

Mariel MacGowan. The Representation of Autism Narratives in Three Libraries at the University of Chapel Hill. A Master's Paper for the M.S. in L.S. Degree. July 2019. 30 pages

Autism and autism narratives are present in the University of North Carolina in a variety of forms and aimed at a variety of target audiences, and so I used a test to examine the types of autistic representation present in the libraries at the university. I visited three libraries - the Manning Library, Davis Library, and the Undergraduate Library - and ran a selection on the books they had available on autism, allowing both fiction and nonfiction in my selection. I also tested for whether the books were aimed at autistic students themselves, neurotypical peers, parents, or teachers, since I theorized that books directly aimed at autistic teens and young adults would be in a minority. This is because the general social atmosphere around autism focuses more on children with the disorder rather than teenagers and adults, even though autism will be present with a child for its entire life and has implications for adult tasks like college application and job hunting.

My theory of what I would find in the library was correct, since fiction books centered around autistic characters were in a minority compared to books dealing with autistic side characters. Pop psychology works and especially autism memoirs dominated the library shelves in the Undergraduate Library and Davis. The majority of the autism memoirs were by parents of children and teens with a small minority written by autistic teens and adults. However, the library was also heavily science-focused and didn't give any time to conspiracy theories surrounding vaccines, which is a strong positive.

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THE REPRESENTATION OF AUTISM NARRATIVES IN THREE LIBRARIES AT THE UNIVERSITY  
OF CHAPEL HILL

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## Introduction

Autism and autism narratives are present in the University of at Chapel Hill's libraries – Davis Library (the graduate library), the Undergraduate Library, and the School of Information Science Library (SILS) - about autism, maps out what is available and how accessible it is, and compares the books' target demographics to get a sense of which books target autistic people, families of autistic people, and teachers and employers of autistic people. Books will also be divided by whether they target children, teens, or adults, and finally by whether the authors of the books are autistic. I will make some suggestions about how UNC can improve its autism resources to appeal to all the demographics who need them.

Besides books, it's also important that people with disabilities, mental or physical, have access to the UNC library and its resources. I will carry out a brief review of other disabilities that might be relatively common in a library setting and would impact a person's ability to use the library. For example, blindness and deafness can severely impair a person's ability to access the library and especially to use particular services that an abled user would have no problem with. Not all disorders are as obvious as those two, however, and some will be more of a nuisance than anything else or require less dramatic methods of accommodation. The "invisible" disorders, where a person with them cannot be easily identified, are also relevant here. They are defined by the University of Massachusetts as "certain kinds of disabilities that are not immediately

apparent to others". Autism is one of these, as are conditions like attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and tinnitus.

Autism is a complicated family of disorders which vary in symptoms and severity, and manifests differently in different individuals. Some forms manifest in inability to recognize social skills and a person's trouble with physical spaces. Others manifest in more overtly visible and severe ways, such as many autistic people being unable to vocalize. Many of these people rely on alternate methods of communication, such as computers or sign language, and there should be ways to accommodate these alternate techniques, if possible, to give them an easier time of accessing library resources.

#### Autism-Centered Books

The reason I think it's important to examine the target audiences and demographics of autism-centered books is because not all books on the subject are equally useful or equally relevant. Some books about autism are aimed at autistic people themselves and offer advice, tips, or management suggestions for the disorder. Others are targeted at parents, teachers, or peers who interact with the autistic person, humanizing the disorder and giving them a better sense of how it works, or giving information to parents about how to identify a child as having autism and how to respond to the situation. Both types of books are important, but recently disability advocates have been critical of books that discuss the autistic experience without input from autistic people themselves, in particular autistic teenagers and adults (Rozema, 2014). Autism is often treated as a mental disorder associated with children (Aging Out: When Children

With Autism Grow Up, Child Mind Institute), and while it is often diagnosed in childhood a person with autism will deal with its lifelong consequences. This affects their job prospects, ability to drive, getting from place to place, and other things that a book discussing autism from the perspective of an unaffected individual cannot get across as effectively as an autistic individual.

This research includes a representation survey of UNC's collection in respect to autism, how autism is represented, and how diverse UNC's collection of autism-related literature is. This research reports on how many books dealing with autism are available at UNC's three main libraries, compares the individual library's resources, and examines books by intended audience and target demographic, and when possible categorizes by whether a book is written by an autistic author. Fiction books are also included in the survey, and autobiographies, as experiences of people with autism, are included.

