Chapter II

The Case Against Hunting

A. The Different Type of Anti-Hunters

Kellert, in his study of the attitudes and characteristics of hunters and anti-hunters, identified as anti-hunters those people who strongly agreed with the statement “hunting for sport is wrong.” Twenty-nine percent of the national sample agreed. But an important difference in statistics arose when the people considered hunting as a whole. “Only 4.5 percent of the sample opposed all forms of hunting including sport, meat and trophy hunting.”

Characteristics of the anti-hunters were: larger number of females, residence in large urban areas, less experience raising animals, no greater involvement with animals except owning pets, and among the lowest knowledge of animals of any group. The data suggested “...two major attitudinal sources for anti-hunting sentiment—the humanistic and moralistic.”

The humanistic anti-hunter was identified as an anti-hunter who had a strong emotional identification with animals. These anti-hunters loved animals, particularly pets, and extended this attitude to wild animals. They focused on the individual animal, not the species. Often they regarded animals as innocent and virtuous.

The moralistic anti-hunter was identified as an anti-hunter who argued that hunting was ethically wrong. Hunting was viewed as having “...a degenerative impact on human beings and society.” The moralistic anti-hunter tended to see an equivalence between humans and animals, and to extend ethical rights to animals.
Humanistic

Humanistic (or anthropomorphic) anti-hunters were noted by Kellert to have "a strong emotional identification with animals," usually individual animals such as pets (not with species of animals). This affection for pets is extended to include individual wild game animals. The humanistic anti-hunters see hunting as "...deliberate infliction of suffering and pain without cause or reason." They talk about animals in anthropomorphic terms of being innocent and virtuous. This view attempts to bring the animals up to the level of human experience. There are also anti-hunters who take the opposite tack and reject anthropocentrism (humans having the highest value), thereby lowering humans to the level of animals. Either way humans and animals are placed on the same level.

Moralistic

The moralistic anti-hunter views hunting as ethically evil. The evil may be seen to reside in what happens to the animal, as in the belief that hunting is an unjustifiable exploitation of the animal world. Or evil may be seen to reside in what happens to people, as in the belief that hunting has a degenerative impact on people. Kellert puts Joseph Wood Krutch, Cleveland Amory, and Albert Schweitzer in the group of moralistic anti-hunters.

Joseph Wood Krutch, the well-known naturalist, says, "...killing 'for sport' is the perfect type of...pure evil...." He says that many evils are done because the doer thinks that he will gain something for himself by doing them. Such people are selfish or unscrupulous, but their actions are not instances of gratuitous evil. But Krutch says, "The killer for sport has no such comprehensible motive. He prefers death to life, darkness to light. He gets nothing except the satisfaction of saying, 'Something which wanted to live is dead.'" He adds, "...killing for killing's sake is a terrifying phenomenon...."

A brochure from Cleveland Amory's Fund for Animals says, "Even if the killing were quick, hunting is not ethically acceptable." Amory's attitude toward hunters is evident in his satirical proposal in a chapter entitled "Support Your Right to Arm Bears."

In this chapter he proposes having a "Hunt-the-Hunters Hunt Club," whose motto would be "If you can't play a sport, shoot one." Amory also attacks game biologists involved in game management. He calls them "...biostitutes"—i.e., biologists who have prostituted themselves to the hunters' ethic...."

Albert Schweitzer has a more philosophical view which needs careful examination. Schweitzer’s philosophy of “reverence for life” holds that “all life is sacred.” He says, "...we have no right to inflict suffering and death on another living creature unless there is some unavoidable necessity for it...." Schweitzer recommends helping worms and saving insects, as well as not cutting off the head of a single flower unless it is necessary. Schweitzer's view is a Western expression of a major Eastern viewpoint dominant in Hinduism that the Brahma-Atman, the life principle, is the divine element that appears in all living things. The priests hesitated to travel during the rainy season, because they did not want to step on any living creature. The principle is that life (from virus to human) is sacred.

In opposing hunting, one may argue that the killing of animals is morally wrong. Consistency would seem to demand that one include both domestic and wild animals in the assertion that the killing of animals is wrong. Since the eating of meat is possible only by killing animals, this leaves one with a position of vegetarianism.

The Fund for Animals does take a vegetarian position. The organization’s recommendation is “Eat healthy, humane plant based foods in lieu of animal products...." The organization claims, “Raising animals for food is the leading cause of environmental destruction and resource depletion throughout the world today." Their solution is not to raise animals for food, not to kill animals (domestic or wild), and to become vegetarians.

If one does become a vegetarian and if this is recommended as the reasonable position for all people, then the killing of animals by humans could largely cease. Obviously, the large numbers of domestic animals such as cattle and hogs would decrease drastically. The American Humane Society would have to find another way of dealing with excess domestic pets other than killing them. Then the killing of wild and domestic animals by humans could stop. Wild animals would still be killed by diseases, starvation, and
predators. Suffering of wild animals and violent death of wild animals would not cease. But such suffering and death would not be directly caused by humans. Is such a world practical? Possible? Without the benefit of meat and animal products such as milk and eggs, would the hunger of humans increase?

If we put vegetarianism in the context of Schweitzer’s thought, a philosophical problem arises. It is clear that Schweitzer’s view is that “all life” includes plants and microbes. In this view, vegetarians are killers, too. They may be able to present arguments to justify their killing of some forms of life while condemning the killing of other forms, but they do not escape from Schweitzer’s principle that all life is sacred. If they do make a distinction between forms of living beings, they are, in principle, doing what hunters (and others) are doing, i.e. making a distinction between living beings (in this latter case between humans and animals). Of course, the vegetarians would reply that there is a significant difference between animals and plants. But the hunters would make a similar claim, i.e., that there is a significant difference between humans and animals. So, regardless of one’s position, one must argue for a significant difference.

Hyperbolic

John Mitchell in his book, The Hunt (1979), has three categories of anti-hunters. The first two parallel those of Kellert’s, but Mitchell adds a third. It is not clear how this third type would fit into the attitudes studied by Kellert. It appears to reflect a reason not to hunt rather than an attitude. Mitchell may be confusing an argument against hunting with a motivation (as I think he is), but Mitchell’s designation is sufficiently important in our understanding of anti-hunters to warrant notice. Hence, we will discuss it here as a third type of anti-hunter. Mitchell calls this type “hyperbolic” because he sees it “steeped in extravagant overstatement.”

This third type of anti-hunter is identified as the one who holds that hunting is the “...spoiler of ecological balances and extirpator of endangered species.” Mitchell presents two people who, he says, represent this view: Lewis Regenstein and Roger Caras.

Lewis Regenstein, the Fund for Animals lobbyist, in his Politics of Extinction (1975), says, “...hunters have been responsible for helping wipe out numerous species of wildlife.” Regenstein then goes on to list elk, Carolina parakeets, heath hens, passenger pigeons, timber wolves and cougars as being extinct in the eastern United States “due in part or in whole to over-hunting.” Mitchell argues that sport hunting was not the reason that any of these no longer exist in the eastern states (the heath hen, passenger pigeon, and the Carolina parakeet are extinct everywhere). Rather, Mitchell argues, habitat loss, commercial hunting, and the attempt to protect property by agriculturalists are the reasons these species are gone.

Roger Caras in his book, Death is a Way of Life (1970), points out that in the Red Data Book of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature that the reasons given for the endangerment or extinction of many animals has been hunting. Mitchell quotes Caras as saying, “...hunting has been not just ‘a major factor’ in the endangerment or extinction (of dozens of animal species) but the only major factor.” Mitchell’s view is that such a position is extreme, hence he calls it “hyperbolic.”

B. Objections to Hunting

Why do people object to hunting? We have seen in the above classification of anti-hunters what interests and motivates the anti-hunters. But what objections do they have to hunting? What arguments do they present?

There are several major objections to hunting that underlie and provide the stimulus for the anti-hunting sentiment. And there are five other identifiable arguments which are part of the pro/anti hunting debate. One senses that if the anti-hunters lost any or all of these five arguments, they would not change their position against sport hunting because of their basic objections. (The hunters would also probably remain hunters even if they lost many of their arguments.) Both these situations suggest that there are two different questions being answered. They are “Why do I oppose hunting?” (“Why do I hunt?”) and “What are the reasons I oppose hunting?” (“What reasons can I give to defend hunting?”) We will begin with the major objections to hunting and then consider five other arguments that reflect the anti-hunters’ views.
Sadistic

One major objection anti-hunters give in their opposition to hunting is that sport hunting is sadistic. They argue that sport hunting is just killing for fun, killing for pleasure, killing for sport. Dana Forbes of the Fund For Animals says, "...the real reason hunters kill: for mere recreation." She concludes, "Hunting is recreational killing, nothing more, and as such it is an activity we must find ethically and socially unacceptable." Cleveland Amory, founder and president of Fund for Animals, claims, "These bloodthirsty nuts claim they provide a service for the environment. Nonsense! A hunter goes into the woods to kill something, period." A brochure from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) says, "Hunting is not the conservation effort or the earthy fraternity it is made out to be; it is recreational slaughter that breeds insensitivity toward suffering, disturbs animal populations and damages the ecosystem." Two examples may be given of this love of killing. One is from an anti-hunter, and the other is from a hunter. Steve Ruggeri of the Friends of Animals explains "Why I Don't Hunt." He first tells us that he used to be a hunter. He says, "I reveled in killing, maiming, bloodletting, and gutting...I hunted in order to kill." Then he says he "...was seized by the realization of how utterly inconsistent it was for me to be so solicitous of a cat (which he was taking to the vet) yet have no regard for the cow (a hamburger) I was devouring." He concluded that it was "...morally imperative for me to end my complicity in the infliction of any gratuitous pain and suffering upon either wild or domesticated animals." So he holds that hunting (and eating meat) is morally wrong because he defines hunting as "killing for the fun of it."

Interestingly, there is at least one hunter who agrees with Ruggeri as to why people hunt but disagrees with him as to its morality. Humberto Fontova, an outdoor writer, says that hunters "...are killers of animals in the most direct way...and we take delight in it....We like to kill animals....Hunters are simply guys who get a thrill out of killing animals." He sees nothing wrong with this. Fontova attributes this thrill of killing to a predatory instinct which he says is an "unnerving but unavoidable fact." Man is simply a predator.

Fontova’s view that man has a predatory instinct to kill, if it were true, would not be an adequate defense of the morality of hunting. If it were, it could be a defense of killing people as well. He might reply that the instinct was specifically targeted to the general group of animals but that it excluded man, but empirical data on murders suggests otherwise. In short, even if the instinct is there, it leaves open the question as to whether it is moral or not.

One outstanding spokesman for the anti-hunting movement is Dr. John W. Grandy of the Humane Society of the United States. The Humane Society of the United States should not be confused with the American Humane Association, which began in 1877 and represents the "Humane Society" in most people’s cities or counties. The HSUS of which Grandy is a part is a more recent organization, begun in 1954, which supports animal rights and is against trapping, hunting, etc. The HSUS is the largest of the anti-hunting organizations in the United States, with over 850,000 members in 1990.

