

Ought: The Journal of Autistic Culture

Volume 4
Issue 1 *Sexuality*

Article 7

November 2022


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Jinx Mylo
Bowling Green State University, jmylo@bgsu.edu



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Recommended Citation

Mylo, Jinx (2022) "Everything's Gonna Be Kinda Queer: Autistic Gender & Sexuality in *Everything's Gonna Be Okay*," *Ought: The Journal of Autistic Culture*: Vol. 4: Iss. 1, Article 7.

DOI: 10.9707/2833-1508.1109

Available at: <https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/ought/vol4/iss1/7>

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Cover Page Footnote

I would like to thank Dr. Sarah Rainey-Smithback for her expertise and encouragement in exploring the intersection of autism, gender, and sexuality.

Everything's Gonna Be Kinda Queer: Autistic Sexuality in *Everything's Gonna Be Okay*

Jinx Mylo

The queerest television show about autistic characters was also the most authentic. Created by the late-diagnosed Josh Thomas and starring autistic actors in all the autistic roles, *Everything's Gonna Be Okay* delivered autistic representation based on lived experiences to the small screen for two seasons from 2020-2021. This authenticity extended to portrayals of gender and sexuality variations that deviated from the traditional norms of gender and heterosexuality, in stark contrast to the standard autistic stereotype. These twenty episodes offer unique explorations of aspects of autistic sexuality including sexual agency, queer experimentation, and the lifecycle of autistic relationships from initiation to conclusion.

When the show premiered in January 2020, depictions of autistic characters in scripted U.S. television shows followed a model based on a combination of diagnostic criteria and repetitive stereotypes. In the preceding months, *Atypical* (Netflix) and *The Good Doctor* (ABC) had begun their third seasons featuring explicitly labeled autistic main characters, while *The Big Bang Theory* (CBS) was number one in the ratings when it completed its twelve-year run featuring an autistic-coded main character. These programs, like so many movies and shows before them, portrayed autism via white, cisgender, heterosexual male characters with either too little or too much interest in sex with women. They reinforced long-standing stereotypes about autism by playing up traits such as lack of empathy, annoying and rude behavior, and savantism that have been perpetuated in film and television since *Rain Man* came out in 1988 and inscribed its definition of autism and autistic people on the viewing public (McGrath, 2017).

It was into this television landscape that *Everything's Gonna Be Okay* (EGBO) debuted, splashing vividly authentic queer, autistic characters across our screens in scenes recognizable from autistic real life rather than from the common stereotypes. A television comedy/drama that aired for two seasons

on Freeform with next-day streaming on Hulu, EGBO was a quiet little show in comparison to *Atypical*, *The Good Doctor*, or *The Big Bang Theory* (and their publicity budgets). It told the story of Nicholas, a gay 20-something Australian man who moves to Los Angeles to become the guardian of his teenage half-sisters Matilda and Genevieve when their father dies.

Nick Walker has written that the word “neuroqueer” can be both an adjective and a verb (Walker, 2021). Combining elements of queer theory and crip theory, Walker uses the word to describe both the people who deviate from the default norms of compulsory heterosexuality and neurotypicality in our culture and the action of challenging those defaults, regardless of one’s own neurotype and sexual orientation. *Everything’s Gonna Be Okay* fits both definitions as the first show created and acted by neuroqueer people and as a show that challenged existing ideas about autism, especially in relation to gender and sexuality. Despite its short run, EGBO provided nuanced portrayals of autistic characters that brought issues such as gender, consent, queerness, and cross-neurotype relationships into the awareness of its audience, thus neuroqueering while being neuroqueer.

Setting the Scene

The main household in *Everything’s Gonna be Okay* is that of Nicholas and his sisters: autistic Matilda, a senior in high school, and neurotypical Genevieve, who’s entering high school for the first time. They are white and upper middle class, grieving for their recently deceased father. Because of their father’s financial prowess, they have a family trust, enabling Nicholas to focus on being his sisters’ guardian without getting a job. An entomologist, Nicholas fills their home with living specimens of various insects and spiders. Nicholas begins the series knowing he has ADHD and ends with a late diagnosis of autism. Rounding out the household is Alex, an attractive, gay, biracial dental student who exudes charm and spends most of the series as Nicholas’s boyfriend, officially moving in for season two.

