

# Richard H. Polsky Ph.D.



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## *Curriculum Vitae*

RICHARD H. POLSKY

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### **Web sites**

[www.dogexpert.com](http://www.dogexpert.com)

[www.ladogtraining.com](http://www.ladogtraining.com)

[www.lapuppyclasses.com](http://www.lapuppyclasses.com)

[www.sfdogmauling.com](http://www.sfdogmauling.com)

### **Education**

1965-1970. B.Sc. The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio  
Major: Biopsychology

1970-1975. Ph.D. University of Leicester, Leicester, England  
Area of Specialization: Animal Behavior

1977-1979. Postdoctoral University of California, Los Angeles  
Area of Specialization: Animal Behavior

### **Academic awards & honors**

1977-1978. Postdoctoral Fellowship, Brain Research Institute, UCLA

1979. National Research Service Award, National Institute of Mental Health.

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## **Academic employment**

1974-1976. Research Associate in Animal Behavior. Joint appointments in the Department of Psychiatry, University of Birmingham, Birmingham England and the Ethology Laboratory, All Saints Hospital, Birmingham, England.

1979-1982. Research Psychologist in Animal Behavior. Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences, University of California at Los Angeles.

## **Non-academic employment**

1981-present. President, Animal Behavior Counseling Services, Inc. Los Angeles, CA.

1997-1998. Staff animal behaviorist, Los Feliz Animal Hospital, Los Angeles, CA.

## **Teaching experience**

1972-1973. Teaching Assistant, Undergraduate Animal Behavior Laboratory, Department of Psychology, University of Leicester

1983 - 1986. Instructor - South Bay Adult School, Redondo Beach, CA.

1992. Instructor. Home Study Program in Behavioral Modification for Dog and Cats. Approved for continuing education credit for veterinarians by the California Veterinary Medical Association

## **Professional Societies**

1982 - present. Animal Behavior Society

1997 - present. International Society of Applied Ethology

2000 - present. American Association for the Advancement of Science

2003 – present. American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior

## **Professional certification**

Certified as an Applied Animal Behaviorist by the Animal Behavior Society. The Animal Behavior Society is the foremost professional organization in the United States dealing with the scientific study of animal behavior.

## **Presentations at scientific meetings**

Factors Associated With Treatment Outcome in Dogs Presented With Behavioral Problems. Conference on the Human-Animal Bond, Irvine, CA. June, 1983.

Variables Affecting Treatment Outcome in Dogs Presented for Behavioral Problems. Annual Meeting of the Animal Behavior Society, Durham, NC. June, 1985.

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Use of Punishment and Counter-Conditioning Techniques to Eliminate Obsessive Tail-Chasing in a Dog. Annual Meeting of the Animal Behavior Society, Davis, CA. July, 1993.

Aggression in dogs elicited through the use of electronic boundary training equipment. Interdisciplinary Forum in Applied Animal Behavior, Denver, CO. March, 1998.

Behavioral differences in puppies as measured in self-report data from their owners. Interdisciplinary Forum in Applied Animal Behavior. Atlanta, GA. March, 1999.

The differential diagnosis of aggression in dogs elicited through the use of electronic pet containment systems. Annual Meeting of the Animal Behavior Society. Atlanta, GA. August, 2000.

Issues relevant to the animal behavior forensic expert as exemplified in the San Francisco dog mauling case. Interdisciplinary Forum in Applied Animal Behavior. Austin, TX. February, 2003.

What kind of information is needed to substantiate dog bite injury? Interdisciplinary Forum in Applied Animal Behavior, New Orleans, LA. March, 2011.

### **Speaking engagements**

Guide Dogs of America, Sylmar, CA. 1985. Presentation: "Understanding canine social development as it applies to the guide dog."

Los Angeles SPCA. Presentation: "Canine social behavior and problem solving techniques." 1987

Southern California Korean Veterinary Medical Association. Presentation: "Diagnosis and treatment of aggressive behavioral problems in dogs and cats." 1992

Southern California Veterinary Medical Association. (Approximately 15 lectures on dog and cat behavior presented at veterinary chapter meetings).

Invited Speaker, Annual Meeting of the Sacramento Valley Veterinary Medical Association, Sacramento, CA. 1991. Presentation : "The scientific basis of dog and cat behavior."

Invited Speaker, Law Offices of Bollington, Stilz, Bloeser & Curry (In-house counsel for 20th Century Insurance Co. Woodland Hills, CA.). Presentation: "What the Attorney Needs to Know to Defend Dog Related Injury Claims". October, 1996.

