

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

David R. Williams is the Florence and Laura Norman Professor of Public Health at the Harvard School of Public Health and Professor of African and African American Studies and of Sociology at Harvard University. His first 6 years as a faculty member were at Yale University where he held appointments in both Sociology and Public Health. The next 14 years were at the University of Michigan where he served as the Harold Cruse Collegiate Professor of Sociology, a Senior Research Scientist at the Institute of Social Research and a Professor of Epidemiology in the School of Public Health. He holds a master's degree in public health from Loma Linda University and a Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Michigan.

He is centrally interested in social influences on physical and mental health and his research expertise includes the trends and determinants of socioeconomic and racial differences in health, the multiple ways in which racism can affect health, and the association between religious involvement and health. Williams is the principal investigator of the South African Stress and Health Study, the first nationally representative survey of the prevalence and correlates of psychiatric disorders in sub-Saharan Africa. He is also the co-principal investigator of the National Study of American Life, the largest psychiatric epidemiologic survey of the black population in the U.S. and the first to include a large national sample of black Caribbean immigrants. He is the author of more than 200 scholarly papers in scientific journals and edited collections. He has served as a member of the editorial board of 8 scientific journals and as a reviewer for more than 50 others. He has been ranked by ISI as one of the Top 10 Most Cited Researchers in the Social Sciences during the decade 1995 to 2005 and by Black Issues in Higher Education as the 2nd Most Cited Black Scholar in the Social Sciences in 2006 and 2007. He is an elected member of the Institute of Medicine and of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. In 2004, he received one of the inaugural Decade of Behavior Research Awards.

He has been involved in the development of health policy at the national level in the U.S. He has served on the Department of Health and Human Services' National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics and on seven panels for the Institute of Medicine/ National Academy of Sciences. He has held elected and appointed positions in professional organizations, such as the American Sociological Association, Academy Health and the American Public Health Association. Currently, he is a member of the of the MacArthur Foundation's Research Network on Socioeconomic Status and Health and the staff director of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Commission to Build a Healthier America