

• OUR VIEW •

Be a part of the conversation

Twenty-eight years ago, one of Canada's worst mass shooting unfolded in Montreal, Quebec.

An ordinary day for the hundreds of students studying STEM programs at the L'École Polytechnique became anything but ordinary. By the end of the day, 14 women were dead, shot to death by a semi-automatic rifle in the hands of a young man with a goal of eliminating women from this earth.

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

These are the names of the 14 women who lost their lives on Dec. 6, 1989, when Marc Lepine, a 25-year-old deranged young man with a hatred for feminists and women in general, opened fire inside an engineering classroom. His reason for the unexplainable violence? Because they were women.

Systematically separating the sexes, Lepine squeezed the trigger of his rifle, spraying bullets that killed 14 women and injuring dozens of others before turning the gun on himself.

While Lepine's name has gone down in infamy in the nearly 30 years since, the names of the victims will likely only be known to the families and friends they left behind, and those who were intimately aware of the aftermath growing up in Quebec.

To the rest of Canada and the world, they are young women who were robbed of living. Their families were robbed of seeing their daughters graduate, of learning of the career paths they would have chosen, of walking them down the aisle on their wedding day, or watching their daughters become mothers to their own children if they so chose one day. They could have done and been anything. Instead, they died on Dec. 6, 1989 simply for being born female.

They are part of a world problem where women and girls are daily victims of gender-based violence.

To remember the victims of the Montreal Massacre and bring awareness while striving for action to prevent violence against women and girls, candles were lit at vigils last night (Dec. 6) in communities across Canada. It's a day that has become known as the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

The day is a part of a global movement - 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence - which began on Nov. 25 and ends on Dec. 10, International Human Rights Day.

Important conversations will be had as we work toward equality for all. Be a part of the movement. #MYActionsMatter.



ABOUT US



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• LETTERS & COMMENTARY •

Lack of respect for the military

I am a Grade 10 student and was participating in a Canadian dance competition on Remembrance Day. At 11 a.m., we were prompted to take a moment of silence to commemorate and show our respect for military veterans and current servicemen and women.

While I proudly wore my poppy and bowed my head in respect and reflection, I was appalled by the utter lack of recognition and respect those around me showed. What was particularly noticeable and irritating was in general, the youth population did not break stride and continued as if nothing was happening, and there was barely a change in the noise level.

For simply one out of 526,000 minutes in the year,

we civilians are asked to reflect on the sacrifices of our military and show a little respect.

Chances are, everybody has an ancestor, relative or family friend that has served. Those who have sacrificed their lives for our freedom and peaceful lives, deserve that minute.

Therefore, if not for yourself, please show respect and thank them.

Although most kids would stand for that moment of silence, they are most likely unaware of why they are doing so. Teaching them how our ancestors shaped our lives would lead to so much more respect on the important day.

We need to set an example by taking Nov. 11 more seriously. Let us be the role models for the many generations to come.

Emily Hambly

Reader not surprised by Pride deficit

I'm not surprised at all at Pride Toronto's enormous deficit with its present stewardship that is "oh so clearly" out-of-touch with the vast majority of straight, bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgender citizens of what most envisage as an inclusive, diverse, and multicultural city in harmony.

Just like the Grinch's energies to stop Christmas, so it is with those party-poopers that obstructed the 2016 Pride Parade disappointing many tourists and Torontonians; however, at the end of the day the celebrations, concerts, and dancing were unfettered by this little nuisance. Sure sounds like an effective boycott to me with the paramedics and fire department and other parade

regulars that protested by abstaining from Pride 2017 in support of "Toronto's Finest". Imagine the uproar if there were such a disruption grinding the Toronto Caribbean Carnival, Labour Day, or jolly Santa Claus Parade to a halt?

Any councillors that may support a bailout courtesy of hard-working tax paying dollars will likely experience that wrath of voters next year and embolden the campaign of Doug Ford for mayor, who I am convinced, would vote against any future funding devoid of the presence of Toronto, Durham, and OPP officers, many with same-sex partners, and the Parade favourites with their arsenals of water-guns and car sirens that until this charade made for a good old time for all.

David C. Searle

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