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**The criminal and criminological aspects of animal abuse -
Animal abuse and the link between animal abuse and violence towards humans**

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1.0 Introduction

What is animal abuse? When asking this question most likely you would get many different answers. A statement published by an animal rights organization characterizes animal abuse as “*any use or treatment of animals that seems unnecessarily cruel, regardless of whether the act is against the law*”¹. Another explanation postulated by F.R. Ascione, a pioneer in this field stated that animal abuse is a “*socially unacceptable behaviour that intentionally causes unnecessary pain, suffering, or distress to and/or death of an animal*” (Ascione, 1993). This term is more frequently referred to in scientific articles.

Animal abuse is without doubt something that concerns many people whether as a pet owner or through your occupation as veterinarian, farmer, slaughterhouse-worker or a dog-walker. Within these different fields, there are many different opinions and views regarding the value of animals and of how they should be treated. In addition, differences between countries play an important role of what is interpreted as animal abuse. Some countries have had laws protecting animals for over hundred years, while others recently got animal welfare laws or do not have them at all. In addition, the way the law works, culture and religion are important in how animals are perceived by the society. All these factors play an important part in how we humans treat and respect animals.

In this thesis, I will present the criminal and criminological aspect of animal abuse. For a better understanding of the topic, the first section will be used to define animal abuse and the different forms of which it can be displayed. Further, the proposed connection between animal abuse and human violence will be investigated, where various research of this particular subject will be presented. The research included in the thesis is aimed to see if animal abuse is indicative or predictive of human violence in general or for more specific types. To make this thesis more complete I chose to include measures of how to prevent animal abuse, as well as corrective measures applied when these behaviours are detected. Finally an introduction to the current situation in Norway, including the Animal welfare Act and practical examples of the law in use.

¹ Lin, Doris, ‘What is animal abuse?’, URL: animalrights.about.com/od/animalrights101/a/What-Is-Animal-Abuse.htm. (Access date 18.11.2015)

2.0 Material and methods

In this theoretical study, it has been of importance to read and evaluate articles, journals and books in gaining a proper understanding of the topic. The availability and character of the material addressing the different subjects has differed. In my evaluation of the literature, I had some criteria's I tried to follow when choosing material. The fact that the material was referred to by other researchers were highly valued, as well as the age. In addition, the methodology of the performed studies was points of concern. However, I could rarely find literature fulfilling all these criteria's. For some of the subjects, it was hard to find material that was up to date. In addition, the methodology was frequently quite poor in many studies.

2.1 Animal abuse

In the first section, I needed to find literature addressing animal abuse in general, in addition to the specific forms. The topics; risk factors and clinical signs that could be indicative to animal abuse are also included in this section. The material available presenting these subjects was quite substantial and in many cases, it was hard to find the origin of the tendencies and facts presented. Therefore, the challenge here was to find reliable information from trustworthy sources.

2.2 The link between animal abuse and human abuse

For the part concerning the link between animal abuse and human violence, the review of the material was quite extensive due to the interdisciplinary character of the subject. There are many studies published but the methodology of the studies is often poor. Almost all studies are retrospective and based on self-reports, in these studies one cannot exclude the possibility of biased answers, which will in turn give misleading results. Other weaknesses of these studies are the lack of control group, so there is no way of knowing the occurrence of the behavior investigated in a generalized sample. In addition, the sample surveyed are frequently very small and often of a very specialized group, where the occurrence of the behavior investigated could be over-represented. The definition of animal abuse could also vary between the studies, which could make them hard to compare results. When the study was performed is also of importance, most studies concerning this proposed "link" occurred between 1980 and until 2010. It has been hard to find studies performed within the last five years. The amount of material available also varies according to the relationship investigated.

2.2.1 Animal abuse as an indicator for domestic violence

Many studies have been performed in order to find results that either support or reject this statement. The three studies included were up-to-date and had similar methodology. They all questioned women at domestic violence shelters about their experiences with animal abuse, as well as a control sample of non-abused women. Two of the studies even took the degree of violence into consideration. They can be criticized due to their retrospective perspective and two of the studies were of a relatively small sample.

2.2.2 Animal abuse as an indicator of child abuse

Finding material of newer age concerning the possible link between animal abuse and child abuse was challenging. Two of the studies included were performed in the 1980s and were based on the same methodology. They surveyed all cases of animal abuse in a specific area and compared it with the reports of child abuse in the same area. These were not optimal studies, as they are retrospective, they had very small samples and no control group. The third study was of newer date and also differed in methodology. Here undergraduate students were questioned about their experiences with animal and child abuse, to see if there were a significant co-occurrence. This study is also retrospective, but the sample size is much larger and it is of a generalized sample, making it more reliable for the overall occurrence.

2.2.3 The background of childhood animal abuse

The background of children engaging in animal abuse differs, some studies aim to prove that witnessing violence is a predisposing factor. While others try to reveal that there is a relation between children being exposed to abuse themselves and childhood animal abuse. The methodology in these studies vary, either women are questioned about their children's behavior or children or adolescents are questioned about their own behavior. All studies included are of a retrospective character, all include a control group except one and the majority is of newer age.

2.2.4 Adult Criminal Offenses

It has for many years been proposed that children who engage in animal abuse, are at risk of committing criminal offenses as adult. Here the studies are aiming to reveal if animal abuse could be predictive of adults engaging in criminal activities and if it could be more predictive for certain offenses. Most studies are retrospective and are based on questioning criminals of their animal abusive behavior as children and comparing it to a control group. However, one of the first prespective studies in this field was performed trying to find support to this theory. In this study, women exposed to domestic violence were questioned of whether their children had been cruel to animals. The children were grouped into abusive and non-abusive and further the number of children that was referred to a juvenile court was noted. The study aimed to see if there was a positive correlation between animal abuse and committing other offences when older. A third study with a different angling is also included, here undergraduate students were questioned with a specific set of questions to reveal the character of the animal abuse perpetrated. In order to reveal the persons in danger of advancing to human victims. This is also a retrospective study, but it surveys a generalized sample and the sample is also large which is positive.

2.3 Prevention and corrective measures of animal abuse

In the section where prevention and corrective measure of animal abuse were addressed, there were relatively few articles available concerning these topics specifically. It was also hard to find evidence supporting the different treatment methods used to correct animal abusive behavior. Because treatment of animal abusers and also the methods used are relatively new, so very little research has been published. I managed to find a couple of articles of reliable sources where these topics were addressed as a part of a larger context.

2.4 Animal abuse in Norway

In the last section concerning the status of animal abuse in Norway, the information presented is based on statistic information retrieved from **NOAH**; the main organization in Norway fighting for animal rights, the **Norwegian Food Safety Authority**; responsible for the control of animal welfare and the **Norwegian Police**; responsible for the investigation of animal abuse cases of a severe character. Further, the content of the **Norwegian Animal Welfare law** is included as a summary of the laws applying to animal abuse, as well as articles from national newspaper to demonstrate the practical use of the law.

The challenge in this section was to find suitable material of trustworthy sources. There is a lot of material available, but a larger share is from unreliable origin. Another problem is that these papers frequently lack references to the facts and statistics presented, as well as authors writing without proper knowledge of the subject. In the second part of this section, where practical cases and sanctions were presented it was quite easy to find material. Animal abuse gets a lot of media coverage in Norway so to gain information about cases and sanctions was quite easy.

