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Topic Analysis

Introduction

The final topic of the 2020-21 LD season has been announced. **Resolved: The United States ought to guarantee universal child care.** While it is both timely (child care issues being especially relevant during a year of Covid-19) and rich in literature (education policies are difficult to design in the best of circumstances), this will be a difficult topic depending on the region of the country that one resides in.

For those areas which allow for in-depth discussions of the specifics of policy, there are numerous counterplans and program designs which are possible to occur. However, for those regions the focus more on both holistic discussions of the topic along with restrictions on negative arguments to engage with the topic, there will be more difficulty explaining why the affirmative is not necessary, even if not perfect. Despite this, there is some ways to navigate the situation due to both legislation that is receiving support from both parties in congress as well as a discussion of what it means to be universal for a social program.

Due to this, the advice I'd provide on this topic is to expand one's reading beyond just childcare directly. Most childcare programs in the United states are schools, and because of this, when childcare programs are designed, they are usually educational in nature. The same problems that plague schools are therefore likely to happen for an expansion of childcare, while the solutions that schools have developed (part-magnet schools for example) are also potential solutions to the issues of a purely universal system. This will require, however, an ability to explain both the connections and similarities that are otherwise looked over.

The Problem of Child Care

At the crux of the issue for this topic is that of what to do with children who can't simply be left at a school (or a debate tournament). Due to stagnating wages over the past several decades, the number of dual earning households in the United States has only grown, while simultaneously the income of households has declined in real terms (DeSilver, 2018; Bureau of Labor Statistics 2020). Due to both this, as well as the changes in social views on women in the workforce, there is an increase need for childcare to be provided to allow for parents (or for parent in the case of single-parent households) to be employed.

Simultaneously, there has been an increase in the cost of childcare across the United States, both prior to Covid-19 and after (Haspel, 2019). This is only further complicated by the numerous "childcare deserts", where even if a parent has the resources to afford childcare there are either no programs or no spots within those programs (Covert, 2017). If this were the extent of the issue, there would, perhaps, be solid footing for why childcare can be resolved via incremental changes to the system. Covid-19 has only magnified these disparities though, resulting in the loss of childcare facilities across the country (Covert, 2020). Primarily this has been an acceleration however, a result of low pay, stressful working conditions, and a lack of upward mobility within the childcare market (Covert, 2017).

Due to these concerns, the proposal of universal childcare was adopted by a large number of Democratic primary candidates, while Republicans have begun proposing other potential solutions, with Senator Romney being the most notable supporter (North, 2019; Levitz, 2021). These plans have been analyzed themselves, but are also often juxtaposed against systems in Quebec, Nordic countries, and to a lesser degree with localized programs such as New York City's universal pre-k program (Baker et al., 2008; Leseman & Slot, 2020). None of the existing programs are capable of resolving the entirety of the concerns listed above, but each provides at least an avenue for solving what is one of the largest national concerns in both economic and social terms.

For the affirmative, the best positioned definitions of universal childcare come from proposed legislation in both the House and Senate. The reason for this is that there are a variety of methods to achieve childcare as an option for all, which means operationalized definitions such as that from H.R. 3315, The Universal Child Care and Early Learning Act Bill, provide both a stable point of discussion while also limiting the topic in terms of what actions the affirmative must take. Generally, the goal of universal childcare, as defined by the bill, is to provide an option of childcare support to all families whose children are not currently eligible for school programs. These supports are made to decline as income increases. It should be noted that there are reasons to believe this is not "true" universal childcare as it does not pay for all individuals in the United States. Perhaps the easiest response is that it guarantees that childcare is accessible at a percentage of income, while also ensuring that spots are available for all who wish to access childcare. It is not uncommon for how it offers public assistance for childcare and would not be surprising if it is how most affirmatives approach the topic.

Between the current status of childcare and the ways in which universal childcare has been designed in the world today, the affirmative is positioned to leverage the reality of the situation to almost overwhelming advantage. There are, simply put, few ways to ignore both the economic and social implications of a lack of childcare that are based in a consequential framework. That is before considering that there are, simply put, few reasons to argue that there is no obligation to provide assistance to children absent a critique that goes beyond the resolution alone. Do not read this as there is no reason to believe that universal childcare does not have its share of problems, but rather the lack of investment and solutions over the course of decades has set up a situation where the negative must be prepared to either provide an alternative, or that they are capable of isolating concerns of a relatively large magnitude to have a true possibility of outweighing.

Segregation and Education

Of primary concern for this topic is the existing status of segregation within the United States. Segregation has been on a steady increase for the past century, a division which is reflected in the numerous ways Black and White individuals (as well as Latino/a and other groups) are increasingly divided (Rothstein, 2018). While, to some degree, racial and ethnic enclaves are a natural product of shared cultural and social values and norms, this division has also resulted in segregation within educational systems that are at the highest level since the 1960's (García, 2020). It is unsurprising that such segregation has been replicated within programs in areas such as NYC as a consequence.

This segregation is responsible for the greatest issues that the affirmative must confront. Black, indigenous, and latino/a families are all more likely to live in areas that are childcare deserts and suffer the largest economic penalties for failure to have access childcare (Novoa, 2020). For the negative, it presents an opportunity to challenge the fundamental assumption of the affirmative, that a universal program is capable of resolving an issue of geography as much as resources. Childcare facilities that serve predominantly Black communities are less likely to have the same resources as those which serve White communities, while those that need language services for immigrant populations are sometimes incapable of receiving that support (Butrymowicz & Mader, 2016). Due to this, and the history of underfunding minority-serving institutions throughout the United States, it is a more than reasonable question of whether the affirmative can expect for its program to differ in a significant way.

Alternatives

This issue is what drives many of the alternative programs to universal childcare. These are generally able to be sorted into three categories: cash, means-tested, targeted. The first is perhaps the simplest to deploy, especially for those who have files from the federal jobs guarantee topic or were debaters during the universal basic income topic, if the problem is cost, give the families money. While this is certainly not the most unusual solution, it is important to note that the average cost of childcare in the United States is prohibitively high, and therefore the cash allowance would also be sizeable. Elliot Haspel argues in *Crawling Behind: America's Child Crisis and How to Fix It* (recommended for both an overview of the childcare crisis and his advocacy), that it would need to be on an order of \$10,000 to \$15,000 per child. Understandably, this is a sum of money that many counterplans may default to not accepting, but at that point it is difficult to see how it is capable of working against the affirmative.

