

**UCLA** College | Social Sciences  
**Gender Studies**



*Commencement*

*2021*

*Saturday, June 12th, 2021*

# *Program*

## *Welcome Remarks*

Kate Norberg, Interim Chair

## *Student Speakers, Class of 2021*

Jared Menschel

Miriam Ghassan Adam

Ajana Orozco

## *Awards Presentation*

Juliet Williams

Professor, Gender Studies and Chair of Awards Committee

## *Introduction of Keynote Speaker*

Professor Aisha Finch, Vice Chair, Gender Studies

## *Keynote Address*

Distinguished Professor Angela Y. Davis

## *Recognition of Ph.D. Candidates*

Savannah J. Kilner, Ph.D.

Advisors: Professors Mishuana and Grace Hong

## *Recognition of Candidates for the Bachelor of Arts*

## *Virtual Tassel Turning and Concluding Remarks*

Kate Norberg, Interim Chair

# THANK YOU!

KATE NORBERG

INTERIM CHAIR, UCLA DEPARTMENT OF GENDER STUDIES

2020-21

AISHA FINCH

VICE CHAIR, UCLA DEPARTMENT OF GENDER STUDIES

2020-21

SARAH HALEY

CHAIR, BLACK GENDER STUDIES SEARCH COMMITTEE

2020-21

*Warm wishes and endless THANK YOUS for all your  
hard work and dedication this year,  
from the Gender Studies staff  
and the  
Gender Studies community at UCLA.*

**THANK YOU**  
**COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER 2021**  
**AND**  
**VISITING PROFESSOR IN GENDER STUDIES SPRING 2021**  
GRADUATE SEMINAR, "FEMINISM IN THE BLACK RADICAL TRADITION"

**DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR ANGELA Y. DAVIS**

**Bio:** Through her activism and scholarship over many decades, Angela Davis has been deeply involved in movements for social justice around the world. Her work as an educator – both at the university level and in the larger public sphere – has always emphasized the importance of building communities of struggle for economic, racial, and gender justice. Professor Davis' teaching career has taken her to San Francisco State University, Mills College, and UC Berkeley. She also has taught at UCLA, Vassar, Syracuse University the Claremont Colleges, and Stanford University. Most recently she spent fifteen years at the University of California Santa Cruz where she is now Distinguished Professor Emerita of History of Consciousness – an interdisciplinary Ph.D program – and of Feminist Studies.

Angela Davis is the author of ten books and has lectured throughout the United States as well as in Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, and South America. In recent years a persistent theme of her work has been the range of social problems associated with incarceration and the generalized criminalization of those communities that are most affected by poverty and racial discrimination. She draws upon her own experiences in the early seventies as a person who spent eighteen months in jail and on trial, after being placed on the FBI's "Ten Most Wanted List." She also has conducted extensive research on numerous issues related to race, gender and imprisonment. Her recent books include *Abolition Democracy* and *Are Prisons Obsolete?* about the abolition of the prison industrial complex, a new edition of *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, and a collection of essays entitled *The Meaning of Freedom*. Her most recent book of essays, is called *Freedom Is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the Foundations of a Movement*.

Angela Davis is a founding member of Critical Resistance, a national organization dedicated to the dismantling of the prison industrial complex. Internationally, she is affiliated with Sisters Inside, an abolitionist organization based in Queensland, Australia that works in solidarity with women in prison.

Like many educators, Professor Davis is especially concerned with the general tendency to devote more resources and attention to the prison system than to educational institutions. Having helped to popularize the notion of a "prison industrial complex," she now urges her audiences to think seriously about the future possibility of a world without prisons and to help forge a 21st century abolitionist movement.

## Candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy



### *Savannah J. Kilner*

**Bio:** Savannah Kilner is an anti-colonial, abolitionist scholar and queer femme parent working at the intersections of critical ethnic studies, Black studies, Indigenous studies, feminist and queer studies, and carceral studies. Her dissertation, *“Pride and Property: Queer Settler Colonialism, Blackness, and the Landed Politics of Accountability,”* plumbs the often-eclipsed connections among and between antiblackness, Indigenous dispossession, sexuality, and urban space by investigating a variety of queer relationships to and narrations of space, place, and land in Ohlone territories (SF Bay Area), from the late 1970s to the present. Savannah has been active in and inspired by movements for prison-industrial complex abolition, Indigenous sovereignty, and housing justice. She is a co-editor of *Counterpoints: A San Francisco Bay Area Atlas of Displacement and Resistance* (PM Press, 2021) and her work has been supported by the Institute for Citizens and Scholars, Ralph E. Bunche Center for African American Studies, Bancroft Library, Center for Study of Women, Social Science Research Council, and UC Humanities Research Institute. She received a BA in Ethnic Studies from Mills College and prior to graduate school, worked as a health educator in high schools and held many odd jobs, including as a traveling saleswoman.

