

Minori, tatuaggi e responsabilità genitoriale

Dovremmo permettere ai genitori di tatuare i propri bambini?

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Should we Allow Parents To Tattoo their Young Children?

Abstract: The spread of tattooing in Western countries since the 1990s has been particularly impressive. In many countries, amongst which Italy, it is not illegal for parents to tattoo their babies, toddlers, and preschoolers. Should we let them? Or should we instead advocate the adoption of a restrictive law to prohibit this conduct? This paper shows that it is not easy to justify the ban. Indeed, we take it morally right to let parents decide for their children under many circumstances, also when their choices are more bizarre and possibly more harmful than getting them a tattoo. A ban on tattoos would then require a ban on a very large part of parental discretion, which would produce a much more morally disgusting scenario than that we intended to prevent. Nor can we isolate a special class of suboptimal parental choices (including getting a tattoo) we only want to prohibit – for example, those which are an alternative to best options that are also omissions, or, those which irrevocably affect the child's future life. A more promising argumentative path to justify the ban, however, can be developed by considering the semiotic properties of a tattoo. By inscribing writing, a design or a symbol on their child's skin, parents claim the right to speak for her throughout her life, not just during her childhood. But when the child will be a grown woman, her parents' illocutionary acts will be taken as hers, thus condemning her to be continuously and unpleasantly misread.

Keywords: Tattoo, Tattooing, Ethics, Child, Parents, Legal, Ban.

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