Grandy argues specifically against sport hunting although he seems generally opposed to hunting. Since he largely attacks sport hunting, he does not state if there is any kind of hunting he would find acceptable. But it is fair to say that although he and his organization, HSUS, attack "sport hunting," they are opposed to all hunting.

Grandy says, "The ethic—if it may be called that—of killing for fun teaches callousness, disrespect for life, and the notion that killing makes right." This "recreational pastime," "this form of pleasure," is "a form of mostly macho, comraderie-based human recreation." It "...inflicts needless undeniable cruelty—pain, suffering, trauma, wounding, and death—on living, sentient creatures." Even if hunting was "cleaned up," he would not find it acceptable because sport hunting is "...the killing of animals for fun." He identifies sport hunting as it is currently practiced as killing for fun. He does not find "...the killing of mammals and birds for human pleasure as an acceptable form of fun." He sees sport hunting as "...a form of recreation that thrives on the killing of innocent beings."
states their basic position: “The American Humane Association is opposed to the hunting of any living creature for fun, a trophy or for simple sport. The AHA believes that sport hunting is a form of exploitation of animals for the entertainment of the hunter, and is contrary to the values of compassion and respect for all life that inform American Humane’s mission.” The terms “fun” and “entertainment” point to the heart of their objection.

The American Humane Association (AHA) is not opposed to the killing of animals, since the organizations of their association across America are engaged in the killing of domestic animals (usually dogs and cats which have overpopulated). They attack wildlife management that produces overpopulation of “game” species but they say that in certain situations it would be necessary to kill overpopulated wildlife. However, they do not want this done by hunters, but by “responsible officials.” Interestingly for a humane society, the AHA’s statement does not attack inhumane methods of hunting, but rather hunting itself.

Cleveland Amory, founder and president of Fund for Animals, says that hunters are “bloodthirsty nuts.” He also says, “Hunting is an antiquated expression of macho self-aggrandizement, with no place in a civilized society.”

Inhumane

A second major objection anti-hunters have to sport hunting is that it is inhumane. This objection is the main objection of the humanistic or anthropomorphic anti-hunter. The Fund for Animals states, “There’s nothing humane about hunting.” This view is that hunting (presumably any hunting, not just sport hunting) is inhumane. The reason they give for this view is the claim that a large number of animals are crippled (not instantly killed), and so they suffer. The Humane Society of the United States says, “Hunters like to talk of the ‘clean kill’—an animal downed with one well-placed shot. While conscientious hunters may aim for this result, few are capable of achieving it.”

Here is the recognition that some hunters are conscientious (as opposed to the first major objection), but that hunting is done by amateur shooters, and they often fail to kill humanely. However, the HSUS does not propose hunter education or shooting skill requirements, i.e., a remedy to the failure. They do not discuss inhumane hunting versus humane hunting, rather they reject sport hunting itself.

Unethical

The third major objection to hunting is that hunting is not ethical. This is the main objection of both the moralistic anti-hunter and the animal rights anti-hunter. The Fund for Animals argues, “Even if the killing were quick, hunting is not ethically acceptable.” This statement says that even if it were quick (humane?), it is not ethically acceptable. The reasons given are that if hunters kill deer, the deer’s average life span is decreased, and that a humane person is interested in “each individual animal.”

Joy Williams in her article, “The Killing Game: Why the American Hunter Is Blood-Thirsty, Piggish, and Grossly Incompetent,” in a 1990 issue of Esquire, claims, “Hunters are piggy. They just can’t seem to help it. They’re overequipped...insatiable, malevolent, and vain. They maim and mutilate and despoil. And for the most part, they’re inept.” She adds, “Sportsman’s Conservation is a contradiction in terms....” She concludes, “Sport hunting is immoral; it should be made illegal. Hunters are persecutors of nature who should be prosecuted.”

The category of moralistic anti-hunter includes Joseph Wood Krutch, Cleveland Amory, and Albert Schweitzer as noted above in the discussion of the types of anti-hunters. Their views were noted there.

In addition to Schweitzer’s view on respect for nature, Paul Taylor in his book, Respect for Nature (1986), opposes hunting from the same perspective but with more of a moral than a philosophical-religious view. Taylor states what he calls a “Rule of Fidelity,” which is that we should not “...break a trust that a wild animal places in us (as shown by its behavior)...,” that is, we should not “deceive or mislead” wild animals. He says, “...the breaking of a trust is a key to good (that is, successful) hunting, trapping, and fishing. Deception with intent to harm, is of the

Deception, for Taylor, includes slipping quietly in the woods with the intent of locating the wild animal. He argues that
"...there need not have been any agreement made between human and animal." 

Taylor finds immoral. Therefore, he rejects all sport hunting, recreational fishing, and recreational plant use, because he says it shows a lack of respect for nature. He does accept subsistence hunting and fishing that is necessary for human survival.

The basis of Taylor's view is expressed in his statement, "...the deceiver considers the animal as either having no inherent worth or as having a lower degree of inherent worth than the deceiver himself." Taylor holds that "...humans are not inherently superior to other living things." His principle of species impartiality is, "No bias in favor of some over others is acceptable. This impartiality applies to the human species just as it does to nonhuman species."

Taylor adds that in hunting, fishing, and picking wild flowers "...the basic interests of animals and plants would be assigned a lower value or importance than the nonbasic interests of humans." He rejects not only hunting and fishing as recreational pastimes but also the owning of caged wild birds, wearing apparel made from furs and reptile skins, collecting rare wild flowers, buying ivory carvings or using hunting dagger handles. All of these, he believes, show a lack of respect for nature.

Peter Singer, in *Animal Liberation* (1975), argues that we have a moral obligation to be vegetarians because our use of animals for food creates pain that animals experience. Singer uses utilitarian arguments concerning the amount of pleasure and pain. In doing so, he is following the English utilitarianism that stems from Jeremy Bentham, who said, "...the question is, Can they suffer? Can they feel? Can they have any interest?" Singer argues, "...the capacity to suffer and to experience pain (called sensation) is the only definite boundary between for the interest of others. To mark this boundary by some other characteristic like intelligence or rationality would be to mark it in an arbitrary manner." This capacity for suffering and enjoyment provides the basis for Singer's saying that animals have "interests."

Then he says, "...the taking into account of the interests of the being, whatever those interests may be—must, according to the principle of equality, be extended to all beings, black or white, masculine or feminine, human or nonhuman." "Nonhuman" beings is too broad a term even for Singer, because it includes non-sentient beings such as rocks. Singer extends interests only to sentient beings, i.e., those who have experiences of pleasure and pain. Singer does not argue that all lives are of equal worth, but he does argue that "...pain is pain, whatever other capacities, beyond the capacity to feel pain, the being may have...." But, in his view, the higher levels of self-awareness and intelligence "...may be relevant to the question of taking life."

A newer kind of moralistic anti-hunter is making a significant contribution to the anti-hunting movement—the animal rights anti-hunter. Tom Regan, in *The Case for Animal Rights* (1983), argues that animals have rights based on their "inherent value." He says "inherent value" to mean "value in themselves," which we are to take off. This is not based on "...the experiences they have (e.g., their pleasures or preference satisfactions)...." Regan argues, contra Singer, "...what is wrong isn't the pain, isn't the suffering, the deprivation, they cause. The fundamental wrong is that of taking life. People call Regan's view "deontological," i.e., referring to rights, and Singer's view "utilitarian," i.e., referring to the measuring or counting of goods and evils.

Regan argues that "subjects of a life" have inherent value. Subjects of a life are those beings that have beliefs, desires, expectations, memory, sensation, and so on. They are beings that are merely sentient or merely living creatures would not be included. Regan uses empirical evidence to determine which creatures would be
He holds that mammals and maybe lower animals would be subjects of a life and hence inherently valuable. Traditionally, the criterion of self-consciousness determined what had value in itself. Regan proposes a broader criterion of "subjects of a life", which, in his view, gives rights to mammals. This criterion, however, does not include birds and fish. (Singer's criterion is much broader and therefore far more inclusive.)

Regan opposes hunting and trapping because these activities "treat animals as if they were a naturally recurring renewable resource, the value of which is to be measured by the interests of the human species." He opposes wildlife management that seeks maximum yield. He also rejects hunter's arguments that shooting causes less suffering of animals, because "not all hunters are expert shots," and so some animals are crippled, and, therefore, in his view, do not have a better death than starvation. Even if this wildlife management approach caused less suffering, he would reject it. He says, "Policies that lessen the total amount of harm at the cost of violating the rights of individuals, whether these individuals are moral agents or patients, and, if the latter, human or animal, are wrong." His position is clear: "The rights view categorically condemns sport hunting and trapping. Though those who participate in it need not be cruel or evil people..., what they do is wrong. And what they do is wrong because they are parties to a practice that treats animals as if they were a naturally recurring renewable resource, the value of which is to be measured by human interests." He opposes hunting and trapping because they treat animals as if they were a naturally recurring renewable resource, the value of which is to be measured by human interests.

Regan's position that animals have inherent value results in his opposition to the killing of domestic animals as well as wild ones. He concludes his book with a chapter on the "Implications of the Rights View." These implications include "Why vegetarianism is obligatory," "Why hunting and trapping are wrong," and "How to worry about endangered species" (he supports efforts to save them, but his theory of rights does not allow him to attribute value to species, only to individuals). "Against the use of animals in science," and a "Summary" in which he says that animal agriculture (ranching) is unjust, even if the animals are raised humanely. For Regan the only morally just position is to be a vegetarian.

Regan states his goals: "...the total abolition of the use of animals in science; the total dissolution of commercial animal agriculture; and the total elimination of commercial and sport hunting and trapping." It is instructive that the anti-hunting arguments of a modern philosopher such as Cartmill lead to positions of vegetarianism and the acceptance of equal value for human and all other sorts of life. While the position of vegetarianism is one that has been held through the centuries for many different reasons and remains an option for people in modern society, it is not clear at all how one would live if one operated with the belief that all forms of life were of equal value. An argument with this conclusion appears to me to be a reductio ad absurdum. If we accepted it, we could not even take a hot shower and kill the microscopic animals living on our skin. Surely one can understand that all forms of life have value...
without going to the extreme of arguing that they are of equal value.

Cartmill gives a clear statement of his attitude toward hunting: "To most of us, ceremoniously going into the woods once a year to kill deer with a rifle sounds about as attractive as marching into the dairy barn once a year to bash cows with a sledgehammer." If Cartmill cannot see the difference between these two activities, it is doubtful if more discussion will be helpful. If there is a difference, then the difference may be the basis of the appeal of hunting. Indeed in a less passionate passage near the beginning of his book in his definition of hunting he refers to the "unrestrained wild animal." His understanding is that hunting is "...an armed confrontation between humanness and wildness, between culture and nature." But in the intervening two hundred pages he loses sight of this understanding and of its possible appeal.