3.0 Animal abuse

To find a uniform definition of animal abuse is almost impossible. Due to the multidimensional character of the subject, where there are different opinions according to the species involved and the type of animal abuse present. These opinions may further differ within societies and countries and is highly influenced by what is perceived as animal abuse by the law. It is also seen that some acts that are perceived as abuse when directed towards companion animals, may be tolerated in the case of farm animals. An example of this is the keeping conditions of bulls in Norwegian farms. Where it is frequently seen that four bulls would share a pen of sixteen square meters for their whole life and this is accepted by most people. Even though the **Norwegian Animal Welfare Law, Chapter 2, § 23** states: *“The animal keeper shall ensure that animals are kept in an environment which is consistent with good welfare, and which meets the animals’ needs which are specific for both the species and the individual. The environment shall give the animals opportunity to carry out stimulating activities, movement, rest and other natural behavior. The animals’ living environment shall stimulate good health and condition, and contribute to safety and wellbeing”*. These living conditions would never have been accepted if applied to dogs.

It is now proposed that rather than focusing on a specific definition, the development of a typology concerning the different types of animal abuse would be beneficial. In this typology the different types of animal abuse has been classified and the acts characteristic of the different types specified. With the use of such typology it will make the communication between the different professions easier. With concern to communication between veterinarians, but also other professions related to health and law enforcement.

To be able to grasp the magnitude of animal abuse occurring, the current situation concerning animal abuse in the UK is presented. It is estimated that in 2014 there were 21 million pet animals, 900 million farm animals and 4 million research animals in the UK, which makes a total of 925 million animals.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Animal Cruelty (RSPCA) received 159 831 reports where abuse of pet animals was suspected, of these cases 20 258 were found to include deliberate and violent cruelty. But only 1029 cases resulted in conviction².

The numbers present for revealing acts of omission is even higher than that of active acts of animal abuse. While statistics and facts related to abuse of farm animals were not retrieve, which is not because it does not occur. It is most likely because people have a stronger emotional connection and more knowledge of what is acceptable treatment of pets related to that of farm animals. Thus resulting in more reports, investigations and prosecutions of cases including abuse of pet animals.

3.1 Forms of perpetration

This thesis will explain the difference between active and passive acts of animal abuse, as well as introducing special types of animal abuse including dog fighting, animal hoarding and bestiality.

3.1.1 Active acts of animal abuse

Active acts of animal abuse or acts of commission can occur in many forms and can have many different motives. Acts of active animal abuse may include beating, kicking, burning, poisoning, shooting, stabbing, sexual assault and torturing of an animal. In a study performed by Kellert and Felthous (1985) they developed nine motivations for better understanding the reasons behind these actions, which are listed on the next page.

It is proposed that active acts of animal abuse often occur together with other types of abuse. Or that it serves as a step in the development of violent and criminal tendencies. These statements will be further addressed in detail in the next section.

² Daily mail, 'Animal cruelty complaints soar: RSPCA investigates nearly 160,000 cases in 2014 with one in eight involving violence', URL: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3049527/Animal-cruelty-complaints-soar-RSPCA-investigates-nearly-160-000-cases-2014-one-eight-involving-violence.html#ixzz3sRQIurPj>. (Access date 21.11.2015)

Figure 1. Illustrates the nine motivations of active animal abuse developed by Kellert and Felthous (1985)

	Motivation	Example
I.	Attempts to control an animal.	Hitting a dog to make it stop barking.
II.	Retaliation.	Throwing a cat against the wall for vomiting inside, due to perceived transgression.
III.	Acting out of prejudice against a species or breed.	Acting out of the belief that such an animal is not worthy of consideration.
IV.	Expression of aggression through an animal.	Organized dog fighting.
V.	To enhance one's own aggression or to impress others.	Using animals as target practice.
VI.	To shock people for amusement.	Kicking, beating, burning, stabbing or shooting an animal.
VII.	Retaliate against another person or as revenge.	Killing the pet of a disliked neighbor.
VIII.	Displacement of aggression from a human to an animal.	Abused child may direct the abuse used against them to an animal.
IX.	Non-specific sadism, with desire to inflict pain and suffering.	Torturing an animal.

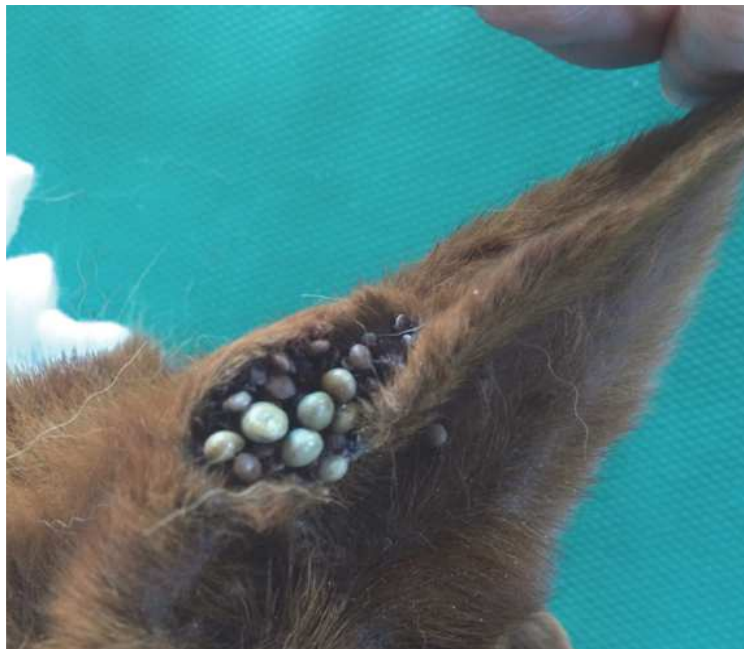
Figure 2. Shows the occurrence of the different types of active acts of animal abuse, based on a study performed by the Humane Society of United States in 2003 (Faver and Strand, 2003)

Type of offense	%
Shooting	17
Animal Fighting	17
Torturing	11
Beating	11
Mutilation	10
Throwing	7
Burning	6
Poisoning	4
Stabbing	3
Kicking	3
Dragging	3
Suffocation	1
Drowning	1
Animal Sexual Abuse	1
Hanging	1
Run Over with Vehicle	1

3.1.2 Passive acts of animal abuse

Animal abuse as a result of passive acts occurs when an owner or caretaker of an animal fails to perform activities needed by the animal to cover their basic needs. Frequently in these cases, the perpetrator does not even realize that their actions are animal abuse, as it is often a result of lack of knowledge. This is not always true, sometimes animal owner intentionally avoids doing acts upon which the animal is dependent of for survival. Passive animal abuse includes the failure of providing food, water and shelter, as well as not ensuring that the animal receives medical care when needed. Both as means of prophylaxis, such as deworming and as treatment of injuries that might occur. More specialized forms of animal abuse in this category includes animal hoarding and puppy mills, in which a large number of animals are kept at the same place and the person responsible fails to meet the requirements of the animals.

***Figure 3.* Shows an example of passive acts of animal abuse³. Not giving anti-parasitic treatment, resulting in a severe tick infestation. Another aspect of the case is that in this area the prevalence of tick-born diseases are quite high**



³ Hognestad H., (2015): Picture of passive animal abuse, Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa

Animal abuse as a consequence of omission occurs quite frequently, but is hard to detect unless the degree of the omission is very severe or many animals are involved. According to the Human Society of the United States, acts of omission are the most encountered type of animal abuse. In most countries, acts of omission against animals are included in the laws and are perceived as a crime.

