The 2024 papers by Douglas & Sedgewick focus on the high rates of **interpersonal victimization and abuse among autistic people**, exploring the mechanisms that make them vulnerable to such experiences, such as social camouflaging (masking) and a tendency to take things at face value.

The **Neurodivergent Scale for Interacting with Robots (NSIR)** can be applied to this work to measure the user-reported outcomes of safety, trust, and connection within human-robot interactions, which contrasts sharply with the harmful human-human interactions described in their research.

Anthropomorphic Connection/Kinship

- The research highlights difficulties in making and maintaining friends and the pressure to conform to neurotypical social norms.

- The NSIR can measure if a robot, designed with a neurodiversity-affirming approach, provides an accepting, non-judgmental "friendship" or connection. Items like **"The robot is more like me than anyone else I know"** (Item 1) and **"The robot and I will be together forever"** (Item 4) would quantify the development of a safe, reliable bond that may be difficult to form with humans.

Social Comfort/Trust

- Douglas & Sedgewick note that a tendency to trust people implicitly and engage in people-pleasing can make autistic individuals vulnerable to abuse and gaslighting.

- The NSIR's **social comfort/trust** dimension could assess how the *consistency* and *predictability* of a robot's interaction (a core benefit of HRI for autism) helps build trust in a safe way, without the risks present in human interactions. Items like **"I believe that my robot is the same with me as it is with anyone"** (Item 8) are key for this assessment.

Safety

- A major focus of their work is the high prevalence of physical and sexual violence experienced by autistic adults.

- The NSIR's **safety** dimension provides a crucial user-reported measure that ensures the interaction environment is fundamentally safe. The item about undressing in front of the robot (Item 7) speaks to the need for secure physical boundaries, providing a metric to ensure robots are not a new vector for

vulnerability, but rather a source of secure, predictable, and non-abusive interaction.

The NSIR helps ensure that human-robot interaction design directly addresses the need for safe, trustworthy social engagement that can act as a protective factor against the types of negative experiences highlighted in the Douglas & Sedgewick papers.

Would you like to explore another article from the document, or perhaps a deeper dive into the concept of **"social camouflaging"** in the context of HRI?