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Exam 3 Discussion Questions

29 November 2012

1. **List and describe/discuss the major institutions or entities, public and private, through which social welfare is delivered in American society.**

Social welfare is defined as the government’s expenses on public goods and services. Factors that influence the government and other institutions to assist in the continuing of social welfare include need, humanity, and social obligations. Each of the following institutions help in the promoting and spreading of social welfare: family and kin, faith based organizations, work organizations, marketplace, charitable and philanthropic organizations, and government. These institutions work to create a balance between what information and resources they can offer to American society and what is expected of these institutions.

Family and kin are a means of delivery for social welfare and the preferred source, so families do not have to rely on the government. If families could assist each other with resources, then this is less the government has to do for families. The government sees family and kin as a self-sufficient means of delivery for social welfare. The primary functions of families are procreation, intimacy, and support. The social welfare functions of a family include care for one another and its elderly, disabled, and young members and financial support for its members.

Faith based organizations or churches are another means of delivery for social welfare into the American society. Churches are great institutions to find a community for support and guidance. Faith based organizations’ primary functions are to encourage and aid in its members spiritual development. The churches’ social welfare functions include counseling of the church members through difficulties, problems, and life, and also social services of any kind to its members.

Another means for delivery for social welfare into the American society are work organizations, employers, or the workplace. A person’s employment can serve as a great means for monetary compensation and income. The primary functions of work organizations are employment. The social welfare functions of work organizations are the employee benefits for the employees of the organization. These benefits, including health, insurance, or monetary, assist not only the employee of the organization, but also the employee’s family.

The marketplace is another means of social welfare delivery to the American society. The marketplace includes organizations, associations, and corporations that provide goods and services, just as the government does, to the public, but for a cost. These goods and services are not necessarily free, as the government’s goods and services may be. The marketplace’s primary function is to exchange goods and services for money. This provides jobs and employment for American families, and allows American families to buy goods and services for their families using the money they earned at their employment, stimulating the economy. The social welfare functions of the marketplace include the exchange of the commercial social welfare of goods and services. These goods and services include nursing homes, group homes, insurance, childcare centers, schools and other consumer products one could receive from the government, but instead, is purchasing it from private vendors of the marketplace.

Charitable and philanthropic organizations are included to be a means of delivering social welfare into America society. Charitable and philanthropic organizations can include nonprofit organizations, support groups, and nonprofit agencies. Their functions include mutual aid and philanthropy for other organizations. The social welfare functions of charitable and philanthropic organizations include volunteering and community social service. These organizations give back to the community and volunteer their time to provide social welfare to others.

The last means of delivery of social welfare into the American society is the government. The national, state, and local governments all are means of delivery of social welfare. The government’s primary function is to distribute goods to consumers for the collective goals. The government’s social welfare functions include fighting against poverty, securing economic and financial needs, educating on health and body, and providing public housing.

1. **What are the core principles (as discussed) that are the foundation of social welfare in American society?**

Social welfare is the essential foundation of the American society. There are three core principles that are the foundation of social welfare in American society. These core principles include:

1. Help people maintain such level of economic security in the face of uncertainty or various social contingencies.

2. Help people achieve at least a basic level of material sufficiency.

3. Help citizens gain access to fundamental goods and services deemed to be essential at least at minimal standards and without regard to status or class.

The first principle, helping people maintain such levels of economic security in the face of uncertainty, incorporates protecting American citizens when they grow old, divorce, or are disabled. Social security for the elders, child support and payments for divorced families, and Medicare for the disabled all fall under this principle of economic security for citizens in the face of uncertainty. The second principle, helping people achieve at least a basic level of material sufficiency, includes antipoverty programs for American citizens. Programs promoting economic growth, quality education, and housing options for the poor, impoverished communities would all be included in this second principle of helping citizen achieve a basic level of material sufficiency. Institutions, such as, payday lending or predatory lending, would not follow this second principle, but instead ignore it. Payday lending businesses do not promote material sufficiency for citizens, but instead, force families to fall into a cycle of debt by charging outrageously high interest rates on top of their loans. The third principle, helping citizens gain access to fundamental goods and services deemed to be essential at least at minimal standards and without regard to status or class, includes the access to public education. Being able to receive an education at a public school would be included in this principle of ensuring citizens have access to fundamental services regardless of class. An education is essential for the survival and success of citizens, no matter the wealth or age of the citizens. Public schools serve this principle of a fundamental good essential to people.

