

NAME - Nu Misra

**A NARRATIVE BASED
CAMPAIGN CALLED
DISABLED FOLKS RIOT.**

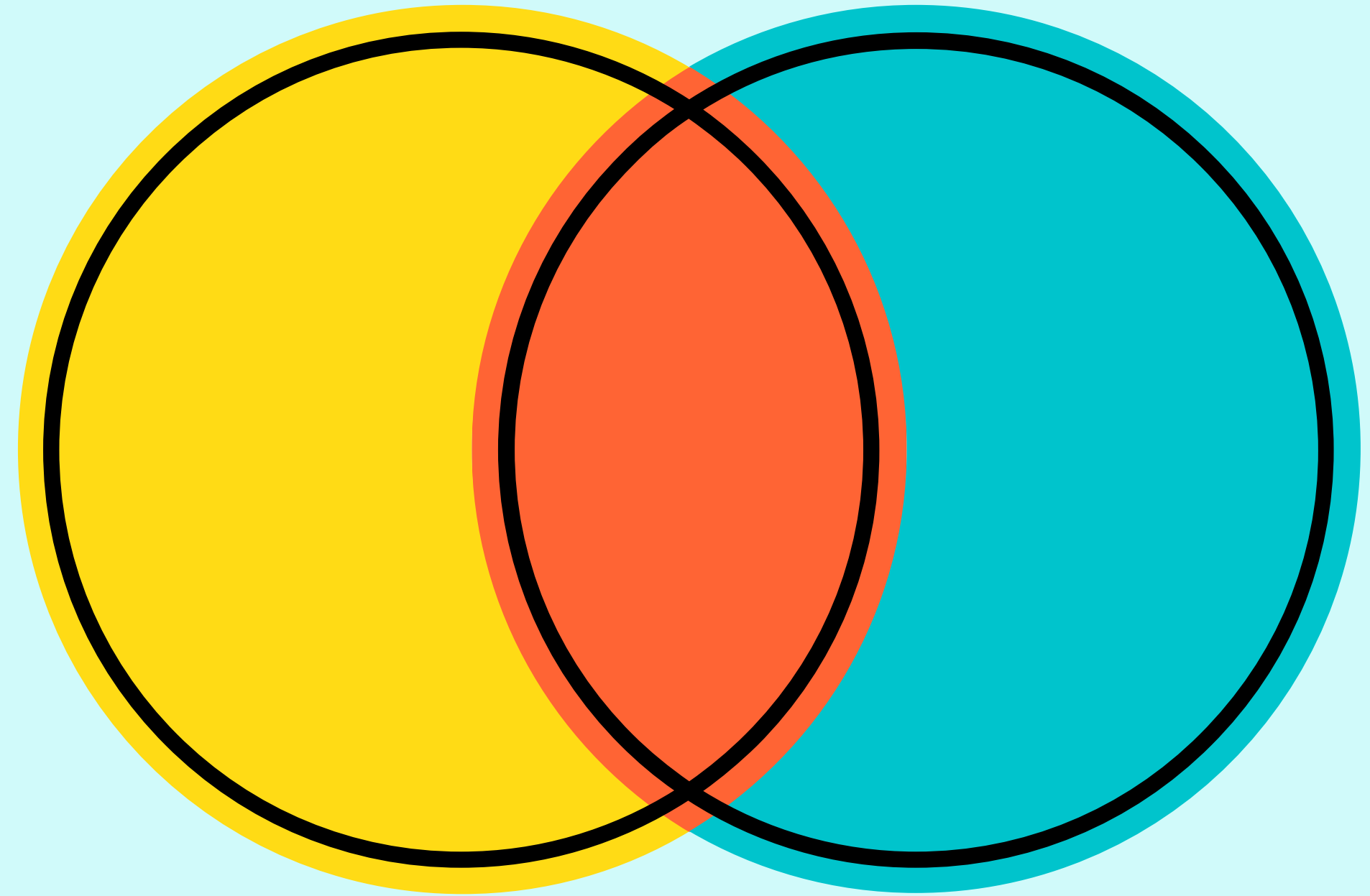
**PART OF CREATE
INITIATIVE BY CREA FROM
MARCH 2022 TO
MARCH 2023**

**Visibilizing disability-based
queer violence amongst
visible and invisible markers
of identities through a
feminist subjective
approach.**



CORE FOCUS OF CAMPAIGN

Sexuality changes, travels and transforms. Within the discourse of sexuality, the intersecting identities of disability and queerness impact and inform each other. These two identities interact to produce a community that wearily lies between queer and disabled forms of being.



