Hunting Democracy

By Daniel Justin Herman
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In December 2003 Vice President Dick Cheney went on a pheasant hunt. At the invitation of two Republican donors, Cheney took to the field with Texas senator John Cornyn, former Dallas Cowboys quarterback Roger Staubach, and seven others. They shot more than 400 pheasants at a private park in Pennsylvania. Cheney killed 70 birds before lunch. Cornyn commented that the experience seemed "kind of like how Tyson's and Pilgrim's Pride" harvest birds. The event was a canned hunt; game-farm employees released disoriented pheasants on a small hill above Cheney and his party, who shot the birds as they flew overhead. Later that afternoon the men killed an unspecified number of ducks at the same game farm.[1]

In hunting, Dick Cheney follows an old precedent for American politicians. Though no presidents of the first half of the nineteenth century seem to have hunted while in office, hunter-politicians came to the fore at century's end. The most noteworthy of them were Grover Cleveland and Theodore Roosevelt, both of whom wrote books about their hunting experiences. More recent hunter-politicians include Dwight Eisenhower, Lyndon Johnson, Jimmy Carter,

This article will mean different things to different people. Ultimately, the discerning reader will circumvent the tendency to be short-circuited by anti-hunter rhetoric, unfavorable politician references, and judgements toward hunting techniques. Please, if you can't stand the heat beware of the kitchen.

WITH THIS ARTICLE COMES OPPORTUNITY

With this article comes opportunity: The opportunity to examine the history of hunting in the United States. Covering, basically from the Civil War to the 21st Century, we are afforded a historical review of the political winds of times gone by and how this shaped hunting then and now. The author is a nonhunter who easily draws from either camp to outline an intriguing review of our past successes and failures. Our job is to review the material presented, separate fact from opinion, and come away better prepared to articulate the importance of hunting.

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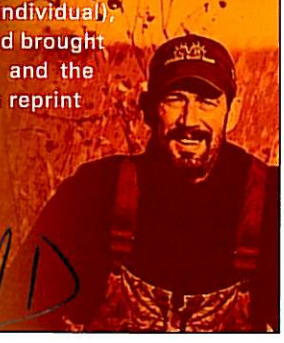
Sincerely,
Mark B. Steffen, M.D.
Publications Committee Chairman



In the nineteenth century every white male in the U.S. possessed, in theory, political and legal rights that only kings and aristocrats had enjoyed in earlier centuries. Among them was the right to hunt. To appreciate the American tradition of hunting as a democratic sport, consider the example of Vice President Theodore Roosevelt, who in 1901 spent three weeks hunting in the company of former teamster John Goff. Artist Charles M. Russell is said to have based this depiction of a Roosevelt hunting experience, In the Mountains (1905, gouache, 20 3/4" x 16 1/2 "), on a description of an actual event.

GIFT OF C.R. SMITH, MHS MUSEUM, HELENA, MONTANA

George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and now George W. Bush.[2]

Dick Cheney's canned hunt, however, is not the same as Cleveland's search for deer in New York's Adirondack Mountains, or even John Kerry's dispatch of a pair of wild pheasants shortly before the Iowa caucus in 2004. Unlike other sorts of hunts, which tell voters "I'm a regular guy," canned hunts offer few political gains. To those who oppose hunting, the canned hunt is merely cruelty taken to its logical extreme. Even those who support hunting tend to draw a strict line between the fair chase and the canned hunt. *Field & Stream*, in a survey conducted in 2003, found that only 12 percent of its readers supported hunting "in enclosures or fenced-in ranches." Given that Cheney should have expected, and certainly received, nothing but bad press for his canned hunt, why did he participate?[3] What social and political meanings did Cheney's hunt hold?

To answer those questions requires us to investigate the social and political meanings of hunting in nineteenth- and early-twentieth century America. Hunting has always had multiple strands of meaning, and we cannot hope to comb them out in a short essay. What we can explore, however, is the contradiction that lies at the core of American sport hunting. At one moment, hunting has operated in American culture as a rite of democracy and at the next, as a rite of aristocracy. That pendulum swing continues today.

