

## Words often contradict reality

### Media sends subtle, powerful message about domestic violence

You have undoubtedly seen media coverage about domestic violence. Perhaps you saw the national headline, *"Sheen accused of using weapon in spat with wife."* You may have wondered how "spat" and "weapon" could appear in the same story.

One article about a local murder-suicide romanticized the horror with the tagline *"Together in life, now together in death."* This tragedy happened after a woman tried several times to leave her abusive husband. Even in stories where a homicide has occurred, the incident is rarely labeled as domestic violence.

We often see media trivializing domestic violence by careless use of language. Savage assaults are called "domestic disputes." We read that victims were having "relationship troubles." Such terms place equal responsibility on both partners. In reality, equality rarely exists in an abusive relationship.

The real story behind most domestic violence headlines is one of long-term control, intimidation and threats by one person against a partner.

Patti Schwarztrauber, executive director of Artemis, explains, "Laws regarding domestic violence have



come a long way. State legislatures and local courts once viewed violence as a private matter. Now they see it as criminal activity. It's time for media to reflect that new understanding of the issue."

As an Artemis supporter, you know that domestic violence is a serious community concern. You have a clear understanding of the dynamics involved. Unfortunately, not everyone has such understanding. Many people form their opinions based on what they read or see on television.

media accountable for providing accurate coverage of these stories. Remind the media of the power of their words. Patti put it very well in a letter to local media last summer. "Journalists have power to shape our perspectives on critical issues, and they have an ethical mandate to do so responsibly."

Responsible reporting is yet another way to place the blame where it belongs – upon the batterer. It demonstrates that our community will not tolerate such abuse.

We ask that you help us hold the



# Reading Lesson

By Sheila Hassell Hughes

I know how to read.  
I have a dictionary,  
and I know what words mean.

So when the CNN banner  
running across the TV screen  
says that police are calling  
this thing  
“a domestic dispute,”  
a clear image comes to mind.

Domestic disputes are what erupt  
when

he leaves  
the seat up  
the lid off  
the food out  
for the umpteenth time  
and she lets loose  
her tide of messy frustration

or

when

she fails  
to put her stuff away  
again  
and he trips over it  
in the dark  
nearly breaking his neck  
swears out loud and  
throws he shoes across the room.

They gripe at each other for a day  
or two. Then make up, or just move  
on.

Or maybe the little stuff piles up  
until  
they decide they can't take it any  
more  
and they divide up their piles of

mess and go  
their separate ways. He  
leaves, or maybe she  
leaves first. It may be  
friendly or not.

Domestic disputes are  
push-and-pull. They are  
about  
the dirty business of how  
to live together in each  
other's space.

But

when

he leaves  
the house, mid-morning  
drives to the elementary school  
where she teaches,  
here in the heartland  
of southern Ohio

when

he hunts her down

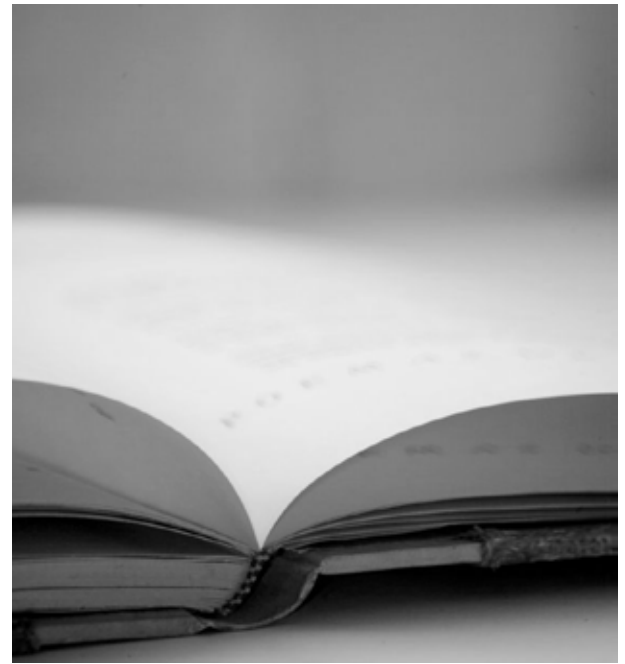
when

he strolls down the hall of the  
Catholic school  
to her fifth-grade classroom  
pulls a knife out  
of his jeans  
a gun out  
of his jacket

when

he stabs and shoots her point blank  
as part of the daily lesson  
for our children

a passion play  
about women who fail  
to behave, talk, submit, revere, or  
love  
according to expectation



or command

then

it is neither  
domestic  
nor a dispute

then

it is woman-hating  
violence  
plain and ugly

part of our nation's favorite pastime

spelled out in blood and powder on  
the blackboard  
where she collapsed  
for all of us to read

and I don't need a PhD  
to get the message.

