

Ought: The Journal of Autistic Culture

Volume 1 | Issue 1

Article 1

December 2019

Front Matter



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/ought>

Recommended Citation

(2019) "Front Matter," *Ought: The Journal of Autistic Culture*: Vol. 1: Iss. 1, Article 1.

DOI: 10.9707/2833-1508.1015

Available at: <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/ought/vol1/iss1/1>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks@GVSU. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Ought: The Journal of Autistic Culture* by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks@GVSU. For more information, please contact scholarworks@gvsu.edu.

UGHT

*the journal of
autistic culture*



Volume 1, Issue 1

Fall 2019

OUGHT

the journal of autistic culture

Volume 1, Issue 1

Fall 2019

OUGHT: The Journal of Autistic Culture

Ought: The Journal of Autistic Culture seeks to document autistic culture by publishing scholarly and creative works that examine and explore it. *Ought* recognizes that autistic culture is not monolithic: it is as varied as the autistic community itself. Accordingly, *Ought* focuses contributions of the autistic community, celebrating the visual and verbal accomplishments of autistic scholars, artists, and others. At the same time, it showcases the work of the scholars, scientists, parents, and professionals who share everyday experiences with autistic people and influence their lives. In blending creative and critical works about autism, *Ought* seeks to break down barriers between academic disciplines, between genres of artistic expression, between caretakers and professionals, and finally, between neurotypicals and autistics. *Ought* is the conversation about autism as it ought to be.

Language and Labels

Ought uses identity-first language to refer to autistic individuals whenever possible. Identity-first language communicates our commitment to neurodiversity and aligns with the journal's focus on autistic culture. *Ought* does employ the term "Autism Spectrum Disorder" to refer to autism, given the widespread use of this term in autism-related research. Nevertheless, *Ought* recognizes and values contributors who resist the pathologizing term "disorder."

Submit to Ought: The Journal of Autistic Culture

Ought welcomes contributions from scholars, researchers, writers, and artists. Contributors are the initial owners of the copyright to their submitted pieces. For more information and the latest call for submissions, please see <http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/ought>.

About the Cover Image



Motivate is a 2016 digital composition by the autistic artist Wendi Powers. She writes: "This is microscope art of a tiny shell. Even the smallest things in nature amaze me. The spiral of shells teach me that growth is a process. Who I am as a whole is made of all the tiny steps I take along the way."

OUGHT Editorial Board

Our editorial board consists of a balance of autistic and neurotypical scholars from universities around the world.

Co-Editors-in-Chief

Robert Rozema, Grand Valley State University

Chris Bass, University of Illinois at Chicago

Associate Editor

David Schaafsma, University of Illinois at Chicago

Editorial Board

Sara M. Acevedo, Miami of Ohio University

Sonya Loftis, Morehouse College

James McGrath, Leeds Beckett University

Bruce Mills, Kalamazoo College

Christen Pearson, Grand Valley State University

Kia Jane Richmond, Northern Michigan University

Peter Smagorinsky, University of Georgia

Alyssa Hillary Zisk, University of Rhode Island

Reviewers for Volume 1, Issue 1 (Fall 2019)

Amanda Biviano, Virginia Tech Institute; John Bruni, Grand Valley State University; Curt Dudley-Marling, Boston College; Sonya Loftis, Morehouse College; James McGrath, Leeds Beckett University; Beth Myers, Syracuse University; Christen Pearson, Grand Valley State University; Kia Richmond, Northern Michigan University; Peter Smagorinsky, University of Georgia; Alisha White, Western Illinois University; Alyssa Hillary Zisk, University of Rhode Island.

