs when they start on each other. One will put a case for something and you're just waiting for the other one to jump in and say the opposite – even if we all know she doesn't really believe it. It makes me really angry but I've tried to intervene and paid the price for it. We let them fight it out now but it takes up all our time.
>
> ('Helen', Women's Aid Worker, England)

Some women in the collective groups were more charismatic than others and tended to dominate the collective meetings. This was discussed during interviews with women in several of the organisations, and I also witnessed it while attending a meeting of a Rape Crisis organisation. The issue being discussed was the reorganisation of counselling sessions. Three members of the collective were making the case for providing longer counselling sessions for women, extending each session from the current one-hour duration to two-hour duration. Their argument centred on making the women feel at ease and they believed the conventional 'therapy-hour' approach they currently used was too 'clinical'. In their experience of conducting counselling sessions in this format they found that women only began to discuss their experience in the last ten minutes of the session, and prior to this they either steered the conversation away from the topic, changed the subject onto something they felt more comfortable with, and used a variety of avoidance techniques. The women making the case for changing to two-hour sessions hoped the longer sessions would give women more time to 'open up' therefore allowing more time to discuss their experiences when they felt comfortable doing so.

Of the other five group members, three women did not agree that this would be a useful or practical change, the fourth took the middle ground, agreeing with the reasons for the change but disagreeing that it would be workable on a practical level due to time and resource constraints, and the fifth was undecided. This group made decisions based on consensus initially, which should be strived for if possible, but if this was not achieved a majority vote decided an issue. The group discussed the issue for over an hour. The three women who did not want to change the counselling format made up the more charismatic members of the group and dominated the debate. In contrast the women who did want to alter the counselling format were far quieter and demanded, and also got, less time to speak than the others. Part of the exchange in the meeting is detailed below. The initials 'M' and 'F' represent two of the women that were against the change, and the initial 'K' represents one of the women making the case for the change.

M: But why change something that works fine the way it is?

K: We've told you we don't think it does work.

M: It does work, you just have to get the women to talk about what they're here to talk about.

F: I see what you're saying but I don't agree. We can't give everyone two hours because there's not time and some of the women would get distressed if they talked for two hours.

K: But some of them aren't getting round to talking about it 'til they're going out the door.

M: If we see them for two hours then we'll not be able to see as many women.

K: But …

M: We can barely see those who contact us just now we don't have time to double the sessions.

K: But it's …

M: Anyway, we're not all here today so we can't decide just now anyway so we can leave it 'til the next meeting.

K: You're not listening to me!

M: I am, I just don't agree.

The issue was tabled on the agenda for the next collective meeting and no decision was taken. The more dominant women in the group were able to change the subject onto something else and avoid talking about the issue they did not want to discuss any longer. In many ways what happened in the meeting was reminiscent of what the three women who wanted to change the counselling procedures had described happening in counselling sessions, though the way of bypassing the issue was different.

Women indicated in interviews that this was a common problem in collective decision-making. In order for it to work effectively everyone must have the opportunity to be heard and to feel as though they are being heard. This was often not the case. Sometimes this was because more charismatic and confident women dominated in discussions and meetings and other times it was because some members of the group did not have the confidence to speak out or to pursue an issue. Collective working and decision-making is compatible with feminist politics because it allows women to be heard and to express an opinion. However, it relies on those involved feeling able to do so. Women in society are not encouraged to behave in this way and respondents indicated that many members find it difficult to do so,

particularly those who have not been involved with the collective for a long time.

> It's hard to speak out at first. You're not used to being listened to and then suddenly people want your opinion and you're not even sure you're that confident of what it is.
>
> ('Elaine', Rape Crisis Worker, Scotland)

> Collective working only works if people contribute and not all the women can do that. What they would say would be valid but often the quieter women don't get heard.
>
> ('Katja', SKR Worker)

The arrival of paid staff in organisations has also made collective working less practical for many organisations. A large number of Women's Aid refuges in the UK in particular employ paid staff that work longer hours and are more regularly involved in the organisation. This has meant that in many organisations those who are more heavily involved in terms of time and are employed to do a job are often assigned responsibility on a day-to-day basis for making decisions in relation to a particular area. This has not necessarily meant the abandonment of collective working, though it has in some cases where paid staff and management committees dominate, but in others it has caused adaptations to the original procedures of collective working that were used.

> Because they're there more often than us it makes sense for them to be able to make more decisions. It's not really a hierarchy but sometimes they can't wait for us all to be around and they often know what's going on more than we do. They do tell us or discuss it with us when they can, they don't ignore us or do things they know we'll not agree with but we have to let them take a certain amount of control or their job would be very hard.
>
> ('Alison', Women's Aid Worker, England)

It is clear from the research findings that many organisations in Sweden and the UK have experienced changes in organisational structure. The research has shown that in some cases change has been motivated by external pressures, and on others internal pressures have precipitated the change. Therefore, the research findings show that despite feminist

principles and the critique of bureaucratic organisation inherent in collectivist organisation, refuges and crisis centres have adapted organisation and working practices according to the particular pressures they are under. Thus, this indicates that connections between structure and ideology are not particularly strong or observable in reality.

## Problems of meaning and organisational 'realities' and 'rhetoric'

Further evidence of the lack of a strong theoretical or practical basis to the collectivist/bureaucratic distinction can be derived from the research findings. Given the problems with categorising organisations as particular 'types' (Martin, 1990), as well as being asked whether organisations identified as having a collective or hierarchical organisational structure (or others as appropriate), respondents were also asked about decision-making, both on a daily basis and for making big decisions. The majority of answers from those in collective organisations for daily decision-making were

> Whoever is available at the time.
>
> Individuals.

For big decisions responses tended to cluster around the following:

> The collective.
>
> All of us at meetings.

However, a significant number of the responses were not as expected. In responding to the question of who makes daily decisions, responses from those in collective organisations included

> Team leader.
>
> Project manager.
>
> The full-time staff.
>
> The paid-staff.
>
> The Outreach worker.

Similarly, there were several occasions where workers had responded to the question of who makes big decisions with seemingly contradictory answers. For example, responses given included

> The management committee.
>
> The board of directors.
>
> Usually the full-timers decide and then tell us what's happening.

In the same way as responses to questions about collective organisations' actual decision-making procedures, those from workers in hierarchical organisations were not as expected. On several occasions respondents indicated that individuals made their own decisions about daily issues, or one or two workers would decide together. However, when it came to making big decisions the same number of respondents gave responses such as

> We all vote on it.
>
> We all get to give an opinion and then we try to find the best thing we can agree on but it takes a lot of time up sometimes.

These are contradictory to the idea of hierarchical organisation, as the ones above are to collective organisation, which may suggest that the definitions of these terms are ambiguous when applied to working practices and individual experience.

## Explanations

Further to the discussion above about the organisational structure of ROKS and SKR, I will now return to the possible explanations for these apparent contradictions. It is probable that there are no pure organisational forms. That it is not possible to identify any solely hierarchical or solely collective organisations, and in fact women's organisations are located along a spectrum of organisational forms (Katzenstein, 1990). It also raises questions concerning the links between structure and ideology and whether it is a useful distinction, which I would argue given the complexities witnessed in Swedish and UK organisations, it is not. It also challenges the notion of an 'ideal type' of feminist organisation, and possibly too whether this 'pure' form ever existed.

An alternative explanation is what organisations espouse is not what they practice; that there may be a difference between 'organisational rhetoric' and 'organisational reality'. In turn, there are a variety of explanations as to why this is the case. There is the possibility that women's organisations adapted both for survival, and in order to project a more 'acceptable' image to those they interact with. Having seen the problems organisations like Rape Crisis face in terms of lack of political opportunity, access and acceptability, the adoption of an alternative structure, or the projection of that image, can be seen as an inherently pragmatic morphing of the positive features of both forms of organisation, thus creating a variety of hybrid-types (Freeman, 1975). Though the research findings show that this has been more successful for Women's Aid, thus supporting both Charles's (1995) and Stedward's (1987) positions. It is pragmatic for organisations to project a particular image to other bodies with which the organisation interacts, as Stedward (1987) notes the workings of refuge and crisis centres are often antithetical to the workings of the state. Therefore, rather than being indicative of co-option as US literature suggests, changes in structure and working practices reflect an attempt to appear more 'acceptable' and to emphasise cooperation rather than conflict, but in fact the everyday working reality is very different. Lastly, it is also a result of incompatibility between the micro and macro level. For example, an organisation may identify with a particular structure and have appropriate mechanisms and structures in place. However, individuals or groups working within an organisation may not adopt the same procedures. The successful operation of any imposed organisational structure requires the cooperation of those individuals involved to facilitate the everyday practical procedures it relies upon.

Therefore, the research findings support the argument that equating feminism with collectivist organisation is unrealistic, and that the distinction between 'collectivist' and 'hierarchical' or 'bureaucratic' strands is unrealistic. The data from women's organisations in Sweden and the UK suggest that this is not a realistic dichotomy, nor do organisations have to be collective to be feminist.

