

Erykah N. Benson

Doctoral Candidate in Sociology

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Education

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor - Ann Arbor, MI

Ph.D. Sociology, *in progress*
M.A. Sociology, May 2024
Preliminary Exam: Social Demography (Pass)

Michigan State University - East Lansing, MI

B.A. Interdisciplinary Social Sciences (*Honors Distinction*), 2021
Thesis: *Dissecting the American History Textbook: A Content Analysis on the Erasure of Structural Racism and Oppressed Voices*, Advisors (Dr. John Waller; Dr. Melissa Fore; Dr. Heather McCauley)

Research Areas

Organizations, Occupations, and Work; Digital Studies; Entrepreneurship and Gig Work; Culture and Ideology

Peer-Reviewed Publications and Manuscripts Under Review

- 2024** Hudgins, K., **Benson, E.**, Carr, S., Simington, J., Walker, Z., Cruz, J., Hutchings, V., Lewis, E., Ostfeld, M. C., & Young, A. Crafting Democratic Futures: Understanding Political Conditions and Racialized Attitudes Toward Black Reparations. *RSF: The Russell Sage Foundation Journal of the Social Sciences*, 10(3), 49–67. <https://doi.org/10.7758/RSF.2024.10.3.03>

Policy Reports and Public Commentary

- 2025** **Benson, E.** & Lundy, L. (2025). "From Aisles to Doorsteps." [Issue Brief](#). Center for Racial Justice and Poverty Solutions.
- 2024** Hudgins, K., **Benson, E.**, Ostfeld, M., Hutchings, V. (2024). "Detroit reparations task force now has until 2025 to make its report, but going slow with this challenging work may not be a bad thing." [The Conversation](#).
- 2023** **Benson, E.** & Simington, J. "Forty Acres and a Mule? How Flint residents believe the government should repay Black Americans." [Issue Brief](#). Center for Racial Justice.
- 2023** **Benson, E.** & Simington, J. "Collective Remembrance and Detroiters' Views Toward Racial Inequity." [Issue Brief](#). Center for Racial Justice.
- 2022** **Benson, E.** & Simington, J. "The Electoral Impact of Racial Reckoning: The Effect of Reparations Policy on Voter Engagement in Detroit." [Issue Brief](#). Center for Racial Justice.
- 2022** Wileden, L. & **Benson, E.** "The Economic Well-Being of Detroit Residents Two Years Into the COVID-19 Pandemic." [Issue Brief](#). Detroit Metro Area Communities Study.

Working Papers

In Preparation

Benson, E. "Stitching Our Own Narrative: Making Sense of Disposable Racial politics and Unpaid Labor in the Digital Economy"

Benson, E. & Lundy, L. "More than an Appetite for Convenience: Usage Patterns of Grocery Delivery Services in Detroit, Michigan"

Select Research Experience

2024 - Present Research Assistant, The Bodies, Identities, Intimacies, and Technologies (BIIT) Lab
The University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, LSA Digital Studies Institute
Dr. Apryl Williams

2024 - Present Research Assistant, *Reparative Artificial Intelligence (AI)*
The University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, LSA Humanities Collaboratory
Drs. Germaine Halegoua, Matthew Bui, Apryl Williams, Ellie Abrons, Tung-Hui Hu

2022 - Present Research Fellow, *Center for Racial Justice*
The University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, Ford School of Public Policy
Dr. Mara Cecilia Ostfeld

Fellowships, Grants, and Awards

External Fellowships

2023 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, DGE-2241144
2021 Population Studies Research Traineeship, National Institutes of Child and Human Development, 5T32HD007339-37

Internal Funding and Awards

2025 Population Studies Center Traineeship Travel Award, University of Michigan (\$750), *Population Association of America 2025 Conference*
2025 Rackham Conference Travel Award, University of Michigan (\$900)
Population Association of America 2025 Conference
2024 Rackham Conference Travel Award, University of Michigan (\$900)
Population Association of America 2024 Conference
2024 Population Studies Center Traineeship Travel Award, University of Michigan (\$750)
Population Association of America 2024 Conference
2023 National Center for Institutional Diversity Anti-Racism Grant, University of Michigan (\$5,000)
2023 Rackham Graduate Student Research Grant, University of Michigan (\$1,500)
2022 Clifford C. Clogg Scholarship, University of Michigan - Ann Arbor (\$2,800)

