

**[Dys]FUNction Rising:
Neurodiverging Through Memoir Madness,
Ooooooh Yeahhhh, DIG IT!**

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?????????????????????

O_O

I want to be
washed away
in an ocean
of Madness
and ride the tide
to the tune of a
mythological promise.

The theoretical stones
that pave the path
to a dry world
hurt my feet

and I want another way.

Give me planks of wood
cut from a tree of hybridity
and
let
me
surf
the Madness
to a new land.

A promised oasis of unrivalled exploration.

Situate Yourself with Me for a Lil Bit

Before you partake on this journey of discovery, let me situate you in the environment that you're about to wander through. While part of the purpose of this work is to invite you into a neurodivergent mindset that is *unclear* as part of your conditional entry, I have been advised to share the rules of engagement as a way of opening up the reading for an easier entry point.

This paper is a work of living inquiry—exploring neurodivergent memoir through my own lived experience and neurodivergent process, then presenting my finding in a manner that feels natural and accessible to me. It purposely ignores the systematic requirement to translate itself into a traditional scholarly form that makes itself inaccessible to most readers. This means that it may be confusing to some readers. This is intentional. The aesthetic form of this paper constructs an argument around what is natural and what are barriers, asking the question: why must we all translate our knowledge into one acceptable style of presentation and can we please address the issue that our scholarly writing is currently presented purely for one very privileged sector of society? The core statement in this work is a plea to reframe what society (particularly academia) interprets as knowledge and allow alternative, marginalised modes of knowledge to have a seat at the academic table. This represents me taking a step towards closing the translation deficit between disabled and non-disabled knowledge and understanding.

While this work has many moments of confuddle, it works in a choreographed dance to present my methodological stance within neurodivergent and mad epistemologies. With this in mind, I ask you to leave your expectations of what knowledge looks like near the doormat. Everything in this paper is steeped in theory drawn from my own way of being. The paper is on the process and the process is presented as is in the paper.

If you finish reading this work and it doesn't make sense to you—then welcome to the mind of a neurodivergent, high school failure when he reads the majority of scholarly papers.

INTRODUCTION: What *ARE* We Even Doing//Being Here?

This isn't going to be easy for me and it'll be twice as not easy for you.¹

I run through myself in lines of time. Surrounding what I know and what I should know but don't know and what I shouldn't know but somehow do know and what it even means to know. What does it even mean to know? How do we know if the answer that you're conceptualising in your head is right//wrong//left//right?² Mad Studies human-person Phil Smith ("[R]evolving" 371) says that "[w]hat we know depends on who does the knowing" and that those that are disabled or "*Mad*" are considered "*unreliable knowers*" (you cannot rely on me to know//no you can't). I have labels (plain blank) that could make you label me *mad* (filled in, not blank). Labels I once feared ("*Why can't I just be normal mummy?*") but now don't ("*Maybe I'm not the problem, maybe it's everyone's perception of me as the problem that is the real problem*").

Let me put on my mask to tell you who I am and what this is all about.

From a neurodivergent writer who identifies with the concept of Madness and is interested in multiple literary forms, my practice-led research is centred around my discontent with the dominant aesthetic style of neurodivergent memoirs. I write memoir to better explore who I am and to share an alternative viewpoint of the world. My interest in sharing this alternative viewpoint is to provide greater understanding of what it is like to be in a "neurominority" (Walker 11)—that is, to be a neurotype that is oppressed by the dominant, neurotypical norm.

¹ Hello, I am a footnote! A whispered add-on to compliment what I've said. Good job saying that, Beau.

² You // Me // We // I // He // She // They—There are so many voices here, but we must keep up!

Let me quickly explain the concept of neurodivergence through the work of neuroqueer scholar, Dr Nick Walker. Neurodivergence is a frame of defining neurotypes that rejects the pathology paradigm and instead argues for the need of a paradigm shift to the neurodiversity paradigm (Walker). This involves shifting through disability studies and away from the medical model of disability (where a person is seen as having a disability as part of their body/mind) and towards the social model of disability (where it is our social structures that disable the disabled rather than their body/mind). As Walker writes “society isn’t properly set up to enable [the disabled’s] participation, and instead is often set up in a way that creates barriers to their participation” (44). So, the neurodivergent are oppressed by a system that is designed to exclude them (Rosqvist, Chown & Stenning)—meaning my disabling is a cause of the society we live in and my neurodivergence is a divergence from the way society is constructed to enable the neurotypical and thusly restrict the neurodivergent.

