Cruelty to animals and Antisocial Personality Disorder. Criminological and forensic correlations

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“We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.
PREVIOUS STUDIES ON VIOLENT CRIMES AND ANIMAL ABUSE
Ressler, Douglas, Burgess


Study based on male homicide perpetrators whose offenses also included some form of sexual crime, 36% of offenders were violent to animals in childhood, 46% in adolescence, and 36% in adulthood based on self-report measures.
CRUELTY TO ANIMALS
AND OTHER CRIMES
A study by the MSPCA and Northeastern University

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MSPCA
MASSACHUSETTS SOCIETY FOR THE
PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS
PERCENT WITH OTHER OFFENSES NOTED IN STATE CRIMINAL RECORDS

[all chi square comparisons between abusers & controls significant at p<.0001]

PERCENT WITH OTHER OFFENSES NOTED IN STATE CRIMINAL RECORDS*

[all chi square comparisons between abusers & controls significant at p<.0001]

# Animal Abusers' Criminal Records

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime</th>
<th>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 the 4 types of crime</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Seventy percent of the people who committed violent crimes against animals also had criminal records for violent, property, drug, or disorder crimes. When compared to their next-door neighbors, people who abused animals were five times more likely to commit violent crimes against people, four times more likely to commit property crimes, and three times more likely to have a record for drug or disorderly conduct offenses.
Animal Cruelty and Psychiatric Disorders

Roman Gleyzer, MD, Alan R. Felthous, MD, and Charles E. Holzer III, PhD

Animal cruelty in childhood, although generally viewed as abnormal or deviant, for years was not considered symptomatic of any particular psychiatric disorder. Although animal cruelty is currently used as a diagnostic criterion for conduct disorder, research establishing the diagnostic significance of this behavior is essentially nonexistent. In the current study, investigators tested the hypothesis that a history of substantial animal cruelty is associated with a diagnosis of antisocial personality disorder (APD) and looked for associations with other disorders commonly diagnosed in a population of criminal defendants. Forty-eight subjects, criminal defendants who had histories of substantial animal cruelty, were matched with defendants without this history. Data were systematically obtained from the files by using four specifically designed data retrieval outlines. A history of animal cruelty during childhood was significantly associated with APD, antisocial personality traits, and polysubstance use. Mental retardation, psychotic disorders, and alcohol abuse showed no such association.


98 criminal defendants [mean age 31 years], half with a history of “substantial animal cruelty” [AC] and half without such a history [NO-AC]

Polysubstance abuse > for AC than NO-AC, p< .0016

APD diagnosis > for AC (37.5%) than NO-AC (8.3%), p< .0016
One study using a sample of 64 men revealed that 46% of convicted rapists and 30% of convicted child molesters admitted to being cruel to animals during their childhood or adolescence.

Violence and other criminality

With regard to criminal behavior, a study by the Chicago Police Department analyzed the arrest data for persons charged with crimes against animals for the period of July 2001 to July 2004. The study revealed an extremely high likelihood that animal cruelty was related to other offenses, both violent and nonviolent. Eighty-six percent of animal offenders had multiple arrests in their past, 70% had been arrested for felonies, and 70% had narcotics charges. Approximately two-thirds had been arrested for battery-related violent offense charges—i.e., aggravated domestic battery, domestic battery, aggravated battery, and simple battery—and over half were alleged to be members of gangs [40].
Correlates of cruelty to animals in the United States: Results from the National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions

Michael G. Vaughn\textsuperscript{a,}\textsuperscript{*}, Qiang Fu\textsuperscript{b}, Matt DeLisi\textsuperscript{c}, Kevin M. Beaver\textsuperscript{d}, Brian E. Perron\textsuperscript{e}, Katie Terrell\textsuperscript{f}, Matthew O. Howard\textsuperscript{g}

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\textsuperscript{b}Department of Biostatistics, School of Public Health, Saint Louis University, St. Louis, MO, United States
\textsuperscript{c}Criminology and Criminal Justice Studies, Department of Sociology, Iowa State University, Ames, IA, United States
\textsuperscript{d}College of Criminology and Criminal Justice, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL, United States
\textsuperscript{*}School of Social Work, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, United States
\textsuperscript{f}School of Social Work, Saint Louis University, St. Louis, MO, United States
\textsuperscript{g}School of Social Work, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC, United States
• The prevalence of all antisocial behaviors was higher among persons with a lifetime history of animal cruelty compared to persons without a lifetime history of animal cruelty.

