

Rationale

During this course we have examined several decision-making points of the juvenile court's operation. These include the decision to refer the case to court, to detain, to transfer the youth to criminal court for prosecution, and to enter a disposition or sentence. The decision to arrest a youth was also part of our studies. We also discussed that research in the area of juvenile justice decision-making can be ideologically based. The purpose of this assignment is to critically examine the research presented in the criminal justice literature to determine if it appears objective or biased.

Assignment

Your assignment is to choose one of these decision making points. Then consult the literature that involves research on that decision making point. I have amassed several studies that address each of the mentioned decision making stages; they are assembled in the reference section of the library. Ask a reference librarian for assistance. Using this collection of studies, select three research articles on your topic. Your writing assignment is to write a five page report constructed around the following questions (each section below should entail one page of your report):

- 1) Is the literature review comprehensive? Explain the strengths or weaknesses.
- 2) Is the chosen methodology appropriate for the researcher's thesis? Explain why or why not.
- 3) Did the researchers include all the variables that affect the decision making stage as we mentioned on this topic? Explain which ones were excluded, why you think this happened, and if this compromised the value of the research.
- 4) Were the conclusions drawn by the researchers supported by the findings of the study? Explain how they were or were not supported.
- 5) Were you able to detect any agenda or slant behind the research? Explain.

Grading

The assignment will be graded according to the following criteria:

- 1) You have followed instructions and answered all sections accordingly.
- 2) You have covered the range of issues in depth.
- 3) Your report is coherent and well organized.
- 4) You have submitted a paper that is readable and reflects college level writing skills.
- 5) The paper must be typed (1" top, side, and bottom margins; double spaced; 12 point font).