Law Offices of Thomas Moore & Associates (In-house counsel for Allstate Insurance Co. Glendale, CA.). Presentation: "What the Attorney Needs to Know to Defend Dog Related Injury Claims." April, 1997.

VCA-Wes Los Angeles Veterinary Medical Group. Introductory lecture on companion animal behavior presented to incoming veterinary student interns, 1989 - 2000.

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19th Annual Feline Medicine Symposium. School of Veterinary Medicine, University of California, Davis. Presentation: "Inappropriate elimination and aggression in cats." February, 2001.

San Fernando Valley Chapter of the Southern California Veterinary Medical Association. February, 2001. Presentation: "Diagnosis and treatment of aggressive behavior problems in cats."

Kern County Paralegal Association. Presentation: "Recurrent Behavioral Issues in Dog Attack Cases." January, 2003

Law Offices of Veatch, Carlson, Grogan & Nelson. Presentation: "Behavioral issues in dog bite litigation as exemplified through three case histories." February, 2003.\

## **Expert witness work**

### *Civil cases*

- Number of times retained as a dog behavior expert in civil cases: Over 200
- Number of times retained as a cat behavior expert in civil cases: Approx. 7.
- Division between Plaintiff vs. Defense: 50% plaintiff / 50% defense
- Number of Depositions given: Approx. 100.
- Number of times testifying at trial: Approx. 50.
- States outside California where deposition or trial testimony has been given:  
*Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Texas, Nevada, New Jersey, Virginia, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, Kansas, Washington, Idaho, Michigan.*
- Counties in California where deposition or trial testimony has been given:  
*Los Angeles, San Diego, Riverside, Orange, Ventura, Kern, Santa Barbara, San Bernardino, Alameda, Fresno, Merced, Sacramento, San Mateo, Tuolumne.*

### *Criminal Cases*

- Number of occasions retained as an dog behavior expert: Approx. 15
- Number of times testifying at trial: Approx. 5
- Division between Prosecution vs. Defense: 70% Defense

### *Police dog cases*

- Number of times retained by plaintiff: Approx. 5
- Number of times retained by defense: 1
- Number of times testifying at trial: 2
- Division between Plaintiff vs. Defense: 85% plaintiff

*Cat bite / cat consultation cases*

- Number of times retained by plaintiff: Approx. 3
- Number of times retained by defense: Approx. 3
- Number of times testifying at trial: 0
- Division between Plaintiff vs. Defense: 50% plaintiff / 50% defense

**Attorney References** *(see website for additional references)*

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your valuable assistance in serving as an expert in this matter. Your thoroughness and professionalism made your retention a happy and successful one. As you know, the facts of this case were rather unusual and it was only through animal behavior expert interpretation that the jury could have properly been advised on what caused plaintiff to lose control of her dog and cause her injury. Following the defense verdict, I was able to speak with nine of the jurors for some time about the evidence. Universally, the jurors found your testimony to be credible, well-prepared, and persuasive. On a personal note, I must congratulate you on your handling of plaintiff attorney's brusque cross-examination. Your calm under questioning was a stark contrast to plaintiff attorney's questioning and courtroom theatrics. Thank you again for your hard work and professionalism in this matter. It was a pleasure working with you in achieving this excellent outcome."

Kenyon M. Young, Esq.  
Bragg & Kuluva, San Diego, CA.

"I am glad that I ran into your expert listing on the internet. I called you in desperation because I needed help with my Dalmation case. Your obvious expertise, together with good common sense and excellent knowledge of the law, helped me prepare many aspects of my case and ultimately lead to a settlement twenty-four hours before your scheduled examination of the dog. I would highly recommend you as an expert to any lawyer, plaintiff or defense."

Barbara S. Williams, Esq.  
Law Offices of Burnett & Williams, Leesburg, VA.

"Thank you for educating me about the behavior of rottweiler dogs. Your dedication to the case was most outstanding. Your expert testimony to the jury in the field of animal behavior and your trial exhibit persuaded the jury that the landowners must have known of the rottweiler dogs' dangerous and vicious propensities to human beings."

Thomas Celli, Esq.  
Law Offices of Thomas M. Celli, Esq. Los Angeles, CA.

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### **Miscellaneous professional activities**

Paid consultant in animal behavior to the Los Angeles City Dept. of Animal Regulation, 1987, 1999.

Paid consultant in animal behavior to the Los Angeles SPCA, 1990, 1992

Publisher of newsletter on animal behavior for distribution to veterinarians:

Bulletin on Companion Animal Behavior. Published quarterly from 1988 - 1992, 1997 - 2002. Renamed subsequently to Literature Review on Dog and Cat Behavior.

