

# Meryl Alper

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## Academic Employment

### **Northeastern University**

2021- Associate Professor, Department of Communication Studies, College of Arts,  
Media, and Design  
2015-2021 Assistant Professor, Department of Communication Studies, College of Arts,  
Media, and Design

## Education

### **University of Southern California**

2015 Ph.D., Communication, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism  
2013 M.A., Communication, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism

### **UCLA Extension**

2010 Certificate (with Distinction), Early Childhood Education

### **Northwestern University**

2005 B.S. (Magna Cum Laude), Communication Studies and History

## **RESEARCH**

### Publications

#### **Books**

**Alper, M.** (under contract, anticipated 2022). *Kids across the spectrums: Growing up autistic in the digital age*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

**Alper, M.** (2017). *Giving voice: Mobile communication, disability, and inequality*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

\* 2018 Association of American Publishers PROSE Award Honorable Mention, Professional and Scholarly Publishing Division, Media and Cultural Studies Category;  
2018 American Sociological Association Outstanding Publication in the Sociology of Disability Award, Section on Disability and Society

\* Reviewed by *New Media & Society*, *IEEE Annals of the History of Computing*, *Journal of Children and Media*, *Disability Studies Quarterly*, *Journal of Interdisciplinary Voice Studies*, *Endeavour*, *Canadian Journal of Disability Studies*, *Choice* (Highly Recommended)

**Alper, M.** (2014). *Digital youth with disabilities*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

\* Reviewed by *Journal of Children and Media*

## Journal Articles (Peer Reviewed)

- Alper, M.** (2021). U.S. parent perspectives of media guidance from pediatric autism professionals. *Journal of Children and Media*, 15(2), 165–182.
- Alper, M.** (2021). Critical media access studies: Deconstructing power, visibility, and marginality in mediated space. *International Journal of Communication*, 15, 840–861.
- Mello, S., **Alper, M.**, & Allen, A. A. (2020). Physician mediation theory and pediatric media guidance in the digital age: A survey of autism medical and clinical professionals. *Health Communication*, 35(8), 955–965.
- Alper, M.** (2019). Portables, luggables, and transportables: Historicizing the imagined affordances of mobile computing. *Mobile Media & Communication*, 7(3), 322–340.
- Alper, M.** (2019). Future talk: Accounting for the technological and other future discourses in daily life. *International Journal of Communication*, 13, 715–735.
- Alper, M.** (2018). Inclusive sensory ethnography: Studying new media and neurodiversity in everyday life. *New Media & Society*, 20(10), 3560–3579.
- Alper, M.**, & Goggin, G. (2017). Digital technology and rights in the lives of children with disabilities. *New Media & Society*, 19(5), 726–740.
- Götz, M., Holler, A., & **Alper, M.** (2016). Children’s preferences for TV show hosts: An international perspective on learning from television. *Journal of Children and Media*, 10(4), 497–507.
- Jennings, N., & **Alper, M.** (2016). Young children’s positive and negative parasocial relationships with media characters. *Communication Research Reports*, 33(2), 96–102.
- Alper, M.**, Katz, V., & Clark, L. S. (2016). Researching children, intersectionality, and diversity in the digital age. *Journal of Children and Media*, 10(1), 107–114.  
\* Reprinted (2017), in D. Lemish, A. Jordan, & V. Rideout (Eds.), *Children, adolescents, and media: The future of research and action* (pp. 111–118). London: Routledge.
- Alper, M.** (2015). Augmentative, alternative, and assistive: Reimagining the history of mobile computing and disability. *IEEE Annals of the History of Computing*, 37(1), 93–96.
- Alper, M.** (2014). “Can Our Kids Hack It With Computers?”: Constructing youth hackers in family computing magazines (1983-1987). *International Journal of Communication*, 8, 673–698.
- Alper, M.** (2014). War on Instagram: Framing conflict photojournalism with mobile photography apps. *New Media & Society*, 16(8), 1233–1248.
- Alper, M.**, & Herr-Stephenson, B. (2013). Transmedia play: Literacy across media. *Journal of Media Literacy Education*, 5(2), 366–369.
- Alper, M.** (2013). Developmentally appropriate New Media Literacies: Supporting cultural competencies and social skills in early childhood education. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 13(2), 175–196.
- Alper, M.**, Hourcade, J.P., & Gilutz, S. (2012). Adding reinforced corners: Designing technologies for children with disabilities. *ACM Interactions*, 14(6), 72–75.
- Alper, M.** (2012). Promoting emerging new media literacies among young children with blindness and visual impairment. *Digital Culture and Education*, 4(3).

## Book Chapters

- Prendella, K., & **Alper, M.** (in press). Day-to-day encounters with media. In R. L. Brown, M. Maroto, & D. Pettinicchio (Eds.), *Oxford handbook on the sociology of disability*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Alper, M.**, & Irons, M. (2020). Digital socializing in children on the autism spectrum. In L. Green, D. Holloway, L. Haddon, K. Stevenson, & T. Leaver (Eds.), *Routledge companion to children and digital media* (pp. 348–357). London, UK: Routledge.
- Alper, M.** (2019). When face-to-face is screen-to-screen: Reconsidering mobile media as communication augmentations and alternatives. In K. Ellis, G. Goggin, B. Haller, & R. Curtis (Eds.), *Routledge companion to disability and media* (pp. 275–284). London, UK: Routledge.
- Alper, M.** (2017). Transmedia. In K. Peppler (Ed.), *SAGE encyclopedia of out-of-school learning* (pp. 791–792). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Alper, M.**, & Haller, B. (2017). Social media use and mediated sociality among individuals with communication disabilities in the digital age. In K. Ellis, & M. Kent (Eds.), *Disability and social media: Global perspectives* (pp. 133–145). London, UK: Routledge.
- Alper, M.**, Ellcessor, E., Ellis, K., & Goggin, G. (2015). Reimagining the good life with disability: Communication, new technology, and humane connections. In H. Wang (Ed.), *Communication and “the good life”* (International Communication Association Theme Book Series, Vol. 2) (pp. 197–212). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Alper, M.** (2013). Children and convergence culture. In D. Lemish (Ed.), *Routledge international handbook of children, adolescents and media* (pp. 148–155). London, UK: Routledge.

