

Congratulations!



2020-2021 Graduates

To the 2021 GSS Majors and Minors:

On behalf of everyone associated with the Gender & Sexuality Studies Program, we want to extend warm congratulations to each of you on your graduation from Northwestern University. We have been grateful for your presence in our classrooms and want you to know how much we have been inspired by our conversations with you as well as by your many insightful contributions to the GSS project. With the small gifts included here, we aim to honor your achievements and celebrate this significant moment in your lives. Congratulations!

We also want you to know that we have been impressed again and again by your resilience, creativity, and dedication during this very difficult year and a half. We well know that the effects of the pandemic have not been borne equally, either locally or globally. We hope that all we have discussed together in Gender & Sexuality Studies classes has enabled you to better understand how specific economic, political, social, and cultural conditions have contributed to the uneven effects of the pandemic. We feel certain that, given the way the pandemic upended many of your dearest hopes and plans for this last year and yet produced imaginative responses and great creativity among you, that it will be you and your generation who will lead the way in thinking about how our societies must change in order to become both more equitable and more just in order to avoid what we have seen this year. We encourage you to continue to speak up as you have for all that you believe in and to work actively with others as they seek to change the conditions of their own lives.

We wish you the very best in your future endeavors and hope that you will continue to remain in touch with Gender & Sexuality Studies. We are proud of your achievements and always heartened to learn of the imaginative ways our GSS Majors and Minors put their degrees to “good trouble,” in the words of John Lewis, as well as to useful, responsible work.

With all best wishes and warm congratulations again,



Janice Radway
Director, Gender & Sexuality Studies



Amy Partridge
Associate Director,
Gender & Sexuality Studies



Tessie Liu
Director of Undergraduate Studies,
Gender & Sexuality Studies



Paola Zamperini
Director of Graduate Studies,
Gender & Sexuality Studies



Eliot Colin
Program Assistant,
Gender & Sexuality Studies

GRADUATING SENIORS IN THE MAJOR/MINOR

Kenny Allen

Major: Political Science – Minor: GSS

Gabriella Boone

Major: GSS, Global Health Studies

Hannah Brock

Major: Sociology – Minor: GSS

Maia Brown

Major: Journalism – Minors: GSS, Sociology

Hunter Feeley

Major: GSS – Minor: German

Pallas Gutierrez

Major: Theatre – Minors: GSS, English

Lexia Hall

Major: Psychology – Minor: GSS

Zaria Howell

Major: Journalism – Minor: GSS

Patricia Janick

Major: History – Minor: GSS

Natalija Karagic

Majors: GSS, Psychology, Global Health Studies

Mia Mamone

Majors: GSS, Journalism

Rachel Mendelson

Major: Journalism – Minors: GSS, Psychology

Alexa Mikhail

Major: Journalism – Minor: GSS

Alexa Moster

Major: Theatre – Minor: GSS

Isabella Noe

Major: Theatre – Minor: GSS – Segal Design Certificate

Amy Prochaska

Major: Theatre – Minor: GSS – Music Theatre Certificate

Chase Stokes

Majors: GSS, Psychology

Grace Teeple

Majors: Biological Sciences, Global Health Studies – Minor: GSS

Mikey Walden

Major: Theatre – Minor: GSS

Lydia Weir

Major: Theatre – Minor: GSS – Music Theatre Certificate

STUDENT AWARDS

RAE ARLENE MOSES LEADERSHIP AWARD

Kenny Allen & Amy Prochaska

Kenny's intellectual commitments to a stronger anti-racist, feminist classroom are inseparable from his activism. His advocacy for police abolition on campus powerfully enact black feminist politics and ethics. From writing on the racialization of space on campus and the gender, racial, and class dynamics of Greek life, to his appearance in a forum confronting the university administration about their shameful response to student protests, Kenny puts the politics at the heart of Gender and Sexuality studies into powerful action.

Amy is a leader in the values and politics of Gender and Sexuality Studies in and beyond the classroom. She demonstrates her commitment to activism and social change as Executive Director of Sexual Health and Assault Peer Educators on campus, and through her work on intimacy coordination in the arts. She translates concepts of gender equity and sexual violence to offer concrete, accessible steps for people, including educators and artists, to show empathy and build inclusive community more effectively.

CASEY PRIZE

Lydia Weir "Reasonable Accommodations: Biopolitics and Disclosure of AccessibleNU at Northwestern University"

Brilliantly bringing Foucault's notion of biopower to analyze university student services, Lydia documents with great insight how the disclosures required by AccessibleNU create normative understandings of disability that frequently retraumatize students who exercise their right to accommodation. The prize committee praised this incisive and critical account of the micropolitics of university life.