**Acknowledgements:** Many incredible people supported me through this program. My advisors Mishuana Goeman and Grace Kyungwon Hong have been exceptional mentors and provided steadfast support, encouragement, and rigorous engagement with my work over the last eight years. Sarah Haley has likewise been a phenomenal mentor and engaged generously with my work since my first quarter at UCLA. I am also grateful to Emily Thuma, who has provided invaluable feedback in the final stages of writing. My work has been strengthened by each of their generosity, scholarship, and labor and I am grateful to have worked with my dream committee. I also thank the amazing Gender Studies staff and acknowledge students past and present, especially my cohort-mate Sa Whitley for their comradeship, collaboration, and support. I also thank Angela Robinson, Preeti Sharma, Laura Terrance, and Stephanie Lumsden for friendship, laughter, and scholarly collaboration. I have been buoyed by friends, comrades, and family in Huichin and beyond. I thank Tahereh Aghdasifar and Magie Ramírez (now both professors!) for countless writing dates and deep reciprocity. Old and new friends and chosen family – including Jenny Weston-Rubianes, Jess St. Louis, Dacia Holliday, Kyisha Williams, Miyuki Baker, Erika Lyla, Nadine Dixon, and many many others – have kept me going and kept me grounded. I thank my in-laws Anne Davis and Bill and Susan Pluss for their love, cheerleading, and childcare. My partner AJ’s love, care, cooking, and commitment have made this PhD possible. Our toddler Coral is the light of my life and I marvel everyday at the life we’ve built together. Lastly, two very important people passed away in the final months of the PhD. Lenn Keller, a Black butch lesbian elder and lifelong activist whose influence and words appear in my dissertation, died in December. My Grandma, Ruth Wadkins—a loving, foul-mouthed rustbelt woman—died in April. This is for both of them.

## Candidates for the Bachelor of Arts

### *Miriam Ghassan Adam*

Major: Gender Studies

*To all the people and hobbies I fell in love with  
along the way, shukran ya albi ٱ ٱ ٱ ٱ ٱ*

### *Lamisa Ahmed*

Double Major: Gender Studies and Political Science

*Thank you so much to my wonderful and supportive family.*

*I wouldn't have made it without you all!*

### *Zara Haseen Ahmed*

Double Major: Gender Studies and Political Science

### *Kiana Azar-Chehr*

Major: Gender Studies

Minor: Labor Studies

*I'm so grateful to have majored in Gender Studies & for  
GS faculty for making my experience at UCLA a truly  
transformative one. Solidarity forever!*

*Hannah Beck*

Major: Psychology  
Minor: Gender Studies

*Cecilia Alvarez Blackwell*

Major: Psychology  
Minor: Gender Studies

*Alejandra Campos Moran*

Double Major: Gender Studies and English  
Minor: Labor Studies

*Clio Cereceda*

Major: Gender Studies

*Siobhan Chapman*

Major: Gender Studies  
Minor: Music Industry

*The support from my family, friends, and the Gender Studies Department meant so much to me during these last years. Thank you all for everything!*

*Hwanhee Choi*

Major: Gender Studies

*Siobhanie Cook*

Major: Asian Studies  
Minor: Gender Studies

*Arianna Cooke*

Double Major: Political Science  
Minor: Gender Studies

*Caroline Cusolito*

Major: Gender Studies  
Minor: Disability Studies

*Here's to the school of my dreams & being a bruin for life! I couldn't have done it without my family, friends, & support from the GS department*

*Yazmine Desanges*

Major: Physiological Sciences  
Minor: Gender Studies

*Thank you to the friends I've made throughout my journey here. I will cherish everything GS has taught me, both inside and outside the classroom!*



## *Chloe Diaz*

Major: Gender Studies

## *Yen Dinh*

Major: Gender Studies

Minor: LGBTQ Studies and Theater & Film

*Thank you to the BL anime/donghuas that gave me the will to live to the next day. Thank you Valorant for being a stress outlet. F\*\*k the system.*

