Anthrozoös

A multidisciplinary journal of the interactions between people and other animals

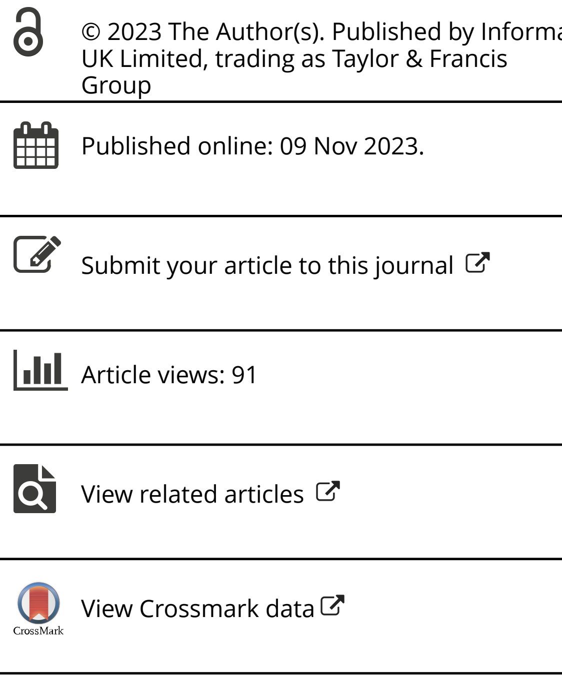
ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rfan20

“Has an Ugly Caw”: The Moral Implications of How Hunting Organizations Depict Nonhuman Animals

Jenna Aarnio & Elisa Aaltola

To cite this article: Jenna Aarnio & Elisa Aaltola (09 Nov 2023): “Has an Ugly Caw”: The Moral Implications of How Hunting Organizations Depict Nonhuman Animals, Anthrozoös, DOI: 10.1080/08927936.2023.2266923

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/08927936.2023.2266923



© 2023 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group

Published online: 09 Nov 2023.

Submit your article to this journal

Article views: 91

View related articles

View Crossmark data

Full Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at
https://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?journalCode=rfan20

ANTHROZOÖS
https://doi.org/10.1080/08927936.2023.2266923

"Has an Ugly Caw": The Moral Implications of How Hunting Organizations Depict Nonhuman Animals

Jenna Aarnio and Elisa Aaltola

Department of Philosophy, Contemporary History and Political Science, University of Turku, Turku, Finland

ABSTRACT

We examined how four hunting organizations in Finland and in the UK (*The Finnish Wildlife Agency, Finnish Hunters' Association, The British Association for Shooting and Conservation, and Countryside Alliance*) describe wild animals on their web pages and what the moral implications of these descriptions are. How do these hunting organizations define animals, and how does this impact the moral regard given to these animals? Using discourse analysis together with philosophical analysis, our examination revealed that the descriptions focus mainly on physical attributes, leaving out the minds of animals. Therefore, hunting organizations take part in dementalization (underestimation or denial of minds) of nonhuman animals, which interlinks with mechanomorphism (the depiction of animals as biological machines). We argue that dementalization and mechanomorphism in the descriptions serve a strategic purpose, as they hinder the possibility of recognizing animal experiences and individuality and keep animal ethical questions out of view. Further, the organizations tend to approach the ethics of hunting through the perspective of human interests only, whilst the interests and inherent value of animals are sidelined. In sum, the way in which hunting organizations depict animals is prone to sidelining ethical issues concerning the killing of animals.

KEYWORDS
Animal ethics; dementalization; human–animal interaction; hunting; mechanomorphism; wild animals

We examined how four hunting organizations in Finland and in the UK (*The Finnish Wildlife Agency*, *Finnish Hunters' Association*, *The British Association for Shooting and Conservation*, and *Countryside Alliance*) describe wild animals on their web pages and what the moral implications of these descriptions are.

As a background to our analysis, we present three classic animal ethical theories, which offer reasons for the moral consideration of nonhuman animals.[1] Academic animal ethicists have examined the moral status and treatment of nonhuman animals, particularly from the 1970 s onward. Perhaps most famously, Peter Singer argues that limiting the circle of moral concern only to *Homo sapiens* shows a prejudice that is not justifiable;

CONTACT Jenna Aarnio jekaaa@utu.fi Department of Philosophy, Contemporary History and Political Science, University of Turku, 20014 Finland

© 2023 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

equal moral weight should be given to the interests of every sentient being affected by the relevant action (1975). Singer's utilitarian animal ethics builds on Jeremy Bentham's notion that the most fundamental feature for moral consideration is the ability to feel pain.[2] The prerequisite for a being to have morally relevant interests is *sentience*, the ability to experience positive and negative affects: as sentient creatures can experience pain and suffering, we should take their interests into account when making moral choices. Indeed, Singer argues that sentience is the only relevant criterion for the moral consideration of individuals (1974, p. 107). Accordingly, the moral permissibility of actions can be evaluated on the grounds of how well they promote wellbeing or prevent suffering.

Tom Regan, on the other hand, emphasized the notion of inherent value rather than interests (1983). Drawing from Kantian ethics, he posited that ethics should focus on the protection of the inherent value of given types of individuals. Such value is based on what Regan calls a *subject-of-a-life*. For a being to count as a subject-of-a-life, they must have certain mental capacities, such as sentience, beliefs, feelings, preferences, and memory, but the ultimate criterion is, again, sentience. All subjects-of-a-life have inherent value and should be treated with respect, inclusive of avoiding unnecessary harm. As many animals are subjects-of-a-life, we should widen the sphere of moral concern outside of humans, which gives grounds for the notion of animal rights (Regan, 1983).

The third influential philosopher, Mary Midgley, proposed a relational approach to animal ethics (1983). She emphasized the role of familiarity and kinship when making moral decisions, which – contra Singer – would justify prioritizing human beings in given circumstances. However, Midgley argued that such relational criteria are not morally overriding. Moreover, while there is empirical evidence of the human tendency to favor our own species, members of other species can also be objects of special relations (Midgley, 1983, p. 110).[3] Ultimately, Midgley based moral consideration on consciousness and sentience, detailing that: "A conscious being is one which can mind what happens to it, which prefers some things to others, which can be pleased or pained, can suffer or enjoy" (1983, p. 92).

All three ethicists position sentience as the main criterion for moral consideration. They show a general trend in animal ethics to underscore that nonhuman animals have more than mere instrumental value – also, animals other than human beings can have morally considerable interests, have inherent value, and even be holders of moral rights (Aaltola, 2012). Such emphasis on sentience has also gained ground at the level of public opinion, as consumers are increasingly concerned about animal suffering.[4] Importantly, animal welfare laws are anchored on the moral relevance of sentience[5] – as is the case in the two countries included in our research: Finland and the UK. Therefore, paying moral regard to animal sentience has become societally accepted and – at least superficially – legally required. In sum, ethical considerations of animals – both academic and societal – are informed by the perceived sentience and cognitive abilities of nonhuman animals. But what of hunting organizations – do they consider the relevance of sentience or, more broadly speaking, the mindedness of non-human animals?

