

The Illusive Race Question & Class: A Bacteria That Constantly Mutates

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ABSTRACT

Through discussion of the varying social constructions of race in the United States and various Latin American nations, this article argues that racism resembles bacteria in that, like bacteria, racism includes variants with unusual traits which have the ability to withstand an antibiotic attack on a microbe. Thus, the definition of race has changed much faster than academicians have defined it. It is resistant to social antibiotics. Popular culture, media and right-wing think tanks are redefining race. Much of the literature has concentrated on the black experience, but while Latinos and blacks share inequality, the experiences are different. The race question cannot be applied to Latinos solely by using the American paradigm. Latin American and Mexican history and the literature on race must be incorporated.