

Robert T. Johnson, Bronx District Attorney
The Office of the Bronx County District Attorney
198 East 161st Street
Bronx, NY 10451
ph: 718-590-2000, 718-590-2312
fax: 718-590-2198
email: angueirl@bronxda.nyc.gov

Joe McCormack, Assistant District Attorney
Bronx County District Attorney's Office
198 East 161st Street
Bronx, New York 10451
ph: 718-590-2000, 718-590-2026
fax: 718-781-1129
email: mccormaj@bronxda.nyc.gov

Nancy Borko, Senior Assistant District Attorney
Bronx District Attorney's Office
215 East 161st Street
Bronx, NY 10451-3511
ph: 718-838-7114

Maria T. Rivero, Administrative Assistant District Attorney:
riverom@bronxda.nyc.gov

Steven Reed, Director of Public Information
The Office of the Bronx County District Attorney
198 East 161st Street
Bronx, NY 10451
ph: 718-590-2235, 718-590-2234

Anthony Girese, Counsel to the District Attorney
Bronx County District Attorney's Office
198 East 161st Street
Bronx, New York 10451
ph: 718-590-2175
fax: 718-992-0545
email: giresea@bronxda.nyc.gov

The Office of the Bronx County District Attorney:

Thank you for recognizing public concern in the case of Tiger Lily, a kitten scorched alive inside an oven on May 6, 2009. I understand Cheyenne Cherry, 17, is charged with felony aggravated animal cruelty, burglary, arson, criminal trespass, reckless endangerment and criminal mischief.

I respectfully ask for your utmost deliberation in the investigation of Cherry and her accomplice, who allegedly broke into ex-roommate Valerie Hernandez's home and trapped Tiger Lily inside an activated stove. Apparently, they ransacked the apartment and raised the stove's heat before fleeing with stolen items. The girls never heard Tiger Lily's last screams and scratches against the oven door.

Please seek the maximum adult incarceration of two years for felony animal cruelty. Cherry also faces possible jail terms of 15 years for second-degree burglary, one year for arson, and four years for criminal mischief. I urge you to hold *both* teens accountable. Both require psychological evaluation and therapy. Both should be barred from possessing or working with animals.

At the very least, they ought to be interned in a juvenile detention hall until age 18 (if applicable). Then, reassessment of the girls' personality traits can determine if adult imprisonment is necessary.

Adolescents who commit brutal crimes against humans usually begin with animals. Columbine shooter Eric Harris, 18, smashed mice with a crowbar and set them on fire. Washington D.C. serial killer Lee Boyd Malvo killed stray cats with a slingshot. Kip Kinkle blew up a cow and burned a live cat. He then shot 25 classmates and murdered his parents in Springfield, Oregon. After Luke Woodham, 16, mortally stabbed his mother and shot nine others, he confessed to bludgeoning his dog and setting her on fire. As a teen, Jason Massey slaughtered 37 cats, 29 dogs and six cows; at 20 he decapitated and disemboweled a girl, 13, and shot a boy, 14.

These murderers, like Cherry, were able to torture and kill without remorse. Indeed, the intentional burning of an animal "should be considered particularly significant as...a predictor of violent and even homicidal behavior," says Dr. Randall Lockwood of ASPCA Anti-Cruelty Initiatives and a frequent consultant for cruelty investigators, law enforcers and mental health professionals.

Cherry "thought we'd play a joke on Valerie." But she and her friend are not guilty of warped humor or bad choices. Roasting a defenseless kitten is the calculated action of a sociopath and a predator.

Thank you for prosecuting Cherry and her accomplice to the fullest degree allowed by law.

Sincerely,