Methods

The study was conducted between November 2021 and June 2022. No ethical approval was required.

Our study focused on two countries – Finland and the UK – and the two most prominent hunting organizations from each.[6] These two countries have well-established hunting cultures that differ from each other in significant ways.

Using discourse analysis, we examined how these organizations, on their websites, describe nonhuman animals and their treatment. Emphasis was placed on three factors: descriptions concerning commonly hunted animals (with a particular interest in whether sentience or cognition was mentioned), descriptions of hunting and its end results, and descriptions of ethics. We carefully read through the materials offered on the websites, searching for texts involving these three factors and analyzing their normative implications. Our study does not provide statistical information but is rather a qualitative exploratory study into the dimensions of hunting discourse that are significant from the perspective of animal ethics and which merit further research. The focus of our study was a philosophical analysis: What are the ethical consequences of either including or excluding references to animal sentience and minds?

Following the grouping of hunting cultures used by Putnam et al. (2011), Finland can be placed in the North European/Scandinavian model where "hunting is recreational, but with a major focus still concerned with generating food. Hunting is popular and widespread, with the highest proportion of hunters per head of population in Europe" (p. 6). In this model, hunting is widely accepted (Ljung et al., 2012; Putnam, 2011). The Finnish hunting culture reflects the "hunting as harvesting" type identified by anthropologist Bertrand Hell, shared by North European and Germanic cultures, where hunting and culling wildlife is seen as managing nature.[7] Hunters are seen as stewards and caretakers who maintain animal populations (Falzon, 2008; Hell, 1996; von Essen & Allen, 2021).[8]

The UK, on the other hand, can be placed in an Anglo-Saxon model, where hunting is largely recreational, and hunters are relatively small in number. In the UK, hunting rights belong to the landowner and hunting has been associated with the land-owning elite. This image of hunting as a recreational pursuit of the elite may be the reason why hunting is viewed somewhat critically by the wider public. Compared with European countries, hunting is also lightly regulated (Putnam et al., 2011, p. 8). In Hell's categorization, the UK represents the "hunting as gathering" type, where

> the right to hunt and the right to own individual property are closely linked in the legal system, completely excluding the idea, basic to the jural aspect of hunting as harvest, of a communal approach to the management of landed property. (Hell, 1996, p. 206)

Legislatively, Finland and the UK differ in how they view the ownership of game. In the UK, game animals are considered *res nullius* (belonging to no one); shooting them "involves some sort of 'contract' with the landowner" (Putnam, 2011, p. 55). In Finland, game animals are viewed as *res communis* (belonging to everyone); the state has more control over hunting them (Ibid. pp. 55–57).

Results and Discussion

Despite the cultural differences, the depictions of wild animals on all four websites were strikingly similar. We argue this shows the extent to which European hunting cultures – even when they differ from each other – have adopted a strongly anthropocentric approach to nonhuman animals.

Hunting Organizations' Descriptions of Animals, Hunting, and Ethics

Out of the four organizations, *The Finnish Wildlife Agency* offered the most comprehensive descriptions of different animal species. Typically, the descriptions consisted of the following: (1) physical appearance (color, size, differences between sexes and ages), (2) geographical origin, (3) current habitat, (4) breeding behavior, (5) diet, (6) vocalization, and (7) hunting season. Moreover, the usefulness of or harm caused by the species, mostly evaluated from the perspective of human interests, was frequently mentioned (e.g., "causes car accidents," "destroys crops," "eats game bird eggs," "is greatly valued as game"), as were references to the potential diseases of the animals (e.g., "carries mange," "carries ticks"). In sum, animals were defined through physical attributes and species-specific traits. Predominantly, they were described as biological organisms, approached through the lens of instrumental value to humans. References to sentience and cognition were almost entirely absent.

The *Finnish Hunters' Association* website had a limited amount of species-specific identification material available.[9] Where such materials existed, they focused predominantly on the biology of the animal, the animal's possible harmfulness, and hunting seasons. For instance, in its description of the red fox, the association briefly mentioned the breeding behavior of foxes, before highlighting foxes' potential diseases (mange, rabies) and how foxes can be killed.[10] The website mainly focused on offering practical advice on how animals can be killed (e.g., advice on how to trap animals and which body part one ought to aim at when shooting an animal) and how the meat of the animal can be cooked. It also listed hunting events, competitions, reasons for hunting, and different hunting-dog breeds. The mission of the association is to endorse hunting and to invite new people to take part in it; therefore, the website often read like an advertisement,[11] and it included various campaigns to target given species or categories of animals (such as "invasive species"). Animals were recurrently described as "game," the killing of which was an enjoyable pastime, whilst animals' sentience and cognition were largely not mentioned.

Similarly, *The British Association for Shooting and Conservation* website was aimed at facilitating and endorsing hunting (against what it calls "extremists"[12]). It listed hunting-related events, news and campaigns, and conservation efforts. Importantly, it also offered guidance on how to trap, poison, snare, and shoot animals, and how to release farmed game (such as pheasants) into the wild before the shoot. Different animal species were approached by detailing how and when they could be killed and how they could be cooked. The only material offering descriptions of the animals was found on the "BASC Young Shots" page at the bottom of the "Activity Area" for children. Here there were identification sheets focused on the living environment, nutrition,

appearance, and vocalizations of the animal species in question and whether the law allowed for disturbing the species. Again, references to animal sentience and cognition were difficult to find.

The *Countryside Alliance* is similarly aimed at campaigning for hunting (and what it calls "the rural way of life"[13]), focusing especially on promoting hunting with hounds. Its website offered news related to hunting and fishing and advertised various campaigns to advance these practices. It also offered recipes on how to cook animal meat and invited people to become members and participate in hunting activities. The website failed to have any specific material describing wild animal species – no species identification material could be found, and indeed descriptions concerning different animal species were virtually nonexistent. Some specific animal species, such as fox, hare, and deer, were mentioned, but mostly *Countryside Alliance* talked about animals at a highly general level, emphasizing the need for managing *wildlife* and *pest* species and using words like *game, quarry, wild mammals, wildlife,* and *pest*.

Therefore, like *The Finnish Wildlife Agency*, the latter three organizations avoided direct references to animal sentience and cognition. However, whilst the former does so by focusing on biological descriptions, the latter three focused mainly on (1) physiological descriptions concerning the act of killing, (2) the generic, use-based categories ("game," "pest") which the animals belonged to and (3) how to prepare meat. Here, emphasis is strongly on the instrumental value of animals, and human benefit is accentuated to such an extent that even biological descriptions of animals remain rare or altogether absent.

However, there were instances where some of the organizations came close to assigning mindedness to animals when discussing their behavior. Particularly when describing habitats, breeding, and eating, the habits of the animals were briefly mentioned (e.g., "the mountain hare searches for food during dusk,"[14] or "the wood pigeon likes to live in flocks"[15]), which act as references to species-specific behaviors. However, the websites tended to define these behaviors as belonging to the species rather than individual animals.

