

Meryl Alper

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Academic Employment

Northeastern University

Department of Communication Studies (College of Arts, Media, and Design)
2021- Associate Professor (with tenure)
2015-2021 Assistant Professor

Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders (Bouvé College of Health Sciences)
2024- Affiliate Associate Professor

Department of Cultures, Societies & Global Studies (Health, Humanities, and Society Program; College of Social Sciences and Humanities & Bouvé College of Health Sciences)
2024- Affiliate Associate Professor

Education

University of Southern California

Department of Communication, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism
2015 Ph.D., Communication
2013 M.A., Communication

UCLA Extension

2010 Certificate (with Distinction), Early Childhood Education

Northwestern University

2005 B.S. (Magna Cum Laude), Communication Studies and History

RESEARCH

Publications

Books

Alper, M. (2023). *Kids across the spectrums: Growing up autistic in the digital age*. MIT Press.

- * 2024 American Library Association, Choice Outstanding Academic Title (top 10% percent of ~5,000 works reviewed annually in *Choice*)
- * 2024 American Sociological Association, Honorable Mention, Best Book Award, Communication, Information Technologies, and Media Sociology Section
- * Reviewed by *Journal of Communication*, *Advances in Autism*, *Choice* (Essential), *International Journal of Communication*

Alper, M. (2017). *Giving voice: Mobile communication, disability, and inequality*. MIT Press.

- * 2018 Association of American Publishers, PROSE Book Award Honorable Mention, Professional and Scholarly Publishing Division, Media and Cultural Studies Category
- * 2018 American Sociological Association, Outstanding Publication in the Sociology of Disability Award, Section on Disability and Society
- * Reviewed by *New Media & Society*, *IEEE Annals of the History of Computing*, *Journal of Children and Media*, *Disability Studies Quarterly*, *Journal of Interdisciplinary Voice Studies*, *Endeavour*, *Canadian Journal of Disability Studies*, *Choice* (Highly Recommended)

Alper, M. (2014). *Digital youth with disabilities*. MIT Press.

* Reviewed by *Journal of Children and Media*

Journal Articles (Peer Reviewed)

Alper, M., Rodgers, R., Rauchberg, J., Simpson, E., & Harrison, K. (in press). “actually an ED and not just a quirky aspect of autism”: TikTok as forum and mediator of autistic food issues and eating disorders. *New Media & Society*.

Alper, M., Rauchberg, J., Simpson, E., Guberman, J., & Feinberg, S. (2025). TikTok as algorithmically mediated biographical illumination: Autism, self-discovery, and platformed diagnosis on #autisktok. *New Media & Society*, 27(3), 1378–1396.

Schmuecker, S., Hourcade, J. P., **Alper, M.**, Fails, J. A., Kawas, S., & Yarosh, S. (2024). Democratizing the ethics of emerging technologies for children. *ACM Interactions*, 31(5), 32–37.

Alper, M., Christiansen, E., Allen, A. A., & Mello, S. (2023). Pediatric media guidance for parents of children on the autism spectrum: A thematic analysis. *Health Communication*, 38(8), 1572–1580.

Alper, M., Manganello, J., & Colvin, K. (2023). Parental mediation and problematic media use among U.S. children with disabilities and their non-disabled siblings during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Children and Media*, 17(2), 219–227.

Perovich, L. J., **Alper, M.**, & Cleveland, C. (2022). “Self-Quaranteens” process COVID-19: Understanding information visualization language in memes. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human Computer Interaction*, 6(1), 1–20.

Fox, J., Pearce, K. E., Massanari, A. L., Riles, J. M., Szulc, Ł., Ranjit, Y. S., Trevisan, F., Soriano, C. R. R., Vitak, J., Arora, P., Ahn, S. J., **Alper, M.**, Gambino, A., Gonzalez, C., Lynch, T. L., Williamson, L. D., & Gonzales, A. L. (2021). Open science, closed doors? Countering marginalization through an agenda for ethical, inclusive research in communication. *Journal of Communication*, 71(5), 764–784.
* 2023 International Communication Association Outstanding Article Award (Association-Wide)

Alper, M. (2021). U.S. parent perspectives of media guidance from pediatric autism professionals. *Journal of Children and Media*, 15(2), 165–182.

Alper, M. (2021). Critical media access studies: Deconstructing power, visibility, and marginality in mediated space. *International Journal of Communication*, 15, 840–861.

Mello, S., **Alper, M.**, & Allen, A. A. (2020). Physician mediation theory and pediatric media guidance in the digital age: A survey of autism medical and clinical professionals. *Health Communication*, 35(8), 955–965.

Alper, M. (2019). Portables, luggables, and transportables: Historicizing the imagined affordances of mobile computing. *Mobile Media & Communication*, 7(3), 322–340.

Alper, M. (2019). Future talk: Accounting for the technological and other future discourses in daily life. *International Journal of Communication*, 13, 715–735.

Alper, M. (2018). Inclusive sensory ethnography: Studying new media and neurodiversity in everyday life. *New Media & Society*, 20(10), 3560–3579.

Alper, M., & Goggin, G. (2017). Digital technology and rights in the lives of children with disabilities. *New Media & Society*, 19(5), 726–740.

Götz, M., Holler, A., & **Alper, M.** (2016). Children’s preferences for TV show hosts: An international perspective on learning from television. *Journal of Children and Media*, 10(4), 497–507.

Jennings, N., & **Alper, M.** (2016). Young children’s positive and negative parasocial relationships with media characters. *Communication Research Reports*, 33(2), 96–102.

Alper, M., Katz, V., & Clark, L. S. (2016). Researching children, intersectionality, and diversity in the digital age. *Journal of Children and Media*, 10(1), 107–114.
* Reprinted (2017), in D. Lemish, A. Jordan, & V. Rideout (Eds.), *Children, adolescents, and media: The future of research and action* (pp. 111–118). London: Routledge.

Alper, M. (2015). Augmentative, alternative, and assistive: Reimagining the history of mobile computing and disability. *IEEE Annals of the History of Computing*, 37(1), 93–96.

Alper, M. (2014). “Can Our Kids Hack It With Computers?”: Constructing youth hackers in family computing magazines (1983–1987). *International Journal of Communication*, 8, 673–698.

Alper, M. (2014). War on Instagram: Framing conflict photojournalism with mobile photography apps. *New Media & Society*, 16(8), 1233–1248.

Alper, M., & Herr-Stephenson, B. (2013). Transmedia play: Literacy across media. *Journal of Media Literacy Education*, 5(2), 366–369.

Alper, M. (2013). Developmentally appropriate New Media Literacies: Supporting cultural competencies and social skills in early childhood education. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 13(2), 175–196.

Alper, M., Hourcade, J.P., & Gilutz, S. (2012). Adding reinforced corners: Designing technologies for children with disabilities. *ACM Interactions*, 14(6), 72–75.

Alper, M. (2012). Promoting emerging new media literacies among young children with blindness and visual impairment. *Digital Culture and Education*, 4(3).

Book Chapters

Alper, M. (in press). Mobile digital inequalities. In G. Goggin & L. Hjorth (Eds.), *Routledge companion to mobile media* (2nd ed). Routledge.

Alper, M., Alcorn, A. M., Harrison, K., Manganello, J., & Romeo, R. R. (2025). Digital media and neurodevelopmental differences. In D. Christakis & L. Hale (Eds.), *Children and screens: A handbook on digital media and the development, health, and well-being of children and adolescents* (pp. 55–60). Springer.

Alper, M. (2025). Disability at the intersections of communication ethics and media technologies. In A. Pinchevski, P. Buzzanell, & J. Hannan (Eds.), *Handbook of communication ethics* (2nd ed.) (International Communication Association Handbook Series) (pp. 364–375). Routledge.

Alper, M. (2024). Good technology is accessible, not just “good enough.” In E. Drage & K. McInerney (Eds.), *The good robot: Why technology needs feminism* (pp. 108–116). Bloomsbury.

Prendella, K., & **Alper, M.** (2023). Inequality and day-to-day encounters with media. In R. L. Brown, M. Maroto, & D. Pettinicchio (Eds.), *Oxford handbook of the sociology of disability* (pp. 197–212). Oxford University Press.

Manganello, J. A., **Alper, M.**, & Kane, C. (2023). Media use and youth with disabilities. In B. Halpern-Felsher (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of child and adolescent health*, Vol. 3 (pp. 441–449). Elsevier.

Prendella, K., & **Alper, M.** (2022). Media and children with disabilities. In D. Lemish (Ed.), *Routledge international handbook of children, adolescents, and media* (2nd ed) (pp. 395–402). Routledge.

Jennings, N., Caplovitz, A. G., & **Alper, M.** (2022). Media use among children with chronic health conditions during the early days of the coronavirus crisis. In M. Götz & D. Lemish (Eds.), *Children and media worldwide in a time of a pandemic* (pp. 167–180). Peter Lang.

Alper, M., & Irons, M. (2020). Digital socializing in children on the autism spectrum. In L. Green, D. Holloway, L. Haddon, K. Stevenson, & T. Leaver (Eds.), *Routledge companion to children and digital media* (pp. 348–357). Routledge.