- **Otherness prevalent among disabled queer identities.**
- **Subverting the cis hetero-patriarchal society that views able-bodied mandates as the norm.**
- **Viewing disability-based abuse through a queer lens. Additionally, differentiating between disabled cis abuse and disabled queer abuse.**
- **Perceived safety in public, community and intimate spaces.**

Introduction



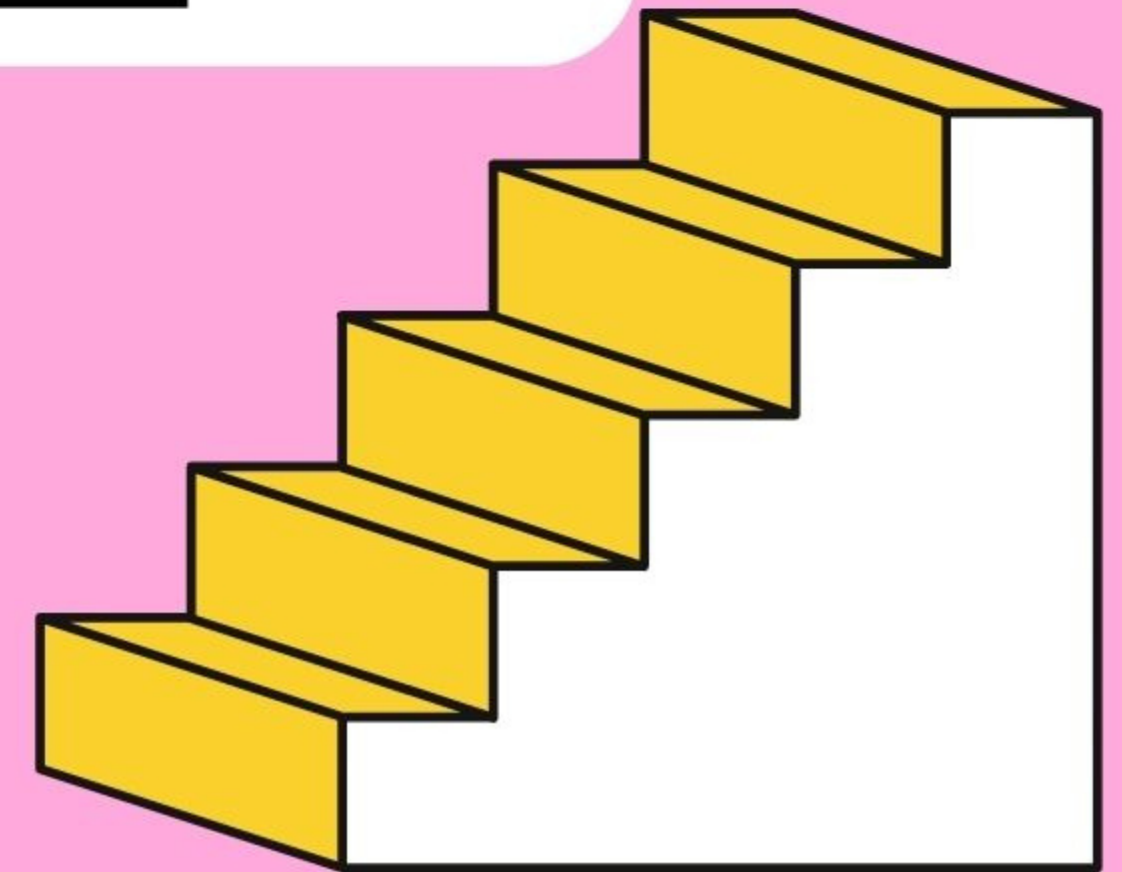
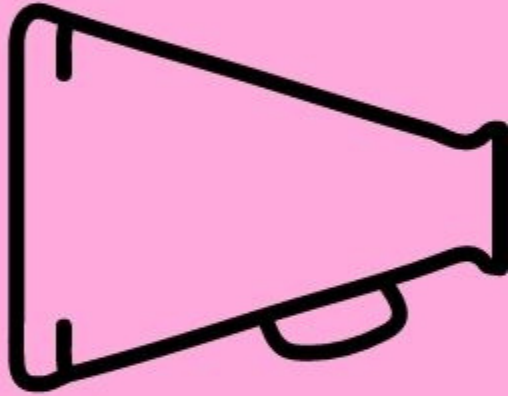