1. **There are various systems of welfare in our country - various methods through which we all benefit from public goods and services. What are these systems? "Some writers suggest that to some extent, everyone is on welfare in America." Do you agree or disagree? Support your view with a reasoned (non-emotional) argument.**

Public welfare is the essential foundation of the American society. There are three core principles that are the foundation of public welfare in American society. These core principles include:

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Public welfare in America also has various systems and methods through which we all benefit from public goods and services. These three systems include: social welfare, occupational welfare, and fiscal welfare. Social welfare is defined as the government’s expenses on public goods and services. Occupational welfare is supporting the well-being of citizens in the workplace. Occupational welfare is typically decided by the employers or a combination between employers and the government. This type of welfare is offered as employee benefits for the workers. Fiscal welfare is the deductions, benefits, exemptions, and credits in the tax system. Fiscal welfare is used to promote the well-being of the citizens. All three of these public welfare systems, social welfare, occupational welfare, and fiscal welfare, all work together to promote people’s well-being in society.

When viewing public welfare in terms of these three core principles and the three types of public welfare, some claim everyone in America is on welfare. I agree with this statement. When public welfare is explained in this light, it is clear that public welfare promotes the well-being of citizens across a wide and diverse range of socio-economic statuses, and not just the poor. For this reason, public welfare should not be thought of as the typical welfare-monthly-paycheck, but the benefits most Americans receive to promote our well-being. Tax exemptions, tax credits, employee benefits, public education, social security, Medicare, and custody payments are enjoyed and needed by most, if not all, Americans. These are types of welfare, typically not the kind we first think of, but all ways that promote our well-being. Because most Americans use or depend on these services, most Americans are on welfare. Welfare should not be thought of as in a negative light, as it typically it portrayed, but instead, as helpful assistance from family, churches, employers, the marketplace, charitable organizations, and the government.

1. **Compare and contrast the traditional poverty measure vs. the supplemental poverty measure.**

The contrasting poverty measures of the poverty measure and the supplemental poverty measure produce drastically different poverty rates. The traditional poverty rate is the percentage of United States’ households at or below the poverty threshold. The poverty threshold, approximately $22,000 for a family of four, varies annually. A family said to be “100% of poverty” is at the poverty threshold, earning about $22,000 a year. A family said to be “200% of poverty” is two times the poverty threshold, earning about $44,000 a year. A family said to be “50% of poverty” is half the poverty threshold, earning about $11,000 a year and in deep poverty. The 2011 national poverty rate was 15% in 2011. The traditional poverty measure was calculated in 1960 by comparing the family’s annual income to three times the lowest cost of a food budget. Since then, the amount has been altered due to size of family and consumer price index. However, the traditional poverty measure does not take other factors into account when determining the cost of living for a household, such as, other resources, expenses, and geographic locations.

The supplemental poverty measure, also known as the modern poverty measure, depicts a more accurate measure of poverty in the United States. This poverty measure was first reported in 2011 under President Obama. It was published along with the traditional poverty measure, but the supplemental poverty measure is released a couple months after the traditional poverty measure to eliminate any confusion. The supplemental poverty measure takes other factors into account, unlike the traditional poverty measure. In addition to factoring in a family’s annual income, family size, and consumer price index, the supplemental poverty measure also factors families’ resources, size, composition, expenses, and geographical locations in the cost of living. The supplemental poverty measure will most likely become the more accepted poverty measure in the future. As a nation, we will most likely trend towards this, but there is much resistance to the new, modern poverty measure. Because the supplemental poverty measure takes more factors of a family into account, the amount of annual income a family earns to be considered living in poverty is higher than the amount reported by the traditional poverty rate. The supplemental poverty rate could translate to mean a family of four is living in poverty if earning $27,000. This new poverty measure is seen as a blessing to poor families who now can benefit from programs to help meet their needs. However, the supplemental poverty measure also creates resistance, because if the poverty measure increases, then more households are considered living in poverty. The poverty measure is used as a basis for many programs, so if the poverty measure changes, this has enormous effects. This means more families are eligible and can benefit from state and federal programs, such as food stamps or health care. The government does not like this because, then the costs of the programs increase, and this calls for more funds to be allocated to these programs. The supplemental poverty measure is a more precise indicator of the level of poverty in the United States, but this new measure creates controversy over program funding.

