Women Who Use Force in their Intimate Partner Relationships: Toward a Common Language & Understanding

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Introduction

Women’s and Men’s Use of Violence

“...folks who batter attempt to change subjects into objects, people into things...people who batter exploit the resources of their partners with a profound sense of entitlement to their partners’ body, mind and spirit.”

Connie Burk, 2008, pg. 1

The topic of violence in intimate partner relationships is commonly fraught with emotion, controversy and complexity. The work of practitioners, survivors and researchers has allowed us to learn more about the role gender has on violent intimate relationships. Intimate partner violence (IPV) is defined by similarities and differences. Research overwhelmingly suggests that women’s and men’s use of violence is asymmetrical and unbalanced in heterosexual intimate partner relationships (i.e., Johnson, 2006). Perilla et al., (2003) observed that women use violence in relationships because of the learning, opportunity and choice that exists in the relationship, where violence is a learned behavior, an opportunity presents itself and a choice is made to do so. Furthermore, the use of violence differs for men and women in terms of its motivation, context and impact. For example, studies suggest that in heterosexual relationships men use violence as means of establishing control and power over their partners, are more likely to cause serious injuries and less likely to report fear of their female partners (Hamberger & Potente, 1993; Malloy et al., 2003; Miller, 2001). In one study, men were more likely to report laughing at their female partners when their partners used violence against them (Hamberger & Guse, 2002). Conversely, studies have demonstrated that women’s motivations for using violence are to stop abuse, retaliate, resist domination, protect self/kids/animals, strike-out preemptively and to gain short term control in their relationship (i.e., Dasgupta, 1999; Larance, 2006).

Feminist scholars agree that in heterosexual relationships the etiology of IPV is rooted and embedded within a system of patriarchy. This entitles men to hold privilege and power over their female partners and enables them to utilize their gender as a predominant form of oppression. However, numerous other sources of entitlement and inequalities that are not rooted in gender are also utilized as means to control. For example, in many relationships social inequalities such as religion, sexual orientation, age, race, and economic status are used either alongside gender or independently as means to dominate & control.

Such sources of oppression are frequently utilized by batterers in Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) relationships. Although there is a general dearth in research on LGBTQ IPV, it is estimated that across studies IPV occurs in 30-40% of LGBTQ relationships. Furthermore, LGBTQ victims face additional barriers in reaching out for help due to continued social stigmas and experiences of ongoing discrimination by the system. The use of these additional social inequalities by the batterer further increases the isolation and negative impact felt by the survivor in the relationship. Much like heterosexual IPV, battering in LGBTQ relationships follows similar patterns. Regardless of the victim’s gender, the victim’s use of force against their...
partner also exists in a same-sex relationship. What is unique, however, is that in same-sex relationships, there is more of the likelihood that the couple will be erroneously characterized as engaging in “mutual violence” or “mutual abuse” by the system, thereby raising the risk of revictimization to the survivor (Elliott, 1996). Officers do encounter same-sex IPV on a regular basis, but studies show that most officers report receiving minimal training on responding to LGBTQ IPV (i.e., Tesch, Bekerian, English, & Harrington, 2010).

Although heterosexual IPV remains an overwhelmingly gendered and asymmetrical crime, it is important to acknowledge that women are capable of and do use violence to batter, coercively control and instill fear in their partner. Although predominantly characteristic of same-sex IPV, female batterers do exist in some heterosexual relationships, and men can be victims who resort to using force. However, difficulties in accessing these individuals, a history of social stigma in reporting, less access to resources and flawed research methodologies leaves the dynamic of male IPV victims who resort to violence largely unexamined.

**Role of Survival**

“Some of the things that people do to survive are noble and beautiful and make great United Way copy. Many of the things that people do to survive are complicated, shameful, illegal, confusing for survivors and outside observers, and downright ugly.”

Connie Burk, 2008, pg.1

 Victims of battering do the best they can to survive the systematic torment, degradation, control, and abuse they experience. Research indicates that women use a variety of strategies to not only survive, but also to manage and cope with the battering. Some involve the use of force, but many do not. Examples of such strategies are resisting the violence, negotiating, placating the abuser, “walking on eggshells,” seeking legal help, seeking familial support, leaving, and reaching out to social service providers (Pence & Dasgupta, 2006; Goodman, et al., 2003). Most women do not start out using force in the beginning of the relationship and when they do it is in self-defense. However, women do report that strategies that challenge the balance of power in the relationship are more helpful than strategies that don’t. Using force can be characterized as one type of power-challenging/balancing strategy.

