

# **Anti-gay violence – a personal development.**

An abstract from  
“... det var bara en bögdjäväl”  
På väg mot en strategi att förebygga och  
motverka homofientligt våld.  
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by  
Hans Knutagård, msw  
RFSL Rådgivningen 36,  
211 41 Malmö, Sweden  
[hans.knutagard@rfsl.se](mailto:hans.knutagard@rfsl.se)  
Phone +46 40 611 99 51

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# 1. Introduction

The night of March 11, 1995, two men crossed paths with a lethal outcome. One was a well known gay ice-hockey player and the other was a 19 year old man with Neo-Nazi sympathies (various Nazi brochures were found in his apartment). The 19 year old claimed later in court that he had spent some time with his friends drinking alcohol and taking some amphetamines before going out that evening. He had his hair cut, but not in a crew cut since he did not want to look like a skinhead. He had borrowed a jacket from a friend, since he would not be allowed into the restaurants in his own bomber jacket. He also brought his knife with him, since he had been threatened several times before.

During the court hearing he said that on his way back home a person came up from behind and put his hand around him and asked "Where do you live?" First he thought it was an alcoholic, as he did not recognize the hockey player. They discovered that they lived in the same neighbourhood and started to walk together. The hockey player was very drunk, but not blind drunk. They crossed through a park and suddenly the hockey player stopped and said, "Damn, you are good-looking". In the next moment the hockey player put his hand on the 19 year olds head and forced it down to the hockey player's groin and said, "Want to suck my cock?" The young man felt threatened, took up his knife and defended himself by stabbing the hockey player in the chest, face, head and back, inflicting a total of 64 stabs wounds. After the hockey player fell to the ground, the young man stated in court that he picked up the sheath to the knife, since he had dropped at the beginning, and ran away to a friend and told him that he "stabbed down a queer, who tried to kiss him".

In court the 19 year old denied that his action had anything to do with the fact that he was member of a skinhead group with National Socialist ideas/Neo-Nazi, or the fact that he dislikes homosexuals because they demoralize society. In an earlier interrogation he had said that homosexuals should be put on a deserted island in order to infect each other so they would all die. The 19 year old dislikes immigrants even more, especially Arabs, Turks and Negroes.

Since the hockey player is dead we have to construct his story. We know that he was well known as a hockey player and gay in the town and a regular guest at the restaurant Extreme. A waitress knew him for many years and considered him a nice and friendly guest who drank a lot and gave generous tips. The waitress claimed in court that the hockey player used to offer young men drinks and seek contact with them - as other men do with women. She had seen him put his arm around young men and get refused. He may try again, but after a second no, he accepted that no without any aggression. The doorman that night stated in court that he had turned away the hockey player at 01.30 since he was too drunk and spoke thickly. The doorman regarded him as persistent and "hot" compared to other evenings, but never aggressive or causing trouble. A musician told the court that he had witnessed the two men on his way home from the studio around 2 in the morning. The hockey player was well built, with long wavy hair and had his hands in the pockets of his dark blue jacket. The young man was slimmer, taller, had a special body posture and short hair. They were walking side-by-side chatting.

The medical examiner described the autopsy findings saying that the stab wounds were made with considerable force and could have proceeded during several minutes. There was only one tiny defensive injury on the victim. No typical injuries on the hands and forearms, when you defend yourself. This could be explained, the medical examiner claimed in court, by the hockey player's high percentage of alcohol (2.8), which was bordering on alcohol poisoning and makes you unable to do any coordinated movements. Most people are "down and out" with that percentage of alcohol. The injuries on the hockey players head, the medical examiner continued, had to be done at a later stage of the stabbing, since it could not be done in the beginning, when the 19 year old was in the hard pressed situation as he claimed.

In the district court there was no doubt that the 19 year old killed the hockey player, the problem was to determine if it was murder or manslaughter. That depended on if there was a provocation from the hockey player or not. The prosecutor claimed that the 19 year old had met the hockey player before. Since he knew that the hockey player was homosexual he took advantage of the situation and deliberately and systematically killed him by continuing to stab the hockey player even when he was lying down on the ground. The district court accepted the 19 year olds version of the story, even though there were things that contradicted his version. Since the hockey player had a tendency to "palpably molest proposed homosexual partners" and even if the hockey player was drunk, the sexual advance could trigger such a provocation that could give rise to the violence. The 19 year old was sentenced to eight years for manslaughter and the previous sentence of probation for stabbing a

coloured person of the same age seven months before, was set aside. The 19 year old appealed to the Supreme Court, which confirmed the order of the District Court by stating that he “had been exposed to a proportionally serious provocation”. That the hockey player’s sexual advance had put the 19 year old “who was only 19 years of age, in a position of uncontrolled fury and that the following lethal assault was committed while (the 19 year old ) he was still was strongly provoked (by the hockey player’s behaviour)”.

## **1.1 Starting point**

I have chosen the example above as a starting point for my abstract about anti-gay violence as a personal development. The abstract is based on the report “... *det var bara en bögdjäväl*” *På väg mot en strategi att förebygga och motverka homofientligt våld* (Knutagård 2003). The report was a part of a non-violence gay project founded by the Swedish Inheritance Fund. The aim of the report was to find efficient ‘hands on’ strategies in order to prevent and counteract violence against homo- and bisexuals.

The report is based on 133 interviews (91 in Sweden and 42 abroad), 43 of them are in connection with study visits at the interviewee’s organisation (35 in Sweden and 8 abroad). Eight of the interviews were with victims of anti-gay violence and two with the perpetrators of such violence. Moreover, the report is based on literature, together with 16 files of press cuttings on violence against homosexuals at RFSL (The Swedish Federation of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights) in Stockholm from 1997-08-21 through 2003-05-23. Furthermore, the report is built on 15 court verdicts that I have been able to track down through press cuttings and some help from a prosecutor in Malmö. Finally, I include study visits at twenty or so crime scenes where violence against homosexuals has taken place.

