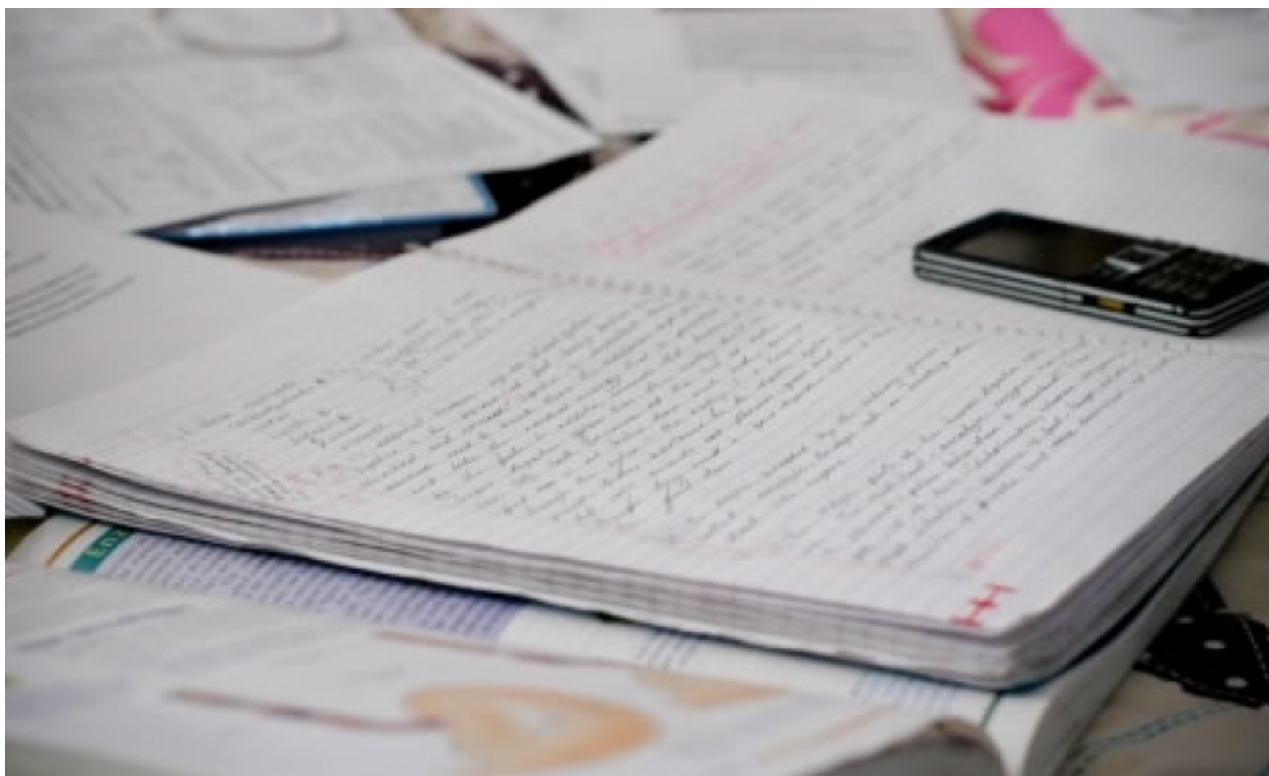


Empowerment against invisibility



03/28/2017 - 07:54



In the non-profit sector, where most workers and volunteers are women, there is still a high percentage of men in positions of power. In this situation, do we want to access positions of power or do we want to conquer them?

Marina Basco

Submitted by F Pere Tarrés on Fri, 03/31/2017 - 07:49

Description:

Member of [Assemblea de Dones Feministes de Gràcia](#) (Feminist Women Assembly).

Vertical photo:



Square photo:



Twitter: [@feministes_vdg](https://twitter.com/feministes_vdg)



Horizontal photo:

- [Printer-friendly version](#)
- [PDF version](#)

The need to include a gender perspective in any field of life, forces us to focus on thinking about ourselves. Thinking about us means, first, that we must know and then revert. When non-profit organisations try to include a gender perspective, what is the purpose? It is worth thinking about whether the answer to this question empowers women in the organisation or only aims to fill the quotas on the governing boards and achieve parity.

And indeed, in the non-profit sector where most of the workers and volunteers are women, there is still a high percentage of men in positions of power. In this situation, do we want to access positions of power or do we want to conquer them?

The patriarchal mindset that has kept us in the private sphere (and we are living in the worst wake of this) has also kept us well away from generating our own knowledge and having power over our own lives in the private sphere, but especially in the public sphere, where non-profit organisations are.

MacKinnon (1991) theorized about the need to create knowledge that is generated only by the female sex, so as to move away from the imperative and excluding knowledge that has prevailed (and indeed still prevails) of the male frame of mind, where there is one single objectivity, that of men.

In other terms, we have positioned ourselves outside of knowledge because the public sphere does not value the capacities and learnings that patriarchy itself has taught us, such as emotional intelligence, care, collaboration, warm-heartedness, etc. Quite on the contrary, the labour market demands from us women to display rivalry, frivolity, competitiveness, rationality, etc, and we have not been taught to be this way.

I do not believe that including a gender perspective means creating a method of knowledge generated by women, but I do believe it should value a framework of knowledge created by and for women.

This is why, even carrying the burden of our house and with a strange inclusion in the public sphere, we have come up against many measures such as parity in the institutions and organisations, the need to break through the glass ceiling, etc. However, these measures make no sense without breaking away from these logics of power, because what we are doing is becoming women that adopt behaviours associated to the male gender to be able to occupy a position and a space (after a lot of sweat and elbowing) in any space of power. We can't claim power pretending to be men, power is our own right.

So, when non-profit organisations design and foster measures for the female sex to jump onto the wagon of equality, we mustn't allow ourselves to be fooled. Yes, protocols of action must be designed, but they must be designed by women, and we have to identify the problems that affect us and find ways of reverting the trends that lead to these problems. Because the way of thinking has been created by men and it's up to women to change this. We do not need saviours or great thinking minds, we can do it ourselves. However, protocols must be a process

of collective awareness and responsibility. There must be a consensus for the measures we adopt and men must be allies in this task, but should not lead it.

Therefore, we need to empower ourselves because positioning ourselves as victims will not help us to step out of this victimisation.

We need to empower ourselves to give visibility to the care we provide and generate spaces wherever we are; whether we are working in a non-profit organisation or as volunteers, our vital and emotional situation must be taken into account and both men and women must learn to manage these situations collectively.

We need to empower ourselves so that our weight in society is recognised, a workday that is double for women, the care (of children, sick relatives, the elderly, etc.) and domestic work that holds the world together and therefore we must emphasize that conciliation sustains life.

We need to empower ourselves to train everyone and at length, because it is shameful that people working in social action can actually believe that the only thing women should worry about is not getting killed; because at the end of the day, our aim is to stop being made invisible and dominated, nowhere and never again.

We need to empower ourselves so that our "feminised" jobs have the same weight for society, because working in

or volunteering for the non-profit sector is not less worthy.

And finally, we need to empower ourselves to remind ourselves that from words to action there isn't just one step, there are parallel universes.

Tags: [gender](#)
[feminism](#)
[empowerment](#)
[Discrimination](#)
[inequality](#)
[care](#)
[labour](#)
[third sector](#)

Links of interest

- [About us](#)
- [Contact](#)
- [Legal terms](#)
- [Cookies policy](#)

Follow us



• [Visit us on Twitter](#)



• [RSS](#)

Source URL: <https://nonprofit.xarxanet.org/opinion/empowerment-against-invisibility>