

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nova Scotian Feminists Fighting Femicide Statement on the Mass Shooting

We demand an end to male violence against women and girls!

Nova Scotia, April 24th 2020 - Our hearts are heavy as we face the loss of 22 innocent people in the worst mass shooting in our country's history. We are outraged that women and girls in this province continue to suffer such extreme violence at the hands of those closest to them in the one place where they should feel the most safety – in their own communities.

As feminists, advocates, and experts in the field of male violence against women and girls we know most mass murders begin with violence in the home. It is often wives, partners, and children of men who kill who are their first victims. The sustained abuse and assaults they face are often the most obvious signs of the murderer's future mass violence. These patterns of abuse and assaults begin days, months, and even years before the killings.

It is now becoming clear that the mass shooting of Saturday April 18th and Sunday April 19th began with acts of torture and violence towards the murderer's female partner. There are reports in the media that the murderer allegedly got into a fight with his partner at a party. Going home with her his violence escalated. He tied her up and inflicted "a significant assault" according to the RCMP. She managed to escape and hide in the woods. He then went on to kill 22 innocent people -12 women and one female youth. This information is important. It tells us that hatred for women fueled this act of mass murder, much appeared pre-planned.

While not all of the victims in this mass shooting were women, all of the victims were victims of misogynist violence. We want to make it clear that misogyny – the hatred of women – affects all of us. This mass shooting, and many mass killings witnessed throughout Canada's history are connected to white men's privilege, showing us that this hatred brings severe harm to many. This hatred of women is ravaging our communities, our families, and our bodies. We want it to end. The first and most important step to fighting back against this hatred is to recognize it as femicide. To always speak out against femicide wherever it lurks in our society, in all our rural and larger communities. We must further recognize that femicide disproportionately impacts Indigenous and Black women, and other marginalized and vulnerable groups. We must have the courage to name misogyny and femicide and speak out against it.

Holding all victims of misogynistic violence in our hearts, we demand clarity from the RCMP as to the femicide elements of this crime. We demand an inquiry with a feminist analysis of the violence. We demand an end to male violence against women and girls.

Signed: Pam Rubin; Lucille Harper; Tara Reddick; Linda MacDonald; Jeanne Sarson; Bernadette MacDonald; and Johannah May Black

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