• The most common behavior for persons with a history of animal cruelty was doing something that one could be arrested for irrespective of whether they were caught or not (61.70%, CI = 57.31–65.92%).

• The least prevalent behavior was forcing someone to have sex (1.20%, CI = 0.59–2.41%). The strongest associations between antisocial behaviors and animal cruelty were found for robbing or mugging another person (OR = 17.93, 95% CI = 11.49–27.97), fire setting (OR = 12.79, 95% CI = 8.85–18.49), and harassing and threatening someone (OR = 12.64, 95% CI = 9.90–16.14).
Psychiatric comorbidities of individuals with and without a lifetime history of cruelty to animals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comorbid psychiatric disorder</th>
<th>History of cruelty to animals</th>
<th>No history of cruelty to animals</th>
<th>Sociodemographic characteristics and other psychiatric disorders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(N = 728)</td>
<td>(N = 41,203)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% (95% CI)</td>
<td>% (95% CI)</td>
<td>AOR (95% CI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mood disorders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major depressive disorder</td>
<td>32.77 (28.38–37.48)</td>
<td>16.58 (15.89–17.29)</td>
<td>1.27 (0.75–1.69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bipolar disorder</td>
<td>19.57 (15.80–23.98)</td>
<td>5.50 (5.18–5.84)</td>
<td>0.99 (0.70–1.39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dysthymia</td>
<td>11.71 (9.40–14.49)</td>
<td>4.23 (3.95–4.53)</td>
<td>1.17 (0.81–1.70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety disorders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panic disorder</td>
<td>7.49 (5.46–10.21)</td>
<td>4.03 (3.77–4.32)</td>
<td>0.89 (0.59–1.34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social phobia</td>
<td>13.84 (11.07–17.16)</td>
<td>4.93 (4.55–5.35)</td>
<td>1.13 (0.82–1.55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific phobia</td>
<td>16.81 (13.88–20.22)</td>
<td>9.49 (8.89–10.13)</td>
<td>1.03 (0.76–1.38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generalized anxiety disorder</td>
<td>10.75 (8.29–13.83)</td>
<td>4.12 (3.79–4.48)</td>
<td>1.14 (0.75–1.72)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance use disorders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol use disorder</td>
<td>63.69 (58.71–68.38)</td>
<td>29.77 (28.28–31.30)</td>
<td>1.56 (1.20–2.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicotine dependence</td>
<td>36.16 (31.39–41.21)</td>
<td>17.56 (16.63–18.54)</td>
<td>0.93 (0.71–1.22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana use disorder</td>
<td>27.90 (23.87–32.32)</td>
<td>8.15 (7.62–8.71)</td>
<td>1.05 (0.77–1.44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other illicit drug use disorder</td>
<td>19.92 (16.38–24.01)</td>
<td>5.02 (4.63–5.44)</td>
<td>1.05 (0.77–1.43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychotic disorder</td>
<td>3.63 (2.19–5.95)</td>
<td>0.74 (0.64–0.86)</td>
<td>1.14 (0.59–2.22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct disorder</td>
<td>8.29 (5.66–11.98)</td>
<td>0.94 (0.83–1.08)</td>
<td>9.53 (6.07–14.97)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality disorders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidant</td>
<td>9.89 (7.26–13.33)</td>
<td>2.27 (2.06–2.51)</td>
<td>1.50 (0.97–2.30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>2.66 (1.39–5.01)</td>
<td>0.46 (0.38–0.57)</td>
<td>0.76 (0.33–1.71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obsessive–compulsive</td>
<td>26.56 (22.53–31.01)</td>
<td>7.74 (7.30–8.21)</td>
<td>1.65 (1.24–2.20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paranoid</td>
<td>18.09 (14.79–21.93)</td>
<td>4.27 (3.98–4.58)</td>
<td>1.34 (0.93–1.94)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schizoid</td>
<td>9.54 (7.17–12.59)</td>
<td>3.09 (2.85–3.35)</td>
<td>0.70 (0.44–1.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antisocial</td>
<td>35.84 (31.53–40.40)</td>
<td>3.13 (2.88–3.40)</td>
<td>6.68 (5.05–8.85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Histrionic</td>
<td>10.69 (8.12–13.94)</td>
<td>1.72 (1.56–1.90)</td>
<td>1.62 (1.14–2.31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathological gambling</td>
<td>3.02 (1.56–5.75)</td>
<td>0.39 (0.32–0.47)</td>
<td>2.23 (1.04–4.78)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family history of antisocial behavior</td>
<td>53.87 (49.40–58.28)</td>
<td>22.49 (21.45–23.56)</td>
<td>2.12 (1.73–2.58)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: AOR values in bold are statistically significant (p-value <.05).