### **Literature Review**

Disability representation is an important issue in libraries that has been understudied, largely because there is a broad spectrum of disabilities – physical and mental – with varying levels of severity and different requirements for treatment. Because of this, the existing literature covers a vast survey of potential disabilities that a library will need to take into consideration. Autism is a not insignificant one, but blindness, deafness, other physical disabilities, and disabilities that may cause an individual problems in a library setting will also be covered here due to the lack of specific literature focusing on autism.

Services that assist autistic patrons may also be helpful to others. In general, libraries' accessibility and how disabilities can interfere with that ability to access them, as well as how the situation can be remedied, are a heavily understudied area of the field that require more examination in the future to make libraries a more comfortable and safe place for disabled individuals to work, access, and enjoy. It is important that they be addressed so that the UNC Library becomes a welcoming place to all patrons regardless of special needs, and that these special needs are taken into account as part of the process. The literature review discusses particular disabilities, their impact on library use, how they affect the way consumers use library access and information with disabilities, and how these disabilities can be counteracted to make libraries more open places to their patrons. Some of them deal with potential solutions and studies held in other countries that, nevertheless, are relevant to solving the issue of accessibility in the United States.

### **Visual Impairment in Libraries**

The first disability that will be discussed involves sight impairments, the most obvious of which is blindness. There are many impacts that blindness will have on an individual's ability to use a library and access its resources. Partially or completely blind people will have difficulty at best reading traditional books, eBooks are also heavily reliant on visual senses, and they may struggle with Internet use and finding the books they need on their own. According to a study by Junaid Rayini (2017), many blind patrons are excited to use the Internet and even feel empowered by it, but libraries fail to summon up the same amount of excitement, partly due to the lack of resources and access to services

that make library use easier for blind individuals and others suffering from vision impairments. The importance of having a layout that isn't cluttered or hard to use is emphasized as a mistake many designers make, and one that's beneficial to all site users (Wachiaya, 2016). Audiobooks and books with larger print than usual are the primary options available for these individuals, and while they are a start they are also not enough. A study by Eldridge in 1982 indicates that blind people and people with vision impairments do not feel as if libraries take them and their needs into consideration when designing the accessibility of a library, and that library students both recognize that this lack of interest for the blind is a problem and have potential ideas to help solve it. It's important, for instance, to have major genres and authors represented as audiobooks for vision-impaired visitors to use, although the audiobook section will, by necessity, not represent every book in the library in audiobook form, although that would be the ideal. Instead, books would need to be selected based on a variety of factors, such as the significance of the novel, importance to relevant fields, and how highly requested it is. It would be a good idea to allow visitors to make audiobook requests, since blind readers find audiobooks a useful way to access books that they are physically unable to read.

Accessibility is an important issue with all disabilities, since many, as mentioned previously, make library use more difficult for library users who have them in varying ways. Some may prevent a person from having full access to library resources that abled consumers would be able to use, others would cause trouble with mobility, while still more would make situations that would be easy enough for abled or neurotypical users

very difficult for disabled users to tolerate. For example, many autistic library users would benefit from having a “quiet zone” in the library for them to use without distractions from noise, other visitors, or outside sources, or a “quiet time” where a lack of outside interference is provided (Hadeer Abd-El-Razak Barakat, 2019). This is a global problem – according to a study by Phukubje and Ngoepe (2016), “students with disabilities are often marginalised by library policies in terms of library services, only a small fraction of books are transcribed into alternative formats that are accessible to students with print impairments, academic books or prescribed materials are not available in appropriate formats, and to produce them in house takes a very long time” (Phukubje & Ngoepe, 2016, 181). This study took place in South Africa, and the authors report that despite efforts to help students with disabilities adjust to library settings they have little government support or assistance in doing so, or even access to the resources and funding they need to progress further on the issue. Mutanga (2017) reports that “In most instances when disability is mentioned in policy documents, either it makes no reference to higher education; or when it does, it is hazy.” (p. 136) Similar problems exist in making libraries in the United States accessible to disabled students through lack of funding, the complexity and demanding nature of the issue, and basic lack of resources. It’s extremely difficult for a library, regardless of intentions, to be all things for all people. However, the problem is also solvable, although by its nature the issue of making libraries more accessible to people with disabilities is complicated, as further exploration of the issue of disabilities is necessary and requires communication and study of disabled communities themselves.