1. **You are the head of the Louisiana state welfare agency and a reporter calls you to discuss the Louisiana’s poverty rates. The reporter wants you to give a little background on poverty statistics, how they are generated, changes and trends in the statistics/rates, what they represent, how they are used in making program and eligibility decisions, and where the average citizen might look on-line to find things like poverty rates, poverty thresholds, welfare and food stamp caseloads, etc. Based on class discussions and resources, make for yourself 2-3 paragraphs of notes in preparation for this conversation with the reporter.**

Poverty is a chronic stress that negatively affects children and their development. Poverty is typically experienced in short time periods by families, usually one to three months. Only 5% of impoverished families are said to be living in chronic poverty, or poverty for over a year or two. It is reported 15% of poor families live in poverty. Louisiana’s poverty rate for 2011 was reported at 18%. Because at least 20% of a parish’s residents live in poverty, Louisiana is described as having “deep, persistent” poverty.

To determine what families live in poverty, the traditional poverty measure was established in 1960. The traditional poverty rate is the percentage of United States’ households at or below the poverty threshold. The poverty threshold, approximately $22,000 for a family of four, varies annually. A family said to be “100% of poverty” is at the poverty threshold, earning about $22,000 a year. A family said to be “200% of poverty” is two times the poverty threshold, earning about $44,000 a year. A family said to be “50% of poverty” is half the poverty threshold, earning about $11,000 a year and in deep poverty. The traditional poverty measure was originally calculated by comparing the family’s annual income to three times the lowest cost of a food budget. Since then, the amount has been altered due to size of family and consumer price index. However, the traditional poverty measure does not take other factors into account when determining the cost of living for a household, such as, other resources, expenses, and geographic locations.

There has been a change in calculating the poverty measure. A trend toward a new, more modern measure is being accepted, because it is a more precise measure of poverty in America. The supplemental poverty measure, also known as the modern poverty measure, depicts a more accurate measure of poverty in the United States. This poverty measure was first reported in 2011 under President Obama. It was published along with the traditional poverty measure, but the supplemental poverty measure is released a couple months after the traditional poverty measure to eliminate any confusion. The supplemental poverty measure takes other factors into account, unlike the traditional poverty measure. In addition to factoring in a family’s annual income, family size, and consumer price index, the supplemental poverty measure also factors families’ resources, size, composition, expenses, and geographical locations in the cost of living. The supplemental poverty measure will most likely become the more accepted poverty measure in the future. As a nation, we will most likely trend towards this, but there is much resistance to the new, modern poverty measure. Because the supplemental poverty measure takes more factors of a family into account, the amount of annual income a family earns to be considered living in poverty is higher than the amount reported by the traditional poverty rate. The supplemental poverty rate could translate to mean a family of four is living in poverty if earning $27,000. This new poverty measure is seen as a blessing to poor families who now can benefit from programs to help meet their needs. However, the supplemental poverty measure also creates resistance, because if the poverty measure increases, then more households are considered living in poverty. The poverty measure is used as a basis for many programs, so if the poverty measure changes, this has enormous effects. This means more families are eligible and can benefit from state and federal programs, such as food stamps or health care. The government does not like this because, then the costs of the programs increase, and this calls for more funds to be allocated to these programs. The supplemental poverty measure is a more precise indicator of the level of poverty in the United States, but this new measure creates controversy over program funding.