The report is restricted to homosexuals, even though bisexuals and transsexuals are just as well exposed. Secondly, the report is restricted to male homosexuals, even though female homosexuals are exposed to the same violence. The report does not include same sex violence. Finally, I have taken the same freedom to interpret the facts of the court verdict as the Supreme Court does with the District Court.

Let’s go back to my starting point. How do you understand the phenomenon of anti-gay violence? How can we understand the murder of the gay hockey player? Is it possible to understand the anti-gay violence as a personal development? At the risk of being misunderstood due to the shortness of this abstract, I would still like to share my findings and thoughts. In order to do so we have to very briefly bring in a theoretical perspective.

## **2. Theoretical perspective**

How can we explain hate crimes against homosexuals, or as I have arrived in my report, to young peoples' gender construction through violence from a cultural historical activity theory (CHAT) perspective? In the process of theoretically analyzing the phenomenon of anti-gay violence I had a great help of the Norwegian professor in psychology Pär Nygren. His text *Professionell omsorg for barn og familier – fra teori til verktøj* (1999) has been very inspiring, as well as his seminar in Malmö about how to develop a personal action competencies in order to commit hate crime (2003) and especially the thoughts around action competencies that Pär has shared with me, which are now published in his latest text *Handlingskompetanse – Om profesjonelle personer* (2004). First we have to look into how a gender is constructed. In order to do so we have to reflect a little about how a human being becomes a personality or becomes socialized and gets a “social gender”.

### **2.1 Gender construction**

#### **2.1.1 Mediated action**

One fundamental rule in CHAT is what Vygotsky claimed that we never communicate directly with each other, but communicate through a mediating artefact, where the language is the most important artefact. The artefact is made up by human beings, who have control over them, but at the same time, the artefact shapes and controls the human beings. The Norwegian professor in sociology Regi Th Enerstvedt rhetorically asks how the western male identity would be if we have been raised with “what the girls have and boys have not” or “that one sex lacks a vagina and instead has an outgrowth that looks like a wound” (1979:252).

When two people communicate, in the relation between them, one person is always the other person's object that fulfils her/his needs and vice versa. According to CHAT there is also always a power dimension in all human relations. To conclude, you could say that communications emerge and occur in activities and out of this perspective anti-gay violence is to be regarded as something the perpetrator wants to communicate about.

## 2.1.2 Developing through activities

Another fundamental rule in CHAT is that the individual creates her-/himself through hers/his own activity in connection with the surrounding world. The individual's personality is a result of its unique activity history, that is to say all the activities the person has participated in. Activities are an endless process of movement, changes, remodelling and development we participate in (illustration 1).

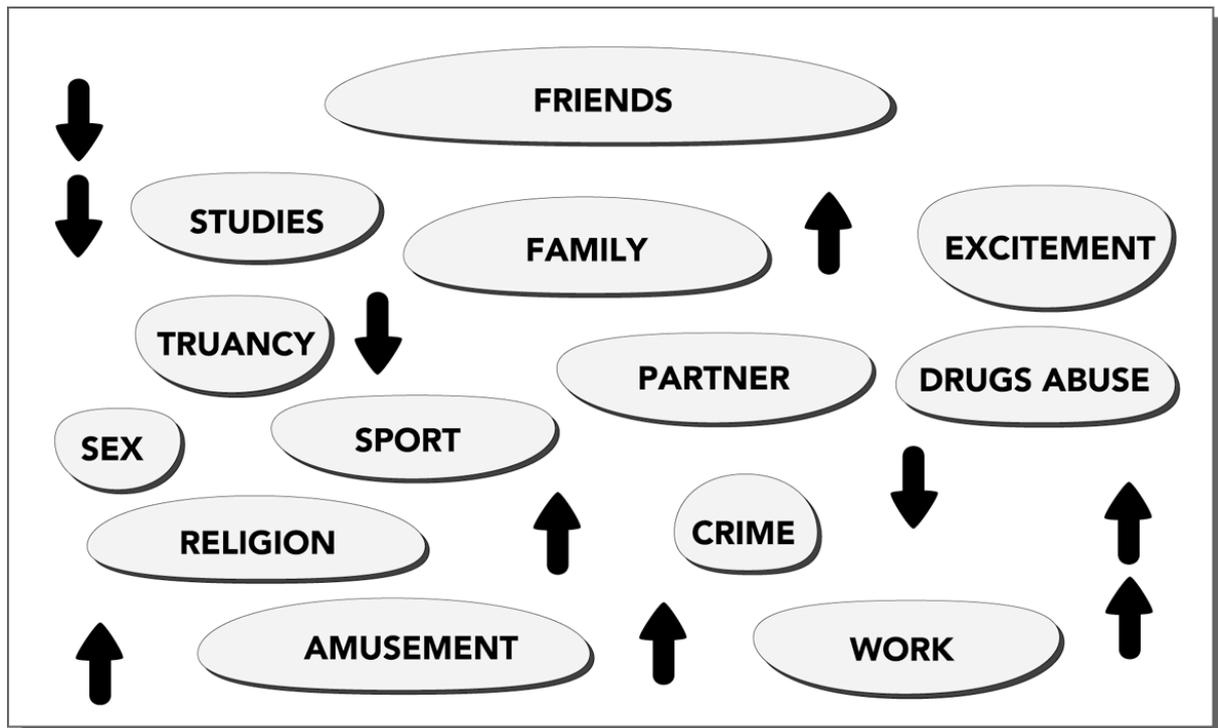


Illustration 1. An example of the flow of activities in a young person's life, that is at risk. The flow similar to the "lava lamp" warms up float up in different sizes and shapes, for sinking down and melts together with the ground material, in order to rise again. Source Knutagård 2003a and 2003b.

