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Cover: picture taken during a moose hunt in Värmland of three female hunters pulling a calf killed by another hunter in the team (not pictured).
(photo: Mari-Linn Stenlund)

Past echoes and modern pressures: on the changing ethics of hunting in Sweden

Abstract

What do hunters consider an ethical hunt?

Ethics are a central part of hunting as it concerns the killing of wildlife. Modern developments are exerting pressures on hunting affecting its practice and ethics. Normative ideals, such as animal welfare and sustainability, are growing in significance and questioning the legitimacy of hunting, pushing the question of ethical conduct. This research explores how modern developments shape contemporary hunting ethics and examines hunters' concerns about the emerging dilemmas from various pressures affecting hunting. Exploring the prescriptions that hunters voice in relation to these developments reveals broader ethics and values held by hunters beyond communicated principles of 'fair chase' and 'quick kill'.

An applied ethics approach is taken, utilizing qualitative empirical data to analyse hunters' perceptions of their own and other hunters' ethical conduct in the face of modern developments, specifically technological innovation, commercialisation, demographic change and centralisation. The thesis thus sheds light on how hunters accommodate, reflect on, or resist these developments, providing insight into held values among hunters and their relationship with wildlife.

Each of these developments are investigated, focusing on ethical issues and the emergence of dilemmas for hunters involving trade-offs between moral principles around fair chase, animal welfare and ecology. Results show that these developments affect how hunting is and should be practiced, causing tensions between different values and perspectives on the purpose of hunting and its continued role in society. The research concludes that ethical principles alone are not enough to guide modern hunters and that the hunting process, which is essential to ethical conduct and experience, is being compromised by modern pressures. Finally, three elements of hunting consisting of effort, knowledge, and purpose, are proposed as a complement to ethical principles to buffer against modern pressures and guide hunters towards an ethical hunting process.

Keywords: hunting, ethics, wildlife management, modernity, process.

Svensk jaktetik i förändring: trycket från moderniteten och det förflutnas genklang

Abstract

Vad anser jägare är etiskt respektive oetiskt med jakt? Etikfrågor ställs på sin spets i modern jakt eftersom det rör frågan om att döda vilda djur. Modernisering, som teknisk utveckling, kommersialisering, demografiska förändringar samt centralisering av beslutsfattande, påverkar jaktens praktik och etik och ställer krav på hur jägarna utför jakten. Normativa ideal, såsom djurvälfärd och hållbarhet, blir allt viktigare och utmanar jaktens syfte och legitimitet. Därmed riktas också allmänhetens och medias uppmärksamhet mot jaktens genomförande och jägarnas agerande.

Syftet med avhandlingen är att beskriva hur moderniseringen påverkar jaktetiken och jägares oro över hur jakten påverkas av förändringar i omvärlden och moderna dilemman. Forskningen undersöker jägarnas uppfattningar om samhällsutvecklingen och deras förslag på hur moderna dilemman i jakten kan hanteras. Resultatet visar att jägare resonerar kring breda och djupa etiska och värdemässiga frågeställningar som går långt utöver de ofta uttryckta principerna 'att ge djuret en chans' och 'ett snabbt dödande skott'.

För att analysera jägares uppfattningar om deras egna och andra jägares handlande och relation till jaktens modernisering har kvalitativa data samlats in och analyserats utifrån ett tillämpat etiskt ramverk. Avhandlingen belyser hur jägare anpassar sig till, reflekterar över eller gör motstånd mot jaktens modernisering. Det ger en inblick i jaktens och jägarnas värderingar och deras förhållande till vilda djur i en modern kontext.

Resultaten visar att dessa moderna förändringar påverkar både hur jakten praktiseras och bör praktiseras. Det leder till spänningar när värden och synpunkter kolliderar med syftet med jakten och dess roll i samhället. Slutsatserna av undersökningen är att jaktprocessen, som är central för etiskt handlande, påverkas av moderniseringen och att etiska principer som sådana därför är otillräckliga redskap då jägare ska navigera i frågor som rör jaktetik. Som ett komplement till etiska principer, och för att motverka påverkan från moderniseringsaspekterna, föreslås därför de tre elementen ansträngning, kunskap och syfte.

Nyckelord: jakt, etik, viltförvaltning, modernitet, process.

Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to thank all of the people who participated in this study. They shared their perspectives, stories and ideas with me as well as inviting me to join when they went hunting. Together you have all provided me with valuable insight into Swedish hunting, of which I hope to do some justice in this thesis.

It has been a decade since I made Sweden my home again. I encountered hunting during my time as a masters student at SLU, starting with just a calendar of the legal seasons on a wall with each of the animals pictured - left behind by a previous student in my room at the time. Since then, hunting has been a parallel journey to settling here and the questions hunting evokes are seemingly endless, yet I am grateful to have been able to explore some of them.

This research was made possible thanks to the Swedish Wildlife Management Fund (Viltvårdsfonden) handled by the Swedish EPA. I also want to extend my thank you to the Swedish Hunters Association and the National Hunters Association for allowing me to participate in various meetings and workshops and for providing insight into their organisations and members.

I want to express my gratitude to all my colleagues at the division of Environmental Communication. I enjoyed studying and working with you and will have great memories of this place. My move to Stockholm (during the pandemic) put more distance to commute but I often did it happily knowing I can get my Pressbyrån coffee on the way and settle in comfortably and see my colleagues when I reach my destination.

I want to thank my fellow PhDs who have been a great support. Sharing this journey with you has made it so much better, easier and fun! Sitting outside in the sun and chatting about everything and anything are some of the most appreciated moments. Malin Bäckman, Therese Åhlvik, Lara Hensle

Contents

List of publications

This thesis is based on the work contained in the following papers, referred to by Roman numerals in the text:

I. von Essen, E. & Tickle, L. (2020). Leisure or labour: an identity crisis for modern hunting? *Sociologia Ruralis*, vol 60 (1), pp. 174–97.

II. Tickle, L. & von Essen, E. (2020). The seven sins of hunting tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 84 (1), 102996.

III. Tickle, L., von Essen, E. & Fischer, A. (2022). Expanding arenas for learning hunting ethics, their grammars and dilemmas: an examination of young hunters' enculturation into modern hunting. *Sociologia Ruralis* 62, (3) pp. 632–650.

IV. Tickle, L., von Essen, E. & Fischer, A. (2023). *Fresh meat: women's motivations to hunt and how they challenge hunting structures* (manuscript).

Papers I–III are reproduced with the permission of the publishers.

The contribution of Lara Natalie Tickle to the papers included in this thesis was as follows:

I. The idea for the paper was originally conceived by von Essen. I contributed to the design of the study. I collected and curated the data, contributed partially to the text. I helped with reviewing and editing the paper.

II. I conceived the idea for the paper and led the literature analysis in collaboration with von Essen. I wrote the original draft with von Essen editing and reviewing.

III. I conceived the idea. I planned the study and collected the data. Both Fischer and von Essen were present at some of the focus group sessions and helped in their facilitation. I organised and analysed the data and wrote the original draft. Fischer and von Essen reviewed and edited the text.

IV. I conceived the idea, collected the data, analysed the data and wrote the text with feedback from Fischer and von Essen.

List of figures

Abbreviations

EPA   Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (Naturvårdsverket)

LRF   Federation of Swedish Farmers (Lantbrukarnas riksförbund)

SJF   Swedish Hunters Association (Svenska Jägareförbundet)

EC   Environmental Communication

USA   United States of America

EU   European Union

KSLA   Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry (Kungliga Skogs- och Lantbruksakademien)

ATV   All-Terrain Vehicle

GPS   Global Positioning System

Introduction

Hunters are at the forefront of interacting with and managing wildlife, often at life-and-death stakes, which makes ethical consideration particularly important. Modern values involving sustainability and animal welfare are questioning the legitimacy of hunting and placing pressure on hunting practice and ethics. Central to this ethical debate lies the question how people view and value wildlife and nature. Here, hunting provides us with an engaging opportunity to trace and explore our varied, nuanced, and paradoxical relations to wildlife (Gibson 2014) into the 21st century.

Reflexive modernity ('modernity' hereafter) lies at the heart of the hunting dilemma, creating a distinct separation between the historical Swedish 'folk hunting' and its modern derivative (Tillhagen 1987; Danell 2020). Derived originally from Ulrich Beck, reflexive modernity goes in hand with the calculation of risk from constant reflection and adaptation to change driven by modern developments, often with unforeseen results such as the disillusionment with institutional structures and traditional social collectives and culture (Beck 1992). Hunters have to navigate the complexity of modern developments and values; vying for legitimacy under existential scrutiny whilst facing pressures that have significant formative effects on hunting practice and purpose. Although in Sweden, hunting acceptance polls are at the all-time high of 89 percent nationally, these rates come at a price: The demand that hunters behave 'ethically' in their various contexts.

Expectedly, ethics have become a focus for the Swedish hunting community as hunters negotiate changes and increased scrutiny regarding their practices both internally and externally. Whereas hunting no longer exists as a subsistence practice in Sweden and there are many ways to interpret its modern purpose, whether it is access to meat, leisure, sociality, or ritual ceremony (Cartmill 1996; Cohen 2014), the contexts in which

hunting is argued to exist in a modern world are multiple. Some motivations to hunt are more publicly persuasive than others (Peterson 2004), and hunting ethics, although occasionally materialised in ethical principles and legislations, vary, and change across hunting demographics.

This study adopts a bottom-up approach based on empirical research with hunters; how they individually and as a group discuss, reason, negotiate and evaluate the effect of modern developments on hunting practices and values. Unlike other earlier studies on hunting ethics, this research focuses on and emphasises in-depth insights into the perspectives of hunters rather than quantitative polling (Skogen & Thrane 2007; Ljung et al. 2012; Krokowska-Paluszak et al. 2020) or broader philosophical evaluations on the morality of hunting. Where these types of research leave off, this research continues: from the morality of hunting as an activity to the ethics of hunting activities.

Therefore, the focus here lies in how hunters themselves constitute, communicate about and reflect on ethics in various contexts. This study uses an applied ethics approach for the empirical work. Using several qualitative data collection methods, a wide range of modern developments are identified as pressuring hunting values and practices to such an extent that they risk becoming 'unethical' by some untold standard. As hunters negotiate what it means to be ethical in hunting, they highlight various issues and pressures of being a hunter in modern society. The identification of unethical behaviour by hunters is done through information gathered during an immersive data collection process that refers to ethical premises in hunting established by institutions as well as in hunting literature. The main developments have various dimensions of effects from bottom-up, top-down to internal and external pressures on hunting. These pressures are identified to be: demographic changes, commercialisation, technological change and issues of governance alongside several other complexities that affect hunting in such a way that cause unease and concern regarding the ethical integrity of the hunting practice.

This study is an original attempt to analyse how hunters navigate modern developments and the ethical pressures and tensions they cause, providing insight into what they are, how hunters (strive to) manage them and, ultimately, what it means to be a hunter in early 21st century Sweden.

1.1 Project overview

Hunting is a main tool used for handling wildlife in Sweden today such as population management, containing the spread of disease, tracking of injured wildlife, reporting on wildlife occurrences, monitoring of movements (see for example Rovobs and Skandobs) and so on. Hunting is likewise an activity that many choose to pursue because it allows access to natural spaces (Øian & Skogen 2016) symbolising how people choose to engage with nature and wildlife.

This study is grounded in the idea that modern developments are creating ethical tensions for hunters to negotiate in current society through various technological, demographic, and economic developments. The implication of this statement is that hunting ethics are visibly changing which causes alarm amongst hunters and is perceived to be happening much faster than previously observed (von Essen 2018).

The aim of this research is to provide insight into how hunting and wildlife management is changing with modern developments and identifying future risks to sustainable wildlife management through hunting ethics and practice. The PhD study is funded by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. As such, there is a desired potential for a practical application of the results that can hopefully lead to more sustainable management as well as a better understanding of wildlife-human interactions.

The modern trends that are emphasised in this study are commercialisation and the continued innovation of new technologies as they are prominent manifestations of modernisation, and they appear to be some of the main instigators of change in the area of hunting. In foregrounding studies to this project, hunters have expressed concern about future developments of hunting (Tickle 2019), a sentiment that is supported by hunting organisations who are now focusing on the issue of ethics (Jägareförbundet 2016) probably because ethics and practice are strongly linked to the legitimacy of hunting (Peterson 2004; Fischer et al. 2013).

However, this research is not about passing moral judgement on hunters although some ethical discussions take place. Instead, the focus lies on problematizing those practices that hunters themselves identify as morally troubling and account for potential reasons why. Through studying and understanding the undergoing changes in hunting ethics and practice there is a possibility to identify developments affecting the hunter community that

can aid in the prediction of emerging risks to how people manage wildlife populations in Sweden.

1.2 Aim and research questions

In this research I aim to *explore how modern developments are pressuring hunting ethics in ways that are concerning to Swedish hunters*. It is set on the premise that societal developments can cause ethical pressures on hunting practices creating tensions within the hunting community. By using several qualitative research methods such as open interviews, focus groups and field observations of hunts I explore how hunters identify ethical issues, refer to them and how they cause pressures and tensions within hunting practices. This method has revealed that hunters often discuss ethics in the context of what they perceive as unethical behaviour and concerns they have about larger developments in hunting practice and culture, without ever concisely defining their own ethical standpoints or frameworks.

Different hunting groups (defined by several criteria ranging from geography, to practice, to species they hunt) define their ethic in contrast to other hunting practices that are different from their own and considered unethical (von Essen et al. 2019). Although a consistent ethical framework is therefore difficult to define, it is still possible to identify certain values and more generalized ethical premises to which a hunter or group may adhere. Nevertheless, I emphasise that the aim of my research is not to define hunting ethics or map out ethical structures across Sweden (a probably insurmountable task). Nonetheless, I concede that there is a generalized implicit ethical premise that is used to provide context for discussing ethics, which is elaborated on in the next chapter 1.3 on positionality and in chapter 2.

There are many theories of ethics, and as a subject, ethics deals with the rational judgement of moral principles connected to normative judgements of fair, good and right. Ethics are understood as theories and premises or "an elaborate network of restrictions, conditions and guidelines" of acceptability (von Essen 2018a:21) according to the moral values we carry with us. Values, by contrast, moral principles linked to our conscience, based on what we define is right and important in our decision-making. Ethics are consequently dynamic and notoriously hard to define, although ethical principles can be identified that guide hunters in their practices. The Swedish hunting community are reacting collectively against perceived pressures that

are affecting hunting in ways they find concerning (von Essen 2018), manifested in for example "etiksatsningen" ("the ethics project") on the part of the Swedish Hunting Association. As a community, hunters see the importance of maintaining hunting as a publicly acceptable activity so that they may continue to practice it.

To maintain acceptability, hunting additionally needs to stay in touch with wider societal values. Hunting has always been politically and socially influenced (Cartmill 1996; Danell 2020) and this is particularly visible in the ethics debate. Here normative values such as animal welfare and rights put pressure on hunting alongside modern developments that affect how it is practiced. As one of the most ancient and anachronistic activities still carried out by people to date (Cartmill 1996), hunting allows for the tracing of human engagements with animals. Therefore, on another level *this research investigates hunting as a focal point for understanding human-wildlife relationships in a modern setting*.

The objectives of this research are the following:

- To uncover modern developments of concern to hunters and provide insight on ethical tensions and dilemmas within hunting
- To explore how these modern developments put pressure on hunting values and practices in ways that are considered unethical by hunters
- To identify the evolving relationships people have to wildlife through hunting ethics and modern changes
- To highlight risks of potentially unethical developments in hunting due to modern developmental pressures (based on concerns in the hunting community).

The dissertation is based upon four main papers, listed in order:

Paper I: von Essen, E. & Tickle, L. (2020). Leisure or labour: an identity crisis for modern hunting? *Sociologia Ruralis*, vol 60 (1), pp. 174–97.

Paper II: Tickle, L. & von Essen, E. (2020). The seven sins of hunting tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 84 (1), 102996.

Paper III: Tickle, L., von Essen, E. & Fischer, A. (2022). Expanding arenas for learning hunting ethics, their grammars and dilemmas: an examination of

young hunters' enculturation into modern hunting. *Sociologia Ruralis* 62, (3) pp. 632–650.

Paper IV: Tickle, L., von Essen, E. & Fischer, A. (2023). *Fresh meat: women's motivations to hunt and how they challenge hunting structures* (manuscript).

The four papers I–IV contribute to identifying modern developments that are of concern to hunters in the form of demographic change, commercialisation, new technologies, and centralisation. Together they provide a comprehensive picture of the challenges faced by modern hunters as they contemplate ethics and what it means to be a hunter today often by reflecting upon the practices, they consider unethical. The papers each specifically deal with social developments that have a marked effect on hunting, providing an indepth investigation of hunters' perspectives according to their own value judgements and sense of ethics as well as that of the hunting community at large. The papers each focus on topics of particular concern to hunters, their concerns about ongoing changes and outlooks for the future of hunting, colleagues, and wildlife. An ongoing theme within hunting research is that much criticism of hunting practices happen in the third person, as hunters criticise the practise of peers or different groups of hunting practices. These criticisms in between hunters manifest as tensions and dilemmas over hunting practices and ethics which are lifted and outlined in each of the papers to inform and provide insight of these issues.

1.3   Positionality and the ethical premise of hunting

This research deals with the controversial topic of killing animals for reasons that are often considered unjustified according to modern normativity. Cartmill (1996:30) defines hunting "…as the deliberative, direct, violent killing of unrestrained wild animals; and we define wild animals in this context as those that shun or attack human beings". The definition is brief but accurate and graphic. It leaves us to question how this practice is sanctioned to continue today considering the rise in the ethical status of animals.

I have often posed this question to myself during the progression of this research and encounters on the topic of hunting. Neither am I alone in asking it. Several researchers from various fields have explored hunting's contra-

dictory values and it continues to fascinate. My interest lies in how hunters understand and enact modern hunting. I have followed hunters and hunting for several years, sparked by curiosity at witnessing them in Sweden, their perceptions of nature, the idea of killing as leisure but also as a caring favour to the ecosystem, the significance of Swedish heritage and cultural belonging alongside a sometimes-emotional relation to landscape. As part of the data collection process, I participated in hunts and completed the Swedish hunting licensing exam in an auto-ethnographic approach. Doing so does not mean that I necessarily agree with all hunting. My own values lean towards animal welfare and providing more space for wildlife to thrive, especially considering that biodiversity is in alarming decline, wildlife environments are increasingly depleted, and animals are compressed into much smaller areas than they would otherwise require.

As a student of environmental communication (EC), I recognise the debated conflict between discovering how people communicate about the environment and a desire to promote sustainability according to normative, personal and academic ideals (Hansen & Cox 2015; Kotcher et al. 2017). There is therefore an inherent tension within the EC field worth recognising. Although hunting poses an ethical dilemma because of its often lethal consequence for wildlife, it could facilitate a form of sustainable relation to wildlife and nature. Hunting therefore has a significant role in this study and it is not about judging its morality but about investigating how the hunting community judges itself. The practical application of EC allows for a diverse yet in-depth analysis of modern pressures on hunting and associated questions of relations to nature and wildlife, providing an original insight into the ethical dilemmas of hunting.

This is why, after reviewing the modern pressures that hunters consider are significantly compromising hunting ethics, in Chapter 6 "Part 1: Change is inevitable but where is it heading? Modern pressures on hunting ethics", I highlight ideas and strategies towards coping with these modern pressures. The second part of Chapter 6, "Part 2: Getting personal: suggested elements for a good hunt" thus refers to three categories (elements) that are highlighted as a response to the modern pressures discussed in "Part 1". The chapter "Part 2" goes on to discuss the importance of the hunting process to potentially buffer social developments that hunters think are leading to practices that could be considered unethical. Concerns about unethical practices are identified during the qualitative data collection process as hunters express

them during interviews, focus groups, meetings and informal conversations (often during hunts). This, together with literature, laws and principles/ formal guidelines, has allowed the research to illustrate what 'ideal' ethical practices, insofar as they can be distilled, potentially entail to hunters. Nevertheless, hunting ethics remain highly varied across such a large and varied community of people (Hettinger 1994; Kuentzel & Heberlein 1998).

This work should not paint a rosy romantic view of hunting; if this study describes an idealized image of hunting, it is an ideal often traced through what hunters describe as unideal, problematic or concerning. It is a backward-tracing research approach that identifies ideas of the ethical by drawing conclusions, in part, from what hunters argue to be *un*ethical, . They do so, for example, through discussing mistakes, often by other hunters. I argue that my positionality is mostly descriptive-analytical focusing on applied ethics, but takes a gradually more normative approach in the discussion chapter 6.2 "Part 2: Getting personal: suggested elements for a good hunt". I place significant value in allowing answers to surface by participants focusing on issues that concern them described in papers I–IV.

To clarify, when referring to the "the ethical premise of hunting" in this research, I note that, although the hunting community has attempted to codify hunting ethics by enshrining them into text by hunting organisations, teams and educational manuals, ethics are fundamentally elusive. Within the hunting community they are contested, mutable, misinterpreted and varied, which simultaneously makes them challenging and interesting to explore.

On the other hand, philosophers and ethicists have created models and theories that can be used to identify certain ethical reasonings by individuals and groups. With my own base in phenomenology and acknowledging that this study is not approached with "a view from nowhere" (Haraway 1988), my personal position in the question of hunting values and ethics is relevant and requires reflection. In this case I consider myself somewhat pragmatic in believing that there is no 'Supreme Principle of Morality" to be applied to situations in our pluralist societies (Bjørkdahl 2005:23) and likewise, I would mostly fall into the "holistic hunting" tab (explained below and in chapter 2.1 on "Morality and Ethics").

Bjørkdahl (2005) in his thesis "The Wild Ember within: A Study of the Hunting Ethos in Norway and the U.S.A". states that hunters who see themselves as playing a role in nature and use hunting as a way to procure

environmentally and animal-welfare friendly food are probably the most ethically sanctioned hunters as a collective:

> The ideal contained within the argument of webs is the integration and harmony of the human species within its natural environment. However, such harmony can only exist at the expense of wild animals, which according to the managerial variety of the argument must be hunted to avoid starvation and massive suffering. According to the second, more radical, variety of the argument, humans should not only be seen as managers of nature, but as intrinsic parts of that whole. (Bjørkdahl 2005:121)

Here he argues that there are two ethical frameworks of varying extremes included in the 'the argument of webs' as he calls it — referring to various ethical arguments that simultaneously refer to ecological webs (hence a web of arguments containing arguments of webs). The ethic incorporates an ecological focus that moves away from anthropocentric sport hunting values of the early 20th century (Bjørkdahl 2005). This premise of ethical webs includes both managerial roles in nature for hunters as well as a holistic view of the hunters as part of nature and is elaborated on in chapter 3.3 on "Contemporary hunting". The argument of webs is part of a movement considered the 'greening' of hunting and forms a popular ethical narrative of environmental sustainability. This ethical narrative is often explicitly cited in hunting reports, websites, magazines and other media outlets (Andersson Cederholm & Sjöholm 2021). Many participants in this research as well as encounters with hunters have voiced similar ideals for hunting.

Other ethical narratives that are not as widely condoned are the predating 'sportsman' centered ethic, which I likewise reject as a basis for hunting. An example would be that I do not refer to hunting as a 'sport' in this study. Other studies on hunting ethics show that hunting for the purpose of enjoyment of 'sport' is the not ethically well motivated (Bjørkdahl 2005; Bichel 2021); neither is it supported by people in general nor by a majority of hunters themselves unless it fulfils other ethical requirements first such as the 'use of meat' or 'quick death' arguments (Fischer et al. 2013). Therefore, the hunting community no longer likes to refer to hunting as a sport, and my own ethical convictions agree with this sentiment and therefore I call hunting an 'activity'. However, this does not mean that hunting for sport does not happen. It merely means that it is not a widely accepted reason to hunt.

During a hunt, heuristic quick decision moments do occur or sometimes ethical principles, outlined by the hunting community, are bent and laws even broken although I have been unable to observe such instances in a 'formal' role since my presence probably affected the behaviour of the hunters. In my own limited but informal hunting experiences, I have witnessed minor infractions of laws and some behaviour I personally deem disrespectful towards wildlife (often language or handling of animal bodies) but none that risked values such as causing unnecessary harm to an animal or risking the safety of colleagues. Formal interviews and informal conversations have likewise retold stories of unethical behaviour, many covered in papers I–IV. Nevertheless, reflections about the discrepancy between discourse and practice of hunting ethics is found later in the discussion in section, chapter 6.

1.4   Outline of the thesis

The papers on which this thesis is based are presented as Paper I–IV at the end. The current chapter outlines the unifying aim of the papers, the positionality and the overall approach used in the research. Chapter 2 explains the relevant but broader ethical contexts used in each of the papers, including main theories and the relationship between ethics and legitimacy. Chapter 3 relays the Swedish hunting context based on a short historical recap and presentation of the contemporary situation of hunting in Sweden, outlining some of the main modern developments affecting the hunting community. Chapter 4 explains the methodology behind the research by first discussing the ethics of qualitative research and subsequently explaining each of the research processes and methods that were implemented at the data collection stage of the study. Chapter 5 provides a summary of each of the papers I–IV. Chapter 6 is divided into two parts: "Part 1: Change is inevitable but where is it heading? Modern pressures on hunting ethics" and "Part 2: Getting personal: suggested elements for a good hunt.".

Chapter 6, Part 1 is an in-depth analysis of each of the studied modern developments putting pressures on hunting ethics, placing them in the context of the relevant literature and providing insights into the current developments and trends in hunting as well as concerns for the future of hunting. Chapter 6, Part 2 offers ideas to counter, buffer or ameliorate these concerns and issues found in modern hunting in an attempt to back-trace good hunting ethics based on hunter's concerns and relating it to wider

literature and established ethical concepts in hunting. Chapter 7 is a concluding overview focusing on the undermining of the 'hunting process' as a unifying theme in modern hunting as well as containing two chapters that suggest future research based on this study. Chapter 8 is a final reflection upon the position of the EC approach to hunting ethics and value of the insights that can be provided on the topic.

2. Background: Hunting Ethics

2.1 Morality and ethics

Speaking about hunting often invites a discussion about ethics (Fischer et al. 2013; Svenska Jägareförbundet 2017). Specifically, hunting ethics is a common system of prohibitions and injunctions within the hunting community. Associations and organisations often collate cultural codes of conduct for hunting. However, to understand hunting ethics in relation to current societal developments, certain fundamental concepts need to be clarified especially since they are essential to understanding hunting ethics. During the research process, it has become clear that ethics and morality are not always easy to identify and discuss. In addition, they can be difficult to define, yet they often lie at the core of most conflicts and discussions.

Social groups and accompanying ethics can, of course, range from societal norms, religious writings, a doctor's Hippocratic oath or hunting ethics. Ethics and morals can be contradictory; one 's personal morals may conflict with the guiding ethics of a larger body, for example, a lawyer believes that murder is bad but will still defend a guilty person as best they can based on the ethics of the bar association and constitutional rights. To be sure, ethical guidelines and norms help shape morality and vice versa from a very early age in people, yet, even with modern developments in science, people are unable to pin down moral absolutes (or Sidgwick's ethical axioms) or trace some biological moral intuition (Greene 2002; Singer 2005).

Studies of emotional reactions to trolley problems and other moral philosophical setups conclude that people often react to ethical dilemmas without rational consideration or weighing of the consequences (Greene 2002). Many impulses that we condemn as immoral are not immoral by other

standards. Another way to illustrate this is the acceptance of behaviours today that would have been immediately condemned as immoral in the past (Habermas 2005; Railton 2017) or as per cultural relativism in other places (Milhaud 2003).

Nevertheless, for the purposes of understanding the challenges facing hunters and hunting ethics, it was established early on within the premise of this research that interests lie in focusing on applied ethics and how hunters communicate and negotiate ethics and morals as a community, as well as the interplay between the individual and the group. Applied ethics are used in specific areas of knowledge and require an in-depth understanding of these areas to analyse the various moral dilemmas, not to judge 'good' or 'bad' as opposed to normative ethics. An applied ethical approach proposes that social phenomena should be studied from within their own cultural context (Trimble et al. 1983; Morris et al. 1999; Zhu & Bargiela-Chiappini 2013), in this case, how hunters understand, do, perform and renegotiate hunting ethics and practice. Applied ethics are therefore used to see how hunters understand, communicate, choose and practice hunting ethics in particular contexts (Resnik 1998), describing the ethical intricacies of tensions, pressures and dilemmas that emerge.

2.2 Theories and models

Although there are a substantial number of ethical theories that discuss hunting, the one that is arguably associated the most with hunting ethics is utilitarianism (Loftin 1984; Causey 1989; Gunn 2001; Garlick et al. 2011). Utilitarianism is a generally normative ethical theory that is well known and prescribes to maximizing 'good' in the form of welfare, well-being or utility (Singer 2011; Crisp & Chappell 2016). Another significant component of utilitarianism is that it measures the consequences of actions (so called consequentialism), unlike deontological ethical frameworks that consider the inherent moral good of the actions themselves such as the categorical imperatives of Kant (Greene 2008; Russell 2008; Shafer-Landau 2017). Teleological ethics, where the Greek 'telos' means final purpose, focuses on consequences (consequentialism) of actions; modern utilitarianism is, therefore, teleological (Korsgaard 2016). These concepts are all parts of the multitude of arguments and values that lie at the root of most ethical disputes, if not discussions, conflicts, judgements and meaning or purpose making.

However, it is worth noting that in many ethical conflicts around the 'right' thing to do, the most 'good', is often spoken about as a 'fact' which it is not (Habermas 2005). It is an epistemological 'fact and value issue' where people mistake moral value for empirical facts. The fact and value issue is comparable to Hume's 'is and ought' problem in which people judge what 'should be' based on what something 'is', deriving prescriptive or normative statements from descriptive ones.

Virtue ethics is another ethical framework, one that originates with Aristotle. It questions an individual's ethics based on their capacity to evaluate a situation and discern the most virtuous action. It places weight on learning and practicing wisdom to achieve the goal of eudemonia, fulfilment and joy in a life (Röcklinsberg 2019) which puts emphasis on being and intention rather than rules of consequence, hence making it neither fully deontological or consequentialist. In relation to hunting, it is an ethic that prescribes humility, respect, prudence and other virtues in hunting, ones that, as Jensen suggests in his article, can be used to question, and judge hunters according to a general criterion based on virtue ethics (Jensen 2001).

However, several ethical theories and models are particularly relevant to hunting and this research which are more descriptive of values hunters may hold. These models can individually or in combination outline the various moral and ethical values that hunters have and share or conflict over. These ethical frameworks are applied to hunting on a Western level and are popularized though international (Western English) literature, although they are reflected in Swedish hunting culture as well.

The most common ethic that has coloured modern hunting and remains in some part today is the so called 'sport hunter ethic' or the 'gentleman hunter'. This ethic has an origin in the late 19th to mid-20th century and epitomized by famous hunters such as Theodore Roosevelt and Ernest Hemingway. It was the time in which the concept of 'fair chase' in hunting was established, mainly formalized by Roosevelt in the Boone and Crockett club which he founded (Boone and Crocket 2020) and is still used widely today. Fair chase was originally established to keep wildlife population in the U.S.A from continued depletion by unmanaged hunting pressure (Cartmill 1996; Boone and Crocket 2020). Although management methods in parts of the EU already existed to prevent such issues (Gieser 2020), fair chase has become a modern term that illustrates the chance of allowing an animal to escape a hunt, allowing them a 'fair' chance to survive and is linked

to the first 'conservation' movement (Cartmill 1996; Posewitz 2002; Boone and Crocket 2020). Fair chase thus forms a basis for controlling wildlife populations so there is enough surplus to hunt and simultaneously preaches an ethic of respecting an animal's natural ability to evade a hunter. Nevertheless, despite the wide use of fair chase, the sports hunter today is widely rejected as an acceptable ethic because it is based in a dominionistic attitude towards animals and nature that kills for enjoyment and for the collection of trophies as primary goals (Kellert 1978; Kalof & Fitzgerald 2003; Peterson 2004; Bjørkdahl 2005; Bichel 2021).

Where the sport hunter ethic considers anthropocentric values, the subsequent 'Land Ethic' moved towards a more 'ecocentric' view that placed value in actions that "…preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise." (Leopold 1949:225). Although this ethic was, and still is, popular, the language in which it was described by Leopold is poetic and compelling yet imprecise and somewhat romantic (Peterson 2004). The Land Ethic attaches value to ecology and showcases the beginning of a stronger connection of science to hunting as wildlife management is fundamental to ethical perspectives today. However, it also approaches wildlife and landscapes in a predominantly managerial capacity and arguably places humans as benevolent lords and stewards over a biotic kingdom.

Some criticize this as an 'eco-fascist' ethic since individual animals are not of primary concern but instead the population and ecology as a whole (Bjørkdahl 2005; von Essen 2018a). Therefore, although Leopold's Land Ethic is still prominent in modern hunting, it is criticized on a basis that it does not prioritize the situation of the individual animal enough; for instance, predators can be killed to maintain high ungulate/herbivore populations, or an individual animal may be 'sacrifice' killed to spare the species due to illness. Species are thus given value by their perceived role in an ecosystem rather than their own inherent value (Peterson 2004).

Today these managerial and imperial attitudes are continually shifting towards less anthropocentric principles of valuing individual animals through arcadian, mutualist, and preservationist lenses in society and filtering into hunting (Bjørkdahl 2005). This hunting ethic incorporates more ecological thought into its ethos and is likewise referred to as 'the argument of webs' and references more holistic hunting (Kerasote 1993; Bjørkdahl 2005:88). The argument of webs tries to harmonize the notion of animal's

intrinsic value and their violent killing in hunting by providing reasons to do so, frequently citing that animals receive a better, less painful and drawn-out death when killed by a hunter. The argument relies on criticizing modern alienation from nature by providing hunting as a means of overcoming it by exposing the realities of life and death (Bjørkdahl 2005; Tickle 2019).

This ethical narrative is perhaps most in line with modern values and tends heavily towards emphasizing the ecocentric and sustainable ideals of holistic hunting as well as emphasizing hunting as a less painful and suffering death for animals in the wild (Kerasote 1993). The holistic argument of webs sees the hunter not as a dominating ruler or steward of natural environments but instead as a part of it, erasing the nature-culture distinction and often espousing spiritual connotations to hunting (Bjørkdahl 2005). This is becoming a more popular ethic amongst both non-hunters and hunters; however, people tend to be more accepting of the 'quick and painless death' ethical argument than the spiritual 'life and death' argument (Bjørkdahl 2005).

This will be referred to as the 'holistic' hunting model from here on as part of a larger ecological-webs argument and is likewise reflective of many recent public values that especially try to integrate both animal welfare and ecological sustainability as central values. It is linked to a larger so called 'green' movement in hunting which features narratives of hunting performing an important role for both individual animals and ecosystem conservation or preservation. However, even hunting scholar Kerasote is known to have mocked the 'good death' argument as "Florence Nightingales with Rifles" (Kerasote 1993:218), inherently showcasing that any ethical model, principle or theory can be critiqued, even by its own proponent.

It is therefore argued that although the webs and holistic hunting arguments perhaps have the strongest basis in regards to modern normative values and arguments (Bjørkdahl 2005), modern hunting ethics still espouse dimensions of all the above mentioned models, theories, principles and more. Although hunting may be moving towards a 'greener' centered narrative with holistic values, the sport ethic still exists in leisure such as tourist and trophy hunting (motivated by conservation) and the Land Ethic can dominate in wildlife management strategies. Hence it is apt to think of hunting ethics as a pluralistic set of values when discussing cases of a collected hunting ethos because it can be individually diverse yet reflect some group commonalities.

2.3 The legitimacy of hunting

As a currency, legitimacy has grown in significance for the hunting community along with ethics since they are in an entwined relation where hunting ethics are connected to the acceptance of wider society which in turn affects legitimacy. Legitimacy provides authority for hunting to operate and is intimately tied to communicating and upholding ethical standards (and what some would consider virtues of hunting) that resonate with the rest of society's values. Shared social ethics change over time and in modern times, they have come to represent values that question hunting and challenge its continued existence. This has spurred a need for the hunting community to retain public legitimacy through ethically motivating hunting in ways that can be deemed acceptable in line with current social values. However, the hunting community itself shapes and is shaped by ethical change in society (Cartmill 1996; Danell 2020) and this exchange can work both ways as hunters argue their perspectives to non-hunters. Denoting that although hunters form a distinct group, they are not isolated from the rest of non-hunting society in their ethical values. There are innumerable variations in what motivates people to hunt.

Authority is another concept linked to legitimacy (Darimont et al. 2020) which is generally achieved through transparency, communication and resonance with dominant values in society (Peterson 2004). Civil services performed by hunters are similarly linked to acceptance and legitimacy. Services are on the forefront of wildlife management, or 'wildlife services' as they are known in North America, include maintaining and managing wildlife populations, tracking traffic injured wildlife, protecting crops and areas from damages and so forth. Current significant responsibilities involve biosecurity measures to prevent and contain the spread of diseases through wild animals such as chronic wasting disease or African swine fever (Emond et al. 2021; Kowalewska 2019.). These services and positions lend both legitimacy through the skills and utility of hunting and hunters as well as authority through both need and centralized government appointment. Since several of these roles are tied to government services, they come with certain authority; on the ground, for example, hunters who track injured animals track them into private lands and kill without requesting permission. On a governing level, since 1938 the Swedish Hunting Association has retained a semi-governmental mandate with public funds to manage wildlife sustainably until 2021 when it was discontinued (Larsson & Bo 2021). This is

discussed later on in chapter 6.1.5 "Welcome New Hunting? — Bureau-cratization, scientization as part of the centralisation of hunting".

Nevertheless, hunting retains high support in Sweden which is essential to its legitimacy and consequently its legal continuation. This acceptance lies on an ethical base expecting that hunters uphold certain (ethical and legal) criteria when they hunt and kill wildlife. Arguably the high acceptance of hunting has several factors, including that many people have some familiarity linked to hunting through a relative or other relationships. Wild meat from hunting is likewise considered a vector for the dispersal of acceptance, as family and friends, and now people who buy it commercially, connect with hunting and value the meat as a resource (Ljung et al. 2012).

Meat is therefore intimately tied to the ethics of hunting as well as its acceptance and legitimacy in modern Swedish society (Kagervall 2014; Ljung 2014). Today hunted meat is argued to be healthier and more ethical than industrial farming (Ljung et al. 2012; Kagervall 2014) which attracts new people to start hunting, and especially women (Gigliotti & Metcalf 2016). Hence the legitimacy of hunting is often tied to utility and animal welfare which is why modern hunting has often been motivated using animal welfare and ecologically grounded ethical arguments (Loftin 1984; Gunn 2001; Garlick et al. 2011; Cohen 2014). The existence of factory farming and the killing of millions of animals in often horrible conditions leaves hunting in a comparatively favourable light for those who continue to eat meat (Bjørkdahl 2005). New developments in artificially grown meat, however, will provide an interesting challenge to this argument.