Another way in which the organizations came close to recognizing animal sentience and cognition was when they discussed the act of stalking animals: if the hunter knows where the animals live, eat, and move, and can recognize their tracks and sounds, they are more likely to catch them. Here, the senses of the animals are highlighted, as the websites warn that hunters need to remain vigilant to the animals' ability to hear, smell, or see the stalker. This suggests that the sentience of animals is, to some extent, recognized – an animal capable of sensing is also an animal capable of sentience. However, this recognition was viewed as practically rather than morally significant, as it could make catching the animal more arduous. For instance, in its description of the red fox, *Finnish Hunters' Association* stated – quite strikingly – that due to the animal's intelligence, it is difficult to catch her.[16] However, intelligence places a practical obstacle rather than a moral one, as foxes are skilled at escaping hunters. Therefore, in the rare instance where references to animal sentience and cognition were made, they were framed to be practically rather than morally relevant.

An explicit denial of animal mentation was offered by the *Countryside Alliance*, arguing against the possibility of wild animal suffering. In their "Case for hunting" booklet, the

organization states, contrary to current scientific knowledge, that animals cannot, for example, experience fear: "Comparative neuroscience has demonstrated that wild animals, apart from possibly the primates and cetaceans, almost certainly lack the complex brain and mental abilities necessary to perceive the human concepts of fear and death."[17] Indeed, they even claimed that speaking of the mental lives of animals is anthropomorphic and has no basis in science. Quite strikingly, *Countryside Alliance* also argued that animals lack the ability to undergo "psychological stress" and instead experience mere "physiological stress," which is in their opinion is a constant in nature even in the absence of hunting. Therefore, *Countryside Alliance* argued that the act of hunting causes animals no psychological or added physiological stress and thus has no impact on the wellbeing of the animal.[18] Further, they claimed that being hunted is "natural" for the animal, which in their opinion also implies that it causes animals no suffering.

While the outright denial of animal mindedness presented by the *Countryside Alliance* is perhaps the most extreme example, the other three organizations fared no better in recognizing the cognitive capacities of animals. While some references to animal welfare could be found on the webpages, a consequence of not recognizing animals as beings with minds is that these references focus mainly on the animals' *physical* well-being, as can be seen in the following examples describing the techniques of snaring: "When practiced to a high standard, and with adherence to the law, snaring can provide land and wildlife managers with an effective means to restrain target animals before they can be humanely managed."[19] The fact that being caught in a snare causes animals not only physical pain but also frustration, fear, and anxiety (Broom, 2022) was ignored.

The failure to recognize nonhuman mindedness results also in shifting the focus onto the level of larger ecosystemic wholes instead of individuals – therefore, in all four websites, emphasis is on "conservation" rather than animal welfare, and indeed the former almost completely engulfs the latter. For instance, the *Finnish Wildlife Agency* approaches elks as "populations," which are evaluated on the basis of their "productivity." They argue that hunting should be focused on "unproductive" individuals (individuals with low fertility), whilst making sure that an adequate number of fertile individuals are spared.[20] When animals are not approached as individuals but rather as collective entities (populations, groups, species), their individual viewpoints – including their sentience and suffering – vanish from view. When this happens, it is not possible to make accurate assessments concerning their wellbeing or the ethics of their treatment.

Decades of research on the cognitive capacities of animals show that phenomenal consciousness (the capacity to feel one's existence as something), suffering, emotions, beliefs, memories, learning, inference, and many other complex mental abilities or states are widespread in the nonhuman world (e.g., Allen & Bekoff, 1997; Bekoff, 2007; Griffin, 2001). Focusing solely on physical pain ignores the complexity of suffering, which always includes a psychological dimension (Aaltola, 2012; DeGrazia, 1996; Mayerfeld, 2002). In light of this research, decisions concerning wild animals cannot be made solely on the level of larger ecosystemic wholes, but a balanced focus on both the individual and holistic levels is needed (Ramp & Bekoff, 2015).

The way hunting affects wild animals has also been researched. Hunting activities, for example, increase the stress levels of wolves (Bryan et al., 2015) and red deer (Vilela et al.,

2020). Especially when hunting with hounds, indications of extreme physiological and psychological stress have been found in deer (Bateson & Bradshaw, 1997). Hunting also increases energy expenditure and resting time while simultaneously decreasing the time available for foraging for moose (Græsli et al., 2020). Social animals can suffer also as a result of witnessing their group members being injured and killed, which can result in PTSD-like states (Bradshaw et al., 2005). Current methods for trapping wild animals have extremely negative effects on animal welfare (Proulx, 2022). It is questionable whether the welfare of animals can be fulfilled with current hunting practices overall (Proulx et al., 2020). Therefore, it is not only erroneous to suggest that hunted animals lack complex cognitive abilities or the ability to experience fear and suffering, but it is also false to argue that animals do not suffer as a consequence of hunting.

Of course, hunting is not the sole cause of harm for wild animals, and recent animal ethical discussion has addressed the suffering of animals in the wild. This research emphasizes that the idea of nature as an idyllic paradise is incorrect; wild animals endure various hardships in nature and humans should, in certain circumstances, intervene to assist them (e.g., Faria, 2015; Horta, 2010, 2018; Johannsen, 2021; Tomasik, 2015).[21] While some of the suffering endured by wild animals is anthropogenic (e.g., land use, pollution, hunting, climate change), some are caused by natural processes. Wild animals can suffer from hunger and thirst, weather conditions, illnesses, parasites, predation, and accidents as a result of evolutionary reproductive strategies (Horta, 2010; Tomasik, 2015).[22] However, the fact that there is suffering in nature does not, of course, justify human beings to cause such suffering. On the contrary, our ability for moral agency comes with a responsibility to diminish the suffering caused by our actions.

Dementalisation, Mechanomorphism, and Their Moral Implications

The discrepancy between what is scientifically known about animal minds and how the hunting organizations' websites define animals is notable. What could motivate the act of maintaining such a discrepancy?

We argue that animal sentience and cognition are not only neglected but that this neglect serves a strategic purpose as it helps to avoid animal ethical awareness and discussion. Simply put, by ignoring animal sentience and cognition, the websites evade the very criteria that have been positioned as the foundation of the moral considerability, inherent value, and rights of nonhuman animals. In the hunting discourse offered on the four websites studied, animals do not thereby emerge as morally worthy individuals, the killing of whom requires justification – the whole issue of animal ethics is cast aside by the simple act of defining animals as something other than sentient, cognitively capable individuals.

Such *strategic neglect* can be analyzed with what Adams (2014) calls the *absent referent*. According to Adams, animals are rendered absent from the food they are turned into – simply stated, the living animal can never be present in meat, and the meat industry does not wish for us to remember her. In the process of turning animals into food, the individual sentient animal is purposefully separated from the end product so that both may be consumed. According to Adams, the process occurs not only physically but also conceptually: the living animal is both practically and conceptually replaced with a

commodity (Adams, 2014, pp. 73–74). We suggest that the strategic neglect apparent in hunting discourse renders wild animals into absent referents – the way in which the websites in our study omitted discussion of animal sentience and cognition, allowing them to render individual animals absent from practices that directly involve their life and death.