## Hearing Disabilities in Libraries

Auditory issues are another disability that can interfere with library use for disabled populations, since they can interfere with a student or employee's ability to communicate with other library users. Nadene Eisner (2012) predicts in "Engaging Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students" that over seventy percent of deaf or otherwise hard of hearing students will attend a public school setting with their abled peers, as well as other students with hearing problems. Without being able to hear or even talk in some cases, a deaf individual may have trouble using the Internet. While sign language is helpful, people who were born deaf have a more difficult time learning words, although of course not impossible. Studies indicate that inclusion of employees with knowledge of sign may be helpful for deaf library visitors. Deafness and partial deafness are more common than blindness and caused by a variety of conditions, ranging from childhood illness, genetics, exposure to loud noise on a regular basis, and ear infections. It comes in a variety of severities, where some people may have difficulty hearing, need special equipment in order to hear, or not be able to hear at all. There are other hearing disorders that do not involve deafness which may need to be considered. Tinnitus is one of the most common of these hearing disorders, an irritating condition which causes a constant ringing, throbbing, or buzzing in the ear that does not go away over time, is loud and persistent enough to be distressing or distracting to the sufferer, and is largely untreatable. While associated with the elderly, it's an illness that can affect anyone at any age (Axelsson and Ringdahl, 1989) and is believed to be the result of long-term ear damage (Roberts et al., 2010). Individuals with hearing disorders like tinnitus may need

restful places where their condition won't interfere as much with their ability to read, or where they will have an easier time focusing on homework or their jobs. However, they will still be able to access and use the majority of library services without issue, which may make their situation less pressing than visitors and employees dealing with deafness or partial deafness, whose condition runs a higher risk of rendering them unable to use library resources and services.

### **Autism**

Autism in particular is a complicated issue to handle, since there are so many different types of autism with different requirements. As a result, libraries have an especially difficult time handling autism, and a sample study by Ghuloum and Alyacoub in 2016 revealed that two-thirds of a sample population of autistic individuals in Kuwait simply didn't use their local library. However, other autistic people enjoyed visiting libraries, and many libraries employ openly autistic librarians, volunteers, and other employees (Lund, 2018). These people may require changes in the library organization to work to their full potential. Organizations such as the Autistic Self Advocacy Network engage directly with the stigmatization of the disorder, as numerous stereotypes exist surrounding autism and autistic people that make it more difficult for people with these disabilities to be open about them and their needs. Also, because there's such a diversity of autism-related conditions that have to be kept in mind when designing or updating a library to be more accessible, it's difficult to make the library space open to everyone. Something that benefits a student with nonverbal or "low-functioning" (this term is falling out of favor in more neurodiversity-inclusive spaces, and is inaccurate in

its categorizing of the disability) autism may be completely unhelpful to a student who has “high-functioning” autism, Asperger’s, or Nonverbal Learning Disorder, which are less visible by their nature as spectrum disorders which are closer to the “higher-functioning” area of the scale.

Another issue with autism involves the disconnect between autistic visitors and whether or not they feel that their needs have been met by the libraries they visit. Many autistic people enjoy visiting the library, but many more are discouraged because they don’t feel that the library meets their needs. In a study in 2016, Amelia MacLay Anderson took a study of users of WrongPlanet, a forum created as an online meeting place for autistic individuals across the spectrum. What she discovered is that, while autistic students use the library with similar goals to neurotypical students, there are other reasons they choose to visit that are relevant to library and information studies: “However, students with ASD especially describe using the library as an escape from sensory overload...Students with ASD use the library as an auditory escape, yet many still find the library to be too loud or chaotic to suit their needs.” (Anderson, 2016, p. 9). Anderson also highlights the relative lack of research in the field of autism and how it affects autistic individuals’ use of the library. A recurring theme in research around disabilities in library settings is how there is a severe lack of research in the field, meaning that the picture of autism and other disabilities is incomplete. This deficiency in research is noted even in studies running up to the present day (Schreibman, 2000) , indicating that, despite more research and better tools to carry out this research, the lack of information on disabilities (especially, but not exclusive to, “invisible” disabilities)

is a modern day problem despite researchers' best efforts, and there is a lot more work to do in this field both to understand autism as a disorder, the requirements people with disabilities have in library settings, and how best to help individuals with autism adapt to an unfortunately often unaccommodating larger society. Something that's emphasized, as it is on *Wrong Planet*, is input from autistics themselves.

