

A sombre time for remembering



Alan King, Ottawa Citizen

"All women were the target of the executioner at the École Polytechnique, a madman took to demented extremes a battle against the more vulnerable sex which is enacted daily without the sound of gunfire in so many fields across this country."

William Johnson
("Massacre jolts all to reflect on place of nation's women."
Montreal Gazette, Friday December 8, 1989.)

What can we learn from December 6? How can we stop violence against women?

- 1) Listen and learn from women. Don't minimize women's experiences.
- 2) Learn about the nature and extent of the problem; abuse is part of many aspects of a woman's life.
- 3) Learn why some men are violent. Realize that the responsibility to stop the violence lies in the hands of men. (98% of violence against women is committed by men).
- 4) Men, wear a white ribbon. Show your commitment to never abuse. Women, wear a purple ribbon. Express your solidarity with those who are abused.
- 5) Challenge people, students and professors who use sexist language and jokes that degrade women; these expressions reinforce women's suffering.
- 6) Learn what sexual harassment is; it is usually very subtle.
- 7) Support your local women's support programs; the need is overwhelming.
- 8) Examine your own behaviour. Do you perpetuate or resist abuse?
- 9) Participate and support December 6 commemoration events. Talk to each other, learn from each other.

December 6 is only five days away. It is marked as a black day in history. Fourteen women were gunned down at l'École Polytechnique de Montreal. These women were no different from the ones we know. They went to school, took notes, wrote papers and exams. They were mothers, sisters, daughters, friends and lovers whose lives were cut short.

On and around December 6, watch for the silhouettes of these women on campus. Remember them. This massacre was an expression of greater evil in society: the systematic and pervasive abuse of women.

We call on all men to wear a white ribbon on and around December 6 as a sign that you condemn men's violence against women, physical or other.

December 6 was an extreme expression of violence against women, but it is not an isolated event. Yes, women die from abuse every day in Canada, but know that abuse and violence against women is not only physical.

Today, look around you and know that most women, at some point in life, have experienced some form of abuse. Yes, they are even the students sitting with you in class.

by Jodie Duplisea and Elise Craft, members of the Womyn's Collective and Marie-Eve Pilon, Social Issues Commissioner

WOMYN

"Victim Tried to reason w/ Killer"
Saturday 9 December, 89 M.Gazette Front page
Walter Buchignani (Journalist)

Provost said that Lépine had entered her class—and had forced the men to leave—he pointed his high-calibre gun at the women and asked whether they knew why he had come.
"Obviously we said no."
"He said, I'm against feminism. That's why I'm here."
"He was pointing the gun at us."
I think I still hadn't realised what was happening. I said, "Listen, we are only ♀ who are studying engineering... We were only in engineering who wanted to live a very normal life."
"Maybe he answered something," she said, "but I didn't hear it—because he began to shoot at us."

Nathalie Provost (survivor)

Notice: All women welcome at the Womyn's Collective meeting in Tilley Hall, Room 222, 7 PM on Thursdays.

In Memory...

by Carla Eky Lam
for *The Brunswickan*

On Wednesday December 6, 1989, something horrible happened. So horrible indeed, we had to search the dark recesses of our minds to understand the "hows" and "whys" — only to turn up nothing. But some of us knew. Until all of us know, not just with the mind, but with the soul how predictably a hate-filled man could purchase a gun, then use it to obliterate the objects of his hatred, no one is safe.

The details, the particulars, the instruments of this man, this incident matter not — his story is repeated throughout history and makes the front pages of "prominent" newspapers everyday. Men like Marc Lépine often get heralded as the champions of the anti-feminist cause.

The 14 women he discriminately

gunned down at École Polytechnique in Montreal lie dead at the hands of one frustrated misogynist who acted out his thoughts.

By labeling Lépine a "madman," a "maniac" and his blood bath an "isolated" incident, we immortalize him and distance ourselves. His acts honestly were not all that "bizarre," "absurd," or even "shocking" from the reflective standpoint of patriarchal consciousness.

His was only the most blatant exercise of the common, less identifiable practices of misogyny which have been "naturalized" into invisibility. Because of these factors, Lépine is a perfect candidate for "exceptionalization" — when he simply put sexual antagonism to grandiose expression.

The dead were students, mothers, sisters, daughters, lovers but most importantly — women.

We cannot, we will not forget:

- Genevieve Bergeron, aged 21
- Maryse Laganière, aged 25
- Nathalie Croteau, aged 23
- Barbara Daigneault, aged 22
- Maud Haviernick, aged 29
- Anne-Marie Edward, aged 21
- Annie St. Arneault, aged 23
- Sonia Pelletier, aged 28
- Maryse Leclair, aged 23
- Annie Turcotte, aged 21
- Helene Colgan, aged 23
- Anne-Marie Lemay, aged 27
- Barbara Marie Klueznick, aged 31
- Michèle Richard, aged 21

Any attempt to recognize them will be inevitable reductionist in its "example making." The members of UNB's Womyn's collective recognize the loss of these individual women. We criticize the context that makes such hate crimes possible and worse

yet, is conducive to them. We ask you to acknowledge this immense loss of love and compassion extinguished when you pass the life-size female figures on campus on Wednesday, December 6. For us they embody the love and compassion extinguished with these lives. We cannot and will not forget.

Madmen invent nothing. They act out the furtive fantasies of the sane. They push to logical conclusions the all-too-familiar irrationalities and aggressions of everyday life.

We can only guess at the impoverishment of our lives — especially the lives of girls and women but all lives — because our society has not yet made peace with women.

'Til then, it — and we — cannot be whole and at peace.

URBAN TRANSPORTATION 101 9th @ 10 AM @ 110 #47 HOLD. → remember to breathe!

IN LAYMAN'S TERMS: HOW TO HAIL A CAB 101

- #1 POSITION YOURSELF CLOSE TO THE ROAD (NOT ON IT)
- #2 LOOK CASUALLY INTO THE DISTANCE (IT'S GOOD TO BE A LITTLE ALOOF)
- #3 RAISE YOUR FAVOURITE HAND SLIGHTLY ABOVE YOUR HEAD
- #4 HOLD. → remember to breathe!
- #5 REMAIN CALM TO BREATHE!
- #6 VISUALIZE SUCCESS WE GUARANTEE A CAB WILL EVENTUALLY COME... (IF YOU'RE STILL THERE WHEN THE SUN COMES UP, HIT A PHONE BOOTH!)

KNOW WHEN TO DRAW THE LINE

Labatt