## Other

### White Papers and Reports (Non-Peer Reviewed)

- Whittaker, M., (with **Alper, M.**, Bennett, C. L., Hendren, S., Kaziunas, L., Mills, M., Morris, M. R., Rankin, J., Rogers, E., Salas, M., & Myers West, S.)\* (2019). *Disability, bias, and AI*. New York: AI Now Institute at New York University. \*co-authors listed alphabetically
- Herr-Stephenson, B., & **Alper, M.**, (with Reilly, E., & Jenkins, H.) (2013). *T is for transmedia: Learning through transmedia play*. Los Angeles and New York: USC Annenberg Innovation Lab and The Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop.

### Conference Proceedings and Workshop Papers (Peer Reviewed)

- Hourcade, J.P., Garzotto, F., Rozga, A., Tentori, M., Markopolous, P., Pares, N., Good, J., Pain, H., & **Alper, M.** (2014). Supporting children with complex communication needs. *Proceedings of the ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI)* (pp. 119–122). Toronto, Canada, April 26-May 1, 2014. New York, NY: ACM.
- Alper, M.** (2013). Making space in the makerspace: Building a mixed-ability maker culture. *ACM International Conference on Interaction Design and Children (IDC)*, Workshop on Evaluating Accessibility in Fabrication Tools for Children, New York, NY.

**Alper, M.,** Hourcade, J.P., & Gilutz, S. (2012). Interactive technologies for children with special needs. *Proceedings of the ACM International Conference on Interaction Design and Children (IDC)* (pp. 363–366). Bremen, Germany, June 12-15, 2012. New York, NY: ACM.

### **Book Reviews**

**Alper, M.** (2020). Book Review: *Parenting for a Digital Future: How Hopes and Fears about Technology Shape Children's Lives* (S. Livingstone & A. Blum-Ross). *International Journal of Communication*, 14, 5004–5006.

**Alper, M.** (2016). Book Review: *Making Computers Accessible: Disability Rights & Digital Technology* (E. R. Petrick). *Technology and Culture*, 57(4), 1027–1028.

**Alper, M.** (2013). Book Review: *The Parent App: Understanding Families in the Digital Age* (L. S. Clark). *Journal of Children and Media*, 7(4), 525–529.

**Alper, M.** (2011). Book Review: *Quest to Learn: Developing the School for Digital Kids* (K. Salen et al.). *Journal of Children and Media*, 5(4), 467–471.

### **Letters to the Editor**

**Alper, M.** (2020). Improving research on screen media, autism, and families of young children. *JAMA Pediatrics*, 174(12), 1223.

### **Amicus Briefs**

*Carpenter v. United States*, No. 16-402 (U.S. Supreme Court, 2017) (co-signer to Brief of Amici Curiae, Data & Society Research Institute and Fifteen Scholars of Technology and Society in Support Of Petitioner).

### **Journal Articles (Non-Peer Reviewed)**

Götz, M., Mendel, C., Lemish, D., Jennings, N., Hains, R., Abdul, F., **Alper, M.** ... Yee, A. Z. H.\* (2020). Children, COVID-19 and the media: A study on the challenges children are facing in the 2020 coronavirus crisis. *TelevIZion*, 33(1), 4–9. \*co-authors listed alphabetically

### **Public Commentary**

**Alper, M.** (2020, November 30). [CAMmer In the Spotlight: Meryl Alper](#). *Website of the International Communication Association (ICA) Children, Adolescents, and Media Division*. (Invited Interview)

**Alper, M.** (2020, October 27). [The silver lining of virtual school for some autistic students](#). *Slate (Future Tense)*.

**Alper, M.,** & Jackson, L. (2019, April 25). [LEGO Braille Bricks](#). *Critical Axis*.

**Alper, M.** (2018, March 6). [Can technology really 'give voice' to disabled people?](#) *Pacific Standard*.

**Alper, M.** (2017, July 21). [Talking like a "Princess": What speaking machines say about human biases](#). *Lady Science*, 34.

**Alper, M.** (2017, June 13). [Personal computing and personhood in design and disability](#). *CASTAC (Committee for the Anthropology of Science, Technology & Computing), General Anthropology Division, American Anthropological Association*. (Invited Commentary)

- Alper, M., & Greene, D. (2017, June 7). [Author Interview: Meryl Alper on “Giving Voice.”](#) *Culture Digitally*. (Invited Interview)
- Alper, M. (2016, September 21). [What ABC’s new TV series \*Speechless\* can tell us about “voice.”](#) *VICE Motherboard*.
- Alper, M. (2016, April 21). [No child’s brain is the same.](#) *Zócalo Public Square* (Syndicated by *Dallas Morning News*). (Invited Commentary)

