



NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Working together to stop violence against people and animals

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A monthly report of news from THE NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER



ON THE LINK BETWEEN ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN VIOLENCE



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[Phil Arkow](#), Editor

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ANIMAL ABUSE AND HUMAN HEALTH & SAFETY

Animal Abuse Histories Found in 43% of School Shooters

How significant is a history of animal abuse as a warning sign of school shooters? Several studies have reported that as many as 50% of youths who engaged in mass murders on school grounds have histories of animal cruelty and torture. Non-academic reports have often hyperbolized these findings to suggest that most, if not all, of these youths have such backgrounds.



Arnold Arluke



Eric Madfis

The truth is more complex, and in a new study of school massacres, Arnold Arluke and Eric Madfis reported that 43% of perpetrators also commit animal cruelty, but that specific types of animal abuse – especially torture done up-close and against socially valued humanized pets such as dogs and cats – might serve as better indicators than more socially acceptable, “everyday” animal maltreatment.

Given widely varying legal and cultural definitions of what constitutes animal maltreatment, a more accurate identification of specific types of cruelty which involve characteristics also common among mass and serial murderers might be more useful and reduce the rate of “false positives” in reporting, they argued. In the school shooters analyzed in this study, 90% had committed cruelty in an up-close and personal manner.

The authors noted that “everyday” types of animal abuse do not necessarily predict antisocial or psychopathic behavior, and that 18% of school shooters reportedly displayed empathy for and attachments to animals. Some even expressed distress when witnessing animals being harmed. Some identified themselves as a mistreated underdog. Understanding these paradoxes can help gain better understanding of the motivations of school shooters, they wrote.

Arluke and Madfis suggested research be conducted to explore whether mass murders perpetrated by workplace avengers, family annihilators and disgruntled citizens also demonstrate comparable rates and types of animal abuse histories.

Several commonalities underlie extreme violence against humans and animals, they noted. Such sadistic violence among school shooters and mass murderers may stem from a sense of humiliation and internalized shame experienced in childhood. The violence becomes a way to gain strength and exert power and dominance over others by determining who lives and who dies.

“If [the youth] later finds a socially acceptable means of compensating for his sense of powerlessness, then he might very well escape the grip of violence perpetrated against humans,” they wrote. “If not, his early experiences with animal cruelty may become a training ground for later committing assaults, rape, and even murder.”

-- Arluke, A., & Madfis, E. (2013). *Animal abuse as a warning sign of school massacres: A critique and refinement. Homicide Studies, 20(10), 1-16.*

Animal Abuse Linked to Risk of Dog Bite Fatalities

The explosive growth of dogfighting, increased awareness of other crimes associated with it, the overpopulation of pit bulls in animal shelters, and the serious nature of dog bites inflicted by these dogs has prompted many communities to engage in contentious debates over banning specific dog breeds. While critics and activists on both sides of breed-specific legislation weigh the practical, legal, emotional and humane implications of such an approach, new research suggests that a history of animal abuse and neglect may be one of the most significant risk factors of a dog’s likelihood to inflict fatal human injury.



Gary Patronek

Gary Patronek and colleagues identified risk factors occurring in 256 fatal dog attacks between 2000 and 2009. Rather than the breed of the dog, the most significant risk factors were:

- absence of someone to intervene (87.1%);
- victim having no familiar relationship with the dog (85.2%);
- owner failing to spay/neuter the dog (84.4%);
- compromised ability of victim to deal appropriately with the dog (77.4%);
- owner keeping dogs as residents rather than family pets (76.2%);
- prior mismanagement of dog by owner (37.5%);
- and abuse or neglect of dog (21.1%).

Four or more of these factors co-occurred in 80.5% of the deaths.

While dog bite injuries and fatal attacks should be seen as preventable public health problems, discussions about prevention and control have been overshadowed in recent years by undue emphasis on dog breed, with pit bulls in particular being singled out. This emphasis has tended to obscure the highly complex genetics, environmental and husbandry factors that cause a dog’s aggressive reaction to stimuli, they wrote. The study aimed to improve the evidence base for understanding and preventing dog bite fatalities by examining potentially preventable factors.

The study examined victims' age, gender, relationship to the dog, the degree to which the ability to interact appropriately with the dog had been compromised, and presence of someone to intervene at the time of the incident. It also explored the dogs' gender, reproductive status, weight, length of ownership, role and living site in the household, and history of abuse or mismanagement by the owner.