- 2022** Population Studies Center Conference Travel Award, University of Michigan (\$400), *Association of Public Policy and Management 2022 Conference*
- 2022** Rackham Conference Travel Award, University of Michigan - Ann Arbor (\$900) *Association of Public Policy and Management 2022 Conference*

Additional Honors

- 2024** Graduate Student Mentorship Award, University of Michigan Department of Sociology
- 2023** Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship, Honorable Mention

Invited Presentations

Formal Academic Presentations

- 2025** Benson, E. "Delivering Change to the Motor City? Usage Patterns and Affective Experiences of Online Grocery and Meal Delivery in Detroit, Michigan. April 10th - 13th, 2025. Poster Presentation. Selected from Abstracts. Population Association of America. Washington, D.C.
- 2024** Easter, M., Benson, E., Piazza, G., Davis, J., Hooker, J. ["Making It: Perspectives on the Business of Creativity"](#). Invited Panelist. Ross Impact Studio. December 5, 2024. Jeff T. Blau Hall. University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, MI.
- 2024** Benson, E. "Driving Change in the Motor City? Usage Patterns and Affective Experiences in Online Grocery and Meal Delivery in the City of Detroit, MI". September 26th - 27th, 2024. Oral Presentation. Selected from Abstracts. Detroit Food Policy Council, Marygrove College. Detroit, MI. [Public Link](#).
- 2024** Benson, E. "Black Creatives in the Platform Gig Economy". April 17th - 20th, 2024. Poster Presentation. Selected from Abstracts. Population Association of America. Columbus, OH.
- 2024** Benson, E. "Catharsis, Community, and Craft: How Black Creatives Make Meaning of Online Community-building in the Platform Economy". April 2nd, 2024. Oral Presentation. 2024 NCID Anti-Racism Graduate Research Showcase. Ann Arbor, MI. [Public Link](#).
- 2024** Benson, E. "Catharsis, Community, and Craft: How Black Creatives Make Meaning of Online Community-building in the Platform Economy". March 23rd, 2024. Oral Presentation. Selected from Abstracts. Black Graduate Student Association Research Symposium. Ann Arbor, MI.
- 2023** Hudgins, K., Benson, E., Simington, J. "Crafting Democratic Futures: Understanding Political Conditions and Racialized Attitudes towards Black Reparations in the US". April 21st, 2023. Oral Presentation. Russell Sage Foundation. New York, NY.
- 2022** Benson, E. "Entrepreneurship and Perceived Economic Uncertainty in Detroit during COVID-19". November 17th - 19th, 2022. Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management Fall Research. Conference. Oral Presentation. Selected from Abstracts. Washington, D.C.

Public Speaking Engagements

2024	"Get the Voter 411." MountUp! For Social Justice Series. Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church. Podcast Invited Speaker. October 17, 2024. Detroit, MI
2024	"Technology, Food Access, and Reparation: Why Public Attitudes Matter". Detroit Promise Program. August 21, 2024. University of Michigan. Ann Arbor, MI.
2024	"Voting in the Michigan Primaries". <i>MountUp!</i> For Social Justice Series. Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church. Organizer & Presenter. February 26, 2024. Detroit, MI.
2021	"Building Financial Knowledge and Equity Across Generations." <i>MountUp!</i> For Social Justice Series. Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church. Organizer & Presenter. April 19, 2021. Detroit, MI.
2021	"Suffer Not the Children: Education and Equity in COVID-19." MountUp! For Social Justice Series. Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church. Organizer & Presenter. March 26, 2021. Detroit, MI.
2021	"Biden Administration's 100-Day Plan and Black America." MountUp! For Social Justice Series. Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church. Organizer & Presenter. February 22, 2021. Detroit, MI.
2021	"Candid Convo on COVID-19". MountUp! For Social Justice Series. Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church. Organizer & Presenter. January 21, 2021. Detroit, MI.
2020	"Get the Voter 411!" MountUp! For Social Justice Series. Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church. Organizer & Presenter. October 30, 2020. Detroit, MI.