As someone with ASD, OCD, ADHD, GAD and MDD³—my mind is a chaotic, unreliable mess of intrusive thoughts and distracting asides. There are sounds and feelings that *pop* out to me and consume my mental capacity. Yet, when I write about my experiences, I often put these parts of myself aside so as to write clearly for the reader. The result being a piece of writing that **tells** the reader about my experiences rather than truly **showing** the reader my experiences (and no amount of descriptive writing can change that).

My research was born out of my desire to bring the reader deeper into my mind/life—chaotic and messy as it is, it still has a charming homely quality to it. Through practice-led research and delving into Mad Studies, I asked myself the question: *How can I find ways to represent my neurodivergent mind in an aesthetic memoir form that allows/invites the reader to more vividly experience my neurodivergence/mad thinking?*

I want to remove the Mask I have crafted to blend into a neurotypical society, take out the Filter that I cling to when I’m struggling through an *episode*, and show you my Heart. I want to put my head//mind//brain//problems//thoughts onto the page in my own way rather than change my head//mind//brain//problems//thinking into a way that tells you my head//mind//brain//problems//thinkspeak without translating it into your head//mind//brain//problems//tumbleweed.

When I write **ME**moir, I want as many people to read it as possible but . . . I have a funny little [opposed to funny big] issue with many published neurodivergent memoirs.⁴ It doesn’t seem fair that the neurodivergent (or if you like—the *Mad*) should be the ones always translating themselves, yet this is all I do—**translate** my thinking into a palatable form on the page so as not to challenge the reader to think like me but rather be told how I think [young man!]. In this sense, I feel like I am betraying my neurodivergent communities by partaking in the cultural practice of sharing my autobiographical/personal narratives (Hillary, “Autist/Biography”) but in a style that conforms to neuronormative western cultural conventions.

Ingram (“Doing Mad Studies”), who is credited with coining the term *Mad Studies*, says that *Mad Studies* emerged

(like a baby from the womb)

from the thinking that the cat*meow*egory of **MAD**ness needed to be transformed and re-evaluated to in-terror-gate the oppression that the *MAD* have been placed under by those labelled psych professionals (Ingram, “Mapping”). To do this, *Mad Studies* was born from the umbrella of Disability Studies and the thinking that to be effective the concept needed to

³ Autism Spectrum Disorder, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Generalised Anxiety Disorder and Major Depressive Disorder.

⁴ A few to see: *Late Bloomer* (Bastow 2021), *I Overcame My Autism and All I Got Was This Lousy Anxiety Disorder: A Memoir* (Kurchak 2020), *Funny, You Don’t Look Autistic* (McCreary 2019), *Thinking in Pictures* (Grandin 1995), *Nobody Nowhere* (Williams 1992) . . . He said a roar, he said a roar, he said a roar.

involve “losing touch with reality” (Ingram, “Genealogy” 94). Coherence (Co! Hear! Us!) is a value often denied to the **mad** by psych professionals so perhaps there is a strength in embracing the INCoHEARence expected of us.

To call yourself **mad** is to recognise your inability to think straight // so *Mad Studies* is a cousin to Queer Studies (Ingram, “Doing Mad Studies”) {????} because I can’t think straight {????}? My thoughts explode all over the place and out of RHYTHM. What does this mean? What is my objective? My own or that of *Mad Studies* [in taking on capitalisation for its existence, am I to assume that *Mad Studies* is in actuality more than a concept but a person or perhaps a being of unimaginable power named Mad Studies (Studies, M. year unknown [not real])]? Well—OBJECTION—the designated objective of *Mad Studies* is that “it needs to have as part of its end goal the shaking up, the disturbing, of all forms of academic knowledge” (Ingram, “Doing Mad Studies” 14) and in pursuit of that *Mad Studies* has to stand as a discipline among a heArd of existing disciplines while having “sense and senselessness” (Ingram, “Genealogy” 95)—thusly becoming an in/discipline.