**Role of Criminal Justice**

Domestic violence is a crime and laws were written to protect victims and hold abusers accountable. However, as a result of stricter domestic violence arrest policies, there has been an increase in females being arrested for domestic violence (Miller, 2001; Osthoff, 2002). This often results in an unintended consequence of victims getting arrested for domestic violence.

One explanation for this unintended consequence is that the criminal justice system’s approach to IPV tends to be gender-neutral and incident-driven, whereas true battering in a relationship actually follows a pattern and is not just a one-time event.
This disparity results in a failure by the system to contextualize and appropriately assess the meaning and motivation of the violence. Further exacerbating the problem is the contradiction that exists in accurately reporting and taking responsibility for the violence. Women tend to minimize the violence, are more likely to underreport their own victimization and over report their own use of violence. Simultaneously, men over report their victimization and underreport their own use of violence. This combination of factors creates the conditions in which survivors of battering are arrested for criminal domestic violence acts.

Being violent toward one’s partner should not be justified as a legitimate way to solve problems. However, it is not uncommon for survivors to be arrested. When survivors’ arrests (or dual arrests) stem from poor evidence collection, inaccurate/incomplete primary aggressor assessments, or officer bias it causes survivors to be revictimized by the system which was designed to protect them. Furthermore, it is counterproductive to the larger overarching goal of keeping families safe and eradicating domestic violence. The negative impact this has on women is insurmountable and, many times, irreparable. Amongst other consequences, many women who use force (WWUF) lose their trust in the criminal justice system. For example, in one study, 51% of battered women reported being treated badly by the police, and 35% stated they would not call the police again because of their negative experience (Tower & Fernandez, 2008). In essence, for these women, calling the police for help becomes a risky endeavor with an uncertain and sometimes more damaging outcome.

Why Language is Important

It is in the midst of these challenges with which the Women Who Use Force (WWUF) Ad Hoc Committee convened. The goal of the committee was to arrive at a common understanding of WWUF through the sharing of language and concepts. The committee comprised of members from various professional backgrounds, but members were predominantly from the criminal justice and social services fields. All members have worked with WWUF in some capacity.

Early conversations amongst committee members revealed that one’s professional background frequently guided the language that was being used to describe similar/same behaviors. For example, the act of a woman hitting her partner (non-defensively) is characterized as criminal under the domestic violence statute by the criminal justice system. However, when examined through a more contextual sociopolitical/social services lens, it could be characterized as a valid way to stop her partner from calling her names, humiliating her, or hurting their children. Legally, her actions are considered a criminal act of domestic violence in the system, but her partner’s are not. Alternatively, through the eyes of victim advocates, her partner’s emotional abuse is considered to be “domestic violence” or battering, but her hitting him is not. The same act being described, but assigned different labels and meanings.
The Goals and Limitations of the Document

This document was created in effort to introduce practitioners, professionals and the general public to the dynamics of WWUF. The document is divided alphabetically into two sections; a list of language used in social services work and a list of language found in the legal system. This separation evolved from continued conversations among the ad hoc committee members. In effort to bridge the gap between professional backgrounds and achieve a more comprehensive understanding of WWUF, the committee encourages readers to look at both sections of the list.

This document is by no means intended as an end-all and be-all on the topic of WWUF. Although this document provides a good general conceptual overview of WWUF, the committee simultaneously recognizes that the scope of the document is limited in its application to adult women who use force in their heterosexual relationships. Undoubtedly, there are many other populations of IPV victims who use force and deserve equal attention. Readers may find that some of the subject matter and concepts do translate to other populations of survivors, such as teen girls, lesbian women and male victims of IPV. However, enough nuances and variations of the dynamics in those relationships exist making separate assessments, presentation, and evaluations of those populations necessary.

