



Evil Autistic Master Plan For Academia: HCI Edition

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EVIL AUTISTIC MASTER PLAN FOR ACADEMIA, HCI EDITION

A plan in progress—now with dramatic affirming metal quotes!

*Be the broken or the breaker
Be the giver or the undertaker
Unlock and open the doors
Be the healer or the faker
The keys are in your hands
Realise you are your own sole creator
Of your own master plan*

— *Dumma Borgir, Gateways*

Figure 1: Screenshot of the living document.

Abstract

They become insolent! To flaunt their evil plan in our faces—this may yet spell their downfall.

CCS Concepts

• **Human-centered computing** → **HCI theory, concepts and models**; • **Social and professional topics** → *Assistive technologies*.

Keywords

Evil, Autism, Masterplan

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1 Introduction

Autism is a disability that is often not immediately evident, rendering it not only ‘tame’ enough to be tolerated, but a favourite choice when it comes to celebrating a disability for economic advantage, or sensationalising it for gain¹. Many readers may be familiar with the concept of the ‘good’ immigrant: an immigrant from a country lower on the axis of international power that will adapt perfectly, work hard, prioritise the dominant culture over their own, express constant gratefulness despite accepting standards lower than those extended to members of the dominant culture, and most importantly, never ask for anything (e.g. [17, 35]). The concept is, to all means of grasping it for the purpose of the following, quite simple: you are different and therefore hated by default, and must prostrate yourself before the dominant culture to prove you are worthy of being tolerated—unlike the normative immigrant, assumed to be ‘bad,’ you become the contrasting ‘good’ immigrant. Following this term, as an autistic person, you are often the ‘good’ cripple²—as long as you do not cause anyone any bother, excel at some sort of technical or otherwise impressive job relevant to the GDP, and above all, are grateful to be tolerated, you will be just that: tolerated.

This is nothing new. In fact, the above description may sound somewhat familiar: the ‘good’ autistic person has been described before, by Hans Asperger, who doted on his “miniature adults” [5,

¹cf: *Inspiration Porn* [16].

²For the choice of wording, we follow the tradition of Nancy Mairs [23] and feminist technoscience [18] broadly, as well as our research group specifically [4].

p.24] or “professor[s]” [5, p.47]³ that displayed the characteristics of a diagnosis later named after him. Not a militant national socialist, the catholic Hans Asperger, member of the NSDAP, was quite representative of most Austrians at the time in his reconciliation with national socialist eugenics. Maybe not entirely representative: he engaged in activism to the benefit of his “autistic psychopaths” [5], arguing that just because they were different did not mean they were not *useful*—a fact that continues to earn him sympathy and appreciation [34] ignoring, then like now, the many other children he dismissed to the children’s euthanasia station *Am Spiegelgrund*.

But what does it mean to be tolerated for functioning not just well, but outstandingly enough to make up for the assumed ‘badness’ of autism? It means overworking yourself, it means autistic burn-out, it means anxiety, depression and panic attacks on top of what is still a disability (no matter how much TV shows from the USA try to convince people otherwise) that access is usually not made for. Worse, for some of us, it means subscribing to and reifying existing power structures, participating in the oppression of the disabled community that we are part of and should instead partake in uplifting. In this, we are not only harming others, but also ourselves: by the power of the very same tolerance we benefit from, asking for access is rendered impossible. The very *privilege* of concealing autism renders our access needs imperceptible.

But even when they are repeatedly demanded, our access requirements are often never met. Worse, they are misunderstood even when explained for the umpteenth time. If we want to not just barely exist in this field, but truly thrive, we must cease our pandering to those who would just as easily discard us. As disabled people, community is essential to our survival [19, 28, 29, 46]. To thrive in an ableist world, we need to look out for each other, collectively provide access to ourselves and our disabled peers, and leave no one behind [28]. In this spirit, we share with you in the following how we make access in our everyday lives as HCI researchers. But first, some context.

