

**Third Annual Proceedings of  
The Society for the Study of Occupation:USA**

**From the Fourteenth Annual SSO:USA Research Conference**

*Fort Lauderdale, FL  
October 2015*





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# **SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF OCCUPATION:USA**

## **(SSO:USA)**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The SSO:USA is a research society that strives to build the body of knowledge in occupational science to benefit humanity. The society values:

- Collegiality
- Collaboration
- Critical discourse
- The development of researchers
- The application of knowledge within a variety of professions
- Shared occupational experiences
- Operating in ways that are open, transparent, fiscally responsible and member and data-driven
- Researchers, students, and practitioners
- Members who are formally trained in occupational science
- And members who are formally trained in other disciplines and whose work integrates well with occupational science

### **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the SSO:USA are:

- To form a national community of scholars to engage in the dynamic exchange of ideas to support the global discipline of occupational science
- To provide a forum to promote and disseminate research in occupational science to the public
- To foster cutting edge theory and research of occupation through the establishment of networks, resources, collaborations, and other identified supports.
- To explore and expand the knowledge of occupation, the application of occupations to understanding of the human condition, and to foster understanding the fundamental nature of occupation in health and well-being
- To study the interrelationship of the discipline of occupational science and the profession of occupational therapy
- To address and quality of the occupational experience of participants in its events.

## **THANK YOU**

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Proceedings editors:

Rebecca Aldrich and Mackenzi Pergolotti

## **SSO:USA Conference Proceedings, 2015**

**Thursday, October 1<sup>st</sup> 2015**

### **SSO: Pre- Conference Institutue**

#### **Institutional ethnography: Exploring the puzzles of people at work**

Marjorie DeVault, *Syracuse University*

In any field of practice, both clients and professionals confront troubles and challenges and they often wonder just “how it happens” the way it does. Institutional ethnography (IE) provides a method of empirical inquiry designed to explore just that sort of question. Combining method and theory, IE arose in the 1970s from a feminist critique of conventional, abstracted analysis that ignores the realities of people’s lives and work. It has since been developed, by Dorothy Smith and others, as a sociology for (rather than about) people, and it has been especially useful for those in fields of professional practice. Institutional ethnographers locate their studies in everyday settings, drawing on a “generous” concept of work, but they also seek to go beyond what people know in their everyday lives and to investigate the forces at work “behind our backs.” The approach is especially useful in the current era of accountability and economic restructuring and thus has particular relevance to occupational science.

This workshop provides an introduction to research methods for institutional ethnography. It will include presentations on background and concepts, and opportunities for participants to discuss their own research interests and projects.

**Friday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015**

## **RESEARCH PAPERS**

### **An exploration of social participation for young adults following a first psychotic episode**

Valerie Fox, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

**Statement of Purpose:** The purpose of this study was to explore participation in social life for young adults following a first episode of psychosis (FEP). There were two study aims: 1) explore the sociocultural mechanisms that facilitated or hindered the engagement and experience of social participation for young adults following FEP; and 2) utilize discursive examples on mental illness to explore perceived opportunities for participation for young adults following FEP. Studies have recognized the importance of social participation for well-being (Eklund, Hermansson, & Hakansson, 2012; Orr, 2005; Schon, Denhov, & Topor, 2009; Wisdom et al., 2008), however, the factors influencing social participation following FEP have not been well-examined in FEP. This study fills a gap in occupational science research as occupational science had not explored the “occupational situation” (Humphry & Wakeford, 2013) of this particular population, which is critical in understanding the nature of occupation as it relates to health and well-being. The purpose of this presentation will be to present study findings, discuss avenues for application of study methodologies, and explore future avenues for translation of this research.

**Description of Methods:** This qualitative study combined collaborative ethnography and discourse elicitation to examine the impact of FEP on participation in social occupations. Five consultants between the ages of 18-30 who had experienced FEP within the last 5 years were recruited. Data were collected for a minimum of 6 months with each consultant. Study aims were met using semi-structured interviews, participant observations, and discourse elicitation. Photographs and quotes related to mental illness were used as a means to elicit discussion about broader social messages and assumptions. Interviews and fieldnotes were transcribed and coded using narrative analysis.

**Report of Results:** Preliminary findings show that the following factors influenced participation in social occupations: social norms and expectations, prior occupational histories, social media, relationships, underlying habits and routines, identities, and limitations in income and transportation. In addition, the need to manage the disease occasionally superseded engagement in occupations, although this engagement was noted to be vital to health and recovery.

**Discussion/Implications as Related to Occupational Science:** This research is important to occupational science for several reasons. First, it has extended understandings of sociocultural factors impacting occupational participation, while also expanding application of existing occupational concepts to new populations (i.e., occupational deprivation, occupational possibilities). Second, this research has provided preliminary data to support intervention



development and offer new areas for clinical practice and policy improvement. Third, this study utilized several innovative methods that can be applied to future occupational science research. The combination of methodologies used in this study provided a holistic understanding of the occupational lives of the study consultants, while also garnering broader ideas about social perceptions related to psychosis and participation. Discourse elicitation is a novel approach that has wide implications for use with many different populations, especially in attempting to explore invisible, or taken-for-granted, assumptions that may not come to mind during more traditional interview formats.

Objectives for discussion:

\*Present findings of the research study and the impact these findings have for occupational science and translation to clinical practice.

\*Discuss a novel method for exploring underlying assumptions and perceptions related to occupational participation, while acknowledging the challenges of this type of method.

\*Suggest future directions for research and application of proposed methods.

Key words: Ethnography, Social participation, Mental illness

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## **Play and playspaces: Exploring the outdoors and natural heritage among children aged 5 to 12**

Helen Lynch, *University College Cork, Ireland*

Urusla Kilkelly, *University College Cork, Ireland*

Angela O'Connell, *University College Cork, Ireland*

Alice Moore, *University College Cork, Ireland*

Sarah Field, *University College Cork, Ireland*

Ulli Falcini, *University College Cork, Ireland*

Statement of purpose: A growing body of research shows that play patterns among children are changing: children are growing up differently than in the past with fewer links to the natural world. This development has been a major concern, with researchers talking about the 'shrinking horizons of childhood' (Gill, 2005), play deprivation (Bundy et al, 2011), and 'nature deficit disorder' (Louv, 2005). There has been a growing concern that child-nature connection is under threat. Furthermore, lack of access to natural spaces infringes on children's rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989). Consequently, in 2014, the Irish Heritage Council commissioned a research team from University College Cork to conduct a review of contact with the outdoors and natural heritage among children aged 5-12. The research team consisted of members from law, education and occupational science.

Description of method: The first objective of the research project was to review literature around children's relationship with the outdoors and natural heritage from a children's rights perspective. This included reviewing trends, barriers, and benefits to connecting with nature, and identifying gaps in the research, particularly in the Irish context. The second objective was to conduct a qualitative study with children aged between five and twelve years. 123 children participated: from a rural, a town, and a city environment to include the views of a broad range of children from different socio-economic and geographic backgrounds. Mixed methods were used to maximise the children's participation: a whole-class art project on the theme of 'what I do in my free time' was conducted in each class, and nine focus groups were carried with 39 children (18 girls, 21 boys). Discussions were audio recorded, transcribed, and analysed together with the artwork, using a qualitative analysis software package.

Report of results: Findings show that there are significant health and well-being benefits to contact with outdoor environments. Play occupations are central to these benefits, specifically where play is inclusive of risk, challenge and flexibility. However, the review of policy and legislation shows that in Ireland, children's relationship with the natural environment has received little attention or support. Particular groups, including children with disabilities face specific challenges in this regard. However, children report preferences for playing outdoors rather than indoors. Location, weather and having friends nearby are strongly linked to the attractiveness of outdoor play.

Discussion and implications: Overall, this research evidences the changing nature of children's lives in Ireland and demonstrates that the child-nature connection is under threat. Key implications were identified in this project including issues related to policy, public awareness, and future developments necessary to address the needs arising. Examples of outdoor play initiatives are proposed as a way forward, with consideration given to developing a children's rights framework for evaluating children's contact with the outdoors. This study demonstrates the importance of interdisciplinary working for integrating a rights-based perspective in occupational science and studies of the physical environment. Discussion will focus on the challenges of interdisciplinary working and the benefits of working together.

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### **Picture this: Exploring the lived experience of high-functioning stroke survivors via photovoice**

Tal Jarus, *University of British Columbia*  
 Linh Huynh, *University of British Columbia*  
 Marie Maratos, *University of British Columbia*  
 Jordon Lui, *University of British Columbia*  
 Julia Tan, *University of British Columbia*

Introduction. Community participation is a critical component of occupational engagement and quality of life (QOL) following stroke. An increasing number of stroke survivors are presenting

with minimal functional impairments. These high-functioning stroke survivors are often discharged with minimum community supports and services for engagement in occupations. However, despite their high level of function, they may have “nonvisible” or overlooked impacts from stroke that may hinder their community participation. Hence, it is essential to learn from stroke survivors about their experiences and perspectives on limitations in community participation. Objectives. To explore the lived experience of high-functioning stroke survivors and to identify potential gaps in community services. Methods. Photovoice, a community-based participatory research method, was used with 5 high-functioning stroke survivors who photo-documented their personal experiences related to recovery and daily occupations following stroke. Stories and meanings behind the photographs were elicited through 5 focus group sessions, which were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim and inductively analyzed to identify themes. Participants hosted 2 community photo exhibitions to educate the public and stimulate change. Results. Five themes emerged from our analysis: importance of appropriate and accessible services, financial determinants of QOL, lack of understanding and consideration for persons with disability, self-reliance and dependence on others, and emotional and behavioural impacts after stroke. The community photo exhibitions attracted stakeholders and provided insight into a need for change. Conclusion. Photovoice is a client-centred approach that has strengthened our understanding of the occupational needs of high-functioning stroke survivors through the use of participant-generated data. This may ultimately contribute to the understanding of the barriers and facilitators for engaging in daily occupations of stroke survivors, and the development of meaningful community programs and services that can increase participation and QOL for stroke survivors.

Key words: Stroke, Participation, Community

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## **Using multiple methods to demystify influences on occupation: The case of parent expectations and young adults with ASD**

Anne V. Kirby, *University of Utah*

**Statement of Purpose:** The purpose of this presentation is to use the case example of a research project involving two methodologically-different, but conceptually-related studies to explore the theoretical and practical implications of using multiple methods for occupational science research.

### **Methods:**

**Study 1:** The National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2; IES, nd) is a large extant dataset of information on a nationally-representative sample of youth who received high school special education services in the U.S. and contains 10 years of follow-up data as they transitioned into young adulthood. The current study utilized a sub-sample (N=1170) of individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) from the NLTS2 dataset. Data from the first and final time-points (participants 13-16 and 21-25 years of age, respectively) were analyzed to determine predictors of young adult participation outcomes in the areas of employment, social participation, and daily living independence. Specifically, the hypothesis-driven structural equation model (SEM; Kline, 2011) tested parent's future expectations as a mediator of the relationships from family background (i.e., race, household income, and mother's education) and functional performance (i.e., academic performance, social skills, and self-care skills) latent variables to young adult participation outcomes. The data were stored and analyzed in accordance with an Institute of Education Sciences data use agreement.

**Study 2:** Seven mothers of adolescent males with ASD participated in semi-structured interviews aiming to understand how they develop their expectations for their sons' futures. Participants were recruited from an email listserv of a nonprofit organization that serves adolescents and young adults with autism and gift card incentives were provided for participation. Interviews, lasting 25-75 minutes in participants' homes, were audio-recorded and transcribed. Additional information collected from participants included fieldnotes, demographic information, and questionnaires about their future expectations and their son's autism symptoms (Social Responsiveness Scale; Constantino & Gruber, 2005). Analysis was qualitative in nature, involved an iterative process of development (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996), and focused on theme-generation with an explanatory purpose (Schwandt, 2007).

### **Results:**

**Study 1:** The tested SEM demonstrated adequate model fit and revealed parent expectations as a significant mediator of the paths from family background and functional performance to young adult participation; significant indirect paths were identified from family background, functional performance, and gender to outcomes.

Study 2: Three themes were identified which describe influences on mothers' expectations: (1) characteristics and experiences of youth; (2) maternal perceptions, beliefs, and emotions; and (3) stereotypes, stories, and society. The mothers also described the approaches they use to plan and prepare their sons for adulthood, which were reflective of their expectations.

Discussion/Implications: In combination, these two studies provide a complex picture of the role parents' expectations play in the future occupational participation of youth with ASD. Specifically, the studies together identified influences on parent expectations, evidence that expectations mediate outcomes, and understanding of the process by which they may contribute to outcomes (i.e., through their approaches). However, both studies have methodological limitations and there are numerous practical and theoretical challenges experienced in the process of navigating interpretation and translation of findings from two distinct methodologies.

Keywords: mixed methods, autism, expectations

Objectives for discussion:

\*Debate the theoretical and practical benefits and challenges of integrating qualitative and quantitative methods in occupational science research

\*Brainstorm sources of extant data that could contain data relevant to occupational science research

Key words: Mixed methods, Autism, Expectations

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## **Exploratory study of breast cancer survivors' lived experience: Activity engagement during and after breast cancer treatment**

Anne Fleischer, *Nova Southeastern University*

Breast cancer is the most widespread cancer among females in the United States. In 2015, an estimated 234,190 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer with an average of 91% of women surviving breast cancer for 5 years (Siegel, Miller, & Jemal, 2015). Due to the growing number of women surviving breast cancer, understanding breast cancer survivors' occupational viewpoint is relevant since engagement in occupations has been found to improve the quality of life of breast cancer survivors (Palmadottir, 2010), and survivors frequently gauge their quality of life from an occupational outlook and express goals in occupation-based terms (Lyons, 2006).

The purpose of the study was to describe breast cancer survivors' experience and associated meaning when participating in their important activities during and after breast cancer treatment to gain a clearer understanding of the "essence of occupation" (Gray, 1997). A multiple-stage critical case purposeful sampling was used to recruit ten breast cancer survivors during chemotherapy or after the initial visit with the radiation oncologist. Participants heard about the study through an oncology provider, a flyer posted within the radiation oncology clinic, or electronically on the Wake Forest Baptist Health research website, which included a confidential phone number and e-mail address to call to receive additional information about the study. The investigator contacted each inquiring participant by telephone or e-mail and provided information about the study. Participants in this study had the following characteristics: (a) diagnosed with Stage I, II, or III breast cancer, (b) consecutively received surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation therapy, (c) were between 40 and 65 years of age, and (d) did not receive additional treatment for their breast cancer, excluding adjuvant therapy.

Each survivor took part in a semi-structured interview at the end of radiation therapy and 6-month's afterwards. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was used to analyze the in-depth interviews. This approach allowed the investigator to write a concise statement reflecting the psychological essence of the participant. Themes that emerged from the transcript reflected the participant's original thoughts and words but also the investigator's analysis (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009).

At the end of radiation therapy two themes emerged which seemed to positively influence occupational performance: "individual outlook influences how activities are approach" and "social support reduces the stress of life;" and two other themes seemed to discourage occupational performance: "side effects impact how activities are completed" and "personal and treatment stresses and struggles influence perspectives on life." At 6-months post-radiation, different themes emerged. Themes that encouraged occupational performance were "positive emotions affect daily life" and "life after cancer has changed due to cancer and diagnosis and treatment;" and discouraging themes were "side effects continue to influence daily activities"

and “negative emotions affect daily activities.” This study provides support for exploring occupational factors influencing performance to gain a greater understanding of the “occupational essence” of specific groups of people. In the future, comparisons of “occupational essence” among various groups of people can be compared to provide a richer understanding of occupation and its role in recovery.

Key words: Breast neoplasms, Occupations, Quality of life

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## Gamification of cognitive assessment: Emerging transdisciplinary technology

Bonnie L. Kennedy, *Blue Marble Game Co.*

Nina Withrington, *Blue Marble Game Co.*

Sheryl Flynn, *Blue Marble Game Co.*

The purpose of this paper is to:

\*Describe the transdisciplinary development process of video games to engage users in authentic occupation during the assessment of cognitive skills

\*Demonstrate preliminary validity of videogames as cognitive assessment by presenting the results of two pilot studies of concurrent validity

Description of methods:

\*Participants were OIF/OEF era veterans reporting chronic post-concussion symptoms who currently reside in community living settings in a large west coast city.



\*Data captured by software were collected in the community in real time on touch screen devices running Windows or Android operating systems. Data captured on test forms and paper questionnaires were entered into digital spreadsheets by hand.

\*Analyses were performed using SPSS for Windows V20. Analyses for concurrent validity were correlational.

#### Report of results

\*Concurrent validity data of ingame assessments and a suite of “stand alone” gamified assessments will be reported, long with software usability survey data. Overall, moderate to strong correlations were found between selected gold standard paper assessments used by clinicians and the gamified assessments.

\*Users reported anecdotal evidence of reduced stigma associated with testing using gamified assessments.

\*In addition, users reported greater motivation and a more positive user experience with the gamified assessments over the gold standard assessments.

#### Objectives for discussion:

\*Transdisciplinary principles including those of occupational science drove the development of an authentic occupational experience in video games for assessing cognitive skills. These principles included: (1) user centered design (DIS, 2010) / person centered experience as a lens of inquiry; (2) software user experience (Albert & Tullis, 2013) drives utilization/purposeful and meaningful experience yields optimal engagement in occupation (Hocking, 2001); (3) dynamic difficulty adjustment (Afergan, et al., 2014)/ just right challenge / flow as interrelated transdisciplinary constructs; (4) occupation as transaction (Dickie & Cutchin, 2013) at the human-computer interface; (5) ecological validity in assessment.

\*The rich heritage of occupational science arose from both a century of practice of occupational therapy and the more recent systematic inquiry of scholars. These sources of knowledge provided the infrastructure for cognitive assessment contextualized in the form of videogames.

\*Each year technology surveys report larger proportions of the population using computer software more of the time for a greater variety of activities. The theoretical infrastructure and transdisciplinary nature of occupational science is well positioned to translate science into quality user experience.

Key words: Cognition, Assessment, Video games

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### **Exploring families' perceptions of family health**

Sarah L. Smith, *University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center*  
 Carrie Ciro, *University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center*  
 Ami B. Bax, *University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center*  
 Beth DeGrace, *University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center*

Statement of purpose: Vital to positive child outcomes is the “health” of the family or family health, as the family is the most important context for child development (Fiese, Rhodes, & Beardslee, 2013). To date, investigation of family health has been limited to studies investigating discrete factors of family life such as family interaction, family functioning, parenting stress, and parenting styles (Carr, & Springer, 2010; Kremer-Sadlik & Paugh, 2007). Yet, dissecting a construct into components does not account for the complexities of a phenomenon that has conceptual influences from biological, psychological, ecological, and social health perspectives (Denham, 2003; Fiese, 2007). Given critical associations between components of family health and child development, inquiry into explicating the experience of family health is warranted to reveal indicators for robust family health to strengthen current models of interventions aimed to support positive health outcomes for the family and child.

Description of methods (participants, data collection, analysis): Constructivist grounded theory methods were used to explore the experience of family health in families with typically developing children. Ten families were recruited and interviewed, including 17 parents and 15 children. A team of four analysts convened weekly for eight weeks to triangulate analyses, along

with family input, for collaborative development of a family health model.

Report of results: These results informed the development of a preliminary family health model to frame families' experiences of family health. The model captures family health being constructed of a sense of connectedness and family identity through shared purpose. Positive mediating factors on family health included conscious engagement in family occupation and intentional time use. Individual or family stressors of having a baby, losing a job, or experiencing poor physical health negatively mediated the overall family's health. Indirect influences of family communication, emotional safety, healthy food choices, and physical exercise contributed to the formation of healthy habits families attributed to robust family health.

Discussion/implications as related to occupational science: Revealing family occupation in families with typically developing children and its relationship to family health provides another step in refining the construct of family occupation and provides a portal through which occupational scientists can investigate the integrity of occupation at a systems level. This study exposes occupational processes that can be explored and provides a platform for discussion for occupational science to be translatable to models of service delivery.

Objectives for discussion:

\*Participants will understand constructs of family health and mediating factors supporting and inhibiting robust family health from the perspective of families raising typically developing children.

\*Participants will discuss implications of these findings for practice, research, and potential translation to service delivery.

Key words: Family health, Family occupation, Grounded theory

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### **Layered purposes of participation: What mapping methods can teach us about occupation**

Kendra Heatwole Shank, *Towson University*

**Purpose.** The concept of ‘community livability’—or how well a community enables the necessary and chosen activities of daily life—is increasingly used but not well studied or understood. Livability has most often been conceptualized as a collection of features of the environment. Literature about aging in community also tends to conceptualize older adults as aging and engaging “in” a relatively static environment. The purpose of this research was to theorize key dynamics of livability for older adults who are aging in place in their homes and communities through a focus on occupations, or the ‘doings’ of everyday life.

**Method.** Twelve community-dwelling older adults (70+) were purposively selected for diversity of experience, socioeconomic level, and living situation in a multiple-case study design. Global positioning (GPS) devices were used to collect spatial data including participants’ location, routine, routes, and duration of activity over two weeks. Interviews and naturalistic observations were additionally used to understand how participants navigated physical, social, and cultural spaces through which community participation occurred. A grounded theory approach to analysis involved using the different types of data for constant comparison and cross-interrogation, fostering a deeper understanding of the participants’ occupations and experiences.

**Results.** Findings from this study include patterns of participation in occupation that vary by personal and residential factors, and processes of navigating the social and physical dynamics of a community. Both patterns and process of navigation suggest ‘livability’ is negotiated in a particular socio-historical context. Findings from the GPS mapping were particularly useful in revealing aspects of participation-in-community that were tacit or taken for granted by participants, as well as geographic and historic dimensions of the community that influenced daily occupation.

**Discussion.** Three implications of these findings will be discussed. First, the use of GPS to create maps offers a novel visual methodology for studying occupation. Possible benefits, challenges, and the broader utility of mapping methods will be discussed. Second, the historical precedent of sorting occupation into categories (e.g. work, leisure) is inconsistent with the complex layering of occupations and purposes that were revealed in the mapping data. Occupational scientists need to move toward ways of describing occupations and occupational patterns that do not rely on categorical reductionism. Finally, these findings challenge existing frameworks of livability. Through foregrounding occupation, livability (and the related policy) can be better conceptualized and supported as active, negotiated, and emerging processes. Occupational science has much to contribute to the national conversation about increasing the livability of

communities for older adults and other populations.

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### **The absence of “occupational beings” in definitions of long-term unemployment: Opportunities for knowledge translation**

Rebecca M. Aldrich, *Saint Louis University*

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Policy responses to long-term unemployment are often based on a range of ‘official’ definitions that address: 1) the duration of joblessness, 2) expected activity engagement during joblessness, and 3) market factors that affect job availability (Blustein, Medvide, & Wan, 2012). In the United States, long-term unemployment is defined as being without work for 27 weeks or more (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014), and policies mandate that long-term unemployed people actively search for work if they want to receive government-funded assistance and retraining. Predicating social assistance on a range of definitions may appear to account for the varied circumstances surrounding joblessness; however, such definitions are often operationalized in ways that restrict benefits (Lipsky, 2010) and ignore people’s diverse everyday needs.

