

Fatness, Queerness, and Neurodivergent Narratives of Intersectional Identities in Media and Pop Culture

In contemporary media and pop culture, the intersection of fatness, queerness, and neurodivergent signifies a crucial but inadequately researched domain of identity and representation. The representation of marginalised identities is becoming increasingly significant as cultural spaces continue to impact social norms and impact perspectives. Media and popular culture have the ability to either reinforce stereotypes or contest the status quo by emphasising varied, nuanced narratives. The comprehension of the intersections between neurodivergent, queer, and fat identities offers valuable insight into the lived experiences of numerous individuals, thereby promoting inclusivity and empathy in a society that frequently marginalises diversity.

Intersectionality, a term introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw, serves as the basis for analysing the interrelated systems of oppression and privilege that impact on persons possessing several marginalised identities. Fatness, queerness, and neurodivergence intersect within social prejudice, each dimension possessing distinct stereotypes and prejudices. The convergence of these identities exacerbates the obstacles encountered by individuals, since the experiences of obese queer neurodivergent persons are not only additive but compounded in complexity.

Neurodivergence includes various cognitive differences, such as autism, ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder), and other atypical neurological diseases. Historically, neurodivergent characters in media have been shown as ‘quirky’ or as challenges to be surmounted rather than as fully developed humans. Furthermore, the absence of intersectional representations results in the underrepresentation of neurodivergent individuals of colour, queer neurodivergent persons, and fat neurodivergent individuals.

Fatness, queerness, and neurodivergence are not discrete identities but rather intersect with cultural prejudices and structural obstacles. Media and popular culture have the capacity to transform these myths, providing more inclusive and genuine depictions that mirror the variety of human experience. Embracing intersectionality enables the creation of a cultural environment that honours many identities, promotes understanding, and celebrates differences. By using intentional storytelling and representation, the tales of obese, queer, and neurodivergent persons may transition from the periphery to the forefront, enhancing both media and society.

Welcome topics include but are not limited to:

- The erasure of fat, queer, and neurodivergent identities in mainstream media.
- Fatness as a symbol of otherness in film and television.
- Queer-coded characters and their intersection with neurodivergence.
- The lack of intersectional representation in animated series.
- How indie films are redefining fat, queer, and neurodivergent narratives.
- The rise of neurodivergent queer protagonists in modern storytelling.
- The impact of LGBTQIA+ representation in kids’ media.
- Fat superheroes: Breaking boundaries or reinforcing clichés?
- The role of celebrity activism in normalizing intersectional identities.
- Queer neurodivergence in pop music: Breaking stigmas through lyrics.
- Fat fashion in queer culture: A pop culture revolution.

- Drag culture and the intersection of fatness and queerness.
- Neurodivergence and queerness in cosplay and fan culture.
- Memes as a medium for intersectional identity expression.
- Analysing representation in global cinema: Beyond Western narratives.
- Social media influencers as champions of inclusivity.
- Representation in reality TV: Exploitation versus empowerment.
- The intersection of fatness and mental health in media.
- Coming-of-age stories featuring intersectional protagonists.
- Fat bodies as metaphors in speculative fiction.
- Intersectional identity in memoirs and autobiographies.
- Non-binary representation and its overlap with neurodivergence.
- The role of fat, queer, and neurodivergent writers in reshaping narratives.
- Intersectional love stories in contemporary media.
- Depictions of fatness and queerness in dystopian and utopian fiction.
- Regional differences in intersectional representation: Hollywood vs. Bollywood.
- The impact of intersectional representation on self-identity and mental health.
- Addressing the gap in children's literature for intersectional representation.
- Future trends: How technology can amplify diverse voices.

Please, submit your abstract of 500 words along with your bio in 50 words to Neha Kumari (nk0007788@gmail.com) by 15 March 2025. The submitted abstracts will be reviewed, and responses will be sent by 15 April 2025. The full paper submission date is 15 June, 2025. The special issue will be published in the journal *Intersections: Gender and Sexuality in Asia and the Pacific*. The journal is also known as *Intersections (Australia)*. Its ISSN is 1440-9151. It is published by The Australian National University and has a long and rich history of publishing scholarship on gender and sexuality as an open-access journal without charging any APC.

Special Issue Guest Editor

Neha Kumari

Neha Kumari is an assistant professor at Sri Balaji University Pune, India. She has published research articles in reputed journals, indexed in Scopus and Web of Science. Neha is the editor of *Fat Studies*, Taylor & Francis. She is an academic editor of the *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities* and an editorial board member of the *Indian Journal of Health, Sexuality, and Culture*. Her areas of interest include Gender and Sexuality Studies, Fat Studies, Film Studies, Transgender Studies, Cultural Studies, and Women's Studies and Communication.