

## The Classical Meaning of the Word “Race”

Before the 16th Century, the word “race” did not mean what it does today. Its meaning has changed. Before the colonial era, the Italian root “razza” meant “breed,” or “stock,” a concept referring to the fact that, as the Romans spread across Europe, they kept encountering people who lived in and attacked from “homelands.” They seemed to have all been born in these geographic areas and they also shared genetic traits because they were in clans that traded together, and shared many customs, so they naturally intermarried. So, the classical meaning of the word “race” developed back when the peoples of Europe lived on discreet “islands,” waiting to discover each other.

But they’re all discovered now. Still, these concepts have persisted. During WWII, the Japanese people were often referred to as an “enemy race” of people with naturally sinister intents for America. At the time, Japanese, Filipino, Hindu, Chinese, and Korean were listed as discreet races on the American census, although these are all clearly nationalities and one religion. This suggested that each nation was populated by one discreet “race” and that all the people in these nations shared natural traits, despite the fact that this wasn’t even the case in America. India and China have both always had much more cultural diversity than America ever has. Secretary of War Henry Stimson wrote that “their racial characteristics are such that we cannot understand or trust even the citizen Japanese.” This is how we allowed our fellow citizens to be placed into internment camps. If you don’t know anything about the history of the U.S. gov’t placing Japanese Americans in internment camps during WWII, please Google it because it is enlightening, though also infuriating.

In 1990, all people from the Asian continent began to be labeled by the gov’t as one single race—Asian—convoluting Japanese with Chinese with Koreans with Indians with Khazaks with Thais with Indonesians with Iraqis and every other nationality on a continent of 4.46 billion people. Just consider that for a second. The U.S. gov’t has an “Asian” box on the census form that you are supposed to check if you are descended from one of those 4.5 billion people. What possible characteristic could all those people share that could make “Asian” a useful social category? What one trait could all those people share, physically or characteristically, that could justify the use of the gov’t knowing how many there are here in America? It is statistically impossible. It is statistically impossible that all those people share any one single characteristic, let alone something like “sinisterness.” So what possible use could there be for having “Asian” on the census?

The answer is: none. The fact is, every racial category on the census was created after the British created “black” and “white” to account for every other version of humanity one might find in America. Blacks and whites were the first two racial designations on the census, and “Native American,” “Asian,” and

“Latino” were added later to maintain the tradition of giving people racial designations. But it is a bad tradition. It is a useless, unwieldy, often wildly inaccurate tradition. Every physical characteristic can be described independently—hair, eyes, nose, lips—because there are people from every race that share them and that’s how DNA works. There is no “black” gene, just a set of genes that, when combined together in one person, we describe as prototypically “black.” But all races have people that have those physical markers as well. And skin color can be broken down into three categories: light-skinned, medium-skinned, and dark-skinned. If the gov’t and law enforcement officials used these descriptors for humanity, the concept of race would completely lose relevance. Unless we really do choose to believe there are invisible secret special characteristics that some races have, like “the ability to dance” or “the capacity for reason.” If you do believe that, I don’t blame you because I have also been raised in a society devoted to brainwashing me into believing nonsense. But I fight back. And I invite you to fight alongside me.

[https://www.census.gov/population/race/data/MREAD\\_1790\\_2010.html](https://www.census.gov/population/race/data/MREAD_1790_2010.html)