Publisher of a newsletter entitled Dog Behavior and the Law. Published for occasional distribution to attorneys. 1997 - 2001, 2010 - present

Expert witness on the Judge Judy Show, Dr. Polsky rendered testimony in a custody dispute over a dog. May, 1998.

Paid consultant in animal behavior for television show produced and aired by Fox Television. "When Good Animals Do Bad Things", September, 1998.

Editorial consultant / reviewer of manuscripts for veterinary text book publisher Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins Publishing Company, Baltimore, MD. December, 2000.

Certified evaluator for the American Kennel Club's Good Citizen Test, 2003 – 2004.

### **Authored books**

*User's Guide to the Scientific Literature on Dog & Cat Behavior*. 2nd Edition. Published by: Animal Behavior Counseling Services, Inc., Los Angeles, CA. Copyright 1995. Library of Congress Catalogue Card Number 91-73115. ISBN: 0-9630005-0-0

### **Papers in veterinary & animal behavior journals**

Polsky, R. Effects of novel environment on predatory behavior in golden hamsters. *Perceptual & Motor Skills*, 1974, Vol. 39, pp. 55-58.

Polsky, R. Hunger, prey feeding, and predatory aggression. *Behavioral Biology*, 1975, Vol. 13, 81-93.

Polsky, R. Developmental factors in mammalian predation. *Behavioral Biology*, 1975, Vol. 15, pp. 353-382.

Polsky, R. Conspecific defeat, isolation/grouping, and predatory behavior in golden hamsters. *Psychological Reports*, 1976, Vol. 38, pp. 571-577.

Polsky, R. The ontogeny of predatory behavior in the golden hamster (*M.a.auratus*). The influence of age and experience. *Behaviour*, 1977, Vol. 61, pp. 26-27.

Polsky, R. The ontogeny of predatory behavior in the golden hamster (*M.a.auratus*). The nature of the experience. *Behaviour*, 1977, Vol. 61, pp.58-81.

Polsky, R. The ontogeny of predatory behavior in the golden hamster (*M.a.auratus*). Sensory pre-exposure. *Behaviour*, 1978, Vol. 63, pp. 175-19

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Polsky, R. The ontogeny of predatory behavior in the golden hamster (*M.a.auratus*). Effects of prolonged exposure, ITI, size of prey, and selective breeding. *Behaviour*, 1978, Vol. 65, pp. 27-42.

Polsky, R. Effects of eating dead prey on the subsequent capture of live prey in golden hamsters. *Physiology & Behavior*, 1978, Vol. 20, pp. 677-680.

Polsky, R. The effects of water deprivation on the initiation of predation in golden hamsters. *Psychological Reports*, 1979, Vol. 44, pp. 995-998.

Polsky, R. Review of "Crowding: Theoretical and Research Implications for Population-Environment Psychology." by L. Severy, Ed. *J. Nervous Mental Disease*. 1981, Vol. 169, pp. 66-67.

McGuire, M., S. Essock-Vitale and R. Polsky. Psychiatric disorders in the context of evolutionary biology: An ethological model of behavioral changes associated with psychiatric disorders. *J. Nervous Mental Disease*. 1981, Vol. 169. pp. 687-704.

Polsky, R. Factors Influencing Aggressive Behavior in Dogs. *California Veterinarian*, October 1983, pp. 12-15.

Polsky, R. Understanding the Job of the Animal Behaviorist. *The Latham Letter*, Fall, 1985, pp. 12-13.

Polsky, R. Companion Animal Behavior from the Viewpoint of an Ethologist. *Companion Animal Practice*, 1989, Vol. 19, pp. 3-4.

Polsky, R. Aggression in Dogs: An Introduction. *Veterinary Practice Staff*. 1989, Vol. 1, pp. 55-57.

Polsky, R. Nature versus Nurture: Are Both Equally Crucial? *Animal Behavior Consultant Newsletter*. 1989, Vol. 6. pp. 1-2.

Polsky, R. Aggression in Cats: An Introduction. *Veterinary Practice Staff*. 1990, Vol. 2, No. 1. pp. 1-7.

Polsky, R. The Causes of Aggression in Dogs. *Veterinary Practice Staff*. 1990, Vol. 2, No. 2. pp. 37-39.

Polsky, R. Aggression in the Veterinary Hospital. *Veterinary Practice Staff*. 1990, Vol. 2, No.3. 27-29.