To understand the contradiction between hunting as democratic sport and hunting as aristocratic pastime, we might begin by comparing Dick Cheney with another vice president, Theodore Roosevelt. In 1901 Roosevelt, while serving in William McKinley's administration, traveled to Colorado to engage in one of the many hunts that punctuated his career. Dressed in his favorite buckskin outfit, Roosevelt hunted alone or in the company of John Goff for three weeks in late January and early February.

Goff, who had come to Colorado in 1884 as a teamster, had become by 1901 a celebrated hunter of bears and lions as well as a proprietor of a small hunting lodge near Meeker. A gulf of status separated the blue-blooded Roosevelt from the frontiersman Goff, but Roosevelt won over Goff nonetheless. "All stiffness and formality" in Roosevelt disappeared, recalled Goff, as the two men entered "that well-known epoch on a hunting trip, when the hunter forms an opinion of his fellow-man—either for better or worse—that is lasting." Goff's

feelings toward Roosevelt "grew warmer" every day until, at the end of the hunt, he felt as though he were separating from a "dear friend." Roosevelt's "demeanor, his manliness, his generosity, his big noble heart, his simplicity," wrote Goff, "combine to make him a companion in the flesh worthy the company of a king."[4]

At one level, Goff's comments sound curiously antirepublican. Goff implied that the highest goal an American could achieve was to be the companion of a king, thus inverting the meaning of the American Revolution. At another level, Goff's comments call to mind the profound connection in the U.S. between republican citizenship and hunting.

Consider that, in the nineteenth-century U.S., every adult white male enjoyed, in theory, the political and legal rights that only kings and aristocrats had enjoyed in earlier centuries. American citizens, not those who governed them, were sovereign. In the U.S., moreover, every adult white male enjoyed another right that only kings and aristocrats had held in earlier centuries: the right to hunt.

The right to hunt and the right to make political choices emerged simultaneously in the U.S. The former right seemed to sustain the latter as a bulwark against aristocracy. By extension, to repeal the right to hunt was tantamount to counterrevolution. "The right to hunt wild animals," explained South Carolina sport hunter William Elliott in 1846, "is held by the great body of the people, whether landholders or otherwise, as one of their franchises," and "to all limitations" on that right "they submit with the worst possible grace." Rather than applauding game seasons and bag limits, according to the American Farmer in 1841, Americans raised "the senseless cry of aristocracy!—privileged orders!—oppression of the poor by the rich!"[5] To many Americans, hunting and republican citizenship were inseparable. Americans had created what might be called a "hunting democracy."

During the half century following the American Revolution, such logic gave issue to a new common-man hero—Daniel Boone, the buckskin-clad hunter who explored, surveyed, and helped settle Kentucky in the late eighteenth century. With no ossified system of game laws, no monarchy, no system of primogeniture to restrain him, Boone became the perfect American atom, a free man, egalitarian, self-reliant, responsible for his own destiny. Boone became the premier symbol for democratic egalitarianism, manly self-assertion, and go-it-alone independence.

EGALITARIANISM, SELF-RELIANCE, AND INDEPENDENCE—QUALITIES EMBODIED BY BUCKSKIN-CLAD KENTUCKIAN DANIEL BOONE—WERE MUCH ADMIRED IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY AMERICA. THEODORE ROOSEVELT (LEFT), WHOSE HUNTER-HEROES WERE BOONE AND DAVY CROCKETT, ARGUED THAT

"NO AMERICANS OF THE OUT-OF-DOOR TYPE, FOND OF NATURE AND THE HABITANTS OF THE WILD, WILL EVER DEVELOP BOLSHEVIC TENDENCIES."