## Perceived and actual functions of organisations

The advent of state funding for women's anti-violence organisations is often cited in US literature as a significant factor in the change from what was previously viewed as a network of social movement organisations to what is now considered by some commentators as a network of social service organisations. They argue that as the state became more heavily

involved with refuges and crisis centres and through organisations' participation in the state's grant economy, the political aspect of anti-violence work diminished and made way for a concentration on service provision. The research findings show that this has not been the case to the same extent in Sweden and the UK. Firstly, organisations have retained their autonomy in both countries and have not become affiliated to state bodies as those in the US have. Secondly, organisations consider their function as being both service provider and political campaigning organisation and do not see these two aspects of their work as mutually exclusive.

Although organisations and staff indicated that in times of scarce resources their priority would be service provision, in that they have a responsibility to meet the needs of women who require access to their services, they attach considerable importance to the social change goals of the anti-violence movement. A feminist political outlook informs the work of organisations and the majority of women identify as feminists although in the UK feminist political principles were more explicitly stated and in Sweden they were more implicit. Furthermore, as Dobash & Dobash (1992) suggest, a philanthropic approach to refuge and crisis work can be noted in Sweden far more than in the UK, but this is not as marked as literature has suggested. Furthermore, in the case of Sweden, the distinction between ROKS and SKR is not as marked as the history of the two organisations would suggest.

## Type of gendered violence

The introduction to this book detailed the types of gendered violence that organisations in Sweden and the UK provide services for. To recap, there is no rape-specific movement in Sweden as is found in the UK and the US, and both networks (ROKS and SKR), although willing to provide services to survivors of rape and sexual assault, concentrate on domestic and family violence in the main.

One of the issues raised earlier in the chapter was the service provision organisations provide for survivors of child abuse. UK Rape Crisis centres are more likely to offer services relating to child abuse (62.5 per cent) compared to Women's Aid (50 per cent). There was some initial ambiguity over the nature of provision in the UK, and whether organisations offered services to adult survivors of childhood abuse, or children themselves. Further data analysis comparing these findings with the numbers of women and children using Women's Aid and Rape Crisis respectively suggests that Women's Aid are more likely to provide for children or

young adults who may be suffering abuse in conjunction with their mothers, whereas Rape Crisis are more likely to provide services for adult women survivors of childhood abuse, or teenage or young women currently experiencing abuse.

Rape Crisis's provision of services for adult female survivors of child abuse is also likely to contribute to its poorer funding situation and conversely the provision Women's Aid have for children is likely to contribute to their better funding situation. In terms of the importance attached to care work and support services, the state assumes more responsibility for the safety and well-being of children than it does for adults in that children's legal status as minors and as dependents upon adults or the state for care, ensures that the provision of services cannot be so easily ignored when crisis intervention may be required and abuse may be ongoing. Conversely, the provision of counselling services for adult survivors of child abuse or neglect, who are not currently experiencing abuse (although crisis intervention may indeed be required) does not carry the same responsibility on the part of the state to provide such services. Furthermore, services that are aimed at individuals with a therapeutic approach, and that are not organised from a feminist perspective, are currently provided by the state and other charitable organisations. This provision is not adequate for demand, and Rape Crisis would argue is not wholly sensitive to the needs of adult women who have experienced sexual violence in the past or recently, but the key difference is that the state assumes more responsibility for the welfare of children experiencing violence than adults who experienced violence as children. As a result Women's Aid is likely to receive higher and more consistent levels of funding since they provide statutory welfare provision in the form of refuge for children currently experiencing abuse or violence. This can be summarised in the following comments from interviewees that support this conclusion.

> Children are a key topic for applying for money. It's partly because the government doesn't want to be accused of neglecting the needs of children because it gets such public attention if they're ever accused of that, but also because it tugs on their heart strings more too. Sympathy levels for children are a lot higher than they are for adults. Of course it shouldn't be like that, it should be about needs and about rights, but it doesn't work that way.
>
> ('Anne', Women's Aid Worker, England)

> Rape, sexual violence – they don't get the same status as domestic violence. It's not connected to families the same way in people's

> heads and I think it's seen as being 'just' about the woman herself and we don't jump to protect her the way that we do with a wife or a mother. … And the child abuse complicates it too because there's been such a furore about 'false memory syndrome' and for a while the papers were full of revelations about supposedly false accusations – do you remember? … and lots of people questioning whether abuse can be forgotten like that or whether therapists were 'planting' memories and so on? There's still a tendency to think women are making it up. I've counselled women myself who have only recently recalled abuse that happened decades ago … their memories are sometimes confused and they resist it themselves sometimes – they don't want to believe it's true. I've never thought women were making it up – there's so much raw emotion comes with the memories that I can't see why [anyone would] put themselves through it, and lets face it it's not like people get that much sympathy about it. … we encourage women to keep silent about abuse, rape, violence, to forget about it … and the mind's an amazing thing, it won't remember what's too hard to know, but then when they do forget and keep silent and then remember we tell them it's all false and they're making it up. Sorry, the point I started off trying to make was it's not a sexy funding issue – no one wants to appear to give money to encourage false memory accusations.
>
> ('Elaine', Rape Crisis Worker, England)

The findings of the research in terms of service provision for survivors of child abuse contribute to our understanding of the limited political opportunity and low levels of access and acceptability Rape Crisis experience. There has been considerable controversy surrounding adult survivors of child abuse and with it a significant amount of scepticism on the part of mental-health professionals and the general public as to the 'believability' of survivors' accounts (Coffey, 1998; Herman Lewis, 1992), with false memory syndrome and vindictiveness cited as explanations for survivors' accounts. As a result, providing services for adult survivors does not increase the likelihood of funding.

Conversely, Women's Aid's service provision for children of women suffering domestic violence, who may also be suffering abuse in conjunction with their mother, is a funding priority. It is of course a statutory responsibility to protect children and Rape Crisis workers see this as contributing to Women's Aid's funding success. Many Women's Aid refuges involved in the interview aspect of the research indicated they had paid children's workers, nursery and care assistants, and that they often received funding solely for work with children.

Not only is ongoing or current abuse of children a statutory responsibility in terms of appropriate intervention to ensure a child's well-being, but recent high-profile media cases of violence against children have ensured that it is prominent in terms of public awareness. Therefore the safety of children, who are considered to need protection by virtue of their status as minors, is an issue that is likely to receive attention from the public, policymakers and funding bodies. In line with the public fear that surrounds violent threats to women and children, these high-profile cases have in the most part involved violence from a male unknown to the individual (Lewis Herman, 1992), raising public awareness of the stereotypical view of sexual violence. Given this, we might expect that services offered by agencies such as Rape Crisis might be seen as legitimate organisations to fund, but the fact Rape Crisis counsel individuals who are predominately adults and not young children deemed in need of protection, such services are not high priority.

## Service provision population(s)

Historically the women-only nature of refuge and crisis work has stemmed from its origins in the women's movement and the gendered understanding of violence. The majority (81 per cent/60) of centres in both countries provided services for women and children only, with all Women's Aid organisations offering this. An additional ten (13.5 per cent) offered services to women only, in the most part these were the rape-specific centres. Similarly to the vast majority of women-oriented crisis centres in other countries, the majority of organisations do not provide services for men. Of the 74 organisations that responded there were 4 exceptions; 2 Swedish and 1 UK organisation provided services for 'all', and the remaining organisation operated specifically for young people and, although affiliated with Rape Crisis, did not provide a gender-specific service and therefore dealt with young men. The three organisations providing services for 'all' reported that they did not provide counselling, refuge or support services for individual male survivors of violence. The main aspect of provision in this respect was to provide information and advice relating to male violence against women, sources of support and advice and how to support a female relative or friend. The involvement of men in organisations that began as part of a women-oriented, self-help feminist movement remains a problematic issue. Organisations indicated that the role of men both as the providers of a service and members of the organisation, and as users of the organisations' services was still debated. This issue was more

contentious in some organisations than others, and Swedish organisations were more likely than UK organisations to be open to the idea of their involvement.

It was clear from the three organisations that did involve men in their work, though only in relation to information provision for the support of a partner, relative or friend, they felt it was important to provide this service because we live in a predominately heterosexual world, and that in their experience of dealing with women who have experienced gendered violence relationships and interactions with men often proved problematic and difficult. As 'Cristina', a ROKS worker explained:

> It's not for their [men] benefit exactly – but for the woman and the man. I think it's good if he wants to understand more and to help her, but I think we should do it with the woman's needs in mind, not to somehow make *him* feel better. I know we can't separate them all the time, and having him feel better might help her, but if I have to tell them to stop behaving a particular way or that they're not supporting her by being concerned about themselves then I will. For me it's about helping the woman, not licking men's wounds.
>
> ('Cristina', ROKS Worker, Sweden)

The lack of understanding women, often experienced in the men close to them, and subsequently the impact that had on women was a significant reason for providing information services for men. Although addressing the needs of women primarily, it was also clear that in providing information for men under these circumstances it was hoped that it might also help to promote men's greater understanding of the impact of gendered violence in general.

