

Title: *Covid Bubbles & The Accessible Revolution*

Author: Emily Gillespie

Zine Printing Details: Digital printing on paper, staple bound

12 pages, 8.5 inches by 11 inches

2020-21

Texture: This zine is printed on smooth, shiny, magazine-style paper. It has a bit of stiffness and makes a crinkling sound when touched.

Title Page: Covid Bubbles and the Accessible Revolution.

Background image on the title page: white clouds, blue sky, a unicorn and a rainbow.

The pages of this zine are very colourful, ranging from pink, to dark blue, to turquoise.

Page 1:

Image Description: A blank Myspace template from the early 2000s with a place for a name, photo, bio and friends.

Text reads: Covid Bubbles is like Myspace top 10: Pick your friends. I never really made it to top 10. Thanks for the reminder, Covid.

Page 2:

Image Description: A colourful birthday theme decorates the page including a birthday banner across the top and cake with pink icing at the bottom.

Text reads: Bullied in Elementary! No birthday party invites for me. I actually quit school at 12. Had to start again somewhere new, the bullying was so bad. Not that it got better.

Page 3:

Image Description: A photo of a thin crescent moon appears on a black background.

Text reads: Now you tell me to find my people, my Covid Bubble, but I've always been left behind.

Page 4:

Image Description: The dark silhouettes of four people against a sunset appear with arms raised, as if dancing.

Text reads: Now my friends or former friends, I mean, social justice and anti-oppression-oriented leftists, are all too busy trying to look after themselves, running to their partners and closer friends, and I'm forgotten—even when I ask to be included, I'm told there's no room: It's about the health unit numbers, and I don't make the cut.

Page 5:

Image Description: Photo of orange oak leaves in the foreground with blurry, out of focus tree leaves and a dark blue sky in the background.

Text reads: Covid creates a fragile social ecosystem, and this Mad Autistic falls to the bottom in apocalypse teams, despite our pre-Covid revolutionary dreaming.

Page 6:

Image Description: Cartoon depictions of two protesters holding a sign and a megaphone appear at the bottom of the page. White clouds across a blue sky appear in the background.

Text reads: Why am I always left behind?" I cry to myself. Just when I think I don't matter much, that no one noticed the pain of being left, a Special Mad Autistic Friend offers their hand up, comes to see me, and reminds me that I matter, even during these strange times. I will be included in the apocalypse revolution after all.

Page 7:

Image Description: A unicorn, swirly rainbow and hearts re-appear from the cover page.

On spiral bound, graph paper text reads: I will make space for my voice to be heard. And despite my bitterness, I still believe in change.

Page 8:

Image Description: A photo of Emily, the zine maker. She is a white person with long blonde hair and glasses wearing a red plaid shirt. She is smiling in front of a tree with fall leaves.

Text reads: Covid is a time for the world to shift. I will be here for the Neurodivergent, MAD, Accessible, Basic Universal Income Revolution. I will not be left behind. Not this time.

Page 9:

Image Description: A cartoon image of a hand giving the middle finger.

Text reads, Fuck your bubbles. Fuck your top 10 lists.

Page 10: Artist's Statement

Emily Gillespie is an author, disability activist and professional daydreamer. Her work explores themes of memory, identity and mental health journeys. Emily enjoys working in community spaces and examining individual and collective experiences. She views storytelling as a tool for resisting predominant social narratives.

Covid Bubbles and the Accessible Revolution reflects on Emily's experience as a Mad, Autistic person feeling left behind by community at the start of the Covid Apocalypse. Her work, inspired by disability justice frameworks, reflects on community care. Emily links this being left behind to early childhood experiences of being excluded by her school peers. Ultimately, her zine has an uplifting message of refusing to be left out of the revolution, and exploring the possibilities of the new world that Covid may bring as society is forced to reflect on its values.

Emily views Covid as a time for social change. She wanted her zine to explore serious themes of exclusion, yet still be playful and hopeful, and this is reflected in the design colour choices including playful graphics such as unicorns and the queer rainbow. Emily invites you to imagine what a future that pushes past exclusion looks like, even during "unprecedented times" such as Covid.

Page 11:

Image Description: A silhouette of a dancer against a bright pink background with a quote by Emma Goldman that reads, "If I can't dance, I don't want to be in your revolution."