Chauvinistic

A fourth major objection to hunting is that hunting is chauvinistic. Ecofeminists charge that hunters are male chauvinists. Hunters, ecofeminists say, are a part of the patriarchal hunting society which has exploited and exploited the domination of man over nature for their pleasure, and plundered nature, killing animals. Andrea Collard says, "...no woman will be free until all animals are free and nature is released from man’s ruthless exploitation." By “man’s,” Collard means “male’s” ruthless exploitation. What is “ecofeminism”? Ecofeminism, as its name implies, is the inclusion of ecology in feminism. Some feminists see the exploitation of women as part of a broader culture of exploitation which includes the exploitation of nature. The solution to the exploitation of women includes the solution to the exploitation of nature. Collard argues, "...feminist values and principles directed towards ending the oppression of women are inextricably linked to ecological values and principles directed towards ending the oppression of nature." The source of this oppression is a patriarchal society whose values are masculine (feminine characteristics are seen as inferior), whose goal is the domination of the world around them ("...God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over...every living thing...’” Genesis 1:28 RSV) (but that God spoke to “them” means the directive was to both Adam and Eve, male and female), and whose obsession is killing and death (rather than creative and life affirming actions and attitudes).

Mary Daly in Gym/Ecology (1978) attacks patriarchal society which degrades women. Daly argues that concern not the interconnectedness of the web of nature but the interrelationships of life and the female’s journey of being, overcoming the historical domination of patriarchal men. She perceives society as "necrophilic" and radical feminism as "biophilic" (a term which she coined and defined as life-loving). The term "necrophilia" has two meanings: 1. An obsessive fascination with death and corpses. 2. The practice or an instance of engaging in sexual intercourse with a corpse. Daly says, "Woman hating is the core of necrophilia." Daly What is the connection between hunting and ecofeminism? Critic of hunting Roger King, in his article “Environmental Ethics and the Case for Hunting,” says, "...eco-feminism links hunting to a broader cultural pattern characterized by male violence, both physical and social, against women." King argues that the writings of Ortega and Shephard confirm the charge that hunting is "...symptomatic of a necrophilic culture, indeed of patriarchal culture...." For Ortega, real participation in nature means to hunt, and one must kill in order to hunt. Women are not included in hunting, and, therefore, they cannot genuinely participate in nature. King comments, "...we accept that hunting is the only fully human activity we are forced to conclude that women are not fully human...." King also attacks defenders of hunting by charging that they are necrophilic in the second sense of the definition. Kings says that the "erotic connection with death" is visible in the writings of Ortega and Shephard. King quotes Ortega, "...the orgiastic element shoots forth, the dionysian, which flows and boils in the depths of all hunting...." King quotes Shephard’s reference to "...the most profound of life’s passions, the demonic moment of the kill and of orgasm." Collard despises hunting and the culture of domination and violence which surrounds it. She calls hunting “man’s oldest profession.” She has no sympathy for hunters. To her, hunters are
“senselessly brutal.” She says they remind her of “...irresponsible little boys driven to savagery out of boredom.” Why is hunting so bad? Because it is the basic element of patriarchal societies in all levels of life. Male in patriarchal societies identify the prey, shoot it, compete for it and are in competition with other males to get the first shot at it. It does not matter if the prey is women, animals, or estate.

Collard says that hunters are sadomasochistic. Sadomasochism includes both masochism, perceiving that one is being dominated (in this case by nature), and sadism, deriving pleasure from being cruel to others (in this case to nature and specifically to animals.) Collard says that the essence of hunting is that it is “...an exercise of power on the part of one who feels overwhelmed, fragmented and frightened and it explains the pathetic urge to kill anything bold enough to be alive.”

Collard rejects the typical story of the evolutionary development of man (read male) dependent upon man’s (read male) creating tools for the hunt, with hunting being the basic driving force behind the rise of civilization. Such a story is an example of male chauvinism. Collard says that hunting is the activity of gathering. The earlier matriarchal society with Nature as Mother and Goddess was suppressed by the rise of a patriarchal culture based on hunting. The patriarchal society created a division of labor which became the basis of the subjugation of women. This subjugation of women was justified by their perceived inferiority, that is, by their perceived inability to participate in the hunt. Nature as goddess was replaced by a male god who was the god of the hunt. The male god of the hunt exemplified the attributes of power, domination, and destructiveness.

Collard sees in the Gilgamesh Epic (about 2000 B.C.E.) evidence of this shift between the two systems. It is hunting that is the primary activity that separates the two systems. Collard says, “...hunting, raping, drinking alcohol and eating meat are required of the men as the conditions of their integration.” into the patriarchal society. For Collard, this whole patriarchal system of domination and violence based on hunting is anti-women, anti-nature, and anti-life, and so is to be rejected.

Not ecologically sound

The fifth major objection to hunting is that hunting is not ecologically sound. This argument is one that the anti-hunters developed out of their response to the hunters’ argument that hunting produces healthy wildlife populations (discussed below as the third subargument). Rather than being just a rebuttal, it may be considered an argument of its own.

Lewis Regenstein, in Politics of Extinction (1975), (noted above in the discussion on types of anti-hunters), charges hunters with exterminating species of wildlife. Roger Caras, in Death is a Way of Life (1970), claims that hunting has been the only factor in the extermination of many animals.

In the “hunting is not ecologically sound” approach, anti-hunters assume the high ground that hunters have used. Luke A. Dommer, president of the Committee to Abolish Sport Hunting, says that during the 1970’s people argued that hunting was cruel, but now anti-hunters are more sophisticated, and their point of attack should change. “We can attack hunting at its weakest point, on ecological grounds...because it relates to the environment and to the welfare of the great masses.”

Ron Baker, in an article “Of Cowards and Conservation,” says in answer to his own question about the nature of wildlife management, “The answer is not that public hunting is a sound conservation practice; in fact, it violates every principle of ecology.” Baker’s justification for this claim is what he calls a “direct contradiction” between a dictionary definition of conservation as “guarding or protecting animals or keeping wildlife populations in a safe or entire state” and what he sees as “the opposite: the controlled killing of wild animals for consumption by hunters.” Baker sees a contradiction between these two, because he is looking at the welfare of individual animals. Whether ecological principles have to do with the welfare of individual animals is a point of issue between the anti-hunters and the hunters.

Dommer’s (Baker’s) proposal is a strategic move in the political battle against hunting. This shift in emphasis is accompanied by a strategic move, i.e., the use of environmental laws requiring environmental impact statements to stop hunting. In the past, when the hunting/anti-hunting controversy fought on both sides with ecological arguments.
C. The Anti’s Evaluation of Hunter’s Arguments

In addition to these four major objections, anti-hunters present additional, specific arguments which are basically rejections of hunters’ arguments. Most of the following arguments can be found in the literature of most of the anti-hunting organizations. John Grandy of the Humane Society of the United States is representative of the anti-hunters, and so we can take his statements of many of these arguments as expressing views held by many of the anti-hunters.

The anti-hunters present five other arguments against hunting. These are, in the main, rejections of hunters’ arguments. The first of these is the argument that sport hunting is not romantic. By “romantic” Grandy means the hunters’ description of their sense of unity with nature, their sense of being a part of nature, or their feeling of being drawn closer to nature and to their biological origins. Such a view of hunting, Grandy says, “...is an anachronism. It is a throwback to a time gone by...long...long ago.” He simply rejects the hunters’ claims. He says that sport hunting “...is a recreational pastime that has nothing to do with feeding families and getting people closer to nature.”

Roger King calls this “romantic” view “the primitivist defense.” King rejects both Ortega Y Gasset’s and Paul Shepard’s views on the place of hunting in a person’s life. King understands their position as arguing that hunting is morally justified because it returns us to nature by restoring us to that “pristine form” of being a man. King rejects Ortega’s appeal to historical fact as insufficient to justify his claim. King also rejects Ortega’s distinction between hunting and mere extermination as explaining the attraction of hunting. Finally King says, “Hunting is not fundamentally a human practice, but a male practice.” King agrees with the ecofeminist position that hunting is a part of “...a broader cultural pattern characterized by male violence, both physical and social, against women.”

The second argument of the anti-hunters is that contemporary sport hunting is not meat hunting. By “meat hunting” Grandy seems to mean not only that it is not subsistence hunting (hunting as a means of survival), but that sport hunting is not done for the purpose of obtaining meat. He appears to be making a factual claim. If it is a factual claim, then its truth or falsity can be determined by learning the motives of hunters (by surveys) and learning what actually happens to the meat of the game that people kill. He does say that from sport hunting “...some people derive some meat that is either eaten or discarded.” But it is clear that he gives no weight to the fact that the meat is eaten.

Literature from The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) points to the numbers of animals that are wounded and to the numbers of birds that are shot but not taken for food. One brochure refers to a hunt on the Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge in South Dakota, in which the article says, “Of the birds that were killed, half of them—25,000 geese—were not even taken for food; they were left to rot on the ground.” On the basis of the report, it appears that the geese were left because they could not be retrieved, since hunters were prohibited entry to the area where some of the birds fell. At any rate, the article stresses the waste of the meat and not its consumption.

The anti-hunters’ third argument is that sport hunting is not necessary. Grandy exempts from his argument early settler (pilgrim) hunting and even hunting during the depression. So he seems to be arguing that because of our current economic development, hunting is not necessary. In his view the earlier hunting for food and clothing has been replaced by “sport hunting.” Since he barely admits that hunters eat “some meat,” he does not see the substitution of wild meat for domestic meat as filling a need.

By saying that sport hunting is not necessary, he probably also means that because we can kill domesticate animals for food, it is not necessary to kill wild ones. He refers to the “needless” killing of wild animals. “Needless” does not refer to killing in general since, unless one is a vegetarian, the killing of animals for meat is necessary. “Needless” then refers to the killing of wild animals. If one chooses the killing of domestic animals over wild ones, then what arguments might be given for the moral superiority of killing domestic animals over killing wild animals? Grandy does not address this question.

The anti-hunters’ fourth argument is that sport hunting (indeed all hunting) removes food from nature that other predators and scavengers use for food. The competition between people and other predators for food (most commonly the ungulates such as
deer, elk and moose) is well-known. The attempt to control or eliminate predators in the United States was done for the purpose of increasing the number of these ungulates that people could have. Grandy's position is derived from looking at the opposite side (the predator's side). He argues that people should not hunt because people are taking food from natural predators. This argument was used in California in support of Proposition 117, which would make it possible to prevent the hunting of deer in certain mountain lion range. Grandy's argument does not seem to be a humane argument in favor of the prey, since the prey is killed in either case. Although some anti-hunters argue that the killing by a mountain lion or wolf is more humane than that of a modern rifle, Grandy does not.

He argues for the benefit of the predator: the less human predation, the more prey, the more mountain lions. The opposite argument was made for predator control: the less natural predators, the more prey, the more for people. If one takes a long view in which over the years the population of prey (and hence predators) rises and falls because of natural conditions such as food supply, it is questionable if either argument is correct.