> It raises awareness too, and that's important. I would never agree to us counselling men because they can provide that service for themselves, we're here for women … but if we can do something that changes men's attitudes and helps them see it from a women's point of view then that's a good thing.
>
> ('Maria', SKR Worker, Sweden)

## Service provision

The provision of services to survivors of violence is a major part of the work refuges and crisis centres do. There is a lack of state provision for survivors of violence and without the services of women's organisations

*Table 6.2* Service Provision – percentage (no.) of organisations providing service

| | Percentage (no.) of organisations | |
|---|---|---|
| **Service** | **Sweden** | **UK** |
| Initial crisis counselling | 94 (32) | 95 (38) |
| Refuge/Safe-house | 91 (31) | 57.5 (23)* |
| Long-term counselling | 79 (27) | 60 (24) |
| Accompanying to police/court | 50 (17) | 90 (36) |
| Welfare/Benefits advice | 47 (16) | 60 (24) |
| Support groups | 44 (15) | 60 (24) |
| Housing advice | 38 (13) | 65 (26) |
| Health advice/care | 35 (12) | 57.5 (23) |
| Legal advice | 32 (11) | 77.5 (31) |

* This figure represents all UK organisations, both Women's Aid and Rape Crisis centres.

many women would not be able to seek help. The provision of services ranged depending on the size and resources available to an organisation. Table 6.2 summarises the number of organisations providing particular services in each country.

The data illustrate that 'frontline'/primary care services are the most prevalent, for example initial crisis counselling and the provision of refuges and safe houses for women escaping violence. This provides evidence that the priorities of these organisations are concentrated on the well-being and safety needs of women who have experienced domestic violence, rape, sexual assault or child abuse. This may indicate that there is a move towards a service-provision orientation to crisis work as literature suggests is the case in the US, however organisations are not absorbed into social service structures in the same way, and the lack of basic core services elsewhere may be equally likely to produce this outcome.

Given the dichotomy of service provision for domestic violence and rape/sexual assault the inclusion of Rape Crisis responses misrepresents the situation somewhat. If Women's Aid responses are considered independently of Rape Crisis then the figure for the level of organisations providing a refuge or safe-house is 96 per cent (33).

The research findings also indicate that women's anti-violence organisations in the UK are more likely to provide a wider range of services than those in Sweden. This is counter-intuitive given the secure funding base Swedish organisations have. There are a number of possible explanations for this. Firstly, the level of need may be lower in Sweden given that statutory welfare services are more comprehensive. However,

women's responses during interviews about the importance they place on services for survivors do not suggest this is the case. An alternative explanation for this is that the history of struggle that has characterised the UK movement's involvement with the state has produced a greater range of services. Interview data do not shed any more light on this issue as women in both countries consistently indicate that they want to provide more services for more people, and that funding is the main barrier to them in doing so. Furthermore, as we have seen from the research findings on funding, both movements rely heavily on voluntary labour.

During interviews the topic of service provision and the level of importance attached to it was talked about at length. It was also a significant element in the questionnaire aspect of the study. Women were asked to rank the different functions of the organisations in which they worked, from the point of view of both the organisation's priorities and which they thought personally should be priorities. In the vast majority (97 per cent) of cases respondents in the total sample indicated that their organisation's first priority was service provision.

The research findings in relation to the importance of service provision to organisations and the women working in them, of whom 92 per cent indicated the provision of services would be their own personal priority, are indicative of the lack of services elsewhere that women can access in relation to both domestic violence and sexual assault. This is discussed in more detail in the section on motivations for work, which discusses the importance of the awareness of need for those women with personal experience of violence. Interview responses also indicate the priority that is placed on service provision by the networks in both countries. Respondents reiterated the roles of the national network organisations in assuming the main responsibility for campaigning work, indicating that the majority of their focus was on the provision of services.

> I hope it never comes down to a choice. Our national organisation does most of our lobbying and campaigning but we do it locally if there's relevant issues and we do community education. The roles are related for me but if I had to choose one it would have to be services.
>
> ('Roisin', Women's Aid Worker, Northern Ireland)

> We do a lot of advising to government departments about violence to women and policy but we don't really do that so much as the

> main ROKS. Our day-to-day is providing services and it's not that the rest isn't important, but we have to be there in case someone turns up. So it's important that we keep it going. Abused women can't wait until the next day or the next day, but if we have to then lobbying and campaigning can wait.
>
> ('Cristina', ROKS Worker, Sweden)

It is likely then, that the lack of a significant national network organisation for Rape Crisis means that individual centres assume responsibility for campaigning as well as service provision. Respondents indicated that this was the case, and that their poor funding level meant they devoted their time, in the most part, to service provision.

The following comments were provided by Rape Crisis workers on questionnaires in relation to the campaigning work organisations are involved in.

> If I ever had time to think about what we might do then I'd tell you.

> We get involved in national events like the Violence Against Women Day but we don't organise much ourselves unless something awful happens and we have to make response.

These findings show not only the poor resources of Rape Crisis but also the extent to which all energies are ploughed into service provision. Furthermore, it is likely that the lack of a national organisation contributes to Rape Crisis's status as an outsider group in relation to the state since it relies on access being achieved by individual organisations rather than having a coordinating network working on its behalf (Stedward, 1987).

What is interesting about the second comment above, and other similar responses from interviews (detailed below), is that the anti-violence movement, in times of scarce resources, will respond to political threat even if it is unable to find, or respond to, political opportunity (Staggenborg, 1995). Therefore, even those organisations with the poorest resources would respond in defence of women's rights if required to do so. In addition to questionnaire comments, the following interview comment illustrates this.

> It's like a red-rag to a bull for us. We don't have time or money to have any long term coordinated campaigning though we'll do training and things if we've got the people available, which is usually the

> problem. No, but we'll respond to things if we have to and it's difficult because there's things it's important for us to stand up about and we have to try somehow. We don't have a network as such but we'll get together in a more disorganised fashion if we need to. Last time … last time it was that rape case in Aberdeen and we went and lobbied the Scottish Office to try and get them to change the consent law and before that we helped others when all that 'hoo ha' was happening about the Human Rights Legislation about not being able to question the victim. But the problem is if we go and do those things then we can't be here at the same time.
>
> ('Sarah', Rape Crisis Worker, Scotland)

Organisations also indicated they provide community education and training for a variety of bodies. A number of these agencies were state agencies, for example the police, social workers and health care professionals, and these are detailed in the section about organisations' relationship with the state in the following chapter.

## Conclusion

The findings of the research indicate that women perceive the function of the organisations as being part service provider and part agent for political change, but that the service provision element takes precedent. Overwhelmingly, anti-violence organisations continue to provide services run by women for women, indicating the link to feminist analysis the movement has. As a result, the findings do not offer support for the possibility that Swedish and the UK movements may experience change similar to that in the US, in that there is no evidence to suggest that there has been an influx of 'new' victims who have subsequently made a feminist analysis less pertinent. Service provision in both Sweden and the UK is comprehensive despite being poorly resourced and represents a considerable achievement on the part of the movement. The findings show that frontline or primary care services are most prevalent, which is most likely a result of poor funding, since longer-term services cannot be guaranteed. This is also supported by the data on funding that describe the difficulties organisations face in both countries in their attempts to provide adequate services.

It is clear that those organisations that have national network organisations can offer a more coordinated response to campaigning and can also take on issues specific to the organisations, like funding provision. As a result, this places Rape Crisis in a poor position in terms

of its ability to achieve insider status. The lack of a national organisation means individual organisations are sole agitators and this adds to the burden already placed upon scare resources, and is likely to further diminish the extent to which the organisation can raise public awareness. The findings show that movements organisations such as Rape Crisis, when there is a dearth of resources, will respond to political threat, as Staggenborg (1995) indicates is the case for some parts of the movement, and act in defence of women's rights.

# 7

# Learning to Listen to Trauma Stories: Doing Research on Violence Against Women

## Introduction

Doing research on violence and trauma is inextricably linked to emotion. The decision to research these topics is the decision to engage with some of the most disturbing, painful and terrifying aspects of human existence. As social scientists we are invited to construct ourselves as detached and unaffected, and our data as part of an objective scientific enquiry untainted by the emotions we are not supposed to have experienced. Most criminological work has ignored emotionality and has essentially seen it as epistemologically irrelevant (Code, 1993).

