

## Women in the Malestream Study of Crime: Exploring Three Swedish Journals throughout the Last Century

Robin Camenius & Tua Sandman

**To cite this article:** Robin Camenius & Tua Sandman (2023) Women in the Malestream Study of Crime: Exploring Three Swedish Journals throughout the Last Century, *Women & Criminal Justice*, 33:4, 261-279, DOI: [10.1080/08974454.2021.1958731](https://doi.org/10.1080/08974454.2021.1958731)

**To link to this article:** <https://doi.org/10.1080/08974454.2021.1958731>



© 2021 The Author(s). Published with license by Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.



Published online: 11 Aug 2021.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 3003




View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

## Women in the Malestream Study of Crime: Exploring Three Swedish Journals throughout the Last Century

Robin Camenius and Tua Sandman 

Department of Criminology, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden

### ABSTRACT

The present article seeks to add further empirical nuance and specification to ongoing debates on the androcentric biases of historical and present research on crime. Using a mixed-methods design, it examines gender differences in theorizing and how women are represented in Swedish crime-related research between 1920 and 2015. On the one hand, the quantitative analysis reveals that explanations and proposed solutions to crime are more gender-neutral than previous research tends to suggest. On the other hand, the qualitative analysis uncovers how women are rendered visible almost exclusively in discussions on crime that concern issues linked to the body, sex and sexuality, or victimhood and vulnerability. Generally, in the Swedish context, characterized by the establishment of a strong welfare state, women and women's criminality have primarily been given relevance in the context of larger socio-economic problems and/or reforms.

### KEYWORDS

Feminist criminology;  
gender differences;  
historical criminology; in/  
visibility; offending women

Despite the long-standing efforts of feminist criminologists to uncover the gender bias of past and present research, the question of criminology's androcentrism remains a central issue for feminist criminologists to this day (Chanser, 2016). For one thing, this field of research has demonstrated the underrepresentation of women as research subjects (Hannon & Dufour, 1998; Hughes, 2005; Naffine 1981/2016; Sharp & Hefley, 2007). Extensive critique has also been raised at how explanations of women's offending historically have focused on psychological and biological shortcomings (Belknap, 2014; Omodei, 1981/2016; Windschuttle, 1981/2016; Zedner 1991). Others have pointed out how empirical research has assumed that women's offending was sexual in nature (Klein, 1973; Minaker, 2006; Shover & Norland, 1978; Triplett & Myers, 1995) and still others have revealed stereotypical representations of women in criminological literature (Comack, 2006; Garrison et al., 1992; Klein, 1995; Smart, 1995; Wilson & Rigsby, 1975; Wright, 1987, 1992). Feminist criminology has also pointed to how particular notions of gender, in effect, underpin the regulation of criminal law and judicial practice, for example in relation to social control in penal and semi-penal regimes (Barton, 2005; Belknap 2014; Bosworth, 2000; Chesney-Lind & MacDonald, 2001; Ericsson & Jon, 2006; Hannah-Moffat, 2006; Jon, 2014; Zedner, 1991).

The aim of the present study is to further advance the study of gender biases in criminological research, by shedding light on historical writings on crime-related issues in a Swedish context. Specifically, it seeks to add empirical nuance and specification to our understanding of how women's crimes have been made intelligible (as compared to men's) and of how women have been rendered in/visible. As part of a research project aimed at better understanding the social

**CONTACT** Tua Sandman  [tua.sandman@criminology.su.se](mailto:tua.sandman@criminology.su.se)  Department of Criminology, Stockholm University, Sweden.

© 2021 The Author(s). Published with license by Taylor & Francis Group, LLC.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

construction of gender and crime through a historical lens – which previously has explored media representation over time (Estrada et al., 2019; Sandman, 2021), and historical crime statistics and the declining gender gap (Estrada et al., 2016) – the article examines the representation of women and the presence of gendered theoretical explanations in Swedish research on crime-related issues over the years 1920 to 2015. The study fills an empirical gap in relation to the study of how women and crime have been discussed in Swedish academic and professional journals over the course of a century.

Part I offers a quantitative and comparative analysis. It addresses the following questions: What gender differences and similarities appear throughout the century, in terms of i) use of explanatory frameworks and ii) proposed solutions to crime? What criminal offenses are the focal point when men and women, respectively, are brought to attention? And additionally, does the attention given to criminal women change over time? If so, how?

Subsequently, part II – which offers a qualitative analysis of historical writings on women and crime – addresses the question: When and how are women brought to light in publications on crime-related issues? Part II examines in what ways the female subject is rendered in/visible through analytical inclusion and marginalization, and in representations related to crime and deviance. Additionally, it attempts to bring forward *when*, in what context, women are given relevance.

## PREVIOUS RESEARCH AND THE CASE OF SWEDEN

The study engages with feminist scholarly discussions on the study of crime and deviance, particularly previous research on the lack of interest in women as an object of study and on how gendered explanations and solutions have dominated the field. The study is informed by the assumption that gender, as a social construct, is embedded in practice and language (Renzetti, 2013), permeating the workings of social relations and institutions, thus invariably reproducing gender roles and relations (Risman, 2004; Risman & Davis, 2013). Accordingly, no institution, social relation or scientific debate can ultimately be free of gendered notions. However, the extensive time span covered in this study requires us to consider how our understanding of criminal behavior is contingent over time and how gendered notions that inform scholarly debate and professional practice gradually change. For example, the outlook on women's role in society has undergone profound changes throughout the last century (Hirdman, 2003), and our common understanding of the harmfulness of violent and sexual crimes have also developed over time (e.g. Camenius, 2018; von Hofer, 2011). Hence, this study of a century of research on crime-related issues naturally reflects such developments, as certain behaviors have been criminalized (e.g. drug offenses), whereas others have been decriminalized (e.g. abortion). With regard to these issues, Sweden could be considered a critical case for the study of gender biases, as the country today is considered one of the most gender-equal in the world. However, Sweden does not necessarily stand out from a historical viewpoint. Instead, as a historical case, Sweden is particularly interesting to explore as it reflects the development of a strong welfare state, a social culture of equality and a comparatively lenient penal philosophy compared to, e.g., the United States (Pratt, 2008a). Thus, given its distinct and different socio-political setting, Sweden (and the Scandinavian context more generally) serves as a relevant point of reference in the broader and international study of the role of women in the so-called 'malestream' study of crime. In particular, the historical and empirical exploration of the study reveals how criminal women are understood by experts and social scientists speaking from the viewpoint of 'a pragmatic and nonmoralistic approach', which are considered typical to the welfare states in the Nordic region (Lappi-Seppälä & Tonry, 2011: 24, see also Pratt, 2008a, 2008b).

Essentially, the study speaks to the feminist engagement with criminology and particularly two strands within this field. First, the discussion on how explanations and proposed solutions to

crime are gendered, and second, the discussion on the invisibility and stereotypical representation of women in criminological thought. While the study is inspired by feminist theorizing and feminist engagement with criminology, it seeks to complement previous observations and conclusions. It maps out differences *as well as* similarities in how offenses conducted by women and men are explained and/or theorized in historical writings related to crime, which add nuance to prevalent discussions on gendered explanations and solutions (e.g. Cook, 2016; Feeley & Aviram, 2010; Zedner, 1991). Additionally, it summarizes and analyzes the concrete ways in which women have been made in/visible in historical writings related to crime. As such, it adds further empirical specification to existing research. In the following subsections, previous research on, first, gendered explanations and solutions and, second, the making in/visible of women will be discussed in more detail.

### ***Gendered Explanations and Solutions?***

Feminist scholars have criticized criminology for its gender bias and lack of representations of women (Chesney-Lind & Chagnon, 2016; Heidensohn, 1985; 2012). This critique has focused on gender differences in criminological theorizing; women have historically been viewed through a biological and psychological framework, leaving greater theoretical variance to the understanding of men's crime (Klein, 1973; Naffine, 1981/2016; Windschuttle, 1981/2016). This has, according to Omodei (1981/2016), meant that stereotypical assumptions on women and gender roles have become ingrained in criminological thinking.

