

# Studies explore weapons/arrests in domestic violence cases

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Weapons were involved in 40 percent of domestic violence cases in Houston, and researchers discovered distinct patterns on when and where each type of weapon was used, according to a recent study at Sam Houston State University.

The study, "Profiling weapon use in [domestic violence](#): Multilevel analysis of situational and neighborhood factors," was based on 9,450 detailed reports of domestic violence cases that occurred in 2005 throughout Houston, the nation's fourth largest city. While the majority of cases – 60 percent—reported the use of bodily force, [weapons](#) were involved in two out of every five cases. Knives were used in 7 percent of these cases, and [guns](#) were present in nearly 4 percent of cases, but the majority of weapons – 26 percent – were classified only as "other" in the [police report](#).

The study, authored by Dr. Joonyeup Lee of Pennsylvania State University and Drs. Yan Zhang and Larry Hoover at SHSU, was published in [Victims & Offenders](#).

For example, knives were more likely to be used in a residence and late at night. Men who confront women generally use bodily force, but men who confront men or women who confront men will more likely use a weapon.

"Police regularly respond to domestic violence calls, which can include anything from a verbal argument to a serious assault with weapons," said

Dr. Lee. "Ideally, if we can figure out the pattern of weapon use, [police](#) will have an educated guess on what may be involved as they respond to the scene in such a short notice and with limited information."

In a second study by Drs. Lee, Zhang and Hoover, "Police response to domestic violence: Multilevel factors of arrest decision," researchers found that police decision making includes legal and other factors. Arrests in domestic violence case were most likely to occur in areas with heavy concentrations of immigrants and economically disadvantaged. In addition, domestic violence arrests were most likely to occur late at night, on weekends or at a residence.

The study analyzed similar reports of domestic violence from the Houston Police Department in 2005. The study was published in [\*Policing: an International Journal of Police Strategies and Management\*](#).

Provided by Sam Houston State University

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