Liebling & Stanko (2001), in the introduction to a special issue of the *British Journal of Criminology* with a focus on researching violence, note that in relation to the emotional difficulties and dilemmas involved: 'We share few of these experiences and when we do so, we do it privately' (421). When issues of emotion and subjectivity are raised they are often '… relegated to appendices or to less scholarly publications' (Pickering, 2001: 486). As such, when embarking on violence and trauma research there is little beyond the literature on researching so-called sensitive topics to rely upon for guidance. Researching trauma can raise issues that are hard to find answers to in the currently available literature. Indeed, I feel an affinity with Scott (1998) when she describes her frustration at seeking literature to inform her research on ritual abuse only to find 'Methodology texts [that] presume a level of communication skill in the rookie researcher so low that s/he needed to be told how to "break the ice with a comment about the weather"' (Scott, 1998: 8).

Ideas of objectivity and detachment remain salient '… despite several decades of critique of this position, that such objectivity is achievable'

(Liebling & Stanko, 2001: 423). Certain aspects of social science are viewed as 'legitimate' and 'illegitimate' with regard to inclusion in a research report and the role of emotion and its relationship to subjectivity has fallen in the latter category. A growing body of literature with an interest in these issues now exists (for example, Code, 1993; Small, 1997). Others go further and suggest that researchers are obliged to consider the emotional aspects of research not only to understand its importance, but to challenge the idea that it is something with which researchers should not be concerned (Atkinson, 1990; Ely, 1991).

Liebling & Stanko (2001) hoped the publication of the *British Journal of Criminology* special issue on researching violence would encourage '… honest accounts of its complexity and emotional intricacy' from other researchers who were able to '… reflect upon, and find meaning in, their own dilemmas' (421). This article is my own reflexive account of knowledge production and shares some of the 'hidden dimension[s]' of the research process (Liebling & Stanko, 2001: 423).

Reflecting on the process of listening to trauma stories made me confront ideas about language and the 'speakability' of such events and their impact, as well as my ability to hear them. It also revealed the ways in which the 'culture of silence' and the discourse of 'unbelievability' that surrounds gendered and sexual violence mediate the interview experience as a social exchange. Listening to stories that are sometimes terrifying, and always painful, means emotion is central to the research process and interaction, and is in itself a form of data. As researchers we must reconcile the contradictions between listening and self-protection, and examine our emotional responses in terms of what we can learn about our society, gender and sexual violence. It is these themes that will now be addressed in relation to the experience of doing research on violence and trauma.

As was discussed in Chapter 1, the silence that surrounds sexual and gendered violence means the extent of violence against women is notoriously difficult to measure. Research tells us that women do not often report assaults to the police, especially if their abuser is known to them, which is most often the case (Koss, 1993; Koss & Heslet 1992), and that secondary victimisation experienced by women in the criminal justice system also serves to deter women from reporting sexual and domestic violence (Byrne & Kilpatrick, 1999; Chesney-Lind, 1999; Hudson, 1998). This secondary victimisation is often a result of the failure of the police, the court and society to believe a woman's story, or they question her role in the assault. Only a small proportion of women report their experiences of violence to the police, in fact, 97 per cent of

women in Painter's (1991) research told no one they had been raped. Therefore the culture that surrounds 'telling' about violence serves to further silence women.

As is clear from the data available on the incidence of sexual violence presented in Chapter 1, even at the most conservative estimate of prevalence, it is clear that many women remain silent and their stories untold. How then as researchers working on issues around gendered and sexual violence do we facilitate the telling of these stories? How might we ensure we actively listen in order to hear stories previously silenced or thought 'unspeakable'?

## Approach to the research

The protocol of conventional research techniques is that interviewers should remain objective and should facilitate rapport with their research subjects only in order to solicit information from them. According to conventional techniques, for an interview 'to be successful, it must have all the warmth and personality exchange of a conversation with the clarity and guidelines of scientific searching' (Goode & Hatt, 1952: 191). This requires the researcher to be friendly but not too friendly and to walk a tightrope somewhere between detachment and rapport. The idea is to be friendly enough to solicit information but not to become emotionally involved.

In developing my approach to research conventional interviewing techniques have been of little help. Ideas of objectivity and detachment are not compatible with my feminist politics. We are all affected by our place in the world and our life experiences and thus cannot enter the research process as a 'blank slate'. Experience is not an end in itself however, but rather a starting point from which to critically reflect and build. Nor is a rejection of objectivity an excuse for poor social science scholarship and lack of systematic inquiry. My experience as a woman and as a feminist researcher means I am starkly aware of the fear of violence in women's lives and the way in which women are encouraged to curtail their activities or behaviour in order to avoid it, with the implication that those who do not manage to avoid it have somehow 'failed' to curtail their behaviour appropriately.

Successful interviewing relies '… very much on the formulation of a relationship between the interviewer and interviewee as an important element in achieving the quality of the information … required' (Rappaport & Rappaport, 1976: 31), and, as Oakley (1981) argues, '… finding out about other people's lives is much more readily done on

a basis of friendship than in a formal interview' (Oakley, 1981: 52). It is this approach to interviewing that has informed my own practice. Had the exchange not been so open then the sharing of personal experiences would not have occurred very often, allowing me less insight into women's experiences and denying me the chance to reflect upon the emotional impact of encountering stories of violence.

Kvale (1996) draws a distinction between two metaphors; the researcher can be a 'miner' who digs for gold, or 'nuggets' of information, or they can be more akin to a 'traveller' who walks a path together with the respondent. The former represents a more positivist approach to social research, while the latter incorporates the notion that an interview is jointly 'made' by researcher and researched, and is therefore comparable to a constructionist approach. To be a 'traveller' does not imply equity in the relationship between researcher and researched though, as the balance of power is weighted on the side of the researcher who inevitably defines the content and approach in some way. It is the role of the traveller that is most analogous with my approach to the research. However, to extend Kvale's (1996) metaphor further, the researcher must demonstrate enough self-awareness so as not to become a 'backseat driver' influencing the journey taken in a way that equates to censorship because s/he is wary of the route.

## The telling of stories

I had predicted that a potentially difficult issue when conducting interviews was the possibility of being told about women's personal experience of violence, but I was not sure how frequently this was likely to happen. The questionnaires addressed the question of personal experience of violence explicitly. Of those that responded to the questionnaire, 45 per cent (248) of women had personal experience of rape, sexual assault or domestic violence. There were no significant differences between women in the two countries with 43 per cent (106) of respondents in Sweden reporting rape, sexual assault or domestic violence and 47 per cent (142) in the UK.

Subsequently, personal experience of violence was explored in greater depth in interviews. On all occasions women's experiences were shared voluntarily and not asked about directly. Of those women interviewed, 16 had personal experience of rape, sexual assault, domestic violence and/or child abuse. Some women had experienced more than one of these, and sometimes on more than one occasion. If violence is viewed as a continuum as Kelly (1988) suggests, therefore including acts such as coercion, flashing, inappropriate comments and emotional

abuse, then all 25 women interviewed had personal experience of sexual violence. All 25 women knew someone, not in connection with their work, who had experienced rape, sexual assault, domestic violence or child abuse. These included mothers, daughters, sisters, nieces, friends, neighbours and colleagues. In all of the interviews women described either a close friend or relative's experience, or gave anonymous examples of the experiences of women they had encountered during their work. More often than not these stories were offered when responding to questions about their motivations to get involved in refuge or crisis work and the reasons they remain involved (see McMillan 2004a; 2004b). As the telling of the story progressed, the purpose of the telling altered and with it the language used, the emotions described and the construction of the narrative. This is discussed further below.

Given the statistics on the incidence of sexual and physical violence against women outlined earlier in this book, and if we consider sexual violence as a continuum ranging from inappropriate language and flashing to rape and sexual murder (Kelly, 1988), it is may be surprising that I had not anticipated the incidence of personal storytelling to be so high. Having reflected upon this during the fieldwork and since, I realised there were two issues here: whether I had expected the incidence of violence to be so high among the women I interviewed and their close friends or relatives (I had fully expected them to be knowledgeable about the experiences of women encountered during their work) and secondly, whether I had expected them to divulge those experiences. At the initial stages of fieldwork and before coming to realise that these two things may be distinct (nor at this stage had I reflected on my own response in any way), I was often unprepared for the divulging of experiences and telling of stories.

During the first interviews I found listening to stories very hard, and I experienced a variety of emotional responses ranging from disbelief and embarrassment to anger and fear. I had not until this point devoted any time to considering how I might respond in these situations. Through the process of reflecting on this experience I became aware that we do not just *know* how to listen to stories of trauma, but we must *learn* to listen to them.

## Learning to listen and the role of emotion

The issues and problems that researchers confront when listening to stories of trauma and violence are inextricably linked with emotion. We have seen that we are not encouraged to make these problems public

but to censor our research reports so as to present the process as unproblematic, and ourselves and our respondents as unaffected. But these data are relevant both methodologically and epistemologically.

Listening to stories of trauma and violence is undoubtedly hard. During the interview period of the research I experienced the full range of emotions from elation and awe to complete despair, sometimes within a single interview. Such was the gravity of the story I was being told during one interview I was unable to prevent myself from crying. It is likely when facing such an emotional 'roller coaster' that we consciously and unconsciously attempt to protect ourselves in some way.