1.1 Context: Autism in the IT sector and HCI Academia

The celebration of ‘good’ autistic people in the IT sector, where they are often marketed as ‘technical genius’ workforce under the trendy buzzword of neurodivergence⁴ upholds eugenic logic by qualifying autistic existence through autistic usefulness—“use the potential of autistic people,” German social innovation company *auticon* proudly tout on their homepage to promote autistic IT-services to companies [6]. This attitude make it hard for those autistic people who *do* survive in the industry to overcome their internalised ableism, as reifying the system serves their individual benefit. But what exactly *is* this benefit? Painting especially those ‘genius’ technical autistic people as completely positive glosses over the fact that even for those few who can thrive in the IT sector, autism is a disability that comes with many struggles. An inspiration to all, the superhuman technology genius (described using

words often creepily similar to Asperger’s “intelligence automations” [5, p. 31] (cf. androids [9, 13])) surely *cannot* be experiencing difficulties or struggles—and if it does, it is just as easily discarded. Meanwhile, in a field that consistently reifies patriarchal values such as competition and domination, and is notoriously adverse to emotional, social and ethical topics, those autistic people who *do* correspond to the ‘good’ ideal dictated by these values are disproportionately privileged (in our experience sometimes to the point of excusing ethically reprehensible conduct), while those who do not, such as multiply and intersectionally marginalised autistic people, are disproportionately excluded and discriminated against (for more on issues with our field refer to [12] unpacking HCI with an intersectional lens).

Autism narratives in HCI research about autistic people still largely focus on children and feature mainly design-interventionist (i.e. design to solve a problem) and techno-solutionist (i.e. technology is what will solve the problem) [10, 24, 36, 37] approaches, often excluding the perspectives of autistic people themselves and positioning autism as a problem to be solved by designers or researchers who are not autistic, yet profess to know what is best [27, 33, 39]. These still dominant approaches are consistently and furiously opposed by autistic and otherwise neurodivergent researchers [7, 21, 39, 44, 46]. Possibly owing to this, a recent paradigm shift is happening in HCI to centre the self-determination and thriving of autistic people and move towards approaches informed by social justice [7, 45]. Nevertheless, our field’s understanding of autism and our research practices in this context continue to be underwhelming, and continue to exclude multiply marginalised autistic populations, such as autistic people outside of the US and Europe [27]. Further, although research on (and with) autistic participants is at least slowly improving, little has changed with respects to academia as a workplace, and the everyday professional norms and practices within. We as autistic researchers keep reaching our limits. How long will we survive academia for, or will we leave the system that was never meant for us?

Academia is often criticised for being extremely competitive, stressful and exploitative as a field. However, rarely do these critiques mention that disabled, neurodivergent, chronically ill or mentally ill academics are disproportionately impacted by this [26]. Similarly, many discussions about the system being ‘broken’ end in advice about what the *individual* academic (usually presumed to be without disabilities) can do about this—the kind of self-care that privileged people engage in: therapy, getting a new hobby, touching grass, and so on. The alternative is, of course, leaving. In this way, Academia follows a eugenic logic, making it impossible to those of us who do not make up for our differences to survive within [42]. Many in roles of similar power as Hans Asperger behave similarly: they help a few ‘poor souls’, lament the general situation, but change nothing about the system. Why should they? After all, they thrive in it.

One would think the celebration of autism in our field would ‘destigmatised’ it, but visibility and acceptance only through usefulness to those in power is a trap, reifying power relations rather than opposing them [14]. Autism is only destigmatised or celebrated when the capitalist system profits off it. By framing inclusion or acceptance only within the purview of celebration of competence, strengths and productivity, the gaping negative remains that those

³He uses masculine versions of both terms, his research focusing to our knowledge exclusively on boys—a general issue in this area that continues to haunt diagnostic criteria and practices to this day [31].

⁴In this context used exclusively for ‘good’ autistic people, utterly erasing the multitude of forms of neurodivergence, of which autism is only one.

disabilities that do not *happen* to bring a system-relevant ‘super-power’ with them are deemed uncomfortable, unworthy of celebration or presence in our field. Those who *would* have been sent to *am Spiegelgrund*, for instance. It begs the question: how many of us, for how long, can survive here? Which in turn makes us ask: How can we make room for more of us? What does it mean to be a ‘bad’ autistic who unapologetically and confidently thrives in Academia on their own terms?

1.2 Evil Autism

The conceptual cruelty of the ‘good’ cripple is that we switch between being regarded as cripples and regarded as normal at the pleasure of those around us. We are at the same time a group often applauded for our adaptability, normalcy and ‘easiness’ as disabled people, while at the same time, when demanding access for besaid disabilities, being told we are not disabled *enough*, there are people who are *actually* struggling, and why are we being so *difficult*⁵? Woe betide the autistic person who is in any way less than perfect.