The second is more reminiscent of the affirmative as defined above. The question therefore pivots to a discussion of how to organize means-testing. What makes this difficult is that there are relatively few debates/discussions on what specifically is the manner of means-testing one should employ. Both Senator's Sanders and Warren call for either a raise in taxes on wealth (in effect doing means-testing through whether one qualifies through this tax) or through a decline in subsidies as income increases. Due to this, the actual ways in which the resolution would happen most likely already include the means-testing. This is prior to the various examples of means-testing programs largely missing their target population and therefore preventing the assistance from getting to those who are most in need (Rice et al., 2019)

The third option is the one that is included in the negative below. Universal programs such as public education generally present an issue when combined with private markets. Either one, they are highly efficient and quality programs due to their location in neighborhoods rich in resources but inaccessible to those most in need, or two, those who have resources utilize them to leave the public system towards the private while also attracting the most qualified workers to move out of the public sphere as well. Targeted programs aim to confront this by explicitly and deliberately designing systems that preclude market forces (Leseman & Slot, 2020). Within education research, the most notable are partial-magnet schools, which work to attract more

resources while also bringing together individuals from low-socioeconomic backgrounds. Childcare programs can also be designed to sit in areas that would force integration, or through other methods be made less broad based and more deliberate in terms of resolving the issues of that the affirmative has positioned (Jacobson, 2019).

Each of these policies are aimed towards decreasing the total supply provided for childcare (if not eliminating the support for public if it is not of high enough quality), avoiding many of the criticisms that exist concerning the Quebec and other programs (Baker et al., 2018). That being said, the negative must be cognizant of the reality of the world. There are reasons why childcare ought to be better and more regulated, but it is difficult to articulate how those same complications do not exist in a world where parents must balance childcare and work on their own. If a structure which is fully funded cannot provide the best support, is it possible to argue that parents who are stretched in multiple directions are somehow able to manage better on their own? It is certainly true that some parents would rather stay home than work, but that is not the same as arguing that them staying home with only marginal support is better than an imperfect system without running aground on the problems that the affirmative will isolate in most rounds.

Spending

Outside of concerns about the specifics of universal childcare, the other common argument against it boils down to spending. Concerns about the deficit have begun resurfacing following the passage of the last covid-19 relief, and the arguments for constraining spending (either now or following the \$1.9 trillion bill being considered now in Congress) are growing (source). While this is the case though, it is also difficult to articulate the argument about spending in a manner which is wholly consistent with the reality of the federal budget.

Projection by the CBO are already indicating the deficit will be at its largest amount in history by 2031 of 107% (Congressional Budget Office, 2021). At the same time, interest rates are low enough that servicing the debt (paying interest) is lower than it was during the 90's (Pandit, 2021). Combined, there is little reason to believe that the affirmative is a unique cause of the expanding deficit, nor that the economic harms caused by the loss of childcare are not significant enough to cause a need for investment. This is prior to the common issue of this argument throughout the years, that of often being justified after judges have examined whether they approve of the resolution as a whole. That being said, the consequences of a debt/fiscal crisis should not be understated. Social programs would not be sustainable, nor private sector growth and jobs, if a major debt crisis were to occur, the problem is with when and if such an event would materialize specifically due to the resolution itself (Amadeo, 2021).

Conclusion

Hopefully this resolution proves to be fruitful for those ending their season with it. While it is one that is of interest to me due to my own research interests, it is also one which is difficult to navigate without some attention given to the specifics of different programs and methods. As a consequence, it may serve well for national qualifiers as there will be a larger reward for those debaters who are able to get deeper into the literature, while also providing a large base of easier to access argumentation to allow for those still learning the event to participate as well.

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Cases

Affirmative

I affirm, Resolved: The United States ought to guarantee universal child care.

Definitions

The properties of universal child care is defined in the Universal Child Care and Early Learning Act Bill in 2019.

Universal Child Care and Early Learning Act, H.R. 3315, 116th Congress (2019-2020)

This bill provides funds to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for an affordable child care and early learning program. **Children who are at least six weeks of age but not yet required to attend school may participate in the program regardless of family income, disability status, citizenship status, or employment of a family member.** Under the program, HHS must support sponsors (e.g., states, local governments, tribal organizations, and nonprofit community organizations) that provide child care and early learning services for families. **Families must pay a subsidized fee, based on their income, for the services. The fees are waived for children from families with incomes below 200% of the poverty line. The fees are capped at 7% of a family's income regardless of the family's income level.**

Value/Criterion

Social Equality is promoted by countries which adopt public support for child care.

Borchorst, Anette, and Birte Siim 08. "Woman-friendly policies and state feminism: Theorizing Scandinavian gender equality." *Feminist theory* 9.2 (2008): 207-224. Accessed: 2/14/21, IM

Social equality became a core value of the Scandinavian countries (comprising Sweden, Norway and Denmark) **during the 20th century, and the welfare states were expanded because of broad compromises between the political parties supported by the social partners. The social democratic parties led the way towards the adoption of redistribution policies aimed at alleviating class differences. Feminist organizations argued for gender equality with a certain success**, and in the 1970s and 1980s, when many forces pulled in the direction of integrating women into the labour force, **a number of policies were adopted to strengthen women's access to the public sphere. This development was conceptualized as 'a passion for equality' and, along the same lines, Norwegian political scientist Helga Hernes concluded that the Scandinavian welfare states might become 'woman-friendly' and 'state feminist'** (1987: 9–29). She emphasized that **these countries adopted welfare policies, such as generous parental leave schemes and extensive public care services for children and the elderly, and had a relatively high political representation of women that allowed them to influence political decisions.** Our overall concern in this article is to reflect upon the potential of Hernes' ideas for understanding the far-reaching changes in the Scandinavian gendered welfare policy models and their normative value as visions of gender equality. In the first part, we compare Hernes' concepts with other theoretical approaches such as Yvonne Hirdman's theory of the gender system and Nancy Fraser's normative theory of justice. We discuss the underlying theoretical, political and normative assumptions about gender equality and social justice related to dimensions such as redistribution, recognition and representation.