Further, psychological studies concerning attitudes toward nonhuman animals have revealed that "dementalization" is a common phenomenon. Dementalization refers to a process of downplaying or wholly denying the mindedness of other animals. It is most apparent when individuals have just eaten or are about to eat meat (Bastian et al., 2012; Loughnan et al., 2010) and when they anticipate being questioned about their choice of food (Rothgerber, 2014). Further, people have a tendency to downgrade the mental abilities of mostly those animals, whom are used for meat or other products, and when they are reminded of the suffering of the relevant animals, they are eager to downplay the latter's mental capacities (Bastian et al., 2012).[23] Therefore, dementalization interlaces with the use and instrumental value of animals – the more an animal is utilized for human benefit, the more pressure there is to dementalize her. Indeed, dementalization functions as a justification for the use of animals: if an animal is deemed to be mentally incapable, there appears to be little or no reason to consider her as a morally relevant individual. Dementalization is thus one common justification for the instrumentalization of animals (Piazza et al., 2015).

We argue that the absence of references to the minds of wild animals in our dataset is yet another example of dementalization. This dementalization happens through omission: by omitting to mention that common game animals are mentally able individuals, the hunting websites downplay the relevance and richness of their minds and sentience. We suggest, in line with the above studies, that here dementalization is used as a method of justifying the instrumental use – in this case, the hunting – of animals. Just as dementalization allows meat-eaters to avoid moral questions concerning the treatment of farmed animals, it allows hunters to avoid moral questions concerning the act of hunting. Therefore, the dementalization of wild animals, evident in our dataset, facilitates avoidance of animal ethical issues. As such, it serves *a strategic purpose*. For instance, when the negative mental experiences of animals are sidelined, so too is the depth of their suffering, and as a consequence the moral problems concerning practices such as snaring and hunting with hounds do not cause discomfort for the hunter.

Another term relevant in this context is "mechanomorphism," which as the antithesis of anthropomorphism refers to the tendency to project machine-like qualities onto animals, thereby denying their phenomenal consciousness and related mental abilities (such as emotions, memory, learning, intentionality, and communication). As Crist (1999) argues, mechanomorphism is common both in sciences and culture and positions animals as biological machineries rather than as minded subjects. Arguably, dementalization and mechanomorphism are two faces of the same coin: whilst the former underestimates the minds of the other animals, the latter justifies these underestimates via the machine metaphor. Mechanomorphism is one contemporary manifestation of the Cartesian legacy. Descartes (2004/1646, p. 35) famously compared animals to machines and drew a dualistic distinction between humans (as subjects) and animals (as objects). Arguably, dualism and mechanomorphism serve the purpose of depicting animals as instrumentally rather than inherently valuable.

Mechanomorphism was also apparent in our dataset. Particularly the tendency to depict the behavior of animals as a manifestation of species rather than individual mindedness opens the door to mechanomorphism. Indeed, on all of the websites, animals were at times referred to as biological machinery, guided by predetermined instincts and patterns of behavior, rather than cognitive or emotive decision-making processes (e.g., "The brown hare often replaces the mountain hare by crossbreeding with it," "Based on their auditory sense animals can locate the origin of sound precisely," "Pine marten tries to avoid crossing open areas"). Of course, species-specific traits and instincts do have a significant role to play, but they can entwine with cognitive abilities, emotions, and more broadly sentience. Therefore, a fox can be genetically inclined to act in a given way and use her memory, experiences, and problem-solving capacities whilst doing so. Ignoring this possibility, and depicting nonhuman animals as biological machinery, interlaces with dementalization and again facilitates the avoidance of animal ethical questions.

The dementalizing and mechanomorphic depictions found on the hunting websites do not potentially influence only the moral beliefs held by hunters. They also are likely to influence wider socially held beliefs concerning wildlife and the ethics of their treatment. As hunting websites have large audiences (e.g., the Finnish Hunters' Association has approximately 145,000 members,[24] BASC more than 150,000 members[25]), they are bound to impact numerous segments of society. Human beings internalize many of their descriptive and normative beliefs from the surrounding social realm (Bandura & Walters, 1977). Thereby, we also internalize social beliefs concerning the ontology (e.g., concerning the cognitive capacities of animals) and the normative status (e.g., concerning whether animals have primarily inherent or instrumental value) of nonhuman animals from our surrounding social world. As hunting organizations have a presence in this world, their websites are likely to have an effect on people's general beliefs concerning what wild animals are like and how they ought to be treated. In our opinion, the wide social impact of hunting organizations instills them with a duty to offer informative and ethically balanced educational materials to both hunters and the general public. As they stand, the websites in our study are failing this duty.

The organizations' authority to influence views about wild animals is particularly concerning in the context of children and youth. *Finnish Hunters' Association* and *The British Association for Shooting and Conservation* both include materials intended for children and young people on their websites. The materials are meant to get children interested in hunting and game-keeping, as well as to function as a pedagogic tool. They reflect the organizations' views of animals examined previously; animals are depicted via references to their physical traits and living environments, leaving out their sentience and mindedness. The materials expose the ontological and normative beliefs concerning nonhuman animals, which children are expected to adopt as they are enculturated into the hunting culture.

Finnish Hunters' Association has a guide [26] intended for adults teaching children (ages 6–15) about hunting. There is a clear emphasis on nature and animals as having merely instrumental value, as they are repeatedly referred to as resources for humans to exploit. Therefore, hunting is described as an activity that benefits human beings both on the level of physical resources (e.g., meat), hunting trophies (e.g., skulls and leather), and psychological enjoyment ("memorable and fine experiences"). The guide includes

several learning exercises, where children are taught to participate in all of these forms of instrumentalizing animals, as teaching them to prepare meat, make hunting trophies, and enjoy the kill are underscored. In general, children are being taught that animals are resources to be stalked, trapped, killed, eaten, and turned into trophies, whilst issues concerning animal sentience and ethics remain almost completely unaddressed. Via the material, children are taught that killing animals is a socially acceptable and even admirable pastime.

The British Association for Shooting and Conservation website includes a *BASC Young Shots* page, which provides information "on events tailored to under 21 s, educational activities, competitions, recipes and much more." The page includes a news area, where praise is given to children who have killed an animal ("Morgan, 12, experienced driven pheasant shooting for the first time last season at a shoot in Brecon. Well done for bagging that pheasant!"; "Alfie, now three, was on his first shoot at just five months old. Grandad had him in a sling while mum and dad shot. Alfie now helps rearing all of the poults over the summer on our local village shoot"). It is appropriate to ask, how does killing animals from an early age affect children's attitudes toward animals.[27] We suggest that stories like these normalize killing other sentient beings for fun and facilitate the construction of a hunter identity. Children are encouraged to enter competitions and events that require them to hunt animals and are offered social recognition and applause for doing so, which is prone to make them not only hunt but also adopt the social identity of a hunter.

