

Forming neurodivergent, networked selves across, within, and all over media

Nafiseh Mousavi, Department of arts and cultural sciences, Lund University, Sweden

Abstract

Autism, ADHD, ADD, and their sister-conditions are enjoying a crucial stage in our time, as a shift of discourse is happening from years of pathologizing these statuses as mental disorders, to recognizing them as ‘neurodivergence’, aka differences in ways of thinking and being. The advent of digital media and emergence of social networks have had a significant role in this shift by providing unprecedented opportunities for knowledge production on neurodiversity and neurodivergence; spaces of community formation for neurodivergent people; and new tools that can better accommodate non-conventional communication styles.

In this paper, I will analyze examples of alternative ways of sensing and sense-making in neurodivergent experiences. My presentation demonstrates how the intensified multimodality of communication and the intermedial dynamics of social media and online platforms have transformed and enhanced knowledge production about neurodiversity. Furthermore, I will discuss how the potentials of digital and social media have been employed by neurodivergent people to represent their lived experiences, shape networked selves, and form communities for interaction and activism.

With this paper, I aim to argue for the mutual fruitfulness of establishing a dialogue between neurodiversity studies and studies on intermediality and multimodality of media. Such discussion, I argue, has social, political, and theoretical benefits for both sides of the dialogue by bringing together the normative and the non-normative and opening new windows for scientific inquiry about human communication.

Keywords

Neurodivergence, networked selves, media, multimodality

Bio

Nafiseh Mousavi is senior lecturer in Intermedial Studies at the division of Musicology and Intermedia Studies, Lund University, Sweden. She has a PhD in Comparative Literature and a background in literatures, languages, and anthropology. In her research, she tries to understand

© Nafiseh Mousavi



ISBN: 978-91-8082-113-1

the dynamics and politics of difference and diversity in intermedial and intercultural communication. More specifically, she studies artistic and non-artistic media production and communication in contexts of migration, political repression, and neurodivergence, with a focus on memory and activism. She works on a diverse range of media and media practices including comics, social media, adaptation, literary narratives, and autobiographies. Her recent publications include the anthology *Truth Claims across Media* (Palgrave, 2024), co-edited with Beate Schirmacher; "Cameras, Pencils, Traumas: Drawn Images in and as Documentary Practice." in *Truth Claims Across Media* (Palgrave 2024), and "Media between Media: 'Making-of's and the Hidden Faces of Film Adaptation" (*European Review*, 2023).

ORCID-ID/Websites

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0130-8416>

Web site: <https://portal.research.lu.se/en/persons/nafiseh-mousavi>

Research gate: <https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Nafiseh-Mousavi-2>

Google Scholar: <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=zd-4u4gAAAAJ&hl=en&oi=ao>