Alper, M. (2019). When face-to-face is screen-to-screen: Reconsidering mobile media as communication augmentations and alternatives. In K. Ellis, G. Goggin, B. Haller, & R. Curtis (Eds.), *Routledge companion to disability and media* (pp. 275–284). Routledge.

Alper, M. (2017). Transmedia. In K. Peppler (Ed.), *Sage encyclopedia of out-of-school learning* (pp. 791–792). Sage.

Alper, M., & Haller, B. (2017). Social media use and mediated sociality among individuals with communication disabilities in the digital age. In K. Ellis, & M. Kent (Eds.), *Disability and social media: Global perspectives* (pp. 133–145). Routledge.

Alper, M., Elcessor, E., Ellis, K., & Goggin, G. (2015). Reimagining the good life with disability: Communication, new technology, and humane connections. In H. Wang (Ed.), *Communication and “the good life”* (International Communication Association Theme Book Series, Vol. 2) (pp. 197–212). Peter Lang.

Alper, M. (2013). Children and convergence culture. In D. Lemish (Ed.), *Routledge international handbook of children, adolescents and media* (pp. 148–155). Routledge.

Other

White Papers and Reports (Non-Peer Reviewed)

Whittaker, M., (with **Alper, M.**, Bennett, C. L., Hendren, S., Kaziunas, L., Mills, M., Morris, M. R., Rankin, J., Rogers, E., Salas, M., & Myers West, S.)* (2019). *Disability, bias, and AI*. AI Now. *co-authors listed alphabetically

Herr-Stephenson, B., & **Alper, M.**, (with Reilly, E., & Jenkins, H.) (2013). *T is for transmedia: Learning through transmedia play*. USC Annenberg Innovation Lab and The Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop.

Conference Proceedings and Workshop Papers (Peer Reviewed)

Pak, E., **Alper, M.**, Rubinstzain, V., & McGivney, E. (2025). Risks, opportunities, and ethical considerations for XR use by neurodivergent youth. *ACM International Conference on Interaction Design and Children (IDC)*, Workshop on Extended Reality and Children: Risks, Opportunities, and Ethics, Reykjavik, Iceland, June 23, 2025.

Rauchberg, J., **Alper, M.**, Simpson, E., Guberman, J., & Feinberg, S. (2023). "Here to have fun and fight ableism": #Autisktok user bios as neuroqueer microactivist platform affordances. *Selected Papers of #AoIR2023: The 24th Annual Conference of the Association of Internet Researchers* (pp. 1–5). Philadelphia, PA, October 18-21, 2023. AoIR.

Hourcade, J.P., **Alper, M.**, Bonsignore, E., Clegg, T., Fails, J. A., Walsh, G., Yarosh, S., & Yip, J. (2023). Participatory approaches to the ethics of emerging technologies for children. *IDC '23: Proceedings of the 22nd Annual ACM Interaction Design and Children Conference* (pp. 795–797). Evanston, IL, June 19-23, 2023. ACM.

Hourcade, J.P., **Alper, M.**, Antle, A. N., Baykal, G. E., Bonsignore, E., Clegg, T., Currin, F. H., Dindler, C., Eriksson, E., Fails, J. A., Garzotto, F., Giannakos, M., Gonzalez, C. S., Iversen, O. S., Landoni, M., Medina, N. M., Quintana, C., Read, J., [...] & Yip, J. (2023). Developing participatory methods to consider the ethics of emerging technologies for children. *CHI EA '23: Extended Abstracts of the 2023 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (Article No. 511, pp. 1–3). Hamburg, Germany, April 23-28, 2023. ACM.

Hourcade, J.P., Garzotto, F., Rozga, A., Tentori, M., Markopolous, P., Pares, N., Good, J., Pain, H., & **Alper, M.** (2014). Supporting children with complex communication needs. *Proceedings of the ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI)* (pp. 119–122). Toronto, Canada, April 26–May 1, 2014. ACM.

Alper, M. (2013). Making space in the makerspace: Building a mixed-ability maker culture. *ACM International Conference on Interaction Design and Children (IDC)*, Workshop on Evaluating Accessibility in Fabrication Tools for Children, New York, NY, June 24-27, 2013.

Alper, M., Hourcade, J.P., & Gilutz, S. (2012). Interactive technologies for children with special needs. *Proceedings of the ACM International Conference on Interaction Design and Children (IDC)* (pp. 363–366). Bremen, Germany, June 12-15, 2012. ACM.

Book Reviews

Alper, M. (2022). Book Review: *Diminished Faculties: A Political Phenomenology of Impairment* (J. Sterne). *New Media & Society*, 24(9), 2184–2186.

Alper, M. (2020). Book Review: *Parenting for a Digital Future: How Hopes and Fears about Technology Shape Children's Lives* (S. Livingstone & A. Blum-Ross). *International Journal of Communication*, 14, 5004–5006.

Alper, M. (2016). Book Review: *Making Computers Accessible: Disability Rights & Digital Technology* (E. R. Petrick). *Technology and Culture*, 57(4), 1027–1028.

Alper, M. (2013). Book Review: *The Parent App: Understanding Families in the Digital Age* (L. S. Clark). *Journal of Children and Media*, 7(4), 525–529.

Alper, M. (2011). Book Review: *Quest to Learn: Developing the School for Digital Kids* (K. Salen et al.). *Journal of Children and Media*, 5(4), 467–471.

Letters to the Editor

Alper, M. (2020). Improving research on screen media, autism, and families of young children. *JAMA Pediatrics*, 174(12), 1223.

Amicus Briefs

Carpenter v. United States, No. 16-402 (U.S. Supreme Court, 2017) (co-signer to Brief of Amici Curiae, Data & Society Research Institute and Fifteen Scholars of Technology and Society in Support Of Petitioner).

Journal Articles (Non-Peer Reviewed)

Götz, M., Mendel, C., Lemish, D., Jennings, N., Hains, R., Abdul, F., Alper, M. ... Yee, A. Z. H.* (2020). Children, COVID-19 and the media: A study on the challenges children are facing in the 2020 coronavirus crisis. *TelevIZIon*, 33(1), 4–9. *co-authors listed alphabetically

Commentary

Alper, M. (2024, March 15). [Prioritize autistic youth mental health without panicking over technology](#). *Newsweek*.

Alper, M. (2024, January 22). [Driving interest-driven learning among autistic youth](#). *Connected Learning Alliance*.

Alper, M. (2024, January 9). [Shattering stereotypes about autism and technology](#). *The MIT Press Reader*. (Invited Interview)

Alper, M. (2020, November 30). [CAMmer In the Spotlight: Meryl Alper](#). *Website of the International Communication Association (ICA) Children, Adolescents, and Media Division*. (Invited Interview)

Alper, M. (2020, October 27). [The silver lining of virtual school for some autistic students](#). *Slate (Future Tense)*.

Alper, M., & Jackson, L. (2019, April 25). [LEGO Braille Bricks](#). *Critical Axis*.

Alper, M. (2018, March 6). [Can technology really ‘give voice’ to disabled people?](#) *Pacific Standard*.

Alper, M. (2017, July 21). [Talking like a “Princess”: What speaking machines say about human biases](#). *Lady Science*, 34.

Alper, M. (2017, June 13). [Personal computing and personhood in design and disability](#). *CASTAC (Committee for the Anthropology of Science, Technology & Computing), General Anthropology Division, American Anthropological Association*. (Invited Commentary)

Alper, M., & Greene, D. (2017, June 7). [Author Interview: Meryl Alper on “Giving Voice.”](#) *Culture Digitally*. (Invited Interview)

Alper, M. (2016, September 21). [What ABC’s new TV series *Speechless* can tell us about “voice.”](#) *VICE Motherboard*.

Alper, M. (2016, April 21). [No child’s brain is the same](#). *Zócalo Public Square* (Syndicated by *Dallas Morning News*). (Invited Commentary)

Honors and Awards

2025	Northeastern University , Excellence in Research and Creative Activity Award, College of Arts, Media, and Design (CAMD) (Awarded to one CAMD faculty member annually)
2024	American Library Association , Choice Outstanding Academic Title (top 10% percent of ~5,000 works reviewed annually in <i>Choice</i>) for <i>Kids Across the Spectrums</i>
2024	American Sociological Association , Honorable Mention, Best Book Award for <i>Kids Across the Spectrums</i> , Communication, Information Technologies, and Media Sociology Section
2023	International Communication Association , Outstanding Article Award (Association-Wide) for Fox et al. (2021), <i>Journal of Communication</i>
2023	International Communication Association , Top Faculty Paper Award, Children, Adolescents and Media Division
2018	Association of American Publishers , PROSE Book Award Honorable Mention for <i>Giving Voice</i> , Professional and Scholarly Publishing Division, Media and Cultural Studies Category