Criminal charges for felonies or misdemeanors (in addition to animal control violations) were filed in 26.2% of the incidents. 49% of owners with prior histories of dog mismanagement were criminally charged, compared with only 11.6% of owners without such history.

"The most striking finding was the co-occurrence of multiple factors potentially under the control of dog owners," they wrote. These included: abuse or neglect of the animal; isolation of dogs from positive family and social interaction; mismanagement; dogs left unsupervised with a vulnerable child or adult; and dogs left neglected and isolated in environments where they have little control, resulting in enhanced protective, territorial and defensive responses to common situations.

"The most preventable incidents involved very young children left alone with dogs to whom they were unfamiliar, or toddlers allowed to wander off and encounter unfamiliar dogs," they wrote. In at least 19 fatalities, authorities considered the lack of child supervision so negligent that criminal charges were filed against the parent or caretaker.

Noting the disproportionate number of dog bites among children, the authors recommended child care workers, pediatricians and veterinarians to remind parents that young children should not be left unattended with dogs. Pediatricians and veterinarians should also screen for histories of animal abuse when treating dog bite cases.

"This information could help human health professionals who may not be familiar with dog behavior to appreciate the importance of collaborating with professionals in animal behavior," they write.

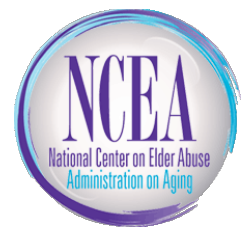
-- Patronek, G.J., Sacks, J.J., Delise, K.M., Cleary, D.V., & Marder, A.R. (2013). Co-occurrence of potentially preventable factors in 256 dog bite-related fatalities in the United States (2000-2009). *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, 243(12), 1726-1736.

ANIMAL ABUSE AND ELDER ABUSE

"Home for the Holidays" for Seniors

Includes Pet Welfare Warning

The National Link Coalition was pleased to see an e-mail announcement in December from the [National Center on Elder Abuse](#) (NCEA) alerting families to be on the lookout for pet abuse when they go home to visit elderly loved ones over the holidays. The e-mail offered families a checklist of signs of elder abuse and neglect to look for to make sure their loved ones are treated with respect and dignity.



The checklist of 17 warning signs of elder neglect included watching for a family pet appearing to be neglected or abused. The guidance advised families to check with the local Adult Protective Services agency or institutional ombudsman if abuse is suspected. Thank you NCEA for including the animal members of the family!

Psychiatrist Cites Human Danger Links in Three Cruelty Cases



Wayne Barber and friends

Three unrelated animal cruelty cases in Las Cruces, N. Mex. prompted local psychiatrist Wayne Barber to write an op-ed column in the [Sun-News newspaper](#) warning readers that such acts put the rest of society at risk, and that “such insensitivity to the feelings of animals not uncommonly leads to depraved actions against people.”

Writing in the Dec. 13 edition, Barber quoted historical references as far back as 1809 linking animal abuse and violent behavioral tendencies that should be a “red flag” of particular concern to child psychiatrists.

“After working more than 40 years as a psychiatrist, one would think I am immune to surprise and alarm,” Barber wrote. “But three recent instances of appalling animal abuse in our community impels me to alert the public of the potential consequences of these actions and, equally important, of our inaction toward such behaviors.”

The three cases involved a group immolation of a cat named “Rosie”; the scalding and attempted choking of a cat by an enraged boyfriend; and the near-fatal abandonment of kittens in a dumpster.

ANIMAL ABUSE AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Online Directory of Pet Care Programs Now Available

A national directory to help survivors of domestic violence locate women’s shelters that are either pet-friendly or that have foster care programs has been made available online. [Safe Place for Pets.org](#), a project of RedRover, offers the ability to search for pet care facilities by ZIP code or city and state.



Searches identify on-site housing opportunities, community referral programs, and other shelters, with convenient links and estimated mileage to reach the facility. The site also provides downloadable logos that can be installed on other agencies’ websites to link to it.

The site is designed to be visually stunning and simple with a feel that is upbeat and hopeful, reflecting a vision of freedom and safety for domestic violence survivors. It was made as easy to use as possible, with escape buttons, recognizing that survivors in crisis might not have much freedom or time to find an escape. A report box enables viewers to alert the website of errors or updates in shelter information.