The feminist critique of criminological thought has taken different expressions. For example, historically-oriented studies have demonstrated differences in how criminal women and men have been understood and treated within the criminal justice system (Barton, 2005; Ericsson & Jon, 2006; Hannah-Moffat, 2006; Jon, 2014). By tracing the theoretical development over time, historical studies of criminological thinking have shown that a Lombrosian perspective influenced the understanding of women's crime long after it was discredited in the light of men's crime. Whereas a wealth of theories were available in consideration of men's criminality, explanations for women's criminality were, long into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, more restricted to biological and psychological explanations (Zedner, 1991; see also Naffine, 1981/2016). That the theorizing on women's criminality was stunted in this manner, Zedner (1991: 342ff) attributes to contemporary assumptions on the nature and sexuality of women. Others have examined and challenged these claims of sexist, stereotypical and one-sided treatment of women in criminological theory. For instance, Steffensmeier and Clark (1980) looked at gender differences in explanations in criminology textbooks between 1918 and 1965 and found no support for the claim of an overrepresentation of psychological and biological explanatory models concerning women and crime. Instead, gender differences in crime were commonly explained using sociological or cultural perspectives (Ibid: 253–254).

This study engages in this critique of how theories and explanations are gendered and contributes to this area by quantitatively exploring whether explanations and proposed solutions for men's and women's crimes historically diverge or not in the Swedish context. Part I offers a systematic analysis of explanations and proposed solutions to women's criminality as compared to men, over an extended period of time; it thereto examines gender differences in the types of crime being discussed, and whether the interest in women's criminality alters over time.

### ***The Making In/Visible***

The feminist critique of criminology often highlights that female subjects, perspectives or experiences have been absent in criminological thought. Previous research has focused on the invisibility of women in criminological thinking and the oftentimes stereotypical portrayals of women as

they are brought to attention (e.g. Belknap, 2014; Klein, 1995; Smart, 1995; Wright, 1987; 1992). Scholars have uncovered how women are marginalized as research subjects in criminological journals. For instance, Hannon and Dufour (1998) compared the number of articles that included women in 1974–1978 and 1992–1996. Although they found an increase, male-only samples were overall much more prevalent. In another study, Sharp and Hefley (2007) examined major criminology journals in the United States 2000–2004 and found limited research interest in women’s offending, with nearly 85% of articles using ‘traditional approaches of focusing only on men, ignoring gender, or controlling for the effects of gender’ (p. 11). Underrepresentation of women in criminological research was also noted by Hughes (2005) in a study of American and British journals between 1895 and 1997. Likewise, in surveying criminological textbooks published 1956–1965 and 1981–1990, Wright (1992; see also Wilson & Rigsby, 1975; Garrison et al., 1992) showed both sparse coverage of women, in both periods, as well as sexist themes when women *were* discussed. Furthermore, Baro and Eigenberg (1993, see also Dorworth & Henry, 1992) examined images in criminological textbooks published 1988–1991. The study, which Love and Park (2013) replicated with regards to 2008–2012 with similar results, found underrepresentation of women as offenders and an overrepresentation of women as victims.

Scholars have further noticed a tendency in criminological theorizing to generalize findings from male-only samples (Fontaine et al., 2009; Naffine & Gale, 1989; Simpson et al., 2008). Feminist criminologists have also pointed to the blind spots in traditional theorizing and to how women *could* have been included (Chesney-Lind & Chagnon, 2016; Cook, 2016). During the 1970s and 1980s, the inclusion of women in samples grew more common in trying to test whether general theories held in relation to women’s offending (Messerschmidt, 1995). This ‘add women and stir’ method (see Klein, 1995: 218) has according to feminist scholars resulted in inclusion of women in a shallow manner (Hannon & Dufour, 1998; Kruttschnitt, 1996; Sharp & Hefley, 2007). In response to this issue, feminist criminologists call for a more in-depth inclusion of women as research subjects by considering the contextual specificities surrounding women’s pathways into crime (Chesney-Lind, 1989; Chesney-Lind & Morash, 2013; Daly & Chesney-Lind, 1988).

This study seeks to advance the discussion on the invisibility and representation of women in criminological thought by mapping out *when* and *how* women are made invisible and, in turn, visible in research on crime-related issues. While, as Sharp and Hefley (2007:15) point out, previous research has focused on major first-tier journals, it remains to be seen whether less affluent journals with a closer connection to practitioners devote efforts to women’s criminality. Given the fact that men are overrepresented in criminal activity, it is hardly surprising that women are less visible in historical writings on crime-related issues. Thus, the present study does not seek to establish the invisibility of women *per se*, but to examine the *ways* in which women are rendered invisible, and to map out how the female subject is represented when she indeed is brought to attention.

## MATERIAL AND METHOD

The study scrutinizes three journals, which, respectively, cover the periods 1920–1975, 1925–2015, and 1950–2015. Given the extended period, the study used a sample covering every fifth yearly volume of each journal starting with the earliest observation in 1920. The material consists of 203 texts in total, all dealing with issues related to crime and deviance (see [Appendix](#)).<sup>1</sup>

First, the journal *Barnavård & ungdomsskydd* [Children’s Care & Youth Protection] started as a journal for practitioners working with poor relief and children’s care but focused its efforts in the 1920s to spreading information and guidelines to social workers, especially on issues

---

<sup>1</sup>Only texts in Swedish were included in the sample.

concerning youth social services. The examined period 1920–1975<sup>2</sup> contains 12 volumes with 58 texts relating to crime. After 1975, the journal shifted its editorial focus to such an extent that it no longer could be considered to represent the study of crime. Second, *Socialmedicinsk tidskrift* [Journal of Social Medicine] has, since its inception in 1924, focused on social, medical and health-related issues, inviting specialists from other fields (academic, political or otherwise) to join discussions and improve the workings of health and medical services in Sweden. The examined period 1925–2015 contains 19 volumes with 90 texts relating to crime. Lastly, *Nordisk Tidsskrift for Kriminologisk Videnskap* [Nordic Journal of Criminal Science] engages in criminological queries in a Nordic context. The authors are primarily legal scholars and criminologists, but also politicians, policemen or other professionals active in the field of crime and punishment. The examined period 1950–2015 contains 14 volumes with 55 texts relating to crime.

These journals are considered to represent contemporary spaces for debate on crime-related issues in Sweden; two are produced by and explicitly speak to practitioners in the field, whereas the third explicitly represents an academic journal. Evidently, the journals span over different periods and address different professions; they cover research debates on social medicine, social work and criminology. As such, the journals are important as sites for knowledge dissemination within particular professions and research fields. It has been an empirical question which journals that historically have covered crime-related discussions in Sweden; as it turned out, these three could be said to cover topics related to crime. Criminology is a relatively new discipline in the Swedish context;<sup>3</sup> hence, prior to the establishment of the Nordic Journal of Criminal Science in 1949, crime-related topics were discussed elsewhere. Given the research problem of the article, a selection criterion has been that the journals discuss crime in such a substantial manner that the publications *theorize* crime, meaning that they include discussions on *explanations* and *solutions* to crime. Based on this criterion, some journals have been discarded, for instance, the Swedish journal on law (*Svensk Juristtidning*, established in 1916). The aim of the article is not to compare the three journals; rather the ambition has been to cover the last century's discussion on crime-related issues in Sweden.

Quantitatively, each journal has been coded using the same coding scheme. To be included in the sample, the text had to contain topics directly related to the issue of crime, which means that the material deals with a wide range of topics and criminal offenses. The coding scheme reveals i) what type of crime the text discusses, ii) with what explanatory framework the crime is explained, and iii) what solution to crime is proposed. The coding scheme also reveals which sex the text focuses on, allowing for gender comparisons regarding the variables listed above (i–iii). The coding process (*quantitative beginnings*) provided an opportunity to distinguish and collect texts that elaborated on women and crime; hence, the coding process resulted in a sample of 48 texts for more in-depth analysis (*qualitative openings*). Generally, the findings must be considered in light of the study's research design and selection criteria. The overall objective has been to examine the representation of criminal women in academic and professional journals; accordingly, only texts discussing criminality have been included. Hence, discussions on wayward behavior and deviance, in general, are only included if linked to discussions on criminal behavior. And as the study demonstrates, texts on criminal women have proven rare.

In terms of limitations, the sample does not necessarily represent the last century's discussions on crime in their entirety. Given that texts on criminal women have proven rare, the decision to restrict the sample to every fifth yearly volume may have as a consequence that significant publications have been overlooked. However, the aim has not been to examine the

<sup>2</sup>The journal was first published in 1910 but no relevant texts were found in the publications of 1910 or 1915.

