Combating Animal Cruelty: The Past, Present and Future

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Why Fight Animal Cruelty?

“… if any passages of Holy Writ seem to forbid us to be cruel to dumb animals, for instance to kill a bird with its young, this is… to remove man’s thoughts from being cruel to other men, and lest through being cruel to other animals one becomes cruel to human beings… ”

St. Thomas Aquinas, (1225-1274)
Why Fight Animal Cruelty?

"Pain is pain, whether it be inflicted on man or on beast; and the creature that suffers it, whether man or beast, being sensible of the misery of it while it lasts, suffers evil."

Rev. Humphry Primatt *The Duty of Mercy* (1776)
Why Fight Animal Cruelty?

In a footnote to *Introduction to the Principals of Morals and Legislation* entitled "Interests of the inferior animals improperly neglected in legislation" (1781), English barrister Jeremy Bentham argued that the capacity for suffering is the vital characteristic that gives a being the right to legal consideration. The final sentence of the footnote is often used today as a foundation for those seeking to promote the cause of animals:

'The question is not, Can they *reason*? nor, Can they *talk*? but *Can they suffer*?
Self-portrait of William Hogarth and "Trump"
William Hogarth’s
*The First Stage of Cruelty* (1751)
detail from Hogarth’s *The Second Stage of Cruelty* (1751)
Detail from Hogarth’s
*Cruelty in Perfection* (1751)
New York’s Original Anti-Cruelty Law (1829)

"Every person who shall maliciously kill, maim or wound any horse, ox or other cattle, or any sheep, belonging to another or shall maliciously and cruelly beat or torture any such animals, whether belonging to himself or another, shall upon conviction, be adjudged guilty of a misdemeanor."

(N.Y. Rev. Stat. tit.6 § 26 (1829))
The arrest of Kit Burns by The ASPCA – New York, May 8, 1868
New York’s Revised Anti-Cruelty Law (1867)

After a year of enforcement, Bergh saw that more changes were needed: (N.Y. Rev. Stat. §§ 375.2-.9 (1867)

- The new law was revised to apply to "any living creature", a major move away from concern only for animals with commercial value
- All provisions applied regardless of ownership of the animal
- The list of illegal acts was expanded to include: overdriving and overloading, torturing or tormenting, depriving of necessary sustenance; unnecessarily or cruelly beating and needlessly mutilating or killing
New York’s Revised Anti-Cruelty Law (1867)

- Animal fighting was made illegal – including bull, bear, dog and cock fighting as well as the keeping of fighting animals and the management of fights

- The law imposed a duty to provide “sufficient quality of good and wholesome food and water” and empowered any persons to enter premises to provide for needs

- The law made it illegal to transport any creature in a cruel or inhumane manner

- Gave ASPCA agents arrest powers for enforcement of these provisions
Fighting Animal Cruelty

Trends in the 20th Century … and beyond
Houston, Detroit, San Francisco
1. The animal cruelty-human violence connection is widely recognized, prompting greater responsiveness to animal abuse
The Animal Cruelty – Crime Connection
"It has long been accepted among professionals who must assess dangerous populations that the best predictor of future behavior is past behavior and a past history of violence is the single most important predictor of future violence... Violence against animals is violence and when it is present it is ... synonymous with a history of violence.”

FBI Supervisory Special Agent Alan C. Brantley at a Congressional Briefing, May 13, 1998
MSPCA Analysis of 153 Prosecuted Animal Abuse Cases (1975-1996) and Matched Control Group

**Criminal Record 10 years Pre/Post Animal Cruelty**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime</th>
<th>Animal Abusers</th>
<th>Controls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Violent Crime</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Crime</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Crime</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disorder Crime</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any of Above</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Animal Cruelty History in Incarcerated Prisoners

Study

Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-Violent Offenders (N=45)</th>
<th>Violent Offenders (N=45)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unoccupied burglary – 33%</td>
<td>Murder/Attempted – 35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property crime – 24%</td>
<td>Sex offence – 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug crime – 36%</td>
<td>Occupied burglary – 9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other – 7%</td>
<td>Armed robbery – 5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Median age = 31.8 yrs.        Median age = 32.3 yrs.

(Merz-Perez, Heide, Silverman and Lockwood (2001))
Animal Cruelty History in Incarcerated Prisoners

Non-Violent Offenders (N=45)

20% had committed past acts of cruelty to animals.

6.7% had history of abuse of companion animals

Violent Offenders (N=45)

56% had committed past acts of cruelty to animals.