In light of the association between American ideas about citizenship and hunting and hunters, one realizes that when John Goff suggested Roosevelt was fit to be the companion of a king, he did not mean that hunting should be solely the sport of kings. Nor did he mean that the highest accomplishment to which an American could aspire was to accompany a king on a hunt. Goff implied that he himself was fit to be a companion to Roosevelt, and that Roosevelt, with his Boone-like simplicity and his big-hearted camaraderie, was fit to be the companion of Goff. Goff and Roosevelt became social equals in the forest.[6] Both were citizens of the American hunting democracy.

If egalitarianism was dear to Goff and Roosevelt, however, it was not dear to all of their fellow sportsmen. In ***The Theory of the Leisure Class***, published in 1899, the American sociologist Thorstein Veblen described hunting as the wasteful warrior ritual of a predatory American ruling class. Employing Social Darwinism in reverse, Veblen explained that hunting was the favored pastime of an atavistic "delicho-blond" type (the descendants of European barbarians) who ruled society through chicanery and plunder rather than through hard work. Hunting, which was itself a game of chicanery and plunder, symbolized the ethos of this "Leisure Class."[7]

Veblen's pronouncements on hunting were not far wrong. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, hunting was fast becoming the sport of nascent American aristocrats who sought to marry their daughters to English nobles and to create English-style game parks. As early as 1893 Theodore Roosevelt wrote that he would "much regret" to see hunting confined to a "system of large private game preserves, kept for the enjoyment of the very rich."[8]

In the Adirondack Mountains, 60 privately owned game parks sprawled over 791,208 acres. Owners included J.P. Morgan and Cornelius Vanderbilt. In New Hampshire, one private game park held 220 bison, roughly ten times the number of wild bison that survived in Yellowstone National Park.

That aristocratization of hunting did not come without protest. In Indiana "malcontent natives" who "imagine they are doing themselves good by injuring the sport of club members" routinely invaded private hunting grounds owned or leased by wealthy hunting clubs from Chicago. The same sort of invasions occurred in the Adirondacks. Sometimes the Indiana malcontents poached; at other times they set fire to marsh grass to destroy habitat. The Tolleston Club of Chicago, similarly, found it necessary to hire "officers and keepers," in addition to Pinkerton detectives, to protect its hunt-

DAN DUTRO, PHOTOGRAHER, MHS PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVES, HELENA

ing grounds from "the lawless element of...South Chicago" who poached game.

Following the precedent of big-game species in the East, the West differed little from the East. "Nearly every available marsh in the valleys of the Columbia and Willamette" Rivers of Oregon and Washington, reported the *Century Illustrated Magazine* in 1903, "is now controlled by clubs of sportsmen, many of whom reside in Portland." In the vicinities of Denver and Los Angeles, virtually all duck-hunting grounds had been "preserved" by clubs, causing "hard feelings among the poorer classes, who like to shoot but cannot afford membership in one of these exclusive institutions." "Game preserves," announced *Forest and Stream* in 1897, "are now as thoroughly established in this country as they are in the old world."[9]

That is how one "Pacificator" saw the situation as early as 1889. "A battle is now being waged" in San Francisco, he wrote in *Forest and Stream*, "between the patrician and plebeian gunners of this State, which has already aroused so much ill feeling that neither party... would hesitate much about turning its guns upon the other." Even respectable clerks and businessmen "who do not belong to the clubs," he reported, "are stigmatized as pothunters, poachers, scoundrels, villains, etc."

When the *Chicago Field* reported in 1881 that farmers and sport hunters "have become accustomed to the belief that the interests of these two classes clash, and that a certain amount of antagonism must exist between them," it revealed that the great conflict of the time was as much cultural as political. Not only did farmers fight against plutocracy by voting; they fought plutocracy by opposing game laws and by ejecting wealthy hunters from their lands. "Matters have reached such a pitch among the farmers," observed Indiana sportsmen in 1891, "that no matter how gentlemanly in deportment we are, we are ordered (often with curses and all kinds of foul abuse) from nearly every farm in this section."[10]

If hunting became a locus for the expression of class resentments, however, it also offered hope for reconciliation. When Theodore Roosevelt entered the Colorado forests in 1901 with John Goff, he entered a wilderness realm where distinctions of status seemed to evaporate.