<sup>3</sup>Beginning in 1970, criminological research was conducted at the sociology department at Stockholm University. Sweden's first independent criminological research department was formed in 1987.

entire period in detail, but to chart and uncover dis/continuities in how (criminal) women have been included and discussed in historical writings on crime-related issues in Sweden. As discussed in the conclusion, the study reveals how certain themes and tendencies characterize the period *as a whole*. This suggests that the results follow from a systematic review (as opposed to being random), and therefore are highly relevant for the study of gender biases in criminological research.

### **Quantitative Beginnings: Comparing Explanations, Solutions and Crime Types**

The quantitative analysis is a comparative analysis, which examines the similarities and differences between men and women in terms of how their offending is explained and made relevant in historical writings. First, the study explores explanatory frameworks and proposed solutions to crime (Table 1), and thereafter, it looks at the relative distribution of criminal offenses discussed in the publications (Table 2).

Explanatory frameworks have been categorized as follows. The *psychological* approach stresses psychological measures and diagnostic metrics in understanding and analyzing criminal behavior. In contrast, *social causes* refer to a sociological perspective, where criminality is seen as a result of deficiencies in social or economic resources, or in social relations, the surrounding social milieu and the like. The *biological* position interprets criminality as caused by constitutional factors. The *judicial* approach treats crime as a result of inefficient, inadequate or too lenient criminal legislation, whereas texts categorized as *rational choice* focus on situational factors, such as the motivation or expertise of particular offenders.

The proposed solutions to crime have been categorized into four groups. *Social interventions* refer to treatment, whether psychological or social in nature. This group thus covers non-penal interventions to crime, such as work training. Conversely, *criminal justice* responses include rehabilitation of offenders through prison and other penal measures aimed at delinquents and adults. Texts grouped under *decriminalization* argue that removal of criminal statutes is the proper solution to handling the social problem in question, whereas the category *other* includes miscellaneous proposals, for example calling for more research or a heightened public awareness via societal debate.

Criminal offenses are grouped into the following categories. *Theft* includes theft, burglary and fraud; *violent crimes* include assault and battering; and *sexual crimes* include rape, sexual assault and procuring and purchase of sex. *Murder* includes murder in the first and second degree as well as planning to commit murder. *Drug offenses* refer to both consumption and dealing, and *traffic violations* refer to driving under influence, driving without a license and as well as minor traffic violations. The *other* category includes a range of offenses, such as environmental crimes, computer crimes, corruption, human trafficking, or when 'crime' is mentioned without further specification. Additionally, (criminal) abortion, *lex veneris*<sup>4</sup> and drunkenness are presented as separate categories.

### **Qualitative Openings: Mapping in/Visibilization**

Undoubtedly, the concept of in/visibility is important when discussing research concerning gender and crime. Here we consider in/visibility as an overarching construct relating to the theoretical and empirical blind-spot (or focus) of how a phenomenon is treated in a certain area of research. In terms of how in/visibilization could be observed empirically, we look at the *inclusion* and/or *marginalization* of women in historical writings and the *representation* of women as criminal offenders and women more generally in research on crime-related issues.

---

<sup>4</sup>The criminal offence of knowingly spreading sexually transmitted diseases.

The concepts of marginalization and representation are widely used in the literature dealing with the lack of research on women's crime, yet it is not always clear what these concepts seek to capture. In this study, *marginalization* refers to a relational process where one research focus (here, women's crime) is analytically discarded or diminished – actively or incidentally – in favor of a different focus (e.g. men's crime). The concepts of inclusion and marginalization capture, for instance, how women are included as objects of study in quantitative samples only to be absent in the analysis or discussion, or how women are analytically reduced to a point of comparison to the textual and empirical main attraction: men's crime.

In terms of *representation*, we look at how women (as criminal offenders as well as generally) are portrayed when brought to attention. More specifically, we examine whether it is the problem of criminality that is brought to the fore, or whether other types of inappropriate behavior are foregrounded. We also seek to uncover to what extent the texts are characterized by stereotypical understandings of women, e.g. whether attention is directed toward sexuality, body or the like. In reading and analyzing the material, we have been attentive to the following questions: *How and when are women's crime problematized? What analytical function do women play in historical writings on crime-related issues? What role do women play in narratives on crime? And how are women made visible beyond the role of criminal offenders?* The analytical process has been an abductive and iterative process; thus, the conceptual and analytical focus presented here should be understood as a research result in its own right. Given the striking lack of attention given to women as criminal offenders in historical writings, which has been confirmed in previous research as well as in this study, it is of particular concern to critically examine how 'the female offender', and women more generally, are given meaning when actually brought to attention or when they serve as reference points in stories of 'male crime'. Basically, what does it mean that women are given relevance in specific contexts and debates, and only in relation to particular crimes?

## PART I: GENDERED EXPLANATIONS AND SOLUTIONS?

In this section, we present the results of the quantitative analysis. First, [Table 1](#) shows the gendered use of explanatory frameworks and what solutions to crime authors propose. Second, [Table 2](#) shows the distribution of criminal offenses discussed when the texts focus on women, men or both. Finally, the section ends with a brief note on the interest given to crime and gender over time ([Table 3](#)).

Out of the total 203 texts, 116 concern 'crime in general', i.e. without relating criminality to either gender. Now, of the texts that *do* mention women and/or men, 19 refer to *only* women, 47 to *only* men and 21 focus on both.

In short, when a crime is discussed in relation to gender, much more interest is given to men compared to women. However, we can see gender similarities in the use of explanatory frameworks and proposed solutions. The proportion of psychological and social perspectives remain similar irrespective of gender, yet a biological understanding is more prevalent in texts referring to women, whereas the judicial perspective is more prevalent in texts referring to men. These findings are in line with previous observations that women's criminality has been understood through a biological framework (e.g. Naffine, 1981/2016; Omodei, 1981/2016; Zedner 1991). Nevertheless, the overall impression is that gender differences are meager so far as the choice of explanatory frameworks goes.

When it comes to proposed solutions to crime, the gender differences are marginal. However, decriminalization is only present in texts referring to women's crime, and criminal justice interventions are slightly more prevalent in texts referring to women. In particular, social interventions are *equally* prevalent, which is interesting as this observation diverges



**Table 1.** Explanatory frameworks and proposed solutions to crime, by gender (column percentages).

	Women (%)	Men (%)	Men & women (%)	No gender (%)
<i>Explanatory frameworks</i>				
Psychology	32	38	33	22
Social causes	32	40	43	30
Biology	16	2	0	8
Judicial	0	11	0	9
Rational choice	0	0	10	7
Missing	21	9	14	23
	101	100	100	99
<i>Proposed solutions</i>				
Social intervention	47	47	52	41
Criminal justice	21	15	14	25
Decriminalization	5	0	5	1
Other	5	13	10	8
Missing	21	26	19	26
% (N = 203)	99	101	100	101

**Table 2.** Distribution of criminal offenses discussed in texts on *women, men* or *both*<sup>a</sup>(column percentages).

Crime	Women (%)	Women (both) (%)	Men (%)	Men (both) (%)
Theft	5	45	24	36
Violent crimes	0	18	28	23
Murder	0	3	7	3
Lex veneris	16	3	1	–
Sexual crimes	0	3	20	15
Criminal abortion	68	0	0	0
Drug offenses	5	6	0	5
Traffic violations	0	6	4	5
Drunkenness	5	9	5	8
Other	0	6	9	5
Total % (Observations N = 165)	99	99	98	100

<sup>a</sup>The columns titled 'both' include texts in which women *and* men are discussed. These columns have been separated by gender since the crime types may differ. Example: In Bu 5 (1940), larceny among women, but also men's sexual crimes, are discussed.

from observations in previous research on historical gender-biased practices in the criminal justice system (e.g. Barton, 2005; Ericsson & Jon, 2006; Jon, 2014; Zedner, 1991). However, whereas previous research often focuses on the ideas governing actual practice inside penal or semi-penal institutions, the findings in Table 1 only concern proposed solutions in the academic and professional realm.

