

RUBY BAFU

Department of Sociology
University of Wisconsin-Madison
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EDUCATION

- 2025 **Ph.D. in Sociology**, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Dissertation: Student-Teacher Interactions in the Context of Online Learning
Committee: Monica Grant, Jessica Calarco, Eric Grodsky,
Katie Jensen, Linn Posey-Maddox
- 2021 **M.S. in Sociology**, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Emphasis: Media Framings of Black Girls' Educational Experiences
Committee: Monica Grant
- 2018 **B.A. in Sociology**, Cornell University, *Magna Cum Laude*
Minors: Inequality Studies and Spanish
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RESEARCH & TEACHING INTERESTS

Race and Ethnicity; Gender; Sociology of Education; Children & Youth; Black Girlhood; Online Learning; Qualitative Methods

PUBLICATIONS

Manuscripts in Preparation

Bafu, Ruby, Garcia, Madison, and Calarco, Jessica. (In preparation to submit to *Teaching and Teacher Education*). "No Biggie/Try Harder: How Frequency and Perceived Motivation Shape Math Educators' Responses to Students' Struggles"

Bafu, Ruby. (In preparation to submit to *Youth and Society*). "Good morning, Madison, Wisconsin: How the Media Highlights Black Women's Othermothering Strategies in Support of Black Girls."

Bafu, Ruby. (In preparation to submit to *Sociology of Education*). "Online Learning, Intersectionality, and K-12 Students' Experiences."

HONORS & AWARDS

Fellowships and Grants

- 2024 Department of Sociology Small Grant Award, UW-Madison, \$300
2023 Sociology of Education Association Conference Travel Award, \$400
2022 Department of Sociology Small Grant Award, UW-Madison, \$200
2021 Graduate Studies Enhancement Grant, Mellon Mays Graduate Initiatives Program, \$1,800
2020-2024 Graduate Research Fellow, National Science Foundation, \$106,000

- 2020 Graduate Studies Enhancement Grant, Mellon Mays Graduate Initiatives Program, \$2,000
- 2019 Institute for Research on Poverty Fellow, UW-Madison
 Conference Travel Award, Graduate School, UW-Madison, \$600
 ASA Student Forum Travel Award, American Sociological Association, \$250
 Race, Ethnicity, and Inequality in Education Collaborative Training Grant Fellow, UW-Madison, \$30,000
 Predoctoral Research Development Grant, Mellon Mays Graduate Initiatives Program, \$2,700
 Minority Recruitment and Retention Committee Grant, UW-Madison, \$500
 Women and Wellbeing in Wisconsin and the World Engagement Grant, Women's Philanthropy Council, UW-Madison, \$2,500
- 2018 University Fellowship, Graduate School, UW-Madison, \$44,000
- 2017 Institute for Recruitment of Teachers Fellowship Program, Phillips Andover Academy
 Office of Academic Diversity Initiatives (**OADI**): Student Individual Funding Sponsorship, Cornell University, \$400
 Global Cornell: Undergraduate Student Travel Grants, \$400
 Cornell Abroad (**CUA**): Global Encounters Scholarship, \$300
- 2016 Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship, Cornell University, \$7,200
 Cornell Abroad: Global Encounters Scholarship, Cornell University, \$500
 Community Engaged Learning and Research Grant, Cornell University, \$500
 Iscol Family Leadership Development in Public Service Grant, Cornell University, \$3,000
 Mario Einaudi Undergraduate Student Travel Grant, Cornell University, \$550

Awards

- 2021 Graduate Student Service Scholarship Award, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- 2021 Exceptional Service Teaching Assistant Award, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- 2021 Sociology DEI Fund Summer Award, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- 2020 Honorable Mention, Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship
- 2019 Honorable Mention, Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship
- 2018 Alpha Kappa Delta, Cornell University
 Best Honors Thesis, Inequality Studies, Cornell University
- 2016 Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship, Cornell University

CONFERENCE ACTIVITY

Papers Presented

- 2024 **Bafu, R.** "Online Learning, Intersectionality, and K-12 Students' Experiences." *E-Learning International Conference*. Kumasi, Ghana. July 11-12, 2024, and *American Sociological Association Conference*. Montreal, Canada. August 9-13, 2024.