Equality requires nations to take steps to defend the rights of women and make it so they don't face greater sacrifices.

Borchorst, Anette, and Birte Siim 08. "Woman-friendly policies and state feminism: Theorizing Scandinavian gender equality." *Feminist theory* 9.2 (2008): 207-224. Accessed: 2/14/21, IM (ellipses included in the original text)

The concept of woman-friendliness was coined by **Norwegian political scientist Hernes** in the late 1980s. She **defines woman-friendly states as such: A woman-friendly state would enable women to have a natural relationship to their children, their work and public life . . . A woman-friendly state would not force harder choices on women than on men, or permit unjust treatment on the basis of sex. In a woman-friendly state women will continue to have children, yet there will also be other roads to self-realization open to them. In such a state women will not have to choose futures that demand greater sacrifices from them than are expected of men.** (1987: 15)

This definition underlines the significance of reproduction and women's options compared to men's. Hernes also challenges the universal approach to the state that had characterized feminist theory and the rather pessimistic conclusions that had been reached by feminist scholars like Fraser (1986) and Carol Pateman (1989) about the patriarchal nature of the welfare state. Hernes' arguments for Scandinavian exceptionalism resonated with the development in welfare state research at large, which took a comparative turn during the late 1980s and early 1990s. **This development implied increasing academic attention to differences between welfare states and the role of politics for institutionalizing specific welfare and gender models.** It is, however, noteworthy that almost at the same time, Swedish historian Hirdman (1990) reached conclusions about the development in the Swedish welfare state that contrasted starkly with Hernes' analysis. **In the Swedish power study, Hirdman argued that the gender system had remained intact because of its two operating logics: gender segregation and hierarchy based upon a male norm.** Scandinavian feminist theory scholars commonly depict Hirdman and Hernes as the pessimist Cassandra versus the optimist Pollyanna, but Hirdman (1996) has questioned this interpretation. She gives an account of their different conclusions about the Scandinavian development that stresses the difference between her emphasis on the labour market and Hernes' preoccupation with the welfare state. **It is true that Hernes was very pessimistic about the potential for achieving gender equality in the market, but another interpretation is that the opposing conclusions are attributable to the fact that Hernes highlights the role of women's agency, whereas Hirdman downplays the significance of actors and underlines the role of structures of the gender system.** For Hirdman, the latter operates according to two logics: gender segregation and hierarchy based on a male norm. In this way, Hernes and Hirdman also represent two extremes in the long-standing debate in social science about structure and agency. Today, **there is widespread consensus that both dimensions matter and that they are mutually constituted, but there is no agreement about how they interact or the role of state institutions in reproducing or diminishing gender inequality.** Both Hernes and Hirdman ignore the fact that gender inequalities intersect with other types of differentiations, such as class and ethnicity. The concepts of woman-friendliness and the gender system were both based on the premise that women have common and collective interests. Hernes did, however, emphasize **that a woman-friendly welfare state was 'a state where injustice on the basis of gender would be largely eliminated without an increase in other forms of inequality, such as among groups of women'** (1987: 15). She did not elaborate, however, on whether and how differences among women would occur, and by which dynamics. At the time, immigration had not yet become a political problem and a key issue in the public debates in Scandinavia. It is questionable whether different groups of women may have interests in a diversity of care policies and care arrangements, which accentuates the issue of options that was central to Hernes' concept of woman-friendliness. **A central argument in Hernes' conception of Scandinavia's potential for woman-friendliness was that the boundary between the public and the private had undergone a marked change owing to the expansion of public care policies. In this way, she contributed to a rethinking of the public-private split, which has been a**

dominant theme in feminist thought about citizenship and power. Feminist scholarship in Anglo-Saxon countries, which have been permeated by a liberal ideology, has argued that a public-private dichotomy, especially with regard to the division between family and state, has cemented a patriarchal order. Further, it has formed a barrier to women's full citizenship, because women and men have been incorporated in different ways as citizens (Pateman, 1989;

Lister, 2003).

Contention 1: Access

Public investment is necessary, recent increases in enrollment have hidden the disparities in quality of care, and that care needs more funding in order to improve, not less.

Taryn **Morrissey 20**, February 18, 2020, "Addressing the need for affordable, high-quality early childhood care and education for all in the United States," Equitable Growth, <https://equitablegrowth.org/addressing-the-need-for-affordable-high-quality-early-childhood-care-and-education-for-all-in-the-united-states/>, Accessed: 2/11/21, IM

Public investments in preschool contribute to dramatic increases in participation in early learning programs in the year or two prior to children's entry into kindergarten. Whereas in 1970, about 1.09 million (27 percent) 3- to 5-year old children in the United States attended preschool, by 2016, 4.701 million (60 percent) were enrolled.²⁹ **Yet these overall rates mask disparities in attendance. While income-based gaps in enrollment in preschool narrowed in recent decades, children in low-income families continue to be less likely to attend center-based care than their higher-income peers.**³⁰ As shown in Figure 1, among children under age 5 with employed mothers, only 28 percent of those in homes under the poverty line attend center-based care, versus 39 percent of those above the poverty line. **This is problematic, as center-based settings tend to provide higher-quality, more stable care, on average, than unregulated arrangements.**³¹ **Further, centers that low-income children attend provide lower quality care, on average, than those attended by their higher-income peers.**³² **Research shows that higher-income families are enrolling children in formal early care and education programs at increasingly younger ages.**³³ In 2005, for example, 22 percent of 1-year-olds from families with incomes above 200 percent of the federal poverty line (at that time, about \$32,000 per year for a family of three) attended center-based settings, compared to just 11 percent of 1-year-olds from families with incomes below 200 percent of the federal poverty line.³⁴ **Our system's reliance on private family investment in early childhood is a driver of inequality, putting children on unequal playing fields well before they walk through the doors of their kindergarten classrooms.**³⁵ **Despite their high expense, early care and education programs should actually cost more, not less.** The quality of early care and education depends on the warmth and responsiveness of teachers and caregivers and on the strength and consistency of caregiver-child relationships, which means **economies of scale do not apply to childcare in the same way as with other economic sectors.** For good reason, state and local regulations set child-adult ratios and group sizes and teacher training requirements. In turn, most childcare costs are directed to labor expenses.³⁶

A failure to find childcare complicates every aspect of life, with parents of children with disabilities reporting greater financial strain and health challenges.