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professor and chair of English at the  
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Publications

# Ohio Legislative Update

Name of Bill	Introduced By / Date	What it proposes	Status
HB 10 – Civil Protection Orders in Dating Relationships	Rep. E. Brown 2/17/09	Would allow juvenile court to issue protection orders to juveniles	Passed in the House, referred to Senate committee
HB 19 – Dating Violence Prevention	Rep. S. Harwood 2/18/09	Requires schools to teach about dating violence in grades 7-12	Signed into law 12/28/09
HB 167 – Victim’s Employment and Housing Rights	Rep. D. Murray 5/5/09	Prohibit employers & landlords from discriminating against DV victim; allow victim to terminate lease & change locks	Passed in the House and referred to Senate committee where it is awaiting hearings. Bill faces strong opposition
HB 391 – Address Confidentiality	Rep. Chandler 12/8/09	Would establish address confidentiality program for persons who believe they are in danger from another individual	Assigned to the House Civil & Commercial Law committee
HB 429 – Increased Penalties for DV Offenses	Reps. Harris & Lehner 1/28/10	Increase penalties for DV; other changes to current law; mandate DV fatality reviews	Assigned to the House Criminal Justice committee

## DV Facts and Figures

- In 2007, crimes by intimate partners accounted for 23 percent of all violent crimes against females and 3 percent of all violent crimes against males. (Calculated from *Bureau of Justice Statistics*, “Criminal Victimization in the United States, 2007: Statistical Tables,” (soon to be published), Table 43a)
- One study found that women who have experienced any type of personal violence (even when the last episode was 14 to 30 years ago) reported a greater number of chronic physical symptoms than those who had not been abused. The risk of suffering from six or



more chronic physical symptoms increased with the number of forms of violence experienced. (Christina Nicolaidis et al., “Violence, Mental Health, and Physical Symptoms in an Academic Internal Medicine Practice,” *Journal of General Internal Medicine* 19 (2004)

- Of female murder victims in 2008, 35 percent were killed by an intimate partner; 2 percent of male murder victims were killed by an intimate partner. (Federal Bureau of Investigation, “Crime in the United States, 2008: Expanded Homicide Data,” (Washington, DC: GPO, 2009), calculated from Tables 2 and 10)
- In 2009, Artemis Center provided 5,761 local victims and their children with services.



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## Artemis Events

**Artemis Center's Annual  
*Walk Away from Violence***  
Monday, May 31, 2010  
Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark

This year, participants can register and collect pledges online. For more details, visit [www.artemiscenter.org](http://www.artemiscenter.org).

**Purple Celebration Raises \$65,000 for Artemis**  
On February 6th, guests braved the snow to celebrate Artemis's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at its Purple Celebration. We would like to thank Vectren, DP&L, WHIO-TV, Oakwood Register, our table sponsors, and our guests for their generous support.

## Local Businesses Helping Artemis Center

**Please mark your calendars for the following opportunities:**

As part of their sponsorship of our "Walk Away From Violence," the local Burger King franchise has designated the last Fridays of March, April and May as Artemis Evenings. All 11 local restaurants will donate 20% of their evening (5PM – 8PM) proceeds to Artemis Center. Burger King's sponsorship of the Walk is in memory of Allison Beaty, a former employee who was killed by her abuser.

It's Skyline Time for Artemis! On Tuesday, April 20 from 5:00 PM to 9:30 PM, Skyline Chili (8906 Kingsridge Drive behind the Dayton Mall) will offer a special opportunity



for Artemis supporters. Your \$10 will buy a pre-set menu that includes all your Skyline favorites. \$4 of every dinner sold will go to Artemis. Special children's menu and prices are also available.