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## Hilary Word

Hilary Word

*University of Mississippi*

Andrea Morales

*University of Mississippi*

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# **Hilary Word**

**Class of 2020, M.A. in Southern Studies**

**Photographs by Andrea Morales, Southern Documentary Project**

SOCIAL DISTANCE PORTRAITS WITH 2020 SOUTHERN STUDIES GRADUATES



# HILARY WORD

## HILARY WORD

Class of 2020

M.A. in Southern Studies

Historian and community organizer

Originally from Jackson, Mississippi, Hilary earned her undergraduate degree in history from Tougaloo College. As a life-long fan of speculative fiction, mythology, and folklore, Word has always been fascinated with the concept of the real versus “unreal” and the supernatural.



Hilary's thesis "Post-Soul Speculation: An Exploration of Afro-Southern Speculative Fiction," looks at the genre of fiction that encompasses works where the setting involves supernatural, futuristic, or other imagined elements. She describes it as "an examination of post-soul, African-American Southern speculative fiction because I'm really interested in how this particular type of fiction showcases the U.S. South's capacity for progressive, liberatory change." Centering post-Civil Rights movement Black Southerners and their realities is at the heart of what she does.

a thought from you. What's something that kept you grounded enough during this time to be able to finish your thesis and defend?

Delivered

Today 12:27 PM

Hey friend! I hope you're safe and well. For my answer: "First, I realized that I had to be willing forgive myself if I wasn't as productive every day as I would have liked. At the same time, my family's love and support as well as encouragement from my committee members helped keep me focused and grounded enough to finish my thesis." I hope this answer helps!