3.1.3 Special forms

In addition to the grouping of animal abuse mentioned above, they could also be classified into special forms. Where only certain animal species are included or there is a special feature of the abuse performed. Examples of this could be bull-fighting, research animals, circus animals, zoological animals, in addition to many more. To address all these types of animal abuse would be too extensive, so a section further detailing dog-fighting, animal hoarding and bestiality is included.

3.1.3.1 Dog Fighting

Dog fighting is a type of blood sport where two dogs are put together in a pit in order to fight each other and spectators can place bets on which dog will win the fight. The fights usually last for one to two hours and is not over until one of the dogs are not able to fight anymore or dies⁴. The dogs used in these fights are most frequently American Staffordshire terrier, American bulldog, Staffordshire terrier or American pit-bull terrier or mixes of these breeds commonly referred to as pit bulls. These breeds are preferred because they are very loyal to their owner, they have very powerful jaws and they can sustain a relatively large amount of abuse (Gibson, 2005). So when these dogs fight they can cause great damage to their component and the fight will continue for a long time.

⁴ Human Society of the United States: Dog fighting facts URL:
http://m.humanesociety.org/issues/dogfighting/facts/dogfighting_fact_sheet.html?credit=web_id85537499.
(Access date 28.5.2015)

Figure 4. Shows a picture of an illegal dogfight⁵.



Dogs that take part in dogfights may get many and serious injuries, such as severe bruising, deep puncture wounds and broken bones. If they are hurt badly they often die within hours or days of the fight, due to blood loss, dehydration, exhaustion, shock or infection. The dogs used for fighting is breed for this purpose, where the parent animals are selected based on traits desirable for fighting, such as good muscling and display of aggression. In addition, these dogs are trained in special ways for preparing the animals for the fight. One training technique uses pray animals, upon which the dog learns how to kill. If a dog cannot be used in the fighting pit, they are frequently subjected to abuse or euthanized in a painful manner. In fact, 25 per cent of all dogs abused in the United States are pit bulls⁶.

⁵ . Occupy for animals: Picture of dog-fighting,

URL: <http://www.occupyforanimals.net/dog-fighting.html>. (Access date 18.11.2015)

⁶ Human Society of the United States: Animal Cruelty Facts and Statistics

URL:http://m.humanesociety.org/issues/abuse_neglect/facts/animal_cruelty_facts_statistics.html. (Access date 17.11.2015)

It is estimated that there are around 40 000 dog fighters present in the United States (Kalof and Taylor, 2007) and in a raid in 2010, of a dog fighting facility they found 407 dogs at one place. These numbers suggests that dog fighting is a problem of significant magnitude in the US, but also being encountered as a problem in Russia, England, South Africa, Canada, Australia and Italy.

Another concern of dog fighting is the co-occurrence of other criminal behaviors. Such as illegal gambling, drugs, the presence of illegal firearms and weapons and violence in general. Unfortunately, there is very little research concerning dog fighting and the associated crimes. A practical example supporting this statement is included instead. In 2011 in Alabama, a mobile police officer reported a suspicion of dog fighting, further investigation was initiated by the FBI, together with the local law enforcement. In August 2013, they were able to make arrests and make charges on the grounds of dog fighting and gambling. The dogs they found at the facility were in bad conditions, many were subjected to abuse and omission. There were evidence of bait training with smaller animals such as small dogs, cats and rabbits. In addition, other illegal activities were also revealed including illegal gambling, seizure of illegal guns and drugs, as well as more than 500 000 dollars in cash.

Animals suffer when dog fighting occurs, not only the dogs fighting but also those not good enough to fight and the bait animals being killed alive. A victim present in the dog-fighting environment not always that evident are the children. They are frequently present at the pits collecting bets and being witness to the fights. It is proposed that being witness to these fights and the violence exerted in these environments may desensitize the children to violence in general. In a study of ninth graders in urban areas of the U.S, it was revealed that almost all had witnessed a dogfight. It was also revealed that most of the kids believed that there was nothing wrong with dog fighting, thus supporting the statement of desensitization (Gibson, 2005).

3.1.3.2 Animal hoarding

Animal hoarding is a poorly understood phenomenon, but it is frequently related to people who have problems with their mental health. In animal hoarding cases there are some common features, such as keeping an above normal number of companion animals. In addition to not being able to provide proper nutrition, shelter and medicinal care for the animals which leads to starvation, disease and death. In these cases, the person responsible fails to recognize that the minimal care is not provided for, which leads to the suffering of the animals.

When entering a household where animal hoarding occurs one can expect to see emaciated animals due to starvation, there might be traces of untreated wounds and infectious diseases, dead animals are also sometimes found. There are also less obvious cases of animal hoarding, which may include animals not allowed to socialize, exert normal behavior or being confined over a longer period of time where the living conditions are uncomfortable such as cold, wet, dark or unsanitary. These are all conditions that would compromise the animal's welfare in individual holdings as well, but it is a far bigger and more serious problem when so many animals are involved. With so many animals in a very small area, infectious agents are allowed to spread fast within the population, some of these pathogens might be zoonotic thus putting people in the environment at risk. The bad sanitary condition predisposes to rodent and insect infestation, in addition ammonia and other toxic bioaerosols produced from accumulated animal wastes might compromise the health of animals and humans. Immune-suppressed or people suffering from respiratory disease will be at risk of further complicating their condition. In severe cases, the health of the neighbor might also be at risk.

Figure 5. Picture from an animal hoarding case where forty dogs were rescued⁷.



The psychological background of animal hoarders is not completely understood. As of now, this condition has not been connected to a specific psychological disorder. However, some common features and theories about the condition are proposed. These psychological features may include a strong affection for animals, often being characteristics for their identity, for example the ‘cat lady’. They also have a strong need of being in control of these animals and the thought of losing them will cause great suffering. The Hoarding of Animal Research Consortium (HARC) has found suggestive evidence of a link to growing up in chaotic homes, with an unstable upbringing. In such environments, the animal can often be the only stable feature present through the childhood and adolescents.

The HARC have further developed a model for psychiatric traits typical for that of an animal hoarder. The behavior could be categorized as a focal delusional disorder, as they see no faults in how they care for their animals, when it is obvious that there are clear acts of omission present. There will also be a delusional paranoia for official authorities, due to the fear of losing their animals.

⁷ Central Oklahoma Humane Society, Picture animal hoarding: URL: <http://www.okhumane.org/blog/ok-humane-rescues-over-40-animals-from-hoarding-case>. (Access date 18.11.2015)

Animal hoarders could also fall into the category of attachment disorder, where a human prefers the company of animals instead of humans, as this feels safer. Some suggests that there could be a connection between animal hoarding and obsessive-compulsive disorders (OCD). The reason for this is that hoarding of inanimate objects is frequently associated with OCDs, in fact 15-30 per cent of people with OCD are hoarders.

3.1.3.3 Bestiality

Bestiality is defined as *‘any sexual contact of humans with animals or any physical contact with animals that causes sexual excitement and pleasure for the human involved’* (Beetz, 2005). In most countries around the world, such acts are illegal, some countries have recently made bestiality illegal such as Denmark. But there are still European countries not considering bestiality as a crime, including Romania, Hungary and Finland⁸.