Final Thoughts

The committee hopes that the document is utilized in the spirit with which it was intended; to guide professionals in the legal, criminal justice, and social services fields towards a more comprehensive understanding of WWUF. Consequently, we hope this will enable others to provide more appropriate and well-informed services for WWUF. Lastly, as the WWUF Ad Hoc Committee, we sincerely hope that exposure to these concepts will an impetus to meaningful conversations in your own communities, as much as it has been in ours. We anticipate that the ever-changing landscape in which we work combined with the continued needs of IPV survivors will continue to fuel our work as we move beyond common understanding towards meaningful changes in the system for women who are using force. As we collectively strive towards greater justice for all those affected by intimate partner violence, we are once again reminded that our work is never done.
Sociopolitical Terms & Concepts Relating To WWUF

Battered Woman Syndrome:
Initially based on Martin Seligman’s theory of “learned helplessness,” battered woman syndrome has been applied to battered women to explain why some women stay in violent relationships when there are opportunities to leave and/or escape. The battered woman syndrome term has also been used to identify a type of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), a psychological trauma state that some victims of crime and trauma may experience. However, the social definition and use of the term battered women/s syndrome has been criticized by some researchers (i.e. Dutton, 1996) and fallen out of favor. Researchers have argued that it is vague and unable to adequately describe the many variations of the experiences of battered women. Furthermore, the term “syndrome” stigmatizes survivors by only focusing on the psychology and not the broad social context of domestic violence. (See also Battered Woman Syndrome Defense page 13)

Coercive Control (CC):
Refers to a model of IPV that incorporates intimidation, isolation, and control as the predominant tactics batterers use against their partners. In addition, CC is used to describe how batterers restrict their partners’ ability to make daily decisions and enforce basic human rights. Stark (2009) states, “what men do to women is less important than what they prevent women from doing for themselves.” Coercive control is described as being used in an ongoing rather than an isolated/infrequent manner, thereby resulting in a cumulative and psychologically traumatic effect on the victim that distinguishes it from other types of crimes (Stark, 2009).

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) or Domestic Violence:
Domestic violence professionals define domestic violence as a pattern of abusive, coercive and/or manipulative behavior used by one intimate partner to take power and control away from the other. This differs from the legal definition and includes both criminal and non-criminal acts. (See also Battering page 9 and Domestic Violence page 13)

Gender Asymmetry:
The concept that in IPV relationships violence is used in a different context, with different motivation & different impact on males and females. Research suggests that this is the appropriate framework with which to study IPV.

Gender Symmetry:
The concept that IPV is perpetrated by men and women at equal levels with similar motivations and consequences. Current research overwhelmingly suggests that this approach is inaccurate. The gender symmetry approach is problematic, because it fails to contextualize the violence, often leading to inappropriate system response and damaging interventions.

Gender Responsive Services:
Gender responsive services/approaches are those that “intentionally allow research and knowledge on female socialization and development, as well as women’s risks, strengths and needs, to affect and guide all aspects of program and system design, processes and services” (Benedict, 2009).

Types of Violence:
The predominant types of violence that apply to WWUF are battering and resistive/reactive violence. Sometimes violence that is not rooted in patriarchal power and control may come to the attention of criminal justice and social services providers. It’s important to be aware that much of the time battering violence is the only type found in an intimate relationship. However, sometimes battering violence may co-occur with other types of violence, making it important for professionals to be aware of the differences and to conduct thorough assessments.
(See Types of Violence Experienced in Intimate Partner Relationships on pages 9-12)

* Use of Force/ Use of Violence/ Resorting to Violence:
Currently all terms are being used to describe the dynamic of women using violence/force in the context of intimate partner relationships. The term violence has been defined as an “unjust or unwarranted exertion of force or power” or the “intentional infliction of physical pain” by Webster’s Dictionary, leading some practitioners to distinguish it from the term force which does not imply the same degree of wrong doing or harmful intent as the term violence (Larance, 2006; House, 2001). Force is characterized as the “use of physical strength to accomplish a task.” (House, 2001). Furthermore, force has also been utilized as a general umbrella term to describe both survivors and non-survivors of IPV (Larance, 2006). Conversely, some domestic violence agencies utilize the term resort, distinguishing it from “use” as offering more information about the sense of desperation that many women feel when using violence in the context of IPV (i.e., Artemis Center, Dayton, OH; Behavioral Connections, Bowling Green, OH). The term Women Who Use Force (WWUF) is general and widely accepted in current research and practice.
*Please note that in Ohio and for the purpose of this document, the term WWUF is being used to describe women who are current or former survivors of IPV.
Types of Violence Experienced in Intimate Partner Relationships

