

# Larry E. Davis: Director, Center on Race and Social Problems and Donald M. Henderson Chair



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2001 Cathedral of Learning

## Biography

Larry E. Davis has spent his life and career dedicated to issues of race, civil rights, and social justice. He earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from Michigan State University and a Masters in social work and a Masters in psychology from the University of Michigan. He then decided to work in the trenches, joining VISTA and spending three years in one of New York City's poorest neighborhoods.

He returned to academia and attended the dual-degree program in social work and psychology at the University of Michigan. He pursued both degrees because he believed that that the methodology of psychology combined with the tools of social work would enable him to bridge the gap between analysis and application.

Over the years, Dr. Davis' work has been funded by the National Institutes of Health, the National Institute of Mental Health and the National Science Foundation.

Before coming to Pitt in 2001, he was a Professor of Social Work and Psychology and the holder of the E. Desmond Lee Chair in Ethnic and Racial Diversity at Washington University in St. Louis.

In 2001, Dr. Davis was recruited to the University of Pittsburgh, where he served as Dean of the School of Social Work until 2017, and holds the Donald M. Henderson Chair. At Pitt, he also

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became the founding Director of the [Center on Race and Social Problems](#) which conducts applied social science research on race, ethnicity, and color, the first such center to be created in any American school of Social Work.

Dr. Davis has long been recognized as a leading scholar of the narrative about race in America and its role in social justice. His academic life has been dedicated to the creation of solution-based dialogues that promote a more racially equitable society.

Some of his publications have appeared in: *Social Work Research, Journal of Applied Social Psychology, Journal of Educational Psychology and Social Work.*

In addition, he is the founder and Chairman of the Editorial Board of the [Race and Social Problems journal](#), Springer Publications.

He has written, edited, or co-authored seven books: *Race, Gender and Class: Guidelines for Practice with Individuals, Families and Groups* (co-authored with Enola Proctor), *Ethnic Issues in Adolescent Mental Health* (Co-edited with Arlene Stiffman), *Working with African American Males: A Guide to Practice* (2000), *Black and Single: Finding and Choosing a Partner who is Right for You* (3rd edition 2004), and *Measuring Race and Ethnicity*, co-authored with Rafael Engel (2011), and *Race and Social Problems, Restructuring Inequality*, co-authored with Ralph Bangs (2014); Dr. Davis is also the co-editor in chief of the *Encyclopedia of Social Work*, 20th Edition.

His latest book [Why Are They Angry With Us: Essays on Race](#) is his most personal book—touching on themes of racial identity, internalized racism, and the legacy of slavery. It is published by Oxford University Press.

In addition, Dr. Davis is the founder of two national organizations, Black Administrators and Scholars (BARS) and leader of [REAP](#)-a consortium of Race, Ethnicity, and Poverty centers.

He is a member of the National Association of Social Workers, Council on Social Work Education, Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) and the Inter-University Consortium for International Social Development (IUCISD). In 2015, he was inducted into the American Academy of Social Work and Social Welfare.

He is the recipient of the 2014 Distinguished Alumni Award, University of Michigan School of Social Work. He is also the first person to receive both the 2016 [Significant Lifetime Achievement in Social Work Education Award](#) by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), and the 2018 Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) Distinguished Career Achievement Award.

Davis has three sons- Keanu, Naeem, and Amani.

## **Selected Publications**

### **Books**

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**Davis, Larry E.** [Why Are They Angry with Us? Essays on Race](#), Lyceum Books, 2015.

Bangs, R. and **Davis, L.E.** (Eds.), [Race and Social Problems, Restructuring Inequality](#) (inaugural issue), Springer Publishers, 2014.

**Davis, Larry E.** & Engel, Rafael, [Measuring Race and Ethnicity](#), Springer Publishers (2011).

**Davis, Larry E.:** [Black and Single: Finding and Choosing a Partner Who's Right for You](#). Ballantine Books. Chicago, Ill (1<sup>st</sup>. edition, 1993, 2<sup>nd</sup>. edition, 1998, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 2003)

**Davis, Larry E.:** [Working with African American Males: A Guide to Practice](#) (Ed.) Sage, 1999 Newbury Park, California.