Matilda is a promising composer and pianist who hopes to attend Julliard and is working her way through a pre-college bucket list of “normal” experiences for a high school girl, which she gleaned from the internet. Genevieve is primarily interested in hanging out with her friends from school and harboring crushes on boys, but she considers herself her older sister’s

protector when needed. Drea is an autistic friend of Matilda's from the special education classroom, who later becomes her girlfriend and ultimately her wife. Jeremy is another autistic friend from class, who appears as a supporting character. The plotlines of the show follow themes of family and romance similar to other dramedies, except with four autistic characters.

Gender

In *Gender Trouble*, Judith Butler (1999) gave us the notion of gender being performed rather than simply existing as an identity in a causal relationship with sex and desire. Among the autistic characters of *Everything's Gonna Be Okay*, gender is performed with varying levels of interest and with varying levels of conformity to the norms aligned with the characters' reproductive systems.

Nicholas is a gay man who typically presents himself in loose clothes and a messy haircut; he seems unconcerned with masculine gender norms or trying to look a certain way. While his boyfriend Alex conforms more closely to trends in gay fashion such as the cut of his clothing and working out to maintain visible abs, Nicholas's everyday style could be best described as casual and uninterested—indeed, in one episode he identifies the selection of clothing each day as a boring activity. He is neither overtly masculine nor particularly feminine, though there are occasional nods to the latter, such as the colored nail polish Nicholas is shown wearing in a number of episodes. This lack of concern for gender norms is common in the autistic community, with research showing that autistic people are less likely to identify with the masculine or feminine label assigned to them at birth than non-autistic people (Cooper et al., 2018; Jack, 2014). Nicholas most often seems like a scattered scientist trying to wrangle his two teen sisters with little time for, or interest in, gender performance.

In the fifth episode of season one, Nicholas shows more interest when he asks their dinner guest, a transgender woman who performs at the drag bingo game they attend, if she would put Nicholas in drag after dinner. In the scene that follows, Nicholas performs a sexy lip-synch of Thelma Houston's "Don't Leave Me this Way" while in full drag, wearing a leopard-print leotard, glitter-festooned fishnets, sparkly gloves, stiletto boots, and a faux fur jacket to go with his dramatic makeup and sky-high wig. In this scene, as

Nicholas poses, sashays, and vamps it up for his friends, he exudes pure joy. In contrast to his normal often distracted or confused expression, his face is alight, his smile is huge, and his movements are beyond confident. If the audience has any empathy, they want Nicholas to feel this way forever.

When he gets called to school the next day to meet with the principal, we see that he's gone back to his default look—with the addition of a blazer to appear more confident in his role as the girls' guardian—but when he emerges from the principal's office announcing a victory on behalf of the girls, for a few moments he struts in camp/swish style with exaggerated gestures and affected speech that clearly amuses him, though he reverts to his usual style afterward. Three episodes later we see Nicholas lip-synching and dancing in heels for Alex, though he's wearing his regular clothes. It seems clear that Nicholas is happy playing with markers of different gender expressions and doesn't feel a need to commit to any particular profile to showcase his identity. This crops up periodically in the remainder of the series, such as when he vogues to the music on the car radio at a stoplight or uses a lip plumper traditionally found at the makeup counter marketed to women to primp for Matilda's wedding. This is reminiscent of Jack's concept of a "gender copia," which she defines as a tool used by autistic people to pick and choose various elements from discourses of identification, neurodiversity, performance, and queerness to construct their gender/sexual identities as it suits them at any given time (2012).

Matilda is an autistic 17-year-old girl whose ideas about girlhood/womanhood are primarily gleaned from the internet. Her gender presentation is traditionally feminine, with long blonde hair, big blue eyes, a slender frame, and an attachment to clothes that might be described as "girly" given the number of pastels, flower prints, and flippy skirts involved. Matilda is assigned to a small special education classroom at school, so she spends most of her day interacting with only a handful of other autistic and disabled students. Because of this, she's had less opportunity to observe peer behavior in relation to gender and sexuality, and has sought to fill in those gaps with online research. Although everyone gets some level of information about dating and sex from online sources, autistic people have been found to be less likely to talk to peers about flirting and dating (Crehan et al., 2021).

It's unclear if Matilda's chosen style of dress is based on innate preference, or if she has adopted it based on the internet's collective opinion of what girls should wear. In the same vein, her ideas about how girls should relate to boys have been adopted wholesale from the internet. She has a crush on the most popular boy in school, Luke, and when her sister asks if she even knows how to flirt, Matilda replies, "You're supposed to ask questions about themselves and pretend they're smarter than you," advice she found on YouTube (Thomas & Thomas, 2020, 00:04:31). Matilda's stated attitude toward appropriate feminine attire and the female role in romance seems regressive in comparison to her exuberant declarations of sex positivity and female sexual empowerment. Because she frequently talks about wanting to fit in and be liked, audiences may wonder if her gender performance is based on a deeply held gender identity, or if she wears it like a costume to create the social outcomes she desires.