Table 2 compares the distribution of criminal offenses being discussed in texts referring to men and/or women. Looking at the texts where *only* women or men are discussed, we see a great deal of interest focused on violent (28%) and sexual crimes (20%) when texts refer to men. Conversely, (criminal) abortion is discussed in 68% (and *lex veneris* in 16%) of the texts referring to women, but not ever in texts referring to men. The texts where *both* men and women appear as offenders show a greater variation in the crime types being discussed. Both women and men are linked to theft (45% and 36% respectively) and violent crimes (18% and 23% respectively). To an extent, these findings are a result of the fact that some texts are describing self-report studies, where women and men are discussed in relation to a wide range of criminal statutes. Nonetheless, by grouping all texts according to research interest, we see that women primarily are being discussed in relation to criminal offenses linked to sexuality and the female body, such as abortion and *lex veneris* (see Klein, 1973; Minaker, 2006; Omodei, 1981/2016; Triplett & Myers, 1995; Zedner 1991).

Finally, a brief note on the interest given to women's criminality. If we look at periods of 25 years, the number of articles dealing specifically with women and crime drops considerably, from 7 (1920–1940) and 8 (1945–1965), to 3 (1970–1990) and 1 (1995–2015) (see Table 3).

**Table 3.** Research focus on crime and gender, by period.

Period	Texts on crime
1920–1940	
Women	7
Men	4
Women & men	2
1945–1965	
Women	8
Men	19
Women & men	11
1970–1990	
Women	3
Men	13
Women & men	3
1995–2015	
Women	1
Men	11
Women & men	5
Texts in total	87

Accordingly, over time, women largely ‘vanish’ as criminal offenders in the journals. This decrease could perhaps be expected given how certain offenses, which historically have been associated with women, are decriminalized during the 20<sup>th</sup> century (von Hofer, 2011: 155; see also Feeley & Aviram, 2010). For instance, by 1974, abortion was fully legalized in Sweden. Nevertheless, the lack of interest in women’s crime is noteworthy. As part II now turn to the qualitative analysis of how women are represented and marginalized, we will – among other things – point to and discuss how women, in later decades especially, are made visible in other ways than as criminal offenders; in short, as women largely ‘vanish’ as criminal offenders, they reemerge in more stereotypical roles.

## PART II: THE IN/VISIBILIZATION OF WOMEN

The qualitative analysis of how and when women are rendered in/visible in historical writings on crime is presented in three sections. The first section elaborates on how women are discussed when actually linked to the crime. The second section explores how women’s offending is included and/or marginalized in quantitative studies. The third and final section examines how women are represented in historical writings on crime, beyond the role of criminal offenders.

### *Offending Women and the Shifts of Focus*

Although women appear as criminal offenders in a range of contexts in the journals, their engagement in criminality is often backgrounded; instead, the authors tend to shift focus from criminality to other types of behavior that are considered problematic. The shifting of focus is apparent when discussions on criminality turn toward women’s and girls’ ‘problematic’ sexual activities (1930 Smt 1–2; 1930 Bu 2; 1945 Smt 7; 1965 Smt 12; 1970 NTfK 3), or when abortion is brought to the fore as a harmful societal phenomenon rather than a potential crime (1935 Smt 3–5; 1950 Bu 7; 1970 Smt 14). Rather than focusing on criminal offending as such, some writings focus on girls’ general social maladjustment (1940 Bu 5), or even their tattoos, which is brought forward as an indicator of wayward and promiscuous behavior, and as a hindrance to social rehabilitation (1960 Smt 8). As elaborated in the sections below, when women’s offending is brought to the attention it almost exclusively concerns practices which are linked to the female body or to female sexuality. Principally, women’s offending is given relevance when it is considered to jeopardize critical social institutions like the family, or when it serves as a point of

reference in broader debates on socio-economic problems which require political, social or medical reforms. In terms of context, these texts are written in the time of an emerging Swedish welfare state and the expansion of social intervention.

In the sections that follow, we focus on the material which explicitly focuses on offending women, and elaborate on the shift of focus from criminality to reproductive concerns, and from criminality to morality, and finally on the shift of focus over time from individual to social causes.

### ***From Criminality to Reproductive Concerns***

Many texts from the early 20th century focus on illegal abortion; the issue of illegal abortions seems to trigger a lively debate and the texts here under scrutiny represent argumentative comments debating the spread and magnitude of criminal abortions as well as appropriate solutions which could address this social problem. Consistently, in these texts, women are not positioned as criminals but are primarily discussed in relation to their (natural) role as mothers and bearers of the next generation. Authors lecture on the psychological and biological constitution of pregnant women and how maternity represents the realization of true womanhood (1935 Smt 3–5). In the 1930s, the abortion-seeking woman is often foregrounded as socially and psychologically fragile, as a suffering victim of circumstance, as someone in need of care and protection from herself and her own psychological make-up. Professionals thus seem to view it as their calling to guide these women; the role of professionals is to protect women ‘against their own understanding of what their situation really means’ (1935 Smt 3). Until the birth of the child, the women are in a psychologically unstable state of mind, and they lack ‘normal judgement’ (1935 Smt 5, p. 195). Essentially, the abortion-seeker seems to lack maternal instincts, and professional intervention is therefore motivated and needed. Illegal abortion is not brought forward first and foremost as a criminal offense, but as ...

... an offence against a deep-seated natural drive passed on by heredity, which demands of adult women that she protect her child in all situations, even at the cost of her own wellbeing.

(1935 Smt 3, p. 1)

Generally, throughout the period between 1930 and 1970, women’s offending is given relevance when linked to women’s reproductive role and concerns the female body, and when her ‘crimes’ are considered part of larger social problems, which could be considered a threat to society at large. It is, quite simply, in relation to crimes such as illegal abortion and *lex veneris* that ‘the female offender’ is made visible. Yet, the social-medical debate on abortion in the 1930s is not necessarily concerned with regulating criminal law as such; as it appears, the intervention of physicians and social workers is primarily aimed at protecting the family as a unit and by extent society and the social order itself. As the title of two of these texts implies – *The Physician and Society* (1930 Smt 1–2) – the expert community is considered to play a critical role in the preservation of the population as a unit. These titles also point to the significance of experts in the larger context of the welfare state and its pragmatic approach to crime and other social ills, as well as the general optimism in the possibility of solving these issues through social and medical intervention (see Andersson & Nilsson, 2017: 71–81). Hence, women are foregrounded not because of their offending as such, but due to their reproductive role within society. Abortion or promiscuity, as discussed below, are depicted as symptoms of harmful social, economic or cultural vices, and therefore illegal abortion and *lex veneris* become relevant to highlight and problematize.

### ***From Criminality to Morality***

Many texts from the early and mid-20th century demonstrate a shift of focus from the criminal *doings* of women and girls to their ‘immoral’ or non-normative *lifestyle*. For instance, descriptions of the ‘problematic’ sexual activities of female delinquents dominate many texts in the early 20<sup>th</sup>

century. As a case in point, a text discussing the probation of offending girls foregrounds the difficulties in controlling the girls' sexual activities rather than discussing their actual engagement in offending (1930 Bu 2). Promiscuity is also the focal point when doctors' encounters with girls suspected or convicted of *lex veneris* are discussed.

The real promiscuity is found in the very young, aged 15–17, often in deeply troubling circumstances. But psychologically, it is not so inexplicable. A girl, who since childhood is used to follow her whims and instincts, without instructions from others, cannot – naturally enough – have the inhibition to resist the strong desires which arise after puberty.

(1930 Smt 2, p. 101)

As Svanström (2000: 152) has pointed out, physicians held a key role in discovering venereal diseases and notifying the authorities, a practice which earlier was restricted to the regulation of prostitution. Yet, in the texts here under scrutiny, doctors predominantly display concern for young girls' promiscuity rather than the actual crime of spreading venereal diseases (1930 Smt 1–2). In short, these girls are foregrounded as moral offenders rather than criminals as such. The quote above suggests that promiscuity was considered a symptom of deeper psychological problems, in this case, lack of self-control and general social adjustment to appropriate gender expectations (see Barton 2005: 90).

A number of texts from 1925 and 1935 also express moralistic sentiments concerning women and girls in hard-pressed social situations. This is especially true in discussions on fostering care provided by organizations affiliated with the church, where offending girls – foregrounded as 'fallen' and 'penniless' – are to be rehabilitated via the learning of household duties and hard work (1925 Bu 1; 1935 Bu 4). It is not their criminal doings that are foregrounded, but the promises of the rehabilitative process of turning fallen and wayward girls into pious and good women, mothers and wives. Similarly, writings from the 1960s also express moralistic sentiments, although less explicitly; here, it is not the promiscuous behavior of individual women or girls that is the focal point, but problems associated with non-normative families. These texts focus on the practical application of interventions aimed at socially vulnerable women or girls; they discuss the bureaucratic challenges of managing 'problem families' in the welfare state (1965 Smt 12), or the psychiatric evaluation of children in foster care and whether their social milieu is helping or obstructing them to grow out of their criminal tendencies (1960 Smt 11). The authors exemplify their arguments using individual case studies, which often contain condescending remarks on the negligence of particular families or individuals receiving benefits from the social welfare system.

