Forensic Psychology of Domestic Violence and Animal Cruelty

Insight into those that commit domestic violence and animal cruelty

Presented by Mauro Paulino
Intersection of Psychology and Veterinary

Intimate Partner Violence

Animal Cruelty
UNIQUE JOURNEY
TOWARDS ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE ON ANIMAL CRUELTY
Sprinkle some humour
"Pawsitive" attitude

Interdisciplinary understanding
Animals are not only your patients

- They can be a red flag of violence in a family
- Against a woman;
- Against a child;
- Against elderly people.
TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE CARE AND ADVOCATE FOR THE WELL-BEING OF ANIMALS.

UNDERSTANDING THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL CRUELTY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

ONE HEALTH
Animal cruelty
Profile of an offender
ALL THESE DIFFERENT FORMS ARE "UN-FUR-GIVABLE"!

Neglect

Abandonment

Physical abuse

Hoarding
About Me

with relevance for this issue

www.mind.com.pt
Mulher encontrada morta em Vila Real com "sinais de grande violência"

Uma mulher de 48 anos foi encontrada esta quinta-feira morta em casa, em Vila Real, com vários golpes de arma branca. No apartamento, estavam ainda mortos os dois cães da mulher de 48 anos. O corpo foi descoberto pelo filho de 14 anos, que alertou as autoridades, como conta a repórter da SIC, Manuela Carneiro.
Condenado a prisão efectiva por esventrar cadela grávida

Enfermeiro no Ultramar fez cesariana a sangue frio a cadela, que veio a morrer, e depois pós-os cachorros vivos no lixo. Juiz aplicou 16 meses de prisão pela "crueldade". Decisão é considerada histórica.

Francisco Alves Rito e Ana Henriques
31 de Outubro de 2018, 13:24
Um homem de 38 anos foi detido, no domingo no Montijo, por matar com violência o cão da sua ex-namorada.

Em comunicado hoje divulgado, a PSP adianta que os agentes foram chamados a casa da ex-namorada do detido pelas 19:00, tendo encontrado um "cenario macabro", no qual o cão havia sido morto, estofado e esquartejado.

O detido era visado em outros processos criminosos por violência doméstica contra a sua ex-namorada, tendo a PSP promovido a reavaliação do nível de risco, de forma que possa haver necessidade de serem disponibilizadas a mulher medidas de segurança.
Condenado a seis anos casal que espançava filhos e enforcou o cão

Um casal impediu um menor de comer e prendeu-o no quarto com fita adesiva. Também o obrigou a deixar o corpo do cão no lixo e a bater à irmã.
Grupo de alunos agride gata dentro de escola em Leiria

A Associação Zoodia de Leiria deslocou-se à escola para recolher a gata, depois de ter sido contactada por uma aluna que tentou impedir a situação.

Crianças de escola de Barcelos ensacaram gato para o esmurrar

Um gato foi colocado dentro de um saco e esmurrado por algumas crianças de uma escola de Barcelos. A denúncia foi feita pela "Streetdogs", uma associação de proteção animal que tenta agora arranjar uma casa para o felino.
PhD Research

- Sample of 133 victims
- 84 had a pet (63.2%)
- Of these, 47 suffered animal cruelty
- 7 offenders killed the animal (14.9%)
You have a primary and crucial role in addressing animal
Animal Abuse

The cycle must be broken

- Domestic Violence
- Child Abuse
- Elderly abuse
Animal cruelty
Domestic violence
Juvenile offenders
Fight with dogs
...
Cruelty to Animals and Violence to People

Marie Louise Petersen and David P. Farrington

Case histories of serial killers and mass murderers suggest that many were cruel to animals in their childhood. Furthermore, it is argued that cruelty to animals in a family tends to be associated with domestic violence, child abuse, and elder abuse.
The absence of intervention allows offenders to become more violent towards people and animals.
The maltreated pet is an indicator that others could be at risk.
Animals aren’t just cute faces

- There is evidence that an animal has the capacity to experience pain.

- They require professionals to take an active role in their protection.

- Animal cruelty cannot be analysed in an isolated way.
The results suggest that CPWs should consider routinely asking children and caregivers questions about animal cruelty and observe the behavior and living conditions of family pets when conducting risk assessments. Future research should determine whether animal cruelty is a reliable indicator of exposure to family violence.

KEY WORDS: animal cruelty; child abuse; child protection; domestic violence; risk assessment
Other Important Facts

- 25% to 40% of the victims don’t end their relationship with the offender because they don’t want to abandon their animals (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence)

- More than 70% of the victims reveal that the offenders threat, beat or kill their pets (Sojourner Center)
Lack of emotional bonding, empathy, remorse and/or competences to cope with frustration.

Possible Enuresis in their childhood and chaotic families or with aggressive parents.

Higher levels of aggressivity.

Lack of emotional bonding, empathy, remorse and/or competences to cope with frustration.

Cognitive distortions about pet behaviour.

Long-term pattern of manipulating, exploiting or violating the rights of others.

Criminal records.
The offender

- Higher levels of animal cruelty are directly related to alcohol abuse, personality disorders, pathological gambling, and antisocial family history.

- 17 times more likely to assault someone, 12 times more likely to set fires, 12 times more likely to threaten someone (Vaughn et al., 2009).

- Retrospective analysis with 20 mass murderers (Arluke, Lankford & Madfis, 2018).
Animal maltreatment is a sign of serious maladjustment in pet owners with the aforementioned profile.
The way they lose the control

Excessive planning and rigidus

Intentions to isolate the victim

Imposition of mindsets about life

Mood swings without apparent reason

Ensuring the victim and/or animal is not left alone in the office with the veterinarian

The Telltale signs and “claws”
Trying to reply to everything

Try to put the blame on the victim or other family members

Try to put the blame on the animal for its misbehaviour

Victim, person or animal could show some fear or act submissively in the presence of the offender

The Telltale signs and “claws”
To be the voice of those who cannot speak!

It's time to unleash your superhero powers!
One health’s idea

Challenge
Psychological intervention with victims

Commit
Psychological intervention with offenders

Act
Support the Psychological Recovery of Animal Cruelty Victims

Change
Case studies with successful rehabilitation
The veterinarians' role as expert witnesses in legal proceedings involving animal cruelty cases

You can play delivering "purr-suasive" testimony in court in defence of the animal
Conclusion

- Who commits an offence against an animal can do it easily to another human being too.

- Animal cruelty is not only a violation of ethical and moral principles.

- As veterinarians, you have a unique position and responsibility to address this issue effectively.
As veterinarians, you have a unique position... and responsibility!

To be the voice for those who cannot speak for themselves.

Let's stand tall, "pawsitive" and proud.
Further reading

21 Psychopathy and animal cruelty offenders
Sara C. Haden, Shelby E. McDonald, and Wyatt D’Emilia

Introduction
Conceptualizations of animal cruelty
Animal cruelty and the legal system
Animal cruelty offenders
Theories of animal cruelty
Research on psychopathic traits and animal cruelty
Conclusions
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