

DIPLOMA CEREMONY

MAY 2021



AFRICAN AND AFRICAN-
AMERICAN STUDIES

&

GENDER, SEXUALITY,
AND WOMEN'S STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER

AWARDING OF DIPLOMAS TO MAJORS IN AFRICAN AND AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDIES

Yaa-Adenike Cunningham

Also a major in Dance Studies

This major found and claimed me. This is my life and is a representation of me discovering the (silenced) world that we all live in and don't always acknowledge. It will influence the "flavor" in my career as a singer, songwriter, and influencer. I enjoyed learning more about myself and other unknown Black intellectuals.

Waliyah Johnson

With High Distinction
Also a major in Anthropology

I love that I was able to come across Anthropology and African American Studies during my undergraduate career. Initially, I thought that I would major in Political Science, but found that I like to be a little bit more hands-on with my studies. I love that my major has allowed me to become more open-minded and welcoming to new things within the world, and most of all I love the people I have met during my undergraduate career.

Amina N’Gambwa

With Highest Distinction

Also a major in Anthropology; minor in American Sign Language

The African and African American Studies department is fundamentally interdisciplinary, and it has exposed me to a long lineage of Black artists, thinkers, and organizers who have dedicated themselves to fighting for Black liberation and celebrating Black resilience. As part of this department, I've explored topics related to race, kinship, art, and power in ways that are both theoretical and deeply personal. After four years, I've still only scratched the surface, and I'm excited to continue learning, thinking, building, and resisting.

Yvonne Rogers

With Highest Distinction

Also a major in Jazz Piano Performance at the Eastman School of Music

My African and African American Studies major has been eye-opening and inspiring from the first class I took! The lessons I've learned in this major have expanded my view of the world and taught me how to think and write critically about the systems that surround us. One of my favorite things about this program has been the faculty, each of whom are some of the most thoughtful people I have ever met. My AAS major has also been the perfect complement to my Jazz Piano major, and I am excited to combine the skills I have gained from both degrees to inform my career as a performer and composer whose work interacts consciously and positively with the world.

Tamera Shaw

With Highest Distinction
Also a major Psychology

African and African American Studies affects me on a personal level. Growing up I didn't get the opportunity to learn much about the history of people who share the same racial identity as me. Since I made the decision to major in African and African American Studies, I've learned more about myself and more about the direction that I want to take after I leave UR. I really enjoyed the small class sizes and the ability to get to know each of my professors on an individual level.

**AWARDING OF DIPLOMAS TO
MAJORS IN GENDER,**

SEXUALITY, AND WOMEN'S STUDIES



Azucena Espiritu

with Highest Distinction
Also a major in Psychology

The major is meaningful to me because it brought about meaningful conversations that are essential to bringing change. It brought about self-reflection, which helped me challenge and solidify my identity as a queer Chicana. I enjoyed sharing what I had just learned with friends and family because it sparked meaningful conversations that I will not forget.

Morgan Elizabeth Farrow

with Highest Distinction
Also a major in English Literature

Being a gender studies major has introduced me to more of my peers than I ever could have anticipated. I have taken classes with students studying a wide variety of subjects. It is this interdisciplinary nature that I really value about my major. Within my GSWS courses, I am surrounded by students who think differently than I do, and that experience has been important to me as I have grown as a student.

Aida Harrop

with High Distinction

Taking Gender Studies Courses has helped me open my perception about our society and the variations of gender differences we've created because of the binaries and social cues we have in our community. Breaking down these different social structures has opened many doors towards addressing the importance of identities and how they intersect. Focusing on how intersectional identities impact how society perceives and treats people helps us find new ways to discuss social issues. Addressing different experiences helps bring demographics together, developing the space needed to create social change for our communities. Working together to understand how differences in gender and sex impact people differently is essential to developing effective representation within our communities. Studying GSW has shown me the prevalence of masculinity in our social structure, and how significantly this impacts our society's social cues and design. With this foundation, we have more clarity around how gender differences impact many aspects of our lives.

Ewin Joseph

with Highest Distinction
Also a major in Anthropology

I am so happy I double majored in Anthropology & Gender, Sexuality and Women's studies. Through these majors, I found out a lot about myself but most importantly how I want to contribute to society. We need humanity and social science studies to be able to question, think, analyze the world around us and bring about change. My majors allowed me to do that and more. Most importantly, they are fun so I didn't see them as an obligation.

Grayson Lenhard

with Honors and Highest Distinction

I switched to Gender, Sexuality, and Women's studies as a junior. After two and a half years as a physics major, I finally realized how much I really hated math, and how much I had loved all the GSW classes I had taken. I also switched because I wanted to make the world a more livable place for everyone, and I felt GSW would be more useful in that goal than physics. I still want to use what I've learned these past two years to improve my little corner of the world, but my biggest gain from this major are the connections I've made to people, even outside of the department and the University -- connections that I likely wouldn't have made had I remained in physics. And connections, community, really is what's most important in making the world a more livable place for everyone.

Annika Yeahyun Limson

with Highest Distinction

There have been a lot of difficulties in my life, a lot of injustices. I thought that I was alone in thinking about gender and racial equality, justice, and liberty. Taking a Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies course helped me find a community that I was searching for. It connected me to activism work that I wanted to get involved with, along with being a part of a curriculum that was inclusive and discussion based. As a GSWS graduate, I do not feel alone. I have found my people. It helped me process everything and learn so many ways to think. I am very grateful.