Throughout the course of this campaign, various questions were asked and reflected upon.

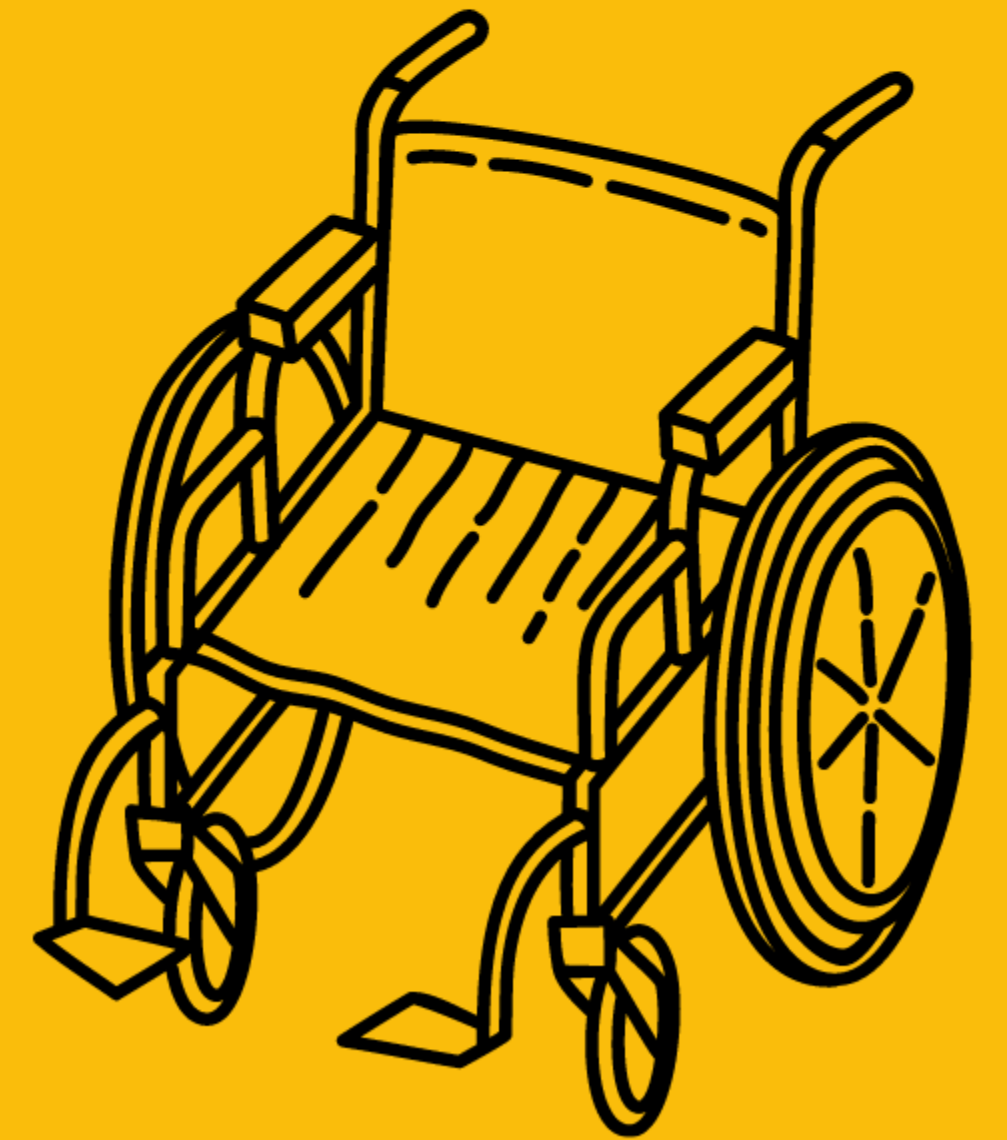
Which identities are allowed inside a room? Which degrees of ability and disability are policed and which one's are easily granted entry? What are the politics of entering (and exiting) a room? Do our situated contexts restrict or free us? What does "free will" mean when someone has a disability?