### *From Individual to Social Causes*

In regard to the question of how and when women are rendered in/visible in historical writings on crime-related issues, one can notice – as discussed above – how focus often shifts from criminality to reproductive concerns and questions of normative femininity and morality. However, whereas the earlier periods under scrutiny demonstrate an interest in concerns related to the female body and/or individual abnormalities in the context of societal progress, the focus tends to shift over time to larger societal and collective problems as a cause of criminality and societal reforms as a solution. This particular shift of focus coincides with an ideological shift in criminal policy in Sweden around 1970; individualized treatment, and the labeling effects of prison and other interventions, now became heavily criticized, while a socioeconomic analysis of crime began to gain ground (Andersson & Nilsson 2017: 105–124). Still, throughout the whole period, women's offending is primarily given relevance when larger societal concerns appear to be at stake, beyond the criminal activities *per se*.

For instance, whereas abortion-seekers in earlier decades are discussed in light of their reproductive role in society, later texts call for liberal legislation regarding abortion and attribute a greater deal of self-determination to women (e.g. 1950 Bu 7; 1970 Smt 14). Now, the authors

highlight the social situation of women, rather than their biological and psychological constitution. For instance, in a text discussing the role of social workers engaging with homeless, teenage outcasts and drug abusers (1980 Smt 16), or in a study of imprisoned women (2000 NTfK 9), it is the vulnerable social status of women that is foregrounded. As compared to earlier texts, the solutions outlined are not household work training but the empowerment of women in general and socio-legal emancipation (e.g. 1970 Smt 14). Common to these examples is how women are portrayed as victims of circumstance, rather than as moral or criminal offenders (see also Wilson & Rigsby, 1975: 136).

Thus, in terms of *when* female offenders are made visible in historical writings, it is in the light of larger social issues that women's offending is made relevant; the questions that dominate most of these texts – which concern women and crime – are social policies on housing and women's entry into the workforce or the social and legal emancipation of women in general. Women's offending is thus given relevance in the context of larger social-economic problems, which are to be addressed through welfare-oriented reforms. Hence, the interest in women's *criminality* remains marginal, while the focus is shifted to social vulnerability and victimhood caused by social and economic deprivation, suggesting a need for professional intervention.

### ***The Marginalization of Offending Women as a Variable***

The latter half of the examined period (1960–2005) shows an emergence of 'the female offender' as a research subject in quantitative studies (1960 Bu 8, NTfK 1; 1970 NTfK 2; 1980 Smt 15; 1985 NTfK 7; 2000 NTfK 9; 2005 NTfK 11). In the main, this research deals with theft, self-reported delinquency, prison inmates, addiction and mortality. Women as research subjects are included to the extent that gender constitutes a control variable; as a variable, gender is used to divide samples and enable comparison between men and women. However, although gender is included as a variable, authors rarely elaborate on the meaning and effects of gender, neither in the analysis nor in discussions on the research findings. Hence, gender is considered as a *property* of individuals rather than an ordering structure of social behavior (cf. Kruttschnitt, 1996). This is especially the case when women are *included* in the sample, but not mentioned in the results section (1985 NTfK 7) or when women's lower crime rate is compared with that of men, yet remains textually and analytically out of focus (1980 NTfK 5).

In other quantitative studies presented in the journals, women are *considered* for inclusion but excluded due to limitations in sample size (1965 Smt 13; 1975 NTfK 4) or because women's crime lack 'practical importance' (1935 Smt 6, p. 199). While women are, on the face of things, included in many studies presented in the journals, they are simultaneously marginalized in the application of scientific analysis and the presentation of research results. The absence of women in this quantitative research setting is somewhat ironic given that criminological research around this time emerged as an independent field of research in Sweden. One can also note that discussions on criminality *in general* often implicitly refer to men's crime, which suggests an overgeneralization in the use of criminological terms. The occasional comment on *women's* crime (for example in relation to youth crime, 1960 Smt 10) reveals how general phenomena, unless otherwise specified, normally allude specifically to men; in short, criminal women are not part of the usual research subjects. As Hannon and Dufour (1998: 64–70) have argued, this may impede the range of questions researchers ask, since general knowledge is presumed to be final.

### ***Non-Offending Women and the Foregrounding of Stereotypes***

We have examined how women's criminality is rendered largely invisible due to the shifting of focus and the marginalization of women as research subjects. Now, we turn to the question of how women are brought to light *beyond* the role of criminal offenders, in texts that concern

men's criminality or crime in general. Previously, we have noted that the research interest in 'the female offender' drops considerably after 1970 (see Table 3). When absent as offenders, when and how are women in general rendered visible and given relevance? The qualitative analysis reveals that non-offending women appear mainly as victims, prostitutes or as mothers, wives and the like.

### *Women as Victims of Crime*

One prominent representation of women is as *victims* of crime. In particular, the material foregrounds battered women (1960 Smt 9; 1995 Smt 19; 2005 NTfK 12; 2005 Smt 22–23, 25), and women as victims of violent (and) sexual crimes (1945 Bu 6; 1985 NTfK 6, 1985 NTfK 8; 1985 Smt 17–18; 2005 Smt 20–21, 24, 26).<sup>5</sup> Throughout the period under scrutiny, the victimization of women is discussed in relation to these particular crime types only; it is striking that all texts in which victimized women appear are concerned with sexual and/or violent crimes. The analysis identifies two overlapping yet distinct discussions that emerge where women as victims are brought to light.

First, we find a number of texts which call attention to women as crime victims, particularly in the context of criminal justice proceedings, as seen from the professionals' point of view – the social psychologist, the legal historian and the forensic psychologist. Women are here foregrounded as vulnerable. For instance, girls are rendered visible as victimized not only by sexual crimes but also by the criminal justice process that follows, in particular through traumatizing gynecological examinations (1945 Bu 6) and aggressive interrogation techniques (1995, NTfK 8). Victimized women are further brought to light as, for instance, the 'terrorized' and 'helpless' battered wife of the alcoholic husband (1960 Smt 9) or as victims of rape and incest in general presentations of the legal-historical development of sexual crimes (1985 NTfK 6; 1985 Smt 18).

Second, women's victimization is brought to the fore in relation to a larger social and political debate on domestic abuse, which surfaced during the 1970s and gained increased momentum in the 1980s and the following decades in Sweden (Tham, 2011, see also Garland 2001: 121–122). It has been argued that some factors particular to the Swedish context intensified the political importance of foregrounding the crime victim. Among these are the decline of the welfare state and its 'collective project' (as from the 1980s), as well as the rising importance of gender equality in criminal policy on men's violence against women (see Tham et al., 2011). Accordingly, the texts that pertain to crime victimization pointedly foreground *the battered woman* as a central figure, and researchers explicitly aim to make visible an important but often unseen structural problem (e.g. 2005 Smt 20–22).

### *Women as Prostitutes*

Another role in which women emerge beyond the role of criminal offenders is as prostitutes. In earlier texts (1960–1980), typically within the field of social work, prostitution is (briefly) mentioned as related to delinquent girls, while later texts focus on legalistic discussions on the benefits and drawbacks of a criminalization of the purchase of sex (1985 Smt 17) and the consequences of criminalization after it was introduced in 1999 (2005 NTfK 10; 2010 NTfK 13). The former group of texts links (women's) prostitution to improper behavior by placing the issue alongside other deviant manifestations such as tattoos (1960 Smt 8), crime and deceitfulness (1965 Bu 9), criminal and antisocial behavior (1965 Smt 12), and drug abuse and homelessness (1980 Smt 16). Earlier texts thus display prostitution as wayward feminine behavior, linked to a socially and economically deprived context, as understood by social workers encountering the

<sup>5</sup>A number of these texts are part of a special issue on men's violence against women in *Socialmedicinsk Tidskrift* (2005 Smt 20–26).

phenomenon. In other words, prostitution is not portrayed as a matter for the criminal justice system. In contrast, later texts (1985, 2005–2010), which typically are written by legal scholars, discuss prostitution from a judicial point of view. More specifically, the subject of the discussions is whether criminalization of prostitution should encompass the buyer, the seller or both (1985 Smt 17), and whether the legislation (as of 1999) that criminalizes the *purchase* of sex works as intended (2005 NTfK 10; 2010 NTfK 13). Similar to debates on crime victimization, these texts link prostitution to social marginalization and/or foregrounds the issue of prostitution as an issue of gender equality. The difference between the earlier and later examples clearly resembles the above-mentioned shift of focus from the individual to socioeconomic causes to crime, beginning in the 1970s.