As shown in the illustration above, an individual participates in a lot of different activities. Several activities are also accessible to the individual at the same time and the activities could even be integrated with each other to a various extent. Activities could also be kept isolated, hidden and be completely contrary to the individual's other activities. The activities are arranged hierarchically and one takes the dominating role, which does not need to be the most time consuming or most necessary one. Instead it is the activity that is the most important for the individual during a time and during a trajectory in life. We are also able to look upon the activities with the concepts *necessary* or *voluntarily* and *spontaneous* or *planned*.

Within the activity system, the individual learns / develops how to act in response to the demanding structure, what Nygren calls "action competencies". These action competencies

have a surviving value within the present social system in which she or he participates in. In every such activity there is also a demanding structure, how to behave as men and as women and against each other and what is male and female or what is regarded as masculinity and femininity. In other words we learn how to “survive” as women/men in the heterosexual normative society. As described before, the relation is not without a power dimension. Instead there exists a “power structure of gender”. When individuals participate in activities they also create relations to other people and to the surrounding world. “Without activity - no human relation”, as Nygren writes, “and these human relations, will not arrive by air. They create, maintain, change and ‘become extinct’ only as a result of the actions that build up these activities through which people involve each other as important objects for their needs” (Knutagård 2003:11).

### **2.1.3 Socialization**

Vygotsky claims that, “the history of the process of *the internalization of social speech* is also the history of the socialization of children’s practical intellect” (1978:27). Therefore, he continues, the “cultural development appears twice: first, on a social level, and later, on the individual level; first *between* people (interpsychological), and then *inside* the child (intrapsychological)” (1978:57). Nygren describes the socialization as a two-sided process where the individual “steps into” the society through different activities in order to through these sub-activities step into the society. At the same time the society “establishes itself” in the individual through the same activities (1999:134-135).

In all activities there is “survival value” and in order to gain this value, the individual has to submit to the rules, values and norms that are valid in these activities. To reach this “survival value” the individual has to learn survival strategy by developing an action competency. So in other words Nygren claims that *the socialization, to a certain extent, requires submission to some specific activity rules and norms in order to be able to qualify oneself to certain competencies with survival value*. This submission is also valid for the construction of gender. The Swedish anthropologist Jesper Fundberg (2003), who studied boy’s soccer, found that the boys as a part of the soccer team also learned an order of gender, where men are superior to women and heterosexual are to homosexual and the white majority is superior to the ethnic minority. Through the soccer training this gender construction also became “written” into the body and became personal action competencies prior to upcoming matches. As Fundberg continued, “through repetition the competency to act is created before matches. The body

should know what it should do in different situations without that the boys have to think, the leaders and players reasoning” (2003:192). According to CHAT the socialization process go along with the individualization process.

## **2.2 Developing a personal action competencies**

In order to describe personal action competencies are developed we have to very briefly explain some of the main concepts of a CHAT perspective, namely; needs, motives and emotions.

### **2.2.1 Needs**

The main force behind our participation in activities, according to Nygren, is the need for a feeling of belonging and of fellowship. The needs according to CHAT emerge when people participate in activities and these needs are always connected to certain objects that fulfil their needs. Nygren (1999) talks about three levels of human needs. The first level consists of *vital survival needs*, like oxygen in order to live. Second level is *developed needs which are biological rooted*, like the need to drink, but we do not specifically need to drink Coca Cola. Finally the third level is *exclusively developed needs*, like driving speedy cars. Needs are partly conditions for people to step into the different activities and partly manoeuvring in the activities. The needs also give meaning to the activity. Looking into the phenomenon of anti-gay violence we have to look into the individual’s needs.

### **2.2.2 Motives**

Out of a CHAT perspective we understand an activity through its motives. Motives are generated from our participation in different activities. They are like mental and emotional reflections of activities. Experiences are stored mentally as guidelines for similar or other activities. Our motives are ordered hierarchically and they are activated if they are “on the top” of the hierarchy of our motives and relevant for the situation. They can also be activated from a situation that emerges from the social context in a concrete situation.

Motives could be divided into *in-order-to* motives and *because-of* motives; they can be both *in-spite-of* and *for-that-reason*. A push and pull metaphor could be used to explain this. Because-of motives are like push factors based on history, we do it for somebody or

something has told us to do so. In-order-to motives are like pull factors; we do it in order to reach somebody or something. The future pulls us forward. Again, in order to understand the phenomenon of anti-gay violence we have to understand the individual's motives.

### **2.2.3 Emotions**

Nygren (1999) regards emotions to be a valuation of the objects that fulfil ones needs characteristics in relation to the individual's own experienced needs. Furthermore, the emotions are valuations of the person themselves and the person's own potential to achieve goal and to satisfy their own needs.

### **2.2.4 The development of personal action competency**

According to the previous discussion I could suggest, based on Nygren (2003) that we develop personal action competencies such as hate crimes by learning how to act in certain situations in relation to specific objects. The action competencies will silently reside in the individual, but when different inner and/or outer circumstances trigger them, they are immediately available. How do you choose our objects? Nygren claims that this is done in four steps. First, the individual participates in an activity where the individual gets her/his need for belonging satisfied. Secondly, the individual wants to be a full, worthy member of the group. Thirdly, that the other people in the activity become important along with the fourth, that the victim of the hate, also becomes an object that fulfils the needs of the individual. The needs that could be satisfied in anti-gay violence, according to Nygren, are

- the need for belonging, such as in the ideological or male bounding fellowship,
- the need for confirmation of ones own gender identity, for example by uncertainty about it,
- the need for power and control, for example as compensation for powerlessness in other central life areas,
- the need for self worth, such as compensation for a lack of social recognition of one's own competencies with survival values in central life areas, and
- finally, sexual need, which has developed in a twisted way.