Novoa 20, Cristina (senior policy analyst for Early Childhood Policy at the Center for American Progress). “The Child Care Crisis Disproportionately Affects Children With Disabilities.” Center for American Progress. January 29 2020. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/early-childhood/reports/2020/01/29/479802/child-care-crisis-disproportionately-affects-children-disabilities/>

This report examines families’ child care experiences when they have children ages 0 to 5 with disabilities and offers policy solutions that are critical to supporting these families. Although the term “disability” applies to a diverse community of individuals representing a broad array of conditions and experiences, people with disabilities often face similar barriers to full participation in social programs and institutions, including child care. Using quantitative data from two nationally representative surveys—the 2016 Early Childhood Program Participation Survey (ECP) and a combined sample of the 2016–2018 National Survey of Children’s Health (NSCH)—as well as qualitative interviews conducted in fall 2019 from a diverse sample of parents across the United States, the report’s analyses demonstrate that families face significant obstacles to finding appropriate child care arrangements. (see Appendix for full methodology) **To ensure their children’s care, parents develop complicated arrangements involving formal and informal caregivers, often with significant consequences for careers, financial well-being, and family life.** Key findings from the analysis include: ECP data show that, **compared with parents of nondisabled children, a larger proportion of parents with disabled children experience at least some difficulty finding care** (34 percent vs. 25 percent) **and are unable to find care** (34 percent vs. 28 percent). Both ECP survey data and interview data show that parents face numerous barriers to care, including a lack of available slots, scheduling challenges, and concerns about quality. **Interviewed parents reported patching together help from extended family, child care centers, special education preschool, and nurses and home health aides, as well as making significant changes to their jobs to provide care.** An analysis of NSCH data shows that, compared with parents of nondisabled children, parents of young children with disabilities are three times more likely to experience job disruptions because of problems with child care. **The consequences of not finding care extend far beyond job disruptions; many interviewed parents reported greater financial strain, health challenges, and increased stress.** **It is important to note that families in which parents are themselves disabled face additional barriers to care. Although this report focuses only on children with disabilities, future research is needed to fully understand these families’ experiences.**

Quality child care relies on high wages for staff that can't be afforded through parent fees alone. States with failing grades have had children die due to the lack of standards and support for these facilities.

Bryce **Covert 17**, 1-25-2017, "Having a Child Will Bankrupt You," ELLE, <https://www.elle.com/culture/career-politics/a42230/cost-of-child-care/>, Accessed: 2/12/21, IM

There's a consensus that K-12 education is a public good, says Marcy Whitebook, director of the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment at the University of California, Berkeley. But we thrust younger kids into a market-based system with just a smattering of public funds. **Nearly all the money for early education has to come from parents. "You can't fund this on parents alone and support a high-quality, well-paid staff,"** Helen Blank, director of child care and early learning at the National Women's Law Center, says. **If there's not enough coming into the system, then pay and standards have to be lowered.** Meanwhile, it's difficult to find ways to cut costs or increase efficiency. **Child care is labor intensive—it requires an adult-to-child ratio that can't be reduced.** Most of the other costs, such as space, are fixed. **There are a certain number of constraints in this sector that don't allow for the kinds of efficiencies you'd look for in other sectors,"** says Vivien Labaton, cofounder of the campaign Make It Work. **Wages for those in the industry are already very low. The median pay for child care providers is under \$10 an hour across the country—less than the wages of people who care for zoo animals or pets and about on par with parking lot attendants and fast food workers. Preschool teachers fare a bit better at just under \$14 an hour. And growth in both groups' compensation has long stagnated even as fees climb.** "There's this huge disconnect between the importance of the work that child care providers are doing and what they're paid," Labaton says. And low pay for providers creates a huge problem. **A landmark 1989 study determined that the best predictor of high-quality child care was high wages for the staff.** Overall, though, American child care is of pretty dismal quality. Less than 10 percent were deemed high quality in a 2007 survey. **Another report from 2013 gave no states an A or B grade for their health and safety standards in day care centers. Most earned either a D or failing. These environments can lead to unspeakable tragedies—at least 45 children died in Missouri day cares between 2007 and 2010. Even families who can afford child care might not be able to get it,** as Gonzalez found out when she was offered the marketing job. **Many centers are simply full; in other places, they don't exist. In a study of eight states, the Center for American Progress found that more than 40 percent of children live in what it calls "child care deserts," or zip codes where there are either no day care centers or more than three times as many children under the age of five as there are available spots.** "Your chances of getting a high-quality program for even six hours a day at [age] four are less than one in ten," says W. Steven Barnett, director of the National Institute for Early Education Research at Rutgers University.

Contention 2: Equity

Covid-19 Pandemic demonstrated the difference between universal child care being offered and removed. Implementing a program for all children would boost womens' participation in the labor force.