Just how fragile our acceptance is can be well demonstrated within the very technologies many of us find sanctuary. Many autistic people find online communities suit their socialising styles well, therefore, many thrive in these places, finding places to build communities, express their interest, and present themselves socially—just like anyone else. However, they are repeatedly targeted, simply for existing, diverging from norms, or being passionate about their interests, by mob hate campaigns such as those instigated on platforms facilitating mob harassment such as Kiwi Farms [1, 2, 30]. Jarringly, many of the perpetrators are autistic themselves, with corresponding views of what constitutes ‘good’ or ‘bad’ autism [3]—in fact, the alt-right consciously attempts to exploit and “weaponise” those autistic people who may be open to their white supremacist ideologies [43]. How many of the participants in these hate groups are autistic themselves, turning against those who express themselves more authentically, or simply differently? Even worse, there is a toxic, mostly online movement called ‘*Aspie Supremacy*’, where autistic people corresponding to Asperger’s ‘good’ autism consider themselves *the next step of human evolution*, sometimes fantasising about having psychic powers or coming from another planet [11]. Aspie Supremacists set themselves apart not just from the disabled community they are a part of, including other autistic people, but from all humans, considering themselves better and more worthy [20]. We do have empathy with this twisted form of internalised ableism: of course, being special and chosen is an enticing fantasy when one is, for instance, being bullied, ostracised, or othered. But it is a dangerous and harmful fantasy, operating with white supremacist, misogynistic, and eugenic intent to continue harming those who do not function within the set system and according to capitalist logic [ibid].

Within this environment, autistic communities have formed to counter such harmful narratives. For instance, the sarcastic subreddit *r/evilautism* embraces the ‘bad’ autism. Here, autistic people share their experiences including rage, anger, and frustration, but also fun, contentment, and deep joy. The difference is that both negative and positive feelings are determined by autistic people

themselves: more often than not, frustration is not expressed about one’s own needs, but about those failing to accept them. Joy is not expressed in overcoming sensory requirements, but in catering to them; not in suppressing stims, but in engaging in them to the full. Autism is talked about here in way that does not rely on internalised ableism and self-hatred. Struggles are given space and dealt with solidarily, through humour, and swapping experiences and advice in a caring and empowering way.

The Crip Collective at TU wien, that the authors are a part of, try to the best of our extent to turn things around in a similar way, forging academic practices that centre our thriving on our own terms. We (the authors) are also part of a small, localised online peer support space dedicated to neurodivergent PhD students, where we crowdsource knowledge and access ideas, share therapy insights and frustrations, and engage in body doubling and similar peer support activities. We have started summarising our practices with both these communities, as well as our own shared and individual practices, in a living document, intended more than anything to remind *us* of our own toolset for surviving academia in an enjoyable format. We would like to share this document with the community in the following. While most of the below is advice that works *with* the system, helping us survive it, some of it works *against* it, and may yet spell our demise. Although we try to provide actionable examples, in some cases, rather than list explicitly *what* we do, which is highly specific and contextual—such as crippling research methods, prioritising outreach and simple language, prioritising and extending support to marginalised students, issuing formal complaints, and so on—we summarise our advice along an overall guideline to be applied to specific cases.

In the spirit of embracing our special interests and autistic joy, the writing style is somewhat floral, and each action point is accompanied by a metal quote⁶.

Copied from the living plan⁷ on the 2nd of February, 2025:

2 Evil Autistic Master Plan For Academia, HCI Edition

A plan in progress—now with dramatic affirming metal quotes!

Be the broken or the breaker
Be the giver or the undertaker
Unlock and open the doors
Be the healer or the faker
The keys are in your hands
Realise you are your own sole creator
Of your own master plan
– Dimmu Borgir, *Gateways*

2.1 Before All Else: Be Evil and Scary

Waking the demon (where’d you run to?)
Walking in shadows (watch the blood flow)
There’s not much longer, so don’t try and fight
Your body’s weakening, walk to the light

⁵The same people will, in fact, do nothing for those they deem actually struggling either... but that is a different topic.

⁶Because we like metal, there is not more to it. However, there’s broadly something about metal that invokes sitting with uncomfortable topics [8, 15, 40], but also of relatively privileged people whining, that is kind of fitting.