2018	American Sociological Association , Outstanding Publication in the Sociology of Disability Award for <i>Giving Voice</i> , Section on Disability and Society
2017	International Communication Association , Top Faculty Paper Award, Philosophy, Theory and Critique Division
2017	International Communication Association , Top 8 Paper Award, Mobile Communication Interest Group
2015	International Communication Association , Top 3 Poster Award, Children, Adolescents and Media Division
2015	Microsoft Research , Finalist (Top 3), Postdoctoral Fellowship, Social Media Collective
2015	University of Pennsylvania , George Gerbner Postdoctoral Fellowship, Annenberg School for Communication (Declined)
2014	University of Southern California , Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award, Department of Communication
2014	University of Southern California , Oxford Internet Institute Summer Doctoral Program Travel Grant, Department of Communication
2013	Society for the History of Technology , Junior Scholar Conference Travel Grant
2011	International Communication Association , Top Student Paper Award; Children, Adolescents and Media Division
2005	Northwestern University , Communication Studies Senior Thesis Honors
2005	Northwestern University , Communication Studies Undergraduate Departmental Excellence
2004	Northwestern University , Doron Abosch Memorial Scholarship, Northwestern Club of New York

Fellowships and Other Faculty Affiliations

2025-	Northeastern University , Affiliated Faculty, Center for Transformative Media, College of Arts, Media, and Design
2018-	Northeastern University , Faculty Scholar, Institute for Health Equity and Social Justice Research
2018-2019	Northeastern University , Dean's Research Fellow, College of Arts, Media, and Design
2018-2019	Northeastern University , Faculty Fellow, Northeastern Humanities Center
2015-2018	Harvard University , Faculty Associate, Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society
2010-2015	Annenberg Foundation , Doctoral Fellowship, University of Southern California

Scholarly Presentations

Keynote Addresses

Alper, M. (2023, September). *Autistic youth, mental health, and the sociotechnical shaping of sociality*. Keynote address at MediaPsych 2023: 13th Biennial Conference of the Media Psychology Division of the German Psychological Society, University of Luxembourg, Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg.

Alper, M. (2022, September). *Supporting mental health among autistic youth in the digital age*. Keynote address at 58th Annual Nobel Conference, Gustavus Adolphus College, Saint Peter, MN.

Alper, M. (2021, March). *Critical media access studies: Examining the benefits and limits of accessibility in mediated spaces*. Keynote address at Dis-/Abilities and Digital Media, German Research Foundation (DFG) Scientific Network. University of Konstanz, Konstanz, Germany. (Remote presentation)

Alper, M. (2019, August). *Digital media, youth, and disability*. Keynote address at +aprendizajes Conference. Fundación Ceibal, Montevideo, Uruguay.

Alper, M. (2019, June). *Redefining mediated human connections through disability and digital technology*. Keynote address at #ScreentimeBU Graduate Student Conference, Division of Emerging Media Studies. Boston University, Boston, MA.

Alper, M. (2016, April). *Universal design for learning*. Keynote address at U.S. Department of Education Ready to Learn Grant Advisory Board Meeting. Twin Cities Public Television, Washington, DC.

Sponsored Panels

Alper, M. (2018, May). *Screen time and the lives of children* (with Amy Jordan, Jan Van den Bulck, and Sun Sun Lim, co-panelists). Sponsored session at International Communication Association, Prague, Czech Republic.

Alper, M. (2017, September). *Media for social responsibility: Life with autism spectrum disorder* (with Ron Suskind, featured panelist; Tina Caswell, Susanne Bruyere, & Nadine Vogel, co-panelists). Park Distinguished Visitor Series, Park School of Communications. Ithaca College, Ithaca, NY.

Alper, M. (2016, August). *Creative computing for all* (with Karen Brennan, moderator; Nick Giacobbe & Rhianon Gutierrez, co-panelists). Keynote panel at Scratch Conference. MIT Media Lab, Cambridge, MA.

Invited Talks

Alper, M. *Emerging technology, learning, and implications for neurodivergent kids*. Google UniSpark Event (2025, May). (Remote presentation)

Alper, M. *Disability at the intersections of inclusion, communication ethics, and media technologies*. “What is Inclusive Communication” Webinar, International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR), Working Group on Inclusive Communication and People with Disabilities (2025, January). (Remote presentation)

Alper, M. *Thinking differently about the “social” uses of media for neurodivergent youth*. Neurodiversity Education Series, The Parent Venture, Menlo Park, CA (2024, November). (Remote presentation)

Alper, M. *Supporting mental health among autistic youth and young adults in the digital age*. The Help Group Summit, Los Angeles, CA (2024, November).

Alper, M. *Kids across the spectrums: Growing up autistic in the digital age*. (Invited book talks after publication).

Curtin University, Centre for Culture and Technology, Perth, Australia (2024, August). (Remote presentation)

Boston Ability Center, Wellesley, MA (2024, June). (Remote presentation)

University of Washington, DUB (Design. Use. Build.) Talk, Seattle, WA (2024, May).

Carleton University, Disability, Accessibility, and Technology: A Critical Disability Studies Discussion Series, Ottawa, ON, Canada (2024, January). (Remote presentation)

Boston Medical Center, Department of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, Grand Rounds, Boston, MA (2023, December). (Remote presentation)

University of Surrey, Surrey Sociology Dialogues, Digital Societies Series, Surrey, UK (2023, November). (Remote presentation)

Drexel University, A.J. Drexel Autism Institute, Philadelphia, PA (2023, November).

Rutgers University, School of Communication and Information, Ph.D. Student Colloquium Series, New Brunswick, NJ (2023, October). (Remote presentation)

New York University/Tech Kids Unlimited Parent Talk (2023, September). (Remote presentation)

Alper, M. (2023, August). *Supporting smart smartphone use for neurodivergent kids*. Ready, Set, Smartphone: A Guide for Families. #AskTheExperts Webinar, Children and Screens Institute of Digital Media and Child Development. (Remote presentation)

Alper, M. (2023, February). *Beyond “mechanical boys”: Theorizing emotions, autism, and affective technologies*. Inclusive Futures: Disability and Technology. Princeton University, Princeton, NJ.

Alper, M. (2021, December). *Advancing digital and educational equity for autistic youth*. Aspen Institute Virtually Human Working Group. (Remote presentation)

Alper, M. (2021, March). *Critical media access studies: Examining the benefits and limits of accessibility in mediated spaces*. Department of Communication, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT. (Remote presentation)

Alper, M. (2021, March). *Only a mother’s touch(screen): The materiality of maternal labor and assistive technology*. Explorations in the Medical Humanities: Parenting in Pandemic. The Society of Fellows and Heyman Center for the Humanities. Columbia University, New York, NY. (Remote presentation)

Alper, M. (2021, February). *Maximizing the participation of children on the autism spectrum in research*. PBS KIDS, Arlington, VA. (Remote presentation)

Alper, M. (2021, January). *Creating inclusive children's media for autism and neurodiversity*. PBS KIDS, Arlington, VA. (Remote presentation)

Alper, M. (2020, October). *Parenting digital youth on the spectrum during the pandemic*. Ask the Experts: Screens, Students, and ASD. Children and Screens: Institute of Digital Media and Child Development, Cold Spring Harbor, NY. (Remote presentation)

Alper, M. (2020, June). *Children on the autism spectrum and media: What should children's media producers know in the age of COVID-19?* Prix Jeunesse International 2020, Munich, Germany. (Remote presentation)

Alper, M. (2020, March). *Disability, voice, and the social implications of communication technologies*. University of Delaware Grand Challenges Program, Designing Inclusive Futures Project. University of Delaware, Newark, DE.

Alper, M. (2020, February). *Promoting equity in digital learning through inclusive sensory ethnography*. Connected Learning Lab, UC Irvine, Irvine, CA. (Remote presentation)

Alper, M. (2019, October). *Digital media, disability, and youth: Opportunities for learning, voice, and sociality*. Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY.

Alper, M. (2019, May). *Disability, voice, and the social implications of communication technology*. LEAD20@MIT: Leadership in the Digital Age. Ruderman Family Foundation and MIT Sloan School of Management, Cambridge, MA.

Alper, M. (2019, February). *Disability and the social implications of communication technology*. Learning Sciences Speaker Series, Center for Teaching & Learning. Boston University, Boston, MA.

Alper, M. (2018, November). *Disability and the social implications of communication technology*. Doctoral Colloquium in Learning and Development, Graduate School of Education. Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

Alper, M. (2018, November). *Disability tech*. Architectural Access Workshop Series, Department of Architecture. MIT, Cambridge, MA.

Alper, M. (2018, August). *The cultural politics of "sensory-friendly" mediated spaces*. Communicating Universal Design, Department of Design Sciences, Faculty of Engineering. Lund University, Lund, Sweden.

Alper, M. (2018, April). *Reconsidering connection and conversation through disability and communication technology*. Disrupting Distance: Evolving Connections and Disconnects in the Digital Age Symposium. Bard Graduate Center, New York, NY.

Alper, M. *Giving voice: Mobile communication, disability, and inequality* (Invited book talks after publication). University of Michigan, Department of Communication Studies, Communication and Media Speaker Series, Ann Arbor, MI (2017, November).

University of Southern California, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, Annenberg Research Seminar, Los Angeles, CA (2017, August).

UC San Diego, UCSD Center for Humanities, Transdisciplinary Disability Studies Reading Group, San Diego, CA (2017, May).