NO HOMOPHOBIA
ALLOWED BUT
ABLEISM IS
PERMITTED



What parameters of dissent are
"allowed" in a patriarchal,
able-bodied framework?



How safe are disabled folks who don't fit into the cis, savarna, hetero-patriarchal idea of a person? How do we negotiate our disabled queerness in public spaces?

How is disabled consent violated on an everyday basis?





**Are we
allowed to
be our
disabled
queer selves
within
public
spaces or are
we made to
achieve
able-
bodiedness?**

GRIEVING PAST SELVES

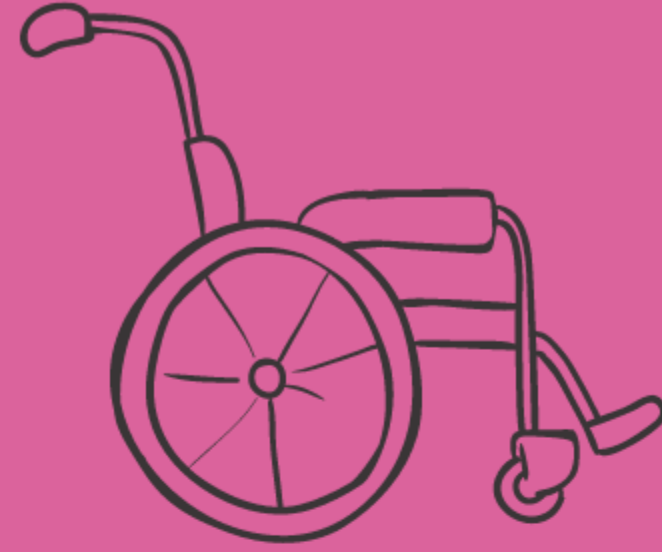


IS STILL GRIEVING.

THE PROCESS

Through attention to critical points in a participant's journey of disability, with markers of sexuality, gender, caste and religion this study analyzed how intersecting identities shaped subjective experiences and situated embodied contexts of ableism in the form of violence and safety around them.

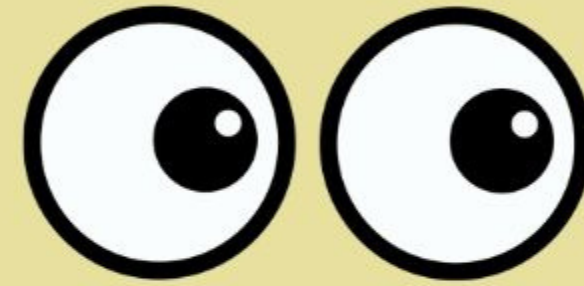
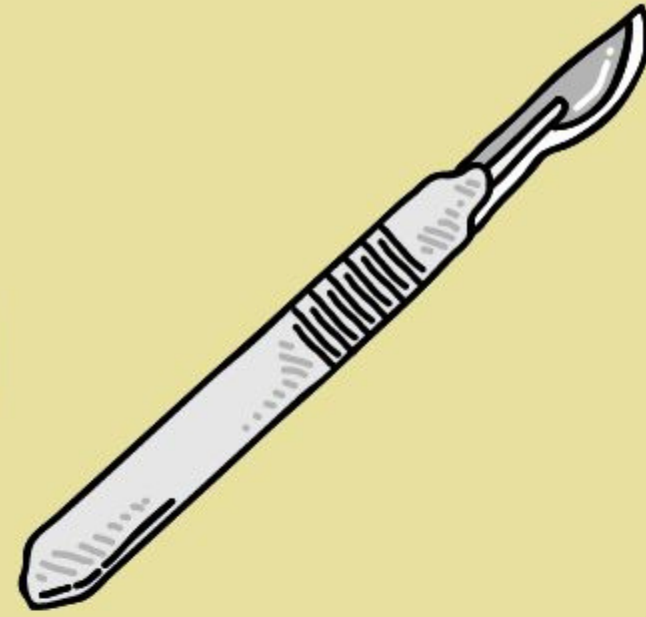




UNDERSTANDING DISABLED INTIMACY



"Will I be able to survive with a disabled left hand my entire life? Am I too incompetent to be a human?"