In this presentation, we draw on findings from two of our studies to illustrate how ‘official’ definitions fail to incorporate an understanding of unemployed workers as occupational beings. Using a collaborative ethnographic orientation (Lassiter & Campbell, 2010), both studies aim to understand how political discourses shape policies, social assistance programs, and everyday responses to long-term unemployment. The first study utilized semi-structured interviews and observations to understand the experiences of eight self-identified long-term unemployed workers in the United States and Canada. The second study is currently ongoing and has used semi-structured interviews to understand the perspectives of 12 stakeholders at employment-

focused organizations in the United States and Canada.

Two key findings illustrate why it is important to include an occupational perspective in policy-related ‘official’ definitions. The first finding, based on an analysis of interviews with unemployed workers, suggests that the feeling of “being stuck” is: 1) central to the experience of long-term unemployment, 2) pervades most occupational pursuits during unemployment, and 3) is related to the occupation of seeking resources (Magasi, 2012) for personal and family survival. The second finding, drawn from an analysis of interviews with organizational stakeholders, is that service delivery representatives tend to depart from static ‘official’ definitions and instead operationalize more variegated experience-based definitions that recognize the centrality of resource seeking in long-term unemployed workers’ lives.

Our discussion aims to answer the question: How does the recognition of “resource seeking” as an occupation fit with prevailing “activity expectations” and discourses about the “right” way to spend time during joblessness? We suggest that an occupational perspective attends to long-term unemployed workers’ extensive resource seeking practices and unsettles current definitions that dictate the provision of social assistance. Accordingly, we propose the necessity of translating an occupational perspective to policymaking and service provision arenas to fully address the needs of people experiencing long-term unemployment.

Objectives for discussion:

\*Discuss the ways in which political policies and programs are or are not designed to accommodate the complexity of everyday life.

\*Discuss how resource seeking aligns with existing definitions and categories of occupation.

\*Discuss facilitators and barriers to translating the occupational perspective to policymakers and other professionals.

Key words: Long-term unemployment, Knowledge translation, Occupational perspective

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### **Families, public spaces, and occupation: Understanding what families do at the library**

Nancy Bagatell, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

Within occupational science there has been growing interest in studying family occupation. A recent volume of the *Journal of Occupational Science* celebrated the 20th anniversary of the UN International Year of the Family and, as Humphry (2014) suggested, opened up a dialogue between the disciplines of occupational science and family studies. These papers highlighted family as a mode of action rather than a static construction, much in line with Morgan's (2011) conceptualization of family practices. The purpose of this paper is to continue this dialogue and extend the conversation beyond the local to consider what families do in public spaces and the influence of political and economic policies and discourses. A secondary purpose is to consider methods of data collection and analysis that provide ways of viewing family occupation in their contextual fullness. Inspired by work of DeVault (2000), who highlighted the importance of exploring family practice beyond the home and the discourse of family life that "swirls" around those spaces – in her case, the zoo - this paper examines the public library as a space for family occupation. Public libraries were chosen because, compared to other public venues, they are a low cost option for family outings and are, in many American communities, a hub for activity.

This study combined ethnography and discourse analysis. The methods used to gather data for this study included observation and the collection of documents, library materials, and discourses about libraries. Observations took place at three different libraries, including two suburban libraries and one urban library. Eight visits were made to each library at different times of day over the course of four months. Observations took place in the children's room in the library as unobtrusively as possible. Jottings were completed and more extensive field notes were written later. Maps of each library space were constructed. Web-sites, materials available at the library, and other public documents were collected and included in the analysis. Data analysis entailed careful reading of fieldnotes and documents, analytic memoing, open coding, and constructing narratives of each library.

The analysis illuminated how family occupations at the library were, to a large degree, dependent on those who produce the context. How spaces were set up, the library location in the community, and the discourses of these spaces had a profound impact on family occupation. The findings highlight the importance of viewing family occupations in connection to larger political and economic factors rather than a construction solely of members of the family. Findings lend support for adopting a transactional perspective (Cutchin & Dickie, 2012) and varied data

gathering strategies when studying family occupation thereby connecting family occupation to larger political and economic issues.

Objectives for discussion:

\*What methods are most useful for studying family occupation in public spaces?

\*How does grounding a study in a space rather than focusing on particular families add to the study of family occupation?

\*What other public spaces have discourses that “swirl” around them and what impact do they have on family occupation?

Key words: Family, Occupation, Libraries

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## **“Away from everybody for an hour”: Reflections on informants experiences in qualitative research**

Aaron Bonsall, *University of Missouri*

Ethnographic studies depend on the openness of informants who are asked to disclose sensitive information such as beliefs and values (Lawlor & Mattingly, 2001). The openness of an informant can depend on both relationships with researchers and the experience of being part of a research project. However, the experience of participation that shapes individuals’ willingness to share their stories is often overlooked.

This paper explores the experiences of parents of children with disabilities that participated in two separate studies. These two research projects are particularly significant because although mothers and fathers participated in both studies, the primary focus of these studies was on



fathers, who have been described as being difficult research informants due to problems with identification, recruitment, and retention (Mitchell et al., 2007). The purpose of this paper is to analyze parents' participation in the research process in order to gain insight into aspects of the experience that allow individuals to share stories that are meaningful descriptions of their lives.

Data collection for these two studies included observations of families participating in activities together, interviews with fathers, interviews with mothers, and group interviews with both fathers and mothers. Eight families that included a child with a disability participated in the two studies. During the interview process, informants were asked specially to comment on their participation in the research. This paper consists of narrative analysis of informants' commentary on the interview process combined with researcher impressions recorded in fieldnotes for interviews and observations.

Over all, the findings demonstrate that the experience of the research process can have a profound influence on what informants share. The setting of interviews and observations influenced informants' perceptions, the process of data gathering, and the content of interactions. Although talking about their children was not something that often happened in their daily lives, informants described being part of the research project as an opportunity to talk about feelings and experiences. Descriptions of the interview process by the informants included comparisons to both personal and couples counseling. This description of the interview process can be difficult for the researcher reluctant to assume this responsibility.

This paper directly relates to the conference theme of methodologies that advance the study of occupation by reflecting on the process of gathering data for qualitative research. For qualitative researchers that depend on the openness of their informants, it is important to consider informants' experiences in the interview process. By examining experiences we can gain insight into topics that informants choose to talk about and why informants are willing to participate in research. This insight into the research process can be useful for new researchers designing an original study or experienced researcher reflecting on past data.

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## **The meaning and experiences of participating in a community-based wellness center from the perspective of individuals with a spinal cord injury**

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**Purpose:** to explore how individuals with a spinal cord injury (SCI) describe their experiences participating in an activity-based community wellness center program, the meaning of these experiences, how their experiences influence their well-being, and how this information can inform occupational therapy practice.

**Methods:** The majority of literature relating to SCI and wellbeing has explored only physical wellbeing and the resulting physiologic benefits of exercise or physical activity. Little is known about the experiences and the meaning of these experiences of individuals with a SCI who participate in wellness programs. Using a phenomenological design, investigators conducted individual interviews of four adult men who were members of a community-based wellness center designed specifically for individuals with a SCI using a semi-structured format. Investigators also observed participants as they engaged in activities at the wellness center. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Field notes of observations were transcribed verbatim. Data were collected until saturation of themes was achieved. Data analysis included gaining a sense of the whole, meaning units, structure and essence of the experiences (Polkinghorne, 1989). Trustworthiness was established via use of multiple investigators, triangulation (multiple methods, investigators), a member check, and use of detailed descriptions and quotes.

**Findings:** Several themes emerged which describe how the center provided a supportive and hopeful environment of peers and a place where participants could go where they could feel in control and have something to do. Through engagement in occupation, participants supported, encouraged, and empathized with each other creating a supportive community and a place for hope. They experienced benefits to their physical, mental, and social well-being through participation and their interactions.

**Discussion:** The findings add to the literature on occupation and wellbeing, co-occupation, occupational spinoff, and transactional nature of occupation. Findings reinforce the notion that being through doing allows individuals to find meaning, purpose, satisfaction, and belonging that promote well-being (Wilcock, 2006). Co-occupations helped shape the experiences of participants (Pierce, 2009). The center provided a social environment that influenced acceptance and feelings of belonging (Rebeiro & Cook, 1999). The center provided a place where

participants could interact, share experiences, ask questions, and be hopeful while doing occupations exemplifying the transactional nature of occupation (Dickie, et al., 2006). Occupational therapists need to recognize the importance of providing an environment where clients can feel hopeful, interact, and share experiences through engagement in occupation.

Conclusion: Occupational therapists need to be aware that rehabilitation focusing solely on exercise and adaptation to life in a wheelchair was viewed negatively by participants. Instilling hope and a sense of belonging through occupational engagement is essential to promoting well-being and successful integration into the community. OT programs should optimize opportunities for social participation and informal/formal education among peer groups and create environments that promote a sense of community and hope.

Key words: Wellness, Occupation, Spinal cord injury

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## **From heuristics to phenomenology: Lessons learned in studying the healing properties of writing**

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Heuristic research (Moustakas, 1990) has unique application to the study of occupation given its individual and collective focus on a particular construct, experience, or phenomenon. Though similar to phenomenology, each has its own distinct design, methodology and application through which self-discovery, personal growth, and collective understanding may be derived.

Heuristics provide a unique approach by which occupational science and its constructs may be studied.

A three phase research project was conducted to explore the occupation of personal writing, its influence on the development of the self and healing properties experienced within individual and collective writing activities. Haertl (2008, 2014) emphasized the importance of the written word in coming to understand the self, others, and personal experience. Ero-Phillips (2015) expanded upon previous inquiry on the occupation of writing to consider collective understandings of culture through written expression. Initial phases of the research involved a heuristic process analyzing 30 years of the primary author's personal poetry and journal writing followed by heuristic interviews of 9 lifetime writers who in accordance with heuristic methodology became co-researchers in the analytical process (Haertl, 2014). Lessons learned within the heuristic process included the importance of developing rapport, opening oneself to the possibilities within the co-researcher relationship while maintaining research boundaries, and consideration of the training needs of researchers involved in the process. Outcomes of the original research led to expansion on the study of the healing properties of writing through phenomenological interviews of 12 persons with mental illness who regularly engaged in collective and personal writing activities.

This presentation will briefly focus on the three phase research process, study results, lessons learned in applying heuristics and phenomenology to the study of occupation, and will conclude with a discussion of potential application to occupational science.

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**Occupational science and gynecologic oncology: Sex, cancer, quality of life and women's perceived occupational possibilities**

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Few scholars within occupational science, therapy and oncology recognize the impact of perceived social pressures to participate in occupations- particularly in sexual activities- on the quality of life and wellbeing of individuals (Sakellariou, 2006, Sakellariou & Algado, 2006). This may be especially important for women with gynecologic cancers who undergo surgical treatments that alter their body image, change their ability to participate in meaningful occupations, and decrease their quality of life (Reis, 2010, Reis, Beji, & Coskun, 2010). In particular, there is a gap in the literature exploring how the quality of life of women with gynecologic cancers relates to their perception of social pressures for activity participation and their confidence to participate in sexual, homecare, and work occupations.

The purpose of this paper is to present an interdisciplinary and collaborative study between occupational science and gynecologic oncology examining the relationship between quality of life and the perceived occupational possibilities of women with newly diagnosed gynecologic cancers. One hundred and eighty-seven women with newly diagnosed gynecologic cancers requiring surgery completed quality of life assessments and the Possibilities for Activity Scale-Gynecologic Oncology (PActS-GO) one month after their primary surgical treatment through a telephone –based interview. The PActS-GO assesses individuals' perception of social pressures and their confidence in doing occupations (e.g. creative, sexual, homecare activities etc.). A regression approach will assess correlates with physical, mental and global quality of life and PActS-GO. We hypothesize that higher quality of life scores will be associated with higher scores on the PActS-GO. In other words, women with better overall quality of life, following surgery, will have more confidence in activity participation and a stronger perception that sexual, work and homecare occupations are socially ideal.

These findings will enhance understandings of quality of life and survivorship for women with gynecologic cancers by elucidating the relationship among perceived social norms about occupations and quality life. Finally, this study will further the translation of an occupational science construct, occupational possibilities, to the fields of cancer survivorship research and gynecologic oncology, by demonstrating the relationship between this construct and the lived cancer experience, cancer surgical outcomes and the quality of life of women with cancer.

Objectives for discussion:

- \*To engage in scholarly discussion regarding association between quality of life and perceptions of occupational possibilities for women with gynecologic cancers
- \*Discussion concerning the perceived social pressure for participation in sexual activities for women with gynecologic cancers
- \*Discussion about the ways in which a diagnosis (and subsequent treatment) of gynecologic cancer can effect and shape participation in occupations

\*Dialog about the partnership and unique collaboration between occupational scientists and gynecologic oncologists

Key words: Occupational possibilities, Quality of life, Cancer

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## Occupational injustice on campus: Students with disabilities having to legitimize their roles

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Introduction: Policymakers articulate the right to equitable access to occupational opportunities for individuals with disabilities (Hammell, 2015). Nevertheless, individuals with disabilities remain underrepresented in universities, are more likely to drop out than students without disabilities, and experience higher unemployment rates (Dutta, Scguri-Geist, & Kundu, 2009; Mpofo & Wilson, 2004; Rimmerman & Araten-Bergman, 2005). These inequities are especially pronounced in health and human service (HHS) programs, which creates an occupational injustice by limiting engagement within school and work. Moreover, this hinders the development of a population of HHS professionals who accurately represent the diversity of the society that they serve. To address these occupational deprivations, we must further our understanding of the barriers faced by students with disabilities who are in HHS programs.

Methods: Our interdisciplinary team conducted in-depth interviews with students in the HHS sector who identified as having a disability to explore the barriers, challenges, and facilitators that they experienced in engaging in occupation, specifically those associated with being a student in HHS programs. Interview transcripts were analyzed using iterative qualitative data

analysis techniques.

Results: We found that students felt they had to engage in a process of legitimating their ability to perform the roles of good student and future practitioner. This legitimization process involves three components: negotiation of the disability label, selective disclosure, and advocacy.

Discussion: Our findings demonstrate how subtle and insidious forms of marginalization and stigmatization work to create barriers and challenges for individuals with disabilities within the HHS sector. This is a mechanism through which occupational choice and justice are limited for persons with disabilities.

Contribution to Knowledge: This study is an important addition to the dearth of literature examining the participation of persons with disabilities in HHS professions and educational programs, which is a gap representing an important area of occupational injustice that must be addressed. Understanding the experiences of students with disabilities in HHS programs will help us change existing structures and processes in order to facilitate the participation of students with disabilities. This will help students thrive within universities, thereby improving their occupational health and well-being, as well as ultimately increasing the diversity of the future clinical population. Answering the call of Laliberte Rudman and colleagues (2008), this research is informed by critical perspectives and aims not only at producing knowledge about social transformation, but also at taking action through knowledge exchange and dissemination strategies.

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## **Education to practice: How do new occupational therapists understand and use occupation in practice?**

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**Problem Statement:** Although there has been an increased emphasis on the use of occupation in the practice of occupational therapy (OT), it is unknown to what extent clinical practice has evolved to reflect the focus on occupation. If the distinct value of occupation is key to the profession's continued relevance in enabling health, data is necessary to identify how occupational therapists are prepared and use occupation in practice.

**Purpose:** The aim of this study is to understand how graduates of an OT program practice, how they articulate their practice, and if they use occupation in their practice.

**Background:** Wilcock (2001) identifies occupational science as a key to broadening horizons in OT. She suggests that "adopting occupational science will assist occupational therapists to think in occupational rather than medical terms" (p.412). An occupational perspective provides a way of thinking regardless of practice area. Pierce (2001) conceptualized critical bridges to link knowledge of occupation to practice including: generative discourse regarding occupation-based practice, and effective education. In 2006 the terms occupation-based interventions and occupation-based outcomes were first incorporated into the ACOTE standards further fixing the professions focus on occupation. Hooper et al. (2014) advocate keeping occupation at the center of learning. Despite the expectation that occupation is used in practice, there is little empirical knowledge of how this does or does not occur and how.

**Methods:** This research uses a comparative case study approach (Merriam, 1998) to explore the translation of knowledge of occupation from an OT education program to entry-level practice. Qualitative data collection includes: in-depth interviews of OT graduates about their understanding and experience of use of occupation in practice and photo elicitation of participant's physical practice environment.

**Results:** Preliminary findings of this research provide an understanding of occupation and its use in practice from the perspectives of occupational therapist who have graduated from a specific OT program. In addition, participant's reflections on the programs curriculum elucidates the extent to which the curriculum integrates various topics with the field's core subject, occupation.



It explores graduates conceptualizations of occupation, and the extent to which occupation is explicitly integrated into the curriculum. Understanding the integration of occupation into the curriculum is necessary to understanding practice, as the degree to which the core subject is integrated impacts formation of professional identity, clinical reasoning, self-efficacy as a practitioner, and advocacy on behalf of their profession to policy makers, payers, and consumers (Hooper et al., 2014 p.189).

Implications: Findings will contribute to the profession's generative discourse concerning occupation, the diversity of how occupation is understood and realized in practice, and the impact education on occupation has on practice. Furthermore, findings will reveal strategies OT practitioners and educators can use to support an occupational perspective in practice. Mitcham (2014) proposed that education is the engine that drives the profession. This study will offer insights into education that have the potential to advance the distinct value of the profession's core of occupation.

Objectives for discussion:

\*Participate in the ongoing discussion on how occupation is realized in occupational therapy practice.

\*Articulate barriers/supports to the translation of knowledge of occupation-based practice as experienced by recent graduates.

\*Identify methods that may be used to gather data needed to enhance curriculum design.

Key words: Occupation-based practice, Occupational therapy practice

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## **Perspectives regarding employment of individuals on the autism spectrum**

Lisa Crabtree, *Towson University*

The purpose of this explanatory sequential mixed methods study was to examine the occupation of employment from the dual perspectives of employers and transitioning youth on the autism spectrum to gain a better understanding of the extremely low employment rate for this population. Through the lens of occupational justice, the act of doing is viewed as essential to the development of a person's potential (Jakobsen, 2004). It is important to systematically examine and explain what a person is doing and how society enables such doing, particularly when barriers to participation may exist. Using a mixed methods design allowed researchers to fully explore and compare perspectives related to the critically important occupation of employment.

Unemployment rates for individuals on the autism spectrum exceed 88% (Wehman et al., 2014), suggesting barriers to occupational engagement exist (Jakobsen, 2004). Furthermore, those who are employed are typically under-employed, and they face higher rates of poverty, forcing many to be financially dependent on their families (Lindstrom, Kahn, & Lindsey, 2013). However, barriers to employment participation have not been fully explored, and it is unclear how perceptions may contribute to occupational deprivation in the area of employment for these individuals.

Researchers conducted a pilot study using surveys of 94 employers and 34 individuals on the autism spectrum aged 16-28, followed by focus groups and interviews with 4 employers and 8 transitioning youth. Analysis included descriptive statistics, qualitative coding and thematic development, and constant comparative methods. Comparison between perspectives of each of the two groups identified two consistent patterns that restricted the employment opportunities for transitioning youth on the autism spectrum: 1) lack of knowledge and 2) limited experiences. Employers identified a lack of knowledge about employment needs of individuals on the autism spectrum, while transitioning youth had limited knowledge of the constructs of employment, including knowledge of what entailed full-time employment. Additionally, employers who were surveyed and interviewed had no experience and many questions regarding employment of those on the autism spectrum. At the same time, transitioning youth in the study described very limited employment experiences.

This pilot study is one example of methodology that can be used to examine occupation from multiple perspectives to gain understanding that will contribute to the discipline of occupational science. Further exploration of the constructs of employment using a larger sample in future studies will provide information for further discussion of a critical occupation.

Objectives for discussion:

\*How does mixed methods research uniquely contribute to the study of occupation?

\*How can multiple perspectives of occupational participation contribute to greater understanding of an occupation?

Key words: Employment occupations, Autism, Mixed methods

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## **Occupational therapy and equine-assisted activities and therapy: An expanded view for hippotherapy within occupational therapy**

Erika L. Osmann, *Colorado State University*

This paper addresses the theme of interdisciplinary collaborations in the study of occupation. The larger systematic mapping review that this project is situated within is a joint collaboration between the Department of Occupational Therapy and the Department of Equine Sciences at Colorado State University (CSU). This study also looks at a larger sample of equine-assisted activities and therapies (EAAT) literature investigated by multiple professions. An occupational perspective is applied this literature base to inform occupational therapy practice and occupational science.

**Purpose:** This paper examined the idea that hippotherapy, the type of EAAT most reimbursable for occupational therapists, limits occupational therapy practice in terms of client factors, interventions, and outcomes. Hippotherapy is largely concerned with the movement of the horse providing neuromusculoskeletal outcomes to a passive rider (American Hippotherapy Association, 2010). This paper hypothesized that an expanded approach to involving the horse in occupational therapy would allow for more occupation-based interventions, outcomes related to performance and participation, and enlarged scope of clientele who can benefit from what Engel (2007)

termed equine-assisted occupational therapy (p. 7).

**Methods:** This paper is situated within a systematic mapping review study of all peer-reviewed, EAAT papers written in English between 1980 and 2014. Nine databases and manual reference lists of included articles were searched with 1,526 records screened and 234 meeting inclusion criteria. Interrater reliability was achieved at 95% for inclusion and exclusion criteria after screening 280 articles. My study included 28 intervention papers with adult participants. A data extraction tool (DET) was developed for capturing EAAT data. The DET was reviewed by an expert panel. Six research team members coded ten articles, achieving 90% interrater reliability; reliability checks were performed every 22 articles. The DET was uploaded into Microsoft Access. Data from the DET was then inputted, queried, and copied into Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. Using the pivot table feature, descriptive statistics were developed from DET data.

**Results:** The hypothesis was partially supported in terms of expanding client factors. Population descriptors and diagnoses in all EAAT papers extended beyond neuromusculoskeletal issues; however client factors of values, beliefs, and spirituality were only addressed in one paper. The EAAT papers also supported the hypothesis regarding intervention. Data included a breadth of intervention descriptions and the use of the horse in addition to passive riding (not controlling the direction or speed of the horse). Lastly the data supported more holistic client outcomes in addition to physical health. Descriptive statistics provided within the paper.

**Discussion:** Implications for occupational science include the need to develop a type of equine-assisted therapy more aligned with occupational therapy values. Suggestions for equine-facilitated occupational therapy (EFOT) include client factors in the context of the client's valued activities. The study of EFOT would also include occupation-based interventions involving the horse and equine environment in a variety of ways. Lastly EFOT would examine outcomes including a holistic range of outcomes related to performance and participation in everyday occupations.