PHI BETA KAPPA INDUCTEES

Sarah Eisenman & Chase Stokes

SENIOR MARSHALL

Chase Stokes

THE RIGHT TO DANCE & SO MUCH MORE



*Marsha P. Johnson at Gay Liberation Front's
Demonstration at Bellevue Hospital, 1970*

Photo credit: Richard C. Wandel, 1970

Digital Transgender Archive:

<https://www.digitaltransgenderarchive.net/files/dv13zt36t>

Congratulations on your graduation! I wish we had been able to celebrate you each in person this year, but I am delighted to have this opportunity to congratulate each of you. It's has been a true delight and privilege to work with you these past four years in the GSS Program.

In lieu of more general remarks, I decided to contribute this photo of trans activist and co-founder, with Sylvia Rivera, of the Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR) and STAR House in NYC, that a student discovered on the Digital Transgender Archive this last quarter. This is a photo of Marsha P. Johnson at the Gay Liberation Front's (GLF) protest of Bellevue Hospital in NYC in 1970. The protest at Bellevue was part of a larger series of demonstrations at NYU buildings to protest the cancelling of a dance by the NYU administration, reportedly because a gay organization was sponsoring the event. The GLF won the right to use the venue, held the dance, and presented the university with the following demands: "the use of university facilities by the gay community, open admissions and free tuition for gay people and all other oppressed communities, the discussion of homosexuality in relevant courses and the end of oppressive treatment of gay patients at Bellevue Hospital."

In an 1998 interview with Leslie Feinberg, Rivera explained that this was the same series of protests that birthed STAR—an organization "for the street gay people, the street homeless people, and anybody that needed help at the time" and lead to the formation of STAR House to meet the immediate needs of their community. As Rivera describes it, "Marsha and I just decided it was time to help each other and help our other kids" while participating at the sit-in at NYU's Weinstein Hall. As Rivera recounts, "the first STAR home was a parked trailer in an outdoor parking lot in Greenwich Village" that housed "some two dozen STAR youth" but later moved to a building at 213 Second Avenue where, "Together, they all figured out how to fix the electricity, plumbing and the boiler. They envisioned the top floor as a school to teach the youth, many of whom had been forced to leave home and live on the streets at a very early age, to read and write."

Later in this same interview with Feinberg, Rivera describes one of the first times the STAR banner “was shown in public” at a protest organized by the Young Lords Party—an organization of revolutionary Puerto Rican youth—that same year: “There was a mass demonstration that started in East Harlem in the fall of 1970. The protest was against police repression and we decided to join the demonstration with our STAR banner. That was one of the first times the STAR banner was shown in public, where STAR was present as a group. . . It was a fabulous feeling for me to be myself—being part of the Young Lords as a drag queen—and my organization [STAR] being part of the Young Lords.”

I offer this photo in this context because this legacy is part of our collective inheritance. It is a reminder as well of the power of a shared vision and collective action. But it is also a reminder that our lives unfold in ways that we cannot anticipate—the decision to fight for the right to dance together instigates a mutual aid project that inspires us to this day. Finally, for me, it is a reminder that, regardless of our circumstances, together we can build the world that we believe in, one that meets our immediate needs and our right to be our authentic selves. My hope for each of you is that you find, or forge, a community of care that sustains and inspires you as you move into this next phase of your lives. Best wishes to each of you on all your future endeavors!


—Amy Partridge

Associate Director, Gender & Sexuality Studies

Feinberg, Leslie. Lavender & Red Series, Part 73: “Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries.” *Workers World*, 24 Sept. 2006, www.workers.org/2006/us/lavender-red-73/.

Feinberg, Leslie. “Interview: Sylvia Rivera by Leslie Feinberg (1998).” *The Queer Bible*, 22 Nov. 2017, www.queerbible.com/queerbible/2017/10/8/interview-sylvia-rivera-by-leslie-feinberg.

Schreiner, Maggie. “An Army of Lovers Cannot Lose: The Occupation of NYU’s Weinstein Hall.” *Researching Greenwich Village History* [Companion Site to *Creating Digital History* (NYU GA HIST.2033)], 14 Dec. 2011, greenwichvillagehistory.wordpress.com/2011/12/14/an-army-of-lovers-cannot-lose-the-occupation-of-nyus-weinstein-hall/.



CONGRATULATIONS
FROM ALL OF US IN
GENDER & SEXUALITY
STUDIES

MESSAGES FROM FACULTY

What an extraordinary year and a half we have lived through together, though we only saw each other virtually! In this time, we have seen you write your best essays, take chances on new ideas, extend yourself to people in ways that none of us thought possible before. As we all struggled to find a life of the mind, a life of the heart, and a life dedicated to justice, I thank you for your determination and creativity. The writer Arundhati Roy has suggested that “the pandemic is a portal.” She asks us to walk through lightly, “ready to imagine another world. And ready to fight for it.” Many congratulations to all of you for lighting the way.