These poverty measures can be found online for citizens to compare and review. Citizens can find poverty rates, statistics, and thresholds easily by going online on the Census Bureau’s website ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)). Once citizens are on the Census Bureau’s website, they should click the link “People,” then “Poverty,” and then click the “Find Poverty Thresholds” link. In addition, the Census Bureau’s website includes welfare and food stamp caseloads. The USDA’s website also has even more information regarding poverty for citizens to review. The USDA’s website includes poverty data sets for the entire country. All of these important and helpful pieces of information can be found online at these two websites for anyone to review.

1. **What is the Louisiana Children’s Dashboard? What agencies signed onto the Dashboard? Give an example of the kinds of indicators included in the Dashboard.**

The Louisiana Children’s Dashboard is a target of indicators of priorities that need to be focused on in order to improve the status of children. The priorities of the Dashboard are hoped to be included in the Children’s Cabinet Strategic Plan to protect children’s well-being. The purpose of the Louisiana Children’s Dashboard is to ensure policy, planning, and budgeting are done in favor and on behalf of the children in Louisiana. The Children’s Cabinet works to protect children’s well-being. To ensure progress is being made on behalf of the children, the agencies that signed onto the Dashboard are required to submit an annual report and interim documents on the Dashboard indicators.

 Multiple agencies agreed to work toward this mission of improving policy, planning, and budgeting on behalf of children. These agencies include the Department of Children and Family Services, the Department of Health and Hospitals, the Office of Juvenile Justice, and the Department of Education. The Department of Children and Family Services agree to monitor and positively affect the percent of families eligible to participate in SNAP, the food stamp program, the rate of child support collections, and the rate of repeat child maltreatment. The Department of Children and Family Services plan to do this by working toward assisting families with child nutrition, creating financial stability for families, and improving child safety. The Department of Health and Hospitals agree to work toward improving children’s well-being by lowering the percent of low birth weight babies, lowering the percent of Louisiana children who are obese, increasing the percent of children receiving immunizations, and lowering the number of percent of children who suffer from asthma related hospitalizations. The Office of Juvenile Justice also signed on to the Louisiana Children’s Dashboard agreeing to improve children’s well-being. They plan to accomplish this by reducing the percentage of children’s one-year recidivism rates, reducing the time of youth living in non-secure, out-of-home placement under the Office of Juvenile Justice, and reducing the number of youth under Families In Need of Services under the Office of Juvenile Justice. The Department of Education also agrees to work to improve children well-being through policy, planning, and budgeting. They plan to do this by working to increase the percent of students arriving to kindergarten ready to learn, the percent of students we are literate by the third grade, and the percent of students who graduate from high school within four years.

1. **The Brookings Institute described in a 2007 publication at least 8 policy ideas for reducing poverty in America. Choose any one of those ideas (i.e., any one chapter), and craft an essay summarizing the policies proposed as solutions to poverty.**

Richard Murnane explains the American thought of equality of education does not actually hold true for impoverished children. Children of poverty are typically at a disadvantage when it comes to education. They are usually learning in schools with inexperienced and inadequate teachers and resources. Most children living in poverty either do not finish high school or graduate high school, but have still not learned the skills used to make a living. If children are not learning basic math and language skills early on, this affects their future educational attainment and job prospects. Impoverished children are already at a disadvantage at a very young age. Low reading and math levels for eight graders translate into low graduation rates for these students. It is reported three-fourths of White students earn their high school diploma in four years, and one-half of Hispanic and Black students are to be living in poverty. Murnane proposes three solutions to this problem of inequality in the education of the impoverished children. He encourages the federal government to amend the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 to improve the accountability, incentives, and capacity of the No Child Left Behind Act.

Murnane explains that the education of children in poverty could be made equal if Congress increased educational accountability. Congress can improve accountability by amending the No Child Left Behind Act to make performance goals attainable for poor children. If the goals were not based on meeting educational standards, but instead based on the growth in children, then goals would be attainable. This would make the goals attainable, and not just a good idea. Even though children may not be at the exact educational level, growth in their learning could still be evident by making the goals more attainable and accountable.