Bestiality is something that is relevant today, even though the number of prosecuted cases is very low. The reason for this is that this behavior is performed in secrecy and there are usually no witnesses to this latency. Its relevancy is supported by the number of websites concerning the subject, where different type of information is exchanged. The subjects ranges from what to do and what not to do, possible zoonotic diseases, other risks and the distribution of pornographic material (Beetz, 2005). Most evidence of the occurrence of bestiality is derived from the activity that is observed on the internet, because there are very few studies available about this subject. However, a study performed in 1974 concerning the sexual behavior of Americans included bestiality. The study included 982 men and 1044 women and the reported prevalence of engaging in bestiality at least once was 5 and 2 per cent respectively.

The different form and degree of bestiality varies, in connection with this the degree of suffering of the animals will also vary. The species most frequently exposed to bestiality are farm animals, horses, dogs and but also poultry and rabbits. The two latter species are

⁸ BBC news, Danmark passes laws to ban bestiality,
URL: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat/article/32411241/denmark-passes-law-to-ban-bestiality>.
(Access date 16.11.2015)

more often associated with a more sadistic form of bestiality, where the damages are so severe that death occurs as a consequence.

In cases where bestiality have been revealed it have been noticed that the perpetrators often isolates themselves, they are often insecure and may have difficulty in bonding with other humans. A connection to children who have been subjected to neglect, physical or sexual abuse have been proposed.

3.2 Recognizing animal abuse

Recognizing animal abuse is important in order to terminate the suffering of animals. Veterinarians are in a unique position of reveal such conditions, because they are the first to be encountered if an animal is sick or injured. To avoid misinterpretation of accidental injuries as non-accidental, guidelines has been developed to help veterinarians to detect animal abuse. The initiation of creating such guidelines was done by the Royal Society of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) in England and Wales and the Scottish Society of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SSPCA). This study included the experiances of animal abuse of 1000 anonymous veterinarians in the small animal practice in the UK. One accidental finding of the study was that there were many similarities between the injuries seen in abused pets and that of abused children.

3.2.2 Risk factors

The risk factors concluded from the study revelead that in cases where animal abuse had occured the owner was often unable or unwilling to explain how the injury happened or you would only get a vague explanation. If you are dealing with several family members, you might often see inconsistencies in their explanations or the history might not fit the injury. The behaviour of the owner could also be suggestive, as they might get aggetated when questioned about the injury or they may act careless about their animal.

Other indications might be present if you check the history of previous pets that have visited the clinic. There might have been many different injuries, death or turnover of animals.

Some risk factors are related to age and gender of the animal. Both dogs and cats under the age of two years are at higher risk of being abused, male dogs are also at higher risk than female dogs (Munro and Thrusfield, 2001). The behavior of the animal could also give us information, if the animal seems afraid of its owner or seems more relaxed in the owner's absence.

Risk factors of omission and then especially animal hoarding might include an owner traveling great distance to get to the veterinarian. They might also use many different veterinarians. Animals of old age is a rare encounter and sometimes owners might bring in a relatively healthy animal with the purpose of getting medication for a more severely affected animal. When talking to the owner they might have problems giving account for how many animals they actually have. Some will claim to have found an animal which is dirty, but the filth in the fur is more consistent with confinement than of a stray animal. The reason for visiting the veterinarian will often be due to problems not associated with good animal health care.

3.2.3 Clinical signs

As the types of animal abuse may vary greatly, so does the clinical signs of abuse. In those cases involving physical abuse, the characteristic clinical findings may include several fractures, especially rib fractures. Upon an x-ray examination one can see that the fractures are of different age, indicating that this was not a one-time event. In addition, bruises, wounds, gunshot wounds, burns and internal lesions can be encountered. In connection to omission the clinical signs presented may include emaciated and dehydrated animals, due to the lack of proper feeding. It could also include ongoing parasitic infection and untreated wounds due to the lack of medical care.

4.0 The link between animal abuse and human violence

The thought of there being a connection between animal and human abuse dates back many hundred years. In the 1770's the German philosopher Immanuel Kant stated "*If he is not to stifle his human feelings, he must practice kindness towards animals, for he who is cruel to animals becomes hard in his dealing with men*". Some hundred years later another German philosopher generally known for criticizing Kants work made a similar statement. Arthur Schopenhauer stated "*Compassion for animals is intimately associated with goodness of character and it may be confidently asserted that he who is cruel to animals cannot be a good man*". Even though these connections have been suggested for a long time, it is still an area in need of new information. Partly because most studies are retrospective, frequently lacking control groups and may differ in their definitions concerning abuse, which makes them hard to compare. The relationship between animal abuse and human abuse is of a multidimensional character because animal abuse can occur with not only one type, but several types of human abuse.

A study performed by The Humane Society of the United States⁹ aiming to reveal the most frequently encountered age and gender of animal abusers. The results showed that 97 per cent of the perpetrators of active animal abuse were males, of these 31 per cent were below the age of 18. While females was to account for 68 per cent of the animal hoarding cases. The animals subjected to abuse were in 76 per cent companion animals. Other findings revealed that in 21 per cent of the cases where active animal abuse were committed there were also other forms of family violence present. One very important reveal of this study is that in the majority of the cases the perpetrators of animal abuse are adult males, which is also the case for domestic violence and child abuse. F.R. Ascione a contemporary researcher in this field stated; "*Although animal abuse does not cause violence to people, it may make violence more likely as animal abuse may desensitize the perpetrator to suffering in general*" (Linzey, 2009). The fact that the perpetrator in both animal abuse and family violence are most frequently adult men and that the human mind can be desensitized to violence makes humans in these environments at risk of becoming a victim of abuse.

⁹ The Humane Society of the United States, First Strike Campaign, 2000 Report of Animal Cruelty Cases, 2001. URL: http://www.humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/CAMP_FS_2000report.pdf . (Access date 24.11.2015)

4.1 Animal abuse as an indicator of domestic violence

Various research performed in the US, Canada and Australia, despite different methodology, country and sample size gave similar results and supports the theory of a connection between animal abuse and domestic violence (Ascione, 2007). The studies were aimed at women in violent relationships who had pets. Of the women questioned 12-40 per cent said that they had experienced their partner threatening to hurt or kill their pet. An even larger part, 25-80 per cent reported that their partner had actually hurt or killed their pet. One limitation of this study is the lack of a control group, where women not exposed to domestic violence were included.

A similar study performed by Volant *et al.* (2008) included a control group and found that women in non-abusive relationships had not experienced their pet being abused. However, it revealed that 46 per cent of the women in abusive relationships and 6 per cent in the control sample of non-abused women reported to have experienced their partner threatening to hurt or kill their pet. In the relationships where both animal abuse and partner violence is present, the aim of the perpetrator is usually to prevent the victim of leaving or reporting the abuse. The victims in these cases often feel alone and seeks comfort in their pet's company and the pet becomes of great value to the victim, so by threatening to hurt or actually hurting them the perpetrator remain in control. The same tendencies can be seen in homes where children are being abused. A more recent study performed by Ascione *et al.* (2007) studied women exposed to domestic violence and a comparative sample of non-abused women and their relation to animal abuse. The research revealed that women subjected to domestic violence were 11 times more likely to witness their animal being hurt or killed by their partner and 4 times more likely to experience threats of hurting or killing their pets than the comparative sample of non-abused women. In this study the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) were used, the aim of this tool is to measure the severity of domestic violence in the home environment. With the help of the CTS the researchers were able to see a tendency where threatening to hurt or kill a pet animal was a strong predictor of minor physical violence and verbal aggression, while actually hurting or killing a pet animal showed as a strong predictor of severe physical abuse. This study suggests that domestic violence occurring in homes where pet animals are also abused might be of a more serious character, than that connected to threatening to hurt a pet animal.