The object that fulfils one's need or the object of hate is always connected with emotions. The emotional charging occurs, according to Nygren (2003), first through the activities the individual participates in. Secondly the individual can eventually seek out a concrete person representing the abstract object of hate and emotionally charge both the object and the context

where the encounter takes place. Finally, the charging can be done through all experiences with the representatives of the objects of hate “filtered” through the personal action competencies “emotional” and “theoretical” glasses.

The process begins when the personal action competencies have become mobilized in a social context that contains an action provocation. Secondly when the individual perceives one or more suitable object that fulfils her/his needs is available and finally when the risk for discovery and consequences are minimal. Let us now look at my findings where the personal action competencies have been triggered to produce anti-gay violence.

### **3. The phenomenon**

Since the field is so extensive I decided to restrict the foundation of analysis in the report to 15 courts verdicts (of which 14 were guilty verdicts), one police report and four structured interviews. From these 20 cases I attempted to investigate both perpetrators and victims in order to find some clue to the phenomena hate crimes against homosexuals. While doing so I also did comparisons with three other researchers in the field; Stephen Tomsen (2002), *Hatred, Murder and Male Honour. Anti-homosexual Homicides in New South Wales, 1980–2000*, Eva Tiby (1999), *Hatbrott? Homosexuella kvinnors och mäns berättelser om utsatthet för brott*, and Colin Morrison and Andrew MacKay (2000), *The experience of violence and harassment of gay men in the city of Edinburgh*. Going over the cases I found some themes that were prevalent in most of them. In this short abstract I will refer primarily to the case described in the beginning involving the hockey player.

#### **3.1 Age, gender and ethnic background**

When I looked into age, gender and ethnic background in the court verdicts I found first that both the victim and perpetrator were men. Nearly all of them included the component of tension between a younger man as perpetrator and an older man as victim (confirmed also by Tomsen, Tiby and Morrison & MacKay). The phenomenon is something between men, which could have something to do with power/powerlessness. In the case of the hockey player the perpetrator is younger and also born in Finland. It looked like the tension components sometimes put the ethnic differences in the background and sometimes not, which means that we also have to look at the relationship between majority and minority society in order to understand the phenomena.

#### **3.2 Social identity**

The basic data gives little evidence about the perpetrators social identities; it looks like they are outside the labour market, some are students, while most are unemployed or criminals. The victims come from a wide variety of social classes and environments and they all seem to be integrated into the society with jobs, etc. The hockey player had job and career but the 19 year old was unemployed. It appears that there is tension between the victims, who are connected to society through work and the perpetrators who are not. It looks like the

phenomenon anti-gay violence seems to have a dimension of exclusion and inclusion in the society.

### **3.3 Gender**

Since my basic data is dominated by men, it appears that the notion of masculinity has a crucial signification for understanding the phenomenon of anti-gay violence. I had the help of Robert W. Connell's *The men and the boys* (2000) and *Maskuliniteter* (1999) when I studied the perpetrators gender. Connell asserts that we have to talk about multiple masculinities not just masculinity, since different cultures and historical times construct gender differently. For many current, as well as historical societies, homosexuality is incompatible with the normative masculinity. We are able to trace through Vygotsky's findings that different cultures with different levels of progress can exist in the same area. Connell also claims that these masculinities do not exist side-by-side, but there are defined social relations between them. Some of them are dominating while others are subordinated or marginalized. Connell writes; "The dominance of hegemonic masculinity over other forms may be quiet and implicit, but may also be vehement and violent, as in case of homophobic violence" (2000:11). So we have to bring in a perspective of **hierarchy and hegemony** to the phenomenon. Connell argues that the masculinities have an existence beyond the individuals; in other words, we can see them as a pattern of **collective masculinities**. Connell writes," Masculinities, are defined collectively in culture, and are sustained in institutions" (2000:11). The hegemonic masculinities fit in well with neo-Nazi ideology, which could predict that the 19 year old is possessed with the values of the hegemonic masculinity.

Connell continues, " We have to regard the **bodies as arenas**, men's bodies are addressed, defined and disciplined, and given outlets and pleasures, by the gender order of society" (2000:12). The masculinities are not static; they are, on the contrary, continuously **actively constructed**. They are "the outcome of intricate and intense manoeuvring in peer groups, classes and adult-child relationships", as Connell put it (2000:12). Another aspect of masculinities is the **internal complexity and contradiction** and this tension is an important source of change. Connell mentions an example of the conflict for a bodybuilder, where they have to be very heterosexual, but in order to make money in order to achieve and maintain the model body they use it in homosexual practice, like photos in gay press etc. Finally Connell thinks that we have to bring in the dynamics of the masculinities, which are in line with CHAT, which claim reformulation due to the cultural historical context. Connell's views

show that we have to have a more complex and pluralistic understanding of gender. Regarding gender we find tension between hegemonic masculinities and submissive masculinities, where the first are built on violence in order to be constructed and to rule.

### ***3.4 Sexual identity***

In regard to the perpetrator's sexual identity, all but one claimed to be heterosexual and for the victims', all but one homosexual. The 19 year old, in the case of the hockey player, claims to be heterosexual. There is an ongoing debate about whether the perpetrators have “come out” as homosexuals or not, but nothing in my study, nor in Tomsens, confirm that. Tomsen confirms Connell’s idea that the anti-gay violence is about masculinities, when he writes that; “Masculine heterosexual identity is built around ensuring the sanctity of the body, with rigid limits imposed on circumstances and socially admitted forms of male physical contact. The matter of bodily touching features as a critical aspect of this provocation to violence. The accused in these and other similar cases strongly stresses the treat involved in sexual fondling” (2002:77).