Another proposed improvement for improving the educational inequality for impoverished children is for Congress to increase the incentives for states to improve impoverished children’s education. By improving education for the poor children, Murnane means teaching children the skills that will be useful after graduation and in the labor market. Instead of having students take exams to graduate and leave high school, the students should be offered exams that could help them receive college credit. If the high school graduation requirements were strengthened to improve students’ success after graduation, then this would possibly lead to the strengthening of lower-level courses in high school to reflect the hard graduation requirements. In the end, this would equate to an education that prepares students better for life after graduation and the work field.

The last recommendation Murnane offers for improving the inequality of education among the poor is to strengthen school’ capacity to educate low-income children. This means teachers need to be able to teach students of low-income backgrounds. Teachers instructing in impoverished communities need to be able to effectively teach important math and reading skills. Also, the best, most effective teachers cannot all be in the more affluent school districts, but instead, in the low-income communities. If anyone needs effective and great teachers, it is the low-income children who are not receiving this critical instruction from their parents. He references a 2004 Teach for America study that compared TFA participants to non-TFA participants. The research proposes that less than four percent of the non-TFA participants graduated from college and were ill-prepared to be teaching students, thus translating to the students only being able to read in the 13th percentile. Murnane proposed programs of professional development in improving the teaching skills of teachers in low-income communities. For schools with the most creative programs, competitive grants will be given, so there is an incentive to develop a teacher improving training.

1. **What is payday lending; give some examples? How does payday lending undermine consumers’ financial stability and trap them in debt? Name and describe briefly 3 policy solutions which, if adopted in Louisiana, could limit the detrimental effects of payday lending.**

Payday lending traps families into cycles of debt. Payday lending are predatory services that people use because they are unaware or ignorant of what they are getting themselves in to. The entire focus of the business is to be vague and non-direct. Payday lenders do not give the full details and explanations behind the loans they are selling to people and omit important information if known then the people would not follow through with the loan. The payday business thrives by not giving any more information than they are required to by law. Payday lending encompasses several types of businesses. Various payday lending businesses include giving customers their tax returns or tax credits early, allowing customers to rent to own cars, furniture, or televisions, and quick credit businesses. It cannot be assumed that only poor or uneducated individuals take out payday loans. Students, middle class families, and the elderly all take out payday loans too.

Payday lending has unaffordable repayment terms of balloon payments, meaning all payments, interest, and fees are due at one point, usually being two weeks. The interest on the payday loans are extremely high, sometimes up to 500%. The payday lenders make the customers postdate the checks till the next time the customers are paid, so the payday lenders deposit the check the night before, ensuring they are paid first. If the customers do not have the money in their accounts to pay the payday lenders back, then their other checks bounce. They are trapped in a cycle of debt, being forced to take out another loan and pay the initial loan, fees, and interest. Payday lending can eventually lead to bankruptcy, loss of bank account, and chronic borrowing.

Because payday lending or predatory lending takes advantage of uninformed citizens, there must be political action taken to limit the detrimental effects of payday lending in Louisiana. Three proposed policy solutions could be adopted to help limit these detrimental effects of payday lending. These three policy solutions include better tracking and reporting of payday lenders, limiting the amount of loans per each person, and limit the annual interest rate to 36%. The first recommendation for a policy solution to payday lending is for increased and better tracking and reporting of payday lenders. This policy solution would help to gather information on how payday lenders function, the amount of their payday transactions, and the background of their customers. Also, this recommendation would help gather information about customer complaints, frequency of loans, and debt. By better tracking and reporting of payday lenders, the payday lenders would be held accountable for their actions. The second recommendation was to limit the amount of loans an individual can take out. This policy solution would encourage people to turn to other means of financial help, besides payday lenders. This recommendation would also help people to not get trapped in the cycle of debt and bankruptcy. The third policy solution for payday lenders is to limit the annual interest rates for payday loans at 36%. Because some annual interest rates can rise to as high as 520%, this policy solution would benefit families and their money tremendously by not gouging them with interest rates. Overall, this limit of 36% annual interest rates would save customers $2 billion each year. In addition, the amount of payday lending establishments in Louisiana would decrease because of the low interest rate number.

