

Wendy Williams

Web Bio

Information

Biography

Biographical Statement

Wendy M. Williams is Professor in the Department of Human Development at Cornell University, where she studies the development, assessment, training, and societal implications of intelligence. She holds Ph.D. and Master's degrees in psychology from Yale University, a Master's in physical anthropology from Yale, and a B.A. in English and biology from Columbia University, awarded cum laude with special distinction. In the fall of 2009, Williams founded (and now directs) the Cornell Institute for Women in Science (CIWS), a National Institutes of Health-funded research and outreach center that studies and promotes the careers of women scientists. She also heads "Thinking Like A Scientist," a national education-outreach program funded by the National Science Foundation, which is designed to encourage traditionally-underrepresented groups (girls, people of color, and people from disadvantaged backgrounds) to pursue science education and careers. In the past, Williams directed the joint Harvard-Yale Practical and Creative Intelligence for School Project, and was Co-Principal Investigator for a six-year, \$1.4 million Army Research Institute grant to study practical intelligence and success at leadership.

In addition to dozens of articles and chapters on her research, Williams has authored nine books and edited five volumes. They include *The Reluctant Reader* (sole authored), *How to Develop Student Creativity* (with Robert Sternberg), *Escaping the Advice Trap* (with Stephen Ceci; reviewed in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *USA Today*), *Practical Intelligence for School* (with Howard Gardner, Robert Sternberg, Tina Blythe, Noel White, and Jin Li), *Why Aren't More Women in Science?* (with Stephen Ceci; winner of a 2007 Independent Publisher Book Award), and *The Mathematics of Sex* (with Stephen Ceci). She also writes regular invited editorials for *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Williams's research has been featured in *Nature*, *American Scientist*, *Newsweek*, *Business Week*, *Science*, *Scientific American*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, and *Child Magazine*, among other media outlets. She was series editor for *The Lawrence Erlbaum Educational Psychology Series* and she served on the Editorial Review Boards of the journals *Psychological Bulletin*, *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, *Applied Developmental Psychology*, and *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, as well as the book publisher *Magination Press* (American Psychological Association Books).

Williams is a Fellow of the Association for Psychological Science (APS) and four divisions of the American Psychological Association (APA)--general psychology, developmental psychology, educational psychology, and media psychology--and she served two terms as Member-at-Large of the executive committee of the Society for General Psychology (Division 1 of APA). She was also program chair and dissertation award committee chair for Divisions 1 (general psychology), 3 (experimental psychology), and 15 (educational psychology) of APA. In 1995 and 1996 her research won first-place awards from the American Educational Research Association. Williams received the 1996 Early Career Contribution Award from Division 15 (educational psychology) of APA, and the 1997, 1999, and 2002 Mensa Awards for Excellence in Research to a Senior Investigator. In 2001, APA named her the sole recipient of the Robert L. Fantz Award for an Early Career Contribution to Psychology in recognition of her outstanding contributions to research in the decade following receipt of the Ph.D. Williams was also named a 2007-8 G. Stanley Hall Lecturer by APA. In 2014, she won second place in the National Institutes of Health "Great Ideas" Challenge for her research proposal to study race and gender influences on the grant-review process.

Teaching

Teaching and Advising Statement

In my research program, I work very closely with a small number of graduate students and undergraduates. As a faculty affiliate on West Campus, I have dinner and a meeting with one or more students twice per week. My goal is to teach students to work independently and on their own terms without constant oversight, on projects largely of their own choosing, while ensuring that their products are high quality.

Professional

Current Professional Activities

I am a fellow of the Association for Psychological Science (APS) and of four divisions of the American Psychological Association (APA)--General Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Educational Psychology, and Media Psychology. My APA service has included two terms as Member-at-Large of Division 1 (General Psychology), separate terms as annual conference Program Chair for Division 1, Division 3 (Experimental Psychology), and Division 15 (Educational Psychology), plus terms as dissertation award committee chair and as the representative to the APA Committee for Women in Psychology. I am on several editorial boards and have guest-edited volumes of the journals *Developmental Review* and *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*. I co-founded and co-directed the Cornell Institute for Research on Children, funded by the National Science Foundation, and I founded and now direct the Cornell Institute for Women in Science, funded by the National Institutes of Health. My awards include the 1997, 1999, and 2002 Senior Investigator Awards for Excellence in Research from the Mensa Foundation, the 1996 Early Career Contribution Award from the American Psychological Association (Division of Educational Psychology), and the 2001 Robert Fantz Award for an Early Career Contribution to Psychology, given by the American Psychological Association to one individual each year in recognition of outstanding accomplishments in the decade following receipt of the Ph.D. I was named a 2008 G. Stanley Hall lecturer by APA, and in 2014 I won second place in the National Institutes of Health "Great Idea" Challenge for my research proposal to study the role of gender and race in the grant-reviewing process.