Drea is one of Matilda's classmates, who later becomes her girlfriend and eventually her wife. She is conventionally pretty with dark hair and eyes, pale skin, and a tall, slender frame. Unlike Matilda, Drea prioritizes comfort over fashion, choosing her clothes based on their sensory impact, such as avoiding seams that itch or tight waistbands that aggravate her Crohn's disease. Her preferred palette tends toward solid colors, most often dark, and compared to Matilda's frothier style, Drea presents more androgynously, typically eschewing makeup and hair products. At their wedding, she wears a tailored suit in contrast to Matilda's lace confection of a dress.

Supporting character Jeremy is a classmate and friend of Matilda and Drea. Of all the autistic characters in EGBO, he comes closest to matching the expected stereotype. Jeremy is a white teenage boy with unkempt curly hair, visible stims (self-stimulatory behaviors such as repetitive hand movements that help him regulate his nervous system), and quiet, leaning-toward-geeky clothing who's interested in girls, but is generally nervous about them. He primarily serves as a prop to highlight the character development of Matilda and Drea—the anti-manic pixie dream girl, if you will. This relegation of a straight white male character into this archetype is a satisfying reversal,

given the history of quirky female characters (that autistic women tend to identify with) being used in this way for so long in television and film.

Nicholas is the only autistic character who strays far enough from a masculine gender presentation for it to be plot-worthy, and only rarely. However, it is notable that the four autistic characters all perform gender differently in the show. Rather than picking a stereotype and repeating it, these characters present a broader swathe of autistic gender than previous works have done. Such representations provide autistic audiences with ideas they can reference while constructing their own gender identities (Gauntlett, 2008).

Gay Sex, Cross-Neurotype Love: Nicholas and Alex

Within the first minute of the pilot episode when Nicholas hopefully asks Alex if wants to “go somewhere and do gay stuff,” it’s clear that *Everything’s Gonna Be Okay* is going to be a show that’s out and proud (Thomas & Thomas, 2020, 00:00:11). The men fall in love quickly, and their sex scenes show them having fun with each other. The normalcy and happiness of their sex life as it is portrayed tells the audience that it’s normal and fun for two men to have sex with each other. Further, everyone in Nicholas’s family is so used to the knowledge of his orientation that they consider his budding relationship with Alex uninteresting.

Unlike their compatible sex life, the communication between Nicholas and Alex is never smooth. In their first scene at the bar, Nicholas states that they’ve connected, while Alex says they haven’t and that Nicholas has just been talking about himself. This kind of mismatched viewpoint is evident in virtually every scene they share. Alex blames this on Nicholas, and Nicholas frequently accepts this blame. This pattern is likely familiar to autistic viewers. The traditional perspective in autism research has been that autistic people have communication deficits and lack empathy, leading to autistic people often being blamed for any problems in their romantic relationships (Yergeau, 2020). This view of autism falls squarely under the medical model of disability—that there is an impairment or something inherently wrong with the disabled person that causes their difficulties.

In contrast, the social model of disability suggests that in many cases disabled people face difficulties due to being in an environment that is not optimized for people like them (Shakespeare, 2006). Damian Milton's introduction of the double empathy problem provided an alternate explanation for autistic communication difficulties in line with the social model. Milton (2012) suggested that communication difficulties were two-sided rather than one-way, such that a non-autistic person would have just as much trouble understanding an autistic person as the reverse, and that the blame for the misunderstanding was shared between both parties rather than automatically being the autistic person's fault.

This theory has been borne out in cross-neurotype communication experiments that measured accuracy of information transfer and interpersonal rapport, finding that groups of autistic or non-autistic people scored higher when communicating with people of their own neurotype than in mixed-chain groups consisting of both autistic and non-autistic people (Crompton, Ropar, et al., 2020; Crompton, Sharp, et al., 2020). Because of their communication differences, Nicholas and Alex continue to encounter obstacles in their relationship because they are relying on different verbal and nonverbal communication norms based on their differing neurotypes, and eventually their relationship ends because of it.