Hunters must as well be perceived to be acting according to social ethical values, or at least not break them, to maintain legitimacy (Peterson 2004; von Essen 2020). There is therefore a communicative component to legitimacy where the image of hunting should meet with certain public perceptions. This means that the image of hunting as a legal and ethical activity is important to uphold to the extent that some question its sincerity or accurate portrayal. Hunters will often try to motivate their actions such as disparaged tourists and trophy hunters arguing that their hunting activities provide significant contribution to the conservation of threatened species (Gunn 2001; Hofer et al. 2002; Bichel 2021). Holistic hunters will emphasise their relation to nature and the tragic wisdom of the circle of life and death; however, more arguments state that hunting is the least harm alternative for animals are more publicly popular (Bjørkdahl 2005). Arguments that animal welfare with

more 'green' eco-centred motives to hunt form the most supported/in line with public values and robust argument for the modern continuation of hunting at this time (Bjørkdahl 2005).

2.4   Operational levels of Swedish hunting

In Sweden, wildlife regulations exist that are founded on population levels and biological diversity which hunters are mandated to follow (Naturvårdsverket 2022). Hunting laws and ethics are thought to co-exist well as values that are important to hunters. They are upheld legally such as animal welfare laws which regulate against unnecessary suffering and issues arise when ethical values and laws diverge or conflict (von Essen & Hansen 2018). For instance, it is stipulated by law that a tracking hound (eftersökshund) needs to be on call within a maximum arrival time of two hours during all ungulate hunts as well as for predators (lynx, bear wolverine and wolf) in case an animal is injured according to 17§ in "Jaktförordningen" (Riksdagsförvaltningen n.d.).

The structure and regulation of hunting ethics in Sweden has changed over time, but currently several laws, regulations and recommendations govern hunting and are also part of a larger bureaucratic structure of governance. The levels of ethical governance are illustrated in figure 1:
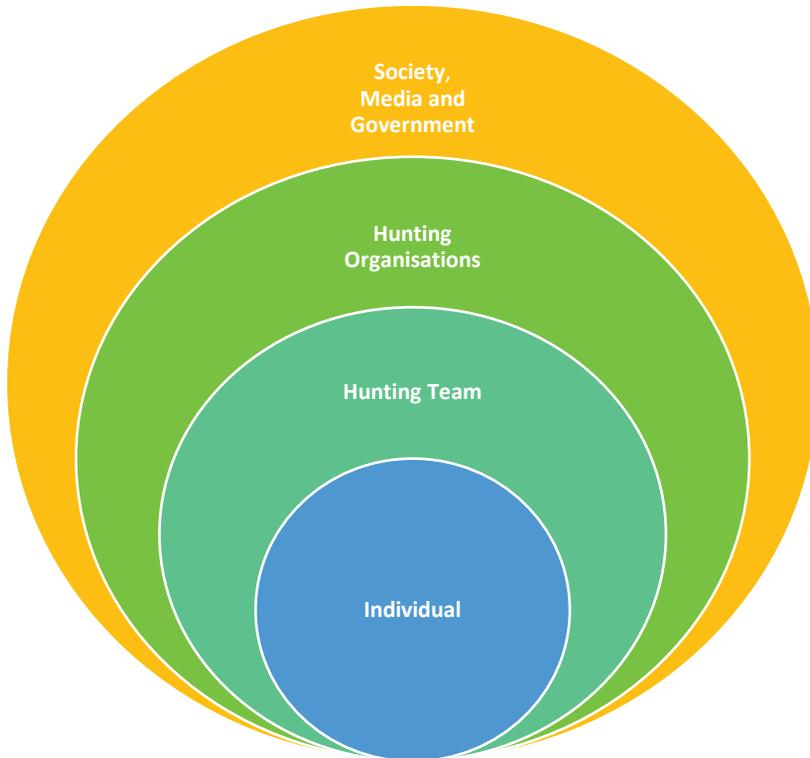
Figure 1 Overview of ethical levels in hunting.

This figure simplifies these levels and illustrates their relational interaction and size rather than a hierarchy. These circle areas all exist within one another and are linked together reflecting a crude rendition of the various sizes of moral and ethical spheres. Research into regulating behaviour and conduct during hunts (or the physical manifestation of 'ethical practice') show that the hunting team have a greater effect on behaviour and practice than stipulated laws (Hansen et al. 2012) although, of course, these tend to also enforce one another and hence all the spheres interact with one another. Laws exist to guide but also enforce ethical conduct through criminalization; however, it is exceedingly difficult to monitor hunters in the field and the job falls often to people within the hunting team to enforce practices with the law as a supportive framework (Bunnefeld et al. 2013; Crow et al. 2013; Gangaas et al. 2013). Often this is done using methods such as requiring a certain level of accuracy and training at the shooting range before allowing

people to participate in a hunt. Alternatively, a hunting team leader may send a team member who has made a mistake back to practice until they reach a minimal level (such as bronze or silver) at the shooting range. Other times misconduct in the team can lead to participants or members being banned from the team. These kinds of ethical regulations are part of a culture within the hunting team itself and responsibility lies on the team leader to call out or encourage practice (Jaktjournalen, 2021).

Hunting organisations could be said to exist in a mediator role as well as a representative one of the hunting community; they keep their finger on the pulse of the hunting community, trends, developments and politics, but also partly set agendas. They act as representatives of hunting to others in society which often means groups from animal activists to farming organisations but, in Sweden, they are also closely tied to wildlife management and regulation. The Swedish Association for Hunting or "Svenska Jägareförbundet" (SJF), as well as other hunting organisations, have been used and even given official mandates to handle wildlife management issues whether it is invasive species, the spread of zoonotic diseases through wild populations or protecting crops from excessive damage (Naturvårdsverket 2022). This is in contrast to, for example, North America, where the governmental wildlife services would carry out such tasks (The Independent, 2013).

Therefore, in Sweden, it is a relationship of benefits and responsibilities as hunters tend to prefer to regulate themselves and are more liberal (sometimes termed *laissez-faire*) often citing their preferred system as "frihet under ansvar" translated to "freedom with responsibility" (Löfmarck et al. 2017). Here hunters prefer the responsibility and legitimacy of performing a national service whilst enjoying the freedom of deciding themselves and keeping hunting within the realm of leisure as well as labour. Research shows that relationships between animal/wildlife interest groups, hunters and government can deteriorate when harsher regulations are enforced by increasing criminalization and thus suspicion, even resulting in increased poaching (von Essen & Hansen 2018) or the dislocation of issues to other, less regulated spaces (Ferns et al. 2022).

When the individual pulls a trigger, they are regulated by their own moral compass as well as the ethical frameworks that govern conduct; however, responsibility falls on the moment they decide to pull the trigger. As mentioned, when hunting in a team, they are there to support or condemn your actions, but hunting alone is becoming more accessible with technological advancements

and other modern influences. There are therefore many situations in which ethical frameworks or cultures of conduct are established. The culture and ethics within a hunting team are critical when it comes to the individual's actions and can affect them negatively and positively according to the more established ideas of hunting ethics which are discussed in the next section.

3. A Swedish hunting ethic?

3.1 Traditional folk hunting

Societal understandings of the human-nature relationship are constantly fluctuating, in turn affecting how we observe and treat wildlife, to see how they have shifted we need "a historical awareness of our present circumstances" (Foucault 1982:778). Hunting is a significant part of human history and changes and develops with society — it has consequently always been socially conditioned and disputed (Persson 1981; Cartmill 1996; Danell et al. 2016). The ancient history of hunting and controversy of killing often paints it as an anachronistic activity against a modern backdrop. Danell and Tillhagen, scholarls of note on Swedish folk hunting history, culture and hunting, judge that hunting today is "a phenomenon that must be understood as modern…" (Danell et al. 2016:11) and "is practiced under completely different conditions than the old folk hunting" (Tillhagen, 1987:9, translated).

The distinction made here between traditional folk and modern hunting is heavily based upon necessity. Where folk hunting was done for subsistence and to supplementing the household (Hansen et al. 2012) and, generally, hunting for leisure has roots in ruling classes and aristocracy in Sweden as well as many other countries (Cartmill 1996; Morris 2014; Danell et al. 2016; Bichel 2021). With time, the more leisure motivated hunt spread to other groups of men and, with time, women (Danell et al. 2016). Conversely, folk hunting was done for the purpose of subsistence which was more common in Sweden than other countries due to sparse populations and more widespread landownership across social classes (Danell et al. 2016). It was enabled when king Gustav III 1789 opened up hunting rights to all landowners (Danell & Bergström 2010). Hence, hunting in Sweden is less

associated with aristocracy and considered to be an activity practiced by a large part of the populace, and also supplied people with added income and sustenance from wild meats, furs and other parts.

Many hunters still generally refer to Swedish hunting as 'allmogejakt' or 'folk hunting' (as seen in TV programs such as "Jaktliv"), even if there are important distinctions between the historical hunt and what is practiced today. Together with 'allemansrätten', translated to 'the right to roam', which allows for free access to the landscape (even if privately owned) there is a proud heritage of accessibility to nature and resources in Swedish culture, which may also be a reason for why it is still referred to as 'folk hunting' even in modern times despite vast differences from the past. Even though necessity and norms have changed, hunting is still considered an enactment of cultural heritage and a connection to previous generations for many of those who state they are 'folk hunters' such as the recent "Svenska Allmoge-JägareFörbundet" (translated to "the Swedish Folk Hunters Association").

A notable break from historical folk hunting today is the heightened concern for animal welfare. Older 'sportsmanship' codes as practiced by gentry arguably have more in common with principles in modern hunting than practices carried out by 'peasantry' or 'folk' for subsistence purposes. Folk hunting was done with the sole purpose of resource extraction, killing animals for sustenance and other practical uses. Their hunting practices would perhaps be considered cruel by modern standards, even if contemporary support for hunting is very much based in utility and using the meat (Fischer et al. 2013; Ljung 2014).

In the past it was common to chase animals to exhaustion through heavy snow (with hunters on skiis) or purposefully injuring them so that they were slowed down and easier to kill, and consideration for animal suffering and pain was minimal if not non-existent in most cases (Danell et al. 2016). The use of traps was common and often practiced on a smaller scale by both children and women closer to home, such as the use of snares (snaror) to catch hares and birds. However, snares, leg traps (rävsax), pits (grop) were considered a different activity from hunting which, much like today, was defined by the active mode over which an animal was overcome and killed using a projectile weapon, spear or similar (Tillhagen 1987). Men would go on longer hunting excursions for larger game such as moose or even bear (Tillhagen 1987). For these excursion-hunts a quick kill was still highly valued (but not for animal welfare reasons) and a sign of a skilled hunter

which was sought after especially since bear hunts could turn dangerous very quickly especially considering the reloading times, which is why they were done in groups of two or more hunters (Tillhagen 1987; Danell et al. 2016).

Over time, the view of wild animals changed from expendable resource and 'unfeeling flesh machines' into creatures worthy of care and value, something the hunter-steward was responsible to care for (Danell et al. 2016). Hunting started to take a more ecocentric, and even biocentric, view of nature and wildlife. These changes were also happening in the rest of Europe. In Germany, one of the most influential hunting culture exchanges with Sweden, the term 'Jagdwissenschaft' (translated to Swedish 'jaktvetenskap' and in English 'hunting science') was coined already in the late 1600s referring primarily to animal biology and ethology of game species (Gieser 2020). There was a general move towards more scientific understandings of nature beyond the preachings of the churches in Europe. Just prior to 'Jagdwissenschaft', Descartes in the mid-1600s developed a mechanistic philosophy that viewed animals (and nature) as 'a sum of parts' "entirely made of body stuff — and so no feelings or sensations" (Cartmill 1996:95). Philosophy and science at the time had not extended to animal welfare and torturous practices such as vivisections and other cruelties were dismissed as the 'breaking of machinery' (Cartmill 1996).

The shocking displays and behaviours of animal mistreatment had an apparent effect over time, and throughout the rest of the 1700s there was an increasing influence to "love all sorts of beasts from horses to houseflies, treat them kindly, and rescue them from the clutches of bad children who torment them" (Cartmill 1996:107). Science and philosophy came to question mainstream religious beliefs and morality as well as their base of social organisations, such as the absolute sovereignty of monarchs. Some people reacted to the many of the brutalities that animals suffered for various reasons throughout these times, whether it was for hunting, shows or experiments.

However, up until the 20th century, ancient rituals, folklore and religion guided many of the actions and beliefs of individuals picking up a weapon with the intention to kill an animal. In Nordic folklore, for the 'allmoge-jägare' or folk-hunter, the multitude of enchantments, ceremonies and readings constituted a whole and meaningful system as opposed to the scattered stories and superstitions we might view them as today (Danell et al. 2016). Today we speak of ethics and morality in hunting where other

cultures and indigenous beliefs may have spoken, or continue to speak, in terms of good luck and bad fortune (Broz & Willerslev 2012) such as divine bounty, favour or punishment. Ethics vary immensely across cultures and time, therefore an ethic, or belief in some cases could "…consider hunting luck as being dependent on their own previous actions and their moral stance towards humans and spirits alike" (Broz & Willerslev 2012:74). These beliefs are relative and often considered irrelevant or irrational by modern western standards. However, some myths and beliefs may remain in Western hunting as small fragments of the past such as 'don't' hunt on Christmas day and allowing for 'Christmas peace' in the forest. What may seem an ethical principle to a Westerner is not shared in past or other communities such as notions of utility and waste in nature. Arctic hunters in Siberia will overkill reindeer and other animals whenever possible to maximise food reserves rather than practice ecologist or conservationist principles (Broz & Willerslev 2012).

The Christian belief had a fundamental influence on hunters, their moral values and ethical infrastructure. However, folklore and ancient beliefs were mixed into this, and ethical structures would often reflect both. Sweden is historically part of the Western sphere of Christian influence on development and regulation of society, so called pastoralist type rule; where the pastor is the leader of their flock, not an absolute monarch but responsible for the moral integrity of their community, for their soul. This Christian spirit of guidance and responsibility has coloured Western, including Swedish, rule and is even part of modern governance structures (Foucault 1982). The pastoralist model for human society has the same religious foundation as the traditional stewardship model (Holsman 2000; de la Bellacasa 2011) which is often used as an example of good and responsible hunting practice which both cares for and exploits wildlife — or 'harvest' as said by Aldo Leopold and many US hunters today. Hence, the Christian religion has had a longstanding monopoly on morality (Singer 2005) where the notion of the 'great chain' or '*scala naturae*' guided ethics from God, to humans, to animals and even down to plants and lowly rocks (Cartmill 1996; Gieser 2020).

By the mid-nineteenth century, "fewer than 100 individuals for red deer (*Cervus elaphus*) and roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*), and probably fewer than 1,000 for moose. Wild boar (*Sus scrofa*) became extinct. Fallow deer (*Dama dama*) may have occurred sporadically on some larger estates in the

south of Sweden." (Thulin & Röcklinsberg 2020:2). The last beaver was shot in 1871 and unfortunately protective laws were only established in 1873, the current population is implanted from Norway (Naturhistoriska riksmuseet 2020). Scarce populations of ungulates led to more livestock predation, which caused more organized persecution of carnivores. Large organized drive hunts where whole villagers participated, bounty hunts and even mandated killing, all strategies were employed with the intention of exterminating carnivores (Thulin & Röcklinsberg 2020). Populations were therefore severely depleted and as seen on the fluctuating timeline of environmental Swedish laws, mandated restrictions were not enough to handle the problems stemming from inconsideration, ignorance and irresponsibility (Danell et al. 2016).

3.2 Hunting care and stewardship

With time, hunters realized that wildlife population decline was not being remedied enough by state intervention and laws, which is why they saw the recently established concept of 'jaktvård' (translated directly to 'hunting care') as a solution. 'Hunting care' encompassed practical measures needed to enrich wildlife populations, and the setting of an ideology and ethic of hunting — it was the conception of a shared hunting culture (Danell et al. 2016). At this point, the act of killing would be enveloped into the more flattering enactment of culture (Danell et al. 2016). Wildlife gained value to Swedish hunters through its beauty and the possibility of recreation and quarry, the good hunter would now become a steward who cared for nature and wildlife, would avoid unnecessary suffering, and thus use acceptable forms of hunting (Danell et al. 2016). The changing values of society Sweden were reflected in the emerging joint hunting ethic titled 'hunting care'. 'Jaktvård' brought about a turning point for the conservation of large mammal and bird populations (Thulin & Röcklinsberg 2020). The earlier founding of Svenska Jägareförbundet (The Swedish Hunters Association) in 1830 lay the foundation for the initiation of 'jaktvård', which they championed. The practice and term 'jaktvård' lasted from the 1830s and far into the 1900s, having been altered to a new variation today named 'viltförvaltning' meaning 'wildlife management', sometimes the hybrid word 'viltvård' meaning 'wildlife care' is used as well. Here, wildlife management as a term is thought to link more to recent science and central

governance structures than the term 'stewardship'. The Swedish Hunter Association was originally established to manage the status and perception of hunters in the community, which was especially important in the face of changing social values, which led to the structuring of the wildlife care ethic (Danell et al., 2016). Wildlife care practice still had an anthropocentric ethic founded in continued Christian values, same as the concept of stewardship existed and still exists when it comes to wildlife and livestock management. Indeed, although modern hunting in Sweden (and other EU countries such as Germany) still practice animal stewardship, hunting has become secularized (Danell et al. 2016) and Christian values exist mostly in a symbolic manner and as heritage.

By the end of the 1950s, ecological research from North America was brought back to Sweden (Danell et al. 2016). However, much of ecological research in the USA around that time was coming from visiting German specialists and academics (Gieser 2020) meaning that influence on Sweden may be more Germanic. Gieser notes that "Wildlife surveys, measures of population control, proto — "sustainable" management of populations, hunting quotas, quantitative methods of bookkeeping, and so on, had been practised by professional hunters and hunting officials for more than 200 years before Leopold formulated his ideas in Game Management (1933)." (Gieser 2020:166). Aldo Leopold was one of the most eloquent and influential writers and philosophers on hunting and, as a hunter himself he wrote about the ethical insights and values of hunting and tried making wildlife management a more serious and respected subject by adapting agricultural terminology and methods of calculation (Bichel 2021).

He therefore strove to organize wildlife management and wrote about it in the same language as one would forestry and farming, quantifying population numbers as stocks and other statistical/economic values which had not been done before in the USA but was used in other rural extractive industries. Leopold also lamented the 'modern' use of technology (even then!). In papers such as 'Wildlife in American Culture' from 1943, he exclaimed that "Then came the gadgeteer, otherwise known as the sporting-goods dealer. He has draped the American outdoorsman with an infinity of contraptions, all offered as aids to self-reliance, hardihood, woodcraft, or marksmanship, but too often functioning as a substitute for them." (Leopold 1943:2).

However, North America, where Leopold developed his theories, has a historical 'frontier' culture that has shaped hunting, unlike Scandinavia,

where agriculture and pastoral practices on established lands throughout several generations. Indeed, the attachment to land and landscape was and is still argued to be very strong in Nordic countries (Øian & Skogen 2016) which is showcased by the existence of 'freedom to roam' which provides free access to the Swedish (and rest of the Nordic) landscape. 'Freedom to roam' along with hunting rights are therefore fundamental to the community spirit and attachment to landscape that many hunters (and non-hunters), have today, which is where the folk-spirit of hunting most probably originates.

3.3   Contemporary hunting

Most Nordic countries, including Sweden, in the 1980s saw another wave of changes to hunting practice and ethics as society moved from its agrarian roots and into more urban establishments and livelihoods (Hansen et al. 2012). Until this time hunting had been inherited down a patrilineal line from father-to-son, and most hunting was for small game. The average age of new hunters rose, were introduced to hunting through friends or work colleagues and were more interested in big game with less dedication to wildlife management and stewardship efforts (Hansen et al. 2012). These hunters were less likely to be connected to farming and they associated animals with pets rather than livestock and the brutality and death of slaughter (Gunnarsdotter 2005). These changes are considered to be a transition to more recreational and leisure-based hunting compared to the past (Andersson Cederholm & Sjöholm 2021). The most pronounced changes, however, were the introduction of the theoretical and practical hunting exam in in 1985 (Danell et al. 2016) and the adoption of the Nordic hunting rules in 1987. The examination of hunters was a clear indication of regulation and the establishing of a shared culture and ethical conduct, hunters now had to start proving their competence and knowledge, both considered essential for an ethical hunter. At the Nordic Hunters' Congress in 1987, the representatives of hunting organisations across Nordic countries decided together to adopt the following 'Nordic Hunters' Rules' (Svenska Jägareförbundet n.d.):

- Be careful with wildlife and nature
- Do not hunt more wildlife than the stocks can handle
- Hunt so that wildlife is not subjected to unnecessary suffering
- Take proper care of the felled wildlife

- Do your part of the wildlife conservation work
- Be sure of safety during the hunt
- Improve and maintain your knowledge and skills about wildlife and hunting
- Show consideration for landowners and the general public
- Be a good hunting companion and create a good relationship with hunting neighbours
- Work to increase the public's understanding of wildlife and hunting.

It can be said that the Nordic countries have a shared ethos, customs, and ideals. The hunting principles above are important and used currently but are as well quite general and can be found in most countries where people practice 'leisure' hunting (von Essen & Tickle 2020). Modern Western hunting (to which Sweden belongs) is often defined as 'sport hunting' (Morris 2014), leisure or recreational hunting (Danell et al. 2016). Hunting in several other Western countries has experienced the shift from more practical hunts to the realm of recreation (Persson 1981; Hansen et al. 2012; Danell et al. 2016; von Essen & Tickle 2020). Hunting as a labour or leisure is a negotiation that has often caused debate. The labour aspect, taken here as the narrative of hunting as a public service provider for society, is often used as a form of justification for modern hunting. At the same time, associating hunting with labour necessarily commits hunting to several consequences and responsibilities. Whilst hunting organisations have outlined ethical codes and communities have a shared ethos, the hunting community often draw on moral relativism, where situational pressures and individual choices based in the relative situation are made. This is sometimes referred to as following one's gut feeling or moral compass. Hunters are usually also against strict regulation of hunting and often averse to government regulation, and increasingly so in Sweden (von Essen & Hansen 2018).

In previous generations, before the changes around the 1980s and when certain big game was hard to come by, most hunters often prioritised the rights of peers and landowners instead of the animal, which is now the other way around. An illustration of this is that if a hunter sees an injured animal, they will first act from an animal ethics perspective instead of prioritizing the landowner, often done by euthanizing suffering wildlife before contacting the landowner rather than after (von Essen & Allen 2021). The paradox of hunters prioritising animal welfare is often debated, leading to arguments whether it is

particularly suitable to still hunt in a modern society. As mentioned, standardization is occurring by training hunters and ensuring their basic knowledge of animals, the importance of training, knowledge, and experience to become a good hunter. Research shows that animal welfare is often a considerably high priority in hunting laws and amongst hunters (along with safety) and forms the basis for some concerns regarding the development of ethics (Causey 1989; Lovelock 2008; Tickle et al. 2022).

Whilst hunting ethics have evolved to include more animal welfare values, it comes in (sometimes uneasy) combination with the ecocentric focus and what is being called the 'greening' of hunting (Alphandéry & Fortier 2007; Gieser 2020). The greening of hunting means that it is taking a more eco-focused and conservationist role. Hunting media and imagery reflects greening through the depiction of pristine nature and undisturbed animals, probably as the result of their increasing scarcity and resulting value (von Essen 2018). This of course is reference as well to the holistic hunting movement (Bjørkdahl 2005). A change in vernacular is taking place as well, where scientific and secular terms are replacing past ones such as 'wildlife care' (echoing Christian and stewardship/dominion), with the term 'wildlife management', translated into 'viltförvaltning' in Swedish. The concept of 'care', although often considered positive and appropriate is argued to be a term of power inequality, dominion, and control (Donovan 2006; de la Bellacasa 2011; Law 2015). Whether the term 'management' is less dominionistic is of course debatable.

Utilitarians aim for the best possible outcome of their decisions, that is, to minimise suffering and increase well-being or happiness. This means even a painful action can lead to the most desirable result. Hence, many atrocities may have a higher utility that justifies them, and although utilitarianism is indeed a suitable base to argue for ethical hunting, it contributes to arguments against it. Peter Singer, a known utilitarian philosopher, argues that hunting can be justified as a more 'humane' form of population management compared to slow deaths caused by famine or disease (Singer 2011) although he is an animal rights activist. However, even though many people think that hunting needs a functional purpose beyond simply pleasure or leisure ('killing for fun') there are other relevant ethical arguments for understanding modern hunting contexts.

Anthropologist Garry Marvin, who in his chapter on "Wild Killing: Contesting the Animal in Hunting" (Marvin 2006), argues that hunting is a cultural phenomenon and distances hunting from the naturalist argument

where hunting is likened to survival through predation on wildlife (Marvin 2006). In this approach hunting is a current cultural practice and not a natural one inherent "in the being of man" with a "mystical link to a putative past" (Marvin 2006:23). He argues that violence is at the core of human-animal relationships, adding that "violence has the effect of a 'creative' or at least 'constituent' force in social relations: deconstructing, redefining, or reshaping a social order, whether intended or not" (Marvin 2006:19).

Therefore, human-animal relations are shaped through violence and particularly for domesticated animals where the death is their primary purpose or the controlled outcome when their purpose has been exhausted. This is animals killed for body parts as well as pets who due to inconvenience or infirmness are often terminated in a clinical and cold manner. Marvin calls these 'cold' deaths due to their calculated and emotionally distanced design where routine, predictability, efficiency, and hygiene are prioritised with control as the fundamental aim (ibid.). In contrast, hunting is labelled 'a passionate death' which again refers to the human and not the animal condition of the situation (ibid.). The hunt is premeditated, and the hunter commits themselves to the emotional and visceral experience of hunting which "is not utilitarian work but a passionate pursuit in which the animal is sacrificed to the pleasure of that passion" (Marvin 2006:44).

Other critics may view people who hunt as possessing an unpalatable character, not liking the joy they gain from killing animals in the wild. Indeed, they may be indicted on a virtue ethics rationale. However, whilst deontologists and virtue ethicists would in this way condemn this character flaw, teleological or consequentialist perspectives put greater weight on consequences rather than virtue of or intent behind action. By using Marvin's arguments for the passionate killing in hunting, there lies a curiosity in exploring whether hunting forms a platform where killing is more correct as opposed to 'cold deaths'.

Modern hunting has been likened to a holiday away from civilization (Dizard 1999), and a potential to bridge the culture-nature gap (Tickle 2019). Others argue that removing hunting would separate human and animal engagement entirely, "cutting wild animals off from shared human–animal histories" (Gieser 2020:176) where we are left with a 'tourist's gaze' at wild animals from the distance as our only chance at a relationship. Which would mean wildlife relationships of engagement (of domination, whether 'management', 'stewardship' or 'care') are reduced to targeted interventions instead

(Gieser, 2020). Hunting ethos exists in parallel in most Western countries with certain variations, for example: fair chase and sportsmanship (Anglo-American), weidgerecht (Germany) and hunting etiquette (Denmark) are some informal cultural codes of conduct that unite hunters today and characterize several hunting ethos.

Nevertheless, there are influences that some deem less desirable. In the USA, 'Wildlife Services' have often faced criticism for their 'exterminator' role when it comes to wildlife, especially predators (it may be difficult at present to argue that Europe is any better with purposes such as culling, however). Some term US Wildlife Services, 'rogue assassins' since they kill up to three million animals a year (Fears 2013). Worse still, they may be painted as disinterested, corrupted or tired bureaucrats who look the other way when wildlife crime such as 'predator killing contests' are carried out on a regular basis (Wilkinson 2018).

The development of several hunting practices in Sweden extend beyond current modern ideas of landscape (see for example 'climax thinking' by Sherren 2021) and into historical imaginations of hunting practice. Landscape attachment is central in hunting conduct and local hunters will even be wary of tourist hunters who may affect practice and accessibility for locals (Skogen 2003; Gunnarsdotter 2005; Andersson Cederholm & Sjöholm 2021).

What comes to light after having studied hunting and especially in a modern context is that it is an excellent area of study for investigating the effect of modern developments on human relations and understandings of nature, which can be interpreted in the form of ethical values, principles and resulting conduct. Due to the ancient roots even attributed to modern hunting, new changes often stand out within its more traditional, conservative customs and practices. The issue remains that hunters kill animals not for survival, coupled with the rising moral status of the animals themselves. However, to provide nuance I cite the eloquent although overly cited quote by Ortega y Gasset:

> Death is essential because without it there is no authentic hunting: the killing of the animal is the natural end of the hunt and that goal of hunting itself, not of the hunter. The hunter seeks this death because it is no less than the sign of reality for the whole hunting process. To sum up, one does not hunt in order to kill; on the contrary, one kills in order to have hunted. (Ortega y Gasset 1972:105)

Ortega y Gasset here tries to respond to reductive arguments about killing for pleasure by explaining that although killing is essential, it does not constitute a hunt on its own since there is a whole process to consider. The aspect of death arguably puts emotions and understandings of human-wildlife relations at their peak, ethical implications are grave (although non-lethal activities can have arguably worse effects on wildlife). Human understandings of wildlife and nature is highlighted as hunting changes as well as its social status, since hunting has always been socially contested (Persson 1981; Danell et al. 2016) and it is one of the oldest relationships we have with non-human animals.

Hence, hunting provides an instructive topic or arena for the study of modernity's effect on human society. Any trends, megatrends, developments, or pressures are emphasised within in the fairly contained world of hunting that, although sometimes on the forefront of modern developments, tends to remain more traditional. Therefore, the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry, after the start of this study launched an inquiry of their own into modern 'megatrends' affecting hunting with predictions and advice for the future (see report by Sandström & Elmberg 2022). Along with this the Swedish Hunting Association (Svenska Jägareförbundet) have initiated an ethics initiative (Svenska Jägareförbundet 2020) and had a conference on the topic in 2020. There is therefore a marked interest in the effect that modern developments and pressures are having on hunting practice and ethics and is discussed in this project.

3.4   Modern pressures

Milton in 'Paradise Lost' describes urbanization and the development of machinery as a fall from a harmonious existence within (nature's) Eden. The ideal often seems to be defined, or at least appreciated, in contrast to something. Therefore, notwithstanding how thoroughly original contemporary issues in hunting appear, it seems many 'modern pressures' on hunting have already been discussed in the past by philosophers such as Ortega y Gasset questioning the purpose of hunting or Leopold warning about the effects of new technologies and their destruction to the essence of hunting (Leopold 1943). Considering that hunting ethics have followed with developments of society (Danell et al. 2016), it is no wonder ethics are complex yet, despite global influences, remain also partially unique to specific contexts in Nordic

countries and Sweden. What we have today is a hunting ethic more considerate of animal welfare than before but, where the need for hunting has changed, questioning its legitimacy as a leisure activity. Therefore, ethics have become the fundament of building legitimacy and acceptance for hunting. Contemporary hunting, rather than a question of survival, is an echo of an ancient existence in natural systems that is constantly coming to question and being threatened by the mere existence of 'modernity'.

As witnessed since the industrial age and stated by academics such as Anthony Giddens, modernity exists at the heart of most social theory. Romantic writers like Rousseau, who brought about the idea of the 'noble savage' and the purity and sovereignty of nature (Russell 2008) stem from the issues of modernization, credited to have been initiated in the renaissance but heightened during the industrial revolution. Contemporary times are of course very different from when Rousseau founded his ideas, certainly post World War II, many argue that we have entered a post-modern era. However, others such as Zygmunt Bauman coin the 'liquid modernity' (Franklin 2003), and then there is the tech-inspired postmodern 'hyper modernity', or maybe we have instead entered the era of trans-modernity? Nevertheless, the idea of reflexive modernity (Beck also calls this second modernity) in style with Beck's and Giddens' writings refers to the many unplanned results that come out of modern developments (Chang 2017) and choices which are made rationally and scientifically still backfire and force society to change (Wimmer & Quandt 2006). Although, Giddens speaks more often of 'late modernity', essentially meaning late-stage modernity, illustrating the multitude of concepts about our modern times. However, reflexive modernity is less concerned with power and wealth and more with the way it handles risk which changes our social patterns, the concept of the nation-state and the economy on which we base our societies (Wimmer & Quandt 2006).

In such a time as this one, knowledge acquisition is key and rampant in a digitized world with technological developments that are known to 'run away' from their original creators and form waves of unpredicted consequences in a near chaotic sum of action, information and result. Which is why Beck describes reflexive modernity not as a reflective or conscious issue but one of unpredictable and unbalancing results that are "…non-linear, anti-determinist time with competing sometimes seemingly paradoxical developments going on simultaneously" (Wimmer & Quandt 2006:337). This idea of modernity fits in well with the research into ethical challenges and the unpredicted effects

of modern pressures on hunting. Hence the term modernity will still be used as a reference to contemporary times but with its foundations rooted in the concept of reflexive modernity and the rebounding effects of new developments. Therefore, settling into the term modernity, what it implies for hunting are the developments (or trends, megatrends, processes) that have become particularly prominent catalysts of change within hunting practice and ethics as well as the fallout effects of many such developments, many which are highlighted and researched as part of this study.

Whether it takes the shape of an industrial Fordist production line, or the lingering anxiety from modern consumption destroying the future, modernity and modern processes lie at the heart of most social theory (Giddens 2013). The idea of a collective social anxiety falls in line with Beck's theory of the 'Risk Society' as every consumptive action we take has wide ranging consequences that we find hard to understand and are essentially uncontrollable, a result of civilization's success and its insatiable demand for resources (Beck 1992). The wellbeing of individuals is said to depend "on improving understanding of the connectedness between people and natural systems and applying that understanding in the policy arena to meet social challenges" (Peterson et al. 2010:127). William Cronon argues that we understand natural systems as we would our gardens that depend on our care yet glorify the wild outdoors because they inspire wonder and remind us of existence outside of the human world (Cronon 1996). These holistic views of the human place in nature and attempts to reassemble fragmented understandings of the culture-nature divide resonate with hunting arguments such as outlined above by hunting scholars (see for example, Ingold 1996; Lovelock 2015; Gieser 2020).

Similar ideas of control, connectivity and valuation often come up in discussions concerning conservation. Humans try to dissect intricate connections in ecosystems, separating them and weighing connections and functions up against each other in the valuation of, for example, conservation versus commercial interests. Approaches such as ecosystem services further illustrate this concept, where people integrate natural phenomena into economic concepts such as service exchange and monetary valuations and, as a result paving the way for commodification of nature in the form of ecosystem services (Gómez-Baggethun & Ruiz-Pérez 2011).

Therefore, there are a myriad of different perspectives and understandings one can have of modern development and several that are often discussed with

relation to hunting are namely: the disputed legitimacy of hunting, commercialisation, social demographic changes, globalization, technological and digital change and finally fluctuations in ecologies and wildlife populations. These developments are of course interlinked and act as catalysts for one another, and they become prominent pressure points on hunting. In the following subsections the focus will lie on technological developments, commercialisation and finally the various demographic changes that are taking place in modern society and have become focal points for studying effects on hunting ethics.

3.4.1 Technology

The topic of technology features prominently in hunting. . Technology is, for the purpose of this research, understood broadly and includes tools, gear, devices and other material paraphernalia used in hunting alongside digital technology such as apps and digital information in general. For example, as hunting weapons are altered and improved upon, hunters are not only able to hunt animals from incredible distances and with accuracy, but they are also able to track and monitor them through live feeds or equipment such as drones. Hence, technological development fuelled by commercial enterprise within hunting leads to changes in practice and codes of conduct and ethical standpoints. One of the most prominent ethical discussions caused by new improved equipment is that of 'fair chase' versus 'a quick and painless kill', a clear-cut example of how hunters motivate their own moral codes and beliefs when interacting with wildlife.

3.4.2 Commercialisation

The commercialisation of hunting presents an especially relevant and contemporary trend that could change hunting culture in Sweden. Urban raised hunters have been shown to spend more money on hunting and "income and education were positively related with annual expenditures and negatively related with the number of days spent hunting" (Hansen et al. 2012:448).

Hunting tourism can be considered a primary example of commercialisation of the activity as the introduction of market forces into hunting often breaks apart the hunting process into separate price-valued pieces that dissolves the relations between hunter, forest, wildlife, and place (Gunnarsdotter 2005; Andersson Cederholm & Sjöholm 2021). Some people in rural areas believe the commercialisation of hunting contaminates the community by breaking up local ties and supplanting them with money

exchanges for goods and services, something that does not only include hunting but most small favour-based economies that used to exist (Gunnarsdotter 2005). Other commercial initiatives within hunting engage in "the supplanting of conservationism by consumerism within the culture of hunting ... embed[ding] a consumptive form of recreation deeper within commercial markets while weakening the checks against over-exploitation that are expressed through traditional sporting values of stewardship and restraint" (McGuigan & Clark-Parsons 2019:68).

3.4.3   Demographic changes

Hunters often form a group that speak for the rural communities, in many cases distinguishing themselves from 'alienated' urban dwellers (Gieser 2020; Tickle 2019; von Essen et al. 2019), and proudly announce their 'rural folk hunter' status. This is of course not always the case as lifestyles have become more fluid with both rural and urban attachments, as well as hunting having some more aristocratic traditions being practiced today such as drive estate hunts (Danell et al. 2016).

Urbanization is often maligned for the separation of the Swedish populous from rural environments and agrarian lifestyles. People became more familiar with animals as pets as well as television shows depicting Disney-fied animals and nature shows, rather than the raring and slaughter of livestock (Gunnarsdotter 2005; Peterson et al. 2010). Some argue that this detachment from the realities of resource extractive industries, and especially the killing of animals, through processes such as urbanisation has led to disconnected emotionally based ideas of nature (Kerasote 1993). It is nevertheless generally agreed by most that urbanised populations are causing people to be increasingly removed from human use of nature and the vast resources they require (see Kaltenborn et al. 2001; Bjørkdahl 2005; Peterson et al. 2010; Tickle 2019).

Some groups of hunters may appear more analytically interesting than others when exploring the effect of commercialisation and technological innovation on hunting. The groups of special interest in this study will be so called 'urbanized' hunters, female hunters and new hunters (who recently have taken a hunting license). These demographic groups are of interest because they appear to embody modern trends in the most explicit way, if not by their own self-understanding, then by their hunter peers around them. Urbanized hunters are stereotyped as an affluent consumer class who is

distanced from the reality of rural living and nature, often referred to as 'Stockholmsjägare' (Stockholm-city hunters) in Sweden. On the other hand, female hunters are growing in number and are also a targeted consumer class through modes such as hunting fashion. Interesting developments within social media regarding female hunters are apparent, where women as female hunters embody further paradoxes within the hunting world. As one of the last bastions of masculinity women can enter hunting as pioneers yet only at the behest and acceptance of men (McGuigan & Clark-Parsons 2019).

Historically women have featured much more in hunting than they have been credited for in modern times, only recently has more research come out to highlight women's roles in hunting history. However, a significant change to the perception of hunting as very masculine was after the second world war, where the hunter had become a role model for a good soldier, and after the war, become a popular pastime amongst many soldiers (Smalley 2005; Giacomelli & Gibbert 2018). This literature is taken from American studies on the topic, nevertheless, the post-world war image of hunting as a rugged man's escape from civilisation into nature has spread amongst all Western hunting culture (Smalley 2005; Haas et al. 2020). The result is that many women today struggle with becoming part of the hunting community, through simple cases such as access to resources, law and land but also unfortunately through discrimination, as showcased by the appearance of 'Patron Ur' on social media which is a 'Me Too' parallel relevant to hunting. Women hunters are bulking up hunter numbers.