The anti-hunters' fifth argument is that sport hunting, in Grandy's terms, "...is no management tool at all." He disagrees with wildlife managers who say that sport hunting is a way of managing wildlife populations (usually the specific example is white-tail deer). Ron Baker concurs with this judgment. Instead of keeping the herds in balance with the habitat, Baker says, "The purpose of wildlife management is to insure high populations of popular 'game' species for 'harvesting' by the greatest number of hunters that game bureaus are able to license."

The anti-hunters reject the following subarguments that have been given in support of, or justification of, the practices of wildlife management as it has been practiced historically in the United States. These subarguments are all part of the fifth argument. These rejected arguments are: 1) sport hunting prevents starvation, 2) sport hunting limits the population, 3) sport hunting helps keep the herds healthy and free from disease, and 4) sport hunters contribute monies through special taxes, licenses, stamps, etc. to buy lands and to generally support wildlife.

The first subargument has been called "the starvation argument" or the "harvest-or-holocaust debate." Wildlife managers typically argue that without hunting or natural predators ungulates such as deer will overpopulate and destroy their habitat which provides them with protection and food. The result is a crash in population of the deer through starvation and/or disease. Anti-hunters reject the argument that sport hunting prevents starvation by arguing that starvation of weak animals occurs anyway, and that the starvation benefits many other wild animals which feed on the starved wildlife.

Dana Forbes calls this argument the hunters' "We shoot 'em to save 'em" defense. The argument implies that it is better to shoot a limited number of the herd than to allow the population to build to the point that there is mass starvation. Forbes argues that this is false on two counts. One, it is not better because shooting deer produces "excruciating deaths," 25-35 percent of the animals are wounded, frequently to die slow deaths, and that of the rest "many" are "retrieved only after pursuit." In what may be a contradictory statement she adds that "the trauma of projectile damage...can hardly be overstated." If the bullet causes such damage, then death would come quickly. Her first argument is an excellent example of the above discussed "inhumane argument."

Secondly, Forbes prefers starvation to shooting. She argues that "starvation is known to induce numbness and euphoria" and is therefore preferable to being shot. She prefers "nutritional stress" which produces shifts in the sex ratio of the newborn, absorption of embryos, and reduction of sperm counts. She prefers nature's other methods of reducing numbers such as, death by predation, disease, parasites and exposure to cold and heat, to shooting.

Anti-hunters reject the second subargument that sport hunting limits the growth of wildlife populations. Grandy says that fall hunting of white-tail deer "...stimulates birth, by tending to make more food available to each deer that remains." If managers wanted to limit populations they could open a season for females only and this "...they never do."

Wildlife biologist Dale McCullough points out that while hunting is necessary in many areas to prevent damage to vegetation that would result in lowering population, "...it does not follow that all deer populations should be or need to be hunted." While overpopulation exists in some parks, "...the surprising thing is how
many parks containing deer populations have no problem.... As professionals, wildlife biologists and managers must distinguish between cases where hunting is necessary and where it is not.93

As noted in the prohunting chapter, J. Baird Callicott uses the land ethic of Aldo Leopold to justify hunting (of a certain type) while he also uses the ethic to argue against other hunting (of predators). Roger King argues against Callicott’s defense of deer hunting by suggesting, “Faced with too many deer, we might instead try to restore the predators which we have eliminated, thereby restoring the stability and integrity of the predator-prey relationship as part of that biotic community.”94

King’s suggestion is a good one. We should, where possible, restore the predators which we have eliminated. (We must remember the reflective remark that people want to restore predators where they (the restorers) do not live. Want a bear in your backyard?) But after restoring predators where practical, might not humans also participate in their natural role as predators by hunting? Such hunting, Callicott argues, is appropriate within the land ethic. It is not practical, says King, because “...in practice, large predator populations are a liability to the sport hunter.... There is then a practical contradiction between sport hunting and Leopold’s ethic, for hunting offers no long-term solution to over-population that is consistent with Leopold’s principle.”95

King points out that Callicott’s use of Leopold’s principle to justify the trapping and removing of beaver who are beginning to dam a previously free flowing stream is a mistake because it “...seems to condone fairly radical human interference in the autonomous processes of nature.”96 This is a mistaken use of Leopold’s principle because it is an instance of human interference with nature in its normal and dynamic process of change. The beaver will modify the environment and the biotic community in the area of the pond (a question of scale) will be destroyed and replaced by another biotic community. The integrity and stability of the existing biotic community will be destroyed. But this work of native animals cannot be judged wrong because Leopold’s principle can only apply to people—to moral agents—not to beaver. Nor can our trapping of the beaver be justified on the basis of Leopold’s principle.

Two different reasons might be given for not trapping beaver in this instance. First, one may give the above mentioned reason of it being a radical interference in the natural history of the stream. Second, humans have no moral obligation to preserve the present biotic community of a particular place (unless it is unique) from the natural actions of native species or from natural events, such as floods or tornados. An exception to this last statement might be if the flood were caused by human activity, such as deforestation by humans. Then humans might have a moral responsibility to alleviate the destruction of the flood.

King also rejects Callicott’s defense of (deer) hunting by using Leopold’s principle, because King argues that Callicott cannot defend the position that “...human beings are themselves a part of the wild biotic community, and thus, that they, as hunters, are playing a constitutive role in sustaining a wild biotic community.”97 In short, King rejects the hunters defense that they are natural predators. King’s argument for rejecting this defense is based on Callicott’s position that domestic animals cannot be released in the wild because they would seriously disrupt ecological relationships. King argues that “...the same must surely be said of human beings. Human beings have lost the particular wild niche which they once had....”98

Anti-hunters reject the third subargument. Grandy says it is “simply wrong” to argue that sport hunting is necessary to keep populations healthy. At best, the killing of the healthy and the unhealthy is random, and often hunters shoot the largest and the strongest. Some anti-hunters prefer natural population-control mechanisms such as disease, while other anti-hunters say that hunters tend to kill the healthy, not the weak and the diseased, so hunting is not helpful in keeping the herd healthy. For example, Forbes says that hunting has a negative effect on the game species’ gene pools, which resembles “evolution in reverse.” She says that hunters “seek the strongest and most fit animals with the biggest racks, thereby altering the composition of animals left to pass on their genes in a manner directly in opposition to nature’s mechanisms.”99 This is not an argument against hunting per se but an argument against a particular type of hunting, i.e., hunting for trophy animals.

Some wildlife biologists have argued that if the older rams of the Dall Sheep are harvested by hunters, the younger rams will
then become engaged in the courtship battles and in courting ewes, hence expending energy to the level that the younger rams' survival rate would be lowered. V. Geist, in his book, *Mountain Sheep: A Study in Behavior and Evolution*, (1971) predicted "...that young rams will die off more rapidly if...they are allowed to participate in breeding at the same level as older rams." W. E. Heimer, in a 1980 paper, "A summary of Dall sheep management in Alaska during 1979—(or how to cope with a monumental disaster)," and in a 1984 study with others, agreed with Geist that the younger rams (without the presence of the older rams killed by hunters) would die at the higher rate of the older rams.

Finally, anti-hunters reject the fourth subargument, the money argument. Grandy admits that sportsmen have contributed money, but says that the amount is comparatively small (enough to purchase only 3.3 percent of the National Wildlife Refuge System), and he argues that the contributing of money does not give hunters any right to hunt. A brochure put out by the HSUS admits, but qualifies, the hunters' monetary contribution: "Hunter dollars have been productively spent on the conservation of wildlife. This contribution cannot be discounted simply because hunters may not have had conservation in mind as much as they did the preservation of their sport. Yet, when placed in factual perspective, it is clear that hunters have distorted the value of their financial contribution to wildlife conservation." The HSUS excludes monies, which they attribute to hunters, that which are obtained from fishing licenses, and most of the money from the sales of handguns.

Luke Dommer in "Who Pays the Tab for Wildlife Conservation?" says that in fiscal 1991 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will receive over $1.1 billion in funding. Of this amount, only $1.77 million will come from the sale of duck stamps, and only $151.78 million will come from the Pittman-Robinson Act. So "...the lion's share of the Service's budget comes entirely from non-hunting related sources...." Furthermore, of the 91.7 million acres of National Wildlife Refuges only 2.9 million acres were purchased by duck stamps—less than 3 1/2%. The balance was purchased from general funds.

Roger Disilvestro in *The Endangered Kingdom* (1989) analyzes the current system of financing of wildlife management. He says, "Biologists often lose in confrontations with hunters primarily because hunters indirectly control wildlife-management purse strings.... Because hunters constitute the main source of P-R funds, the money is used almost entirely for programs designed to benefit game animals, such as deer, ducks, and geese...." He warns, "The system will not change...unless a funding system is enacted that broadens support for wildlife management beyond the hunting community...." Colorado was the first state to institute a check-off on the income tax form as a source of funds for non-game wildlife. Initially it was successful and other states followed. But this funding has been erratic. Some states used this money to buy land for non-game protection. Then the states opened this land to hunting. Disilvestro says, "The anti-hunters bolted and the non-game programs became subject to a vituperative debate that continues today. Many anti-hunters have even tried to scuttle the non-game programs on the grounds that they are a bogus front for raising money for game management."

Most anti-hunters prefer a general tax to support wildlife in order to cut down on the influence that hunters currently have. Missouri passed a one eighth of one percent override on the state sales tax which brings in $24 to $30 million a year. John Mitchell in *The Hunt* (1980) says that Missouri has "...a model, a point upon which public policies and private attitudes might finally achieve a measure of balance, without the bitter divisiveness that has attended the hunt in this country for so many years." In addition to the above arguments and subarguments, Grandy makes a specific argument against hunting on the National Wildlife Refuges. 261 of the 343 National Wildlife Refuges are open to hunting. Grandy says that the refuges were set up as "inviolable sanctuaries," and hunting and trapping and predator control should not be done on them. This position is an assessment of the (im)proper place where hunting is conducted. Grandy is against hunting on the refuges, but his objection is not limited to the refuges; rather it is only a specific example of his opposition to hunting everywhere. He is using the technique of making a specific objection to hunting in a particular place, or hunting of a specific animal, or hunting with a particular method (such as using a bow and arrow) as a method of opposing hunting generally.

The above are the main objections to hunting and the principle arguments that are presented against hunting. However, some
anti-hunters leave argumentation and use action. In California, the Hunt Saboteurs organization goes into the field to oppose hunting. They claim to use “nonviolent direct action to protect wildlife. We put ourselves between the hunter and the hunted.” The Animal Rights Front of Connecticut and the Guardian Animal Rescue of Texas are two other such hunt sabotage organizations.

Because of confrontations between anti-hunters and hunters, many states have passed hunter-harassment laws which make it illegal to harass hunters in the field. The laws have been declared unconstitutional in New Hampshire and repealed in Connecticut but remain in effect in many states. Illegal activities of sabotage such as spiking roads, erecting barricades on roads, vandalizing vehicles and assaulting hunters have been carried out. Luke Dommer of the Committee to Abolish Sport Hunting does not advocate illegal activities, but he supports legal actions in disrupting hunting. He urges people “...to help the groups already operating and trained for these actions.”