Alyssa Nelson

With Highest Distinction
Also a major in History

I am incredibly grateful to be graduating with a degree in Gender, Sexuality, & Women's Studies. It is a field of academic study that I can apply to truly every facet of my life. The presence of gender is everywhere, but this major has taught me how to recognize it and combat its harsh stereotypes. I look forward to continuing to learn about gender, since this topic is ever evolving.

Paola Isabel Rodriguez Tiel

With Honors and Highest Distinction

Also a major in International Relations

Gender Studies has been incredibly soul-enriching. I think it is truly the most interdisciplinary major there is. In these four years I have taken courses in Anthropology, Psychology, Film Studies, English, International Relations, Religion... I have learned to see the world with different lenses, to truly understand our relationships with each other... I have learned a great deal of compassion, seeing how the patriarchy hurts us all in different ways and how intersectionality comes into play in shaping our experiences. I never knew there was so much to learn about gender, but now when someone asks me "Gender Studies? What is that about?" I always surprise them!

Reanna Dumaguin Salvador

with Honors and Highest Distinction

Also a major in Psychology

The Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies program helped me discover and narrow my research interests. It was in Professor Bakhmetyeva's Politics of Nature class that I began to learn more about Indigenous rights and transnational activism. Now, two years later, my senior thesis is about Indigenous storytelling methods in the context of Philippine culture and activism. I also anticipate my graduate research to center Indigenous and other marginalized voices in documentary media. So, it is safe to say that the GSWS program has provided me with tools to help me be a more thoughtful photojournalist and documentarian. Even if that does not work out, I will still have become a better human because of what I learned during my undergraduate career. In short: I learned just how much I don't know and am excited to spend the rest of my life figuring it out.

Kimberly B. Tiffany

with Honors and Highest Distinction

My Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies major has shaped my life and career path in so many ways. I entered college with the plan of becoming a medical student. Upon taking gender studies classes for my enjoyment and meeting Professor Bakhmetyeva, I decided I wanted this to be a larger part of my career. It has helped me to find my desire to work as a gynecologist for an underserved population to provide equal access to healthcare for women everywhere. This major has helped me to see that reproductive issues are the root of so many women's issues and I want to help change that. I can't thank the GSWS department enough for helping me find my role within the field of medicine.

**PRESENTATION OF FREDERICK
DOUGLASS INSTITUTE
UNDERGRADUATE
RESEARCH AWARD**



Amina N’Gambwa

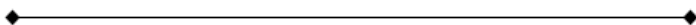
For work in the course “Humanitarianism and its
Discontents”

Tamera Shaw

For work in the course “Cultural Politics of Prison Towns”

**PRESENTATION OF SUSAN B.
ANTHONY INSTITUTE
UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS
FOR COMMUNITY
CONNECTIONS**

This award is presented to students whose work in gender and women's studies has contributed significantly to the local campus or Rochester community during the academic year.



Grayson Lenhard

Class of 2021

Reanna Salvador

Class of 2021

**PRESENTATION OF SUSAN B.
ANTHONY INSTITUTE
UNDERGRADUATE AWARD FOR
INDEPENDENT RESEARCH**

This award is presented to the student who has
completed the best undergraduate research
project in gender and women's studies during the
academic year.



Kimberly Tiffany
Class of 2021

Alyssa Nelson
Class of 2021

**RECOGNITION OF RECIPIENT
OF THE 2021 SUSAN B.
ANTHONY INSTITUTE
DISSERTATION AWARD**



Marianne Kupin-Lisbin

Department of History

*The Illusion of Dissidence: The Virgin Mary
and Local Catholicism in Seventeenth Century
Bosnia*

**RECOGNITION OF RECIPIENT
OF THE GRADUATE
CERTIFICATE IN GENDER,
SEXUALITY, AND WOMEN'S
STUDIES**



Jane Sylvester

Department of Musicology,
Eastman School of Music

The Frederick Douglass Institute for African and African-American Studies was established in 1986 to promote the development of African and African-American Studies in undergraduate and graduate education and to advance research at The University of Rochester.

The Susan B. Anthony Institute for Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies focuses on the changing cultural, economic, political, and psychological relations among people of all genders and sexualities. In 1980 the University launched a concentration in women's studies. The program was officially opened in 1982, and in 1986 the University established the Susan B. Anthony Center for Women's Studies to support the program, faculty research, and attention to women's issues. The Institute name was amended between 1996 and 1997 to become the "Susan B. Anthony Institute for Gender and Women's Studies," and in 2016 the latter part was changed to "Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies" to better reflect the breadth of the field.

Because African and African-American Studies and Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies ask questions that are best addressed through investigations in a variety of disciplines, the programs encourage an interdisciplinary approach to research and learning.

Both programs both include faculty from the Humanities, Sciences, and Social Sciences, who are appointed in the College of Arts and Sciences, the Eastman School of Music, the Margaret Warner Graduate School of Education and Human Development, the Simon School of Business, the School of Nursing, and the School of Medicine and Dentistry.