### **Autistic Input**

Something which disability groups have been criticized for in the past is treating autism and related disorders like illnesses or defects that need to be cured, and for emphasizing the narratives of parents, teachers, and supervisors over the narratives of individuals with ASD themselves. Amelia Anderson (2016), in "Autism and the Academic Mind: A Study of Communication", notes that "There is little research about the college experiences of students with ASD themselves, instead focusing on the experiences or impressions of parents, teachers, or administration" (p. 647). Autism Speaks, probably the most well-known and well-funded autism charity, has faced severe criticism from autistic individuals and their allies for the use of autism as an illness or threat, its pledge to "cure" autism, and a lack of autistic individuals in its staff that was only highlighted when Elder St. Robinson, a member of the organization's board of directors, resigned from his position due to concerns that leadership wasn't listening to him (Robinson, 2013). While Autism Speaks is a powerful organization with a deft marketing strategy and deep pockets, its opponents argue it has squandered its ability to do good, at least without heavy reforms and a leadership change. Organizations like the Autistic Self-Advocacy Network are presented as alternative organizations that hope to change this

by placing autistic people in the organization's membership, in control of determining policy, and giving them a national voice as representatives of their own demographic. For marketing reasons, autism is frequently associated with children, which doesn't mesh with the actual demographics – autistic children grow into autistic teenagers and adults, who will deal with difficulties throughout their lives due to their autism.

The implications of this are significant, especially given my hypothesis before starting research that many books in the UNC library that deal with autism are targeted at adult readers, and generally neurotypical ones that place emphasis on the study and understanding of autism and related disorders as disabilities. Many disabilities have an issue with representation and who receives what kind of help, how that help is provided, and especially who speaks for disabled populations. While advocacy is important, it's also important to give people with disabilities a voice in their accommodation and take their voices into account. What is clear is that a conflict exists between the different ways autism is understood and studied – should autism and other disabilities be engaged with as disorders which need to be treated, or something which the library environment should adapt to? Should studies focus on people with autism themselves, to discover what are the best ways to encourage autistic students to find their own voices in respect to their disability and its treatment, and how should a balance be found between the different voices affected by the disability? The literature sheds some light on approaches which are promising in narrowing the participation gap between abled and disabled library visitors.

## Methods

Studying autism resources in a library setting included several different steps, each of which work towards a larger picture of Chapel Hill's current accessibility status. The primary focus is on a book overview of the autism selection at the three UNC libraries - the Davis library, the Undergraduate Library, and the SILS Library. My overall goal in checking the book selection is to grade UNC's current selection on how it deals with autism – for example, are books about autism aimed at a particular demographic, and if so which one? This is important, for example, because many books and websites that deal with autism tend to be medical books describing young to teenage patients or books that are aimed at children. As discussed above, autism marketing is often focused around young people with the disorder and their parents, and while providing a good school environment for autistic children is important it downplays the presence and needs of autistic adults, many of whom would like a greater voice in how their condition is discussed and engaged with by the educational and medical community. Books were overviewed, if possible, to see how many of them are authored by individuals on the spectrum, such as St. Elder Robinson and Temple Grandin. While individual experiences don't reflect the wide range of experiences of people diagnosed with autism, they are important because they return the autistic narrative to autistic individuals themselves. Since not all texts divulge whether or not the author is on the spectrum, especially in the case of medical journals where the author's status isn't so relevant, I also counted texts where the author made an effort to contact or engage with adults on the spectrum for their point of view.