Research

Current Research Activities

I identify, study, assess, and train various aspects of intelligence that lead to success in real-world environments, particularly practical or real-world intelligence. I also study societal implications of intelligence in its many forms. My work spans two domains: basic research (e.g., identifying, modeling, and assessing the components of practical thinking and reasoning) and applied research (e.g., training practical and creative thinking skills). The goal of all my research is to expand conceptions of meaningful human thinking and reasoning to include those types of thinking that result in real-world success, and to apply this knowledge to better understand and solve critical societal problems. My primary current focus is a program of research on cognitive and social-cognitive sex differences, and their implications for women's versus men's academic career choices. In November 2009, I founded—and now direct—the Cornell Institute for Women in Science (CIWS), funded by the National Institutes of Health. CIWS conducts basic and applied research on women in science, focusing on empiricism rather than advocacy to understand and enhance women's scientific careers.

Extension

Current Extension Activities

My extension-outreach-education program involves training a broad range of intellectual abilities, disseminating information about the range of human competencies, and creating programs targeting populations in need of assistance. My major current outreach initiative is the Cornell Institute for Women in Science (CIWS), for which I am Principal Investigator. Much of CIWS's mission is outreach to women students and scientists, to the scientific community more generally and to administrators within it, disseminating our research on issues relevant to women's career/life pathways and success. My key recent outreach effort has been the creation of a video series with accompanying educational modules, designed to both inform and inspire girls and women in science as well as their teachers, parents, and the administrators who run programs for them. I have also offered workshops and in-depth training at Cornell and at 4-H summer camps for high school youth from New York State. (See www.ciws.cornell.edu.)

Education

Education

- Ph.D. 1991 - Yale University
Psychology
- M.Phil. 1986 - Yale University

- Physical Anthropology
- M.S. 1985 - Yale University
- Psychology
- B.A. 1982 - Columbia University
- English & Biology

Courses

Courses Taught

HD400, HD401; HD700, HD701; HD8990.

Websites

Related Websites

[Cornell Institute for Women in Science \(CIWS\)](#)
[Cornell Institute for Research on Children \(CIRC\)](#)

Assoc. for Psych. Science Video:

<http://www.psychologicalscience.org/index.php/news/releases/womens-choices-not-abilities-keep-them-out-of-math-intensive-fields.html>

Administration

Administrative Responsibilities

As Founder, Director, and Principal Investigator for the Cornell Institute for Women in Science (CIWS), I manage a \$1.3 million budget. I make all hiring decisions and handle other personnel issues for our institute. In addition, I plan, organize, and co-run our annual Advisory Board meeting in Shelter Island, New York. I also share in the administrative reporting responsibilities for the National Institutes of Health (our funder).

Publications

Selected Publications

Selected Authored Books

Williams, W. M., Blythe, T., White, N., Li, J., Sternberg, R. J., & Gardner, H. I. (1996). Practical intelligence for school. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.

Williams, W. M. (1996). The reluctant reader: Why children don't choose to read and how to help them. New York: Warner Books. (*Translated into German and Chinese in 1997; published by iPublish internet publishing service in 2000*)

Williams, W. M., & Ceci, S. J. (1998). Escaping the advice trap. Kansas City, Missouri: Andrews and McMeel (Universal Press Syndicate). (*Reviewed in The Washington Post, Sunday May 3, 1998; USA Today, April 22, 1998, The Sunday New York Times Week in Review section, Sunday June 14, 1998, The Philadelphia Inquirer, Sunday June 7, 1998, plus numerous additional newspapers; excerpted in the American Psychological Association APA Monitor, May, 1999) (*Translated into German in 1999 and released in a new edition in Germany: Williams, W. M., & Ceci, S. J. [2000]. Konflikt? Bewältigung in der Partnerschaft: Psychologische Ratschläge unter der Lupe [Coping with conflict in the partnership: Psychological advice under the magnifying glass]. Augsburg, Germany: MVG Verlag*)*

Williams, W. M., Markle, F., Brigockas, M. G., & Sternberg, R. J. (2002). Creative intelligence: How to enhance children's creative abilities. Boston: Allyn and Bacon Publishers.