⁷https://docs.google.com/document/d/1r8qzn4FnnUU7F5_N2LXGMIWubrWi4x_X43mPcTJU_8/edit?usp=sharing

Those painful times so alone, so ashamed
 I'm not coming back, there's nothing to gain
 – Bullet for my Valentine, *Waking the Demon*

It is valid to ask for support in attempts to navigate neurotypical sociality. It is valid to repeatedly attempt to tell people to listen to your words instead of interpreting everything other than your words, valid to be frustrated and sad when access is not granted, when you have no idea what is going on, when everything is too loud, when what you communicate is ignored and instead your 'vibe' or 'body language' is 'read' as contrary, rude, or in other ways negative. It is also, however, valid to throw all that is holy overboard and instead embrace these perceptions of you. Cultivate a persona that is evil and scary. Embrace the darkness projected onto you. No longer will you bend over backwards for any purpose other than disjointedly creeping up walls. No longer will you exhaust yourself performing all the masking and empathy work on your own. Put fear in your adversaries' hearts with your diabolical grimace. Exhaust them with your well-crafted monologues, just as they exhaust you with their misguided 'smalltalk'. The time has come to unleash the Beast, the horned god, the very abomination they so readily see in you.

2.2 Nail a Plaque to your Fortress Gates

Heaven queen, carry me away from all pain
 All the same, take me away, we're dead to the world
 Heaven queen, cover me in all that blue
 Little boy, such precious joy is dead to the world
 – Nightwish, *Dead to the World*

Forge a cursed sign for your door or desk to make it clear that you are not to be disturbed in your grand and important designs. If you are feeling gracious, consider adding instructions for alternative channels to reach you by (e.g. 'If door is closed, please do not disturb. If it's urgent, knock or write in chat'). In our infernal experience, for obscure and mysterious reasons, written signs have more authority compared to direct commands (such as begging others repeatedly to stop bursting in whenever and for no good reason). Generously use written signs wherever applicable—consider, for instance, the potential of: 'SILENCE'. Possibilities are endless. So it is written.

2.3 Participate Through the Aether

Not about to see your light
 And if you wanna find hell with me
 I can show you what it's—
 – Danzig, *Mother*

If conferences play no role in your sinister plans, attend from the comfort of your fortress to save your dread energy for where it is needed. Are the foolish misguided souls around you pushing you to travel, in a laughable attempt to weaken you? Despair not, for there are several powerful cards you can play, each more gruesome than the last! If those who would damn you to such a fate are friendly, and the ethereal plane connection is stable, play the Access Card (a.k.a.: *Telling The Honest Truth, or Asking For What You Need*). If those who would damn you to such a fate are friendly, but the conference refuses to allow mirror images, play the Accusation Card (to blast the conference to cinders, combine this with the *This Reinforces US/Eurocentrism And Colonial Structures* Card—vicious,

although largely ineffective). If those who would damn you to such a fate neither comprehend nor care about your requirements, then, depending on their values, use your cursed knowledge of the dark arts to divinate whether you should use the *It Is Cheaper* Card or the *It Is Better For The Climate* Card (appropriating climate activism for your own evil schemes—detestable!)

2.4 Commit a Mere Half of Your Resources

There is a Hell, believe me, I've seen it
 There is a Heaven, let's keep it a secret
 No one needs to know
 – Bring me the Horizon, *Crucify me*

These haunted shadowlands are rife with sneaking tasks creeping up from the shadows, and seemingly innocent tasks suddenly revealing a hidden rat-tail of additional hurdles. You may, at times, be considering burning your carefully crafted evil plans and resigning yourself to your fate—but despair not! Consider instead becoming a Master Of Deception: rather than filling your entire previous hourglass of time with toil, fill up a mere half. Fabricate a web of sinful lies regarding your availability if necessary. Indeed, such are the workings of these cursed realms that you will find the rest of your time filling up with work by itself regardless of your machinations. Should you nevertheless unexpectedly find yourself with taskless paid time on your wicked hands, there will always be a ghastly lecture waiting to be refined, a hellish document pit you could arrange, a twisted propaganda piece you could write, an evil colleague you could assist in a ritual. You will always find a way to fill your working hours with more meaningful and sinister work—but once lost, you will never find a way to regain your personal leisure time.