### **Women as Mothers or Partners**

One also finds numerous examples of women appearing as subsidiary characters in case study narratives. These mentions are usually part of passages where authors detail actual cases of crime, delinquency or other social problems in a range of contexts, for example concerning probation imposed upon delinquents (1965 Bu 9), in descriptions of the typical ‘problem family’ and its real-life manifestations (1965 Smt 12), or when psychologically evaluating LSD consumers (1970 NTfK 3). Here, as subsidiary characters, women are introduced as *the mother* or *the partner*, i.e. as wife, girlfriend or fiancée. In the qualitative material containing 48 texts, such characters come up 15 and 16 times respectively. However, these female characters are oftentimes mentioned in passing and have little bearing on the analytical conclusions; men are typically in focus. This echoes the observation of Estrada et al. (2019: 150), on Swedish media accounts of criminal women throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century; in 24 percent (1905–1935) and 20 percent (1945–1975) of the articles on female offenders,<sup>6</sup> women were ‘described on the basis of their relationship to a man’, as wives, girlfriends or fiancés.

## **CONCLUSION**

While criminal women often have been sensationalized and given ample coverage in media accounts over the last century (see Estrada et al., 2019), the same cannot be said about women as research subjects. Of 203 texts in total, only 19 explicitly focused on women and crime, and 21 referred to both men *and* women as offenders. In line with previous research, the present study thus seems to confirm that ‘the female offender’ is a relatively absent figure in historical writings. This is hardly surprising given the fact that women are consistently and substantially underrepresented in conviction data regarding theft-type offenses and violent crimes since the advent of Swedish crime data in the 1830s (Camenius, 2018). Looking at the total amount of suspected criminal acts each year between 1975 and 2007, we see that women make up 10–20 percent (Hollari, 2008). However, although relatively absent, ‘the female offender’ *does* appear occasionally, and women in general (beyond the role of offenders) also seem to serve a particular role in discussions on crime-related issues. The present study has sought to add nuance and specification to scholarly discussions on the occurrence of gendered explanations and solutions and the ways in which women are rendered in/visible.

Part I quantitatively compares the use of explanatory frameworks and the solutions proposed to crime in relation to gender. Apart from the biological approach being applied more often with regard to women’s offending, the findings generally show more *similarities* than differences. However, differences are plentiful with regard to what crime type the authors focus on, with theft, violent and sexual crimes dominating the research interest on men. In research on women, on

---

<sup>6</sup>Dropping to 4 percent 1985–2015.

**Table 4.** Distribution of problematic behavior related to sexuality, by gender (column percentages).

Sexuality	Women (%)	Men (%)
Sexual crimes	0	68
Abortion	33	0
Lex Veneris	10	3
Promiscuity	26	13
Homosexuality	5	10
Prostitution	26	6
Total % (observations = 69)	100 (42)	100 (31)

the other hand, criminal offenses related to sexuality, reproduction and the body loom large. Part II qualitatively examines the in/visibility of women as offenders and the representation of women in general. It maps how focus often shifts from criminality to non-criminal behavior when women's criminality is discussed, and how 'the female offender' is often marginalized in quantitative research studies; if included, she often serves merely as a point of comparison. Generally, women's criminality is largely left undebated; instead, women's *sexuality* is often brought to light and problematized, especially when considered relevant in relation to larger social problems and/or reforms. As particular crimes connected to women (e.g. abortion) have been decriminalized over the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the number of discussions on criminal women also decreases considerably over time (see Table 3). However, women are still incorporated in narratives and discussions on crime-related issues, now predominantly as victims of crime, as prostitutes<sup>7</sup> or as mothers, girlfriends and wives in case studies on *men's* crime. Thus, when women are brought to attention beyond the role of criminal offenders, it is predominantly in roles that are strikingly stereotypical.

Seeing how promiscuity and other sexual behavior are salient in the material, in discussions on crime in general, a follow-up analysis has also been conducted, concerning the mentions of problematic sexual behavior of women as compared to men (see Table 4). As shown, men are mostly discussed in relation to sexual crimes (68%) while discussions on women revolve around abortion (33%), promiscuity (26%) and prostitution (26%). This suggests that gender differences in historical writings on crime are most pronounced when sexual behavior is discussed; this concurs with findings in previous research, which point to a tendency to consider women's criminality as linked to sexuality and the body (see Klein, 1973; Minaker, 2006; Omodei, 1981/2016; Shover & Norland, 1978; Triplett & Myers, 1995).

So, taken together, when and how are women rendered visible, as criminal offenders and beyond, in Swedish historical writings on crime? Almost exclusively, women are made visible in relation to the 'typically female'. Women come into sight in discussions on crime when debates concern issues linked to the body, sex and sexuality, or victimhood and vulnerability. Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, whenever women appear in historical writings on crime, the discussions concerning sexually transmitted diseases, abortion and child-bearing, promiscuity, prostitution, subjection to sexual crimes and bodily abuse, victimhood, socio-economic vulnerability, motherhood or marriage. It is also striking that women are given relevance in discussions on crime-related issues when the role of women has bearing on larger socio-political or -economic developments and concerns. Within the context of an emerging welfare state, women's criminality does not appear particularly significant as such; rather, what is given relevance is the role of women in sustaining public health, the family as a unit, or the collective as a whole. In other words, the criminality of women is often backgrounded and mostly discussed in connection to issues such as reproduction, morality or equality, i.e. in discussions stretching far beyond the question of crime (prevention) as such. Naturally, representations of 'the female offender' (or the lack of such representations), whether found in media accounts or criminological research, relate to broader social

<sup>7</sup>The same tendency has been noted regarding representations of women in criminal justice parliamentary bills 1971–2000, see Ericson (2005).



and political processes, which are contextual and contemporary. Thus, in the historical case explored here, one may note that the role of experts and practitioners engaged in social work is crucial in an emerging and robust welfare state. One may suggest that their particular role in the welfare state system serves to make sense of the articulations that dominate the discussions on crime in the Swedish journals. The broader social and political context in which criminal women (and women beyond the role of offenders) here are brought to light is characterized by evolving ideas of economic and sexual egalitarianism, an intense societal debate on victimhood, and a social and pragmatic criminal policy – all of which play out alongside the historical emergence and decline of the Swedish welfare state.

Generally, criminologists and other social scientists have much to gain from reflecting on the contingent and ever-changing nature of how we perceive and understand social problems and offenders, but also on historical continuities which very well may color our way of thinking still today. Failing to address the general lack of focus on women's crime, the marginalization of offending women as a variable, and the stereotyping of women's roles, may hinder criminological theorizing and the generalizability of its research results, and ultimately its claims of legitimacy. This objection is all the more important given the striking gender similarities in the use of explanatory frameworks and the proposed solutions to crime. It is by digging underneath the general approaches to understanding crime, and by considering how women as research subjects could be – and could have *been* – included, that we may find useful ways in guiding criminological thought going forward (see also Cook, 2016).

## Funding

This work was supported by the Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life and Welfare (Forte) [grant number 2015-00316].