Harvard University, Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society (with Elizabeth Ellcessor), Cambridge, MA (2017, May).

Institute for Human Centered Design, Boston, MA (2017, May).

University of Maryland, Human-Computer Interaction Lab, College Park, MD (2017, April).

Data & Society Research Institute, New York, NY (2017, April).

University of North Carolina, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Mary Junck Research Colloquium Series, Chapel Hill, NC (2017, January).

Alper, M. (2017, May). *Growing up autistic in the digital age: Early fieldwork and findings*. Access for All: Designing Experiences for People with Autism Symposium. New York Transit Museum, Brooklyn, NY.

Alper, M. (2017, April). *Augmenting communication for non-speaking youth with new media and popular culture*. Tech Kids Unlimited, NYU Tandon School of Engineering, Brooklyn, NY.

Alper, M. (2016, May). *Reconsidering conversation: Mobile media as communication augmentations and alternatives*. Department of Communication, University of Washington, Seattle, WA.

Alper, M. (2016, January). *Networked immobility*. Faculty Ideas Session. Berkman Center for Internet and Society, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

Alper, M. (2015, October). *New directions in supporting digital youth with disabilities*. Center on Media and Child Health, Children's Hospital Boston, Boston, MA.

Alper, M. (2015, June). *Playing with transmedia and gender in children's storytelling*. St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences, Vienna, Austria.

Alper, M. (2015, January). *Making a difference. One app at a time?: Disability, distinction, and domestic access*. Microsoft Research New England, Social Media Collective, Cambridge, MA.

Alper, M. (2014, October). *Augmenting communication for non-speaking youth with new media and popular culture*. Department of Informatics, UC Irvine, Irvine, CA.

Alper, M. (2014, October). *Giving "screen time" a time-out: Rethinking media use among youth with disabilities*. Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders, Santa Ana, CA.

Alper, M. (2014, May). *"I wish he loves games": The media practices of autistic youth with complex communication needs*. Robotics and Autonomous Systems Center Interaction Lab, Viterbi School of Engineering, USC, Los Angeles, CA.

Alper, M. (2014, March). *Digital media and early learning: "Greatest hits" 2014*. UCLA Early Care and Education Center, Los Angeles, CA.

Alper, M. (2013, October). *Youth with disabilities and their digital media use*. New America Foundation, Washington, DC.

Alper, M. (2012, October). *From Minnie Mouse to Minecraft: Children's transmedia storytelling and play*. Advertising Research Foundation Youth Forum, Burbank, CA.

Invited Panels (Moderator)

Alper, M. (2024, February 6). Nurturing the neurodivergent: Unique considerations for youth screen use. #AskTheExperts Webinar, Children and Screens Institute of Digital Media and Child Development. (Remote presentation)

Invited Panels (Speaker)

Alper, M. (2020, October). *Every body: A conversation with Sara Hendren & Elizabeth Guffey* (respondent; with Matthew Battles, moderator). Making (It) Work Series, metaLAB and Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society. Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.

Alper, M. (2017, May). *Conversation with Heben Nigatu, BuzzFeed's Another Round podcast* (panelist; with Jonathan Sun, moderator; Kishonna Gray, co-panelist). MIT Online Humor Conversation Series, Cambridge, MA.

Alper, M. (2016, October). *The turn to "tween": An age category and its cultural consequences* (panelist; with Marah Gubar, moderator; Tyler Bickford, co-panelist). MIT Communications Forum, Cambridge, MA.

Workshop Organizer

2017 Shared Realities: Disability, Technology, and Inclusion (sponsored by Microsoft Research, co-organized with Dylan Mulvin, Microsoft Research)

Sponsored Workshops and Institutes

2019 Invited Participant (with full funding), Workshop on Disability, Bias, and AI, Microsoft Research and the AI Now Institute, New York, NY.

2018 Invited Participant (with full funding), Communicating Universal Design, Department of Design Sciences, Faculty of Engineering, Lund University, Lund, Sweden.

2018 Invited Participant (with full funding), Developmental Science in the Digital Age, Society for Research in Child Development and Jacobs Foundation, Irvine, CA.

2018 Invited Participant, Making Sense of Algorithmic Systems, STS Program, Tufts University, Medford, MA.

2018 Invited Participant (with partial funding), Social Science Foo Camp, Facebook Headquarters, Menlo Park, CA.

2016 Participant, Jacobs Foundation-sponsored Pre-Conference Workshop, Society for Research in Child Development Special Topic Meeting: Technology and Media in Child Development, UC Irvine, Irvine, CA.

2016 Participant, Early Career Mentoring Program, Society for Research in Child Development Special Topic Meeting: Technology and Media in Child Development, UC Irvine, Irvine, CA.

2016 Invited Participant (with full funding), NSF Workshop on Youth, Learning, and Data Science, UC Berkeley, Berkeley, CA.

2015 Participant (with full funding), NSF-sponsored Doctoral Colloquium, iConference, Irvine, CA.

2014 Participant (competitive), Oxford Internet Institute, Summer Doctoral Program, Oxford, UK.

Conference Presentations and Panel Discussions

Alper, M. (2025, June). Disability and the ethical disruption of communication technologies. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Theme Session, Denver, CO. (Remote presentation)

Alper, M., Rodgers, R., Rauchberg, J., Simpson, E., & Harrison, K. (2025, June). “actually an ED and not just a quirky aspect of autism”: TikTok as forum and mediator of autistic food issues and eating disorders. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Health Communication Division, Denver, CO.

Alper, M. (2024, March). *“Absolutely no way is he going to school to watch Paw Patrol”: Autistic children’s learning with media and technology*. Society for Cinema and Media Studies Annual Conference, Boston, MA.

Alper, M., Rauchberg, J., Simpson, E., Guberman, J., & Feinberg, S. (2023, November). *TikTok as algorithmically mediated biographical illumination: Self-discovery and autism diagnosis on #autisktok*. National Communication Association Annual Conference, Human Communication and Technology Division, National Harbor, MD.

Rauchberg, J., Alper, M., Simpson, E., Guberman, J., & Feinberg, S. (2023, October). *“Here to have fun and fight ableism”: #Autisktok user bios as neuroqueer microactivist platform affordances*. Annual Conference of the Association of Internet Researchers, Philadelphia, PA.

Alper, M. (2023, May). *I get to earn screens, which is terrible”: Parental mediation and the family context of autistic children’s media use*. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Children, Adolescents and Media Division, Toronto, Canada. (Remote presentation) **(Top Faculty Paper Award; Children, Adolescents and Media Division)**

Alper, M. (2023, May). *Beyond “mechanical boys”: Theorizing the affective uses of technology through autistic youth*. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Philosophy, Theory and Critique Division, Toronto, Canada. (Remote presentation)

Alper, M. (2023, May). *“They have mythical characters that have mythical abilities like myself”: An ethnographic study of media and identity development in autistic youth*. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Popular Media & Culture Division, Toronto, Canada. (Remote presentation)

Alper, M., Rauchberg, J., Simpson, E., Guberman, J., & Feinberg, S. (2023, May). *“I’m my own target audience”: Platform affordances and neurodivergent young people’s cultural production on #Autisktok*. TikTok and Children Symposium, TikTok Cultures Research Network and the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the Digital Child. (Remote presentation)

Alper, M., Manganello, J., & Colvin, K. (2022, November). *Parental mediation of media use among children with disabilities and their siblings during the COVID-19 pandemic*. American Public Health Association Annual Meeting, Boston, MA. (Oral presentation)

Alper, M. (2022, May). *“can we be friends? on social media”: A qualitative study of autistic children’s friendships in the digital age*. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Children, Adolescents and Media Division, Paris, France. (Remote presentation)

Alper, M., Jennings, N., & Caplovitz, A. (2021, May). *Children living with chronic illness, disability, and the media during the coronavirus crisis*. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Children, Adolescents and Media Division. (Remote presentation)

Alper, M., Mello, S., & Allen, A. A. (2021, May). *Doctors' orders: Examining pediatric media guidance topics and correlates in the context of autistic children*. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Children, Adolescents and Media Division. (Remote presentation)

Mankoff, J., Alper, A., McDonnell, E., Mack, K., Potluri, V., & Kasnitz, D. (2021, April). *Human computer interaction folk have found disability studies: Playing together well!* Panel discussion at the Society for Disability Studies Conference (SDS@OSU). (Remote presentation)

Alper, M. (2019, May). *The cultural politics of "sensory-friendly" mediated spaces*. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Activism, Communication and Social Justice Interest Group, Washington, DC.

Alper, M. (2019, May). *Portables, luggables, and transportables: Historicizing the imagined affordances of mobile computing*. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Mobile Communication Interest Group, Washington, DC.

Alper, M., Mello, S., & Allen, A. (2019, May). *Physician mediation theory and pediatric media guidance in the digital age: A survey of autism medical and clinical professionals*. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Health Communication Division, Washington, DC.

Allen, A., Alper, M., Shane, H., & Haynes, C. (2018, November). *Attitudes & use of screen media in families of children with autism: A survey*. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Annual Convention, Boston, MA.