1. **We used a couple of phrases repeatedly this week: “budget priorities are policy priorities” or “the real policies of an administration are reflected in the budget decisions they make.” What does this mean? Discuss fully.**

Policy priorities are the top, most important, or key concerns administration will oversee and ensure successful during their work. Budget priorities are the top, most important, or key concerns of administration that they will allocate or cut funding for during their work. Policy priorities and budget priorities should be the same. Candidates, administration, policymakers, and the government all voice their opinions and priorities pertaining to policy. However, the most concrete way to truly know one’s policy priorities is to observe their budget priorities or how they allocate money and funds. Even though administration may claim a particular topic is important and top priority, the real policies of an administration are reflected in the budget decisions they make. This means where people spend their money reveals what their priorities are. Policy priorities are reflected and seen in budget decisions and how administration spends their money, which is then echoed as policy decisions.

 If a candidate running for office claims his top priority is having strong families, then this should be reflected in his budget decisions. If strong families are important to this candidate, then cutting programs or funds for family programs should not be seen in the budget decisions. It is hypocritical to claim families are important and the backbone of our society, but then dry up all of the funds for programs to help and strengthen families. By reviewing a candidate’s or administration’s budget decisions, their priorities are made clear. The budget serves as a type of accountability for administration to uphold their promises and priorities. If strong families are a candidate’s stated policy, then strengthening families should be reflected in the way the candidate uses public resources.

 This same accountability can be seen in policies regarding children, small businesses, and predatory lending. Administration who values children as our future, the success of small businesses, and helping working families succeed and thrive, then this should also be evident in the budget decisions they make. If administration claims children are our future as a top policy priority, then they should not cut funding for early childhood education. If administration values small businesses and their successes, then high taxation and fees cannot be placed on the small businesses making it more difficult for them to succeed then corporations. If administration claims to value the success and strength of working families, then they cannot support and fund predatory lending institutions that create a cycle of debt for poor, working families. All of these policy priorities can be truly seen as candidates’ priorities if they make them budget priorities as well.

1. **What does it mean for a young person in foster care to “age out” of the foster care system? What are some of the challenges faced by youth aging out of foster care? What are the likely outcomes or future scenarios when a young person ages out of foster care? In your opinion and based on class discussions and course content, what could/should be done to support youth aging out of foster care?**

 “Aging out” of the foster care system creates severe problems and concerns for young people. To “age out” of the foster care system means to reach 18 years old and not have a permanent family or place to live. The youth who “age out” have typically been living in the foster care system for years and now, because they are 18, have nowhere to go, not even the foster home anymore. This is a problem for 20,000 youth each year, who “age out” of foster care.

Foster care youth are typically placed in a new home every six months. This creates instability in their lives. Foster care youth who “age out” have increasingly lower rates of high school completion and higher rates of homelessness and crime. Foster youth who “age out” of the system also typically have maladaptive and emotion issues due to abuse and neglect during their lives. The youth who grow up in the foster care system and then “age out” are at greater risks of experiencing higher rates of physical and mental diseases. The average youth who “ages out” of the foster care system will earn about $700 a month, compared to other youths who do not and earn about $1500 a month at the age of 24. Youth who “age out” of the foster care system have higher rates of eventually being homeless and impoverished.

In my opinion, state and federal administration and policymakers need to do more to support the youth that “age out” of the foster care system. Programs that help youth survive and thrive in the “real world” need to be created, so “aging out” youth can be successful after living in the foster care system. The top priority of improving and supporting “aging out” youth is a quality education. These youth need to be taught by intelligent, well-equipped teachers who provide a quality education, so they can succeed after the foster care system. It is crucial for these youth to graduation high school and further their education to a college or university. Programs should be created that help these youth prepare for college and their success after high school. If college is not the right choice for an “aging out” youth, then programs would also be available to help these youth find jobs, apartments, and living successfully on their own. The “aging out” youth are citizens too, that need to be supported so they can be successful after leaving the foster care system.

1. **Summarize and discuss the significance of the case, In re Gault.**

The Supreme Court ruling of in re Gault was a landmark for youth and their rights in 1967. The Supreme Court ruled that juveniles had the right to due process, just as adults do. The right to due process includes the right to be notified in a timely manner of the charges of the juvenile, the right to question the witnesses, the right against self-incrimination, and the right to a lawyer.

