

# WESTERN/NORTHWESTERN REGIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR HUMAN SERVICES

Fall, 2017 Newsletter

## CONTACT DR. RUBY

Email: [jrubby@fullerton.edu](mailto:jruby@fullerton.edu)  
Phone: 657-278-8385

## TAKE THE SURVEY!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WROHS>

## OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

<https://www.facebook.com/WesternNorthwesternRegionOfHumanServices/>

## MESSAGE FROM WROHS PRESIDENT JAMES RUBY, PHD

Hello Fellow NOHS Members,

As your regional president, I wanted to pass along my greetings and best wishes. I am honored to be able to represent our new combined regions for the National Organization for Human Services.

In case you didn't know, our region now covers the following states: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, and Guam. That is an incredibly large area, but based on our size, we could easily become the most influential region in NOHS!

Recently, I sent a link to a survey to many of you. If you have not had the opportunity to complete it, please do so using the link to the left. I hope you will help us get to know you a little better and share some of your hopes and visions for our region.

We have also established a Facebook page, where we can connect folks from our region in an efficient way. Again, the link is to the left.

I truly believe in NOHS and I am excited to see the renewed energy in our region. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns. I am happy to help assist you in whatever ways I am able.

I wish you and yours a restful and enjoyable summer and I hope to see you at our national conference in Iowa in October!

## FITNESS FOR THE HUMAN SERVICES PROFESSION— WHERE DO WE START?

*Shoshana D. Kerewsky, PsyD, HS-BCP*

We've all met a human services student or practitioner who set off our alarms. I'm guessing that we've all thought, "This person is in the wrong profession," whether because the person seems unskilled, biased, unethical, or dangerous. Yet we may also be stereotyping or misunderstanding the person, or acting from our biases. We may have had the experience of being misjudged or considered unsuitable for our profession ourselves. Yet there are no objective standards for fitness. How do we notice our incorrect or irrelevant reactions, yet retain our radar for people who



are actually unfit, or unready?

I recently edited a monograph for Council for Standards in Human Service Education (CSHSE) that I hope is a starting point. It's a preliminary work, one I hope will stimulate discussion and lead to further exploration of this important and complex topic. You may download it at no cost from CSHSE's website: <http://www.cshse.org/publications.html>.

## REGIONAL MEMBERS' PRESENTATIONS AT THE 2017 NOHS ANNUAL CONVENTION

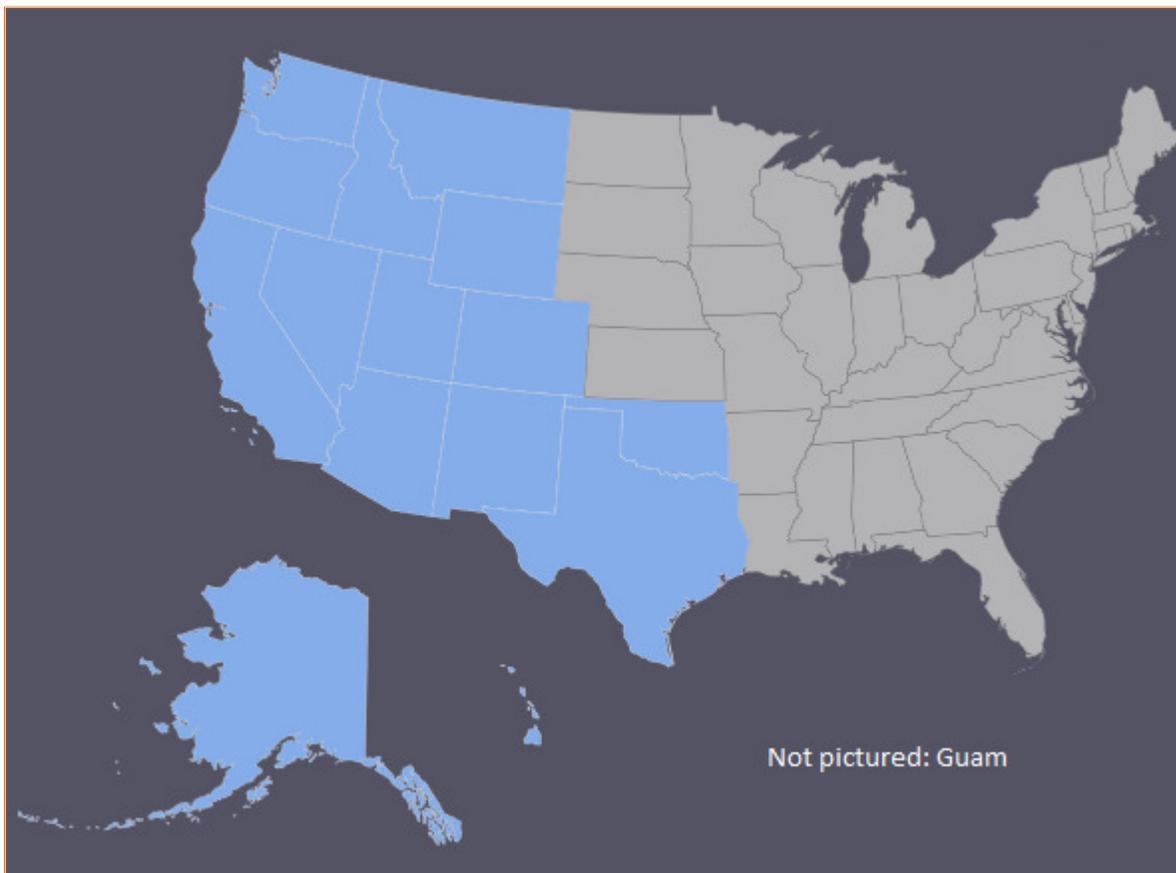
### James Ruby:

- Integrating Strengths Based Supervision in Human Services (workshop)

### Shoshana D. Kerewsky:

- Professional Self-Awareness: Teaching Students, Trainees, and Professionals to Evaluate Their Risk and Resilience Factors (workshop)
- Ethical Dilemmas in International Study, Practice, and Research Settings (poster)
- Ethical Leadership in Human Services (workshop with Linda Wark and Nancy Wood)

**Are you a member of our region presenting at NOHS? Are you attending?  
Let us know on Facebook!**



## COMMON DYNAMICS IN DOMESTICALLY VIOLENT RELATIONSHIPS

*Diane Berry, MSW, JD, LCSW*

### Submit to our newsletter!

Send your content to Dr. Shoshana D. Kerewsky, Editor, at [kerewskyopa@gmail.com](mailto:kerewskyopa@gmail.com) by **January 1, 2018** for consideration for the next issue.

- ✓ Please include **WROHS** in your subject line
- ✓ Run a spelling check
- ✓ Be sure your professional name and highest relevant degree and certifications, and institution or agency appear on your document itself
- ✓ Submit in .doc or .rtf format only

The issue of domestic violence continues to plague relationships today in spite of more than forty years of treatment specifically designed to eradicate it. While the precise character and forms of violence in each relationship may differ, there are common dynamics that occur and remain consistent in violent relationships. These dynamics will be addressed in this article.

The United States Department of Justice Office of Violence Against Women defines domestic violence as “a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner”(Office of Violence Against Women: Areas of Focus). While most consider the term violence to refer to physical acts, domestic violence can be anything from physical and sexual violence to emotional, psychological or economic actions or threats of actions that influence or affect another person (Office of Violence Against Women: Areas of Focus).

Domestic violence is also known by other terms such as battering, spousal abuse and intimate relationship violence. In addition, it can affect persons of all socioeconomic backgrounds and educational levels and can happen to anyone regardless of age, race, religion or sexual orientation (Office of Violence Against Women: Areas of Focus). Finally, it not only impacts the individuals in the violent relationship, but affects family, friends, co-workers and the entire community (Office of Violence Against Women: Areas of Focus)

While the actual acts of violence in relationships vary, there are certain common characteristics that violent relationships share. The key aspect is control; specifically, the goal of these behaviors is to achieve a significant measure of control over an intimate partner. No one perpetrator exhibits all of these behaviors or tactics; most have a preferred few they resort to much of the time to achieve control over a partner.

This author spent eighteen years facilitating Batterer’s Treatment Groups and has observed all of these tactics in operation. The most extreme example of control observed was a client who expressed that when she was allowed to leave the home she shared with her abuser, she was required to sign in and out of the residence. If she was traveling to the grocery store, she had a limited window of time to make the trip and, upon her return, her grocery bag would be examined and compared with both the receipt she provided and the funds deducted from the joint checking account. If there was a discrepancy, she was beaten. She is no longer in this relationship.