**Key words:** Occupational therapy, Hippotherapy, Equine-assisted

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## **Volunteering: What it means for rural African-American women**

Jyothi Gupta, *St. Catherine University*

**Background and purpose:** Current research in the United States suggests that people over age 65 are more likely to volunteer on a given day than those in any other age group (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012). At a time when social services are being cut, complex social issues emanating from the growing disparities in society leave many communities underserved. Older adult volunteers often fill these service gaps. Research has shown that older adults who volunteer experienced an increased sense of purpose, increased personal competence, and increased life satisfaction (Van Willigan, 2000). Other studies have found that people who are Caucasian, married, educated, and of a higher socioeconomic status are more likely to volunteer (Tang, Morrow-Howell, & Hong, 2009).

There is a dearth in the literature on studies that examine the motivations for volunteering in different racial and/or ethnic groups, in rural and or urban low-income areas. The purpose of this study was to understand the motivations for volunteering in older African American women in a impoverished, rural and racially segregated community.

**Methods:** The research questions for this study were: What motivates older adults in a rural community to volunteer? What are the perceived benefits of volunteering? This study used a mixed-methods approach, as it was imperative to garner nuanced contextual understandings of the powerful sociocultural influences that had shaped the lives of the study participants. The quantitative data was gathered with the Volunteer Functions Inventory (VFI), an instrument that has been used widely and has published psychometrics (Clary, et. al., 1998). The qualitative data was obtained by conducting a focus group and one-on-one interviewing of six community elders. The qualitative analysis was performed using the Framework Analysis method that involved familiarization; identification of a thematic framework; indexing; charting; and mapping and interpretation. Peer checking and data triangulation established trustworthiness and rigor.

**Results:** Quantitative results show that the participants were motivated to volunteer by their values, desire for a greater understanding of their community issues, and for enhancing social relationships. Additionally, with increasing age, a desire for enhanced psychological well-being was an important motivator. Satisfaction was ranked high and was unanimous. Qualitative results revealed themes relating to both the individuals and the community. Overarching themes pertaining to individuals that emerged were related to individual beliefs, values, and benefits of volunteering. Themes that emerged about the community had a temporal aspect; inescapable racial inequality that spans the past and present, the theme of loss of community illustrating the present situation, and the theme of rebuilding community spanning the present and the future. The benefits of volunteering extended from increased energy and alertness; improved sense of life balance and fulfillment, to enhanced life purpose and sense of belonging.

Conclusion: These results provide insights into the influences of historical events and prevailing social attitudes in shaping the identities and occupational choices of participants. The occupation of volunteering gave a profound sense of purpose and meaning to these women, and for many defined their being. Understanding the motivations, health benefits and the meaning derived from volunteering occupation can be the basis for promoting healthy aging in communities, improve the health and well-being of older adults and the communities.

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### Preferred activities and well being: A study of occupation

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A sense of wellbeing is considered to be a universal phenomenon lying at the heart of happiness and quality of life. Factors believed to affect subjective wellbeing can be summarized as the person's circumstances, genetic make-up, and intentional participation in activities that are freely chosen (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005; Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2006). Occupational scientists who are interested in studying intentional activities that impact wellbeing may address this factor as play or as harmonious passions or activities that people find important, that are related to their identity, and that make "a life worth living" (Vallerand et al., 2003; Vallerand, 2008). Deconstructing these experiences may lead to a deeper understanding of well-being and quality of life. This is a task for which occupational scientists are well suited.

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to describe the experiential qualities of freely chosen,

pleasurable activities, as reported by adults in the general population.

**Method:** The instrument used to measure the experiential qualities of freely chosen, pleasurable activities was a modified version of the Daily Occupational Experience Survey (revised) (DOES-r), a self-report questionnaire in which respondents select a preferred activity and identify the characteristic experiences that accompany their engagement in it (Blanche, 2002). The study methods consisted of 3 phases: (1) revision of the instrument based on findings from the original pilot study, (2) data collection via Qualtrics, and (3) analysis of the data. Participants were 18 to 64 years old, and represented a variety of professions and interests (N=450). As guided by the survey, each participant identified one activity they considered to be their preferred pleasurable activity or their passion, and specified the experiential characteristics of that activity using a list of 31 potential experiences. Experiential items targeted the motivation to enter into the activity (e.g., I feel creative, I feel happy) and the characteristics of the activity as perceived by the participant (e.g., activity requires imagination, requires mental activity).

**Results and Discussion:** Exploratory factor analysis of the 31 experiential items yielded five factors: creativity, restoration, heightened self-awareness, ludos, and mastery.

The creativity factor was defined by experiences of imagination, mental activity, being exposed to new experiences, being spontaneous and lighthearted, and doing for others. The restoration factor combined relaxation and being lighthearted with doing for oneself. The heightened self-awareness factor represented experiences in which the person seeks intense physical activity which are exciting and leaves the person full of energy. The ludos factor represented the experience of pure play, i.e., an activity without a clear purpose that is engaged in mainly to experience joy. The mastery factor appeared to be the opposite of ludos, as it linked routines that are necessary to perform with enjoyment derived from doing something that the person can do well. Findings suggest that the research instrument may be valuable in future research that aims to explore and understand meaningful leisure occupation choices among adults with a variety of life challenges.

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## **Renaissance of adolescence in the third stage of life**

Charlotte Brasic Royeen, *Rush University*

**Statement of Purpose:** Changes or shifts in patterns of human occupation are poorly understood. In 1994 Royeen presented one of the earliest explorations of paradigmatic shifts in human occupation. Subsequently, others have explored a range of issues regarding patterns of occupations across the lifespan including Eakman and Edlund (2012). The purpose of this paper is to revisit Royeen's (1994) work and to integrate critical concepts in occupational science literature to an updated conceptual model.

**Description of Methods:** In this qualitative research presentation, a descriptive self-referenced case study will be delineated as what Merriam called a legitimate research design (1988). Further, this illustrative, self-referenced case study is both a process and product connecting personal experiences to a larger understanding. Data collected and used in the case study are documents, reflective journal writing, and repeated analysis using the COPM, e-mail conversations with a key colleague, and artifacts from travel, art and other forms of doing. The case study design and timeline (6 months) will be presented including (a) what data was collected, (b) how data was collected, (c) critical temporal events, (d) methods of reflexive analysis of the data, and (e) criteria for data interpretation including issues of trustworthiness of the data.

**Report of Results:** Emerging themes of the descriptive, self-referenced case study will be discussed and critiqued as follows. First, the theme of occupational integrity and occupational identify across changes in life patterns will be discussed (Bair, 2008). Second, the match of typical developmental issues of adolescence (Beckett & Taylor, 2010) with the issues of major shifts in occupational patterns as an adult will be identified and explored. Third, the theme of well-being as a renaissance and as a goal of the synthesis of occupational patterns and literature will be discussed. Fourth, a working timeline of a triad of deliberative stages of occupational sub patterns will be discussed including (1) anticipatory occupations (2) transitioning occupations, and (3) restorative occupations via searching and seeking occupational value and categorization by main, hidden or unexpected occupations will be presented and analyzed.

**Discussion/implications as related to occupational science:** How the results of this paper are related to and integrated with occupational science literature will be delineated. Finally, the



process of descriptive case study research in this instance and as an overall methodology to advance the study of occupational science will be presented and promoted. The strengths and limitations of this particular case study as well as the strengths and limitations of case study research as a tool for the investigating occupational science occupation will be posited.

**Importance to Occupational Science:** Certainly case study research has been critical in the development of major theorists such as Freud and Piaget: Occupational science has not fully explored its possibilities for developing knowledge and understanding in occupational science. Theoretical development as can be provided by case study research will be presented to add conceptualization and theory to understanding of patterns of occupation and key related concepts within the scope of occupational science.

**Objectives for the discussion:**

\*Compare temporal patterns of occupation over time.

\*Analyze a conceptual model for paradigmatic shifts in occupation that integrates existing literature in occupational science as relevant to the case study.

\*Discuss the benefits and areas of challenge when doing case study research.

\*Analyze how descriptive research fits into the stages of research pertaining to a body of knowledge.

**Key words:** Occupational patterns, Paradigmatic shifts, Occupational identity

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## **Translating collective occupations to Japanese culture: "Uchi (inside)"**

Etsuko Odawara, *Seirei Christopher University*

Yaiko Shibata Japanese, *Hyogo Rehabilitation Hospital*

Occupational science originated from Western ideas and has focused on individuals. However, as we develop our theories of occupation, human health, and well-being, we also need to be aware of the importance of focusing on collective occupations and intentionality, as well as individual, in order to more fully understand the occupational process; that is, how occupation promotes human health (Ramugondo & Kronenberg, 2015). Translation of these concepts to practice in occupational therapy must take into consideration cultural factors as well.

This study is a part of a larger research project to investigate the experience of occupational group therapy sessions in Japan by clients with physical disabilities in recovery stage and occupational therapists. Investigating clients' and therapists' experience of group sessions in a rehabilitation hospital in Japan leads us to better understanding of how Japanese collectiveness or "uchi (inside)" influences clients' participation in a group and human well-being. Odawara & Tuji (2011) showed how collective occupation promoted a Japanese stroke survivor in life crisis to reestablish her life, through her changing intentionality.

**Purpose:** To explore the relationship between collective occupation, health, and well-being in Japanese society. The author investigated the experience of occupational therapy group sessions of clients in the recovery phase and that of their paired therapists, in a rehabilitation hospital in Japan, to better understand how collective occupation relates to health and well-being.

**Methods:** Participants were clients with physical disabilities and their therapists in a rehabilitation hospital in Japan. Participant observation of 6 group sessions, interviewing 18 clients and 21 occupational therapists, and 3 focus groups of occupational therapists were conducted. Interview and focus group data were transcribed and analyzed using narrative analysis, based on Garro & Mattingly (2000). Member checking and triangulation of the results of analysis was done and agreement was found.

**Results and discussion:** I found the therapists' goal was to prepare clients for social participation. The process they used included:

1. Joining the group together as part of a therapy pair, thus offering the protection and support of the therapist's knowledge of the client and their uchi relationship,
2. Promoting clients' engagement in collective occupations,
3. Using the group to lower the hurdle for individuals anxious about returning to previous occupations because of their disability,
4. Promoting challenges in a safe environment,
5. Evaluating clients' ability in social settings,
6. Bridging to the future.

I found two aspects of the environment in the group sessions: a challenging one, because of the new setting for occupational performance, but also supportive friendly one, constructed by Japanese therapists and clients to whom uchi is the social norm as well as a familiar cultural practice and orientation. Uchi (inside), like African “Ubuntu” (Ramugondo & Kronenberg, 2015) features social attributes of bonding, cooperation, belongingness, sharing, intimacy and responsibility. Three features led clients to find pleasure and satisfaction in confirming their functioning and ability to fulfill their social role. This uchi environment for collective occupation was bridging them toward fuller social participation, health and well-being within the Japanese culture.

Objectives for discussion:

\*The discussion will encourage the participants to consider their responses to the following questions.

\*What collective occupations do Westerners, such as Americans, have? How do they relate to your self-identity and well-being? How do you translate the concept of collective occupations to practice in Western cultures such as the US?

Key words: Social participation, Occupational intentionality, Japanese culture

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## The disparities dilemma: Critical considerations for aging research and practice

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In the coming decades, the racial and ethnic make-up of the United States’ (U.S.) population

aged 65 and over will become increasingly diverse (Vincent & Velkoff, 2010). Occupational science, with its attention to mitigating occupational injustices, is well-positioned to make a contribution to knowledge on participation and healthcare disparities for racially and ethnically diverse older adults.

Although the medical literature is replete with information on healthcare disparities for various racial and ethnic groups, relatively little is known about disparities for people who use occupational therapy services in the U.S. The limited amount of information available on occupational therapy relates mainly to care access and this literature suggests little disparity (Chan, 2009). Other rehabilitation literatures contain studies that have examined the association between race and ethnicity on functional outcomes for rehabilitation patients; however, scholarship on this topic is relatively nascent. Similar to the broader rehabilitation literature, the occupational science literature offers little research addressing healthcare disparities for older adults; however, there are notable theoretical contributions that pertain to this topic.

In both occupational science and occupational therapy, scholars have called for a critical reflexivity in research and practice that we wish to engage in the present paper. In this paper, we aim to raise the collective consciousness of our occupational science community about the healthcare disparities facing the older adult population in the U.S. We interpret and critically evaluate evidence from our experiences and a secondary data analysis on a randomized controlled trial with racially and ethnically diverse older adults (Authors, 2012). This study used a semi-crossover design to provide occupational therapy intervention to participants (n=460) over a 6-month period. Participants were pre-tested, post-tested, and follow-up tested at 18 months.

In the present paper, we explore three common places for disparities in occupational science and occupational therapy to arise: recruitment, retention, and assessment. Building upon our experiences with research, we will critically examine approaches to recruiting and retaining racially and ethnically diverse older adults during the course of this study and discuss lessons learned that may be translated to practice. We provide a modified, multi-faceted model of recruitment and retention strategies (Authors, 2014). Additionally, we offer results and new insights from a Rasch analysis which examines similarities and differences in conceptual meanings of an assessment tool often used in research. Findings reveal that translation/adaptation of assessments to languages and cultures for which they were not originally developed may be problematic in both research and practice.

Rather than providing answers to the disparities dilemma in occupational science research, we invite the audience to join us in what Laliberte Rudman (2013) termed “enacting the ‘critical potential’ of occupational science” (p. 300) by “questioning the ‘way things are’, or what has come to be taken-for-granted, within and outside occupational science, regarding occupation and occupational inequities” (p. 310). We believe that the present moment is a critical time to interrogate our beliefs about older adults’ research experiences, considering power relations,

social structures, and methodological approaches that may better support an increasingly diverse aging population.

Objectives for discussion:

\*Open a critical dialogue on addressing older adults' health disparities considering pertinent theoretical and methodological framings in occupational science

\*Raise consciousness in the occupational science community about older adults' health disparities in the United States

\*Interpret evidence and critically examine a translational research program conducted with a racially and ethnically diverse older adult population

Key words: Health disparities, Older adults, Translational research

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## **Morning routines of persons with chronic disabilities: Use of participant-generated photography for data collection**

MaryEllen Thompson, *Eastern Kentucky University*

The purpose of this research was to examine morning routines of individual's with chronic disabilities using participant-generated photography to guide semi-structured interviews for a qualitative study. The research was conducted over a two-year period. Year One: four adults with chronic disabilities were recruited by student researchers. Participants ranged in age from 50 to 73 years old and living with disability for six to 20 years. Interviews were transcribed and reviewed line-by-line to highlight important, key statements and included reflective remarks (or

jottings) in the margins. Individual analysis of each interview was completed for initial coding followed by cross-case analysis for purposes of final coding. Codes were labeled using terminology from the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework. The following characteristics of morning routines were identified: Activities of Daily Living (ADL), Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL), Objects (medical and typical), Context: Temporal, Context: Other than Temporal, and Values. Photographs were reviewed for confirmation of characteristics. Year Two: seven additional adults with chronic disabilities were recruited by a new group of student researchers. Participants ranged in age from 21 to 87 years old and living with disability for three to 34 years. Interviews were transcribed and reviewed for the previously identified characteristics (from Year One) and any additional themes were examined using cross-case analysis. Themes that emerged included: Importance of self-developed routines, Importance of object placement, Impact of chronic pain and fatigue, and Motivation to live a typical life. All analysis and results were completed under the supervision of an experienced researcher. Results were then compared to a previous study of the morning routines of typical individuals for similarities and differences. Overall, individuals with chronic disabilities reported using more objects (medical) and needing an apparently longer period of time to complete their morning routines. A clear end to the morning routine was problematic for those with chronic disabilities who were not going to a job. Many similarities also were found between typical individuals and those with chronic disabilities. Challenges of comparison related to different data collection choices will be discussed. Advantages of using participant-generated photography as a data collection method for occupational science research include improved connectedness between researcher and participant, usability with participants who are non-verbal or have a language challenge, triangulation of data collected, and current ease of accessing digital media.

Objectives for discussion:

- \*Next directions for researching morning routines
- \*Thoughts about chronic disability and aging
- \*Management of photographic and other visual methods of data collection
- \*What other occupations might be studied using participant-generated photography

Key words: Morning routines, Chronic disabilities, Photography

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### **Meta-synthesis: Exploiting the potential for occupational science**

Mandy Stanley, *University of South Australia*

Introduction: Meta-synthesis involves taking multiple qualitative studies on the same topic and re-analysing the published findings (Murray & Stanley, 2015). The outcome of analysis is to arrive at a deeper level of understanding of the topic which has greater potency than single studies.

Statement of purpose: In this presentation I will describe what meta-synthesis is and how it might be used by researchers to build a stronger evidence base for allied health practice.

Method: To begin the meta-synthesis a clear question needs to be determined before defining search terms and selection criteria. Once the studies have been located they are appraised with regards to quality before data in the form of findings and direct quotes are extracted. Data are then analysed thematically to arrive at conceptual themes.

Findings: Methodological issues related to the difficulty with searching, quality appraisal of studies, combining studies with differing methodological approaches, the positionality of the researchers and the lack of consensus of approach will be presented. To illustrate key points and provide examples of methodological issues, might be resolved I will draw on my own experience of conducting meta-syntheses of the transition from allied health clinician to academic (Murray, Stanley & Wright, 2014) and parenting in the neonatal intensive care unit (in press).

Implications for occupational science: With careful consideration of the limitations of meta-synthesis the new conceptual knowledge derived will strengthen occupational science. This is particularly valuable and promising for a science which predominantly has qualitative studies with small sample sizes.

Key words: Meta-synthesis, Qualitative, Meta-ethnography

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### **A systematic mapping review of equine-assisted activities and therapies for children with autism: Implications for occupational therapy**

Brittany C. McDaniel, *Colorado State University*

Erika L. Osmann, *Colorado State University*

Wendy Wood, *Colorado State University*

The targeted conference theme for this paper is methodologies to advance the study of occupation. Equine-assisted activities and therapies (EAAT) involve the use of a horse to help people with a variety of health conditions, including children with autism. EAAT are activity-based, occurring in everyday equine environments like stables, riding arenas, and trails. EAAT have grown in popularity, however EAAT literature has not been systematically synthesized.

Our purpose was to create a comprehensive map from an occupational perspective of refereed literature on EAAT for children with autism published between 1980 and 2014. This map will guide future research, practice, and education by identifying strengths and gaps in the literature from an occupational perspective.

A search of 9 databases produced 1541 peer-reviewed articles. Through a process of inclusion/exclusion, 234 papers were deemed directly relevant to EAAT; 25 of those were relevant to children with autism. The research team developed a data extraction tool (DET) to systematically extract information from each of the included articles. In developing the DET, the International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF) (World Health Organization, 2002) was used to categorize outcomes, revealing to what extent EAAT literature addressed the child's body functions, activities, and participation. The team achieved 90% interrater reliability in use of the DET. Data were analyzed in Microsoft Access and Excel to produce descriptive statistics, thus creating a comprehensive map of the literature.

Overall, 25 articles were directly relevant to EAAT for children with autism; 15 articles addressed autism exclusively, while 10 addressed a variety of conditions. Twenty articles were research, and six were conceptual/theoretical pieces. Research studies implemented a variety of



designs, most commonly single-group pretest-posttest designs. Therapeutic riding (10 studies) and hippotherapy (four studies) were the most commonly studied interventions. Many theoretical rationales were used to explain how EAAT affected change in participants, including but not limited to: motor learning theories, behavioral theories, sensory integration theory, human-animal bond theories, and dynamic systems theory. Sixteen studies measured outcomes categorized as ICF body functions, while only ten studies measured outcomes categorized as ICF activity or participation. The most commonly measured outcomes include: communication, interpersonal interaction, sensory processing, balance, and autism symptomology.

In summary, despite the occupational nature of EAAT, literature pertaining to EAAT for children with autism has never been synthesized from an occupational perspective. This study implemented a unique methodology to provide an occupational lens to EAAT by systematically mapping the literature and categorizing outcomes using the ICF. This revealed that few EAAT studies measured the child's ability to meaningfully participate at home, school, or in the community, presenting an opportunity for future research from an occupational perspective. Informed by existing EAAT literature, a new theoretical basis is proposed for how the horse can be utilized within occupational therapy practice to increase the child with autism's ability to participate fully in life. Overall this systematic mapping review will guide future research, practice and education in the field of EAAT for children with autism.

Key words: Equine-assisted activities and therapies, Occupational therapy, International classification of functioning, Disability, and Health

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## **The difference between meaningful and psychologically rewarding occupations: Findings from two pilot studies**

Moses N. Ikiugu, *University of South Dakota*

Ashley Hoyme, *University of South Dakota*

Brittany Mueller, *University of South Dakota*

Rochelle R. Reinke, *University of South Dakota*

Introduction: It has been suggested that meaningful occupations are healing because they activate the dopaminergic neural pathways in the brain (Gutman & Schindler, 2007). In our two pilot studies, we investigated whether: 1) self-selected meaningful occupations activated the dopaminergic neural pathways as hypothesized, and 2) there were differences in the type of occupations that were perceived by study participants to be; a) meaningful, b) psychologically

rewarding (likely to activate the dopaminergic or reward neural pathways), and/or c) both meaningful and psychologically rewarding. Method: Twenty one individuals participated in the two studies. All participants were adults and were either associated with a University in Midwest USA or were occupational therapists. Both studies were conducted using repeated measures designs (Portney & Watkins, 2009). In study number one, participants chose occupations that were meaningful to them under the guidance of the principal investigator (PI) using the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (McColl, Paterson, Davies, Doubt, & Law, 2000) and the Assessment and Intervention Instrument for Instrumentalism in Occupational Therapy (Ikiugu, 2007). Each study participant was video-recorded participating in a chosen meaningful occupation. Participants' brains were scanned on the functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging scanner under 4 conditions: watching themselves on video participating in the chosen meaningful occupation; watching themselves on video participating in a rote exercise; 3 receiving verbal stimulation related to meaningful occupation; and 4) receiving verbal stimulation related to universally recognized rewarding stimuli. Data were analyzed using a General Linear Model to determine if reward neural pathways were activated when participants watched themselves participating in meaningful occupations or receiving verbal stimulation related to their meaningful occupations.

In study number two, data were gathered using the Experience Sampling method (Scollon, Kim-Prieto, & Diener, 2003; Trull & Ebner-Priemer, 2009), the Brief Mood Introspection Survey (Mayer & Gaschke, 1988), and Evaluation of Meaningful Activity Survey (Goldberg, Brintnell, & Goldberg, 2002). When cued on the phone, participants wrote down the occupation in which they were engaged, with whom, their perception of the type of occupation (whether fun, obligatory, etc.) and responded to the BMIS and EMAS items. Discriminant analysis was conducted to determine the occupation types that were associated with positive mood (psychologically rewarding) and that were associated with the most meaning (as indicated by the EMAS scores). Findings: Self-selected meaningful occupations did not activate the reward neural pathways as hypothesized in the first study. In the second study, mood and meaningfulness were able to discriminate between occupation types. Fun occupations elicited the most positive mood (likely psychologically rewarding), especially when they were mentally stimulating and were performed with other people. Conclusion: There seemed to be characteristics that were common to both meaningful and psychologically rewarding occupations (both were mentally stimulating and fostered connection with other people). There were characteristics that were distinct to each type of occupation. Psychologically rewarding occupations tended to be perceived as fun, while physically stimulating occupations tended to be perceived as meaningful. A larger study with a more representative sample is being planned in an attempt to verify these findings.