26% had history of abuse of companion animals

(Merz-Perez, Heide, Silverman and Lockwood (2001))
The Child Abuse – Animal Cruelty Connection
Incidence of Animal Abuse in 53 Child-Abusing Families

- 60% had at least one family member meeting animal abuse criterion defined by New Jersey animal cruelty law.
- Children were animal abusers in 37% of abusive households, but the sole animal abusers in only 14% of animal abusing households.
- Animal abuse was reported in 88% of homes referred for physical abuse of children, compared with 34% of homes referred for neglect or children at risk.

Incidence of Animal Abuse in 53 Child-Abusing Families

- Abusive households had more pets under 2 years of age and fewer over 2
- Pets had injured a family member in 69% of animal abusive households vs. 6% non-abusive

The Domestic Violence – Animal Cruelty Connection
1997 Survey of 50 Domestic Violence Shelters in US

- 85.4% reported women in shelter talked about pet abuse.
- 63% said children described incidents of pet abuse.
- 83% indicated they observed the domestic violence/animal abuse link.
- 27% included questions relating to pet abuse in their intake interviews.

LOVE SHOULD NOT MEAN FEAR

Domestic violence and spousal abuse are often preceded by threats and irrational behavior. Because domestic violence is a leading cause of homicide, both violence and the threat of abuse are prosecuted to protect the family.

The Baltimore Police Department now provides personnel dedicated exclusively to investigate domestic violence, assist with prosecutions, and send abusers to jail.

Call 911 — FOR EMERGENCY RESPONSE
Call 311 — FOR INFORMATION
Vision Statement

National Link Coalition
Vision Statement

It is understood that there is a link between violence against humans and violence against animals. Through the recognition and integration of this understanding into policies and practices nationwide, people and animals are measurably safer.
Trends in Animal Cruelty Law Enforcement

2. The human-animal bond has increasing legislative and law enforcement importance
Pets are Part of the Family

57% of all households have pets
- 72 million pet dogs in US
- 82 million pet cats

• 75% of households with school age children
• A child in America is more likely to grow up with a pet in the home than with a father
• 84% of pet owners acquired their pet mainly for companionship
• 83% of pet owners refer to themselves as their pet’s mom/dad
• 90% would not consider dating someone who wasn’t fond of their pet
Traditional Family Systems Theory

Extended Family

Parent(s)

Child(ren)

Community

Pet(s)
More Appropriate Family Systems Theory
Trends in Animal Cruelty Law Enforcement

3. Expansion of felony animal cruelty laws
Number of States with Felony Animal Cruelty Laws

1800 - 2012
Changes 2010 – 2012: Legislation

Felony Cruelty to Animals
- Idaho (3rd incident), Mississippi
- Still remaining: North Dakota, South Dakota

Animal abuser registries
- Suffolk, Albany, Rockland Counties, NY
- Introduced in 18 states. Link cited as rationale.

Animal Sexual Assault
- Register as a sex offender (Oregon)

Cross-Reporting
- Connecticut: Animal Control & Dept. of Children & Families (2-way)
- Only 2-way cross-reporting: Connecticut, Illinois, W. VA.
- Kansas bill: ACOs to report child abuse -- failed
Accomplishments 2010 – 2012:
Pet Protection Orders: 22 states + Puerto Rico

- **Enacted:**
  - Arkansas,
  - Maryland,
  - New Jersey
  - Oregon,
  - Texas

- **Rescinded:**
  - D.C.

- **Bills failed:**
  - Florida
  - Kentucky
  - Virginia
National Center for Prosecution of Animal Abuse

The National Center for Prosecution of Animal Abuse (NCPAA) is a program of the National District Attorneys Association (NDAA), created in partnership with the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) and Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF) to educate and train prosecutors and allied professionals on the effective handling of animal cruelty and neglect cases, including cases involving the co-occurrence of animal abuse and violence to people. NDAA desires to bring greater awareness to the often misunderstood nature of animal maltreatment and how it can interconnect with family violence and contribute to lethality issues for victims of interpersonal violence.