2.5 Enter a Diabolical Pact

We stay here tonight (don't let them find us or we're dead)
 Promise me you won't leave my side (the warmest place to lay my head)
 And when the sun comes up we fight (don't let them find us or we're dead)
 So promise me you won't leave my side
 – Escape the Fate, *The Guillotine*

Your vile ears, though attuned to more important matters, may have heard, in passing, of the social structure of the so-called 'work husband/wife'. You rightfully cringe at this grotesque display of heterosexual normativity. However, there exists a better, more effective, and far more depraved evil counterpart to this: the evil autistic symbiont. Should you be so lucky to encounter a similarly wicked colleague at a similar level within the academic hierarchy, consider entering a Researcher Symbiosis with them. This sinister pact, of which no two are alike, may contain anything your vile hearts desire, from cooperating on projects and writing together (should your dark research interests align) to engaging in regular check-in rituals for nefarious emotional support. Symbionts may encourage one another to deny requests, may lend each other their bodies for various activities, and engage in many more unspeakable and inconceivable acts. Possibilities are endless: consider, for instance,

who decides when and why sending a substitute is appropriate? Why not represent your symbiont at an event beyond their power?

2.6 Deny

Refuse

Resist

Refuse

Resist

– Sepultura, *Refuse/Resist*

Learn the powerful invocation of NO. Deny those who would drain you of your power, your time, your very essence. Do not succumb to the pressures upon you! Refuse the impingements that have come to be tolerated by fools. You owe no one your unpaid time or labour. Nothing is worth your destruction and suffering. To assist you in your endeavours, collect incantations and phrases with which to arm yourself to this purpose. Your coven can assist you in your evil decline (e.g. by cheering your denial and fostering a culture of celebrating boundaries).

2.7 Gather Your Resources

By the holy flaming hammer

Of unholy cosmic frost

We will voyage 'cross the kingdom

To reclaim what once was lost

– Gloryhammer, *Holy Flaming Hammer of Unholy Cosmic Frost*

Your entire life, you have been led to believe there is something wrong with you; that you must cease your sinful ways and step into the light. You may have believed so yourself, always trying a little harder, pushing yourself a little further. You may find yourself with no confidence left in your own righteous judgement, cruelly gaslighting yourself, questioning your own experience. No more. Do not wallow in woe. What is done, is done. Rise from the ashes. Create a dark and terrible grimoire of dreadful wisdom, collect validating texts, images, messages, and other sinister affirming material in whatever gruesome form your abominable bodymind can comprehend (e.g. an evil master plan, a portrait of an emotional support character, a folder full of positive feedback from students, notes, quotes). If your mind continues to deceive you, write a validation manifesto and invite your evil colleagues, minions and worshippers to add their signatures or imbue it with additional powerful and diabolical messages.

2.8 Refocus Your Energies

Holy Diver

You're the star of the masquerade

No need to look so afraid

Jump, jump, jump on the tiger

You can feel his heart, but you know he's mean

Some light can never be seen

– Dio, *Holy Diver*

Surely, you have found yourself, in the past, attending conferences, workshops or other *allegedly* purpose-oriented meetings for the purpose of cooperation, only to find yourself witnessing whatever event you attended descend into a rambling social function.

Should this occur again, heed this: Do not waste your precious energy suppressing your murderous rage, or channel your power into cursing others into cooperation. Instead, simply tune out, leave them to rot, and proceed with your own grisly and loathsome work. If they can collectively decide to ignore the plan, then surely you, a powerful master of deviance, can decide to do whatever you please as well! Create your own agenda for the event. Concoct vile ideas by yourself, detach from the group and explore the castle, gorge yourself on the buffet, put to paper your monstrous plans, go wild with the stationery. This is now your laboratory. To glory!

2.9 Gather Your Allies

I'll take another step for you

I'll shed my tears until I drown or until I am underground

I'll take another breath for you

Will you still be there when I'm home out from the great unknown?

– The Amity Affliction, *Pittsburgh*

Patching a broken system normalises its use. Even worse, those the system is broken *for* are expected to repair it. The truly evil path is to refuse to use or mend that which is broken. No longer will you let anyone drain you of your powers while offering nothing in return. Instead, seek out other villains and lend them your powers. Seek not only those in your image, but all the monstrous, the evil, the outcast. Operate in the shadows. Build your own fortifications, forge your own tools, carve out your own destiny. Create nightmarish landscapes and hellish structures in that your wicked work may thrive.