Intent and Consent: Matilda's First Time

On her internet-sourced "normal girl" pre-college bucket list, Matilda has included getting drunk and losing her virginity, preferably with an attractive, popular boy. She accomplishes the former at home one evening with Nicholas supervising her safety as she proceeds to drink enough peach schnapps with Alex to become tipsy, then drunk, and then drunk enough to vomit while Alex holds her hair back, achieving her bucket-list goals for the night. As she becomes progressively more intoxicated and her inhibitions are lowered, she begins sending video messages to Luke, the boy she has a crush on, which become flirtier and more suggestive (if still oddly formal) as the evening goes on. When he responds with a video message of his own, Alex and Nicholas express their admiration for his appearance and Matilda shares with them her plan to kiss Luke as soon as she can manifest it.

When Matilda is invited to a party at Luke's house, she believes this will be the night they have sex, though they have never kissed, and Luke has given her no indication of sexual interest. After she makes her approach with another bottle of peach schnapps and begins flirting aggressively, Luke becomes uncomfortable and tells Matilda that he only likes her as a friend, leaving her devastated. Drunk and crying in the driveway, Matilda encounters Luke's friend Zane. Seeing that she is upset, Zane politely asks if she's okay. To reduce her feelings of rejection by Luke, Matilda asks Zane to have sex with her, which eventually happens. This sort of sequence is a common enough trope in fictional depictions of teen romance (not to mention in real life). Here, though, when Matilda's sister Genevieve finds out what happened, she accuses Zane of rape and begins an avalanche of repercussions.

Issues of sexual consent have become more nuanced and complex in the past several decades as American culture has been forced to face issues such as double standards based on gender, relational expectations, power dynamics, and the influence of alcohol. In this scene, Matilda is clearly the instigator, and uses persuasion to convince the boy to have sex with her when he initially declines and pulls away. Intent on crossing sex off her pre-college bucket list (again, not unlike any number of non-autistic teen girl characters), Matilda has researched sexual anatomy, contraception, and the outcomes of female first sexual encounters in advance of the night, as evidenced by her ongoing narration throughout the act and the fact that she brought condoms with her. She is not a passive participant, nor is she confused about what is happening, and the boy does not hold any particular power over her. She displays full agency in this scene, rather than being the less powerful subject of someone else's sexual machinations.

In *Sexual Consent*, David Archard (2019) acknowledges that the use of alcohol muddies the waters of informed consent but outlines the logic by which such encounters might be judged. If a person has been intoxicated before and knows that they are likely to experience decreased sexual inhibition while drunk, then making a choice while sober to engage in drinking that will lead to an intoxicated state implies an acceptance that some level of sexual disinhibition may occur, and acceptance of decisions they may make while in this state (Archard, 2019). This does not, of course, mean that anything sexual that happens while a person is drunk is automatically consented to by the act of drinking—saying no and/or revoking consent are still potential

outcomes, and if the level of drunkenness proceeds to mental and/or physical incapacitation then continued consent is not possible. Matilda, who deliberately got herself drunk with a bottle of liqueur she brought from home (rather than being overserved by others) is accepting of her choice to drink and is accepting of her choice to ask Zane for sex. Giddy, even. She is aware that she is being influenced by her alcohol intake, but she is still capable of reasoning and saying no, such as when she redirects Zane's efforts with a firm, "That's not my vagina" (McMullen & Howard, 2020, 00:14:14).

The fact that Matilda is a drunk teenager would give anyone pause when considering the issue of consent. However, she is not drunk to the point being unable or reluctant to communicate her thoughts and feelings effectively; we can point again to her detailed narration throughout the sexual encounter. It's also not the first time she has been drunk. On that earlier occasion, she engaged in flirty and increasingly suggestive video texts with Luke and did not experience any negative outcome to the relationships involved, but instead felt closer to them all. Based on this previous experience, it makes sense that Matilda doesn't expect her drunken sexual encounter with Zane to generate a negative response.

Is it still a little sad? From the audience's perspective, of course. Matilda was rejected to the point of tears and is now having sex with a boy the audience knows is unworthy of her. Is it a little embarrassing? Yes. When Matilda beseechingly asks Zane if he finds her attractive, or says to him liltily, "Please kiss me" (McMullen & Howard, 2020, 00:12:11), the audience can't help but cringe, because his opinion is so meaningless and yet she intensely craves the male sexual approval she has learned she should be obtaining as a young woman. MacKinnon wrote, "Women's sexuality is the capacity to arouse desire in [someone who is socially male]," and here we see Matilda claiming her sexuality by that measure (1982, p. 533). Though she realizes it is "just sex" and it's not particularly pleasurable, she is satisfied at crossing an item off her bucket list, announcing partway through the act, "We're doing it, we're having sex!" as she fluctuates between a grimace of physical discomfort and a triumphant smile (McMullen & Howard, 2020, 00:14:27). If she anticipates that the act will lead to she and Zane becoming friends or engaging in sex again in the future, she is not the first girl to think as much in this type of situation, drunk or not, and autistic or not.