The directory is a free-standing website and a project of [RedRover](#), a Sacramento-based organization whose Relief programs include grants to domestic violence shelters and victims. The National Link Coalition and [Sheltering Animals and People Together \(SAF-T™\)](#) provided technical assistance.

Pet Protective Order Statistics Reported in Minnesota

Ohio legislators are considering a bill to allow courts to include animals in domestic violence protective orders. They have asked how many such orders have been issued in the 23 states with similar laws. The National Link Coalition has only been able to identify one state (Minnesota) that breaks out these data among all protection-from-abuse orders issued. Above are Minnesota's statistics since its law was passed in 2010. The statistics count only one order per case: several orders may have been issued if more than one animal was involved.

OFP cases Order	Year			
	2010	2011	2012	2013
The care, possession, or control of a pet or companion animal owned, possessed, or kept by the petitioner or respondent or a child of the petitioner or respondent is set forth as follows:	110	661	759	757
The respondent must not physically abuse or injure any pet or companion animal.	119	624	764	807
All cases with either order	165	874	1022	1067

LINK-Letter readers who can track down similar reports from other states are invited to share these figures with us. Thanks!

Congratulations to Maya Gupta!

[Maya Gupta, Ph.D.](#), who has served on the National Link Coalition steering committee since our inception, is the new Executive Director of the Animals and Society Institute. Maya headed [Ahimsa House](#), providing emergency pet safety planning and safehousing, veterinary care, advocacy, and a crisis line to help Georgia's human and animal survivors of domestic violence reach safety together.



Maya's academic research focused on the connections between animal abuse and domestic violence to better diagnose, predict and prevent violence in all its forms. She has written and trained extensively on The Link and has developed numerous safe havens for pets. She serves on the Board of Directors of the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence, as Vice Chair of the Cobb County Domestic Violence Task Force, and the Animal Cruelty Advisory Council of the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys. She is past chair of the American Psychological Association's Section on Human-Animal Interaction. She received the Task Force Member of the Year Award from the Georgia Commission on Family Violence in 2012.

The [Animals and Society Institute](#) is a nonprofit independent research and educational organization that advances the status of animals in public policy and promotes the study of human-animal relationships. Its many programs include AniCare and AniCare Child assessment and treatment protocols for animal cruelty offenders; establishing majors and minors and academic fellowships in human-animal studies; promoting and publishing academic dialogue; and publishing public policy papers.

Taking over the helm at Ahimsa House is Myra Rasnick, former Director of Program Services, who has been with Ahimsa House since 2007 and who has over 12 years of victim services experience.

How to Include Animal Abuse in Domestic Violence Awareness and Training

The domestic violence field has long used the [“Duluth Model of Power and Control,”](#) a schematic drawing of a wheel created in 1984 by the Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs that demonstrates the most common abusive behaviors and tactics used against battered women. At least one domestic violence agency has modified the Duluth Model wheel to include animal abuse.



[Safe Passage](#), in Northampton, Mass., has developed a wheel that includes “Using Children or Pets” among these tactics. Safe Passage has also produced a fact sheet, “Power & Control Tactics: Using Animal Cruelty as Part of Domestic Violence,” that describes these in more detail. Such tactics are:

- **Intimidation:** Harming or killing a pet and threatening that the same thing will happen to you if you don’t comply with the abuser’s demands.
- **Emotional abuse:** Calling your pet names, or giving away or killing a pet to take away your primary source of comfort and unconditional love.
- **Isolation:** Refusing to allow you to take your pet to your preferred veterinarian, or prohibiting you from socializing your dog with other dogs.
- **Minimizing, Denying & Blaming:** Blaming you or your pet for the cruelty. Killing a pet and then saying that it doesn’t matter because the pet was old.
- **Using Children:** Harming or killing the children’s pet to intimidate them. Blaming the “disappearance” of the family pet on you in order to create a wedge between you and the children.
- **Economic Abuse:** Refusing to allow you to spend money on adequate pet food and/or veterinary care (then blaming you when the neglect is noticed by authorities).
- **Legal Abuse:** Trying to take possession of a pet for which you have been the primary caretaker. Filing charges of pet theft against you if you leave with the pet.
- **Coercion and Threats:** Threatening to harm or kill your pet if you leave or assert any independence.

