

Erykah N. Benson

Literature, Science, and Arts Building
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Education

- Present **Ph.D. in Sociology**, The University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, MI
Advisor: Dr. Jeffrey Morenoff
- 2024 **Master of Arts**, Sociology, The University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, MI
- 2021 **Bachelor of Arts (High Honors)**, Michigan State University - East Lansing, MI
Thesis Advisor: Dr. John Waller

Research Interests

Structural Racism; Social Demography; Technology and Digital Studies; Neighborhood Studies

Academic Positions Held

Research

- 2024 - Present Research Assistant, Reparative Artificial Intelligence (AI)
The University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, LSA Humanities Collaboratory
Principal Investigator: Dr. Germaine Haleboua
Collaborators: Drs. Matthew Bui, Apryl Williams, Ellie Abrons, Tung-Hui Hu
- 2022 - Present Research Fellow, Center for Racial Justice
The University of Michigan - Ann Arbor
Director: Dr. Celeste Watkins-Hayes
Research Director: Dr. Mara Ostfeld
Associate Director: Dr. Dominique Adams-Santos
- 2021 - Present Research Assistant, Detroit Metro Area Communities Study
The University of Michigan - Ann Arbor
Principal Investigators: Drs. Jeffrey Morenoff, Elisabeth Gerber, Mara Ostfeld
- 2021 - Present Population Studies Center Trainee
The University of Michigan - Ann Arbor
National Institutes of Child and Human Development
Advisor: Dr. Jeffrey Morenoff

2019 - 2021 Primary Investigator, *Sins of Omission: A Visual Content Analysis of the Portrayal of Racial Minorities*
Michigan State University - East Lansing
Faculty Mentors: Dr. John Waller, Dr. Melissa Fore

Teaching

2021 - 2022 Teaching Assistant
Wayne State University - Detroit
Department of English, Basic Writing (ENG 1010), Dr. Thomas Trimble, Dr. Nicole Varty

2020 - 2021 Teaching Assistant
Michigan State University - East Lansing
Department of Sociology (SOC 100), Dr. Eric Beasley

Honors and Awards

Internal Funds

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

External Funds

2023 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship (\$147,000)
2021 Population Studies Research Traineeship, Eunice Kennedy Shriver NICHD, 5T32HD007339-37
2020 Provost Undergraduate Research Initiative, Michigan State University - East Lansing (\$4,000)
2020 Andrew Undergraduate Fellowship, Michigan State University - East Lansing (\$1,000)
2020 MLK, Jr. Advancing Inclusion Through Research Award (\$300)
2020 Diversity Research Showcase, Michigan State University - East Lansing (\$1,000)
2020 Richard B. Gerisch Scholarship, Michigan State University - East Lansing (\$5,000)
2019 Ernest G. Green Black Alumni Scholarship, Michigan State University - East Lansing (\$1,000)
2018 Guyer Public Policy Award, Michigan State University - East Lansing (\$1,000)
2018 Reverend C.O. Stewart Education Ministry, Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church

Honors

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

Publications

Peer-Reviewed Publications

- 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.

Public Sociology in Non-Refereed Publications

- 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.

Presentations

Academic Conferences

- 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. Detroit Food Summit, Detroit Food Policy Council. Detroit, MI.
- 2024 **Benson, E.** “Black Creatives in the Platform Gig Economy”. April 17th - 20th, 2024. 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. 2024 Anti-Racism Graduate Research Showcase. Ann Arbor, MI.
- 2024 **Benson, E.** “Catharsis, Community, and Craft: How Black Creatives Make Meaning of Online

Community-building in the Platform Economy”. March 23rd, 2024. 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. Russell Sage Foundation. Black Reparations: Insights from the Social Sciences. New York City, 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. Washington, D.C.

Other Colloquia or Conference Participation

- 2023 “The Love Jones Cohort: Single and Living Alone in the Black Middle Class: A Conversation with Dr. Kris Marsh”. Book Talk Discussant. October 3rd, 2023. Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy. Ann Arbor, MI.

Invited Community Presentations

- 2024 **Benson, E.** “Technology, Food Access, and Reparation: Why Public Attitudes Matter”. Detroit Promise Program. August 21, 2024. University of Michigan. Ann Arbor, MI.
- 2024 **Benson, E.** “Voting in the Michigan Primaries”. *MountUp!* For Social Justice Series. Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church. Co-Organizer & Presenter. February 26, 2024. Virtual.
- 2021 **Benson, E.** “Building Financial Knowledge and Equity Across Generations.” *MountUp!* For Social Justice Series. Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church. Co-Organizer & Presenter. April 19, 2021. Virtual.
- 2021 **Benson, E.** “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. Virtual.
- 2021 **Benson, E.** “Biden Administration 100-Day Plan and Black America.” *MountUp!* For Social Justice Series. Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church. Organizer & Presenter. February 22, 2021. Virtual.
- 2021 **Benson, E.** “Candid Convo on COVID-19”. *MountUp!* For Social Justice Series. Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church. Organizer & Presenter. January 21, 2021. Virtual.
- 2020 **Benson, E.** “Get the Voter 411!” *MountUp!* For Social Justice Series. Mount Pleasant Missionary Baptist Church. Organizer & Presenter. October 30, 2020. Virtual.

Select Media Coverage

“Detroiters’ financial recovery from COVID mixed.” [Axios](#). May 2022

“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

Departmental Service Activities

2023 - 2024	Student Coordinator, Race & Racial Identities Workshop, U-M - Ann Arbor, MI
2023 - 2024	Mentor, Applied Policy Internship and Research Experience Program, U-M - Ann Arbor, MI
2022 - 2024	Graduate Student Recruitment Representative, The University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, MI

Research Skills

Stata Statistical Software

Microsoft Suite

Geographic Information Systems (ArcGIS)

Dedoose

Undergraduate Mentorship

Lexi Turner, Spelman University, ASPIRE Program

Morgan Chambers, Spelman University, ASPIRE Program

Love Lundy, Spelman University

Professional & Academic Associations

Professional Membership

American Sociological Association

Association of Black Sociologists

Population Association of America

Affiliations

Institute for Social Research

University of Michigan Population Studies Center

Stone Family Center for Inequality Dynamics

Center for Racial Justice at the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy

Michigan State University Black Alumni Association