I. Types Most Common To WWUF

- Directly apply to WWUF
- Defined by unbalanced power structure
- Most common types found in criminal justice, batterer intervention programs, and dv agencies

A. Battering:
An ongoing pattern of using intimidation, coercion, violence, and other tactics of control to gain and maintain power and control over an intimate partner and induce fear (Pence & Dasgupta, 2006). Within the feminist framework, it is widely accepted that in intimate partner relationships the source of this entitlement of power is rooted in gender and patriarchy. However, patriarchy doesn’t only perpetuate gender oppression, but other types of oppression (i.e. race, sexual orientation, religion, etc.) as well. The abusive behavior of the batterer is most frequently illustrated through the use of the “Power and Control Wheel,” developed by Domestic Abuse Intervention Project in Duluth, Minnesota (www.theduluthmodel.org). Although not impossible, “it is exceptional and rare for a female in a heterosexual relationship to establish the type of dominance over her male partner that would constitute ‘battering’ behavior” (Pence & Dasgupta, 2006). Battering has also been called “intimate terrorism” in some research (i.e. Johnson, 2006). See also Coercive Control pg.7.

Example 1: In a heterosexual relationship, a male partner may physically, sexually, emotionally, and financially abuse his female partner. The female partner does not exhibit a pattern of control towards her male partner.

Example 2: In a same-sex relationship, one partner may utilize all the above categories, in addition to other control tactics, such as threats to “out” their partner, reinforcing internalized homophobia, and questioning their partner’s sexual orientation.

B. Resistive/ Reactive Violence:
A relationship defined by one controlling and one non-controlling partner. The violence or force is used by the victim (non-controlling partner) to resist domination, to escape, to end the battering, to retaliate against the abuse, self-defend, and/or to establish some parity in the relationship (Pence & Dasgupta, 2006; Johnson, 2006). WWUF predominantly fall into this category of violence. This type of violence is generally bi-directional, where both partners use violence, but the frequency and severity of their assaults are not equal.

Example 1: A female utilizes various strategies to resist her partner’s domination. She may start off using strategies such as appeasing her partner, negotiating, walking on eggshells, and/or eliciting help from family or outside agencies. If those strategies don’t work, she may
progressively begin to use strategies that challenge the balance of power, such as talking back, yelling, threatening, and/or begin using physical force in effort to stop the battering and/or express her anger. **Example 2:** a wife shoves and scratches her husband; he then punches her in the face and breaks her nose. The outcome is asymmetrical, with the female sustaining a higher severity of injury (West, 2007).

**Example 3:** In a same-sex relationship, a male partner may utilize the above strategies (see Example 1) to resist domination and retaliate against his battering partner.

**Note of Caution:** In situations where violence has been used by the woman as a response to being battered or in self-defense, it may be tempting to categorize the couple as engaging in *mutual* violence, especially because many women underreport victimization and over report their own use of violence. They may identify themselves as being "just as violent" or "controlling" as their male partners. This could erroneously lead professionals to use this as a criminal defense/prosecution strategy or refer the parties to inappropriate interventions (i.e. couples counseling). Johnson & Ferraro (2000) identify mutual violence, as being very rare. Furthermore, some practitioners doubt the existence of mutual violence, where both partners are violent, controlling, and battering each other.

II. **Types Least Common to WWUF**

- Less commonly found in the context of IPV and WWUF
- Can be used as justifications for violence by batterers and systems
- Can co-occur with battering or without battering in the relationship
- Most of these types of violence are not gender-driven
- Victims of this violence are not limited to just intimate partners
- Important for practitioners to assess the individual’s use of violence in the course of their lifetime, particularly prior to the diagnosis of a pathology. A thorough assessment may reveal that a pattern of battering or exerting power and control existed prior to the onset of the illness, stressor, or pathology (see *ODVN Standards for WWUF Guidelines/Promising Practices for Programs working with WWUF*- in print). In cases where different types of violence co-occurs, more than one type of intervention/ treatment method is necessary to fully address the issues underlying the violence (i.e. batterer intervention coupled with substance abuse treatment, etc.).