### **Honors and Awards**

- 2018        **Association of American Publishers**, PROSE Award Honorable Mention for *Giving Voice*, Professional and Scholarly Publishing Division, Media and Cultural Studies Category
- 2018        **American Sociological Association**, Outstanding Publication in the Sociology of Disability Award for *Giving Voice*, Section on Disability and Society
- 2017        **International Communication Association**, Top Faculty Paper Award, Philosophy, Theory and Critique Division
- 2017        **International Communication Association**, Top 8 Paper Award, Mobile Communication Interest Group
- 2015        **International Communication Association**, Top 3 Poster Award, Children, Adolescents and Media Division
- 2014        **University of Southern California**, Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award, Department of Communication
- 2014        **University of Southern California**, Oxford Internet Institute Summer Doctoral Program Travel Grant, Department of Communication
- 2013        **Society for the History of Technology**, Junior Scholar Conference Travel Grant
- 2011        **International Communication Association**, Top Student Paper Award, Children, Adolescents and Media Division
- 2005        **Northwestern University**, Communication Studies Senior Thesis Honors
- 2005        **Northwestern University**, Communication Studies Undergraduate Departmental Excellence
- 2004        **Northwestern University**, Doron Abosch Memorial Scholarship, Northwestern Club of New York

### **Fellowships and Faculty Affiliations**

- 2020-        **Northeastern University**, Affiliate Scholar, Northeastern Law School, Center for Law, Innovation, and Creativity
- 2018-        **Northeastern University**, Faculty Scholar, Institute for Health Equity and Social Justice Research
- 2018-2019    **Northeastern University**, Dean’s Research Fellow, College of Arts, Media, and Design
- 2018-2019    **Northeastern University**, Faculty Fellow, Northeastern Humanities Center
- 2015-2018    **Harvard University**, Faculty Associate, Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society
- 2010-2015    **Annenberg Foundation**, Doctoral Fellowship, University of Southern California

## **Scholarly Presentations**

### **Keynote Addresses**

- Alper, M. (2021, March). *Critical media access studies: Examining the benefits and limits of accessibility in mediated spaces*. Dis-/Abilities and Digital Media, German Research Foundation (DFG) Scientific Network. University of Konstanz, Konstanz, Germany. (Remote presentation)
- Alper, M. (2019, August). *Digital media, youth, and disability*. Keynote address at +aprendizajes Conference. Fundación Ceibal, Montevideo, Uruguay.
- Alper, M. (2019, June). *Redefining mediated human connections through disability and digital technology*. Keynote address at #ScreentimeBU Graduate Student Conference, Division of Emerging Media Studies. Boston University, Boston, MA.
- Alper, M. (2016, April). *Universal design for learning*. Keynote address at U.S. Department of Education Ready to Learn Grant Advisory Board Meeting. Twin Cities Public Television, Washington, DC.

### **Sponsored Panels**

- Alper, M. (2018, May). *Screen time and the lives of children* (with Amy Jordan, Jan Van den Bulck, and Sun Sun Lim, co-panelists). Sponsored session at International Communication Association, Prague, Czech Republic.
- Alper, M. (2017, September). *Media for social responsibility: Life with autism spectrum disorder* (with Ron Suskind, featured panelist; Tina Caswell, Susanne Bruyere, & Nadine Vogel, co-panelists). Park Distinguished Visitor Series, Park School of Communications. Ithaca College, Ithaca, NY.
- Alper, M. (2016, August). *Creative computing for all* (with Karen Brennan, moderator; Nick Giacobbe & Rhianon Gutierrez, co-panelists). Keynote panel at Scratch Conference. MIT Media Lab, Cambridge, MA.

### **Invited Talks**

- Alper, M. (2021, March). *Critical media access studies: Examining the benefits and limits of accessibility in mediated spaces*. Department of Communication, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT. (Remote presentation)
- Alper, M. (2021, March). *Only a mother's touch(screen): The materiality of maternal labor and assistive technology*. Explorations in the Medical Humanities: Parenting in Pandemic. The Society of Fellows and Heyman Center for the Humanities. Columbia University, New York, NY. (Remote presentation)
- Alper, M. (2021, February). *Maximizing the participation of children on the autism spectrum in research*. PBS KIDS, Arlington, VA. (Remote presentation)
- Alper, M. (2021, January). *Creating inclusive children's media for autism and neurodiversity*. PBS KIDS, Arlington, VA. (Remote presentation)
- Alper, M. (2020, October). *Parenting digital youth on the spectrum during the pandemic*. Ask the Experts: Screens, Students, and ASD. Children and Screens: Institute of Digital Media and Child Development, Cold Spring Harbor, NY. (Remote presentation)
- Alper, M. (2020, June). *Children on the autism spectrum and media: What should children's media producers know in the age of COVID-19?* Prix Jeunesse International 2020, Munich, Germany. (Remote presentation)

- Alper, M. (2020, March). *Disability, voice, and the social implications of communication technologies*. University of Delaware Grand Challenges Program, Designing Inclusive Futures Project. University of Delaware, Newark, DE.
- Alper, M. (2020, February). *Promoting equity in digital learning through inclusive sensory ethnography*. Connected Learning Lab, UC Irvine, Irvine, CA. (Remote presentation)
- Alper, M. (2019, October). *Digital media, disability, and youth: Opportunities for learning, voice, and sociality*. Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY.
- Alper, M. (2019, May). *Disability, voice, and the social implications of communication technology*. LEAD20@MIT: Leadership in the Digital Age. Ruderman Family Foundation and MIT Sloan School of Management, Cambridge, MA.
- Alper, M. (2019, February). *Disability and the social implications of communication technology*. Learning Sciences Speaker Series, Center for Teaching & Learning. Boston University, Boston, MA.
- Alper, M. (2018, November). *Disability and the social implications of communication technology*. Doctoral Colloquium in Learning and Development, Graduate School of Education. Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
- Alper, M. (2018, November). *Disability tech*. Architectural Access Workshop Series, Department of Architecture. MIT, Cambridge, MA.
- Alper, M. (2018, August). *The cultural politics of “sensory-friendly” mediated spaces*. Communicating Universal Design, Department of Design Sciences, Faculty of Engineering. Lund University, Lund, Sweden.
- Alper, M. (2018, April). *Reconsidering connection and conversation through disability and communication technology*. Disrupting Distance: Evolving Connections and Disconnects in the Digital Age Symposium. Bard Graduate Center, New York, NY.
- Alper, M. *Giving voice: Mobile communication, disability, and inequality* (Invited book talks after publication).  
 University of Michigan, Department of Communication Studies, Communication and Media Speaker Series, Ann Arbor, MI (2017, November).  
 University of Southern California, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, Annenberg Research Seminar, Los Angeles, CA (2017, August).  
 UC San Diego, UCSD Center for Humanities, Transdisciplinary Disability Studies Reading Group, San Diego, CA (2017, May).  
 Harvard University, Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society (with Elizabeth Ellcessor), Cambridge, MA (2017, May).  
 Institute for Human Centered Design, Boston, MA (2017, May).  
 University of Maryland, Human-Computer Interaction Lab, College Park, MD (2017, April).  
 Data & Society Research Institute, New York, NY (2017, April).  
 University of North Carolina, School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Mary Junck Research Colloquium Series, Chapel Hill, NC (2017, January).
- Alper, M. (2017, May). *Growing up autistic in the digital age: Early fieldwork and findings*. Access for All: Designing Experiences for People with Autism Symposium. New York Transit Museum, Brooklyn, NY.
- Alper, M. (2017, April). *Augmenting communication for non-speaking youth with new media and popular culture*. Tech Kids Unlimited, NYU Tandon School of Engineering, Brooklyn, NY.