Alper, M., Paulsen, K., Hjorth, L., Parisi, D., & Archer, J. (2018, October). *On haptics, touch, and the internet*. Roundtable panel at the Annual Conference of the Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR), Montreal, QC.

Alper, M. (2018, August). *Disability and digital technology*. Special session on "Digital Innovations for Change: Public Sociology in the 21st Century." American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA.

Alper, M. (2018, May). *Future talk: Lay theories of technological and other futurities*. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Children, Adolescents and Media Division, Prague, Czech Republic.

Allen, A., Alper, M., Shane, H., & Haynes, C. (2017, November). *Interprofessional development of a survey exploring mobile technology use among families of children with autism*. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Annual Convention, Los Angeles, CA.

Patel, R., & Alper, M. (2017, November). *Giving voice to social communication outcomes in an increasingly diverse & digital age*. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Annual Convention, Los Angeles, CA.

Alper, M. (2017, August). *Disability: Making "sense" of computing through sensory processing disorder and autism*. Panel on "Making Sense of Computing: Methods, Uses, and Histories." Annual Meeting of the Society for Social Studies of Science, Boston, MA.

Alper, M. (2017, May). *Hearing synthetic speech as human: Disability, technology, and the politics of listening to computerized voice*. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Philosophy, Theory and Critique Division, San Diego, CA. **(Top Faculty Paper Award; Philosophy, Theory and Critique Division)**

Alper, M. (2017, May). *Making a case for iPad cases: Theorizing mobile accessories and materiality*. International Communication Association Annual Association, Mobile Communication Interest Group, San Diego, CA. **(Top 8 Paper Award; Mobile Communication Interest Group)**

Alper, M. (2017, May). *Keeping voices attached to people: Disability, demagogues, and design in media*. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Pre-Conference on Media Justice: Race, Borders, Disability, Data, San Diego, CA.

Alper, M. (2016, November). *Bringing in disability to bring back class: Understanding media and technology for contemporary times and people*. Plenary on Media and Class in the 21st Century. Media & Class in the 21st Century Pre-Conference, National Communication Association Annual Conference, Philadelphia, PA.

Alper, M. (2016, October). *The communicative value of recreational media use among children with complex communication needs*. Society for Research in Child Development, Special Topic Meeting: Technology and Media in Children's Development, Irvine, CA.

Katz, V., Alper, M., & Clark, L. S. (2016, October). *Researching children, intersectionality, and diversity in the digital age*. Society for Research in Child Development, Special Topic Meeting: Technology and Media in Children's Development, Irvine, CA.

Alper, M. (2016, October). *Disability, digital media, and the “home technology divide.”* Digital Media and Learning Conference, Irvine, CA.

Goggin, G., & Alper, M. (2016, July). *Disability, children, and new challenges to digital policy and human rights*. International Association for Media and Communication Research Pre-Conference, Children's and Young People's Rights in the Digital Age. London School of Economics, London, UK.

Alper, M., & Goggin, G. (2016, June). *Children with disabilities: Rights, digital tech, freedoms*. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Children, Adolescents and Media Division, Fukuoka, Japan.

Alper, M. (2015, June). *Networked im/mobility: Infrastructural barriers to school district deployment of iPads as assistive technologies*. Digital Media and Learning Conference, Los Angeles, CA.

Alper, M. (2015, May). *The trouble with “screen time”: Disability and the social construction of children’s mediated bodies*. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Popular Communication Division, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Alper, M. (2015, May). “*There’s many ways that I know that he can read*”: Towards an asset model of childhood disability and children’s media use. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Children, Adolescents and Media Division, San Juan, Puerto Rico. **(Top 3 Poster Award; Children, Adolescents and Media Division)**

Alper, M. (2015, May). *Speak, spell, touch, tell: A history of mobile talking machines*. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Communication History Division, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Alper, M. (2014, May). *Reconsidering theories of ICT adoption: The case of tablet-based augmentative and alternative communication devices*. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Theme Session, Seattle, WA.

Alper, M. (2014, May). *Augmentative, alternative, and assistive: Reimagining mobile communication and disability*. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Mobile Communication Pre-Conference, Seattle, WA.

Alper, M. (2013, October). “*Can Our Kids Hack It With Computers?*”: Making hacking “family-friendly,” 1983-1987. Society for the History of Technology Conference, Portland, ME.

Alper, M., & Jennings, N. (2013, June). *Young children’s positive and negative parasocial relationships with media characters*. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Children, Adolescents and Media Division, London, UK.

Holler, A., Götz, M., & Alper, M. (2013, June). *Children’s preferences for TV show hosts: An international perspective on learning from television*. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Children, Adolescents and Media Division, London, UK.

Alper, M. (2013, May). *War on Instagram: Framing mobile photography apps in embedded photojournalism*. MIT Media in Transition Conference, Cambridge, MA.

Alper, M. (2013, March). *Mixed-ability maker culture*. Digital Media and Learning Conference, Chicago, IL.

Alper, M. (2012, March). *Promoting emerging new media literacies among young children with blindness and visual impairments*. Digital Media and Learning Conference, San Francisco, CA.

Alper, M. (2011, May). *Representations of non-American “foreigners” in American children’s television*. International Communication Association Annual Conference, Children, Adolescents and Media Division, Boston, MA. **(Top Student Paper Award; Children, Adolescents and Media Division)**

Alper, M. (2011, March). “*There’s a nap for that!*”: Parents’ YouTube videos of babies and toddlers using iPhones, iPads, and iPod Touch devices. Digital Media and Learning Conference, Long Beach, CA.

Grants

Contract Work (Federal Grants)

2020-2025 U.S. Department of Education, Ready to Learn Grant, “Learn Together: Connecting Children’s Media and Learning Environments to Build Key Skills for Success,” Grantee: Corporation for

	Public Broadcasting (CPB) with Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) (Total Cost: \$105,109,615; Role: Universal Design for Learning Consultant, \$10,000 dedicated)
2015-2020	U.S. Department of Education, Ready to Learn Grant, "Content, Community, and Collaboration: Advancing Children's Learning Through Personalized Media Experiences"; Grantee: Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) with Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) (Total Cost: \$99,111,409; Role: Universal Design for Learning Consultant, \$15,000 dedicated)
2015-2020	U.S. Department of Education, Ready to Learn Grant, "Superhero School: Harnessing the Power of Science, Literacy, and Media"; Grantee: Twin Cities Public Television (Total Cost: \$36,765,832; Role: Project Consultant, \$10,000 dedicated)

External (Industry and Federal)

2025-2029	Australian Research Council, "Disability and Digital Citizenship" (AUD \$2,227,221/USD \$1,396,668; Lead: Western Sydney University; Role: International Partner Investigator, Non-Salaried)
2025-2026	Reality Labs Research, "XR for Youth Ethics Consortium" (\$114,000, Unrestricted Gift; Role: PI) (Project: XR Form Factor, AI, and Neurodivergent Children)
2023-2025	Reality Labs Research, "XR for Children Ethics Consortium" (\$80,000, Unrestricted Gift; Role: PI) (Project: Exploring the Ethics of XR for Neurodivergent Children)
2023-2024	Tufts Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) NIH Clinical and Translational Science Award (UM1TR004398) Small Grants to Advance Translational Science (S-GATS) Program, "Collaborating with the Autism Community to Develop Novel AAC/SGD Access Methods for Individuals with Little or No Functional Speech" (\$50,000; Role: Co-I; PI: L. Chukoskie)

Internal

2023-2024	TIER 1 Grant, Northeastern University, "Social Media Use and Eating Disorder Risk at the Intersections of Gender and Autism" (Direct Costs, \$50,000; Role: Co-PI with R. Rogers)
2018-2019	Dean's Research Fellow Award, College of Arts, Media, and Design (Direct Costs: \$3,750; Role: PI)
2018-2019	Health Equity Pilot Award, Institute for Health Equity and Social Justice Research, Northeastern University (Direct Costs: \$5,000; Role: PI)
2017-2018	Latifa Al Khalifa Grant, College of Arts, Media and Design, Northeastern University, "Growing Up Autistic in the Digital Age" (Direct Costs: \$10,000; Role: PI)
2013	Diploma in Innovation Grant, University of Southern California (Direct Costs: \$5,000; Role: PI)

Other Academic Research Positions

2010-2013	University of Southern California , Annenberg Innovation Lab Research Assistant (Prof. Henry Jenkins)
2011-2012	University of Southern California , Annenberg Research Seminar Graduate Assistant (Prof. Larry Gross and Prof. Peter Monge)
2010	University of Southern California , Project New Media Literacies Research Assistant (Prof. Henry Jenkins)
2003-2005	Northwestern University , Children's Digital Media Center Lab Assistant Manager & Research Assistant (Dean Barbara O'Keefe) NSF Award #0125592, "Collaborative Research/CRI: Children's Digital Media Centers"
2002	Northwestern University , Spatial Intelligence and Learning Center Research Assistant (Prof. David Uttal)