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## POSTERS

### **Exploring the effects of dance as a therapeutic media to assess attunement in co-occupation between primary caregiver and infant**

Kelly R. Frye, *James Madison University*

Natalie A. Perez, *James Madison University*

Amy R. Yun, *James Madison University*

**Purpose:** Dance has been used as a metaphor (Larson, 2000) in co-occupation literature. Matherly, 2013, and other dance literature suggests that dance has psychological benefits. Little research has been conducted to explore the effects of dance on the caregiver-infant co-occupation and attunement. Our study seeks to explore whether dance has an effect on co-occupations within these dyads. This could be utilized as a useful tool in the future when providing care for families.

**Method:** Participants: will include dyads consisting of primary caregivers, ages 18 years and older, and their infants, ages 2 weeks to 12 months. Dyads where the child is a toddler and pre-walker will also be included. Participants must be able to speak and understand English in order to benefit from the group. Purposive and convenience sampling techniques will be used to recruit participants. Participants will be recruited through word of mouth and community fliers. Snowballing sampling will also be used because some participants may suggest other potential participants.

**Data:** will be collected using the PICCOLO and modified COPM. The PICCOLO is a strength-based assessment designed to increase parent understanding and knowledge of infant development. It is used to observe and quantify a caretaker's ability to interact and support

his/her infant in the following domains: affection, responsiveness, encouragement, and teaching. A modified COPM will be used as a guide to interview primary caregivers of their satisfaction, wants, and needs of daily routines with his/her infant. These themes will shape the dance/movement intervention. The researchers will take field notes during the interviews and groups to capture unfolding co-occupations and to triangulate the data.

**Design & Procedures:** A mixed methods approach is used. A quantitative design allows us to quantify the impact of the intervention on attunement as described in the PICCOLO assessment. A Pre-test/Post-test design will be used. A qualitative phenomenological design will most accurately help researchers describe the phenomenon of caregiver-infant interaction.

**Analysis:** Field notes will be analyzed through the constant comparative method to extrapolate emerging themes. Pre-test and post-test PICCOLO scores will be statistically analyzed (SPSS) to compare findings.

**Results:** This is a research work in progress. Data will be collected May 15-June 12, 2015

**Discussion:** Although no results have been determined yet, we are hopeful that this intervention will provide insight into enhancing co-occupation between caregivers and infants concerning dance as a therapeutic medium. We hope that this insight will lead to more evidence-based practice for occupational therapy practitioners in EI with families.

**Objectives for discussion:**

\*Discuss experiences of caregivers and infants who participate in an inter-professional dance/movement intervention.

\*Describe how dance/movement affected co-occupation among caregiver and infant interaction and how caregivers believed this intervention affected performance within co-occupations.

**Key words:** Co-occupation, Dance, Attunement

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### **Play and play spaces: Listening to children's voices on designing for play in an Irish school setting**

Eimear Cagney, *University College Cork, Ireland*

Chloe Carroll, *University College Cork, Ireland*

Helen Lynch, *University College Cork, Ireland*

**Statement of purpose:** Evidence is emerging that children experience fewer opportunities for outdoor free play both at home and at school than in previous generations. This has been thought to be a contributor to childhood obesity and the increase in mental health difficulties for children. Consequently research has begun to focus more on outdoor play settings in relation to health and wellbeing. For example, in Australia, researchers have shown that when loose parts are introduced in school yards, levels of teamwork, constructive and creative play increased, along with reports in social skills and self-concept improvements (Bundy et al, 2009; Bundy et al. 2011). However, children have been excluded from having a say in designing their play environments (NCO, 2004) and studies have argued for the need to adopt a child-centred approach in planning and designing playspaces for children (Australian Heart Foundation, 2013). This study aimed to research outdoor playspace design from a child-centred approach: to explore the perspectives of children from a primary (elementary) school in Ireland on their ideal play space and its affordances.

**Description of method:** A qualitative ethnographic study was conducted to explore children's ideas about their play spaces and play preferences. A mosaic approach was used to generate data in one city school, of mixed gender children aged from four to 12 years. All children engaged in an art project to share ideas about their favourite play landscapes. Focus groups were carried out with groups of children representing each class in the school: children outlined what they considered to be important for play. The researchers observed the different age groups at play during break (recess). Field notes were kept to record data from meetings with teachers, parents' council members and the project manager. Data were transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis.

**Report of results:** Data were categorised into 3 key themes: 1) a diverse range of natural and built affordances that provides 2) challenging and sensory rich experiences where the children have the opportunity to engage in a range of social and solitary outdoor and 3) a sense of ownership over the schools play space and their outdoor play experiences. Key findings demonstrate the complex requirements of the schools outdoor play environment for children that go beyond the

need for physical activity play.

Discussion and implications: The study offered new insights into what children perceive to be the most important constituents of a school playspace. It also indicated that a number of factors were important for creating an outdoor play space. These included natural and built features that incorporate risk and challenging design features, allowing for spaces for social play and varying sensory experiences. This informed the transformation of the school's bare concrete yard to a dynamic play space offering diverse play experiences. The importance of the occupational context is identified as a core factor in enabling play.

This study helps inform occupational therapists about the importance of occupational context, and incorporating a rights-based approach when working with children and schools, in designing health promoting playspaces.

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## Play and playspaces: Accessibility and usability of playground environments for children under 12

Alice Moore, *University College Cork, Ireland*

Helen Lynch, *University College Cork, Ireland*

Statement of purpose: Playgrounds are important outdoor environments in many communities during childhood. However, playground spaces often do not meet the needs of typically developing children or children with disabilities. This results in social exclusion in local community settings for many children. This study explored the evidence regarding accessibility and usability of playgrounds for children of all abilities in order to identify factors that enable or constrain social inclusion in community playgrounds.

Description of methods: A scoping method was used as little research in this area has been collated and synthesised. Scoping reviews are effective for exploring and synthesising varied methods of inquiry around a phenomenon of interest. Five stages in a scoping review were employed: 1) identifying research question, 2) identifying, 3) selecting, 4) analysing and 5) summarising relevant empirical literature and research findings on the topic (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005)

Electronic databases were searched, using the P.I.C.O framework, to establish key words which were used in various combinations. A hand search of grey literature was completed of additional studies identified in reference lists of articles retrieved. Recent textbooks on childhood and playground environments were manually searched to identify additional studies contained in their reference lists. 158 articles published between 2000 and 2014, relating to children 12 years and under, and utilising the terms usability or accessibility in the abstract or title were found for review. Each article's title, abstract, introduction and conclusion were reviewed, leading to the identification of 34 articles. 20 further articles were excluded as they did not meet the inclusion criteria. Fourteen studies were finally selected and analysed.

Each study was critically appraised and evaluated in relation to design and methods utilised using McMaster analysis tools. Studies were read and re-read to ensure a rigorous and comprehensive examination. Studies were analysed and coded on a paragraph by paragraph basis to identify themes and categories. Mind-maps were constructed to identify links between the articles and develop themes. Finally, themes were identified, compared and contrasted across the articles, which formed the foundation of the findings.

Report of results: 14 key articles were identified and two major themes emerged: 1) accessible playground environments-features and factors; 2) from excluding to including- making playground environments usable. Findings indicate that numerous environmental barriers contribute to making playground environments inaccessible and unusable for many children, particularly children with disabilities. Playground design is identified as a significant factor in enabling inclusion, and goes beyond physical access issues. The importance of the occupational context is identified as a core factor in enabling play but more importantly for supporting social inclusion.

Discussion/ Implications as related to occupational science: This study provides insights into how environmental design shapes occupational engagement from an occupational science

perspective. Findings have an application to occupational therapy and occupational-centred practice, as they identify how practitioners can work to advocate for children's occupational right to play; and develop and maximise the accessibility and usability of playgrounds, thus enhancing the play opportunities on playgrounds for all (Prellwitz & Skar, 2007; Shapiro, 2006).

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## Translating occupational science knowledge about immigration using a framework of occupational justice

Tessa L. Boston, *Saint Louis University*

Rebecca M. Aldrich, *Saint Louis University*

The phenomenon of immigration has been studied exhaustively by political and social scientists, their foci ranging from productivity to cultural trends. Occupational science adds to the aforementioned research by acknowledging the complexity of immigration and emphasizing how occupations affect and are affected by international relocation (Huot, Laliberte Rudman, Dodson, & Magalhaes, 2013). The purpose of this literature review was to explore the occupational perspective of immigration and identify gaps that still exist in current knowledge. Twenty-four articles published between 2007 and 2013 in six journals contributed to this literature review.

According to existing literature, many immigrants experience occupational injustices in their new environments. Although one reason for immigration is the promise of a more prosperous career and greater opportunity for work occupations, one common outcome is demotion in salary or type of employment. This can cause feelings of stress, injustice, and dissatisfaction for immigrants (Heigl, Kinebanian, & Josephsson, 2011). Research suggests that, for reasons including racial stigmatization or differences in system structures, knowledge and skills do not always transfer equally across cultures (Hocking, 2012). As a result, immigrants may lack opportunities to participate in necessary and meaningful occupations, work or otherwise (Sterling



& Nayar, 2013). These findings suggest that immigrants may benefit from finding ways to develop and translate their skills into new occupations after moving to new contexts. Occupational scientists can facilitate this development by interpreting and communicating this knowledge to immigrants as well as other disciplines and professions that work with immigrants.

The results of this literature review suggest that occupational scientists can utilize an occupational justice approach to enable knowledge translation and justice within the immigrant population; accordingly, this poster outlines ways in which enablement skills from the Participatory Occupational Justice Framework (Whiteford & Townsend, 2011) can be used to facilitate translation of occupational science knowledge into collaborations with immigrant communities. Using this framework may guide agencies and service providers to better help immigrants communicate their proficiencies and strategize ways to utilize skills in their new contexts. Facilitating knowledge translation in this way may eventually ease immigrants' transitions and open up opportunities for their participation in important and meaningful occupations.

Key words: Immigration, Occupations, Occupational injustice

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## **Impact of legalized same-sex marriage on occupational engagement and well-being: A pilot study**

William B. Wrightsman, *Touro University Nevada*

The purpose of this qualitative pilot study is to determine the impact of legalized same-sex marriage on occupational engagement and well-being utilizing a phenomenological approach. The question asked of the participant is: What is the impact of legalized same-sex marriage on your occupational engagement and well-being? This pilot study explores themes such as occupational participation and presence, health outcomes, occupational identity, occupational norms, and occupational rights, in an attempt to understand how these broad concepts correlate to legalized same-sex marriage and potentially influence occupational engagement and well-being. While many studies have found a correlation between opposite-sex marriage and positive health outcomes, no qualitative studies were found that analyzed legalized same-sex marriage and the impact that this societal institution has on the subjective experience of occupational engagement and well-being. This is an important area to explore, as occupational scientists believe that there is a direct correlation between occupational engagement, health, and well-being (Doble & Santha, 2008; Hammell, 2010; Reid, 2008; Wilcock, 2005).

Key words: Occupational engagement, Same-sex marriage, Well-being

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## **Health status after job loss—Does the reason for job change matter?**

Maren Voss, *Towson University*

Jie Chen, *University of Maryland*

Statement of purpose: Examine health status of the recently but no longer employed population by reason for job loss or leaving.

Description of methods: Using the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey 2008-2012, a sample of 8742 respondents experiencing job loss during the survey year were evaluated by reason. We compared those who passively lose employment with a group naming a reason and purpose for leaving work, examining how the reasons and conditions following employment relate to health outcomes. Multivariate regressions and ordered probit models were used to estimate the association between unemployment reasons and SF-12v2 physical (PCS), mental (MCS), and self-rated health outcomes post-unemployment, controlling for demographic, socioeconomic, and prior health factors.

Results: Health status was significantly worse among those who passively lost employment from layoffs or jobs ending, compared to health status of the recently employed population who left jobs for maternity, family care, or pursuing education. The negative associations between jobs lost and health outcomes were more substantial among respondents with better prior health status.

discussion and implications for occupational science: Unemployment has received the bulk of attention in study of health effects related to employment change, though job instability was identified as a related stressor in early meta-analytic reviews on the associations between unemployment and health (Dooley, Fielding, & Levi, *Health and unemployment.*, 1996). Since that time precarious employment has been linked to job stress and health declines (Burgard, Brand, & House, 2009; Benach, 2014) and there has been attention to expanding the study further to discouraged workers, those who have given up looking for work because they feel there are no jobs available to them (Aldrich, 2011). These groups share a recent but tenuous attachment to the labor market which has provided both economic and non-economic benefits. Our study likewise examines an extended pool of those marginally attached to the labor market in looking at the recently but no longer employed. As secondary analysis, we did not measure time-use following unemployment directly, but findings from our study corroborate prior findings that effective time use correlates with improved coping and better psychological health during unemployment (Van Hoya & Lootens, 2013). A study of time use during the 2008 recession found that only 2-6% of time in lost work hours was applied to productive activity (Aguilar, Hurst, & Karabarbounis, 2013). We hypothesized that job leavers who engage in named unpaid occupations that provide time structure, purpose, and regular activity would have better health outcomes than job leavers without named replacement activities. Our findings support this conclusion and have implications for including time-use and activity structure within the policy

and programming offered to the unemployed and to job leavers.

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## **The occupational benefits associated with persons caring for a pet**

Christine A. Johnson, *Nova Southeastern University*

Choosing to own a dog often requires a higher commitment level to each of the areas provided in order to take care of the pet. Feeding requires careful consideration of the food that would be the best for the dog. There has been an increased interest in feeding dogs a raw, natural diet to ensure the ingredients are known (Billinghurst, 2001). Feeding a raw, natural diet also eliminates many ingredients and additives that pets are allergic to in commercial pet food. Grooming consists of caring for their coat, teeth, and nails by the individual or outside service provider. Illness and prevention has become increasingly expensive with the first year costing \$300 to \$1,300 for the year and a minimum of \$300 each year following in veterinarian health and wellness visits alone without including the cost of unknown emergency veterinary care (Petfinder, n.d.). An alternative option for individuals on a fixed household income is to obtain health insurance for the pet. Coverage plans are similar to humans in that they differ greatly in the services provided, so ample research is suggested. Research has been completed to study the effects in each aspect of a person's life in regards to owning a pet. Pet ownership is intricately connected to a person's occupational health through meaning linked to place spirituality and time, improving occupational balance, engagement, identity, and well-being.

The act of owning a pet can directly and indirectly affect a person in many ways. Having a pet in a home creates a special meaning of the place the person lives. The care a pet needs creates a

sense of purpose for the person, which has an effect on the person's spirituality. Routines and habits involved with feeding, toileting, training, and sleep schedules impact the temporal aspects of time in a person's life. Physical activity, play, and training required for pets ensure and help the person to create occupational balance within his or her life. Owning a pet also creates unique areas of occupational engagement within the community through animal groups and associations. The physical activity required for an animal has influenced a person's physical health in taking a pet for walks or playing within the home environment. The human-animal bond created between the person and pet decreases anxiety, depression, and strengthens the mental health of the person who owns a pet.

Key words: Pet, Occupation, Health benefits

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## Action research with a home-based training program to understand and address the occupational needs of caregivers of older adults

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Courtney Stiles, *Towson University*  
Abby Vandegrift, *Towson University*

**Statement of Purpose:** The purpose of this action based, case study research, utilizing a concurrent embedded mixed methods approach, was to examine the effects of a home-based, student-led caregiver education program to meet the occupational needs of caregivers of older adults. Many caregivers experience occupational imbalance in their attempts to meet the needs of the care recipient(s) in addition to their own needs. Many caregiver training programs have taken an educational approach, providing information. But a more active learning approach was undertaken in the current study to allow caregivers to learn specific skills and techniques within the context of their own home or environment of their choice.

**Description of methods:** In order to best address the needs of five participants, a semi-structured interview was conducted and analyzed for themes in addition to obtaining perceptions of quality of life (Quality of Life Scale), self-efficacy (General Self-Efficacy Scale related to caregiving role), and burden (Zarit Caregiver Burden Scale) through Likert scale ratings. Specific skills or areas to focus the training were identified. At least 3-4 contacts were made with caregivers to establish rapport, understand the context of caregiving, identify occupational needs of the caregiver, teach skills and techniques, provide information, and follow-up through phone and/or email. All training was provided on an individual basis but participants gathered for a final group session to learn of additional resources and share experiences. Pre-intervention data from the questionnaires were compared with post-intervention data. Additionally, the Modified Multi-axial Assessment of Caregiver Intervention Outcomes was used to determine the effectiveness of the training to meet the targeted needs.

**Results:** Two participants discontinued participation due to death or illness after the initial contacts. The remaining participants demonstrated improvements in their quality of life, efficacy, and burden based on observed scores. There was no statistically significant difference due to small sample. Qualitatively, participants reported benefitting from the training and were better prepared to handle the challenges of caregiving. Two cases are highlighted that best illustrates this action research methodology to understand and address the occupational needs of caregivers.

**Discussion/implications as related to occupational science:** The home-based training program and engagement of caregivers in learning and applying new skills and knowledge was successful in addressing specific caregiver needs. The action based methodology employed in natural contexts allowed researchers to obtain the lived experience of caregivers. Researchers became more comfortable and used as knowledgeable resources for the caregiver. Follow-up contacts aided both caregivers and researchers to address unforeseen issues which also shed light on the participation patterns of the caregivers enabling the researchers to affectively experience the meaning and value placed on certain occupations performed in the caregiving role. This deeper

level of knowledge of the occupational engagement of caregivers can enable more creative and effective training programs to be developed.

Objectives for discussion:

- \*Explore action research methodology to identify occupational needs of a target population.
- \*Discuss the impact of relationship building in addressing needs of a target population
- \*Outline opportunities for occupational scientists to use this methodology to address specific needs.

Key words: Action research, Occupational engagement, Informal caregiving

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## **The occupations of adulthood: Perspectives from adolescents with autism spectrum disorder**

Anne V. Kirby, *University of Utah*

Statement of Purpose: The purpose of this presentation is to contribute to an occupation-centered understanding of the transition to adulthood for youth with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in order to inform occupation-based interventions to support successful transitions to adulthood.

**Methods:** Eight adolescents with ASD (ages 12-17; 1 female) participated in semi-structured interviews in their homes on the topic of adulthood, focused on their perceptions of the occupational participation of adults. All participants had the capabilities to verbally respond to open-ended interview questions. Each adolescent's parent completed questionnaires during the interviews and participated in their own interviews afterward (analyzed separately). In order to gain an understanding of perspectives from individuals in a broad range of situations, we recruited a diverse group in terms of race, household income, family structure, educational experiences, and level of functioning. Participants' Social Responsiveness Scale (SRS; Constantino & Gruber, 2005) t-scores ranged from 65 to 117; four participants had autism severity scores in the mild to moderate range (60-75) and four in the severe range (>75). Interview questions focused on participants' perspectives on the lives and occupations of adults in general, as well as what they expect for their own futures. Interviews were audio recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using a systematic, iterative coding procedure (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Qualitative thematic coding focused on responding to two broad questions: "What do adults do?" and "How will you know when you are an adult?"

**Results:** For the first broad question—What do adults do?—analysis revealed three main themes: (1) Productivity; (2) Caring for Self and Others; and (3) Handling Difficult Situations. The adolescents described adults as being productive which included working and being able to pay for things, taking care of themselves and others, and being prepared and able to problem solve when difficult situations arise. Regarding the second question—How will you know when you are an adult?—two themes summarized the participants' responses: (1) Age and Accomplishment; and (2) Maturity and Responsibility. Some participants explained that they would become adults once they reached a certain age (e.g. 18) or achieved certain accomplishments (e.g. graduation from high school or college). However, other participants emphasized that adulthood was not a function of age, but rather something that was earned by demonstrating maturity and responsibility, being able to make important decisions, and having the freedom to control one's life.

**Discussion/Implications:** The findings of this study related to what adults do (i.e., occupations) provide potential avenues for occupation-based interventions that would be meaningful for youth with ASD (e.g., employment-based, money-management/purchasing, caring for self/others, problem-solving in context). Integration and translation of this knowledge to practice with this population could improve not only the occupational participation of adults with ASD, but also their own recognition of themselves as adults. Previous research in occupational science has identified the important relationship between occupations and identity in this population (Bagatell, 2007) and this study provides new insight into potential avenues for identity development through occupation to improve quality of life for individuals with ASD.

**Key words:** Individual perspectives, Autism, Transition to adulthood

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### **Facilitating adaptation: The effects of an occupation-based program**

Brittany N. Saviers, *University of Central Arkansas*

Jennifer A. Moore, *University of Central Arkansas*

Intellectual/developmental disabilities are a diverse group of chronic conditions that are due to mental and/or physical impairments. People with intellectual/developmental disabilities (IDD) may experience problems with major life activities such as communication, mobility, social participation, and independent living (CDC, 2015). These problems may serve as barriers to participation in occupations, meaningful activities and provide individuals with a positive quality of life. According to the Centers for Disease Control (2015), there is an increase in the prevalence of individuals diagnosed with IDD. Therefore, it is imperative that evidence-based programming be developed to facilitate participation in occupation.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the efficacy of the performing arts in facilitating change in adaptive behaviors when used as an occupation. Acting Creates Therapeutic Success (ACTS), is a community-based program designed to provide those with IDD the opportunity to participate in the performing arts through the utilization of drama, dance, art, and music. Under the direction of occupational therapy practitioners, participants are encouraged to contribute in all areas of the creative process including story development, dance choreography, actor portrayal, costuming, set and playbill design; culminating in a performance for the public.

This efficacy study utilized a one-way repeated measures design over time (Portney & Watkins, 2009) to evaluate whether those who participated in ACTS demonstrated mastery in their person system behaviors. Schkade and Schultz (1992) defined person system behaviors as the sensorimotor, cognitive, and psychosocial characteristics present in the actions of an individual while performing a task. Participants were 13 adults ages 22 to 60 with IDD who were enrolled in ACTS for one hour a week for 12 weeks and met all inclusion criteria. Changes were measured by documenting the occurrence of the participant's person system behaviors on the Person System Behavior Taxonomy developed by the researchers (Moore & Brown, 2012). Based on the Theory of Occupational Adaptation, this taxonomy consisted of 45 behavior statements reflecting a categorization of primitive, transitional, and mature adaptive response behaviors in the sensorimotor, cognitive, and psychosocial areas of the person system. The Person System Behavior Taxonomy was completed every 4th session for a total of 12 weeks by rating the frequency of each behavior on a 5-point scale. In this study, improvements were found

in all three person systems with the greatest change occurring in the psychosocial person system. The findings support the use of the performing arts as a meaningful occupation among individuals with IDD.

As occupational science asserts, adaptation occurs when humans pursue and orchestrate occupations (Clark, et al., 1991). Similarly, research participants who were engaged in the occupation of the performing arts demonstrated a positive change in adaptation, thus supporting this assertion.

Attendees of this presentation will hear the results of an efficacy study regarding the benefits of using the performing arts with this population and its relevance to occupational science. Furthermore, attendees will leave with a repertoire of performing arts activities while understanding their use as therapeutic media in the enhancement of adaptive behaviors.