When camping, wrote J. A. McGuire in a 1903 issue of *Outdoor Life*, "everyone immediately casts off formality, dons the garb of freedom, throws care to the winds, and does not need to be so very particular about the quality of his grammar nor the character of his nomenclature. He addresses his companions by the title of 'Jim,' 'Bill,' 'Buck,' or 'Doc,' as the case may be, and doesn't have to put on a Sunday smile or a polished front to get a friendly answer back."

In the wilderness, class distinctions ceased to matter; hunters and guides entered a realm of rugged equality that harked back to the world of Daniel Boone. The ethos of a hunting democracy prevailed over the ethos of aristocracy. In the libertarian realm of the wilderness, indeed, where skill in woodcraft and hunting determined one's rank rather than birth or wealth, the social authority of hunter and guide could be reversed. "The sportsman's relation to his guide is scarcely less close, scarcely less sacred than that of child to mother," inveighed Harry Radford in 1903. Radford, slayer of the world's record wood bison and member of the Arctic Club of America and the New York Zoological Society, described guides as "nature's noblemen," who had "slept under one blanket" with presidents, statesmen, generals, poets, philosophers, and scientists. Sadly, Radford failed to express his admiration for his Eskimo guides on a journey to Point Barrow, Alaska. When one of the guides attempted to back out of the expedition (his wife being sick), Radford became enraged and struck him with the handle of a whip. A fight ensued in which Radford and his hunting partner were stabbed to death.[11]

In 1892 Verplanck Colvin, the man who had explored and mapped the Adirondacks in the 1870s on behalf of the state of New York, similarly praised guides for being "fearless of panther, bear or wolf" and for "battling your way forward perhaps unconsciously—but ever in the interest of mankind." Colvin added that if guides were willing to "secure wise councils from safe and conservative men," men who were "the best, kindest, gentlest and noblest hearted employers," guides could solve "the socialist or labor question of this age." Far from suggesting an unbridgeable gulf between capitalist and worker, the hunter-guide relationship revealed "a system of natural commingling of interests of employers and employed in the same organization."[12] Sport hunter and guide would restore the lost harmony between boss and worker, pointing the way to the salvation of the country.

That men like Radford and Colvin felt compelled to preach about the solidarity between guides and sportsmen, however, indicated their fear that guides, like other laborers, did not invariably love their employers. Why was it, wondered Lieutenant Townsend Whelen in 1907, "that the aver-

THROUGHOUT AMERICAN HISTORY, HUNTING HAS OPERATED IN THE CULTURE AT ONE MOMENT AS A RITE OF DEMOCRACY AND AT THE NEXT AS A RITE OF ARISTOCRACY. THAT PENDULUM SWING BETWEEN THE ELITE AND THE COMMON-MAN HUNTER, LIKE THESE MEN ON THE MISSOURI RIVER IN THE 1890S, CONTINUES TODAY.

WHEN WE ARGUE ABOUT HUNTING, WE ARE ARGUING ABOUT WHO WE ARE AND WHAT SORT OF SOCIETY WE WISH TO LIVE IN.

age sportsman is held in such contempt by the guides and hunters of the backwoods?" Why, he continued, did guides invariably refer to sportsmen as "tenderfeet" and "dudes"?[13] In asking such questions, Whelen was asking for a return to the imagined days of old when sport hunter and guide had been as one.

Whelen, whose expeditions to the Rocky Mountain West had helped make him a leading authority on woodcraft and hunting, berated sportsmen for requiring guides to carry their guns and their extravagant camping accessories, saddle their horses, and even shoot their game. The sportsman who asked his guide to do all that was "a weakling come to play at a life which calls for only strong men."