{*Mad Daddy*} Ingram [my nickname for him—said with love and courage] describes the [IR]rationale of *Mad Studies* with these letters strung together into words strung together into paragraphs that trick our minds into understanding: (in big chunk form with bolding added by author for emphasis)

There are two sides to this equation: on the one side, showing that there is **method in our madness**; and on the other side, **preserving madness in our method**. This second side is to **ensure that Mad Studies actually remains Mad**. It has to retain components of madness, which means that while it is important to do the work that resembles other established bodies of knowledge—as an academic discipline and/or a field of knowledge beyond academia—I think what it can also partially bring about is a form of mimicry that, in the way Mills (2013, 2014) talked about, has a **subversive effect on academia**, i.e., on all other academic disciplines.
 (“Doing Mad Studies” 13)

With that in mind [IN YOUR EYES], I supP

pose

that I should write my place in the chaos as I live my place in the chaos. There is no way to remove the chaos from my life (“stick an ice pick up my eye socket and steal a piece of my brain Doctor . . . I am not ready for my low bottom E”) so when I am writing about my life—how does it make sense to filter out the chaos {PrOfeSSOr cosPLAYer}? If a reader wants to read a story about a *madman* then should they not submit themselves to brEAThe madness?

TAP OUT!

What would a neurodivergent aesthetic form of literary memoir look like [Tom Selleck? Bert? Ernie]? It’s not as easy as cracking open a computer and looking at the patterns in the wiring, so how can the aesthetic form be structured to embody a neurodivergent frame of thinking? {Is it really this messy? **Am I really this messy?**}

Accurate and authentic representation is important when it comes to destigmatising neurodiversity (Johnson and Walker), but when it comes to personal creative non-fiction accounts of *Mad* experiences—what is the most powerful way to represent these experiences [and would this make me qualified to tell people I am an accountant?]

Accessible or Authentic⁵? (Accessible to who? Authentic to who? 100% success is 100% impossible)

⁵ What does it mean to be Authentic? Flesh, bone, blood and dreams?

Masked or Raw [and fleshy and facing the crowd and sCREAMing “This is Me”]?
Same same sister or Different different daddio?

Might readers deduce [little Sherlock] that my creative work is representative of all neurodivergent frames of comprehension (Rajan) {not possy Bill} and how can I ensure it is read with nuance? What boundaries exist in the pursuit of this aesthetic form and what are the consequences of crossing them? {Ignite my villain arc!}

Would a truly neurodivergent form of memoir massively restrict readership? Is there worth in conceptualising a neurodivergent memoir aesthetic when there is no current available [A Veil, A Bull] research to suggest there is any particular calling//request for it⁶? Would simply writing a counter-narrative that embodies the distracted brainwaves of a neurodivergent brain be enough to . . . to . . . to . . . Robertson notes, when talking about her own memoir detailing the raising of her autistic son, that a “disability counter-narrative will contest master narratives in its content, but it may also do so in its form, by enacting this principle that shape structures story” (Robertson para. 12). And I am all about the Shape [Nacho Cheese Flavour] and showing my point rather than just telling so

({[]})because I learn through repetition({[]})
I am why I am doing this.

Am I a Bull in an [F]art museum just looking to destroy contentment? There is an abundance of amazing neurodivergent memoirs⁷ out there that are written in an easy to digest and relatable manner (*IT IS SAFE TO READ THESE AS IT WILL NOT MADDEN YOUR BRAIN*) {is it safe to read these when it will not madden your brain?}, so why should I bother breaking that with my desire for a *Mad* incoherence? Or, to paraphrase Dr Ian Malcom (famous mathematician specialising in chaos theory who survived a dinosaur breakout (1993)), am I so preoccupied with whether I could develop a neurodivergent {*MAD*} memoir form, that I’m not stopping to think if I should (obviously this is me stopping to think if I should—I’m not letting those darn dinosaurs bamboozle me).