Polsky, R. Behavioral Alternatives to Declawing. *Veterinary Practice Staff*. 1990, Vol. 2, No.4. 27-30.

Polsky, R. Another Look at Nature versus Nurture: Problem dogs or problem owners? *Veterinary Practice Staff*. 1990, Vol.2, No.5, pp. 7-10.

Polsky, R. A Question of Labels. *American Kennel Club Gazette*. Oct. 1990. p. 216.

Polsky, R. Elimination Problems in Cats: Making a Diagnosis. *Veterinary Practice Staff*. 1990, Vol. 2, pp. 21-23.

Polsky, R. Elimination Misbehaviors in Puppies. *Veterinary Practice Staff*. 1991, Vol. 3. No.1. pp. 20-22.

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Polsky, R. Examples of fear aggression and territorial barking in companion dogs. *Veterinary Practice Staff*. 1991, Vol. 3, No.2. pp. 1, 7-10.

Polsky, R. Genetics and dog behavior. *Veterinary Practice Staff*. 1991, Vol. 3, No.3. pp. 22-24.

Polsky, R. Time-Out: An underemployed punishment training technique for puppies. *Veterinary Practice Staff*. 1991, Vol. 3, No.4. 8-10.

Polsky, R. Should food reward be used to train a dog? *Veterinary Practice Staff*. 1991, Vol. 3, No.5.

Polsky, R. Interviewing owners about pet behavioral problems. *Veterinary Practice Staff*. 1992, Vol. 4. No. 1. pp.17-19.

Polsky, R. Questions about dominance aggression in dogs. *Veterinary Practice Staff*, 1992, Vol. 4, No.3. 1, 7-9.

Polsky, R. How do you know if a dog's aggressive behavior can be changed? *Veterinary Practice Staff*, 1993, Vol. 5, No.1. 15-19.

Polsky, R. The misbehavior of owners. *Veterinary Practice Staff*, 1993, Vol. 5, pp. 3-6.

Polsky, R. Diazepam induced defensive aggression in a cat. *Feline Practice*, 1993, Vol. 21, 21- 22.

Polsky, R. Does Thyroid Dysfunction Cause Behavioral Problems? *Canine Practice*, 1993, Vol. 18, 6-8.

Polsky, R. Helping Rover to Relax: A Complete Guide to Understanding Canine Stress, Anxiety and Emotions. 1993. HWE, Inc. North Hollywood, CA. pp. 1-19.

Polsky, R. Comments on buspirone for urine spraying in cats. *Advances in Small Animal Medicine and Surgery*, 1994, Vol. 7, pp. 3-4.

Polsky, R. Electronic shock collars: Are they worth the risks? *J. American Animal Hospital Association*. 1994, Vol. 30, pp. 463-468.

Polsky, R. Ethology: A foundation for treating behavior problems. *Veterinary Medicine*, 1994, Vol. 89, pp. 192-195.

Polsky, R. The steps in solving behavior problems. *Veterinary Medicine*, 1994, Vol. 89, pp. 504-507.

Polsky, R. No-nonsense textbooks on dog and cat behavior. *Veterinary Medicine*, 1994, Vol. 89, pp. 941-943.

Polsky, R. Guidelines to follow when using drugs in behavioral therapy. *Veterinary Medicine*, 1995, Vol. 90, pp. 289-831.

Polsky, R. Methods used in behavior therapy. *Veterinary Medicine*. 1995. Vol. 90. pp. 524-527.

Polsky, R. Wolf hybrids: Are they suitable as pets? *Veterinary Medicine*. 1995. Vol. 90. pp. 1122-1124.

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Polsky, R. Recognizing dominance aggression in dogs. *Veterinary Medicine*. 1996. Vol. 91. pp. 196 - 201.

Polsky, R. Medical treatment of dominance aggression in dogs. *Veterinary Medicine*. 1996. Vol. 91, pp. 416 - 419.

Polsky, R. Review of "Veterinarian's Encyclopedia of Animal Behavior." by Bonnie Beaver. *Applied Animal Behaviour Science*. 1998, Vol. 58, pp. 205-207.

Polsky, R. Can aggression in dogs be elicited through the use of electronic pet containment systems? *J. Applied Animal Welfare Science*, 2000, 3(4), 345-357.

### **Articles in legal publications**

Polsky, R. Provocation as a defense in dog-bite cases. *California Lawyer*, February, 1998. p. 28.

Polsky, R. Guidelines for behavioral discovery in dog-related injury cases. In D. Favre and Peter Borchelt, Eds. *Animal Law & Dog Behavior*. Lawyers & Judges Publishing Co. Tucson, AZ. 1998. pp. 333-340.