Legislative Recommendations Addressing Domestic Violence and Animal Abuse

This paper is a guide for legislators seeking ideas and substantiation for animal protection laws in a domestic violence context. It provides background on the psychology and impact of animal abuse on battered women and witnesses. Legislative remedies include: redefining “family” or “household” to include animals and “family violence” to include animal abuse; including pets in protective orders; allowing law enforcement and animal services to seize animals to get them out of harm’s way in domestic violence cases; addressing community property issues; prohibiting future ownership of animals when animal abuse is committed to intimidate a person; requiring cross-reporting of animal, child and domestic abuse; and including animal abuse within the tort of intentional infliction of emotional distress in the marital context. (Five years after this article was published, Texas enacted statutory authority allowing courts to include pets in domestic violence protective orders.)

-- Robbins, J. (2006). **Recognizing the relationship between domestic violence and animal abuse: Recommendations for change to the Texas legislature.** *Texas Journal of Women and the Law*, 16(1), 129- 148.

Protocols Address Service Animals in Domestic Violence Shelters

In addition to providing housing for animals of domestic violence survivors, a secondary concern affects disabled survivors with service animals. These remarkable dogs assist persons who are blind, deaf, physically disabled or experience diabetic or epileptic seizures. They are guaranteed access to transportation and accommodations under the Americans with Disability Act and various state laws.

Many questions arise when a woman in need of shelter uses a service animal, such as: knowing when the animal is legitimate; providing access to the animal in the shelter; balancing the interests of residents who are fearful of or allergic to dogs; providing for the animal's needs; making the "reasonable accommodations" required under law; and solving problems that arise.



To address these concerns, two domestic violence coalitions have compiled guidelines for shelters. The Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence has written a 23-page [Model Protocol on Service Animals in Domestic Violence Shelters](#), published in 2009. More recently, the Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic



Violence (End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin) has updated its [Background Paper and Sample Policy](#) to address legal requirements and practical expectations when service animals are presented.

ANIMAL ABUSE AND CHILD PROTECTION



British Child Welfare Agency Recognizes Animal Welfare Issues in Child Assessments and Safety Planning

The London Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) in the UK has recognized the link between child maltreatment and animal abuse by including procedures for responding to suspected animal cruelty and by developing a joint protocol with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA).

In the 5th edition (2013) of its Child Protection Procedures, [Practice Guidance B-3 No. 15](#) notes the increasing evidence of links between abuse of children, vulnerable adults and animals, and that children's intentional harm of animals could be an indicator that the child has been a victim of abuse or neglect. Acts of animal cruelty may be used to control and intimidate children into being silent about their own abuse, the Guidance states.

The Practice Guidance encourages child welfare professionals to be observant about the care and treatment of animals while carrying out assessments. These assessments, as well as safety planning with victims of domestic violence, must ensure that the needs and risk of harm to both children and animals within the family are addressed.

The procedure encourages animal protection professionals to receive training about recognition and referral processes to enable them to raise appropriate concerns about child welfare issues.

The LSCB recommends that local Safeguarding Children Boards throughout the UK to adopt the joint protocol to ensure effective cooperation and communication in identifying and acting upon risk factors affecting children and animals. The protocol describes procedures for reporting concerns to the other agency and actions that will be taken, and provides referral forms and lists of contacts.

ANIMAL ABUSE AND VETERINARY MEDICINE

Veterinary Social Work Position Available

The University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine's Small Animal Hospital is recruiting for a Client Support Counselor to provide emotional support and grief education to families with pets being treated in the facility. Individuals with social work experience would be particularly suitable. Visit the University [website](#) for details.

THE LINK IN THE LITERATURE

The Global Guide to Animal Protection

Edited by Andrew Linzey. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2013.

The Link between animal and human violence is included in several chapters of this new, collaborative book that expertly synthesizes hundreds of animal welfare, animal rights and human-animal interactions issues into accessible summaries. Animal ethicist and theologian Rev. Dr. Andrew Linzey has brought together 158 of the world's leading advocates, academicians and professionals, from 19 nations, to address nearly 200 topics ranging from animal burials to zoo ethics.



Linzey's introduction quickly establishes The Link, declaring, "Human welfare and animal welfare are inextricably related," (p. 2) and that addressing animal cruelty stops violence at its roots.