## *Audy Jasmine Elhawary*

Major: Gender Studies

## *Alejandra Estrada*

Major: Sociology

Minor: Gender Studies

*Thank you to the ones who never left my side.*

## *Ashley Figueroa-Lozano*

Major: Gender Studies

*Con todo mi cariño a mis Padres, Hermanos, y Familia: Una meta más en mi vida se ha cumplido... A ustedes debo este logro y con ustedes lo comparto.*

## *Jasmine Flores*

Major: Gender Studies

Minor: Chicana Studies

*Esto va para mi familia, especialmente mi Mama, los quiero mucho! To those who have given me their love and support I'm forever grateful, thank you!*

## *Halli Rae Gigante*

Double Major: Gender Studies and Global Health

*I am beyond thankful for all the wonderful faculty, friends, and family that have been there for me throughout my time here <3*

## *Jasmin Gonzalez*

Double Major: Gender Studies and Psychobiology

Minor: Chicana/o Studies and Central American Studies

*A heartfelt thank you to my family for always being there for me. I love each of you and couldn't have accomplished this without your endless support!*

## *Anita Grigore*

Major: Gender Studies

Minor: Music Industry

*Cheers to my friends and family and when you can't tell the difference!*

## *Zoe Hearn*

Major: Global Studies

Minor: Gender Studies

*Special thanks to my family and partner! I couldn't have done it without you!*

## *Brooke Helmick*

Major: Gender Studies

Minors: Theatre and Global Studies

*I am so grateful for my mom, friends, and community for uplifting me and helping me get here. I can't wait for the next adventure! Go Bruins!*

## *Viviana Hinojosa-Firo*

Major: Gender Studies

*I would like to thank my mom and my sisters for believing in me! This is a huge accomplishment as a first generation student. CONGRATS CLASS OF 2021!*

## *Alahna Horne*

Major: Sociology

Minor: Gender Studies

## *Fatima Iqbal*

Double Major: Gender Studies and Psychology

## *Ayuni Kelton*

Double Major: Gender Studies and Psychology

## *Sam Kennelly*

Major: Gender Studies

*Thank you to my family, who's always been there for me. I wouldn't be here without you!*

## *Sara Kieffer*

Major: Gender Studies

Minor: Education

*Thanks to all those who listened to me stress about school for the last 5 years. And special thanks to Shannon, I wouldn't be here without you <3*

## *Katie LaFrance*

Major: Gender Studies

## *Ana Lapota*

Major: Gender Studies

## *Jazmine Vega Lopez*

Major: Gender Studies

Minor: Education Studies

*Never did I imagine myself graduating from UCLA, yet here I am. This is for my parents, family, friends, mentors. I DID IT!!*

## *Sarahi Lopez*

Double Major: Gender Studies and Political Science

*"Without community, there is no liberation." - Audre Lorde*

## *Linda Lozano*

Major: Anthropology

Minor: Gender Studies

*Thank you to all my family for your constant love and support. I know my grandpa would have been proud to see this day, so this is for him.*

## *Eman Magzoub*

Major: Psychology

Minor: Gender Studies

*I'd love to thank my family and friends for their continuous support. Gender studies classes and the amazing professors truly made my UCLA experience.*

## *Angela Christine Martinez*

Major: Gender Studies

*Thank you to my family for your unconditional love, support, and prayers.  
You encouraged me to fight till the end. Couldn't have done it without you!*

## *Shanna Mehrdad*

Major: Gender Studies

## *Jared Menschel*

Major: Gender Studies

*5 years, 4 moves, 3 colleges, 2 hospitalizations, 1 bachelors degree. Thank you to  
everyone who supported me on this surreal journey. We did it, Mom:)*

## *Megan Merati*

Major: Gender Studies

Minor: Film and Television

*Thank you so much! Go Bruins!*

## *Lindsey Kate Miller*

Major: Political Science

Minor: Gender Studies

*Mom, Dad, and Elyse, thank you for all you do and for always believing in me.*

*Jasmin Montano*

Major: Sociology  
Minor: Gender Studies

*Alyssa Montserrat*

Double Major: Gender Studies and History

*Ajana Orozco*

Major: Gender Studies  
Minor: LGBTQ Studies

*Ifueko Osarogiagbon*

Major: English (Professional Writing)  
Minor: Gender Studies

*Thank you for making these past four years so memorable!*

*Michaela Palumbo*

Major: Gender Studies

## *Corrina (Corry) Presser*

Major: Gender Studies

## *Michael Noah Quicho*

Major: Physiological Science

Minor: Gender Studies

*Thank you to my family, friends, colleagues, and professors who've helped me succeed throughout my time at UCLA! On to the next chapter!*