a CI: confidence interval.
b AOR: odds ratio adjusted for sociodemographic variables, lifetime psychiatric disorders, and a family history of antisocial behavior.
Research on the Link in Spain
"Those who maltreat pets and unjustifiably causing death or injuries that occur causing a serious physical impairment, will be punished with imprisonment of three months to one year and disqualification special one to three years for the exercise of profession, trade or commerce which has a connection with animals."
DEFINITION OF ANIMAL ABUSE

“Socially unacceptable behavior that intentionally causes unnecessary pain, suffering, or distress to and/or death of an animal” (Ascione, 1993)
Hoarding
Dog/cock fighting
Sample: 24 inmates (forensic) diagnosed with ASPD

Characteristics:

• 14% sentenced for violent felonies (homicide, murder, murder attempt)

• 69% committed rape (in 4 cases, # of victims 5-23)
McDonald Triad

Animal Abuse

Pyromania

Enuresis

MacDonald (1963), Hellman & Blackman, 1966, Tapia (1971)
Mc Donald Triad
23.5%

Animal Abuse
41%

Pyromania
71%

Enuresis
58.8%
SAMPLE (2011)

- 52 forensic cases
  - 51 men
  - average age 33.26 years
  - With a history of animal abuse
Dependent variables

- (a) crime committed (violent/non-violent)

- (b) presence or not of two dimensional psychopathy factors (PCL:SV; Hare 1985), and ASPD (DSM-IV-TR)

- (c) McDonald triad (cruelty to animals, pyromania, enuresis) and Pincus triad (child abuse, brain injury, paranoia)
Status

Jail (77%)

Parole (15%)

Security measures (psychiatric) (8%)
Previous History:

Violent crime 77%
Alcohol abuse 35.8%
Drug abuse 83%

Antisocial Personality Disorder 85%
Psychopathy (PCL: sv Hart, Cox & Hare)

- High 20%
- Moderate 36%
- Low 40%
• Of the sample of 52 cases with a history of animal abuse, the cause for their prosecution is a violent crime (89%)

• They have a previous history of violent offending (77%)
• High scores in psychopathy and ASPD related to more sadistic animal abuse and more sadistic interpersonal violence.
CONCLUSIONS
The Link: IPV and cruelty to animals

- There is a growing body of evidence that indicates further examination may be warranted.
- The task for the mental health community /criminologists is to place greater emphasis on this element of offending behaviour in their examination and diagnostic procedures.
The Link: IPV and cruelty to animals

- Law-enforcement agents should be trained specifically.
Thank you!!!!