There are multiple ways in which the able-bodied world dissects a "broken" disabled body. There are multiple instruments through which it achieves this - whether that's by the surgical knife, the hand of a holy man or able-bodied eyes that convince the disabled body to turn their disability into "positive ability". I reject all of them.

TED



- Building an online community.



disabledwomenriot

Following ▾

Message



20 posts

213 followers

2 following

Disabled Women Riot

Disabled Women Riot is a @laadli_pf award winning campaign exploring disability based violence.
By @disablednuriots, part of @think.crea fellowship.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- **How do we problematize disabled abuse through a queer lens?**
- **How do we go beyond markers of gender and ability in order to explore disability through an intersectional lens?**
- **How do we critically view disability and queerness from a subjective feminist standpoint without getting caught up in theory?**

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- **How do we move beyond the hierarchies of abuse to look at abuse through a wider systemic intersectional lens?**
- **How do we give agency of narratives back to the community instead of relying on supposed "subject matter experts"?**
- **How do we re-imagine agency and consent from a disabled queer viewpoint?**

PARTICIPANT PROFILES

- **Ages 20-30**
- **Mumbai, Kolkata, Delhi, Kerala**
- **LBT community**
- **Folks with varied disabilities, both visible as well as invisible.**
- **Trans, Non-binary, Queer**
- **Various sexualities**
- **Social locations : Upper-caste, DBA, Muslim**



EXCERPTS OF NARRATIVES FROM
INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED :

EVERYTIME MY ABLE-BODIED
PARTNER FOUGHT
WITH ME IN A PUBLIC PLACE,
I HAD TO AGREE WITH
HIM AND TAILOR MY
RESPONSES TO HIS LIKING
BECAUSE I WAS
DEPENDENT ON HIM TO
GET BACK HOME.

ANONYMOUS, A PHYSICALLY
DISABLED WOMAN.



In this anonymous narrative, a physically disabled woman tells us about how she has been at the mercy of her able-bodied partners during abusive situations where she wasn't permitted to show any hostility, or put forward her own needs.

THE ACT OF SHOWING HOSTILITY
AND BEING ASSERTIVE
IS OFTEN A PRIVILEGE, WHICH IS
INACCESSIBLE TO
MARGINALIZED
FOLKS. WE NEED TO
PEOPLE PLEASE
IN ORDER TO SURVIVE.

ANONYMOUS, A PHYSICALLY
DISABLED WOMAN.



HOSTILITY AND PRIVILEGE

**AS A PHYSICALLY
DISABLED WOMAN,
I FEEL LIKE CASUAL SEX HAS
ALWAYS BEEN INACCESSIBLE
TO ME. WHEN WE'RE
DISABLED, WE OFTEN NEED TO
DEPEND ON PERCEIVED SAFETY,
WE ARE ON OUR GUARD
AT ALL TIMES,
EVERYWHERE BECAUSE
OF THE VIOLENT ABLEIST WORLD.**

CASUAL SEX AND DISABLED?

**BEFORE I ENGAGE
IN SEXUAL INTIMACY,
I NEED SOME SORT OF
COMMITMENT
AND ACCEPTANCE FROM THE
PERSON, I NEED TO KNOW
THAT I CAN DEPEND
ON THEM IF SOMETHING
GOES WRONG OR IF I FLAIR UP. I
KNOW I'M MORE
SUSCEPTIBLE TO ABUSE
BECAUSE OF MY
DISABILITY. IT'S NO SECRET.**

Spaces like exploration of sexuality and hookups are often closed off and inaccessible to folx with disabilities.