Direct confrontation in the field between anti-hunters and hunters is dangerous. Attempting to get between animals and hunters who are intending to shoot is extremely dangerous. Angry confrontation by anti-hunters with hunters will no doubt bring an angry response. Tragedy awaits.

D. Hunters' Evaluation of Anti-Hunting Arguments

What strengths and weaknesses do the anti-hunting objections and arguments have?

Evaluation of Sadistic Charge

The first major objection, that hunting is sadistic, is a reductive argument. It reduces hunting to killing. While hunting does entail killing, hunting is not the same thing as killing. For example, if one goes out into the pasture and shoots a domestic cow, one has not gone hunting. One has killed an animal, but one has not hunted. The person in the slaughter house who kills the domestic sheep and cattle is a person who kills but does not hunt. His job is not a pleasant one and certainly not one that most of us would wish to have. Neither is the job of butchering animals a particularly pleasant one. So we get other people to do this for us.

The killing of animals is necessary if we are going to eat meat. The alternative is to become vegetarians. But killing animals is not the same thing as hunting. The killing of wild animals is also not necessarily hunting. Shooting buffalo in a pen, dynamiting fish, or poisoning wild animals (for example, coyotes) is not hunting. This objection expresses the view that enjoying killing is crude and even sadistic. When Krutch, Amory and others attack “the joy of killing,” “killing for killing’s sake,” and “the pleasure of killing,” they are correct in doing so. Most, if not all, hunters would agree. But Krutch, Amory and the others are incorrect when they equate gratuitous killing with hunting.

The extent of this misunderstanding is seen when Krutch describes an advertisement in which a boy is taught by his father to hunt and the boy shoots a number of quail. Krutch then says, “...it seems to me that he is being taught a pure evil...” Hunters and anti-hunters could not be further from each other at this point. From the viewpoint of hunters, the context of the shooting of the quail is the outdoors, knowledge of wildlife, training of dogs, tradition of family, love of nature, ethics of conduct, rules of sportsmanship, skill in shooting, and food for the table. The boy is not being taught to kill for killing’s sake. He is participating in a complex social and natural event with historic significance.

If there is an opposite of Krutch’s view of hunting as pure evil, it is the Spanish philosopher, Ortega y Gasset’s view that hunting “...belongs in the repertory of the purest forms of human happiness.” Whenever man has been free to do what he pleases, Ortega says, he has engaged in hunting, dancing, racing, and conversing. And hunting has been “consistently more important” than any of the others. Hunters would say that they do not enjoy killing but that killing is a necessary part of hunting which they do enjoy. They reply that their critics confuse enjoying hunting with enjoying killing. Killing for fun is wrong, hunting for fun is not. Killing is a part of hunting. What is true of the part is not necessarily true of the whole. If a part of an engine is light, it does not necessarily follow that the engine is light. George Reiger, conservation editor of Field and Stream, says, “...killing only involves a split second of the innumerable hours we spend surrounded by and observing nature. We kill to hunt, not the other way around.”
The killing of the animal is at the heart of the problem. Ortega says that every good hunter is "...uneasy in the depths of his conscience..." when he faces the death that he inflicts on animals. "He does not have the final firm conviction that his conduct is correct...the generally problematic, equivocal nature of man's relationship with animals shines through that uneasiness." Nonetheless, Ortega says, "Death is essential because without it there is no authentic hunting: the killing of the animal is the natural end of the hunt and that goal of hunting itself, not of the hunter." Hence his rejection of photography as a substitute for hunting.

Ortega's most famous statement with regard to killing and hunting summarizes his view: "...one does not hunt in order to kill; on the contrary, one kills in order to have hunted." No other single statement so succinctly summarizes the relation of killing to hunting.

**Evaluation of Inhumane Charge**

The second objection, that hunting is inhumane, is not an argument against hunting itself (unless one defines hunting as inhumane, which some anti-hunters do). Rather, the objection is to the manner or method or consequent of sloppy shooting. To the extent that this objection is to the inhumaneness of having cripples (wounded animals not killed), the solution is to shoot well so that cripples are rare. The correction of sloppy shooting is accurate shooting, not the elimination of shooting. To the extent that this objection is the view that shooting a deer with a high-powered rifle is inhumane because it causes suffering, hunters reply that being killed with a high-powered rifle causes less suffering than being killed by starvation or by natural predators. Some anti-hunters, such as Forbes, disagree.

**Evaluation of Unethical Charge**

The third objection, that hunting is unethical, is usually based on the belief that wild animals have as much inherent value of rights as humans. The strength of this objection is that we need to recognize that all living things, including animals and plants, wild and domestic, have value. We should respect nature. We should not kill animals and plants senselessly. The weakness of this objection is that all living things do not have the same value, and that killing living things necessary for life, including human life.

How might one respond to Albert Schweitzer's view of that all life is sacred and that we should have a reverence for life? First, one should agree with Schweitzer that all living things have value, and that life is a mysterious and wonderful part of our universe. We should not be callous in our attitude toward living creatures. Even those living things with which we tend to have little appreciation or with which we feel little sympathy, such as frightening snakes, slimy slugs, and distant insects, have value as part of a fascinating ecological system. Our appreciation for all forms of life does not mean that we are incapable of making judgments of which we shall kill (particular types of germs and viruses) and which we shall save (e.g., humans). Neither does our respect for, and appreciation of, animals keep us from eating meat.

Schweitzer's position makes evident the fact which all people (hunters, anti-hunters, vegetarians, and other people) must face, which is that living entails killing, that is, life entails the necessity of destroying life to have life. Life is not possible without death (of others). Eating means killing. It means killing "innocent" living things, but life is not possible without it. This is true on all levels of existence from amoebas to people. It is a mistake to state this biological fact in moral terms. Nature has evolved such that organisms require the ingestion of other organisms in order to survive. Schweitzer admits that killing cannot be avoided and even admits that "slavish adherence" to the principle of not killing any living thing may lead to less compassion, not more. What Schweitzer fails to do is to provide a principle which would help us choose between killings.

Vegetarians choose to kill only plants. The vegetarian position faces several problems. First, our awareness of microscopic animal life makes vegetarianism impossible. To cook and eat even organically grown vegetables is not possible without killing animals, even if they are small ones. Surely, if one makes a moral argument against killing large animals, it must apply to small animals as well.
Second, the growing of vegetables destroys wildlife habitat. Ron Spomer in his article “Why Hunt?” points out that vegetarians are “...responsible for the deaths of countless wild animals. The land on which their fruits and vegetables are grown is stripped of its wildlife habitat.” In fact, he says, “Modern table vegetable production may be one of the most polluting and wildlife destructive agricultural practices known to man.”

Third, what moral principle makes killing animals wrong but killing vegetables right? Some vegetarians (but not Schweitzer) appeal to a pain/pleasure principle. Their argument is that vegetarians do not cause pain because the plants (or their fruits) they kill do not have neurons, the fundamental functioning unit of nervous tissue. However, we are beginning to become aware that plants react to sensory stimuli. Plants can undergo biological stress. Is it then not a principle but a matter of degree? If so, then both the animal eaters and the vegetable eaters must give the same kind of answer—a justification of a degree of stress and death for their (people’s) survival.

Would it not be more straightforward and honest to admit that our existence depends upon our taking of life, our killing of other living things (whether plants or animals)? Ought we not then to recognize our fate and give thanks to the Source of all life for the life we take to preserve our own lives? In doing so, we might accept Schweitzer’s principle that all life is sacred. We then must give good reasons (which I think we can) for the killing of living things. These reasons would be based on the levels of complexity and the characteristics of the living things. To start at the top, we can give good reasons for distinguishing between people and other animals, and, therefore, we can give good reasons for acting differently toward people and other animals.

It is appropriate to talk about murdering people, but it is not appropriate to talk about murdering other animals. It is appropriate to talk about innocent and guilty people, but not innocent and guilty animals or plants. The moralistic anti-hunter says “Murdering other animals is just as wrong as murdering people; All life is equally valuable.”

All life is not equally valuable. If it were, then we would not have the ability to choose between germs, microbes, plants, animals and people. We could not eat. Life refutes this claim. What is true is that all life is valuable, but not equally so. It is our responsibility as reasoning, moral creatures to make distinctions and to give good reasons for our actions toward the various forms of life, including people, other animals, plants, and ecological systems.

Paul Taylor, in Respect for Nature (1986), argues that hunting, trapping and fishing are unethical because they involve deception. This is the most unusual argument that I have encountered in reading the literature of the anti-hunters. Few, if any, of the others have adopted or used this view. Theodore Vitali, who agrees with Taylor’s definition of person and much of what he says about the proper understanding of rights, rejects this deception argument. Vitali says, “I take this argument to be patently absurd because no such trust relationship exists in any way, shape, or form in nature. If ever there were an example of imposing a human value upon nature, Taylor takes the cake here.”

One wonders if Taylor would attack people who “rob” honey from bees as morally depraved thieves. No doubt he would reserve the hottest place in hell for the wild turkey hunter who attempts to deceive by making the yelps, purrs, and clucks of a turkey hen. Such a hunter is attempting to imitate the hen’s calls and deceive the gobbler into thinking a hen is near and available. Duck hunters who call ducks into the decoys must also be consigned to these lower regions. Such behavior by hunters is not a morally degrading action; rather it is an example of the highest challenge of nature: to meet a wild creature on its own terms i.e., with the instinctive skills of the wild animal operating at their highest level.

Taylor’s mistake, as pointed out by Vitali, is that he imposes human values on nature. Wild animals do not trust humans. To read love and trust into wild animal behavior is to erroneously attribute to animals our own moral sensitivities. Animals would have to have these higher abilities in order for there to be any moral deception. Tricking an animal, such as a gobbler, involves deception but it does not involve moral deception.

Taylor’s view that “...humans are not inherently superior to other living things” is too extreme a view. Most people would accept that other living things have value, but believing that all species are equally valuable flies in the face of the obviously sig-
significant differences between species. Complexity, sensitivity, intelligence, and self-awareness are important differences, and they constitute a sufficient basis for different behavior toward different species of life. Even the vegetarians place different values on plant life and animal life. The distinctive differences between people and lower animals may not be as great as we once thought, but the differences are major.

Peter Singer, in Animal Liberation (1975), argues that more pain is produced than pleasure in using animals for food; hence there are moral reasons we should be vegetarians. He opposes hunting because it causes suffering, since no hunter can say that he kills instantly every time. Singer’s calculation of pleasure and pain is easily used against him by referring to the pain and suffering caused by predators or disease or starvation. R. G. Frey, in Rights, Killing, and Suffering (1983), refutes Singer’s argument by showing that the proper conclusion to be drawn from Singer’s position is that we ought to reduce the pain. The conclusion should be that animals should be humanely raised and mercifully slaughtered, not that we should be vegetarians.