When Matilda's younger sister Genevieve learns that sex occurred, she confronts Zane at school, accusing him of raping her sister while she was drunk and crying. Genevieve's friend chimes in, "And autistic!" before Genevieve punches Zane twice in the abdomen (McMullen & Howard, 2020, 00:19:11), making it clear that they believe autism affects the ability to provide consent. The punches lead to a parent conference with Nicholas, Zane, and Zane's father in the principal's office, where Genevieve is asked to apologize or be suspended for violence. Genevieve refuses to apologize, leading to a sidebar in the hallway between Nicholas and his sisters in which he's brought up to speed. Matilda insists she was using Zane, not the other way around, and doesn't understand why everyone is so upset, since she isn't. Back in the principal's office, Nicholas is now enraged that Genevieve is being asked to apologize, given Zane's earlier actions with Matilda. Nicholas makes an official accusation of statutory rape, citing the same things Genevieve and her friend did and adding that Matilda was 17 but Zane was 18: "Drunk, underage, crying, autistic" (Berlin & Howard, 2020, 00:03:20). The discussion centers on Matilda's autistic status, suggesting that Nicholas also does not believe Matilda is capable of informed consent.

When they discuss the situation at home later that afternoon, Matilda argues that the situation is unfair. She states again that she was using Zane, and that she had just wanted to "tick the box" (of her bucket list) and was happy about having done it until everyone else got involved and created an embarrassing scene (Berlin & Howard, 2020, 00:08:05). Matilda asks Nicholas if he has ever had sex when drunk or crying, and when he admits he has, Matilda calls out the double standard asking if it's because she's autistic, expressing confusion because she thought they were a sex-positive household. Nicholas agrees that they're sex positive, but it's tricky, stating, "Yes, absolutely your diminished ability to read social cues scares the hell out of me when it comes to gross boys wanting to touch you" (Berlin & Howard, 2020, 00:09:08). The irony in this statement is that Nicholas at this point is undiagnosed, but he's still autistic, and shares a similar tendency to misinterpret social cues.

Matilda asks for clear rules of what she can and can't do, but Nicholas tells her, "I can't give you the rules, I can just give you my opinion" (Berlin & Howard, 2020, 00:10:53). They end the conversation by making a deal that if Matilda wishes to have sex, she will call Nicholas first to check in before acting. This deal confirms that Matilda is seen as less self-aware and capable

than non-autistic girls her age, who are generally not expected to tell their parents every time they consider having sex.

Experimentation and Evolution

At the party at Luke's, Drea and Jeremy had shared a kiss, but she immediately told him it was a one-time thing. Drea told Matilda afterward that she didn't like it, but she didn't know if it meant she didn't like kissing boys, or just Jeremy, and that she's trying to figure out what she likes. This leads to Matilda deciding that experimentation is a good idea, and she asks Drea and Jeremy if they want to fool around with her, suggesting it would be a learning experience. When they cautiously accept the offer, Matilda calls Nicholas for permission to host their *ménage à trois* at home. Not having expected their deal to come up so soon, he uncomfortably agrees, acknowledging that she is capable of making such a decision. It's not explored in the episode if Nicholas's greater acceptance of this situation is primarily because no one is drunk, or if he somehow feels that her autistic friends are safer than Zane, the popular boy. When the three teens reach the bedroom and Matilda begins to instruct everyone on what to do, Jeremy experiences anxiety and says he no longer consents, then leaves the bedroom. Matilda and Drea experiment with favorable results, which leads to their beginning a romantic relationship.

Before long, the two girls are in love. In the scene in which they declare their feelings, Drea is pacing and flapping as she works up to saying, "I love you" (Thomas, Meyer, & Goldenberg, 2020, 00:04:17) Matilda confirms that she feels the same way, and then Drea lies on the floor, overwhelmed, and calls for her service dog to lie on her to apply deep pressure. Matilda is still standing and matter-of-factly asks if Drea wants her to wait while she stims, or if she can go practice piano. Drea sends Matilda off to practice, both of them radiating happiness. Here we see the kind of communication compatibility that Nicholas and Alex lack.

