

2-1-1994

## Black Heritage Stamp Series: Dr. Allison Davis

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*Issue Date:* February 1, 1994

*First Day City:* Williamstown, Massachusetts

*Designer:* Chris Calle, Ridgefield, Connecticut

*Art Director and Typographer:* Richard Sheaff

*Modeler:* Richard Sennett, Stamp Venturers

*Project Manager:* Elizabeth Altobell,  
Stamp Acquisition, USPS

*Manufacturing Process:* Intaglio, Stamp Venturers

*Colors:* PMS 484 and 504

*Image Area:* 0.84 x 1.41 inches or  
21.3 x 35.8 millimeters

*Format:* Pane of 20

*Plate Numbers:* "S" followed by a single digit

*Marginal Markings:* © USPS 1993

## Dr. Allison Davis Stamp

Dr. Allison Davis, who studied the factors that shaped the lives of African-Americans, was an influential voice in psychology, anthropology, sociology and education from the early 1940s until his death in 1983. He was perhaps best known for his contribution to the debate over intelligence testing, in which he suggested that tests were developed in a way that unfairly reflected the abilities of low-income children.

Dr. Davis was the author or co-author of 10 books. From *Deep South* (1941), written in conjunction with Burleigh B. Gardner and Mary R. Gardner, to *Leadership, Love, and Aggression* (1983), he studied racial and class issues in the United States in a voice that was provocative but never inflammatory. The 1983 book analyzed the life history of four African-American figures: Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. Du Bois, Richard Wright and Martin Luther King, Jr. He found in them a common theme of anger at racial discrimination being channeled into constructive action.

Besides contributing to the literature of race in the United States, Dr. Davis had a successful academic career. He earned master's degrees in two fields at Harvard, studied anthropology at the London School of Economics and received a doctorate from the University of Chicago. He was on the Chicago faculty for nearly 40 years and late in his life was honored there by a symposium on "Race, Class, Socialization and the Life Cycle."



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE



# AMERICAN COMMEMORATIVES



## DR. ALLISON DAVIS

Dr. Allison Davis has been noted as one of the most distinguished social anthropologists and psychologists of the nation. His pioneering investigations of learning and intelligence made him a leading authority regarding the influence of social and economic factors in the education of poor children. His research was instrumental in creating a basis for ending legalized racial segregation in the United States. One of the earliest challengers of intelligence testing based on cultural bias, Dr. Davis dispelled the theory that children from low-income families were inferior in intelligence to their upper-income contemporaries. He argued that the inadequate education that lower socio-economic students received as a result of defective intelligence testing was depriving society of untapped sources of human ability.

Dr. Davis was born in Washington, D.C. in 1902 and attended the academically rigorous M Street (later called Dunbar) High School. He graduated summa cum laude as valedictorian of the Class of 1924 at Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts. He earned two master's degrees from Harvard, one in comparative literature and a second in anthropology. Dr. Davis went on to study anthropology at the London School of Economics and received his doctorate from the University of Chicago in 1942.

Dr. Davis was a faculty member of the University of Chicago for nearly 40 years. In addition to Chicago, his teaching career included appointments at Dillard University; Hampton Institute; Yale, where he was a research associate in psychology at the Institute for Human Relations; and Harvard, where he was co-director of field research in social anthropology. In 1970, Chicago appointed him John Dewey Distinguished Service Professor. He held visiting professorships and lectureships at such places as Columbia University, the University of Michigan, Smith College, the University of California (Berkeley) and the University of Pittsburgh. He also worked for two years at the American Council on Education.

During the Johnson and Nixon administrations, Dr. Davis served as a member of the President's Commission on Manpower Retraining. He was a Fellow of the Academy of Arts and Sciences and the National Academy of Education and a member of Phi Beta Kappa. In 1982 and 1983, Dr. Davis won MacArthur Foundation grants to further his work on the life and career of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. Davis' published work includes ten books, several of which have become classics. His co-authored book, "Deep South", a study of the cotton-plantation system and of color caste, helped to shape Gunnar Myrdal's "An American Dilemma", a study on race relations.

