

Do medical schools need to reevaluate how they teach race?

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

Medical students looking to score high on their board exams sometimes get a bit of uncomfortable advice: Embrace racial stereotypes.

“You see ‘African American,’ automatically just circle ‘sickle cell,’” said Nermine Abdelwahab, a first-year student at the University of Minnesota Medical School, recounting tips she’s heard from older classmates describing the “sad reality” of the tests.

Medical school curricula traditionally leave little room for nuanced discussions about the impact of race and racism on health, physicians and sociologists say. Instead, students learn to see race as a diagnostic shortcut, as lectures, textbooks, and scientific journal articles divide patients by racial categories, reinforcing the idea that race is biological. That mind-set can lead to misdiagnoses, such as treating sickle cell anemia as a largely “black” disease.

“Right now, students are learning an inaccurate and unscientific definition of race,” said Dorothy Roberts, a law and sociology professor at the University of Pennsylvania, who coauthored a [recent paper](#) in Science arguing for an end to the use of biological concepts of race in human genetics research.

“It’s simply not true that human beings are naturally divided into genetically distinct races,” Roberts said. “So it is not good medical practice to treat patients that way.”

Read full, original post: [Teaching medical students how to challenge ‘unscientific’ racial categories](#)