

## **Stephen J. Ceci**

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Stephen J. Ceci was born on March 22, 1950, and while not much information is available on his early years, his life's work has focused on studies surrounding the validity of children's courtroom testimony, gender studies, and intelligence. Ceci received his bachelor's degree in general psychology from the University of Delaware in 1973, earning his master's degree in developmental psychology two years later in 1975 from the University of Pennsylvania. He completed his doctoral degree in developmental psychology in 1978 at the University of Exeter in England.

In his early career, Ceci focused his research surrounding the validity of court testimony in cases surrounding child sexual and physical abuse, and neglect, examining characteristics of competence, suggestibility, and confessions by coercion. In his research, Ceci investigated how a child could be considered competent to testify in court, and his or her understanding of truths versus lies. He also looked into a child's suggestibility and his or her likelihood of repeating information previously heard. In addition, Ceci investigated authoritative influence on a child's susceptibility in false confessions, an area of interest closely related to suggestibility. He produced several publications in this area including his article, "Suggestibility of the Child Witnesses," which received the Robert Chin Memorial Award in 1994, and his book, "Jeopardy in the Courtroom: A Scientific Analysis of Children's Testimony," which received the William James Award for Excellence in Psychology in 2000.

In addition to his contribution in children's testimony, Ceci devoted his research to intelligence. He developed the "Bio-Ecological Theory of Intelligence," linking cultural roles in

the development of intelligence. According to his theory, Ceci posits that intellectual abilities of individuals living in developing countries are often misjudged as a result of cultural preconceptions. Ceci then published his book, “On Intelligence: A Biological Treatise,” outlining this theory on intellectual development. Ceci also focused his research on investigating sex differences within mathematics and science. In his book, “The Mathematics of Sex,” Ceci posits that small biological differences in boys’ and girls’ ability to succeed in mathematics and sciences are exaggerated by gender stereotypes and discrimination, leading to an underrepresentation of women in these areas of study. As a result of his research, Ceci established numerous outreach programs to aid in increasing women’s involvement within these areas of interest.

Over his lifetime, Ceci has authored around 450 books and book chapters, journal articles, and reviews which have been frequently cited. He has received several honors including the American Academy of Forensic Psychology’s Lifetime Distinguished Contribution Award in 2000 and more recently the G. Stanley Hall Award for Lifetime Contribution to Developmental Psychology in 2018. Currently, Ceci works as a staff psychologist at Cornell University, serving on several editorial boards and teaching classes. In addition, he still continues to conduct research in children’s testimony, women and science, and intelligence.

### **Further Reading**

Ceci, S.J. (1996). *On intelligence: A bioecological treatise*. Cambridge MA; Harvard University Press.

Ceci, S.J., & Bruck, M. (1993). Suggestibility of the child witness: A historical review and synthesis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 113(3), 403-439.

Ceci, S.J. & Bruck, M. (1995). *Jeopardy in the courtroom: A scientific analysis of children's testimony*. Washington DC: APA Books.

Ceci, S. J. & Williams, W. M. (2010). *The mathematics of sex: How biology and society conspire to limit talented women and girls*. NY: Oxford University Press.