Ceci to receive a top award from academic society

Stephen J. Ceci, the Helen L. Carr Professor of Developmental Psychology in the College of Human Ecology, will receive the 2013 Distinguished Scientific Contributions to Child Development Award, April 19 in Seattle from the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), the largest organization of developmental psychologists in the world, the organization announced this week.

Ceci is the author or co-author of more than 400 academic publications, and, according to the society, one of the most cited developmental psychologists -- 35 of his articles and books have been cited more than 100 times each. All told, his work has been cited about 17,000 times, according to Google Scholar, with an H index of 55 (meaning that 55 of his articles have each been cited at least 55 times).

In the award nomination, Ceci's seminal scientific contributions were noted in the areas of everyday intelligence (with the late Cornell Professors Urie Bronfenbrenner and Ulric Neisser), sex differences in mathematical ability (with Cornell Professor Wendy M. Williams) and the reliability of child witnesses (with Maggie Bruck of Johns Hopkins University).

"His work on children's testimony is among the highest impact in psychology, having been cited in every level of judicial reasoning all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court's 2007 ruling in Kennedy v. Louisiana, which the Court reversed a lower court's death penalty verdict," says the SRCD. His research has been published in the leading developmental psychology journals as well as in the highly esteemed general journals in psychology, the award selections committee added.

The SRCD also noted that Ceci's work on the role of schooling in intelligence (Ceci, 1991, Developmental Psychology), cited around 600 times, according to Google Scholar, and his groundbreaking study of racetrack handicappers' intelligence (JEP:General, 1986), cited around 200 times, have been instrumental in shifting psychometrics from its reliance on theories of general intelligence toward a contextualist theory of everyday intelligence. This a view has become current among researchers even though it was not 25 years ago when Ceci's research began to challenge it by showing how cognitive performance is altered as a function of non-cognitive variables.

Ceci came to Cornell in 1980 and has since received lifetime distinguished scientist awards from the American Psychological Association (APA) and the Association for Psychological Science.

"We have run out of lifetime awards to recognize Steve's genius, which is a problem because he continues to do groundbreaking work," said Frank H. Farley, past president of APA and one of Ceci's nominators.

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