A. **Situational Violence:**

Violence used to achieve goals without any pattern of control, intimidation, and domination in the relationship (Pence & Dasgupta, 2006; Johnson, 2006). There is no instillation of fear and no defined “battering” pattern in the relationship. Disagreements/arguments do happen in most intimate relationships. Some couples may even use emotional abuse towards one
another (i.e. name-calling) and on a rare occasion, there may be a physical act of aggression (i.e. a slap, an object is thrown etc.). Although such isolated incidents may occur, in most relationships fights do not escalate to the point of physical aggression. There is frequently a withdrawal ritual that happens where the parties take a break, compromise, or stop the fight altogether (Jacobson & Gottman, 1998). In a healthy relationship there is a “line” that is not crossed by either party.

Example: One partner slaps his/her partner when they find out about an infidelity or when a couple fights over a stressor in the relationship (i.e. gambling addiction). They may also engage in emotional abuse towards each other when they are arguing (i.e. name calling etc.).

Note of Caution: Batterers will frequently try to convince others that their use of violence is “situational.” This element coupled with victims who minimize their victimization in an incident-driven criminal justice system, might erroneously lead professionals to miscategorize the violence as being “situational” rather than “battering.”

B. Medical Pathology:
Broad category used to identify violence that is a result of illness, disease, or some sort of physical/neurological disorder. This type of violence is typically generalized and does not only target the intimate partner.

Examples: A person becomes violent after experiencing a neurological change originating from things such as; Alzheimer’s disease, a Schizophrenic psychotic episode (or another type of psychosis), traumatic brain injury, etc.

Note of Caution: Again, batterers frequently make excuses for their violence and may blame an illness, such as bipolar disorder, for their use of violence. However, the majority of individuals suffering physical or mental illness do not behave violently.

C. Substance Abuse:
Violence that may co-occur with substance abuse/use. Batterers frequently blame alcohol/drugs to excuse their abusive behavior. It is clear that substance use does not cause IPV. When male-dominant attitudes are controlled for, the relationship between alcohol and domestic violence often disappears suggesting that personal beliefs about one’s entitlement to dominate someone may lead to violence (Pernanen, Blane & Kosten, 1991 as cited in Bennet, 2006). The relationship between substance abuse and IPV is complex and sometimes cyclical. For example, substance use may increase the risk of victimization by exposing women to violent men who abuse substances (Bennett, 2006). Alternately, women’s risk for substance abuse is increased by their victimization (Bennett, 2006). Also, it is not uncommon for women to use substances to cope with trauma. Some studies show that 55-99% of women in substance abuse treatment have a lifetime history of abuse (i.e., Najavits, Weiss, & Shaw, 1997; Downs, 2001). Conversely, 50%-70% of court-involved batterers do abuse substances, but
60%-75% of batterers are not drinking when they batter (i.e., Pernanen, Blane & Kosten, 1991 as cited in Bennet, 2006). One thing that is clear is that substance abuse in the relationship frequently increases the lethality of the batterer and the fear level of the victim, making the pairing of substances and violence a dangerous combination (Hamberger, 1997).

D. **Antisocial Violence:**
Violence attributed to a personality disorder, called Antisocial Personality Disorder (APD), as defined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). APD is characterized by the inability to conform to social/legal norms, moral ineptitude, lack of empathy/remorse for victims, and sense of social entitlement to behave inappropriately. Their violence is usually generalized across situations and victims. According to the DSM, the majority of individuals with APD are men. Although most batterers do not have personality disorders, some studies estimate that approximately 10-30% of batterers in batterer intervention programs (BIPs) do meet criteria for being antisocial (i.e. Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994). If such men are ordered into intervention programs, their charm and skill in reading and manipulating others can mislead their partners and treatment providers to believe that they are making positive changes, when they are not. This can lead to a false sense of security for the victim. Antisocial individuals’ ability to effectively participate in traditional BIPs is current topic of debate. Many practitioners and researchers (i.e., Mauricio, Tein, & Lopez, 2007) assert that traditional batterer intervention attempts to treat violent offenders with APD are counterproductive and unsuccessful.

**Note of Caution:** Caution should be taken when labeling antisocial violence, because marginalized communities tend to be falsely labeled with “antisocial personality.”