Stung by these charges, sportsmen fired back in the pages of *Outdoor Life*, the magazine in which Whelen had published his jeremiad. Leading the counterattack was Levant Fred Brown, who described Whelen's strictures as "buffoonery and impudence—rank scolding; offensive assumption to instruct, fanfare of zeal, absence of all discretion." The sport hunter, argued Brown, should bring on his hunt all the extravagant sporting paraphernalia he desired to use, regardless of what guides might think. In response to what *Outdoor Life* dubbed the "Whelen-Brown Controversy" came a storm of letters supporting both sides. "If we condemn Mr. Whelen's article," wrote one correspondent in the April 1907 issue, "we must re-write the history of Davy Crockett and Daniel Boone; we must rescind all praise that has been accorded to our early explorers." Whelen, he insisted, was absolutely correct; real hunters looked after themselves in the woods. That was why so many hunting clubs were named after "Boone, Crockett, Lewis, Clarke" and other frontiersmen and explorers.

After months of charge and countercharge, the controversy showed no sign of abating. Countless letters had flooded the offices of *Outdoor Life*, announced the editors, too many to print. No further letters on this issue were sought; the animus on both sides must subside.[14] The larger significance of the controversy, however, did not subside. In hiring guides to do camp chores, carry guns, and saddle horses, elite sport hunters betrayed the egalitarian, individualistic tradition of their forebears. Such men seemed to make hunting into a ritual not of democracy and equality, but of aristocracy and dominion.

Theodore Roosevelt and his fellow Progressives bucked against the aristocratization of America not just by regulating business and breaking up trusts, but also by campaigning for game laws and public preserves. In the United States, where political rights and hunting rights were closely related, hunting would remain the sacred right of the democratic many, and the democratic many would retain the sacred rite of hunting. The conservationist movement was not, however, as democratic as Roosevelt believed it to be. Several recent historians have argued convincingly that early-twentieth-century conservationists turned public lands, especially western lands, into game preserves for wealthy men who could afford to travel to exotic locales. To paraphrase Louis Warren, conservationists transformed "local commons" used by subsistence hunters (Indians, ethnic minorities, and poor whites) into "national" or "state" commons used by elites. Karl Jacoby goes a step further, arguing that hunters who used local commons—or at least those in the Adirondacks of New York—had worked out conservationist practices long before powerful conservationists stepped in to save game.[15]

The choice made by Roosevelt and his fellow conservationists, however, was not between protecting game strictly for common men or protecting game strictly for the elite. Conservationists chose a middle path, steering carefully between the tradition of hunting without restriction and the alternative of private hunting preserves protected for the wealthy. It is important to note that not all elite hunters supported Roosevelt's public preserves. "Until all of the game is shot off and the public has no further interest in its protection," wrote one hunter in 1909, "it is absolutely impossible to have decent shooting or much game. Free public shooting is a delusion anyway. When there is no more wild game to be protected, and men of wealth, whose tastes run in that direction, are permitted to breed and sell anything they want to, whenever they want to, without a lot of red tape, there will be no end of big preserves created, and more game... than this generation of sportsmen has ever seen."[16]

In the short run, to be sure, the federal net that Roosevelt threw over public lands benefited men who were wealthy enough to enjoy hunting vacations in the West or in the mountainous preserves of the East. In the long run, however, conservation democratized sport hunting by transforming every hunter into a "sportsmen," a term that in the nineteenth century referred only to elite men. Just as in the nineteenth century, "gentleman," a term reserved for elite men in the colonial era, came to describe any white male American adult, so in the twentieth century "sportsman" came to describe any man who hunted. Once again, the American hunting democracy prevailed.

One might argue that hunting as sport, thanks to Rooseveltian conservation, peaked in the 1940s and 1950s. Whether hunters reached their apogee on the scale of social status in those decades is another matter. Perhaps the new legions of sportsmen gained prestige from their association with the old elite whose ethic of fair play, style, and dash, and whose wealth, seemed to establish them as ideal men. "Marry a hunter," a middle-class housewife from Missouri told her daughter in the 1950s; hunters were known to have good character.[17] At the same time, hunting, perhaps because of its association with uneducated sorts who often lived in rural areas, began to lose social prestige precisely as it reached its height of popularity. "Sportsmen" became identified as "rednecks." As a result, the term sportsman lost any definite meaning as a marker of social status, just as the term gentleman had lost any definite meaning as a marker of social status a century before.