- Alper, M. (2016, May). *Reconsidering conversation: Mobile media as communication augmentations and alternatives*. Department of Communication, University of Washington, Seattle, WA.
- Alper, M. (2016, January). *Networked immobility*. Faculty Ideas Session. Berkman Center for Internet and Society, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
- Alper, M. (2015, October). *New directions in supporting digital youth with disabilities*. Center on Media and Child Health, Children's Hospital Boston, Boston, MA.
- Alper, M. (2015, June). *Playing with transmedia and gender in children's storytelling*. St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences, Vienna, Austria.
- Alper, M. (2015, January). *Making a difference. One app at a time?: Disability, distinction, and domestic access*. Microsoft Research New England, Social Media Collective, Cambridge, MA.
- Alper, M. (2014, October). *Augmenting communication for non-speaking youth with new media and popular culture*. Department of Informatics, UC Irvine, Irvine, CA.
- Alper, M. (2014, October). *Giving "screen time" a time-out: Rethinking media use among youth with disabilities*. Center for Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders, Santa Ana, CA.
- Alper, M. (2014, May). *"I wish he loves games": The media practices of autistic youth with complex communication needs*. Robotics and Autonomous Systems Center Interaction Lab, Viterbi School of Engineering, USC, Los Angeles, CA.
- Alper, M. (2014, March). *Digital media and early learning: "Greatest hits" 2014*. UCLA Early Care and Education Center, Los Angeles, CA.
- Alper, M. (2013, October). *Youth with disabilities and their digital media use*. New America Foundation, Washington, DC.
- Alper, M. (2012, October). *From Minnie Mouse to Minecraft: Children's transmedia storytelling and play*. Advertising Research Foundation Youth Forum, Burbank, CA.

### **Invited Panel**

- Alper, M. (2020, October). *Every body: A conversation with Sara Hendren & Elizabeth Guffey* (respondent; with Matthew Battles, moderator). Making (It) Work Series, metaLAB and Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society. Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
- Alper, M. (2017, May). *Conversation with Heben Nigatu, BuzzFeed's Another Round Podcast* (panelist; with Jonathan Sun, moderator; Kishonna Gray, co-panelist). MIT Online Humor Conversation Series, Cambridge, MA.
- Alper, M. (2016, October). *The turn to "tween": An age category and its cultural consequences* (panelist; with Marah Gubar, moderator; Tyler Bickford, co-panelist). MIT Communications Forum, Cambridge, MA.

### **Workshop Organizer**

- 2017 Shared Realities: Disability, Technology, and Inclusion (sponsored by Microsoft Research, co-organized with Dylan Mulvin, Microsoft Research)

### **Sponsored Workshops and Institutes**

- 2019 Invited Participant (with full funding), Workshop on Disability, Bias, and AI, Microsoft Research and the AI Now Institute, New York, NY.
- 2018 Invited Participant (with full funding), Communicating Universal Design, Department of Design Sciences, Faculty of Engineering, Lund University, Lund, Sweden.



- 2018 Invited Participant (with full funding), Developmental Science in the Digital Age, Society for Research in Child Development and Jacobs Foundation, Irvine, CA.
- 2018 Invited Participant, Making Sense of Algorithmic Systems, STS Program, Tufts University, Medford, MA.
- 2018 Invited Participant (with partial funding), Social Science Foo Camp, Facebook Headquarters, Menlo Park, CA.
- 2016 Participant, Jacobs Foundation-sponsored Pre-Conference Workshop, Society for Research in Child Development Special Topic Meeting: Technology and Media in Child Development, UC Irvine, Irvine, CA.
- 2016 Participant, Early Career Mentoring Program, Society for Research in Child Development Special Topic Meeting: Technology and Media in Child Development, UC Irvine, Irvine, CA.
- 2016 Invited Participant (with full funding), NSF Workshop on Youth, Learning, and Data Science, UC Berkeley, Berkeley, CA.
- 2015 Participant (with full funding), NSF-sponsored Doctoral Colloquium, iConference, Irvine, CA.
- 2014 Participant (competitive), Oxford Internet Institute, Summer Doctoral Program, Oxford, UK.