2.10 Take Your Leave and Your Time

Rest in the Ground

Rot in the Ground

Long may we live

Long may we rest

– Feminazgûl, *The Rot in the Field is Holy*

Always take a day of sick leave. Always. Be it chronic pain, meltdown, brain fog, PMS, depression, looming burnout, or any other manner of sickening corruption that is taking over your vile bodymind, even if those whispering in your dread ears wish you to think it does not warrant a sick day—take a sick day. *HEAR THE DARK DECREE OF THE BEAST: A SICK DAY IS NEEDED!!!* Should those poor misguided souls around you quake at the unfathomable corruption you contain, transfigure your ailment into a headache (which for some strange and unholy reason is always acceptable). In the same poisonous vein: do not let yourself be goaded into the laughable concept of working hours, at best an incomplete and broken scaffold. You need not bother yourself with such trifles. You create your own timeline—and it includes time to rest.

2.11 Cultivate an Evil Life

Out there is a fortune waitin' to be had

You think I'll let it go? You're mad

You've got another thing comin'

– Judas Priest, *You Got Another Thing Coming*

No matter how difficult it may be to separate your wage-toil from your work of dark passion, you must. These scholarly halls, and the academic machine, are not your friends. They do not love you, and they do not care what fate befalls you. Even if—nay, *especially* if!—you perceive your colleagues as friends, and your depraved and horrible socialising style is through working on things together, it is of *utmost* importance you gain friends, family, a coven, or any other manner of loyal consorts separate from your workplace, and take heed to allocate enough of your horrible resources to cherishing them. For if the hateful machine expels you, as one day it will, you will find yourself forsaken. Refuse to waste your dark powers, refuse to cast spells without recompense. Pour your labour instead into parts of your fiendish life that can and will love you back—including your own wicked self.

2.12 Be a menace

Put your hands up, put your hands up
We'll fight until we die, this ain't ever gonna stop
This ain't ever gonna stop
'Cause they came for our minds, we said nothing
They came for our hopes, we said nothing
They came for our souls, and still, we said nothing
Now they're coming for our lives, so what's it gonna take?
So what's it gonna take?
– Parkway Drive *Writings on the Wall*

If we are to be condemned for our 'disproportionately strong sense of justice,' So Be It. Let us ascend in all our glorious degeneracy! Stand up against injustice, even such that may be normalised, even such that may be hard to verbalise. Practice research, teaching and community as you would in an ideal, ethical world. Call out people perpetuating oppressive, hierarchical and exploitative norms. Do not let yourself be used, and do not allow for others to be used. Show those that would hide behind calculated ambiguity and rhetorics that their bullshit is seen and will be challenged. Why not burn bridges with those whom you cannot work with without destroying yourself anyway? Why pay the price if it means regaining control from their power? Complain! Complain! Consider: even if your complaint or uprising is ineffectual, it will put fear in the hearts of those who would harm others like you, a warning that they cannot simply get away with it.

2.13 Distort the Utensils of the Craft

I cannot go back to what I have known
I cannot uproot these seed that you've sewn
Wrenching and writhing in pain of the change
Breaking forth from humanity's chains
– Antarticus *Lord of the Change*

Throw out the tools forged by fools; what use are such trifles to you? Toss instead powerful and forbidden combinations of theories into your cauldron, sew unholy bits of methods together and awaken them to life with the lightning from the skies. Craft new and terrible tools to bring to fruition your terrible purpose.

2.14 Finally: Forge a New And Evil Fate for the Ages to Come

Take a look through the bars at the last sights
Of a world that has gone very wrong for me
Can it be that there's some sort of error?
[...]
Mark my words, believe my soul lives on
Don't worry now that I have gone
I've gone beyond to seek the truth
– Cradle of Filth, *Hallowed be thy Name*

In the year of 2024, the mills of industry grind our bones ever faster, unpaid labour is sold to fresh meat as precious experience, the student is valued the least, and the review is an afterthought. False idols are worshipped as the coin chooses the path, demanding free labour, eternally on the edge of cosmic burnout. But the fate of our small world of academia can change. You can foster an evil culture of caring, carve out macabre supportive spaces, whisper to your grim colleagues to take care of themselves. Lead by heinous example: work less and slay more. It is your dark and grisly duty to conquer this hellscape and increase your ghastly power, so you may recruit more villains like yourself, and provide the next generation with the resources you never had.

End of the copy-pasted section. Here, the living document contains additional resources and further reading, as well as the disclaimer that we do not accept responsibility for evil deeds.