The animal liberationists are also subject to another major objection to their position. Roger J. H. King, although opposed to sport hunting on other grounds, rejects the animal liberation argument against hunting. He says, “The individualistic orientation of animal liberation theories ignores the ecological reality of the biotic community.” Stated a bit fuller, with a hint to a possible solution, King says, “A holistic ethic geared to respecting the integrity of the whole is more in tune with the ecological reality of biotic communities than a liberationist individualism.”

Tom Regan, in The Case for Animal Rights (1983), argues that “subjects of life,” defined in such a way as to include mammals, are individuals with rights. Despite the fact that his criteria applies to mammals and not to other animals such as birds and fish, Regan uses “animal” in the title of his book (and in his discussions in the book) rather than “mammal.” His opposition to hunting, based on such criteria, could only apply to the hunting of mammals.

Regan’s “subjects of life” is so broad that the critical difference between people and lower animals is lost. This critical difference is self-consciousness. Self-consciousness is the basis for human freedom. It is because we are free to choose one action rather than another that we are morally responsible. Animals are not morally responsible because they do not have this freedom. Regan’s “subjects of life” (mammals) do have higher qualities than do other forms of life and are therefore more valuable. But the same principle applies between people and these lower mammals. People have higher qualities and therefore have rights to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” It does not make sense to say that lower animals in nature have the right to life. It is nonsensical to say that rabbits have a right to life that coyotes should respect. The term “right” is being used out of meaningful context.

J. Baird Callicott, in his book In Defense of the Land Ethic (1989), rejects Regan’s arguments against hunting. Against Regan’s arguments that not all hunting deaths are quick and clean, and that wildlife management is producing a surplus of game, Callicott responds that these arguments are “adventitious,” meaning that they do not deal with the essence of the problem but with merely accidental features which may be remedied.

This is an important reply. In many of the arguments advanced against hunting, the objections can be met by simply modifying what is done. If the argument is that hunters waste meat, then the solution is prevent the wasting of meat. If hunters are bad shots, then one can remedy this by requiring that hunters have shooting skills in order to get a license. If management is improperly done, then do it properly. None of these things has to do with hunting itself and hence are not really arguments against hunting per se but arguments against how hunting is done. Properly understood, if they are correct, they are reasons to modify how hunting is done.

Callicott also deals with Regan’s essential argument against hunting. Regan argues that hunting violates the rights of the animals because they are “subjects of life.” So Regan says that wildlife management should prevent human predation. Callicott counters, “But from the subject-of-a-life’s point of view his or her rights are equally and indifferently violated upon being killed and eaten whether ‘those’ who do so are human hunters or wolves.” Regan would reply that animals are not moral agents. But he has made them subjects of life, and he says that they can pose “innocent threats” to others. Callicott says, “Regan’s permission of ani-
mal predation...stands in direct contradiction to his theory of animal rights. 128

If Regan was consistent, he would argue that the world would be morally better if the world was purged of all carnivores. Such a final logical step in the argument makes it clear that Regan’s argument has been reduced to an absurdity. Logicians use the Latin term, reductio ad absurdum, to refer to arguing from some premise by logical steps and reaching an absurd conclusion. The result of such an argument is to show that the premise is false.

In one of the most unusual positions taken in the animal rights controversy (that is saying a lot) Steve Sapontzis argues that people have a moral obligation to prevent wild animals from preying on each other. (You can guess that he thinks of people preying on wild animals.) Such an incredible view would strike most people as an absurdity. Sapontzis does not agree. In fact, he attacks the belief that an argument with such a conclusion is an absurdity.

After jumping through a number of logical hoops, Sapontzis concludes, “Where we can prevent predation without occasioning as much or more suffering than we would prevent, we are obligated to alleviate avoidable animal suffering. Where we cannot prevent predation or cannot do so without occasioning as much or more suffering than we would prevent, that principle does not obligate us to attempt to prevent predation.” 129

He is undaunted by the objection which he notes that “…we would have to frustrate predators and perhaps even drive many of them to extinction (in the wild). Furthermore, we would have to control the population explosion among the former prey which our prevention of predation would occasion. This would require frustrating many of these animals, too, and would probably necessitate subjecting some of them to the trauma of surgery to sterilize them.” 130 To get around this objection, he qualifies his view to say that we have an obligation to prevent predation when we can do so without producing more suffering.

As a philosopher Sapontzis should have known to question his fundamental assumption. He does not. He takes it for granted that it is a widely held moral assumption that humans are “obligated to alleviate avoidable animal suffering.” “Suffering” is such an anthropomorphic term (refers to humans) that it clouds the issue. Animals do experience pain. But pain is a natural component in animal (including human) life, and it is incorrect to say that we should eliminate pain. It is neither biologically possible nor desirable. Pain is a negative stimulus, but it is not evil. We may have an obligation to eliminate or transform evil, but we do not have any obligation to eliminate pain. In using “animal,” Sapontzis is thinking of individual animals, not of animal populations. Often our sympathy may lie with the rabbit who is being chased by the coyote, but we not only do not have a moral obligation to prevent the coyote from obtaining its meal; it is a misunderstanding to suppose that we should. To prevent the coyote from catching, killing, and eating his prey would not benefit nature (it would, of course, benefit that particular rabbit at that time). But removing coyotes would, in the long term, bring disaster to the rabbits when they overpopulated and destroyed their habitat and then in a weakened state died in mass by disease and starvation.

If we have a moral obligation to nature, and I think that we do, it is to the biotic whole of nature, not to individual animals.

Sapontzis attempts to defend his strange position by using “avoidable” in his statement. One can reply to him that predation is eating meat, and that eating meat is necessary for carnivores; hence predation is unavoidable; hence we have no obligation to prevent it. He gives an example of “avoidable” by referring to our control over domestic pets. He says we should prevent them from being predators. But where does he think dog food comes from? If, for moral reasons, I prevent my dog from killing rabbits, how can I morally buy dog food made from animal by-products?

One of the criticisms against the animal rights movement is that it has “…elevated ignorance about the natural world almost to the level of a philosophical principle.” 131 This view comes from Richard Conniff’s article, “Fuzzy-Wuzzy Thinking About Animal Rights,” published in the Audubon magazine. He confesses that he finds the animal rights activists are people “…a lot like me,” which he defines as people who “…have been able to live all our lives under the illusion that nature is essentially benign, and that death is the exception rather than the daily rule.” 132 He suggests that if people wish to think clearly about nature that the proper context is “…not Muffin the cat but an eviscerated elk calf (eaten by a grizzly). Nature is a slaughterhouse—vast, brutal, gory, and efficient.” 133
Conniff sees a more serious weakness of the animal rights position than the ignorance of nature of its participants. He notes "...an apparent contradiction in the animal rights philosophy." He asks, "How could animal liberationists argue on the one hand that humans were merely a part of nature, no better or worse than other animals, and on the other that our species alone was obligated to give up practices with which it has naturally evolved, like killing and eating animals and wearing their skins? How could they argue that humans have no inherent moral superiority, and at the same time argue that we have a high moral obligation to treat animals more humanely than they would treat us or each other?"  

If one argues, as many in the animal rights movement do, that all species are of equal value, then either one has lowered humans to the level of animals and therefore the same principles of behavior apply to each, or one has raised animals to the level of humans and therefore would have to criticize animals for violating the rights of other animals by taking their lives. In either case, the animal rights argument fails. In the first case, it fails because humans would not have any moral responsibility. In the second case, it fails because animals would have to have moral responsibility, which is absurd.

To claim that hunting is unethical because all species have equal inherent value is to destroy our ability to choose between the lives of animals, germs, and people. It is important to understand that animals have value and that value is inherent. Their value does not just reside in their value for us. Nonetheless, we must be able to recognize the significant differences in the levels of inherent value in living things. We must because we have to act differently towards different creatures. We do not believe it is right to kill and eat a person, but we do find it necessary (unless one chooses to be a vegetarian) to kill and eat animals.

**Evaluation of Chauvinistic Charge**

How might hunters answer the fourth major objection to hunting, which is the charge of the ecofeminists that they are chauvinistic? The hunters should begin by acknowledging the contributions that the ecofeminists have brought to our understanding of nature. Rachel Carson's early book, *Silent Spring* (1962), warned us of the disaster that DDT was causing to our environment. The ecofeminists have pointed out clearly that the desires to conquer nature, to dominate nature and to exploit nature are a part of a particular outlook which they have identified as male dominance. It is surely true that Western thought and culture has been largely dominated by males who were biased against women and their abilities, and who understood themselves as having the task of conquering nature.

Is the subjugation of women connected with the subjugation of nature, with both subjugations being a part of a patriarchal society based on hunting? There are many parts to this question. Patriarchal society has as a matter of historical record subjugated women.

What is not a clear is that attitudes attributed to males and females by Mary Daly and Andree Collard are necessarily connected with gender. Daly says of her book, *Gyn/Ecology* (1978), "...it is absolutely Anti-androcrat, A-mazingly Anti-male, Furiously and Finally Female." The book is fine as a protest against the injustice toward females which she documents. As a final position of human beings searching for integrity, justice and freedom, the book is inadequate. Daly has been "named" by her enemy and consumed by her fury. We (meaning all of us, male and female, black and white, young and old, Eastern and Western) are first human beings. The source of evils and our sins (as well as our goodness) must be traced back to our being persons.

The central issue for our consideration is whether or not the attitudes, intentions, and actions related to hunting are a part of the set of attitudes, intentions and actions of males, or a male culture that desires to subjugate women. In short, is hunting related to female suppression?

Ortega's presentation of hunting is chauvinistic in the sense that he defines man's being as first occurring in his being a hunter. Ortega says, "Hunting was...the first Form of Life that man adopted, and this means...that man's life consists in being a hunter." Is "man" used here generically or as referring to males? It seems that Ortega forgot about women, since they are never mentioned. He relegated the "gathering" part of early culture in his book to a footnote in which he says that gathering probably did not signify much or become a formal occupation. Certainly this was not true.
in many cultures. By such simple dismissal, not even the existence of women, much less their activities, is noted. Such male chauvinism detracts from Ortega’s presentation.

Ortega’s separation of hunting from gathering is also questionable. The earliest humans were most probably hunter/gatherers.

Paul Shephard’s account is preferable to Ortega’s in that he does not separate the hunter/gatherer aspects of the early society. Shephard argues for the value of the hunter/gatherer society in contrast with the latter agricultural society. He, too, quietly drops the gathering and deals only with the hunting. This leads him into the same mistake as Ortega. Shephard says, “Man is in part a carnivore: the male of the species is genetically programmed to pursue, attack, and kill for food. To the extent that men do not do so they are not fully human.”¹³ Eight Does the first use of “man” in this quote mean both male and female? It seems so. But he then says that men (meaning males) must hunt to be “fully human.” What about women? Are they not “fully human”? Or are women “fully human” doing something else? Are there, then, two types of fully human beings?

Is the ecofeminists’ charge against hunting justified? Not necessarily. That some defenders of hunting are male chauvinists does not mean that all defenders are, nor does it mean that there is a necessary connection between the two. Both sides of this debate may have been unduly influenced by the more dramatic features of the hunting of large game. Reconstructing early human societies is shaky at best, but those early omnivorous humans were most probably highly opportunistic with regard to sources of food. They did not eat the available edible fruits, nuts, vegetables, animals, fish, snails, snakes, etc. Whether the earliest societies were patriarchal or matriarchal we just do not know.