Finally, the last demographic of particular interest is the more nebulous 'new hunter' (including females, urbanites, and other relatively young hunters). The new hunter is not merely a temporal category, but raises issues such as mentorship and points of entry into this culture. Did they receive any mentoring and how are ethics taught to new hunters otherwise? New hunters may also be more susceptible to consuming online sources for techniques about hunting and therefore be exposed to foreign practices or videos aimed at marketing rather than teaching (McGuigan & Clark-Parsons 2019) and that may not conform to local or traditional Swedish hunting ethics.

New hunters may also be consumers of 'weekend' hunting courses where licenses are obtained quickly without longer training or education in codes of conduct. This last point is something that has been particularly stressed by some hunters and particularly those who teach hunting education and licensing programs. They see it as a deterioration in hunting praxis and ethic

that is detrimental to the hunting activity. According to Persson, and affirmed by Heley (2010), a hunter's upbringing is more important in shaping perceptions of hunting than their current place of residence (Persson 1981), Hence, the argued need for long-term mentors within hunting.

Access to the countryside and hunting is not readily available for many immigrants, perhaps some tourists and foreigners, but then there is also a potential ethical clash for those who may have been hunters abroad. As discussed in the hunting tourism section above urbanization is perhaps the most vocalized concern of many hunters. The sense that people living in cities are to alienated from the realities of living in the countryside and not able to take on the responsibility of proper wildlife management and stewardship (responsibility for land). There has also been concern voiced over the popular 'quick courses' in urban areas that license hunters quickly so they may go out and hunt when they are not ready to do so without significant guidance given by and experienced hunting team (jaktlag) or at least a mentor. Hunting organisations have been reaching out to female and younger offering mentorship programs and contacts for those who are interested, although there are not enough to supply all new hunters who lack connections into hunting.

Urbanization is one of the processes whose impact on ethics, mainly in the form of a more disconnected approach to land and wildlife management, perhaps receives the most criticism from the hunting community. It is also a trend that affects several of the other developments that take place in hunting, such as the training of new hunters who grew up in cities without hunting and the commercialisation where those without contacts need to buy hunting opportunities, no trend is isolated. The problem is sometimes described as people living in cities are too disconnected from the reality of the countryside and are therefore ill-suited to the wildlife management aspect of hunting (Gunnarsdotter 2005; von Essen & Hansen 2018; Tickle 2019). Urbanization creates physical separation between culture and nature (Peterson et al. 2010) and a break from traditional agricultural societies.

It is purported to result in the loss of hunting traditions and difficulties in accessing land, which paves the way for, among other things, hunting tourism (Gunnarsdotter 2005). However, it is worth noting that the gap between city and country is not definitive and has become more fluid and many who hunt commute between the two (Skogen 2003; Eriksson et al. 2018). This social mobility between rural and urban areas and increased

higher education make rural communities more complex (Skogen 2005). Some hunters maintain strong connections to the countryside and do not fall into the category of 'city hunters' (Persson 1981) and many hunters who are registered in the city may have moved there in recent years and may also have land and even housing or family in the countryside or vice-versa.

However, those identified as city-bred Nordic hunters were shown to spend more money on hunting and "income and education were positively related to annual expenses and negatively related to the number of days spent hunting" (Hansen et al. 2012:448). Admittedly, this has also been commented on within the hunting community, that people who do not live or are close to their hunting ground spend more money on the idea of hunting than they spend active time in the hunt itself (Tickle 2019).

4. Methodology

This research is funded by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency who administrate the 'wildlife management fund', which is financed by hunters through the annual hunting fee. Behind this study, then, is the ambition for the practical application of the results which can hopefully lead to more sustainable and democratic management of wildlife. The study's key premises around change and ethics originate from previous qualitative studies with hunters regarding emerging trends in hunting. Hunters have expressed concern about urbanisation, commercialisation and the lack of mentorship in hunting in work foregrounding this research (Tickle 2016).

By starting from the observation that hunters are concerned about ethical changes and their effect on hunting practices, there is a chance of benefiting the hunting community. Nevertheless, it could also be a disservice if it leads to the increased regulation of hunting which some hunters may object to considering the laissez faire traditions that exist in Swedish hunting. However, the purpose of this research is not to only benefit the hunting community but is instead aimed at bringing insight to the changing ethics of hunters and whether they are sustainable, and even ethically desirable, with regards to the relationship to and management of wildlife. At the same time as these instrumental aims undergird the study, it also seeks to provide tools for navigating modern pressures on hunting, explained later in the discussion section chapter 6.

4.1   Representing data and reflexivity

When representing data, a method for managing gaps in understanding of how the data will be used is by explaining the interpretative method and analysis, such as explaining that themes are found, and that the participant

will not be represented as a full person/by their whole character in the research (Pickering & Kara 2017). This is especially true as it is not often viable to add entire interviews and character overviews into a piece of research. There are similarly issues of speaking on behalf of a third party (Hadjistavropoulos & Smythe 2001). Like 'voiceless others' (von Essen 2018) these are people who are being spoken for by the participant and hence cannot be there to communicate their own perspectives. From my previous research experience, hunters are known to speak of hunting behaviour and ethics in the context of other hunters and give examples of behaviour they disapprove of and find unethical.

Nevertheless, when hunters mention these third-party individuals, they generally do not mention people directly by name but instead cite a situation and keep the person anonymous, and as the hunters themselves will probably be anonymous in the research it will be a small risk of identification and harm. Hunters may also refer to a group in general such as 'city hunters' and so on, which is indeed a voiceless other but too general and will not result in individual identification such as a photo or a very recognizable and specific event might. Nevertheless, non-consenting individuals sometimes must be factored into ethical considerations in the study. The importance is to maintain the dignity and privacy of all persons who are directly or indirectly involved in the research (Hadjistavropoulos & Smythe 2001).

Although there are many laws governing the individual, there is not as much legislation and research that deals with the representation of communities (Raitio 2018). The qualitative sets of data that I gathered from individuals, but also focus groups and other sources, will in the end be seen as representative of opinions within the hunting community. Hunters are generally not marginalized like many native communities such as the Sámi in Scandinavia, nevertheless they consider themselves to be under strong scrutiny by society because of their practice and a perceived 'victimhood' (von Essen & Allen 2017a). This may lead to them being defensive and wary, especially of their image in the media and how they are portrayed in research about them. However, there are ways to mitigate these damages. Such mitigating measures are often taken by levelling out power positions and using mechanisms of authorization such as researcher reflexivity, informed consent, co-authorship, anonymity, pseudonyms and composites (Graneheim & Lundman 2004; Alvesson 2010; Gabriel 2020). However, this still does not deal directly with representing communities. It is evident that researchers cannot understand and

represent people's lifeworlds perfectly. People already deal with being represented imperfectly in some type of community through for example democracy, political groups or interest groups. Hunters are often represented officially by The Swedish Hunting Association and the National Hunters Association, who handle the political affairs and media coverage, as official lobby groups and organisations.

Speaking with representatives of the Swedish Hunters Association provides valuable information on hunting ethics, however, it might be a more official and tempered version of what individuals and groups of hunters actually believe and practice. Indeed, community representatives, just like political ones and other officials, can portray more general, watered-down versions of actual community beliefs and practices for them to be more acceptable to wider society and fit the generalised idea that they represent. This is likely when discussing hunting from an official instead of individual position, which is why hunting in Sweden is concerned with framing and its societal image (Ljung et al. 2012; Lindroth 2019). In order for this research to have a more accurate or realistic picture of the hunting community, I highlight the perspectives of the individual as representative of a group or community. I do this by also interviewing them about relevant personal details such as upbringing and hunting mentorship.

Misrepresentation is a risk, but by engaging thoroughly with a community of people it is perhaps possible to mitigate it (van Donge 2006). Gathering data but also collaborating with representatives who can confirm or reject information is one tactic. Another way is to empower the individual and through repetition and updates on the research, reconfirm the interpretation of the information provided by the participant. Referencing information from one participant with other participants by bringing up stories (without risking identifying an individual) can also be a method of crosschecking statements with several people that represent the community. Nevertheless, some research into hunting may be skewed toward positive sides. Hunter behaviour will be affected by the presence of a researcher in ethnographic research (van Donge 2006) and they may try to show their 'best side'. It also could be argued that the most confident hunters with knowledge and experience put their foot forward or are approached for hunting research instead of people who are not equally active hunters. They will often also be the people researchers are most attracted to follow considering the wealth of knowledge they possess even when they are critical of others' bad practices.

These hunters may become representative of hunting, but only in the world of research, which may contrast with the reality of many hunters who are not as involved in hunting and are not often as easy to reach.

4.2 Collecting empirical data

The data collection was qualitative and took place in iterative stages, which enabled a more informed approach to hunting. The study began with a pilot study done in 2019 that included workshops with hunting organisations, participation in the hunting exhibitions 'Swedish Game Fair' at Tullgarn and 'Elmia Game Fair' in Jönköping as well as several private meetings with the Swedish Hunters Association (SJF) and the National Hunters Association (JRF). Through involvement in the hunting community as well as previous experiences in hunting research, it was possible to develop a feel for the current discussions around ethics. Additionally, this gave me the opportunity to talk with both young and older hunters about the most pressing issues in the ethical development of hunting at an early stage of the research study. Such a varied collection of data can be triangulated between the different results and compared to quantitative data from other sources, such as demographic data from different authorities. However, it is important to highlight that even though several parallel collections have been carried out, the focus and most work has been put on interviews and focus groups. This is because I find these methods most suitable for the sort of phenomeno-logical data I seek from hunters.

Throughout the study, unplanned conversations with hunters and those involved in hunting occurred about various ethical issues. Usually these conversations lasted less than 20 minutes, but sometimes much longer. They were part of the process of immersion in the hunting community ─ getting a feel for ongoing issues and gathering ideas. I also maintained close contact with hunter associations and thus got the institutional perspective. The unplanned conversations are an important part of many research studies, but are often not included because of the informal nature and due to not being recorded. Nevertheless, the main data sets were collected using several different methods that are outlined in brief below.

4.2.1 Scoping

Initially, scoping studies were carried out to evaluate and identify relevant contemporary issues in hunting ethics. This was mainly done at different hunting fairs, specifically Swedish Game Fair (attended May, 2019) and Elmia (attended May, 2019). At these occasions, my supervisors and I had conversations with exhibitors, professionals, and participants at the fairs on various subjects related to hunting ethics.

Two workshops were conducted with the two main hunting associations: Svenska Jägareförbundet (the Swedish Hunters Association) on February 8th, 2019 and Jägarnas Riksförbund (the National Hunters Association) on February 16th, 2019. These included discussions on hunting ethics that were recorded as well as Mentimeter surveys prepared beforehand, where participants were asked to individually rank questions related to hunting ethics.

4.2.2 Netnography — digital ethnography

The digital has been both a research tool and object of study in this thesis. Netnography is a field derived from ethnography, in this context, it was used to observe and understand the online hunting forum called 'Robsoft', and the community that uses it. Online spaces have started to complement or replace physical meeting places. Experienced and professional hunters also confirmed our choice of Robsoft, the largest Swedish hunting forum, for our research. After immersing myself in the forum without participating in it, I started collecting relevant data for my research. This method was used for the research presented in Paper I: "Leisure or Labour: An Identity Crisis for Modern Hunting?" The data collection method was semi-systematic using a thematic analysis through manual open coding with specific words used to search for posts regarding hunting. These words included: 'care', 'service', 'duty', 'job', 'responsibility', 'manage' (in Swedish). Together the forum threads formed a community of interpretation between each of the hunters with more than one perspective on the individual posts. The following themes were identified and standardized into a format that corresponds to tensions (in the posts) between pleasure and work in hunts of various kinds. This data source reflected the virtual community of hunters who are increasingly online. It is a modern and meaningful arena in which norms and ethics are both constituted and discussed. It is not only valuable insofar as it gives some sort of estimation of 'real' life behaviour but is a practice and

behaviour of its own, and what Habermas has referred to as a 'third space' (Wimmer 2005).

4.2.3   Semi-structured interviews

After the initial studies that ran for part of 2019, I developed an interview guide for semi-structured interviews with individual hunters. The guide was based on results from the scoping process, reviews of hunting literature and themes of societal developments.

During the years 2020–2022, a total of seventeen individual interviews were conducted with hunters of various kinds. Eleven of these were with hunters who work in some capacity with hunting education: Four at a nature management high school, one was formal mentor for new hunters and some were involved in creating training programs and materials. The remaining interviews were conducted with hunters of varying genders, ages and degrees of experience in hunting. Likewise, the hunters who were interviewed lived in different parts of Sweden, this was a conscious choice in order to get a broader and more inclusive perspective of Swedish hunting. It is worth noting that although developments in hunting may apply all over Sweden, there are variations across several areas and especially across the varied geographical and latitudinal areas. These variations in hunting occur across Sweden due to many factors, such as culture and geography — which includes variations in ecosystems and wildlife. For instance, even if techno-logical change is affecting hunting practices and ethics, it may manifest quite differently in Southern estate hunts compared to winter ptarmigan hunting in the far North.

The interviews lasted between one and a half to two hours. They were transcribed partially by me and a research assistant and then I coded for analysis with the software Nvivo using specific coding schemes for each manuscript, which aimed to examine different aspects. Respondents were recruited through a snowball method: each hunter gave rise to further contacts, which built on a larger network over time. Most of interviews were conducted via mobile phone and the Zoom online meeting program due to the pandemic.

A third-person narrative was often employed in the interviews. This has proven to be a successful strategy in research with hunters on sensitive topics such as illegal hunting (Pohja-Mykrä 2016). Practically this means that it encouraged hunters to talk about other hunters in different ways: what they believed they did, thought, and related to certain moral dilemmas. It is a

method employed to indirectly get at respondents' own values. However, most hunters spoke freely about their direct own experiences and reasoning. The interview data, similarly as for the data collected through the netnography and focus groups, were analysed thematically. This was done by finding recurring patterns in the qualitative data that can indicate a wider trend in the hunting community (Braun & Clarke 2006).

4.2.4   Focus groups

The focus groups consisted of four to six students each from the ages sixteen to eighteen. These were students at two agricultural colleges, learning for rural or nature-oriented professions. All of the focus groups lasted just under one hour except for one. This is the recommended timeframe for interviewing demographic groups of this age (Daley 2013). Statistically each of the participants was younger than the average hunter. Most of the participants were however male, which reflects the current Swedish hunting community since only four out of more than thirty participants were female.

All the focus group participants had experience of hunting, either through the college or from home where they had hunting families or through contacts who invited them out on hunts. The students were likewise involved in a hunting-specific course with both practical and theoretical classes. I primarily organised and facilitated the focus groups with Anke Fischer on six occasions and Erica von Essen on one, and the discussions were semi-structured with interactions between the participants being encouraged. All participants at some point actively contributed to the discussions although there were some more active participants in many of the groups. At a specific point during the focus groups visual tools were used as prompts to get participants to start thinking about ethical dilemmas, such as news clips from hunting events and images of trophies on social media.

4.2.5   Field observation

There was a total of ten participant observation events during different hunting occasions. First, one full day of hunting in Södermanland: this was an estate drive hunt focusing on ungulates and especially fallow deer and wild boar with a large group of hunters of varying ages although most being middle aged or above. Second, two afternoon roe deer hunts in Uppsala County with a smaller group of hunters who were predominantly in their twenties. Third, three separate night hunts for wild boar in Uppsala County with one other hunter.

Finally, a four-day moose hunting trip in Värmland with a group of hunters of varying ages although all of us were female. These different types of hunts, in some-what different settings, with a varying group of people have provided an interesting cross section of the hunting community and especially of 'newer' groups of constellations of people. An insight into language, culture, rituals and organisation in different environments and varied wildlife provided an interesting overview of practice and ethics. During these field studies, the focus was on observation, but conversations with hunters were also noted. Most were saved as notes that were later analysed thematically with the Nvivo program.

4.2.6   Autoethnography

The auto-ethnographic study was conducted as part of a larger immersion process into hunting and understanding how ethics are taught, especially important to people like myself without an upbringing that included contact with hunting. I signed up for the hunting licensing course offered by the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences' hunting club, which is mainly comprised of students at the university. Here I attended some afternoon lectures but did most of the theoretical learning through the provided literature, namely the Swedish Hunter Association's newest book titled "Jägarskolan. Allt du behöver för att ta jägarexamen" ("Hunting school. Everything you need to take the hunting exam." Own translation) written by the prominent Swedish hunter Ulf Lindroth (2019). The course lasted from end of October to December 2019. The theoretical exam took place on the 10th December 2019 in the same lecture hall at the university under supervision of an examiner. The exam was on paper, since the electronic version would only be introduced later. The practical exam was moved up due to the Covid-19 pandemic to June of 2022. Although I had practiced shooting a few times previously at shooting ranges, I signed up for an intensive three-day shooting course to pass the full range of practical exams ranging from weapon safety to target shooting.

The focus of the autoethnography was the hunting licensing process; I passed both the theoretical and practical hunting exams and received my hunting license. Throughout this time, I would note my experiences, how ethics were taught, talk and interact with peers about various issues and take notes as I was observing the process of teaching, learning and interaction. These notes were likewise entered into Nvivo and thematically analysed

together with the other data collected. The autoethnography provided a comprehensive understanding of the training process and a fundamental understanding of hunting.

5. Summary of papers

5.1 Paper I: Leisure or labour: an identity crisis for modern hunting?

The first article published in this study is titled "Leisure or Labour? An identity crisis for modern hunting?" in the journal *Sociologia Ruralis* issue 1 volume 60 in 2020. The issue of tension between hunting as a leisure or labour is explored in detail by examining the largest online Swedish hunting forum 'Robsoft' using a netnographic approach. The article discusses how modern hunting appears to be undergoing an identity crisis by transitioning from labour to leisure and, increasingly, vice versa. The transition is better understood as an incomplete, ongoing oscilliation. Today, hunting is framed both as a hobby for the leisure participant, and as a societal duty that delivers wildlife management, pest control for agriculture, sustainably sourced meat and euthanasia of injured wildlife. Most hunters today are identified as leisure hunters who seek to hunt for several reasons. Hunting done purely for fun and leisure is often condemned as bloodthirsty and unpalatable, which is why hunters stress that, unlike other leisure activities, hunting is distinct because it has a functional role of managing wildlife. The steward badge is worn especially proudly by North Germanic hunting cultures (Lindqvist et al. 2014) such as Sweden, who 'harvest', 'cull', 'maintain' and 'balance' nature's stocks (Falzon 2008). There are instances where hunters shed the hunter label entirely, such as in the Netherlands, and promptly call themselves 'wildlife managers' (von Essen et al. 2019) perhaps to distance themselves as much as possible from the leisure aspect of hunting, which is seen as mostly inferior (Fischer et al. 2013).

The results from the netnography of the Robsoft forum discussions show that labour and leisure tensions manifest across many contexts and spectrums. Tensions exist between different types of hunters or hunting groups, and it is not difficult to find conflicts in opinion on how to deal with hunting issues. In similar terms, different parts of hunting were understood by hunters as involving more of less leisure or labour respectively. Many hunters expressed that hunting needs a balance between leisure and labour to be meaningful, which connects to the concept of serious leisure. Where labour is expended in the service of leisure, involving skill perseverance, hardships, and reward. If hunters perform public services, such as tracking traffic injured wildlife and managing troublesome wildlife, then this serves as good reasons to let hunters carry on with their work to non-hunting society and maintain high general acceptance rates. The paper concludes that problems of legitimation occur when tensions tip too much to either labour or leisure, and hunting becomes joyless or hedonistic, and that threatens the self-understanding of hunters and public understanding of hunters.

5.2 Paper II: The seven sins of hunting tourism

The article is titled "The Seven Sins of Hunting Tourism", published in *Annals of Tourism Research* journal volume 84 in 2020. It identifies risk zones in hunting tourism to be used as guidelines and raise awareness for navigating hunting ethics in the liminal, and somewhat uncertain, space of tourism. The guide or 'sins' are supposed to help both the individual hunter as well as the hunting outfitters/tourism providers who regulate the hunt and are often those responsible for making sure that proper wildlife management procedures and lawful and ethical conduct is upheld. The risk zones identified within hunting tourism are as follows:

> *The pay effect* describes in so many words, the implications that come when you pay for a hunt from both the side of the outfitter, and that of the hunting tourist. Due to the price of a hunt, there is an expectation to deliver a successful and memorable hunt and, often, a trophy (as a memorabilia). Excessive commercialisation splits the hunting process into sellable parts.

The Tourist bubble refers to the partly insulated and inauthentic setting that is created around tourists visiting a new environment, also understood as an 'environmental bubble'. (Cohen 1974)

Last chance tourism is a manifestation of 'loving to death', last chance tourism is the attraction of something that is disappearing or being significantly changed such as places, species or cultures.

The bucket list caters to dreams, life fulfillment through significant spending, and the pursuit of happiness (Thurnell-Read 2017). In hunting this refers to shooting a trophy animal at some point in your lifetime (as a measure of success).

When in Rome (do as the romans do) is a reference to cultural relativism by means that one follows the customs of the place one is in. Various hunting communities exist all around the world with their own practices that claim to be the correct form of hunting. (von Essen et al. 2019)

The false display is all about animals being reduced to props for pictures. The animal or animal parts are removed from their natural context and a new distorted meaning is placed upon them, which is often false.

The saviour refers to the seemingly altruistic motives to engage with threatened species as a tourist and as a hunter. This kind of argument, although trophy hunting can provide help towards conservation, acts more as reassurance to wildlife tourists who insert themselves as saviours and often with colonial undertones abroad.

These seven tropes can be understood as pressure release valves that partly remove socially imposed norms for a limited time, leading to potential acts of deviant behaviour when abroad. It is also important to keep in mind that each of these seven sins can compound and affect one another. At home and in a hunting team, ethical conduct is often regulated by peers, on holiday the situation changes as we have illustrated, on holiday the parameters are different and unfamiliar. What should be avoided in the end is portraying animals as commodities to be delivered to the hunter. The seven sins are intended as a referential framework which both tourists and hunting

outfitters, as well as any nature tourism organisation, can refer to regulate their own conduct and business so that it may be conducted with a high ethical standard.

5.3 Paper III: Expanding arenas for learning hunting ethics, their grammars and dilemmas: An examination of your hunters' enculturation into modern hunting

The article titled "Expanding arenas for learning hunting ethics, their grammars and dilemmas: An examination of your hunters" enculturation into modern hunting" was published in *Sociologia Ruralis*, volume 62, issue 3 in 2022. Using theories on moral learning, as well as Walzer's thick and thin moral argument, it contrasts the views of young hunters with the ethical principles outlined in the educational literature for the hunting exam. The hunting licensing process according to many educators within hunting is a first step and basic test of aptitude for new hunters who will then go on to learn more in their hunting careers most suitably within a hunting team. However, the hunting exam is still an important part of the journey of becoming a hunter, and in addition, many newly graduated hunters do not have a clear path into a hunting team. Therefore, education is an important topic on the theme of ethics since it delves into the origin of our moral intuitions and well as the social structures that guide our ethical frameworks.

The respondents interviewed demonstrated to act as moderators of modern trends in hunting, often bringing 'destabilising' influences like social media and female hunters. Young hunters are enculturated into traditional hunting structures and, in the process, caught in a dialectic between modern influences and traditional hunting culture. The findings highlight challenges such as 'false consensus' and 'ethical trade-offs' in the learning of hunting ethics, which emerge potentially due to a lack of space for deliberation on hunting ethics. These students navigate between the modern developments of society and the current cultural structure and ethical framework that exists within hunting. It is therefore suggested that discussing ethics beyond deontological do's and don'ts and encouraging more open discussions around hunting ethics in formalised classrooms is being overlooked. Although, open discussions were expressly welcomed by interviewed teachers. Discussion about ethics could raise understanding between hunters as well as hunting

groups, remedying any cases of 'hunting cannibalism' through misunder-standings as well as help hunters weed out practices they disagree with. Most importantly, ethics discussions with new and young students would facilitate a forum where they can deal with the dualities of being a member of modern society entering into the traditional institution of hunting.

5.4 Paper IV: Fresh Meat: Women's motivations to hunt and how they challenge hunting structures

In Western countries, like Sweden, there has over the last decade been an increase in women taking the hunting exam. However, few end up actively hunting after passing their exams. Wanting to retain numbers of hunters and retain the legitimacy of hunting, women have become inadvertent ambas-sadors for hunting. As a contrast to this external image of female acceptance in hunting, the internal situation is different and not entirely reflective of the publicly communicated story. Female hunters reveal internal social structures and conflicts pertaining to their demographic backgrounds, experience of hunting and particularly their gender. Despite these challenges, women are increasingly interested in hunting. One of the main interests to start hunting is source ethical wild meat and achieve sustainable wildlife management. This research, through the vector of lethal wildlife management and meat, explores women's understanding of themselves as hunters, the challenges they face, issues of emphasised femininity and discrimination as well as any implications this has for the hunting community. It states that, in this case, women who hunt for ethical meat and animal welfare reasons will carry those values into their practices. Bourdieu's theory of capital is used to explain and examine the various negotiations of capital and power that are used within the hunting community and team. Here it is revealed that women consolidate and trade in capital to navigate their positions within hunting. It concludes on the note that women are to some extent still a marginalized group in hunting which has subsequent effects on hunting practice and ethics. Also stating that women have an evolving place in hunting along with changing perceptions of masculinity and femininity that should make for more pluralistic under-standings of the individuals who see value in hunting.

6. Discussion

This chapter is divided into "Part 1 and "Part 2" and both chapters review results in papers I–IV collectively in relation to the cultural history of Swedish hunting, the present developments, and their potential future trajectories. The pressures exerted on hunting are outlined and discussed in the collected contexts of papers I–IV as well as relevant literature and ongoing developments in hunting. Part 1 covers significant modern developments identified by hunters to have prominent or concerning effect on hunting ethics, these are: commercialisation of hunting, technological innovations, demographic shifts, and centralisation. Part 2 of the discussion follows on from this and introduces how back-tracing hunters' concerns about modernity's impacts on hunting can identify elements of a hunting process to help counter modern pressures on hunting ethics and practice. These elements are not a blueprint for an ideal hunt, but it is a model that one can consider in terms of breaking down constituents of hunting for analytical clarity. As such, problems of ethics can be more clearly demarcated in various parts of the hunting process.

In a larger context, this work provides an overview of Swedish hunting experiencing and navigating modern pressures whilst balancing hunting culture, identity, its continuity through attraction and retention of hunters, and social legitimacy. All these factors display the many roles that hunters take on and manage as members of modern society in the context of wildlife management, as moral actors, stewards and managers, actors between rural extractive services and nature.

6.1 Part: A farewell to folk hunting?

Chapter 3.1 "Traditional folk hunting" recounted how folk hunting is the fundament for many of the practices and principles within contemporary hunting, from the hunting team, landowner rights to the policy of 'freedom with responsibility'. It is therefore understandable that folk hunting is cherished for these reasons and for its distinct Nordic identity compared to hunting in the rest of Europe which is thought of to have more aristocratic origins (Danell & Bergström 2010; Danell et al. 2016). However, the history of folk hunting revealed that it was not an egalitarian process, it went through changes, and nobility or a ruling elite often had the last say in what was decided (Tillhagen 1987; Bjørkdahl 2005). As described in chapter 3.1, hunting practices put pressure on wildlife populations and led to significant suffering by individual animals (Tillhagen 1987; Danell 2020). Today, the idea of folk hunting is an often romanticised ideal. However, it would be unwise to disregard the past, especially since so many issues being raised today were already raised more than 100 years ago by hunters and hunting philosophers such as Jose Ortega y Gasset or Aldo Leopold.

Due to modern pressures and tension, briefly outlined in chapter 3.4, such as demographic changes, there is correspondingly a reflexive cultural resistance emerging in groups of hunters as a reaction to new developments, leading hunting to include groups forming counter-public spheres (Wimmer 2005) of rural resistance (von Essen et al. 2015) reflected within the wider politics of rural-urban divides in society. Ideological lines cause conflict of the purpose of hunting and its governance (chapter 6.1.3 and 6.1.4) creating issues in agreement over practice and the enactment of ethical values. Debates over the purpose of hunting are influenced by stakeholders such as farmers, and instances over interpreting ethics (such as 'false consensus') and disagreements over values may arise. Does this mean that all aspects of folk hunting are coming to an end where hunters are disconnected from hunting teams, urbanised, spend more and use newer technology as well as learn online and from centralised agencies? These are predictions to where hunting is heading, however many of these issues with hunting today are discussed in further detail in the following sections.

6.1.1 Urbanisation and hunting ethics: a growing urban-rural divide

One of these pressure points that ties in to and sometimes enforces other modern pressures is urbanisation and the physical separation of people from 'natural' environments and rural areas. Social attitudes towards nature can be traced into, amongst others, classical literature where the common vilification of nature as the unknown, often feminine, to be tamed (Öhman 2015). Nature gradually became more romanticised and produced contempt towards urbanisation, including through the divine writings of Milton or the dreary urban landscapes of Dickens. Urbanisation is a primary cause of the changing rural community in Sweden, the loss of rural roots based in 'working the land' and nature extractive labour, including hunting (Gunnarsdotter 2005). Indeed, the hunter who lives on the land they hunt is in decline (Hansson-Forman et al. 2020). Land and leasing prices have increased around urban areas and access hunting grounds is getting expensive and scarce as discussed in papers I and III, creating several domino effects. New hunters have less chance to get into a team and access to hunt and therefore less opportunity to continue to learn and practice. What remains of is to pay for it commercially which is outlined in paper II and discussed in further detail in the next section.

However, despite arguments about the rural-urban divide, like so much else, is not clear cut. During the various forms of data collection, but especially during the focus groups and interviews, I asked whether the participant considered their upbringing and themselves as 'rural', 'urban', or 'both'. The answers were often nuanced, many considering themselves rural because they felt more comfortable in rural environments, even if they had grown up in cities or vice versa. In articles I and III the prejudice that exists in hunting circles against 'urban' hunters has been mentioned and would sway some people towards adopting more rural based identities. Yet, modern fluidity of movement between areas means many if not most have a significant relation to both (Skogen 2003).

Skogen argues that "Economic modernisation, cultural diversification and increased social and spatial mobility weaken the basis of traditional rural communities that were built around agriculture and resource extraction" (Skogen 2003:312). The rural-urban divide is a phenomenon that is splitting the hunting community into those with access to hunting networks and lands and those who practically do not. The access to land is not only about opportunity to hunt but likewise about the access to knowledge, practical training, and peer interaction. As repeatedly mentioned, and relates to

research in paper III on enculturation of young hunters, the hunting team/ peers is where hunters gain knowledge, skills and regulate hunting ethics (von Essen & Hansen 2018).

Owning or leasing land for hunting ties hunters to the responsibility of caring and managing it along with wildlife. In paper II on hunting tourism the transfer of responsibility from the paying hunter to the outfitter caused ethical tensions or 'risk zones'. However, the responsibilities to manage land for hunting are manifold and those who have a long distance to travel will not have the same awareness from regular overview as people who live on or within a short distance of their hunting grounds. The issue, I argue, is therefore the decoupling of hunters from their significant responsibilities as stewards who are often required to help on a formal level, such as being called in to deal with injured wildlife (Andersen et al. 2014). As pointed out in paper II, the understanding of the local hunting situation and stewardship efforts are part of founding principles in Swedish hunting (as outlined in chapter 3.2 "Hunting care and stewardship"). Similarly, paper III discussed the importance to communicate that hunting is not like other sports fitted into a busy schedule but that it is a practice that ought to take time, requiring responsibility and commitment.

An urban based class and a weakened rural one is showing signs of a shift from the historical landowner hunters who had a more regular oversight and initiative to stay engaged in stewardship and management efforts. Likewise in paper I, on the labour and leisure of hunting, hunters discussed and even argued the purpose of hunting. Paper I, concluding that extremes of leisure or labour hunting were undesirable, and the purpose of hunting needs to incorporate the many reasons for wildlife management such as, meat procurement on the one hand, and as sport and hobby on the other. Paper II showed how hunters who only hunted for leisure, paid for it commercially and with no intention to further their involvement in the hunting process were considered unethical. Even the 'urban' hunters who hunted sporadically on leased land were criticised by other hunters for their lack of involvement.

Paper III and IV especially point out the increasing demographic groups without hunting ties, such as women and/or urbanites, miss out on specific knowledges gained from experienced peers that they pass on to their relations. Respondents in papers III and IV likewise added that catching up on knowledge that some had grown up with was a difficult task, whether it referred to hunting vernacular or knowledge about wildlife.

Some hunters mourn the change of hunting or potential 'loss' of folk hunting through the breaking of patrilineal and rural inheritance, as fewer people may inherit skills passed down through relations, now that new demographic groups are increasingly prominent. Following the education of hunters through more diverse channels, including the centralised education, this may be said to have to contributed to a feeling of loss of certain traditions and knowledges. A reaction to these modern developments of urbanisation and centralisation are also for people to reject these trends as a form of cultural resistance (von Essen 2018a), instead choosing to define themselves by opposition as well as through traditionalism and heritage, as seen some in young male hunters in Norway (Bye 2003; Krange & Skogen 2011; Borgen & Skogen 2013). However, the need to assert one's rurality is more important than the need to assert masculinity (Bye 2003), although these identities are linked, hence the rejection of women in hunting is not as pressing as what would be considered urban and centralised values that are often manifested politically in the rural-urban divide. A divide that is considerably linked to commercialisation of hunting in numerous ways including gaining access to hunting for those without hunting networks.

6.1.2   Commercialising hunting: paying for privilege and replacing heritage with service

The commercialisation of hunting has raised concerns for several years (Kaltenborn et al. 2001; Fennell & Ebert 2004; Lovelock 2008, 2015) and one of the first issues raised in this study, particularly in paper II. The commercialisation of hunting is manifested primarily in tourism and hunting outfitters selling hunting opportunities in Sweden and abroad, although most of the issues discussed concerning access to hunting and similar refer to national hunting tourism. In extreme terms, commercialisation of hunting encourages a marketed version of hunting for pleasure that does not often align with the normative ethical standards of the hunting community and wider Swedish society (Kagervall 2014; Ljung 2014; Andersson Cederholm & Sjöholm 2021). Hunting for pleasure is considered acceptable if the hunt fulfils other more 'important'ethical criteria first such as wildlife management, euthanasia or obtaining meat (Fischer et al. 2013). These stewarding efforts to maintain healthy wildlife populations feature prominently in all the research papers I–IV.

What lays ground for suspicion of hunting tourism enterprises is the breakdown of the hunt into commercially available parts (Gunnarsdotter 2005; Cohen 2014; Tickle 2019) as well as the 'itemization' or cataloguing of wildlife when purchasing a hunting experience (Cohen 2014) similar to 'window shopping' of individual animals enabled by wildlife cams (Reo & Whyte 2010). Compartmentalization and itemisation effectively dissect the hunting process. Added tensions also arise in local communities caused by competition (often about access to hunting) and conflicts of interest regarding management and stewardship plans. Furthermore, commercia-lisation creates the liminal spaces of tourism resulting in ethical risk zones outlined in paper II, making it hard to enforce social norms and values that otherwise guide hunters in their practice.

Excessive commercialisation of hunting disrupts it by compartmenta-lising and itemising the otherwise very extensive hunting process and ultimately ruining the quality and intensity of the hunting experience (Cohen 2007). This is clearly recounted in paper II along with the argument that responsibility to act ethically is transferred mostly onto the service provider instead. The modern pressure of commercialising hunting has thus many side effects and is a main driver in the changing of practice and values in hunting, bringing many risks and breaking from traditional local hunting cultures.

As already mentioned, urbanisation is a factor driving up the price of urban-adjacent hunting grounds, as well as any other sought-after hunting grounds. Increased concentrations of people around urban centres and rising land and leasing prices means more people resort to paying for commercial hunting opportunities. Hunting tourism has existed in Sweden for a long time, especially attracting people from Germany, Norway and Denmark. Tourism being supported by a local market as a solution to the inaccessibility for hunting opportunities carries its risks as covered in paper I and II. These ethical risks were outlined in paper II in the form of seven risk zones or 'sins' that hunting tourism gives rise to, such as the 'pay effect'. More recently, Cederholm and Sjöholm have studied the Swedish tourism hunting industry and interviewed outfitters (who sell hunting opportunities) where they argue, comparable to paper II's arguments, that outfitters become 'moral gatekeepers' negotiating their own positions and mediating those of customers and other stakeholders in the hunting tourism market (Andersson Cederholm & Sjöholm 2021). Already Gunnarsdotter's (2005) study on a rural community and their hunters found that local interests

would clash with those of hunting outfitters, especially with regards to pricing them out of their local hunting grounds even in rural areas, as well as skewing priorities in managing wildlife (Øian & Skogen 2016; Olofsson & Jansson 2020). Sustainable wildlife management structures and acceptance of local wildlife means that local populations need to be involved in the process, even able to hunt and perform other functions themselves (Skogen 2003; Gunnarsdotter 2005; Mkono 2019; Bichel 2021). As argued in paper II in relation to moral decoupling in commercial hunts, a hunting client may be largely shielded from realizing the harms of the hunt because of, among other things, the 'tourist bubble effect'. Similar concerns have been described in Norway, where local communities are worried they will be pushed out and alienated from their local lands by hunting tourism (Skogen 2003) by the so called new class of 'landowner aristocracy' (Mischi 2013; Andersson Cederholm & Sjöholm 2021).

That some people must pay for hunting opportunities sounds as if they were a disadvantaged group. Paper IV explores how certain capital can be traded in hunting; however, economic capital does not immediately translate into cultural or social capital and those who pay do not automatically get a viable hunting network. Truly, trophy and sport/leisure hunting (tourism hunting) is considered an activity for wealthy people (Andersson Cederholm & Sjöholm 2021). Especially since hunting is expensive to invest in if one does not have access to the necessary equipment and infrastructure such as weapons, storage, gear or even a car. Expenses coupled with the idea that tourism hunting is considered a 'mere pleasure' supports the widespread image of a rural areas and natural landscapes as playgrounds for a paying wealthy elite.

The main tension is the divide between the (normatively valued by hunters) holistic hunting experience, focusing on nature experience, connection, sustainability, and wellbeing versus "the discourse of quantity, efficiency and calculable outcomes" (Andersson Cederholm & Sjöholm 2021:13). Many of the ethical risk zones, including the 'pay effect', 'bucket list' and 'false display' in paper II warn of quantifiable expectations rather than prioritising a holistic experience, as well as the expectations manipulating the priorities of a situation, including the ethical responsibility, or more probable, regulation of the customer. It is, therefore, challenging balancing the customer's different expectations and skills with hunting principles. Outfitters find it difficult to handle the expectations of new customers in relation to ethical principles. One

way is to have a run through of rules and formalities prior to a hunt as well as 'red cards' and fines if rules are broken (Andersson Cederholm & Sjöholm 2021). The issue with fines is that they may be hard to enforce, not be significant enough to hurt some costumers financially or cause them to reflect upon their mistakes. Hence, a network of peers in a hunting team who regulate ethical practice (and attitudes) is often necessary for people to reflect on their mistakes (von Essen & Hansen 2018).