A body of literature (for example Coffey, 1998; Lewis Herman, 1992; Stanko, 1997) details the emotional responses individuals may experience when hearing trauma stories. It is common on hearing trauma stories to create an emotional distance for one's self and to allow oneself not to really listen or engage (Coffey, 1998; Lewis Herman, 1992). This is tempting when the alternative is tears. When listening to a trauma story the teller asks the listener to share the burden of pain. The interactive process involved therefore requires the listener to accept that they are also vulnerable. As Coffey summarises:

> If, for one person, foolishness does not account for helplessness, for ourselves, no amount of precaution can absolutely preclude it. … The struggle to understand trauma is the struggle to hear in trauma stories the truths that they hold about vulnerability and helplessness. This is a struggle for us all.
>
> (1998: 22)

Having reflected upon my own response to women's personal stories of sexual violence I am aware that the emotional process I experienced followed this pattern. Trauma stories are inherently unbelievable and unspeakable (Lewis Herman, 1992); we do not want to believe we are vulnerable, so we do not want others to speak it because we do not want to be reminded of our vulnerability when we listen. Both this process and society's assumptions about gender stereotypes, and norms of femininity and masculinity contribute to the silence that surrounds gendered and sexual violence.

> The ordinary response to atrocities is to banish them from consciousness. Certain violations of the social compact are too terrible to utter aloud: this is the meaning of the word unspeakable.
>
> (Lewis Herman, 1992: 1)

As a result, '… silence is the typical response of those who are sexually assaulted' (Stanko, 1997: 76). Lewis Herman (1992) argues the silence that surrounds gendered and sexual violence verges on cultural psychosis. The culture of silence and the hidden nature of violence means we are often ill-prepared for listening to personal stories of trauma.

Taking the time to reflect early in the research process, I became aware that I created an emotional distance between those being interviewed and myself. In doing so I attempted to create a protective barrier between the information being shared and my own sensitivities. As a result, when women divulged their personal experiences I was not always *really* listening. I would hear the information being shared but was often unable to connect it with the individual sitting in front of me; I was unwilling to hear it as another human being's experience. I am also now aware that my response was based upon my inability and unwillingness to face the overwhelming feelings of fear, sorrow and despair that hearing such stories creates. I was trying to avoid the tears that I was convinced had made me appear totally unprofessional. Truly listening would also remind me of my own experience as a woman living in a society where the fear of violence dominates the lives of all women.

Rebecca Coffey's description of her own emotional response when conducting research on the personal trauma of rape, sexual assault and atrocities committed in times of conflict, documented in her book *Unspeakable Truths and Happy Endings* (1998), has helped me understand my own response. She describes listening to one of her respondents, Madeleine, telling her story of the experience of gang rape by 27 men. Coffey notes that although she was attending a meeting with Madeleine and her therapist with the purpose of hearing her trauma story, meaning there was no element of surprise at it being told, when Madeleine then began to tell her story she felt overwhelmed. Feeling out of her depth with Madeleine only at the prelude, she was unable to leave or to stop her as Madeleine was sharing her story and going through the pain as an act of faith, and thus trusted Coffey to be able to hear her. In order to cope with this experience Coffey created an emotional distance between herself and Madeleine by engaging a coping mechanism that involved Coffey pretending she was watching a particularly good soliloquy of a playwright or actress. Later when Coffey was calmer she was able to re-engage her appreciation of the reality of Madeleine's situation.

My own response was more disorganised in that I did not pretend to be listening to an act of fiction or theatre, but the overwhelming panic about how I should respond was all-consuming to the extent that I was

distracted from truly listening. It is possible to ignore one's emotional response only for so long, and to eventually experience these emotions was unavoidable. This was also necessary if I was to truly engage with the women I interviewed. Women detailed their own experiences of rape, sexual assault and domestic violence; the stories of women who had used the refuge or crisis centre in which they worked, as well as the impact of violence on their lives in terms of flashbacks, nightmares, depression, suicide attempts, self-harm and fractured relationships. Many of these stories were incredibly painful to listen to, and when the panic I experienced during the first interviews subsided I began to experience feelings of sorrow and despair, anger, and increased levels of fear about my own personal safety. Kelly (1988) documents similar emotional responses and Stanko says, 'Emotion and pain are never far from teaching and research on sexual violence' (1997: 75).

My emotional response and tendency towards self-protection meant I had to confront my potential desire as a 'traveller' (Kvale, 1996) to be a 'backseat driver' in these situations and to act in ways that may silence the respondent. I had to reflect upon the fact that when someone was divulging a story of traumatic abuse and violation and when I was travelling that journey with them in infinite detail and heading straight for what seemed like a 'multiple pile-up', I often wanted us to go left (or right or back or whatever) – in any case, in another direction. It was difficult for me to admit that I was exhibiting and contributing to the silencing and denial of sexual violence experiences when my feminist politics was in direct opposition to this. A challenge as this was, accepting this realisation allowed me to explore ways in which I could learn to listen while at the same time be cognisant of my own emotional response and reconcile this with myself.

## The active listening 'traveller'

Through an examination of the literature on listening to trauma stories – much of which is from the perspective of the listener in a therapeutic or mental-health role – the theory of active listening emerged as that most likely to influence my approach to the research. This approach is borne from a counselling and psychotherapeutic background and encourages empathy. Although this approach uses a therapy *technique* I was not using it for a therapy *purpose*. This is an important ethical issue when conducting research on trauma and violence; we have responsibilities not to cause undue distress by encouraging people to recall

painful events, nor to allow the boundaries of our role to be confused with a more therapeutic one. There is considerable potential for exploitation here.

Active listening involves showing concern and giving verbal and non-verbal feedback to demonstrate involvement in the narrative of the speaker. To actively listen we must give our full attention; be open and present an open posture; create a relaxed atmosphere and demeanour; be aware of non-verbal communication; and have a 'third ear' to identify themes, gaps or sudden changes of topic. Demonstrating empathy is a key element to the process of active listening as it is for good research. To understand someone's experience we have to put ourselves in their shoes – of course this must then be critically reflected upon and theorised about – but for this to be successful what we take from the interview needs to accurately reflect that person's perspective. To facilitate this active listening also involves repeating back to the respondent what has been understood from their narrative to confirm it as an accurate representation and/or for the respondent to contextualise or alter aspects of it. Using active listening therefore makes the interview process a joint journey in which a narrative is constructed and mutually understood.

The techniques involved in active listening do not on the face of it look particularly difficult, but these are skills that need to be learnt. Using them fully is also a very involving but rewarding process. I was relatively confident that the data generated from interviews I conducted using this technique would have far fewer instances of silencing of the respondent, or misunderstanding their perspective. Respondents also echoed my thoughts in comments during or after the interview, for example,

> Thank you. I really feel that you listened to my story.
>
> I really enjoyed talking to you. I know that's hard stuff to hear … so thanks.

Using active listening did not prevent my emotional responses from occurring. The interviews still contained considerable pain and distress for me as the listener. However, the key distinction between these interactions and the earlier interviews was that I was able to explore whether my emotional responses echoed those of the respondent, in what way they differed, and to take care to ensure my emotions did not mask

those of the respondent. An issue often raised by survivors of trauma when they decide to tell their stories is that they are often forced to take responsibility for the listener's feelings and emotions. It was important to me that I did not find myself in that situation as I did not want to add to the responsibility already placed on women survivors of violence by wider society. When I felt anger, did that reflect the emotions of the experience/event for the respondent? On many occasions our emotions were comparable, and on others they contrasted or were directly at odds. This in itself was valuable data that I was subsequently able to reflect upon. I gained valuable insights into how perspectives can differ when you have the lived experience of the trauma as compared to when you have been invited to share it and are looking in on it from outside.

## Limits of language and the structure of memory

The process of active listening revealed to me the limits that language has when utilised to articulate the experience of trauma. Even a cursory glance at testimonial literature about trauma reveals titles such as *After Silence* and *Telling* which detail the process of overcoming the silence surrounding traumatic experiences of violence and the struggle to elucidate it.