ON NEURODIVERGENT MEMOIR: Show Me the TRUTH//INSIDES of this So-Called *MAD* Memoir

Let’s set the scene with an autistic writer writing an autistic memoir. No, let’s not. I prefer the term neurodivergent. Life is about labels and what labels feel best attached to our personality, and neurodivergent feels the most comfortable on me . . . but also, it sounds like a classification that would be given to a superpower (Is neurodivergence a superpower? Not important right now but super important to me always and it is debatable as most things in life are because neurodivergence comes with a lot of things that make life more difficult despite certain qualities that can make life feel like it is worth living.). SO A NEURODIVERGENT WRITER IS WRITING A NEURODIVERGENT MEMOIR [use your inside voice please] {what does that even mean?} [[it means you’re too loud]] {who gets to decide that, it doesn’t feel fair that

⁶ From what I could find through searching academic papers, websites on neurodivergence, and having read relevant books in full, including: *Neurodiversity Studies: A New Critical Paradigm* (2020), *The Palgrave Handbook of Auto/Biography* (2020), *The Routledge International Handbook of Mad Studies* (2021), *Normalizing Mental Illness and Neurodiversity in Entertainment Media: Quieting the Madness* (2021).

⁷ See footnote 4 or read again now: *Late Bloomer* (Bastow 2021), *I Overcame My Autism and All I Got Was This Lousy Anxiety Disorder: A Memoir* (Kurchak 2020), *Funny, You Don’t Look Autistic* (McCreary 2019), *Thinking in Pictures* (Grandin 1995), *Nobody Nowhere* (Williams 1992) . . . He said a roar, he said a roar, he said a roar.

your too loud is my normal} } } [[[just stop]]]. Many have written about this practice. Rose (“Autistic Autobiography”) refers to it as autie-ethnography while Grace (“Autistethnography”) calls it autist-ethnography. I don’t like either of those words AS THEY **DISAGREE WITH ME ON A SENSORY LEVEL** {i am sensitive to certain sounds} so I’m going to refer to it as Darren. Darren is frustrating to write {right} if you want it published and read by more people than just your mum “because far more autistic people write Autist/biographical narratives, discuss disability and representation, and generally have ideas [worth talking about] than get publishing contracts or peer-reviewed publications” (Hillary, “Autist/Biography” 316). Hillary attributes this deficit of published Darren to a concept known as *theory of mind*—a person has *theory of mind* capabilities if they are able to understand what is happening in other people’s minds [some thinkers assume human beings are all meant to be little Sherlock Holmes-type people but Sherlock Holmes is a fictional character]. This means knowing when a person is saying *one thing* while meaning *another thing* (sarcasm is the lowest form of humour and never funny and needs to be thrown off a bridge yesterday).

Neurodivergent people often struggle with this “capability” when young but get better at it with age (Hillary, “Autist/Biography”). Through repetition, repetition, repetition, repetition, RIP A TISH SON—through repetition, neurodivergent people gain the experience and the knowledge to better assess other people’s minds. But this *theory of mind* **THING** has STUCK to autistic people causing discrimination toward us as having *no real identity*. =(=(=[Not a real boy]

As Yergeau puts it (“Clinically Significant”), because it is *assumed* that neurodivergent people don’t have a *theory of mind* and a *theory of mind* is required to be human then it can be assumed that we [ND] are less than human {identity-less}. Baggs (as paraphrased by Hillary, “Autist/Biography” from a now deleted online blogpost—where did it go and why does no cloud give it a home?) seems to reckon [WRECK ON] that this is why it is more common for neurodivergent folk to write “textbooks” [not academic textbooks but clinical memoirs with textbook-like diagnostic qualities = Bugs Bunny//neurodivergent memoir in a dress, wig and lipstick//clinical textbook-like memoir] rather than memoir.

=There is an expectation that an autistic memoir

(I use the A word out of respect for the author [I don’t hate the A word, I am just very aware of the societal weight that surrounds it])

provide a clinical definition of autism and focus on the exploration of autism rather than the exploration of the autistic person (Hillary, “Autist/Biography”; Yergeau, “Circle Wars”). Neurotypical memoirs do not have this same expectation that they must devote themselves to a clinical definition of neurotypicality and what that means. No (KNOW), it solely focuses on the person and their experiences.

