

Jane Austen Society of North America - Vermont Chapter (JASNA-VT)
presents

Jane Austen and Autistic Spectrum Disorders:

Re-examining some of her characters' challenges with conversation,
empathy and social interaction from a 21st century perspective

A Talk by Phyllis Ferguson

**Sunday, June 9, 2019
2pm to 4pm**

~ A quick 10 minute drive from our Across the Lake dance venue ~
Champlain College
Morgan Room, Aiken Hall — 83 Summit Street, Burlington, VT



Over forty years ago, **Phyllis Ferguson** graduated as a speech language pathologist from McGill University. Up until her recent retirement from the North Vancouver School District, she gained her extensive experience with children and adults with communication challenges while living and working in a variety of communities from Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island to Coolbellup, Western Australia.

Her professional knowledge of those with social and communication impairments provides a new and unique lens through which to view some of Austen's most memorable characters. Phyllis has given talks on her theories to numerous groups including the JASNA AGMs in Montreal, Portland and Vancouver, the New Directions in Austen Studies conference in Chawton, England and the Pride and Prejudice: The Bicentennial conference held at Wright State University. As well she has been a guest speaker for nine JASNA and two Jane Austen Society of Australia regions.

In addition, in 2011 she presented an award winning poster session entitled "Portrayals of Autistic Spectrum Disorders in Fiction" at the annual conference of the Canadian Association of Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologists held in Montreal.

Phyllis has served JASNA in a variety of ways including two terms as a member of the JASNA Board of Directors and as Chair of the JASNA Grants Committee plus many years as Regional Co-ordinator for Vancouver. Currently she is the Membership Secretary for JASNA Canada.

She greatly appreciates that her interest in Jane Austen's life and work led her to discover the many joys and benefits of English Country Dancing. She and her husband, Lindsay, have eased into retirement by becoming "dance gypsies" happily attending balls and week-long dance camps around the continent.