Teaching Experience

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

2024	Guest Speaker, PUBPOL475: Race, Place, and Inequality, Dr. Mo Torres
2024	Guest Speaker, Detroit Students Establishing Educational Dreams (S.E.E.D.) Program
2024-5	Graduate Student Supervisor, SOC 394: Sociology Undergraduate Research Opportunity, Dr. Jeffrey Morenoff

Wayne State University, Detroit

2021	Teaching Assistant, ENG 1010: Basic Writing, Dr. Thomas Trimble
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Michigan State University, East Lansing

2020	Teaching Assistant, SOC 100: Introduction to Sociology, Dr. Eric Beasley
2019	Teaching Assistant, SOC 161: International Development & Change, Dr. Benjamin Marley

Select Media Coverage

- "ASPIRE program bridges research and real-world impact." [Youth Policy Lab](#). August 2024.
- "Detroit residents largely support reparations, survey finds." [Crain's Detroit](#). April 2023.
- "U-M report finds majority of Detroiters support some form of reparations." [CBS News Detroit](#). April 2023
- "Anti-Racism Collaborative awards over \$100,000 in Graduate Research Grants". [NCID](#). June 2023.
- "Detroiters' financial recovery from COVID mixed." [Axios](#). May 2022
- "Report: Most Detroiters support reparations, say policymakers should, too." [Bridge Detroit](#). April 2023.

"Detroit Reparations Task Force hears public proposals during first meeting." [Michigan Advance](#). April 2023.
 "What could improve Detroit turnout? Candidates who support reparations." [Bridge Detroit](#). November 2022.

Academic and Professional Service

2025	Conference Symposium Organizer. Black Graduate Student Association Graduate Research Symposium. "Illuminating Our Black Joy". March 20th - March 22nd. Ann Arbor, MI.
2023	Book Discussant. "The Love Jones Cohort: Single and Living Alone in the Black Middle Class: A Conversation with Dr. Kris Marsh". October 3, 2023. Ann Arbor, MI
2023 - 2024	Student Coordinator, Race & Racial Identities Workshop, U-M - Ann Arbor, MI
2022 - 2024	Graduate Student Recruitment Representative, U-M - Ann Arbor, MI

Methodological Training

University of Michigan

2023	Quantitative Methods: Practicum, Department of Sociology
2022	Race, Ethnicity, and Quantitative Methodology, ICPSR Summer Program
2022	R Statistical Computing Environment, ICPSR Summer Program
2022	Statistical Methods II, Dept. of Sociology (Stata Statistical Software)
2021	Statistical Methods I, Dept. of Sociology (Stata Statistical Software)

Additional Research Skills

Geographic Information Systems - ArcGIS Pro Version 3.3.2 (Spatial Mapping)
 Dedoose Qualitative Coding Software
 Microsoft Excel
 Survey design, implementation, and analysis

Certifications

2024	Program for the Education and Evaluation of Responsible Research and Scholarship (PEERRS)
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Mentorship

Students

2025 - Aanya Panyadahundi, University of Michigan, Sociology Undergraduate Research Opportunity (SURO)
 2025 - Sanjana Sunilkumar, University of Michigan, Sociology Undergraduate Research Opportunity (SURO)
 2025 - Zihao Xu, University of Michigan, Sociology Undergraduate Research Opportunity (SURO)
 2025 - Halle Chen, University of Michigan, Sociology Undergraduate Research Opportunity (SURO)
 2024 - Maegan Davis, University of Michigan, Sociology Undergraduate Research Opportunity (SURO)
 2024 - Morgan Chambers, Spelman University, Applied Policy Internship and Research Experience Program
 2024 - Love Lundy, Spelman University, Public Policy and International Affairs Program
 2023 - Lexi Turner, Spelman University, Applied Policy Internship and Research Experience Program

Professional & Academic Associations

Current Professional Memberships

<i>Join Date</i>	<i>Institution</i>
2021	American Sociological Association
2021	Association of Black Sociologists
2021	Population Association of America

Current Institutional Affiliations

<i>Join Date</i>	<i>Institution</i>
2024	Bodies, Identities, Intimacies, and Technologies (BIIT) Lab, Digital Studies Institute
2022	Stone Family Center for Inequality Dynamics, Institute for Social Research
2022	Center for Racial Justice, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy
2021	University of Michigan Population Studies Center, Institute for Social Research
2019	Black Alumni Association, Michigan State University
2019	Social Science Scholars Alumni Association, Michigan State University