- 2022 **Bafu, R.** “A Black Feminist Discourse Analysis of the Media’s Framings of Black Girls’ Educational Experiences.” *National Women’s Studies Association Conference*. Minneapolis, Minnesota November 10-13, 2022.
- 2022 **Bafu, R.** “Human Centered: A Discussion of How A Black Women’s Collective Works to Disrupt the Research Process.” *American Educational Research Association Conference*. San Diego, California. April 20-24, 2022.
- 2021 **Bafu, R.** “A Black Feminist Discourse Analysis of the Media’s Framings of Black Girls’ Educational Experiences.” *The Society for the Study of Social Problems*. Virtual Annual Meeting. August 4-7, 2021.
- 2019 **Bafu, R.** “The Impact of School Punishment on the Racial Understanding and Educational Outcomes of Black Girls.” *American Sociological Association Annual Meeting*. Manhattan, New York. August 10-13, 2019.
- Bafu, R.** “The Impact of School Punishment on the Racial Understanding and Educational Outcomes of Black Girls.” *Association of Black Sociologists Annual Conference*. Manhattan, New York. August 8-10, 2019.
- Bafu, R.** “The Impact of School Punishment on the Racial Understanding and Educational Outcomes of Black Girls.” *Social Science Research Council-Mellon Mays Graduate Initiative Program Summer Conference*. Manhattan, New York. June 24-26, 2019.
- Bafu, R.** “The Impact of School Punishment on the Racial Understanding and Educational Outcomes of Black Girls.” *Chicago Ethnography Conference*. Evanston, Illinois. March 15-16, 2019.
- Bafu, R.** “The Impact of Mothers on the Racial Identity Making Process of Black Women with Natural Hair in the United States and the Dominican Republic.” *Sociologists for Women in Society Winter Meeting*. Denver, Colorado. February 7-10, 2019.
- 2018 **Bafu, R.** “It’s Never Just Hair: *Pelo Malo* and The Modern Racialization of Women’s Natural Hair in the Dominican Republic and the United States.” *Mellon Mays Graduate Initiatives Program Summer Conference*. Manhattan, New York: June 18-20, 2018.
- 2017 **Bafu, R.** “Black Women’s Racialization in the Dominican Republic and the United States.” *Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Regional Conference*. Haverford, Pennsylvania. November 9-11, 2018.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- 2024 *Research Assistant, “The Discussion Project, PI: Dr. Diana Hess, UW-Madison.*

Conducted qualitative coding of interviews, wrote memos, and contributed to manuscripts about students' experiences in discussion-based learning spaces.

- 2023-2024 *Research Assistant, "Race in the Class," PI: Dr. Aireale Rodgers, UW-Madison.*
Supported data analysis on a qualitative research project studying racialization in doctoral coursework. This project is funded by the International Society of the Learning Sciences and the Wallace Foundation's Emerging Scholars Grant.
- 2022-2023 *Research Assistant, "Racial Equity and Digital Courseware," PI: Dr. Aireale Rodgers, UW-Madison.*
Conducted student focus group interviews, supported data analysis, and contributed to a toolkit for a project in partnership with the Transgressive Teaching Collaborative focused on exploring how instructors and students leverage digital courseware to support racial equity in postsecondary STEM gateway courses. This project is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.
- 2021-2022 *Research Assistant, "The Discussion Project, PI: Dr. Diana Hess, UW-Madison.*
Conducted qualitative coding of interviews, wrote memos, and contributed to manuscripts about students' experiences in discussion-based learning spaces.
- 2021-2024 *Research Assistant, "Teacher Responses to Students' Struggles with Math," PI's: Dr. Eric Grodsky and Dr. Jessica Calarco, UW-Madison.*
Conducted data analysis of surveys and contributed significantly to manuscript in which I am first author.
- 2020-2024 *Research Assistant, "Black Madison Voices: Perspectives on Education and Schooling from Madison's Black Communities," PI: Dr. Maxine McKinney de Royston, UW-Madison.*
Contributed to IRB protocol, engaged in project management, and conducted oral history interviews to document Black Madisonian's educational experiences.
- 2019-2020 *Research Assistant, "Evaluative Project on Restorative Justice in Dane County, Wisconsin," PI: Dr. Amy Hilgendorf, UW-Madison.*
Interviewed restorative justice practitioners, analyzed secondary documents related to restorative justice, observed restorative justice coalition meetings, and created summary reports for community partners.
- Research Assistant, "Chronic Absenteeism Among Students," Dr. Eric Grodsky, Madison Education Partnership and UW-Madison.*
Contributed to the study design and created focus group protocols.
- Research Assistant, "Exploring Race and Educational Opportunity in Community-Based Spaces," Dr. Bianca J. Baldrige, UW-Madison.*
Conducted in-depth semi-structured individual interviews, attended community events, and wrote field notes.