## ORCID

Tua Sandman  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9653-2033>

## LITERATURE

- Andersson, R., & Nilsson, R. (2017). *Svensk kriminalpolitik* [Crime and Politics in Sweden]. Liber.
- Baro, A., & Eigenberg, H. (1993). Images of gender: A content analysis of photographs in introductory criminology and criminal justice textbooks. *Women & Criminal Justice*, 5(1), 3–36. [https://doi.org/10.1300/J012v05n01\\_02](https://doi.org/10.1300/J012v05n01_02)
- Barton, A. (2005). *Fragile moralities and dangerous sexualities: Two centuries of semi-penal institutionalization for women*. Ashgate Publishing.
- Belknap, J. (2014). *The invisible woman: Gender, crime, and justice*. Nelson Education.
- Bosworth, M. (2000). Confining femininity: A history of gender, power and imprisonment. *Theoretical Criminology*, 4(3), 265–284. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362480600004003002>
- Camenius, R. (2018). *Könsskillnader i lagföringsstatistiken 1840–2010: En studie om förändringar i nivåskillnaden i brott mellan kvinnor och män*. [Gender differences in sentencing 1840–2010: A study on changes in the gender gap.] Masters [Thesis]. Stockholm University.
- Chanser, L. (2016). Introduction to special 10th anniversary issue of feminist criminology: Is criminology still male dominated? *Feminist Criminology*, 11(4), 307–310.
- Chesney-Lind, M. (1989). Girls' crime and woman's place: Toward a feminist model of female delinquency. *Crime & Delinquency*, 35(1), 5–29. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011128789035001002>
- Chesney-Lind, M., & Chagnon, N. (2016). Criminology, gender, and race: A case study of privilege in the academy. *Feminist Criminology*, 11(4), 311–333. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1557085116633749>
- Chesney-Lind, M., & MacDonald, J. (2001). Gender bias and juvenile justice revisited: A multiyear analysis. *Crime & Delinquency*, 47(2), 173–195.
- Chesney-Lind, M., & Morash, M. (2013). Transformative feminist criminology: A critical re-thinking of a discipline. *Critical Criminology*, 21(3), 287–304. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10612-013-9187-2>

- Comack, E. (2006). The feminist engagement with criminology. In B. Gillian & E. Comack (Eds.), *Criminalizing women: Gender and (in)justice in neo-liberal times* (pp. 58–78). Fernwood Publishing.
- Cook, K. (2016). Has criminology awakened from its “androcentric slumber”? *Feminist Criminology*, 11(4), 334–353. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1557085116660437>
- Daly, K., & Chesney-Lind, M. (1988). Feminism and criminology. *Justice Quarterly*, 5(4), 497–538. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07418828800089871>
- Dorworth, V., & Henry, M. (1992). Optical illusions: The visual representation of blacks and women in introductory criminal justice textbooks. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*, 3(2), 251–260. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10511259200082651>
- Ericson, C. (2005). *Kvinnor och män i kriminalpolitiska motioner 1971–2000. En analys i ljuset av tre feministiska perspektiv* [Women and Men in Parliamentary Criminal Justice Bills 1971–2000. An Analysis in the Light of Three Feminist Perspectives]. Stockholm University.
- Ericsson, K., & Jon, N. (2006). Gendered social control: ‘A virtuous girl’ and ‘a proper boy’. *Journal of Scandinavian Studies in Criminology and Crime Prevention*, 7(2), 126–141. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14043850601002692>
- Estrada, F., Nilsson, A., & Bäckman, O. (2016). The darker side of equality? The declining gender gap in crime: Historical trends and an enhanced analysis of staggered birth cohorts. *British Journal of Criminology*, 56(6), 1272–1290. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azv114>
- Estrada, F., Nilsson, A., & Pettersson, T. (2019). The female offender – A century of registered crime and daily press reporting on women’s crime. *Nordic Journal of Criminology*, 20(2), 138–156. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2578983X.2019.1657269>
- Feeley, M., & Aviram, H. (2010). Social historical studies of women, crime, and courts. *Annual Review of Law and Social Science*, 6(1), 151–171. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-lawsocsci-102209-152910>
- Fontaine, N., Carbonneau, R., Vitaro, F., Barker, E. D., & Tremblay, R. E. (2009). Research review: A critical review of studies on the developmental trajectories of antisocial behavior in females. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, and Allied Disciplines*, 50(4), 363–385. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-7610.2008.01949.x>
- Garland, D. (2001). *The culture of control: Crime and social order in contemporary society*. Oxford University Press.
- Garrison, C., McClelland, A., Dambrot, F., & Casey, K. (1992). Gender balancing the criminal justice curriculum and classroom. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*, 3(2), 203–222. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10511259200082621>
- Hannah-Moffat, K. (2006). Empowering risk: The nature of gender-responsive strategies. In B. Gillian & E. Comack (Eds.), *Criminalizing women: Gender and (in)justice in neo-liberal times* (pp. 250–266). Fernwood Publishing.
- Hannon, L., & Dufour, L. R. (1998). Still just the study of men and crime? A content analysis. *Sex Roles*, 38(1/2), 63–71. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1018712511855>
- Heidensohn, F. (1985). *Women and crime*. MacMillan.
- Heidensohn, F. (2012). The future of feminist criminology. *Crime, Media, Culture: An International Journal*, 8(2), 123–134. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741659012444431>
- Hirdman, Y. (2003). Kvinnorna i välfärdsstaten: Sverige 1930–1990 [Women in the Welfare State 1930–1990]. In Y. Hirdman (Ed.), *Kvinnohistoria: Om kvinnors villkor från antiken till våra dagar* [Women’s history: On women’s conditions from antiquity to today] (pp. 203–218). Utbildningsradion.
- Hollari, S. (2008). Kvinnors brottslighet” [Women’s Crime]. In *Brottsutvecklingen i Sverige fram till år 2007* [The development of crime in Sweden up until 2007] (pp. 373–394). Brottsförebyggande rådet.
- Hughes, L. (2005). The representation of females in criminological research. *Women & Criminal Justice*, 16(1–2), 1–28. [https://doi.org/10.1300/J012v16n01\\_01](https://doi.org/10.1300/J012v16n01_01)
- Jon, N. (2014). Transforming cowboy masculinity into appropriate masculinity. In I. Lander., S. Ravn., & N. Jon (Eds.), *Masculinities in the Criminological Field* (pp. 19–37). Ashgate.
- Klein, D. (1973). The etiology of female crime: A review of the literature. *Issues in Criminology*, 8(2), 3–30.
- Klein, D. (1995). Crime through gender’s prism: Feminist criminology in the United States. In N. Rafter, & F. Heidensohn (Eds.), *International feminist perspectives in criminology: Engendering a discipline* (pp. 216–240). Open University Press.
- Kruttschnitt, C. (1996). Contributions of quantitative methods to the study of gender and crime, or bootstrapping our way into the theoretical thicket. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 12(2), 135–161. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02354413>
- Lappi-Seppälä, T., & Tonry, M. (2011). Crime, criminal justice, and criminology in the Nordic countries. In M. Tonry & T. Lappi-Seppälä (Eds.), *Crime and Justice in Scandinavia* (pp. 1–32). University Press of Chicago. <https://doi.org/10.1086/660822>
- Love, S., & Park, S. (2013). Images of gender twenty years later: A content analysis of images in introductory criminal justice and criminology textbooks. *Feminist Criminology*, 8(4), 320–340. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1557085113492993>