The physical touching was the trigger for the 19 year old to start stabbing the hockey player. When it comes to the victims, the basic data raises an important question about the vulnerability of older homosexual men, especially social isolated, something that also Tomsen noticed (2002:17). One victim in my material is slightly mentally retarded, which highlights the double vulnerability of homosexuals with functional disorders. This double vulnerability could apply as well for homosexuals with ethnic minority backgrounds. Our phenomenon could be described in the tension between heterosexual and homosexual identity and practise.

### ***3.5 Previous criminality***

When I focused on earlier criminality I found that seven perpetrators had previous criminal records, three of them none and in ten cases we don’t know. Of those perpetrators who have a criminal record, all have been charged for violence before. In Tomsens study 40% of the perpetrators where known for violence, had a criminal history or had been in jail. Our 19 year old has a criminal record and has therefore had the opportunity to “learn” violence or has learned personal action competencies of violence. In other words, he has made a personal development towards anti-gay violence. There were no records for the victims. The tension is between those who have been there, seen it and done it and those who have not.

### **3.6 Known/unknown**

A question often raised is if they are known/unknown to each other. In two thirds of the cases I studied, the perpetrator and victims were unknown to each other. The same figures are found in Tomsen, Tiby and Morrison & MacKay. You could characterize the victims as having an ability to make contact with a stranger. In a way they “know” the person, but in our cases they “knew” wrong. The fact that the perpetrators in 2/3 of the cases do not know the victims could be a sign that they chose to regard them as objects that fulfil their needs, such as their needs to construct themselves as a special type of masculinity.

### **3.7 Place**

Another question is at what place the phenomenon of anti-gay violence take place? The material shows two main areas, at home and in public. In Tomsen’s study, 43% of homicides were at the victim’s or the perpetrator’s apartment, and 41% in public places. Tiby and Morrison & MacKay have similar figures. Studying the cases it appears that the perpetrators have knowledge about both the homosexual arena and what kind of activity that goes on there before they enter the beat. It is not a new territory for them; instead it looks like a neighbour’s backyard. The perpetrators have developed personal action competencies to manoeuvre in these areas. It seems like they enter the homosexual areas in order to satisfy some kind of need. Is that the need of constructing their masculinity? A construction that requires violence? This could be contrasted with the court’s view of the perpetrator- that they have acted out of a “sudden and intense violent aggression”. The victims are characterized by being at known places.

### **3.8 Number**

In 11 of the 19 crime cases in my material has been carried out by more than one perpetrator at the crime scene. So the number of the perpetrators seems important. Tomsen claims that we have to look upon the group attack as a “group production of masculine identity among the perpetrators” (2000:46). Leontiev introduced the division of labour as a fundamental historical process and with that the division between the individual action and the collective activity (Leontiev 1959/1981). Leontiev illustrated this with an example of a collective hunt. In a collective hunt the motives have to be found in the motives of the activity, not within the

individuals. In a collective hunt, a hunter can perform an opposite action, as a beater frightening the game in order to give the other hunters the chance to kill the game. If the hunter would have to hunt alone and from his own motives, such action as chasing away the game would have been meaningless. But Leontiev claims that in a collective activity, like the collective hunt, the individual action becomes reasonable and appropriate, since all the hunters will share the meat. If we focus on the collective activity in the anti-gay violence prevention we are able to recognize all the “hunters” and also recognize the meaning of the individual action. The group does not need to be physically present as I found in the case of the hockey player, they could be present in the 19 year old’s mind. What distinguishes the victims is that they are alone. The tension is between several perpetrators and one victim, which lead me to consider that this might be a joint production of masculine identities. In such case, we have to look into the gender constructing activities of the society in order to find our phenomenon.

### ***3.9 Affected by alcohol and narcotics***

In the cases we find again tension between the perpetrators and victims regarding the influence of alcohol and narcotics. In these cases the perpetrator seems to be more affected than the victim. You can become violent under the influence, but you can also get under the influence in order to become violent. In the first case you are considered not responsible for your actions, in the other you are. This could be a conscious strategy from the perpetrator in order to receive a lighter verdict. The courts only consider that you can become violent by being under the influence.

### ***3.10 Sexual advance***

A crucial point in the verdicts is the sexual advance. In the case of the hockey player the Supreme Court decided manslaughter instead of murder. The Supreme Court wrote that the 19 year old had been assaulted by a proportionately serious provocation and that this sexual advance, since he was only 19, had put him in a state of uncontrolled rage and that the deadly assault had been carried out while he still was strongly affected by the hockey player’s actions. In other words, the hockey player is to be blamed for his own death. Why did they leave the street and cross the park? In the homosexual world, parks are meeting places for sexual encounters. The 19 year old could not be unaware of this. Maybe he made the sexual advance and proposed crossing the park in order to get to a hidden place for the murder. In

my cases we are able to track the tension between how open for sexual advances the victim was and the active invitation to the sexual advance and the sexual activity of the perpetrators. When the advances are starting to be realized, the perpetrator's honour is assaulted. This leads us to the importance of male honour.

### **3.11 Male honour**

In connection to the sexual advance, the concept of male honour is very important. Tomsen claims that "male honour and the protection of the sanctity of the male body can comprise the critical aspects of motive. This is a key element in the controversy surrounding the use of the homosexual advance defence in criminal trials" (2002:68). The Dutch professor in history Pieter Spierenburg means that violence and honour play a salient roll in the male culture, "for one thing, in societies with pronounced notions of honour and shame, a person's reputation often depends on physical bravery and a forceful response to the insult. Second, notions of honour and shame are characteristically gender related. In almost every society male honour is considered to be quite different from female honour" (1998:2). He continues to claim that honour has at least three layers; "a person's own feeling of self-worth, this person's assessment of his or her worth in the eyes of others, and the actual opinion of others about her or him. The criteria of judgement depend on the sociocultural context" (1998:2).