Gault, a fifteen year old boy, was taken to a children’s detention home and charged with making inappropriate phone calls to a lady. Gault said his friend made the calls, but they came from the phone number of Gault’s residence. Gault was sentenced to remain at the Arizona State Industrial School as a delinquent juvenile until he reached the age of 21. The case was brought to the State Supreme Court explaining the Arizona Juvenile Code was unconstitutional and Gault was not denied procedural due process. The State Supreme Court ruled the due processes clause was not violated or denied, so the case was brought to the United States Supreme Court.

In a 8-1 U.S. Supreme Court ruling, it was stated that the 14th amendment was violated by sentencing Gault to the State Industrial School until age 21. The due process clause was violated, because Gault was not given the right to a lawyer, not notified of the charges against him, not informed of the right against self-incrimination, and not given the right to question his witnesses. In re Gault 1967, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of juveniles and their right to due process, just like adults, giving juveniles equal due process rights.

1. **In two recent presentations, we were given in-depth information about the systems the state has in place to care for children when, in the opinion of the state, parents are no longer able, fit, or willing to care for their children. It is a gravely serious matter for the state to make such a decision and to disrupt a family by removing a child from his/her home, and the very best care and treatment possible ought to be available. Yet, we heard both systems described as "broken" and we heard about terrible outcomes for a large percentage of the children in each of these systems. Compare and contrast the issues, challenges and problems of the foster care system and the juvenile justice system in Louisiana today.**

In two, different yet similar, systems of the state, juveniles are cared for by the state. These two state systems include the foster care system and the juvenile justice system. When the state feels as if they need to intervene in children’s caregiving, it will only be after the parents have shown an inability to put the child’s best interest first. This is the use of the state’s parens patriae power. The parens patriae power of the state is a limited paternalistic power to promote the wellbeing of certain citizens who lack the capacity to act in their own best interest. In the state’s opinion, parents are no longer seen as able to care for their children, when the state must put the children in the foster care system or the juvenile justice system. This is a serious concern of the state’s, parents’, and juveniles’, because when children are removed from their parents, lasting damage is done. For the decision to be made to disrupt a family bond by removing a juvenile from a household, is detrimental to the psychological well-being of the child. Because the state removes children from their families into the foster care system or the juvenile justice system to be cared and looked over by the state, the state must ensure the very best care is available to the children for the proper and successful growth of the children. However, these two systems of the state are described as “broken” and can lead to detrimental outcomes in children.

Both the foster care system and the juvenile justice system may be a better alternative for children in serious damaging situations. However, when children are removed from the family, the bonds are broken. Both of these state systems force children and parents to break bonds and damage their attachments. Breaking the attachment bond is a grave matter, because this has lasting effects on the child. The state assess each family situation separately, deciding whether the breaking of the family attachment and bonds is of less harm than the harm done to the child by staying in the family. This is a crucial decision, because breaking bonds between parents and children are detrimental for children’s psychological functioning and growth. If the child is in greater harm though by staying in this family situation, then the state will exercise their parens patriae power and remove the child from the home. Because the parens patria power forces the state to take care of the children, there must be a clear and logical reason as to when this power is exercised.

Both systems are also linked, meaning the children who live in foster care are often the same children in the juvenile justice system. Children in both the foster care system and the juvenile justice system have increasingly lower rates of high school completion and higher rates of homelessness and crime. Children from both systems also typically have maladaptive and emotion issues due to abuse and neglect during their lives. These youth are also at greater risks of experiencing higher rates of physical and mental diseases. These are the same children that do not receive a quality education, because growing up in the foster care system or the juvenile justice system is not the best place to learn. This lack of a quality education eventually leads to being underpaid and not finding employment when they get older. This is why children from foster cares, perhaps similar children in the juvenile justice system, earn $700 a month at age 24, compared to their counterparts of an average 24-year-old who earns $1,500 a month. Not only do both systems create detrimental damage to the children they are trying to help, but resources for both the foster care system and the juvenile justice system are being cut. With the care for the children already not being adequate and effective, less resources equates to even less well-equipped care.