“Typical autism essays ensure readers understand why *autism* is important, but showing why *autistic people* matter is optional and often neglected . . . I’d rather read the humans these texts diagnose and ignore” (Hillary, “Autist/Biography” 317). I, too, would rather the readers read me rather than the clinical labels that have been attached to me {perhaps this be the reason why I gravitate toward the more mysterious labels of neurodivergent and/or *mad* rather than autistic, mentally ill or disabled . . . They feel less diagnostical and more personalitical [new word, new world]}. I am not interested in teaching you about my diagnoses, I am interested in showing you my experience of existing in the human condition with a divergence to the neuronormative.

In a review of one of the earliest neurodivergent memoirs (*Nobody Nowhere: The Extraordinary Autobiography of An Autistic* by Donna Williams), Bass bemoans Williams not giving enough of an explanation of the differences between autism and Williams’s comorbidities and found himself frustrated throughout the start of the book (boohoo it happens to me with the start of reading anything). “It’s not enough to tell readers who we are: we must tell them what *autism* is, too,” comments Hillary (“Autist/Biography” 320).

When I // being me // Beau—being Beau // start reading words [FORMulating a narrative] the empty page stage impregnates a cloud of distracting thoughts in my head [skull enclosed pink mush]. Every small detail is punctuated {IMPALED like Vlad} with connective thoughts and ideas that cLOUD the intention of the writer [IAMSODISTRACTEDDISTRACTEDDISTRACTEDDISTRACTEDCARTSID]. So afraid am I, from previous lived experiences, of misunderstanding the understanding that I overcompensate [the mask onto my face as a reader]. Beau understands that the writer's [right, errrr] point might be to slowly unravel their intentions as a way to build intrigue and/or tension and/or enthusiasm and/or connection but the lack of NOing gives license to my *MAD* mind to invite too many messy mud thoughts [My doctor might have said letters like ADHDdistracted] to the process and I find myself frustrated and confused until a strong sense of “*what I'm meant to understand*” is understood by Beau//me//I//you. Perhaps this is why I have a crush on prologues/preludes/preambles/foreword. If it is not STRONGLY stated what Beau needs to understand then I just don't understand and instead drop down the rabid hole. *roar* I hate that reading takes me ten times as long as my peers {scene smart}.

So then, in saying that THAT, why is it my responsibility to inform the reader why I experience sensory discomfort with certain *touches* rather than just show them it happening and let them infer why it is happening? That is what a lot of right, errrrrs do to me, knowingly or unknowingly or maybeknowingly, and it takes me a lot longer than neurotypical readers to fully understand what I'm meant to be understanding ^{and I don't think} that is fair. So why must I explain my condition//mud mind to them? I want to be a novel: *show, don't tell*. But the expectation is that the author of a neurodivergent memoir must be more than an author—they must be a teacher (call me Mr. Beau and I will envision myself as a puppet from a children's television show chomping at the seams to teach you about CoNfUSinG SOcial CuEs).

So with this, Beau // no // you // or // I // can (confidently not confidently) see that neurodivergent memoirs come with expectations including: that they should double as a textbook [EXPELL ME YOU MARK], the authors lack a *theory of mind* {{UNHUMAN OR INHUMAN YOU DECIDE DELICATE DECIDER}}, they need to focus more on the condition than the person (“*Why can't I be normal mummy?*”), and that their tendency to fall into perseveration (Happé; Yergeau, “Clinically Significant”) can make them come across as “irrational” (LIKE A BIRD with razorblade feathers AND hidden microscopic cameras inside of their eyeballs AND a mission from the Give-a-mint // Gave-a-mount // Govern mans).

Please, don't get distracted and keep up with me [**THIS IS MY INSIDE VOICE**].