Hunting, that is, the killing of animals, has no necessary connection with one gender, especially if one is referring to the killing of small animals. When, where, and how the first patriarchal societies arose we do not know. But there is no necessary connection with hunting in order for such a society to arise.

Hunting is connected with some historical patriarchal societies, but so is farming. The patriarchal societies of the ancient Near East, such as the Babylonian expressed in the Gilgamesh Epic (2000 B.C.E.) and the Biblical expressed in the Old Testament (1000 to 400 B.C.E.), were farmers and herders, not primarily hunters.

Historically women have been excluded in many western societies from the hunting of large animals. But subjugation of women is not caused by hunting. That some societies may have connected the two does not mean that there is a necessary connection.

Collard’s view of the hunter as an “overwhelmed, fragmented and frightened” male who has the “pathetic urge to kill” is a caricature. Her opposition to a culture of domination and violence is justified. But hunting, for example, the hunting of American Indians who conceived themselves as performing a sacred act involving the giving of life by the animal, is not necessarily characterized as she supposes. If this is correct, then it is not hunting that she should be opposed to, but rather a certain type of hunting. In this opposition to certain types of hunting most hunters would agree, though they might not agree with her about the type.

Both the defenders of hunting (Ortega) and the anti-hunters (Collard) point out the conflict involved in the fact that hunting involves the death of what the hunter loves and admires. Ortega says that the good hunter “...is uneasy in the depths of his conscience...”¹³⁰ when he recognizes that he inflicts death on what he admires. Ortega says that the hunter lacks “the final and firm conviction” that his action is appropriate. Ortega does not claim to have solved “the moral problem of hunting.” He ends his account of the ethics of hunting with the note that persons are a part of “the inexorable hierarchy” of living things. Collard also notes “the contradictions” involved in the hunter killing that which he claims to love. She ends her account of “shots in the dark” with a reference to Henry David Thoreau. She quotes Thoreau as saying that “explorers and lumberers” do not love wild nature any more than “woodsawyers” love forests. King also quotes Thoreau attacking the logger who says that he admires the tree he has cut. Interestingly enough, Collard tells us that Thoreau had to cut timber in his attempt to live self-sufficiently. Yet she claims that Thoreau’s cutting of timber “...did not prevent him from participating as fully as he could in the mystery of the wild.”¹⁴⁰

In Joyce Contrucci’s account of Collard’s “biophilic journey”
she notes Collard's removing of insects from the logs that she places in her wood stove. Is there no "contradiction" here? Collard is sensitive to living things and does not wish to kill them. Yet where did this log she puts in her fire come from? Did it not come from a living tree? And even if the tree were dead when it was taken from the forest, did she not remove the homes of many animals for her own comfort? Can Thoreau and Collard cut trees to warm themselves without losing their sense of the mystery of the wild? If they can, can not the rest of us do likewise? And can not the hunter who kills the animal as Thoreau and Collard killed (or had someone else kill them) the trees likewise still keep his respect for the wild? The contradictions, dilemmas, paradoxes, or whatever else you want to call them are there. But they are shared by all - ecofeminists and hunters.

King agrees with the ecofeminists. He holds that any action (including hunting) can be satisfactorily evaluated only within the context in which it is done. He believes that hunting is unjustified because it is part of a view of the natural world which sees the world as an object of predation which is "...to be pursued and violently subordinated...." King rejects this view of the natural world and therefore rejects hunting.

Is King's argument applicable to sport hunting? Is sport hunting a part of the attempt to conquer and dominate the world? King's argument would seem to be more applicable to the hunting of the United States western pioneers who sought to conquer the wilderness, and who saw nature's bounty as resources that they had the right to plunder. King's argument seems most appropriately applied to the Daniel Boone figures who killed bears or wolves to conquer the west. The final expression of this type of hunting was the market hunting of the late 1800's which almost brought many species of the North American wilderness to extinction. But sport hunters of today do not identify with this context. Indeed, the conservation departments of most states were formed in reaction (often too late) to such slaughter. Sport hunters were the driving force in establishing these departments. They demanded the conservation of game. They did want to hunt game but in a different context.

What is the context of contemporary sport hunting? The answer to this question takes one back to the statements of the hunters (given in Chapter I) as to why they hunt. The answer includes the desire to be a part of nature, the desire to be a part of a tradition, the satisfaction of being a direct provider of food, and the naturalness felt in pursuing game. King denies that he is attacking a caricature of the hunter, but he does place the hunter in the context of the desire to destroy and dominate nature. The hunter's expressions of what they are doing (as given in Chapter I) do not express this context in which King wants to place them.

John Mitchell, in *The Hunt* (1980), offers sociological contexts from which he believes that we can understand the perspectives of both the people who are for, and the people who are against, hunting. Mitchell suggests different sociological contexts in which the different attitudes toward hunting seem appropriate. He proposes that the pro-anti hunting split follows the urban/liberal versus the rural/conservative split. In the context of the city, where "...meat is rendered painlessly between cellophane and cardboard,...hunting has to appear somewhat barbaric." On the other hand, in the context of the country, the rural perspective is that "...the frontiersman is hero, life is competitive, nature is cruel, and meat is rendered violently by bullet or blade." In this sociological context, hunting, Mitchell suggests, has a "valid" role.

King also rejects hunting because it is "not necessary for survival." Many other anti-hunters make this same point. But they fail to acknowledge that the hunt is done in the context of obtaining food. It is a fact that no game animal (varmints are an exception) is hunted legally in the United States that is not used as food. The critics of hunting are correct in making the point that killing outside the context of food, that is, "just for the fun of it," cannot be justified because hunting involves the death of the animal. But within the context of obtaining food, sport hunting can be justified. The restriction that this food is not necessary for survival is too narrow. It is not necessary if one substitutes domesticated animals. But is the killing of domesticated animals morally superior to the killing of wild animals? If one rejects the killing of all animals, one can only eat vegetables and only use products which are not made from animals. Are people more a part of nature or less a part of nature, by taking such a position?

An entirely different feminism than that of the feminism of Collard and Daly is that of Clarissa Estes in her book, *Women Who
Run With the Wolves. Indeed Estes argues for the need of women (and men) to develop the natural, instinctive self. Although her book is addressed to women, Estes says about men, “Within the masculine psyche, there is a creature, an unwounded man, who believes in the good, who has no doubts about life, who is not only wise but who also is not afraid to die.” The mature hunter faces death and sees it as natural.

Evaluation of Not Ecologically Sound Charge

What evaluation might one make of the fifth major objection to hunting, which is that it is not ecologically sound? This issue is raised by some biologists when they ponder the place that values have in wildlife management. Edward Langenau, Jr. and others, in an article “Values in Management,” note the objection raised by some anti-hunters that hunting removes the most genetically fit individuals, since hunters seek the largest trophies. The result is that the smaller, less genetically fit survive to reproduce.

The biologists reply, “...there is no evidence that hunting produces changes in gene frequency.” They further suggest that some of the major hunted species, such as the white-tailed deer, have evolved under selection pressures and have outlasted many now-extinct predators. Further, it may be that “...a succession of intense harvest is precisely the mechanism maintaining genetic variability.”

With regard to “ecological values,” these biologists draw boundaries on scientific inquiry. They say there are no scientific answers “...to questions of whether or not habitat should be managed for species diversity, which species mix to favor, and which dimensions of diversity—species richness or species equitability—should be used to establish management goals.” These scientists correctly note that the goals of science lie outside science in the value judgments of people. Our value judgments need to be stated and debated in open, public forum in the context of free speech and political action within a democratic society.

Answers to the Five Arguments

Of the five other arguments, the first argument is that sport hunting is “not romantic,” i.e., it is not a way to get close to nature. It is not clear how this disagreement between hunters and anti-hunters might be resolved. It is not evident that if hunters produced more accounts or produced better accounts of their feeling of being a part of nature (one might suggest Aldo Leopold’s beautifully poetic accounts) that Grandy and other anti-hunters would be persuaded. How might a reader go about determining who is correct? Reading the accounts, questioning people one can trust, and/or participating in hunting, seem to be possible avenues for individuals to resolve this issue for themselves. This issue appears to be a part of the basic discussion, “Why do people hunt?” Are we to believe the hunters’ accounts of their experiences? Grandy does not. Since Grandy rejects hunters’ accounts, he is then free to attribute to them what he believes is their real motive. This he takes to be the deriving of pleasure from killing (his main objection to sport hunting).

The second argument against sport hunting is that it is not meat hunting. As noted above, sport hunting is not subsistence hunting (hunting necessary for existence). In saying that sport hunting is not meat hunting, Grandy probably means that the primary reason that most people hunt is not to obtain meat or, what is more likely, Grandy means that the obtaining of meat has nothing to do with contemporary sport hunting. If this is correct, then the extent to which it is correct, if it is, could be determined by a sociological study of hunters’ aims and attitudes. Motives would probably be, in part, determined by the hunters’ social and economic status. Rural, poor people probably do hunt for meat. Affluent, urban people are probably more interested in other aspects of hunting or not interested in hunting at all since they can obtain their meat from the supermarket. Aside from motivation, what happens to the hundreds of millions of pounds of meat that comes from the approximately four million deer killed by hunters each year in the United States? Most of it is consumed by the hunters and their families. Some animals are shot but not found, or are wounded and die later. This meat is lost to the hunters, but it is consumed by scavengers. Indeed, anti-hunters argue that animals that die from starvation are not wasted since scavengers have their place in nature as well. Certainly there are slob hunters who kill animals and leave them, but no responsible hunter or hunting group advo-
cates such behavior.

These millions of pounds of meat substitute for domestic meat in the diet of the hunters and their families. The wild meat provides a very small percent of the meat eaten by most hunters, nevertheless the total volume of wild meat consumed in the United States is large. When Grandy says that sport hunting “...has nothing to do with feeding families...,” his claim is factually incorrect. Domestic meat might be substituted for wild meat, but this would require increased production of domestic animals, and their slaughter. Are there humane or moral arguments for the preference of killing domestic animals rather than wild ones?

Grandy uses “sport hunting” in two ways. He uses it in the negative and narrowly defined sense of “killing just for fun,” and he also uses it in a broader sense of referring to the kind of hunting that is not subsistence hunting, i.e., hunting that is necessary for survival. Using the term in the first sense, he excludes “meat hunting” from “sport hunting.” Using the term at other times in the second sense, he refers to the general practice of hunting at the present time in the United States which does include meat hunting. This ambiguous use of “sport hunting” permits him to condemn (as we all would) “killing just for fun” and to condemn the practice of the activity generally termed “sport hunting.” If the hunter eats what he kills, is the activity “sport hunting” or “meat hunting?” It is not clear how Grandy would respond.

