

Should geneticists drop 'race' as a biological concept?

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.

If a team of scientists in Philadelphia and New York have their way, using race to categorize groups of people in biological and genetic research will be forever discontinued.

The concept of race in such research is “problematic at best and harmful at worst,” the researchers argued in a new [paper published in the journal Science](#).

However, they also said that social scientists should continue to study [race as a social construct](#) to better understand the impact of racism on health.

For more than a century, natural and social scientists have been arguing about whether race is a useful classificatory tool in the biological sciences — can it elucidate the relationship between humans and their evolutionary history, between humans and their health. In the wake of the U.S. [Human Genome Project](#), the answer seemed to be a pretty resounding “no.”

In 2004, for example, Francis Collins, then head of the National Human Genome Research Institute and now director of the National Institutes of Health, called race a “flawed” and “weak” concept and argued that science needed to move beyond race. Yet, as our paper highlights, the use of race persists in genetics, despite voices like Collins, like Craig Venter — leaders in the field of genomics — who have called on the field to move beyond it.

Read full, original post: [What Scientists Mean When They Say 'Race' Is Not Genetic](#)