Several of the many noted contributors to this anthology are known to Link audiences. National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow's chapter on "Animal and Human Violence" (pp. 223-224) initiates a section on Changing Perspectives and Changing Ethical Sensitivity, arguing that animal abuse should no longer be considered a separate issue but rather as part of the landscape of family violence, and that animal abuse should be seen as a human welfare issue with implications for public health and safety.

The ASPCA's Randall Lockwood describes the challenges of "Reporting Cruelty in the United States" (pp. 279-280). Stephen Zawistowski traces the ASPCA's aggressive, inventive and significant role in developing both the animal and child protection movements in "Societies Against Cruelty in the United States" (pp. 15-16).

South African humane educator Louise van der Merwe's chapter on "Caring for Animals and Humans" (pp. 281-282) notes that in her especially violence-prone nation there is a growing awareness that animal cruelty, far from being peripheral, is linked to the problem of violence against humans. Caring for other living creatures can help combat children's feelings of lack of worth.

Australian psychologist Eleonora Gullone's chapter on "Children's Relations with Animals" (pp. 125-126) describes how humans are a social species needing interpersonal attachments and social relationships; children's interactions with unpredictable and non-critical animals provide opportunities for social support, emotional investment and expression free of negative evaluation or rejection. The connectedness and sense of belonging that pets provide can be a protective or buffering factor against the destructive forces of psychopathology in an increasingly individualistic culture, she writes.

NEWS FROM LINK COALITIONS

Alberta Link Coalition Hires Coordinator

The Alberta Alliance for the Safety of Animals and People (AASAP) has hired a part-time pet safekeeping coordinator, [Patricia Mamak](#). Alberta SPCA Education Director [Tim Battle](#) reports that, "Patricia is perfect for this job. She works part-time doing intake at a women's emergency shelter, and does a lot of volunteer work with a local animal rescue group. She's already making headway into organizing all the details of setting up a program."



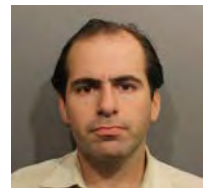
The AASAP organizing committee is going strong, with representatives from veterinarians, police, public education lawyers, humane societies, animal control, violence prevention, and women's shelters. AASAP is piloting a pet safekeeping program in Edmonton, with the vision of expanding it to all of Alberta.

"We still have lots of questions and decisions to work though, such as who transports the animal, who pays for any treatment needed if the animal is sick or injured, and other concerns," Battle notes. Mamak is also creating consent agreements, releases and other necessary forms, and is asking help from other programs who would be willing to share their materials with our Canadian friends.

THE LINK IN THE NEWS

Domestic Violence Call Leads to 15 Counts of Animal Cruelty

A Wilton, Conn. man was charged with 15 counts of animal cruelty several days after police went to his home on a domestic violence call that did not result in an arrest. Jesse Sheldon, 31, was charged in the incident after police discovered 15 dead chickens and ducks on his property that the [Hartford Courant](#) said had been allowed to starve to death. Sheldon was released after posting \$7,500 bail.



Jesse Sheldon

Mother Charged with Child and Animal Cruelty; Daughter Was Bullied

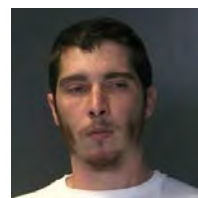
A woman was charged with both animal and child cruelty after 35 pets and her young daughter were found living in a feces-filled and urine-soaked home that reeked so bad that the girl was bullied at school because of it. Thibodaux, La. police arrested Lorencia Raffray, 45, on Dec. 6 after receiving a tip that she was hoarding animals. The [Lafourche Parish Daily Comet](#) reported the odor from the 14 cats, 18 kittens and three dogs was so intense that it could be smelled outside. Officers had to step outside several times to get fresh air. The girl was staying home from school because students teased her about the smell of her clothes. Raffray, charged with 35 counts of animal cruelty and one count of cruelty to a juvenile, was freed on \$500 bond.



Lorencia Raffray

Man Charged in Attacks on Father and Dog

Prosecutors in Suffolk County, Long Island, N.Y. have charged Steven Errante, 26, alleging that he broke his father's ribs with a baton and then beat the family dog with a baseball bat. The dog was so badly injured with fractures to her head, face and legs she had to be euthanized. [CBS News](#) in New York said Errante was charged with second-degree assault and aggravated cruelty to animals, and was ordered to stay away from his father.