The creation of new legions of sportsmen in the first half of the twentieth century, moreover, did not mean that the forces of democracy had sealed their triumph. The Progressive-era conflict over conservation continued in the 1920s and 1930s, when William Temple Hornaday (A Boone and Crockett Club member) and his Permanent Wild Life Fund, along with Harry McGuire, editor of *Outdoor Life*, lined up against the American Wild Fowlers, the American Game Protective and Propagation Association, and the National Association of Audubon Societies. Hornaday and McGuire favored low bag limits in duck hunting whereas their opponents favored high bag limits (or no limits) but strict enforcement of hunting seasons as well as a new law banning pump and "magazine" guns capable of firing multiple shots. On the surface, the controversy concerned how best to conserve game, yet each side pitched the struggle as one between democracy and aristocracy, with sportsmen standing on both sides of the controversy.

According to John C. Phillips (also a member of the Boone and Crockett Club), a wealthy Massachusetts physician who served as president of the Wild Fowlers, McGuire was simply voicing his bias against elite hunters. McGuire, argued Phillips, believed that "all duck clubs are more or less 'cliques of wealthy sportsmen' seeking higher bag limit privileges." McGuire incited "bad feelings toward the owners and lessors of duck properties" not in order to protect ducks, but

in order to attack duck clubs. Far from blaming its own members for declines in the wildfowl population, Phillips's American Wild Fowlers blamed "the openly assaulting public" who hunted on federal lands using magazine guns. The government, claimed the Wild Fowlers, lacked the money and the personnel to enforce game laws effectively.

The question of who was correct in this debate is beside the point. Both were correct: waterfowl needed protection. More interesting is the social conflict embedded in the debate. As the new legions of sportsmen entered the conservationist movement, they attacked, and were attacked by, the old elite who enrolled under the banner of the Wild Fowlers. At issue was the viability of the American hunting democracy.

If you leaf through a Cabela's catalog, you will see few signs of class conflict among sportsmen today, though you might notice that prosperous hunters still boast of their trophies from distant and exotic locales like Alaska, Asia, or Africa. Behind the glossy photos, however, controversy persists. The conservation of wildfowl is no longer the issue it was in the 1920s and 1930s, but common-man sportsmen decry state-run lottery systems that reserve big-game animals for those wealthy enough to pay up to $75,000 per tag. The big-money lotteries generate funds for conservation, but they also make big-game hunting into an aristocratic rather than an egalitarian sport.

What, then, do we make of Dick Cheney and canned hunts? To understand what Cheney's canned hunt means and why it matters, let's begin with a simple observation: the games we play reflect the sort of people we are. That is why the methods and meanings of hunting and conservation have been debated for so long. Hunting is not just about hunting; it is about the meaning of citizenship in a republic.

In the colonial and early national era, common-man hunters opposed game laws not because they opposed saving game, but because they saw game laws as a stalking horse of aristocracy. To counter that trend—to save the U.S. as a hunting democracy—conservationists such as Theodore Roosevelt created public game preserves and embraced their guides as equals.

In the short run, Rooseveltian conservation dispossessed common men of their traditional right to hunt (even as it allowed many to make their living as guides). In the long run, however, conservation democratized sport hunting by transforming all hunters into "sportsmen." In turn, spokesmen for common-man hunters argued against spokesmen for elite hunters over how best to save game, painting their battle as a great struggle between the forces of democracy and the forces of aristocracy. Throughout American history, indeed, hunting has swung between the poles of democracy and aristocracy, serving at one moment as a rite and right of the many and at the next as a rite and right of the few. The American hunting democracy has never been wholly secure.