Hillary (“Autist/Biography” 330) notes that “Common (mis)interpretations of Autist/biography centre neurotypical readers, so the biggest shift I can think of is to centre the autistic reader first.” She is talking about a lack of having to explain oneself and knowing that the autistic reader will see themselves in the work and the neurotypical reader will figure it out eventually. I // being me // the Beau [like the Rock only smaller and shakier] would like to see the neurodivergent writer [ME] centre their writing around their own neurodivergent thinking rather than wearing a neurotypical cap while structuring it. Make sense [cents?]?

This might alienate *even* the neurodivergent reader (WE ARE ALL DIFFERENT—aliens to one another and alien to the societies we have built from stupid ideas and bad theory⁸) but I think // know, feel // no, feel // that this form of writing might better capture the neurodivergent mindset [put on your working clothes baybee you have to work to read this!].



⁸ Not a fact but an easter egg to an obscure line from an obscure wrestling promo that haunts my obscure mind.

MY PROCESS: Now, shall I un-break myself so you can see what makes me break? (Dirty little tease boi meme language monster of chaos)

What have I done? Freed my thoughts from Oblivion and wrote “something that comes from things the way wine comes from grapes” (Taussig 401). When Taussig speaks of writing as animating things, it gets lost in this writer’s//Beau’s mind due to the word fetishism trailing his point [kinky]. When it {the concept} re-emerges it splashes throughout my thought pattern and I imagine Beau’s words in animation (visualise my mind now—now—now my mind—visualise, VIZ U LIES—but who is Viz and why do they lie?). Like my body, which (?) expands and grows and changes, the words enter my mud mud mad mud mind as one thing and then expand and grow and change to the point where others *may* have to work [shoot//worked shoot] to figure out what is clear in my mud.

Mind.

Through my research, it became clear to me that I hold a subconscious lingering [GRUDGE] resentment toward traditional academic writing due to my negative past experiences in education. I often felt like a penguin in a class full of monkeys being told that our success depended on us climbing to the top of a tree. Eventually the penguin *might* learn how to climb the tree, but it will take a lot longer and be achieved in a way that looks very different to the monkeys. Maybe this is why I fell into this fragmented form of writing? A way of writing that feels natural and exciting to me because it allows all of my messy thoughts to have a place on the page and not just what makes it through the filter.

In taking this approach, I *neurodiverge* my writing [that’s a neologism] and let readers feel the swampy insides of my brain. I wanted to replicate the challenge that I experience in focus and understanding—so I could allow readers to know me better. Through this practice-led research, I came to the suspicion that Beau is comprised of three faces//modes.

The Mask (smokin’).

The Filter (“*you can’t just say that to someone, young man*”).

The Heart (I want to rip myself a part and share it all with you—that is all I want—to give you everything and let you swim in it so I can take notes on if we drown or swim—on a whim).

Thusly, Pugsley Addams, shall we examine what these three faces//modes be [hot or not hot or not hot or not hot or not swipe right for hot swipe left for not not not not NOT KNOT KNOT HOT burn]⁹?

My Mask: In which Windon writes how he has been taught to write. He sticks to writing himself like a book you might find on the *New York Times* Bestseller list. His words read like something that your current average ten-year-old kid could pick up and enjoy or at the least understand. There is little challenge outside of the narrative themes, presented clearly in a structure that could be comprehended easily by most. Windon’s aim with this piece is to adhere to the literary standard of **universality** (Long 12) and develop something for “everyone” (is it though?). Windon’s Mask is a neurodivergent story told through his perception of a neurotypical aesthetic form. It is translating itself for you in real time.

My Filter: This be where my writerly self-filters the messiness of Beau’s neurodivergent mad mud mind and presents it in an easily readable way. It is a presentation of a neurodivergent story told with clear language but that deviates in structure, becoming a counter-narrative (Robertson), as it follows the fun shiny nuggets.

1. Beau tells you a story about a social situation.
2. In that story he is eating cereal.
3. Beau loves cereal so starts talking about that.

⁹ Hot or not hot or not

4. His love of cereal comes from when he was a kid and used to eat cereal in the morning while watching cartoons.
5. Beau's story moves to talking about cartoons but he doesn't mention point four at all so it comes out of nowhere. He assumes you've made the connection that he has so he doesn't explain at all.
6. You think "*Ohmygod, Becky, Beau is so random!*"
7. Beau has forgotten where he was in his original story but he remembers the point of it so he offers the point without the rest of his story.
8. You are bamboozled.