Moreover, Spierenburg writes that honour can be oriented inward or outward, "associations with the body means being linked to the body's outer appearance in particular. The outside is considered to reflect inner qualities, so appearance takes primacy. Conversely, in its spiritualized form, honour is linked primarily to inner virtues" (1998:5-6). According to Spierenburg, Western Europeans have moved towards the inner honour over the last three hundred years. We have drifted away from "traditional manhood" towards "new masculinities". In line with Spierenburg, we could say that the perpetrators in the material are characterized by an outer honour, while the victims are characterized by an inner honour. It also looks like the perpetrators in the material use their honour as radar in order to find a suitable victim for their gender construction by violence, and a learned personal action competencies are the way they exercise it. The tension is between the honour connected to outer or undemocratic family loyalties based on earlier cultural historical phases, and inner or democratic, based on the modern national state. An outer honour must be constructed and maintained in front of others.

### **3.12 Penetration**

One of the building blocks in the construction of hostility towards homosexuals is the fear of being penetrated. We find in the material that tension is created between an unrealistic and terrible dread of being penetrated based on earlier cultural historical phases, and on the other side an indifference to penetration among the victims.

### **3.13 Violence**

When I looked into the **violence** of anti-gay violence I had help from Mogens Møllers (2000) text *I fars vold*. The author is a well-known researcher who writes under the pseudonym of Mogens Møller. He describes violence out of CHAT and different perspectives which are useful tools for us in our analysis of the perpetrators. First, Møller claims that violence always has an **aspect of power**. Violence does not exist in a vacuum, but is always exercised by somebody and against somebody or something. Secondly, Møller considers that **physical violence** can be understood as violence against the body as well as against property and material things. **Mental violence** Møller thinks often gets confused with social violence. For him, mental violence is a violence that has the victim's mental condition, emotions and cognitive activities as direct or indirect target. The **structural and social violence** is on the other hand violence that in an unnecessary way decreases people's life and life quality. Social violence, according to Møller, is a question of methods or reign techniques for sorting, dissociation and to create social hierarchies.

Finally, Møller talks about **symbolic violence and dominion**, where the symbolic violence is "power to construct the reality or ones own experience of reality" (2000:63). In the material appears that the homicide is the culmination of different kinds of violence against homosexuals. The perpetrators have done mental, social and symbolic violence before they exercise physical violence. Maybe it is a personal trajectory of action competencies for anti-gay violence? I found the phenomenon of anti-gay violence there is a tension between the violent tendencies of the perpetrators and lack of violence associated with the victims.

### **3.14 The encounter**

In the courts there was a discussion about if the violence of the encounter was spontaneous or planned. In the material it looks like the perpetrator already has practiced how to behave in an

encounter with homosexuals, which implies that the encounter could be planned. Referring to our other findings, this encounter is also necessary for the construction of gender. I got an inkling that the victims seem to have taken their chance for a sexual meeting and do not seem forced to do so. It looks like the tension is between the perpetrators planned and necessary activities and the victims spontaneous and voluntary.

### ***3.15 Selling or buying sex***

When it comes to selling or buying sex there were are complexities. In one case it is obvious, and in two cases it is implied that the perpetrator was selling sex. Tomsen claims in his study that anti-gay violence “is typical attacks exercised by poor youth and male prostitutes who blackmail or steal from homosexual victims and who find support for the criminal activity in the societies anti homosexual ideology” (2000:10). The victims in my material fall into two groups; older men who are subjects for younger men who sell sex, and the men who sell sex. If we look upon those who sell and buy sex as a marginalized group we find tension between the majority and the minority.

### ***3.16 Neo-Nazi or right extreme ideology***

An interesting perspective on the phenomenon is the existence of Neo-Nazi, or extreme right ideology. According to a professor in history and expert on Neo-Nazi in Sweden Helené Lööw, the Neo-Nazi’s are men who love men without sex, the male bonding, in a world without women. They think homosexuality is an invention by the Jews and the homosexuals are paedophiles which triggers a merciless hate. In none of the cases in my material where it was obvious, was the perpetrator found guilty of Neo-Nazi or right extremist activity (which could have been possible in Sweden and had made the sentence harder). In some of the court verdicts they did mention a prevalence of sympathy for Neo-Nazis by the perpetrator. The courts find it difficult to connect these sympathies to the violence towards the homosexual.

All my interviews gave a unanimous answer about the process of becoming a Neo-Nazi. The origin is in the feeling of being violated that young people experience during and after having being robbed. To add insult to injury, the young people know that the filing of a police report seldom, if ever, results in a conviction. In 80% of robbery cases is it immigrant young people who rob ethnic Swedish young people, according to social worker Ann Hellströmmer, at the support centre for young crime victims in Stockholm. Hellströmmer explains that the young

boys who have been robbed take different paths, some get support and help to talk about it, and others can rationalize it, while some get connected with the Neo-Nazis.

The contact is usually made when the offended looks up the Neo-Nazi's websites. Then the Neo-Nazis invite him to the group, pick him up and bring him along. In the fellowship he is needed and he starts to feel like somebody. Violence is only one part of the package, but he will soon learn personal skills or actions competencies how to use violence as a means/method. From the beginning he will mainly have a feeling of indifference against homosexuals, not hate. Since he needs (motivation) the fellowship (activity) and learns that the group highly appreciates (demanding structure) that the members exercise act of violence against homosexuals. For example the member who comes back to the group and claims "I have beaten up a fag", are cheered by the others with "You are good!" The boy will learn how to receive this positive attention (survival strategies) and by doing so, he will also receive the personal action competency of beating up homosexuals. The trigger is in the social group that legitimizes the violence and the group fellowship motivates him. In the fellowship you have to learn by acquiring a personal action competency, where anti-gay violence is one part. And so it goes around.