Making mistakes in a hunting team likewise carries over on to other members, such as injuring an animal which leads to having to end the hunt and might lead to a tracking effort which can take several hours, ruining the experience for ones colleagues as well as carrying the shame of having injured an animal, as noted in paper III. The added pressure to not 'inconvenience' team members is a way to keep unethical practices in a hunting team in check, and the threat of being kicked off a team for serious ethical transgressions. None of these checks-and-balances exist in a paid hunt, at least not to the same degree, alternatively of ethical regulation then relies on the culture within a hunting team which is discussed more in papers III and IV.

Nevertheless, hunting outfitters wary in their service where some offer a luxury service aimed at customers who do not have an interest in getting the meat of their kill and others put significance on holistic hunting experiences which include butchering and consuming the meat (Andersson Cederholm & Sjöholm 2021). Paper IV echoes this sentiment where the hunters showed an "embodied and visceral relationship with food, which is often personal" (Peltola et al. 2020:184) linking to people's ethical choices and social identity as people who confront the realities of their food. Some outfitters go so far as to condemn other tourism practices as unethical and choose to instead offer holistic hunting experiences for those who "…are the real hunters because they spend all their time and energy and money on wildlife management… if you look at those rich people, they pay for the hunt but they don't care about wildlife..." (Andersson Cederholm & Sjöholm 2021:9). This outfitter in particular focuses on the hunting process and the utility of wildlife and wildlife management initiatives as part of the tourist experience.

In general, people are more supportive of hunting outfitters with a folksy vibe and who serve those ethical dimensions, such as using the meat and making it a part of the hunting experience (Kagervall 2014; Ljung 2014; Andersson Cederholm & Sjöholm 2021), also discussed in paper IV. Therefore, interests in wildlife management can collide, local people may be

alienated from surrounding lands, responsibility is put on outfitters and operators who need to focus on profitability and quantifiable results. Yet, responsible commercial hunting enterprises, that heed the seven risk zones or 'sins', could form a responsible complement to other forms of hunting in Sweden (a well-run outfitter can be better than an irresponsible team). Arguably though, tourism on its own would not function as a viable replacement for traditional hunting teams for urbanites and other groups without contacts.

Adding international context to analyse the various effects of commercialisation, Scotland forms an interesting comparison for Nordic countries, including Sweden. In Scotland, commercial hunting is an extensive practice where sporting estates cover about 40 percent of all privately owned land, and hence it is a significant force in both wildlife and land management practices that have co-evolved with hunting since the 18th century (Watts et al. 2017). Whilst ethical practices and conduct by hunters might not be a major issue, there are conflicts around management policies, especially between conservationists and sporting estates, particularly concerning the favouring of game species in particular red grouse and red deer (Redpath & Thirgood 1999; Redpath et al. 2013; Dinnie et al. 2015). Quantity of deer shot also equates positively with land value (Watts et al. 2017). These management issues which are heavily linked to economic factors from estate value to profitable commerce can prove prophetic for Sweden. Coupled with the ethical risk zones outlined in paper II and especially concerning the compartmentalization of hunting, there lie evident risks in extensive commercialisation of hunting.

Here, the commercial aspect of hunting also involves an incredibly lucrative industry for buying equipment, some people investing in gear as part of their preparation for a hunt and invoking some of the excited feelings (Tickle 2016). The commercial gadget side of hunting however influences hunting practices, especially in the subject of new technology.

6.1.3   New technologies: selecting the 'difficulty level'

Technology is something that has always been a part of hunting, from spears to rifles, the use of tools and adaptations is part of its evolutionary history. Technology today spans many diverse developments from gadgets, gear and other paraphernalia, tools and weapons as well as digital technologies, it touches every part of our lives. It is often quoted that Aldo Leopold already in the early-mid 1900s complained about the use of

gadgetry stating "Our tools improve faster than we do. It is unlikely that economic motives alone will ever teach us to use our new tools gently. The only remedy is to extend our system of ethics from the man-man relation to the man-earth relation" (Leopold 1943:1). This citation could be from contemporary dialogue, yet it stands to prove that whilst technology has been ubiquitous in human development, it is not uncontested but an often unpredictable, double-edged sword.

Human societies have a dialectical relationship with technology, where new tools and systems are created and in turn shape the evolution of society as cultures tend to evolve along the lines provided by their technology. The development of the rifle has shaped modern hunting into what it is today, it also led to extremely efficient killing compared to previous methods (bow and arrow, spear and so forth), however there are many more devices that form part of the standard hunting equipage today. Therefore, in this section the dialectic relationship between technology and hunting is reviewed to then discuss how technology both recedes and reveals nature and animals (Su & Cheon 2017:3). Wild boar may in many ways be seen as a species that introduces opportunity to experiment with previously restricted gadgets and gear in hunting. It adds to the arsenal of the increasingly geared up hunter leading to the discussion of the aesthetics and the identity marker of consuming or refusing various hunting technologies.

During the research process, technology was divided into physical and digital technology where physical technology has digital capabilities but is used for the purpose of helping hunters in the field as 'field gear' such as rifles, cameras, scopes, night vision, GPS etcetera. By contrast, digital technology refers to social media, images and digitalised data shared in online forums as well as apps (for studying for hunting exam, or WeHunt app on the mobile phone). In paper III, hunting instructors discussed the added number of devices and technological aids used in hunting, often leading to a form of dependency and replacing skills that hunters would have honed in the past. Abroad, in the USA, Native American communities and especially the youth have through television and internet seen "trophy hunting shows and were learning techniques and perspectives about hunting from non-Native, recreational hunters through these shows" (Reo & Whyte 2010). This also led to the adoption of new technology such as remotely triggered trail cameras which concerned some community members who felt that "they allow hunters to stay indoors and reduce the amount of time they

spend outdoors, scouting and learning about the woods" (Reo & Whyte 2010). Similar complaints have been voiced in Sweden, particularly regarding the loss of skill and influence of digital media (Lindroth 2019). Devices and added tech have thus become more prominent in modern outdoor activities (Arts et al. 2021), hunting as an outdoor activity is likewise affected, even to the point of a group of hunters being classified as 'gearheads' (Littlefield & Ozanne 2011).

Technology can frame an interaction significantly, and with hunting, the ethos is inseparable from the activity due to the severity of the outcome of killing (Su & Cheon 2017). As described in all of the papers, especially in papers II and III, hunting is about self-imposed restrictions (Morris 2014) not only for the sake of creating a challenging game, but also to balance the principles of fair chase and quick kill (von Essen et al. 2020) as explained in paper II.

Hunting and using technology require training, those willing to hunt need to undertake lessons such as target shooting, thus using technology to make a hunt more efficient is not necessarily easy. Indeed, the use of various technologies are an acquired skill in themselves; using apps, new GPS tracking devices or even drones requires certain proficiency (von Essen et al. 2020). However, these tech-skills are considered extrinsic to hunting and are therefore not valued within the hunting community relative to intrinsic skills such as tracking, stalking or butchering (Morris 2013). Of course, one can say that what is seen as intrinsic/extrinsic to hunting is fluid and changing. At some point, the use of GPS trackers for dogs was seen as extrinsic but with time, it naturalized into being part of hunting.

Outlined in paper III, those taking the hunting exam, training, and learning new skills are seeing more instances anchored in technological developments. A recent change, in 2021, when the hunting exam moved from paper to online theory tests which has received criticism for being too difficult and failing potential recruits (Svensk Jakt 2023). Another common feature in the education and training of hunters are shooting cinemas, where target practice on wildlife happens on a cinematic screen, have also become standard practice for hunters. This research's participants in paper III gave mixed views citing advantages and disadvantages of shooting cinemas, with assessments based in different understandings of ethical principles, so called false consensus or, again, the trading of principles for various purposes. Probably the most prominent trade off made was the introduction of night-

vision for killing wild boar, since they are recently allowed to be hunted during nighttime unlike other wildlife. As recalled in papers I and III, the wild boar is considered a particularly special wild species, even compared to other troublesome 'over-abundant' species such as geese, due to factors such as its resilience, high reproduction factor, damage potential and size (Emond et al. 2021). Hunters are pressured to deal with wild boar especially by farmers who see damage to their crops. Hence a trade-off is made concerning the use of night-vision: efficiency and quick kill are ethical principles that are prioritised over fair chase in this case.

This trade off and trial in newly legalised technology has not been without issues, the imaging has cause identification mistakes such as a hunter shooting a cow instead whilst using thermal night vision (Jaktjournalen 2021). Others might argue night vision brings them closer to the animal in the cover of darkness. Night vision however is said to add another barrier between the hunter and the quarry/environment, since it was described as playing a video game in paper III. A more speculative take is arguing the ethical implications of having real life scenarios transformed into distanced video games risking moral disengagement or a loss of the intense emotions that successfully felling an animal tend to bring (Marvin 2006). Referring back to the classic 'trolley problem' where increased distance from the act seemingly makes it easier to commit (Greene 2002), many show less issue with a life ending decisions when there is a (technological) buffer between themselves and the act of killing. It echoes the sentiment that "[I]if people were responsible for killing even a small portion of the meat they eat, animals in general would be treated with much more respect and compassion" (Swan 1995:191–192).

Tech and identity

To be sure, constantly switching in and out from devices is the modern norm (Oudshoorn & Pinch 2003). Technology creates this mediated existence in nature beyond the use of mere tools, digitalisation and constant online connectivity (indeed a hunt can break down if digital connection is eliminated) whether social media as described in papers I and II, IV or gear and apps as highlighted in paper III. Most hunters, like everyone else, are engaged with their mobile phones and with new apps being developed to help and coordinate hunts, such as 'WeHunt' or 'Tracker', they have become essential tools for hunting (particularly group hunts) as shown in paper III. Apps geared towards passing the hunting exam and online video clips educate hunters around the

world, creating new arenas for passing on hunting knowledge, compared to knowledge inheritance, mentors and even physical lessons. This, compounded with the other modern developments (urbanisation and commercialisation), is changing how knowledge in hunting is disseminated. Hunters have become connected and wired-up yet some adapt technology and gadgetry to the point of being given their own category, so called 'the rational gearhead' hunters. The gearhead hunters through the mastery of technology can gain and express "…control, order and precision" in their hunting practices. The mastery of technology has been linked to masculine identity signaling through controlling errant nature and alternatively through its dominating power (Oudshoorn & Pinch 2003; Öhman 2015).

Technology is often associated with masculinity and several argue that most technology, especially gear, tools and gadgets, are designed to be used by men, so called, 'scripting of technology' (Oudshoorn & Pinch 2003). Scripting means a piece of technology is designed to be used by a certain group and a certain way can reshape users and their practices. Hunting rifles were originally built for use by men and has reshaped how people hunt, yet most people and even children can use them. Recently, women have increased their presence in hunting probably as a result of increased income, position and leisure and more weapons are being developed specifically for women (Bernstein 2018). The scripting of technology, and gender-scripting when referencing male/female specific design is interesting as male scripted technology tends to focus on function and gadgetry whilst female scripted technology is designed with feminized aesthetics in mind (Oudshoorn & Pinch 2003:22) such as being pink or tighter fit. Nevertheless, technology can be highjacked, and used by others than the intended user even with another purpose in mind, the old musket rifles may have been designed for men but did afford armed women better protection.

Adapting technologies as a form of identification likewise happens along the rural-urban, divide where rural youths may see the car as more central to their identities (Oudshoorn & Pinch 2003) and shun new trends in gadgetry and hunting aids. In Norway, the rural-urban divide is sometimes viewed (and stereotyped) into the urban geared-up hunter who hunts for a week in autumn, is wealthy and invests in all the most expensive technology, compared to, the rural hunter who hunts regularly throughout the year, uses old and inherited equipment and spends long hours outdoors labouring away in the cold dark woods with pride (Bye 2003). Certainly, such extreme cases

or tropes are a recurring image throughout all the papers and especially paper I and a theme about the changing hunting community in the report by KSLA (Sandström & Elmberg 2022) who see 'nature managers' and 'leisure hunters', still echoing the somewhat derogatory division of those who work and those who play. Now however, papers III and IV edge away from the stark contrasting of hunters beyond the sometimes-prejudiced categorisations to show the more nuanced identities and technological consumption patterns by hunters where the internet is now a standard and integrated part in a hunting lifestyle and even the hunt itself. Therefore, although hunters may define themselves by consumptive choices of gear and clothing, respondents in each of the papers generally were open to consuming a wide variety of technology and gear, from inherited weapons and using apps on their phones or trying out new night vision scopes.

Nonetheless, although urban and rural identities tend to be nuanced and more intermingled than at first perceived, the increased adaptation of technology is being weighed against loss of skill as pointed out by the educational literature and participants in paper III. In the ongoing need to balance principles and purposes such as skill versus efficient killing and fair chase versus quick kill when adapting technology, there are also those who chose to reject many forms of modern equipment for a more atavistic approach (and undiluted or unmediated experience). Bow hunting is not legal in Sweden (Berg et al. 2021) although the intrinsic skill needed to hunt using a bow is appreciated by several hunters.

A report released in 2021 provides an initial investigation into the legalization of bow hunting in Sweden which might become a possibility in the future (see Berg et al. 2021). In the US, bow hunters describe that rifle hunters do not reach the same level of ethics with reference to fair chase as well as skill needed to hunt successfully (Su & Cheon 2017). Nevertheless, the need for skills to compensate for technology also poses a risk to injuring wildlife. Either way, although the atavistic approach such as bow hunting and tech minimalism fall in line with the more labour intensive ideal and skill of hunting, technology always forms some part of hunting. Hence, although technology sometimes is intrusive it may also add challenge and enhance engagement with nature (Su & Cheon 2017). The initial point with technology in hunting is that it is adapted to the interests and motivations of the hunter who can negotiate their choice of technology and the 'challenge level'.

6.1.4 Who gets to decide? Stakeholder interests, motivations, and the shaping of hunting policy.

Interests and motivations are critical to shaping hunting conduct, however, there are several stakeholders in the countryside that are invested in how hunting is conducted (such as whether it is a leisure sport or a laborious protection hunt). These contrasting perspectives on hunting and its purpose work to shape and even clash over hunting policy. Throughout Europe, hunting is expected to fulfil many different roles. Countries including, Belgium, Finland and Italy "…state that their management objectives are to control population density in order to maintain acceptable damage levels to forestry and agriculture, and reduce deer–vehicle collisions, but in practice their main focus is the management of sporting game populations" (Apollonio et al. 2011:107). On the other hand, Slovakia and the Czech Republic have a clear ecosystem-oriented approach and consider hunting as maintaining their cultural heritage, as stated in the Czech Game Management Act from 2003 (see also Bartos et al. 2010). An overview of European management (and stewardship) policies reveals that there are different 'profiles' or intentions for hunting which helps determine who can weigh in on hunting and hunting policy, whether they are a stakeholder or an interest group.

Swedish hunting policy is based in laws formed and adapted over centuries, however, a modern overview of Swedish hunting would be much like the one above outlined for Finland, Belgium, and Italy, where abundant and healthy wildlife populations are favoured by hunters but also managed with regards to other rural resource stakeholders (namely, farming and forestry). The Swedish hunter, more than balancing wildlife populations, often works instead with balancing interests of themselves and neighbours, from healthy wildlife populations, to protecting crops for farmers, keeping damages within an acceptable level. This balancing act is difficult and not often satisfactory for all involved.

This research engages primarily with hunters although the subject of wildlife involves other relevant 'players' that I have come in touch with through the hunters or directly in the capacity of discussing wildlife management. These stakeholders can be sorted into the following groups: hunters, farmers, foresters, and their respective organisations (such as Svenska Jägareförbundet, Mellanskog, Lantbrukarnas Riksförbund); animal rights and welfare groups; and government organisations (tasked with

representing the democratic interest). These stakeholders and interest groups all represent significant interest in Swedish wildlife and resource management as well as land use, which interact with one another. Of course, people may be part of several of these stakeholder and interest groups, carrying separate motivations such as farmer and hunter or environmentalist and hunter, all with their own values. These stakeholders and interest groups are organised into 'demographic pressures' on hunting, versus 'sectoral pressures' motivated to protect their interests, to distinguish the motives and influence of each of the pressure groups on hunting. Each of these stakeholders try to affect or even pressure the hunting community to fulfill their own agendas or visions for wildlife and nature. Therefore, there is potential for them to have a significant effect on hunting and ethics. There is a common saying when discussing wildlife management and hunting which says, 'we manage people' and it seems true since much of the time is spent managing the wants and expectations of these stakeholders. This is a tricky situation as sustainable management is often prone to conflict especially due to varied attention to stakeholders as well as power imbalances amongst them (Peltola et al. 2022).

Other stakeholder groups are more general consisting of various demographic interests in hunting and particularly external groups who espouse the mutualist value orientation. Mutualists believe that animals have a right to their lives in mutual existence with human is prevalent in Western countries and the Nordics (Gamborg & Jensen 2016; Manfredo et al. 2020). These demographic interest groups place external pressure on the legitimate existence of hunting. The general public in Sweden still supports hunting if it has utilitarian dimensions with focus on using the meat (Ljung et al. 2012; Kagervall 2014) and considered sustainable (Kagervall 2014) whilst respecting animal welfare (Bjørkdahl 2005). The purpose of outlining the current standards for hunting legitimacy is to emphasise that they are based on ethical hunting practices more than before as outlined in paper IV. Paper IV argues that hunting is a criticised activity and its continued existence debated which causes an existential pressure on hunters as ambassadors of hunting (Tickle & von Essen 2020) leading to higher levels of responsibility to uphold ethical values and principles in their practices. Therefore, older ideals of leaving society behind to commune with nature such as suggested by more romantic hunting writers such as Ortega y Gasset, is no longer as easy. Hunters are more scrutinized than before with the help of technology,

and individual hunters carry significant responsibility (Tickle et al. 2022) and face external and internal criticism (von Essen & Hansen 2018). Certainly, as paper IV argues, the existential threat would pressure hunters to be more critical of one another, or reflexively double down in support.

Another clash in values is the original labour and leisure motivation for hunting which is debated in paper I. There is concern within the hunting community that hunters engaged in management efforts all year long are declining (see previous chapter 6.1 "A farewell to folk hunting"), and who will take over these management efforts in the future (Sandström & Elmberg 2022). Hence the clash between labour and leisure interests for hunting are manifesting in larger issues about the stewardship and/or wildlife management efforts, who will carry them out and in what capacity. Here, the discussion over the governing policy of hunting is intensified, as mentioned earlier, hunters perform stewardship efforts to promote healthy abundant wildlife popu-lations in Sweden, as well as efforts to protect other rural stakeholders' interests from the damages caused by wildlife. These various efforts need highly engaged hunters, whether they do so voluntarily, as employees, under mandate and so forth. Sectoral pressures, primarily farming and forestry, have strong interests in managing wildlife, keeping populations low and away from their production sites (Dressel et al. 2021).

In the face of such outside pressure, hunters again try to maintain a balance between helping or serving these sectors and stewardship efforts supporting wildlife. Currently, the increase in wild boar has led them to reach 'pest-status' levels despite being a species of 'high game'. It has gone so far that the Farmers Association petitioned for revised hunting laws since the old ones have become outdated according to their official statement (Lantbrukarnas Riksförbund 2022). Such a change in policy would funda-mentally affect how hunting is performed and the ethical values represented, for example risking hunters to become 'pest-control' managers, mandated, or employed to kill, or rather cull, undesirable wildlife to a larger extent. The forestry industry, due to weakened forests, is likewise expecting hunting to protect vulnerable tree plantations. What these stakeholders are apparently encouraging is for hunters to become a form of 'dirty work' or 'waste disposal' workers as outlined in paper I and paper III.

6.1.5   Welcome new hunting? Bureaucracy, scientization and standardisation as part of centralising hunting

Hunters value their extensive agency in what stewardship and management initiatives they utilize, however, hunting has over the decades become more centralised, meaning that it is more centrally governed. The centralisation process is similarly an increase in formalisation of the relationship between hunting and government, to the point of bordering on employment or conscription of hunters to perform services. It is identified through three steps happening within the hunting world: standardization, bureaucratization and scientization. The standardization is occurring mainly through the hunting education process, which rather than inherited adheres to standards of knowledge and examination. Bureaucratization regards the increased reporting and logging duties that hunters are mandated to fill and the scientization process is the increase of research and ecological knowledge, modelling and methods being used for hunting policy. This is not only on the level of knowledge generated by experts, but by its increased integration in parlance by and self-understandings of hunters (see von Essen 2015. Centralisation is a generally destabilising force as hunting stands on a laissez-faire libertarian foundation based in landownership and the principle of 'freedom with responsibility'. This means that Swedish hunters inherit and value the ability to decide about their hunting styles and stewardship initiatives such as wildlife populations, bag limits and target species and demographics within the legal parameters on a national (and EU) level.

The relationship to the state is formalised starting with the societal 'services' that hunting provides. A main one, that is often communicated outward, being the tracking and euthanising of wildlife injured in traffic accidents, where the pay is relatively low (Moilanen 2021). These services are often not significantly motivated by economic means since the margins for any profit would be low if not negative from accrued costs. It is worth noting that Hunters are thus arguably an important node of information about wildlife (Peltola et al. 2013) and their experience of management through these services. Today, only a few hunters are professionally contracted and their numbers are in decline (Widemo 2021) with the services being provided mainly on personal initiative by independent non-professional hunters since the work is often tied to landownership. It is worth mentioning that historically, hunters were paid a 'skottpengar' (directly translated to 'shot money'/bounty) to kill wolves and could likewise face fines if they failed to participate in wolf

culls (Komi & Kröger 2022). The relevance of this historical tidbit is that hunters have been financially mandated/managed by governing institutions and even deployed as a force against wildlife (classed as a threat or vermin) before. Hunting is becoming more formalised through centralisation as per paper III and in some contexts used as a force to control wildlife - although in other cases hunting groups themselves seek to control populations depending on species and definitions of stewardship. The significant differences between wildlife management and stewardship are manifold however, an overview is that wildlife management is more formalised and based on scientific modelling and research whilst stewardship adheres more to folk hunting heritage, local knowledge, and land ownership rights.

The standardization of hunting practice and knowledge is happening through the licensing requirement as well as the digitalisation process of the theoretical exam as outlined especially in paper III. Standardization through licensing processes is however limited to new hunters reaching a 'minimum' requirement of knowledge and practical ability as well as creating an educational baseline for hunters in the onslaught of online information, hunting tutorials and other sources mentioned in paper III. Here, hunting organisations are trying to guide hunters in choosing appropriate learning material, publishing much on their own and falling in line with standard knowledge and practices. Worth noting is that the online/digitalization simultaneously provides both the potential to archive and share lesser-known traditions or uncommon knowledge and practice. The standardization of hunting is likewise intertwined with a bureaucratization process, where an increasing amount of wildlife management decisions are taken centrally rather than locally, as well as an increase in bureaucratic paperwork and reporting for the average hunter. Hunters are required to report hunting bags, observations, and wildlife inventory, and apply for permits to hunt in protected areas, protected species or out of season. The increased bureaucratization in the form of paperwork and reporting (commonly using a designated hunting reporter in the team) is also causing frustration amongst hunters. Resulting in some lashing out against the Swedish EPA and EU directives as the source of their frustrations, whether it is against the newly instated ban against lead ammunition in wetlands (Svenska Jägareförbundet 2022) or the lack of neutrality at the Swedish EPA (Eriksson 2022a).

Research and science advising modern hunting policy is not a new development however it is increasingly referenced for government operations and

in several cases, challenges conventional hunting knowledge and methods. Arguably, hunters in general are willing to adopt new methods and management initiatives based in research if it can be reconciled with their cultural identity. The scientization process causes issues when it comes in conflict with other research results, local knowledge and questions of bias. If new policies based in research are not compatible with hunting culture resistance is common (Krange & Skogen 2007). Papers III and IV explain the importance to which ethics lie as a foundation for stewardship and management strategies. Paper II, in particular, shows the faults in alienating local populations from landscapes and wildlife and management initiatives, which leads to unsustainable coexistence between people and wildlife. The difficulties and resistances in adapting researched methods and solutions can specifically relate to rewilding issues (Rippa 2021) or wolf conservation policies (von Essen & Allen 2017a).

Paper III and other research (see Dunk 2002; Bye 2003; Reviron-Piégay & Mischi 2009; Krange & Skogen 2011) similarly establish how deep rooted the hunting culture and identity in a locality can be. Hunters therefore oppose attempts to change or reshape practices and identifiers they cannot relate to, and thus prefer to adopt and figure out new methods, labels, identity based on their traditions. Abroad, German hunters distinguish between the practice of 'hege' (which would be translated to 'stewardship') and the practice of 'wildlife management', actively resisting to call themselves by the new concept of wildlife managers (Gieser 2020). Hege is a historical practice 'of care and stewardship' derived from a Christian pastoralist system. These stewardship practices therefore derive from local knowledge that is inherited through generations, linked to the landscape and local identity. Hence, German hunters "tend to vehemently refuse being labelled as 'managers' and, instead claim to be engaged in Hege, a particular 'traditional' form of stewardship that defines the hunters and their relationship with wild animals. This relationship has been under attack for some years now" (Gieser 2020:177). In Sweden, the centralisation process in general is part of the organisational oversight of a liberal hunting culture based in the privilege of landownership.

Although Swedish hunters have similar attachments to tradition in folk hunting and stewardship and 'viltvård', none of this research has viewed the same 'on the ground' refusal of the 'wildlife management' term. Research shows that hunters are instead willing to embrace new ideas and methods in

wildlife management in so far as it is reconcilable with their cultural identity, mainly based in stewardship, land ownership and folk hunting heritage (von Essen & Allen 2017b). They can often adapt scientific research and principles under the labels of viltvård/hege/stewardship. These efforts to integrate science into classic hunting vernacular signals attempts to re-appropriate and assimilate management directives. Hence, whilst centrali-sation through governance of hunting is resisted, paper I points out that there are several advantages to accepting stronger connections with centralised government oversight along with the integration of scientific based initiatives. Citing research and well sourced arguments allow for legitimacy in challenging debates. Hunting organisations often curate an external picture that fits more normative societal values (Andersson Cederholm & Sjöholm 2021) and even on a European level, the 'green hunting' image is often communicated to garner support, whether it is preserving wetlands (Mischi 2013), or the procuring of climate friendly meat initiatives that many hunters support. Government mandates to officially handle wildlife management, such as that given to 'Svenska Jägareförbundet' provides significant advantages of authority, decisive power and legitimacy to the hunting community and their relevance to wildlife management.

When hunters accept centralisation

On the other hand, the price for these significant advantages can potentially be very steep. Referring to the previous section on hunting and rural stakeholders, sectoral interests from agriculture and forestry will often pressure hunters to cull wildlife, lobbying for initiatives that would require hunters to kill more animals (see Borgström 2022; Eriksson 2022b). A significant pressure on hunters to contain and cull wildlife populations is the spread of wild boar throughout Sweden and the threat of African Swine Fever. Papers I and III describe the pressure that both newer and older generations of hunters are feeling to deal with wild boar stakeholders outlined above. New technologies as well as research are all taking place to aid in the management (and not stewardship) of wild boar, where, as outlined in previous papers, the ethical principle of fair chase is traded in favour of quick and effective killing. In Vallarsa, Italy, the local hunters have been declining in numbers with wildlife populations growing exponentially, meaning "… many express how 'draining' the hunting season has become, with the requirements to meet their assigned killings" (Rippa 2021:12). Since rural steward hunters seem to be declining these exhaustive amounts of hunts

and culls could come to increase in Sweden, perhaps intensifying measures to conscript hunters to do the 'dirty work'. Another issue with the labourization of hunting is the ethical dilemmas that Marvin associates with so called 'cold deaths', a hygienic and unemotional slaughter (Marvin 2006) which in paper I was described along the lines of 'soulless assassins' in the woods. Hunting as labour toes the lines of killing as a job and echoes criticism against US 'wildlife services' as wildlife exterminators (Emond et al. 2021) and 'rogue assassins' echo these concerns (Fears 2013). Similarly, hunting to protect income (for example farmers who hunt) or even survival also encourages people to de-prioritise ethical considerations in comparison to more pressing personal aims.

Considering this, it is worth noting the ongoing developments since the termination of the wildlife-management mandate (see the statement made by Larsson & Sköld, 2021 on the Swedish Hunters Association's page). There is current uncertainty over how this role will be filled. Hunters have again expressed concern a renewed mandate would increase centralisation (Svenska Jägareförbundet 2021). Whether private contractors will be employed as 'cullers' or hunting organisations will regain the mandate but with greater central oversight of policy, one can only speculate. It is worth considering the ongoing labour-leisure dilemma in hunting can help hunters see which way hunting may develop and hopefully make more informed decisions for the future.

Hence, the ethical implications of the 'identity crisis' in hunting of whether it should be used as a centralised labour force to be directed at wildlife or a leisure pursuit, have a significant impact. Ethical risks may arise when hunters are seen as a labour force rather than volunteers, since the ethical principles that otherwise guide hunting stewardship (and sportsmanship) are exchanged for efficient wildlife management, often referring to culling and the extermination of 'pests'. Therefore, there are many benefits of centralised hunting and the adoption of scientific principles into formal hunting structures, yet they cause unease amongst hunters who see hunting being changed and moved away from traditional roots, and motivations. A favoured outcome for hunters would be if 'freedom with responsibility' could be leveraged for scientifically sound wildlife management together with the acknowledged legitimacy of central government. These ethical risks within hunting are therefore not so much predictions as warnings against the gradual but extreme changes that hunting can undergo due to modern developments and pressures. Issues arise

when hunters are pressured to kill separated from the hunting process, whether it is through socio-economic forces or technological buffers, which is the main concern of the following section.

6.2 Part 2: Getting personal: suggested elements for a good hunt

Due to concerns and issues covered in chapter 6.1 "Part 1"; this "Part 2" identifies what they have in common and proposes preliminary counteractive measures. Through recording people expressing their various concerns about the future of hunting due to modern developments, an ideological premise was 'reverse-traced'. The previous sections in chapter 6.1 show that there are ethical tensions in hunting, such as its modern role, heritage and local knowledge versus centralisation and new research, or new commercial and tech pressures affecting practices. By reviewing these ethical pressures and tensions through problem behaviour and prescriptions that surface in papers I–IV, we may glean a potential 'ideal'. Thus considering if we can use these 'immoral' instances to get closer to revealing the 'moral'. Then in so doing, begin to apprehend an ethics framework that hunters see as aspirational and normative.

Using the reverse-tracing method, three elemental parts of hunting can be deducted, namely effort, knowledge and purpose, that form part of what can be considered a 'good' hunt/hunter who acts within the accepted set of values. These values according to the empirical data, cohere mostly with the ecological 'webs' and holistic hunting model outlined in chapter 2.2 "Theories and models". Although this ethos is what hunters appear to refer to (a priori) the most when expressing concerns, it includes aspects of the sport and Land Ethic as well, proving the variety of values held in hunting.

The elements deducted from the empirical data are employed to counterbalance or 'buffer' the pressures caused by modern developments, based on the perspective that modern hunting is a balancing act between intentions such as effectivezed labour and compartmentalized leisure. As argued, modern pressures try to push hunting towards the efficient and impersonal 'cold' killing, through either serviced 'shooters' or employed 'exterminators', covered in papers I, II and III. The elements below in 'figure 2' could likewise help to counteract unethical behaviour outlined in paper IV, which focuses on modern values of animal welfare in hunting, the

purpose of hunting and issues concerning 'macho' flippant and posturing behaviour towards killing wildlife.
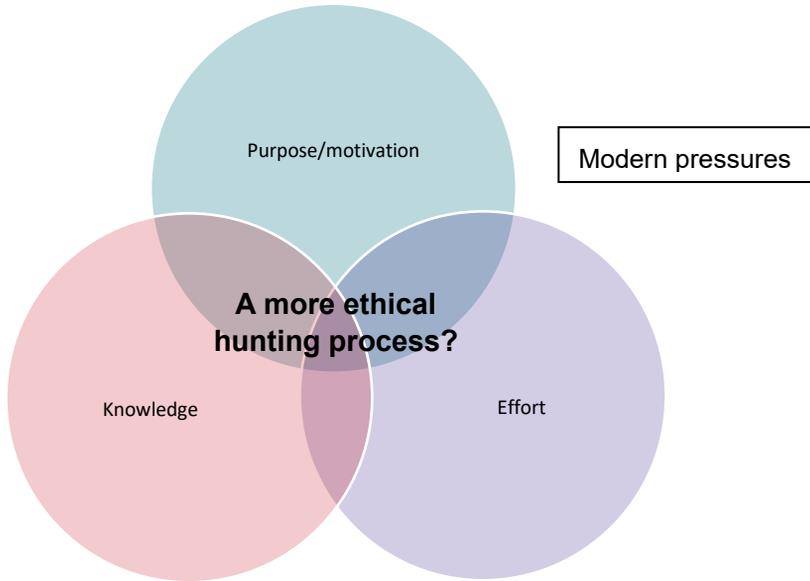
Figure 2. Elements of the hunting process.

The elements suggested to counterbalance modern pressures in hunting are effort, knowledge and purpose (see, for example, Shephard et al. 2022, for recent attempts at similar modelling) of a hunt and hunter and are elaborated on individually in the next three chapters. They are identified in each of the papers as important to the overall hunting process. Figure 2 illustrates how these elements could visually combine to make a more ethical hunting process. At the heart of hunting is the full engagement of process and the body of the hunter, creating what is a desired immersive and intense experience (Cohen 2014), with the potential to reconcile humans with natural systems or at least relief from a noisy world (Tickle 2019). Therefore, the hunting process is an essential part of the holistic hunt. The hunting process is one aspect of hunting that this research understands to be affected and changed by modern pressures such as commercial compartmentalization,

technological replacement of intrinsic skills and knowledge, sectoral pressures and so on.

Therefore, the next section is aimed at presenting each part of the 'Elements of the hunting process' model by first outlining each of the three components individually to then argue their purpose as a synthesized whole, illustrated above. Note that this model is at an early stage, making it suitable for continued research. The model was conceived near the end of this research based on results covered in papers I–IV where elements were isolated and engaged with according to hunter's concerns. It is therefore encouraging to see that other researchers, such as Shephard et al. (2022) in their paper "Reviving the unique potential of recreational fishers as environmental stewards of aquatic ecosystems", explore their own model based on comparable categories within angling, showing a wider interest in clarifying sustainability in nature extractive/consumptive processes (Shephard et al. 2022).

The elements of the hunting process model is founded on what hunters have described as unethical and emphasises ethical risks in hunting, rather than creating a formula for an ethical hunt. There is a general interest in understanding that modern ethical hunting is an act of balancing several ethical principles, and the following three elements should help guide hunters in this process, starting with 'effort'.

6.2.1   Effort

Dedication in other words means effort, and specifically physical effort (to the extent of one's capabilities). Bodily effort is part of the holistic hunting experience since hunting is an engagement of the senses. Effort is a main component in each of the papers' various arguments, whether it is paying other to take over otherwise grueling tasks or over-reliance on technology such as ATVs or trail cameras. Each of these modern developments can eliminate moments that would otherwise require physical effort and skills in hunting.

Illustrating an early idea of effort in Western sport hunting, is when Theodore Roosevelt refrained from shooting a black bear that had been caught and tied up for him to shoot. For Roosevelt, the right to kill the bear lay in the hunting process and effort exerted to pursue his quarry and it was key to his identity as a hunter. This event features as the origin of the 'fair chase' principle in hunting, relating to effort as a sign of respect for the hunt, the quarry or both.

The 'teddy-bear' incident displays dedication to a hunt through effort, and a feeling that one needs to commit oneself entirely and physiologically to deserve the kill. The 'good' that comes from that personal experience of the world that can only be done through the fleshy sense of the body and perhaps the only possibility of consciously crossing the culture-nature gap by engaging the nature of said body. This implies that although humans separate themselves consciously from nature, engaging in one's physicality through senses, impulses, and emotions, provides an immersive experience of oneself in the environment. Note that 'nature of our body' does not by any means validate naturalistic ethics, especially considering that our initial reactions to certain inputs or stimuli can be socially changed (Cushman et al. 2017). Effort is a variable measure as well, yet to prove oneself dedicated to a hunt through physical effort not only made Roosevelt feel he deserved to kill his target, the more strenuous a pursuit is the more rewarding as well.

Bennet in her work suggests that moral codes are insufficient for ethical action and embodied sensibility is necessary (Bennett 2001). Without going too deep into Bennett's work, it is still understandable that emotion is part of the physical hunting experience, as well as a component of ethics. Singer wrote that there is a dialectical relationship between the biological and the cultural roots of ethics that are inseparable although both shape its evolution (Greene 2002; Singer 2011). If a hunting process is not fulfilled and 'corners are cut' to effectively kill an animal, would it not be unethical or instead be called 'culling'? Referring to the argument in papers II and IV, the need for modern hunters to put effort into the hunting process is essential according to hunting ethics. Modern developments, as argued in Part 1, tend to reduce or compartmentalize the hunting process instead of emphasizing the holistic experience, facilitating an embodied experience.

In paper I, the tension between leisure or labor is often one that concerns physical effort. Hunters employed to limit populations may resort to what would otherwise be considered unethical shortcuts using technology or other means to efficiently kill wildlife with the minimum amount of effort. In Part I discussions about urbanization, technology, and commercialisation have heavy implications for hunting and the future of hunting as it risks being partially reduced to effortless massacre. This connects to paper III, and the 'ethical trade' between fair chase and quick kill when using extra technologies and extended hunting times to kill wild boar efficiently — since people are now allowed to hunt them at night using lighting and night vision scopes.

Paper III as well highlights how educational hunting literature directly references the loss of hunting skills due to technology (gadgetry and gear), denoting both physical and intellectual skills.

The hunting community, for the sake of hunting ethics, want people to dedicate much investment into their hunting practice, as mentioned in Paper III: "…one should approach hunting — not as a side activity unceremoniously squeezed into a busy modern schedule but as a commitment in both time and effort" (Tickle et al. 2022:7). However, a skilled hunter that puts in effort and physically engages in a hunting process, immersing themselves in both environment and activity, is not necessarily ethical. Here, the other two elements are relevant, with purpose to guide and the effort to learn through dedication to skills as well and knowledge, which is the next element in the model.

6.2.2 Knowledge

Although a hunter's levels, types and forms of knowledge can vary, in the hunting literature and licensing process, the emphasis is on learning. A hunter must identify the hunted species, know the legal season, distinguishing age, sex and even relation to other animals (for example if it is a hind with fawn) to adhere with legal regulations. The intention to learn about the environment and from one's interactions with it, are equally a component of ethical hunting. The responsibility to learn from one's mistakes is part of showing respect for wildlife as illustrated in paper III through the acceptance of students making mistakes if they show they take responsibility to learn and improve, or in the disapproval of failure to own up to mistakes such as injuring an animal during an attempted kill or display of macho nonchalance towards killing.

Paper II speaks of the unethical risk zone of the 'tourist bubble' where the hunting tourist does not understand the foreign context (including ecology, biology, culture) in which they hunt, leading to an inability to judge whether they are acting ethically or not. This risk zone or 'sin' is included in this element of knowledge. Applied more broadly it highlights a 'blindness to the environment', wildlife and use of resources around us, the kind of blindness often attributed to an 'urbanized' and 'commercial' class of hunters who lack an interest (or time) to learn about hunting and nature.