Industry Employment

2015-	Educational Media & Technology Consultant and Curriculum Designer Projects: PBS KIDS (with WGBH and Twin Cities Public Television) (<i>Let's Go Luna</i> , 2015; <i>Ready Jet Go</i> , 2017; <i>Hero Elementary</i> , 2015-2019; <i>Molly of Denali</i> , 2018-2022; <i>Tiny Time Travel</i> , 2023-2024); Apple TV+ (<i>Yo Gabba GabbaLand!</i> , 2022-2023)
2008-2009	Los Angeles Family School , Los Angeles, CA Substitute Preschool Teacher
2008-2010	Nickelodeon , Los Angeles, CA Research Manager, Nick Jr. Preschool Television Projects: <i>Ni Hao, Kai-lan</i> , <i>The Fresh Beat Band</i>
2005-2008	Disney Channel , Burbank, CA Programming Scheduling Coordinator, Programming Department
2004	Nickelodeon , New York, NY Intern, Noggin/The-N, Brand Creative Department
2003	Sesame Workshop , New York, NY Intern, <i>Sesame Street</i> , Domestic Research and Education Department

Podcast and Radio Interviews

Screen Deep (Children & Screens: Institute for Digital Media and Child Development). [Neurodivergent children and media use](#). April 2, 2025. (Podcast)

Connected & Courageous (Spark & Stitch Institute). [On showing up for kids across the spectrums with Dr. Meryl Alper](#). December 5, 2024. (Podcast)

Peoples & Things (New Books Network). [Kids Across the Spectrums: Growing Up Autistic in the Digital Age: A discussion with Meryl Alper](#). October 21, 2024. (Podcast)

The Current (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation/CBC Radio). [Why adults love the children's show Bluey](#). April 17, 2024. (Radio)

Cultural Studies (Toby Miller). [Meryl Alper on young people, play, media effects, disability, Sesame Street, Nickelodeon, and autism](#). March 27, 2024. (Podcast)

How Do You Like It So Far? (Henry Jenkins & Colin Maclay). [Episode 114: Growing up autistic in the digital age with Meryl Alper](#). March 15, 2024. (Podcast)

Tilt Parenting (Debbie Reber). [Dr. Meryl Alper on screens and growing up autistic in the digital age](#). January 9, 2024. (Podcast)

Imagine Otherwise (Ideas on Fire). [Meryl Alper on autistic kids' digital media](#). September 20, 2023. (Podcast)

Welcomed by Design (University of Pittsburgh). [Access as an ideal](#). April 24, 2023. (Podcast)

The Futures Archive (Design Observer). [The microphone](#). August 4, 2022. (Podcast)

Science Whys (Nobel Conference). [Kids across the spectrums](#). July 29, 2022. (Podcast)

The Good Robot (University of Cambridge). [Meryl Alper on 'captions,' assistive technologies, and the real meaning of accessible technology](#). April 5, 2022. (Podcast)

One World One Network? (International Communication Association). [“Oneness” in networks of children and families?](#) December 24, 2021. (Podcast)

Critical Technology (University of Toronto). [Kids across the spectrums](#). December 6, 2021. (Podcast)

Spark (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation/CBC Radio). [Disability design](#). November 8, 2019. (Radio)

Spark (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation/CBC Radio). [Can technology really give a voice to the voiceless?](#) March 12, 2017. (Radio)

Media and Press Coverage

Education Week. [Here's when most Americans think cellphones should be banned](#). October 16, 2024.

TheWrap. [The tao of 'Bluey': The magic of the show that captivates both kids and parents](#). June 7, 2024.

Children and Screens. [Parenting tip sheets: Neurodivergent youth and digital media](#). April 26, 2024.

Children and Screens. [After the smartphone: What now?](#) January 23, 2024.

Children and Screens. [Smartphones: Preparing for healthy use](#). January 19, 2024.

Children and Screens. [Smartphones: Assessing readiness](#). January 16, 2024.

Psychology Today. [Is technology hurting the neurodiverse?](#) December 20, 2023.

Yahoo! Life. [This school banned cellphones 4 years ago. Here's how it's going — and why others are now following suit.](#) December 14, 2023.

Parents Magazine. [The best smartwatches for kids, tested by real kids and their watchful parents](#). November 25, 2023.

Women's Health Magazine. [How a community of TikTokers is debunking disability, one viral video at a time](#). July 26, 2022.

WIRED. [I gave my child a smartphone and it's been the best thing for her](#). February 20, 2022.

EdTech Magazine. [How can universities help disabled students with remote learning?](#) September 28, 2020.

The New York Times. [Disabled do-it-yourselfers lead way to technology gains](#). July 14, 2020.

La Diaria (Uruguay). [Meryl Alper: "Hay que involucrar a la persona con discapacidad en la creación del producto que es para su beneficio."](#) August 22, 2019.

VICE Magazine. [Facing tomorrow's high-tech school surveillance](#). October 29, 2018.

TechRepublic. [Microsoft's new AI app to assist the blind could be a 'game changer' in accessibility](#). July 12, 2017.

Mental Floss. [7 academic studies of Instagram](#). July 7, 2017.

TechRepublic. [Despite its promise, modern technology often fails to help disabled users](#). May 25, 2017.

Engadget. [The enduring myth of the hacker boy-band](#). May 5, 2017.

Digg. [Can Amazon's Alexa be your friend?](#) March 31, 2017.

PRI's The World. [Barbie typewriter toys had a secret ability to encrypt messages — but they didn't think girls would care](#). January 17, 2017.

The Guardian. [Sesame Street's Count von Count and the lack of foreign voices on children's TV](#). January 15, 2017.

Tech Insider. [If you have over 25 photos on Instagram, you're no longer cool](#). May 26, 2016.

School Library Journal. [Transmedia and education: How transmedia is changing the way we learn](#). June 11, 2014.

The Verge. [You should be reading tween hacker magazines from the 1980s](#). June 5, 2014.

Gizmodo. [How teen hackers were portrayed in 1980s family magazines](#). June 5, 2014.

The Atlantic. [In defense of Instagramming conflict in Crimea](#). March 7, 2014.

ACM Computers in Entertainment. [Playing with transmedia: An interview with Becky Herr-Stephenson and Meryl Alper](#). May 21, 2013.

WIRED. [Babies and iPads: A new type of discussion](#). October 20, 2011.

TEACHING

Courses (Undergraduate unless noted)

Youth and Communication Technology (19 students); Northeastern: F15, S16 (two sections), F16, F17, S18, F18 (two sections), S20, F20 (two sections), S21 (two sections: undergraduate and undergraduate/graduate), S22 (undergraduate/graduate), F22 (undergraduate/graduate), S23, F24 (two sections), S25

Mobile Communication (19 students); Northeastern: F16 (new course preparation), F17, S18, S19, F19, S22, F22, S23, S25

Communication, Technology, and Society (19 students); Northeastern: F19 (new course preparation), S20
Cultures of New Media (25 students); USC: S15

Advising and Mentorship

Junior Faculty Mentorship

2024- Smit Desai
2021-2024 Moira Weigel

Doctoral Student Advising, Northeastern CAMD Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Design and Media

2024- Veronica Rubinsztain (Co-Advisor with Michael Ann DeVito)

2023- Eunju Pak (Co-Advisor with Laura Forlano)

Doctoral Dissertation Committee Member

2024- Yueyang Yao (University of Illinois-Chicago, Ph.D. in Communication)

2022- Marty Heath (University of Illinois-Chicago, Ph.D. in Communication)

2020-2024 Katherine Prendella (Rutgers University, Ph.D. in Communication)

Doctoral Qualifying Exam Committee Member

2024 Yueyang Yao (University of Illinois-Chicago, Ph.D. in Communication)

2022 Marty Heath (University of Illinois-Chicago, Ph.D. in Communication)

Masters' Thesis Committee Member

2020 Houjiang Liu (Northeastern University, MFA in Experience Design; Reader)

Other Graduate Program Review and Examination

2022 Nomy Bitman (Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Department of Communication and Journalism, Doctor of Philosophy; Doctoral Thesis Examiner)

2021 Meg Szydlik (Northeastern University, Graduate Certificate in Digital Humanities; Project Reviewer)

2020 Hersinta (Curtin University, Department of Internet Studies, Doctor of Philosophy; Doctoral Thesis Examiner)

Advisor, Graduate Practicum Research

2017 Adesewa Adelekun (Harvard School of Public Health, Master of Public Health)

Advisor, Undergraduate Research Assistant

2018-2020 Erika Christiansen (Northeastern University, Department of Communication Studies)

2017-2018 Madison Irons (Northeastern University, Department of Communication Studies)

Advisor, CAMD Honors in the Discipline

2025 Meagan Ellis (Northeastern University, Department of Art + Design)

Advisor, Independent Study

2024 Tal Benami (Northeastern University, Department of Communication Studies)

Advisor, Undergraduate Directed Research

2020 Erika Christiansen (Northeastern University, Department of Communication Studies)

2016 Danielle Mokarzel (Northeastern University, Department of Communication Studies)

Advisor, Student Intern

2024- Ziyu (Linda) Lin (Northeastern University, Undergraduate Health Equity Intern, Institute for Health Equity and Social Justice Research)

2024- Hannah Jackson (Northeastern University, Undergraduate Health Equity Intern, Institute for Health Equity and Social Justice Research)

2023-2024 Amira Toivonen (Northeastern University, Undergraduate Health Equity Intern, Institute for Health Equity and Social Justice Research)

2023-2024 Marina Ferreira (Northeastern University, Undergraduate Health Equity Intern, Institute for Health Equity and Social Justice Research)

2022 Sarah Feinberg (Newton High School South, Summer Research Intern)

External Guest Lectures

(2022, September). *Digital Inequalities and Autistic Youth*. Concordia University, Department of Communication Studies (Youth and Media; Undergraduate), Remote.

