

Neither Sexism Nor Ageism

Section: Economy

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During the economic crisis of the 1970s, many people labeled as progressives were radically sexist. Faced with the scarcity of jobs, they proposed that, in order to prevent two incomes from entering one family while another had none, women should stop working. Among other mistakes, their sexism was based on the belief in a fixed number of jobs that could only be redistributed, not increased. Now, the sexism and intellectual shortcomings of their analysis have been sufficiently proven, as well as the essential contribution women have made to improving the quality and growth of employment. Even those who most defended these positions now hide them and claim they never did.

Today, many people labeled as progressives, non-sexist, and non-racist are radically ageist. Faced with the scarcity of health resources and the denial of scientific evidence regarding social impact by Western governments during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, they proposed that, since there were not enough resources for everyone, elderly people should be excluded from access to ventilators and other resources—in other words, they should be “left to” die. A movement initiated from sociology and spread across various sectors throughout Europe led most governments to officially prohibit this ageist discrimination, although it still occurs in practice in many cases.

Scientific evidence on social impact makes it very clear that

overcoming ageism is not only essential to avoid excluding a growing portion of the population from human rights but also to improve the lives of the entire population. To give just one example, the voluntary continuation of those who wish to keep working beyond the usual retirement age increases the common fund for financing social services for the whole population, rather than decreasing it if they are prevented from doing so. Those who now defend ageism will not be able to hide it in the future; today, with the internet, there is evidence of everything.