When listening to women trying to articulate 'complex stories of injury' (Gilmore, 2001) I became starkly aware of the limitations of language to reveal the depth of their experience. For example, the limitations of the word 'pain' and those synonymous with it failed in the face of the lived experience of the feeling. During interviews women made comments such as

> I just don't have the words.
>
> I need a special word – there isn't one …
>
> I remember opening my mouth and hoping the aching, throbbing, hideous feeling of violation would rush out as quickly as it had come in. But it felt all through my body – no, all through my being – infiltrated. If you imagine what it would feel like to have maggots working their way through your bloodstream from the end of your toes, the tips of your fingers, the top of your head, your belly button, and they're all going to meet in the middle and no part of you will be free of them. It's not 'sore', because you can't rub it better, you can't take a paracetamol – it's not that sort of pain, it's … well, it's …

> it makes you despair, but that sounds too much like depression, that's not right – it's all of these things combined and so much more. It's really frustrating to not be able to say it …

Gilmore states that 'Crucial to the experience of trauma are the difficulties that arise in trying to articulate it', and that these difficulties are often '… formulated as crises in speaking and listening' (2001: 131). She argues that the consensus position on trauma is that it is in some fundamental way beyond the scope of language. This leads to an impasse in that

> Language is asserted as that which can make trauma real even as it is theorised as that which fails in the face of trauma. … For the survivor of trauma, such an ambivalence can amount to an impossible injunction to tell what cannot, in this view, be spoken.
>
> (Gilmore, 2001: 132)

An aspect of the silencing of stories of violence for some then is the failure to find in language a way to truly convey the experience and the feelings surrounding it to others. This insight from the interview process and actively listening to engage with the language women used, the gaps they had in their narrative, and their own frustrations at not being able to find appropriate words, allowed a deeper understanding of the silencing process and isolation of the trauma experience.

The process of active listening also revealed a number of insights about the structure of memory, the construction of narrative in different contexts and for different purposes, and the different types of supporting information that may be offered to provide and support a 'good' story.

There is an anticipation that narratives will take a chronological form, that events will be ordered and easily followed, that the central actors will clearly emerge, and we will follow the story through a 'logical' sequence of events. The women I interviewed in all cases attempted to tell me their stories in an ordered chronology, however this often proved difficult. Many women had gaps in their memories ranging from seconds to minutes to complete days and longer. Some women could not remember how they felt at different times in their lives, some could not recall aspects of the context of events or at what point in their lives particular things had occurred. Of course none of us has infallible memory and we simply do not remember everything about our own lives, but the

nature of traumatic memory and recall means contradiction, confusion and lack of clarity often run through them. As Coffey summarises:

> What I believe is necessary to the understanding of trauma is to see that sometimes confusion about facts, complicity, and peril are part of trauma's emotional aftershocks.
>
> (1998: 44)

Women's stories began with a chronological approach but often quickly jumped back and forth to different points in their lives, from past to present, sometimes pondered over for further reflection. This in itself is something you need to learn to cope with in the interview situation as it is easy to feel 'lost' and from the perspective of the 'traveller' the experience can seem chaotic. It was often the inability to remember something in particular that prompted the 'jumping' of memories to and from different aspects of their story. The inability to recall particular aspects of memory for many of the women caused distress. One respondent could not remember where she had been going on the day she was assaulted, and another could not remember when the physical and sexual abuse she suffered at the hands of her husband had actually begun.

> People expect you to remember everything … and in some ways I do – like it was yesterday – but other things I can't seem to remember at all, and it annoys me.
>
> Some of the bits I can't remember really distress me, but then I think do I want to remember them?

I explored these gaps in memory with women and the distress it caused. The distress experienced was linked to concerns about credibility and the 'truth' status of their story. Women explained that they made considerable effort to make their story sound 'good', which on further investigation meant 'believable'.

The culture of silence is tied up with the notion that traumatic experiences are unbelievable. In relation to sexual and gendered violence it is also tied up with our society's tendency to disbelieve women survivors of violence. Women themselves are starkly aware of this. Thus, gaps or contradictions in women's narratives can result in their distress because they fear they will be accused of lying or exaggerating, attention seeking or malice. These gaps in memory also serve to silence

women because they view the potential for being accused of attention seeking or malice (for example) as too high a risk to take.

These concerns then, caused in part by the culture of silence, and in turn contributing to it, shape the narrative that is constructed in the interview process. Details are mentally sifted by the respondent for relevance and their potential to disrupt the story being told, unnecessary justification is offered for decisions taken and aspects of behaviour, and the acceptance of responsibility for particular events, or aspects of experience, is taken. Coffey (1998) found a similar pattern in her interviews saying of respondents: 'She will dawdle on details that have significance only to her, or she will rush through the logic needed to convince you of the import of the moment.' Stories of violence and trauma are therefore not always 'good' stories – they do not mirror the structure and format of fiction – and women survivors of violence are aware of the limitations of their own story and how this might be heard and interpreted by the listener.

Again, it was the process of active listening that allowed these ideas to be explored as the level of engagement with the narrative of the interviewee revealed the gaps in memory, the gravity they would place on a particular aspect and the explicit justifications women would give for their behaviour. Reflecting on these and women's past experience of telling and not being believed, or being questioned in detail about any ambiguity or inconsistency in their story is another aspect that brought home the silencing that surrounds issues of violence. Women themselves are starkly aware of them and are distressed by what they may see as a 'bad' story or failed memory.

Narratives and stories are of course grounded in the context in which they are constructed and told. This is influenced by the teller, the listener and the purpose of the telling. Stories will 'look' or sound different in a variety of arenas. For example, detailing an assault or series of assaults to the police for potential criminal investigation requires what we might call 'historical truth' (unachievable as any 'pure' form of this may be) – they want to know the 'facts' and therefore require a story constructed in that manner. Stories told in this arena also need to have some aspects of 'verifiable truth' for them to be considered a 'good' or 'useful' story. The nature of gendered and sexual violence means there are rarely any witnesses, and it is in part the police's attempt to establish a historical and verifiable truth that leads to the traumatic experience of the criminal justice and reporting process. In our adversarial legal system, in the few cases that come to court, these are the very aspects that will be open to scrutiny. Most, if not all, of these expectations about stories are based

on myths about sexual violence, responses to it, and what a survivor will 'look' and act like.

There have been many discussions in recent years, particularly in relation to life history research, about the construction of stories and the social context in which they are told, and the social context of the events described (Plummer, 1995). Additionally, debates about the truth status of research data are numerous. Just as I do not conform to ideas of objectivity I do not have any expectation that our accounts of events are a definitive 'truth'. These can be more helpfully thought of as a respondent's narrative truth. As such, the nature of telling about violence in the interview situation allows for a story based on a narrative truth which is grounded to some extent in historical truth. Respondents have the opportunity to detail their thoughts, feelings and reflections upon historical events they experienced; these stories can be inconsistent, unfinished, disorganised, ordered or chaotic and still be accepted as representing what is true to the survivor at that point.

It is of course necessary in research not to take stories simply at face value, but to systematically investigate, challenge ideas and assumptions, and explicitly reflect with the respondent upon what is and is not included in the story and why. However, when researching sexual and gendered violence this aspect must be done with great care. As noted above, in the criminal justice system, and in society in general, and in close personal relationships women's stories will be questioned and scrutinised. 'Facts' are questioned in the criminal justice system as part of the adversarial process, but they are also questioned by people women may have turned to for support. This questioning of 'facts', behaviour and interpretation is undeniably implicated in the silencing of survivors. I was very aware of the dilemma I faced and the potential harm I could cause if I were to 'get it wrong'. As such I took great care to question or probe aspects of *how* women experienced violence and its aftermath, to explore why women chose to include some aspects of their story over others, and queries that encouraged them to reflect on the construction of their story and the meaning behind it. I was careful not to ask questions of behaviour so as to avoid implying responsibility or that an alternative form of behaviour may have been better. As one respondent put it, a common response from those in her social network following being raped by her estranged husband was '*why* did you let him in?' I did not want to be that person, even unintentionally. These are issues that must be carefully thought through and navigated when approaching research on issues that are 'sensitive' so that research can be systematic and thorough, but not harmful. Or in the case of sexual

violence, so that it does not then become part of the further silencing of survivors.

## Conclusion

Conducting research on violence inevitably generates an emotional response in those who listen to personal stories of trauma. This was certainly the case in my experience but, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of violence and the fear of violence in women's lives, it is necessary to engage with these emotional responses and critically reflect upon them. In doing so I became aware that the shock I experienced when women told their personal stories of violence was not shock at the number of women who had been subjected to rape, sexual assault or domestic violence; it was shock at the number of women I interviewed who were willing to share their experience, who were no longer conforming to the culture of silence.

Societal attitudes and public discourses about violence influence whether the story is told, how the story is told, what is included and how it is experienced by the teller and listener. It is necessary for the interviewer as listener to consider how they themselves fit into these public discourses. My response to hearing stories of violence made me realise that many of us, including myself, contribute to the culture of silence. I do not think violence against women should be considered unspeakable, and I think the culture of silence must be challenged, but I was forced to confront the fact that despite my feminist politics, at the outset I was not prepared, nor particularly willing, to be a listener. Nor did I know how to cope with the feelings listening created. The emotions we experience as researchers while listening to stories of violence may pose a threat to the voices of those who have experienced it as we may intentionally or unintentionally act in ways that silence aspects of their stories. We must ensure that we *truly* listen to trauma stories in order to understand our respondents' experiences, and in turn these experiences and the meanings attached to them should be critically reflected upon. The process of active listening can facilitate the listening process and help create a positive, if emotionally difficult, experience for interviewer and interviewee. Our emotional responses should also be reflected upon as these in themselves constitute data that can give us epistemological and methodological insights, and this also acknowledges that we are not emotionally detached from our research. We may experience a variety of emotional responses during the research, but to encourage silence by failing to listen does not prevent either assault, or

the fear of assault. The culture of silence that surrounds violence against women remains a strong force. My reflection on the research process reiterated the importance of including in my research the voices of those involved and of detailing my own emotional response.