Stiffman, A., and **Davis, L.E.:** [Ethnic Issues in Adolescent Mental Health](#). Sage, 1990, Newbury Park, California, (Eds.).

**Davis, Larry E.**, and Proctor, E.K: Race, [Gender and Class: Guidelines for Practice with Individuals, Families, and Groups](#). Prentice-Hall, 1989, Englewood Cliff, New Jersey.

## **Editorials**

**Davis, L.E.** "[We have failed American workers](#)", *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, March 12, 2017

**Davis, L.E.** "[Whose country is it, anyway? America is at a racial tipping point](#)" , *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, October 6, 2016

**Davis, L.E.**, "[Who's to blame?](#)", *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, July 17, 2016

**Davis, L.E.**, "[Race: America's Grand Challenge](#)", (2016) *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research*, Volume 7, Number 2.

**Davis, L.E.**, "[Are race relations worse under Obama?](#)", *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, April 19, 2015

**Davis, L.E.**, "[Facing up to race: Celebrating diversity is no substitute for addressing racial disparities](#)", *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, December 19, 2014.

**Davis, L.E.**, "[Have we gone too far with resiliency?](#)", *Social Work Research*, March 2014

**Davis, L.E.**, "[Reaching the Racial Tipping Point](#)", *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, December 16, 2012.

**Davis, L.E.**, "[Don't Blame the Teachers for the Racial Achievement Gap](#)", *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, December 18, 2011.

**Davis, L.E.**, "[Dr. Martin Luther King would be Surprised](#)", *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*, January 17, 2011.

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**Davis, L.E.**, "[Race in America: A three-day conference in Pittsburgh will seek solutions to our toughest racial problems](#)", *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*, June 2, 2010.

**Davis, L.E.**, [Sunday Forum: Black America is at War](#), *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, June 1, 2008.

**Davis, L.E.** and Bangs, R., "[Pittsburgh's Shame](#)", *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, July 1, 2007.

**Davis, L.E.** "MLK: All-American", *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, January 15, 2007.

**Davis, L.E.** "Where are the Potential Husbands, Role Models?". *The Miami Herald*, February 12, 2004.

**Davis, L.E.** "[A Gender Gap in Black and White](#)", *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*, July 29, 2003.

**Davis, L. E.** "[The New Ingredient in the Identity of Black Biracial Children](#)", *The Chicago Tribune*, December 1996.

## Speeches

Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) 2016 Presidential Lecture: *Race: America's Grand Challenge*. [Watch Speech](#). [Watch Q & A](#).

2016 APM Awards Luncheon: 2016 CSWE Significant Lifetime Achievement in Social Work Education Award. [Watch speech](#).

## Articles

**Davis, Larry E.** [Prologue: Race and Social Problems](#) (2009), 1, 1, pp.1-2

**Davis, Larry E.**, Wallace, J. and Shanks, T. (2008) [Overview on African Americans](#), [Encyclopedia of Social Work, 20<sup>th</sup> Edition](#), NASW Press/Oxford University Press, p. 65-75.

Mizrahi, T. and **Davis, L.E.**, Editors-in-Chief (2008) [Encyclopedia of Social Work, 20<sup>th</sup> Edition](#), NASW Press/Oxford University Press.

**Davis, Larry E.** and Bangs, R. (2007) [The Center on Race and Social Problems at the University of Pittsburgh](#), [Journal on Research on Social Work Practice](#), 17,(5), pp. 632-634.

**Davis, L.**, Saunders, J, Johnson, S. Miller-Cribbs, J. and Williams, T., Wexler, S. (2003) [Predicting Positive Academic Intentions Among African American Males and Females](#). *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 33, 2306-2326.

## Selected Funded Grants

He has received research funding from sources such as the National Science Foundation, the National Institute of Health, and the National Institute of Mental Health.

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