I suspect that inclusiveness has trended upwards with time as access to people with disabilities became a more important issue and America in general became more sensitive to physical and mental disorders, although the former became accepted before the latter, and issues involving people with mental disabilities being bullied and otherwise abused in places where they are supposed to be given care (most recently the Judge Rosenberg Center, which is infamous among mentally disabled people and their allies for their use of involuntary and violent shock therapy) are present (NPR). The next part of my survey focused on books, specifically books about autism. This survey was intentionally narrower and more specific than my general survey, and books used were determined by several factors. Autobiographies and memoirs by autistic authors or authors on the autism spectrum were permitted, as well as works of fiction. My survey at the three libraries took a selection of at most fifty books, using “autism”, “noverbal learning disorder” and “Asperger's Syndrome” as search terms in the book catalog. Fifty was chosen as a large, round number that is big enough to give me a general sample of the library's contents relating to autism. Large-print books and audiobooks were not searched. Books were further weeded down by eliminating ebooks from the initial search, limiting it only to books with physical copies stored in the Davis library. While books in non-English languages were not tallied, I made note of them as encouraging accessibility for non-English-speaking visitors or visitors where English wasn't their first language. I suspected that, for ESL readers, Spanish would probably be the most common language represented due to the growing presence of Hispanic immigrants. This was to avoid counting a book twice. However, I checked if an English translation

exists, and if one did I counted the translated copy instead of the original. If not, I counted the English copy as the representative of the text in the general tally.

Books in my selection were evaluated under several different criteria. First, I was interested in the target demographic of the books selected, primarily age, gender, and whether or not it is directed at autistic people themselves. I was also curious if particular authors who discuss autism appear more than once, particularly in medical contexts, since some seemed to focus on autism and related topics more than others. Target demographics, as well as the phenotypes of the group being studied, are relevant because they're used to determine whether or not autistic people themselves are the people primarily targeted by books on autism in the UNC libraries. I was curious about how many studies of media are aimed at or use children as compared to adults. Autism is especially affected by this, especially when the study of autistic children and teens overshadow research connected to adults.

Once books were identified, my second piece of analysis involved taking a sample of each library's books using search terms to emphasize the books that focus specifically on autism, and sorting them by target audience, target demographic, whether the book is academic, autobiographical, or explanatory in nature, and whether or not the author of the book is autistic. Scholarly texts were judged by whether or not the author dealt directly with autistic people, for example through surveys or interviews, and this information was used as part of judging the texts.

## **Results**



### *The SILS Library*

There were differences between the libraries' collections. At a total of sixteen books, the SILS library had a larger selection of fiction books on autism represented than the others, which is not especially surprising given that the library houses an extensive collection of children's books. Autism was not the main subject of these books, but it was represented in the presence of characters, all children, with autism. The absence of autistic adults is at least in part likely due to the age demographic of the books' target audience. It would be easier for a child, both neurotypical or autistic, to relate to an autistic child over an autistic adult. Nevertheless, this ties into my observation earlier that autism is frequently associated with children even though it's a lifelong condition with associated consequences. However, something worth noting is that the vast majority of the texts that were included is that the autistic character represented was almost never the main character in the story being told, but a child or friend who has autism. Only two of the books found in the SILS library, featured an autistic narrator. The first is *Piggy* by Mireille Geus (2008), about Lizzy, a preteen girl whose autism leads to her manipulation by a bullying, criminal older girl. The absence of autistic lead characters in the SILS library was observed. With the majority of main character roles going to neurotypical children, that encourages young readers to put themselves in the shoes of the neurotypical character rather than the autistic one. The only young child-appropriate book about autism, *All My Stripes* by Shaina Rudolph (2014), used animal rather than human characters. The book was published with the help of the Autism Science Foundation. However, the book's association with Allison Singer, also a former

president of Autism Speaks, caused it some controversy, as Autism Speaks only had two autistic individuals on its board at the time of publishing (ASAD, 2017).

There were four guides targeted at students with autism spectrum disorders to help them cope in a classroom setting, with two books aimed at the peers of these students, explaining what autism looks like to them and emphasizing that autistic people should not be bullied, but treated with respect. There was one book aimed at caregivers specifically. Since there aren't really books aimed at adults at the SILS library, there were fewer books with an adult target audience of teachers with an autistic student in their class or parents of a child with autism. While a neurotypical audience is necessary, since it's helpful if students know what to expect if they have an autistic classmate to prevent bullying or miscommunication, it was good that there were books targeted at autistic people themselves. These guides, counting guides for both autistic and neurotypical students, were the most frequently occurring of the nonfiction books, but were still overall represented much less than the fiction books.