Ceci, S. J., & Williams, W. M. (2010). The mathematics of sex: How biology and society conspire to limit talented women and girls. New York: Oxford University Press. (*Reviewed in Science: Miller, R. T. (2009). Women in science: Preference and penalties differ, Vol. 326 (20 November 2009), 1063-4.*)

Sternberg, R. J., & Williams, W. M. (2010). Educational psychology, second edition. Boston: Merrill. (*Introductory college-level textbook*)

Selected Edited Books and Edited Journal Issues

Sternberg, R. J., & Williams, W. M. (Eds.) (1998). Intelligence, instruction, and assessment. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. (*Reviewed by R. S. Nickerson in Contemporary Psychology, 43 (6), 698-700.*)

Ceci, S. J., & Williams, W. M. (Eds.) (1999). The nature/nurture debate. Oxford, England: Blackwell Publishers. (*Reviewed by A. Wells in The Psychologist, a publication of the British Psychological Association, December 2000.*)

Williams, W. M. (Ed.) (2000). Ranking ourselves: Intelligence testing, affirmative action, and educational policy. Psychology, Public Policy, and Law, 6(1). (Guest Editor of American Psychological Association journal)

Williams, W. M. (Ed.) (2002). Teaching children real-world knowledge and reasoning. Developmental Review, 22. (Guest Editor of Special Issue)

Ceci, S. J., & Williams, W. M. (Eds.) (2007). Why aren't more women in science? Top researchers debate the evidence. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association Books. (*Winner: 2007 Independent Publisher Book Award--Bronze Award, 65 national categories, 2,690 books submitted for 2007 awards; Reviewed in Science, 13 July 2007: Vol. 317, no. 5835, pp. 199-200: "Women in Science: Can Evidence Inform the Debate?" by Marcia C. Linn; Reviewed in Science News, March 24, 2007, Vol. 171, page 191; Reviewed in Scientific American Mind: Branan, N. (2007). "A Lab of Her Own, review of Why Aren't More Women in Science?", p. 81, vol. 18, number 1, Feb.-Mar. 2007; Reviewed in five additional journals/periodicals.*)

Selected Articles, Chapters, Editorials, Book Reviews, Etc.

Williams, W. M., & Sternberg, R. J. (1988). Group Intelligence: Why some groups are better than others. Intelligence, 12, 351-377.

Williams, W. M., Sternberg, R. J., Rashotte, C. A., & Wagner, R. K. (1993). Assessing the value of cooperative education. Journal of Cooperative Education, 28 (2), 32-55.

Williams, W. M., & Sternberg, R. J. (1993). Seven lessons for helping children make the most of their abilities. Educational Psychology, 13 (3-4), 317-331.

Sternberg, R. J., Wagner, R. K., Williams, W. M., & Horvath, J. A. (1995). Testing common sense. American Psychologist, 50 (11), 912-927.

Williams, W. M. (1996). Consequences of how we define and assess intelligence. Psychology, Public Policy, and Law, 2 (3/4) 506-535. (*American Psychological Association journal*) (*This article appeared in an independent issue from the one I guest-edited for the same journal.*) (*Winner of the 1999 Mensa Education and Research Foundation Senior Investigator Award for Excellence in Research*) (*Reprinted in 2001 Mensa Research Journal*, 32 (2), 21-53.)

Sternberg, R. J., & Williams, W. M. (1997). Does the Graduate Record Examination predict meaningful success in the graduate training of psychologists? A case study. American Psychologist, 52 (6), 630-651. (*Abstracted by Science for its web site, August, 1997; abstracted by Business Week Magazine, October 3, 1997; generated largest volume of mail American Psychologist received in response to any article as of that date*)

Williams, W. M. & Ceci, S. J. (1997). A person-process-context-time approach to understanding intellectual development. Review of General Psychology, 1 (3), 288-310. (*American Psychological Association journal*) (*Winner of the 1997 Mensa Education and Research Foundation Senior Investigator Award for Excellence in Research*)

Williams, W. M., Horvath, J. A., Bullis, R. C., Forsythe, G. B., & Sternberg, R. J. (1997). Tacit knowledge inventories for military leaders: Platoon leader, company commander, and battalion commander levels. Questionnaires developed for the Army Research Institute. Alexandria, Virginia: U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences.