## *Flavia Rodrigues*

Double Major: Gender Studies and Psychology

*Attending UCLA has been an incredible experience, I am so grateful for all the love and laughter this campus has given me.*

*Thank you UCLA. Go Bruins!*

## *Maria Rosales*

Double Major: Gender Studies and Labor Studies

*I would like to dedicate this accomplishment to my parents and my sister and to all the people who helped me along the way.*

## *Mahsa Safvatu*

Major: Gender Studies



## *Yesenia Sanchez*

Major: English

Minor: Gender Studies

*A mí querida familia, muchísimas gracias por su paciencia, apoyo, y amor incondicional que me han enseñado en este último año. ¡Al final, sí se pudo!*

## *Julian Sazo*

Major: Gender Studies

*Thank you to everyone who has supported me throughout these 4 years. Love you all! P.S. Free Palestine*

## *Juan Solis*

Majors: Gender Studies, Chicax Studies, and Central American Studies

Minor: Public Health

## *D. Torres*

Major: Gender Studies

*Gracias a toda mi familia que me ha apoyado! & shout out to all the homies I met at UCLA <3*

## *Elan Tulberg*

Major: Sociology

Minor: Gender Studies

*Excited to get my Ph.D. in Sociology with a focus in Gender at UT Austin :)  
Thanks to my friends & family for all the support! #TransferPride  
#4.0Gang*

*Elena Akemi Usui*

Double Major: Gender Studies and Global Studies

*Stephanie Vargas Perez*

Major: Sociology

Minor: Gender Studies

*Big thanks to family! Very glad to be out of here <3*

*Mari Nicole Ventura*

Major: Gender Studies

*Christin Villalobos*

Major: Gender Studies

*Baylee Wechsler*

Double Major: Gender Studies and International Development Studies

Minor: Spanish

*Thank you to the friends and family who helped me through these past four years, and thank you Gender Studies Department for changing my life <3*

*Kyla M. Wheeler*

Major: Psychology

Minor: Gender Studies

*Shout out to everyone who supported me! I hope to see more Black people and critical race theory reflected in the gender studies dept. in the future!*

*Kaedion Wynter*

Major: Gender Studies

*I'd like to thank everyone who supported me up until this point. Most importantly, I'd like to thank my son for motivating me to finish my degree.*

*Angelita Yarborough*

Major: Gender Studies

*Thank you to all of my loved ones that have shown unwavering support throughout this journey. Mom, I wouldn't be here without you. I love you.*

*Congratulations  
to the  
Class of 2021!*

***Gender Studies Award Recipients 2020-21***

***Gender Studies Community Engagement Award***

Recipient: Ajana Orozco, Gender Studies Major

***Prize to participate in the National Women's Studies Association  
Annual Conference Fall 2021***

Recipient: Maya Montes, Gender Studies Major

***Departmental Honors***

Sara Kieffer, Gender Studies Major

*"Ooooh Shiny: An Investigation of Literature and Media Surrounding Women  
with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder"*

Faculty sponsor: Professor Sharon Traweek

Faculty Co-sponsor: Kate Norberg

***Congratulations to the 2020-21 Gender Studies  
Award Recipients!***

# UCLA Department of Gender Studies

Main Office:

Kathryn Norberg, *Interim Chair*

Jenna Miller-Von Ah, *Manager and Graduate Advisor*

Van Do-Nguyen, *Financial Manager*

Samantha Hogan, *Student Affairs Officer*

Richard Medrano, *Administrative Coordinator*

Jaden King, *Work Study Student Assistant*

Box 951504, 1120 Rolfe Hall

Los Angeles, CA 90095-1504

Mail Code:150402 (UCLA use only)

Tel 310-206-8101

Fax 310-206-7700

[info@gender.ucla.edu](mailto:info@gender.ucla.edu)

[www.genderstudies.ucla.edu](http://www.genderstudies.ucla.edu)

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