### *The Undergraduate Library*

The Undergraduate Library had thirty-three books relevant to autism, with nonfiction much more heavily represented than it was in SILS. However, no one genre was overwhelmingly present the way there was a majority of fiction books in the children's library. Nonfiction is a much more divided genre, split into many different subgenres: pop psychology, thesis papers, autobiographies, and memoirs. There were three memoirs, one from the point of view of a teenager with autism and two taking the point

of view of parents who had an autistic child. The other things I noticed involved recurring themes, such as the history of vaccinations, the alleged connection between autism and vaccinations, and the history and misunderstandings behind that myth. The vast majority of the books took the side of vaccines and didn't treat the speculation that vaccines caused autism seriously, which I think is a good sign of the library's science literacy. Some of the books' ties to autism issues were fairly loose, such as a book about the X-Men and a book exploring pet cognition, which while interesting have little to do with autism.

### *Davis Library*

The Davis Library was interesting to study because its selection was the most eclectic, with representation mixed between fiction (though of a more mature bent than the kind of fiction found in the SILS library, which was mostly aimed at children and teenagers) and nonfiction, mostly of the pop science vein that was seen in the Undergraduate Library. There were nine autism-related memoirs, with only one of them written by an autistic adult, one written by a child, and seven of them written by a parent discussing the experience of raising an autistic child. One of these memoirs took the form of a play, written with the input of the author's adult daughter, while the other two memoirs were of the more archetypal variety of a parent reflecting on the positive and negative elements of raising an autistic son. What was surprising to me was that there was only one book written as a guide for autistic college-age students, since I would think they

would be a major target audience at a large university with a considerable student population of 29911

Social skills guides in general were very scarce, in favor of fictional works dealing with autism and pop science books that handle the subject. There was only one book that dealt with vaccines, and it was only tangentially related to autism because of the pervasive myth that vaccines cause autism or increase autism risk. In general, it seemed to be a mixture of the other two libraries' contents in that it was largely a hybrid of nonfiction with a focus on pop science, memoirs usually but not always written by parents, and a handful of guides targeted at teachers and students. The scientific disciplines represented at Davis were largely psychology and biology, the two most directly relevant to autism, its identification, and its study, though there was also one general history of autism.

### **Discussion**

I noticed that overall the genres most represented in the library were the fiction books and pop science, followed closely by the autism memoirs. These three were, overall, more aimed at neurotypical than autistic audiences - for example, the two most prominent fiction books with autistic narrators - *Piggy* and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* - were both by neurotypical narrators and their lead characters are multidimensional but stereotypical, if in relatable situations. The autistic narrator of *Piggy* gets mixed up with an especially vicious school bully who pressures her into negative behavior while narrator of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

tries to solve the murder of a dog in his neighborhood while struggling with problems in his family. While *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* was praised at the time of its release for representing a sympathetic and multi-dimensional autistic character, it later has been criticized within the disability community (Bartmess, 2015) for relying on stereotypes and tropes regarding autism and autistic people as a whole, such as the narrator's general lack of empathy and his belief that people who are unlike himself are less intelligent and not worth paying attention to. The book is a good example of how a work that's considered inclusive when it's first written may not hold up to closer scrutiny in the future.

As for the nonfiction I studied, I also wasn't surprised that it had a consistent presence or that the majority of nonfiction works represented were memoirs and pop psychology. The autism memoir is a popular form, especially in its manifestation as the autism-parent narrative in which a parent reflects on the experience, positive and negative, of raising an autistic child. There were a couple of memoirs that were written by autistic authors, but they are still heavily underrepresented in favor of narratives for and by neurotypical people, which was disappointing but what I expected. On the other hand, the absence of conspiracy narratives around vaccines and the presence of several books that directly debunk the alleged autism-vaccine connection. This means that the libraries' scientific literacy is solid, and I appreciated that those works, which promote dangerous misinformation and have contributed to multiple public health crises.