**My Disabled Body
Belongs To My Own Gaze
And No One Else's**



Anonymous

Public spaces seem daunting to me as a physically disabled and an autistic person. They make me feel less than, incompetent to survive in an able-normative system. The loud noises, the precarious roads, the stairways and the constant stares of unbelonging. It was only a few days back that I had decided to go on a solo date to a Cafe in Andheri using a metro. Well, can I ever escape the ableism and neurotypicality in public spaces? Can I escape the othering or the infantilization or the sexism that I face as a disabled woman?

While, I was navigating my way around, a cis-man decided to perceive me and my disability and assumes authority over my body and tells, "aap handicapped lag rahi hai, lift use kariye." Apart from using a very violating way to describe my disability, he also assumes access into my disabled experience and took the liberty to dictate what I can/can't do. More than that, there is a power imbalance that allows the able-bodied and patriarchal norms regulating my body autonomy and agency.

The spaces are created in a way to alienate you, and well the question of basic access to these spaces shouldn't have to be political or one which requires you to expend so much resources in fighting for a fundamental element-access and entry. For disabled people, fighting for access is an act of regular resistance. We barely get a break from it.



Why are disabled bodies in public under constant surveillance?

Why is our safety considered the collective responsibility of the entire society?



A queer disabled person recounts - My body carries with it histories of being intruded upon, prodded by doctors and abused by ex boyfriends who saw my body as an open book to be violated and used. My body has been stared at, declared a novelty, a medical marvel, a body that needs to be named, shamed and labelled. Nobody has ever let my disabled, queer body just "be", just exist in public spaces.

R, another person with a gendered and disabling experience says, "I still remember an incident that took place when I was going to school with my mom in an auto. There was a car in front of the school gates and the auto driver kept on shouting that he has an "abnormal" passenger and that they should clear the road. I felt like I wanted to disappear and almost started crying when my mom told me to just ignore his words."

"NON-TRADITIONAL" FORMS OF **ABUSE FACED**

"My disability has been a constant source of feeling unsafe in public spaces. For example, I need a lot of help with mobility, especially in Bombay, while climbing onto footpaths, crossing the road or getting on and off trains during these times, if I turn to seek help from a fellow passenger, especially if they are male. It is very difficult because I have to wait until I find a female passenger who can help me. I have had several experiences where in the guise of helping me, male co-passengers have tried to touch my hand or arm in a way that felt unsafe or uncomfortable.

There is, however, no way to prove something I can only feel and which is not visible and therefore they turn around and tell me that being helpful did not pay them well because instead I turned around and questioned their integrity."

"They also perceive my body as an empty vessels of abuse. I know this because my cousins back at home taunt me. Now everyone has grown up so they don't remember but they used to hurl ableist slurs at me. They used to called me "lula". In our regional language it means useless. I also escaped abuse once from a male relative. He used to call me stuffs like "devi" and had hidden my mobility aid once.. Luckily my mom arrived right on time but when I told her she wouldn't listen to me. Because of my speech disability I think she pretended not to understand me. This is how they silence disabled women."

NORMALISATION OF ABUSE FACED
ABLEIST CONCEPT OF CARE

"There is a lot of normalization of violence towards our bodies. We are considered lesser and so is our bodies. Sometimes even the medical institutions who we rely on for care are abusive to us."

VIOLENCE
WITHIN
NATAL
FAMILY
AND
INTIMATE
SPACES.

My father would say things like "she has made me spend so much financially with all her medical bills" in front of other family members. I was always constantly made to feel like I am a bird in in terms of inadvertent things that my mother would say like saying that she can't step out of the house after I have reached home from school because I needed to be monitored and could not be left alone. Even when I was functioning independently I was always made to feel like I was taking up more space than I deserved and I grew up, feeling like I was not worthy of any of it.

"Since I state that I am asexual in most intimate space, I am not believed for saying this because there is a notion that most disabled people are asexual beings anyway

This means that my sexuality is invisibilised in almost all spaces I'm a part of, while my disability is visible. I have also experienced significant body image concerns which adds fuel to the fire, because people believe that that they are responsible for me, feeling asexual and not that it is genuinely my sexual orientation."

In intimate spaces, people often tend to not want lights or don't want to stop even if they see me disassociating.

