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# **Theories of Blackness, Indigeneity, and Racialization in Research to Reduce Inequality in the Lives of Young People**

**Call for Proposals for a One-Time Writing Fellowship**  
**Applications Due: April 2, 2021**

Sponsored by the William T. Grant Foundation  
Published book chapter, writing workshop, and webinar presentation  
Organized by Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang  
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## Fellowship Overview

This small, one-time writing fellowship incorporates three components for each participating Writing Fellow:

- (1) publication of an original chapter in an edited volume,
- (2) participation in a writing workshop, and
- (3) presentation of parts of each chapter in a facilitated webinar series.

Fellows will receive writing support and editorial feedback, participate in a writing workshop, and present portions of their chapter in a webinar series. If public health protocols allow us to gather as a group, we will hold a live, one-day writing workshop in December 2021. Each Writing Fellow will receive a stipend of up to \$2,000. In addition, the William T. Grant Foundation will provide travel and accommodation for the writing workshop.

### Part 1: The Edited Volume

Those who engage in research to reduce youth inequality know that strong methods are needed alongside strong theorizing about racialization, racism, and racial categorization. In graduate school, many of us learned the methods which can be utilized to reveal deep-seated systems of racism in our society. However, we often had to learn to *theorize* racialization and racism in less formal ways, including by participating in social movements, new collaborations, and peer-to-peer mentoring; by working with students; and through self-guided reading outside of our discipline. Learning to meaningfully theorize about racism and racialization certainly can be humbling. The goal is not to arrive as an expert at a final destination, but instead always to understand our thinking as a work in progress.

The volume published as an outcome of this fellowship invites multidisciplinary stories of such learnings to enliven understandings of Blackness, Indigeneity, and racialization that are at work in social science research intended to reduce inequality in youth outcomes. We ask chapter contributors to tell the story of how they came to engage with compelling theories of Blackness, Indigeneity, and/or racialization; how these theories are used in their own social science research; what this means for research with youth; and how the work engages with policy and practice. We urge the author(s) to take a storytelling approach in writing their chapter, and encourage each contributor to vulnerably explore the shift, transformation, or growth in their own thinking about Blackness, Indigeneity, race, racialization, and racism.

## Rationale for the One-Time Writing Fellowships

Often, research on reducing inequality in youth outcomes related to racism and antiblackness pays scant attention to theories of Blackness, Indigeneity, and racialization. Research, levers of inequality, and measures of youth outcomes related to racism may rely on racial categories and racial schemas that go uninterrogated. Many researchers working to reduce inequality problematically treat race as a biological, static, or naturalized category. In contrast, in fields such as sociology, Indigenous Studies, Black Studies, Latinx Studies, and Asian American Studies, we find explicit theorizations about the invention of race and the ongoing consequences of racial stratification. These fields excavate theories of race, ethnicity, and Indigeneity that attend to and examine how such categories are socially constructed. The theories undergird our understandings of how Blackness, Indigeneity, race, and racism matter for social science research on these topics, and how research findings can be applied.

Years after completing scholarly degrees, many who aim to do research on reducing inequality in youth outcomes realize that they have been insufficiently trained to research and write about important matters of Blackness, Indigeneity, and racialization. Scholars sometimes come to this realization while still in graduate school, forming study groups or other kinds of self-guided learning to supplement the missing parts of their curriculum. Many of us have indeed received mis-training—training that proffers flawed, deeply problematic, and racist logic. In instances like these, some scholars choose to embark on an individual journey to educate themselves to be more adequately prepared to contend with their research questions and to support their students. In some cases, scholars have engaged in the daunting task of working to undo previous training and the consequences of that training on their scholarly thinking and teaching. These realizations may be prompted by students or other individuals they have been tasked with educating or training. Notably, disciplinary and institutional culture may actually discourage scholars from seriously engaging with critical studies, making the journey to access and engage with scholarship all the more challenging.

Pandemic research will almost certainly come out of the COVID-19 crisis, and some studies explicitly will address racial inequalities. Other research will leave it unnamed, hidden behind terms like “high risk populations.” These (re)newed racializations, if left unquestioned, will become implicit theories of race.

The terms and habits of referring to racialized groups are often disciplinary, and they reveal more about what various disciplines believe about race rather than how communities understand themselves to be racialized. Decisions about how racialized groups are defined, combined,

collapsed, and not counted in statistical data, and about the terms researchers use to refer to people's experiences of being racialized and experiencing racism have consequences for youth and communities. With this in mind, this writing fellowship's focus on deconstructing racialization—or the process through which racial meaning is discarded in the creation of categories or analysis—will allow for dialogue and reflection on the learning process that leads to meaningful incorporation of theories of Blackness and Indigeneity into social science research.