Covert 20, Bryce (contributor at The Nation and a contributing op-ed writer at The New York Times). "We Can't Save the Economy Without Universal Child Care." The Nation. April 17 2020. <https://www.thenation.com/article/economy/child-care-economy-coronavirus/>

I've worked from home for seven years, but my workday is now punctuated by new sounds: the clamor of little feet and loud voices as my young upstairs neighbors learn from home. **Every state has closed schools in response to the coronavirus outbreak; some are not resuming the academic year. That has sent at least 55.1 million students home. But many parents have come to count on school as a form of child care while they go to their jobs. Both parents work in nearly two-thirds of married couples with children under the age of 18, and about three-quarters of single mothers and 84 percent of single fathers do.** That's 22.6 million families that now have nowhere to send their children. If parents are lucky enough to have a job that lets them work from home, they're doing so with children, who need a watchful eye and, if possible, something enriching to do. Things are even harder for anyone who still has to leave the house to go to work. **Those people are now scrambling to find backup child care arrangements to keep their kids safe. We don't normally think of public school as child care, but schools are generally a safe place for children when their parents go to work.** We have lots of evidence that offering something similar for children at younger ages would allow even more people to be employed. And now **we're witnessing the terrifying opposite: what happens to parents—and the economy—when free, accessible, quality child care is yanked away.** One of the older examples of the economic benefits of offering inexpensive, universal care for young children comes from Canada. **After the province of Quebec instituted a universal child care program in 1997, its share of working women ages 26 to 44 reached close to 85 percent, the highest in the world. The increased number of women in the workforce elevated tax revenues so much that the program essentially pays for itself now.** Here in the US, Washington, DC, has been working toward something similar. In 2009 the city started offering free, universal preschool, which is now available for kids ages 3 to 4. The program increased the labor force participation rate for women with young children by 10 percentage points. **You can dig back into US history to see a similar impact. During World War II, the federal government ran universal, low-cost child care for the Rosie's going into factories as riveters. Where it was available, women were more likely to work and to work longer hours. But that program ended when the war did, and the US hasn't had universal child care since.** We know our economy is suffering for it. The labor force participation rate for women in the US has fallen behind that of other developed countries, thanks, in part, to our lack of investment in early care. **In 2016 alone, nearly 2 million parents with children age 5 or younger quit their jobs, turned down offers, or significantly changed their work arrangements because they had problems getting child care. The burden falls hardest on women, who are still expected to be the primary caregivers.** Mothers who can't find child care are significantly less likely to be employed than those who can. **Tens of millions of parents of older children whose schools have closed have now joined their ranks. Their options are bleak. Since older people are at higher risk of complications from Covid-19, grandparents can't help. If child care centers are open, they're likely to be serving only essential workers.** Many parents are trying to continue to work and care for their children at the same time—an arrangement that has health experts predicting a spike in pediatric injuries, given that there's only so much attention a person has to split between work and child care. **It's unclear how long our political and business leaders can keep pretending that everything is normal and that parents can work as they did before without**

anyone else to watch their kids. Eventually, the crisis will pass, and schools will reopen. But when they do, we shouldn't forget this painful lesson: A smoothly functioning economy is one in which people who want to work can do so. Affordable and accessible child care plays an enormous role in making that a reality. It's just as true for infants and toddlers as it is for middle and high schoolers. Just as we've made public school available to all, we should make free, high-quality care for children age 5 or younger available to all parents, too.

Provision of child care is critical to an intersectional approach to equity. Race, class, and gender are all factors into the effects of a lack of childcare.

Lynn Chancer 19, 5-6-2019, "Revisiting and Fulfilling the Feminist Promise of Universal Day Care," Gender Policy Report, <https://genderpolicyreport.umn.edu/revisiting-and-fulfilling-the-feminist-promise-of-universal-day-care/>, Accessed: 2/10/21, IM

American, second-wave feminism immediately brings to mind fights over abortion, violence against women, and sexual objectification (notably, the protests at the 1968 Miss America pageant in Atlantic City). **Much less frequently remembered is that early liberal and radical feminists — many of whom were involved in starting the National Organization of Women (NOW) — saw the provision of affordable and high-quality universal daycare as a major sine qua non of “women’s liberation.”** Why? And what happened to strip this vital issue out of politicians’ platforms and feminist cultural discourse (let alone feminist activism en masse)? **For those who have children, daycare access (or lack thereof) poses ongoing and significant burdens.** Relatives may or may not be available to take care of children when they are too young to go to school. **Daycare may be unaffordable; it may corral an unjustifiable portion of a parent’s income than can be justified when weighed against possible work earnings or the attainment of educational degrees.** Parents may not know how to find a good provider for their children (a problem easily rectifiable if quality public options were available and publicized). **As feminists grow more attuned to concerns about intersectionality — namely, how race and class, among other social differences, compound gender-based concerns — the lack of universal, high-quality daycare in the United States has begun to highlight the effects of growing socioeconomic inequalities on and between women and families.** Middle- and upper-class women may be able to afford to hire a “private” childcare provider (or “nanny”), but this option is laughable for most of those situated at the working-class and poorer ends of the American economic spectrum. Today, then, **scholars like the contributors in this series can point to the most advanced industrial countries and the host of social assistance they provide for family support — from generous parental leave to excellent daycare for pre-school children.** That the United States does not provide such comprehensive support makes it an outlier among socially wealthy countries. And **it is a problem that, in turn, may well affect other “outlier” statistics related to women’s ability to achieve full and equal public participation.** For example, whereas the United States was relatively ahead of other countries in the 1970s in terms of women serving in national legislatures, by 2019 the Inter-Parliamentary Union reported that this figure had declined sharply — to a hard-to-believe 78th in the world, lagging behind Europe and Afghanistan. What happened, and what can be done to reverse this worrisome gender-related trend that led to my diagnosing a “rise and stall of American feminism” from the 1980s through the 2010s? In referring to a “rise and stall,” I focus on how, **with regard to politics but also other issues like reproductive justice (i.e., access to abortions), feminist progress began to plateau or even decline in the 2010s.** However, I went on to call my recent book **After the Rise and Stall of American Feminism** because this trend is now reversing: the #MeToo movement may well have initiated a new burst of feminist activism and cultural consciousness with its focus on the problems of sexual harassment and violence against women across lines like class, race, sexuality, and age. As I investigate in **The Rise and Fall of American Feminism**, **this may owe to another set of increasingly outdated divides between “bread and butter” economic and cultural “sexuality” related issues** for which feminists have often advocated separately. **Now, as thinkers and activists identify and collapse such divisions, we seem to have a chance to actualize, address, and redress a gamut of multi-faceted concerns. Feminist policymakers, sociologists, economists, and legislators have made good headway in advocating for, and attaining, better parental leave in some places in the United States; in New York City, for example, universal pre-K became guaranteed for all families in 2017, under Mayor Bill DiBlasio.** Still, it is clear that far more needs to be done to realize what early second-wave feminists envisioned: all

women and families having the means to meet their desires for full social and economic participation and for taking unequivocally good care of their family and dependents.