Beau's filter is a counter-narrative that meanders to a conclusion that most won't decipher from the work. It is a journey down a path shrouded in trees and branches and shrubbery. You can read it, but you might not explicitly understand why things are happening. My story makes sense to Beau and it's your job to connect the dots. Beau's Filter is a neurodivergent story told in his neurodivergent counter-narrative and presented in his perception of a neurotypical aesthetic structure.

My Heart: [is {F}ART]. It is mine and me and you and a broken filter. My heart is the line, trampled and BROken {poor Barbie}. It is what is of me and unshown but there and gone through affiliation of expected ideas and open minded to a wider world, breathtaking (Smith, "[R]evolving") even. It is conceptual through CONfusion#dance# and the marriage of disability studies and queering (Ingram, "Doing Mad Studies"; Smith, "Defining Disability Studies") [queefing] and maybe FRAGments of fear and hysteria (Walwicz) because even me isn't entirely me as I am memories and masks slathered over false faces on a meatshell with a big goonie ghost behind the wheel.

My
he
art
is messy
and
confusing
but real [butt reel].

My He[F]ART is beyond boundaries and barriers and it scares {cares for} me! I care [so scared of] what I am seen as. You have seen how fast my mind moves and how mANY times the track DIVERGES [Earth earth girth flattened girth fattened Earth shattered mirth Mythril]. The impulses that I try so hard [ROCK HARD] to conceal {whip in your weapon} and the thoughts that consume [sue me Susie looloo] me, every last bit takes me over, the thoughts that consususususususususuME me break through my {Bret} Hart and fall into you the reader [eater of worlds, meeter of words]. The intrusion-illusion fusion of THORTS THWARTS MY "COHERENCY".

Are you exhausted? {I am always so tired}
I'm one—I won—I wonder.
Have I pushed you too far?

Is my HEART too much [AM I EXHAUSTED like an exhaust pipe polluting the planet]? Is my Filter the face made by my mask that is most easily shared and understood and doing good. Doing good. Doing good. Goodo.

I met Ania Walwicz in 2016 and she always enCOURAGED me to be my impulses but I did not knot listen//glisten because I wanted to be universal. Is the universal real? Is it an eel [splish splash dine n' dash]. I just wanted to

FIT

in because I never fit in in person but in writing I can take my time to be HOME a person that doesn't stand out. I wanted to be universal. Is universal always a good thing?

When Ingram talks about psychiatrists being the main critics // arch nemeses of *Mad Studies* and about their roles as experts on [[frock]locking]] everything when no one can be an expert on psychiatrists except for psychiatrists, I wonder how psychiatrists are born and my EXperience with them has always ended with me being given lessons on how to BE. My ART is seen wrong, know, my HE is seen wrong, no know, my HEART is seen wrong.

Everyone likes my Mask. IT IS SUCH A NICE MASK. I modelled it off Luchador masks [of which is Lucha Libre, of which is Mexican Professional Wrestling, of which is a world of wonder and bizarre {me hearties} mythology]. If I just be my mASK all the time, everywon would like me. I like being liked because now that I am an old//sold person I have memorised all the tricks[hot] to fitting in [I AM A NINJA IN THE CROWD {i am a ticking time bomb waiting and ready to explode when the pressure becomes too much}. Beau shows his Mask to everyone because it is well-liked and he worked very hard//so hard [ROCK HARD] on crafting it. But Beau's Mask wears me out when I wEAR it too long (it hurts my ears and breaks my sensory skills).