(2022, April). *Disability and Communication Technology*. USC, Department of Communication (Communication & Technology; Undergraduate), Remote.

(2021, April). *Disability and Communication Technology*. USC, Department of Communication (Communication & Technology; Undergraduate), Remote.

(2020, September). *Disability and Communication Technology*. USC, Department of Communication (Communication & Technology; Undergraduate), Remote.

(2018, November). *Giving Voice*. University of Maryland, College of Information Studies (Technology, Culture & Society; Undergraduate).

(2018, February). *Giving Voice*. University of Virginia, Department of Media Studies (Media Bodies; Undergraduate).

(2018, January). *Giving Voice*. USC, Department of Communication (Humanistic and Social Scientific Approaches to Human Communication; Graduate).

(2017, October). *Giving Voice*. Cornell University, Department of Communication (New Media & Society Graduate Reading Group).

(2017, April). *Giving Voice*. NYU, Department of Anthropology. (Constructing North America; Graduate).

(2016, October). *Media, Technology, and Disability*. MIT, Department of Comparative Media Studies. (Introduction to Media Studies; Undergraduate).

(2016, March). *Mobile*. Harvard University, Graduate School of Education. (Learning, Teaching, and Technology; Graduate).

(2015, September). *Empowerment and Inequality*. MIT Media Lab. (Unpacking Impact: Reflecting as We Make; Graduate).

SERVICE

Service to the Institution

University Service

2024- Member (CAMD Representative), University Standing Appeals Committee on Tenure

2023- Member, Northeastern University Institutional Review Board (IRB)

2020- Member, University Awards Nomination Committee, Rhodes, Marshall, and Mitchell Scholarships, Northeastern University

2022-2023 Member (External), Chair Search Committee, Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, Bouvé College of Health Sciences, Northeastern University

2016, 2022 Faculty Marshal, Commencement, Northeastern University

College Service

Committees and Leadership

2022-2023 Member, CAMD Excellence Awards Committee

2021-2023 Member, CAMD Academic Affairs Committee

2022 Member, CAMD Tenure on Entry Review Committee

2017-2018 Co-Organizer, CAMD Food for Thought Faculty Lecture Series

Other Service

2025 Application Reviewer, CAMD Center for Transformative Media Mini-Grants

2023- Application Reviewer, CAMD Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Design and Media Program

2017, 2025 Faculty Marshal/Attendee, CAMD Commencement

2016 CAMD Dean's Portfolio Reviewer, Northeastern Undergraduate Admissions

Department Service

Committees and Leadership

2025	Member, Tenure Promotion Committee
2024	Member, Faculty Midcourse Committee
2022-2023	Member, Partial/Secondary Appointment Search Committee
2022, 2023	Chair, Merit Review Committee
2022	Chair, Partial/Secondary Appointment Search Committee
2016-2019, 2020-2022	Member, Curriculum Committee
2020-2021	Member, Non-Tenure Track Promotion Committee
2019-2020	Member, Search Committee (Tenured/Tenure-Track Professor)
2018-2019	Chair, Search Committee (Tenured/Tenure-Track Professor)
2017-2018	Member, Non-Tenure Track Promotion Committee
2016	Member, Merit Review Committee

Other Service

Attendee, Senior Cording Ceremony & Luncheon (2016, 2018, 2022)
Attendee, Honors Banquet (2016, 2019, 2022, 2025)
Host, Dinner with the Faculty (2015-2020)

Presentations at Northeastern Events, Courses, and Symposia

(2025, February). *Husky How-To: Help your kids learn from media*. Talk and panel moderator with student presenters from COMM 4605 Youth and Communication Technology, Office of Alumni Relations.

(2025, February). *Adventures in dissertating*. Talk, CAMD Ph.D. Program in Interdisciplinary Design and Media, INAM 7901: Dissertation Writing Seminar.

(2024, November). *TikTok as forum and mediator of autistic food issues and eating disorders*. Talk, Faculty Works-in-Progress Series, Northeastern Institute for Health Equity and Social Justice Research.

(2024, October). *TikTok as forum and mediator of autistic food issues and eating disorders*. Talk, CAMD Food for Thought Faculty Lecture Series.

(2024, May). *Topics in disabled youth, ethics, and values in communication technologies*. Guest lecture, Department of Philosophy and Religion, PHIL 1145: Technology and Human Values.

(2024, April). *Creativity and communication for health impact*. Panelist, CAMD Partner Summit.

(2024, March). *Critical media access studies: Examining the benefits and limits of accessibility in mediated spaces for neurodivergent youth*. Talk, CAMD Center for Design Conversation Series, Disability and Design Futures: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Design for Access.

(2024, February). *Topics in disabled youth, ethics, and values in communication technologies*. Guest lecture, Department of Philosophy and Religion, PHIL 1145: Technology and Human Values (Honors Section).

(2024, February). *Autistic youth, mental health, and the sociotechnical shaping of sociality*. Talk, College of Engineering, ALLIED (Allies for Leading, Learning, Inclusion and Education of Disabilities) Project.

(2023, October). *Kids across the spectrums*. Guest lecture, Honors Program, HONR 1310: Invisibility, Disability, and Family Life.

(2023, February). *Ethics and innovation in public and participant engagement*. Talk, Runway to Broader Impacts Peer Learning Group.

(2022, March). *Autism, youth, and media in society*. Guest lecture, Department of Sociology, SOCL 2225: Sociology of Disability.

(2021, November). *Disability and communication technology*. Guest lecture, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, EECE 2750: Enabling Engineering.

(2020, September). *Disability and communication technology*. Guest lecture, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, EECE 2750: Enabling Engineering.

(2020, July). *Designing accessible online courses*. Talk, CAMD Faculty Online Teaching Chat (Remote presentation).

(2019, October). *Assistive technologies for speech and communication*. Guest lecture, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, EECE 2750: Enabling Engineering.

(2019, April). *The cultural politics of “sensory-friendly” mediated spaces*. Talk, Design for Human Experience: Automation and the Senses, 2018-2019 CAMD Dean’s Research Fellows Presentation.

(2019, April). *Adaptive design: Nurturing achievement for individuals, design teams, and wider society with Alex Truesdell*. Discussant, CAMD Dean’s Distinguished Lecture Series.

(2019, February). *Giving voice*. Guest lecture, Department of Sociology, SOCL 2225: Sociology of Disability.

(2019, February). *The cultural politics of “sensory-friendly” mediated spaces*. Talk, Faculty Works-in-Progress Colloquium Series, College of Social Sciences and Humanities and the Northeastern Humanities Center.

(2018, November). *Advancing digital and health equity for autistic children*. Talk, Department of Health Sciences and the Institute for Health Equity and Social Justice Research, Works in Progress Series.

(2018, October). *Disability*. Talk, Design for Human Experience: Automation and the Senses, 2018-2019 CAMD Dean’s Research Fellows Project Launch.

(2018, February). *Giving voice*. Talk, Northeastern University Undergraduate Speech & Hearing Club.

(2017, November). *Disability awareness*. Faculty panel representative, Meeting of Northeastern University Students Against Institutional Discrimination.

(2017, October). *Assistive technologies for speech and communication*. Guest lecture, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, EECE 2750: Enabling Engineering.

(2017, June). *Interpersonal relationships and communication*. Panelist, CHATTER Symposium (Collaboration Highlighting Autism Through Technology for Emotion & Relationships), Northeastern University.

(2017, April). *Giving voice: Mobile communication, disability, and inequality*. Talk, School of Law, Faculty Colloquia.

(2017, February). *Growing up autistic in the digital age: Early fieldwork and findings*. Talk, Northeastern Center for the Arts Faculty Lunchtime Colloquium.

(2016, April). *Assistive technologies for speech and communication*. Guest lecture, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, EECE 2750: Enabling Engineering.

Northeastern Office of Marketing and Communications

Northeastern Global News. [How should you approach screen time with your child? Northeastern students create parental guides with help from ‘Bluey.’](#) April 16, 2025.

Northeastern Global News. [YouTube star Ms. Rachel is bringing her children’s songs to Netflix. But are they good or bad for teaching children?](#) January 21, 2025.

Northeastern Global News. [April is Autism Acceptance Month. Public awareness helps those on the spectrum, expert says.](#) April 2, 2024.

Northeastern Global News. [Why kids love Peppa Pig and \(some\) parents loathe her. Relatable characters will offend someone, Northeastern experts say.](#) March 7, 2024.

Northeastern Global News. [Have podcasts peaked? If so, what comes next?](#) November 3, 2023.