Racial inequality starts at childhood, with black students facing a litany of worse outcomes due to a lack of equal childcare. We have an obligation to confront this discrimination.

Save the Children 21, "Why Fighting Racial Injustice Must Begin in Childhood,"

<https://www.savethechildren.org/us/charity-stories/statement-on-racial-injustice>, Accessed: 2/15/21, IM

In the United States, racism has existed overtly for centuries, and tacitly for decades. It is built into the very structures that should be designed to serve and support children.

Black children in America suffering disproportionately from poor health, hunger, inadequate education and violence. Black babies in America are more than twice as likely to die before their first birthday as white babies. Black babies are more than 3 times as likely to die from complications related to prematurity as compared to white babies.

U.S. maternal mortality rates for Black women are 3 times as high as rates for white women. **Research by the National**

Black Child Development Institute has shown that Black children do not have equal access to high-quality early education and are suspended or expelled from programs at higher rates

than any other race. Black students are twice as likely as their white peers not to graduate

high school on time. Black children are 3 times as likely to live in poverty as white children.

Black children are 8 times as likely to be murdered as white children. Without access to early

education, children are more likely to drop out of school, become a teen parent, never attend

college and be arrested for a violent crime – perpetuating the cycle of poverty. Black children

are being held back from the start and this is unacceptable. Powerful institutions must do

more to confront and challenge racial discrimination and the structures that perpetuate it. Each

of us has a role to play in ending systemic discrimination and institutionalized racism. **We must all listen and educate**

ourselves, each other and our children, and vote at all levels to support those who will stand

up to injustice and actively fight inequality.

Negative

I negate, Resolved: The United States ought to guarantee universal child care.

Definitions

The properties of universal child care is defined in the Universal Child Care and Early Learning Act Bill in 2019.

Universal Child Care and Early Learning Act, H.R. 3315, 116th Congress (2019-2020)

This bill provides funds to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for an affordable child care and early learning program. **Children who are at least six weeks of age but not yet required to attend school may participate in the program regardless of family income, disability status, citizenship status, or employment of a family member.** Under the program, HHS must support sponsors (e.g., states, local governments, tribal organizations, and nonprofit community organizations) that provide child care and early learning services for families. **Families must pay a subsidized fee, based on their income, for the services. The fees are waived for children from families with incomes below 200% of the poverty line. The fees are capped at 7% of a family's income regardless of the family's income level.**

Value/Criterion

Government policies directly impact the well-being of citizens, and which is the primary value of today's debate round.

Dumont 18, (Marie, 3-20-2018, Research assistant at the Library of Parliament for Canada)"Well-being in Public Policy: Should Governments Worry about Happiness?," HillNotes, <https://hillnotes.ca/2018/03/20/well-being-in-public-policy-should-governments-worry-about-happiness/>

Research is increasingly showing a link between government policies and well-being. The quality of government policies regarding poverty and inequality, and environmental protection are an important factor in improving a country's well-being. In 2015, world leaders adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN's 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda to promote the adoption of government policies that correlate with improving happiness and well-being. **The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) also acknowledges that "there is more to life than the cold numbers of GDP and economic statistics". The organization says that public policy should be informed by statistics that reflect quality of life factors including trust, voter turnout, unemployment and environmental degradation.**

My Criterion is Pragmatism.

Zittoun 2014, Philippe. The political process of policymaking: A pragmatic approach to public policy. Springer, 2014. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Philippe_Zittoun/publication/304817686_Creating_Social_Disorder_Constructing_Propagating_and_Politicising_Social_Problems/links/5bc47e1e299bf1004c5f88d4/Creating-Social-Disorder-Constructing-Propagating-and-Politicising-Social-Problems.pdf IM

According to Charles Peirce, **pragmatism is primarily a method that clarifies concepts.** He therefore proposes a **“pragmatic maxim” based on the expected practical effects: “Consider what effects, that might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to have.** Then, our conception of these effects is the whole of our conception of the object” (Peirce, 1878, p. 286). Consequently, Peirce argues that the concept “hard” in “a diamond is hard” suggests a specific practice, that of scratching a diamond against other substances in order to materialise this hardness by observing the effects of this scratching. In other words, according to Peirce, **the meaning of a concept can only be measured by its uses and the identification of its practical consequences.** This method is therefore less interested in defining truth than in proposing the conditions for its validity. This means that we should avoid considering concepts as having their own internal meaning to which we can gain access through intuition, but rather, identify a series of **operations with practical results.** As Stéphane Maldérieux summarises, no idea is clear in itself and by itself, but it becomes clear if we develop it taking into account its practical effects (James, 1995). From this perspective, **pragmatists oppose metaphysics and sciences, which have established a method that makes it possible to translate a concept into an experimental protocol. They would like philosophy to follow the same path as experimental sciences by testing concepts. It is here that positivism and pragmatism meet through their desire to take interest only in what is verifiable.** William James positioned pragmatism as a new avenue which made it possible to move away from the then dominant debate opposing empiricism and rationalism. While empiricism is only interested in facts, rationalism takes an interest in the logic of reason. For the former, religion is inconceivable while for the latter, all thought presupposes an initial and transcending concept. For James, the pragmatist method makes it possible to overcome this opposition which he qualifies as sterile. To do this, he suggests implementing a method which makes it possible to distinguish between concepts based on their practical consequences on reality. Seen in this light, religion is conceivable because it clearly has practical consequences within society (James, 1995). According to James, **pragmatism is, first and foremost, a method that avoids philosophical categories of thought and turns towards the observation of consequences. This pragmatic approach by consequences is essential provided that it is clearly distinguished from a pragmatic approach by outcomes. Roberto Frega (Frega, 2006) differentiates pragmatic action which involves an action carried out depending on known and predictable outcomes, from the pragmatist action which involves determining the meaning of actions based on consequences which are unknown and which are not specified solely by intentions**

Contention 1: Segregation

New York City proves that universal childcare does not mean equitable child care, with only one in five classrooms being racially or ethnically diverse.