In this research the process of active listening and critical reflection allowed insights to be gained into our potential as 'travellers' (Kvale, 1996) to become 'backseat drivers' and direct the interview in directions that are less painful for us if we are not aware of our emotional responses and reactions. We must avoid this where possible; otherwise, we risk contributing to the culture of silence that surrounds sexual and gendered violence and the perceived 'unspeakability' of such experiences. Active listening has also allowed insights into the limits of language in terms of voicing the impact of the experience of sexual violence and how this then contributes to the silence that surrounds it. Truly listening to the stories told by the women interviewed also revealed the structure of the narratives provided and attempts made to give a 'good' or believable story. This also impacts upon the culture of silence, as women are acutely aware of the expectations surrounding their stories and the need for historical verifiable truths in many instances of their storytelling. The social research interview conducted with active listening techniques allows for a telling experience that accepts the respondent's narrative truth.

Having reflected on the experience of bearing witness to women's stories of violence I have gained a deeper insight into the importance of a service – the service of organisations I researched such as Rape Crisis and Women's Aid – that allows women to speak about their experience to willing and sympathetic ears. It also reminds me of the importance of research that documents the experience of refuges and crisis centres that aim to provide that service and to campaign to challenge that silence and the hidden nature of violence. For me it has reinforced the importance of the fact that '… shattering the silence of women remains a major commitment of the women's and feminist movement both within and beyond the academic world' (Graham, 1983: 135). The silence that surrounds our emotions within the research process should also be challenged as Liebling and Stanko (2001) have urged.

# Conclusion

Violence against women is a key concern for the women's movement and feminism. My central aim was to examine how feminists have responded to a violent society in Sweden and the UK and how they have sought to organise this response.

Women's anti-violence movements in various countries have pursued two forms of action: political campaigns on issues of violence; and alternative welfare provision in the form of refuges and crisis centres aimed at empowering women and challenging male violence and domination. Feminist activists in different countries have varied in their analysis of the nature of the state; however, despite differing degrees of ambivalence, the anti-violence movement has recognised the need to engage with the state to improve women's rights through policy change.

Until now, the US experience has dominated the literature. The key themes of which have been that, although increased engagement with the state through state funding has brought benefits in terms of expansion of welfare services for women, it brought costs in terms of increased bureaucratisation, the dilution of the original feminist aims and the abandonment of non-hierarchical organisational forms. Scholars and activists disagree about the nature of rape crisis centres and refuges in the US and their capacity to influence entrenched gender practices and structures. It is argued that the service-provision role has compromised the campaigning role following the advent of state funding and closer relationships with the state has had the effect of co-opting the movement, thus depoliticising it. As noted in Chapter 1, US writers suggest such a trajectory is inevitable when organisations engage with the state.

This study has compared the experiences and organisational developments of women's anti-violence organisations in Sweden and the UK. In

both countries there are well established and extensive networks of anti-violence organisations. While the movements in Sweden and the UK have also chosen to engage with the state, there is more variation in process and outcomes than the US experience suggests. Engaging with the state in different ways and by adopting different strategies, both movements to some degree have succeeded in turning state structures towards feminist goals, while retaining a significant degree of autonomy from the state, and a feminist political understanding of the causes and repercussions of violence. This suggests that the outcomes of engagement with the state are contingent upon multiple factors and are far from certain.

## Engaging with the state

In examining the trajectory and the subsequent impact of the movement in each country, I have distinguished between political opportunity structure, by which I mean system level factors such as formalised consultative procedures or service-level agreements; and political opportunities, by which I mean contingent features such as the receptivity of political elites and other state actors, the impact of changing public opinion and so on. Turning to internal factors, I have identified feminist ideological perspective and the willingness and capacity of organisations to be dynamic and responsive as important variables. These factors explain the degree to which different organisations can – or will – exploit the political opportunity structure and the political opportunities they encounter by, for example, adapting their organisational structures, arena and tactics accordingly.

Anti-violence organisations in Sweden have adopted a mainstreaming strategy and have sought change from within existing structures. The close relationship the movement has had with the state from the outset, the history of consensus politics, social democracy and the institutionalisation of equality politics have provided favourable political opportunity for the anti-violence movement to gain access to policy-makers. Furthermore, the liberal approach the movement has adopted means it is seen as acceptable in the most part by political elites and therefore enjoys favourable political opportunity as well. In short, the movement in Sweden has acceptability, access and receptiveness.

However, there are costs: the institutionalisation of equality politics has compromised some of the movement's claims because the rhetoric of equality makes it difficult to raise women-specific issues. So

organisations operate in a generally favourable political climate that allows claims to be heard but the movement must remain watchful because favourable political opportunities are not guaranteed.

Nonetheless, the willingness of the movement to adapt in the event of less favourable political opportunity can be noted in the increasingly radical feminist outlook that is beginning to characterise the movement. The success of the movement is well illustrated in the *Kvinnofrid* legislation of 1998, where organisations operated in a consultative capacity on this policy change. The legislation not only allowed for the core funding of anti-violence organisations, but also widened the definition of rape and criminalised the sex buyer, thus, the movement achieved radical feminist gains in terms of reform. This demonstrates the radical potential in terms of campaigning and social change goals using a still-largely liberal feminist approach.

The movement in the UK has historically been reluctant to engage with the state and has challenged the state from its autonomous organisational base. This approach developed as a result of the closed nature of the political system and the marginal position of interest groups in relation to the state. In short, there was an unfavourable political opportunity structure. Furthermore, the radical and socialist feminist perspective that has informed the UK movement has meant organisations were previously ambivalent in their engagement with the state and less willing to enter formalised relations. The strategy the movement has adopted has altered in light of changing political opportunity afforded by increased public awareness of the issue and the state's growing responsiveness to demands, especially at local level.

We might expect the political opportunity structure with regard to the anti-violence movement within a particular state to have a similar effect on its different branches. However, the research has documented that in the UK this has not been the case. Women's Aid and Rape Crisis have experienced the state in different ways and have adopted different strategic responses.

So, on the one hand, Women's Aid have adopted a pragmatic approach when engaging with the state and have succeeded in being accepted as insiders by virtue of their role as service providers. However, when they emphasise their role as agents for political change they occupy outsider status, and therefore overall, occupy thresholder status. It is Women's Aid's ability to provide statutory welfare services that has opened up a favourable political opportunity structure in the form of service-level agreements with local authorities, as the distinct funding position

detailed in the research indicates. Furthermore, those political elites involved have been receptive to the network's ability to provide welfare services at a low cost, and so have welcomed the movement in its capacity as service provider. In addition, the increasing public awareness and acceptance of domestic violence as an issue has contributed to the claims being heard. Organisations may have access to a structure, but it requires the claims to be heard for them to be successful. Thus, favourable political opportunity meant a favourable political opportunity structure could be exploited. Furthermore, willingness on the part of Women's Aid to adapt structure and strategy is also significant. Those organisations that maintain a 'purist' stance are unlikely to be able to exploit opportunities because they will not be able to gain access. Women's Aid has managed to adopt a pragmatic approach to engagement with the state and as a result has avoided institutionalisation and the dilution of feminist political aims.

The strategy that Women's Aid have adopted to achieve this has involved the creation of a national coordinating network that facilitates the individual refuges and provides consistency in terms of ideology and strong base from which to resist institutionalisation, as well as a national body with which the state can interact. Secondly, the organisation has adopted internal structure and working practices to make them more compatible with more formalised engagement with state structures. This has not, for the most part, involved the abandonment of feminist principles of democracy and eschewing hierarchy, but rather the adoption of more efficient structures.

On the other hand, the experience of Rape Crisis has not been so favourable. Rape Crisis has failed to get the same degree of access to the state, something that is evident in its poor funding situation. Rape Crisis centres do not provide statutory welfare functions, so cannot achieve insider status by emphasising this function in the way Women's Aid can. Furthermore, Rape Crisis have not organised on a national level to the extent that Women's Aid have, and as a result appear less organised to state agencies, and also work in a way that is antithetical to the working of state bureaucracies.

Rape Crisis has retained its autonomous organisational base and feminist analysis of violence like Women's Aid has, but occupies a marginal position in relation to policymaking and access to service provision. Having said this, the Rape Crisis movement has achieved significant policy gains in the area of violence against women, particularly in relation to the workings of the criminal justice system.

