

Survivors' right to memory

escrito por Lidia Puigvert, Mar Joanpere, Patricia Melgar y Ramón Flecha | junio 11, 2023



We know all too well how rapists and harassers go to great lengths to destroy the truth about the facts as part of their attempt to eliminate the victims or at least to silence them. We know how rumour and justice often condemn victims for telling the truth. Science also demonstrates the consequences of such a situation for the mental and physical health of those who suffer violence. We cannot stand idly by and watch, as all international standards say, we must act.

The concept of «survivors' right to memory» allows for an

analysis of what is happening and also provides the scientifically proven solution. «Survivors' right to memory» refers to the right of victims and survivors to publicly present evidence of the episode of abuse, revictimisation or isolating violence they were victims of. Any attempt to silence them, to hide or distort the real facts is a revictimisation.

Many victims and survivors today are having serious consequences for their health as they see those who harassed them occupying positions of power over them, even positions of equality, see them in the media and in institutional speeches while they use that same power to continue to keep their victims silent, to make them invisible, to say that they were the ones who provoked them, to stain their image with all kinds of slander. If the survivors dare to say anything, even with all kinds of evidence, they are attacked for stirring up the past, for dividing the movement, for harming one ideology or another.

Only the harassers and their accomplices disagree with this concept, they hide it trying to make it invisible, they know that it effectively weakens their power because it allows citizens to know exactly the trajectories of each person. But they are losing it, more and more is known and soon everything will be known, opposing this right of survivors will be one more action that will expose their help to the harassers, their cruel action against the victims and survivors.

This article on the concept has been written by four feminists. Lúdia Puigvert was the first victim survivor of the first case reported in Spanish universities back in 1995. Mar Joanpere was the victim survivor who, together with another colleague, officially won the first case of gender violence in a Spanish university. Patricia Melgar is

leading R&D research on the subject. Ramón Flecha was the only professor for years who supported the victims.