## **Conclusion**

While books on autism have a substantial presence in the library system at the University of North Carolina, there are several issues that can be improved on in the future. Autistic narratives, as written by autistic people, are in a distinct minority, overshadowed by popular science books and autism memoirs. The fiction selection is promising, if problematic in that autism fiction is reliant on stereotypes, such as mentioned above with *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. To improve the selections available in the library, I would strive to include a greater diversity of viewpoints - teachers and parents one, siblings and peers another, and autistic people themselves represent an internal perspective which forms an important piece of the whole picture. While the perspectives of parents and teachers should be represented and are important, since they help drive policy that affects people with autism and other disabilities, it's also important for the people who are most directly affected by a condition to be one of the loudest voices in addressing it and engaging with the larger world about it.

To form a balanced perspective, it's important for all of these different points of view about autism to be represented in the library, and to help autistic students both understand the disorder and learn how to manage it from texts that appeal to them specifically, rather than relying on texts created for the purpose of helping parents, teachers, and peers. While the library has a solid variety of texts and genres available across all three libraries, the stock could be improved further, and I would especially recommend an increased representation of autistic voices.

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## Appendix:

### Table 1: Davis Self Study

In a different key: The story of autism	Donvan, John	Historical
Accessing the curriculum for learners with autism spectrum disorders	Mesibov, Gary B.	Guide for teachers
Neurotribes	Steve Silberman	Pop science
Life, Animated	Suskind, Ron	Parent memoir
The Reason I Jump I Wish I Were Engulfed In Flames	Higashida, Naoku	Memoir by autistic child
Following Ezra Autism's False Prophets	Decker, Jeni Fields-Meyer, Thomas	Parent memoir
Autism: A Very Short Introduction	Offit, Paul A.	Pop science
Animals In Translation	Frith, Uta	Pop science
A Mind Apart	Grandin, Temple	Biology
Exiting Nirvana Autism: Preparing for Adulthood	Szatman, Peter Park, Clara Claiborne	Guide for teachers
Autism: Understanding the Disorder	Howlin, Patricia	Play/memoir by parent of autistic adult
Autism - An Inside- Out Approach	Mesibov, Gary B.	Guide for autistic teens
Autism: An Introduction to Psychological theory	Williams, Donna	Scientific study
No Book But the World	Happe, Francesca	Guide for Teachers
Love That Boy	Cohen, Leah Hagen	Scientific study
The Boy Who Loved Tornadoes	Fournier, Ron	Novel with autistic side character
Daniel Isn't Talking	Davenport, Randi	Parent Memoir
The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time	Leimbach, Marti	Parent memoir
	Haddon, Mark	Novel with autistic side character
		Novel with autistic narrator

Autistic Children: A Guide for Parents and Professionals	Wing, Lorna	Guide for parents and teachers
Switched On	Robison, John Elder	Memoir by autistic author
Brain Maker	Permutter, David	Pop science
Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders : DSM-5.	American Psychiatric Association	Reference Book
Do You Believe In Magic?	Offit, Paul A.	Pop science
Brain On Fire	Calahan, Susannah	Memoir
The Tell-Tale Brain	Ramachandran, V. S	Pop science
Look Me In the Eye	Robison, John Elder	Memoir
Vaccine	Allen, Arthur	Pop science

**Table 2: SILS Library**

Temple Grandin: How the girl who loved cows embraced autism and changed the world	Sy Montgomery	Biography
Waiting for Benjamin	Alexandra Altman	Fiction
I am Utterly Unique	Elaine Marie Elson	Children's Nonfiction
Tacos, Anyone?	Marvie Ellis	Guide for caregivers
My Friend With Autism	Beverly Bishop	Guide for neurotypical kids
All About My Brother	Sarah Peralta	Biographical Children's Fiction
Taking Autism to School	Andreanna Edwards	Guide for caregivers and neurotypicals
An exploration of the relationships of characters with autism spectrum disorders in young adult and upper elementary level literature	Mary S. Randolph	Thesis
AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER REPRESENTATION IN YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE: A CONTENT ANALYSIS	Marli Johnston	Thesis
PUBLIC LIBRARIES: SERVING CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM	Holly Broman	Thesis

DISORDER AND THEIR  
FAMILIES  
EVALUATING THE  
PRESENCE OF THE  
AUTISM SOCIETY IN THE  
AMERICAN SOUTH USING  
DIRECT CONTENT  
ANALYSIS