With growing awareness by the public to recognize and report animal abuse, combined with increased attention by the media, prosecuting attorneys need the resources to properly address incidents of animal abuse in their community and...
Trends in Animal Cruelty Law Enforcement

4. Use of Advances in Science in the Prosecution of Animal Cruelty Cases
In December of 2007 the ASPCA launched the world’s first Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) vehicle, designed to travel to crime scenes involving multiple animals to facilitate treatment and documentation of the condition of animal victims and to assist law enforcement agencies in collecting animal-related evidence to be used in the prosecution of crimes. Based in Atlanta, it has been used at dogfight raids, puppy mill rescues and animal hoarding cases from Tennessee to Pennsylvania.
2010 – 2012: Changing Paradigms
Veterinary Medicine

AVMA

• Amended veterinarian’s oath to identify animal welfare as priority
• Updated policy on animal abuse and neglect

“One Health”

• National Link Coalition a resource for One Health Commission
• Collaborating with One Health Initiative
• “Medics Against Violence” DV program in Scotland
• SafePet program in Manitoba: vets, H.S., Family Violence Prevention

Veterinary Forensics

• IVFSA
• Conferences
• University of Florida courses
• American Academy of Forensic Sciences voted to accept DVMs
Canine CODIS

- Multi-agency
- ~400 dogs
- 26 Properties

Q: Are they connected?
ASPCA forensic analyst Amanda Fitch swabbing pit for bloodstain evidence
Trends in Animal Cruelty Law Enforcement

5. New community-based approaches to old animal cruelty problems

Animal Hoarding
Episode 1: Bonnie and Don
Premieres Wednesday, July 21 at 9 PM e/p
As conditions deteriorate in the homes of two people overwhelmed by animals, families are driven to intervene. Bonnie refuses to let her dogs outside, turning her home into an unsanitary horror that is threatening her health — and the animals — forcing her family to act. Don’s 30 cats have torn his house to shreds, and his ailing wife is forced to live with her daughter’s family. They’ve now decided that this disaster has gone on for too long, and they ask him to risk charges of animal cruelty in order to bring his wife home.

More: About Bonnie
Photos: Bonnie and Don

More: About Don
Watch: Don’s Video
Elk County PA Cat Sanctuary Rescue
2010
ASPCA Exclusive Rescue Photos

Hundreds of crates and cages were assembled at the temporary shelter to house the rescued felines.

Elk County PA Cat Sanctuary Rescue 2010
Trends in Animal Cruelty Law Enforcement

5. Recognizing animals involved in cruelty cases as victims of crime deserving special effort to undue the harm that people have done
HLE Director of Operations Howard Lawrence prepares a dog for transport
Anti-Cruelty Behavior Team

- Evaluations
- Enrichment
- Socialization
- Rehabilitation
**BEHAVIOR BASICS**

**Case #:** 2011-237  
**Location:** Morehead, KY

**Dog ID:** 135  
**Name:** Fiona

**Evaluation date:** 11/30/11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adoptable Immediately</td>
<td>Behavior Modification Recommended</td>
<td>Extensive Rehabilitation Needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Behavior on leash:**
- [ ] Walks
- [ ] Pulls — hard to handle
- ✔ Balks (may need to be carried)
- [ ] Panics (carry only)

**Potential behavior problem(s):**
- [ ] Aggression (toward people)
- [ ] Aggression (toward other dogs)
- ✔ Fear
- [ ] Other:

**Notes:** Very nervous at the beginning of her evaluation, but she warmed up as we progressed. Showed lots of social behavior, despite her initial anxiety. Would likely prefer a quiet home. Loved the helper dog and would probably benefit from co-housing, foster, playgroups or placement with another dog. Very food motivated!
ACBT Behavior Exercises

**Quick & Dirty Handling Exercise**

**Time Commitment:** 10 seconds  
**Purpose:** To reduce fear of people and being handled by them  
**Steps**  
1. Break a few treats into tiny, bite-sized pieces. Bring them with you, along with your other supplies, when it’s cleaning time.  
2. Open the dirty crate.  
3. Pick up the dog inside and put him into the clean crate.  
4. Whip out a surprise treat and feed it to the dog. (If he doesn’t take it, just drop it in front of him and proceed.)  
5. Close the door.  
6. Clean and sanitize the dirty crate.

**Drive-By Treats**

**Time Commitment:** 5 minutes  
**Purpose:** To teach dogs to feel less fearful when people approach  
**Steps**  
1. Break a few treats into tiny, bite-sized pieces.  
2. Treats in hand, walk through the kennel area.  
3. When you walk past a C Dog or a B Dog, stop at the dog’s crate.  
4. First, say something to the dog in a friendly tone. Then, open the crate door.  
5. Offer the dog a treat. If the dog will approach to eat it, feed by hand. If not, just drop the treat in front of the dog.  
6. Move on to the next dog.
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For resources, newsletter and webinar information …

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