Halley **Potter 19**, 10-1-2019, "In the Fight for School Integration, Don't Forget Early Education," Century Foundation, <https://tcf.org/content/commentary/fight-school-integration-dont-forget-early-education/?agreed=1&session=1>, Accessed: 2/15/21, IM

New data analysis out this week from Urban Institute researchers Erica Greenberg and Tomas Monarrez shows that early childhood settings are among the most racially segregated educational spaces in our country. Greenberg and Monarrez looked at data for all center-based and home-based early childhood programs enrolling at least five children, from birth to preschool, included in the federally funded 2012 National Survey of Early Care and Education. This includes day care centers, private preschools, public pre-K, and Head Start programs, as well as family child care providers, nannies, and informal care arrangements such as a relative or neighbor providing child care for children. Using the "index of dissimilarity"—a measure of how many children from one group would have to move programs in order to create an even distribution of children from two different groups (in this case, looking at a combined group of black and Latinx students versus all other students)—the researchers compared levels of segregation in early childhood settings versus elementary, middle, and high schools. Based on this measure, the researchers found that early childhood education was 13 percent more segregated than elementary school education, and 20 percent more segregated than high school education. This is deeply troubling, because elementary school and high school education are themselves already incredibly segregated. These high levels of racial segregation in early childhood education are likely in large part byproducts of the socioeconomic segregation that occurs for households raising children. **The early education landscape in the United States is severely fractured, with many low-income families placing their children in publicly funded programs with strict income cut-offs, while higher-income families are placing their children in private programs that are unaffordable for working families. Moreover, even when all families have access to universal public early education, such as through state or city universal pre-K programs, racial segregation levels can still be high.** For example, although **New York City's recently implemented universal pre-K program enrolls an overall racially and ethnically diverse student body, analysis of enrollment data for the first year of the newly expanded program (2014–2015) reveals that most pre-K classrooms are not reflective of such diversity. In fact, one-sixth of all pre-K classrooms have enrollments where more than 90 percent of students come from the same racial or ethnic group, and just one in five classrooms is highly racially diverse, with no racial or ethnic group comprising more than 50 percent of enrollment.**

Even with direct state regulation child care centers are biased along class and racial lines, disadvantaging those who are most in need of more resources.

Sarah **Butrymowicz** and Jackie **Mader 16**, 3-6-2016, "The race problem in Mississippi daycares," Hechinger Report, <https://hechingerreport.org/the-race-problem-in-mississippi-daycares/> Accessed: 2/10/21, IM

At a child care center in Clinton, children spend their days in colorful classrooms, supervised by qualified lead teachers, all of whom have college degrees. During outdoor time, the children can run up and down a grassy hill, explore a sensory herb garden, or play on a playground that cost roughly \$180,000 to build. About 10 miles away at a daycare center in North Jackson, the classrooms are also stocked with toys and books, thanks to a nonprofit program, but caregivers only need a high school diploma. Outside, children can play with hula-hoops or bounce balls on the side of the building. Playground equipment is too expensive. Most of the children at the Clinton center are white; the Jackson center enrolls predominantly black children. **Child care advocates in the state worry that the effects of decades of extreme poverty among black Mississippians and a history fraught with racial tension have trickled down into child care centers, disproportionately impacting black children. In visits to 30 child care centers in central Mississippi, reporters saw centers split along lines of race and class, and plagued by the same problems that affect the state's racially and economically divided public schools. The range of quality in the state's 1,521 licensed centers is not neatly divided or easily quantified:** many centers that serve mostly black children are rated highly, while some centers that serve white children do worse on quality rankings. But there is a direct link between how much parents can pay and how much a child care center can charge that, in turn, dictates the size of daycare budgets for salaries and supplies. **Many centers serving low-income black children can't offer the same resources as those that cater to middle- and upper-middle class white children, such as expensive playgrounds, highly educated teachers or lower-than-required staff-to-child ratios. Advocates say the system frequently shortchanges both the disadvantaged children it should serve and the providers who struggle to keep their businesses running.** Children who most need the support quality child care can provide may not get it and providers may be penalized for failing to meet state standards set by the Department of Health, but receive little to no help from the state in making improvements.

Contention 2: Targeted Programs

The best path forward is to implement a program which is targeted to specific regions, allowing for a universal provision for those most in need. This both maintains high quality and quantity, while avoiding subsidizing high income groups.

Leseman, Paul PM, and Pauline L. Slot, 20. "Universal versus targeted approaches to prevent early education gaps: The Netherlands as case in point." Zeitschrift für Erziehungswissenschaft 23.3 (2020): 485-507. Accessed: 2/15/21, IM

Targeted policy and targeted programs **Targeted programs, according to a review, are most costs-effective and lead to lower macro-costs** (Akgündüz et al. 2015) **and, also important to consider, support a more fair distribution of society's collective wealth, because targeted programs redistribute collective tax money to those most in need** (Bartik 2014; Van Lancker and Van Mechelen 2015). **Investment in universal provision, in contrast, benefits also non-disadvantaged children, the more so, the more these children make use of the provision relative to children from disadvantaged groups, which is usually the case in full-day childcare** (Van Lancker and Ghysels 2012; Van Huizen and Akgündüz 2016). A different, but related finding is reported by Blanden et al. (2016) who analyzed the effects of the introduction of 12.5 h **free ECEC provision for all children in the UK in the period 2002–2007, as an instance of universal ECEC policy**. Using school readiness and school achievement register data, the authors **report** only small, smaller than expected, positive effects of the expansion on children at primary school entrance which disappeared by age 7. The explanation, according to Blanden and colleagues, is **that the extra funding led to only a small increase in use of ECEC in places and even less in hours, but instead mainly replaced privately funded ECEC use by publicly funded use, benefitting the higher income groups most who already used ECEC but on their own costs**. There are important caveats to targeted programs too. **Targeted programs tend to strengthen segregation tendencies (admitting children from disadvantaged backgrounds only) and to lead to concentration of disadvantages in centers and classrooms** (Vandenbroeck 2015). This limits the opportunities for disadvantaged children to learn from non-disadvantaged children, for example children who are relatively skilled speakers of the national language (Henry and Rickman 2007; Justice et al. 2011; De Haan et al. 2013; Reid and Ready 2013; Weiland and Yoshikawa 2014), increases the load put on teachers (Lee et al. 1998), lowers achievement standards and teacher expectations (Agirdag et al. 2012), may not attract the best teachers or be simply less academically focused (Cascio 2017; however see for counter-evidence Dotterer et al. 2013). The major caveat concerns the definition of 'disadvantaged' and the boundaries that are set to the groups of children who are eligible for extra support. **The paradox here is that the narrower the definition of target groups (for example, only the most severely deprived are eligible for extra support), the higher the return on investment but also the smaller the total aggregated impact of the policy on society**. If only, say, the 5% most deprived children and families are selected, the return on investment in provision for these children and families might be high (so do it), but the total impact on society might be rather modest simply because the proportion of children getting extra support is small (more is needed). Moreover, if only the most severely deprived children get extra support in the form of targeted ECEC programs they will subsequently end up in primary schools, and at a later stage in secondary schools, with other children from the same or similar neighborhoods who were less severely but still noticeably deprived, however not enrolled in a preschool program. **In this case, there will be less peer-learning and other spill-over effects compared to a situation in which a larger group of children received the extra support, improved in skills, and thereby constituted an environment which was more conducive for development and learning** (Barnett 2010; Bartik 2014).

