

# Queer media and the politics of queer visibility



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

## **Abstract**

How are non-normative sexual and gender identities constructed and represented in online spaces? Through a review of sociological research, this article examines the politics of queer representation and visibility in user-generated online media, such as personal homepages, blogs, YouTube vlogs, and queer-specific social networking sites. While research has focused on how third parties can mediate queer representation in magazines or commercial websites, in this article we focus on self-generated online media which allow users to represent themselves. Our review finds that personal homepages reflect a distinct lack of class, racial, and ethnic diversity, in addition to reinforcing static boundaries between straight/ gay, male/ female, and public/ personal. Blogs also perpetuate a static conception of identity that privileges the individual, promoting a politics of recognition based on normativity. Queer content on YouTube is marked by an underrepresentation of vloggers of color, female vloggers, transgender/ genderqueer vloggers, and older vloggers. Further, whiteness emerges as the unstated norm on YouTube, as search results tend to yield vlogs by white people, unless racialized search terms are specified. While social networking websites allow queer people to articulate their identities, pre-assigned identity markers on these platforms delimit the expression of sexual identities online. The review offers a deeper understanding of how queer online media impact representation and visibility, while also privileging certain sexual and gender identities and practices over others. The research presented is by no means exhaustive, but offers a critical perspective on the role of queer media in the

project of queer visibility, and the challenges and constraints of such endeavors.

## Introduction

How are non-normative sexual and gender identities constructed and represented in online spaces? Through a review of sociological research, this article examines the politics of queer representation and visibility in user-generated online media, such as personal homepages, blogs, YouTube vlogs, and queer-specific social networking sites. While research has focused on how third parties can mediate queer representation in magazines or commercial websites (Rodriguez, 2019), in this article we focus on self-generated online media which allow users to represent themselves. With an attention to the intersections of race, class, and ethnicity, the review offers a deeper understanding of how queer online media impact representation and visibility, while also privileging certain sexual and gender identities and practices over others.

Although there is no consensus on the definition of “ queer,” the category problematizes seemingly stable relations between chromosomal sex, gender, and sexual desire. Queer opposes what are assumed “ natural” norms of sex, gender and sexuality, extending to identity, community, and politics (Jagose, 1996). According to Warner (1991, p. 16), “ queer” offers a comprehensive way of characterizing those whose sexuality places them in opposition to the current “ normalizing regime.” As explained by Gabriel Rotello, former editor of the now-defunct New York City queer magazine *Outweek* (Duggan, 1992, p. 224): “ When you’re trying to describe the community, and you have to

list gays, lesbians, bisexuals, drag queens, transsexuals (post-op and pre), it gets unwieldy. Queer says it all.” In this article, we use the term “ queer” as an umbrella category to refer to non-normative sexualities and genders, acknowledging the intersections, specificities, and complexities of both queer sexualities and queer genders (Halperin, 2003, p. 341).

With the advent of mass media and the Internet, there are particular implications of online platforms for queer people. The term “ queer media” has been used to refer to media targeted specifically at queer people and/or produced and distributed by queer-identified individuals themselves. Queer media can assume different forms, both offline and online, including but not limited to queer presses, webzines, personal homepages, commercial queer-targeted websites, social networking sites, blogs, chat rooms, discussion lists, electronic mailing lists, and YouTube videos.

This article focuses on the ways in which queer people represent themselves in online spaces. Our review finds a number of opportunities and challenges related to queer visibility within virtual spaces. For instance, blogs can perpetuate a static conception of identity that privileges the individual, promoting a politics of recognition based on adhering to dominant norms. Personal homepages and YouTube vlogs reflect a distinct lack of class, racial, and ethnic diversity. While social networking websites offer queer people a space to articulate their identities, they are also characterized by structural constraints, such as a limited number of identity markers for sexual or gender identities (Gagné, 2012; Weight, 1998). With an attention to the intersections of race, class, and ethnicity, the review offers a deeper understanding of how queer media impacts representation and visibility, <https://assignbuster.com/queer-media-and-the-politics-of-queer-visibility/>

while also privileging certain sexual and gender identities and practices over others.