I submit, then, that canned hunts such as the one in which Dick Cheney participated bother most Americans not simply because they're unsporting, but because they're aristocratic. Or, rather, canned hunts are unsporting because they are aristocratic. They enable wealthy hunters to evade the rules that govern the rest of the hunting population. The ethos of the canned hunt is not to overcome hardship, but to eliminate it. Those who participate in such hunts kill animals not because they have taken them in fair chase, but because they have purchased their lives. Just as English nobles took pride in killing hundreds of farm-raised birds in a day of shooting in the nineteenth century, Dick Cheney and friends take pride in killing hundreds of farm-raised birds in a day of shooting in the twenty-first century.

It may be too much to say that the way aristocrats treat game birds corresponds to the way they treat their fellow humans. But I would argue that canned hunts haunt Americans who realize that humans, too, can be caged, confused, denied a fair chance in life. The people's liberty, observed John Adams over two hundred years ago, is perpetually "skulking about in corners...hunted and persecuted in all countries by cruel power." The only antidote to that sort of power, according to the republic's founders, was self-discipline, moderation, and constant vigilance—what they termed "virtue"—qualities that canned hunts seem to mock.[18]

Canned hunts haunt Americans, moreover, because those who favor canned hunts tend to go wherever they can find the most game, or the biggest game, in whatever way is most convenient, regardless of cost. The canned hunt flies in the face of a century of work done by American hunters intent on preserving game on public lands—and preserving hunting itself—for the many.

It may sound preposterous to suggest that the U.S. is destined to become

DEPLETION OF GAME LED CONSERVATIONISTS TO CREATE PUBLIC PRESERVES, STEERING A PATH BETWEEN THE "COMMON MAN" TRADITION OF HUNTING WITHOUT RESTRICTION AND PRIVATE HUNTING RESERVES FOR THE WEALTHY.

THIS UNDATED PHOTOGRAPH CAPTURES THE SPIRIT OF THE FORMER AT A CABIN ON THE HILGER RANCH NORTH OF HELENA, MONTANA. THE HUNTERS ARE INDENTIFIED AS "WILL HILGER, ED BOWMAN, AND JOE HILGER 'BUFFALO BILL.'"

a nation of canned hunting rather than a hunting democracy. But selling off public lands to private game ranchers is precisely what President George W. Bush's public lands advisor, Terry Anderson, has proposed to do (though political expediency militates against any overt moves in that direction for the time being). Meanwhile, state game agencies have begun to award hunting permits to ranchers who auction them off to the highest bidders. That plan, too, privatizes a public resource, wild game animals.[19] Step by step, we edge closer to Dwight Huntington's prediction in 1900 that all hunting in the U.S. will be done on private preserves.

The logic of "kill as many as you like," "no holds barred," "take every advantage," and "you paid for it, you deserve it" have no place in a republican sport. "The mere fair-weather hunter," warned Theodore Roosevelt in 1901, "who trusts entirely to the exertion of others, and does nothing more than ride or walk about under favorable circumstances, and shoot at what somebody else shows him, is a hunter in name only."[20] Those who participate in today's canned hunts could benefit from a dose of Rooseveltian wisdom.

Meanwhile, the debate over the sanctity of the American hunting democracy continues. When we argue about hunting, we are arguing about something that matters. We are arguing about who we are and what sort of society we wish to live in. ■