Targeted within universal, universal within targeted **Considering the arguments pro and contra universal versus targeted approaches, the conclusion seems to be: try to take the best of both. Universal approaches to the extent that they (inevitably) lead to moderate overall quality (against already high public costs), while lacking extra impulses to attract disadvantaged children and provide them with compensating high quality education and care, should be complemented by targeted measures. Targeted measures should be based on a broad instead of narrow definition of who is in the target group so that even when implementing purely targeted programs the overall impact on society can be substantial because pertaining to larger numbers of children. Practically, this may suggest that an approach that focuses on demographic areas (neighborhoods, municipalities, regions) with a moderate to high representation of target children (targeted approach), based on a broad definition of who is at risk, and that includes all children in these areas in a program of high quality (universal approach) is promising.** Alternative or complementary approaches could be to provide universal ECEC from age four or five until primary school starts (considering the positive evidence for this age range), but targeted programs in the period before (Bartik 2014), or to include in early universal systems targeted measures to stimulate active outreach to disadvantaged children and families in order to increase their participation, and to provide extra quality, beyond merely creating more supply (cf. Cornelissen et al. 2018).

Policymakers must be intentional and targeted to confront a lack of integration. Universal programs are historically underapplied to by individuals who are non-white, non-english speaking, of low socioeconomic status.

Linda Jacobson 19, 10-1-2019, "Study: Early-childhood programs more segregated than K-12," K-12 Dive, <https://www.k12dive.com/news/study-early-childhood-programs-more-segregated-than-k-12/563945/> Accessed: 2/15/21, IM

'A fractured system' **The segregation seen in the early-childhood sector "is in large part due to a fractured system in which many low-income children are in publicly funded programs with strict income cut-offs, while higher-income children are in private programs that are unaffordable for working families."** Potter explained. Dolores Acevedo-Garcia, director of the Institute for Child, Youth and Family Policy at Brandeis University, added that **early-childhood programs in general are "hyperlocalized" and families prefer providers and centers close to home.** Because many neighborhoods are segregated, programs serving young children are a reflection of the community. **The findings make a case for universal preschool programs** because they "often offer parents choices in a mixed-delivery system rather than limit them to neighborhood schools," said W. Stephen Barnett, the senior co-director of the National Institute for Early Education Research. "Children's first educational experiences should not be segregated." He noted, **however, that even in public preschool models without income cutoffs, Head Start often insists that eligible children still attend Head Start classrooms, which "creates problems for integration."** And bilingual programs targeting English learners may also contribute to segregation, he said, while "dual language immersion and other approaches that encompass all children support greater integration." Acevedo-Garcia added Head Start does allow centers to enroll some families above the poverty line, but those families are still largely low-income. She added rules encouraging inclusion of children with disabilities in Head Start could also be a vehicle for more integration. **Erica Greenberg, a senior research associate in the Center on Education Data and Policy at Urban Institute, argues targeted programs don't have to result in more segregation. "Public child care subsidies can support children in classrooms that also serve children with family-paid tuition."** she said. **Some targeted programs, for example, have a sliding fee scale for families above the income cutoffs. Models of integration That's the approach at the Morris Jeff Community School in New Orleans, featured in a 2015 report on charter and magnet schools that have made diversity part of their design and also serve young children. The school blends state funding for pre-K students from low-income families with tuition-based slots for children from higher-income families.** A profile of the school quotes a pre-K teacher who said she was attracted to working in the school because she wants "students to think about other people's point of view." **Another model exists in the Hartford, Connecticut, region where the 1996 state Supreme Court decision in a desegregation case led to magnet school growth that includes schools serving pre-K students.** The report on those models, however, notes school transportation services often don't extend to all pre-K students, which can be a challenge for some families either because of a lack of transportation or work schedules. **Experts also recommend strategically locating high-quality programs in schools and communities that would draw a diverse mix of families. That was the result in 2006 in Cincinnati, Ohio's Pleasant Ridge Elementary when the school, which was losing enrollment and overlooked by white families in the neighborhood, opened a Montessori preschool program and a new building.** Now, 12 years later, the Montessori program has been viewed as a vehicle for revitalizing and increasing diversity in the neighborhood school. **A recent study by researchers at the University of Michigan and MDRC, focusing on the universal pre-K program in Boston Public Schools, also notes families that don't apply for universal, public preschool programs tend to be non-white.**

low-income, and non-English-speaking. Policymakers and education officials focusing on pre-K expansion, they said, “should pay attention to identifying and targeting children who are unlikely to enroll in any prekindergarten program.” Other “under-used levers” for increasing diversity in the early-childhood sector, Greenberg said, could include “mirroring intentional K-12 integration efforts via school district boundaries and assignment policies,” and using zoning regulations and funding for start-up providers and expansion to work toward more diverse programs.