We foreground our analysis with a brief overview of queer visibility and heteronormativity. We then highlight some of the central themes and arguments shaping research on individually-produced online queer media, followed by some of the constraints, both cultural and structural, existent on such platforms. The research presented is by no means exhaustive, but offers a critical perspective on the role of queer media in the project of queer visibility, and the challenges of such endeavors. The article concludes with implications and suggestions for future research.

#### Background: Queer Visibility and Heteronormativity in the Media

For queer individuals, as with other marginalized groups, gaining visibility is high-stakes, and often fraught with complexities. Foucault (1978) illustrates how visibility is heavily informed by relations of power. In the Victorian era, sexuality came to be carefully confined to the home and related to the purpose of reproduction. Repressive mechanisms governed what was said or known about sex, while penal law enforced prohibitions on those who transgressed such norms of sexual conduct. As Kohnen (2010, p. 25) summarizes: “[T]he process of who and what becomes visible, in which ways, and to whom involves a multi-faceted negotiation with and within established regimes of power-knowledge.”

Queerness is therefore not invisible by default, but instead made so by the promotion of heterosexuality as “normal” and “natural,” especially through the labelling of non-heteronormative sexualities as “deviant” (Kohnen, <https://assignbuster.com/queer-media-and-the-politics-of-queer-visibility/>

2010). This reflects aspects of heteronormativity, or a “ set of norms that make heterosexuality seem natural or right and that organize homosexuality as its binary opposite” (Valocchi, 2005, p. 756). The consequence is a sexual politics that does not contest dominant heteronormative assumptions and institutions, instead upholding and sustaining them, while encouraging a domestic and consumption-oriented culture. Lisa Duggan (2003) terms this neoliberal sexual politics as homonormativity. Under such conditions, queer individuals are reduced to a singular axis of identity, and the ways in which sexuality intersects with race, ethnicity, class, gender and religion remain largely ignored (Chasin, 2000).

The necessity for queer-specific media stems primarily from the fact that mainstream media outlets often do not grant adequate visibility to the queer community, and may perpetuate images that are stereotypical or inaccurate. For instance, mainstream media in the U. S. has historically portrayed trans people as freaks or curiosities, contributing to their objectification and alienation (Namaste, 2005; Serano, 2007; thepowerisyrs, 2010). Thus, representation by queer people themselves becomes a crucial aspect of queer media (Robinson, 2007).

Our review focuses on user-generated online media, particularly at a time in which there are significant political and personal gains from queer visibility. The invisibility of queer people often serves as a reason for their exclusion from rights (Sircar, 2008). This is exemplified by the now overturned 2013 *Suresh Kumar Koushal vs. Naz Foundation* judgment of the Supreme Court of India, which criminalized all non-heterosexual articulations of sexuality since “ a miniscule fraction of the country’s population constitute lesbians, gays,

<https://assignbuster.com/queer-media-and-the-politics-of-queer-visibility/>

bisexuals or transgenders...” Hence, “ being visible has often been understood as the cornerstone of GLBT identity” (Kohnen, 2010, p. 27). This article focuses on how queer people’s online visibility is constructed and constrained on online platforms, analyzing how categories of gender, sexuality, race, and class are both challenged and upheld in the process.

### Self-presentation of Queer Content Producers

Self-presentation constitutes an “ intentional and tangible component of identity” (Schau and Gilly, 2003, p. 387), and requires that social actors behave in coherent manners in order to project and maintain a desired impression of themselves. Queer people’s self-presentation on personal homepages, blogs, YouTube vlogs, and queer-specific social networking sites demonstrates the ways in which boundaries of identity, individuality, and the public and private life are both challenged and upheld in online spaces.