**Note of Caution:** There is much philosophical debate about whether such personality disorders, are considered “mental illness.” It is the position of this committee that to label it as mental illness carries with it the high potential to excuse abusive behaviors and justify the violence.
Legal Terms & Concepts Relating to WWUF

Battered Woman Syndrome Defense:
Ohio Revised Code Section 2901.06: Battered woman syndrome pursuant to Ohio law is an affirmative self defense claim in which an expert will testify that the accused suffered battered woman syndrome in order to establish the requisite belief that the accused was in danger of death or great bodily harm to justify the use of force in question. * Please note that prosecutors may be able to introduce this information in their case in chief under certain circumstances; also men and children have been able to exert the claim. Historically, this has not been a successful defense. Please contact National Clearing House for the Defense of Battered Women (1-800-903-0111; http://www.ncdbw.org/more.htm ) for further assistance/clarification if you/your agency are involved in such a criminal defense case.

Domestic Violence:
The term “domestic violence” in the legal system defines the relationship more broadly by referring not only to the intimate partner, but also to a current/former member of the household, a spouse, a blood relative, or individual with whom there is a mutual child. The term “domestic violence” legally only pertains to threats to harm/kill or inflicting actual physical harm and causing that person to be fearful. See Ohio Revised Code Section 2919.25 below:

(A) No person shall knowingly cause or attempt to cause physical harm to a family or household member.

(B) No person shall recklessly cause serious physical harm to a family or household member.

(C) No person, by threat of force, shall knowingly cause a family or household member to believe that the offender will cause imminent physical harm to the family or household member.

(F) As used in this section and sections 2919.251 and 2919.26 of the Revised Code:

(1) “Family or household member” means any of the following:

(a) Any of the following who is residing or has resided with the offender:

(i) A spouse, a person living as a spouse, or a former spouse of the offender;

(ii) A parent or a child of the offender, or another person related by consanguinity or affinity to the offender;
(iii) A parent or a child of a spouse, person living as a spouse, or former spouse of the offender, or another person related by consanguinity or affinity to a spouse, person living as a spouse, or former spouse of the offender.

(b) The natural parent of any child of whom the offender is the other natural parent or is the putative other natural parent.

(2) “Person living as a spouse” means a person who is living or has lived with the offender in a common law marital relationship, who otherwise is cohabiting with the offender, or who otherwise has cohabited with the offender within five years prior to the date of the alleged commission of the act in question.

Predominant Aggressor:
Ohio is a “primary physical aggressor” state (see definition below) and others are “predominant aggressor” states. The term may also be used in custody evaluations. “Predominant aggressor” does not refer to who struck first, as the term “primary” may imply. Therefore, this term is preferred to “primary” by professionals in the field. The International Association of the Chiefs of Police (IACP) characterizes the predominant aggressor as the “person who poses the most serious ongoing threat to the other” (pg. 3). The IACP also notes that an injury resulting from a person acting in self-defense is neither abuse nor a crime in the 2006 National Law Enforcement Policy Center model policy for domestic violence.

Preferred Arrest:
Ohio’s policy states that “if a peace officer has reasonable grounds to believe that the offense of domestic violence or the offense of violating a protection order has been committed and reasonable cause to believe that a particular person is guilty of committing the offense, it is the preferred course of action in this state that the officer arrest and detain that person [ORC § 2935.03(B) (3) (b); 2935.032(D)].

When an arrest is not made when it is preferred course of action to do so, the officer must articulate in the written incident report required by Ohio Revised Code Section 2935.032 a clear statement of the officer’s reasons for not arresting.

Primary Physical Aggressor:
Refers to Ohio’s policy the police must follow if the officer has reasonable cause to believe that family or household members committed offenses against each other, “it is the preferred course of action in this state that the officer, arrest and detain until a warrant can be obtained for the family or household member who committed the offense and whom the officer has reasonable cause to believe is the primary physical aggressor [ORC §2935.03(B) (3) (d)].

Factors that shall be considered when police are determining the primary physical aggressor:

(i) Any history of domestic violence or of any other violent acts by either

person involved in the alleged offense that the officer reasonably can ascertain;

(ii) If violence is alleged, whether the alleged violence was caused by a person acting in self-defense;

(iii) Each person's fear of physical harm, if any, resulting from the other person's threatened use of force against any person or resulting from the other person's use or history of the use of force against any person, and the reasonableness of that fear;

(iv) The comparative severity of any injuries suffered by the persons involved in the alleged offense.

If the officer does not make an arrest, he/she must document in the police report why an arrest was not made [ORC §2935.032(D)].
References


Domestic Abuse Intervention Project in Duluth, Minnesota (www.theduluthmodel.org)


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