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Aarti Bodas, PhD

aarti@foundry10.org | AartiBodas.com| https://www.linkedin.com/in/aarti-bodas/

PROFILE

Postdoctoral research scientist studying conceptual development and learning. Experienced in designing and conducting experimental and applied research using qualitative and quantitative methods. Passionate about translating scientific findings into accessible and meaningful insights for diverse audiences, including caregivers, educators, policymakers, and other researchers. Committed to bridging the gap between research and practice through effective communication to support children's developing reasoning skills and overall growth.

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

Experimental Design: Experimental and Observational Studies; Surveys

Quantitative Methods: GLM, Advanced Regression Techniques, ANOVAs/ANCOVAs

Qualitative Methods: Thematic Analysis, Content Analysis, Interviews

Science Communication: Public-Facing Research Writing, Research Translation, Academic Publications, Presentations, Educational Outreach

Statistical Software: R/RStudio, SPSS

Teaching: Curriculum Development, Undergraduate Instruction, Research Mentorship, Educational Outreach

RESEARCH APPOINTMENTS

Postdoctoral Research Scientist | foundry10 | 2026-present

- Designs studies investigating caregivers' beliefs about pediatric vaccines, their influence on healthcare decision-making, and how beliefs change over time.
- Designs an educational intervention informed by caregivers' beliefs to support informed healthcare decision-making.
- Considers various approaches to translating scientific evidence from public health and biology into clear, evidence-based messages about the benefits of pediatric vaccination.

Child Cognition Lab, Boston University | Graduate Researcher | 2021-2026

- Designed experimental studies examining children's evaluations and learning from scientifically accurate and misleading explanations about non-living natural phenomena.
- Investigated how children's cognitive abilities and science identity influenced their evaluations of others' explanations.
- Investigated children's and adults' conceptualizations of science and science identity
- Collaborated with a cross-disciplinary team of developmental psychologists, education researchers and educators to develop and field-test an evidence-based elementary school curriculum about evolution by natural selection.
- Demonstrated that understanding that science aims to explain the world predicts children's learning gains from science instruction (Bodas & Kelemen, 2026).

- Analyzed teachers' and students' explanatory question-asking and its role in classroom discourse and science learning.

STAR Lab, Villanova University | Graduate Researcher | 2019-2021

- Designed and conducted experimental study examining preschoolers' learning from educational science media.
- Evaluated effects of science media on children's environmental knowledge, concern, and self-efficacy.
- Conducted systematic content analyses of scientific and fantastical elements in children's educational books and television shows.
- Examined the prevalence and role of fantasy elements in educational science media, raising implications for children's science learning (Chlebuch, Bodas & Weisberg, 2023).

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Boston University, Course Instructor

Abnormal Psychology for Boston University Summer Challenge Program (Summer 2026)

- Designed and delivered two-week undergraduate-level psychology course to 20 high school students.
- Translated research on psychological disorders into clear and engaging lessons.
- Mentored students in utilizing explanatory models to compare how various psychological disorders manifest and are perceived across different cultures.

Boston University, Teaching Fellow

CAS PS 101: General Psychology (Fall 2021; Fall 2024; Spring 2025)
CAS PS 211: Introduction to Experimental Design (Fall 2023; Spring 2026)
CAS PS 241: Developmental Psychology (Spring 2024; Fall 2025)

- Designed instructional materials, quizzes, and activities to support undergraduates' learning about psychology and support the development of their scientific reasoning skills.
- Designed hands-on activities and applied research examples to teach undergraduates statistics and R programming.

EDUCATION

2021-2027	**Boston University**
	PhD, Developmental Science, Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences
Dissertation	Why the sun shines: Children's sensitivity and susceptibility to scientifically accurate and misleading explanations of nature, and the role of individual differences.
Committee	Dr. Deborah Kelemen (1st Reader), Dr. Melissa Kibbe (2nd Reader), Dr. Peter Blake (3rd Reader), Dr. Tara Mandalaywala (4th Reader)
2021-2023	**Boston University**
	Master of Arts in Psychology, Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences

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2019-2021	**Villanova University**
	Master of Science in Psychology, Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences
Thesis	Investigating the Influence of Educational Media on Children's Environmental Views
Committee	Dr. Deena Weisberg (Chairperson), Dr. Janette Herbers, Dr. Irene Kan
2015-2019	**University of Washington, Seattle**
	Bachelor of Science in Psychology, Department of Psychology
	Minor in Global Health, School of Public Health

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Publications

Bodas, A., & Kelemen, D. A. (2026). Conceptualizing science as explanatory predicts elementary students' life science learning: The relative influence of science conceptions, science identity and mindset. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 104, 101948. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2026.101948

Bodas, A., Chlebuch, N., & Weisberg, D. S. (2025). Water woes: The effects of children's science media on conservation knowledge, self-efficacy, and environmental worry in the United States of America. *Journal of Children and Media*, 1-21. https://doi.org/10.1080/17482798.2025.2472666

Chlebuch, N., **Bodas, A.,** & Weisberg, D. S. (2023). What does the Cat in the Hat know about that? An analysis of the educational and unrealistic content of children's narrative science media. *Psychology of Popular Media, 12*(1), 77-92. https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000388

Manuscripts Under Review

Chlebuch, N., **Bodas, A.,** & Weisberg, D.S. Still Hidden Figures: Gender and race representation in children's educational science media. *Submitted*.