Steven Errante

Youth Arrested in Arson Attacks Also Charged with Animal Cruelty

A Japanese teenager arrested last July over a series of five arson attacks, including one in a high school where he had been a student, was subsequently charged with violating Japan's Act on Welfare and Management of Animals for allegedly killing four cats with a crossbow. The youth, whose name was not revealed because of his age, is currently a Kochi University student who reportedly took in cats advertised online as needing new homes, the [Mainichi newspaper](#) reported. He allegedly admitted to shooting the cats to "let off steam." The corpses of the cats were found at his home during the investigation of the arsons.

Animal cruelty, arson and persistent bedwetting were proposed by psychiatrist J. M. Macdonald in 1963 as a set of three behavioral characteristics which, in combination, are often predictive of later violent tendencies, particularly serial offenses. Subsequent research has tended to discredit what is called the Macdonald Triad.



Janet and Ramon Barreto

"Most Wanted" Case Seeks Woman with Alleged Child Homicide/Puppy Mill Links

The U.S. Marshals Service and the Humane Society of the U.S. have issued a [press release](#) seeking information on Janet Barreto, a fugitive on the USMS' 15 Most Wanted List. Barreto is allegedly linked to multiple puppy mill operations and the homicide death of a toddler. Barreto and her husband, Ramon, who use several aliases, are said to have sold small breed puppies or rehoming rescues through online classified ads and in flea markets and parking lots throughout North America. The Barretos have been on the run for five years following the death of a little girl in her care by blunt force trauma. USMS officials found seven other small children extremely malnourished and living in squalor in the couple's Mississippi home in 2008, where a puppy mill with more than 180 dogs and 50 cats were living in inhumane conditions. The USMS is offering a [\\$25,000 reward](#) and HSUS is offering a \$5,000 reward for useful information.

Pair Charged in Seven Murders Over Disputed Dogfight Bet

Police in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico arrested Jesus Mendoza Hernandez, 21, and Edgar Lujan Guevara, 31, on charges related to the murders of seven family members over a disputed bet at a dogfight. Prosecutors said the two took money, stole three vehicles, and killed two men, three women, and two children who were allegedly gagged, bound and stabbed to death over a disputed \$115 bet. A two-month-old baby was spared, [Animal People](#) reported.

Child Abuse Suspicions Lead to Man Charged with Having Sex with Family Dog



Joshua Lee Werbicki

A Palm Bay, Fla. man was charged with cruelty to animals and having sexual acts with animals after apparently being caught having sex with a female German shepherd named "Angel" on an in-home surveillance camera set up because of suspicions of child abuse. Investigators said Joshua Lee Werbicki, 22, and the dog had had sex six times in the past year. A woman living in the home told police that there had been concerns that a child in the home may have been abused. Police are investigating the suspected child abuse, [Florida Today](#) reported.

Man Charged with Cruelty for Allegedly Running Over Wife's Dog

A Hawthorne, Calif. man was charged with animal cruelty after allegedly deliberately running over a pet Chihuahua belonging to his estranged wife and children in what the wife believes was retaliation for her not signing over their house to him in a divorce settlement. [The Daily Breeze](#) reported that Michael David Parker, 45, was arrested on Jan. 3 after surveillance video was found reportedly showing Parker driving into an alley, presumably taking the dog out of the car's trunk, backing up, then rapidly accelerating and running over "Cow Cow." As the dog lay bleeding and convulsing in the alley, the car drove away. The couple's other dog, "Lucky," was reportedly missing. Parker's estranged wife, Olga, told reporters, "If someone would do that to a dog... what would he do to my kids?"



Michael David Parker

THE LINK IN THE LEGISLATURES

Cruelty Case to Become Documentary Feature

The "Puppy Doe" case, a horrific incident of animal cruelty that gave rise to a bill in the Massachusetts General Assembly, will be the subject of a documentary being produced by two Los Angeles filmmakers.