### **Conference Presentations and Panel Discussions**

- Alper, M., Jennings, N., & Caplovitz, A. (2021, May). *Children living with chronic illness, disability, and the media during the coronavirus crisis*. International Communication Association, Children, Adolescents and Media Division. (Remote presentation)
- Alper, M., Mello, S., & Allen, A. A. (2021, May). *Doctors' orders: Examining pediatric media guidance topics and correlates in the context of autistic children*. International Communication Association, Children, Adolescents and Media Division. (Remote presentation)
- Mankoff, J., Alper, A., McDonnell, E., Mack, K., Potluri, V., & Kasnitz, D. (2021, April). *Human computer interaction folk have found disability studies: Playing together well!* Panel discussion at the Society for Disability Studies Conference (SDS@OSU). (Remote presentation)
- Alper, M. (2019, May). *The cultural politics of "sensory-friendly" mediated spaces*. International Communication Association, Activism, Communication and Social Justice Interest Group, Washington, DC.
- Alper, M. (2019, May). *Portables, luggables, and transportables: Historicizing the imagined affordances of mobile computing*. International Communication Association, Mobile Communication Interest Group, Washington, DC.
- Alper, M., Mello, S., & Allen, A. (2019, May). *Physician mediation theory and pediatric media guidance in the digital age: A survey of autism medical and clinical professionals*. International Communication Association, Health Communication Division, Washington, DC.
- Allen, A., Alper, M., Shane, H., & Haynes, C. (2018, November). *Attitudes & use of screen media in families of children with autism: A survey*. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Annual Convention, Boston, MA.

- Alper, M., Paulsen, K., Hjorth, L., Parisi, D., & Archer, J. (2018, October). *On haptics, touch, and the internet*. Roundtable panel at the Annual Conference of the Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR), Montreal, QC.
- Alper, M. (2018, August). *Disability and digital technology*. Special session on “Digital Innovations for Change: Public Sociology in the 21st Century.” American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA.
- Alper, M. (2018, May). *Future talk: Lay theories of technological and other futurities*. International Communication Association, Children, Adolescents and Media Division, Prague, Czech Republic.
- Allen, A., Alper, M., Shane, H., & Haynes, C. (2017, November). *Interprofessional development of a survey exploring mobile technology use among families of children with autism*. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Annual Convention, Los Angeles, CA.
- Patel, R., & Alper, M. (2017, November). *Giving voice to social communication outcomes in an increasingly diverse & digital age*. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Annual Convention, Los Angeles, CA.
- Alper, M. (2017, August). *Disability: Making “sense” of computing through sensory processing disorder and autism*. Panel on “Making Sense of Computing: Methods, Uses, and Histories.” Annual Meeting of the Society for Social Studies of Science, Boston, MA.
- Alper, M. (2017, May). *Hearing synthetic speech as human: Disability, technology, and the politics of listening to computerized voice*. International Communication Association, Philosophy, Theory and Critique Division, San Diego, CA. (Top Faculty Paper Award; Philosophy, Theory and Critique Division)
- Alper, M. (2017, May). *Making a case for iPad cases: Theorizing mobile accessories and materiality*. International Communication Association, Mobile Communication Interest Group, San Diego, CA. (Top 8 Paper Award; Mobile Communication Interest Group)
- Alper, M. (2017, May). *Keeping voices attached to people: Disability, demagogues, and design in media*. International Communication Association Conference, Pre-Conference on Media Justice: Race, Borders, Disability, Data, San Diego, CA.
- Alper, M. (2016, November). *Bringing in disability to bring back class: Understanding media and technology for contemporary times and people*. Plenary on Media and Class in the 21st Century. Media & Class in the 21st Century Pre-Conference, National Communication Association Conference, Philadelphia, PA.
- Alper, M. (2016, October). *The communicative value of recreational media use among children with complex communication needs*. Society for Research in Child Development, Special Topic Meeting: Technology and Media in Children’s Development, Irvine, CA.
- Katz, V., Alper, M., & Clark, L. S. (2016, October). *Researching children, intersectionality, and diversity in the digital age*. Society for Research in Child Development, Special Topic Meeting: Technology and Media in Children’s Development, Irvine, CA.
- Alper, M. (2016, October). *Disability, digital media, and the “home technology divide.”* Digital Media and Learning Conference, Irvine, CA.
- Goggin, G., & Alper, M. (2016, July). *Disability, children, and new challenges to digital policy and human rights*. International Association for Media and Communication Research Pre-Conference, Children’s and Young People’s Rights in the Digital Age. London School of Economics, London, UK.