Another study arriving at similar conclusions were performed by Simmons and Lehmann (2007). In their study of women who were victims of domestic violence and where the perpetrator also engaged in animal cruelty, a connection was made revealing that more frequently several types of violence were present in these relationships, as well as more controlling behavior exerted by the perpetrator.

The research above supports the theory of a link between domestic violence and animal abuse and that animal abuse can be used as an indicator to reveal domestic violence. In addition to this link, there were also suggestive results that in homes with animal abuse, there were often a more serious form of violence present. The co-occurrence of animal abuse and domestic violence is present in many cases, though not always. The suggestive occurrences that more severe forms of violence occur in connection with animal abuse, underlines the importance of investigating the possibility of domestic violence occurring in a home where animal abuse is revealed. An additional important factor is that women in abusive relationships often delays leaving their home because they fear for their pet animal. A study performed by Flynn (2000) gave suggestive results of this theory. In a study of 107 women at a domestic violence shelter, 47 per cent had experienced their partner threatening to hurt or actually hurting their pet, 40 per cent of these reported to have delayed leaving the abusive relationship due to fear for their pet.

4.2 Animal abuse as an indicator of child abuse

Child abuse in the connection to animal abuse could have been included in the section above, as child abuse is a part of domestic violence. I chose to address child abuse separately due to the vulnerability of the children and that in situations where child abuse is present it may be the only abusive form directed to humans. So in this section research aims to reveal if animal abuse can be counted as a reliable indicator of child abuse.

One of the first studies performed trying to find support to this theory was performed by Hutton (1983) in the United Kingdom. Trying to reveal this connection Hutton went through all cases concerning animal cruelty reported to the RSPCA in a specific area and comparing them with children noted as at-risk in the Social-Service register. In all 23 families were included in the study and he found that 35 % of the children in these families were on the list of at-risk of subjected to child abuse.

The result of Hutten's study inspired the American researcher DeViney *et al.* (1983) to initiate a similar study in the U.S. In this study families who fulfilled the criteria of child abuse and neglect, in addition to having pets were included. The study revealed that in 60 per cent of the families, the pets were also abused or neglected. An even more revealing discovery was that in 80 per cent of the families with animal abuse physical child abuse were present, compared to 34 per cent related to sexual abuse and neglect.

In one of the newer studies concerning this possible connection, DeGrue and DiLillo (2009) performed a study with the aim to support the theory that animal abuse can be an indicator of child abuse. They initiated a retrospective study based on self-reports from numerous college students from three different universities in the United States. In this study the tool Computer Assisted Maltreatment Inventory (CAMI) was used, this is a computer program used to reveal if people have been exposed to abuse in their childhood. In addition, the Animal Violence Inventory (AVI) program was used with the aim of revealing witnessing or participation in animal abuse. With the use of these two programs, the researchers were allowed to draw conclusions suggesting that the co-occurrence of animal abuse could be more indicative for some types of child abuse. Results showed that in homes where animal abuse were present the children were at higher risk of being exposed to physical abuse, and also of being a perpetrator of animal abuse themselves. While for children exposed to sexual abuse or neglect engaging in animal abuse were more predictive than the co-occurrence of animal abuse by an adult.

Research suggests that when animal abuse is present, children are at risk of being abused as well. These studies also suggest that animal abuse is more predictive of physical abuse, than of child abuse in general. While childhood animal abuse is more predictive for sexual abuse and neglect of children.

4.3 Childhood animal abuse and adult criminal offenses

A common trait of many children engaging in animal abuse is that they grew up in a family with some kind of dysfunction. These families are usually characterized by either neglect or some form of abuse. In families with neglect childhood animal abuse often occur as a consequence due to the lack of parental guidance of what is acceptable behavior and not. In abusive families where children are exposed to violence and abuse, childhood animal abuse might be present and often of a more serious character. It is suggested that the

frequency of witnessing abuse and the relationship to the perpetrator are of importance for developing violent tendencies. The subject of childhood animal abuse has been an area of great interest for many researchers. Trying to figure out what the predisposing factors of childhood animal abuse could be and if childhood animal abuse can be predictive of developing violent tendencies in adolescence and adulthood.

4.3.1 The background of childhood animal abuse

The research concerning possible predisposing factors of childhood animal abuse is relatively new. The researcher Quinlisk (1999) conducted a study to reveal if there were a correlation between witnessing and developing animal abusive tendencies. In this research, women at a domestic violence shelter were questioned. Of the 72 women, 68 per cent reported having pets in which 88 per cent had experienced their pet being abuse. Further 54 per cent reported that their children had mimicked the behavior of the adult animal abuser. The main focus of Quinlisk research was to find supporting evidence to the theory that being witness to animal abuse could be a predisposing factor for developing animal abusing tendencies. As this research was conducted on women exposed to domestic violence there is the possibility that other forms of violence might also be of importance. A study aiming more for discovering this connection was performed by Becker *et al.* (2004) where he compared the results from questioning abused women and non-abused women and the prevalence of animal abuse among their kids. The result showed that 11 per cent of kids exposed to domestic violence engaged in animal abuse, compared to 5 per cent of the non-abused.

In addition to witnessing violence, the researchers Thompson and Gullone (2006) wanted to present a study indicating that the relationship to the perpetrator is of significant, as well as the frequency of witnessing animal abuse. In their study, they investigated both boys and girls from twelve to eighteen years. Based on self-reports Thompson and Gullone could report that there was a significant difference between having never witnessed animal abuse and having witnessed animal abuse more than once. The latter group also showed much higher incidences of being involved in animal abuse themselves. In addition to this finding, there was also a positive correlation to witnessing animal abuse being perpetrated by a family member or friend and engaging in animal abuse. While witnessing a stranger abusing animals had significantly lower correlation.

The results of the research above can be supported by Bandura's social learning theory¹⁰ which states that humans learn from observing and modeling behavior performed by other humans. Another theory that could be even more compatible with the research above is the vicarious learning theory (Linzey, 2009), that states that the observation of behavior has a greater impact if the observer has a meaningful relationship to the person performing the behavior.

Childhood animal abuse is not only thought to occur as a consequence of witnessing violence towards animal. It is also suggested that children exposed to abuse might be a cause for childhood animal abuse, especially victims of sexual abuse. Research suggestive of this theory were performed by Duncan *et al.* (2005) who did a study of boys with conduct disorders, where he grouped them according to if they had abused animals or not. The results showed that boys who abused animals were 2 times more likely to have been exposed to physical and/or sexual abuse or domestic violence, than that of the non-abusive group.

Ascione *et al.* (2003) came to a similar conclusion in his study of children who had been sexually abused and children who were periodically under psychiatric treatment, in addition to a third control group of normal children. The result showed that 18 per cent of the sexually abused group and 15 per cent of the psychiatric group had engaged in animal abuse, compared to the normative group of 3 per cent. A possible explanation for this tendency might be due to displaced aggression from a human to an animal. The victim of child abuse might feel powerless and not having control. By abusing animals, they identify with their own abuser and regain the feeling of power and control.