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[1]Dallas Morning News, December 18, 2003; Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch, December 18, 2003.
[2]Thomas L. Altherr, "First Hunters': American Presidents and Hunting" (paper, North American Society for Sport History annual conference, May 1992).
[3]Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch, December 28, 2003; New York Times, February 8, 2004; Wayne Pacelle, "Cheney's Canned Kill, and Other Hunting Excesses of the Bush Administration," http://www.hsus.org/ace/20186, accessed June 17, 2004. See also Manchester (N.H.) Union Leader, October 15, 2003.
[4]John B. Goff, "The Roosevelt Lion Hunt," Outdoor Life, 7 (May 1901), unnumbered page.
[5]William Elliott, Carolina Sports by Land and Water: Including Incidents of Devil-Fishing, Wild-Cat, Deer, and Bear Hunting, &c. (Charleston, S.C., 1846), 285, 286; American Farmer, 3d ser., 3 (1841), 25.
[6]Roosevelt might be a gentleman hunter, noted J. A. McGuire in his article on the vice president's Colorado hunting trip of 1901, but he gladly cast off "conventional manners and social dignity while in the hills. J. A. McGuire, "Gov. Roosevelt's Colorado Indian Hunt," Outdoor Life, 7 (March 1903), unnumbered page.
[7]Thorstein Veblen, The Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions (1890; repr., New York, 1912), 40–41, 134, 258, 263, 270.
[8]Theodore Roosevelt, The Wilderness Hunter, Homeward Bound ed. (1893; repr., New York, 1910), 270.
[9]Dwight W. Huntington, "Field Sports of To-Day," Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine, 66 (October 1903), 896; "That 'Duck Preserve' Question," Outdoor Life, 7 (February 1901); Huntington, Our Big Game, 34; "American Game Parks. The 'Forest and Stream's Fourth Annual Report on Game in Preserves. Part One—Fenced Parks," Forest and Stream, 49 (July 31, 1897), 85. For an additional listing of privately owned preserves, see the sequel to this article, "Part Two—Unfenced Parks," ibid. (August 7, 1897), 104–6. See also William Henry Atherton, "The 'Rich' and the 'Poor,'" ibid., 48 (April 17, 1897), 306–7.
[10]Chicago Field, 15 (March 26, 1881), 104; Hough, "The Shooting Clubs of Chicago. IV," 64.
[11]Harry Radford, "The Sportsman and His Guide; Address Delivered by Harry V. Radford at the Annual Banquet of the Brown's Trace Guides' Association, Held in the Historic Old Forge House, at Old Forge, N.Y., January 8, 1903," Woods and Waters, 7 (Spring 1904), 16; "Three Years Trip in Barren Lands," Edmonton Journal, August 17, 1910, copy in folder 5, box 47, RU 208, SIA; "Bare Arctic Tragedy," article published in Washington Post, January 1, 1915, copy in box 3, RU 7252, ibid.; "Wood Bison Hunter Here," article published in Edmonton Capital, July 29, 1910, copy in folder 5, box 47, RU 208, ibid.
[12]Ibid.
[13]Townsend Whelen, "The Sportsman and His Guide," Outdoor Life, 19 (February 1907), 173–74.
[14]"Notice to Readers and Correspondents," *Outdoor Life*, 19 (May 1907), 609-11
[15]Louis Warren, The Hunter's Game: Poachers and Conservationists in Twentieth-Century America (New Haven, Conn., 1997), 1–3; Jacoby, Crimes against Nature.
[16]Quoted in *History of the Committee on Conservation of Forest and Wildlife of the Camp Fire Club of America 1909-1989* and the *Camp Fire Conservation Fund 1977-1989*, comp. Charles Banks Bellt (Dobbs Ferry, N.Y., 1989), 9.
[17]Marie Timberlake, conversation with author, 2001.
[18]John Adams quoted in Bernard Bailyn, The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), 59.
[19]Dan C. Johnson, "The Future of Hunting in America," Outdoor Library, Bass Pro Shops, http://www.basspro.com/servlet/catalog. MONTANA THE MAGAZINE OF WESTERN HISTORY 10 CFPage?mode=article&objectID=28571&catID=11, accessed June 15, 2004; Great Falls (Mont.) Tribune, December 12, 2002, http://www.greatfallstribune.com/news/stories/20021212/localnews/558640.html, accessed June 15, 2004.
[20]Theodore Roosevelt, "An Elk Hunt at Two-Ocean Pass, Wyo.," Outdoor Life, 8 (November 1901), unnumbered page.