- Alper, M., & Goggin, G. (2016, June). *Children with disabilities: Rights, digital tech, freedoms*. International Communication Association, Children, Adolescents and Media Division, Fukuoka, Japan.
- Alper, M. (2015, June). *Networked im/mobility: Infrastructural barriers to school district deployment of iPads as assistive technologies*. Digital Media and Learning Conference, Los Angeles, CA.
- Alper, M. (2015, May). *The trouble with “screen time”: Disability and the social construction of children’s mediated bodies*. International Communication Association Conference, Popular Communication Division, San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- Alper, M. (2015, May). *“There’s many ways that I know that he can read”: Towards an asset model of childhood disability and children’s media use*. International Communication Association Conference, Children, Adolescents and Media Division, San Juan, Puerto Rico. (Top 3 Poster Award; Children, Adolescents and Media Division)
- Alper, M. (2015, May). *Speak, spell, touch, tell: A history of mobile talking machines*. International Communication Association Conference, Communication History Division, San Juan, Puerto Rico.
- Alper, M. (2014, May). *Reconsidering theories of ICT adoption: The case of tablet-based augmentative and alternative communication devices*. International Communication Association Conference, Theme Session, Seattle, WA.
- Alper, M. (2014, May). *Augmentative, alternative, and assistive: Reimagining mobile communication and disability*. International Communication Association Conference, Mobile Communication Pre-Conference, Seattle, WA.
- Alper, M. (2013, October). *“Can Our Kids Hack It With Computers?”: Making hacking “family-friendly,” 1983-1987*. Society for the History of Technology Conference, Portland, ME.
- Alper, M., & Jennings, N. (2013, June). *Young children’s positive and negative parasocial relationships with media characters*. International Communication Association Conference, Children, Adolescents and Media Division, London, UK.
- Holler, A., Götz, M., & Alper, M. (2013, June). *Children’s preferences for TV show hosts: An international perspective on learning from television*. International Communication Association Conference, Children, Adolescents and Media Division, London, UK.
- Alper, M. (2013, May). *War on Instagram: Framing mobile photography apps in embedded photojournalism*. MIT Media in Transition Conference, Cambridge, MA.
- Alper, M. (2013, March). *Mixed-ability maker culture*. Digital Media and Learning Conference, Chicago, IL.
- Alper, M. (2012, March). *Promoting emerging new media literacies among young children with blindness and visual impairments*. Digital Media and Learning Conference, San Francisco, CA.
- Alper, M. (2011, May). *Representations of non-American “foreigners” in American children’s television*. International Communication Association Conference, Children, Adolescents and Media Division, Boston, MA. (Top Student Paper Award; Children, Adolescents and Media Division)
- Alper, M. (2011, March). *“There’s a nap for that!”: Parents’ YouTube videos of babies and toddlers using iPhones, iPads, and iPod Touch devices*. Digital Media and Learning Conference, Long Beach, CA.

## Research Grants

### **External**

2015-2020 U.S. Department of Education, Ready to Learn Grant, 2015-2020, “Superhero School: Harnessing the Power of Science, Literacy, and Media” (PBS KIDS’ *Hero Elementary*) (\$36,765,832 overall, \$10,000 dedicated; Role: Project Consultant)

### **Internal**

2018-2019 Dean’s Research Fellow Award, College of Arts, Media, and Design (\$3,750; Role: PI)

2018-2019 Health Equity Pilot Award, Institute for Health Equity and Social Justice Research, Northeastern University (\$5,000; Role: PI)

2017-2018 Latifa Al Khalifa Grant, College of Arts, Media and Design, Northeastern University, “Growing Up Autistic in the Digital Age” (\$10,000; Role: PI)

2013 Diploma in Innovation Grant, University of Southern California (\$5,000; Role: PI)

## Academic Research Positions

2010-2013 **University of Southern California**, Annenberg Innovation Lab  
Research Assistant (Prof. Henry Jenkins)

2011-2012 **University of Southern California**, Annenberg Research Seminar  
Graduate Assistant (Prof. Larry Gross and Prof. Peter Monge)

2010 **University of Southern California**, Project New Media Literacies  
Research Assistant (Prof. Henry Jenkins)

2003-2005 **Northwestern University**, Children’s Digital Media Center  
Lab Assistant Manager & Research Assistant (Dean Barbara O’Keefe)

2002 **Northwestern University**, Spatial Intelligence and Learning Center  
Research Assistant (Prof. David Uttal)

## Industry Employment

2017- **PBS KIDS and WBGH**  
Freelance Educational Media & Technology Consultant

2008-2009 **Los Angeles Family School**, Los Angeles, CA  
Substitute Preschool Teacher

2008-2010 **Nickelodeon**, Los Angeles, CA  
Research Manager, Nick Jr. Preschool Television

2005-2008 **Disney Channel**, Burbank, CA  
Programming Scheduling Coordinator, Programming Department

2004 **Nickelodeon**, New York, NY  
Intern, Noggin/The-N, Brand Creative Department

2003 **Sesame Workshop**, New York, NY  
Intern, *Sesame Street*, Domestic Research and Education Department

## **Selected Media Coverage**

- EdTech Magazine*. [How can universities help disabled students with remote learning?](#) September 28, 2020.
- The New York Times*. [Disabled do-it-yourselfers lead way to technology gains.](#) July 14, 2020.
- Canadian Broadcasting Corporation/CBC Radio: Spark*. [Disability design.](#) November 8, 2019.
- La Diaria* (Uruguay). [Meryl Alper: “Hay que involucrar a la persona con discapacidad en la creación del producto que es para su beneficio.”](#) August 22, 2019.
- VICE Magazine*. [Facing tomorrow’s high-tech school surveillance.](#) October 29, 2018.
- TechRepublic*. [Microsoft’s new AI app to assist the blind could be a ‘game changer’ in accessibility.](#) July 12, 2017.
- Mental Floss*. [7 academic studies of Instagram.](#) July 7, 2017.
- TechRepublic*. [Despite its promise, modern technology often fails to help disabled users.](#) May 25, 2017.
- Engadget*. [The enduring myth of the hacker boy-band.](#) May 5, 2017.
- Digg*. [Can Amazon’s Alexa be your friend?](#) March 31, 2017.
- Canadian Broadcasting Corporation/CBC Radio: Spark*. [Can technology really give a voice to the voiceless?](#) March 12, 2017.
- PRI’s The World*. [Barbie typewriter toys had a secret ability to encrypt messages — but they didn’t think girls would care.](#) January 17, 2017.
- The Guardian*. [Sesame Street’s Count von Count and the lack of foreign voices on children’s TV.](#) January 15, 2017.
- Tech Insider*. [If you have over 25 photos on Instagram, you’re no longer cool.](#) May 26, 2016.
- School Library Journal*. [Transmedia and education: How transmedia is changing the way we learn.](#) June 11, 2014.
- The Verge*. [You should be reading tween hacker magazines from the 1980s.](#) June 5, 2014.
- Gizmodo*. [How teen hackers were portrayed in 1980s family magazines.](#) June 5, 2014.
- The Atlantic*. [In defense of Instagramming conflict in Crimea.](#) March 7, 2014.
- ACM Computers in Entertainment*. [Playing with transmedia: An interview with Becky Herr-Stephenson and Meryl Alper.](#) May 21, 2013.
- Wired*. [Babies and iPads: A new type of discussion.](#) October 20, 2011.