These common tactics include the following:

**Intimidation**—In this tactic the goal is to elicit fear in the partner that something bad will happen. This can be done using looks or actions. Even gestures can elicit fear. The abusive partner may destroy her favorite things, smash personal possessions, abuse pets or display weapons. One example of this tactic used by a client of this author was rather ingenious, yet terrifying. When he and his partner engaged in an argument, he would calmly sit at the kitchen table and begin to clean his gun. He never pointed it at her or directly threatened her with it; yet the message was clear. They are no longer together.

One additional note about gender needs to be addressed here. In this article, for ease of discussion, male pronouns are used to indicate the violent partner and female pronouns are used to indicate the victim. This is not meant to imply that a woman cannot be the violent partner in either a heterosexual or same sex relationship. However, this author spent five years evaluating all persons arrested and convicted for domestic violence in Manitowoc County, Wisconsin and is of the opinion, consistent with some recent research on the subject, that men and women tend to use violence for different reasons. Men tend to use violence to control a partner, while women tend to use violence to protect themselves. In every instance in which it was a woman to be evaluated, she had been a victim first, often multiple times in a variety of relationships. Finally, she had had enough and lashed out. Her partner, who in most cases had previously been arrested for domestic violence, was smart enough to pick up the phone and she went to jail.

**Emotional Abuse**—This is relatively self-explanatory; emotional abuse involves the use of put-downs, criticisms and insults with the goal of making the partner feel bad about herself. She may be called names or made to think or feel she is losing touch with reality. She may be humiliated in front of family or friends or made to feel guilty about her actions. One common name hurled at women by violent partners is “bipolar” or some other mental health label.

**Isolation**—An abusive partner wants his victim as dependent upon him as she can be so she will be unable to leave him or seek support from friends and family members. If he is her only source of emotional support, she is more likely to stay with him and tolerate his abuse. In this tactic, he will control what she does, who she sees or has contact with, what she reads and, as in the case of the client mentioned above, where she goes. He effectively limits her involvement outside of the relationship and often uses his “love” for her to justify these actions. Statements used may include something similar to: “Why do you need to see your family today? Aren’t we family?” or “Why do you need to go out with your friends; don’t you want to spend time with me?”

**Refusing to Take Responsibility for His Actions**—The violent partner may make light of the abuse (“it wasn’t that bad”), deny any knowledge or recollection of it (“how did you get that black eye?”) or blame the female partner for the incident (“you know how upset I get when you...”). He is basically shifting the responsibility for the violence and any issues in the relationship to his partner.

**Using Children as Pawns to Control**—When a couple has children together, the violent member can exploit them to gain control over his partner. He may attempt to make her feel guilty about her care of the children, focusing on something she did or didn’t do for them. If they are separated, he may use the children to relay messages about changes in placement or threats to her. He may threaten to take the children from her or may use placement times as an occasion to harass her, especially if there is a protection order preventing him from having contact with her any other time. Needless to say, this has a significant impact not only on the victim but on the children as well.

**Using Male Privilege**—While still in the relationship, he may treat her like his servant, requiring her to have dinner available when he demands it, only to refuse to eat it or throw it on the floor as inedible once it is prepared. He may also make all of the big decisions in the family without consulting her, such as deciding to move or quit his job. When at home, he may act like the “master of the castle”, and insist upon being waited on by his partner and children.

**Economic Abuse**—Some abusive partners will prevent their wives from getting a job outside the home. Others will make it impossible for her to keep one by showing up at work demanding to speak with her or engaging in other inappropriate behavior to get her fired. He may take her money, as in the case of the client mentioned above, or may make her ask him for money for groceries or other necessities. He may also deny her access to any information about the family finances.

**Coercion and Threats**—This tactic is somewhat similar to Intimidation, but involves a required behavior on her part. He will likely use coercion or threats to get her to do something, such as stay with him, to drop charges against him or engage in illegal behavior of some kind. He may threaten to leave her, commit suicide, or report her to social services to get her to do as he wishes(Wheel Gallery).

As stated above, no abusive partner uses all of these tactics. Most have two or three they regularly rely upon to achieve control over their partner. Each is effective, however, in successfully limiting the autonomy of the abused partner (Wheel Gallery).

## References

Frequently Asked Questions. (n.d.). Retrieved January 5, 2016, from Domestic Abuse Intervention Project: <http://www.theduluthmodel.org/about/faqs.html#change>

Office of Violence Against Women: Areas of Focus. (n.d.). Retrieved January 4, 2016, from United States Department of Justice: <http://www.justice.gov/ovw/domestic-violence>

Wheel Gallery. (n.d.). Retrieved January 5, 2016, from Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs: <http://www.theduluthmodel.org/training/wheelts.htm>