



RUTGERS–NEW BRUNSWICK

Graduate School of Education



big boxes and BIG, HEAVY doors that only open one way: Taking Race Seriously in Spectacles of Learning Using Interaction Analysis

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University of Michigan

12:00pm–1:00pm
Wednesday February 25, 2026



Connect with colleagues during this hybrid presentation at the GSE (Room 124).

Lunch will be provided! Can't attend in person? Join us remotely via [Zoom!](#)

This talk builds on ongoing work with Dr. Jasmine Ma at New York University, where we have sought to make new theoretical and methodological tools available for the study of learning interactions as racialized phenomena. We call our approach a radical relational approach to interaction analysis. In our theorizing, we have previously argued for a renewed use of Chuck Goodwin's substrates and have wrestled with the methodological dilemmas of studying race within the radical relational approach. In this talk, I focus on (1) theories of race, specifically the ontological assumptions of racialized persons in interaction, and (2) the precarity of personhood for Black children in learning environments that invite Afropessimism as an often necessary lens in interaction analysis.

Maisie Gholson is an associate professor of educational studies at the University of Michigan. Her research focuses on the mediating role of gender and race in mathematics learning and identity development. Her recent research projects were through two National Science Foundation grants exploring the mathematics developmental trajectories of Black youth and the role of race and gender in undergraduate advising. Her teaching work has included leading the Educational Studies doctoral program redesign and directing the Race and Social Justice Institute. She is an associate editor for *Cognition & Instruction* and an editorial board member for *Educational Studies in Mathematics*, an international mathematics education journal. Maisie is currently serving as a committee member for the national Mathematical Sciences of Education Board sponsored by National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine. Maisie serves on multiple advisory committees, including those in Michigan, that support Essential Instructional Practices in Early Mathematics. As a mother of a neurodiverse child, Maisie is a local advocate of children with autism. She is a former high school mathematics teacher and prior to that a patent writer in her hometown of Houston, Texas. She received her PhD in curriculum and instruction from the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) and her BS in electrical engineering from Duke University.