Note from the Editors: This Moment of Arrival

In a 2013 article, Joseph N. Straus (2013) observed that “We are living in a period in which a *culture of autism* [my emphasis], constructed not by medical professionals but by people with autism, has begun to arrive” (p.473). We hope this journal further evidences this arrival, signaling that autistic culture is worth examination in its own right and by its own people. As Strauss suggests, this means countering the dominant medical view that positions autism as a mental disorder to be corralled or cured. Instead, we see *Ought: The Journal of Autistic Culture* as a small part of the larger neurodiversity movement—the campaign to recognize neurological difference as normal and necessary to human development (Loftis, 2016). Our part of this campaign is publishing expressions and evaluations of autistic culture, produced by autistic individuals and neurotypical allies who are affected by autism.

This first issue of the journal, then, features Wendi Power’s digital artwork; Linda Chown’s poetic tribute to Greta Thunberg; Joy Schaefer’s critique of *L’Enfant sauvage*, an important early film treatment of autism; Rebecca Burgess’ influential comic “Understanding the Spectrum”; Mairi Evan’s personal essay about the normative societal pressures experienced by autistic people; Merida Lang’s scholarly article exploring the under-representation of autistic students of color; and much more. Some of these contributors identify as neurotypical, and some are autistic. Of course, there cannot and should not be a journal of autistic culture without the experiential knowledge of autistic individuals communities (Charleton, 2000); no inquiries, analyses, or arguments without the “autistic stories and gestures” that Melanie Yergeau (2018) believes can potentially “neuroqueer[. . .] what we’ve come to understand as language and being” (p. 5). While this journal is edited by two neurotypicals with close connections to autism—Robert Rozema and Chris Bass—our editorial board consists of both non-autistic and autistic individuals from a range of universities. Collectively, we believe that the best conversations around and about autism involve a variety of voices, neurodivergent and

neurotypical, scholarly and artistic, formal and informal. Our goal is inclusion.

Finally, we hope *Ought* reaches a wider audience than a typical academic journal, due to its subject matter, its blend of scholarly and creative works, and its availability via open access publishing. We envision an audience of autistic and neurotypical readers from differing backgrounds and educational levels, and we encourage you to pass this journal along to your friends, family members, colleagues, and co-workers. Tell them that autistic culture has arrived—and is still arriving.

—Robert Rozema and Chris Bass

References

- Charlton, J. I. (2000). *Nothing about us without us: Disability oppression and empowerment*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Loftis, S. (2016). *Imagining Autism: Fiction and Stereotypes on the Spectrum*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Straus, J. N. (2013). Autism as culture. In Davis, L.J. (Ed.). *The disability studies reader*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Yergeau, M. (2018). *Authoring autism: On rhetoric and neurological queerness*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

OUGHT

Volume 1, Issue 1 (Fall 2019)

Toward an Autistic Culture

8 | POETRY

Being Greta Thunberg

Linda Chown

9 | FINE ART

Woman Warrior Within

Wendi Powers

10 | FILM THEORY

Truffaut's *L'Enfant sauvage* (*The Wild Child*, 1969): Evoking Autism & the Nascent "Eugenic Atlantic"

Joy C. Schaefer

42 | ESSAY

The Moon Is Especially Full: Notes on Poetry, Teaching, Tests, and [Autistic] Intelligence

Chris Martin

51 | FINE ART

Never Present

Pernille Fraser

52 | COMICS

Understanding the Spectrum

Rebecca Burgess

62 | PERSONAL ESSAY

Oughtism and Oughtistic Narratives in the Lives of Autistic People and their Families

Mairi Evans

79 | FINE ART

Brain on Spectrum

Wendi Powers

80 | TEACHING AND LEARNING

Seeing in Color: How Are Teachers Perceiving Our Diverse Autistic Students?

Merida Lang

93 | FINE ART

Light Thieves

Pernille Fraser

94 | POETRY

You and Me

Suzanne J. Gikas

96 | TEACHING AND LEARNING

Establishing a Presumption of Competence in the ELA Classroom: One Teacher's Story of Creating Space for Autistic Culture

Chris Bass

113 | REVIEW

On the Edge of Gone by Corinne Duyvis

Sarah Frisch