



Reckoning with Race: Fluidity, Invention, and 'Reality'

The notion of race as a social construct, rather than an objective physical reality, has increasingly made inroads in the United States in recent years. Yet even in quarters where it seems most widely accepted and familiar, it has hit roadblocks. After a brief discussion of the idea of race as socially constructed, I will describe and dissect three areas in which it seems to have been difficult to apply: genetic and biomedical research; debates about "transracial" identities; and sports. Why is it that we hold on so firmly to 18th-century understandings of human races when it comes to these domains?

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