3 Conclusion

It gives us joy to share our resources with others, and creating this plan in its current tone and format was an additional joy virtue of our obsession with metal, horror, genre literature, and words as such. However, reading through it in its entirety again, we see the many complications that may make certain points unfeasible to others. Further, we ourselves profit from being at least 'good enough' autistic people to still be in the system (as opposed to those who never set foot in it despite dreaming to, or were forced to leave), benefitting to at least some extent ourselves from 'good' autistic privilege: thus, our plan probably overlooks many things, or suggests things that may not be preferred or possible for other autistic people, or people with other disabilities or chronic or other illnesses. In the following, we consider the ramifications of our humorously named "master plan."

3.1 Crippling academia

We cannot thrive in the system as is, therefore, we must change it. If we only ever pour our efforts into peer-support or individual self-care for the purpose of making access into the system as is, and dealing with things as they are, we normalise and reinforce the status quo—as pointed out in previous critiques of our field [44, 46]. We think this could be pointed out more strongly. The competitiveness and exploitative nature of academia will continue to tempt those of us already privileged—the 'good' autistics—into pushing each other down for individual gain. In our own experience, we have encountered many 'good' autistic peers and seniors who did not extend solidarity to their 'bad' autistic colleagues, or other marginalised people. There is no real room for autistic thriving in such a system.

We often hear about the need for more ‘care’ in Academia—but how far does and can this ‘care’ go? Too often, care is used as a buzzword [22], its ambivalence exploited to enact harm in the name of care [25]. Many of us are too scared to put up a fight and take a risk, some rightfully so. What exactly is meant by ‘care’ is often left unsaid, sometimes transpiring to adhere to individualist values. Does ‘care’ only mean using the money you earned in a destructive system to pay for the therapy to address the issues caused by the same system? Does ‘care’ for others mean asking colleagues if they are doing the same? Does it mean thinking beyond your individual self and being prepared to lose individual privileges for the sake of others, or does it mean you do what you must to stay in the game?

Staying in the game certainly has its merits. Much of the research that treats autistic participants respectfully and leads to outcomes that autistic people *actually* desire or find helpful is conducted by autistic researchers themselves [45]. Criticisms of HCI research with neurodivergent participants comes from neurodivergent researchers themselves [7, 21, 39, 44, 46]. Marginalised researchers who thrive in academia can choose to support other marginalised researchers, creating spaces for them where previously, there were none. And there *are* autistic researchers in academia, at least—we have a somewhat representative number, and between us, a somewhat powerful voice advocating for our needs. Looking at the numbers, autism as a research topic is *trendy* (although our field still does not seem to have a solid grip on *how* to do it without harming autistic people). The same cannot be said for many other disabilities, whom academia remains closed to, who do not get to stay, whom research about is not trendy or easily funded, as previous criticism towards HCI calls out [46]. Disabled communities, and support by people outside these communities, are an important resource for surviving academia [ibid], but if we want to do research that does disabled people (and other marginalised groups) justice, these groups need to be represented, and to be represented, the field needs to become *better* for them—spaces being carved out by those few who ‘made’ it and are holding the front with a handful of allies is a starting point, but fragile, putting a high workload on very few, already marginalised people.

Changing a field without being complicit is challenging, maybe impossible. As academic structures are deeply interwoven with capitalism itself, we are unsure of how dismantling ableist structures can be achieved. However, we urge taking the calls for care seriously and explicitly. Instead of vaguely referencing ‘care’ as a buzzword, define, substantiate, and above all, *practice* it—and turn your eye towards the structural, rather than the individual, in doing so. Care as in: emphasising reciprocity and relationality, as in: being continuously attentive to the neglected [32]. Care as in: justice-oriented [28]. Care as in: humility [38]. It is imperative that not only the ‘good’ autistic people get to have a say in our technological futures. Disability experience is shaped by multiple identities and standpoints (such as race, class, or gender), each a potential site of privilege or oppression [28]. To collectively thrive in academia, we need solidarity with each other across marginalisations. Disability experiences differ and so do access needs: leveraging a disability justice understanding of care means direct, situated action [28]. It means sharing resources (including emotional resources), negotiating access needs, looking out for each other, being patient with each

other. It means that disabled people get to decide how an accessible space looks like for them [28, 41].

If you read this, and you are autistic: it is time to stop being ‘good’.

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