## **TEACHING**

### **Undergraduate Teaching**

- Communication, Technology, and Society (19 students); Northeastern: F19 (new course preparation), S20
- Mobile Communication (19 students); Northeastern: F16 (new course preparation), F17, S18, S19, F19
- Youth and Communication Technology (19 students); Northeastern: F15, S16 (two sections), F16, F17, S18, F18 (two sections), S20, F20 (two sections), S21 (two sections)
- Cultures of New Media (25 students); USC: S15

## **Advising and Mentorship**

(Students are affiliated with Northeastern University's Communication Studies undergraduate program unless otherwise noted.)

### **Doctoral Dissertation Committee Member**

2020- Katherine Prendella (Rutgers University, Ph.D. in Communication)  
2017-2020 Alex Ahmed (Northeastern University, Ph.D. in Personal Health Informatics)

### **Masters' Thesis Committee Member**

2020 Houjiang Liu (Northeastern University, MFA in Experience Design; Reader)

### **Other Graduate Program Review and Examination**

2021 Meg Szydlik (Northeastern University, Graduate Certificate in Digital Humanities; Project Reviewer)  
2020 Hersinta (Curtin University, Doctor of Philosophy; Doctoral Thesis Examiner)

### **Advisor, Graduate Practicum Research**

2017 Adesewa Adelekun (Harvard School of Public Health, Master of Public Health)

### **Advisor, Undergraduate Research Assistant**

2018-2020 Erika Christiansen  
2017-2018 Madison Irons

### **Advisor, Undergraduate Directed Research**

2020 Erika Christiansen  
2016 Danielle Mokarzel

## **Guest Lectures**

(2020, September). *Disability and Communication Technology*. USC, Department of Communication (Communication & Technology; Undergraduate), Remote.  
(2018, November). *Giving Voice*. University of Maryland, College of Information Studies (Technology, Culture & Society; Undergraduate).  
(2018, February). *Giving Voice*. University of Virginia, Department of Media Studies (Media Bodies; Undergraduate).  
(2018, January). *Giving Voice*. USC, Department of Communication (Humanistic and Social Scientific Approaches to Human Communication; Graduate).  
(2017, October). *Giving Voice*. Cornell University, Department of Communication (New Media & Society Graduate Reading Group).  
(2017, April). *Giving Voice*. NYU, Department of Anthropology. (Constructing North America; Graduate).  
(2016, October). *Media, Technology, and Disability*. MIT, Department of Comparative Media Studies. (Introduction to Media Studies; Undergraduate).  
(2016, March). *Mobile*. Harvard University, Graduate School of Education. (Learning, Teaching, and Technology; Graduate).

(2015, September). *Empowerment and Inequality*. MIT Media Lab. (Unpacking Impact: Reflecting as We Make; Graduate).

## SERVICE

### Service to the Institution

#### University Service

2020-2021 University Awards Nomination Committee, Rhodes, Marshall, and Mitchell Scholarships  
2016 Faculty Marshal, Commencement, Northeastern University

#### College Service

2021 Member, Academic Affairs Committee  
2017-2018 Faculty Co-Organizer, CAMD Food for Thought Faculty Lecture Series  
2017 Faculty Marshal, CAMD Commencement  
2017 Interviewee, CAMD Website Rebranding Stakeholder Interviews  
2016 CAMD Dean's Portfolio Reviewer, Northeastern Undergraduate Admissions

#### Department Service

2020-2021 Member, Non-Tenure Track Promotion Committee  
2016-2019, Member, Communication Studies Curriculum Committee  
2020-2021  
2019-2020 Member, Search Committee (Tenured/Tenure-Track)  
2015-2020 Host, Dinner with the Faculty, Communication Studies Department  
2018-2019 Chair, Search Committee (Tenured/Tenure-Track)  
2017-2018 Member, Non-Tenure Track Promotion Committee  
2016-2017 Member, Communication Studies Merit Review Committee  
2016, 2018 Attendee, Communication Studies Senior Cording Ceremony & Luncheon  
2016, 2019 Attendee, Communication Studies Honors Banquet

#### Presentations at Northeastern Events and Symposia

(2020, September). *Disability and Communication Technology*. Northeastern University, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, EECE 2750: Enabling Engineering.  
(2020, July). *Designing accessible online courses*. Northeastern University, CAMD Faculty Online Teaching Chat (Remote presentation).  
(2019, October). *Assistive technologies for speech and communication*. Northeastern University, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, EECE 2750: Enabling Engineering.  
(2019, April). *The cultural politics of "sensory-friendly" mediated spaces*. Design for Human Experience: Automation and the Senses, 2018-2019 CAMD Dean's Research Fellows Presentation.  
(2019, April). *Adaptive design: Nurturing achievement for individuals, design teams, and wider society with Alex Truesdell*. Discussant, CAMD Dean's Distinguished Lecture Series.  
(2019, February). *Giving voice*. Northeastern University, Department of Sociology, SOCL 2225: Sociology of Disability.

