



December 6, 2022

Geneviève Bergeron, Hélène Colgan, Nathalie Croteau, Barbara Daigneault, Anne-Marie Edward, Maud Haviernick, Barbara Klucznik-Widajewicz, Maryse Laganière, Maryse Leclair, Anne-Marie Lemay, Sonia Pelletier, Michèle Richard, Anne St-Arneault, and Annie Turcotte.

On December 6, 1989, a lone shooter walked into an engineering class at École Polytechnique and murdered 14 women and injured 14 others in the name of “fighting feminism.”

The legacies of gender-based violence have continued far beyond that fateful day in the engineering classroom. According to The Canadian Femicide Observatory for Justice and Accountability, a woman is killed by her current or former partner an average of every six days in Canada. For women that experience marginalization, particularly trans women, Indigenous women, Black women, sex workers and disabled women, the rates of violence disproportionately impact them.

This violence does not occur in a silo. The rise of “incels” and toxic masculinity contribute to a culture that perpetuates misogyny and hate constantly. The ideologies fester on internet forums and are expressed in violent attacks targeting and killing women.

For educators, the weight of addressing gender-based violence can be a heavy burden to bear. On the one hand, we have the opportunity to instill values of respect and equality in young, impressionable minds. We have the potential to intervene and direct students away from discriminatory beliefs and we can also support students who witness gender-based violence. On the other hand, we too are impacted by the rise of gender-based violence. It can occur in our homes, our convening places, and even within our hallways.

We all have a collective responsibility to eliminate hate in all forms—our communities rely on it. We remember the 14 women at École Polytechnique and those who are targets of gender-based violence.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.

Nathan Core
President