On queer people’s personal homepages, two types of identity narratives emerge (Alexander, 2002b; Mitra & Gajjala, 2008; Williams, 2007). In the first narrative, sexual orientation is regarded as the core component of the author’s identity. This idea is conveyed through the use of a main menu page “ highlighting a series of links that circle around the presentation of a core gay identity, narrated mono-vocally” (Alexander, 2002b, p. 86). That is, all of the links connect back to narrating the author’s gay identity, representing the centrality of sexuality. This reflects an essentialist understanding of gay identity, where “ gayness” is presumed as “ the core and relatively unchanging component of selfhood around which all of the

other “ plots” of one’s life are organized and come ( *contextually* ) into meaning” (Alexander, 2002b, p. 86).

In the second narrative, which occurs less frequently as compared to the first, sexual orientation is not regarded as a central component of the author’s identity, but instead involves “ more experimental narrations of queer lives” that are “ often less linear, less revelatory of a ‘ truth’ about one’s sexuality” (Alexander, 2002b, p. 92). The second narrative implies that online representations can problematize “ traditional assimilationist (and heteronormative) figurings of sexuality and sexual orientation as part of one’s private, as opposed to public, life” (*ibid.*) .

It definitely helps! I cannot find Alexander’s article online at all, but I think the paragraph needs a line of our own paraphrasing of what that means – right now it is mostly quotes.– Please find the article attached.

In addition to centralizing sexuality as a core element of identity, homepages also reinforce static boundaries between categories such as gay, straight, male, and female. For instance, alternative sexual practices and identities are fixed into a strict categorizations based on specific interests, such as the use of Webrings, including the Gay S/M Ring, the Gay Bowlers Ring, or the Lesbian Feminist Ring. In addition, bisexuality remains at the margins on these websites; it is only occasionally mentioned, almost never explored in-depth, nor is it treated as a unique category of its own.

The issues of identity representation and reach may be most significant for blogging than for any other media form (Rak, 2005; Williams, 2007).

Bloggers use personal experience as a category of knowledge (Rak, 2005),  
<https://assignbuster.com/queer-media-and-the-politics-of-queer-visibility/>



and the subjectivities of bloggers is resituated within frameworks that privilege the individual (Mitra and Gajjala, 2008). While on the one hand, this can unravel oppressive structures by challenging dominant norms, it may also result in the loss of community-based support structures for the individual blogger. This individualization benefits those with greater economic and cultural capital, while further marginalizing those without access to such resources.

Further, media such as queer blogging can result in the “ separation of sexual practice (which takes place in private spaces invisible to mainstream society) and queer performativity (which becomes acceptable as signaling participation in a neoliberal and modern transnational economy)” (Mitra and Gajjala, 2008, p. 410). This results in the reinforcement of the individual and concretization of the largely dominant binaries of the private and the public.

YouTube has been viewed as a “ valuable performative and discursive space” that enables individuals to make meaning of their gender identities (O’Neil, 2014). Many queer youth use this platform to make coming-out videos covering a wide range of content including topics such as being out, or asking for or offering support (Alexander and Losh 2010; Wuest, 2014). In self-presentational videos by trans youth on YouTube, five narrative structures have been found to emerge: transitional videos; D. I. Y. gender (in which bloggers demonstrate how to present their preferred genders); trans video blogging; trans anti-bullying videos; and celebrity trans video blogging (O’Neill, 2014). Wuest (2014) notes how coming out videos by queer youth on YouTube can facilitate the development of identity by making queer

subjectivities visible, and equipping queer youth with skills to interact with the queer community and negotiate the pressures of mainstream culture.

While videos use moving images to convey messages, media forms such as commercial social networking websites, personal homepages, and blogs provide users with textual and visual tools as identity markers to articulate a queer public identity. According to Williams's (2007) analysis of the content of three blogs run by three gay American college-age males, there are three ways of textually articulating a public queer identity on queer blogs: references to/discussions of sexual orientation; references to same-sex relationships; and references to queer culture and/ or LGBTQ community affiliations.