– Tessie Liu

Associate Professor of History and Gender & Sexuality Studies;
Director of Undergraduate Studies, Gender & Sexuality Studies

Congratulations and all best wishes as you celebrate the completion of your college education and embark on a new and exciting stage of your life and career!

– Héctor Carrillo

Professor of Sociology and Gender & Sexuality Studies

I met some of you when I signed you up for the major or minor in GSS, others in a GSS first-year seminar I taught three years ago (how are you already graduating???), and others vicariously through the wonderful things your faculty say about you. However our paths did or didn't cross, thanks for everything you put into our courses and our program, congrats and much respect for making it through such an unfairly difficult end to your college experience, and VERY best wishes for life after Northwestern!!

–Nick Davis

Associate Professor of English and Gender & Sexuality Studies

Dear Gender and Sexuality Studies Graduating Seniors, Majors and Minors– Huzzah! Here you are, students and scholars, thinkers and writers, friends, companions, and citizens, on the threshold of a great event. You’ve found your way through a devastating upheaval, and navigated a world pandemically turned upside down, to your graduation from Northwestern University. And you have accomplished this feat, often isolated and alone, with more buoyancy, resistance, strength, and good cheer than anyone, anywhere, ever, had the right to expect from you. Might this have something to do with your determination to take up studies in a field of multiplicities that bravely challenge conventional assumptions and resolutely contest conveniently settled views? Perhaps you’re also strengthened by studies in a field that aspires progress-toward building better worlds? In any case, you have made it through the night. And now you are together as a graduating class. Bravo. Further words escape me. But no better ones can I imagine than those of Gwendolyn Brooks, in a poem I discovered in the cold dark grim March of the year 2020. I send them to you along with the wish that your life ahead finds tolerably calm seas, good winds, and above all sun. (Alas, all I can give is a weather-wish that has no influence on climate change). Congratulations, Class of 2021! Fare thee well, in the along.

Speech to the Young: Speech to the Progress-Toward

(Among them Nora and Henry III)

By Gwendolyn Brooks

Say to them,
say to the down-keepers,
the sun-slappers,
the self-soilers,
the harmony-hushers,

“Even if you are not ready for day it cannot
always be night.”

You will be right.

For that is the hard home-run.

Live not for battles won.

Live not for the-end-of-song.

Live in the along.

–Mary G. Dietz

Professor of Gender & Sexuality Studies and Political Science

Graduating Seniors- What a resilient group you are! I have so enjoyed watching you stretch, grow, and display commitment and collegiality. I am grateful that these past years I've seen so much intellectual bravery. I'm excited to watch you keep using your critical eyes as you transition to this next, exciting stage of your life. I send you all my very best wishes.

–Jillana Enteen

Professor of Instruction, Gender & Sexuality Studies

It's inspiring to see this stellar group of graduating GSS seniors and think of how you will go out and make the world a better place with your knowledge, skills, and commitment. To graduate at any time is an achievement -- to have done so after this most challenging year and a half is extraordinary. I look forward to seeing what you will do next. Congratulations, all!

–Jeffrey Masten

Professor of English and Gender & Sexuality Studies

Congratulations to a wonderful class of brilliant scholars. I'm so thrilled to celebrate your accomplishments as you graduate. Cheers to the future!

–Renee Shelby

SPAN Postdoctoral Fellow

Congratulations to all the graduating GSS Seniors with a special shout-out to those I was fortunate enough to have in my classes. Your journals were amazing! May all your linguistic constructions of gender and sexuality be empowering!

– Gregory Ward

Professor of Linguistics, Philosophy, and Gender & Sexuality Studies

Over the past year and a half the performance of solidarity has dramatically trivialized the force of the words we share to convey our commitment to one another, even in our GSS community. I will therefore just say this: I count it as one of the greatest blessings in my life that I got the privilege of sharing a learning space, be it virtual or in-person, with so many of you graduating this year, and even if I did not get to meet all of you, being able to claim you as my companions in my journey through the study in gender and sexuality studies brings me great joy. Congratulations on all you have accomplished, and my most enthusiastic wishes for all the beauty, happiness, and light possible to each and every one of you, and then some! When and if you can, once in a while, turn your luminous gaze back onto us, so that we may keep rejoicing in you and all your accomplishments to come.

–Paola Zamperini

Associate Professor of Literatures and Cultures in Chinese;
Director of Graduate Studies, Gender & Sexuality Studies