[Boston Magazine](#) reported that Paulina Quaranta and Elizabeth Lawrence are producing "[Puppy Doe: A Documentary](#)" to explore animal abuse laws across the U.S. The case, called the worse animal cruelty that Boston had ever seen, made national headlines and inspired 76 legislators to sponsor Senate Bill 1914 (The PAWS Act – Protecting Animal Welfare and Safety). (See *LINK-Letter November, 2013*).


SB 1914 would define animal abuse committed in the presence of a child as "extreme atrocity and cruelty" with enhanced penalties. It would mandate veterinarians to report suspected animal cruelty with immunity from civil and criminal liability for good-faith reporting. The bill would also create a statewide animal abuse hotline and registry of animal abuse offenders.

Radoslaw Czerkawski was charged with 11 counts of animal cruelty and misleading investigators for allegedly torturing and burning a dog he bought for \$40 and later abandoning her on a playground. He is being held without bail with a court date scheduled for February 11.

Bills We're Watching:

Animal Abuse in the Presence of a Child

 **Massachusetts SB1914**, the PAWS Act (Protecting Animal Welfare and Safety), would define animal abuse committed in the presence of a child as "extreme atrocity and cruelty" with enhanced penalties. It would mandate veterinarians to report suspected animal cruelty with immunity from civil and criminal liability for good-faith reporting. The bill would create a statewide animal abuse hotline and registry of animal abuse offenders. The bill was referred to the Joint Committee on the Judiciary on Nov. 6.

 **New York A706** would include animal cruelty in the presence of a child as an element in endangering a child's welfare, and within the definition of a neglected or maltreated child. It has been referred to the Codes Committee.

Reporting and cross-reporting:



District of Columbia B20-0153 would amend the DC Official Code to incorporate veterinary medicine as a health profession. Under this new classification, veterinarians and veterinary technicians would become mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect.



New York A3766 would require anyone who enforces animal cruelty laws to report suspected child abuse or maltreatment, and any person mandated to report child abuse or maltreatment to file a report of suspected animal abuse or maltreatment. The bill is in the Social Services Committee.



New York A3283 would require any employee of a veterinary hospital or clinic, boarding kennel, shelter or rescue center, or facility that provides services for animals to report an animal's injury, illness, or condition to the police if animal cruelty or abuse is suspected. Employees who reasonably and in good faith file such reports would be immune from civil or criminal liability. The bill is in the Agriculture Committee.



Wisconsin SB 199 would require veterinarians to report all suspected animal abuse, with immunity from civil liability for good-faith reporting. Currently they are mandated to report only suspected animal fighting and lack immunity. The bill is in the Judiciary and Labor Committee.

Domestic Violence/Pet Protection Orders



Ohio HB 243 and **SB 177** would allow courts to include companion animals in domestic violence, anti-stalking and temporary protection orders. **HB 243** would also require children adjudicated as delinquent for committing animal cruelty to undergo psychological evaluation and counseling, and adult offenders to be sentenced to probation supervision. The bills have been referred to the House Judiciary and Senate Criminal Justice Committees.



Massachusetts SB767 would allow any person to file a nuisance suit against another person or entity that subjects an animal to conduct which poses a risk to its life, health or safety.



Michigan SB 285 would make it illegal to kill, torture, maim, disfigure, or poison an animal with the intent to cause mental suffering or distress to another person or to exert control over another person. The bill passed the Senate on Nov. 13 and was referred to the House Committee on Criminal Justice.




New Jersey A 916 would have authorized courts to include animals in domestic violence restraining orders. The bill was in the Assembly Judiciary Committee when the legislature adjourned.




Vermont HB 342 would hold a person who intentionally kills a pet liable to the pet's owner for non-economic damages for emotional distress resulting from loss of love, companionship and affection of the pet.


Advocates for Animals

 **Connecticut HB 5677, HB 6690 and HB 6310** would have appointed a State Department of Agriculture veterinarian to act as an animal advocate in family relations matters, civil cases, and criminal proceedings (including cruelty cases) that involve the care, custody and well-being of animals. **HB 6690** passed the House and was in the Senate Judiciary Committee when the legislature adjourned.

Animal Hoarding

 **Pennsylvania HB 860** would establish a new crime of animal hoarding, a third-degree misdemeanor, and require a psychological evaluation prior to sentencing. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.

