

Opinion

# The Culture of Gender Violence

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It is there, we see it every day, is rooted in parenting patterns, in the patriarchal system, in sociocultural factors: violence against women is real and it is also accepted as something natural to our misogynistic and sexist society. For gender violence there are no territorial boundaries nor social class differences, color, creed and level of education. It is imperceptible, because it is underhanded.

It is a kind of violence that is practiced at all levels, it's unlimited and unsurprising. That it doesn't provoke surprise, anger, nor enrage. The culture of gender violence has its support in stereotypes, in religions created to oppress, in a patriarchal education, in a system that invisibilizes women as human beings and continually denigrated them: that violates their rights and excludes them from justice.

It is a culture ranging from the denial of labor rights, social equality, abortion, education, health and progress. That re-victimizes the victim, who applauds the alpha male victimizer. These are established patterns that have to do with double standards, hypocrisy, fear, and of living under false appearances. Reasons by which the emotional, physical, and sexual abuses and therefore the femicides, are not denounced.

And when a victim have the courage to denounce it, she end up being judged by the society that accuses her as the guilty party. Needless to say of a legal system that condemn and dishonor her, accusing her of lying, exonerating the aggressor. The same aggressor who in revenge kills her, in many of the countless and terrible femicides that no society cares of.

The culture of rape, also naturalized which, as with every response, tells us is a woman. Is a woman, it's all right, is only a woman: an object, a trifle, a slave. That culture ranging from the allocation of roles and colors. That tells us how to think, how to behave, what to do and what not to do according to our gender. And if we stray off the pattern then what happens to us is completely our fault. We are also accused and blamed even when living under the parameters set by the patriarchy. Globally, the existence of laws that enslave women.

The culture of gender violence that tells us that women are the weaker sex, that we cannot play sports assigned to men, that we cannot perform professions or jobs that since ancient times have been assigned to men. That tells us that our role in life is to be mothers, clean the house and take care of our children. Sexually satisfy our men. Live for them. And poor her that decides to go off the pattern and love another woman! Because she is denigrated, attacked, raped and killed. And even worse: she was just a lesbian who was not even a woman. A closed case from the moment the body gets inside the morgue.

It is a violence that is there at the school, on television, on radio, in art, in everything. In everything around us.

The way the news manage information in cases of gender violence: with bias, stereotypes and patriarchy. Women because their self-interest support patriarchy, deciding with this to live in submission and in the shadows perpetually.

It is a culture that denies us personal fulfillment and to live according to our own will

There is much to say about the culture of gender violence from whatever platform, and its reasons and its

consequences and who benefits from it. What is it that doesn't allow us to react to this atrocity? What is it that prevents us not to be outraged, and awakening in mass whenever a child, teenager or woman is raped? When she is attacked and killed? What is it that does not allow us to create a culture of prevention? The restructuring of society and patterns? What is it that doesn't allow us to respect ourselves? ¿To value us as human beings with equal rights?

How deep is our indifference that does not hurt and infuriates us every time we learn of a femicide? Of an assaulted a woman? Of an injustice on labor rights? Of a state that does not invest in development policies for women? When will we stop living with stereotypes, with misogynistic and oppressive religions? When are we going to change patriarchal standards to raise healthy children who do not abuse in any stages of their life?

When are we going to see ourselves with the certainty of being just a speck in the immensity of time? And how fleeting is our time on earth that we will put all our efforts in order that equality and the right to be, and to live according to our own free will, won't be punished? When will we have the strength to change the culture of gender violence for that of respect?

There are so many ways -the instances we all practice gender violence- that usually we do not realize we're doing it, because it is something that is there permanently, as naturalized as the air we breathe, like the heartbeat, like blinking. But gender violence is something learned therefore can be changed. Of course we have the ability to eliminate patriarchy, sexism, misogyny and indifference. The question is: when will we?

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