- (2019, February). *The cultural politics of “sensory-friendly” mediated spaces*. Northeastern University, Faculty Works-in-Progress Colloquium Series, College of Social Sciences and Humanities and the Northeastern Humanities Center.
- (2018, November). *Advancing digital and health equity for autistic children*. Northeastern University, Department of Health Sciences and the Institute for Health Equity and Social Justice Research, Works in Progress Series.
- (2018, October). *Disability*. Design for Human Experience: Automation and the Senses, 2018-2019 CAMD Dean’s Research Fellows Project Launch.
- (2018, February). *Giving voice*. Northeastern University Undergraduate Speech & Hearing Club.
- (2017, November). *Disability awareness*. Faculty panel representative, Meeting of Northeastern University Students Against Institutional Discrimination.
- (2017, October). *Assistive technologies for speech and communication*. Northeastern University, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, EECE 2750: Enabling Engineering.
- (2017, June). *Interpersonal relationships and communication* (with Dania Jekel, moderator; Justin Robbins & Dot Lucci, co-panelists). CHATTER Symposium (Collaboration Highlighting Autism Through Technology for Emotion & Relationships), Northeastern University.
- (2017, April). *Giving voice: Mobile communication, disability, and inequality*. Northeastern University, School of Law, Faculty Colloquia.
- (2017, February). *Growing up autistic in the digital age: Early fieldwork and findings*. Northeastern Center for the Arts Faculty Lunchtime Colloquium.
- (2016, April). *Assistive technologies for speech and communication*. Northeastern University, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, EECE 2750: Enabling Engineering.

### **Northeastern Office of Marketing and Communications**

- News @ Northeastern*. [The power of ‘voice,’ and empowering the voiceless](#). April 17, 2018.
- News @ Northeastern*. [TTYL, AIM: How we used AOL Instant Messenger, for better or worse](#). November 16, 2017.
- News @ Northeastern*. [How new research and Sesame Street are expanding our understanding of autism](#). March 31, 2017.
- News @ Northeastern*. [Professor examines benefits, social inequalities of voice technologies](#). February 28, 2017.

### **Service to the Discipline**

#### **Professional Society Leadership**

- 2020-2023     Invited Member, International Communication Association (ICA) Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Access (IDEA) Committee
- 2019-2020     Invited Member, International Communication Association (ICA) Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Access (IDEA) Task Force

#### **Journal Editorial Board Member**

- 2019-     *New Media & Society* (2020 Google Scholar: #1 in Communication; 2019 Journal Citation Reports: #6 in Communication)
- 2019-     *Journal of Children and Media*



### **Book Manuscript Reviewer**

2020 MIT Press, Polity  
2019 Bloomsbury

### **Book Proposal Reviewer**

2020 Columbia University Press, MIT Press, Oxford University Press  
2018 MIT Press (two proposals)  
2017 MIT Press, University of Minnesota Press, Bloomsbury  
2015 Oxford University Press

### **Other Manuscript Reviewer**

2021 Social Science Research Council

### **Grant Proposal Reviewing**

National Science Foundation (ad hoc), 2019, 2021

### **Journal Manuscript Reviewer**

2021 *International Journal of Communication*  
2020 *International Journal of Child-Computer Interaction; Journal of Children & Media; Journal of Sociotechnical Critique; New Media & Society; Social Media + Society*  
2019 *Health Communication; International Journal of Communication; International Journal of Qualitative Methods; Journal of Children and Media; Media Psychology; New Media & Society; Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research; Television and New Media*  
2018 *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience; International Journal of Communication; Journal of Children and Media; Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication; Media Psychology; New Media & Society*  
2017 *Journal of Children and Media; New Media & Society*  
2016 *International Journal of Child-Computer Interaction; Human-Computer Interaction; International Journal of Communication; Journal of Children and Media; Media Psychology; New Media & Society; Social Media + Society*  
2015 *First Monday; International Journal of Communication; Journal of Children and Media; New Media & Society; Television and New Media; Universal Access in the Information Society*  
2014 *International Journal of Child-Computer Interaction; International Journal of Communication; New Media & Society*  
2013 *International Journal of Child-Computer Interaction; International Journal of Communication; Journal of Children and Media; Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*  
2012 *International Journal of Communication; Journal of Children and Media*  
2011 *Journal of Children and Media*

### **Conference Program Committees**

ACM CHI Works-in-Progress Program Committee, Associate Chair (2013)  
ACM IDC Workshops Co-Chair (2012, 2013), Publicity Co-Chair (2013)

### **Conference Mentorship and Committees**

- 2021 ICA, Top Dissertation Award Committee; Children, Adolescents and Media Division
- 2017-2019 ICA, Research Escalator Session Mentor; Children, Adolescents and Media Division

### **Conference Paper Reviewer**

- 2020 ACM DIS (Designing Interactive Systems), ICA
- 2019 ACM CHI (Computer-Human Interaction), ACM DIS, ACM IDC (Interaction Design and Children), ICA
- 2018 ACM CHI, ICA
- 2017 ACM CHI, ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW), ACM Symposium on User Interface Software and Technology (UIST), ICA
- 2016 ACM CHI, ICA
- 2015 iConference, ACM IDC
- 2014 ACM CHI, ICA
- 2013 ACM CHI, ICA, ACM IDC
- 2012 ICA
- 2011 ICA

### **Doctoral Consortium Abstract Reviewer**

- 2016 Society for Research in Child Development, Special Topic Meeting: Technology and Media in Children's Development

### **Professional Society Memberships**

- 2010- International Communication Association (ICA)
- 2018 American Sociological Association (ASA)
- 2017 Society for Social Studies of Science (4S)
- 2014 Association of Computing Machinery (ACM)
- 2013 Society for the History of Technology (SHOT)

### **Service to the Community**

- 2006- Northwestern University, Alumni Admissions Council (Los Angeles and Boston), Undergraduate Admissions Interviewer
- 2018 Invited Judge, Machine Learning Accessibility Hackathon, Microsoft New England Research and Development, Cambridge, MA
- 2017 UNICEF Innovation Fund, Augmentative and Alternative Communication Solutions for People with Disabilities, Advisor and Proposal Reviewer
- 2013-2014 The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, National Coalition for Core Arts Standards, Special Education Review Team Co-Lead for Media Arts Standards