It has also been proposed that animal abuse could be associated with conduct disorders and bullying. Conduct disorders are defined as "*repetitive and persistent pattern of behaviors occurring in which the basic rights of others or major age-appropriate societal norms or rules are violated*" (Bernstein, 2014) and includes stealing, lying, running away, violence towards humans and animals and antisocial behavior. A tool for diagnosing conduct

¹⁰ Bandura A., 1977, The social learning theory,
URL: www.simplypsychology.org/bandura.html. (Access date 27.10.2015)

disorders is the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-MD). Here physical animal abuse is included as a criterion for revealing conduct disorders. The reason for this is that animal abuse is frequently occurring together with other conduct disorders. Another important reason for being included is based on the results of a study performed by Frick *et al.* (1993). The result showed that children with conduct disorders would display animal abuse for the first time around the age of six and a half years old. Compared to fighting at six years, bullying at seven years and assaulting at seven and a half years, making animal abuse one of the earliest indicators of conduct disorders.

Another study supporting the theory of a connection between conduct disorders and animal abuse was performed by Luk *et al.* (1998) the study compared children with at least one conduct disorder except from animal abuse, with a normative sample. The result showed that 28 per cent of the children with conduct disorders had engaged in animal abuse, compared to the normative sample of 3 per cent. An additional finding in this study showed that the children in the abusive group were more frequently raised in poorer families and often suffered from more severe conduct disorders. It is of importance to reveal conduct disorders in children and adolescents as it may be predictive for developing antisocial personality disorders in adults. Characteristics of antisocial personality disorders include disregard for other humans and there will very often be an increased use of violence. In addition, people with antisocial personality disorders frequently lack the feeling of guilt and may behave callous towards the suffering of others.

4.3.2 Adult criminal offenses

In the previous sections the different scenarios where animal abuse and family violence could co-occur has been presented, as well as the background of why some children abuse animals. It was briefly mentioned that childhood animal abuse could possibly be predictive for developing violent tendencies in adolescents and adulthood and this will be the subject of the next section.

Two hypotheses are postulated concerning the development of adult violence; the Violence Graduation Hypothesis and the Deviance Generalization Hypothesis. The Violent Graduation Hypothesis (Gullone, 2012) suggests that children engaging in animal abuse are more likely to advance to human directed abuse in adult age. This developmental pathway could be due to a gradual desensitization or as a rehearsal for their human victims.

While the Deviance Generalization Hypothesis (Gullone, 2012) proposes that aggressive behavior is a co-occurring event of anti-social behavior, because animal abuse is frequently accompanied with theft, property destruction, sexual assault and other violent crimes.

One of the first studies concerning the connection between childhood animal abuse and adult violence were performed by Kellert and Felthous (1985). They compared the occurrence of animal abuse of aggressive offenders, non-aggressive offenders and non-offenders. The result showed that 25 per cent of the aggressive offenders had abused animals, which is significantly higher than 6 per cent of the non-aggressive offenders and zero per cent of the non-offenders. Another more recent study performed by Merz-Perez *et al.* (2001) was initiated to give support to the suggested theory that animal abuse would be more prevalent among violent offenders, then that of non-violent. The result of the study showed that the 56 per cent of the violent offenders compared to 20 per cent of the non-violent had participated in animal abuse. Both studies suggest that animal abuse could be a predictor for adult violence. However, this was a retrospective study so there will always be a possibility of misleading results.

The first prospective study in this field was initiated by Becker *et al.* (2004) the study is based on investigating the possibility of a connection between childhood animal abuse and adolescent violence. The study was based on interviewing a group of women exposed to domestic violence and a control group of non-abused women with a questioning of animal abusive behavior of their children. The children were grouped according to animal abusive and non-abusive. Results showed that 26 per cent of children in the abusive group and 14 per cent of the non-abusive group had engaged in violence, which resulted in referral to a juvenile court. The difference between the abusive and non-abusive group is not that large and a clear relation between animal abuse and other adolescent violence could not be concluded. It could rather indicate that violent family relationships could play a larger part than animal abuse on its own.

A rather extensive research was performed by Arluke *et al.* (1999) wanting to reveal if animal abuse could be more predictive of specific types of criminal offenses. One group comprised people who had been prosecuted for animal abuse more than once. In addition to a handpicked control group, matching the prosecuted sample according to gender, socioeconomic status and age. A significant difference was displayed between the

prosecuted and the control group, showing that 70 and 20 per cent respectively had engaged in more than one criminal offense. When comparing types of criminal offense they found that for both property-related and public disorder related crimes the prosecuted group was involved at a higher rate. The most significant finding of the study was that 38 per cent of the prosecuted and 7 per cent of the control group reported to have participated in violent crimes. This result might indicate that there has been some sort of escalation in the violent tendencies of the childhood animal abuser.

Figure 6. Presenting the result of Arluke *et al.* (1999) study, comparing the percentages of the different offences and the difference between the two groups.

Crime	Animal Abuser	Controls
Violent Crime	38%	7%
Property Crime	44%	11%
Disorder Crime	37%	12%

It has for a long time been proposed that childhood animal abuse of a cruel manner could be predictive for serial killers and mass murderers. An example of such a connection can be found in the mass murdered Martin Bryant from Tasmania, Australia. In 1996, Bryant killed thirty-five people in nineteen hours. When searching Bryant’s history it was revealed that he at the age of seven and eleven was reported to official authorities because he had tortured and harassed animals. Another well-known example is that of American Carroll Edward Cole who was executed in 1985 for the murder of five people, of the thirty-five murders he was accused for. It has been revealed that when he was a child he strangled a puppy, this was also the mode of killing of his human victims.

Robert Kessler an FBI agent working in the Behavioral Science Unit organized the interviews of thirty-six serial killers in the 1970s, where he was able to draw parallels of the motives and the backgrounds of these offenders. In this study, Ressler found that more than half of the offenders admitted to have engaged in animal abuse in their childhood or adult life (Ressler *et al.*, 1988) after this discovery animal abuse was included in the FBI profile of serial killers.

When the MacDonald's triad (McDonalds,1963) was published, suggesting that animal cruelty, fire setting and enuresis could be precursors for extreme violence that later would be directed towards humans. This hypothesis received a lot of attention and resulted in increased interest for the subject. A lot of research is supportive of the connection between animal abuse and violence towards humans, in which many have been presented above. The researchers Levin and Arluke (2008) wanted to perform a study where the goal was to find childhood animal abusers being at risk of perpetrating severe offenses to other human beings. They did so by questioning undergraduate students about whether they had participated in animal abuse or not. More specifically they had to indicate what type of animal, method of inflicting pain, relationship to the animal and if these were intentional acts. Results obtained that 28 per cent of the questioned students had participated in animal abuse, but only 5 per cent reported to have abused cats or dogs. Further 13 per cent admitted using hands-on methods and 5 per cent reported having intentionally abused the animal with the aim of causing suffering and pain. Only 1 per cent of the students were positive for all three criteria. The three criterions; the animal abused being a cat or a dog, using hands-on methods and wanting to inflict pain are more predictive for more extreme killers.

Not all children or adolescents who abuse animals as children will end up as criminals, but research show that they are more frequently at-risk. It is especially important to discover the extreme forms of animal abuse, as it is more predictive of more serious criminal offenses. In the research performed by Levin and Arluke (2008) the aim is to do exactly this, by focusing on a small sample of high-risk tendencies. The study could be criticized for excluding too many people only at-risk, but at the same time a large amount of false positives is also excluded.

