

Ethical hunting essay



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When it comes to the issue of hunting there are different points of view.

There are three distinct groups that exist: the hunters, the non-hunters, and the anti-hunters. While non-hunters themselves do not participate in the long time tradition they accept that others do. The anti-hunters condemn both the activity and the people that partake in it. They believe that hunters are only killing animals for the trophy and allow the meat to go to waste.

They claim that all animals suffer when they are killed by a hunter. They argue the role that hunters play in conservation efforts. They believe that it is just a cover up so the states can continue to make money off of the hunters. I will show evidence that does not support these claims. I will show that the sport of hunting does in fact play a major role in our lives and that it should continue to be passed down through the generations.

Hunters not only provide money to the protection of wild animals but they provide meals for needy families. It was a cold November morning, the alarm was going off. The clock read 4: 00am. He slowly got up and headed to the bathroom.

His clothes were set out in the breeze way as not to get any human scent on them. After a shower, small breakfast and some coffee he made his way out to get them. It took him about twenty minutes to get dressed he was not fully awake yet. He pulled on one boot and then the other.

Reached back inside the door grabbed his keys to start the truck and let the frost melt off the windows. He went back inside to wake his son who was going to go with him on this hunt. The young but was only ten years old but

was full of excitement and enthusiasm. He raced to get ready so he would not make his dad late. While the boy was getting ready dad was making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to take with them for lunch.

He packed in some beef jerky and some little Debbie snacks. He poured the rest of the coffee into a thermos but made a separate one with hot chocolate for his little hunting buddy. Just as he finished the bot came running into the kitchen with a big smile and told his father he was ready to go. Dad handed the boy the backpack with the lunch and helped him put on his fanny pack that was to hold his gloves and any little treasures the boy would find throughout the day.

He grabbed his gun and another pack filled with gear. He and the boy headed for the truck excited, and with the dream of killing a buck. Hunting is a tradition that has been around since the first man walked this earth. It has been handed down from one generation to another. It has provided hungry families with food to get them through.

For some families they survived only on what they were able to hunt and gather. Hunters also play a huge role in conservation efforts. According to the U. S.

Fish & Wildlife Service, “ Hunting organizations contribute millions of dollars and countless hours of labor to various conservation causes each year”. A few examples of such organizations are: The Boone & Crockett Club, National Wild Turkey Foundation (NWTF), and National Rifle Association (NRA) along with many others. The NRA states on their website, “ Sportsmen contribute an additional \$300 million each year to wildlife conservation activities.

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Hunters and fishermen fund nearly 75% of the annual income for all fifty state conservation agencies” (Gale, “ Hunting. ” Current Issues: Macmillan Social Science Library, 2010).

On the other hand some people contend that the idea of hunters as conservationist is just an absurd. They feel that this just a way to try and sell the tradition. They believe that by people hunting we are destroying ecosystems and wildlife. They think that nature is the only true conservationist, that, natural predators will keep the population of animal species at adequate levels. Without the help of hunters I feel that the non-predator animals of our world would adapt to make up for the loss of offspring. Hunters provide the tool necessary to control the breeding population.

That is the single most important thing to remember that predators only prey on the young and the weak. The healthy adults will produce more offspring to counter the loss. When people hear the term trophy hunting they automatically assume that the animals killed are going to be wasted. The belief that these hunters are only interested in the hides and antlers of these animals is a misconception. The fact is that most of these hunters either consume the meat themselves or donate it to local soup kitchens. In fact the state of Iowa has what they call the HUSH program (Help Us Stop Hunger).

According to the Iowa Department of Natural resources, in the 2010-2011 hunting seasons the hunters donated around 6, 300 deer. Those deer generated 1. 1 million meals for Iowa’s less fortunate. The program also helps the economy in the state.

The participating meat lockers that cut up the meat each receive seventy five dollars for each deer that they process. The Food Bank of Iowa also receives five dollars for each meal distributed to cover administrative costs (DNR, 2012). The word trophy can mean many different things it is all based on what the individual deems a trophy to them. For some a trophy can be the heaviest animal killed for another it could be the biggest rack, and for some they may not need to kill anything to consider themselves successful. People cannot believe that hunters will travel to places like Africa just to kill an animal and only bring back the mounted trophy. They feel that the animal was killed only for the value of the hunter.

What they do not realize is that the meat is taken by the hunting party and local villages. Many of these people depend solely on what the hunters kill to survive. I agree with Russ Chastain when he says, “ Anyone who will kill an animal simply for the antler and horns, and who wastes the meat, is not a hunter, he’s a poacher” (Chastain, 2012). With the growing popularity of hunting and the pursuit of the American dream we have come up with what many people are calling “ Canned Hunts”.