Hunting programs can give children valuable information about nature and teach them to appreciate its complexity and beauty (Peterson et al., 2017). In the era of climate catastrophe and mass extinction of species, every human would benefit from appreciating nonhuman nature. However, this need not include killing wild animals. If we are to follow the lead of animal ethical research, instead of presenting animals as mere resources, new generations should also be taught to appreciate wild animals – not only as representatives of their species – but also as sentient beings with inherent value.

In sum, we argue that the neglect of animal mindedness is deeply problematic because it diminishes moral appreciation of nonhuman animals and sidelines ethical discussion on how they ought to be treated. When animals are not defined as beings with sentience, moral concern becomes superfluous, and moral emotions such as empathy fail to find their object. The afore-mentioned animal ethicists positioned sentence of nonhuman animals as the basis for their moral relevance. Overlooking such sentience – or further mental abilities – thereby amounts to overlooking the moral worth of animals and their interests. This is especially worrying considering hunting organizations can influence views about wild animals.

Hunters' Animal Ethics?

Although the websites in our study tended to evade animal ethical discussion, there were three notable exceptions. First, all four hunting organizations pointed out that animals should be treated with "respect." In our dataset, "respect" refers to at least the four following meanings: avoidance of causing unnecessary pain to animals, using natural resources

sustainably, making use of the animal's carcass, and not disrupting other human individuals in the nearby vicinity with hunting. For instance, *The Finnish Wildlife Agency* posits that "ethically acceptable hunting" includes killing the animal as painlessly as possible, and respecting her, which is correlated with using the animal's body as fully as possible.[28] The agency's ethical guidelines for elk hunting included a section titled "Respecting the quarry," where respect entails the following: treating the carcass hygienically, helping the animal if she falls into ice, using dogs to trace injured animals, and killing all injured animals. The *British Association for Shooting and Conservation,* on the other hand, referred to "respect" in relation to other users of the countryside: "Carcasses should not be displayed. It serves no useful purpose and may offend other countryside users."[29]

According to the Cambridge Dictionary, *respect* can mean, for example, "to treat something or someone with kindness and care," "to accept the importance of someone's rights or customs and to do nothing that would harm them or cause offense," and "to feel or show admiration for someone or something that you believe has good ideas or qualities." Using the term in the context of hunting, however, seems puzzling. How could respect actualize in a practice that is based on ending a being's life, often in a way that is likely to cause fear, stress, and pain in the hunted animal? In animal ethics, respect is usually directed toward the wellbeing, interests, or life of the nonhuman animal. For instance, Tom Regan proposed that

> The respect principle, as a principle of justice, requires more than that we not harm some so that optimific results may be produced for all affected by the outcome; it also imposes the *prima facie* duty to assist those who are victims of injustice at the hands of others. (1983, p. 249)

Therefore, respect toward animals means both that we must refrain from harming them and that we must assist them when others harm them. This would clearly position hunting beyond the scope of "respect" and indeed would obligate one to try and prevent hunting from taking place.[30]

Second, the organizations make references to avoiding "unnecessary suffering": "Do not cause unnecessary suffering to the quarry,"[31] "There is no evidence that it [hunting with hounds] causes unnecessary suffering,"[32] "The purpose of the snare is to hold the fox and avoid causing unnecessary suffering while the fox is held."[33] If the term *respect* in the context of hunting seems problematic, so does the emphasis on avoiding causing *unnecessary suffering* to the animals. What can be considered as "necessary suffering"? In the context of animal ethics, necessity is usually defined in terms of basic wellbeing: if act X ensures the basic wellbeing of a human being (e.g., shooting an animal in order to eat) or nonhuman animal (e.g., conducting a painful operation on an animal in order to ensure her survival), and no other alternatives can be found, X can be considered necessary (Aaltola, 2012, pp. 97–100). However, it is questionable that killing wild animals to fulfill comparatively trivial interests such as recreation or food preferences could fulfill these criteria.[34] Therefore, references to "necessity" require careful justification (Aaltola, 2012, p. 100). The hunting organizations position hunting itself as such a justification by claiming that it is necessary owing to ecological and instrumental reasons (human benefit). The implication is that the suffering of animals is thereby also necessary.[35] Yet, in our view, the necessity of hunting requires a much more nuanced

and less anthropocentric analysis, one capable of recognizing the sentience and inherent value of nonhuman animals.[36] If we pay attention to the latter two factors, the necessity of hunting becomes less obvious, which questions the notion of "necessary animal suffering."

Third, the organizations argue that hunters are caretakers of nature, who assist wild animals. However, the attitudes toward assisting wild animals, found on the web pages, are conflicting. Where mentions of assistance were made, they most commonly referred to birds, especially waterfowl. Both *The British Association for Shooting and Conservation* and the *Finnish Hunters' Association* encouraged offering waterfowl assistance in the forms of feeding rafts, creating new living environments, and killing small predators that feed on the birds. Yet, the purpose for aiding the waterfowl seems to be strongly anthropocentric. While the birds do benefit from feeding and the removal of predators, they are likely to end up as catch for hunters. Indeed, arguably the ultimate end goal is to maximize bird populations to ensure that hunters have enough animals to shoot. This aim was made explicit by the *British Association for Shooting and Conservation*:

> Excessive or inconsiderate shooting is unacceptable, bad for conservation and is likely to reduce shooting success and bring all shooting sports into disrepute. If this code is followed, flight ponds will continue to provide excellent shooting with benefits to conservation which can be demonstrated to, and enjoyed by, a wider public.[37]

Therefore, there seems to be a contradiction with hunters' concern for declining waterfowl. While advocating killing small predators, like the American mink, to protect waterfowl, the hunters themselves kill the very birds they claim to protect. The motive, at least partly, is to secure bird populations for hunters in the future.[38] Indeed, *The Finnish Hunters' Association* explicitly argued that "hunting and caretaking must remain entwined. Feeding animals allows them to survive the winter and enhances their productivity."[39] Similar assistance is offered to some other common game animals. In Finland, hunters commonly feed white-tailed deer during the winter months – an act which keeps the populations plentiful for hunters and causes nuisance to others (white-tailed deer cause various forms of damage to both local ecologies and human interests). Assistance is again motivated by hunters' gains, and indeed they admit that most of the white-tailed deer populations in Finland are in the scope of feeding regimes.[40]

Some hunters offer assistance in the form of searching for injured wild animals (mostly ungulates and large predators injured in traffic accidents). However, the primary form of "assistance" on offer is euthanasia, as injured animals are usually tracked and shot.[41] For instance, in Finland, hunters have specific units that track and kill large mammals injured in traffic accidents. In at least some of the situations, the animal could instead be rehabilitated, but since there are few resources for doing so (rehabilitation centers for large animals are scarce in Finland), the animals are killed. Whether the existence of such lethal services lessens the incentive to ensure more resources to treat and rehabilite the animals poses an important yet unaddressed question.

