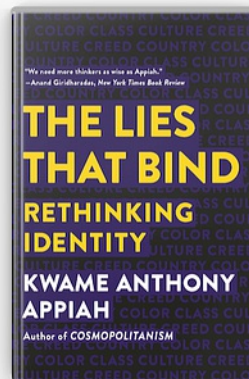


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# The Lies That Bind—A Commentary on Kwame Appiah

A Writing Journal Series—Entry # 1.4



*Race has been a source of trouble in human affairs since the contours of the modern ways of thinking about it became dimly visible in the rise of new scientific ideas about human beings as parts of the natural world. These ideas grew explosively in the nineteenth century, as did the cultural authority of biology, the new science of life. ...but the world outside the sciences hasn't taken much notice. Too many of us remain captive to perilous cartography of color.*

- *The lies that bind us* **page 8**

It is clear that segregation and prejudice have been persistent issues throughout history, and even with the advancement of scientific knowledge, these issues continue to plague modern society. This is a deeply troubling and unacceptable reality, as it demonstrates that despite all the progress we have made in understanding the world and each other, we still struggle to treat each other with respect and equality.

Having read the book *The Gene: An Intimate History* (Mukherjee, 2016), this line stood out to me due to Appiah's pointing out how biology's emergence culturally dominated people's minds. This can go in the wrong direction, like all tools, when mishandled. Because of this, racial naturalism, or the idea of humans, as one species, is subdivided by "races" simply because of different features. An example of how the "world outside of sciences" adapted this wrongly was during the time of the nazis. Eugenics, or the study of arranging reproduction to increase the occurrence of heritable characteristics regarded as desirable within a human population, was a worldview at one point. This naturalist racism has cost the lives of six million Jews. This is why authors like Appiah repeatedly bring up topics like this: to serve as a reminder and not have history repeat itself; and to improve the current state of the world—

which still needs more work done.

By [Carl Kho](#) on [December 26, 2022](#).

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