

# “The Guns of Autumn”: The American Hunting Controversy in Historical Perspective

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In 1975 a supposedly objective documentary on contemporary sport hunting appeared on television. With the sensational title of *Guns of Autumn*, the show seemed anything but objective to many of the hunters who viewed it. As the letters to the network suggest, a large number of the sportsmen felt that the program was nothing more than anti-hunting propaganda. What was it about *Guns of Autumn* that angered sportsmen? By tracing the historical development of what I have called the “code of the sportsman,” an attempt was made to answer this question and shed light on the continuing debate between hunters and anti-hunters.