Does the Case for Animal Rights Outweigh Legal Hunting: A Cost-Benefit Analysis

For my first critical essay, I would like to argue the case for keeping hunting legal in the United States. I hope this doesn’t become too broad of a topic, but I think it will work for the angle which I will approach it. Moreover, I will be excluding higher primates for the sake of my discussion because as we know it is illegal, even impossible to hunt gorillas, chimpanzee’s etc. in this country. I am not saying this doesn’t happen in other parts of the world, but I will be excluding these groups for the purpose of my analysis, as I will be limiting my discussion to the United States.

In the body of my essay I am going to consider the case for animal rights from both perspectives. Additionally, I will clearly outline the case for animal rights and follow it by the case against it. One of the main issues I will be bringing up against the case for animal rights is that animals are more instinct driven as apposed to moral agents. This is the fundamental reason humans differ from animals. Humans have the capacity to make choices, exhibit free will and have the responsibility to act ethically and respect the rights of other human beings. I think an easy way to understand this principle is to look at an example. For instance, if all rights were extended to animals, a wolf killing a deer would have to be brought up on murder charges. This simply doesn’t make sense and does not fit into our society. Upon laying out the arguments for both sides, I will perform a cost-benefit analysis on the effects of hunting vs. animal rights. Such issues I will be touching on in this part of my analysis will include, but not limited too: overpopulation issues and what effect it will have on the habitat and surrounding communities, humans eating meat is natural, the benefits derived from annual hunting license sales, and human
satisfaction derived from the sport. Looking at the effects of over population on indigenous habitat will be an issue an environmental economist might look at. I haven’t found any specific research on it yet, but it might be interesting if they have calculated an efficient number of deer a certain area can sustain. These are a few of the ideas I am shooting to target, but as I conduct further research and receive mentoring they may be subject to change.

I believe this topic is appropriate for this course because it will touch on the ethics behind killing animals and what rights they are entitled too. Moreover, I will examine the efficiency of hunting, and its effects on our environment. In addition, I will attempt to outline the basic benefits from multiple perspectives (i.e. animal benefits, environmental benefits, monetary benefits) versus the costs (i.e. killing animals) to prove a case for keeping hunting legal in the United States. I intend to take a critical look at this issue from an economist’s point of view, the animal’s rights perspective, as well a nutritionist’s standpoint. I think this can be a particularly interesting perspective because since our inception we have been omnivorous hunters/gatherers. Looking at our dentition shows from an evolutionary standpoint that we are carnivores. Taking an evolutionary perspective might shed additional light on the topic at hand. Finally, I welcome your opinion on what you think will make this paper most effective.

Below are a list of articles, books, and websites I have been reviewing in order to guide my writing:

The Case for Animal Rights by Tom Regan
The Myth of Animals Rights by Tibor R. Machan ®
Why Animals have No Rights by Carl Cohen ®
Eating Meat is Natural by Jim Powlesland ®
Wikipedia.org/Animal_Rights ®