

STATEMENT OF AIMS

1. **THE RECOGNITION OF RAPE OF EVERY KIND;** not only by strangers but by husbands, fathers and stepfathers, not only by physical violence but by blackmail, social pressure and financial pressure.
2. **MARRIAGE MUST NOT BE TAKEN TO MEAN CONSENT** to have intercourse when the husband demands it. Forced intercourse between husband and wife is rape.
3. **THE STATE MUST ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR PREVENTING AND ELIMINATING RAPE.** When it fails to prevent this crime it must compensate the victim. Nothing will be more effective in ensuring that the government does everything in its power to put an end to rape. Women, who go through the physical and emotional shock of rape, must not be the ones to bear also the financial burden, which can involve the cost and labour of raising a child, or a private abortion, moving house away from where the rape took place, wages lost while recovering from the assault, loss if husbands or boyfriends reject us because we have been raped. The Criminal Injuries Compensation Board is supposed to provide compensation for those who suffer violent crimes. But where rape is concerned it is seldom paid and never enough, and the women must go through a second trial to claim it. We demand:

that compensation be automatic, without a second trial

that it be extended to rape within the family

that it must cover all the woman's costs and compensate her as far as possible for what she has been through.

If a rapist believed without reason that a woman consented, that must not be considered reason to leave him free to rape again, or to leave the woman without compensation. Many men seem to believe women are always available to them.

Rape trials and investigations must be conducted fairly and carefully to ensure that it is the right man who is removed from the streets, and that rape is not used as a pretext to harass minority communities.

There must be adequate lighting everywhere, and police protection in 'danger spots' where women demand it. In many parts of Britain, even in major cities, there is still no street lighting late at night.

4. **THE WOMAN MUST NOT BE PUT ON TRIAL.**

The case should be pursued if and only if the woman so chooses.

If she prefers it should be heard 'in camera'.

Adequate and experienced legal advice and representation should be available free.

The jury should be at least half female.

A woman's sexual history, including prostitution, should not be brought up in court. The woman is not on trial and her private life and work are not relevant to the case. Lawyers who disregard this right, and judges who allow them to do so, must be dismissed from the case.

The anonymity of the woman must be strictly enforced in all circumstances, unless she wants her name to be known.

Judges who are known to be biased against women should not be allowed to sit in rape cases; the woman must have the right to refuse to have her case heard by such a judge.

Whatever a woman wears, and wherever she chooses to walk or to be, these are her right and are irrelevant to the case.

The routine by which judges warn juries that women lie must be abolished.

5. **RAPE VICTIMS MUST BE TREATED WITH RESPECT AND CARE.**

Rape crisis centres must be established, funded by the state, in every urban and rural area. These centres should be run and controlled by groups of women independent of government supervision, so that every woman can feel free and safe to make them her own.

Those who ask questions of a woman after rape should be women if she so wishes, and should not be members of the police force.

There must be no internal examination unless the woman requests it: it cannot prove or disprove rape and is often just another physical assault.

The woman must be free to have anyone of her choosing with her in any encounter with police, courts, doctors, etc.

Raped women must have the right to compensation from any doctor, police officer, or others in contact with her who has abused her physically or verbally, or treated her without the consideration due to one who has been the victim of an assault.

6. **EVERY WOMAN MUST HAVE THE FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE** she needs in order to leave a situation where she feels in danger of rape.

She must have the money and therefore the social standing to defend herself from a husband or individual man and from any judge, police officer or doctor biased against her.

Women have the right to defend themselves physically by any means at their disposal.

All of this means increased power in women's hands to resist rape.

7. **WOMEN AGAINST RAPE AIMS TO SPREAD THE BATTLE AGAINST RAPE.**

To keep the issue always in the public eye as an intolerable crime against women. To collect and circulate information about rape, its sources and its consequences, through surveys, and written materials, and by presenting the issue from women's point of view through the media. **The media must treat rape as the crime of violence that it is, and not in a flippant or sensational manner.**

To help bring together groups to fight against rape.

To take part in the international movement against rape, working together with women in other countries.

To organise so that every rapist and potential rapist will know that he can no longer count on sympathy and encouragement from those in authority.

To organise so that every woman can be assured that though she may be alone at the time of a rape, there will be plenty of women afterwards who are ready to take her part.

To mobilise the united strength of women, who are everywhere and continuously fighting against all forms of rape,

Please contact Women Against Rape at:

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