The assistance offered by hunters is thus either aimed at benefitting the interests of hunters rather than animals (the animal that is first fed is later killed, which underscores that protecting "the good life" of the animal is not the main incentive), or it consists of lethal methods (which, when prioritized over other potential alternatives, again fails to

protect “the good life” of the animal). In neither instance is the animal approached as a sentient, inherently valuable individual. As ethically aware animal assistance requires recognition of the sentience and inherent value of animals, we argue that the sort of actions offered by hunters fails – at least in these two examples – to count as such assistance.

The above leads to the following question: Does the welfare of animals hold intrinsic value for hunters, or do references to it partake in what can be called “welfare washing” (akin to “green washing”): an effort to manifest ethical awareness in public discourse whilst ignoring it at the level of actions?

The *Countryside Alliance* website underscored the idea that hunting is not only morally permissible but also a moral duty. They argued that it is the “responsibility” of human beings to “manage” wildlife and that without such management, “vulnerable populations, biodiversity, habitat conservation and the production of food” would be at risk. This responsibility results from human beings having altered ecosystems, which are now “manmade.” As a result, they suggested that “It is widely accepted that certain species have to be controlled.”[42] The negative impact of human activities can indeed be argued to lead to responsibilities toward wild animals: humans have drastically changed the natural environment for their own benefit and to the detriment of wild animals, and the consequence of this is that they hold special duties toward the latter. In sum, human beings hold the duty to rectify the harm they have caused to wild animals (Palmer, 2021). However, these are not necessarily duties to “manage” or kill animals, but rather they are to assist them or to ensure relative ecological stability through nonlethal solutions and thereby prioritize, where possible, peaceful coexistence over killing.

Conclusion

The four hunting organizations in our study tended to omit mentions of animal sentience and cognition; instead, they described animals as merely biological organisms, representatives of generic categories instead of individuals, and as resources. Even when mindedness was referenced it was presented as a source of practical obstacles rather than moral ones. The discrepancy between scientific knowledge about animal minds and the organizations’ depictions is notable and, we argue, serves a strategic purpose: by ignoring animal sentience, the organizations evade the very criteria that have been positioned as the foundation of the moral considerability of animals. As a result of this dementalization, animals are not viewed as morally worthy individuals, whose wellbeing matters and the killing of whom requires moral justification.

What we call “strategic dementalization” – the avoidance of animals’ minds in order to evade morally uncomfortable questions concerning their use – interlinks with the anthropocentric belief that human interests are always primary to nonhuman interests. This belief manifested in the websites’ tendency to vilify those animals who do not serve human interests. In particular, those species considered to be competitors with the hunters’ interests (i.e., species that for instance prey on fowl) were frequently depicted in negative terms. For instance, the *Finnish Wildlife Agency* offered a short depiction of crows, focused mainly on their physical appearance, after which the website added: “Has an ugly caw.” We suggest that this peculiarly normative characterization of crow vocalizations is motivated by what followed: “Crows often rob other birds’ nests.”[43] In

sum, crows are characterized as rather unpleasant birds who have an ugly voice and who commit moral crimes (the morally laden verb "to rob" is applied to crow behavior) against other birds. The same applies to the characterization of red foxes. After a short depiction of the physical description and diet of foxes, the *Finnish Wildlife Agency* stated, "Harmful for game animal populations due to taxing nests and fledglings," followed by "Spreads rabies and mange."[44] In both instances, animals who compete with hunters' interests are depicted negatively, either as carriers of disease, as "harmful robbers," or as esthetically displeasing. In such cases, dementalization interlinks with the vilification of animals, whilst both phenomena serve to prioritize hunters' interests over those of animals.

The avoidance or even denial of animal mindedness, combined with the belief that human beings are the guardians of nonhuman nature, is based not only on anthropocentrism but also on the age-old dualism between humans and other animals, which is deeply embedded in Western thinking. Humans are seen not only as separate from other animals but as above the rest of the natural world. Thus, our study suggests that the hunting organizations' websites echo Cartesian dualism and, more broadly, the anthropocentric worldview that positions human beings as ontologically and normatively superior to nonhuman animals. This Cartesian, anthropocentric tenet entwines with the avoidance of both animal mindedness and animal-ethical questions.

A practice that has such a vast impact on nonhuman species (in Finland alone, over 1,240,000 animals were hunted in 2021[45]) is in our view morally obligated to pay more heed to both the science concerning animal sentience and minds and the ethics regarding the treatment of our nonhuman kin.

Notes

1. These three theories have had a significant impact on both academic animal ethics and the public opinion on animals, but they are by no means the only theories available. Here, they are used to showcase the general trend in animal ethics to emphasize the importance of sentience for moral consideration.
2. Bentham (1789) famously wrote that "The question is not, Can they reason?, nor Can they talk? but, Can they suffer?"
3. See also Palmer (2010) on relational approach to animal ethics.
4. For discussion, see Evans and Miele (2019).
5. For discussion, see Blattner (2019).
6. The Finnish Wildlife Agency (https://riista.fi/), Finnish Hunters' Association (https://metsastajaliitto.fi/), The British Association for Shooting and Conservation (https://basc.org.uk/), Countryside Alliance (https://www.countryside-alliance.org/).
7. Hell (1996) identifies two different hunting cultures existing in Europe with different techniques and social contexts: "hunting as harvesting" and "hunting as gathering."
8. The Finnish word riista denotes roughly the same as game; animals that are hunted. The Finnish term for game/wildlife management (riistanhoito) has a slightly different meaning compared to the English term; hoito can be translated as care, so riistanhoito could be translated into "game care" (similar to the Swedish term for wildlife management, viltvård, which can be translated into wildlife care [von Essen, 2018]).
9. Hunting guides consisting of guides to hunting elk, bear, and wild boar as well as guides for using artificial light and night vision in hunting white-tailed deer and responsible hunting in the wetlands.

