

## RATIONAL AND IRRATIONAL HUNTING

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[Assignment: Is there a subject about which you know more than the average reader? If so, write an essay in which you use comparison-contrast as a device to help us understand this topic. The purpose of the essay is to share your insights as an "insider."]

(1) The sun slowly rises, casting a golden haze over a tranquil pond. The early morning sounds of doves and other wildlife fill the air. The faint sounds of approaching ducks can be heard in the distance. As they fly closer and closer, they face the hunter. This hunter can be a true hunter, in the sense that he is aware of the ethics necessary to preserve the sport, or a bloodthirsty killer who will never be satisfied until he shoots the last duck in the flock. Irrational hunters do not appreciate the concept of hunting. The number of shells shot and the number of rules broken in a given day constitute a good hunt, or so think the irrational hunters. On the other hand, rational hunters put themselves at one with nature, and savor its beauty and power. Rational hunters kill what they need and what is permissible, leaving the habitat in a perfect state of equilibrium, the way nature intended. In abiding by the limits, hunting during the season and at the proper time of day, using proper ammunition and arms, and finally, hunting while sober, rational hunters ensure a positive image of hunting for present and future hunters.

(2) It is easy enough to distinguish between the two types of hunters. Sane hunters may seem somewhat cautious or conservative but they are always good representatives of the sport. Certain characteristics classify sane or rational hunters: the rational hunters always obey the limit. After reaching the daily quota on waterfowl, they will end the hunt and feel quite satisfied with their day. In contrast, the bloodthirsty hunters will never be satisfied until they run out of shells and kill every bird in the sky above them. They enjoy continuous, high volume shooting with a high kill percentage, feeling empty inside if they let one bird get by them. After a hard day of shooting they will collect all of the birds and throw them into a big pile and then take photographs of the two hundred birds they slaughtered within hours in order to commemorate their barbaric triumph.

(3) Sane hunters abide by specified dates of certain hunting seasons and do not hunt all year round. However, the bloodthirsty hunters know no boundaries and will hunt whenever, whatever, and wherever they want as long as they know they are not going to get caught. While on their rebellious rampage, they will continue to use lead shot while hunting. The inside of a shotgun shell is filled with little pellets that are shot out of the gun in a close pattern. These pellets can be lead or steel, and they kill or injure whatever they come in contact with. Today, lead shot has been outlawed in most states because of the poisonous effects it can have on the water and food supply of surrounding wildlife. However, this little technicality has no effect on irrational hunters, because lead shot is cheaper and is better for their guns. While hunting they will shoot lead shot, but they will carry a couple of boxes of steel shot to satisfy the inquisitive game warden. The guns and how they are operated also say a

lot about different types of hunters. The most common and legal gun for the true hunter is an over and under, or pump shotgun, with the plug fully intact. The plug of a gun is a spring that makes it possible to have only two shells in at a time. This seems logical and fair while hunting birds, and also makes hunting a challenge. Thus, if you hear a continuous and uninterrupted pop of about eight rounds, you can be sure that you are in the presence of an irrational hunter. By taking the plug out of their shotguns, irrational hunters enable themselves to shoot a high number of shells very fast without reloading, again making the hunt more one-sided. They can now shoot eight birds at once or one bird eight times.

( 4 ) The early morning is ideal for hunting. It is peaceful and relaxing and the birds are at their peak. At this time of day, the hunter and the bird are both somewhat aware of each other, and this ensures a challenging hunt. Night hunting, which usually occurs during a full moon for the purpose of visibility, allows the bloodthirsty hunters to put the odds greatly on their side. They are allowed to quench their thirst by calling in unsuspecting ducks and then shooting away to their heart's content as the ducks literally fly right into their boat. Even more merciless, they may shoot birds on the water, an unfair practice.

( 5 ) According to the irrational hunter, a hunt is never complete unless there is an abundance of alcoholic beverages to liven up the day or night and improve shooting ability. Common sense stops the true hunter from mixing alcohol and hunting. However, the ideal situation for the crazy, wild hunter is to have as many guys as possible all squeezed into a boat or blind, all drunk enough to shoot each other, waiting for a flock of birds to fly over so they can go on a killing spree.

( 6 ) Irrational hunters break numerous laws. These violations greatly damage the sport. Many times it takes wisdom and self-restraint to refrain from slaughter, and to obey all of the given laws. Sane hunters follow these rules, giving a positive image to the sport and allowing it to continue. On the other hand, irrational hunters are only concerned about their own well-being and how much they can brag about the number of ducks, deer, or whatever they have chosen to slaughter. Bloodthirsty hunters will not be satisfied until they shoot the last buffalo.