Key words: Performing arts, Occupation-based program, Occupational adaptation

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## **Family occupational engagement: Opportunities to promote resilience in young children who experience homelessness**

Debra Ann Rybski, *Saint Louis University*

Background and Rationale: The United States reported 2.5 million homeless children in 2013.

This 36% increase in the last decade represented one out of every 30 children (Bassuk et al., 2014). Children who were homeless or highly mobile (HHM) likely lived with a single mother, who experienced mental health problems, abuse or sustained trauma. Up to 26 % of preschool and 40% of school age children needed mental health services and showed delays in foundational skills of executive function and self-regulation (Herbers et al., 2014) critical for learning and participation at home and in school (Masten et al, 2014). Children who are homeless experience developmental risks, yet many demonstrate resilience, an adaptive response in the face of risk. Resilience displays adaptive feature that include at least one committed caregiver and child self-regulation (Cutuli & Herbers, 2014). These resilience factors support responsive “parent-child co-occupations” and meaningful “child occupational engagement”. Statement of Intent: Constructs of parent-child co-occupations to enhance resilience in children who are HHM will be shared from the author’s practice and research with families in transitional shelter living. Examples will describe an occupational science framework that highlights individual, family and collective community-based practice and social policy work in family homelessness. Argument: Supporting families in shelter programs ideally builds on the cultural capacities within families such as strong caring relationships provided by not only mothers, but also extended kin, and community members. Care giving is protective when it is responsive, sensitive and positive. Protective care giving can be further enhanced by a two generation approach to family support that emphasizes cultural strengths in promoting health (Lombardi et al., 2014). This, in turn builds resilience, diminishes risks and increases occupational potential in children who are homeless. This trajectory of support in families and children enhances lifespan health. In addition, the two generation approach builds a young child’s social inclusion, through parental support of a child’s increased complexity in daily occupations such as self care, literacy and play. This facilitates children’s capacities for executive function and self-regulation skills, key occupational strategies to foster successful social and school inclusion. Importance to Occupational Science: Occupational science and occupational therapy address family co-occupations “of and in natural environments” (Cutchin, 2012) to better understand and inform occupationally just and best practice in HHM children’s occupational development and future social inclusion. Conclusion: Children who are homeless face many obstacles to health promotion and educational success. Yet many children exhibit resilience despite adversity. Occupational science compels researchers to observe meaningful inter-connectedness in the study of mother and child occupations that can facilitate resilience in young children who experience homelessness. Thus, mother-child co-occupations are important scenarios to explore in the situated sphere. Furthermore, they provide insight for interdisciplinary policy and intervention agendas to address the social needs and occupational possibilities (Rudmin, 2006) of mothers and young children who experience homelessness.

Objectives for discussion:

\*Identify children’s self-regulation, social skills, and behavior challenges in homeless and highly mobile families.

\*Describe risk and resilience in the development of occupational performance for participation in young children who experience homelessness.

\*Discuss the importance of reciprocal, responsive caregiving, child self-regulation and family co-occupations that promote resilience in children who are homeless or highly mobile.

Key words: Homelessness, Resilience, Participation

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**Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> 2015**

## RESEARCH PAPERS

### **Is the transactional perspective useful to occupational science? What next?**

Antoine Bailliard, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

Virginia Dickie, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

Staffan Josephsson, *Karolinska Institutet Sweden, Sør-Trøndelag University College, Trondheim, Norway*

Valerie Wright-St Clair, *Auckland University of Technology*

Rationale: Philosophy, theory, and research are closely connected in a mutually constitutive relationship. Theories (formal and informal) offer frameworks of understanding through which

research is conducted. Theories inform what research questions can be posed, what data are to be collected, and how analyses should be conducted. On the other hand, research drives theory development by providing empirical data that generate, challenge, and/or confirm theoretical constructs. The tight relationship joining theory and research suggests that theories are “living” constructs that must be continuously modified through research. Taking this as our starting point, we will begin a critical dialogue on the relationship of the transactional perspective and research in occupational science.

The purpose of this forum is to examine what the transactional perspective has contributed to occupational science research, identify areas where the theory needs development, and consider how research has or has not contributed to the development and refinement of the perspective. We will also review the challenges and benefits to applying the transactional perspective in research and other forms of scholarship. To begin the discussion, we will explore and critique the concept of transaction as it has been used in several published studies. Our aim is to foster a scholarly dialogue that welcomes other theoretical perspectives and will contribute to theory development within occupational science.

- 1) Promote a critical examination of the relationship of theory and research using the transactional perspective.
- 2) Elicit participant reflections on applying the transactional perspective in research and other forms of scholarship.
- 3) Explore ways to encourage theory development in occupational science.

Objectives for discussion:

\*Participants will expand their understanding of the transactional perspective’s philosophical underpinnings as it relates to research.

\*Participants will discuss the utility and challenges of employing a transactional perspective in research.

\*Participants will identify areas in which the transactional perspective can be further developed.

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## **Revealing and representing complexity: A case for methodological creativity in occupational science**

Kendra Heatwole Shank, *Towson University*

Elizabeth Hart, *Carol Woods Retirement Community*.

Occupational scientists need to adopt methods that can represent the situational whole in which occupation unfolds. The purpose of this presentation is to argue for methodological creativity in the study of occupation. We suggest that using multiple methods in order to better understand the dynamic and complex nature of participation is consistent with a transactional theoretical framework, and argue that expanding methodological options will move our discipline forward in terms of the types of questions we can ask and the strength of knowledge we can offer. We use findings from two research studies about participation in older age, each employing a different methodology, as examples of how an expansion of methods leads to a richer understanding of occupation. First, we will show how GPS mapping of older adults' daily activities revealed embodied habits, time- and place-navigation and influences on occupation that were largely unrecognized or taken for granted by the participants. The maps, created over several weeks, offered a unique window into the negotiated, situated nature of participants' participation patterns. Second, we will describe a study of a community mall, where the occupations that occurred within the mall were studied primarily via naturalistic observation. Combining these observations with current and historical photographs, documents, and analysis of geographic and socioeconomic influences provided rich data about patterns of engagement within the mall and the tensions that shaped occupational possibilities for older adults. While both of these studies involved older adults, the methodologies—and the dimensions of occupation they reveal—are relevant to many other areas of inquiry. Additionally, both studies are strong examples of how a transactional perspective of occupation can prospectively inform research design. The potential for using such methodologies to ask system- and population-level questions is especially promising for research in areas of occupational justice and occupational possibilities, where the focus extends beyond the individual as the unit of analysis. We conclude with a discussion of these possible extensions, as well next steps for strengthening the rigor of these methods.

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### **Conceptualizations of occupation in relation to health: A conversation between theory and experience-near data**

Mark E. Hardison, *University of Southern California*

Kristine M. Carandang, *University of Southern California*

Lucía I. Floríndez, *University of Southern California*

Elizabeth A. Pyatak, *University of Southern California*

Olga Solomon, *University of Southern California*

Ruth Zemke, *University of Southern California*

Current occupational science theory describes a positive link between occupation and human health. This theory asserts that an essential unit of analysis for understanding health is in everyday human actions (Wilcock, 2006). Indeed, extant literature has identified occupation as a powerful facilitator of health and wellbeing. Consequently, basic theory in occupational science has favored positive implications for health based on engagement in occupations. However, experience-near accounts reveal that engaging in occupation has both positive and negative implications. Recent scholarship in occupational science has recognized this conflict and asserts that further understanding of the occupation-health link is necessary (Durocher, Rappolt, & Gibson, 2014). This panel will advance the discussion between experience-near accounts and basic theory by employing case examples from interdisciplinary research.

Presentation #1 will frame the discourse by providing a conceptual map (Feyerabend, 2011) of how occupational science has described the relationship between occupation and health, and identify opportunities for theoretical expansion. We will argue for adopting a dialectic perspective on the occupation-health link. To illustrate the need for expanded theory, a case example will be given employing data from a large mixed-methods ethnographic study ('Autism in urban context: linking heterogeneity with health and service disparities', NIMH, R01MH089474, 09/30/2009 - 08/31/2012, Solomon, O., P.I.). These data capture the experiences of a child with ASD and his family related to ways in which his medical and developmental conditions make participation in physical play both transformative and detrimental.

Presentation #2 extends this dialogue to the clinical care setting by challenging notions of the health-promoting effects of healthcare providers' recommendations within chronic disease management. This presenter will provide one exemplar case from a study on diabetes as a lens into the experiences of making agentic choices between maintaining the intensive requirements of diabetes management and engaging in developmentally normative, though potentially risky

activities. These choices are further examined using theoretical tools from medical sociology and anthropology combined with concepts introduced within occupational science literature.

Presentation #3 will describe the activities of a Latino gang. Drawing from a transactionalism framework and understanding the interrelatedness of contextual conditions to occupation (Dickie, Cutchin & Humphry, 2006). The presenter will discuss the affordances and constraints typical of a gang-inhabited neighborhood, and evaluate both the positive and negative health-related aspects of gangs. Additional excerpts from memoirs and first-hand accounts of former gang members (Rodriguez, 2005) will be analyzed to describe the occupational activities of gangs from a participant perspective. This presentation will critically appraise the limitations of a health-promoting view of occupation by framing culturally grounded information as necessary when describing possible impacts on health.

As these presentations will illustrate, occupations lead to flourishing for some aspects of health, but may also lead to some negative impact. The panel will demonstrate the importance of including both the positive and the negative impact into conceptualizations of occupation to better understand how it is linked to human health, wellness and participation.

#### Acknowledgements

Autism in Urban Context: Linking Heterogeneity with Health and Service Disparities (NIMH, R01 MH089474, 2009-2012, O. Solomon, P.I.)

#### Objectives for discussion:

\*Participants will ask questions of the panel to clarify or expand the presentation.

\*Participants will share other experiential examples critically appraising the health-promoting view of occupation.

\*Participants and panel members will explore reconciliation of these observations with basic theory of occupation.

Key words: Health promotion, Critical occupational science, Experience-near research

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## POSTERS

### **How does mindfulness impact the experience of healing in clinical environments?**

Mark E. Hardison, *University of Southern California*

Shawn C. Roll, *University of Southern California*

**Statement of Purpose:** Mindfulness interventions help patients focus nonjudgmentally on the experience of the present moment, to improve health-related outcomes. A growing body of literature shows mindfulness interventions to be effective at reducing pain, reducing anxiety, and enhancing well-being when provided by experienced mindfulness providers. Mindfulness interventions may be both directly occupational (e.g. the occupation of meditating) and indirectly occupational, that is, shaping the experience of other occupations (e.g. mindful eating). There is an emerging discourse in the occupational science literature that links mindfulness to occupation by emphasizing that mindfulness may interact with the process of doing, being, and becoming. However, there has yet to be a full exploration of how the occupation of mindfulness is experienced (e.g., directly or indirectly) when used in the context of rehabilitation for body-related disorders. The purpose of this study is to examine how mindfulness is deployed in physical rehabilitation and explore patient experiences on incorporating mindfulness as a direct or indirect adjunct to therapy.

**Methods:** Data were collected through a systematic process of reviewing literature and small pilot study. A systematic search of PubMed, CINAHL, SPORTDiscus, and PsycINFO was conducted using the search terms “therapeutics, rehabilitation, or alternative medicine” and “mindfulness”. No restrictions on year of publication or level of evidence were used. All original abstracts were screened and relevant full-text manuscripts were independently juried by both authors using the inclusion criteria: (1) described a mindfulness intervention, (2) relevant to occupational therapy, (3) targeted a body-related disorder, and (4) was provided in a rehabilitative context. The pilot study was conducted with eight patients receiving hand therapy for pain and deficits in hand function. Patients listened to an audio-recorded, mindfulness-based body scan prior to their standard therapy session. In a brief semi-structured interview, patients provided their perspective on the mindfulness intervention as it related to their therapy. Comments related to the participation in mindfulness as a direct occupation or as an adjunct to therapy were identified for this analysis. The methods of mindfulness intervention deployment identified from the literature search were compared and contrasted with data obtained from the patient interviews.

Results: Of 1524 original abstracts, 188 full-texts were read, and 16 studies met criteria for inclusion. In the literature, mindfulness interventions ranged from structured mindfulness-based practices separate from the rehabilitation process to mindfulness activities integrated within rehabilitation. Both methods produced positive outcomes and participants generally reported that mindfulness was acceptable to them as an intervention, as well as noting the activities may have helped them engage in the process or rehabilitation. The hand therapy patients expressed mixed opinions regarding mindfulness as a direct occupation versus the usefulness of mindfulness for moderating the rehabilitation experience.

Discussion: When used in physical rehabilitation mindfulness interventions are deployed and experienced as both a direct occupation and to indirectly impact the experience of rehabilitation. To maximize positive effects of mindfulness, further exploration is needed to better understand how patient preference, previous exposure to mindfulness, and other factors contribute to how patients experience mindfulness within rehabilitation.

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## **Occupations of drag queens and students with intellectual and developmental disabilities: Revealing the benefits of collaborative ethnography.**

Ryan Lavalley, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

Adam DePrimo, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

Occupational science researchers have looked towards ethnographic methods as a viable way to elucidate the complex emergence of occupation for both individuals and communities (Bailliard, Aldrich, & Dickie, 2012). These ethnographic methods have been founded both in classical ethnographic philosophy and, increasingly, more collaborative approaches. Classical ethnography has traditionally maintained an “objective” distance from the consultant, attempted to find objective truth, and prioritized the sensory experience of the ethnographer over that of the consultant (Clifford, 1983). Through this distancing, classic ethnography ineffectively attempts

to extract the subjectivity of the ethnographer and consultants from study findings, denying its unquestionable influence in the resulting understanding of the consultant experience. However, through collaborative ethnographic methods, the relationship between ethnographer and consultants is prioritized as a determinant of outcomes. In recognizing and leveraging this relationship, researchers can facilitate a continual construction of shared meaning that is a more appropriate and congruent representation of the experience of both ethnographer and consultant (Jackson, 1989). As experienced by the researchers, this more collaborative approach to research allowed for a richer understanding of drag as it emerged through a family of drag queens and enabled a more adequate representation of the occupational experience of students with intellectual and developmental disabilities during post-secondary transition. Various ethnographic approaches, which acknowledged and built upon the inescapable collaborative nature of ethnography, encouraged openness and reciprocal intimacy between researchers and consultants as they explored the dynamic and artistic expression of drag and the community inclusion of post-secondary transition students. By specifically offering increased opportunity for consultant feedback and review, researchers were first challenged to understand drag as more than simply “dressing as a girl,” allowing its conceptualization to burgeon into a complex and dynamic experience of occupation. Secondly, through collaboration with the charter school staff and participant observation with the students and vocational settings, multifaceted and emergent relationships that could be sustained through and after graduation began to surface. Through juxtaposition of the two researchers’ experiences with seemingly dissimilar populations, the benefits of collaborative ethnography with diverse populations are illuminated. By understanding both the challenges and benefits of sincere collaboration during ethnographic research, we were able to gain an invaluable tool for future exploration and study of occupation across a variety of communities.

Key words: Ethnography, Drag, Transition

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## Managing stress in college students with mindfulness

Donna M. Costa, *Touro University Nevada*

Yvonne M. Randall, *Touro University Nevada*

The years that young adults spend in academic pursuits is both exciting and overwhelming and is often characterized by a lack of occupational balance. The lived experience of college students includes high levels of stress leading to impaired physical and psychological health, diminished quality of life, poor sleep and decreased academic performance. Recent research studies have suggested that as many as many as 50% of college students experience significant levels of stress in the form of anxiety and/or depression. (Regehr, Glancy & Pitts, 2013) The National College Health Association reported a 50% increase in students reporting anxiety from 2000 to 2008 (Bergen-Cico, Possemento & Cheon, 2013). A study done by occupational therapy educators described stress levels in occupational therapy students as above average or the highest in their lives. (Pfeiffer, Kranz & Scoggin, 2008; College campuses around the world are developing programs to help students manage their stress levels, in an attempt to provide preventative interventions. Widespread interest in mindfulness-based interventions research has demonstrated the benefits of mindfulness in physical and psychological health. Jeffrey Arnett's theory of emerging adulthood was developed that is based on research done looking at young adults' developmental characteristics from ages 18-29. Some of these characteristics include a focus on identity exploration, instability, frequent changes in living situations, focus on self, and major life decisions about career path; they are optimistic about this stage in life and generally feel positive about all of the possibilities available. Psychiatrists Holly Rogers and Margaret Maytan at Duke University developed a mindfulness program for students based on emerging adulthood theory which they named Koru. The first randomized controlled trial of Koru (Greeson, Juberg, Maytan, James & Rogers, 2012) showed statistically significant improvements in perceived stress, sleep problems, mindfulness and self-compassion. The Koru program was implemented at a university in the southwest U.S. in the Fall of 2014 as a research study examining the effectiveness of the Koru Mindfulness Program on stress levels, sleep, self-compassion and mindfulness. A pre-test post-test cohort study design was used in this study. This presentation will describe how the Koru program was implemented and marketed, the response of students to the program, and the research findings that have emerged from the data analysis. The presenters will describe the components of the Koru program and the experiences of two occupational therapy faculty members in leading Koru groups. The implications for occupational science will be discussed as they relate to understanding the effects of the demands of college academic life. This may lead educators to increased awareness of the lack of occupational balance in students and may contribute to the development of interventions that promote healthier coping strategies in this population. Resources will be shared with participants for further learning.

Key words: Mindfulness, College students, Stress

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### **Survey of assessment tool selection and use by occupational therapists in maryland**

Amanda C. Jozkowski, *Towson University*

Caryn Brandel, *Towson University*

The American Occupational Therapy Association's Centennial Vision establishes evidence-based practice as a profession-wide priority (AOTA, 2006). Citing recent funding caps and healthcare reforms, Doucet & Gutman (2013) caution against reliance on site-specific instruments and tools from other disciplines, in favor of psychometrically sound function-based assessments that confirm to insurers occupational therapy's effectiveness and distinct contributions. Occupational therapy (OT) practitioners vary in their consideration of the following assessment principles in practice: (a) using standardized, evidence-based assessments; (b) using appropriate tools for diverse occupational needs; and (c) accurately administering and interpreting assessments (Coster, 2008; Piernik-Yoder & Beck, 2012).

Limitations to OTs' best use of assessment tools may include institutional barriers, lack of educational preparation, or other factors. The aim of this study was to explore current trends and therapist perceptions regarding their tool use in practice, by investigating three main questions based on the assessment principles above:

\*Are OTs using standardized assessments?

\*What factors influence OTs' assessment tool choices?

\*How confident are OTs in assessment administration and interpretation?

The study was conducted using an online survey. Participants (projected to be >50 licensed OTs working primarily with adult clients) completed a 55-item-maximum online survey with an adaptive format: the number of items presented was contingent upon participants' responses. Sample characteristics are presented with descriptive statistics, and inferential statistics were used to analyze data related to participants' assessment tool selection and use.

Preliminary results (n=34) indicate that only about one quarter of non-pediatric OTs in Maryland frequently consider the psychometric properties of a tool, and nearly 80% modify or adapt the tool from its standardized form for use in practice. Although access to a range of assessment tools varies widely by clinical site, and many therapists rated tool cost as a major factor in determining tool selection, 65% of respondents reported that the tools they do use provide "a comprehensive understanding of [their] client's holistic occupational needs."

In her 2008 Eleanor Clarke Slagle Lecture, Coster attested to the complexity of measurement in OT, as practitioners are measuring real people in their real lives. Therefore, practitioners must assume the responsibility to choose assessments that address clients' diverse and most pertinent occupational needs (Coster, 2008). Skillful assessment depends upon the evaluator's procedural adherence, awareness of psychometric properties, and understanding of their implications (Sok Mui, Palethorpe, & Rodger, 2012). This survey highlights the need for more consistent assessment guidelines in adult rehabilitation, which can only serve to enhance the rigor and trustworthiness of our interpretations and professional opinion with clients, funders, and colleagues in healthcare.

#### Objectives for discussion

\*Describe the benefits and barriers of adaptive survey design.

\*Discuss the evidence to support the use of standardized versus individualized assessment in occupational therapy across various settings.

\*Discuss the role of assessment for use and compliance with the Affordable Care Act and AOTA ethical principles.

Key words: Adaptive survey, Assessment, Professional issues

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### **The occupation of caregiving: The effects on family dynamics**

Jessica M. Andrus, *Nova Southeastern University*

The topic of caregiving has been well researched, yet is still significantly misunderstood and misrepresented in the health care field. Much of the research performed is centered around general caregiving. With focus on specific populations, ages, and functions, the research should and can be more in depth and useful in clinical, real-life situations amongst various disciplines. The field of occupational science has the ability to contribute significantly in breaking down the occupation of caregiving and developing specific research to assist overwhelmed, over worked, stressed, and fatigued family caregivers. Some consider caregiving a co-occupation, while other do not, and furthermore some consider in order to be a co-occupation it must meet certain criteria. The definition of co-occupation is reviewed and used to compare whether caregiving should be considered a co-occupation. Family caregiving is a meaningful, yet emotional and involved occupation. In this paper, several components of family caregiving after traumatic brain injury are analyzed and discussed. The effects on family dynamics after brain injury with family caregivers is explored and suggestions for both the caregiver and recipient of care are explored for improved rehabilitation and recovery. Caregiver support is found to be a large indicator of not only happiness and improved quality for the caregiver, but also for the recipient as well. Our society relies heavily on family caregivers, yet there are limited resources available to them, especially diagnosis specific resources. Family centered care is also discussed and the importance of family centered treatment across the continuum is stressed. After the acute phase of traumatic brain injury, the patient is typically transferred from acute care to an inpatient rehabilitation program. It is at that time that the caregiving role intensifies, advocating is much more important, but yet families feel that medical professionals simultaneously decrease communication and support about their loved one. The transition from medical staff to family caregiver is explored and discussed. The occupation of caregiving comes with high expectations from other family members, friends, and medical staff, however little training is provided. Occupational balance is important in the role of caregiving in order to reduce the effects of two disruptions, occupational disruption and biographical disruption. Understanding concepts from occupational science and integrating them with the occupation of caregiving can greatly benefit interdisciplinary health professions, caregivers, family members, and persons with traumatic

brain injuries or other illnesses, disabilities, or diseases.

Key words: Family caregiver, Traumatic brain injury, Occupational

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## Use of photographs in the study of occupations

Brightlin Nithis Dhas, *Hamad Medical Corporation*

Intent: The intent of this presentation is to continue the dialogue in the field of occupational science regarding the use of photographs in the study of occupations and occupational implications. Photographs can be regarded as arts personifying the photographer-artist or as records displaying reality, but meaning-making is a dynamic interaction between the photographer, viewer, and the photograph whereby meaning is actively constructed and not passively received (Schwartz, 1989). Photographs could be used as an adjunct for other methods of data collection, such as interviews, surveys, or questionnaires as a resource for eliciting more information through language, which in turn serve as data to be analyzed and reported or could be used as data in their own right (Harrison, 2002). Based on a review of three research methods that use photographs, namely Photoelicitation Interview, Photovoice, and Layered analysis of photographic content in addition to author's preliminary experience, use of photographs in studying mundane occupations, studying the properties of occupation in their own right, and addressing occupational injustice will be discussed.