While this scene is adorable, autistic, and embracing of Matilda's shift to queerness, Matilda herself has reservations based in gender and cultural norms. Though she is very affectionate and flirty with Drea in private or around her family, when Drea asks her to the prom in front of their class, Matilda says no because she wants a "normal, regular prom" (Thomas, Meyer,

& Goldenberg, 2020, 00:05:36). Though she realizes later that this choice will damage their relationship and retracts it, it shows that despite her love of Drea, she continues to harbor heteronormative ideas of what high school girls are meant to experience.

In season two, the relationship collapses, then is rebuilt. After a summer of emotional turmoil and ghosting her girlfriend, Matilda declares with all the teen angst normally reserved for coming out as queer or transgender that she is straight. In this sequence, she provides an interesting contrast to the usual coming out narrative. When she had sex with Zane, her family was upset, it caused an embarrassing ruckus at school, and her male sex partner chose not to speak to her again. In contrast, her queer relationship was completely accepted by her family and presumed-to-be-queer teacher, and she was loved by Drea. In her situation, Matilda actually reaps more social benefit from non-heterosexuality.

When Nicholas is told of Matilda's shift in understanding her sexual orientation, he admits to being disappointed, as it was something they had in common. But, just as queer kids follow the reactions of their bodies to realize their true natures in defiance of compulsory sexuality, Matilda realizes she is not sexually attracted to women in the way she is attracted to men, something she confirmed by comparing her responses to different types of pornography on the internet. Her realization that she is heterosexual causes her significant distress, because she does not want to lose the loving relationship she has formed with Drea or disappoint their families.

However, once Matilda gets through her rehearsed speech about not being sexually attracted to women, Drea confides that she doesn't think she experiences sexual attraction to anyone. She notes that the thing she liked about sex was being so close to Matilda, but that there are other ways to feel as close or even closer. Recognizing that they don't want to have sex with each other but that they are in love, they decide to stay together in a sexless romantic relationship, with the allowance that Matilda can have sex with men on the side, turning a corner toward a decidedly non-traditional relationship.

Later, when the first such encounter happens and Nicholas checks in with Drea to see how she's feeling, she states that she identifies as asexual homoromantic, and she just wants Matilda to be happy. Matilda, now in

queer romantic relationship but having heterosexual sex, has the best of both worlds, in her opinion. Nicholas at first is unconvinced that Drea is naming her orientation correctly, thinking she could just be saying what she thinks Matilda wants to hear, but understands after Drea explains how she feels, which is that she isn't interested in sex with anyone. In this storyline, the characters are again representing autistic people authentically. Studies have shown that there is a higher incidence of queerness among autistic people, including bisexuality and asexuality (George & Stokes, 2018). Additionally, it's common for people to not believe asexuality is an orientation.

The negotiation of Matilda and Drea's relationship recalls Jack's (2012) *copia*, with each of the girls selecting the various elements of sexuality and queerness that appeal to them to create their own kaleidoscopic identities. As they pick and choose the aspects of their relationships that work for each of them and let go of the elements that don't to create an outcome of happiness, Matilda and Drea exemplify this spirit of sexual identity exploration, invention, and self-definition. The series concludes with their wedding, attended by their families and officiated by Jeremy. Matilda in a lace-encrusted wedding dress and veil (along with spike heels that sink into the grass with every step) and Drea in an immaculate white suit, both are glowing with happiness at the future they are choosing for themselves.

Conclusion

Through the relationships of Nicholas, Matilda, Drea, and to a lesser extent Jeremy, autistic gender and sexuality are portrayed as having numerous expressions, just as non-autistic gender and sexuality have been portrayed on screen. Some relationships succeed and some don't, but they all play out in the show with a combination of situations specific to autistic people and situations that are familiar to all viewers, regardless of neurotype. Breaking from old stereotypes of autistic people and instead basing the characters on lived experience, *Everything's Gonna Be Okay* provides us with autistic characters who are at turns sympathetic, infuriating, brilliant, foolish, loving, petty, loyal, and a host of other characteristics that we don't often see on screen. It is a long stride forward in positive and realistic autistic representation on television, and we can only hope that others will follow in its path.

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Jinx Mylo is a late-diagnosed autistic and ADHD PhD student at Bowling Green State University's School of Media and Communication, with additional graduate work in the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies department. Her research combines quantitative approaches to media effects, qualitative studies of autistic identity and cross-neurotype communication, and critical methods to investigate the effects of fictional autistic characters in popular culture on attitudes toward autistic people.

