“Sir and Ma’am, May I See Your Licenses for Your Kids?”

The issue of whether or not to require parents to have licenses in order to be able to have children is certainly controversial. In this paper, I will explain LaFollette’s argument in favor of licensing parents, including regulating other potentially harmful activities, theoretical objections to licensing, practical objections to licensing, and his analogy with adoption. Then I will argue in favor of LaFollette’s view, and raise and respond to two objections against my view.

To begin his argument, LaFollette argues that society normally regulates many activities, where it is illegal to perform these activities without having permission (344c1). For instance, automobile drivers’ licenses, practicing medicine, law, pharmacy, or psychiatry (344c1).

LaFollette raises and responds to two theoretical objections against parental licensing: (1) People have a right to children just like free speech and religious expression; therefore licensing parents would be unjust (345c2); and (2) You would have to be able to reasonably predict that parents would be abusive, once they were parents (345c2). He answers (1) by making these replies. 

LaFollette then raises and responds to five practical objections to parental licensing (347c2). (1) Lastly, LaFollette gives an analogy with adoption, claiming that our adoption practices show that our legal and moral system already recognizes that not everyone is capable of rearing children well (349c1).

LaFollette’s argument is plausible for these three reasons. First, …
My opponent might argue that … [AN OBJ WOULD BE HERE].

I would reply that … [MORE WOULD BE HERE].

My opponent might also argue that … [ANOTHER OBJECTION WOULD BE HERE].

I would reply that … [MORE WOULD BE HERE].

In conclusion, I explained LaFollette’s argument concerning regulating other potentially harmful activities, theoretical objections to licensing, practical objections to licensing, and his analogy with adoption. Then I argued in favor of LaFollette’s view, and lastly raised and replied to two objections against my view. This is an important issue about which we should really think.

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