I. KEY CONCEPTS

A. Spatial dimensions of sexualities and the shaping of sexualities through online and offline experiences

1. A need to theorize online experiences: are they public vs private vs semi-public (how is privilege defined in these different spaces?): how might ranking tiers of media (e.g. big media as conservative and social media as third or second tier) change how we theorize sexualities in relation to these media contexts?

2. How to best address (and disrupt) the "online/offline" binary. What use is there in conceptualizing internet use as a practice (rather than the Internet as a thing, or alongside the Internet as space) might have in disrupting dichotomies such as online/offline, public/private, mainstream/peer-to-peer media?

B. Community online

1. Reckoning with community-building happening online and the shift from place to virtual community

2. How media practices inform/transform sexual expression and identity practices—how media practices inform/impinge upon existing social structure
C. Commodification of sexualities vis-à-vis media

1. (re)Conceptualizing media influence - moving beyond discussion of media imitating lived experience, lived experience imitating media to grapple with how media increasing integrated with life
2. Mapping and analyzing the creeping commodification of sexuality in media – approaching impossibility of privacy or control of online/digital self
3. The limits of sharing/sociology of “oversharing”
   a. online dating/online cruising – is it amplifying, preserving, or challenging racial, class, and sexual inequality (i.e., for the latter, is it deepening the closet? Helping people come out of the closet? Under what conditions?)

D. Representation

1. Who is represented, how authentic are the portrayals, and what does authenticity mean in a deeply mediated social world?
2. How do mainstream representations of sexualities have an effect on social attitudes?
3. How do depictions of sexuality in media relate to depictions of sexuality in other arenas of life? Media is more inclusive of diverse sexualities in that there are more routes for representation, but the legitimation of some media source over others still allows for homogeneity in the most frequent representations of sexuality (such as TV shows or news stories).
4. How do media representations and interactions affect the relationships between sexual minorities and racial minorities?

E. Conceptualizing media as a research context/institution

1. Is it useful to conceptualize the media as a conservative institution; if we’re looking outside the mainstream, is it merely reflective vs. productive?
2. What differences are there in relation to media “platforms”—comparing TV, internet, etc.—and how should we address the social meaning of media convergence?
3. How best can we account for the historical context of media and its relationship to sexualities? For example, how might we compare classified ads, Craigslist, and Grindr and their comparative roles in cruising?

F. Media and social movement

1. What are the relationships between sexuality-based social movements and media?
MOST SIGNIFICANT AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

A. What counts as data?

1. How do we assess boundaries of "authentic" data in the digital age?

B. Differences between face-to-face interactions and online interactions to collect data

1. How can face-to-face ethnographic interviews from prior eras be compared to virtual communities today? How do we trace community histories over time after the development of virtual community?

2. How does consumption of online media impact offline sexual behavior? What motivates individuals to produce sexual media content for online distribution and consumption?

C. Relationship between historical and contemporary research

1. Historical research, arguably, relies on the privileged archives of discursive construction (written texts). How do you get outside of these archives? How do we sort through the messages there and the claims that we can address?

D. How do media impact personal identity and social development

1. How do online media hinder/contribute to sexual development (or lack of, or even negative) self-esteem. For example, Instagram offers a first hand pictorial (e.g visual culture) account into how people see themselves. Digital media like these lend themselves to studying impression management in interactional/collaborative spaces.

2. How does the internet operate as a mobilizing tool (who has access and who doesn't) and how does this use intersect other key identities, like race, SES, etc.

E. Relationship between understandings of identities and their mediation (production, circulation, consumption) in mainstream and digital contexts

1. How are mass-mediated discourses about sexuality shaping, being co-opted -- or, even more radically, becoming -- neoliberal discourses on civil rights in the U.S.?

2. How can queer media scholars bridge/undermine/disrupt the (modernist) divide between representations of equality and those structures of inequality themselves, which implies a linear trajectory from "reality" to "media" and back again (or vice versa).
F. Access to “vulnerable” populations and ethical concerns

1. New media give us unprecedented access to user generated content. How do we access this content respectfully and where/when do we need to seek consent to access this information?

2. New media also give us access to marginalized groups’ content. Do we need different sets of guidelines and practices around analyzing and accessing this kind of data?

3. How do we contend with the filtering and corporate (other institutional) control of media? How do we account for the institutional capability to exclude/limit particular sexual content?

4. How do we address the privacy/surveillance concerns of more vulnerable communities that might be raised by our research of them online, especially given a sex negative culture?

G. Dating and cruising/sexual practices

1. How might we understand people’s experiences with online dating/online cruising, especially in terms of class, race, and the closet?

2. Is online dating amplifying, preserving or challenging sexual, racial, other inequality?

3. How do we think about the complicated role media play in strengthening or weakening ties (how does intimacy works in relation to media). How do we measure that?

H. How does place figure into our research

1. Place is important (if overlooked in research) for sexuality and should be an important area for future research on digital media/sexuality

2. How might we think differently about the digital divide beyond a frame of is it “present or absent”

3. What are the critical differences for those “plugged in” and different ways of being plugged in that circulate among sexual subcultures/communities?

4. How do visual cultures of sexuality norms and queer representations of possibilities—audience and sexualities—construct a self with a broader audience in mind and a self that is more viewable/distributed across space and time?

5. What are the relationships between digital media producers and digital media consumers, and how do digital media practices (e.g. blogging) shape counter discourses and new norms around sexuality?
6. Has privacy become a new privilege and what is its relationship to sexual practices and identities?

METHODOLOGICAL CONCERNS AND WAYS TO NEGOTIATE THEM

A. Qualitative research ethics

1. How do we conduct qualitative, particularly ethnographic, rigorous work in an institutional setting that is increasingly hostile to qualitative research (the IRB process!)
2. How do we improve our methods in queer media studies while attending to the sometimes contradictory interests of empirical rigor and analytic complexity?
3. How do we address the attendant political issues that are always implicated in questions of risk, security, public/private, privilege, etc. when developing and executing queer media projects?

B. Publication and dissemination

1. How do we engage in dialogue with non-academics so that our research reaches a broader audience?
2. How do we properly anonymize, cite, or give proper attribution to media texts (i.e., blogs, discussion boards, Facebook pages) and user generated content as primary rather than secondary sources?
3. How do we expand the presence of peer reviewed, open access journals to distribute sexuality studies beyond sociology?

C. Navigating the IRB and ethics of access:

1. How do we tackle taboo topics, youth sexualities, and illegality and successfully navigate the IRB process at the same time?
2. How do we make sure that IRB processes around sexuality studies are standardized across all institutions so that all researchers have an equal opportunity to do this research?
3. How do we help IRBs reimagine what constitutes “public” vs. “private”
4. How do we practice transparency as researchers in an online space (what does positionality mean when you’re online?)
5. What are best practices around longitudinal studies of mediated spaces and how would these compare to face-to-face interviews?
6. What are the limits of ethnography conducted solely online (is rigorous net-nography possible?)

7. What difference does the media make to the interview process?

8. How to document adolescent consumption of porn—how is that impacting maturity?

9. How to bring class and SES to the forefront in queer media studies?