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## WOMAN SAYS SHOOTING WAS IN SELF-DEFENSE

*JOHN ALLARD, Staff Writer*

A Swansea woman told Lexington County sheriff's investigators she shot her boyfriend in self-defense after they argued Saturday night.

Sharon Elizabeth Fisher, 25, said in a statement that her boyfriend's .357 Magnum handgun "just went off," Lexington County Coroner Harry Harman said. John David Williamson, 35, was shot once in the chest while standing about 4 feet from Fisher.

The shooting occurred when Williamson started to walk out of their home at 126 Charley Rast Road in Swansea after the argument, Harman said. Williamson stopped when Fisher telephoned the Sheriff's Department, turned around and walked toward Fisher, who then shot him. "I think there could be a question about self-defense," the coroner said Monday. "After all the facts come out, that could be a possibility."

Fisher remained on the phone with the Sheriff's Department after the shooting and reported what happened, he said.

She has been arrested on a murder charge and was being held Monday night in the Lexington County jail.

Before the 10:45 p.m. shooting, Fisher told investigators that she and Williamson argued while watching the televised football game between the University of South Carolina and the University of Georgia. Then Williamson dragged her around by the hair, Fisher said.

One of Fisher's relatives, who spoke on condition of anonymity after talking with Fisher, said Williamson and Fisher had been arguing a lot recently. The relative said Fisher and Williamson drank beer Saturday night, but said neither was drunk.

"She had gotten afraid of him lately. He was going through a very bad divorce. He was insanely jealous," the relative said. "She didn't kill him on purpose. She was crying and grieving because she loved him."

The law in South Carolina on self-defense is not clear-cut, said **Jack Swerling**, a Columbia lawyer who has represented several women cleared of murder charges for shooting a spouse.

Normally, a person must believe he or she will be seriously injured or killed to claim self-defense successfully in a shooting, he said.

But the state Supreme Court ruled this year that an imminent threat is not required if a wife shoots a spouse who abused her, **Swerling** said.



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