

License to procreate



Caroline McCallPhilosophy211 Stephen Everett, Section 001 October, 12, 2012 License to Procreate The question “ should people procreate” is a very opinionated one. There is no right or wrong answer just a personal opinion based on facts to support it, I happen to side with Hugh LaFollette in his essay “ Licensing Parents”. I will argue that before people are allowed to procreate they should have to obtain a license which gives them the right to produce and raise children. Otherwise they should not be allowed any children until they have the license.

First I will look at it from the child’s point of view and explain how it is rational for them. Second I will look at the reasoning and policies of this theory. Finally I will discuss how it would change the modern today and how it would be implemented. The licensing idea came about to protect children from harm. When children are little they cannot defend themselves and have no one but their parents to depend on. “ Each year more than half a million children are physically abused or neglected by their parents.

Many millions more are psychologically abused or neglected, not given love, respect, or a sense of self-worth” (LaFollette 438). Children need constant care and support, some people are just not suitable to give the attention and love that a baby requires. An analogy of this would be a small puppy. My roommates and I really wanted a puppy for our house this year and one of the girls volunteered for it to be mainly hers so she would take it home with her during breaks and continuously watch it.

When we went to the pet store they would not let us have a dog because we were college kids and they said we didn’t have the time that the puppy needed devoted to it. A couple weeks later we called and asked if there was

any way we could get one still and they said we need to know your schedules, where it will at all times, who will be the main caregiver, and we need parental support. So in the end we ended up getting a five week old German Shepherd Lab mix, but only with the consent of someone who had accountable credibility.

When I think of this I think of how we had every right to get a dog if we wanted to but we needed to understand what getting a puppy entailed, just like how parents have rights to a child but they need to understand that they have to have accountable credibility to raise a child. “ Both slander and human sacrifices are prohibited by law; both could result from the unrestricted exercise of freedom of speech and freedom of religion. Thus, even if people have these rights, they may sometimes be limited in order to protect innocent people. ” (Lafollette 440).

Parents do have a right to bear children, but children have a right to a good and beneficial life. Are the parent's rights more valuable or important than the child's? Is it right to say that the parent is being selfish or self-centered if they bring a child into the world that they cannot securely support? I think so because it is the parent's duty to provide their child with the best life possible and to make sure they succeed the best they can. Just like with adopting the puppy there are tons of qualifications that you have to meet when adopting a child.

My family adopted my sister when we were both six years old. I was very small but I can still remember some of the process that we had to go through. We had to go sign a ton of papers and then we had numerous interviews with both of the families. They wanted to make sure that we could

afford another child so they looked at my parent's incomes, their house, where we lived, how many kids they already had, how much time they could spend with the kids, etc. There were so many questions that we were asked just to make sure that she was going to be safe in our house.

My mother was a stay at home mom so she had plenty of time to spend with us and we were able to afford for Rachel, my sister, to be a part of our family. I know that if you are trying to adopt an infant the regulations are even tighter. Your house has to be baby proofed and you have to have everything already ready for the baby when it comes home. If people have to go through those processes to get a puppy or even a child then why are we not requiring the biological families to do the same thing? Despite the trauma children often face before they are finally adopted, they are five times less likely to be abused than children reared by their biological parents. " (Lafollette 446). When you adopt you have planned and dreamed of having this child instead of a mistake that you are now stuck with. When you plan on having a child and are expecting it or wanting it there would be less resentment or frustration towards that child. Having this process or program would definitely change the way the world is today. It would reduce or diminish the babies produced for welfare checks.

Seeing as how my sister was one of those babies it's terrible for parents to be dependent on the welfare checks which is for the children but it doesn't end up actually helping the children to an equal or successful life. This just goes to show an example of the parent that would not be given a license because they do not care about the child's well-being they just want the money that keeps coming in as long as they keep having babies. If this program were to

be implemented in order to get your license you would need to take classes and tests.

The classes would consist of nutritional information, hygiene information, health hazards, descriptions of behaviors and actions at certain ages, and basic needs for the child. I would also like to include a fake baby session where the couple or parent has to then take home a fake baby, one that can cry and be recorded so that the teacher can later look at the records and determine whether or not they are ready for their license. Some high school students do this experiment but I think it would be highly effective for adults to try as well.

After the classes I would like for some tests to be run on the potential parent or couple. A background check for previous violent or abusive records would obviously need to be looked into. Adults with an abusive or violent past from their parents or guardians are more likely to abuse their children than people who had a happy childhood. These adults are also less likely to be overall happy. After considering my third statement some might say that it intrudes on our constitutional rights. However, I do not agree with that because it's just like having a driver's license.

You have the right to drive a car if you would like to but because it can put someone else that is innocent in danger they make regulations that allow you to drive or not. These regulations are put in place to keep everyone safe and happy. So you may drive a car without a license but if you get pulled over there are going to be consequences because you may have put others' lives in danger. Just like with having a child you have the right to have a child but because you are not licensed to have one you may be putting the

innocent child's life at risk and there will be punishments for it. The punishment for having an unlicensed child would be something like adoption. If for some reason you happen to get pregnant you can apply for the license as many times as you would like but if the infant is born without a license then it would be taken into the adoption agencies custody. It doesn't violate your rights as an adult because that child has a right to fair and equal life just as you did when you were a child. An adult's life's choices or rights do not overcome a baby's right. If you cannot provide the basics for a child then you should not be able to take it into a situation where it will never have an equal chance to succeed or be happy.

Overall I have argued that people should not be allowed to procreate unless licensed through a process of interviews, tests, and classes where they will be evaluated to whether or not they would be acceptable parents. The children have a right to a successful and happy life because they are innocent people that have to have someone responsible to rely on to help make that happen. If the parents take the classes which teach them about how to be a great parent and help the child there should be no reason for them to fail unless they did not try or had a violent or abusive past and/or present.

I couldn't imagine not having my sister and I know that she would not be the person she is today had she not been adopted by my family. She has had a very successful past and has a very bright future. Situations like this definitely make modern day society better for children. This program would eventually shape this nation to where there would be less abuse and violence towards children and support happier adults in the long run.

Sources Shafer-Landau, Russ. The Ethical Life: Fundamental Readings in Ethics and Moral Problems. New York: Oxford UP, 2012. Print.