Northeastern Global News. [Cellphone bans in schools alone won’t curb distraction, says communication technologies expert.](#) August 23, 2023.

Northeastern Global News. [What parents, not just children, can learn from watching Bluey.](#) June 15, 2023.

Northeastern Global News. [‘Digital Red Scare’ or Chinese propaganda tool? As legislators push to ban TikTok, many users wonder what will happen.](#) March 7, 2023.

News @ Northeastern. [Does TikTok pose ‘data espionage’ concerns for the US? The answer is complicated.](#) June 14, 2022.

Experience Magazine. [Sparkles, poo, and crying eyes: This website interprets emoji.](#) February 2, 2022.

News @ Northeastern. [Will the metaverse protect our privacy — or will it exploit us more than ever?](#) December 22, 2021.

News @ Northeastern. [The power of ‘voice,’ and empowering the voiceless.](#) April 17, 2018.

News @ Northeastern. [TTYL, AIM: How we used AOL Instant Messenger, for better or worse.](#) November 16, 2017.

News @ Northeastern. [How new research and Sesame Street are expanding our understanding of autism.](#) March 31, 2017.

News @ Northeastern. Professor examines benefits, social inequalities of voice technologies. February 28, 2017.

Service to the Discipline

Professional Society Leadership

2024- Steering Committee Member; Working Group for Disability, Communication and Media; International Communication Association (ICA) (Invited)
2022-2024 Secretary; Children, Adolescents and Media Division, ICA (Elected)
2020-2023 Member; ICA Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Access (IDEA) Committee (Invited)
2019-2020 Member; ICA Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Access (IDEA) Task Force (Invited)

Journal Editorial Board Member

2025- *Mobile Media & Communication* (2023 JCR Impact Factor: 3.1, Q1)
2022- *International Journal of Communication* (2023 JCR Impact Factor: 1.9, Q2)
2019- *New Media & Society* (2023 JCR Impact Factor: 4.5, Q1)
2019- *Journal of Children and Media* (2023 JCR Impact Factor: 2.1, Q2)

Book Manuscript Reviewer

2022 MIT Press
2020 MIT Press, Polity
2019 Bloomsbury

Book Proposal Reviewer

2024 University of Chicago Press
2023 University of California Press
2020 Columbia University Press, MIT Press, Oxford University Press
2018 MIT Press (two proposals)
2017 MIT Press, University of Minnesota Press, Bloomsbury
2015 Oxford University Press

Fellowship Application Reviewer

2023- Social Science Research Council (SSRC) Just Tech Fellowship

Other Manuscript Reviewer

2021 Social Science Research Council (SSRC) Just Tech Program Report

Grant Proposal Reviewing

Mitacs Accelerate Program (Canada, Federal) (ad hoc), 2024
Royal Society Te Apārangi (New Zealand, Federal) (ad hoc), 2024
Canada Research Coordinating Committee (CRCC) (Canada, Federal) (ad hoc), 2022
National Science Foundation (NSF) (USA, Federal) (ad hoc), 2019, 2021

Journal Manuscript Reviewer

2025 *Health Communication, Information & Culture; Journal of Children and Media*
2024 *Information, Communication & Society; International Journal of Communication; International Journal of Cultural Studies; International Journal of Human-Computer Studies; International Journal of Qualitative Methods; Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders; Journal of Communication; Journal of Children and Media; Journal of Gender Studies; New Media & Society; Social Media + Society; Societies*
2023 *American Psychologist; Social Media + Society*
2022 *Applied Psychology; American Psychologist; Autism & Developmental Language Impairments; Information and Learning Sciences; Health Communication; Journal of Children and Media; Journal of*

Computer-Mediated Communication; Journal of Literary and Cultural Disability Studies; Journal of Pediatrics

2021 *International Journal of Communication; International Journal of Qualitative Methods; Journal of Children and Media; New Media & Society*

2020 *International Journal of Child-Computer Interaction; Journal of Children and Media; Journal of Sociotechnical Critique; New Media & Society; Social Media + Society*

2019 *Health Communication; International Journal of Communication; International Journal of Qualitative Methods; Journal of Children and Media; Media Psychology; New Media & Society; Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research; Television and New Media*

2018 *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience; International Journal of Communication; Journal of Children and Media; Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication; Media Psychology; New Media & Society*

2017 *Journal of Children and Media; New Media & Society*

2016 *International Journal of Child-Computer Interaction; Human-Computer Interaction; International Journal of Communication; Journal of Children and Media; Media Psychology; New Media & Society; Social Media + Society*

2015 *First Monday; International Journal of Communication; Journal of Children and Media; New Media & Society; Television and New Media; Universal Access in the Information Society*

2014 *International Journal of Child-Computer Interaction; International Journal of Communication; New Media & Society*

2013 *International Journal of Child-Computer Interaction; International Journal of Communication; Journal of Children and Media; Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*

2012 *International Journal of Communication; Journal of Children and Media*

2011 *Journal of Children and Media*

Conference Program Committees and Organizational Roles

ACM IDC, “Extended Reality and Children: Risks, Opportunities, and Ethics,” Workshop Co-Organizer (2025)

International Communication Association, “The Second Disability, Communication, and Media Preconference at ICA 2025: Disability Research as Disruptive Research,” Pre-Conference Co-Organizer (2025)

ACM ASSETS Experience Reports Track Committee, Jury Member (2024)

ACM CHI Works-in-Progress Program Committee, Associate Chair (2013)

ACM IDC Workshops Co-Chair (2012, 2013), Publicity Co-Chair (2013)

Conference Panel Organization and Leadership

(2025, August) “Critical Studies of Technology at Home,” Special Session, American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Chicago, IL (Session organizer)

(2018, May) “Future Visions of Children, Media, and Technology,” International Communication Association, Children, Adolescents and Media Division, Prague, Czech Republic. (Panel co-organizer)

(2016, October) “Youth, Neurodivergence, and New Media,” Society for Research in Child Development, Special Topic Meeting: Technology and Media in Children’s Development, Irvine, CA. (Panel chair)

(2015, June) “‘I Open at the Close’: Infrastructure and Ideology at Play in School Tablet and Laptop Rollouts,” Digital Media and Learning Conference, Irvine, CA (Panel organizer)

(2015, May) “Reuse, Revision and Repurposing: Across the Lifespan of Digital Communication Technologies, Infrastructures and Practices,” International Communication Association Conference, Communication History Division, San Juan, Puerto Rico. (Panel co-organizer)

(2014, May) “Reimagining the Good Life with Disability: Communication, New Technology, and Humane Connections,” International Communication Association Conference, Theme Session, Seattle, WA. (Panel organizer)

(2012, March) “Universal Designs for DML: Innovations for Students with Disabilities,” Digital Media and Learning Conference, San Francisco, CA. (Panel organizer)

Conference Mentorship and Committees

2023	Mentor, Mentorship Program; Digital Media and Developing Minds International Scientific Congress; Children and Screens Institute of Digital Media and Child Development
2022	Member, Engaged Scholar Award Committee; ICA Children, Adolescents and Media Division
2021	Member, Top Dissertation Award Committee; ICA Children, Adolescents and Media Division
2017-2019	Mentor, Research Escalator Session; ICA Children, Adolescents and Media Division

Conference Paper Reviewer

2025	ACM UIST (Symposium on User Interface Software and Technology), IAMCR (International Association for Media and Communication Research)
2024	ACM CHI (Computer-Human Interaction), International Communication Association (ICA), HICSS (Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences)
2022	ACM DIS (Designing Interactive Systems), ACM IDC (Interaction Design and Children), ICA
2020	ACM DIS, ICA
2019	ACM CHI, ACM DIS, ACM IDC, ICA
2018	ACM CHI, ICA
2017	ACM CHI, ACM CSCW (Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work), ACM UIST (Symposium on User Interface Software and Technology), ICA
2016	ACM CHI, ICA
2015	iConference, ACM IDC
2014	ACM CHI, ICA
2013	ACM CHI, ICA, ACM IDC
2012	ICA
2011	ICA

Doctoral Consortium Abstract Reviewer

2016	Society for Research in Child Development, Special Topic Meeting: Technology and Media in Children's Development
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Professional Society Memberships

Current: International Communication Association (ICA), American Sociological Association (ASA); Lapsed: Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR), Society for Cinema and Media Studies (SCMS), Society for Social Studies of Science (4S), Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), Society for the History of Technology (SHOT)

External Reviewer for Tenure and Promotion

2 (1 at US R1, 1 at Non-US Public University)

Service to the Community

2024-2025	Advisory Board Member, Connected Learning and Neurodiversity Project, Connected Learning Alliance
2006-2022	Undergraduate Admissions Interviewer, Northwestern University Alumni Admissions Council
2021	Neurodiversity Advisory Board Member, Center for Scholars & Storytellers, UCLA.
2018	Invited Judge, Machine Learning Accessibility Hackathon, Microsoft New England Research and Development, Cambridge, MA
2017	Advisor and Proposal Reviewer, UNICEF Innovation Fund, Augmentative and Alternative Communication Solutions for People with Disabilities
2013-2014	Co-Lead, Special Education Review Team for Media Arts Standards, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, National Coalition for Core Arts Standards