Visual tools to facilitate queer identity include traditional LGBTQ Pride images, along with explicit and implicit homoerotic imageries. These techniques were also found by Mitra and Gajjala (2008) in their study of Indian queer blogs. In addition, a queer public identity is often articulated by labelling the page as "gay-friendly," and through use of symbols generally associated with gays and lesbians such as rainbow flags or pink pyramids. The use of such symbols and demarcations contribute to the reification of boundaries between lesbian and gay, and also gay and straight, and underscore the limitations to articulating one's queerness online (Alexander, 2002b). However, this tactic can also be understood as a deliberate strategy to develop a personal identity while also achieving a smaller, unique collective identity within a larger sexual minority community (Sells, 2013).

Digital technologies are therefore contradictory: while they can equip ordinary people with the tools to represent themselves and challenge hegemonic norms, they can reinforce dominant ideals of gender and sexuality. In the next section, we discuss how self-representations on queer online media are constrained by hegemonic norms of sex, gender, race, and class.

### Norms of Sex, Gender, Race, and Class

Within queer media spaces, the question of representation is not entirely unproblematic. In cultures mediated by capitalism, representation is inextricably linked to commodification. In this context, individuals participate in a conscious display of signs, symbols, and brands (Mauss, 1973, p. 73). As consumption is intrinsic to survival, and viewed as a crucial component of one's identity, queer identity is then projected as something to have, rather than to be or become (Lacy, 2014). Consequently, even within queer media spaces that challenge dominant norms, hierarchies of class, gender, and race are often still reproduced (Das, 2018; Farber 2017; Sender, 2001; Robinson, 2012). Moreover, since maintaining an online presence through a personal webpage can involve economic costs, creating a cyber presence necessitates turning one's identity into a marketable commodity (Snyder, 2002). As a result, one's social location mediates access to media production (Brighenti, 2007). Thus, while web technologies do enable queer Internet users to project desirable images of themselves, it is often only to the extent they are either willing to pay for the image, or market it into a profitable commodity.

In the process, dominant social norms regarding sex, gender, and race are typically upheld in online spaces. For instance, transitioning videos may reinforce mainstream ideas regarding the sex and gender binary, the achievement of appropriate gender expressions through consumption practices (such as wearing appropriate clothing), and the need for medical interventions to legitimize the gender identities of trans people (O’Neill, 2014; Horak, 2014). Therefore, while queer-specific videos do pose a challenge to mainstream representation of queers as the “ other,” and can enable queer youth to shape themselves and their world (Wuest, 2014), they can simultaneously perpetuate dominant identity norms.

Likewise, while online social media communities dedicated to the genderqueer identity provide non-binary individuals a means to support each other and cultivate a sense of collective identity, they may also give rise to discriminatory practices such as misgendering, or using an incorrect gender pronoun (Darwin, 2017; Fraser, 2010). Similarly, transgender men’s use of online message boards about fitness can on the one hand facilitate support and knowledge-sharing, but also reify binary ideals of maleness and masculinity (Farber 2017).

In addition, the articulation and representation of complex, intersectional queer identifications (such as “ fat lesbian living in the sticks,” “ queer’n’Asian,” “ dis/abled leatherdyke”) within the blogosphere involve narratives that adhere to audience expectations. This is because, as Butler (2005) notes, the “ truth” of being necessitates the witnessing and recognition by others. Hence, the online audience’s participation in the blogging process constructs and limits self-presentation on blogs.

<https://assignbuster.com/queer-media-and-the-politics-of-queer-visibility/>

Consequently, a “politically problematic politics of recognition” based on normativity is perpetuated, which ends up reinstating social hierarchies (Bryson et al., 2006, p. 808).

The salience of race in the visibility of queer identities is evidenced by the case of queer vlogs on YouTube, wherein whiteness emerges as “inherent in recognisable queer sexuality” (Fraser, 2009, p. 1). This is because race and ethnicity play a role in determining which trans vlogs get watched (Horak, 2014; Wuest, 2014; Raun, 2012). The top results for video searches yield vlogs of white people, unless racialized search terms are specified (Horak, 2014; Raun, 2012). Therefore, despite the significant presence of trans people of color, their videos remain largely invisible to those who do not specifically seek them out using search terms such as “black mtf” or “latino ftm” (Horak, 2014). Horak (2014, p. 576) attributes this to the fact that “dependence on the visible body means that attractiveness and race/ethnicity invariably structure viewers’ encounters with the videos.”

