

# #utgrävningpågår

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During the autumn of 2017 the hashtag #metoo started circulating on social media platforms around the world. The internet was flooded with testimonies of sexual harassment and violations, both from the past and present. What was pulled out into the light of day was the result of a structure allowing men to diminish women and impinge on our fundamental rights, without repercussions. This structure depends on us to keep quiet. If we talk, we lose. So, we followed the rules. Until now.

Hashtags for specific professions were created, inspiring many women to take a stand with those who were breaking the silence, such as in Sweden the strong group of actresses in #tystnadtagning. Many of Sweden's archaeologists joined up to the secret Facebook group for academics #akademikeruppropet, where women were sharing their stories, supporting each other, and organizing the movement.

One of the testimonies there caught my attention. It was an archaeology student from the same university where I had studied telling her personal story. This was a testimony not only describing what she had been through, but also how she had been treated when she asked for help: how the supposed student care system had turned its back on her and protected him. And how she had gone home and left the archaeological profession. He had done wrong, but she paid the price.

That same day I started the hashtag for Swedish archaeologists #utgrävningpågår. The social media group quickly grew to over 700 members. When it was presented to the media and published in the national newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* on 30 November 2017, 387 archaeologists had signed the statement against harassment. By today's date, 411 names are on the public list. *Dagens Nyheter* published a number of the anonymized per-

sonal testimonies, while all have been made available as a widely circulated pdf (Anon 2017).

#utgrävningpågår at large was well-received by the Swedish archaeological community. Many men, as well as women, were alarmed by what they read, and there were widespread calls for action. Workplaces checked over their routines and a need for new policies was often recognized. Sweden's professional organization for contract archaeology, SUBo, held a workshop with the theme #utgrävningpågår at their 2018 annual meeting in Norrköping (SUBo 2018). This discussed the question of management responsibility: how to handle reports of improper behaviour and its consequences. Risk analyses were discussed, with short term contracts, common in commercial archaeology, given as a key example of a factor which can hinder reporting of concerns. The fear of not being offered a new contract if one pointed out unacceptable behaviour by an (especially senior) colleague kept the victims quiet. We are now also receiving invitations from university departments and student groups to come and present the group, our work, and the changes we see necessary.

The work of #utgrävningpågår continues, with an unaltered determination to make the working environment safe for all of Sweden's archaeologists. A next step is the conference *Vägskäl*, to be organized by the Swedish Archaeological Society (*Svenska Arkeologiska Samfundet*) in cooperation with the Department of Cultural Sciences at Linnaeus University from 21–23 November 2019 in Växjö (Swedish Archaeological Society 2019). This conference will carry forward the impetus to expose this burden of abuse, so damaging to women's careers and wellbeing, and to make visible the structures which support it.

## References

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