Paper IV discusses the growing interest in wildlife and nature (as well as hunting in general) amongst female demographics, and describes the phenomenon of women taking the hunting exam to learn without the intention

to necessary to go out and actively hunt. Knowledge in this context is again referred to in conjunction with blindness, many who took the hunting exam have described it as an 'eye opening process' (Tickle 2019) to wildlife and new contexts in natural environments (tracks, signs, sounds, ecologies and so on) that they would not have identified before. Even though knowledge needs to be gained and a minimum level achieved to legally hunt in Sweden, paper III, on the other hand, concludes that ethics are not fundamentally established in the licensing of hunters but stem from upbringing and social interactions with hunters and non-hunters. Shephard et al. (2022) in their 'aquatic stewardship model' emphasise communal learning, encouraging knowledge collecting and action towards sustainable stewardship of aquatic ecologies. Although, people criticize extractive activities such as hunting and angling, these activities can provide valuable knowledge of local systems such as, experiential, cultural, tacit knowledge, and skills, however, this requires an interest (and a dimension of effort) to learn.

Educators in paper III relay that learning should not be done only to pass exams; those who take the hunting exam are expected to enter a hunting team as part of their continued education, another form of communal learning. While it is not legally specified that new hunters need to join a team, newly licensed hunters without some background in hunting lack the knowledge to perform an ethical hunt. For example, if two new hunters were given an opportunity to hunt boars on someone's land, according to narratives outlined by hunters in the empirical research in papers I–IV. Equally, those who have experience in hunting should continue to gather knowledge whether it is from peers or perhaps new scientific studies. Hunters have a responsibility to "Improve and maintain [their] knowledge and skills about wildlife and hunting" as outlined by the 'Nordic Hunters' Rules' in chapter 3.3 "Contemporary hunting".

The lack of learning and knowledge leads to an unethical hunter who does not understand the system in which they participate, appropriate, and even manage. Hence not only physical effort is needed for a hunter to face the challenges of modernity, but they must also gather knowledge through learning about surrounding ecological environments to guide them within the complex web of ethical subtleties and subjectivities. The value of place based knowledge, a kind of situated knowledge of local ecology and landscape is thus impressed upon by hunters.

6.2.3 Purpose

The element of purpose relates to paper IV as it discusses motivations to hunt as a signifier of moral values that can be carried into practice, such as the case of women who hunt for 'ethical meat' concerning animal welfare. Other arguments for the modern importance of purpose can be found in Bjørkdahl's thesis on the hunting ethos in Norway and the U.S.A. where he states that "We should not take 'just because'-responses seriously, especially when it comes to a practice that kills millions of sentient creatures each year. Hunting, despite its ancient and intimate bond with humanity, is always in need of justification." (Bjørkdahl 2005:10). The sands have shifted, and the historical overview shows that hunting does need a purpose to motivate itself to modern ethical standards both within hunting and to the public for its legitimacy. Each of the papers discuss purpose, whether people hunt for labour or leisure purposes (paper I), for a holiday (paper II), or for ethical meat (paper IV).

The element of purpose is different from the other two of 'effort' and 'knowledge' since it forms more of a reflexive and guiding principle. The purpose element moreover shares dimensions with virtue ethical criteria unlike the other elements, again connecting back to the virtue-based criteria used for the 'Aquatic Stewardship Model' (Shephard et al. 2022). At a community level it may form an organisational force to gather around (or fracture down), as argued in "Part 1" of this discussion, where demographic and sectoral groups have different purposes for hunting. Some purposes may even be somewhat disingenuous, communicated outward yet not realized internally, such as the acceptance of female hunters and their purposes for hunting outlined in paper IV.

In some cases the rhetorical use of hunting purpose to gain legitimacy may be abused, although clarifying acceptable purposes and motivations for hunting forms a sound basis for guiding the hunting community. Purpose is meant to encourage reflexive consideration of personal moral motivations and intentions, but also as a reflection of ethics within the wider hunting community. The purpose motivating one to hunt connects to the moral compass of a hunter and provides opportunities for engagement with this question amongst peers acting as a a potential tool for discussing ethics, a concluding point in paper III.

Fischer's et al. (2013) study "De-legitimizing hunting — Discourses over the morality of hunting in Europe and eastern Africa" finds that moral

arguments for hunting in the form of motivation or purpose for hunting are vital for its legitimacy and that hunting for sport and enjoyment can only be justified once other essential ethical criteria are covered. A similar argument exists in the Danish Act on Hunting and Game Management (1994) where "It states that all hunting must have a purpose which amounts to more than simply killing wildlife (for the fun or excitement of it), and that all killed animals are to be collected and used for food, fur and other recognized purposes (with the exception of diseased animals or animals killed because they cause harm)." (Gamborg et al. 2018:18).

Nevertheless, although purpose is important to hunting, not all purposes make hunting ethical. The critique of 'sport' shows it is rarely seen as a significant purpose for hunting, usually people will list other motivations/purposes such as camaraderie, nature experience, ethical meat and so on (Hansson-Forman et al. 2020; Naturvårdsverket 2022). Competition, and collecting rare and impressive trophies is often considered a weak and insubstantial purpose for hunting on its own (Bichel 2021). There is a larger argument to the utilitarian value of purpose or 'intent' as outlined by Dobson who distinguishes the virtue of non-consumptive wildlife tourists with the harmful intent of consumptive tourists (Dobson 2012). This argument is countered as non-consumptive tourism is often argued to cause less damage than consumptive (see Lovelock 2015), also outlined in paper II. Likewise, trophy hunting is not considered an acceptable/virtuous intent for a hunt but may produce conservation benefits and has an interest in preserving 'game' species (Loftin 1984; Bichel 2021). Indeed, Bichel uses the 'worst-motive fallacy' (Walmsley & O'Madagain 2020) to illustrate bias against the presumed motives of trophy hunters, although it is worth noting that he defines any hunter taking a trophy as a trophy hunter (Bichel 2021). Hence, both hunters and non-hunters tend to be harsh in judging the motives of hunters in general, which could emphasise the need to clarify hunting purposes for guiding of hunters. Consequently, purpose and motivation are tied to values and although they are instrumental to an ethical hunt, they do not directly equate with a hunt being ethical or vice versa, hence there is a reliance on certain regulatory structures that tend to guide acceptable purposes or motives for hunting, including peers and public legitimacy. At a larger scale purpose asks what the ethical values of hunting are and what role it has in modern society.

6.2.4 Hunting alchemy: elemental synthesis to buffer modern pressures on ethics

The model above is a preliminary suggestion aimed at hunters that should help to buffer against and navigate the unethical pressures of modern developments outlined in Part 1. The three elements (effort, knowledge and purpose) above are all-important to hunting ethics; the whole counts for more than the sum of its parts. Together they combine to buffer against modern pressures that would go against modern hunting values and ethics and should have the advantage of creating a more immersive hunting experience.

The three elements are highly generalizable to encourage hunters to reflect upon their actions and motives to hunt as well as on their place as hunters in modern society, which in paper III was an issue of speculation amongst young hunters. Reflecting on hunting may be better for maintaining ethical standards than deontological rules and principles that may cause false consensus within groups, as pointed out in papers II and III. The model provides a tool to communicate about ethics more on a practical applied level than a theoretical level.

Internally as these elements should work to maintain the hunting identity and immersion into natural systems that hunters value so highly in their narratives (Bjørkdahl 2005; Reis 2009; Marvin 2010; Tickle 2019). The hunting ethical principles outlined in the 'Nordic Hunters' Rules' certainly help to guide hunters, but they do not cover the importance of the hunting process. Urbanization, less local landowners, fading traditions and steward- ship efforts, increased commercialisation and technology, sectoral pressures and even aspects of centralisation are all modern pressures pushing hunting into practices hunters have criticized as unethical. Hence, when planning a hunt, integrating these elements alongside ethical principles and laws would protect the hunting process from being compromised or reduced. Honouring the hunting process is repeatedly revealed to be the unspoken ideal of hunting ethics from the qualitative responses and observations in each of the papers but recognizing what constitutes the process may change in time.

The elements of the hunting process model is but a suggestion for complementing the framework for evaluating hunting since ethical principles and laws are very open to interpretation and false consensus. Currently, principles and rules are not outlined to protect against modern developments that only cause ethical uncertainty and muddy the waters as to what ethical hunting should be. Modern pressures show that hunting is being shaped in

ways that are concerning to many practitioners. Ethical principles do not specifically describe the need for hunting process as a whole. The process of hunting is occasionally curtailed or different parts of the process receive disproportionate weight, resulting in the hunt being less balanced by modern pressures. Parts of the hunting process are possibly eliminated by certain ethical reasonings, such as arguing the only principle that matters for wildlife is a 'quick death' when hunting has an arguably much larger ethical reach than just the killing, including the shaping of ecosystems, human animal relations, resource use, cultural practices and so forth.

7. Conclusion: An ethical hunting process?

> To the sportsman the death of the game is not what interests him; that is not his purpose. What interests him is everything that he had to do to achieve that death — that is, the hunt. Therefore what was before only a means to an end is now an end in itself.
>
> (Ortega y Gasset 1972:105)

Ortega y Gasset is widely cited in hunting literature and although he is not the product of contemporary hunting culture his quote illustrates the importance of hunting process; essentially that hunting is not primarily a means to an end anymore, and that modern hunting is about experiencing the process. Nevertheless, the process of hunting can vary, it is a concept that is defined often by how it is threatened, divided, reduced, avoided, replaced and so forth. For the purposes of this argument, the hunting process can be defined as everything that happens between the beginning of a hunt and the end. A hunt can be planned for months and years, but the beginning of a hunting process should be the moment one steps into an environment armed with the intention to kill an animal, ending when the hunt is formally ended by the hunter(s). The hunting process should likewise contain the elements used in the model in the previous chapter 6.2 and reflect what hunters are concerned is being reduced — tracking or navigating terrain, silent observation and attentiveness, handling the carcass through field dressing and transport, butchering if you shot an animal and so forth.

The elements of the hunting process model is a primary conceptualization of elements in the hunting process. Together these elements show the holistic value of their interaction, however, the model is too simple to describe a 'good' and complete hunting process as the elements are defined by what is

threatened by modern pressures. It therefore could be said to have a more practical application than descriptive, based upon the issues outlined in Papers I–IV and "Part 1" of the discussion.

Research articles have discussed the physical nature and intensity of bodily sensations during hunting by writers and researchers across several fields, often calling them 'embodied'. In the wide array of humanities literature, the focus has often been on a constructed relation to nature not stretching beyond the images of dominating violence enacted on natural spaces (Franklin 2001). When researchers observe hunters, they are following people who are experienced hunters, involve themselves in hunting activities regularly throughout the year and have it as a significant part of their identity (see, Franklin 2001; Marvin 2010; Keil 2021; Rippa 2021). These are the kinds of people that the hunting community in Western countries, including Sweden, tend to view as a hunting archetype and are often the hunters studied for qualitative research purposes. Archetypes can function as models for 'good hunters', often described in the study papers (I–IV) as respectful in attitude and behaviour towards wildlife and killing, knowledgeable, skilled, dedicated to hunting and following ethical principles such as utilizing meat or furs from killed animals. Although it is clear that people are often flawed, I would argue, that when discussing ethics, we discuss ideal scenarios, what hunters should strive for ethically and provides greater reward through engagement (Reis 2009; Cohen 2014).

This thesis sets itself apart as it has focused on otherwise under-represented groups both in hunting and qualitative research, such as female hunters (Smith et al. 2022) and young hunters (Tickle et al. 2022), stepping away from the archetypical experienced of senior hunters who tend to be the subject of other qualitative research. This allows for a more comprehensive picture of developing demographics in hunting. Younger demographic groups are subject to generational cultures that affect hunting. Younger hunters and women provide perspectives that are valuable to the under-standing the assimilation of ethics and potential future trends based on current results from these groups, for example in papers III and IV. These demographic groups will go on to form part (perhaps a growing proportion) of the hunting community and contribute to shaping and remaking hunting ethics in a dialectic process between upbringing, moral values, hunting culture and ethics.

I want to moreover emphasise the hunting process as something that is consistent throughout all the papers and research as an essential part to the modern hunting ethic, as well as hunting identity. When the hunting process is reduced it is often rejected as 'not real hunting' and instead dismissed as shooting, canned hunting, culling, slaughter and on it goes. The hunting process, in the context of this study, places the emphasis of hunting back on immersion into the (laborious) process of hunting. Since hunting is a deeply sense-tied experience (Franklin 2001; Gieser 2020; Keil 2021), it cannot be adequately simulated in any way that replicates the holistic fullness of an 'entire hunt' (Reis 2009; Cohen 2014). Meaning that one should engage in a holistic process to fully experience hunting and avoid the 'cheap thrills' of mere shooting (Reis 2009; Cohen 2012). The three elements, effort, knowledge and purpose, above form part of the hunting process as well as use the element of 'purpose' to navigate ethics and (towards) legitimate engagement in hunting. However, as argued in the above section and applies here as well, there is no perfect formula for an ethical hunt.

The three elements are important components of the hunting process and together they essentially make an easier model to follow and communicate — much like the 'seven sins' in their function as deterrents (not guiding principles, vice does not tend to need it) outlined in paper II. Therefore, although there is no formula for an ethical hunt, since the variety of values, perspectives, ontologies are potentially endless, the model above works primarily to buffer against modern pressures that could affect hunting practices pushing ethics in unethical directions. The process should subsequently fall as a unifying mantle over the elements allowing for more profound exploration, and hopefully understanding, of topics such as ethics and practice; potentially bridging alienation from nature allowing for better reflection upon hunting values.

7.1   Future research

7.1.1   Embodied hunting as ethical hunting

The embodiment of hunting has been written about in several ethnographic and anthropology based pieces of research (see, Franklin 2001; Keil 2021) and is a theory of particular interest for further investigating 'the process' of hunting and its relation to ethics and other questions such as alienation from

nature. Embodiment of hunting elaborates on what is considered a full and immersive hunting experience. It is a concept explaining that humans are embodied creatures ongoing constant interactions with their environment to maintain homeostasis and perform intellectual cognition (Johnson 2015). Understanding that we are our bodies and that the body and mind are not separate operational 'headquarters' (although much of Western philosophy would have it seem that way), the human is bio-functional and thus embodied (Johnson 2015).

Embodiment in hunting serves several functions relevant to this research and forms a robust ground from which to examine the often-alienating pressures of modern developments and hunting ethics. It is a concept that lies at the crux of many issues that have been explored in this study, although not always materialised on paper. The topic of embodiment occurred when reviewing the study as a realization that when respondents in the study or other academics speak of an ideal and ethical hunt, they speak of the embodied process, either in of itself or through the three elements identified above which are related to embodiment. This idea has grown from several inspiring topics, such as the original idea of appropriating nature as rewarding labour, religious symbolism, and the hunter as a steward and 'gardener' of landscapes inspired by Rippa's research of hunters in Vallarsa, Italy.

Embodiment as a central concept in hunting provides an interesting comment on human relations to technology and the virtual world which increasingly dominates everyday lives. Hence embodiment would be instructive for the purposes of clarifying human relations to the virtual, where the physical and digital cross, interact, mimic and even replace one another.

7.1.2 Mentorship and socialisation into the hunt

After a long period of stagnation, rapid changes are occurring in the way in which new hunters are qualified and socialized into hunting culture. This also happens elsewhere in Europe. In France, for example, the need for increased shooting of wild boar and at the same time an aging hunting corps has led to loosening of hunting qualifications. The development around an aging hunting corps and a lack of new hunters can be found in all Western societies. Research should investigate how Sweden proposes to meet this challenge. This should extend beyond quick evaluations of new forms of hunting degree and instead map socialization processes and obstacles that new hunters encounter on their way past the hunting degree certificate and towards

integration into the hunting corps. KSLA describes inevitable developments such as property price trends and demographic shifts (Sandström & Elmberg 2022) and notes that it can be difficult to be a member of a traditional hunting team, where participation and attendance are required. Thus, research should also be done on how contributions from different types and groups of hunters can vary.

Furthermore, how can mentoring programs, which are already used in parts of Europe, work as a supplement to further train new hunters and in making contacts for further hunting opportunities? New hunters should also be explored as a concept in terms of who it includes, invites, and excludes. Simply being young and urban are not the only demographic variables that should be considered. Studies should investigate opportunities for immigrants, women, and minority groups of various kinds to join the hunting corps in the future, for example with interviews.

8. For better or worse: reflections on navigating modern pressures and past echoes

This research has a broad scope covering the main issues concerning hunting ethics in Sweden today. Mapping out these ethical tensions and pressures in relation to hunting ethics has been the primary aim of this work. By examining hunters' perceptions, the origins of the issues and problematizing them in a hunting context, I have presented developments within hunting that pose a risk to hunting practices and ethics, directly affecting wildlife management practice and policy. The research however has, as a final measure, summarized the common factors of these issues and risks to hunting ethics in the fledgling proposal 'elements of the hunting process' model and emphasis on 'hunting process'.

I have tried to interview people from different areas of Sweden, considering its geography and the variations in hunting; I have included interviews from the North, mid and South of Sweden. Ethics have been a central topic in this work but even more so hunting itself and perceived ideas of 'good' and 'bad' within the hunting community. This research is therefore empirical when examining hunting and approaches the study of ethics from the perspective of applied ethics. By researching applied ethics, I have looked at how hunters discuss ethics and ethical dilemmas and issues amongst themselves and with me during conversations and interviews. Applied ethics (or practical ethics) is "about the application of ethics or morality … to practical issues" (Singer 2011:1). Therefore, I have conducted an empirical study of hunting ethics by interviewing hunters, observing and to a very limited extent, training and practicing for hunting. I likewise approached this work from an understanding of my own situated knowledge, and the proverbial "view from above, from nowhere" (Haraway 1988:589)

as a limitation in this study and have tried to answer this issue in chapter 1.3 "Positionality and the ethical premise of hunting". Another limitation of this study, besides the scope and span of the data, is the discrepancy between the discursive and practiced. Meaning, how people speak about hunting and their ethical practices versus how they are actually practiced, what people say versus what people do. Through field studies and the auto-ethnographic process, I have tried to ameliorate this issue and provide more perspective into practiced ethics, which I combined with narratives, especially in paper IV which featured the auto-ethnographic work. Nevertheless, as a researcher my own presence at a hunt can affect behaviour and practice, due to people knowing they are observed. Consequently, often in hunting, unethical practice is often uncovered in research through the process of "hunting cannibalism" — hunters criticizing each other's practices and values rather than owning up to their own shortcomings (von Essen & Hansen 2018; Lindroth 2019). Even so, this research did not aim to investigate the discrepancy between discourse and practice - it highlighted pressures on hunting ethics, whether discursive or practical, even though as often with ethics, there is a discrepancy between argument and practice, which is illustrated in paper III 'false consensus' dilemma, where hunters agree on an ethical principle but practice it differently.

There are still several limitations to the fledgling proposal of the 'Elements of hunting' model. It is outlined that "Ethical models, like scientific ones, are evaluated by generality, number of anomalies, and parsimony" (Peterson 2004:315). The model in this research is general but does contain anomalies argued in the chapters above, particularly pointing out that hunters with skills, dedication and knowledge of hunting may still be deemed unethical by other hunters, and ethical reasonings. What it does provide is a formulation based on the empirical results of this research, which contrasts with the 'Aquatic Stewardship Model' (Shephard et al. 2022) since that is based in ethical theories such as virtue ethics. Other limitations of this study is that each of the modern developments covered in this dissertation and each of the paper (I–IV) could form a doctoral study of their own. The research has tried to balance between inclusive and in-depth but there is more to each of these developments to be explored, with reference to the suggested future research given above as well. There are countless factors affecting hunting ethics and how it is being remade, this study however has aimed to provide significant insights into some of the

most prominent and important changes as perceived by the hunting community.

However, unlike several other studies on hunting and ethics (see Bjørkdahl 2005; Bichel 2021) this study is situated in the subject of Environmental Communication (EC) and not philosophy, a distinction that has been difficult to navigate at times. EC, due to its multidisciplinary and eclectic spectrum (Hansen & Cox 2015) provides the tools for original qualitative analyses of hunters' own views, debates and practices beyond philosophical theories. In essence, EC is the collected approaches to investigating social interactions about the environment (Peterson et al. 2007) although it tends towards "…understanding, critically analyzing and facilitating transformations to more sustainable and just societies." (Joosse et al. 2020:767). What 'sustainable' and 'just' mean however, is inherently contested. The tension between 'discerning scholar' and 'informed activist' is an ongoing debate and issue in EC. Consequently, EC has at points has been called a 'crisis' discipline (Hansen & Cox 2015), dealing with tensions regarding its normative ambition to promote environmental sustainability versus an analytical ambition to investigate communication about the environment (Peterson et al. 2007).

I have discussed my positionality and, how it supports the normative values of hunting which tend towards holism including ecological and animal welfare considerations. Nevertheless, this dissertation uses an analytical approach where Part 1 (the analysis) and Part 2 (suggested approaches) are both based in an analysis of the empirical data in papers I–IV. Nonetheless, it has been a looming desire for this work to speculate on what the future will bring and the risks it may incur. Risks are such a core aspect of our societies today and especially with concern to the environment (Beck 1992). I have listened to many different hunters and ethical perspectives, even if they conflict with my own, while investigating hunting to understand the community, its dilemmas and tensions. I hope that this thesis provides some insight into the ethical dilemmas that hunters face, how these affect our understanding of wildlife in society, and they manifest themselves in hunter practices and ethics, including some primary steps towards reaching that illusive ideal which is a 'good hunt'.

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Popular science summary

What do hunters consider an ethical hunt?

Ethics are a central part of modern hunting as it concerns the killing of wildlife. Normative ideals, such as animal welfare and sustainability, are growing in significance and even questioning the purpose and legitimacy of hunting, pushing the question of ethical conduct. At the same time, modern developments, in the form of technological innovation, commercialisation, demographic change and centralisation are exerting pressures on hunting affecting its practice and ethics.

This research therefore explores how modern developments shape contemporary hunting ethics and examines hunters' concerns about the emerging modern dilemmas due to various pressures affecting hunting. By exploring the values, structures and codes that hunters say should be used to guide them in relation to these modern developments, the research reveals broader ethics and values held by hunters beyond communicated principles of "fair chase" and "quick kill".

An applied ethics approach is taken, utilizing qualitative empirical data to analyse hunters' perceptions of their own and other hunters' ethical conduct in the face of modern developments. The thesis thus sheds light on how hunters accommodate, reflect on, or resist the effects of modern developments on hunting, providing insight into held values among hunters and their relationship with wildlife in a contemporary setting.

Findings show although ethical values tend to shift over time, modern pressures are leading them in ways that are concerning to hunters. The work concludes by providing elements that could complement current ethical codes and principles in hunting and help hunters through the ethical intricacies that modernity continues to impose. These elements are summarized as "effort", "knowledge" and "purpose" related to hunting and

might serve to buffer against the pressures of modernity, and to guide hunters by emphasizing the importance of the "hunting process". The hunting process is the extensive process that people undertake during a hunt which often includes actions such as tracking and field dressing. This hunting process is at risk of being compromised by the developments of modernity, often with unethical consequences in the eyes of the hunting community.

Populärvetenskaplig sammanfattning

Vad anser jägare är etiskt respektive oetiskt med jakt?

Etikfrågor ställs på sin spetts i modern jakt eftersom det rör frågan om att döda vilda djur. Den moderna utvecklingen, såsom tekniska innovationer, kommersialisering, demografisk förändring och centralisering, utövar tryck på jakten och påverkar dess praxis och ideologi. Stöd för normativa ideal, såsom djurvälfärd och hållbarhet, ökar samtidigt i samhället. Syftet och legitimiteten med jakten ifrågasätts därmed på ett annat sätt än tidigare. Men istället för att behandla frågan om huruvida man ska jaga eller inte, utforskar denna studie hur man ska jaga, vilket lyfter fram frågor om etiskt beteende.

Syftet med avhandlingen är att beskriva hur moderniseringen påverkar jaktetiken och jägares oro över hur jakten påverkas av förändringar i omvärlden och av moderna utvecklingar. Studien undersöker jägarnas uppfattningar om samhällsutvecklingen och deras förslag på hur moderna dilemman i jakten kan hanteras. Resultaten visar att jägare resonerar kring breda och djupa etiska och värdemässiga frågeställningar som går långt utöver de ofta uttryckta principerna "att ge djuret en chans" och "ett snabbt dödande skott".

För att analysera jägares uppfattningar om deras eget och andra jägares handlande samt deras relation till jaktens modernisering har kvalitativa data samlats in och analyserats utifrån ett teoretiskt ramverk baserat på tillämpad etik. Avhandlingen belyser hur jägare anpassar sig till, reflekterar över eller gör motstånd mot jaktens modernisering. Det ger en inblick i jaktens och jägarnas värderingar och deras förhållande till vilda djur i en modern kontext.

Resultaten visar att vissa av de ovan nämnda moderna samhälleliga förändringarna accelererar förändring inom jakten på ett sätt som är både hoppfullt och problematiskt. Slutsatserna av undersökningen är att jaktprocessen, som är central för etiskt handlande, påverkas av moderniseringen och att etiska principer som sådana därför är otillräckliga redskap då jägare ska navigera i

frågor som rör jaktetik. Som ett komplement till etiska principer, och för att motverka påverkan från moderniseringsaspekterna, föreslås därför tre kategorier. Dessa kategorier sammanfattas som "ansträngning", "kunskap" och "syfte" relaterat till jakt och kan tjäna som en buffert mot modernitetens tryck. Genom att tänka i dessa termer kan jägare bygga kapacitet att navigera genom framtida etiska dilemman och modernitetens utmaningar. Tillsammans kan dessa kategorier vara till hjälp för jägare genom att framhäva vikten av "jaktprocessen" som en viktig faktor som riskerar att förminskas. Jaktprocessen innebär den omfattande process som människor genomför vid en jakt, och ofta inkluderar åtgärder som spårning, och slakt. Denna jaktprocess står i fara att förminskas på grund av modernisering, ofta med oetiska konsekvenser i jägarsamhällets ögon.

Appendix 1: Other publications

- Kline, C., von Essen, E., Lindsjö, J., Fouache, A., Tickle, L., Dashper, K., Cederholm, E. et al. (2021). "14 Working Animal Research: An Agenda for the Future," pp. 243–52. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110664058-015.
- von Essen, E., Allen, M. & Tickle, L. (2020). Game of Drones: On the Moral Significance of Deception in Modern Sport Hunting. *The Philosophical Journal of Conflict and Violence*, 4 (2), pp. 137–57.
- Tickle, L.N. (2019). The Practice of Hunting as a Way to Transcend Alienation from Nature. *The Journal of Transdisciplinary Environmental Studies*, 17 (1), pp. 22–34.

Pending publications:
- *Ambio: A journal of Environment and Society*: Meeting the challenges of wild boar hunting in a modern society: the case of France P. Vajas, P., von Essen, E., Tickle, L. & Gamelon; M. Ref. No.: AMBI-D-22-00194.
- Report on Hunting Ethics for the Swedish EPA: "Utmaningar för den svenska jaktetiken i ett moderniserande samhälle".

Papers I-IV

I

Leisure or Labour: An Identity Crisis for Modern Hunting?

Erica von Essen ⓘD * and Lara Tickle

Abstract

Modern hunting appears to be undergoing an identity crisis as a result of transitioning from labour to leisure. This transition is by no means linear or absolute. Today, hunting is framed both as a hobby for the leisure participant, and as a societal duty that delivers wildlife management, pest control for agriculture, sustainably sourced meat and euthanasia of injured wildlife. Hunting is hence doubly serious as 'serious leisure': it involves skill and perseverance, but it is also seen as serious in constituting societal labour. In this article, we employ netnographic research to examine how and in what contexts labour-leisure tensions are manifested among Swedish hunters. We observe hunters struggle with the balance between leisure and labour on four levels: (1) internally, when it comes to reconciling their personal motivations for hunting; (2) between hunters, resulting in the normative differentiation between 'urban leisure hunters' and everyday hunters in the countryside doing 'real' work; (3) between different hunting practices; and (4) between wanting to enjoy the freedom afforded by the leisure label, while also inviting formalisation of hunting's role as a public service, including compensation. Our findings show the contradiction between labour and leisure is also differently managed across these levels.

Introduction

Hunting today typically is seen as a vacation from society (Ortega y Gasset 1972; King 2010). The modern hunter hunts not for subsistence, but for self-actualisation, as social recreation and personal fulfilment (Gigliotti and Metcalf 2016). But hunting is also argued to be a principled, challenging undertaking as well as a societal service; in this way, it is seen as a kind of unpaid labour in modern society. We ask: what happens when a discourse of leisure and hunting as recreation collides with a discourse of duty, also a key rhetoric to modern hunting? When hunting is defended before society today, it is frequently so on the basis of constituting therapeutic wildlife management (Peterson 2004; Morris 2013). Without hunting, it is said by hunters, game populations would spiral out of control (Curnutt 1996; Dizard 1999). In many

parts of the world, hunters are responsible for culling pests, protecting agriculture, maintaining a balance in the trophic system, and for euthanising traffic-injured wildlife (Dahles 1993). Hunters everywhere today wear this public service assignment like a badge of honour (Holsman 2000; Falzon 2008).

At first glance, there appears to be considerable tension between the labour or leisure understandings of hunting. Research has suggested that hunters may begin to struggle with their public identity in relation to this (Kaltenborn *et al.* 2013b). Although it is not unthinkable for labour to also be enjoyable, and for leisure to encompass hardships, not to mention for these purposes to intermix in the same activity, labour and leisure are usually defined in dialectical opposition to one another (Green and Jones 2005). Hunting is characterised by sustained commitment on the part of participants, a social world comprised of internal rules and codes, the imposition of self-constraints, a material culture, and the expenditure of time, money and effort. It is thus an activity that approximates our understanding of *serious leisure* (Stebbins 2001; Veal 2017).

In this article, building on the serious leisure reading of hunting, we argue that hunting is undergoing an increased sportization into a form of leisure on the one hand, away from any subsistence roots, and on the other hand an increased emphasis on its duty vis-à-vis society to maintain wildlife populations. These are two polarising directions. They set about a publicly visible and privately felt identity crisis for hunting in modern society, as this tension activates discussions about what hunting should be *for*. We ask: what sort of tensions do we see when leisure and labour attempt to be reconciled by modern hunters? To answer this, we present a netnographic study of the largest online hunters' forum in Sweden. Through covert observation and searches of users' posts we use forum interactions to show in what contexts, and in what ways, the tension between labour and leisure are lived out by the discourse of the users of the forum as part of their everyday naturalistic exchanges. In a concluding discussion, we argue it destabilises and fragments the foundation upon which hunters present themselves to the public today. We also argue it generates tensions within hunting as a community, resulting in the increased differentiation of hunters into communities of practice positioned closer or further away from leisure and duty respectively, often corresponding to urban and rural tensions. Our findings also help to clarify previous research that demonstrates the existence of a moral prioritisation of motives for hunting, where hunting 'for leisure' and 'for labour' may be simultaneously undertaken, but arranged in a moral hierarchy of motives (Fischer *et al.* 2013).

Method

Swedish hunting is a prime context for exploring the increased interplay of duty and leisure, public and private, utilitarian and esoteric dimensions for hunting for several reasons. For one, the Swedish Hunting Association has a semi-governmental mandate, including public funds, to manage wildlife sustainably since 1938, making hunters work in the service of the state. Relatedly it is also on the way to launching an extensive wildlife monitoring program that directly puts hunters to work as wildlife managers, and Scandinavian hunters are already used to doing inventory for the state

(Helle *et al.* 2016). At the same time, Swedish hunting regulation is marked by autonomy in the principle 'freedom with responsibility' (von Essen 2017), key to leisure.

We conduct netnography as means of capturing emerging popular spaces for discussion among hunters, which have gradually replaced physical meeting places. Our selected social media gathering is Robsoft, Sweden's largest forum for hunters. Robsoft was confirmed by our expert consultations with hunting professionals at the associations to be representative of Swedish hunters. Hence, following the principles of netnography, they were important informants for 'judging typicality of forums or in characterising the community running and using the forum' (Holtz *et al.* 2012). Forums like Robsoft are seen today to offer a space for hunters involving 'peer-to-peer communication in which tensions and stigmas may be removed and opinions can be expressed with fewer inhibitions' (Ebeling-Schuld and Darimont 2017, p. 524)

On Robsoft, we did not actively disclose research nor participate in discussions, meaning we approximated a 'lurker' format (Björk and Kauppinen-Räisänen 2012). However, the forum we chose is public domain, meaning that its threads and posts are 'public data' and readable even to non-users (Mkono 2015). For added anonymity, however, we have removed all avatar names, and quotes from users have been translated from Swedish to English, making them unlikely to be retraced in search strings. Users on the forum have a considerable geographic spread across Sweden, as indicated by their place names (not included here), and different demographic profiles.

After a period of lurking and reading posts, in combination with conducting a literature review on hunting as serious leisure, we developed Boolean search keywords. To search the forum, membership was acquired. Our searches focused on words that often appear in discussions with hunters and which point toward different characters of the hunt, words such as 'pleasure hunting' and 'responsibility'. The word searches that were successful and therefore used for the results were; pleasure, pleasure hunting, wildlife management, duty, relaxation, hobby, culling and, management. Failed searches were words such as; work, employment and sport, which generated too many hits and were too general in content. A majority of comments used for this study span the years 2016–2019. With this search strategy, the method ensured that we received hunters' naturalistic discussions around this theme, as approached from various topics, rather than looking for a thread that addressed this tension explicitly.

We ended up with 92 posts, across 45 threads, with some of the posts quoting comments resulting in one post containing up to 4 comments from different forum users, although counted as a single post. Broader discussions on the threads are sometimes summarised to add context to users' responses to one another. Altogether, we pasted posts into a 50-page word document. The two researchers performed the thematic analysis collaboratively through manual open-coding. In this sense, we formed an interpretative community with more than one perspective on the material. The following themes were identified, and standardised into a format corresponding to inhabiting tensions of different kinds:

1. Tension *within* hunters, showing internal ambivalences forum users had about the reasons for hunting, how they saw the role of hunting, and aspects of duty and hobby.

2. Tensions *between* hunters, showing how users differentiated themselves on the basis of doing 'real' hunting, undertaken as a public service, compared to frivolous leisure hunting. Hunters also criticised their peers for exaggerating the public utility of hunting.
3. Tensions between separate *parts* in hunting and *types* of hunts, showing that users could separate between arduous dutiful tasks involved in hunting and more exciting parts.
4. Tensions arising from the *increased regulation* of hunting, where we show that users both object to and look favourably upon the formalisation of the role of hunting as a service in society.

Before we present findings under these four themes, we place hunting in a perspective of serious leisure by reviewing the serious leisure literature.

Toward a leisure society: the serious leisure concept

One of the defining features of capitalist society has been the rise of leisure (Dumazedier 1967). With increased wealth, the rise of mobility, and the need to disconnect from modern societal obligations, leisure has constituted itself as a key expressive and constitutive domain in western post-industrial societies. With it has come leisure specialisation, the rise of distinct leisure classes (Heley 2010) and a domain in which a person can negotiate their identity apart from family, work and the stressors of everyday life (Green and Jones 2005).

Part of the raison d'être to leisure is in providing a needed escape. To this end, leisure has been seen as something wholesome that compensates for, and provides an escape valve out of, the inauthenticity of the 'daily grind' (Dumazedier 1967; Franklin 2003). Common to many popular forms of recreation today, like fishing and rock-climbing, is that they may be based in a kind of return to nature, take place in the countryside, and involve some degree of difficulty, self-imposed as well as imposed by nature (Bauer and Alexander 2004). This is reflected in the term 'serious' by Stebbins, rescuing the leisure from ending up as a hedonistic activity that anyone can do. It typically involves six qualities: perseverance, effort put in to acquire skills, the availability of a leisure career, a shared ethos, an attractive social identity and benefits such as self-fulfilment.

Indeed, 'serious' leisure has been invoked from grounded theory in ethnographic studies as an attempt to justify to the level of investment, effort, time and engagement spent by participants in their chosen leisure pursuits (Shen and Yarnal 2010). 'Serious', as opposed to 'casual' leisure, denotes sustained engagement, acquirement of skills and self-realisation. To mark its relative seriousness, leisure activities often come with their own set of codes of conduct (Bauer and Alexander 2004) and stages of progression (Bryan 1977). Its rules should be understood as 'lusory': internal and unique to the activity (Morris 2010). That society does not codify rules for engagement is part of the freedom of a leisure participant, who may enter into an unobligated activity and negotiate constraints at his own convenience or partly in collaboration with that of his leisure community of practice (Green and Jones 2005).

Leisure is not merely an individual pursuit of self-realisation, but connects also to socio-psychological processes of belonging. (Stebbins 1982), who pioneered the serious leisure term, argues that leisure participants tend to 'speak proudly, excitedly, and frequently about and to 'present themselves' in terms of their leisure pursuit' (Stebbins 1982, p. 257). They reproduce themselves in groups with shared affinities around this pursuit, providing social recognition through the choices made in leisure time (Shamir 1992). The network has affinity without ever needing to meet face-to-face, but can likewise physically come together for more concentrated bonding in for example tourism and tournaments (Green and Jones 2005).

Hunting, a form of modern leisure?

On the face of it, sport hunting adheres well to the serious leisure construct. Like other forms of sport leisure, it involves constraint, commitment and specialisation (Veal 2017). It is presented as an escape from life of labour (King 1991). It is a game of perseverance insofar as the hunter needs to develop skills and often needs to brave harsh weather and trying conditions to find, stalk and kill game. Further, much of sport hunting approximates the 'inherently subjective nature' of serious leisure in a way that defies rationalisation in terms of the imposition of external rules (Yoder 1997, p. 412) – external, in the sense of coming from non-participants. For Swedish hunters, their leisure is encapsulated in the term 'freedom with responsibility', meaning exception from detail regulation, but with an internal ethos

Indeed, hunting has been presented as an introspective pursuit involving man, nature and his dog (Raija and Jarno 2013) an inner journey (King 1991); the exercise of personal morality (Posewitz 1994) and as an activity that defies standardisation (Hanna 2006). On this account, how a hunter behaves is 'in the end, a question of personal judgment and personal ethics' (Marvin 2013, p. 152), not to be infringed upon by society. To this end, this obscures the extent to which hunting ethics are also *communal*; indeed, cultural codes of conduct for hunting are often codified by sports associations, such as the Boone & Crockett Hunting Club or the national hunting associations, and provide the moral framework for many hunters, such that one can speak of a shared ethos for given communities of practice (von Essen *et al.* 2019). Fair chase and sportsmanship (Anglo-America), jägarmässighet (Sweden) weidgerecht (Germany) and jaktetiket (Denmark) are some informal cultural codes of restraint that unite hunters today.

Hunting has a pronounced material culture, which corresponds to serious leisure's understanding of the importance of the reproduction of the material culture (Yoder 1997). Consuming this material culture provides the basis for self-expression and group identification, and it is also found to add to the professional aura of the serious leisure community (Yarnal and Dowler 2002) Authors have resolved this as conspicuous consumption, involving identity constitution by way of choices made in leisure: what gore-tex and logo to wear as hunters; what paraphernalia to use in nature (Green and Jones 2005). The use of secondary gadgets is also common, in hunting's tradition of making or customising your own tools or weapons (Whittaker and Kamp 2006).

