



Robbing children of their innocence

## Description

# Rationalizing the taking of a life is the first step in condoning violence and lessening the value of all life

By **Georges R. Dupras**

I read recently where Prince George was taken to his first pheasant shoot by his mother, the Duchess of Cambridge.

My personal image of the young prince is that of a carefree, happy, effervescent child, innocent in the ways of the world. At an age where he is learning the social skills, he is also being conditioned to a way of thinking. I'm talking about the development of a mindset. Often enough, during these formative years, the attributes we most admire in youthful innocence are stripped away as part of this first passage in life.

The eager smile and restless enthusiasm of waiting for Santa Claus on Christmas Eve, or perhaps the anticipated arrival of the Easter Bunny for that all-important egg hunt, are soon washed away. Children, after all, must learn the realities of life; the boy must be made a man.

We're all gifted to one degree or other, some with above-average intelligence, some in the arts or athletics, and others with survival instincts, business smarts, street smarts, etc.

What of sensitivity? Is that a gift or a curse? People who are overly sensitive, a trait rooted in compassion, can hardly be happy, certainly not in this world. What of children, already disillusioned through the loss of innocence, and now desensitized as a matter of course through conditioning?

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I'm of that school that believes that there are three things you never take from another person: their dignity, their faith and their sensitivity. To strip them of any of these is to deny one or more of the fundamental attributes that defines them.

Life is hard, and disillusionment will come soon enough. There is no reason to introduce a young free spirit to the realities of our world before he is old enough to question the why, and more importantly, to challenge the



rationale. It takes a lifetime, if ever, to understand who we are, what defines us as individuals and how we fit in, if at all. Being exposed to the act of killing, and more importantly, the enjoyment in taking part in such an activity, is no less than emotional child abuse. To rationalize the taking of a life, any life, is the first step in condoning violence and lessening the value of all life.

Child abuse takes many forms: physical, emotional and through conditioning to name but three. To de-sensitize an innocent spirit through the personal enjoyment found in violence and killing is unconscionable.

## The rationale

Pheasants are not native to the UK but were imported as a food and game species by hunting enthusiasts. Their numbers do increase – but this is by design. It is encouraged by the same mindsets that take part in canned hunts, then try and tell you that they are conservationists.

'Today we are charged with being anti-rich. No one has simply said, "Perhaps they're just anti-cruelty.'

Traditional pursuits are often used to justify practices that are no longer a part of our social values. If we cherish our traditions, it behoves us to re-think, re-invent, or discontinue some of the more controversial ones. Over the years, those of us who have expressed concern over trapping, rodeos, circuses, bullfighting, slaughter practices including Halal and Kosher, have been accused of being anti-native, anti-poor, anti-Semitic, anti-Muslim. Today we are charged with being anti-rich. No one has simply said, "Perhaps they're just anti-cruelty".

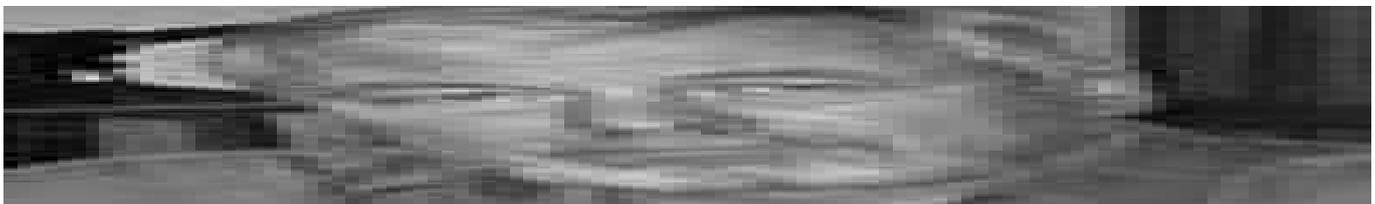
How sad that in 2019, there are those who still find pleasure in killing, in de-valuing life, and of robbing children of their innocence.

Image: [California Department of Fish and Wildlife](#) via [StockPholio.net](#)

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**Georges R. Dupras** has advocated for animals for over fifty years. A member of the International Association for Bear Research and Management (IBA), a Director of the Animal Alliance of Canada (AAC), Quebec Representative of Zoocheck Canada and past Board member of the Canadian SPCA, he worked on the original Save the Seal campaign in 1966 that culminated in the founding of the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) in 1969. Georges Dupras has published two books, *Values in Conflict* and the eBook *Ethics, a Human Condition*, and currently lives in Montreal, Canada.



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