Furthermore, you develop with your peers and you construct your gender and honour in front of your peers. The 19 year old knew the young man who tortured and killed a young ethnic boy named John Hron at Kode. That young murderer was a friend of the 17 year old who killed an artist in Gothenburg together with a 24 year old, who in his had killed a man he thought was homosexual outside a bar (Jesús Alcalá DN 970917). They all have Neo-Nazi sympathies, they have all read the book "For an increase violence against homosexuals", which the 24 year old had written, but the courts take no notice of this.

### ***3.17 Mental disorder***

Another question is if the perpetrators have a mental disorder. When the courts focus on the perpetrator's personal mental disorder, they individualize the problem and take away the possibility to see the violence against homosexuals as a part of a human activity. Furthermore, it does not only take away the perpetrators responsibility, but also the community's and the society's responsibility in total. Maybe it is a conscious strategy.

### **3.18 Report**

Anti-gay violence has a very low reporting rate. According to other studies, like Tiby and Morrison & MacKay, and my own material it seems there are a large number of cases that are never reported. So we find tension between a high vulnerability for crime and a low police reporting.

### **3.19 Sentencing**

Out of the material it is hard to say if the verdict was adequate or not. According to Tomsen, “it is apparent that defence arguments about the occurrence of an actual physical homosexual advance have more success when linked to a plea of provocation” (2002:57). He continued with that “some suggest that successful defence claims about a homosexual advance dignify exaggerated acts of violence which have irrational roots in hatred and ought to be rejected as a community norm” (2002:57). The absence of reporting could be due to the low penalty for the crime. It looks like the courts only go on the facts what happens and have a hard time to verdict any motive of hate crime because of the victim homosexuality.

### **3.20 Theoretical implementation**

If we try to apply Nygren’s reasoning to an anti-gay crime, we can assert that in children’s and young people’s activities, such as family, school, sport, leisure time etc., there are demanding structures that by necessity force them to develop specific action competencies in order to survive. Even if, from a CHAT perspective, there is always a possibility for the individual to transcend the activities structures and borders. For some children and young people the result of the demanding structure is the development of a hostility or hate against homosexuals, for others not. The same applies within their peer-groups.

For the 19 year old the gender construction through violence has been developed as a result of development of specific action competencies as a part of the creation of certain masculinities, with important concepts as male honour, male culture and male hegemony. The young man’s learning, to an action competencies, take place in everyday activities and in defined cultural historical and social context. When he carries out the anti-gay action he also at the same time constructs his heterosexual gender as a part of his personal development, applauded by the members of the same cultural group of which he is also a member.

Therefore, it becomes necessary not only to focus on the individual, but also focus on what it is in her or his social activity system that requires this competency. Nygren's (2004) notion *actions competencies* are therefore of tremendous help when we analyze the anti-gay violence and implement preventions strategies.

### 3.21 Summing-up

In order to make the finding in material easier to overview I made following table.

	<b>Perpetrator/perpetrators</b>	<b>Victim</b>
<i>Gender, age, ethnicity</i>	White younger male	White older male
<i>Social identity</i>	Outside labour market	Inside labour market
<i>Social gender</i>	Hegemonic masculinities build on violence	Subordinated masculinities
<i>Sexual identity</i>	Heterosexual	Homosexual
<i>Previous criminality</i>	Experience/action competency	No experience
<i>Known/unknown</i>	Unknown subject	"Known" subject
<i>Place</i>	"Neighbour backyard"	Home ground
<i>Number</i>	Several	Alone
<i>Influence</i>	More influenced on drugs	Less influenced on drugs
<i>Sexual advance</i>	Makes the sexual advance	Open to the sexual advance
<i>Male honour</i>	External honour	Internal honour
<i>Penetration</i>	Acceptable reproductive penetration/ gender power order	Unacceptable not reproductive penetration / powerlessness
<i>Violence</i>	Present	Absent
<i>Encounter</i>	Planned / necessary	Spontaneous / voluntary
<i>Report</i>	High exercising of violence	Low reporting of violence

Based on my material I have come to the conclusion that the phenomenon of anti-gay violence could be formulated as:

**Young peoples' gender construction through violence in the encounter between members of majority and minority cultures in different cultural historical contexts.**

I also formulated a working definition of hate crime against homosexuals.

**A perception of the heterosexual group's superiority and a belief that there exist biological and cultural differences between people with different sexual orientations provide the main motivating factors that allow them to assign different values to people, more and less worthy. This means that by considering oneself as more worthy as an individual, a group or a society, gives them the right to develop and use personal action competencies to oppress, exploit, control or extinguish other sexual orientation than the normative heterosexual.**

With this in mind let very briefly look into what we are able to do to prevent and counteract anti-gay violence.

## 4. On our way to design a prevention programme

When we have found out that anti-gay violence is young peoples' gender construction through violence in the encounter between members of majority and minority cultures in different cultural historical contexts, how do we design a prevention programme for that?

### 4.1 Operative activity model

I have constructed following operative activity model, which can be used for a practical prevention work against anti-gay violence, but also as an aid while analyzing it. The model shows the relation between the actual crime, the triggering action, the previous activity and the underlying causes of needs and motives (illustration 2).

