

## Harvard geneticist David Reich NY Times' op-ed ignites debate over whether 'races' exist

On Monday morning, I woke up to a tweet from Sam Harris, the bestselling author and popular podcast host, referencing a debate we never quite had over race and IQ.

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Harris is touting a New York Times [op-ed](#) by David Reich arguing that “it is simply no longer possible to ignore average genetic differences among ‘races.’”

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The background to Harris's shot at me is that last year, Harris had Charles Murray [on his podcast](#). Murray is a popular conservative intellectual best known for co-writing [The Bell Curve](#), which posited, in a controversial section, a genetic basis for the observed difference between black and white IQs.

Harris's invitation came in the aftermath of Murray being shouted down, and his academic chaperone assaulted, as he tried to give an invited address on an unrelated topic at Middlebury College...

Harris returns repeatedly to the idea that the controversy over Murray's race and IQ work is driven by “dishonesty and hypocrisy and moral cowardice” — not a genuine disagreement over the underlying science or its interpretation. As he puts it, “there is virtually no scientific controversy” around Murray's argument.

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Here is my view: Research shows measurable consequences on IQ and a host of other outcomes from the kind of violence and discrimination America inflicted for centuries against African Americans. In a vicious cycle, the consequences of that violence have pushed forward the underlying attitudes that allow discriminatory policies to flourish and justify the racially unequal world we've built.

To put this simply: You cannot discuss this topic without discussing its toxic past and the way that shapes our present.

**Read full, original post:** [Sam Harris, Charles Murray, and the allure of race science](#)