Taken together, the chapters in the edited volume will encourage readers to deeply think deeply about the theories of Blackness, Indigeneity, and racialization that they rely upon in social science towards a more just society. Due to differing epistemological and ontological roots, the chapters likely will not coalesce into a universal theory to simply be applied. Our goal is not to assert a grand theory of race and racialization that can be generalized to every youth context. Instead, the goal is to tell stories that demonstrate what is needed to refuse universalized theories of Blackness, Indigeneity, and racialization, and to carefully read and assess how and why our theories do (or do not) work. We hope that gathered together, the stories will encourage more theoretically reflexive and vulnerable conversations about these themes among the community of scholars committed to reducing inequality in the lives of youth.

### **Information for Applicants**

Writing Fellow applicants are invited to reflect upon and tell a story about how they came to theorize Blackness, Indigeneity, and/or racialization and race. While the editors locate their work in the disciplines of education and psychology, we invite scholars from various social science disciplines, including economics, sociology, public health, and all other disciplines, to submit a chapter proposal. We ask applicants to share the challenges, dilemmas, and contradictions that arose when grappling with understandings of race, racialization, and racism. We welcome narratives from scholars who have embarked on a journey of self-education and are actively working against disciplinary and institutional norms and values. We also welcome co-authored chapter proposals in which authors exchange stories or share a conversation about these themes.

### **Part 2: One-Day Writing Workshop**

The second component of the initiative is an in-person workshop. The meeting will be an opportunity for Writing Fellows to share chapter drafts in a supportive setting, to get feedback on ideas and structure, to talk through challenges and places where they are “stuck,” and to learn from each other. Workshop timing will coincide with the first draft

submission deadline of chapters for the edited volume. Writing Fellows will bring their first substantial drafts, and we will spend the day in meetings as a full group, and also broken out by small groups based on sections of the book. Fellows will read from their drafts. Along with the section editors, other authors in their section will provide feedback and ideas, and ask questions. The meeting will provide space for Fellows to develop their ideas. Soon after the meeting, section editors and volume editors will provide written feedback, giving authors everything they need to produce final chapters.

### Part 3: Webinar

The third component of the initiative is a multi-part webinar series to be recorded after final approval of the chapters. All Writing Fellows will be invited to participate as presenters in an online webinar broadcast by the William T. Grant Foundation. The webinars will be an opportunity for authors to share chapter content in another format and to learn from other Fellows in the initiative. The webinars will provide an interactive space for attendees to learn from Fellows, and for Fellows to learn about the impact and possible extensions of their work. In each episode, three to four Fellows will share highlights from their chapters; a moderator (a series editor or volume editor) will field questions from the online audience. Each webinar will be recorded and transcribed, with videos and transcriptions permanently available on a microsite of the William T. Grant Foundation website. In this important way the public will have access to the discussions generated by the process. The webinar series will live alongside the edited volume as a resource for deeper consideration of theories of Blackness, Indigeneity, and racialization, and how they have been (mis)understood and (mis)applied in the context of youth-focused research.

### Stipend

A stipend of up to \$2,000 will be provided; if a chapter is co-authored, the stipend will be split evenly between co-authors. The stipend will be distributed as follows:

- \$500 upon acceptance as a Writing Fellow
- \$1,000 upon acceptance of a completed chapter, and
- \$500 for participation in the webinar.

## How to Apply

TO APPLY TO BECOME A WRITING FELLOW, please send a chapter proposal, in a Word document that contains the following information, to [evetuck@gmail.com](mailto:evetuck@gmail.com) and [kwayne@ucsd.edu](mailto:kwayne@ucsd.edu). Please submit your application by April 2, 2021, and include “WTG Writing Fellows” as the subject line.

1. A 500-word proposal (APA format).
2. Your chapter proposal should focus on answering the following questions:
  - a. What theories and conceptualizations of Blackness, Indigeneity, and/or racialization inform your research? Are aspects of those theories especially important to consider in research with youth?
  - b. Who are the teachers and books, and what are the lived experiences that are important to the story you have to tell about how you learned to theorize about Blackness, Indigeneity, racialization, and racism? What challenges, contradictions, dilemmas, and shifts are important in sharing your story?
  - c. What do these theories and conceptualizations mean for how you approach your research?
  - d. What do these theories and conceptualizations mean for how you engage with policy and practice around your research?
  - e. What do you wish to see more scholars in your field achieve? If you could make a change to your field, what would that change be?
3. Ideally, chapter proposals demonstrate or describe the storytelling approach of the intended chapter. We seek chapters that bring readers along with the line of thinking of the author(s).
4. Provide name, affiliation, and contact email for each proposed author. For co-authored submissions, please designate one author for correspondence. If you are a member of an Indigenous community, please include the name of your Nation or Indigenous community.