His last study, "Leadership, Love and Aggression", examined psychological factors which shaped the personalities and perspectives of four pivotal African American spokesmen. Other works include "Children of Bondage", "Father of the Man", "Social-Class Influences Upon Learning" and "Intelligence and Cultural Differences".

This commemorative stamp honors the accomplishments and service of Dr. Allison Davis and coincides with the 200th anniversary of the founding of his alma mater, Williams College.

The Dr. Allison Davis commemorative stamp, one of the Black Heritage Series stamps, was designed by Chris Calle of Ridgefield, Connecticut. The stamp was issued on February 1, 1994, in Williamstown, Massachusetts.





MUSICAL PRELUDE MS. TANYA NICHOLSON '94  
Williams College

PRESIDING MS. JO E. SAUNDERS  
District Manager  
Customer Services and Sales  
Springfield District  
U.S. Postal Service

NEGRO NATIONAL ANTHEM

INVOCATION DR. DENNIS C. DICKERSON  
Stanfield Professor of History  
Williams College

WELCOME DR. HARRY C. PAYNE  
President  
Williams College

INTRODUCTION OF  
DISTINGUISHED GUESTS MR. ARTHUR BEAULIEU  
Postmaster  
Williamstown, Massachusetts

ESSAYS MS. CHRISTINA DICKERSON  
Williamstown Elementary School

MR. LINDSAY GRACE  
Mt. Greylock Regional High School

REMARKS MR. GORDON J. DAVIS  
Son of Dr. Allison Davis

DR. JOHN A. DAVIS  
Brother of Dr. Allison Davis

DEDICATION OF STAMP MR. SAMUEL GREEN, JR.  
Vice President  
Customer Services and Sales  
U.S. Postal Service

HONORED GUEST MR. ALLISON S. DAVIS  
Son of Dr. Allison Davis

BLACK HERITAGE



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

W. Allison Davis, born in 1902 in Washington, D.C., was one of the nation's most distinguished social anthropologists and psychologists. His pioneering investigations into the influence of social and economic factors on the education of poor children, helped to create a basis for the ending of legalized racial segregation in the United States.

Davis, one of the earliest challengers of intelligence testing on the basis of cultural bias, attacked the assumption that children from low-income families were inferior in intelligence to their upper-income contemporaries. He argued that the inadequate education poorer students received, as a result of defective intelligence testing, was depriving society of untapped sources of human ability.

Among numerous honors, Davis served on the President's Commission on Civil Rights and as vice chairman of the Department of Labor's Commission on Manpower

Retraining, during the Johnson and Nixon Administration. He was a Fellow of the Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Center for Advanced Studies and from 1970 until his death in 1983, he served as the John Dewey Distinguished Service Professor.

His published work includes ten books. Most influential were *Deep South*, a study of the cotton-plantation system and of color caste, and his last study, *Leadership, Love and Aggression*, which examined psychological factors that shaped the personality and perspective of four pivotal African Americans.

The Postal Service is proud to commemorate Dr. Allison Davis with the issuance of this stamp. Designed by Chris Calle of Ridgefield, Connecticut, the stamp is the latest addition to the Postal Service's Black Heritage Series and is officially dedicated at Williams College, Davis' alma mater.

**THE NEGRO NATIONAL ANTHEM**

*"Lift Every Voice and Sing"*

by James Weldon Johnson

1. Lift ev'ry voice and sing, till earth and heaven ring.  
Ring with the harmonies of liberty. Let our rejoicing rise,  
high as the list'ning skies. Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.  
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us.  
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us.  
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,  
Let us march on till victory is won.

2. Stony the road we trod, biffer the chast'ning rod.  
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died.  
Yet with a steady beat, have not our weary feet,  
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?  
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,  
We have come, treading our path thro' the blood of the  
slaughtered, Out of the gloomy past, till now we stand at last  
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

3. God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,  
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way,  
Thou who hast by thy might, led us into the light,  
Keep us for ever in the path, we pray.  
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee.  
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee.  
Shadowed beneath thy hand, may we forever stand,  
True to our God, true to our native land.

**DR. ALLISON DAVIS**



*Cover Photo Courtesy of Dr. Allison Davis Family.*  
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**DR. ALLISON DAVIS**

**FEBRUARY 1, 1994 WILLIAMS COLLEGE  
WILLIAMSTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS**

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