

# THE INDIANAPOLIS STAR

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EDITORIALS

## Curbing the violence waged on women

### Our position:

*Violence against women should be combatted  
with knowledge, among other weapons.*

**S**even seconds. That's how often a violent crime against a woman takes place in the United States. An average of one attack every seven seconds means 514 every hour, 12,342 every day and more than 4 million a year.

Women aren't always innocent parties in violent attacks, but statistics show they usually are victims, not victimizers. In 2000, women were victims of 4.5 million violent crimes, including about 500,000 rapes or other sexual assaults. In 29 percent of the attacks, perpetrators were current or former husbands or boyfriends. Women in their high school years to their mid-20s are nearly three times as vulnerable to attack by a partner as other age groups.

Here in Indianapolis, police created a domestic violence unit two years ago. Since then, the number of protection orders and arrests has risen.

As reported March 6 by *Star* staff writer Vic Ryckaert, the county has seen a 70 percent increase in orders filed since 1998. There's been a 15 percent increase in court cases over the same period.

But an improved response to these injustices does not keep them from happening. Knowledge is the only real tool for preventing violence against women.

Some in Indianapolis have recognized this fact. Last week, Demia, Butler University's organization for women's issues, organized "Take Back the Night," a candlelit march around the Butler-Tarkington neighborhood, as a demonstration against violence against women. Other local organizations are undertaking similar projects, and these efforts are valiant. But they will do little good if the eyes, ears, hearts and minds of the community aren't open to their message.

Every person must learn about these figures and the terrifying reality they portray. Since March is Women's History Month, there's no better time to do so.

We must be aware of how frequently these atrocities occur, how hurtful they are to victims and how deeply they damage the spirit of all of us.

In the time it took you to read this editorial, another even women were attacked.