Canned hunts are hunts that take place on private land where the animal cannot get away from the hunter. The definition of canned hunts in an article written by PETA says: “ These animals may be native to the area, raised elsewhere and brought in, or purchased from individuals who are trafficking in unwanted or surplus animals from zoos and circuses. They are hunted and killed for the sole purpose of providing hunter with a trophy” (Gale, Sport Hunting Is an Unnecessary Form of Cruelty to Animals, 2008). I do not believe in his form of hunting. It is unfair to the animals.

This not the tradition that has been passed down to us from our ancestors. Unfortunately, to some people a trophy is the biggest animal that is killed. To me and many other people hunting is about more than just killing an animal, it is about the chase and the adventure that takes place each time we are out there. This is called “ Fair Chase Hunting”. The Boone & Crockett Club defines fair chase as, “ The ethical, sportsman like, and lawful pursuit and taking of any free ranging wild, native North American big game animal in a manner that does not give the hunter an improper advantage over such animals” (Gale, “ Hunting.

” Current Issues: Macmillan Social Science Library, 2010). We cannot call it hunting if we know exactly everything that is going to happen and at what time it will happen. The experience itself for a lot of people that I know is trophy enough. If they are skillful and lucky enough to outsmart the quarry, to them is an added bonus. Anti-hunting activist groups like People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) say that when animals are shot that is suffers a slow painful death (Gale, Sport Hunting Is an Unnecessary Form of Cruelty to Animals, 2008).

While I can agree that not every animal that is killed is done so in the quickest and most effective way, I can say that it not the goal of a true sportsman. We as sportsman have an obligation to the quarry to understand where the vital organs are and to make the best shot possible to make a quick painless kill. Not all animals are regarded in the same priority when it comes to the argument of animal suffering. In 1949 the British Report of the Independent Committee of Inquiry into the Cruelty to Wild Animals stated: Sentimental concern about animals is directed mainly towards particular

animals such as foxes, deer, and rabbits, which are beautiful or attractive creatures viewed as such by those who are not concerned with the damage they may cause. Few people seem to be in the least concerned about what happens to rats, which are generally regarded as vermin and arouse considerable feeling of revulsion. Yet the rat is an intelligent and highly sensitive creature (Gunn, 2001).

Many of us do not think about what they are saying here. It is not ok for us to go out with guns and bullets to kill animals, but it is ok for us to lure them in with food so they get caught in traps. A lot of times mice that have been caught are not done so the way the trap was designed. They are caught by the tail or foot and cannot get away.

If the traps are not checked regularly than the animal dies a slow painful death of starvation. If are going to say that animals that are hunted are treated cruel than why is the mouse any different? It is not all animals are the same. Mike Lapierre is a hunter and also works in the hunting industry as a booking agent for hunting trips says, “ I have never once come across a person who hunts because it gives them pleasure to watch an animal suffer and die” (Lapierre, 2008). I can also say that I have never met anyone that was just about killing animals just because it was entertaining. There are however exceptions just as with everything else that we encounter in this world.

There are poachers that kill animals illegally and a lot of the time end up just wounding them. The animal in this case unfortunately does suffer until it dies. But these people are criminals just like the guy that robs the

convenient store. We should not group these people in actual sportsman; society does not say well we are all just like that guy that robs the store.

Remember the father and son that I told you the story of at the beginning of this paper? That is the story of my father and I when he was teaching me how to hunt and what it meant to be a sportsman. We did not kill anything that day or that season. We continued to go out and give it our best but the deer were too smart. I learned that it is not easy to make kill but that is not what mattered. What the real joy was, is making memories and bonding with others that are close to us will always mean more than killing an animal.

I respect that not all people are hunters, but there two groups of these people. The non-hunter who themselves do not hunt but accept that other people do. The anti-hunter, people that feel that hunting is immoral and unethical they condemn the activities and the hunters themselves. There are always going to be the anti-hunters there is nothing that we can do to stop them. It is not their right however to tell us what we can do in our lives.

We need to stand up for ourselves and the tradition that has been handed down to us. Like I mentioned before hunting has been around as long as our earliest ancestors. The bible makes references to hunting. In Genesis 3: 21 “ Did the lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them” and again in Genesis 9: 3 God said to Noah and his sons, “ Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you, even as the green herb have I given you all things”.

This early in our existence animals were already being used for the benefits of humans and it should remain that way for the remainder of it.