10. https://jahtimedia.fi/luonnossa/kettu
11. von Essen (2020) has researched Swedish hunting magazine covers and found a shift implicating greater concern for the public image of hunting. The magazines can be read as advertisements for the wider public as well as for hunters themselves. This way, the magazines, as well as the websites in our study, “perform an ambassadorial function for hunting” and “are also part of in a process of hunters rehabilitating their image before the general public” (von Essen & Allen, 2021, p. 181).
12. https://basc.org.uk/about-us/
13. https://www.countryside-alliance.org/
14. https://riista.fi/game/metsajanis/
15. https://riista.fi/game/sepelkyyhky/
16. https://jahtimedia.fi/luonnossa/kettu
17. https://www.countryside-alliance.org/getattachment/Our-Work/Campaign-for-Hunting/Resources/CASE-FOR-HUNTING2012.pdf?lang=en-GB
18. “Animals cannot distinguish the initial stages of a hunt from the repeated disturbances from other factors with which they are regularly faced. In the absence of psychological stress, the physiological stress during hunting is no more than is natural to the quarry and for which it is naturally adapted.” (https://www.countryside-alliance.org/getattachment/Our-Work/Campaign-for-Hunting/Resources/CASE-FOR-HUNTING2012.pdf?lang=en-GB)
19. https://basc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2019/04/Snaring-Best-Practice-Booklet.pdf
20. https://www.riistainfo.fi/kurssi/hirven-metsastys/
21. The scale of proposed interventions varies according to author, ranging from spreading awareness of the issue and small-scale intervention such as providing food and medication (e.g., Horta, 2010) to genetically modifying wild animals in order to reduce suffering (e.g., Johannsen, 2021).
22. In effect, hunters sometimes appeal to nature being “red in tooth and claw” as an argument for hunting: hunters do quickly and painlessly what mother nature would have done slowly and painfully (Cahoone, 2009; McLeod, 2007; von Essen & Allen, 2021). Hunting is presented as an act of mercy for wild animals. However, killing healthy individuals and depriving them of future existence for comparatively trivial interests (such as recreation) and arguing this to be merciful is not an ethically defensible argument for hunting, but can be seen as an attempt to justify the practice to the wider public (von Essen & Allen, 2021, pp. 179–180).
23. The phenomenon is related to the cognitive dissonance caused by meat-eating.
24. https://metsastajaliitto.fi/sites/default/files/2020-11/Toimintasuunnitelma2021.pdf
25. https://basc.org.uk/join-basc/
26. “Nuorisotyön ABC – opas Nuorten eräkasvatukseen” (https://metsastajaliitto.fi/sites/default/files/2021-08/Nuorisoty%C3%B6nABC_netti.pdf)
27. And indeed, toward human beings; studies have shown that being violent toward animals predicts being violent also toward humans (see, e.g., Hodges, 2008; Jegatheesan et al., 2020).
28. https://www.riistainfo.fi/oppitunti/eettinen-ja-kestava-metsastys/
29. http://www.codeofgoodshootingpractice.org.uk/pdf/COGSP.pdf
30. von Essen and Allen (2021) analyzed the use of care language in Swedish hunting media, and the references to “care” identified are very similar to references to “respect” in our study. von Essen and Allen conclude that the use of care language shows opportunism and works as a tool to convince the public about the acceptability of hunting.
31. https://riista.fi/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Eettisia_ohjeita_metsastajille.pdf
32. https://www.countryside-alliance.org/getattachment/Our-Work/Campaign-for-Hunting/Resources/CASE-FOR-HUNTING2012.pdf?lang=en-GB
33. https://basc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2019/04/Snaring-Best-Practice-Booklet.pdf
34. An interview survey made in Spain about attitudes toward different purposes for managing wild animals showed that “lethal control to improve domestic animal health is highly

accepted (75%), is more controversial when animals are killed for damaging crops (59% acceptance) and is highly unaccepted when the goal is to enhance game species numbers (22% acceptance). Older people and males, in particular, accept more readily some of these control-hunting measures" (Garrido et al., 2017).

35. For example, https://www.countryside-alliance.org/getattachment/Our-Work/Campaign-for-Hunting/Resources/CASE-FOR-HUNTING2012.pdf?lang=en-GB
36. On the ethics of hunting, see, for example, Cohen (2014) and Luke (1997).
37. https://basc.org.uk/codes-of-practice/flight-ponds/
38. Even if assistance would be conducted to help the birds, it is not clear why precisely the birds should be protected and not the predators feeding on them.
39. https://metsastajaliitto.fi/sites/default/files/2021-08/Nuorisoty%C3%B6nABC_netti.pdf
40. https://www.riistainfo.fi/kurssi/valkohantapeuran-metsastys/
41. https://www.riistainfo.fi/oppituntі/jaljestavan-koiran-kaytto/
42. https://www.countryside-alliance.org/getattachment/Our-Work/Campaign-for-Hunting/Resources/CASE-FOR-HUNTING2012.pdf?lang=en-GB
43. https://riista.fi/game/varis/
44. https://riista.fi/game/kettu/
45. https://www.luke.fi/fi/tilastot/metsastys/metsastys-2021. This estimate is based on the numbers reported by hunters themselves and excludes illegal hunting.

Acknowledgements

We gratefully thank the anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Funding

The first author received funding from the Finnish Cultural Foundation; Suomen Kulttuurirahasto.

References

Aaltola, E. (2012). *Animal suffering: Philosophy and culture*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Adams, C. J. (2014). *Sexual politics of meat: A feminist-vegetarian critical theory* (20th anniversary ed.). Bloomsbury.

Allen, C., & Bekoff, M. (1997). *Species of mind: The philosophy and biology of cognitive ethology*. MIT Press.

Bandura, A., & Walters, R. H. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Prentice-Hall.

Bastian, B., Loughnan, S., Haslam, N., & Radke, H. R. M. (2012). Don't mind meat? The denial of mind to animals used for human consumption. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *38*(2), 247–256. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167211424291

Bateson, P., & Bradshaw, E. L. (1997). Physiological effects of hunting red deer (*Cervus elaphus*). *Proceedings: Biological Sciences*, *264*(1389), 1707–1714. https://doi.org/10.1098/rspb.1997.0237

Bekoff, M. (2007). *The emotional lives of animals*. New World Library.

Bentham, J. (1789). *An introduction to the principles of morals and legislation*. Clarendon Press.

Blattner, C. E. (2019). The recognition of animal sentience by the law. *Journal of Animal Ethics*, *9*(2), 121–136. https://doi.org/10.5406/janimalethics.9.2.0121

Bradshaw, G. A., Schore, A. N., Brown, J. L., Poole, J. H., & Moss, C. J. (2005). Elephant breakdown. *Nature*, *433*(7028), 807–807. https://doi.org/10.1038/433807a

British Association for Shooting and Conservation. (n.d.). https://basc.org.uk/

Broom, D. M. (2022). Some thoughts on the impacts of trapping on mammal welfare with emphasis on snares. In G. Proulx (Ed.), *Mammal trapping: Wildlife management, animal welfare & international standards* (pp. 121–128). Alpha Wildlife Publications.

Bryan, H. M., Smits, J. E. G., Koren, L., Paquet, P. C., Wynne-Edwards, K. E., & Musiani, M. (2015). Heavily hunted wolves have higher stress and reproductive steroids than wolves with lower hunting pressure. *Functional Ecology*, *29*(3), 347–356. https://doi.org/10.1111/1365-2435.12354

Cahoone, L. (2009). Hunting as a moral good. *Environmental Values*, *18*(1), 67–89. https://doi.org/10.3197/096327109X404771

Cohen, E. (2014). Recreational hunting: Ethics, experiences and commoditization. *Tourism Recreation Research*, *39*(1), 3–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2014.11081323

Countryside Alliance. (n.d.). https://www.countryside-alliance.org/

Crist, E. (1999). *Images of animals*. Temple University Press.

DeGrazia, D. (1996). *Taking animals seriously: Mental life and moral status*. Cambridge University Press.

