

Erykah N. Benson

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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 Interests

Technology and Digital Studies; Survey Methods; Entrepreneurship and Gig Work

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>
- 2021 **Benson, E.** “Dissecting the American History Textbook: A Content Analysis on the Erasure of Structural Racism and Oppressed Voices”. *Social Science Scholars Program Volume 5*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press.

Policy Reports and Public Commentary

- 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 challenge 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

Benson, E. Delivering Change to the Motor City?

Benson, E. Catharsis, Community, and Craft: How Black Creatives Make Meaning of Online Community-building in the Platform Economy.

Select Research Experience

- 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
- 2021 - Present **Research Assistant, Detroit Metro Area Communities Study**
The University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, Poverty Solutions
Drs. Jeffrey Morenoff, Elisabeth Gerber, Mara Cecilia Ostfeld
- 2019 - 2021 **Principal Investigator, A Visual Content Analysis of the Portrayal of Racial Minorities**
Michigan State University - East Lansing, College of Social Science
Drs. John Waller, Melissa Fore, Heather McCauley

Fellowships, Grants, and Awards

External Fellowships

- 2023 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship
- 2021 Population Studies Research Traineeship, Eunice Kennedy Shriver NICHD, 5T32HD007339-37

External Awards

- 2020 Richard B. Gerisch Scholarship, Michigan State University - East Lansing, (\$5,000)
- 2020 Diversity Research Showcase, Michigan State University - East Lansing (\$1,000)
- 2020 MLK, Jr. Advancing Inclusion Through Research Award (\$300)
- 2020 Andrew Undergraduate Fellowship, Michigan State University - East Lansing (\$1,000)
- 2020 Provost Undergraduate Research Initiative, East Lansing (\$4,000)
- 2019 Ernest G. Green Black Alumni Scholarship, Michigan State University - East Lansing (\$1,000)
- 2018 Reverend C.O. Stewart Education Ministry, Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church
- 2018 Guyer Public Policy Award, Michigan State University - East Lansing (\$1,000)

Internal Funding and Awards

- 2025 Rackham Conference Travel Award, University of Michigan - Ann Arbor (\$900)
- 2024 Rackham Conference Travel Award, University of Michigan - Ann Arbor (\$900)
- 2023 National Center for Institutional Diversity Anti-Racism Grant, University of Michigan - Ann Arbor (\$5,000)
- 2023 Rackham Graduate Student Research Grant, University of Michigan - Ann Arbor (\$1,500)
- 2022 Clifford C. Clogg Scholarship, University of Michigan - Ann Arbor (\$2,800)
- 2022 Population Studies Center Conference Travel Award, University of Michigan - Ann Arbor (\$400)
- 2022 Rackham Conference Travel Award, University of Michigan - Ann Arbor (\$900)

Additional Honors

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

Invited 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 Summit, Detroit Food Policy Council. 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”. *MountUp!* For Social Justice Series. Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church. Organizer & Presenter. February 26, 2024. Detroit, MI.
- 2021 “Building Financial Knowledge and Equity Across Generations.” *MountUp!* 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 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

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.
- “Inaugural ASPIRE cohort enjoys rewarding summer research experience with the YPL.” [Ford School](#). August 2023.
- “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 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

- 2024 Qualitative Methods, Bodies, Identities, Intimacies, and Technologies (BIIT) Lab, Digital Studies Institute
- 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

- Dedoose Qualitative Coding Software
- Microsoft Excel

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 - Rino Fujimoto, 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
- 2024 - Rino Fujimoto, Undergraduate Research Assistantship
- 2023 - Lexi Turner, Spelman University, Applied Policy Internship and Research Experience Program

Mentorship Speaking Engagements

- 2024 Graduate School Panel with Scholars Alumni, Scholars Alumni Board, Michigan State University - East Lansing, MI
- 2023 Your Path to Go Blue Webinar - Humanities, Management, and Social Sciences Graduate Programming,
University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, MI

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