It is precisely because of the loss of hunting's original practical function of meat procurement (Bronner 2004) that its now 'wanton' blood sports are questioned by

the non-hunting public (Bulliet 2005). On the face of it, one can argue that hunting appears to have transitioned increasingly from that of household labour to a cultural leisure pursuit. Here, we acknowledge two important things: first, we use a definition of the labour where 'labour is an intentional activity designed to produce a change in the material world' (Sayers 2009, p. 144). The definition forms the basis for but does not necessarily include remuneration and employment within a capitalist system, a system that sees also subsistence practices, including hunting for meat, as labour (Ember 1978; Srivastava 1999). Second, we note that in post-hunter-gatherer Swedish society, leisure as such began to infuse segments of hunting at an early stage (Nyrén 2012). While for most of Sweden hunting was a laborious pursuit involving keeping away predators as well as securing meat, furs and hides for household consumption, the nobility and crown in particular distinguished themselves from folk hunting ('all-mogejakt') through the choice of game, apparel, weapon and aesthetics (Tillhagen 1987), as well as assertions that they possessed superior knowledge about hunting and forestry (Dirke 2015). This leisure class effectively appropriated hunting rights in Sweden until 1789, when landowners like farmers could finally hunt game on their own land. Throughout Swedish history, however, folk hunters were bound to an association of hunting with labour through decrees that implicated them in for example mandatory wolf culls, where they could be jailed, fined or flogged by *jägeristaten* for refusing to participate (Nyrén 2012; Bergström *et al.* 2015). This further points to early framings in Sweden of hunting as a societal duty, albeit one that unlike today was conscripted rather than voluntarily undertaken. In 1647, it is worth noting that folk hunting was further consolidated as labour in a paid capacity, with the introduction of bounties on wolf and bear that remained in some form well into the twentieth century.

Although (Nyrén 2012) documents 'leisure elements' in folk hunting as early as the 1600s, sport hunting as a modern leisure was arguably a post-World War II phenomenon. Historical momentum toward a post-industrial society in Sweden, including shorter working hours and more time for leisure, precipitated a rise in serious leisure in providing self-actualisation and self-enrichment (Yarnal and Dowler 2002). Thus, for the average worker, it would not have been possible to hunt for leisure purposes alone until the middle of the last century.

During the 1980s hunting in Sweden underwent another fundamental change where those who started hunting no longer came from a traditional hunting background of having been mentored from childhood into hunting and was associated with the agrarian society This new group of hunters started hunting at an older age, had probably been introduced to hunting through friends (Hansen *et al.* 2012) and lived a more urban lifestyle where animals were pets and not livestock to be slaughtered (Gunnarsdotter 2005). These trends within hunting form the community that hunters form today, which also includes more women hunters in the Nordic countries (Gunnarsdotter 2005; Hansen *et al.* 2012). Some argue that these trends along with 'economic modernisation, cultural diversification and increased social and spatial mobility weaken the basis of traditional rural communities that were built around agriculture and resource extraction' (Skogen and Krange 2003, p. 312). It would therefore seem that hunters in Sweden have undergone changes that follow with the modernisation of society in general and has contributed to new or changed

understandings of hunting and its purpose. Despite these changes, the idea of folk hunting (*allmogejakt*) is still a cultural ideal held by many hunters in Sweden. Perhaps most recently illustrated by the SVT television show 'Jaktliv' where the presenter in the first episode states that they are showing the genuine Swedish hunting known as 'folk hunting' (SVT 2019). Therefore, there is an understanding that tensions still exist between the ideal folk hunting from the agrarian community and the modern trends that are changing this traditional understanding of hunting and what constitutes a hunter.

Today, public acceptance of hunting in Sweden as elsewhere is conditional upon several factors, including ethics and rationale (Peterson 2004). If the aims of hunting can be secured otherwise; such as through wildlife viewing as nature recreation, outdoor sports for physical betterment, and the purchasing of meat (or vegetarian options) at supermarkets, hunting stands weakly on a justification as leisure alone. Hunters and hunting lobbyists have therefore appreciated the necessity of framing hunting as a contributor to society through the production of free range food, environmental improvement, wildlife management and euthanising of injured wildlife (Suni 2018).

Hunters maintain that unlike other leisure activities, hunting is distinct in having a functional role of managing wildlife. The steward badge is worn especially proudly by north Germanic hunting cultures (Lindqvist *et al*. 2014), who 'harvest', 'cull', 'maintain' and 'balance' nature's stocks (Falzon 2008). There are instances where hunters shed the hunter label entirely, such as in the Netherlands, and promptly call themselves 'wildlife managers' instead (von Essen *et al*. 2019) perhaps to distance themselves as much as possible from the leisure aspect of hunting, which is seen as mostly inferior (Fischer *et al*. 2013).

At the same time, the idea of hunting as solely labour does not appear to be desirable for hunters either for it makes hunters accountable to 'employers'. This may be an unwelcome dutification of a hobby that also invites formalisation and regulation that robs hunting of its freedom and harks back to the days of flogging, jailing and fining for neglecting one's state-mandated hunting duties (Dirke 2015) In this way, it appears a challenge for hunting to be both; nevertheless, this seems to be the case more than ever before. In the section that follows, we give voice to how hunters resolve some of these tensions between leisure and labour on social media.

Findings from the forum

Internal tensions

Various idiosyncrasies and paradoxes of hunting appear to be present within individual hunters. Reflections and speculations regarding *why* one hunts reveal perspectives and how one balances public and private motivations for hunting. Forum users discuss the topic, referring to their own thoughts and experiences and relating them to other users online. Sometimes personal positions are also clarified through dialogue with other forum users.

Users ponder the question: what type of activity is it in a modern society?

- Re: Should bird breeding be done for pleasure hunting?

  by Respondent 1 »2008

  For me, all hunting is pleasure hunting, I hunt for pleasure. No hunter in Sweden can come and say that he must hunt for the sake of the food

  The comment above by Respondent 1 establishes that hunters cannot deny enjoying hunting due to it being a choice and not necessary for survival. Many answers, if not a majority, reflect upon hunting as something fun, that they enjoy but also provides service and value through the acquisition of meat, managing wildlife populations and other common hunting goods.

- Re: Shoot several moose the same day or in the same area

  Post by Respondent 2: 2018

  As I said hunting IS fun but that's not why I hunt

  I think it is pretty fun to repaint the house, but you would think I was pretty crazy if I painted the house again a week after already painting it.

  The hunt must have a purpose

Separating hunting from other forms of leisure, Respondent 2 adds:

  Is it the excitement of sneaking etc. then you can take a photo instead of shooting

  If you want more organic and humane meat then it is more difficult to buy it

  [...] If you just hunt for pure pleasure then you can shoot at the range?

  According to Respondent 1, there is no necessity in killing wildlife for sustenance. However, hunting without any 'purpose' connected to some utility might as well not be considered hunting. He underpinned his reasoning with the current issue of motivating hunting in a modern society where, as stated, it is not necessary for survival.
  The definitions of purpose and ideas of utility nevertheless vary between posts and the purpose can be anything from fun to protecting crops. Although many will cite purpose when they refer to getting a useful task done related to work, others will see the purpose of hunting as 'enjoyment'. Enjoyment as purpose is often in response to being directly questioned or challenged by hunters who argue that hunting for enjoyment is frivolous. Both lines of arguments, whether the purpose of hunting is for pleasure or for work, have a defensive tone.
  In a reflexive post, Respondent 3 asks whether hunting truly needs a purpose:

- Re: The weapons investigation

  by Respondent 3: 2013

  ... everything does not have to have a function or an 'important purpose' it is enough that someone thinks their hobby is fun or interesting or have I missed something?

Respondent 3 adds to his point that it would be 'crazy' if everything needed a purpose that would be of some social benefit just so 'one's interests should not be questioned'. Hunting appears to be compared to other activities but, due to killing animals in hunting, there is the need for justification. It is implied in the comments that utilitarian motivated hunting has more societal acceptance than simply hunting for fun. On the other hand, many users in this section seem to agree that hunting *should* be fun and is a kind of leisure, the divide is whether the hunt needs utility to motivate it for oneself and *wider society*.

Similarly to the Respondent 3 above, Respondent 4 in response to the prompt 'define pleasure in your reasoning above' argues hunting has many benefits that are practical but it is the adrenalin surge of shooting that hooks him on hunting:

- Re: Moosehunt season 2018-2019

  Post by Respondent 4: 16 okt 2018, 20:38

  What I mean by pleasure in hunting in the context of shooting is excitement, adrenaline, humility and well-being

  I really enjoy being in nature, picking mushrooms etc. I also like cooking and really appreciate being able to serve meat from the forest with a story on the plate to family and acquaintances... For my part, however, it is still the case that what gives the hunt its addictive kick, adrenaline surge and, after several years, what still makes my pulse race without equal measure is the chance to take a shot, in other words the killing. I won't hide from that.

Respondent 4 balances his motivation for hunting with several practical reasoning although he is frank in *admitting* that in the end he hunts for the fun of taking the shot, at least that is where the adrenaline kick lies. The dialogue still appears to be somewhat defensive about hunting, as displayed by the line 'I wont' hide from that'. Nevertheless, several forum users feel that the leisure aspect, the concept of killing for fun, is a *major threat* to the future of hunting. This *threat* to modern hunting is often associated with certain types of problematic hunters, like the urban hunter trope. A forum user reflects on his internal tensions as a hunter:

  (Respondent 5) wrote:

  I might qualify as an urbanite in midlife crisis, the 40-plus who wants to leave the city, put me in the woods, listen, watch, tip-toe forward. Slowly lifting the gun and pressing ... would that make me a worse person?

He starts to question the labour justification for hunting:

  Listening to many hunters it sounds like they are a huge benefit for society. 'Imagine if we would refuse to hunt, holy s_it then wildlife car accidents would increase with 74 thousand percent. Foxes would eat up every deer, wolves and bears would eat children in playgrounds and so on. If only they understood!'

Respondent 5 adds in the post how:

> In fact, I believe that society can handle itself damn well without us hunters. We do not hunt to have meat on the table, it is both cheaper and easier to buy Danish pork fillet for SEK 59 / kg at ica. We hunt because it is a leisure activity.

Respondent 5 summarises the desire to connect with nature and the angst that arises from killing wildlife, adding to his comment: 'would that make [him] a worse person?'. As the respondents navigate the rationales of leisure and labour they deal with complexities related to how they identify themselves through hunting, raising the aforementioned questions regarding personal character, purpose, responsibility and enjoyment. The multiple contradictions of hunting lead to internal tensions that spark reflexivity but also contrasts. In the next theme, we observe that discussions on the nature and purpose of hunting often take place on the basis of distinguishing one's motivation to those of other hunters.

Tensions between hunters

Lively debates between hunters on what constitutes hunting are common and online forums are no exception. The distinctions that forum users make between hunting groups such as urban and rural hunters, or foreign hunters and locals are especially common. There are also strong tensions between the everyday labour hunter and the leisure 'weekend' hunter who argue over the purpose, future or need for hunting. Whether it is arguments between hunters or civil discussions explaining one's own viewpoint on hunting, forum users would refer to one-another's posts as point of departure for expressing their personal opinions or challenge someone else's:

- Re: Wild boar Scania, and rich businessmen

  Post by Respondent 6: 2018

  That answer says a lot. You do not live where you hunt, therefore you don't understand any of the problems. It is implied that in open countryside you are able to contain the pigs in a forested area far away. This is not possible in semi-forested countryside.

  You babble around the problem so you can go on rewarding drive hunts

  now and then

  Have a nice day

The post above by Respondent 6 is in reaction to another forum user. The tone is reprimanding, the point is that the other hunter does not face the same difficulty to manage and contain the wild boar. The comment also alludes to the concept of inner and outer groups, in this context those who live where they hunt and therefore engage with land and wildlife on a daily basis. Engaging with hunting as a daily mundane task, a necessary labour to protect land and maintain wildlife *balance* is a common way local hunters distinguish themselves while demonising hunters who lack the same commitment. An accusation is levelled that that some hunters only go on 'rewarding' hunts, shirking their responsibility to manage wild boar populations

in favour of fun and leisure. The wild boar issue in general activates the tension be-tween leisure hunters and labour hunters, where the latter toil to cull populations to prevent land and crop damage.

There are different ways to hunt the wild boar, a drive hunt is known to be exciting, quick and is done as a social event, it is an entertaining and 'rewarding' hunt that many enjoy to the extent that it can be sold to tourists and other visiting hunters. Some hunters argue that the drive hunt is inefficient in managing the wild boar pop-ulation, clearly undertaken for sheer enjoyment. The language used in these labour type comments reflect that the boar is too much of an issue to be killed in leisure type hunts and it needs to be managed seriously using more labour like tactics by the entire hunting community.

- Re: Letter to eradicate wild boar

    by Respondent 7: 2018

    Very good letter. Wild boar is merely a pest that is to be equated with rats, badgers, jackdaw etc, etc. Your HOBBY and the talk of 'managing wild boar' is just a bad excuse for an adrena-line rush. I shoot all the legal pigs I come across (striped or brown ...). I have two multitraps that work perfectly.

    I calculate the pig damages to SEK 50,000 2017 in my business

    Of course I invite hunters for free, with the requirement that everything they shoot is legal

The boar is discussed in a business-like manner, where damages are calculated to specific amounts with more likeness to pest control than hunting. Respondents 6 and 7 accuse other hunters of practicing a 'hobby', an excuse for an 'adrenaline rush' with a derogatory tone.

The labour dimension of hunting is also brought to fore when hunters refer to the killing of injured wildlife. Swedish hunters pride themselves on being caretakers and euthanisers of maimed wildlife, especially from botched hunts, disease or traffic collisions. This task is never spoken of in leisure terms; it is viewed as a labour and cleaning duty, where the irresponsibility of other hunters leads to the suffering of wildlife and the besmirching of the hunting activity.

- Re: The matter of wild game shot on land where I'm allowed yes

    by Respondent 8: 2017

    When the Dane announced that he did not give a shit about deer when the neighbour called him, I called the police. I drove home to get the rifle because I, as a hunter, couldn't see this suffering anymore. Before I was back, the officer in charge rang and gave me permission to euthanise.

The anecdote continues into grizzly detail about the deer, apparently 'the entire left leg was in small pieces... the stomach was like a bongo drum and fluid filled. The skin was ripped to shreds by pieces of bone'. The explicit description adds to the gravity of the comment to illustrate the damage that a failed hunt causes. Respondent

8 not only points out the suffering of a botched hunt but also the lack of responsibility some hunters take to wildlife on 'their land'. The concept of the foreign tourist hunter is also alluded to by the fact that it is a 'Dane', and not a local Swede, who could not be bothered to do what some consider to be his duty. This comparison is recurring on the forum, where hunters highlight the negative aspects of other hunters and hunting groups, speaking of foreigners, tourists, urbanites or bad marksmen.

Users express that these hobby hunters only shoot for fun which ignores all the other important roles of hunting. Many of these tasks are not considered enjoyable forms of hunting, such as witnessing the suffering of a wounded animal or hunting pests that are unremarkable using methods that do not spark much excitement.

Tensions between parts and types of hunting

It appears possible to not only separate types of hunters, but parts of hunting, according to their relative approximation of leisure or labour. Different valuations of a good hunt are seen in the use of language, a hunt can be 'useful', 'purposeful', 'necessary', 'an adrenalin kick', 'relaxing' and so forth. It may be that hunts which usually are thought of as exciting have negative associations for other hunters. Hunters may resent drive boar hunting because it seemingly trivialises the hardships they suffer due to wild boar. Exciting, high-tempo drive hunts of wild boars are contrasted to a more tedious wild boar cull taking place at baiting sites during the night and alone. Certainly, some even use traps and cull the trapped animals, which can be described as a joyless or less 'rewarding' event, however with a clearly functional purpose.

Some hunters also refer to the 'fun' part of a hunt as everything following up to when the actual shot is fired, after that comes the 'work'; transporting the body and processing it through slaughter or preserving the fur or trophy, showing capacity to segregate parts of the process.

- Re: Shoot several moose the same day or in the same area

  Post by Respondent 8: 2018

  [...] It is fun if you have the chance to see and shoot animals. The slaughtering is perhaps less fun. But necessary.'

It is quite common for hunters to refer to hunting as a practice containing many different parts that together form a whole. A hunt can be anything from a couple of hours to years of preparation, then you also have all the steps to take in a hunt such as stalking, watching, shooting or transporting. Whilst the comment above by Respondent 8 illustrates that some parts are more fun than others (before and after the shot), others express this from a more rounded perspective:

- Re: 'The meat needs we will soon be ashamed of'

  Post by Respondent 9: 2014

  I think different parts of hunting have their own charm. Until the shot it is a fantastic relaxation. Being out in nature and moving around, being on vacation and still having a 'job' to

do. When it starts to smell like a chance to shoot there is a 100 per cent focus on the task in a way that is very difficult to get in other situations (at least for me). After the shot, the animal will be taken care of and prepared as food for family and friends.

There is an interplay in tasks reflected in Respondent 9's musings that are not as clear in the previous comment by Respondent 8. Respondent 9 emphasises the various charms that go into the different *parts* of hunting which together appear to form a fulfilling entirety that embodies relaxation, excitement, work and reward. Despite the emphasis on nature relaxation and focus of shooting the comment also encouragingly refers to having a 'job to do'. Together each part of the hunt forms a fulfilling balance between leisure and labour.

The forum also shows that some hunts are more fun, and others more of a chore, depending on things like the landscape. 'Joyless' hunting is discussed in a thread by Respondent 10 below:

- '[Respondent 10]'s soul destroying watch thread – a torture experience in nature'

    by Respondent 10: 2015

    The watch location is on a large turning area at the end of a gravel road. The view is only thicket and the lowest shooting distance is about 60–80m

    [...]

    The pass is placed straight under the bridge bracket for the E4, so the ceiling height is for roaring lorries, cars and some heavy vehicles... you also get the pleasure of hearing the buzzing from the giant dehumidifier which is placed in the foundation AND last but not least, the whining and the choking from the hydraulic dampers that counteract bridge oscillations etc.

A picture of the hunting ground is also shared with the hopes that other users will join in with their stories or sympathies, which they do. Respondent 10 writes that he came to realise how miserable the hunt was when he compared it to representations of appealing hunts on other threads 'that showed enjoyable experiences, nice nature pictures and beautiful landscapes'. He describes the hunting position as a place that 'must be watched' when moose or drive hunting, implying responsibility. It is clear that the 'labour' hunt is usually thought of in contrast to the idyllic and enjoyable leisure hunt.

Besides hunting in undesirable landscapes or times (such as night or cold mid-winter), and the mundane culling of pest species, there is also the aforementioned 'cleaning up' type hunt which includes the euthanising of wildlife injured in traffic accidents or botched hunts. When hunters are called in the middle of the night to track maimed wildlife, the task has more work-like qualities than leisure. At the same time, the forum demonstrates that duty is also associated with pride.

- Re: Regarding wildlife shot on land where I'm allowed yes

    by Respondent 11: 2017

    I shoot injured wildlife everyday of the year on my own grounds. I see it as my duty and the hunter's job

In the quote above this is not only seen as a hunter's 'duty' but also referred to as a 'job', in the context of the comment it is something that should be actively pursued and done despite inconvenience. The duty in this case appears to mean moral duty towards the suffering of wildlife. There appears to be widespread agreement that one should carry out hunting in its entire process, whether it is a chore or a pleasure. Respondents may refer to tasks as being boring or fun but they still seemingly carry them out. In none of the searches on the forums or collected data does a hunter state that they actively avoid a part of the hunting process, such as slaughtering.

Respondent 11 adds that '*would not report it to anyone. No other bastards' business. It is a thing between me and "god"!*' This potentially indicates the pressures that hunters are experiencing from regulators and society in general which is elaborated upon in the next section.

Tensions arising from the regulation and formalisation of hunting

A recurring topic of discussion is the increased regulation facing hunters today in Sweden, which is seen as a negative limitation upon their freedom. The conservation of the wolf in Sweden, in particular, has precipitated high amounts of reporting, inventorying and regulation that according to some, tires them out and sucks the fun out of hunting. According to comments, they are fed up with the amount of bureaucracy in regions that are wolf populated.

• Re: Jaktrazzia

  Respondent 12 wrote:

  Many of the hunters in the Wolf-belt are so bloody tired of all number exercises, tours, inhibitions, inventories and appeals in Circus-Wolf...

Other comments address regulation concerning the legality of hunting firearms, or when discussing the killing of maimed animals and the right calibre to use. Answers show mostly that moral obligation to end the suffering of the animal with a suitable weapon is more important than doing it with the legally correct calibre. Hence, *getting the job done* takes priority over the legal details pertaining to method, implying hunters' value autonomy when hunting.

Negative comments about regulation and 'being watched' also appear in the comment below by Respondent 13 who mentions formal employment in wildlife management. Hunting becomes a governmental job when you adhere to laws, rules, and responsibility and stay professional in front of critics. Collectively it diminishes the interest to hunt and he argues that: 'You get tired. Hunting interest dwindles'. Hence, the respondent discloses that there is a tipping point where hunting ceases to be fun when it becomes too formalised:

• Re: Jaktrazzia

  by Respondent 13: 2017

You, do you think we who work with wildlife management are more positive? Work your butt off for shit pay, take into account laws, rules, directives and regulations and then answer nice to everyone who has 'views' on our work? Get bogged down in press and on social media, by both sides, as soon as any decision is made at all …

In a nightmare scenario, hunters see themselves becoming joyless pest controllers and slaughterers working at an abattoir.

• Re: Are there any wolf-snipers on the forum?

by Respondent 14: 2010

Where 'amusement hunting' is something bad and that any killing of animals should be done by some kind of sad paid contract killers who, full of self-hatred, go out to limit pest populations…

On the other hand, not all comments are against formalising hunting as a societal service. Some arguments tell that the formalisation of hunting has actually led to increased empowerment and freedom for hunters in that they perform a valued civil service as wildlife *carers*. Respondent 15 speaks of hunters being the 'long arm of the police', and with such authority they are able to track an animal and kill it even if it is on someone else's land which eases the work.

• Re: What about wildlife shot on land where I'm allowed yes

by Respondent 15: 2017

But in principle, the tracker-hunters are the extended arm of the police and you have the necessary powers to shorten the suffering of the animal without jeopardising life and property. It is very nice to avoid having to worry about borders and other things but just go for it until it is done.

Although hunters see themselves as stewards of wildlife in Sweden, the detriment is that they are invariably expected to handle wildlife when it becomes a problem - everywhere and at all hours of the day. According to several users of the forum, there is significant pressure from stakeholders on hunters to manage and contain troublesome wildlife such as wild boar in the south or the raccoon dog in the north.

The dutification of wild boar hunting is such that posts raise the question of whether hunters should receive payment for culling wild boars.

• Re: Wild boar Scania, and rich businessmen

of Respondent 16: 2018

… maybe a bounty would get more to go out at night, because it is no longer about pleasure hunting in nice weather with friends. For that there will be enough pig anyway … If society wants help with limiting the pig population then they actually have to help in the way they can, financially.

Monetary compensation is how jobs are motivated and rewarded, which some forms of hunting increasingly are, meaning they are becoming formalised into jobs. The comment above indicates that the leisure hunt and the labour hunt are both compensated, but in different ways: with fun or monetary payment respectively. Hence, if the hunt is not so enjoyable but done as a marketable skill then it should be compensated in some other way. Whether such a system would work is not discussed in more depth although other ideas of compensation are also considered:

- Protection hunt for wild boar

  by Respondent 17: 2019

  If you do not want to lease the land but still get help doing protective hunting then offer hunters a protection hunt for free... To pay for hunting becomes wrong in my eyes, it requires a lot of time from the hunters and it is during boring times of the day...

Some write that their interest in hunting would fade away if they did not receive some of the personal enjoyment benefits and hunting were to only be done as a necessity and job.

- Re: One step closer to bow hunt!

  by Respondent 13: 2018

  I still argue that if we are just going to have NECESSARY hunting then there won't be much left. Protection hunts only for protection of crops and forests then. Sad. Never to hunt hare with scent hounds, never to shoot forest birds or let loose a dachshund in a den. It would make for poor hunting.

Discussion

Leisure and labour exist on a spectrum and sometimes lose their boundaries altogether (Neulinger 1981). Work spaces become leisure spaces and leisure activities take on work-like characteristics (Rojek 2010). With this complexity in mind, we investigated the sinuous relationship between leisure and labour in the context of contemporary hunting in Sweden. We asked: is this tension visible on the level of hunters' social worlds and discourses? If so, in what ways and in what contexts? Our netnography captured natural data examining hunters' discussions of this tension as it featured across diverse contexts and topics on forum threads. We contend it is a tension that affects all contemporary non-subsistence hunters to an extent.

Whereas in the old days, certain animals were the purview of upper leisure class hunters and small game was typically seen to belong to subsistence hunters (Manning 1993), today the one and the same animal could be both pest and prized commodity in different contexts (Kopytoff 1986; Mullin 1999; Mkono 2015). In our study, for example, a wild boar could be sold expensively during an adrenaline-fueled drive hunt at a country estate during the day, and laboriously staked out as a pest to be cleaned up at a baiting ground by the solitary landowner in the cold long night. The same type of

hunt, moreover, was also found to be several things to the hunter across a labour-lei-sure spectrum depending on environmental factors like landscape and weather. This coheres with the Beatty & Torbert's reasoning that 'walking the dog on a sunny day can be leisure; on a raw, rainy day, the same person may experience walking the dog as work' (Beatty and Torbet 2013, p. 475)

We observed that hunting is undergoing a parallel sportization (Gibson 2014), de-taching from subsistence needs and becoming motivated by esoteric reasons on the one hand (von Essen and Hansen 2016) and a dutification, in the form of re-attaching to a meaningful purpose that can be motivated as a public service, on the other hand (Holsman 2000; Kaltenborn et al. 2013b; Lindqvist et al. 2014). This is referred to as a growing 'disjunct between sport hunting and wildlife management' (Schulz et al. 2003, pp. 565–566). To be sure, hunting has always struggled with this tension to an extent, especially on the level of inter-hunter groups that have positioned themselves closer or further to labour and leisure respectively. Indeed, historical research betrays a picture of hunting as a battlefield for hunters segregated by different motivations and frequently excluding one another on the basis of 'incorrect' motives (von Essen et al. 2019). We contend the situation today is changed insofar as each and every hunter may experience a segregation of motives internally, having multiple motives arranged hierarchically, and using labour or leisure justifications for the activity depending on the discursive context in which they present it (Fischer et al. 2013). That said, this is arguably a less im-portant compartmentalisation on the individual level. For the first time as well, barring some seeds of anti-hunting resentment in the 1600s (Cartmill 1993), labour and leisure require conceptual separation in order to publicly legitimate hunting, which may be tarnished if recreation becomes too hedonistic, since it involves life and death, as well as the non-consensual participation of others – animals (Gaard 2001)

If hunting is increasingly subject to two polarising directions, what does this mean? Why is it a problem? First we must declare that neither of these turns are inherently bad. As our hunters note, once one's service is acknowledged as a job there comes pay and prestige, and when something is purely seen as leisure, it minimises governmen-tal oversight and allows the hunter to live out his true self in nature (Ortega y Gasset 1972). The problems occur when leisure and labour are out of balance, tipping the scales too far in one direction. Our forum posts indicate several of these problems, ranging from 'sucking out the fun', inviting bureaucracy, to jeopardising the public presentation of hunters. More practically speaking, when hunting approximates too much leisure, hunters become vulnerable to the argument that the goods they seek in hunting: solitude, challenge, companionship, nature reconciliation and more, can be attained through non-lethal leisure activities (List 2004). Oppositely, when hunting seeks justification on utilitarian ends, it becomes incumbent on hunters to show they are the most efficient population cullers. This means they would have to show a prin-ciple of non-addition of suffering as compared to when natural predators would do the job of culling herds (Rolston 1988); they would also have to refrain from targeting valu-able trophy bucks since this does not cull the herd in an ecologically sustainable way, and they would not be permitted to take too much pleasure in their job (Fennell 2012).

Problems of tipping the balance also arise as different *types* of hunts, different *parts* to the hunt, and different *hunters* align themselves more or less closely toward the leisure or labour ends of the spectrum, and this causes antagonism over division

of labour (Øian and Skogen 2016) assigning the 'fun' bits to some hunters, and the chores to others. In broad terms in today's society, this seems to connect to a growing division between urban leisure hunters and rural labour hunters who clean up after them, as our forum users note. This development has been observed in many places, where leisure hunting is increasingly, according to the locals, turning the country-side into 'an outdoor playground for the upper strata' of society (Wightman 2004). This fragmentation of hunters, and increased antagonism between subcultures, is a distinctive feature of hunting, often leading to exclusions and blaming of out-groups (Skogen 2001; von Essen *et al.* 2018, 2019).

The labour perspective

Following (Srivastava 1999) and (Ember 1978) to name a few, labour can be any-thing where humans appropriate resources for personal use. As Sean Sayer argues, the Marxist concept of labour follows Hegelian principles and labour can become 'something we do not only because we are forced by economic necessity but as a free activity' (Sayers 2009, p. 156). Hunting is seen as labour in one of its simplest forms where it is a direct appropriation of natural resources and involves the most immedi-ate relation to nature (Sayers 2009). A work reading of modern hunting would see hunting, like any work, comprise of 'bundles of activities' (Sanders 2010), some of which are pleasant and others unpleasant. Our forum users criticise the tendency to segregate these bundles and only opt in for the fun stuff. Hunters regard their euthan-ising injured wildlife as laborious, but also 'regard their ability to accomplish [these] that regular people would find repellent with a certain amount of pride' (Sanders 2010, p. 551), demonstrated in status associated with being wildlife stewards.

   To this end, hunting as labour was only acceptable until it started limiting hunters' autonomy, as illustrated in forum users' lamenting over formalisation. This points to an important interaction between work, autonomy and leisure. On the Marxist ideas of (Sager 2015), work can be empowering and authentic if it approximates working autonomy. Hence, insofar as the hunter can show a harvest-to-table connection with the game, and is not alienated from his work through a division of labour or 'com-partmentalisation' that limits his autonomy (p. 9), hunting as work is virtuous. But for example, a professional hunter employed by a hunting estate, whose only job it is to shuttle clients to the forest, and to butcher their kills for them, would perform a reduced, alienated form of labour whereas his clients would mostly undertake the leisure bits. A hunter who received some sort of compensation for resolving the wild boar problem for a landowner, meanwhile, may perform morally acceptable labour that involves all aspects of the hunt: monitoring, stalking, killing, butchering and eating the game meat.

The leisure perspective

In a serious leisure reading of hunting, by contrast, the laborious aspects of the activ-ity are fundamentally a part of leisure: they are central to constituting hunters' identi-ties and their belonging in the leisure community. Here, a laborious late night stalk of wild boars is not so much pecuniary labour, as a form of *labour intensive* status display

by skilled hunter (Beatty and Torbet 2013). Any work-like components to hunting, are willingly built challenges for sport (Ilundáin-Agurruza 2010). Rojek and Blackshaw (2015) term this as labour expended in the service of leisure (p. 549), pointing to leisure as the goal of the hunt. This coheres with (Stebbins 1982)'s serious leisure concept. Nevertheless, it appears that hunting is 'doubly' serious in this perspective. Not only does it require the six qualities of serious leisure, perseverance, effort, career, ethos, identity and benefits (Barbieri and Sotomayor 2013) but it is also serious in being framed as a societal duty. A labour-supported justification for hunting in serious leisure, then, purports to provide more than self-actualisation and self-fulfilment on the individual level, but is seriously consequential to the rest of society.

We find similarities here to volunteer firefighters, who perform a 'double duty' where obligation and societal stakes are part of their serious leisure (Yarnal and Dowler 2002). This study also found that firefighters struggle with ambivalence in relation to this double duty, in a way that manifests in 'a constant negotiation and compromise between the obligation to serve society and the pleasure and self-worth' (p. 169). Interestingly, this serious leisure and volunteer community exhibit similar frustration in relation to how society understands them, 'We used to be here for the public and they used to be here for us' and 'They've got to know that we can't do this for nothing' (p. 176), which we found recurring themes in hunters' frustrations in trying to balance labour and leisure. Furthermore, although the firefighters in Yarnal & Dowder's study feel bound by obligation and duty to their practices, most individuals interviewed ultimately used terms like excitement, thrills and pleasure when motivating their participation. In hunting, a serious leisure reading would construe the wildlife cull function of modern hunting, as a societal duty, as an important, but ultimately a co-benefit and not the individual rationale on the level of individual hunters (Hanna 2006), which was confirmed by several forum users.

Ultimately, we observe that hunting is subject to many paradoxes. It is a blend of the traditional and artificial; it is naturalistic and contrived; it involves pride and remorse, emotion and detachment; instinct and intellect (Causey 1992; Luke 1997; Tantillo 2001; Donald 2006; Griffin 2007; Kaltenborn *et al.* 2013a; Gieser 2018). This makes it a good fit for serious leisure, where behaviour is observed to be complex, ambiguous, changing, and at times contradictory (Yarnal and Dowder 2002, p. 165). Furthermore, as in all things, excess in either direction of these delicate balances creates moral, social, political and philosophical problems. Equally, in the tension between leisure and labour, upsetting the delicate balance is problematic. We posit that the shift of hunting from labour (subsistence) to leisure, while by no means linear, and its current attempts at reconciliation with a labour rationale, may be engendering an identity crisis for modern hunting.

It appears that the balance between leisure and labour may look different depending on what level one is: for the individual, in the hunting collective, or as hunters before society. For the individual, hunters may not need self-delusion into thinking they are doing a public good but, as indicated by forum posts, they can recognise they ultimately do this for fun. When it comes to hunting as an activity presented before the public, however, the labour dimension needs to weigh heavier than leisure (Fischer *et al.* 2013). In the end, we declare that the leisure and labour balance will be inextricably linked to the evolving public image of hunting.

Conclusion

As hunting transitions from labour into leisure in modern society, albeit with twists and turns, it exhibits some signs of having an identity crisis. This is not merely a philosophical observation, but something which is felt deeply by practicing hunters today when it comes to understanding and justifying their activity before outside society. We showed how a simultaneous sportisation of hunting and an ambition to at least discursively re-attach a societal utility to hunting, including framing hunting as a service for agriculture and biosecurity, engenders tensions within hunters, between hunters, between forms of hunting, and between hunters and the broader society. Future research needs to attend carefully to the co-existence of multiple rationales for hunting, and *for whom* such rationales are presented, as we found that leisure and labour motivations correspond to different levels of debate. Moreover, we welcome further research that engages with serious leisure activities that are 'serious' in more ways beyond the six qualities presented by (Barbieri and Sotomayor 2013) after Stebbins; that is, forms of serious leisure that are serious by having a built-in, or discursively adopted, rationale of also serving societal goals. Some examples beyond the volunteer firefighting case could include hobby farming, which in the urban agriculture context is increasingly pitched as contributing to sustainability.

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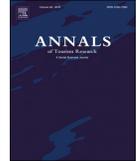Uppsala
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II

ELSEVIER

The seven sins of hunting tourism

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

In a review of situational pressures on tourists, we identify seven sins or risk zones that induce moral disengagement and allow for behaviour that would be considered unethical by the same people when not on holiday. The context of hunting tourism reveals the following sins act cumulatively on the hunting tourist: "The Pay Effect", "The Tourist Bubble", "Last Chance Tourism", "The Bucket List", "When in Rome", "The False Display", and "The Saviour". Identifying these sins and the way hunting tourists draw from them to neutralize eco-guilt are argued to be a first step on the call to set standards and practices within consumptive wildlife tourism consistent with the Precautionary Principle in tourism planning.

Introduction

Hunting tourism as part of wildlife tourism (up until Covid-19), appears to be increasing in popularity and scope (Moorhouse, Dahlsjö, Baker, D'Cruze, & Macdonald, 2015; Flanagan, 2019). Nevertheless, trophy hunts and African Hunting Safaris have garnered significant controversy in recent years, inviting unease among the hunting community as to its implications on the public perception of hunting broadly (Øian & Skogen, 2016). Our study approaches western holiday hunters as practitioners of serious leisure (Green & Jones, 2005) who are also a primary group to partake in commercial hunts such as trophy hunting (see Simon, 2016; Gunn, 2001; Mkono, 2019). Studies have tended to assess the legitimacy of trophy hunting tourism either from the perspective of public acceptance or ethical argument analysis (see e.g. E.Cohen, 2014; Gunn, 2001). Increasingly, utilitarian ecological and sustainability impacts of hunting tourism inform such justifications, especially in African regions (Komppula & Gartner, 2013). The ethics of individual hunting tourists on the ground when engaging in commercial hunting have been considerably less explored than aforementioned sustainability assessments of the industry as a whole. Following this, we do not aim to judge whether hunting of itself is an ethical act; instead our concern is in highlighting practices within particular forms of hunting to which hunters themselves object on ethical grounds. Such a perspective is needed insofar as research has yet to examine how, and in what ways, the hunting tourist experience may facilitate a breach of the hunting ethics one upholds in other hunting contexts.

A premise is that because touristic settings are liminal "site[s] of heightened exchange value, subject to nomadic, de-territorializing flows of information and desire" (Katz, 1999, p.148), one may be less bound to conventions that hold at home, or that touristic settings bring forth deviant norms for conduct. Research on hunters abroad has intimated this may be the case, suggesting from empirical studies that situational pressures in socially and culturally ambiguous field settings in hunting (Kuentzel & Heberleln, 1998) allow hunters to neutralize conduct that they would regard as unethical, borderline or morally questionable in regular circumstances. In this paper, we consider the generalized situational pressures that act on a tourist hunter. Thus, we show how a 'risk

zone' is created for hunting tourists of what authors have termed *ethical fading* of one's decision-making (Fritsche, 2005; Tenbrunsel & Messick, 2004).

In our paper, we identify on the basis of a cross-section of tourism literature seven tropes that hunters risk falling for when they go on a hunting holiday, when they become hunting tourists: *"The Pay Effect", "The Tourist Bubble", "Last Chance Tourism", "The Bucket List", "When in Rome", "The False Display",* and *"The Saviour".* These tropes, derived mainly from tourism literature and specifically applied to a hunting context, may be understood as potentially emerging 'ecological sins' in a trend of eco-guilt on the part of tourists (Fredericks, 2014). In the section that follows, we briefly outline key tenets of western hunting codes of conduct, as they involve ideals of fair chase, minimizing unnecessary suffering and norms of stewardship. Next, we show how the sins in tourism facilitate a breach from these ethics. These cases of moral disengagement are referred to as "sins" to illustrate the faults people commit and the way they neutralize such behaviour. Certainly, "ecological sins", redemption and spirituality are recurring motifs in people's engagement with nature and hunting in modernity (Leopold, 1943; Ortega y Gasset, 1972) and therefore committing ethical errors may be interpreted as crossing the divine (law of nature). We argue these sins are generalizable beyond the hunting tourism context, and have utility for behaviour in several touristic spaces. Indeed, tourists behaving badly are not a new concept, but behaving badly in a way that has serious implications for vulnerable non-human animals merits more research (Kline, 2018). As to why it is important to illustrate harms in these interactions, we argue that touristic practices actively constitute human-animal relations and establish new moralities (Stone & Sharpley, 2013). With the increase in hunting tourism, this hence needs to be approached as an arena of importance for constituting hunting ethics.