Manuscripts in Preparation

Bodas, A., Elgamal, K., & Kelemen, D. Why the sun shines: Young children's evaluations of scientifically warranted and unwarranted explanations about non-living natural phenomena and the roles of social context and individual differences. *In prep.*

Bodas, A., Elgamal, K., & Kelemen, D. Why mountains are so tall and high: Young children's tendencies to adopt others' scientifically warranted and unwarranted explanations about non-living natural phenomena and the roles of social context and individual differences. *In prep.*

SCIENCE COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

Public-Facing Writing

Bodas, A. (2026, October 30). What do kids need to know about science to think like scientists? https://aartibodas.com/2026/10/30/what-do-kids-need-to-know-about-science-to-think-like-scientists/

Bodas, A. (2024, December 23). 2024 [Graduate school reflection]. https://aartibodas.com/2024/12/23/2024/

Bodas, A. (2023, December 25). 2023 [Graduate school reflection]. https://aartibodas.com/2023/12/25/2023/

Bodas, A. (2022, December 31). 2022: My first full year in Boston. https://aartibodas.com/2022/12/31/2022-my-first-full-year-in-boston/

Invited Outreach Presentations

Bodas, A. (2022) *Pursuing a career in Psychological Research.* Invited speaker via Skype a Scientist at Rossal School, Lancashire, North West England.
Bodas, A. (2022). *Pursuing a career in Psychological Research.* Invited speaker at Weston High School, Weston, MA.
Bodas, A. (2020). *Applying to experimental psychology masters programs, navigating the first year of graduate school, and staying positive during Covid-19.* Invited speaker for Emerging Minds Lab, Arizona State University.
2018-2019: Social Media Coordinator, Diversity in Psychology, Co-organized conference for high-school students from under-represented minorities to learn about the Psychology program at UW.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

- Cognitive Development Society
- Society for Research on Child Development

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

2025-2026	Graduate Teaching Fellowship, Boston University
2024-2025	Graduate Teaching Fellowship, Boston University
2023-2024	Graduate Teaching Fellowship, Boston University
2023	Boston University Frederick S. Pardee Center for the Study of the Longer-Range Future Graduate Summer Fellowship ($6,000)
2022	Boston University Center for Innovation in Social Science Mini Grant ($1,500)
2021	Graduate Teaching Fellowship, Boston University
2019-2021	Graduate Student Assistantship, Villanova University
2020	Villanova Graduate Research Fellowship, Summer 2020
2019	Undergraduate Research Conference Travel Award
2019	Hagenstein Endowment Travel Scholarship
2018	Research Scholarship from the Mary Gates Endowment

HONORS AND AWARDS

2024	Clara Mayo Research Award ($2,295)
2020	Induction into Psi Chi Psychology Honor Society
2019	Guthrie Prize for Best Empirical Research Paper

INVITED TALKS

Bodas, A. (2024). Children's explanatory preferences about non-living natural kinds. Invited Speaker for Developmental Science Program Brown Bag.

Bodas, A. (2023). Children's explanatory preferences about non-living natural kinds. Invited Speaker for Developmental Science Program Brown Bag.

Bodas, A. (2022). Children's learning from science media. Invited speaker for Boston University Academic Immersion program in Psychology.

Bodas, A. (2022). Children's explanatory preferences about non-living natural kinds. Invited Speaker for Developmental Science Program Meeting of the Minds.

Bodas, A. (2020). Children's environmental learning from fictional media. Invited speaker for Villanova University Cognitive Science Brown Bag Group.

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CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Bodas, A., & Kelemen, D. (2026, April). Conceptualizing science as explanatory predicts elementary students' life science learning: The relative influence of science conceptions, science identity, and mindset [Poster presentation]. Cognitive Development Society Biennial Conference, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Bodas, A., & Kelemen, D. (2025, May). Children's learning of adults' scientifically warranted and unwarranted explanatory preferences [Symposium presentation]. Society for Research on Child Development Biennial Meeting, Minneapolis, MN, United States.

Bodas, A., Kelemen, D., Khandelwal, M., Latorre, C., & Kumar, A. (2024, April). Examining science identity: Contributions of social factors to individuals' belongingness to science and explanatory tendency [Symposium presentation]. American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA, United States.