Williams, W. M., & Ceci, S. J. (1997). "How'm I doing?": Problems with the use of student ratings of instructors and courses. Change, 29 (5), 12-23. (*Abstracted in The Chronicle of Higher Education, March 14, 1997, and the American Psychological Association A.P.A. Monitor, May, 1997; also abstracted in*

Science, October 10, 1997, and featured on *Science's* website, October, 1997; also abstracted in *Scientific American*, December, 1997)

Ceci, S. J., & Williams, W. M. (1997). Schooling, intelligence, and income. *American Psychologist*, 52 (10), 1051-1058. (Abstracted in *The Washington Post*, October 19, 1997; and abstracted and quoted in *Science*, March 12, 1999)

Williams, W. M. (1997). Reliance on test scores is a conspiracy of lethargy. "Point of View" Invited Back-Cover Editorial, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, October 10, 1997, p. A60. (Abstracted in *Business Week*, October 3, 1997, and in front-page story in *The New York Times*, November 8, 1997; reprinted in the *Newsletter of the National Society for Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences*, Vol. 7, No. 4, November, 1997.

Williams, W. M., & Ceci, S. J. (1997). Are Americans becoming more or less alike? Trends in race, class, and ability differences in intelligence. *American Psychologist*, 52 (11), 1226-1235. (Reprinted in the *Mensa Research Journal*, 45 [Fall 2000], 49-68)

Sternberg, R. J., & Williams, W. M. (1998). You Proved Our Point Better than We Did: A Reply to Our Critics. *American Psychologist*, 53 (5), 576-577.

Williams, W. M. (1998). Democratizing our concept of human intelligence. "Point of View" Invited Back-Cover Editorial, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 15, 1998, p. A60. (Reprinted in *The Education Digest*, 64, (4), 39-42, December, 1998; reprinted in *Confronting the Forgotten History of the American Eugenics Movement*, edited by Facing History and Ourselves National Foundation, Inc., 2001, initial print run 5000 copies; reprinted in *Mensa Research Journal*, 33 (3), 10-13; 2003).

Williams, W. M. (1998). Are we raising smarter children today? School- and home-related influences on IQ. In U. Neisser (Ed.), *The Rising Curve: Long-term changes in IQ and related measures*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association Books. (Abstracted in *Newsweek Magazine*, May 6, 1996, and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 24, 1996)(Winner of the 1999 Mensa Education and Research Foundation Senior Investigator Award for Excellence in Research)

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Horvath, J. A., Forsythe, G. B., Bullis, R. C., Sweeney, P. J., Williams, W. M., McNally, J. A., Wattendorf, J. A., & Sternberg, R. J. (1999). Experience, knowledge, and military leadership. In Sternberg, R. J., & Horvath, J. A. (Eds.), *Tacit knowledge in professional practice*, (pp. 39-71). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

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Hedlund, J., Forsythe, G. B., Horvath, J. A., Williams, W. M., Snook, S., & Sternberg, R. J. (2003). Identifying and assessing tacit knowledge: Understanding the practical intelligence of military leaders. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 210, 1-24.

Williams, W. M., Papierno, P. B., Makel, M. C., & Ceci, S. J. (2004). Thinking Like A Scientist About Real-World Problems: The Cornell Institute for Research on Children Science Education Program. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 25(1), 107-126.

Barnett, S. M., & Williams, W. M. (2004). The Emperor's New Clothes: A review of *IQ and the wealth of nations*. *Contemporary Psychology*, 49 (4), 389-396. (Book review, lead article)

Williams, W. M., & Ceci, S. J. (2005). Beware the undiscovered genius. *Nature* 435, 534 (26 May 2005).

Williams, W. M. (2005). Grant Quest: the search for overhead dollars. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 9, 2005. (Invited back-cover editorial)

Ceci, S. J., Williams, W. M., & Mueller-Johnson, K. (2006). Is tenure justified? An experimental study of faculty beliefs about tenure, promotion, and academic freedom. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 29, (6): 553-569. (whole-issue target article)

Williams, W. M., & Ceci, S. J. (2007). Striving for perspective in the debate on women in science. In: *Why aren't more women in science? Top researchers debate the evidence*. (S. J. Ceci & W. M. Williams, Eds.). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association Books.

Williams, W. M. & Ceci, S. J. (2007, March 9). Does tenure really work? *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Volume 53, Issue 27, Page B16. (Invited Back-Cover Editorial)

Ceci, S. J., Williams, W. M., & Barnett, S. M. (2009, March). Women's underrepresentation in science: Sociocultural and biological considerations. *Psychological Bulletin*, 135 (2): 218-261.

Ceci, S. J., & Williams, W. M. (2009). Should scientists study race and IQ? Yes: The scientific truth must be pursued. *Nature*, 457 (12 February 2009), 786-789.

Williams, W. M., & Ceci, S. J. (2009). Race: A useful way to glean social information. *Nature*, 458 (12 March 2009), p. 147.