The third argument is that sport hunting is not necessary. What does Grandy mean by “not necessary?” If he means it is not necessary for people’s survival in the United States at this time, he is correct. If he means that domestic meat can be substituted for wild meat, he is correct. But does this substitution mean less killing, less suffering? Is there less suffering in the modern factory production and slaughter of chickens and cattle than that of turkey and deer living in the wild and being shot?

If one is a vegetarian, then the killing of animals (wild or domestic) is “not necessary” for one’s eating. If one is not a vegetarian, then the killing of animals is “necessary.” One might argue that killing wild animals is “not necessary,” since we can kill domestic animals instead. Then one would need a justification of the preference of killing domestic over wild animals. Are there moral reasons for preferring the killing of domestic animals over wild ones or vice versa? None have been advanced.

The American Humane Society (not Grandy’s organization) is engaged in large scale killing of animals that are brought to animal pounds in the cities of America. Kim Sturla, executive director of the San Mateo County Humane Society, reports that “...10 to 12 million unclaimed, undernourished animals (are) euthanized annually across the nation.” So the American Humane Society is not against the killing of animals, only against the cruel or inhumane killing of animals. It is also interesting that the reasons that they give for killing domestic animals is overpopulation—the same reason hunters give for killing wild animals. The American Humane Society kills domestic animals because they are overpopulated, and yet the society condemns the killing of wild animals that are overpopulated.

Often a further step is taken. The argument against killing wild animals inappropriately moves to the killing of “innocent beings.” Are domestic animals less “innocent?” And what is meant by “innocent?” Is any animal “guilty?” It is an emotional term, used to arouse feelings. But it is inappropriately used in reference to animals.

Grandy’s fourth argument is that sport hunting removes food from nature (contrary to some elements of the third argument in which he does not give much weight to the meat removed and consumed by sport hunters). As noted above, the two-sided argument (if less predators then more prey for humans, and if less human taking then more for predators) is questionable when applied over an extended period of time. This whole argument of the competition between persons and wild predators should be dropped. The existence of wild prey depends upon habitat. If the habitat is in a healthy, productive condition, and the variable factors such as rain and temperature are in a normal range, then the population and health of the ungulates such as deer and elk will be high. If these populations are high, then the numbers of predators will rise because food for the predators’ young will be abundant. If the habitat is in poor condition because of overuse or because of the variable factors (drought or late freeze), then the number and health of the ungulates will be low and consequently the number of predators will decline. Both persons and wild predators have a place in the natural environment.
Grandy's fifth argument is that "sport hunting" is not a management tool at all. All reasons given by wildlife managers as to why hunting is a useful tool in managing wildlife is rejected (as noted above). What is one to make of these subarguments? One should notice that these subarguments are counterarguments or arguments against, i.e., they are given to refute previous arguments. As such, they are not the affirmation of positions as much as a rejection of other positions.

With regard to the topic of the first of these subarguments, starvation, hunters make or attempt to make an argument that hunting is more humane than starvation. Their idea is that a quick kill is more humane than slow starvation. Surprisingly, the Humane Society of the United States, the Fund for Animals, and other anti-hunter groups say that starvation is more humane than being shot with a high-powered rifle. Dana Forbes of the Fund for Animals prefers "starvation,... death by predation, disease, parasites and exposure to cold and heat," since she says these are the ways "...which nature employs to ensure survival of the fittest." That disease, exposure, and starvation are more humane is rejected by hunters.

The second subargument is to limit growth. This argument is rejected by the anti-hunters on the basis that fall hunting stimulates reproduction in response to abundant feed left for the survivors, and that, on the other hand, if there is nutritional stress, this will cause the female deer to give birth to fewer offspring. The anti-hunters prefer nutritional stress and starvation, and the pro-hunters prefer harvesting the "crop" and leaving fewer deer with better nutrition and more offspring. Grandy says that "...if wildlife managers were truly interested in just limiting populations they would open a season for females only, but they never do." Managers are not just interested in population control, since they have other objectives as well, but managers do set the number of females that need to be eliminated in order to maintain a balance of the sexes. Often doe permits are issued or a "doe day" is declared for the purpose of removing a determined number of females.

Actually, wildlife managers often have a difficult time convincing hunters to shoot does, because the not killing of does was an early deer restoration rule that has become ingrained in the ethos of hunting ethics. Hunters conceive of themselves as practicing deer preservation by not shooting does. ("If you don't shoot does, you'll always have deer.") Wildlife managers who want to deal with an excessive number of does in order to maintain a balance of deer population with the habitat find themselves trying to sell reluctant hunters the idea that the deer herd would be healthier with fewer does.

No more revealing story of the effects of different approaches to the management (including non-management) of deer could be told than that of Angel Island. Angel Island State Park is a one square mile island in San Francisco Bay. The population of black-tailed deer has risen to starvation levels and crashed three times: 1966, 1976, and 1980. The first attempt to deal with the starvation level population in 1966 was to have park rangers shoot the excess deer. Fifty deer were killed, and then a public outcry stopped the shooting. The population crashed because of starvation. The second attempt in 1976 included the San Francisco Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals feeding the deer. The population crashed anyway. The third attempt in 1980 brought a recommendation from Professor Dale McCullough, the A. Starker Leopold Professor of Wildlife Management at the University of California, Berkeley. His recommendation was that they introduce "...coyotes to allow natural predation to reduce the herd." This natural, biological solution was condemned in the media. The San Francisco Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals' solution this time was relocation. Over 200 deer were relocated. The result was that about 85 percent of the relocated deer died within a year.

In 1983, with the population expanding, the same society proposed another solution: trapping and sterilizing the deer. Trapping failed, and the society stopped its attempts to influence management of the population. Today, rangers shoot the excess deer.

The conclusion is extremely important: "...alternatives to shooting for control of deer populations are expensive, ineffective, and not particularly humane." McCullough and this author wonder why not use the natural predator alternative? There is evidence that some of the anti-hunter authors would support natural predation. So here we might have a case where an ecological solution could be used, and this solution would be acceptable to hunters, anti-hunters, conservationists, nature lovers, and game
biologists. If these sometimes warring groups came together in support of an ecological solution, maybe the public could be educated to accept natural predators.

What response might be given to King’s argument against Callicott using Leopold’s land ethic as a basis for the justification of hunting? King suggested that we should restore predators where they have been exterminated. In some places where there is an extensive human population the reintroduction of large predators is not practical. In areas where it is practical predators should be reintroduced. King’s position that “...in practice, large predator populations are a liability to the sport hunter...” is false. Both hunters and antihunters often take this mistaken view. When biologist Dr. James Earl Kennamer, director of Research and Management for the National Wild Turkey Federation, was asked, “Should I control predators on my land?” Dr. Kennamer said, “No, except under extreme situations.” He went on to explain, “Predators are part of nature’s way of controlling many of the rodents and other small animal populations, which, if disturbed, would have detrimental effects on the ecological balance of the ecosystem.” This is a turkey biologist telling turkey hunters not to kill predators which might kill turkeys. Why? Because the predators play an important role in maintaining a healthy population of turkeys, which is what the hunters want. King’s view (and that of many hunters) that there is a “practical contradiction” between sport hunting and the existence of predators is false.

King also rejects Callicott’s defense of hunting as its playing a beneficial role in the wild biotic community. King argues that humans have lost their wild niche and that for them to return to their former place in the natural order of things would play havoc with ecological relationships. It is true that humans could not return to the status of getting all their food from wild plants and animals without destroying that resource. But humans may play the role of selective predators who are guided by wildlife management principles and limited by laws and rules as to where and as to how many animals they can take. Humans can have an occasional return to that niche which they once occupied all the time. There is no practical contradiction in doing so.

The third subargument is to keep them healthy. The focus of the anti-hunters is on individual animals. The focus of wildlife managers is on the herd. Wildlife managers point out that overcrowding resulting from overpopulation makes it easy for diseases to spread between the animals. Also, too many animals means less food which results in nutritional stress which makes the animals more susceptible to disease.

Forbes’ “anti-evolution” argument is about a certain kind of hunting, trophy hunting, hence is not about hunting per se. She may also be mistaken in her view of the prey chosen by predators. Predators certainly do catch the slow, the weak, the diseased, and the crippled. But predators are also opportunistic. They catch (or try to catch) what comes along. The truth is that most hunters do exactly the same thing. Despite stories about hunting for great trophies, most hunters shoot the first legal deer that comes along. But if she is correct about trophy hunting, then the hunting can be modified and, in fact, in most areas today wildlife biologists recommend that antlerless deer be taken. The question of whether or not the harvesting of mature males adversely affects a wildlife population must be determined by scientific study.

Contrary to the above mentioned studies by Geist and Heimer on Dall sheep, biologist Edward Murphy and others have shown that the evidence does not support Geist’s and Heimer’s theory of the negative effects of harvesting mature Dall rams by hunters. Murphy reports, “Two comparisons of population composition between nearby unhunted and hunted populations showed no relationship between the harvest of old rams and the proportions of young rams in the populations, and no effect of hunting on lamb or yearling production was evident.” Murphy found that Heimer’s hypothesis that the removal of the older rams would result in a lower reproduction rate by the ewes was not correct. Murphy found that the lamb to ewe ratio did not differ significantly between the hunted and unhunted areas.

Issues of the ecological impact of hunting (or a certain type of hunting such as trophy hunting) are the kind that should be debated between hunters and anti-hunters. Both groups should be concerned with the health of the wildlife populations. Decisions about the accuracy of either hunters’ or anti-hunters’ factual claims should be settled by scientific research. We have noted the above disagreement between researchers, so we should not expect final
and ultimate answers from science, because scientific answers are always subject to more rigorous testing. If the issue is a biological one, answers can be given by biologists. If the issue is a philosophical one, it should be so acknowledged and discussed as such.

The fourth subargument is about money. If one takes a historical view of the last hundred years, it has been the hunters (Teddy Roosevelt comes to mind) and the hunters’ organizations who have been doing research on wildlife and working to preserve wildlife habitat (such as Ducks Unlimited). Admittedly, they have been primarily concerned with game species that are hunted. But preserving natural habitat benefits all wildlife. Hunter organizations have been involved in restoring wildlife to areas where early frontier expansion eliminated them completely.

An example of this restoration is The National Wild Turkey Federation’s re-establishment of wild turkeys to all the lower forty-eight states which originally had turkey populations and even to some states that did not originally have a native flock. Again, it has done so for the purpose of establishing flourishing flocks that could be hunted. Is the country and its wildlife better off with the wild turkeys or without them? And who provided the money and effort to restore them? Hunters often feel that some of the anti-hunters are “Johnny come lately” conservationists who should join with the hunter conservationists to preserve the wildlife that both value highly. George Reiger of Field and Stream says of the anti-hunters, “They have only a relatively recent and highly erratic record of concern.”

General observations and conclusions about the hunting/anti-hunting controversy will be made in the final chapter of the book. We will be able to stand back from the controversy and contribute some insights about the issue. First let us examine the view of Aldo Leopold, a pioneer and inspirational source of contemporary ecology, on the nature of hunting.