Hunting is a divisive topic; many would call it a categorically sinful act whilst others view it as a holy communion with nature. We take a more pragmatic approach: as any practice, there are more or less morally acceptable forms within it, regardless of one's categorical objection. This makes it possible, for example, to judge and abstain from some harmful animal husbandry practices in farming without taking a position for or against farming per se, just as one can make more or less ethical consumption choices in the supermarket when sufficiently informed about e.g. animal welfare assessments. This study engages with concerns about degenerating conduct in hunting tourism, much of which hunters themselves identify as morally problematic according to their own codes of conduct. At some point, it may be argued that an aggregation of sinful hunting practices in hunting tourism may be detrimental to an overall assessment of hunting. It is beyond the scope of our study to entertain this precise tipping point. For now, we observe that certain formats appear more or less detrimental to animal welfare, and should therefore be scrutinized by hunters themselves going forward.

Our discussion raises questions about the ethical implications of the commodification of wildlife; critiques of cultural relativism that ostensibly point to sometimes lax behaviour as permitted on holiday; the social ambiguity of new places, and the role of hunting tourism in mediating the public acceptance of hunting more broadly. We also engage with the self-objection that there is anything like a sharp divide between hunting tourism and 'regular' hunting, or that commercial tourism can easily be demarcated from traditional hunting today which is untrue. In fact, we caution that the blurring of regular and tourist hunting may imply that situational pressures from touristic settings increasingly also infuse everyday forms of hunting.

Finally, addressing the dialectic between structure and agency in terms of responsibility for conduct in tourism, we refer to the precautionary principle as outlined by David Fennell in the context of tourism. Despite many of the uncertainties involved in human-environment relationships (Fennell, 2011), the precautionary principle can facilitate the creation of adapted frameworks, such as the seven sins, that lead to better decision-making in the tourism industry and as well for the tourist and consumer (Fennell & Ebert, 2004). We consider the tourist hunter to be an active member in the development of tourism and the industry. In order for precaution to act as a "planning tool that actualizes the imperative of sustainability, actively managing tourism in a more proactive, future-focused manner and acknowledging the uncertainty inherent in tourism-related development and activities" (Fennell, 2011 p.75) one should also include the agency of the tourist consumer.

At home: hunters as nature's shepherds?

Hunters often frame themselves as conservationists and stewards of nature (Gunn, 2001; Hofer, Blanco, and TRAFFIC Europe (Program), 2002). To be sure, this framing is often disputed (Simon, 2016). It has been said that hunters embody the paradox of considering themselves "animal lovers" while also killing animals for excitement and sport (E. Cohen, 2014). Understandably, there are innumerable ethical deliberations on whether the hunter can be "sensitive to the animal's interests in avoiding pain and in continuing to live…" (Luke, 1997, p.39) and still pull the trigger. Several reasons are given for the killing of animals during a hunt, whether they are utilitarian (Loftin, 1984), transcending compassion to the violent truth of life and death (Luke, 1997) or a profound spiritual experience (E. Cohen, 2014). The hunters' paradox of 'killing what you love' is not easily resolvable, but fraught with tensions and cognitive dissonance. Perhaps as a way to resolve some of this anxiety, though for many practical reasons as well, hunting appears to have fashioned itself after an underlying ethic that comprises both species-level and animal welfare virtues (Luke, 1997; Posewitz, 2002; von Essen & Hansen, 2018).

Many hunters see themselves as essential to the wellbeing of animals through wildlife management and argue that without their stewardship, the wildlife situation would be dire (Kaltenborn, Andersen, & Linnell, 2013). Hunters have as well been attributed with valuing "animal population control aimed at preserving ecological integrity" (Sneddon, Lee, Ballantyne, & Packer, 2016, p.235) as part of the stewardship ethic. Part of wildlife management is hunters handling some of the undesirable work, such as tracking and euthanizing injured wildlife from traffic accidents, a service to both society and animal welfare according to hunters (von Essen & Tickle, 2019).

To further illustrate ethical principles "beyond fair chase" (Posewitz, 2002) there are laws that ensure certain standards within

hunting and animal welfare are met as illustrated by agreements such as CITES, the IUCN red list, animal welfare laws, the 5 freedoms, and, conservation programs. Hunting ethics however, extend beyond legal stipulations to include complex evolving norms of propriety for sustainably harvesting wildlife (Causey, 1989). Reflected in law and morality alike, is the belief that animals are no longer property to be used without any regard for welfare (Fennell, 2000). Between formal laws and informal hunting codes, an ethic of responsibility is reflected within these frameworks (von Essen & Hansen, 2018), also termed "duty of care" (Fennell, 2000). This duty of care appears more often than not to be rooted in attachment to land where "the local hunters have taken the hunting grounds into their possession, not as properties, but as landscapes." (Øian & Skogen, 2016 p.116). Hunters often have familiar spaces where they hunt, as well as certain types of hunting and types of wildlife (von Essen, van Heijgen, & Gieser, 2019)As hunting tourists, they will deviate from this familiarity in various dimensions, especially geographically and culturally, but often times across species and hunting practices. Indeed, hunting tourism is used to broaden their experiences and affirm their hunter identity (Green & Jones, 2005).

When hunters become tourists on unfamiliar grounds, one premise then is that they may lose a key relationship to the land that is behind their ethical conduct. Much of hunters' ethics, whether about respecting animal welfare or ensuring the integrity of future stocks, are grounded in paternalistic stewardship values intimately linked to a connection with place. This place-based ethic is summarized as "ethics of responsibility (*Verantwortungsethik*)" (Cohen, 2014, p.6). This is why, moreover, practices that disconnect hunters from their land also undermine the ethical legitimacy of hunting (Ljung, Riley, Heberlein, & Ericsson, 2012). There is a point, often seen to correspond with the commercialization of the enterprise and the outsourcing of key ecological services to the land, at which hunting instead becomes likened, perhaps extremely, to an unethical blood sport (Cohen, 2014) – hunters go in and out without stewardship motivations. Of course, commercialization in itself takes many forms in hunting, not all of which have dele-terious impacts on hunting ethics, as some profitable ventures have proven successful in terms of cultural, ecosystem and wildlife preservation (Freeman & Wenzel, 2009; Lovelock, 2008).

Hunters as tourists

Although in places motivations of killing for the pot, and killing to balance ecosystems appear, hunting is mostly viewed as a sport or serious leisure in western post-industrial societies (Green & Jones, 2005; Morris, 2014). Additionally, hunting tourism is expanding tourist markets internationally (Newsome & Rodger, 2012; Øian & Skogen, 2016). The importance of distinguishing hunters and a hunting tourist is that when the hunter pays for the hunting experience, in the form of services with an outfitter, they enter the role of a tourist. Trying to define exactly what a tourist is, is challenged due to the "fuzziness" of the concept (Cohen, 1974 p.549), nonetheless, the tourist is, among other things, a consumer (Cohen, Prayag, & Moital, 2014). There are different types of hunting tourists and often people have different understandings of what they entail, such as hunting tourism meaning "trophy hunter" or "foreign hunter" (Komppula & Suni, 2013). The hunting tourist is a traveler motivated by a defined special interest that contributes to their choice of destination for travelling (Komppula & Suni, 2013).The destination offers a novelty experience for the hunter of some kind (Green & Jones, 2005). Hunters will often travel to the places where they hunt, but the hunting tourist travels somewhere to experience something outside of their own hunting norm, whether it is landscape, method of hunting or species they hunt. More specifically, Komppula and Gartner highlight that "Travel and tourism experiences happen outside an individual's daily environment and routine" (2013 p.169). The hunting tourist will not establish a lasting relationship with a place where the hunt takes place; they are a disconnected visitor who is not continuously responsible for the sustainable management of land or wildlife (Holsman, 2000). This task is outsourced to the hunting outfitter or wildlife manager. Consequently, a hunting tourist will often pay an outfitter or tourist service to aid in the hunting experience, whether it is a trophy hunt, a guide or a package experience with accommodation and food (Eliason, 2014; Lovelock, 2008).

Whilst tourism can refer to people visiting destinations close to home, there is often a palpable n experience of the "tourism time and space" (Uriely, Ram, & Malach-Pines, 2011). Studies have indicated that people tend to display a "attitude-behaviour gap" (Cohen et al., 2014 p.892). In this context, the gap concerns when consumers announce caring about ethical standards in their consumption practices, but few actually enact these standards on holiday (Cohen et al., 2014). These findings clearly alert to the existence of a type of dissonance where ethical behaviour may be communicated but not acted upon when in the role of a tourist.

The allure of travelling to exotic places is a large part of tourism. Forecasts predict a rise in tourists willing to travel to more remote and 'unspoilt' natural areas that are often ecologically fragile (Hall, Gossling, & Scott, 2015). Especially with the arrival of eco- or adventure tourism and "Last Chance Tourism" (Lemelin, Dawson, Stewart, Maher, & Lueck, 2010), discussed further on in the article.

The transaction that takes place between a client and a hunting outfitter foregrounds this study. As stated, the impact of such commercialization has been examined mainly on the level of ecological sustainability in the 'kill it to save it' narrative (Keul, 2018, p.188). The hunting industry often point to these eco-centric benefits: individual animals may be sacrificed by trophy hunters, so that revenue can be generated to contribute toward the conservation of its species in the wild (E. Cohen, 2014). As we will note, however, critics point to fallacies in this argument, including the industry's unhelpful targeting of trophy specimens that have breeding po-tential. A less examined criticism of the integrity of hunting tourism, albeit much harder to study, is the impact of hunters' suspension of ethical norms on animal welfare of the hunted animal. Increasingly, researchers draw attention to animal ethics in non-con-sumptive wildlife tourism, such as in "The Customer Isn't Always Right— Conservation and Animal Welfare Implications of the Increasing Demand for Wildlife Tourism" (Moorhouse et al., 2015) and animal welfare campaigns and magazines such as National Geographic issue on the *Hidden cost of wildlife tourism* (2019). These studies are however, not paralleled in the context of *consumptive* wildlife tourism. This may perhaps be because there are categorical objections to such practices that preclude a more nuanced

assessment of the degrees of harms within it. In hopes of filling this gap, we have identified seven tropes that often occur when on holiday and that facilitate immoral behaviour and result in ethical implications first and foremost for animals, and to a lesser extent local communities and environments in a hunting tourist context. We stress that 'unethical' behaviour is not predicated on a prior baseline according to a moral theory, e.g. utilitarianism, but on baselines of *how hunters hunt in non-touristic settings*.

The seven sins of hunting tourism

The pay-effect

There is a growing trend to assign monetary values to nature and wildlife (Bauer & Alexander, 2004). While hunter tourists pay for the full experience with an outfitter, there are times when the value of the product replaces the value of the experience in tourism (Komppula & Gartner, 2013). This is manifested in "Itemized pricing of the prey" displays of outfitters (Cohen, 2014, p.10). Therefore, getting bang for one's buck is a significant driver for many trophy hunters, who may in extreme cases "dispense with the hunt altogether and go directly to the kill" (Causey, 1989, p.333). The monetary aspect of commercial hunting also means that tourists who perceive "money as power could make them feel that they deserve freedom on their vacation and this could induce them to ignore and transgress norms and regulations." (Li & Chen, 2017 p.154).

Outfitters typically advertise their hunting packages not with pictures of landscape and culture, but with successful hunters happily posed with animal trophies. Getting "your money's worth" is a standard within tourism to such an extent that "value for money" is a sorting option on dominating websites such as TripAdvisor and Bookings.com. Main concerns of hunters are that hunting tourism raises prices and alienates residents from local landscapes (Øian & Skogen, 2016), often giving intra-community tensions between those commercialize their business for outsiders and those that stay true to traditional economies of hunting (Gunnarsdotter, 2005). Outfitters may hold themselves to high hunting standards and be highly knowledgeable about wildlife but, pressure is felt if the outfitter is unable to deliver a successful hunt (Tickle, 2019). Reprimanding hunters over unethical conduct may be challenging considering pressure to perform as "polite and service-minded" hosts (Daugstad & Kirchengast, 2013, p.181). As a business, outfitters sometimes offer refunds if they are unable to supply a suitable quarry (Bauer & Alexander, 2004; Eliason, 2014) adding to the pressure to deliver. Simon (2019) notes that this commodification of hunting trophies that it impacts animal welfare; some bucks have been bred so severely for the size of their antlers that they have trouble holding their heads up.

Moreover, the act of paying for a hunt may absolve the hunting tourist's obligation to care for wildlife. A common critique among self-styled 'traditional' hunters is that it replaces the work otherwise spent by the hunter stewarding the environment by feeding game and contributing to environmental improvement (Holsman, 2000). Insofar as hunting defenders name these activities as central in forging a sense of community with animals and more defensible ethic (King, 2010). The outsourcing of such activities to care-takers replaces any stewarding done by the paying hunter. In von Essen and Hansen (2018), a Swedish hunter criticizes such touristic hunting on account of "You don't step in to do the stewarding stuff. You just go out a few days a year, the prices are through the roof so when you're out there you want to shoot yourself an animal. You want to maximize your investment" (p.10). Likewise, Franklin (2008) aptly describes this for hunting tourists: "There is nothing but their own pleasure and interest binding them to the place" adding that "nothing about these experiences that galvanizes *a longer-term relation of care*" (p.41, our italics).

The tourist bubble

The tourist bubble refers to the partly insulated and inauthentic setting that is created around tourists visiting a new environment, also understood as an "environmental bubble" (Cohen, 1974). The tourist bubble usually includes tourists going to other countries, or places of cultural and territorial variation, and a bubble is created when those variations are tempered by travel institutions to soften culture shock or an intense sense of otherness (Jacobsen, 2003). Hence, one may be in a foreign culture while existing socially outside of it (Smith, 1977). This is compounded when hunting outfitters often hire hunting guides from western countries (Lemieux & Clarke, 2009) which increases the cultural buffer enforcing the tourist bubble. Consequently, outfitters and travel agents often advertise the authentic cultural experience, but what they offer tend to be tourist-mediated forms of engagement (Jacobsen, 2003).

The hunter is dependent upon the outfitter to learn about the local wildlife situation and whether animals are managed ethically and sustainably which, within the confines of a constructed hunting package as a tourist bubble is difficult to see (Carrier & Macleod, 2005). If one looks at hunting outfitters in Central and Southern Africa, such as Namibia, the bubble reifies parts of the colonial history. The neo-colonial presentation of hunting is common as "Many from the new world are attracted to the old world of hunting with great cultural significance, dress, protocol and arcane practices such as blooding the hunter" (Lovelock, 2008 p.5). Mkono (2019) has argued that the western hunter is given a chance to play out a previous colonial self, which in turn produces images and wounds of the colonial past. The aim of the hunter is not to engage with local culture but rather a fetishized and romanticized version of the hunting culture they expect and is exported there.

Furthermore, research on the tourist bubble suggests the latter is sustained as people are not always the adventurous explorers they fancy themselves to be on holiday, but creatures of habit and comfort. They want an experience of the local and authentic, but they also do not want their leisure experience to be too different from their everyday lives so that they sacrifice certain comforts, such as being able to pay with their credit cards or sleep in a safe and comfortable environment (McLean & Hurd, 2011) or enjoy nice food and drink (Eliason, 2014). The bubble is thus selectively assembled, and dependent on the choices of the tourist. Eliason (2014) notes that outfitters are expected to deliver comfort and familiarity to keep patrons happy during hunting trips. Therefore, the hunting

experience can be said to be an amalgamation of tourist preferences and the outfitter predicting their expectations, with an added flourish of selected local cultural features in a local landscape (Jacobsen, 2003). The hunting package is neither a reproduction of hunting back home nor an authentic experience of local hunting culture, but a carefully curated hybrid of both.

In the tourist bubble, the hunter is less able to see the wider picture (Carrier & Macleod, 2005) and may embark on a hunting trip that, with a broader understanding of the locality, would otherwise be considered unethical. Staged authenticity in this bubble effectively obscures the actual impact of one's actions whilst giving off an appealing wholesome sense of authentic reality (Chhabra, Healy, & Sills, 2003). In the tourist bubble, both the outfitter and the hunter subscribe to a reality where the narrative suits their purposes and unethical or potentially destructive behaviour is not acknowledged.

Last chance tourism

Nowhere is the phenomenon of "loving to death" more manifested than in 'last chance tourism', whether it is a fragile destination or threatened species (Dawson et al., 2011). Through last-chance tourism, wildlife and ecosystems are being loved to death as people try to see them before they are destroyed or changed beyond recognition (Dawson et al., 2011; Lemelin et al., 2010).

There is strong attraction that pulls people to disappearing destinations, similar to the allure of being the first to do something so is there to being the last to experience it (Dawson et al., 2011). Marketing to desires where tourists dream of being explorers and adventurers is a strong tool. It has been contended that tourists often visit places to gain social capital, to appear travelled and cosmopolitan (Dawson et al., 2011; Jacobsen, 2003). Hence, for hunters, part of the appeal of the "Big Five" and "the Dangerous Five" lay in their scarcity and rarity. Overwhelmingly, the selection of hunting tourist packages, such as those by "Diana Hunting Tours" or "Book Your Hunt Inc", reflect an interest in charismatic, dwindling megafauna in remote places of the world (Hausmann, Slotow, Fraser, & Minin, 2017).

As Dawson puts it "Last chance tourism (LCT) plays on the same sense of rarity, pristineness, and elusiveness that is the foundation for the 'firsts' and draws on the elitism of peak or continent 'bagging' and the lure of authenticity in the exotic. (2011 p.251). Certainly "bagging" is part of hunting, where the result of a successful hunting trip is to bag an animal, a trophy, meat, pelt or story (Keul, 2018). The chance to shoot some of the rarest and most charismatic wild megafauna before they disappear is a draw for hunters, especially if they believe, as the campaigns of the trophy hunting lobby make clear, it will help them in the wild. There is a sense of exclusivity in this that plays to the fantasy of the adventurer within the hunter but also altruistic motives around conservation. However, it would appear in Last Chance Tourism that "the desire to consume vulnerable spaces (and species) seems to outweigh tourists' commitments to supporting sustainable economies or ecological preservation" (Dawson et al., 2011 p.262). Translating this to hunting exotic species in remote vulnerable ecosystems, the growing market of last chance tourism (ibid.) can prove to be a greater threat to fragile species such as the rhinoceros or wild African lion as pressure increase from hunting. Last Chance Tourism, driven by the self-interest of travelers, places pressure on fragile ecosystems and fauna; even spurring on unethical commercial practices to meet consumer demands which eventually speed up the degeneration process of the last chance destination.

The bucket list

As a western cultural idiom, bucket list experiences are a big theme in tourism with countless articles promoting places to see, things to do, try, consume and experience "in your lifetime". Bucket lists cater to dreams of life-fulfillment, often through the medium of spending lots of money "in the pursuit of happiness" (Thurnell-Read, 2017). The bucket list trope is similar to last chance tourism in that they both cater to opportunistic and hurried desires; although, last chance tourism is about 'before they die' and the bucket list is 'before I die' - operating on a more egocentric level. The idea "that travel experiences offer self-fulfillment and are a measure the success or meaningfulness of one's life" (Thurnell-Read, 2017 p.58) is reflected in hunting where "every hunter dreams about shooting the 'big' one at least once in his life." (Komppula & Gartner, 2013 p.175). Research shows that entire countries have been labelled 'bucket list destinations' for hunters, like South Africa, Kenya and Tanzania (Lemieux & Clarke, 2009).

The bucket list trope may appear to be personal but, is a narrative that is being used by the tourism industry to "present the accumulation of specific tourism experiences as a necessary task" (Thurnell-Read, 2017 p.65) in order to show others that you have 'lived well'. Hence, the bucket list aims both at self-actualization, and conspicuous consumption; it has internal and external functions. As in any sport, hunting often involves competition with oneself and, to a lesser extent, against other hunters (Morris, 2014), in the form of the most sizeable trophies and most exotic hunting experiences. It is said that the hunter, while he may fancy himself alone in the wilderness, ultimately "requires an audience" (Strychacz, 1993). Sharing pictures of rare quarry is a popular outlet for this (Kalof & Fitzgerald, 2003).

The Bucket List mentality also explains the sanctity 'hunting trophy lists' such as The Boone and Crockett Club where the number of trophies you can tick off this list becomes an indicator of how successful a hunter you are. They offer awards to the hunters who achieve the 'world slam' (killing all representatives of a subspecies of a particular species, or killing the largest individual of a particular species in a given year) (MacDonald, 2005). The idea of bagging an exclusive opportunity and certain species is a draw (Foote & Wenzel, 2008; Dawson et al., 2011). Another experience is the Macnab Challenge in Scotland marketed as an exclusive adventure and "ultimate test" of hunter prowess (Henton, 2017). Typing "bucket list hunting" into Google reveals lists such as "Ultimate Bucket List: Top 10 North American Hunts You Must Try Before You Die" and "7 Bucket List Hunts You Can Start Planning Right Now". These lists align with some common bucket lists concepts such as existentialist consciousness about finite lifetime and the pressure to plan it *now* (Thurnell-Read, 2017).

When in Rome, do as the Romans do

The proverb 'When in Rome, do as the Romans do', means that when you are "…abroad or in an unfamiliar environment you should adopt the customs or behaviour of those around you." (Lexico Dictionaries, n.d.). The maxim is an endorsement of cultural relativism, often observed in touristic settings, which stands in opposition to universalism where ethical principles stand on their own apart from cultural norms (Fennell, 2000). Descriptive cultural relativism merely observes that morality is a construct to a particular society at a particular time and place, while normative cultural relativism insists that the conventions in any one place can never be unethical as they are specific to this culture. When in Rome, conversely, takes normative ethical relativism further by insisting that visitors to a society, even if they come with their own set of ethics, should adapt to the conventions of the destination culture. As such, 'When in Rome' has been used to sanction behaviour that is considered unethical at home and touristic spaces have been seen as zones of "permissiveness and indulgence, which should not be judged by the ethical criteria deployed in daily life" (Cohen, 2018, p.6).

When in Rome offers the perhaps clearest mechanism by which a hunting tourist knowingly departs from their ethics 'at home'. On the face of it, hunters do not appear to be cultural relativists regarding hunting ethics. They are under normal circumstances quick to condemn the practices and conventions of other hunting cultures. Whether this is a particular use of dogs, handling of meat or killing practices (Colomy & Granfield, 2010). Various hunting communities of practice try to lay claim to the 'right' and 'true' form of hunting at the exclusion of lesser practices (von Essen et al., 2019).

Such ethnocentrism or national pride may be present when hunters compare themselves to outsiders, but seems sometimes to be relaxed or overtaken by a "When in Rome" mentality when visiting these destinations on holiday. Here, hunters try new techniques that are unethical or illegal at home (such as bow-hunting), dine on game meat they would otherwise not try (Mkono, 2019), and adapt their conduct to the context. In so doing, however, hunters who are not used to cultural customs and lack knowledge of local wildlife and ecosystems may cause more harm to the hunted animal than they expect. Hunters unused to another weapon may opt to use it to align with local customs (Komppula & Gartner, 2013) potentially increasing the margin for mistakes. Hunting wildlife whose anatomy and behaviour is unfamiliar can cause undue harm as the ethical principle of a "quick kill" is at risk when one is lacking in training and knowledge. Witnessing direct ethical transgressions due to peer pressure is understandably difficult, yet in research into hunting tourist types in Finland "The major finding of [their] study is nevertheless the notion of the differences that were found in the hunting behavior of individual hunters in terms of hunting in their usual hunting grounds and hunting tourism."(Komppula & Suni, 2013, p.58). The study also discovered "novelty-seeking behaviour" in tourist hunters.A study into moose hunting in Ontario showed that outfitters were less supportive than locals to hunting calves as they have less demand for them by clientele (Hunt & Davis, 2017), which may be another indication of varying judgements in wildlife management between tourism and locals.

Finally, we refer to extensive empirical studies that have indicated hunters' willingness to not only forego moral codes but also break the law when they are visitors in a place. So-called 'transient' hunters (Brown, Decker, & Enck, 1995), whether these are "leisure seeking city dwellers" (Heley, 2010, p.323) tourists from other states (Eliason, 2014) or poachers from afar (von Essen & Hansen, 2018), are morally differentiated by local hunters on account of violating local rules. Outsider hunters habitually become 'ideal offenders' (Colomy & Granfield, 2010). Whether such observations are grounded in defensive localism and territoriality (Eliason, 2014) or reality is sometimes difficult to assess, but research on poaching shows that passing lone hunters are more likely to violate game laws than ones with social and familial ties to the local community (Eliason, 2013).

The false display

Out of all the tropes The False Display is probably the most discussed in popular media. We define this "sin" as the reduction of situations and events into snapshots and superficial displays mainly through the means of photographs and display of animal parts.

There is no denying social media has spurred much debate regarding the contrived images we create around ourselves. Photos of people and wildlife are being widely circulated online, often to the detriment of the pictured animals and their species at large (Moorhouse et al., 2015). This trend is not limited to non-consumptive wildlife tourism but is prevalent within hunting and hunting tourism, from trophy photos (Kalof & Fitzgerald, 2003) to showing the "kill shot" in videos (McGuigan & Clark-Parsons, 2019). Despite online backlash toward trophy hunting pictures featured online, articles and influencers who name and shame individuals, most famously in the case of Cecil the lion (Mkono, 2018), the circulation of animal images in hunting continues.

Tourist hunters may try to follow guidelines provided by hunting organizations, such as Safari Club International, on how to provide tasteful photos of their quarry. Some hunters abstain from sharing any pictures at all especially since hunting photos are generally met with heavy criticism online. It is understandable to want to capture and commemorate tourist hunt, however, there are issues when this becomes its main purpose. The animal is objectified and reduced to a fetishized trophy, the highlight of the hunt becomes the killing and display of the animal and the hunting process and experience falls away. Connecting to deviant tourism behaviour; "many types of deviant tourist behaviors show the influence of vanity. For example, some tourists will break regulations to take a photo or take away or damage something to keep as a souvenir." (Li & Chen, 2017,p.153). Certainly, when the aim of the hunt is the display, codes of hunting ethics may be broken in pursuit of the perfect animal picture, trophy or other animal parts. This can lead to unethical hunts and disrespectful displays of the trophies such as the case of the Canadian Carter couple kissing over a lion carcass (Tacopino, 2019). Such display does not go with the often somber reality of hunting where the death of an animal is meant to symbolize the natural "circle of life" as valued by hunters (Tickle, 2019) and stewardship principles (E.Cohen, 2014; Gunn, 2001).

Other forms of distortion happen in animal images within tourism such as *Dinseyfication* where trivialization of an animal leads to "images that are devoid of true meaning in efforts to be distinctive" (Fennell, 2011, p.196). The images and portrayal of animals we

have discussed do not show context but the "inability or unwillingness to learn and appreciate the animal beyond its cultural or financial value is a form of arrogance" (Fennell, 2000 p.30) leads to a type of animal-human disconnect (Fennell, 2000, 2011). The human-animal disconnect observed in many trophy hunting photos can also be found in other fetischized objects such as taxidermy displays, hides, feathers and animal parts that occur in tourism. Disneyfication is not a new term but, we choose to identify it here as part of the process where animals and animal parts are removed from their natural existence and distorted as new meanings are imposed upon them. We refer to a phenomenon whereby the tourist hunter visits a place in which artefacts and animals hold no special meaning to them in terms of knowledge of conditions, production or rearing and the consumption industry fills this void by imposing false meanings on the "products" (Simon, 2019). In Louisiana the alligator is constructed as a symbolic animal but also as a type of mascot; "Kitschy lacquered alligator heads, teeth, and the image of the alligator on any sort of clothing can be found in plenty at all major tourist destinations" (Keul, 2018 p.184). Hence, the animals that hunters engage with are "caricatures and reproductions" that ultimately invoke a desire to experience more fakes (Bulbeck, 2005).

The alligator in this case is exploited, farmed breeding to supply exotic meat, skins and hunting targets, as well as showcased in tourist tours. It becomes a veneer that the tourism industry relies on to commodify "natural" attractions and sell to tourists without being attached to the physical and moral reality of alligator exploitation. In this setting, the animals perform "a fiction of themselves as wild" (Desmond, 1999, p.151). Due to this misrepresentation it may be difficult for a hunter to know if an animal is from a farm or completely wild, there is no labelling on the animal. Nevertheless, this is not a priority because wildlife management is not the responsibility of the tourist hunter but instead of the local outfitter. Through the False Display both the animal's welfare and dignity may be degraded (Shani, 2009).

The saviour

If "the road to hell is paved with good intentions", we need to be cautious about the cloaking of tourist hunting practices through altruistic motives. The Saviour sin is connected to the rise of ecotourism, charity tourism and volunteering tourism (voluntourism) (Thurnell-Read, 2017). Through "good intentions" and the "quest to be associated with the hero image" (Uriely et al., 2011 p.1063), questionable conduct can be sanctioned. Hero stories for trophy hunters and other altruistic travelers serve to maintain a positive sense of self (Copes & Williams, 2007). Indeed, the hunter can see themselves as a Byronic hero, a type of anti-hero, who must do the difficult and, even despicable, in order to serve the greater good, by shooting an endangered animal to protect its species (Holsman, 2000).

People are the protagonists of their own life story, and as such, we end up making "creative narratives of stories that tend to allow us to do what we want and that justify what we have done" (Tenbrunsel & Messick, 2004 p.225). For hunters it is a common rationalization that trophy hunting is "…driven by the desire to save animals from the threats of extinction, poaching and other such undesirable possibilities" (Mkono, 2019 p.253). Such altruistic positions have been criticized by Bulbeck (2005) as an empty 'New Age Spirituality' that amounts largely to reassurance for wildlife tourists.

There is further reason to be critical of such selfless characterization as research suggests that altruistic tourism is designed more to cater to the needs of the tourists than the needs of the communities that they purportedly serve (Benson & Wearing, 2012, p.243), whether these be species populations or local people. Benson & Weaving maintain that such tourists become the 'new colonialists' who exotify the predicament of suffering African communities or its ailing wildlife, and who may insert themselves as white saviours. This is shown to have the actual impact of both criminalizing the hunting practices of local natives, declaring their practices 'contrary' to the interests of biodiversity conservation, and taking their jobs (MacDonald, 2005).Especially since, as we observed, hunting outfitters often employ professionals from Western countries. Equally, the actual impacts of trophy hunting on biodiversity conservation is disputed and demand for certain wildlife through hunting industries can actually increase pressure on wild populations (Williams & Sas-Rolfes, 2019).

In addition to this, Holsman (2000) shows on the ideas of Belden and Russonello (1996) that tourist hunters are likely to be of the brand 'disconnected sportsmen', who are the least likely among hunters to support biodiversity. Further, he notes while support may be theoretical, it often fails when species conservation negatively impacts hunters or conflict with private property. This point is echoed also by Simon (2016), who harnesses the concerns of Aldo Leopold regarding the culture of competition around trophy hunting, and the fact that economic resources rather than skill or local knowledge constitute success. All of this points to dubious connections between hunters' trophy pursuit and any genuine pursuit of biodiversity conservation.

Discussion

Our seven identified tropes may be understood as *pressure release valves* that remove societally imposed norms for a limited time, granting them a liminal license to indulge in deviant behaviour. Importantly, they are interrelated: a Touristic Bubble effect is reproduced by way of When in Rome mechanisms and by the pay-effect, and the unethical behaviour that follows it may be neutralized by techniques of self-deception used in The Saviour sin, so that the behaviour can be continued.

Cumulatively, the sins help carve out hunting tourism as a space for exemption and hedonism. Such detachment from societal norms has meant that many scholars have seen leisure and tourism as spaces for enacting freedom (von Essen & Tickle, 2019) and resisting dominant conventions. In our seven sins, we find evidence that the suspension of conventional norms for propriety and hunting ethics may have the opposite effect. That is, they do not set the individual free so much as they reproduce established power structures, colonial relations (Desmond, 1999) and reify dominionistic values toward animals. As we have seen, the way hunting tourism is set up rests on a perpetuation of core-periphery colonial dynamics, where built-in justifications for tourist hunters coming

to hunt rest on 'white saviour, rapacious native' narratives (MacDonald, 2005), and where the site may become a carefully curated pastiche of the real thing, complete with caricatures. Insofar as hunters demonstrate greater regard for animal welfare in recent decades (Samuel, 1999), cases of touristic hunting in many ways represent a step *backward* and cement animals comfortably as commodities. Our central premise is that the seven sins are indulged in touristic settings leading to straying from fairly established principles within western hunting ethics. Such indulgence is not a form of maverick hunter going off-piste to discover new vistas of hunting but instead they are a tourist falling for the typical trappings that exist within the tourist world.

Our review of the sins suggests that there may be an inverse relationship between ethics and commodification in hunting. The monetary exchange can divide the hunt into various resalable parts (Gunnarsdotter, 2005) potentially disregarding ethical principles of hunting. Money, as argued in the Pay Effect, may also facilitate sensations of power in tourism where they expect to have their needs met and care less about other's approval leading to deviant behaviour (Li & Chen, 2017). In turn, the commercialization of hunting and the commoditization of prey may ultimately degrade the intensity of the experience (E. Cohen, 2014). With increased commodification of animals, they are collapsed from process into product. In the eyes of many hunters, this "is not hunting" (Cohen, 2014; Gunn, 2001; Komppula & Suni, 2013), another issue where hunters fall into the "no true Scotsman" fallacy where they distance themselves from unethical behaviour rather than confront and modify it. This attitude is also observable on a level of scholarship; consumptive wildlife tourism like hunting tend to be subject to broad assessments of 'good' or 'bad', thus precluding investigations into a diversity of practices within it.

The idea of the precautionary principle is future focused planning to protect local identity, culture and environments from threats and irreversible damage (Fennell & Ebert, 2004). The existence of a referential framework to avoid ethical misconduct when in a foreign space would benefit hunting that depends on clear ethical standards to garner acceptance. More importantly, it could prevent damaging behaviour and a lowering of ethical standards to suit the demands of the individual tourist whilst highlighting the importance of the tourists' responsibility (Kline, 2018). In this way, the precautionary principle is an expedient approach to recognizing the responsibility of both structure (industry) and agent (tourist).

We note that while killing the animal is the result of all these practices, how one engages with wildlife is of high importance the hunting community (Gunn, 2001; Holsman, 2000; von Essen et al., 2019). The fault lies not in the act of being a tourist (or a hunter for that matter) but in falling into a pattern of unethical behaviour that, as described in the seven sins, are brought forward within the realm of tourism. Spiritual motives and concern for spirit and soul have been expressed to be of high priority by trophy hunters, seconded by emotions and desires to fulfill hunting dreams (Radder, 2005). Hunting is a draw because of meaningful pursuit coupled with historical tradition, ritual (Gasset, 2007; Posewitz, 2002), and *holistic experience* (Komppula & Suni, 2013; Lovelock, 2008). Trophy hunters often emphasize the trophy but in unison with "exploration, discovery, and learning… [as]core intellectual motives" (Radder, 2005,p.1142) and achieve a "peak experience" through such hunts (Komppula & Gartner, 2013; Radder, 2005). Tourist hunts that achieve these standards are intensely rewarding for the hunter as well as contribute to conservation and cultural exchange if handled correctly (Freeman & Wenzel, 2009; Gunn, 2001). Freeman and Wenzel have championed polar bear hunting in Inuit territories as more sustainable than polar bear *viewing* due to valuable cultural exchange with the local culture along with regulated species management (Freeman & Wenzel, 2009) indeed, if "wildlife pays, wildlife stays" (Fennell, 2011, p.194).

Awareness of the potential for moral disengagement to happen during a holiday is a first step toward mediating behaviour aboard. Since the tourist space is varied across the world and of a transitory nature (Tribe & Mkono, 2017) it is necessary to highlight individual responsibility in travelers and that they are part of shaping the environment they chose to holiday in (Kline, 2018). It is especially challenging to enforce legal regulations across all countries where one may hunt. Therefore, the precautionary principle could be instilled in the tourist and the outfitter to prevent hunting tourism from becoming a metaphorical Gomorrah of unethical behaviour.

Conclusion

While not all hunting tourism is the same, encouraging the industry and its consumers to think of challenges in the form of seven sins of hunting can facilitate appropriate risk management in order to avoid falling into patterns of unethical or unsportsmanlike behaviour (McGuigan & Clark-Parsons, 2019; Morris, 2014). Such a pursuit is in the service of the self-preservation of hunting as much as species conservation and animal welfare. The uncertainty inherent in tourism development (Fennell, 2011) contributes to the liminal space that is hard to predict and regulate, especially on a global level. Therefore, when it concerns animal tourism, welfare organizations such as World Animal Protection direct campaigns toward informing tourist online. Informing tourists of the consequences of their behaviour through applied ethics rather than deontological "Do Not" posts appears to be more sustainable in the long term (Fennell, 2000).

Within the hunting community there has been a long-standing concern for degrading ethical conduct due to societal trends and modern factors (Cohen, 2014; Leopold, 1943; von Essen & Hansen, 2018). Nevertheless, these concerns uttered by many in the hunting community are paralleled by the common refusal to acknowledge distasteful or damaging hunting acts. Cases illustrating the 'no true Scotsman' fallacy would be hunters dismissing other hunters as "poachers", "hillbillies" or "that's not hunting". Problematic cases of hunting tourism illustrate that the hunting community cannot continue to disassociate from certain cases whilst lamenting the degradation of ethical standards of hunters. Tourism hunting is very much a part of hunting and will likely continue to be. Hunters understand that the continuation of the activity is based upon levels of societal acceptance of their practices (Ljung et al., 2012). Hence the need for individual hunters to act responsibly is paramount to the continuation of hunting, but more importantly for hunters to understand that despite the liminal holiday space, they are subject to the same moral responsibilities as everywhere else. Our study emphasizes the importance of the individual, who operationalizes ethics and "in order for ethics to have utility, it needs to

be exercised regularly – not unlike the muscles of the body…" (Fennell, 2011 p.12). Nevertheless, ethics need to be cultivated also on a structural level. For now, the seven sins are mainly directed at the "decision maker" tourist hunter so they will not "leave their ethics at home" (Kline, 2018).

This paper is a step toward creating memorable risk-zones for hunters (and hopefully other tourists engaging with wildlife) to keep in mind when going on holiday. We respond to the call to set standards and practices within consumptive wildlife tourism. Considering the negative image that hunting tourism can have, and the importance that societal acceptance plays for the future survival of hunting (Ljung et al., 2012; von Essen & Tickle, 2019) these sins are advised to steer clear off as each hunter can be an unwitting ambassador for hunting. We conclude with Causey's point that we need to consider the extent to which the hunting community truly must commit to defending and protecting all forms of hunting, or whether it can start to criticize some unethical commercial elements without chastising hunting as a whole (Causey, 1989). In a time of broader "eco-guilt" (Fredericks, 2014) and the Catholic Church contemplating adding "ecological sins" to the Catechism (Esteves, 2019) we find that the Seven Sins of Hunting Tourism are a fine way to start.

Declarations of interest

None.

