

2015 “Bring Your Own Idea Proposal”:
Structural Injustice, Inequalities, and Interpersonal Violence

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When white police officer Darren Wilson shot and killed unarmed black teenager Michael Brown last August, public reaction was intense. People around the world focused on police violence, the profiling of black men and women, other longstanding racial tensions, and racially patterned economic inequalities in St. Louis and in American cities more generally. Since then, protests have highlighted the importance of these issues to many people around the United States and drawn attention to the need for bold social change.

In responding to such calls for change, many policymakers and scholars have focused on reforms of the institutions and practices of policing. Although these reforms are urgently needed, it is also important to target the *systemic causes* of racial inequality and the violence it often inspires. By addressing these causative factors, reforms have the potential to influence St. Louis and other cities on a broad and enduring scale.

We propose to bring together faculty members from a wide range of disciplines to consider bold changes designed to address economic inequality, systemic educational and healthcare shortcomings, and unbalanced or narrowly focused regional planning efforts. We believe this is an opportunity for Washington University to provide real service to the St. Louis community and to cities across the United States facing similar, if not identical, problems. Our meetings will promote lively multi-disciplinary discussion and help make progress toward identifying solutions to problems of systemic racial injustice in St. Louis and beyond.

We have reached out to the following faculty members from across the university, and they have all agreed to participate:

Sheretta Butler-Barnes, Assistant Professor, George Warren Brown School of Social Work

John N. Constantino, Blanche F. Ittleson Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics, Director, William Greenleaf Eliot Division of Child Psychiatry, School of Medicine

Ebony Duncan, Assistant Professor of Education (as of fall 2015), College of Arts and Sciences

Sarah Gehlert, E. Desmond Lee Professor of Racial and Ethnic Diversity, George Warren Brown School of Social Work

Melody S. Goodman, Assistant Professor of Surgery, School of Medicine

Bob Hansman, Associate Professor, Sam Fox School

Clarissa R. Hayward, Associate Professor of Political Science, College of Arts and Sciences (co-convenor)

Odis Johnson, Jr., Associate Professor of Sociology and Education, College of Arts and Sciences

Molly W. Metzger, Assistant Professor, George Warren Brown School of Social Work

Jason Q. Purnell, Assistant Professor, George Warren Brown School of Social Work

Laura A. Rosenbury, Professor, School of Law (co-convenor)

Bradley Schlagger, A. Ernest and Jane G. Stein Associate Professor of Developmental Neurology, Associate Professor of Radiology, Anatomy & Neurobiology, and Pediatrics, School of Medicine

Elizabeth Sepper, Associate Professor, School of Law

Robert D. Winfield, Assistant Professor of Surgery, School of Medicine (co-convenor)

Thank you for your consideration.