## Ideology and organisational forms

One of the major themes of the US research has been the relationship between the changing organisational form of women's anti-violence organisations and the dilution of the movement's radical aims. In general, centres have moved from an 'ideal form' in terms of collective, non-hierarchical working to more formalised client/professional relationships and hierarchical structures. The changes that US centres have undergone have led to questions being raised as to whether comprehensive services for survivors of violence have been accompanied by the abandonment of social change goals and the original aim of a violence-free society. In this respect, the survival or modification of the 'original form' of organisation is seen to be a crucial indicator of the degree to which the movement has retained its radical ideology.

If the situation detailed in US literature were to be the case in Sweden and the UK, we would expect to find a high number of bureaucratic centres, with a social service orientation rather than a social movement outlook. We would also expect to find the threat of removal of funding for failure to comply with funding restrictions. In addition, we would expect to find poor funding security for refuges and crisis centres in order to ensure they remain compliant.

However the dissertation argues that while levels of funding are still perceived as inadequate and insecure, the incorporation and deradicalisation of the movement that has been witnessed in the US has not occurred in Sweden and the UK to the same extent.

The research demonstrates that in the UK there is no strong link between organisational structure and ideology. Organisations no longer conform to 'the original model' as discussed earlier. However there is not necessarily a clear relationship between structure and the ideological perspective of a particular organisation. Nor is there necessarily a strong contrast between bureaucratic and collective organisations and their respective service provision, ethos and goals. Furthermore, how individuals and groups within organisations experience structure suggests adaptation rather than transformation. That which is espoused is not always practised. Although in some cases organisations have had to adapt as a condition of state funding, in practice most retain strong elements of collective working and ethos.

In the case of Sweden, the responses of workers in the ROKS and SKR networks indicated there was little discernible relationship between organisational structures and espoused feminist perspective. So, for

example, the more radical ROKS were as likely to have bureaucratic forms as they were to have collectivist structures, while the more conventionally liberal feminist SKR groups were more likely to be collectively organised. As in the UK espoused structures did not necessarily 'hold' in terms of how workers described their day-to-day practices.

The RMT approach to social movements emphasises structure over ideology and asserts that only bureaucratised movements can achieve significant policy gains. This approach largely neglects the role of political opportunity and agency for feminist engagement with the state. The research has shown that there is not an inevitable movement trajectory, given that the movement in both Sweden and the UK have retained autonomy from the state and continue to use alternative forms of organisation, although these may not conform to a purist form of collective working. It is also the case that formal structure may not equate well with formal practices and organisational ethos.

## Women's motivations and experience of anti-violence work

This research has concluded that there is no one single motivating factor for women doing either paid or unpaid work in refuges and crisis centres. Consistent with existing literature on motivations for anti-violence work and volunteering, I have identified altruistic and psychic benefits as important in women's decision to undertake care or human service work. In addition, a key finding is that women's political motivations as feminists motivate them considerably, and these political motivations play a central role in their decision to volunteer in a refuge or rape crisis centre in particular. The research also found that women's multiple motives for volunteering are also related to the dual functions of the organisation – part social service and part agent for social change – and as such, their motivations for involvement in both these aspects are significant.

Concluding further from these findings, the research has found that neither the NSMT approach nor the RMT approach to social movement participation adequately explain women's involvement in the anti-violence movement and its organisations. The former fails to acknowledge the political element of the women's movement and as such neglects the importance of politics as a motivating factor for women. The RMT perspective concentrates on rational choice and sees movement participation as motivated only by self-interest. As a result, this perspective fails to capture the complexities of social movement participation, especially when the movement has more than one function; a helping aspect and a wider social and political aspect.

Another key finding of the research is that women have significant personal motivations for becoming involved in anti-violence work. I have identified the key role that women's personal experience of violence plays in their decision to work in refuges and rape crisis centres. This can be their own individual experience, or the experience of a close friend or relative. This motivation is related to their own experience of help and support post-assault. For those who received help and support there is a desire to 'give back', and for those who received inadequate help and support there is a keen awareness of the dearth of services available to women, and therefore the need for alternative feminist welfare provision.

The research has also identified the desire to engage with women with similar experiences and understandings of violence as important for those women with personal experience of violence. Traumatic experiences isolate people from those around them, and the silence that surrounds sexual and gendered violence compounds this. Women working in refuges and crisis centres were motivated in part by their desire to seek commonality and understanding as a protection from terror and despair. This sense of belonging was particularly important for those with personal experience of violence, but was also important for workers as a whole. The research found that women engage in anti-violence movement work because they are seeking an experience of 'sisterhood' and an all-women working environment. This restates the importance of feminist politics in women's decision to become involved. The research demonstrates that women's positive experience of work is related to both a positive working environment and strong interpersonal relationships. Interpersonal relationships with colleagues and a mutually supportive working environment were significant factors in helping women deal with the emotional pain that is an inevitable part of anti-violence work and listening to trauma stories. The research found that the retention of workers is most likely when this is the case.

## Theoretical implications

The research has demonstrated that traditional theoretical perspectives on the state and social movements have largely neglected the experience of the women's movement. The research has found that existing theory that attempts to explain the relationship of feminism and the feminist movement to the state fails to adequately address this complex relationship. Further, the social movement theory discussed in this book also fails to address the experiences and complexities of the women's movement in terms of how movements put political issues on

the agenda, and in terms of the motivations for individuals to become involved in social movement participation. Similarly, existing theories of motivations for volunteering fail to encompass the multiple motives identified as important to women working in anti-violence organisations. The most significant omission here is the political and feminist element.

As a result the research concludes that further development of these theoretical perspectives is required. Feminists have attempted to develop typologies of the state and state/social movement interaction. Despite some feminists' ambivalence towards the state and the problems inherent in talking about 'the state', it is necessary for feminism and feminists to continue to engage with these debates in order for us to further develop our theoretical understandings of these complex relationships.

In conclusion, this study of the women's anti-violence movement in Sweden and the UK has provided a new comparative case study of refuges and crisis centres and offers a major challenge to the existing US literature about the women's anti-violence movement and its relationship with the state. It has demonstrated that a complex and ambiguous relationship exists between such organisations and the state, involving costs and benefits. Outcomes cannot easily be read from organisational forms and POS. Far more contingent factors are at play. And finally, to borrow Matthews's (1994) concept of 'managing violence', and to extend it, I argue that while the state does shape and constrain women's anti-violence movements, it possible for movements to engage and at the same time 'manage' the state.

# Notes

## Introduction

1. The use of the term 'liberal' here is not intended to necessarily imply a close relationship with the state, and a desire to seek reform via the state. Although SKR are open to engagement with the state, in that they do not go against their feminist outlook, they engage with the state far less than ROKS. The use of the term 'liberal' in this context refers to the more philanthropic and charitable elements of this part of the movement. 'Liberal' is the term Swedish women working in refuges and crisis centres use in this context.
2. The differences between ROKS' and SKR's understanding of male violence are similar to the differences that split the Women's Aid movement from Erin Pizzey, the founder of the first Women's Aid refuge.

## 1 Violence Against Women and the Feminist Movement

1. Lees (1997) states that rape in marriage was criminalised in Britain in 1991. This is true for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, but not for Scotland where there is a distinct legal system. In Scotland, rape in marriage was criminalised in 1989 following the case of *Stallard* v. *HMA* in Stirling High Court. There are other distinct pieces of legislation that apply to Scotland. The Law Reform (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Scotland) Act (1985) introduced what was known as 'shield' legislation that prevented the use of sexual history and character evidence of the complainant. This was set out in terms of a general prohibition on such evidence, but with three rather loose exception clauses, so the defence had to make an application to introduce evidence under one or the other of them. In practice judges allowed this evidence to be admitted in the majority of cases, making the 'shield' legislation largely ineffective (Brown, Burman & Jamieson, 1993). The Sexual Offences (Procedure and Evidence) (Scotland) Act (2002) supersedes this older legislation. It prevents the accused from conducting his own defence in rape and sexual assault trials, and introduces stricter guidelines on the admissibility of sexual history and character evidence of the complainant; the defence is now asked to tie this more closely to relevance. Furthermore the act also states that if a complainant's sexual history is to be used in evidence, then the previous convictions and charges of the accused must be admitted. The Protection from Abuse (Scotland) Act (2001) allows for powers of arrest to be granted with matrimonial interdicts; that is, an abusive partner who has violated an interdict, even if he has not committed a criminal offence, can be arrested and removed from the scene.
2. For a more comprehensive coverage of social movement theory see Chapter 1, 'Theories of Mass Social Movements', in Pakulski (1991). See Charles (2000) for a more detailed discussion of social movement theory in relation to feminist social movements specifically.

## 2 Feminism and the State

1. It is important to note that despite Esping-Anderson's (1990) insights, and although he recognises the role of the family as well as that of the economy, he maintains the split between family and economy and links gender interests to the family and class interests to the economy, therefore perpetuating the public/private divide intrinsic to state theory. Charles (2000) notes this shortcoming in Esping-Anderson's approach, and Lewis (1992) provides detailed criticism of the neglect of gender in the analysis of welfare regimes.

## 3 Women's Anti-violence Organisations and the State

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