Descartes, R. (2004/1646). Letter to the Marquess of Newcastle. In S. M. Shieber (Ed.), *The Turing test: Verbal behavior as the hallmark of intelligence* (pp. 35–39). MIT Press.

Evans, A. B., & Miele, M. (2019). Enacting public understandings: The case of farm animal welfare. *Geoforum*, *99*, 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2018.12.013

Falzon, M. A. (2008). Flights of passion: Hunting, ecology and politics in Malta and the Mediterranean. *Anthropology Today*, *24*(1), 15–20. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8322.2008.00560.x

Faria, C. (2015). Disentangling obligations of assistance: A reply to Clare Palmer's "Against the view that we are usually required to assist wild animals". *Relations*, *3*(2), 211–218. https://doi.org/10.7358/rela-2015-002-fari

Finnish Hunters' Association. (n.d.). https://metsastajaliitto.fi/

Finnish Wildlife Agency. (n.d.). https://riista.fi/, https://www.riistainfo.fi/

Garrido, F. E., Castro, F., & Villafuerte, R. (2017). Control hunting of wild animals: Health, money, or pleasure? *European Journal of Wildlife Research*, *63*(6), 1–4. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10344-017-1154-x

Græsli, A. R., Le Grand, L., Thiel, A., Fuchs, B., Devineau, O., Stenbacka, F., Neumann, W., Ericsson, G., Singh, N. J., Laske, T. G., Beumer, L. T., Arnemo, J. M., & Evans, A. L. (2020). Physiological and behavioural responses of moose to hunting with dogs. *Conservation Physiology*, *8*(1), coaa122. https://doi.org/10.1093/conphys/coaa122

Griffin, D. R. (2001). *Animal minds: Beyond cognition to consciousness*. The University of Chicago Press.

Hell, B. (1996). Enraged hunters: The domain of the wild in north-Western Europe. In P. Descola & G. Palsson (Eds.), *Nature and society: Anthropological perspectives* (pp. 205–217). Routledge.

Hodges, C. (2008). *The Link: Cruelty to animals and violence towards people*. *Animal Legal & Historical Center*. Michigan State University College of Law.

Horta, O. (2010). Debunking the idyllic view of natural processes. Population dynamics and suffering in the wild. *Telos*, *17*, 73–88.

Horta, O. (2018). Concern for wild animal suffering and environmental ethics: What are the limits of the disagreement? *Les ateliers de l'ethique*, *13*(1), 85–100. https://doi.org/10.7202/1055119ar

Jegatheesan, B., Enders-Slegers, M. J., Ormerod, E., & Boyden, P. (2020). Understanding the link between animal cruelty and family violence: The bioecological systems model. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *17*(9), 3116. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17093116

Johannsen, K. (2021). *Wild animal ethics: The moral and political problem of wild animal suffering*. Routledge.

Ljung, P. E., Riley, S. J., Heberlein, T. A., & Ericsson, G. (2012). Eat prey and love: Game-meat consumption and attitudes toward hunting. *Wildlife Society Bulletin*, *36*(4), 669–675. https://doi.org/10.1002/wsb.208

Loughnan, S., Haslam, N., & Bastian, B. (2010). The role of meat consumption in the denial of moral status and mind to meat animals. *Appetite*, *55*(1), 156–159. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2010.05.043

Luke, B. (1997). A critical analysis of hunters' ethics. *Environmental Ethics*, *19*(1), 25–44. https://doi.org/10.5840/enviroethics199719137

Mayerfeld, J. (2002). *Suffering and moral responsibility*. Oxford University Press.

McLeod, C. M. (2007). Dreadful/delightful killing: The contested nature of duck hunting. *Society & Animals*, *15*(2), 151–167. https://doi.org/10.1163/156853007X187108

Midgley, M. (1983). *Animals and why they matter*. University of Georgia Press.

Palmer, C. (2010). *Animal ethics in context*. Columbia University Press.

Palmer, C. (2021). Assisting wild animals vulnerable to climate change: Why ethical strategies diverge. *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, *38*(2), 179–195. https://doi.org/10.1111/japp.12358

Peterson, M. N., Chesonis, T., Stevenson, K. T., & Bondell, H. D. (2017). Evaluating relationships between hunting and biodiversity knowledge among children. *Wildlife Society Bulletin*, *41*(3), 530–536. https://doi.org/10.1002/wsb.792

Piazza, J., Ruby, M. B., Loughnan, S., Luong, M., Kulik, J., Watkins, H. M., & Seigerman, M. (2015). Rationalizing meat consumption. The 4Ns. *Appetite*, *91*, 114–128. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2015.04.011

Proulx, G. (2022). *Mammal trapping: Wildlife management, animal welfare & international standards*. Alpha Wildlife Publications.

Proulx, G., Cattet, M., Serfass, T. L., & Baker, S. E. (2020). Updating the AIHTS trapping standards to improve animal welfare and capture efficiency and selectivity. *Animals*, *10*(8), 1262. https://doi.org/10.3390/ani10081262

Putnam, R. (2011). A review of the various legal and administrative systems governing management of large herbivores in Europe. In R. Putnam, M. Apollonio, & R. Andersen (Eds.), *Ungulate management in Europe: Problems and practices* (pp. 54–79). Cambridge University Press.

Putnam, R., Apollonio, M., & Andersen, R. (2011). *Ungulate management in Europe: Problems and practices*. Cambridge University Press.

Ramp, D., & Bekoff, M. (2015). Compassion as a practical and evolved ethic for conservation. *Bioscience*, *65*(3), 323–327. https://doi.org/10.1093/biosci/biu223

Regan, T. (1983). *The case for animal rights*. University of California Press.

Rothgerber, H. (2014). Efforts to overcome vegetarian-induced cognitive dissonance among meat eaters. *Appetite*, *79*, 32–41. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2014.04.003

Singer, P. (1974). All animals are equal. *Philosophical Exchange*, *5*(1), 103–116.

Singer, P. (1975). *Animal liberation: A new ethics for our treatment of animals*. HarperCollins.

Tomasik, B. (2015). The importance of wild-animal suffering. *Relations*, *3*(2), 133–152. https://doi.org/10.7358/rela-2015-002-toma

Vilela, S., da Silva, A. A., Palme, R., Ruckstuhl, K. E., Sousa, J. P., & Alves, J. (2020). Physiological stress reactions in red deer induced by hunting activities. *Animals*, *10*(6), 1003. https://doi.org/10.3390/ani10061003

von Essen, E. (2018). The impact of modernization on hunting ethics: Emerging taboos among contemporary Swedish hunters. *Human Dimensions of Wildlife*, *23*(1), 21–38. https://doi.org/10.1080/10871209.2018.1385111

von Essen, E. (2020). The changing wildlife tableau of hunting magazine covers. *Society & Animals*, *30*(4), 363–385. https://doi.org/10.1163/15685306-BJA10002

von Essen, E., & Allen, M. (2021). Killing with kindness: When hunters want to let you know they care. *Human Dimensions of Wildlife*, *26*(2), 179–195. doi:10.1080/10871209.2020.1800145