My Filter is a bit easier to SHOW you but then sometimes peep-ill say that Beau is really cool but he can be a bit odd and I know that Beau's oddness is a result of the Filter not catching everything. It is my dirty mud mad mind wandering [lost lost lost daddy lost]. Peep-ill don't like losing the point and my Filter loses the point because it dddddestroys itself in letting rogue tumbleweeds slip through. As Smith says:

Although I generally pass as able-bodyminded
in most of my day-to-day encounters
with the normies that surround me
those who know me intimately
know I'm crazy as a motherfucker.
It's easier to pass—
to keep my crazy invisible. ("[R]evolving" 379)

That's what he says—what he said—his bodymind threw to the world. Keeping my Heart invisible makes MINE life easier. My Filter is "not
an innate and essential brokenness that [is] part of me
but the result of social processes
through and by which I [am] understood by those around me" (Smith, "[R]evolving" 379). This guy gets it, gets it, gets it real good, push it.

I like my Heart—HeART—He{F}ART. It is like a waterfall where everything just comes out and lives and thrives and I can breathe that water because I don't have to WORK so hard to

be

me because KIT KAT being me can be a lot of work and my arms and legs and big mud get sore and swollen and need to rest but I can't rest when I want people to like me and I don't want people to not like me because I've heard how much being not liked is a bad thing and I don't want to be a bad thing.

I am [L]on[E]ly trying to live, to

be.

The effort stings. But I keep efforting because not efforting means not fitting in and not fitting in means I am Mad which might make people think I am a wrong thing.

I like answers.
 But
 I
 am
 Real
 -ising
 that
 answers
 aren't
 always
 answerable.
 No questions.
 No, questions!
 Do you like me?
 Why are we hair?
 Is this a neurodivergent form//harm of memoir?
 Is it readable//enjoyable?
 Where does it rank on the enjoyment scale?
 Give me a percentage // get an expert (that isn't a psychiatrist) . . .
 Who owns this body?
 This mind?
 These
 worlds
 words?

Does this belong in *academia* or should I be scared of people//smarties calling me bad//mad//wrong//mud and “wanting to cut off my head” (Walwicz 47). Am I just a scared//TERRORfried little boy craving acceptance and a hug?

Which of my faces do you think is the prettiest?
 Which would you like to wear?
 Maybe then we can understand each other better.
 I know you so well because I so often put on your face so you will welcome me.
 What do you get when you put on mine?



[IN]CONCLUSION: And yet I see nearly a slice of pie in the sky in the high of my eye and I want you to know that I can remove myself sometimes

It is true I can. Here I have not but I can (can-can DANCE) and I even like it sometimes. I like cosplaying majority. I like being more easily liked. I like being told I am smart when I am not being myself (I am knot smART when I am just me). But following invisible//inadvisable trends hurts my feet. I can't see the map and the track, the track is invisible.

With more SPACE and TIME [Doctor Who?], I would like to ask what other neurodiVERGent right,errs think about the concept of a neurotypical/neurodivergent aesthetic literary form.¹⁰ None of the key books I read real(lee) spoke about the aesthetic. With *Mad Studies* and the concept of Neurodivergence still being so young (like a sea man), the general focus of Neurodivergent//MAD memoir discourse is on the ever-important content//CON-

¹⁰ Maybe knot at all.

And I want to hold your hand {metaphorically speaking} as we go through it toGET-HER. I don't want to pOInt out the bees BUZZing in the *bushes* along the sidepa-ah-ah-ahth but instead see you see me react to them and how their BUZZing pulls a physical reaction out of me. SENSORY TOO MUCH NESS.

Do I think I have been suc—not a failure?

Uh, I am used to fail—not being successful . . .

Perhaps, ALL writing by a neurodivergent right, errrrrrrr is inherently neurodivergent *MADMAFMADMAFMADMAFMADMAFMADMAFMADDDDDDD* and so writing in what I think as a neurotypical style is neurodivergent no matter the AESTheTIC? But when living in a society WITH so so so many structural barriers for *Mad* people (Smith, “[R]evolving”), maybe adding a barrier for NEURO[Brother Nero]Typical readers to give them a divergent experience through a neurodivergent life can add a more literal LEARNing experience to the story. This is not to confront the neurotypical or the non-Mad, this is to more equally share existence and BEing // MEing.

Do they//yoU feel exhausted by this?

I am always so exhausted . . .

I am always so tired . . .

... confused ...

... distracted ...

... distraught ...

... afraid ...

...panicked...

...panicked ...
frustrated

... frustrated ...

... Beau.

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