The Relationship Between Animal Cruelty and Crime Prevention and Reduction

The proposed symposium, “The Relationship Between Animal Cruelty and Crime Prevention and Reduction,” consists of two presentations. The first addresses the empirical evidence linking animal abuse to other forms of interpersonal violence, i.e., “the link”; while the second focuses on policy and programmatic responses to “the link.” The purpose of these presentations is to stimulate thinking about animal cruelty both as a serious crime in and of itself as well as an opportunity to identify behaviors that may lead to other crimes of violence and how responding to animal cruelty may enhance crime prevention efforts. After the presentations there will be a discussion with the audience on what actions, policies, or programs are available and what new ones may be needed.

First Presentation. Empirical evidence for the link between animal abuse and other interpersonal violence.

- Animal abuse as an early indicator of children and families at risk
- The relationship between animal abuse and child abuse
- The association of animal abuse with domestic violence
- Elder abuse and its link to animal abuse
- Witnessing violence and polyvictimization
- Advantages of identifying animal abuse
- Childhood animal abuse and juvenile crime
- Resources available

Second Presentation. Policies and programs that have emerged as a result of “the link.”

- FBI added animal cruelty crimes to National Incident Based Reporting Programs
- JCAT
- Cooperation between domestic violence and animal protection groups
- Including pets on domestic violence protection orders
- Safe Havens for pets of domestic violence victims
- Cross reporting
- Enhanced penalties for children witnessing
- Consideration of animal maltreatment in child custody decisions
Following the two presentations, there will be a general discussion in which the attendees can respond to the information, share their views on this link, and contribute their ideas to what policies, programs, or actions are needed.

**Bios for presenters:**

Mary Lou Randour, Ph.D.

Dr. Randour, a psychologist, is Senior Advisor, Animal Cruelty Programs and Training, Animal Welfare Institute, Washington, D. C. She has a Ph.D. from the University of Maryland, received a NIMH Postdoctoral Fellowship, was a Clinical Fellow in Psychology at Cambridge Hospital, Harvard Medical School, and is an Adjunct Professor in Psychiatry at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences. She is the author of handbooks such as *A Common Bond: Child Maltreatment and Animals in the Family*, as well as *AniCare Child*, a treatment approach for children who abuse animals. Dr. Randour has published articles in numerous professional journals as well as written chapters for edited volumes. Her latest contribution “The Psychology of Animal Abuse Offenders,” co-authored with Dr. Maya Gupta, is in the newly released book *Animal Cruelty: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Understanding*. In her career, Dr. Randour has worked for a federal research funding agency and enjoyed a private practice for almost 20 years. She now devotes her knowledge of psychology to advance animal protection and its connection to human welfare, working in partnership with organizations such as the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, the Battered Women’s Justice Project, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the National Council for Juvenile and Family Court Judges, the National Animal Care and Control Association, the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, and the National Sheriff’s Association.

Nancy Blaney has advocated on behalf of animals for more than 30 years and is currently Director of Government Affairs for the Animal Welfare Institute, where she is responsible for working with federal and state legislators and regulators as well as other interest groups in support of improving animal welfare, the prosecution of animal cruelty crimes, and public awareness of the relationship between animal abuse and other forms of violence. Nancy also serves as co-chair of the Animal Cruelty Advisory Council of the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys and is a recipient of APA’s Lifetime Achievement Award. She has made presentations on the subject of federal legislation and animals and family violence to audiences of judges, law enforcement, prosecutors, domestic violence and animal welfare advocates, and others. AWI became the first advocate for animals on Capitol Hill in 1951. Dedicated to alleviating the suffering of animals caused by humans, AWI has been a leader in achieving the most significant federal animal protection laws and has extended its efforts to improving the enforcement of state and local cruelty laws and calling attention to the relationship between animal cruelty and interpersonal violence.