Argument: Noting the struggle in the definition of occupation, Fox (2015) suggested scholarship to understand the fundamental properties of occupation. Hocking (2009) called for the study of occupations in their own right. With their ability to stimulate deeper discussions about taken-for-granted daily occupations, photographs are especially valuable in the study of various properties of daily occupations and explore meanings associated with their implications. (Hartman, Mandich, Magalhães, & Orchard, 2011).

The concept of occupational injustice, which originated in occupational science and accepted as a domain of occupational therapists is closely associated with social injustice and Photovoice method, which positions itself as the apt method to address social injustice can be used effectively to address occupational injustice.

Importance to occupational science: Occupational science concerns itself with the study of occupations and addressing issues resulting from the effects of occupations. Photographs can be a valuable tool in research of occupational science concepts.

Conclusion: Analysis of three visual research methods that use photographs and the nature of occupations provides insights regarding the usefulness of photographs in understanding the properties of occupations that are mundane and uniquely meaningful to the individual, to address occupational injustice, and to understand occupations in their own right.

Objectives for discussion:

\*Ethical considerations in the use of photographs in research

\*Practical limitations of using photographs in research, ways to overcome barriers

Key words: Photographs, Occupations, Visual research methods

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### **College students relationship to health and well-being: Through the lens of occupational perspective of health**

Sarah M. Waters, *Nova Southeastern University*

In 2011, there were 21 million full-time college students in the United States alone (U. S. Department of Education, 2013). In the past 10 years, full-time college student enrollment has increased by 32%, with the speculation that this number will continue to grow in the next 10 years (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). With these large numbers of higher education students, there is a lot of attention being given to the health and well-being of this population due to preconceived health disparities associated. Although, there have been many health disparities have been identified in the population of full-time college students, many students remain to have good health throughout his or her college years. However, when identifying prevalent health concerns of college students, the following are noted to be the most prevailing: mental health issues, decreased amounts of physical activity, poor nutrition, obesity, financial health, alcohol and drug abuse, sexual violence and health, and tobacco use (University of Minnesota, 2007).

Current research within the field occupational science has been limited in regard to this population. However, the fields of psychology and education have completed multiple studies regarding the well-being of students to facilitate academic success (Ekelman, Bazyk, & Bazyk, 2013). None of these studies considered the direct relationship between a college student's well-being and occupational engagement (Ekelman et al., 2013).

Wilcock's theory of Occupational Perspective of Health (OPH) provides a framework for the complex relationship between the person, occupation, environment, and well-being (Wilcock, 2006). The concepts of doing, being, becoming, and belonging, are central to the OPH, and can be applied throughout any population in order to describe the occupational engagement of an individual or group. This theoretical paper uses these concepts to discuss the health and well-being of college students through an occupational science lens.

To date, there is very little research on the implications and relationship of how occupational engagement can impact a student's health and well-being (Ekelman et al., 2013). There is also limited examination on how a student with a disability may be impacted by the same construct (Ekelman et al., 2013). More in depth and further research is recommended to address the accomplishment of occupational balance within the college student population and its impact on health and well-being (Wilson & Wilcock, 2005). It is recommended that the field of occupational science complete further research in order to assist the field of occupational therapy

in creating health promotion and prevention programs for college students.

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### **A community-based fieldwork exploring occupational justice: The student perspective**

Gabrielle Petruccelli, *Nova Southeastern University*

**Background and Rationale:** This presentation will examine the theoretical constructs and relationships between occupation, justice, and a person-centered approach as perceived by occupational therapy students in a community-based fieldwork. The dynamic nature of the healthcare system and the recent decline in placements for fieldwork present unique challenges to student learning. To meet the demand for these challenges, students are increasingly being placed in community-based settings for completion of their required fieldwork. According to Scaffa (2001), community based practice includes a broad range of health-related services including prevention and health promotion. Community-based practice is further defined by considering location, elements of professional autonomy, or social justice (Gat & Ratzon, 2014, p. e47). Wilcock (1998) introduced the concept of occupational justice. This term was meant to reflect the belief that societies should provide opportunities for people to engage in meaningful occupations that allow them to develop their potential and participate in their communities (Braveman & Suarez-Balcazar, 2009, p.15). Community based fieldwork has been found to provide students with opportunities to explore different cultures and overcome stereotypical thinking concerning minority populations (Gat & Ratzon, 2014, p. e48). While the benefits of community-based fieldwork have received considerable attention, the students' point of view has seldom been studied.

Statement of Intent: This paper discusses how students perceive their role as providers of occupation based activities in a subsidized housing complex for mixed populations including the elderly, immigrant population, and those transitioning from homelessness. The student experiences will be shared that support several theoretical assumptions from occupational science including:

\*Participation in a range of occupations for health and social inclusion

\*Diverse populations shall receive equal privileges in occupations.

\*Empowering people to engage to their greatest potential as members of a community

Franklin Towers is public housing for the elderly and disadvantaged operated through the Portland Housing Authority (PHA). The mission of the PHA is to provide and expand affordable housing and services that improve quality of life, build community, enhance safety, and promote personal success for the people we serve. Currently the nursing students from the University of Southern Maine offer blood pressure and glucose screenings at this site each week. As part of a senior project, the nursing students completed an interest survey of the residents and discovered a need for an occupational therapy presence. This collaboration began in January of this year with twelve occupational therapy students. Because this was a new community-based site, the occupational therapy students entered with little insight into their role. What they learned from the residents was that they felt unsafe, isolated and had limited resources to do the things they wanted to do. Identifying the injustices, the occupational therapy students created resident specific weekly activities to build community through empowering participation, increasing awareness of resources and aiding with increased self-sufficiency.

Discussion/implications as related to occupational science: As the profession of occupational therapy expands into community based practice, it is important to prepare future practitioners for the responsibility of addressing social and occupational injustices that may exist. This paper will use the lens of occupational science to explore the opportunities that community-based experiences offer students as they prepare for the profession of occupational therapy.

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### **The purna health management system: Prioritizing meaningful occupations for life balance**

Emily Schulz, *Still University*

The purpose of this research paper is to present some of the findings of a research study conducted to examine the effectiveness of the Purna Health Management System (PHMS) Teachings, which are based on ancient Vedic Philosophy and were developed by the Himalayan Master and Teacher Sri Sri Sri Svami Purna Maharaj (Svamiji). This paper focuses on one aspect of the PHMS: Life Balance (Stress Management) as it pertains to the importance of prioritizing and balancing personal and professional activities and goals and focusing energy on positive pursuits and hobbies. This research paper therefore targets the “translation of occupational science” conference theme in that it bridges the gap between Vedic Philosophy and Occupational Science.

Background: Recent occupational science literature suggests that having a fulfilling occupational repertoire is important in life balance (Håkansson, Dahlin, Ivanoff, & Sonn, 2006) and that engagement in meaningful occupations enhances well-being (Matuska, & Christiansen, 2008). Stress management is facilitated when people’s perceptions of what they want to do are in alignment with what they can do across various life domains (Matuska, & Christiansen, 2008). Similar to occupational therapy philosophy (Meyers, 1922) which underlies the importance of having a balance of work, rest, play, and sleep; and occupational science which supports occupational balance across life domains (Matuska, & Christiansen, 2008), the PHMS Teachings state that in order to live a wholesome fulfilling life, one must learn to prioritize one’s personal and professional activities (Spedding, 2012). The PHMS Teachings also state that along with that balance of work and leisure activity, however, the quality of the activity chosen is very important. According to the PHMS Teachings, wholesomeness, positivity, and activities which bring harmony to the self and others are central to balancing one’s life and decreasing stress (Spedding, 2012). This aspect of the PHMS Teachings is brought to light in the study findings.

Study Methods and Findings: Adult participants who were students of Svamiji were recruited via a sign-up sheet at three events held by Svamiji in April of 2014. A SurveyMonkey® link to an online anonymous survey with both quantitative and open-ended questions was emailed to 100 interested parties and 41 surveys were completed. In order to gauge life balance through engagement in meaningful occupations, participants were provided with a list of hobbies and interests and asked to check which activities on that list they were involved with during a 1-week period. The responses were analyzed for the total number of hobbies per week they engaged in and also for each specific hobby relative to: 1) demographic variables 2) engagement in the PHMS Teachings, and 3) self-reported: physical health, mental/emotional health, overall stress,

stress management ability and well-being; using Spearman's Rho Correlations. Findings suggest that household income, educational level and employment status may influence some of the types of occupations chosen by the participants, and further suggest that the implementation of the PHMS Teachings encourage engagement in volunteerism. Finally, certain occupations seem to be associated with the experience of increased stress and others with decreased stress.

Implications for Occupational Science: This study suggests that choice of personally relevant occupations is influenced by socio-economic status as well as spiritual philosophy and can be a factor in the stress level experienced by humans. As suggested by Wagman, Håkansson, and Jonsson(2014), further study of why and how people choose to engage in health-supporting occupations that facilitate life balance, support health and well-being, and decrease stress is recommended.

Key words: Life balance, Stress management, Occupational balance

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## Quality of life of transition age young adults on the autism spectrum and their families through an occupation-based lens

Barbara B. Demchick, *Towson University*

Lisa Crabtree, *Towson University*

Characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) present unique challenges to individuals and their families. Raising children with ASD is energy intensive and time consuming, and necessitates a loss of familial roles and productivity. Transitioning to adulthood is a particularly

challenging time for those with ASD and their families at a time when child rearing demands usually decline, parents of young adults with ASD are often faced with increased daily care taking demands. Parents report feelings of anxiety about their youth's vocational future, social participation, and safety, and engage in frequent advocacy activities (Graetz, 2010). This impacts family quality of life (FQOL), or the dynamic sense of well being of the family. When FQOL of a family is satisfactory, each member is likely to be emotionally healthier, and participate in activities at home and at work (Zuna et al., 2011)

Due to the increasing prevalence of ASD, the number of families with a young adult with ASD is also rising. This has led to a greater need for services for these young adults, as once they leave school where supports are mandated, service needs far exceed availability (OAR, 2009). In the absence of standard societal mechanisms for appropriate supports and services, families shoulder many of the responsibilities associated with finding services for their children (Lord & Bishop, 2010). This suggests the need to regard ASD as a public health concern and to place an emphasis on examining resources for adults with ASD and their families. This is particularly important since outcomes for these young adults for independent living and employment tend to be poor, with the majority demonstrating continued dependence on their families (OAR, 2009).

This theoretical paper will explore Family Quality of Life (FQOL) in families with transitioning youth with ASD, and will examine how daily roles and occupations of the family are influenced by having a young adult on the spectrum, based on a qualitative study of family quality of life from the perspective of parents of transitional youth with ASD (Demchick, 2012). It will also discuss the results of an intervention program for young adults with ASD which showed participation in a meaningful challenge course activity with typical peers enhanced quality of life of individuals and their families (Crabtree & Demchick, in press)

Participants in this forum will reflect upon how disability related supports influence participation in occupation, and will explore advocacy in families with transition age youth. Occupational balance and occupational justice will be discussed pertaining to family members as well as to the young adult with ASD. We will discuss the value of looking at disability related support and policy through an occupation-based lens.

Objectives for discussion:

\*Analyze the relationship between disability related support and participation in occupation for transition aged youth with autism and their families

\*Discuss occupational balance and occupational justice pertaining to family members as well as to young adult with ASD.

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## RESEARCH PAPERS

### **Occupations as vehicle for social change: Assessment of a multi-faceted intervention to reduce stigma towards mental illness**

Nikhil Tomar, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

Todd Jensen, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

Nelson Pace, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

Statement of purpose: Meaningful occupations are often utilized to initiate or advance social movements that address a social concern. For instance: many 5k or 10k runs are conducted on daily basis across the globe to raise funds and awareness for a broad range of health issues. Social media has also been used for similar purposes. However, insufficient evidence within occupational science literature exists that evaluates impact of such engagement in occupations on tangible outcomes of social change of desire. This study, conducted by an interdisciplinary team of students from Occupational Science, Social Work, and Public Health, engaged college students in a photography campaign on social media to reduce perceived public stigma towards mental illness (MI). Perceived public stigma can be conceptualized as an individual's perception of public devaluation and discrimination towards MI. Perceived public stigma is known to negatively impact service utilization among those who need services. Based on existing evidence, we hypothesized that creating a community-focused, visual-based, and multi-faceted intervention can help decrease perceived public stigma and increase service utilization among college students

Methods: The project was implemented at a university in a Southeastern state and was approved by the relevant Institution Review Board. During late 2014, between September 12th and



October 11th, we advertised and conducted a photography campaign in which participants (i.e. students / stakeholders/leaders/faculty) held signs showing their support for people experiencing mental illness. Participants engaged through voluntary participation using online social media and through booths around campus. Besides photography campaign, we also held education sessions and a panel with expert speakers to raise awareness regarding mental illness during the same time. Administrative data from student health services was collected to analyze the influence of the intervention on service utilization among students. We also conducted pre- and post-intervention surveys with more than 300 students, chosen randomly through university database, across 3 time-points. Data were analyzed using statistical tests including Pearson correlation, T-tests, and regression analyses.

Results: Preliminary analysis showed that healthcare service utilization before and after the intervention period was significantly less as compared to during the intervention ( $t(1.5) = -4.39$ ,  $p=0.024$ ). Survey data are currently under analysis.

Discussion/Implications: Sociological examination of social movements has added immense evidence pertaining to their initiation, organization, and consequences. However, at the heart of social movements lie meaningful occupations for those who engage in them. This study highlights community-based organization of such occupations and their influence on desired outcomes. Also, visual methods have been used in occupational science literature to highlight lived experience of minority populations. However, data from this study highlights employment of visual methods to motivate positive social change by engaging community members at large. Occupational scientists can use multi-faceted data sources and interventions, hinged on everyday meaningful occupations, to translate utility of occupations in addressing social concerns. Such evidence can further our understanding of occupation as a construct while addressing issues of social justice, which is a major thread in contemporary occupational science discourse.

Objective for the discussion:

\*Illustrate utility of occupations in initiating or supporting social change.

Key words: Stigma, Social change, Visual media

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### **Occupation-based fieldwork: The importance of an occupational science perspective when designing an international occupational therapy fieldwork experience**

Jill M. Innes, *Nova Southeastern University*

**Background:** It is imperative that today's health care professions adopt a holistic and occupation-based perspective that embodies health and wellness (Frank, 2012). The interdisciplinary work of occupational science and occupational therapy can offer a dynamic perspective to future scientists, therapists and educators. Interdisciplinary work care can be achieved in occupational therapy fieldwork experiences, and facilitate future clinicians to gain an understanding on the innate need of humans to be occupied by meaningful occupations.

**Purpose of the Study:** To examine the lived experiences of occupational therapy students who are participating in an international Level I fieldwork experience in Ibarra, Ecuador: May 2nd-May 11th, 2015. This study has been designed from an occupational science perspective. The goal of this qualitative study is to assess the students' perception of: occupation, cultural diversity, client-centered care, and the role they can assume as future clinicians.

**Research Design:** A phenomenological approach will be utilized to gain insight on the lived experiences of occupational therapy students who are participating in fieldwork abroad. Phenomenological research studies are beneficial for both occupational science and occupational therapy; and will help participants gain awareness of their experience abroad.

The qualitative data will be collected during the nine day fieldwork experience in Ecuador. The student participants will participate in three semi-structured interviews and a group debriefing. Three semi-structured interviews will occur on days: three, six and nine and will consist of informal and open-ended questions.

The semi-structured interviews and group debriefing will be digitally recorded, transcribed, and undergo thematic analysis. The research data will be themed according to the Braun & Clarke (2006) six steps of thematic analysis.

Trustworthiness will be ensured by triangulation. The semi-structured interviews and debriefing

will be coded separately, and a comparison of themes will be performed. Member checking will occur to ensure correct themes were discovered. A reflexive approach will be integrated into the data analysis; and will contribute to the insight gained on the participants' perceived experience.

Intent: The integration of occupational science into occupational therapy fieldwork can provide an enriched understanding of the occupations and lived experiences of students, and their awareness on culture and occupation. This study will illustrate a need for further collaborative research between occupational science and occupational therapy to ensure a global focus on occupation, health and wellness.

Conclusion: Culturally-inclusive research is required on behalf of occupational science and occupational therapy to meet the evolving needs of a globally connected environment. A client-centered perspective that is driven by the client, versus the influence of the therapist will revolutionize global occupational engagement (Martin, Martos, Millares & Bjorklund, 2015).

Contribution to occupational science: Collaborative efforts between occupational science and occupational therapy can ensure a global focus and culturally-inclusive health.

Objectives for discussion:

\*To engage in discussion on global occupations and need for culturally-inclusive educational experiences.

\*Discuss results from qualitative study: identify themes discovered from an occupational science perspective.

\*Dialog about future areas of study: collaborative ways to prepare future clinicians and scientists to meet diverse needs of global community.

Key words: Occupational therapy, Occupational science, International fieldwork

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## **The development of ADLs as occupations in OS and OT**

Kathlyn L. Reed, *Texas Woman's University*

**Background & Rationale:** In 1917, when occupational therapy was formally organized, there was no such area of occupation as ADL, daily living skills, or everyday living activities as we know them today. Occupational therapy practice was organized around scheduling daily events (habit training), work activities for the institution (cooking, clothing, gardening, making mattresses and brooms), reconstruction work (strengthening, work tolerance, curative workshop) and convalescent work (homebound work, sheltered workshops, homemade arts and crafts). Evaluating daily living skills began in 1935 with Margaret Sheldon's work, who was a physical educator (Sheldon, 1935) but did not have significant influence on occupational therapy until the 1950 time period (Livingston, 1950); some 30 plus years after the formal beginning of occupational therapy

**Statement of Intent:** The purpose is to illustrate the development of an area or category of occupation and how it became part of the organization of activities or tasks recognized as occupations in the practice of occupational therapy beginning in 1935 in education through development in physical therapy (Deaver & Brown, 1946) to the present statement in the Occupational Therapy Practice Framework, Third Edition (2014).

**Argument:** Occupation is an evolving area of study in and of itself. What is classified as occupation changes over time and will likely change in the future. This review of ADLs as a recognized area of occupation is designed as an example of how the study of occupation arises.

**Importance to OS.** OS is the major area of study designed to explore and bring to our attention how and where occupation is occurring and may have implications for the practice of occupational therapy. Reviewing the rise of ADLs as a focus of study may provide guidelines for recognizing and documenting changes in the focus on occupation in the future.

**Conclusions:** The study of occupation is a fluid and changing process influenced by what is viewed as important human activities at any given time and place. The study of ADLs illustrates the dynamics of changing views of occupation. Such changes will likely occur again. Can we learn from the past to illuminate the future?

**Objectives for the discussion:**

- \*Document and trace the beginning of ADLs as an occupation or group of occupations
- \*Explore the interdisciplinary process of identifying and clarifying occupation
- \*Illustrate how the study of occupation can change from initial recognition to current status

**Key words:** Activities of daily living, Physical demands of daily living, Achievement record

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### **Family practice and mealtime occupation: A literature review**

Ashley E. Mason, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

Scholars have been interested in the experience of participation in occupations related to family mealtime including eating and feeding as well as preparing, cooking and serving meals. Often, the study of family mealtime has been embedded in research of family daily routines with little focus on unpacking mealtime occupations themselves. This is problematic because it implies family mealtime occupations lack complexity and do not require further attention to detail. However this could be further from the truth. In fact family mealtime occupations are very complex and often involve transactions through multiple social contexts and social relations at a given time (Larson & Zemke, 2003; Mason, 2015).

Family mealtime occupations are conceptualized as components of family mealtime practice. They are co-constructed through family member participation in culturally meaningful activities and are constantly evolving based on the complexity of the social relations and social context of the given mealtime occupation. They include participation in meals as well as, procuring, preparing, and serving food and cleanup.

Morgan's (2011) concept of family practice suggests families are not a static group of people acting apart from each other, but a dynamic process complete with practices that are constantly changing and recreated. Family is the lens through which social activities are studied, not an individual family member as 'the voice' for describing family processes (Morgan, 2011). His concepts allow for a broader view of family processes and multiple methods for data collection and analysis. Therefore, Morgan's concepts of family practice were used as a framework to synthesize literature on qualitative family mealtime research.

The purpose of this paper is to provide a critical literature review of the occupational science research on family mealtime to better understand the state of qualitative research on this topic. The criteria included: qualitative peer-reviewed research articles that describe how family members organize and interact through their own family mealtime practices or studies that describe family mealtime occupations; research conducted in Western countries; and research that addressed an in-depth discussion of family mealtime occupations. Five of ten articles were omitted from the original search because while family mealtime was discussed, it was not the focus of the study. Data analysis included the exploration of theoretical approach, methods utilized, and characteristics of participants in each study. Findings included absence of identified family theoretical approaches, use of primarily interviews as methods, and perspectives of women, parents and caregivers as participants. There was little focus on occupation, little variety in methods, and more emphasis on the lived experiences of the individual.

With the lack of emphasis on occupation in these studies, moving forward it is important for family mealtime researchers to use appropriate methods, such as ethnographic methods through the lens of the transactional perspective (Bailliard, Aldrich, & Dickie, 2013), to closely examine the complex relationship of family mealtime occupations and their contexts within a given situation. This coupled with Morgan's concept of family practice will shift the focus from individual to the occupation and can provide more insight to the family mealtime research.

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## Cultivating mindfulness to alleviate boredom

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The purpose of this theoretical paper is to identify how an interdisciplinary collaborative effort between occupational therapists, occupational scientists, speech language pathologists, and

physical therapists can promote mindfulness to alleviate boredom. First, the paper will establish the sources of boredom, such as low situational demands (client has much higher abilities than demanded by a situation) or poor abilities (demands are too high for a client's abilities). Next, the paper will address if boredom is the result of occupational deprivation or the result of excessive opportunities. Martin, Sadlo, and Stew (2012) state "we have developed immunity to this onslaught, requiring even higher levels of sensory stimulation to reach our consciousness" (p. 59). Then, the research will delve into the societal aspects of boredom occurring in the United States, including "lack of engagement in productive occupations such as education and work" (Farnworth, 1998, p. 140). Finally, the paper will analyze ways to develop mindfulness to eliminate boredom and create life balance, by cultivating the core building blocks of intention, attention, and a mindful way attitude (Reid, 2011). This theoretical paper will conclude with real-world examples of how an interdisciplinary group can infuse mindfulness into occupation.

Key words: Boredom, Mindfulness, Occupational deprivation

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## First-generation college students: A study of experiences and academic success

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Statement of Purpose: Historically, first-generation college students have poor academic performance and low completion rates compared to their traditional counterparts despite funding and program efforts instituted in the 1960s through the Higher Education Act. The aim of the study is to identify patterns of academic performance and of predictors of academic outcomes

while capturing the experiences of first-generation college students specific to their perceptions of college life, utilization of supportive resources available to them, and perception of success. Ultimately, the purpose of this study is to understand what leads to academic success for first-generation college students in an effort to inform stakeholders about the most supportive constellation of services that will heighten performance, improve retention and graduation rates, and optimize occupational opportunities among first-generation college students.