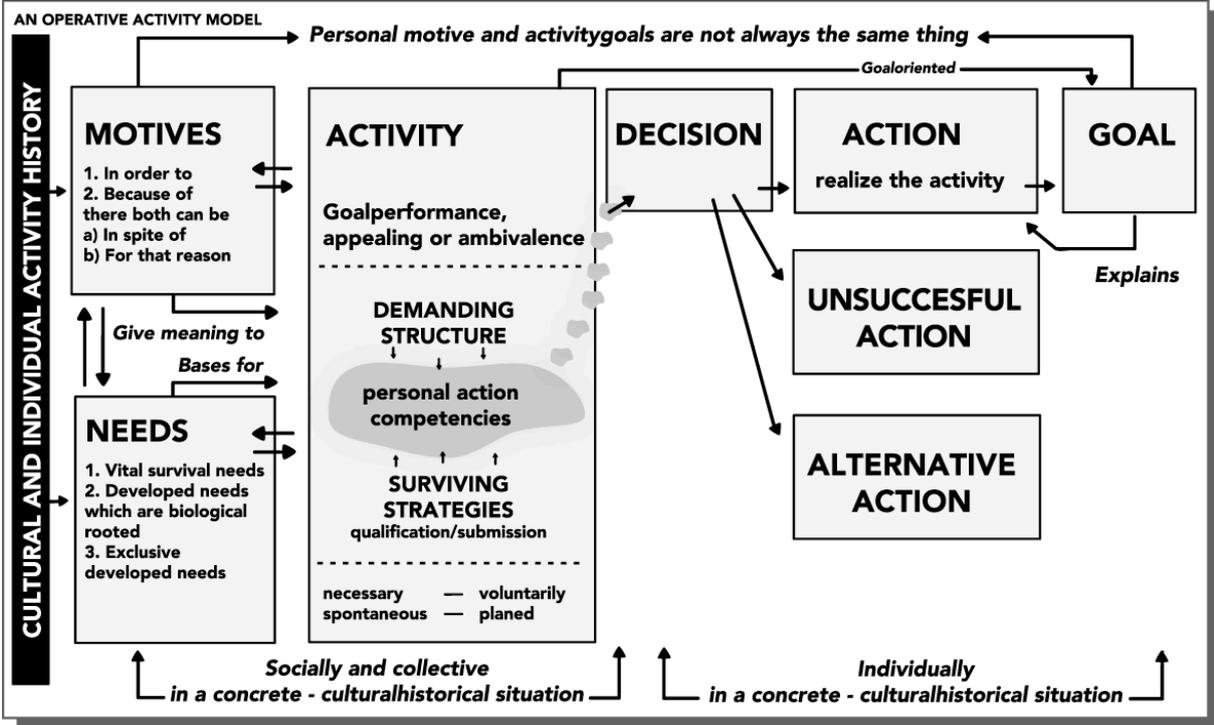


Illustration 2. An operative activity model. Source Knutagård 2003.

When we look upon the **goal**, the dead homosexual, we see the **result of the action**. The goal becomes a statistic, homicide of one homosexual. The goal explains the action, but gives no references to the process that has led up to the action. When we look at the action “to be killed by somebody”, we cannot draw any conclusion from just that fact if this criminal action was a manifestation of bullying, robbery, crime of passion, homophobia or racism. In order to understand that, we have to understand the **activity** that leads up to the action. The action is

only *a point* that precedes the goal, but it realizes the activity. We mostly recognize the successful action, but there could also be an **unsuccessful action**, like if the hockey player would not follow into the park. There could also be an **alternative action**, like the 19 year old decided there and then, to leave the skinhead group he belonged to. The focus on the action doesn't give any clue why the perpetrator being on the crime scene precedes being somewhere else. A one-sided focus on the action takes us away from understanding the activity and that the activity tries to communicate something to us. Instead we have to focus on the activity or activities that lead up to the action, or in other words the activity/activities that trigger the personal action competencies.

For example the murder of the hockey player appears to be an **action regarding the goal**, but an **activity regarding the motive**. To kill the hockey player is an **individual decision** and has emerged out of the 19 year old's individually developed action competencies, within a **cultural and individual activity history**. However, the underlying **motives** for the 19 year old are as well as the activity socially and collective, in a concrete cultural historical situation. These motives could be **in-order-to** or **because-of**, there both can be **in-spite-of** or **for-that-reason**. The basis for the activity is the 19 year old's **needs**, and I have already given some examples, where the most predominating is the feeling of belonging.

Everybody in the activity does not have to be goal target, but at least one has to be, in order for the activity to exist. Participating in an activity could be as a part of goal performance, but it could also be with appeal, that you participate in the activity in order to get help for something else, mostly unconscious. You can also participate with ambivalence that you both want and do not want. Both types of participation have to be focused on in the prevention work and both concepts are well described in Hammerlin & Enerstvedt's (1988) text about suicide.

As we already mentioned the activities can be split up in **necessary** or **voluntary** and **spontaneous** or **planned**. If we look at the anti-gay violence out of young people's gender construction by violence it is very likely that the activity we are talking about is necessary and planned. If they are necessary and planned it gives us a good opportunity to make preventions strategies that target these demanding structures. The focus for prevention work should be these **demanding structures** of the activity system, which encourage the **surviving**

**strategies** to give a **personal action competency** of anti-gay violence. Activity system in this regard could be the family, the group, the community, the society or all of them.

The whole activity system is connected with **communication**, which means that if we want to understand the anti-gay violence we have to understand it, with Møller's words, "both as speech about violence and violence as speech" (2000:131). When we understand the activity as communication, we are also able to understand it as the activity of gender construction, which it is indeed.

#### ***4.2 We have to prevent and counteract the development of young people's action competencies to a gender construction through violence/anti-gay violence.***

We have to give young people conditions for a democratic development of their gender along with supporting social context. The main area is the school and working places, but the whole society has to be involved. A good example is Anders Minken's The Motorsports Program 2&4, in Norway, which he have described in his text *Serious fun* (1998).

#### ***4.3 We have to reduce and eliminate the existence of such action competencies.***

A good and reductive work is done by intervention in selective activities. We have to influence the demanding structures in the activities of the society that force individual to develop action competencies, where the base is a gender construction through violence.

#### ***4.4 We have to prevent and counteract young people's gender construction through "violent activities", that will say the triggering of the action competencies via a form of a violent activity.***

We have to work both with situational crime prevention, in the physical context and with social prevention, with the physical person.

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