

The title of my project is called *Finding a Flapper in Iowa*. Ever since I was about 9 years old, I have wanted to study history. My primary interest in history is focusing on women's history because I grew up reading textbooks full of stories about men and their great accomplishments and I was left with about 3 examples of women and the impact that they made. That had never sat right with me. This semester I took Forensic Rhetoric and to tie the semester together we were to investigate an archival item of our choice, utilizing the University of Iowa's special collections. In our paper we were to place the item into its historical context and answer the question, how does this historical artifact help to understand a specific moment in history? Utilizing the Brinton collection, I examined the flapper dress from that collection that belonged to Indiana Brinton and wanted to find out more about the fashion of the 1920s and understand the significance of flappers; and therefore, the 1920s lifestyle in Iowa as opposed to major cities throughout the United States. Once I heard that there was a flapper dress in the Brinton collection I was dying to know more. Through my research when people hear the word "flapper" they picture Gatsby parties, women with their hair cut short, loose dresses, holding a gin and tonic in one hand and a cigarette in the other. They will picture New York City or Chicago or another modern city and the crazy night life. What people do not picture is rural Iowa and flappers existing in the same place and time. These were women who helped pave the way for women's rights in the 20th century. They started a shift in the thinking about women and their roles in society and beyond and I believe that that is something that needs to be studied and written about. That was the purpose for my research and what I looked for, because the flappers were more than just a dress and a good time. It represented a shift in the mindset of men and women of what women could do. And I have found that Indiana Brinton helped bring that lifestyle and thought process to Iowa when Iowa was deemed a rural community. I am truly honored to receive the Undergraduate Research Award. When I first began to truly start researching and studying history, I knew that I found what I wanted to do and being recognized for one of my biggest passions in life is a truly humbling experience. This only encourages me that I am on the right track in my goals for the future and pushes me towards working only harder on my future projects wanting to learn and grow even more.