**Description of Methods:** This study used a mixed methods convergent parallel design to capture the lived experiences of first-generation community college students while identifying differences and predictors in academic performance between this population and other students. The qualitative portion of the study explored the experiences of first-generation college students' successes, challenges, and utilization of resources through interviews with students, interviews with advisers, a focus group, and participant observation at first-generation events. Data were transcribed and coded multiple times using an iterative process with expert review of the data which yielded similar codes. Codes were categorized by commonalities in sentiment until themes emerged. A disconfirming case was used to Member checking was completed with a majority of the participants who verified accuracy of the themes. Using a concurrent technique, the quantitative portion of the study examined academic performance, retention rates, and test scores guiding course placement, and financial aid usage of 300 students; 100 traditional students, 100 first-generation students receiving support services, and 100 first-generation students without services. Quantitative data was analyzed using ANOVAs, crosstabs, and Chi square to compare the groups and identify predictors. The simultaneous data collection yielded results at the same time which were then integrated for a comprehensive understanding of first-generation college student successes and experiences.

**Report of the Results:**The results of the study suggest that first-generation college students enroll in college academically underprepared, enroll in far more developmental courses, complete fewer credits, earn lower GPAs, and are less likely to complete degrees or transfer out to a four-year institution. The predictive analyses revealed that receiving Student Support Services made first-generation students 73% as likely to transfer to a four-year institution and 52% as likely to graduate. Some of these results may be explained by the themes that emerged from the perspectives of the students and advisors. The themes, It's not the journey, it's the destination; Travel into a new world; and Using travel aids, suggest that first-generation college students enter college with a different perspective and motivation goals compared to those of their traditional peers, and they encounter a very different culture while enrolled, but make use of resources to support their performance.

**Discussion/Implications:** The existing, largely financial resources available to first-generation and low-income college students is not narrowing the achievement gap after decades of efforts. This approach has used a social justice paradigm to improve access and affordability in an attempt to equity rather than an occupational justice approach to enable engagement in higher education. An occupational justice lens will allow colleges to value different occupational



capacities and different occupational meanings. There are complex racial and socioeconomic disparities in higher education that cannot be resolved without considering the students as occupational beings to support their occupational engagement holistically. The results of this study suggest a paradigm shift is necessary in the provision of student support to extend beyond classroom and academic performance and into social and cultural strata to alter the expectations of performance society-wide. Only after these paradigm shifts are in place will all students, regardless of race or socioeconomic background, experience occupational justice.

Objectives for the discussion:

- \*Recognize the occupational injustices experienced by first-generation college students
- \*Understand some of the higher education experiences of first-generation college students
- \*Appreciate the gap left by society's social justice approach which may be resolved by an occupational justice approach

Key words: First-generation college students, Occupational justice, Higher education

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## **Interdependent identities of Filipina workers within a liminal sphere at statue square: An ethnography of a collective occupation**

Terry Peralta-Catipon, *California State University, Dominguez Hills*

Using an occupational science lens, this ethnographic study of a weekly gathering of Filipina workers at Statue Square in Hong Kong shows how use of space during their collective occupational engagement has become vital to the migrants' adaptation process. Study findings show how recurrent use of implicitly demarcated spaces led to the development of social structures with shared experiences, shared meanings, and shared identities resulting in its transformation into a liminal sphere that allow for multiple types of transformative experiences. Having interdependent self construals, the Filipina workers' liminal spheres become venues for the much needed social and cultural contexts for bridging and rebuilding disrupted and conflicted identities.

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## **Moving beyond body structures and functions: Foregrounding human capacity for occupation**

Nancy Bagatell, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

Jenny Womack, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

Since its inception, some scholars have described occupational science as the science that “underpins” occupational therapy and is the core body of knowledge for the profession (Clark et al., 1991; Mitcham, 2014). Over the past decade there has been interest in how occupation is considered in educational curricula. In 2006 Hooper introduced the profession to the concept of

subject-centered education, the subject in this case being occupation. Hooper et al.'s (2013) ground breaking, comprehensive study of how occupation is addressed in curricula has provided some preliminary examples of how occupation is conceived in educational programs. However, to date there are few descriptions in the literature of pedagogical strategies that prevent occupation from fading into the background while more peripheral subjects, such as those related to body structures and functions, are foregrounded.

Throughout the history of occupational therapy, what should be taught and how it should be taught has been a source of discussion and often a source of tension. Deciding on the balance between biomedical content, such as anatomy, with content reflecting the moral treatment philosophy, such as coursework in personal and mental hygiene and arts and crafts, was greatly debated by the founders of occupational therapy (Coleman, 1990). As the field became more entrenched in biomedical practices, knowledge of body structures and functions came to be viewed as core content in occupational therapy education programs. Often, anatomists and neurologists were responsible for teaching this content through lectures and cadaver labs, with little application to occupation or occupational therapy practice. While many programs currently offer courses in anatomy and neuroscience that are more closely tied to occupational therapy, the content of these courses are often considered foundational and perhaps separate from the core subject of occupation. For example, students might learn the muscles of the shoulder, consider the movement that results, and then apply this motion to a decontextualized activity. This paper will highlight one program's process of translating knowledge about the human capacity for occupation into coursework. We will describe the creation of courses that move beyond body structures and functions by embracing a subject-centered, that is, occupation-centered, approach. Rather than foregrounding body structures and functions, we begin with occupation and explore the human and nonhuman factors that facilitate and inhibit performance and participation in these occupations. The conceptual basis for this change and specific strategies for implementing curricular and course-specific reformation are discussed.

Objectives for the discussion:

\*What are the challenges to teaching a course such as the one described?

\*What are the challenges to learners in a course such as the one described?

\*How does knowledge about human capacity move beyond understanding anatomy and physiology?

Key words: Education, Subject-centered, Translation

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### **Web of life support for three philosophies of occupation**

Patricia Gailey, *California Institute of Integral Studies*

The intent of this theoretical paper is to propose that Capra's (1997) web of life be used as a foundational support for the three philosophies of occupation described in current literature about occupation. These philosophies include occupation as subjective experience (Pierce, 2001a, 2001b) occupation as transactional experience (Cutchin, 2001), and occupation as community health (Wilcock, 2006). Because each philosophy has a different focus, it is important for occupational scientists to understand the relations among them, so that the full identity of occupation can be better understood and utilized in practice.

The possibility of using the web of life as a foundational support for the three philosophies was discovered during a constructivist grounded theory study in which a broad spectrum of literature, including the three philosophies, was explored for life-supporting relevance. Capra's (1997) web of life was used as a lens to assure that relevance. As a model of deep ecology concerned with what sustains life, Capra's web is congruent with current trends to emphasize flourishing experience in the study of occupation. Because it is empirically grounded and consistent with most spiritual traditions, it also lends itself to concerns for evidence-based occupational therapy practice and for holistic proficiency. While this application of constructivist grounded theory methodology is not typical, it successfully supported the inquiry.

Web constructs include three criteria requisite to sustained life, details of the change process, including autopoiesis, and encompassing life systems. The three criteria, process of cognition, dissipative structure, and self-organizing pattern, are respectively congruent with Pierce's (2001) productivity, pleasure, and restorative qualities of occupation. Details of the change process,

catalytic loops, structural coupling, far from equilibrium, and bifurcation, align respectively with the themes of continuity, contingency, problem, and action that support the transactional perspective of Deweyan philosophy (Cutchin, 2004). The encompassing systems in Capra's (1997) web are consistent with Wilcock's (2006) descriptions of relations between community and individuals. Capra's (1997) autopoiesis is reflected in Pierce's (2001) expansion of capacity, Cutchin's (2004) construction of self, and Wilcock's (2006) definition of becoming.

Applied to occupational therapy concerns, the web of life offers a framework for the qualities that guide best practice. The web's empirical grounding supports the necessity for client-centered practice, meaningfulness of activities, and creative expression. Conversely, literature suggests that lack of adherence to these principles creates deterioration. While a balance between decay and thriving experience fluctuates naturally in the course of occupations, occupational therapy best practice aims to minimize decline and optimize healthy participation. Linking Capra's web of life to occupational therapy practice affirms current best practice principles as accurate and illuminates the importance of adhering to those principles.

Capra's (1997) web of life offers the breadth of support sufficient for all current philosophies of occupation, locating them in relation to one another and promising a better understanding of the larger identity of occupation. The web's depth, which links empirical grounding with spiritual values, reinforces the essential nature of occupational therapy best practice principles generated from discourse about spirituality.

Key words: Philosophies of occupation, Web of life

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## **An investigation of parent and infant occupational performance in the neonatal intensive care unit**

Ashlea D. Cardin, *Missouri State University – Springfield*

The earliest of occupational therapy interventions often commence in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), where mothers and fathers begin learning how to parent in unexpected surroundings and with unexpected complications. Worry about the infant's health, the unfamiliar setting, technology, medicine, and constant monitoring can interrupt normal family functioning and bonding. It is within this hyper-technical and complex environment that occupational therapists have the unique opportunity to harness the power of occupation and to support parents' engagement in their infant's care in order to achieve positive family outcomes (Altimier & Phillips, 2013). Family life in the NICU exists; however, it may look and feel very different from parents' expectations and dreams.

Recognition of the existence of NICU-based family life is fueling recommendations for a shift in neonatal occupational therapy practice. Although there will always be a need for specialized medical care and technology, occupational therapy has the opportunity to introduce and support family occupations in the NICU. In an effort to bridge the gap between the infant's medical fragility and emerging family life, neonatal occupational therapists look beyond the infant's person factors to address interrupted family engagement and participation, which in turn may affect family health and well-being.

This shift in thinking about infants as occupational beings and active participants in their environment coincides with the profession's transformation back to a "discipline focused on occupation" (Polatajko, 1994, p. 591). However, a limitation of occupation-based practice may be the lack of clarity surrounding what infant and family occupations exist in NICU. Without clear definitions of these constructs, occupational therapists may not recognize or value them as part of practice. While recommendations for neonatal occupational therapists' skill level, knowledge base, and practice have been established (AOTA, 2006), there is paucity of literature describing parent and infant occupations in the NICU. Thus, the innovative purpose of this presentation is twofold: to both inform and transform neonatal occupational therapy practice.

First, in an effort to inform, a qualitative research project was undertaken to provide occupational therapists, multidisciplinary NICU professionals, family members, and other stakeholders with rich definitions of parent occupations, infant occupations, and parent-infant co-occupations experienced in the NICU. Using a phenomenological approach, examples of occupations and themes emerged from inductive analysis of parent interviews conducted in a Level III NICU. Second, in order to transform practice and encourage a shift from a biomedical, sensory, or purely environmental view of the NICU infant toward one that assesses the infant and family in concert, this project employed a strong occupational focus and outlined the process guiding occupational therapist and client interaction in the NICU. The interactional process was framed

using the Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance (PEOP) Model (Baum, Christiansen, & Bass, 2015) and the Person-Environment-Occupation-Performance (PEOP) Occupational Therapy Process (Bass, Baum, & Christiansen, 2015) as theoretical foundations for neonatal practice.

Key words: Neonatal, Infant, Occupation

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## Working in multi-disciplinary teams: Drawing on the alone in a crowd experience

Mandy Stanley, *University of South Australia*

Introduction: Early founders of occupational science such as Ann Wilcock envisioned an inter-disciplinary science however occupational scientists are predominantly occupational therapists. One way of developing the field of occupational science is to participate in inter-disciplinary research teams on research studies bringing an occupational perspective to the focus of inquiry. Indeed having a inter-disciplinary team increases the chances of the project being funded in many large research grant schemes.

Intent: In this presentation I will share my experience of being part of an inter-disciplinary team

on a nationally funded project exploring loneliness and older people (Stanley, et al., 2010). I was the only occupational therapist/ scientist on this team along with nurse researchers, sociologists and aged care administrators. The project was also conducted across two states with the chief investigator in another country and thus three different time zones.

Argument: The presentation will focus on the strengths and limitations of working within an inter-disciplinary team. Whilst I anticipated that I could approach the data from an occupational perspective the data was far more occupational than I ever imagined and my team members could see that without adopting my occupational lenses. Some of the challenges of working as a team came from the different lenses that we brought to data analysis as well as the different expectations of the research process. These were resolved by keeping communication channels open and making space for robust discussions.

Implications for occupational science: Recommendations from this experience for occupational scientists are to have early conversations about publications and authorship and document agreements made, as well as establishing good working relationships to enable frank, honest robust conversations when differences arise. The strength of the inter-disciplinary team comes from the contributions from multiple perspectives to build the depth of findings.

Key words: Collaboration, Theoretical lenses, Inter-disciplinary

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## Family leave policy in the United States: Social determinants of family life course health

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Background: This theoretical paper uses results from a recent study of the occupation of breastfeeding to create a practical scenario illustrating how lack of access to paid family medical leave in the United States contributes to disparities in family health and exclusion from participation in early family occupations such as breastfeeding (1). The Life Course Health Development (LCHD) framework a theoretical framework examining contexts of health disparities (2), is introduced as a relevant and useful lens for examining social determinants of family health and occupation. In the United States, the lack of paid family leave from



employment is a social policy barrier that deprives families from health producing early family occupations. Factors such as lower levels of education and income, associated with risk of not breastfeeding, are also associated with having employment that does not afford family leave or other flexible work characteristics (3). These factors interact to create a nested environment of early adversity for families, who in addition to being deprived of participation in the health producing occupation of breastfeeding, also experience parent-infant separation and exclusion from other early family occupations. Complex social determinants interact to create early adversity for families leading to a trajectory of decreased occupational potential and poor family health across the life course (4). Thinking about occupation often underemphasizes the influence of social determinants, such as alienating social policies, on occupation across the life course. Recognizing and understanding how social determinants create barriers to occupational participation and performance will help inform occupational science and client-centered occupational therapy practice (5).

**Aim/Objectives:** The aim of this paper is to critically examine gaps in thinking about social determinants of occupation and demonstrate how the complex interplay between social determinants, including social policy, may lead to injustices in occupational participation and performance.

**Methods:** A practical scenario illustrating social determinants of breastfeeding was constructed using results from bivariate and multivariate analysis of contextual factors associated with extended, exclusive breastfeeding. Factors from the Infant Feeding and Practices Study II (IFPS II), a study described elsewhere, were mapped to the most appropriate LCHD context and used to create a scenario depicting the nested environment of disparity in family health and occupation resulting from lack of access to family medical leave.

**Results:** The LCHD framework is a useful lens for examining social determinants of occupation and identifying how lack of access to family leave creates a situation of exclusion from breastfeeding and occupational injustice.

**Conclusion and Significance:** Expanding thinking about social determinants of early family occupation to include understanding of how social policy may alienate or exclude families from occupations such as breastfeeding may enhance therapist-client interactions and outcomes of the occupational therapy process, and address gaps in current thinking that may contribute to occupational injustices.

**Key words:** Family occupation, Social policy, Occupational injustice

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### **Social action in occupational science: Pushing beyond interpretation and understanding**

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Debbie Laliberte Rudman, *University of Western Ontario*

Lilian Magalhães, *University of Western Ontario*

The role of “science” in occupational science, as well as its scope and contribution to society, has been contested. In doing so, scholars have taken up critical perspectives to expose the dominance of positivist/postpositivist notions of science that have bounded the discipline to objective and “value-free” knowledge production and limited its contributions to social reform (Laliberte Rudman, 2014; Magalhães, 2012). Furthermore, the incorporation of critical perspectives into occupational science has resulted in a re-conceptualization of occupation as a political phenomenon with a role in the reproduction of unequal power relations in society (e.g. Angell, 2012; Townsend, 2012). This disciplinary development has involved a shift in political awareness from a political discourse about the positioning of the discipline within health and/or social sciences, towards a discourse about the politics of everyday occupations and the potential of occupation for enacting resistance and social transformation. Although this critical work represents a valuable contribution from occupational science, it is still not sufficient to advance an emancipatory agenda in which the power of occupation is stressed to address the occupational injustices and inequities that are being deconstructed and critiqued (Farias & Laliberte Rudman, 2014). What is more, while exposing the role of occupation in oppressive practices is fundamental, social change may not arise unless we embrace new ways of thinking and doing research that break down the barriers between science/research and action. It is therefore vital to explore and discuss alternative philosophical and methodological frameworks of “science” or research that can provide a robust foundation to enact social transformation through occupation.

Consequently, the authors present an exploration of alternative philosophical and methodological frameworks that challenge the often taken-for-granted notions of science and evidence, and recognize that all inquiry is moral and political. Building on the existing theoretical incorporation of critical perspectives into occupational science, this presentation aims to advance the discipline beyond knowledge generation and critical questioning, towards a study of occupation that is socially meaningful, responsible and committed to social change. In addition, this presentation will advance current discussions within occupational science regarding the need for more critical and action-oriented scholarship by engaging the audience with the “qualitative revolution” that has been taking place in the social sciences and qualitative inquiry.

Objectives for the discussion:

\*Challenge foundational assumptions of what constitutes ‘good’ qualitative research and open up a discussion about research as a form of radical practice oriented towards social change.

\*Facilitate discussion regarding how to integrate and embrace occupation scholarship that is socially responsible and meaningful for all stakeholders.

\*Engage the audience with current discussions within qualitative inquiry and social sciences regarding research and action.

Key words: Occupational science, Alternative frameworks, Social transformation

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## **Changes in the occupational self: The occupational implications for people following concussion**

Gabrielle Petruccelli, *Nova Southeastern University*

An emerging area for occupational therapists that is gaining increased public awareness is the negative effects of concussion on occupational engagement and performance. Following injury, traditional treatment approaches focus on preventing further injury, and physical and cognitive rest with the ultimate goal of returning to previous level of participation. However, there is a clear gap in practice and in the literature with regards to an approach to treatment of clients with post-concussive symptoms in supporting their return to occupations.

The duration of post-concussive symptoms can vary widely from minutes to months, and even longer in a small number of cases (Grady, et al., 2012). It is this unknown period of recovery time in which individuals are at a higher risk of losing their occupational identities due to extreme changes in their habits, routines and roles. When a loss of occupation occurs, a cascade of negative events leads to further disengagement and an increased overall recovery time.

Eriksson, Tham, & Kottorp (2013), describe a phenomenon called ‘occupational gap’ and define this to mean a consequence of illness of injury where people perceive difficulties in performing some of their everyday preferred occupations (p. 152). The phenomenon of occupational gaps emanates from the concept of occupational participation defined by Kielhofner as engagement in work, play, or activities of daily living that are part of one’s socio-cultural context and that are desired and/or necessary to one’s well-being (Eriksson, Tham, & Kottorp, 2013, p. 158). Further explanation includes the gap that occurs between what an individual wants to do and what he actually does. This approach is different than the traditional deficit specific approach to intervention and it begins to get at the layer of occupation and personal meaning.

Occupational therapists are trained in activity analysis and to identify limiting patient factors or environmental barriers that prevent full participation in everyday occupations. The traditional role for occupational therapy intervention for people following concussion has focused on symptom management and environmental or activity adaptations. Specialty assessments focus on isolated client factors and include visual, perceptual and vestibular assessments. While occupational therapists are highly qualified to address these performance deficit level factors, there is an additional, less talked about role for occupational therapists. This paper attempts to bridge from traditional occupational therapy practice to looking at the occupational implications through an occupational science lens for people following concussion and their inability to access their preferred occupations.

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### **Grounded theory in occupational science: Misrepresented or simply misunderstood?**

Chetna Sethi, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

Intent: This theoretical paper discusses the different schools of grounded theory methodology and how each of them can be used to enhance our understanding of occupations. It also highlights previous grounded theory studies published in the *Journal of Occupational Science* to provide relevant examples of methodological limitations within occupational science in particular, and health and social sciences in general.

Argument: It has been suggested that with its close ties to symbolic interactionism and pragmatism, grounded theory methodologies are well suited to study complex occupations (Nayar, 2012). In addition, the focus of grounded theorizing on process (Charmaz, 2014) rather than pure description could move occupational scientists towards answering the questions regarding how and why people engage in occupations rather than simply what occupations they engage in. Although grounded theory techniques are rather universal in that they can be applied to many research questions, what makes grounded theory different in each of these scenarios is the representation of the findings based on different ontological assumptions (Charmaz, 2014). More specifically, although Glaser and Strauss's original statement of grounded theory implied a post-positivist tradition, some have argued that Glaser's orientation was highly positivistic (Cooney, 2010), and that he believed in an objective reality that could be discovered by a neutral observer. On the other hand, Corbin and Strauss (2014) have presented a post-positivist tradition of grounded theory, and Charmaz (2014) has promoted a relativist epistemology with an emphasis on constructivist grounded theory. Researchers must recognize these differences and employ the appropriate school of grounded theory to their research based on their own ontological and epistemological assumptions, and present their findings accordingly. Unfortunately, researchers ignore these subtle differences and the description of their methodologies is scant in many published occupational science studies claiming to use grounded theory.

Importance to Occupational Science: Occupational scientists can utilize grounded theory methodologies to advance the study of occupation in a number of ways. First, the focus can be shifted from description to process-oriented research. Second, the focus on theory development could advance the discipline for practical application. Finally, the appropriate application of grounded theory methodologies could enhance interdisciplinary collaborations.

Conclusion: The subtle differences among the schools of thought of grounded theory are often ignored by researchers, thus leading to presentation of research findings that are disjointed from the original goal of grounded theory methodology. However, if employed appropriately, grounded theory methodology can advance the scholarship within occupational science.

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## A power analysis of participation in occupations through social interactions

Nikhil Tomar, *University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

Intent: Provide a conceptual model proposing participation in occupations as a unit to analyze socio-political dynamics and power structures in a society.

Argument: Engagement in occupations is embedded in the context of a culture or an institution. Many occupations are flooded with multiple social interactions involving explicit language and conduct along with implicit thinking or reasoning. Further, we, as social actors, do not enter these situations as hollow entities but as cultured or habituated individuals. The daily social interactions we experience through occupations, shape our worldview by instilling normative expectations for conduct. For instance: many learn to pray before eating at a dinner table. The dinner table in the example is embedded within a specific culture or institution, such as in a religious household in the United States. Everyday occupations and social interactions position us in the power structures of society. For instance: Which social actor has the agency to recite the prayer and why? Who should stand or sit while doing the prayer? How do the consequences of

social interactions, such as not wanting to pray at the dinner table, provide us basis for our future engagement?

Use of governmentality perspective and transactional perspective to study occupations has provided guidance to study influence of higher power structures on occupations. However, there is lack of a conceptual model that can explicitly highlight the command of power structures on everyday occupations. This paper provides such a conceptual model (figure 1). The model was developed inductively using observation gained through my engagement in daily activities of a clubhouse for individuals with mental illness. The observations were part of an independent study class mentored by a medical anthropology scholar. The model was developed using symbolic interactionism from Goffman's perspective (1964) and theories of action proposed by Dewey (1922) and Bourdieu (1998). The model focuses on a slice of time and suggests four aspects integral to power analysis of an occupation:

- 1) agency to express ourselves in occupations that maintain or challenge existing power structures;
- 2) negotiation of power that occurs between social actors while engaging in an occupation;
- 3) thinking of each social actor during the doing, which is a reflection of his/her past familiarization with power structures;
- 4) and consequences that each social interaction has for the actors involved in the act and on the occupation itself.