Polsky, R. Issues about animal behavior relevant to dog-bite statutes. In D. Favre and Peter Borchelt, Eds. *Animal Law & Dog Behavior*. Lawyers & Judges Publishing Co. Tucson, AZ. 1998. pp. 345-357.

### **Featured stories in news media**

Early in his career, Dr. Polsky's work as an applied animal behaviorist was the subject of feature stories in the news media. A partial list of stories that appeared are as follows:

#### *Television*

Eye on L.A., October, 1986.

Two on the Town, February, 1984.

Italian National Television, May, 1983.

PM Magazine, September, 1983.

#### *Newspaper*

San Gabriel Valley Weekly (Supplement to the Los Angeles Times - San Gabriel Valley Edition, May, 1998)

Santa Monica Evening Outlook (August, 1990)

Pasadena Star News (July 10, 1983)

Daily News (July 15, 1983)

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Los Angeles Times (April 20, 1983)

Long Beach Press Telegram (July 20, 1983)

### ***Magazine***

Picture Week Magazine (October, 1986)

Orange Coast Magazine (May, 1984)

Cats Magazine (December, 1985)

### ***Radio***

KABC Radio, Live 60 minute interview on Michael Jackson Show (March, 1985)

KFWB News Radio, L.A. At Large with Cleeve Herman (July, 1983)

KNX-FM Los Angeles, Live 60 minute interview on show entitled " Free Forum" (June, 1983)

### **Media consultations**

2/15/01. Invited expert on live internet broadcast discussing San Francisco dog mauling case: Sam Donaldson commentator, ABC News.

6/28/05. Interviewed live on KGO radio, San Francisco, about a recent pit bull mauling in San Francisco.

8/5/05. Interviewed by Los Angeles Times about dog-bite fatality in Los Angeles.

1/8/05. Interview with Alex Helmick of Chicago Public Radio. Subject: Pit Bulls.

2/1/05. Interview with Amelia Nielson-Stowell of the Desert News in Salt Lake City, UT. Subject: Cat bites.

6/2/06. Radio interview with Beth Whisman and Steve Fast of WJBC Radio, Bloomington, IN. Subject: Laws pertaining to dangerous dogs.

7/14/06. Interviewed for news story on proposed dog park in Camarillo, CA.

10/5/06. Interviewed live on Newstalk 1350 KSRO, Santa Rosa, CA. (CNN affiliate) Subject: Pit Bulls.

12/1/06. Interviewed for news story appearing in Santa Monica Daily Press, Santa Monica, CA. Subject: Depression in dogs over holidays.

3/7/07. Interviewed for news story appearing in Taunton Gazette, Taunton, MA. Reporter: Rory Schuler. Subject: Propensities and myths about pit-bull type dogs.

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4/27/07. Interviewed for news story appearing in The Arkansas Democratic Gazette - a state- wide circulated newspaper in Arkansas. Reporter: Richard Massey Subject: Attacks by put-bull- type dogs.

5/29/07. Interview with reporter Dennis Nishi representing BBC World New Service for radio program Culture Shock. Subject: Opinions on Rent-a-Dog business conducted by company named FlexPetz.

6/8/07. Interview with reporter from Chicago Tribune for possible news story. Subject: Temperament testing in dogs and how these test can be used to warrant euthanasia in dogs.

8/3/07. Interview with reporter from Los Angeles Times for story regarding dog fatality that occurred at the Los Angeles home of actor Ving Rhames.

8/4/07. Interviewed for live appearance on CBS Saturday Morning Show: Topic - Fatal dog attacks.

11/15/07. Interview for story about pros and cons of dog parks, by Scott Horesman. Press Enterprise, Riverside, CA.

4/20/08. Interview with editor of Shape Magazine regarding safety for joggers during potential hostile encounters with dogs.

4/23/08. Interview with KFWB radio commentator Paul Lowe regarding recent human fatality caused by grizzly bear at commercial enterprise in California that trains exotic/ non-domesticated animals for the entertainment industry.

9/5/08. Interview for the Herald Sun newspaper, Durham, NC. Reporter Dan Way. Topic: Tethering in dogs.

9/8/08. Interview for the New Jersey Herald newspaper. Topic: Fatality inflicted by 3 year old husky dog on 6 day-old infant. Reporter: Tow Howe.

9/18/09. Interview for story about dog mauling in St. Petersburg, FL.

*(CV updated July, 2011)*