

Restricted interests in *Life, Animated*

Amandeep Jutla, MD

Postdoctoral Fellow

Whitaker Scholars in Developmental Neuropsychiatry Program

Division of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry

Columbia University

New York State Psychiatric Institute

American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, 66th Annual Meeting

Life, Animated: How Disney movies Helped a Boy with ASD Connect (Media Theatre)

October 15, 2019

Disclosure of potential conflicts of interest

Source	Research funding	Advisor/ consultant	Employee	Speakers' bureau	Books, intellectual property	In-kind services (e.g., travel)	Stock or equity	Honorarium or expenses for this presentation or meeting
Potential conflict	Whitaker Scholar in Developmental Neuropsychiatry Award (Marilyn and James Simons Family Giving)							

Autism

Social communication deficits

Restricted behaviors or interests

As clinicians we tend to focus on the negative aspects of restricted interests

But *Life, Animated* makes a compelling case for considering restricted interests in the larger context of the child's life

Autism

Social communication deficits

Restricted behaviors or interests

+

A source of **well-being** (in and of itself)

A source of **community**; a way to develop **relationships** and a sense of **mastery** (Disney movie club)

Could parlay a special interest into employment (at the movie theater)

-

An interest could be **socially problematic** (not developmentally apropos, or perhaps unsettling)

Family **may not be as supportive** as the family in this film

Further reading...

Gunn KCM, Delafield-Butt JT. Teaching children with autism spectrum disorder with restricted interests: a review of evidence for best practice. *Review of Educational Research*. 2016;86(2):408-430.

Klin A, Danovich JH, Merz AB, Volkmar FR. Circumscribed interests in higher functioning individuals with autism spectrum disorders: an exploratory study. *Research & Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities*. 2007;32(2):89-100.

Mercier C, Mottron L, Belleville S. A psychosocial study on restricted interests in high functioning persons with pervasive developmental disorders. *Autism*. 2000;4(4):406-425.