Further, trans vloggers of color are often subjected to ridicule and discrimination, pointing to the prevalence of racism within a participatory media culture that is often hailed for its democratic and emancipatory potentials. Therefore, as Raun (2012) notes, whiteness emerges as the unstated norm and a referent for trans subjectivity on YouTube. In the process, queers of marginalized ethnicities are labelled as periphery, and framed as objects to be desired and possessed, rather than agentic and desiring queer subjects. All of these factors contribute to the systematic marginalization of non-white queer experiences.

Our review finds that online spaces of queer self-presentation often become another space for the reinforcement of dominant norms pertaining to various axes of one's identity, whether class, gender, sex, or race, as well as any and all of their intersections. This makes visible only certain people and practices, while leaving others to the margins. As we now discuss, these norms are also imposed by the structural elements of online media.

### Structural Limitations of Online Platforms

Literature on queer-specific social networking websites reveals that while the Internet functions as a place of transcendence and freedom, it also imposes numerous restrictions on the degree of control that users can exercise in articulating their subjectivities. Fraser (2010) argues that the internet often functions as a closet in the formation of queer subjectivities by endorsing a specific and recognizable set of queer traits and subjectivities. This, in turn, leads to the production of ideas regarding what it means to be a “real” or “authentic” queer person (Hickey-Moody et al., 2008). According to Weight (1998), the relatively small number of gay identity markers delimits the ways in which people can express their sexual identities online. On social networking websites, the construction of queer subjectivities is facilitated by profiles, through which users interact with each other (Gagné, 2012). The profiles are created using a menu of pre-existing identity and personality categories, in addition to any space for self-description. Within such spaces, the constitution of identities is mediated by the websites' structural contours.

While queer websites can facilitate online queer identity formation, they offer only a pre-assigned list of choices (O’Riordan, 2017). As a result, some of the ways in which queer individuals textually present themselves online may not be representative of their true selves (Sells, 2013). For instance, on *GayRomeo.com*, a popular global gay male networking and dating website, there is no option to specify gender identity, and sexual identity is intelligible only in accordance with the lexicon of gay, bisexual, and transgender (Gagné, 2012). Likewise, on *Gaydar* ([www.gaydar.com](http://www.gaydar.com)) and *Gaydar Girls* ([www.gaydargirls.com](http://www.gaydargirls.com)), two websites commonly used by queer youth, individuals can only represent themselves in relation to sexuality, foreclosing other aspects of themselves (Fraser, 2009). Consequently, identities become framed according to predefined menus and compartments (Nakamura, 2002). In this manner, the use of particular labels, hierarchical lists, and the complete textual removal of different identities result in the reproduction of dominant discourses of sex, race, and gender present in offline spaces within the virtual world. This then legitimizes certain subjectivities while excluding others (Fraser, 2009).

The notions of time and identity are also problematized on Youtube vlogs, wherein creators’ offline experiences appear fixed in time and space. Consequently, queer vlogging does not typically result in the projection of a fluid or subjectivity, and instead perpetuates the notion of identity as temporally and spatially fixed. Horak (2014) complicates the effects of YouTube transitioning videos which manipulate the notion of time. She argues that a majority of these videos, with a few exceptions, operate according to a progressive temporality she refers to as “hormone time,”

where time is measured against the first shot of testosterone or HRT pills (hormone replacement therapy). Based on a Christian temporal structure, hormone time is depicted as something linear and teleological wherein life is shown to advance progressively in the direction of living full time as an individual of the desired gender. In reality, however, transitioning is a highly complicated process that involves complex temporal movements in all directions.