CHAPTER 4 - RECLAIMING

DISABLED CONSENT

"I think disabled consent is violated in many ways in terms of offering support when it is not asked for or taking advantage of someone when you are helping them cross the road by touching them inappropriately or doing things that make them feel unsafe. If for example, the girl who is deaf and mute or is blind, it is possible that the partner engages in sexual activity that she is not comfortable with or is not able to say no to."



Resistance
goes on

"First we need the world to recognize us as full people. Us being denied our bodies, from which the denial of disabled consent is rooted, only then can we reclaim an articulation of disabled consent."





Since, my disability and transness is mostly invisible to people, I have not faced a lot of microaggressions because of that. But when I'm out with my partner who is visibly queer trans, people tend to scold me more if I bump into them because of my blindness.

PERCEPTION OF SAFETY



I think I perceive safety as being present only in spaces where I am surrounded by familiar people.

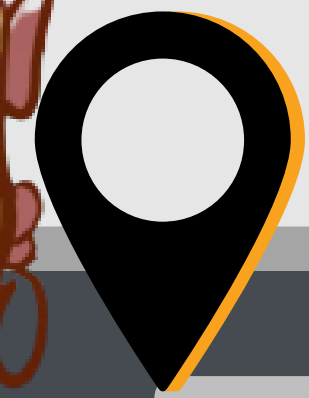
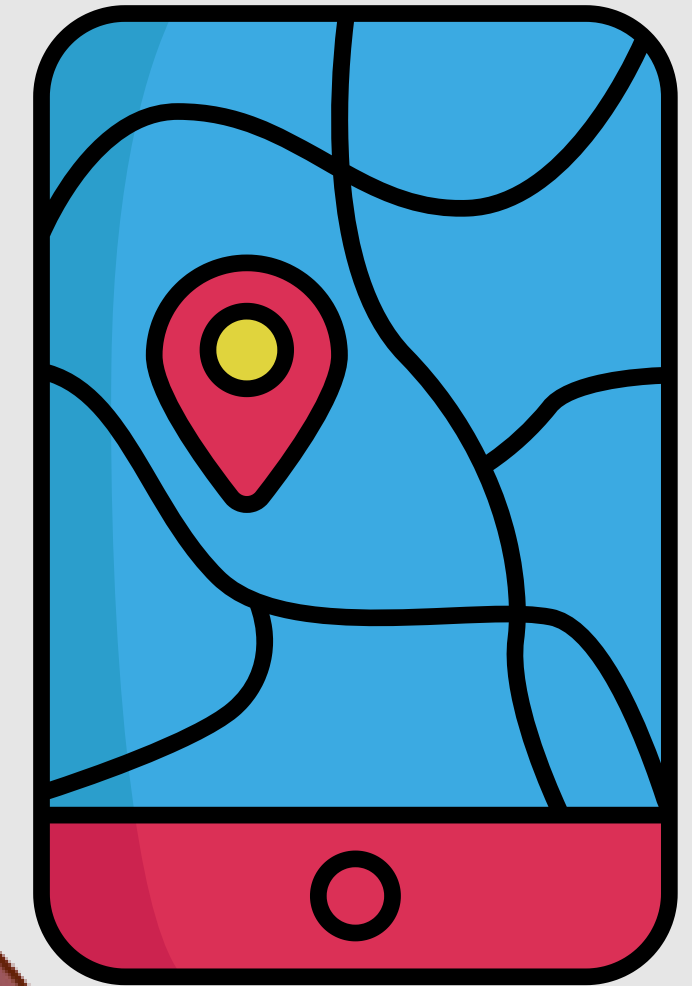
My disabled trans body perceives safety when people see me for who I am and believe me.

Mere lie ek vikalaang kveer dalit vyakti ke roop mein, suraksha hee vaastavik kraanti hai.

DISABLED RAGE AND DISSENT

*"My systemic rage, hence is beyond personal. **It's political, it's alive, it breathes.** My systemic rage is, both collective and personal, and it teaches me to be better for myself and my disabled being. It teaches me to embrace growth (and non growth, too) at crip-time. It teaches me to rebel and write with anger and joy, both."*

CONCLUSION



THANKYOU!



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- **Illustration credits : https://instagram.com/minor_grace?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=**

