



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Arts

of

AMY BISHOP

BA (University of Western Ontario, 2010)

**“Stories from the Spectrum: Connecting Knowledge about Children with Autism
Spectrum Disorder to Practice in Child and Youth Care”**

School of Child & Youth Care

Tuesday, July 21, 2015

12:00PM

University Centre

Room A207a

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Jessica Ball, School of Child & Youth Care, University of Victoria (Supervisor)

Dr. Doug Magnusson, School of Child & Youth Care, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:

Dr. Lynn Guengerich, School of Nursing, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Michael Miller, Department of Computer Science, UVic

Abstract

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex and lifelong neurodevelopmental disorder that is widely variable in presentation and intensity of defining features. ASD affects 1 in 94 Canadians and is increasing in prevalence. The variety of professionals who work with children with ASD have an accumulation of experiences that can be instructive and inspiring for other practitioners. This study explored how their wealth of experiences might be encapsulated as short vignettes or stories that could be analyzed and used as resources for educating current and future professionals. Six stories were collected from diverse professionals, and themes were summarized in order to demonstrate the types of lessons that can be learned through a clinician's story of a significant moment or event in working with a child with ASD. The stories highlighted challenges and breakthroughs in communication and managing the child's challenging behaviours, as well as skills and techniques that professionals have found effective in practice. The study shows that clinician's stories hold valuable information that can be shared with professionals in an interesting and memorable manner. Future research could expand on this study to build larger collections of stories with additional viewpoints and specific professional insights and experiences with a variety of children in their practice.