More Alike than Unalike: Neurodiversity with Nuance
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Background
The neurodiversity paradigm maintains that neurological differences are normal variations in the human species, like race and sexual orientation, which ought to be valued and accommodated, not “fixed” or eliminated. (Chapman 2020; Walker 2021)

My Thesis
Cognitive continuity among the neurotypical and neurodivergent requires more nuanced normative claims that respect individual differences and fluid circumstances.

Difference, Not Deficit?
Depends on the case. For some, a mere difference (e.g. Temple Grandin, Chacku Mathai). Others a deficit (e.g. Donna Williams, Elyn Saks). Many autistic people accept difference and deficit (Kapp et al. 2013)

Accommodation Alone?
Impairments only sometimes arise from stigma or lack of social accommodation (e.g. Saks). False dichotomy between social & medical models (contra Lim 2015; Den Houting 2019)

Cognitive Continuity
Neurodivergent and neurotypical differ in degree, not kind. Psychological variation not only within neurological conditions, but across humanity. (May 2023)

Minority vs. Personality
No such thing as “severe” autism, schizophrenia, etc. just like there’s no “severe homosexuality” or other minority identities? (Walker 2021) (contra Hughes 2021; Nelson 2021)

Better model: personality traits. E.g. introversion sometimes a mere difference (recharge), sometimes a deficit (isolation).

A Nuanced Paradigm
Reject the biodiversity metaphor. Individual differences in brain function are quite unlike the phenotypic differences between a beetle and a Bengal tiger.

We’re more alike than unalike. Emphasizing our shared humanity can promote compassion, respect, and support for all.

Select References