Ceci, S. J., & Williams, W. M. (2010). *The mathematics of sex: How biology and society conspire to limit talented women and girls*. New York: Oxford University Press. (Reviewed in *Science*: Miller, R. T. (2009). *Women in science: Preferences and penalties differ*, Vol. 326 [20 November 2009], 1063-4.)

Sternberg, R. J., & Williams, W. M. (2010). *Educational Psychology*, second edition. Boston: Merrill. (college textbook)

Ceci, S.J., Fitneva, S. A., & Williams, W. M (2010). Representational constraints on the development of memory and metamemory: A Developmental-Representational theory. *Psychological Review*, 117, 464-495.

Ceci, S. J. & Williams, W.M. (2010). Sex Differences in Math-Intensive Fields. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 19(5), 275-279. ("Most downloaded article" of October 2010 on Association for Psychological Science website)

Whitecraft, M. A. & Williams, W. M. (2011). Why are there so few women computer scientists? In: *Making Software: What Really Works, and Why We Believe It* (second edition), ed. G. Wilson. Cambridge, MA: Riley.

Ceci, S. J. & Williams, W. M. (2011). Understanding current causes of women's underrepresentation in science. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 108: 3157-3162 (issue 8); (featured as first article profile in "This Week in PNAS").

Williams, W. M., & Ceci, S. J. (2012). When scientists choose motherhood. American Scientist, 100 (2), 138-145. (Feature article)

Valla, J. M., & Williams, W. M. (2012). Increasing Achievement And Higher-Education Representation Of Under-Represented Groups In Science, Technology, Engineering, And Mathematics Fields: A Review Of Current K-12 Intervention Programs. Journal Of Women and Minorities in Science and Engineering 18(1), 21–53.

Williams, W. M. & Ceci, S. J. (2012). Scientists and motherhood. American Scientist, June, 2012.

Williams, W. M., Barnett, S. M., & Sumner, R. A. (2013). Where are all the women in academic science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields? In Handbook of Research on Promoting Women's Careers, Eds. London: Edward Elgar.

Williams, W. M., & Valla, J. M. (2013). Hard times for defending “nurture.” Psycritiques.

Williams, W. M. (2012, Fall). Cornell Institute for Women in Science. Human Ecology Alumni Magazine.

Rindermann, H., Ceci, S. J. & Williams, W. M. (2013). Whither cognitive talent? Understanding high ability, its development, relevance and furtherance. In S. B. Kaufman (Ed.), Beyond Talent or Practice: The Complexity of Greatness, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Valla, J. M., & Williams, W. M. (2013). Response to Staats. Psycritiques.

Ceci, S. J., Ginther, D., Kahn, S., & Williams, W. M. (2014). Women in academic science: A Changing Landscape. Psychological Science in the Public Interest (whole-issue monograph).

Williams, W.M., & Ceci, S.J. (2014, November 2). Academic Science Isn't Sexist. The Sunday New York Times, “Gray Matter” Editorial.

Defraigne, W. C., Williams, W. M., & Ceci, S. J. (2014). Attracting STEM talent: Do STEM students prefer traditional or work-life-interaction labs? PLoS One, 9(2): e89801. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0089801 PMID: 24587044

Williams, W.M. & Hritz, A. (2014). Reconsidering intellectual styles. Psycritiques.

Ceci, S. J., Ginther, D., Kahn, S., & Williams, W. M. (2015). The right to choose? Scientific American Mind.

Ceci, S.J., Williams, W.M., & Kahn, S. (Eds.) (in press). Underrepresentation of Women in Science: International and Cross-Disciplinary Evidence and Debate. Frontiers in Psychology. Special Issue.

Williams, W. M., & Ceci, S. J. (in press). Do tenure expectations differ for women and men assistant professors in STEM fields? Frontiers in Psychology.

Ceci, S.J., & Williams, W. M. (in press). The psychology of psychology: A thought experiment. Behavioral and Brain Sciences.

Ceci, S.J., Williams, W.M., & Cash, B.M. (in press). Affirmative action does not result in hiring less qualified academic scientists. Frontiers in Psychology.

Williams, W. M., Barnett, S. M., & Wethington, E. (in press). What women in science need to know about work-life balance. In Success Strategies of Women in Science: A Portable Mentor (P. Pritchard, Ed.). New York: Elsevier.

Ceci, S. J. & Williams, W. M. (in press). Why so few women in mathematically-intensive fields? In S. Kosslyn & R. Scott (Eds.) Emerging Trends in the Social and Behavioral Sciences. NY: Wiley & Sons.