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III

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

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Expanding arenas for learning hunting ethics, their grammars and dilemmas: An examination of young hunters' enculturation into modern hunting

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Abstract

Although hunting is declining in western countries, the number of people taking the hunting exam in Sweden are stable, and new demographic groups are becoming hunters. Through interviews done in Sweden with both new and experienced hunters, as well as focus groups with young hunters at agricultural colleges, we investigate how they navigate praxis and ethical frameworks taught in hunting. Using theories on moral learning, as well as Walzer's thick and thin moral argument, we contrast the views of these young hunters with the ethical principles outlined in the educational literature for the hunting exam. We then present how young hunters reasoned around issues regarding hunting ethics, animal welfare and the place of hunting in modern society, both inside and outside the classroom. The young hunters we spoke to acted as moderators of modern trends in hunting, often bringing 'destabilising' influences like social media and female hunters. Young hunters are enculturated into traditional hunting structures and, in the process, caught in a dialectic between modern influences and traditional hunting culture. Our findings highlight

challenges such as 'false consensus' and 'ethical trade-offs' in the learning of hunting ethics, which emerge potentially due to a lack of space for deliberation on hunting ethics.

KEYWORDS
ethics, modernity, moral learning, technology

INTRODUCTION

The killing of animals in hunting evokes ethical debate (Cartmill, 1996). Following the cultural critique of hunting with the rise of animal rights, veganism and animal welfare initiatives, the hunting community increasingly advertises its sustainability and the contributions to society that hunters perform as stewards of wildlife (Holsman, 2000; von Essen & Tickle, 2020). Perhaps as a result of this sustainability image, hunting in a western context attracts individuals with lost ties to the countryside wanting to 'reconnect with nature' (Dizard, 1999; Leopold, 1992; Ortega y Gasset, 1972; Posewitz, 2002; Tickle, 2019). At the same time, societal processes such as urbanisation and increased social and physical mobility are cause for concern among hunters, as they change both the composition of the hunting community and how hunting is viewed (Dinnie et al. 2015; Øian & Skogen, 2016; Tickle & von Essen, 2020). Societal change is therefore resulting in pressures on hunting, challenging its ethical legitimacy.

Currently, hunters balance the place of hunting in modern society depending on their motivations as a leisure or a labour, indicating a type of 'identity crisis' for modern hunting that materialises both individually and structurally (von Essen & Tickle, 2020).To add further complexity to these society-wide value shifts, modern trends such as technological development interact with societal processes such as urbanisation (Caro et al., 2017; von Essen, 2018) to produce new contexts for a person to become a hunter.

As new hunters with varied backgrounds are recruited into hunting, they bring both personal moral viewpoints as well as new methods of learning that have become popular with the rise of the Internet and social media. We are interested in understanding how new, and specifically young hunters, are enculturated into traditional hunting structures and how they navigate the dialectic between modern influences and traditional hunting culture.

In this article, we, therefore, investigate how new, and specifically young, hunters negotiate the ethics of hunting, including the differences between the ethics expressed and performed by established hunters, the non-hunting majority and their own backgrounds. We focus on Sweden as a case, as hunting is well-integrated into the culture and history of this country that is simultaneously highly modern and experiencing the aforementioned societal changes (in values, technology, demographics) that can be seen across many western societies.

In Sweden, hunting is a traditional practice derived from agricultural management with significant folk roots as it contributed to households' food supply. Hunting is carried out on foot, sometimes with specialised dogs, alone or with a hunting team. Although hunters sometimes may hunt alone, they often belong to a team they hunt with as well. Game species range from large herbivores such as moose (*Alces alces*) to birds such as ptarmigan (*Lagopus muta*), and also under certain conditions, the hunting of carnivores (e.g., grey wolf *Canis lupus*) is allowed.

By contrasting what is taught in official hunting literature and curricula with findings from focus group discussions and interviews, we show that hunters in Sweden vary in their own moral stances as well as in their interpretations of ethical hunting principles that are taught to them. Using theoretical concepts of moral learning, particularly Walzer's (1994) writings about thick and thin morality, we unpack how young hunters negotiate their personal moral standpoints in relation to the ethical principles taught to them in the face of influences from both modern developments and enduring patriarchal structures. We see that young hunters bring their own morals into established ethical structures of hunting, and therefore they may change hunting ethics at the same time as they are assimilated into it. Nevertheless, ethical issues such as 'false consensus' and 'trade-offs' arise when young hunters are lacking arenas to deliberate and reflect on their moral standpoints and experiences in hunting.

LEARNING TO HUNT (ETHICALLY)

A typical maxim heard concerning good hunting practice is '*you learn your whole life*'. Undeniably, childhood exposure to hunting as well as ancestral traditions passed on through generations is significant. However, the traditional and patriarchal 'father-to-son' inheritance of hunting practices (starting from young childhood and continuing throughout maturation) and passed-on situated knowledge appears to be decreasing in Sweden (Gunnarsdotter, 2005; von Essen, 2018; von Essen & Tickle, 2020). As older patriarchal family values change and more people from varied backgrounds are introduced to hunting, such as women, foreigners or those without a hunting heritage (Eriksson et al., 2018; Hansson-Forman et al., 2020), enculturation into hunting takes place increasingly through formalised and more scholastic means such as literature, classes, examinations and training. In addition, technological developments such as the accessibility of audiovisual information on the Internet also open up for the different ways of informal learning unfettered by geographical constraints. Nevertheless, a hunter's identity and values are often attributed to their 'roots' by means of landscape attachment (Øian & Skogen, 2016; Skogen, 2003) as well as upbringing. Hence, it is difficult to condense all that is considered 'hunting ethics' into the structure of a single learning curriculum with successful learning assessed through a formal exam. It has therefore been shown, by Swedish hunters' own admission, that 'what is lectured at the course doesn't matter as much' (von Essen & Allen, 2017, p. 22). Such statements may appear elitist, where only those growing up 'with hunting in their blood' (Dinnie et al., 2015; Littlefield & Ozanne, 2011a) are able to become 'true hunters', whereas people with an urban upbringing and lifestyle are 'othered' (Dizard, 1999). Perhaps it is the unpredictability of these 'new' types of hunters that has, in many western countries, led to unease among older generations and other demographic groups that are attached to their own hunting traditions (Caro et al., 2017; Tickle, 2019).

Nonetheless, even those who have not grown up with the teachings of hunting in their life do not enter a hunting course in a moral vacuum. Morals are learned through processes of cognitive development through life (Cushman et al., 2017; Gibbs, 1977; Miller, 1985; Railton, 2017), and therefore people enter hunting with variable moral 'baggage' and values (Caro et al., 2017). Next, we briefly consider some of the mechanisms by which moral development occurs.

MORAL LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The development of morals and values begins in the earliest childhood. We can thus assume that the learning of hunting-related values and norms also starts in very early childhood—for example, if a child sees an adult bring home a hunting quarry smiling proudly and later enjoying a meal made of the meat, they will probably adopt similar associations (Cushman et al., 2017). Many hunters recall positive memories of hunting in their childhood (Littlefield & Ozanne, 2011b). However, there are also people *without* a hunting background who still wish to incorporate hunting into their life. They will have found other ways to form value-based experiences and inferences that have led them to seek hunting as a rewarding activity (Cushman et al., 2017). Consequently, people who express an interest in hunting share certain values or 'reward functions' that they see in the activity, whether they grew up in a hunting household or not.

Yet as new hunters are socialised into the hunting community, they bring with them their own values and moral viewpoints. Hence, there lies some relevance, for the purpose of this study, in more traditional psychological studies of moral development. For example, Kohlberg's stages of moral learning illustrate moral development throughout a person's lifetime (Carr, 1996; Colby et al., 1983). Particularly interesting for moral reasoning is the differentiation between conventional and post-conventional morality and the purely speculative idealistic stage of 'ethical principle orientation' (Baxter & Rarick, 1987; Carr, 1996; Gibbs, 1977). Kohlberg (1986) posits that at the conventional stage, authority, rules and their enforcement through implied punishment are the basis for judging 'wrong', while at the post-conventional stage, moral reasoning is based in contractualism and respect of one's peers and self-respect. Whilst some conclude that much of moral learning is developed through assimilation organically through life, morality—as well as the process of moral reasoning—can and, maybe *should*, be taught in the capacity of any other scholarly subject as long as it does not fall for the 'bogy of indoctrination' (Carr, 1996, p. 368).

This leads to the argument that whilst people have their own moral faculties, in the context of hunting, hunters-in-training should not only be relied upon for their own judgement but must also be *taught* about hunting ethics. These ethics pertain to everything from ensuring wildlife welfare to attending to interpersonal norms of propriety in hunting teams. We view hunting ethics, therefore, as something between personal judgment (Marvin, 2010, p. 152) and a broader culture. Nevertheless, if hunting is taught only in terms of deontological prompts ('you shall' and 'you shall not') without offering reflection around the basis for these norms, broader dilemmas of being a hunter in modern society are not approached or, even worse, are dealt with dogmatically. Hence, we stipulate that learning is culturally situated and therefore, for the purposes of this study, apply Walzer's (1994) concepts of *thick and thin morality*.

Walzer (1994) describes thick, maximalist morals as culturally embedded in particularistic contexts that may be social, historical and religious. These thick conceptions of morality are formed over a long time of complex interactions that apply to certain parts of a cultural group. By contrast, thin conceptions of morality are simpler, yet universally accepted values that avoid cultural complexity and can be understood, in their minimalist terms, also by cultural outsiders. Therefore, whilst morals and ethics are often culturally situated, certain cases of affective reactions and logical reasoning will hold across different contexts (Cushman et al., 2017; Emmerich, 2015; Miller, 1985). Thin morality is more fundamental and universal, meaning that thin moral principles are valued and understood across cultural contexts. A typical example of a thin moral principle would be 'that the killing of people is normally wrong', which is universally unquestioned, held throughout history and different societies (McMahan, 2002, p. 189). Nevertheless, thick and thin morality

are intertwined, with thin moral values leaving room for thick cultural values to be added (Walzer, 1994). Outsiders of a community may agree to a thin moral principle, but within a community, that principle is made thicker by cultural context and situated understanding.

Hunting is a deeply cultural activity with a strong (and thick) ethical structure established across many platforms with concretised ethical principles (Causey, 1989; Danell et al., 2016; Gunn; Loftin, 1984; Fischer et al. 2013). Whilst taking a course in hunting may, in part, be a question of pedagogics, the learning of hunting and its ethical structures is very much a cultural undertaking (Causey, 1989; Tomasello et al., 1993).

METHODOLOGY

We configured this study as a qualitative and phenomenological inquiry into the formal and informal learning spaces of young hunters. Young hunters, under the age of 35, are of relevance as they are raised alongside modern developments and form a well-defined demographic that works as a good indicator for modern changes that can affect the hunting community. The young hunters included in our study all had different levels of hunting experience despite being in the process of taking or recently passing the hunting exam. Some had never hunted before, while others had many years of experience and might be training to become professional hunters.

Data collection

Data collection was qualitative and took place in iterative stages that allowed for a more informed approach to the study area of hunting, starting with a pilot study that comprised workshops led by us with hunting organisations, attending the hunting exhibitions 'Swedish Game Fair' at Tullgarn and the 'Elmia Game Fair', as well as several private meetings with The Swedish Hunters Association and the National Hunters Association (the largest and second-largest hunting organisation in Sweden, respectively). From these events, we developed a sense of the current discussions around ethics and early on talked to hunters of different age groups about the learning of hunting ethics.

From there, the lead author immersed herself systematically into the various arenas in which hunting norms are constituted. First, the author undertook an auto-ethnography of the hunting exam course in Sweden during autumn 2019, keeping a diary and field notes for each event. This was through attending lessons, passing the theoretical exam, chatting with coursemates and the current process of taking the various shooting tests. Second, in coherence with auto-ethnographic research, field observations were done on three hunting occasions, unconnected to the course, featuring young hunters. The hunts consisted of one full day drive-hunt with dogs organised at an estate and two evening roe deer hunts with a local hunting organisation. Other participant observations included visiting the homes of hunters in connection with these events and being shown around the hunting schools at which we conducted interviews.

These efforts of immersion into hunting culture set the stage for the main data collection, the focus groups and interviews on which this research is based. In total, seven focus group discussions were held, and 14 people were interviewed individually for this study, covering the length of the country (a majority from mid and southern regions, but this may reflect population density/distribution accurately) to gather diverse views on hunting ethics.

The focus groups consisted of four to six students each, at two vocational agricultural colleges from the ages 16 to 18, specialising in rural or nature-oriented careers. All of these students had an experience of hunting through the college and some from home and were involved in a hunting-oriented course with both practical and theoretical teachings. They were younger than the average hunter and predominantly male (which reflects the current Swedish hunting community). Overall, four out of more than 30 participants in focus groups were female. The focus groups were facilitated by the lead author. Discussions were semi-structured, and interaction between the participants was encouraged. Although there were dominant voices in many of the groups, all participants at some point actively contributed to the discussions.

All focus groups except for one lasted just under one hour, which is in line with the recommended timeframe for the demographic group and size (Daley, 2013). Informed consent was obtained in advance as well as at the start of a session, all of which were attended in person physically on site at the two colleges. A teacher was present at the first session. Although this did not appear to have had an obvious censoring effect amongst the participants, there is still a chance of teachers inhibiting the expression of certain sentiments (Daley, 2013). This was therefore not repeated in the other group discussions. Peer-influence is of course also a factor (Akers & Jennings, 2009; Daley, 2013; Moloney et al., 2003), and this was considered by the researchers in their observations by paying attention to over-domineering personalities and, where appropriate, calling on quiet participants (Daley, 2013).

The interviews were semi-structured and lasted from one hour to just over two hours. Four of the semi-structured interviews were conducted in person and the rest remotely via telephone or video call programs, due to the coronavirus pandemic. Participants were found through hunting organisations and the snowballing method (Gabriel, 2020). We conducted 11 interviews with experienced hunters who have roles as teachers, mentors or hunting course and exam organisers, and three young female hunters who had recently passed or were in the process of taking the hunting exam. This sample, while not representative, provided a diverse collection of voices that all had reflected to some extent about the learning of hunting ethics.

Data analysis

During the processing of the data from the interview and focus group transcripts, codes were inductively developed from the data but were also framed in relation to the challenges mentioned facing hunters in the Introduction section: anxieties about the impact of modernisation on hunting as a culture and on learning processes. Through the iterative process of moving between data and literature, it became apparent that an effective method of illustrating how young hunters approached established ethical structures in hunting was to use the main hunting course literature (Lindroth, 2019) as a point of departure. The newest coursebook for the hunting exam exerted a structuring function for the interview guide in terms of framing topics but also served as a tool that provided students with the vocabulary to discuss ethics with the researchers and, finally, functioned as a reference point for criticism.

Specifically, the chapter titled 'Jaktetikens grunder' (Foundations of Hunting Ethics) in the coursebook contains many of the recent concerns and trends within hunting under specific sub-headings. These will be used to organise the presentation of the findings in the Hunting Ethics—From Page to Practice section.

RESULTS

Background: Swedish hunting education

In Sweden, since 1985, it is legally stipulated that people must pass a theoretical, practical and safety exam in order to hunt (Danell et al., 2016). At present, teaching for the hunting exam is done in a standardised pedagogical system that includes course literature and a multiple-choice exam. Once the theoretical exam is passed, a practical exam about shooting and weapon safety is carried out on approved shooting ranges. Studying for the theoretical exam can be done individually from home, using course literature (often from either one of the main hunting organisations) and study apps, attending several classes over a period of some months or taking a 'quick course' (Gadolin, 2015). 'Quick courses' usually entail the students researching the literature themselves and then attending a two to three-day course over the weekend to review the literature and take all of the exams, both theoretical and practical. The quick courses have become particularly controversial, as they are thought to not adequately teach and enculturate new hunters. Quick courses are seen to undermine understanding of fundamental principles such as weapon safety (Gadolin, 2015) and set a wrong precedent from which one should approach hunting—not as a side activity unceremoniously squeezed into a busy modern schedule but as a commitment in both time and effort.

The hunting community remains active in trying to recruit new hunters into their globally declining ranks, and Sweden is no different, with active (permit leasing) hunters having declined by about 30,000 hunters from 1993 (a record high period) to 2021 (Eriksson et al., 2018; Naturvårdsverket, 2021). Although there has been a slight uptick in people taking the hunting license in the last couple of years, reports still show a general decline with some slight buffering by growing numbers of foreign and female applicants (Eriksson et al., 2018; Hansson-Forman et al., 2020). Women are increasingly taking the hunting exam, although recent statistics show that in Sweden, out of 2,822 women who took the hunting exam, only 1,076 continued to lease hunting permits to hunt practically (Eriksson et al., 2018; Hansson-Forman et al., 2020; Marklund, 2019). This trend is seen throughout Sweden, where a stable number of people take the hunting exam, but a much lower number are leasing hunting permits. Some of them may hesitate to hunt as their main motivation might lie in '... a great interest in animals and nature, so rather this motive seems to be connected to an ethical consideration to *not* take an animal's life' (Hansson-Forman et al., 2020, p. 5, our italics). Nevertheless, new groups of hunters are emerging with heterogeneous backgrounds and perspectives (Larson et al., 2014).

Due to changing demographics and backgrounds of new hunters, combined with changes in hunting practices, interest within the established Swedish hunting community in education and specifically hunting ethics has increased as exemplified by 'etiksatsningen' [the big ethics initiative] by the Swedish Hunting Association (Svenska Jägareförbundet, 2021). This has become especially topical as growing pressure on hunters to control the 'calamitous' increase in boars (*Sus scrofa*) is disrupting hunting conduct as hunters use new or different methods (e.g., hunting at night) and technologies (e.g., infrared vision), potentially at the expense of certain ethical principles (von Essen, 2019). Consequently, ethics have become a central concern for many Swedish hunting organisations, hunters and hunting lobbyists, both as they deal with internal challenges and as they communicate hunting to a non-hunting society. Here, we use official hunting course literature to contrast the taught ethical framework of hunting with the moral views and reason-

ings of our study participants. In the next section, we directly cite ethics-related subheadings from the coursebook, relating these to the main issues discussed by our study participants.

Hunting ethics–from page to practice

'Gain and utilise knowledge about wildlife'

The course literature emphasises that increased knowledge about wildlife creates a better hunter but, most importantly, leads to a naturally acquired respect for all wildlife (Lindroth, 2019, p. 39).

In our conversations, those who were fairly new to hunting expressed that the hunting course opened them up to a new world of knowledge about wildlife behaviour and ecology. However, they analysed, critiqued and used knowledge with different outcomes. Personal values, morals and understanding were expressively used to judge sources of information. This was especially clear when young hunters in focus groups discussed their use of the Internet for sources on hunting. They applied their ideas of respect towards wildlife when judging the propriety of information material, as well as quality of information:

> If I were to sit in the evening and watch a film whilst eating chips, then I would not exactly choose '20 best slo-mo hunting kill-shots'. I would choose someone who goes around and talks, and where I gain knowledge, that I want to watch, where I see he respects wildlife, that he is a hunter with knowledge so I can learn. (Focus Group 4)

Another participant voiced that she had viewed a teacher as a role model and kept contact with them after the course had ended, based on their shared values and perspectives on hunting and wildlife:

> At the same time, he is very aware that one needs to manage [wildlife] correctly and well. Even when we spoke and asked him 'Where is biodiversity included?'; and he was happy that we raised the question because it is often missed, at the Swedish Hunting Association as well. So he has been a bit of a role model actually. (Participant 15)

Several participants thus explicitly mentioned judging learning material and teachers as role models based on their own knowledge and values rather than accepting all the 'teachings' that they were exposed to during their hunting course. This was also exemplified by the following statement:

> You can learn as much as you want from the Internet, but then you have to choose for yourself what you need and what you think sounds good. (Focus Group 3)

Students shared knowledge and went on peer-recommendation regarding which information and Youtube-type videos to watch online, weighing up opinions and taking it 'with a pinch of salt'.

> It is then that you have to look at what others are saying about it, you listen to some and hear their opinions. If all say it is good then it is good. If two say it is good and three that it is really bad, you have to listen to what others say. (Focus Group 5)

Another group expressed that the younger generation learned faster and more than previous generations due to their online access and habits. When questioned on whether they had adopted or tried any new methods they had seen online, participants in different groups said they had watched American hunting videos using lures to attract foxes and thus ordered and tried them out themselves successfully.

However, in the end, most, if not all, participants concurred that practical experience 'in the forest' was essential and could not be replaced by scholarly knowledge. This was expressly supported by some teachers who during interviews maintained that 'you cannot teach ethics' and that the hunting exam was a test to pass, while the actual education and ethics guidance were provided in hunting teams by more experienced peers.

> ...Of course, you sit and talk about it [hunting] during the hunting exam, that you will stalk quietly and the wind here and there, but it is not the same thing at all if you are going to do it for real, practically, that is what I think. (Focus Group 4)

Respect for wildlife, tied by Lindroth (2019) to having knowledge of the hunted species, was prominently mentioned in all of the focus groups; our study participants, however, did not relate respect to knowledge themselves. The term 'respect' was often used when discussing ethical conduct but only elaborated on by participants when they were specifically asked what they meant by showing respect for wildlife. Here, answers varied but several connected 'respect' to behaviour such as language and treatment of the animal after death (tasteful displays of the body or not wasting resources such as meat or fur).

> Respect for wildlife, in death same as in life. (Focus Group 4)

Ethical views were evidently dynamic: Some students changed their ethical views or rather engaged in 'ethical-trade-offs' as they were exposed to new knowledge and being encultured into new hunting paradigms:

> In my opinion, because it was not the hunting that I started with at all, but I can imagine that many think this way, they think it is wrong that we breed these ducks here for the slaughterhouse, the duck facility out here, and then we buy some and put them outside. Then these old men come here and pay for it, and then we shoot them. I thought that was wrong. That we breed animals to kill them. I am raised that we kill animals that we did not have to place out. (Focus Group 2)

In this case, other members of the same focus group agreed that the duck rear-and-release was a 'difficult hunt to defend'. A counterargument, brought up by one of the participants, was that no other hunting form provided opportunities for as many stewardship initiatives as duck and pheasant hunting since the animals were bred and then released into an ecosystem specifically cultivated for their survival by the hunters. Following this ethical argumentation, these stewardship initiatives thus came to replace previous principles about not hunting animals bred only for hunting purposes.

'Use modern technology correctly'

> There was a time when a successful hunter was equivalent to a skilled hunter. Those two were near-identical. That is not necessarily true today and the difference compared to before is technology. (Lindroth, 2019, p. 41).

In the coursebook, this heading received a longer elaboration on the *mis*use of technology as well as negotiating technology in an effort to maintain principles such as 'fair chase' and 'respect for wildlife'. Whilst the Internet and mobile phones are definitely affecting how young hunters learn about hunting and act in the field, as seen in the previous section, in the focus groups, technology was often discussed in the form of new developments or paraphernalia recently introduced to hunting. Technologies mentioned in particular were adjustable lighting, thermal and night vision scopes, which were legalised at the national level as recently as 2019 for hunting wild boar (Regeringskansliet, 2019).

> It feels like, that, it feels like a videogame. It does not feel like a hunt when you look into it because it is pitch-black and then you check the scope and see a group of pigs. It simplifies reducing damage to fields and to come closer to the pigs and avoid using the lamp. But there are some mixed thoughts if it should be legal or not. (Focus Group 3)

Likening the view through night scopes to a videogame recurred also in other focus groups, which may indicate that this had been discussed amongst the participants prior to the focus group or that the night scope inspired the same apparently detached feeling of playing a video game. Participants expressed an ethical trade-off where the night scope appeared to have improved hunting wild boar and thus the control of crop damage, but there existed doubt as to whether ethical principles of hunting were upheld.

Other instances of technology use such as smartphone apps and global positioning system technology (GPS) evoked similar discussion. With regard to other technologies, participants often reflected that technology use should not impair the principles of 'fair chase' or giving wildlife a chance to escape. Young hunters were aware of their ways of negotiating these ethical challenges, especially when comparing themselves to 'older hunters', stating that they were more alert when using technology and knew when to put it away.

'Shoot wisely and well' and 'Do not be careless with tracking injured game'

The coursebook highlights the importance of planning your shot and tracking not only large high-game species but the small game as well: 'When you in silence wonder whether you yourself are a good hunter then there are few measurements that are better than how much energy you spend towards tracking injured small game and how often you succeed with it. Here true hunting ability and hunting ethics go hand in hand' (Lindroth, 2019, p. 45).

Here, we combine these two headings as they both focus on the importance of taking responsibility for your shot. Injuring the game was a grave issue for participants. Pulling the trigger was

described as a highly charged moment, both with adrenaline but also with feelings whether the outcome was hit, miss or injure:

> Injuring an animal is the worst there is. There is nothing worse, that feeling is not fun at all. (Focus Group 3)

Quite a few of the young hunters with some hunting experience had injured game at some point. Yet taking a 'safe shot' was one of those ethical principles no one would really challenge unless for the reason of felling already injured animals. Newly licensed hunters would approach shooting differently; during the field study, one newly examined female hunter whispered to the researcher that she had no intention to shoot during the hunt and was there for the experience. In this case, even the idea of shooting wildlife was contested, yet the person in question was still interested in hunting. During another hunt, it became apparent that people interpreted differently what was considered a 'safe shot'. A young hunter recalled an experience where she joined another hunter, and they had agreed that one should only shoot when confident and rather let an animal pass than risk injury. However, despite their prior agreement, during the hunt, the participant observed that the other hunter displayed bad judgement when shooting at a hare and, in her view, did actually take a risky shot.

Whilst our study participants had experiences of firing off bad shots at animals, they expressed great remorse when they admitted it. At the same time, they also saw it as part of the learning process—at some point, you will probably miscalculate and fire a bad shot. Teachers and team leaders would approach such events differently, on occasion deciding to end the hunt and sending the erring hunter away to train on a shooting range before being allowed back. The hunting teachers we interviewed also described how they would try to explain and analyse what had gone wrong. Neither teachers nor young students reported 'yelling' at or 'shaming' students who made mistakes. However, in practice, injuring game or missing a shot remained a case of some shame for the perpetrator since a hunt might have to be stopped and tracking commences, so whilst injuring game was often expressed as an emotionally painful event, its moral evaluation as 'wrong' was also enforced through peer influence and rule of law. At the same time, peer pressure could also lead to more rash shooting:

> There is a bit of a macho attitude sometimes that you should shoot wild boar in any way possible, the first thing you do, and they are pretty hard to get a good shot at. (Participant 15)

Some participants had started hunting by shooting wild boar, and others were getting access to land through crop-protection hunts by killing wild boar and 'gaining a good reputation' locally. For some of our participants, the recent abundance of boar thus shaped the introduction into hunting in a way that differed from earlier generations, who started hunting by killing small game. Wild boar offers a different ethical context than in the past, as they require a Class 1 weapon, are considered 'high game' and can be easier to injure. One teacher lamented the treatment of wild boar by hunters and even professionals, classifying it as the biggest ethical issue Swedish hunting was facing today. With the abundance of wild boar and disrespectful behaviour towards them, he was concerned that bad hunting conduct was unwittingly taught to new hunters.

'Be a good hunting colleague' and 'Safety'

Safety is highlighted as a fundamental concern that is discussed throughout the whole book. Unsafe practices are more than a 'breach of etiquette' (Lindroth, 2019, p. 48). Practising safety is also a sign of a trusted member of the team. Respect for hunting colleagues is discussed in the form of being generous about shooting opportunities and not being possessive about the game (Lindroth, 2019).

Safety was often mentioned as the foremost priority of many participants. Linked to discipline, good safety conduct was the hallmark of a good hunting colleague—and recklessness a significant warning sign. However, ethics was often discussed through bad examples (a phenomenon leading to 'hunting cannibalism', which is elaborated in the discussion). Critical comparisons happened on the individual as well as on national or cultural levels and appeared to be the base for why Swedish hunting was considered highly ethical by several participants:

> Sweden is not like the US where they use semi-automatic weapons and just fire 30 shots on a group of pigs without aiming properly but just to hit them and 'they need to go down'. But that could really happen in Sweden. (Focus Group 3)

Controversial film clips online provided material for some participants to illustrate unethical conduct. Nonetheless, critique of colleagues certainly happened also through anecdotes recounting instances of gender discrimination, unfamiliarity with hunting, age discrimination and intimidating or macho type behaviour:

> The older people have less respect for women, [they say:] 'What? But women don't hunt!' But younger people respect it [women hunting]. (Focus Group 3)

Female hunters were the ones who raised the issue about discrimination although macho behaviour was talked about by both males and females, often in reference as posturing and cavalier behaviour towards wildlife, sometimes displayed through the use of derogatory language applied to wildlife such as 'devil-fox' or 'damned pigs'. Female participants expressed optimism with regard to an increase in female hunters. They attributed this increase to values and status around the growing interest in ethically sourced meat and self-sufficiency (a main reason for some of them), 'an interest in nature' and also to an introduction to hunting by friends and partners if they did not have a hunting family. Some female participants without a hunting background attributed much of their involvement with hunting to female colleagues who provided encouragement and support for learning.

Generational differences also came into question, as illustrated by the citation above, where generalisations can be cautiously drawn to say that gender discrimination was done by older males and posturing by younger males. However, considering that most hunters are male, this is no revelation. Younger hunters often grow up with more modern habits but expressed difficulty in disagreeing with older hunters. Some felt it was often futile to convince older hunters of the younger ones' opinions and knowledge, citing their own youth and inexperience as a basis. Instead, there was an expressed desire by several participants, with and without a hunting background, to prove themselves, including their knowledge and ethics, worthy to older, experienced hunters.

DISCUSSION

In the midst of these cultural changes and societal pressures, young hunters navigated the moralities of hunting as they studied and trained to become legitimised or even professional hunters. While individual moral values are developed throughout life and in cultural situatedness when negotiating ethical frameworks, our analysis identified cases where there appeared to be a 'false consensus' and 'trade-offs' of ethical principles. These two types of cases illustrate underlying conflicts that exist between individual hunters as well as between individual ethics and formalised teachings, something that ethics deliberation between young and more experienced hunters could highlight and perhaps even solve. Below we elaborate on these.

False consensus

Participants often cited the same or similar ethical principles, but their approaches to, and support for, these principles varied. A way to interpret this is as a type of false consensus through superficial convergence, where similarly cited ethical principles are verbally rationalised or physically enacted in different ways—a 'thin' ethical principle (Walzer, 1994). An example from our data ('Shoot Wisely and Well' and 'Do not be Careless with Tracking Injured Game' section) illustrates the difference between 'thin' and 'thick' principles: Two hunters agreed that harming an animal by not judging a shooting instant properly was unethical. However, their judgements of what constituted a well-judged shot diverged. Thick morality shapes behaviour all the way to the snap moment where individual decision-making and personal experience take charge (Dale, 2015). While people might tend to agree on a thin principle such as 'respect for wildlife', they might diverge in their thick interpretation of these, which are developed and embedded in cultural contexts.

Therefore, whereas environmental ethics have extolled the pragmatic and conflict-mitigating potentials of shallow or so-called convergent consensus that originates from different moral reasonings (see Norton, 1991), this hunting context demonstrates that such seeming consensus can also lead in the opposite direction. Instead of all roads leading to Rome, hunters use Rome (in the form of taken-for-granted deontologically framed proscriptions and prescriptions) as a point of departure and end up in various corners with quite different practical implications. The role of education and learning in navigating these roads, furthermore, is clearly underexamined in the intersection of environmental ethics and moral learning research.

Ethical trade-offs

Ethical trade-offs are often used as a type of ethical exercise (Kohlberg, 1986; Menzel & Wiek, 2009.). Here, we might see trade-offs where participants illustrated ethical stances or principles in hunting that were weighed against each other or a repositioning of moral values in order to accommodate new practices. The trading of ethical principles happens in different contexts, sometimes between competing for desirable considerations (Menzel & Wiek, 2009). Some trade-offs may be more acceptable than others depending on perspective. A common case of trade-off between principles in hunting is the negotiation of 'fair chase' versus 'quick kill', where efficient technology is assessed against an animal's ability to escape the hunter, giving the animal a chance to escape

but also a sport for the hunter (Su & Cheon, 2017). In our study, an example of such a trade-off concerned the use of night vision scopes (infrared or thermal) on their rifles. Participants likened night vision to video games, and they described a type of disassociation from the reality of killing the animals, which appear as bright shapes in the scope. Hunting is often described as a game or sport (Morris, 2014; von Essen et al., 2020), and the filtering of wildlife with video-game type visuals alerts a 'step too far' as technology facilitates visual disassociation between the hunter and their quarry, one where hunters risk becoming simple 'shooters' since technology replaces skills (Brown & Cooper, 2006; Lindroth, 2019). However, the young hunters we spoke to were aware that, despite the disassociation and lack of fair chase brought on by the night vision scopes, they used them for the reason that they were recently legalised to curb the rapidly growing wild boar populations—which they felt compelled to manage. They were trading in one principle for another, in this case 'stewardship' in the form of population management trumping 'fair chase'.

Another case of ethical trade-off lay in the discussion around duck breeding ('Gain and Utilise Knowledge about Wildlife' section). Through socialisation into a group of duck hunters and exposure to duck breeding practices, rather than rejection, duck hunting became adopted as an acceptable part of the hunting repertoire, where the freedom of ducks was replaced with the extensive stewardship activities (including habitat management) needed for breeding and hunting them. Here, descriptive norms (i.e., observed, actual behaviour) seemed to have shaped the young hunter's own behaviour—and their ethical evaluation of duck hunting (Gino et al., 2009; Goldstein et al., 2008). In this case, the moral good of stewardship, needed to be able to hunt ducks, superseded the principle of only hunting ducks that hatched in the wild.

Discussing ethics—Towards co-constructing knowledge in hunting education

Our unpacking of false consensus and ethical trade-offs has shown how hunters may reach ethical decisions. The concepts of thick and thin morality add a somewhat hierarchical pattern to our analysis of ethical decision-making. Thin morality can be seen as universal across hunting groups and even outside of hunting communities. Distinct thin and imperative principles showcased in the results are that game populations must not be endangered, sound practices that do not risk harm to colleagues or wounding animals and the meat must be used—a moral idea shared by both hunters and non-hunters (Ljung et al., 2012). Breaking one of these thin principles would face disapproval and de-legitimise any hunting activity for a majority of people, hunters and non-hunters alike. Nevertheless, during a culturally complex situation such as a hunt, the enactment of these thin principles reveals the thick context surrounding them, a multitude of thick understandings and necessities that also guide behaviour. In the Results section, and hunting debates outside of this research, we see different thick moral interpretations of thin principles such as sound practice, avoiding the risk of harm to the animal, and what it means to manage wildlife populations without endangering them. Seeming agreement at the 'thin' level might, as a false consensus, conceal divergence in thick interpretations within hunting about what adhering to a thin principle requires. Fischer et al. (2013) found that certain motivations for hunting, such as excitement and fun, were only seen as ethically permissible if obligations at a higher moral level, such as stewardship, were met. This hierarchy model shows that also seemingly thin principles are being navigated in their context and, notably, in relation to each other. In this interpretation, moral evaluations, for example, of different motivations for hunting, are not necessarily competing or cancelling each other out, but the favourable evaluation of one principle might render the

unfavourable evaluation of another one acceptable (Fischer et al., 2013), a point illustrated also in relation to balancing leisure and labour in hunting (von Essen & Tickle 2020).

On another note, our findings suggest that young hunters lacked an arena to discuss the details of hunting ethics and to process the ethical implications of what they learned about hunting online. Here, a gap was created in the teaching of hunting ethics, filled instead with personal moral reasoning by the individual student. By exploring cases of false consensus and ethical trade-offs, we have illustrated that young hunters are facing challenges navigating ethical dilemmas and pressures. We also witnessed cases of what some hunters, including course literature, refer to as 'hunting cannibalism' where hunting groups criticising each other might lead to undermining hunting entirely as an ethically legitimate activity. Nevertheless, thin fundamental principles appeared to be respected across our participants and are shared by many other, hunting as well as non-hunting, communities. Currently, in formalised hunting education, ethics and ethical conduct within the hunting community are discussed using mainly prescriptive practical examples and comparisons. Understandably, it often proved challenging for participants to verbalise their moral values and thoughts clearly. This might be because some thoughts are taboo, participants lack enough confidence or opportunity to share them, or because hunting is steeped in thick cultural understandings of ethics that are hard to disentangle and put into words (Tomasello et al., 1993; Walzer, 1994).

As far as cultural change in any one subculture, such as hunting, is concerned, modernisation is not a linear process. Research into young hunters with traditional patriarchal and working-class hunting backgrounds in Norway show that many young hunters admire their fathers and ancestors and often *reject* modern trends (Borgen & Skogen, 2013) probably as a case of peer influence and community (Cushman et al., 2017; Gino et al., 2009; Goldstein et al., 2008; von Essen & Hansen, 2018). Other cases show that part of the moral learning of young hunters may be informed by selectively looking back on the past, perhaps cherry-picking from old traditions (as von Essen & Allen, 2018, show of Swedish hunters). At the same time, several of our focus group participants voiced that young hunters might be more accepting of new developments within hunting, such as women joining hunting teams, compared to some senior hunters. Although, we want to highlight that issues of discrimination or disagreement in hunting are not just a generational issue and can stem from many factors such as cultural differences or social group dynamics.

Importantly, there was a positive response and unanticipated enthusiasm for engaging in ethics discussions from especially newer and younger hunting students. The participants were able to morally argue at a post-conventional level (Kohlberg, 1986) when given the chance to discuss ethics on a broader and more philosophical scale, something our participants said was not often done in the classroom. There is value in pointing out the necessity of ethics discourse, not in the context of 'why things are right or wrong' but instead aim conversations at discussing 'how is it to be a hunter today?' The latter question opens up beyond the frame of standard teaching and socialisation practices and accommodates issues of modern development in a flexible manner beyond deontological ethical demands. More reflexive ethics discussions in classrooms and groups could exercise the moral muscle (Carr, 1996) and allow hunters to explore ethical reasonings.

Online and digital materials form a predictably large part of knowledge gathering today and often outside of the teaching curriculum of hunting. Teachers are still known to fall behind when it comes to integrating digital technology and games into their classes (Ashinoff, 2014; Prensky, 2003) and the traditional institution of hunting is no exception. Students consume hunting teachings from online forums other than those accredited by the Swedish Hunting Agencies. They will watch out of interest in their own times and even pick up new learning techniques from online materials. An interesting finding was that young hunters saw that their own morals, ethics and

personal values had a principal role to play in navigating and assessing online content. Here, decision-making in itself is a learning process (Bell, 2010) where we see participants make judgements based on their own knowledge, moral principles and peers. Since regulating the consumption of online materials is unfeasible, it is important to account for it as an increasingly important part of a person's repertoire in hunting education. It functions as both a tool and a repository of knowledge and, possibly, also as an arena or 'third space' in which ethics discourse can be held.

In the end, the origins of internal moral thought and action are still being discussed and have been 'since the inception of their fields' (Cushman et al., 2017, p. 8). Nevertheless, discussion about ethics could raise understanding between hunters as well as hunting groups, remedying any cases of 'hunting cannibalism' through misunderstandings as well as help hunters weed out practices they disagree with. Most importantly, ethics discussions with new and young students would facilitate a forum where they can deal with the dualities of being a member of modern society entering into the traditional institution of hunting.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST
The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author [L.T.].

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This research examines hunters' concerns about modern pressures on hunting ethics. Results show that modern developments are causing dilemmas and tensions as values and perspectives conflict over the purpose of hunting and its continued role in society. The research concludes that ethical principles alone are not enough to guide hunters and that knowledge, effort and the purpose of hunting are important elements of the hunting process, whose consideration can help to buffer against the impact of modern pressures.

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