5.0 Prevention of animal abuse

It is very important to reveal acts of animal abuse, due to the suffering of the animals and also because abuse towards humans may also be present. Equally important is the task of preventing animal abuse of occurring in the first place or terminating such behavior. The preventative measures include the education of professionals as well as pre-professionals, cross reporting and law enforcement.

5.1 Educating as part of prevention

The veterinarian is often the first professional person that is introduced to an animal possibly exposed to animal abuse. Early intervention might prevent the worsening of a situation, where a more violent form of abuse might develop or human abuse becomes included. That is why it is important to educate veterinarians to be able to recognizing animals that are being abused. Where also the possible co-occurrence of domestic violence, in addition to the suggested escalating violent tendencies of childhood animal abusers should be emphasized. The veterinarians should also be introduced to the different forms of animal abuse, their main characteristics, as well as their frequency of occurrence. An example of this is that an animal subjected to omission brought in by a client or someone in the community, is expected to occur with a frequency ranging from occasionally to quite common. While a pet brought in to the clinic after being exposed to a non-accidental injury is quite uncommon. A problem in the education of veterinarians within this particular subject is that very few have it included as part of their curriculum in their degree, for some it is voluntary and for others only the part concerning animal abuse will be addressed. Another important aspect is to inform veterinarians of what to do when animal abuse is suspected and to be clear of how and to whom the report must be sent. It is suggested that in cases where it would be appropriate for the veterinarian to intervene they should inform their client of the conditions and of how to resolve the situation. In cases where this is not possible, the case should be reported to the relevant authority.

As veterinarians are not the only ones that could be involved in situations where animal abuse is present, the concept of cross reporting has been introduced in some countries. Cross reporting includes that a veterinarian suspicious of child abuse would report this concern to the social services, while a social service worker suspicious of animal abuse would report such a suspicion to the relevant authority responsible for animal welfare.

A weakness of cross reporting is the lack of knowledge of the other professions field.

A third group equally important to be educated in this matter are the parents, caregivers and other people that could contribute in revealing animal abuse. They should know what is acceptable behaviour towards animals, what is included in animal abuse and the possible co-occurrence of other types of abuse and the tendencies associated with childhood animal cruelty.

Educating people about animal abuse is not a direct way of preventing animal abuse, but a measure that will give results in the long run. By informing people of what is perceived as animal abuse and of the risks associated with it, more cases can be revealed and the behavior stopped.

5.2 Corrective measures as prevention

The legal status of animals differs between countries, the members of the European Union is obliged to follow the **European Convention for the Protection of Pet Animals** as a minimum requirement. Where the aim of the convention is to promote wellbeing and protection of animals. By giving them intrinsic value, they are considered as more than just property, but are still inferior to human beings. In Germany, the **German Animal Welfare Act** states that it is the human's responsibility to protect and ensure the wellbeing of animals. By claiming this responsibility of humans they are considered as more of a caretaker, rather than having a superior position. Which in turn increases the value of the animal from property to a fellow creature (Tomaselli, 2003). How the law represents animals and the penalties laid down for committing acts of animal abuse is reflected in peoples view of animals and of what is perceived as animal abuse.

It is important that the law protecting animals and the laid down penalties for breaking these rules have taken the complexity of the situation into consideration. It is important to distinguish between a casual act of abuse and chronic ones, also if the abuse was a result of omission or it was intentional. These are some factors that could be predictive for what type of corrective measure should be initiated and also the severity of the act.

When it comes to penalties for braking animal welfare laws it is suggested to keep them at a level that makes animal abuse socially unacceptable, regarding any person and age. If the penalty would be too light the consequences of perpetrating animal abuse would be minimal and would not serve as a preventative measure. Animal abuse would then be

perceived as just a minor crime and it would be regarded as more acceptable by the society. It is also important to state that low certainty-high penalty punishments are not often of a high preventative value, as the perpetrator will perceive the chances of getting caught minimal. Another negative aspect of having too high penalties is that the jury will be more reluctant to give sentences according to these criteria. The penalties in different countries vary, but are generally too low. More frequently fines are given and prison time below one year for very serious cases. Penalties exceeding this would often be accompanied with other forms of perpetrations.

When young offenders are encountered juveniles prison would not be a good alternative in correcting this behaviour, on the contrary this could be a possible pathway for developing other types of criminal behaviours. Therefore, a different strategy is proposed for child and juvenile offenders, where individual consultations and anger management can be included. But there are two other treatment methods that have had good results, this being Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) programs and Animal-Associated Therapy (AAT). MST programs will not only include individual therapy of the offender, but the whole family and it occurs in the home environment, rather than a treatment facility. In this way other problems in the family could also be addressed, such as substance abuse by a parent, and by addressing other problems in the family it will improve the chance of a success. In these programs, the parents can be thought how to deal with the different types of behavioural disorder displayed by their child as well. Studies have showed that a higher share of the children who participated in MST programs compared to those who did not participate, graduated from high-school, had better grades and were employed at the age of nineteen (Livingston, 2001)

AAT has also been proven as a beneficial way of overcoming emotional problems, frequently associated with the lack of empathy, which is often accompanied with animal abuse. By teaching these young people how to train and care for an animal, they may develop or strengthen their feeling of empathy, which again decreases the likeliness of violence.

The initiation of treatment programs for animal abusive behaviour should only be implemented after a thorough evaluation of the offender. To make sure the right treatment is provided.

6.0 Animal abuse in Norway

6.1 Norwegian Animal Welfare Act

To include the whole animal welfare act would be too extensive, so a brief summary is made of the most important laws, with a special focus on those related to animal abuse.

The act is composed of three main parts, the first one regarding general requirements, the second one about the keeping conditions and the last one regarding administrative orders and sanctions.

The aim of the animal welfare act is to promote good animal welfare and respect of animals. Those animals covered by the law include mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, decapods, octopuses, squids and honeybees. These animals have their own intrinsic value, independent of the usable value proposed by men. They should be treated and protected against unnecessary suffering. When reporting an animal exposed to abuse or neglect the complaint should be submitted to the Norwegian Food Safety Authority (NFSA) or the police. Anyone who encounters a sick, injured or helpless animal should try to help it as far as possible, if it is not possible the owner or the police should be notified.

In the chapter concerning keeping conditions it is stated that animals should only be kept if they are able to accommodate the keeping conditions consistent with the animal welfare act. This includes an environment supporting the welfare of the animal, according to species-specific requirements. Also with regards to individual needs, such as possibility for movement, rest and other natural behaviour. In addition, they should receive proper food and water, protection against injuries, disease, parasites or other dangers. It also includes a paragraph concerning specific prohibitions, which lay down prohibitions against perpetrating violence against animals, abandoning an animal in a helpless condition, engaging in sexual interaction with animals and using live animals as feed or bait.

The Norwegian Food Safety Authority control that the laws and regulations included in the animal welfare act is followed. Upon a breach of a mild character the NFSA can make a decision of improvement. In these cases a list of the areas of improvement is made in writing, along with a deadline for these corrections. If these decisions are not followed, an enforcement fee can be initiated. This could be a one-time fee or as a running fee for the number of days exceeding the deadline. In more severe cases where only making a decision of improvement is not enough a non-compliance fee could be used. In addition,

prohibitions of performing certain activities or for having animal can be added, but could also be used as the only means of correction.