Further, within these platforms, interface design features encourage users to reveal their racial, gender, or national identity, inscribing identity politics onto virtual bodies (Gagné, 2012). Thus, local identities are not erased; rather they are re-framed in accordance with the available structural and functional components of the website (Gosine, 2007; Nakamura, 2002). Online identity is not distinct from local space, time, or politics. Structural components of websites and online media therefore define and constrain queer visibility and self-presentation in virtual spaces.

## Conclusion

Self-presentation in online spaces can both empower and limit users (O'Neill, 2014). While on the one hand, queer media has the political potential to challenge norms of heterosexuality and binary sex and gender categories, on the other, their emancipatory potential for all queer people can be questioned (Sircar, 2008). In fact, as the review suggests, user-generated queer online media can give rise to queer politics which is based on a liberal rights and equality discourse that often makes no attempt to challenge the existing social and sexual hegemonies.



Queer online media legitimize dominant norms of class, race, ethnicity, and normative standards of gender expression (Farber, 2017; Fraser, 2017; Gagné, 2012; Mitra and Gajjala, 2008). Blogs can perpetuate a static conception of identity that privileges the individual, promoting a politics of recognition based on normativity. Queer content on YouTube is marked by an underrepresentation of vloggers of color, female vloggers, transgender/genderqueer vloggers, and older vloggers. Further, whiteness emerges as the unstated norm on YouTube, as search results yield vlogs of white people unless racialized search terms are specified (Horak, 2014; Raun, 2012). Queer online visibility therefore operates as a “ double-edged sword” (Brighenti, 2007). As Alexander (2002b, p. 98) notes, “ as some representations are put forward, others are left behind and critical silences are created—silences that reveal assumptions, values, and omissions that call for interrogation.”

Additionally, although queer-targeted websites exist in several languages, the hierarchical placement of English as the common language of the Internet, and the language of a global or U. S.-based gay rights movement, remains largely unquestioned (Heinz et al., 2005). Reviewing the literature on queer media reveals a pressing need to focus on how the politics of representation and visibility takes place in other parts of the world.

It is also important to remember that queer space on the Internet does not just exist on queer-identified sites. Dasgupta (2017) has shown how queer individuals also encounter and interact with each other on mainstream websites, and future research might explore these additional domains. It is also beyond the scope of this article to analyze the effects of queer visibility

on political recognition for queer communities, or on queer politics and activism.

According to Barnhurst (2007, p. 8), “ queer media put homosexuals in control of the means of cultural production, but the dangers include the pursuit of mainstream production values, the superficial polish that serves up celebrity and sensationalism but excludes unglamorous queers leading ordinary lives.” This literature review on queer online media certainly attests to this claim. The project of visibility therefore embodies the contradictions, politics, and tensions of queer representation. As a result, as Dutta (2008) argues, “ the narratives of access ... become simultaneous narratives of exclusion.” A critical sexuality perspective can be used to examine various forms of media representation to address questions of political economy and sexual and gender justice.

## References:

- Alexander, J. (2002a). Queer Webs: Representations of LGBT People and Communities on the World Wide Web. *International Journal of Sexuality and Gender Studies*, 7 , 77-84.
- Alexander, J. (2002b). Homo-Pages and Queer Sites: Studying the Construction and Representation of Queer Identities on the World Wide Web. *International Journal of Sexuality and Gender Studies*, 7 , 85-106.
- Alexander, J., & Losh, E. (2010). “ A Youtube of One’s Own?”: “ Coming Out” Videos as Rhetorical Action. in *LGBT Identity and Online New Media* (pp. 51-64). New York: Routledge.