Bodas, A., Kumar, A., & Kelemen, D. (2024, March). Children's sensitivity to scientific ways of explaining natural phenomena and the role of science identity [Symposium presentation]. Cognitive Development Society Biennial Conference, Pasadena, CA, United States.

Bodas, A., Khandelwal, M., Latorre, C., Kumar, A., & Kelemen, D. (2024, March). Relationships between children's and adults' explanatory tendencies and science identity [Symposium presentation]. Cognitive Development Society Biennial Conference, Pasadena, CA, United States.

Kumar, A., Bodas, A., & Kelemen, D. (2024, February). Explain me this: Science identity does not prevent children from valuing other people's bad explanations [Poster presentation]. Eastern Psychological Association Annual Conference, Philadelphia, PA, United States.

Ting, F., Bodas, A., Harfouche, L., & Kelemen, D. (2023, March). Children's sensitivity to physical and cognitive disability status when judging norm violations [Flash talk]. Society for Research on Child Development Biennial Meeting, Salt Lake City, UT, United States.

Chlebuch, N., Bodas, A., & Weisberg, D. S. (2023, March). Still hidden figures: Gender and race representation in children's educational science media [Poster presentation]. Society for Research on Child Development Biennial Meeting, Salt Lake City, UT, United States.

Bodas, A., Chlebuch, N., & Weisberg, D. S. (2022, April). An inconvenient truth: Educational media increases preschoolers' worry about the environment, but not their knowledge [Poster presentation]. Cognitive Development Society Biennial Conference, Madison, WI, United States.

Weisberg, D. S., Chlebuch, N., & Bodas, A. (2022, March). Impossible elements in children's educational media [Paper presentation]. Annual Meeting of the International Society for Fiction and Fictionality Studies, Chicago, IL, United States.

Chlebuch, N., Bodas, A., & Weisberg, D. S. (2021, April). Wile E. Coyote, physical science genius: A content analysis of children's science media [Poster presentation]. Society for Research on Child Development Biennial Meeting.

Herbers, J. A., Jennings, K., Cutili, J. J., Abdul-Masih, M., & Bodas, A. (2021, April). Parent-child relationship quality among dyads with infants and toddlers experiencing family homelessness [Symposium presentation]. Society for Research on Child Development Biennial Meeting.

Bodas, A., Kyuchukova, K., Lucca, K., & Sommerville, J. (2019, May). "Can I count on you?" Siblings influence infants' expectations of trustworthiness of fair and unfair agents [Poster presentation]. Association for Psychological Science 31st Annual Convention, Washington, DC, United States.

Bodas, A., Kyuchukova, K., Lucca, K., & Sommerville, J. (2019, March). “Can I count on you?”: Infants notice inconsistencies in prosocial behavior across contexts [Presentation]. Northwest Social Cognitive Development Conference, Friday Harbor, WA, United States.

CHAIRED SYMPOSIA

Bodas, A. (2025, May). Contextual Factors Influencing Children's Questions and Explanations. Symposium presented at the Society for Research on Child Development Biennial Conference, Minneapolis, MN.

Patel, K. & Bodas, A. (2024, April). Science and me: How scientific thought and engagement is shaped by identity factors and diverse learning contexts. Symposium presented at the Cognitive Development Society Biennial Conference, Pasadena, CA.

RESEARCH MENTORSHIP

Polygence, Research Mentor

- **Harley,** CORE program student

Boston University, Graduate Student Mentor

- **Malvika Khandelwal,** Boston University, Recipient of 2022 Kilachand Honors College Award
- **Ankita Kumar,** Boston University, Recipient of UROP Awards (Fall 2022, Summer 2023)
- **Mrinalee Reddy,** Boston University, Recipient of UROP Award (Spring 2024)
- **Fari Mabud,** Boston University, Recipient of UROP Award (Summer 2024)
- **Kate Saluti,** Boston University, Recipient of UROP Award (Spring 2025); Directed Study student
- **Eira Wang,** Boston University, Directed Study student
- **Ezzah Tariq,** Boston University
- **Allaa Bouzaghou,** Boston University
- **Sophia Lapp,** University of Pittsburgh
- **Cristian Latorre,** Boston University
- **Anika Kumar,** Boston University

ACADEMIC SERVICE

2020-2021 Villanova University Psi Chi Vice President
2022- 2026 Boston University Developmental Science Colloquium Series
2024-2026 Boston University Developmental Science Prospective Students Day

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- ***Ad-hoc Journal Reviewing***: Cognitive Development (co-reviewer); Translational Issues in Psychological Science; Journal of Cognition and Development.
- ***Conference Reviewing:*** CogSci Conference (2022).