- Messerschmidt, J. (1995). From patriarchy to gender: Feminist theory, criminology and the challenge of diversity. In N. Rafter & F. Heidensohn (Eds.), *International feminist perspectives in criminology: Engendering a discipline* (pp. 167–188). Open University Press.
- Minaker, J. (2006). Sluts and slags: The censoring of the Erring female. In B. Gillian & E. Comack (Eds.), *Criminalizing women: Gender and (in)justice in neo-liberal times* (pp. 79–94). Fernwood Publishing.
- Naffine, N. (2016). Theorizing about female crime. In S. Mukherjee & J. Scutt (Eds.), *Women and crime* (pp. 70–91). Routledge. (Original work published 1981)
- Naffine, N., & Gale, F. (1989). Testing the nexus: Crime, gender, and unemployment. *British Journal of Criminology*, 29(2), 144–156. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordjournals.bjc.a047812>
- Omodei, R. (2016). The mythinterpretation of female crime. In S. Mukherjee & J. Scutt (Eds.), *Women and crime* (pp. 51–69). Routledge. (Original work published 1981)
- Pratt, J. (2008a). Scandinavian exceptionalism in an era of penal excess, part I: The nature and roots of Scandinavian exceptionalism. *British Journal of Criminology*, 48(2), 119–137. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azm072>
- Pratt, J. (2008b). Scandinavian exceptionalism in an era of penal excess, part II: Does Scandinavian exceptionalism have a future? *British Journal of Criminology*, 48(2), 119–137. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azm072>
- Renzetti, C. (2013). *Feminist criminology*. Routledge.
- Risman, B. (2004). Gender as a social structure: Theory wrestling with activism. *Gender & Society*, 18(4), 429–450. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243204265349>
- Risman, B., & Davis, G. (2013). From sex roles to gender structure. *Current Sociology Review*, 61(5–6), 733–755. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392113479315>
- Sandman, T. (2021). Familiar felons: Gendered Characterisations and narrative tropes in media representations of offending women 1905–2015. *Crime, Media, Culture*. Online First 11 Apr 2021.
- Sharp, S., Hefley, K. (2007). This is a man's world... or at least that's how it looks in the journals. *Critical Criminology*, 15(1), 3–18. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10612-006-9016-y>
- Shover, N., & Norland, S. (1978). Sex roles and criminality: Science or conventional wisdom? *Sex Roles*, 4(1), 111–125. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00288382>
- Simpson, S., Yahner, J., & Dugan, L. (2008). Understanding women's pathways to jail: analysing the lives of incarcerated women. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, 41(1), 84–108. <https://doi.org/10.1375/acri.41.1.84>
- Smart, C. (1995). *Law, crime and sexuality: Essays in feminism*. Sage Publications.
- Steffensmeier, D., & Clark, R. (1980). Sociocultural vs. biological/sexist explanations of sex differences in crime: A survey of American criminology textbooks, 1918–1965. *American Sociologist*, 15, 246–255.
- Svanström, Y. (2000). *Policing public women: The regulation of prostitution in Stockholm 1812–1880*. Atlas Akademi.
- Tham, H. (2011). Brottsoffrets uppkomst och utveckling som offentlig fråga i Sverige [The rise of the crime victim as a public issue in Sweden]. In C. Lernestedt & H. Tham (Eds.), *Brottsoffret och kriminalpolitiken* [The crime victim and politics on crime] (pp. 23–49). Norstedts Juridik.
- Tham, H., Rönneling, A., & Rytterbro, L.-L. (2011). Emergence of the crime victim. In M. Tonry & T. Lappi-Seppälä (Eds.), *Crime and justice in Scandinavia* (pp. 555–611). University Press of Chicago. <https://doi.org/10.1086/659838>
- Triplett, R., & Myers, L. (1995). Evaluating contextual patterns of delinquency: Gender-based differences. *Justice Quarterly*, 12(1), 59–84. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07418829500092571>
- von Hofer, H. (2011). *Brott och straff i Sverige: Historisk kriminalstatistik 1750–2010 Diagram, tabeller och kommentarer* [Crime and Punishment in Sweden: Historical Crime data 1750–2010. Figures, tables and comments]. Kriminologiska Institutionen.
- Wilson, N., & Rigsby, C. (1975). Is crime a man's world? Issues in the exploration of criminality. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 3(2), 131–140. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0047-2352\(75\)90003-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/0047-2352(75)90003-3)
- Windschuttle, E. (2016). Women, crime and punishment. In S. Mukherjee, & J. Scutt (Eds.), *Women and crime* (pp. 31–50). Routledge. (Original work published 1981)
- Wright, R. (1987). Are “sisters in crime” finally being booked? The coverage of women and crime in journals and textbooks. *Teaching Sociology*, 15(4), 418–422. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1318001>
- Wright, R. (1992). From vamps and tramps to teases and flirts: Stereotypes of women in criminology textbooks, 1956 to 1965 and 1981 to 1990. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*, 3(2), 223–236. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10511259200082631>
- Zedner, L. (1991). Women, crime, and penal responses: A historical account. *Crime and Justice*, 14, 307–362. <https://doi.org/10.1086/449189>

## Appendix. List of references (qualitative sample).

Journal	Title	Year	Pages	Code
Barnavård och Ungdomsskydd	Ersta diakonissanstalts skyddshemsverksamhet	1925	17–21	Bu 1
	Lagstiftningen angående förundersökning och övervakning	1930	46–51	Bu 2
	Sexuell etik och hygien	1930	111–115	Bu 3
	Forbundet den 13 okt. 1935 avlämnade yttrande över skyddshemsakunnigaas förslag och betänkande	1935	226–233	Bu 4
	Redogörelse för en undersökning rörande skyddsuffrotrade flickor, som åren 1931–1939 intagits på Wohlfarts Stiftelse	1940	93–100	Bu 5
	Barbari inom barnavården	1945	23–27	Bu 6
	Erfarenheter från Stockholms stads rådgivningsbyrå	1950	52–58	Bu 7
	Den dölda ungdomsbrottsligheten	1960	79–81	Bu 8
	Överprövning hos RÅ	1965	239–246	Bu 9
	Läkaren och samhället	1930	76–78	Smt 1
	Läkaren och samhället	1930	100–102	Smt 2
	Post abortum: Ett inlägg i en aktuell fråga	1935	1–3	Smt 3
	Några reflexioner i abortfrågan	1935	50–52	Smt 4
	Abortkommitténs lagförslag ännu en gång	1935	193–195	Smt 5
	Behandlingen av sociala homosexuella	1935	196–202	Smt 6
	Vården av bildbara sinnslösa	1945	38–40 + 56–60	Smt 7
	Tatuering hos tonårsflickor – ett socialt problem	1960	50–53	Smt 8
	Samhällsätgärder mot alkoholskadade	1960	99–102	Smt 9
	Åtgärderna mot ungdomsbrottsligheten	1960	143–148	Smt 10
	Fosterbarn undersökta vid barnpsykiatrisk klinik	1960	381–388	Smt 11
Problemfamiljerna i våldfärdssamhället	1965	187–195	Smt 12	
Risken för återfall i fylleri bland Stockholmspojkar	1965	201–205	Smt 13	
Bedömning av abortärenen	1970	627–630	Smt 14	
Missbruk, dödlighet och dödsorsaker	1980	51–59	Smt 15	
Social Jour i storstad	1980	333–337	Smt 16	
Kvinnosyn, sexualitet och makt – en ny syn påstitutionsfrågan	1985	373–379	Smt 17	
Ett möte mellan juridik och medicin	1985	380–387	Smt 18	
Eva Contra Tarzan: Föreställningar om de två könen	1995	118–122	Smt 19	
Könet våld – nya våldsbilder, krockande förståelser och utmaningar i praktiken	2005	483–489	Smt 20	
Nya våldsbilder – den svenska bilden i nordiskt relief	2005	490–502	Smt 21	
Mansväldet, (k)ons/makten och männen – den kommunala arenan	2005	514–526	Smt 22	
Välsörvande män i samtalsterapi: makt och vanmakt	2005	527–535	Smt 23	
"Om hon somnade skulle inte jag vilja ha sex" – unga mäns samtal om gränsen mellan fredligt "sex" och våldtäkt	2005	536–547	Smt 24	
Våld i samkönade parrelationer	2005	548–557	Smt 25	
Beöroa utan att uppröra – Män slagna av kvinnor	2015	236–243	Smt 26	
Svensk undersökning	1960	113–117	NITK 1	
Butiksnattar och andra smärre förmogenhetsbrott ur kriminalpolitisk synvinkel	1970	143–163	NITK 2	
Kasistiska meddelanden rörande rättspsykiatriskt undersökta LSD-missbrukare	1970	314–323	NITK 3	
Ungdomsfängelselevers bakgrund och utveckling	1975	134–153	NITK 4	
Sjuklighet och dödlighet hos en grupp långtidsuppföljda tidigare ungdomsfängelselever och mödrarna till deras barn	1980	204–210	NITK 5	
Sedlighetsbrott i Sverige: Påföljder, återfall och behandling	1985	40–48	NITK 6	
Skördarna och deras inverkan på 1800-talets stöldbrottslighet	1985	101–112	NITK 7	
Sexuella och rituella övergrepp – utsogas uppkomstbetingelser	1995	129–141	NITK 8	
Gå direkt till fängelset utan att passera "gö" – välfärdproblem bland fångar	2000	289–301	NITK 9	
"Den som betalar för sex är en brottsling" Om den svenska kriminaliseringen av sexköp som ett medel för att motverka prostitution	2005	73–92	NITK 10	
Vad är nytt med "det nya klientelet"? En jämförelse av frivgivna fångar 1992 och 2002	2005	147–161	NITK 11	
Välsutvecklingen i Sverige 1974-2002 – en analys av sjukvårdsdata	2005	225–248	NITK 12	
Finns det grader i helvetet? Om köp (och försäljning) av sex	2010	466–481	NITK 13	