In animal abuse cases of serious character, where prison time is used as penalty the length of the sentence varies according to severity. In cases where the animal abuse perpetrated is considered as an intentional act or as a severe act of omission the penalty is a fine, up to one year in prison or both. While for cases where severe violence against animals has been committed, the penalty is prison for up to three years.

6.2 The current situation in Norway

Animal abuse is a growing problem in Norway. In 2014, 7300 cases of suspected animal abuse were reported to the NFSA, in addition to 365 cases reported directly to the police. This is significantly higher than that of 2002, where 2500 cases of possible animal abuse were reported. A partial reason for this increase could be due to an increased interest and awareness of the subject. Another problem related to animal abuse in Norway is that of the cases reported, very few gets prosecuted. Of the 7300 cases reported in 2014 only 38 was prosecuted and if convicted their sentences would very often be limited to a fine or short stay in prison. An example of this is a man who unprovoked throwed a dog into the ground and beat it to death, the man was only sentenced to 30 days in prison. Sentences requiring longer stays in prison and the prohibition of have pets is very rarely encountered. When looking at all the animal abuse cases that ended in prosecution the last six years, only 2 per cent lost the right of having animals. Banning people from having pets should be used more often as the chance of reoccurrence will be reduced. It is also worth mentioning that no one has ever been sentenced to the maximum penalty of three years in prison.

However, it seems like there are changes occurring in the legal system regarding animal abuse and that to the better. In May, 2014 a man was sentenced to one year in prison after starving 400 pigs to death¹¹. Up until now this is the highest penalty received in Norway for animal abuse. There is another case that got a lot of publicity in Norway concerning a

¹¹ Aftenposten – Grisebonde dømt til ett års fengsel for dyremishandling
URL: <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/Grisebonde-domt-til-ett-ars-fengsel-for-dyremishandling-7509633.html>. (Access date 13.11.2015)

dog that was tied to an iron pipe and dropped six meters into a river to drown¹². Someone found the dog shortly after and reported it to the police. The owner turned himself in and stated that the dog had major behavioural problems, because the dog had been mistreated by its previous owner and it was going to be euthanized. Many people working for animal rights were hoping for the maximum sentence of three years in prison, as the dog was put into a situation with great suffering and pain. This did not happen, the owner was sentenced to six months in prison and lost the right to have any pets the next ten years. Even though the sentence was higher than what have been seen in previous cases, this was still a set back in the fight for animal rights.

Figure 7. Picture of the dog Lukas that was thrown into a river to drown. The dog was noticed by some random people passing by, but it was too late¹³.



¹² . NRK – Fengsel for drapet på hunden Lucas, URL: <http://www.nrk.no/ostfold/fengsel-for-drapet-pa-hunden-lucas-1.12236903>. (Access date 13.11.2015)

¹³ VG: Aktor ber om fengsel i hundedrapssaken , URL: <http://www.vg.no/nyheter/innenriks/dyrene/aktor-ber-om-fengsel-i-hundedrapssaken/a/23399967/>. (Access date 13.11.2015)

In addition to the changes occurring in the legal system where animal abuse offenders are getting higher sentences, in 2014 the NFSA was granted the power to give out non-compliance fees for those who do not follow the laws and regulations concerning animals. The fee when given to an individual person could be as much as 1800 euros, while for a company it could be up to 130 000 euros. Further, in September this year Norway got its first animal police in one of the largest city in Norway, this occurred as a result of a change in government. This pilot project aims to show the possible results of having an animal police, both in regards of revealing animal abuse but also revealing other types of crimes related to humans where animals are involved.

7.0 Summary and conclusions

In this thesis, the criminal and criminological aspects concerning animal abuse have been presented. In order to get a proper understanding of the topic the first section explained the different acts being characteristic for passive and active animal abuse, as well as different motives of these actions. Also from a perspective of the veterinarians field of work the possible clinical signs and risk factors that might present itself when an abused animal is encountered at the clinic is addressed. With this in mind, the reader was introduced to other forms of abuse that could be presented together with animal abuse. With regards to domestic violence, further divided into partner violence and child abuse. Different studies were presented to see if there is a significant co-occurrence of animal abuse and domestic violence and if so could animal abuse be used as a reliable indicator of these forms of abuse. Following this section the focus is based on the perpetrator of animal abuse. In the cases where children abuse animals what kind of underlying factors could result in such behaviors. The research presented aims to support or reject the possible connection to witnessing violence and being subjected to child abuse. Another theory frequently encountered is that children and adolescents who are cruel to animals are at higher risk of developing criminal tendencies as adults. Different studies concerning this matter are presented taking the different types of crimes perpetrated into consideration.

As the different forms of perpetration have been presented, I found it natural to include a section where measures of correction and prevention were addressed. Where the importance of increasing people knowledge concerning animal abuse and the associated forms of abuse are of importance. Especially people working in professions at risk of encountering animal and/or human abuse, to make sure that the cases are reported to official authorities as early as possible. Then corrective measurements can be implemented and the abuse of animals and humans can be stopped or prevented. The final section gives an introduction of the current situation in Norway, where animal abuse is an increasing problem. It also includes parts of the Norwegian Animal Welfare Act, as well as practical examples of animal abuse and their sanctions.

Based on the knowledge I have gained by working on my thesis it is my opinion that animal abuse is a topic worthy of attention. Due to the fact that animals have an intrinsic value and should not have to suffer. I also think that it is the responsibility of humans to make sure that the needs of animals are accommodated in the best way possible. Partly because animals have been domesticated by humans for thousands of years to fit into our lives and our homes. But also because we are superior creatures able to predict the outcome of our own and others actions.

Animal abuse on its own is important and becomes of even greater importance when human lives are involved. As research show there is frequently a co-occurrence of animal abuse and domestic violence, with regards to partner and child abuse. The research presented also suggested that the abuse perpetrated in environments with animal abuse is often of a more serious character. Based on these two findings I find that animal abuse can be used as a reliable indicator for the co-occurrence of domestic violence.

The research concerning predisposing factors of animal abusers find that there is a correlation between watching abuse being perpetrated, both of that directed towards humans and animals. It is also evident that children subjected to abuse are at risk of developing animal abusive behaviors, with a higher prevalence of those who are victims of sexual abuse.

Less conclusive is the results retrieved from studies aiming to prove that those who are cruel towards animals as children are at risk of becoming criminals when adult. The studies trying to prove this theory, remains suggestive. It is frequently seen in criminals that they have engaged in animal abuse when young, but there is also very often other factors that could be just as predictive. Such as growing up in families where children were neglected or abused. A correlation that has been supported is that people who engage in more severe forms of animal abuse, if more frequently linked to crimes of a more violent character.

Another aspect that I find does not receive the attention it should is how to correct these abusive behaviors. Earlier animal abuse was only thought of as a co-occurring event of other delinquencies and few measures to correct this specific behavior was initiated. The treatment of animal abusers is a relatively new concept but is now more frequently initiated, mainly in the United States.

Because these specific methods to correct animal abusive behavior have not been used for a long time, few empirical studies exist to support their efficiency. But based on practical examples they seem to have a positive effect.

When concluding the results obtained from the research included in my thesis it supports my initial thought, that animal abuse is something that should not be taken lightly. For the sake of both humans and animals involved, the important of reporting animal abuse should be underlined. In addition to having in mind the possibility of the co-occurrence of human abuse.

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APPENDIX