- Barnhurst, K. (2007). Visibility as Paradox: Representation and Simultaneous Contrast. In K. Barnhurst (Ed.), *Media Queered: Visibility and its Discontents* (pp. 1-19). New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.
- Brighenti, A. (2007). Visibility: A Category for the Social Sciences. *Current Sociology*, 55, 323-342.
- Bryson, M., L. MacIntosh, S. Jordan, and H. Lin. (2006). Virtually Queer? Homing Devices, Mobility, and Un/Belongings, *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 31, 791-814.
- Butler, J. (2005). *Giving an account of oneself*. Oxford University Press.
- Campbell, J. E. (2005). Outing PlanetOut: surveillance, gay marketing and internet affinity portals. *New Media & Society*, 7, 663-68.
- Cover, R. (2002). Re-sourcing Queer Subjectivities: Sexual Identity and Lesbian/Gay Print Media. *Media International Australia*, 103, 109-23.
- Das, S. (2018). The Politics of Representation and Visibility: A Sociological Engagement with an Indian Queer Webzine. *Explorations*, 2, 107-127.
- *Online Queer Media and the Politics of Queer Visibility in India: A Sociological Inquiry into the Politics of Representation and Visibility in Gaylaxy Magazine* (Unpublished graduate dissertation). University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad.
- Dasgupta, R. K. (2017). Online Romeos and Gay-dia: Exploring Queer Spaces in Digital India. In E. McNeil, J. E. Wermers, and J. O. Lunn (Eds.), *Mapping Queer Spaces of Praxis and Pedagogy*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Dutoya, V. (2016). Defining the “ queers” in India: The politics of academic representation. *India Review*, 15, 241-271.

- Dutta, A. (2008). Narratives of Access and Exclusion: Nationhood, Class and Queerness in the Indian English-Language Press. In E. Miyake and A. Kuntsman (Eds.), *Out of Place: Interrogating Silences in Queerness/Raciality*. Raw Nerve Books Ltd.
- Epstein, S. (1994). A Queer Encounter: Sociology and the Study of Sexuality. *Sociological Theory*, 12 , 188-202.
- Foucault, M. (1978). *The History of Sexuality Volume I: An Introduction*. New York: Random House, Inc.
- Fraser, V. (2009). Sex, Sexuality and Cyberspace: Intersecting Queer Spaces on and Offline. *The Real and the Virtual: Critical Issues in Cybercultures* , 57-66.
- Fraser, V. (2010). Queer Closets and Rainbow Hyperlinks: The Construction and Constraint of Queer Subjectivities Online. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 7, 30-36.
- Gagné, M. (2012). Queer Beirut Online: The Participation of Men in Gayromeo. com. *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*, 8 , 113-37.
- Gosine, A. (2007). Brown to Blonde at Gay. Com: Passing White in Queer Cyberspace. In K. O'Riordan and D. J. Phillips (Eds.), *Queer Online: Media, Technology, & Sexuality* (pp. 139-154). New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.
- Gray, M. L. (2009). Negotiating Identities/Queering Desires: Coming Out Online and the Remediation of the Coming-Out Story. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 14 , 1162-89.
- Green, M., A. Bobrowicz, and C. S. Ang. (2015). The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Community online: discussions of bullying

and self-disclosure in YouTube videos. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 34 , 704-12.

- Halperin, D. M. (2003). The normalization of queer theory. *Journal of HH Homosexuality* , 45, 339-343.
- Hegland, J. E. and N. J. Nelson. (2002). Cross-Dressers in Cyber-Space: Exploring the Internet as a Tool for Expressing Gendered Identity. *International Journal of Sexuality and Gender Studies*, 7 , 139-61.
- Heinz, B., L. Gu, A. Inuzuka, and R. Zender (2002). Under the Rainbow Flag: Webbing Global Gay Identities. *International Journal of Sexuality and Gender Studies*, 7 , 107-24.
- Hickey-Moody, A., M. L. Rasmussen, and V. Harwood. (2008). How to be a real lesbian: The Pink Sofa and some fictions of identity. In S. Driver (Ed.), *Queer Youth Cultures* (pp. 123-138). New York: State University of New York Press.
- Horak, L. (2014). Trans on YouTube: Intimacy, Visibility, Temporality. *Transgender Studies Quarterly*, 1 , 572-85.
- Jagose, A. (1996). *Queer Theory: An Introduction* . Melbourne University Press.
- Kohnen, M. E. S. (2010). *Screening the Closet: The Discourse of Visibility, Sexuality, and Queer Representation in American Film and Television, 1969- Present* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island.
- Lacy, A. (2014). *The Queer Blogger: Interrogating the Commodification of Identities* (Unpublished undergraduate dissertation). Columbia College Chicago, Chicago.