Animal Abuse and Other Crimes

 **Massachusetts HB1594** would replace the archaic definition of bestiality as “the abominable and detestable crime against nature, either with mankind or with a beast,” with more contemporary terminology making it illegal to “commit a sexual act upon an animal, use an object to sexually abuse an animal, or knowingly permit a sexual act with an animal.”

LINK TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Jan. 14 – (online): Jenny Edwards will present a free webinar on “Understanding and Prosecuting Bestiality,” in a [webinar series](#) presented by the National District Attorneys Association’s National Center for Prosecution of Animal Abuse, in partnership with the ASPCA and the Animal Legal Defense Fund.

Jan. 24 – Columbus, Ohio: Lesley Ashworth, Nancy Bell and Tamara Word will conduct a training on the [AniCare](#) model of animal cruelty assessment and treatment at the Center for Family Safety and healing.

Jan. 28 – (online): [Allie Phillips](#) will conduct a webinar on the Link for the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Prevention Programs.

Feb. 13 – (online): Diane Balkin will present a free webinar on “Pretrial Motions: The Framework for Evidence at Trial,” in a [webinar series](#) presented by the National District Attorneys Association’s National Center for Prosecution of Animal Abuse, in partnership with the ASPCA and the Animal Legal Defense Fund.

Mar. 7 – Murfreesboro, Tenn.: [Allie Phillips and Diane Balkin](#) will present on The Link for Rutherford County PAWS.

Mar. 9 – (online): Phil Arkow will conduct a webinar on “Practical Guidance for Veterinarians and Their Staffs for an Effective Response to Suspected Animal Cruelty, Abuse & Neglect” for the [Veterinary Information Network/Veterinary Support Personnel Network](#).

Mar. 22 – Austin, Texas: Phil Arkow will present on how The Link can be used to “Learn What the Monster Likes and Feed it” at the [Texas Unites for Animals](#) conference.

Mar. 27 – Huntsville, Ala.: Allie Phillips will train on “When the Abuse of Animals Harms Children” and “Therapy Animals Helping Maltreated Children” at the [30th Annual Child Abuse Symposium](#).

April 1-4 – Grand Rapids, Mich.: Allie Phillips will lead workshops on “When the Abuse of Animals Harms Children” and “Therapy Animals Helping Maltreated Children” at the National Center for Prosecution of Child Abuse’s [Equal Justice for Children conference](#) in conjunction with the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan.

April 7 – Richmond, Va.: [Allie Phillips](#) will present a workshop on “When the Abuse of Animals Harms Children” at the Prevent Child Abuse Virginia conference.

April 22 – Seattle, Wash.: Allie Phillips will present on The Link and sheltering pets of domestic violence survivors at the [International Conference on Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence & Trafficking](#).

April 25 – Stratford, Ontario, Canada: Phil Arkow will present on Domestic Violence and The Link for [Optimism Place Women’s Shelter](#).

May 2 – New Orleans, La.: Phil Arkow will present on “Species-Spanning Connections at the Intersections of Child Maltreatment, Domestic Violence and Animal Abuse” at the [19th National Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect](#).

May 20-21 – South Bend, Ind.: Phil Arkow will train the [St. Joseph County Prosecutors Office](#) on The Link between Violence to People and Violence to Animals.

July 19 – Kobe, Japan: Phil Arkow will present on “The Cycle of Violence: The Connection between Violence to Humans and Animals” at the [3rd International Conference on Animal Care](#).

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The news items and training opportunities contained in *The LINK-Letter* are intended to disseminate as widely and as freely as possible information about the connections between animal abuse and interpersonal violence. Permission is hereby granted to re-post these articles in other newsletters, websites, magazines, and electronic publications provided that appropriate credit is given to the National Link Coalition and with links to www.nationallinkcoalition.org.

To subscribe to The Link-Letter (*it's free!*) – Just send an e-mail to Coordinator Phil Arkow (arkowpets@snip.net) and tell us what organization(s) you're with and where you're located.



ABOUT THE NATIONAL LINK COALITION



The National Link Coalition is an informal, multi-disciplinary collaborative network of individuals and organizations in human services and animal welfare who address the intersections between animal abuse, domestic violence, child maltreatment and elder abuse through research, public policy, programming and community awareness. We believe that human and animal well-being are inextricably intertwined and that the prevention of family and community violence can best be achieved through partnerships representing multi-species perspectives.

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Chair, Animal Abuse & Family Violence Prevention Project,
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