- 2017 *Research Fellow for PI: Dr. Aisha Finch, UCLA, Mellon Mays Writing and Research Training Program.*
Learned how to write a successful research proposal and gained feedback on first iteration of literature review for senior honors thesis.
- 2016 *Student Researcher, Global Health Program-Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.*
Shadowed doctors and observed Haitian-Dominican race relations in Santo Domingo in preparation for future interviews for Mellon Mays Undergraduate research project at Cornell University.
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TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Assistantships

- 2023 Lecturer, “The Sociological Enterprise,” Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Summer Term.
- 2020 Teaching Assistant, “Methods of Social Inquiry,” Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Spring Semester with Prof. Monica Grant.
- 2019 Teaching Assistant, “Methods of Social Inquiry,” Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison, Fall Semester with Prof. Jordan Conwell.
- 2016 Teaching Assistant, “Introduction to Sociology,” Cornell Prison Education Program, Auburn Correctional Facility, Spring Semester with Emily NaPier.
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OTHER TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- 2020-Present Dear Diary Program Coordinator, Dear Diary of Madison, Madison, Wisconsin.
Created program materials and curriculum, mentored Black girls, and led instructional sessions related to identity, self-esteem, and sexual health as co-facilitator of the group.
- 2019-Present Books and Breakfast Coordinator, Freedom Inc., Madison, Wisconsin
Implemented a summer political education program for Black and Southeast Asian elementary-aged children, created social justice curriculum, read to students, fed them healthy meals, and taught them about body safety, gender identity, and activism/
- 2019 Athletic Tutor, “Criminal Justice in America,” “Classical Sociological Theory,” “The Sociological Enterprise,” University of Wisconsin-Madison
Reviewed undergraduate course material relating to broad sociological concepts such as race, gender, crime, and punishment for undergraduate student athletes.
- 2018 Teaching Fellow, Practice Makes Perfect- JHS 217, Queens, New York
Taught rising eighth graders ELA and math concepts in preparation for the SHSAT, an exam which determines entry into NYC specialized high schools.
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SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- 2023 Guest lecture for graduate media seminar in the Department of English and Comparative Literature for a discussion about Black girls in the media, San Diego State University.
- 2022 Guest lecture for undergraduate “Sociology of Race” seminar in the Department of Sociology for a discussion about Black girls’ educational experiences, University of Wisconsin Madison.
- 2022 Guest lecture for Race & Ethnicity Brownbag and Qualitative Methods Brownbag in the Department of Sociology for panel on strategies for finding funding for qualitative research, University of Wisconsin Madison.
- 2022 Guest lecture for First Year PhD Students’ Pro-Seminar in the Department of Sociology for a discussion about how to apply for grants and fellowships, University of Wisconsin Madison.
- 2021 Panelist for anti-racist discussion "CommUnity Conversations on Sustained Engagement for Racial Justice” run by the Center for Community and Non-Profit Studies, University of Wisconsin Madison.
- 2021 Panelist for "BIPOC Graduate Students doing Community-Engaged Scholarship,” a discussion hosted by the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Funding and the Association for Graduate Engaged Scholars, University of Wisconsin Madison.
- 2021 Guest Lecture for Gender Seminar, University of Wisconsin Madison.
- 2021 Guest Lecture for seminar entitled, “Best Practices of Community Scholarship,” University of Wisconsin Madison.
- 2021 “Reflections on Creating Black Girls Matter Curriculum,” Race, Ethnicity, and Inequality in Education Collaborative Training Grant (CTG) Fellowship Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- 2020 “Reflections on Doing Community-Engaged Work,” Best Practices of Community Scholarship, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- 2018 Guest Lecture for Sociology of Gender Seminar, University of Wisconsin Madison.

SERVICE

Graduate Representative, Children and Youth, American Sociological Association, 2021-2022
Newsletter Editor, Children and Youth, American Sociological Association, 2022-2023

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

American Sociological Association (*Sections: Children and Youth and Sociology of Education*); American Educational Research Association; National Women's Studies Association; Association for Black Sociologists; Sociologists for Women in Society; Alpha Kappa Delta; Black Graduate and Professional Student Association

MEDIA COVERAGE

Muldrow, Ali. "Amplifying Black Voices in Madison: Individual Classroom Experiences." Wort FM, Madison, April 23, 2024. <https://www.wortfm.org/amplifying-black-voices-in-madison-individual-classroom-experiences/>

Conklin, Aaron R. "What Does It Feel Like to Be Treated Like a Problem?" Pgs. 8-9 in *Letters & Sciences- Spring 2023*. https://issuu.com/uwmadisonls/docs/lettersscience_spring2023

UW-Madison, The Graduate School. "2020 TA Award Winners Honored for Excellence in Teaching and Instructional Continuity." The Graduate School, UW Madison, March 29, 2021. <https://grad.wisc.edu/2021/03/29/2020-ta-award-winners-honored-for-excellence-in-teaching-and-instructional-continuity/>

Kothari, Azul. "Legislation to Protect Natural Hair Introduced in Wisconsin." *The Badger Herald*, September 17, 2019. <https://badgerherald.com/news/2019/09/17/print-9-17-legislation-to-protect-natural-hair-introduced-in-wisconsin-ak-lh-nd-sde-ad/>

SKILLS

MAXQDA, Atlas. Ti, Qualtrics, Stata, and R

Languages

English: First Language & Spanish: Fluent (Reading, Writing, Speaking)

REFERENCES

Monica Grant

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Linn Posey-Maddox

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