On the Edge of Gone	Hillary Fox	Thesis
Al Capone Does My Homework	Corrine Duvyis	Fiction - book with autistic character
A Certain October	Gennifer Choldenko	Fiction - book with autistic character
Marcelo in the Real World	Angela Johnson	Fiction - book with autistic character
Anything But Typical	Francisco X. Stork	Fiction - book with autistic character
Adult interactive style intervention and participatory research designs in autism : bridging the gap between academic research and practice	Nora Raleigh Baskin	Fiction - book with autistic character
Al Capone Shines My Shoes	Lila Kosyvaki	Scientific Study
Piggy	Gennifer Choldenko	Fiction - book with autistic character
Friends Learn About Tobin	Mireille Geus	Fiction - book with autistic character
When my worries get too big! : a relaxation book for children who live with anxiety	Diane Murrell	Fiction
Rules	Kari Dunn Boron	Guide for autistic students
The boy who ate stars	Cynthia Lord	Fiction - book with autistic character
Keisha's Doors	Kochka	Fiction - book with autistic character
The Heart's Language	Marvie Ellis	Fiction and Guide
Looking After Louis	Lois-Ann Yamanaka	Fiction - book with autistic character
Al Capone Does My Shirts	Lesley Ely	Fiction - book with autistic character
This is Asperger Syndrome	Gennifer Choldenko	Fiction - book with autistic character
Andy and his yellow frisbee	Elsa Gagnone and Brenda Smith Miles	Guide for neurotypical kids
The Devil Hole	Mary Thompson	Fiction - book with autistic character
Please don't say hello	Eleanor Spence	Fiction - book with autistic character
Disability in comic books and graphic narratives	Phyllis-Terri Gold	Fiction - book with autistic character
	Chris Foss et al.	Scientific Study

Answers to the health questions people ask in libraries	Laura Townsend Kane	Reference Guide
Universal usability	Jonathan Lazar	Reference Guide

**Table 3: Undergraduate Library**

Characterizing Early Development and NREM Sleep in Infants and Toddlers and Risk for Autism Spectrum Disorder	Page, Jessica	Thesis
Early Life Exposure to Air Pollution and Autism Spectrum Disorder: Susceptible Time Windows and Populations	McGuinn, Laura	Thesis
In a Different Key	Donvan, John	Historical Study
The Reason I Jump	Higashida, Naoki	Memoir by an autistic teen
Neurotribes	Silberman, Steve	Historical Study
I wish I were engulfed in flames : my insane life raising two boys with autism	Decker, Paula	Memoir by parent with autistic child
Following Ezra	Fields-Meyer, Thomas	Memoir by parent with autistic child
Autism : a very short introduction	Frith, Uta	Study
Autism : understanding the disorder	Mesibov, Gary B.	Study
Ginny Moon	Ludwig, Benjamin	Novel with autistic character
Lake Success	Shteyngart, Gary	Novel with autistic minor character
The Disordered mind	Kandel, Eric R.	Study
Innate	Mitchell, Kevin J.	Study
The Age of Perpetual Light	Weil, Josh	Short story with autistic minor character
Facts and fictions in mental health	Arkowitz, Hal	Psychological study
Pets on the couch	Dodman, Nicolas H.	Animal psychology
The human superorganism	Dietert, Rodney R.	Pop biology
Andy Warhol was a hoarder	Kalb, Claudia	Pop psychological study
Parenting and theory of mind	Miller, Scott A.	Study of autistic parents
The brain's way of healing	Doidge, Norma	Study
Great myths of the brain	Jarrett, Christian	Pop biology
The man who wasn't there	Ananthaswamy, Ani	Psychology

Infection madness	Washington, Harriet A.	Psychology
The Home Front	Vanderburg, Margaret	Novel with autistic minor character
Child psychopathology	Mash, Eric et al. Darowsk, Joseph	Psychology
The Ages of the X-Men	Swaab, D. F.	Pop culture study
We are our brains	Hoboken, N.J	Psychology text
Child and adolescent psychopathology	Mnookin, Seth	Psychology
The Panic Virus	Wilson, Mike	Study of anti-vaxxers
Disability Affecting Learning	Qyayson, Ato	Pro/Con book
Aesthetic nervousness	Moon, Elizabeth	Psychology
The speed of dark	Engdahl, Sylvia	Novel with autistic character
Vaccines		Pro/Con book