- Mauss, M. (1973). Techniques of the Body. *Economy and Society* , 2, 70-88.
- McLelland, M. (2002). The Newhalf Net: Japan's " Intermediate Sex" On-Line. *International Journal of Sexuality and Gender Studies*, 7 , 163-175.
- Mitra, R. and R. Gajjala. (2008). Queer Blogging in Indian Digital Diasporas. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 32 , 400-23.
- Nakamura, L.(2002). *Cybertypes: Race, Ethnicity, and Identity on the Internet*. New York: Routledge.
- O'Neill, M. G. (2014). Transgender Youth and YouTube Videos: Self-Representation and Five Identifiable Trans Youth Narratives. In C. Pullen (Ed.), *Queer Youth and Media Cultures* (pp. 34-45). Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- O'Riordan, K. (2017). From Usenet to Gaydar: A Comment On Queer Online Community. *ACM SIGGROUP Bulletin – Special issue on virtual communities*, 25, 28-32.
- Puar, J. K. (2007). *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Pullen, C. (2014). *Queer Youth and Media Cultures*. Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- Raun, T. (2012). *Out Online: Trans Self-Representation and Community Building on YouTube* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Roskilde University, Roskilde.
- Rak, J. (2005). The Digital Queer: Weblogs and Internet Identity. *Biography*, 28 , 166-82.

- Robinson, S. (2007). Queensland's Queer Press. *Queensland Review*, 14 , 59-78.
- Rodat, S. (2014). Cyberqueer – Major Topics and Issues in Current Research. *Revista Romana de Sociologie*, 25 , 429-442.
- Rodgers, J. (2012). Queer Theory, Media Studies, and Editorial Processes in Queer Student Media. *3Cmedia*, 7 , 1-14.
- Rodriguez, J. A. (2019). Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Media: Key Narratives, Future Directions. *Sociology Compass*, 13, 1-10.
- Sedgwick, E. K. (1990). *Epistemology of the Closet* . Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Sedgwick, E. K. (2013). Queer and Now. In D. Hall and A. Jagose (Ed.), *The Routledge Queer Studies Reader* (pp. 3-17). Abingdon: Routledge.
- Sells, T. G. C. (2013). The Construction of Sexual Identities in an Online Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Bulletin Board System, *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 23, 893-907.
- Sender, K. (2001). Gay Readers, Consumers, and a Dominant Gay Habitus: 25 Years of the *Advocate* Magazine. *Journal of Communication*, 51 , 73-99.
- Sircar, O. (2008). Questions of Visibility. *In Plainspeak*, 2 , 10-17.
- Snyder, D. I. (2002). " I Don't Go By Sean Patrick": On-Line/Off-Line/Out Identity and SeanPatrickLive. com. *International Journal of Sexuality and Gender Studies*, 7 , 177-195.
- Valocchi, S. (2005). Not Yet Queer Enough: The Lessons of Queer Theory for the Sociology of Gender and Sexuality, *Gender and Society*, 19, 750-770.

- Warner, M. (1991). Introduction: Fear of a Queer Planet. *Social Text*, 29, 3-17.
- Weight, G. M. (1998). Closetspace in cyberspace. Online Article. Available on the Web at: .
- Williams, A. N. (2007). *Logging In, Blogging Out: Gay College Age Males and the Blogosphere* (Unpublished graduate dissertation). Indiana University, Bloomington.
- Wuest, B. (2014). Stories like Mine: Coming Out Videos and Queer Identities on YouTube. In C. Pullen (Ed.), *Queer Youth and Media Cultures* (pp. 19-33). Palgrave Macmillan UK.