How Geography Shapes Structural Inequality

David Dante Troutt
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CURRENT RESEARCH

Policy analysis and prevention remedies to address the root and consequences of structural inequality

Structural inequality--grounded in racial and class division--has persisted too long in the US, its consequences becoming even more critical as the nation experiences dramatic demographic change. Inequality of opportunity has been framed primarily in terms of income inequality, rather than a focus on the place-based institutions and resources that either promote or constrain opportunity. David D. Troutt, Professor of Law and the founding Director of the Rutgers Center on Law in Metropolitan Equity (CLiME) at Rutgers University, aims to advance public understanding and discourse of structural inequality through the lens of "metropolitan equity." Metropolitan equity assumes that much opportunity is transmitted through the relative resources of local public and private institutions like schools, health and food access, housing policy and economic development. Profound regional segregation between wealthy municipalities and neighborhoods on one hand and poor areas on the other contribute to continuing cycles of poverty, unsafe environments, and subpar educational quality at the local level. Opportunity hoarding has real consequences for people living in under-resourced communities. Closer scrutiny of the rules governing key local institutions shows chronic inattention to equitable principles. By promoting academic research and engaging not only interdisciplinary scholars but also the public for greater social impact, Professor Troutt hopes to demonstrate that structural inequality is now every U.S. citizen's problem, and that every community, whether wealthy or poor, must engage policies that advance our best values of healthy personal growth, economic competitiveness, and meaningful democratic participation.

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AFFILIATION

Rutgers University

EDUCATION

- J.D. in 1991, Harvard Law School
- A.B. in 1986, Stanford University

AWARDS

- Finalist, C. Wright Mills Award, 2014
- Myers Outstanding Book Award (for *The Monkey Suit*), 1999

RESEARCH AREAS

Humanities, Law / Ethics, Poverty & Equality, Global Policy

FUNDING REQUEST

Your contributions will help support David Troutt and his Center on Law in Metropolitan Equity at Rutgers University as they continue to analyze policies and law to identify needs in communities and build an engaging platform to provide information and interventions. Funding of $350-500K/year will facilitate the infrastructure necessary for effective research by providing a dedicated space, fellowship resources, mapping capacity and conferences, and supporting personnel.

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