Conclusion/Importance: A conceptual model providing indicators to assess power dynamics in social interactions, embedded within our everyday occupations, is proposed. Justice is a prominent part of discussions in the occupational science literature yet very few conceptual models exist that connect power structures that guide concerns of justice with participation in everyday occupations. Acknowledging this aspect can further our understanding of occupations and occupational justice by explicitly exposing influence of power differentials on participation in occupations. Using participation in occupation as a unit of analysis also provides ways to translate knowledge of occupations in assessing and addressing social concerns through interdisciplinary research.

Objective for discussion:

\*Analyze nature and role of occupations in maintaining or challenging power structures using sociological analysis of social interactions.

Key words: Social interactions, Power structures, Mental illness

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**Latino families' experiences of autism diagnosis and services: Using critical ethnography to explore opportunity as a concept for occupational justice**

Amber M. Angell, *University of Southern California*

Statement of Purpose: Building from the occupational justice literature and the capabilities approach of Sen (1999), this study seeks to develop the concept of opportunity as a way to operationalize occupational justice. In light of disparities in autism diagnosis and services for Latino children in the U.S., this critical ethnography explores how structural and interactional processes come together to affect the daily lives of Latino families of children with autism, and how opportunities related to the diagnosis influence wellbeing and human flourishing. The study questions are: What opportunities facilitate or hinder access to an autism diagnoses and services for Latino children? What opportunities for Latino children are enabled or constrained by an autism diagnosis and services?

Methods: This critical ethnography examined the experiences of 12 Latino families related to their child's autism diagnosis and services. Participants include 13 children with autism from 12 families; 19 parents; and one grandmother. The study took place in two phases over a period of 12 months. Phase 1 (3 months) retrospectively identified the pathways to an autism diagnosis and services for 12 children through two narrative-based audio-recorded interviews with their parents. Phase 2 (9 months) built upon Phase 1 to examine the experiences of 6 of these families through additional audio-recorded interviews and video-recorded observations in home, clinic, school, and community contexts. Record review of children's health records (Angell & Solomon, 2014) provided further triangulation of data. Analysis utilized an iterative process, moving back and forth between families' experiences and the broader sociocultural, political economic contexts in which they occur.

Results: Structural factors that hindered access in this cohort were most often seen in families' experiences with public school systems, while their experiences with a state regional center



demonstrated ways that a bureaucratic system can facilitate access to services. Interactional factors included relationships with extended family members; how they viewed the child's developmental delay had a significant impact on families. Family relationships with practitioners also influenced children's access to services; even when parents felt children were not receiving sufficient services, some were hesitant to disagree with administrators for fear of retaliation against their nonverbal children in the form of mistreatment. An autism diagnosis brought some families closer together and provided an explanation for the child's "misbehavior." In other cases, parents felt that the diagnosis caused them to distance themselves from family members who were unsupportive.

Discussion/Implication for OS: These findings provide a starting point for discussion about how to "operationalize" occupational justice. In this case, asking what kind of opportunities were afforded or hindered by an autism diagnosis provides a lens that foregoes the assumption that "more is better" and asks what families are actually able to do with an autism diagnosis. These findings also offer a way to capture both structural and interactional processes that contribute to health disparities, avoiding a deterministic or individualistic lens by focusing on daily family experience (Angell, 2012).

Objectives for discussion:

\*At the end of the session, participants will: 1) Identify opportunities that facilitated or constrained Latino families' obtaining an autism diagnosis and services for their children. 2) Identify opportunities were enabled or constrained by an autism diagnosis and services for Latino families. 3) Assess the utility of the concept of opportunity as a way to operationalize occupational justice.

Key words: Occupational justice, Opportunity, Autism

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 Presenter index

- Aldrich, Rebecca M.: 15, 41  
 Allison, Darcy: 18  
 Andrus, Jessica M.: 59  
 Angell, Amber M.: 83  
  
 Bagatell, Nancy: 16, 73  
 Bailliard, Antoine: 51  
 Battjes, Bryan: 23  
 Bax, Ami B.: 13  
 Blanchard, Jeanine: 32  
 Blanche, Erna Imperatore: 28  
 Bonsall, Aaron: 17  
 Boston, Tessa L.: 41  
 Brandel, Caryn: 57  
 Bulk, Laura Y.: 22  
  
 Cagney, Eimear: 39  
 Carandang, Kristine M.: 52  
 Cardin, Ashlea D.: 76  
 Carroll, Chloe: 39  
 Carsone, Blair C., 70  
 Champoux, Tessa: 23  
 Chang, Megan C.: 28  
 Chapleski, Kelli: 45  
 Chen, Jie: 43  
 Ciro, Carrie: 13  
 Costa, Donna M.: 56  
 Crabtree, Lisa: 24, 64  
  
 DeGrace, Beth: 13  
 Demchick, Barbara B.: 64  
 DePrimo, Adam: 55  
 DeVault, Marjorie: 4  
 Dhas, Brightlin Nithis: 60  
 Di'Ambrosio, Stephanie: 45  
 Dickie, Virginia: 51  
 DiMarino, Dorothy: 18  
 Doll, Kemi M.: 20  
 Duvnjak, Dario: 18  
  
 Easterbrook, Adam: 22  
 Ekelman, Beth: 18  
  
 EroPhillips, Adrienne: 20  
 Falcini, Ulli: 6  
 Farias, Lisette: 79  
 Feldkamp, Lauren: 23  
 Field, Sarah: 6  
 Fleischer, Anne: 10  
 Floríndez, Lucía I.: 52  
 Flynn, Sheryl: 11  
 Fogelberg, Donald: 78  
 Fox, Valerie: 5  
 Frye, Kelly R.: 38  
  
 Gailey, Patricia: 75  
 Ghanouni, Parisa: 22  
 Groe, Jessica: 45  
 Grundy, John: 15  
 Gupta, Jyothi: 27  
  
 Haertl, Kristine L.: 20  
 Hardison, Mark E.: 52, 54  
 Hart, Elizabeth: 52  
 Hoyme, Ashley: 36  
 Huynh, Linh: 7  
 Iannarelli, Paolo: 18  
 Ikiugu, Moses N.: 36  
 Innes, Jill M.: 67  
  
 Japanese, Yaiko Shibata: 30  
 Jarus, Tal: 7, 22  
 Jensen, Todd: 66  
 Jodzio, John: 18  
 Johnson, Christine A.: 44  
 Josephsson, Staffan: 51  
 Jozkowski, Amanda C.: 57  
  
 Kar, Laura: 24  
 Kennedy, Bonnie L.: 11  
 Kilkelly, Urusla: 6  
 Kirby, Anne V.: 8, 47  
 Knight, Jennifer: 45  
 Krajewski, Lindsey: 23

Lamb, Amy: 23  
 Lavalley, Ryan: 55  
 Lawson, Sonia: 45  
 Lee, Michael: 22  
 Lessans, Ashley: 45  
 Lui, Jordon: 7  
 Luttrell, Melissa: 45  
 Lynch, Helen: 6, 39, 40

Magalhães, Lilian: 79  
 Mallinson, Trudy: 32  
 Maratos, Marie: 7  
 Marterella, Abbey: 32  
 Mason, Ashley E.: 69  
 McDaniel, Brittany C.: 35  
 Moore, Alice: 6, 40  
 Moore, Jennifer A.: 48  
 Mroz, Tracy M.: 78  
 Mueller, Brittany: 36

O'Connell, Angela: 6  
 O'Neil, Aurelia: 15  
 Odawara, Etsuko: 30  
 Opini, Bathseba: 22  
 Osmann, Erika L.: 25, 35

Pace, Nelson: 66  
 Parham, Diane L.: 28  
 Parhar, Gurdeep: 22  
 Peralta-Catipon, Terry: 73  
 Perez, Natalie A.: 38  
 Pergolotti, Mackenzi: 20  
 Petruccelli, Gabrielle: 62  
 Pitonyak, Jennifer S.: 78  
 Pyatak, Elizabeth A.: 52

Randall, Yvonne M.: 56  
 Reames, Selena: 45  
 Reed, Kathlyn L.: 68

Reinke, Rochelle R.: 36  
 Roberts, Earllene: 22  
 Roll, Shawn C.: 54  
 Royeen, Charlotte Brasic: 29  
 Rudman, Debbie Laliberte: 15, 79  
 Rybski, Debra A.: 49

Saviers, Brittany N.: 48  
 Schulz, Emily: 63  
 Sethi, Chetna: 81  
 Shaffer, Tom: 45  
 Shank, Kendra Heatwole: 14, 52  
 Smith, Sarah L.: 13  
 Solomon, Olga: 52  
 Stanley, Mandy: 34, 77  
 Stav, Eli: 71  
 Stiles, Courtney: 46

Tan, Julia: 7  
 Thompson, MaryEllen: 33  
 Tomar, Nikhil: 66, 82

Vandegrift, Abby: 46  
 Voss, Maren: 43

Warick, Ruth: 22  
 Waters, Sarah M.: 61  
 Wilson, Elizabeth: 23  
 Withrington, Nina: 11  
 Womack, Jenny: 73  
 Wood, Wendy: 35  
 Wright-St Clair, Valerie: 51

Yatczak, Jayne M.: 23  
 Yun, Amy R.: 38

Zakrajsek, Andrea: 23  
 Zemke, Ruth: 52

## SSO:USA HISTORY

By Elizabeth Larson, 2002

History can be made in those mundane moments when neither the impact nor the influence of the future can fully be understood. In 1917 a group of scholars made history when they met to establish the profession of occupational therapy. Their vision of this fledging profession, focused on the core idea of occupation: to advance “occupation as a therapeutic measure,” “study... the effects of occupation upon the human being,” and disseminate “scientific knowledge of this subject.” Although this date and time marked a turning point, it was in fact a culmination of many individuals’ efforts and advocacy. As in any good story, the founding mothers and fathers could not have predicted the course the profession of occupational therapy would take and how long it would be before a discipline that specifically studied occupation was developed.

The founders’ vision served as the groundwork for what has emerged today as the discipline of occupational science. Interest in occupational science has surfaced on nearly every continent where scholars are joining together in study groups, on listservs and web pages, and at conferences to discuss the ideas and their applications to occupational therapy. This proliferation of vents on occupational science has surprised many but seems to be meeting a growing need among practitioners and scholars to better understand and use occupation therapeutically. “occupational science ... is developing in ways that we could never imagined or predicted-its shape and character are being formed by scholars who embrace it and the students who earn doctoral degrees in the discipline” (Zemke & Clark, 1996)

In November 2002, nearly 90 years later, another landmark event in the evolution of occupational science occurred. In Galveston, Texas, another group of scholars met to formally establish the first U.S.-based research society aimed at addressing the mission outlined by the founders. This event too marked the cumulative efforts of many individuals over several years. Since the First Annual Research Conference in 2002, the Society for the Study of Occupation: USA has continued the original mission of facilitating high quality scholarship. There were so many people who contributed and offered support, both financially and emotional, that it would be impossible to mention them all here. Suffice to say, it takes the effort of many to continue the mission.

SSO:USA Web Page Address: [www.sso-usa.org/](http://www.sso-usa.org/)

## PAST ANNUAL CONFERENCES

First: Research Conference

Inaugural Lecturer: Ruth Zemke

November 14-16, 2002

Galveston, Texas

Second: Research with an Attitude

Ruth Zemke Lecture in Occupational Science Lecturer: Elizabeth Yerxa

October 16-18, 2003

Park City, Utah

Third: Scholarship in the High Desert

Ruth Zemke Lecture in Occupational Science Lecturer: Jeanne Jackson

October 29-31, 2004

Warm Springs, Oregon

Fourth: Building a Community of Scholars Coast to Coast

Ruth Zemke Lecture in Occupational Science Lecturer: Florence Clark

October 27-29, 2005

Potomac, Maryland

Fifth: Spanning a Community of Scholars: Occupational Science Research from the Heartland

Ruth Zemke Lecture in Occupational Science Lecturer: Charles Christiansen

October 27, 29, 2005

St. Louis, Missouri

Sixth: A Community of Scholars: Crossroads of Culture and Occupation

Ruth Zemke Lecture in Occupational Science Lecturer: Graham Rowles

October 25-27, 2007

Albuquerque, New Mexico

Seven: Occupations Under the Sun: Expand Your Scholarly Horizons

Ruth Zemke Lecture in Occupational Science Lecturer: Clare Hocking

October 23-25, 2008

Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Eighth: Colorful Views of Research Methods in the Northeast

Ruth Zemke Lecture in Occupational Science Lecturer: Virginia Dickie

October 14-16, 2009

New Haven, Connecticut

Ninth: CSOS and SSO:USA Joint Occupational Science Conference

Ruth Zemke Lecture in Occupational Science Lecturer: Gelya Frank

October 14-16, 2010

London, Ontario, Canada

Tenth: Mountaintop Reflections: Learning from Ten Years as a Scholarly Community

Ruth Zemke Lecture in Occupational Science Lecturer: Doris E. Pierce

October 20-22, 2011

Park City, Utah

Eleventh: Occupation and Place: Sustainability, Balance & Occupation

Ruth Zemke Lecture in Occupational Science Lecturer: Malcolm P. Cutchin

October 4-6, 2012

Portland, Oregon

Twelfth: Occupation and Education

Ruth Zemke Lecture in Occupational Science Lecturer: Debbie Laliberte Rudman

October 17-19, 2013

Lexington, Kentucky

Thirteenth: Globalization & Occupational Science: Partnerships, Methodologies & Research

Joint International Conference in Occupational Science

Ruth Zemke Lecture in Occupational Science Lecturer: Elizabeth Townsend

October 16-18, 2014

Minneapolis, Minnesota

**SSO: USA Annual Research Conference Fort Lauderdale, Florida October 1-3  
Program-at-a-Glance**

**Thursday, Oct. 1**

<b>12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Registration</b>	<b>Lobby by Champ Carr Room 1st Floor</b>
<b>1:00 -5:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Pre Conference Institute</b>	<b>Champ Carr Room 1st Floor</b>
<b>5:00 -6:30 pm</b>	<b>SSO Board Meeting</b>	<b>Abeona Room 8<sup>th</sup> Floor</b>
<b>7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Welcome and Opening Reception</b>	<b>Himmarshee Room and 8<sup>th</sup> Floor Balcony</b>

**Friday, Oct. 2 -**

<b>7:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.</b>	<b>Registration and Breakfast</b>	<b>Lobby and Himmarshee Room 8th Floor Balcony</b>
<b>9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Merritt Room</b>	<b>New River Room A</b>
	<b>Valerie Fox</b> An Exploration of Social Participation for Young Adults Following A First Psychotic Episode	<b>Helen Lynch, Urusla Kilkelly, Angela O’Connell, Alice Moore, Sarah Field, and Ulli Falcini</b> Play and playspaces: exploring the outdoors and natural heritage among children aged 5 to 12
	<b>Anne V. Kirby</b> Using Multiple Methods to Demystify Influences on Occupation: The Case of Parent Expectations and Young Adults with ASD	<b>Anne Fleischer</b> Exploratory Study of Breast Cancer Survivors’ Lived Experience: Activity Engagement during and after Breast Cancer Treatment
	<b>Beth DeGrace, Sarah Smith, Carrie Ciro and Ami Bax</b> Exploring Families’ Perceptions of Family Health	<b>Kendra Heatwole Shank</b> Layered purposes of participation: What mapping methods can teach us about occupation
<b>10:30 a.m. -10:45 a.m.</b>	<b>Networking Break</b>	
<b>10:45 a.m. -12:15 p.m.</b>	<b>Merritt Room</b>	<b>New River Room A</b>
	<b>Nancy Bagatell</b> Families, Public Spaces, and Occupation: Understanding What Families Do at the Library	<b>Aaron Bonsall</b> “Away from Everybody for An Hour”: Reflections on Informants Experiences In Qualitative Research
	<b>Kristine L. Haertl and Adrienne EroPhillips</b> From Heuristics to Phenomenology: Lessons Learned in Studying the Healing Properties of Writing	<b>Mackenzi Pergolotti and Kemi M. Doll</b> Occupational science and gynecologic oncology: Sex, cancer, quality of life and women’s perceived occupational possibilities
	<b>Jayne M. Yatzak, Andrea Zakrajsek, Amy Lamb, Tessa Champoux, Bryan Battjes, Lindsey Krajewski, Lauren Feldkamp, and Elizabeth Wilson</b> Education to Practice: How do New Occupational Therapists Understand and Use Occupation in Practice?	<b>Lisa Crabtree</b> Perspectives Regarding Employment of Individuals on the Autism Spectrum
		<b>Beth Ekelman, Darcy Allison, Dario Duvnjak, Dorothy DiMarino, John Jodzio, and Paolo Iannarelli</b> The meaning and experiences of participating in a community-based wellness center from the perspective of individuals with a spinal cord injury
		<b>Laura Y. Bulk, Adam Easterbrook, Parisa Ghanouni, Bathseba Opini, Michael Lee, Earllene Roberts, and Ruth Warick</b> Occupational injustice on campus: Students with disabilities having to legitimize their roles
		<b>Erika L. Osmann</b> Occupational Therapy and Equine-Assisted Activities and Therapy: An Expanded View for Hippotherapy within Occupational Therapy

Lunch on your own and occupational balance time			
	Merritt Room	New River Room A	New River Room B
12:15 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.			
3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	<b>Jyothi Gupta</b> Volunteering: What it means for Rural African-American women	<b>Erna Imperatore Blanche, Diane L. Parham, and Megan C. Chang</b> Preferred Activities and Well Being: A Study of Occupation	<b>Charlotte Royeene</b> Renaissance of Adolescence in the Third Stage of Life
	<b>Etsuko Odawara and Yaiko Shibata</b> Translating collective occupations to Japanese culture: "Uchi (inside)"	<b>Abbey Marterella, Jeanine Blanchard, and Trudy Mallinson</b> The disparities dilemma: Critical considerations for aging research and practice	<b>MaryEllen Thompson</b> Morning Routines of Persons with Chronic Disabilities: Use of participant-generated photography for data collection
	<b>Mandy Stanley</b> Meta-synthesis: Exploiting the potential for occupational science	<b>Brittany C. McDaniel, Erika L. Osmann, and Wendy Wood</b> A Systematic Mapping Review of Equine-Assisted Activities and Therapies for Children with Autism: Implications for Occupational Therapy	<b>Moses N. Ikiugu, Ashley Hoyme, Brittany Mueller, and Rochelle R. Reinke</b> The Difference between Meaningful and Psychologically Rewarding Occupations: Findings from two Pilot Studies
4:30 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.	Break		
4:45 p.m. – 6:15 p.m.	Zemke Lecture	<b>New River A/B 8th Floor</b>	
7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Zemke Reception	<b>Himmarshee Room and 8<sup>th</sup> Floor Balcony</b>	
8:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.	Poster Session 1	<b>New River Rooms A and B</b>	
	<b>Kelly R. Frye, Natalie A. Perez, and Amy R. Yun</b> Exploring the Effects of Dance as a Therapeutic Media to Assess Attunement in Co-occupation between Primary Caregiver and Infant <b>Alice Moore and Helen Lynch</b> Play and playspaces: accessibility and usability of playground environments for children under 12 <b>Tessa L. Boston and Rebecca M. Aldrich</b> Translating occupational science knowledge about immigration using a framework of occupational justice <b>William B. Wrightsman</b> Impact of legalized same-sex marriage on occupational engagement and well-being: a pilot study <b>Maren Voss and Jie Chen</b> Health status after job loss- Does the reason for job change matter? <b>Christine A. Johnson</b> The Occupational Benefits Associated with Persons Caring for a Pet	<b>Anne V. Kirby PhD</b> The Occupations of Adulthood: Perspectives from Adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder <b>Brittany N. Saviers and Jennifer A. Moore</b> Facilitating Adaptation: The Effects of an Occupation-Based Program <b>Debra Ann Rybski</b> Family Occupational Engagement: Opportunities to Promote Resilience in Young Children Who Experience Homelessness <b>Emily Schulz</b> The Purna Health Management System: Prioritizing Meaningful Occupations for Life Balance <b>Barbara B. Demchick and Lisa Crabtree</b> Quality of Life of Transition Age Young Adults on the Autism Spectrum and Their Families Through an Occupation-Based Lens <b>Sonia Lawson, Kelli Chapleski, Stephanie Di'Ambrosio, Jessica Groe, Jennifer Knight, Ashley Lessans, Melissa Luttrell, Selena Reames, Tom Shaffer, Courtney Stiles, and Abby Vandegrift</b> Action research with a home-based training program to understand and address the occupational needs of caregivers of older adults	
9:15 p.m.	STUDENTS – TEA WITH ZEMKE	Abeona Room 8th Floor	
Saturday, Oct. 2			
7:30 a.m.-8:30 a.m.	Breakfast and Meet Committee Chairs	<b>Himmarshee Room and 8<sup>th</sup> Floor Balcony</b>	
8:30 a.m. – 10:00	Business Meeting	<b>Himmarshee Room 8th Floor</b>	
10:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.	Networking Break		
10:15 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	<b>Merritt Room</b>	<b>New River Room A</b>	<b>New River Room B</b>
	<b>Antoine Bailliard, Virginia Dickie, Steffan Josephsson, and Valerie Wright-St Clair</b> Is the transactional perspective useful to occupational science? What next?	<b>10:15-1045 Kendra Heatwole Shank and Elizabeth Hart</b> Revealing and representing complexity: A case for methodological creativity in Occupational Science	<b>Mark E. Hardison, Kristine M. Carandang, Lucia I. Florindez, Elizabeth A. Pyatak, Olga Solomon, and Ruth Zemke</b> Conceptualizations of occupation in relation to health:



		<p><b>10:45-11:15 Deborah A. Dougherty and George S. Tomlin</b> A Cultural Analysis of “Evidence” Emerging from Research and Practice Contexts: An Occupation of Evidence-Building?</p>	<p>A conversation between theory and experience-near data</p>
<p><b>11:45 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.</b></p>	<p><b>Deli Lunch and Poster Session 2</b></p> <p><b>Mark E. Hardison and Shawn C. Roll</b> How Does Mindfulness Impact the Experience of Healing in Clinical Environments? <b>Ryan Lavalley and Adam DePrimo</b> Doctoral Student Occupations of drag queens and students with intellectual and developmental disabilities: Revealing the benefits of collaborative ethnography. <b>Donna M. Costa and Yvonne M. Randall</b> Managing Stress in College Students with Mindfulness <b>Amanda Jozkowski and Caryn Brandel</b> Survey of Assessment Tool Selection and Use by Occupational Therapists in Maryland</p>	<p><b>Himmarshee Room and 8<sup>th</sup> Floor Balcony</b></p> <p><b>Jessica M. andrus</b> The Occupation of Caregiving: The Effects on Family Dynamics <b>Brightlin Nithis Dhas</b> Use of photographs in the study of occupations <b>Sarah Waters</b> College Students Relationship to Health and Well-Being: Through the Lens of Occupational Perspective of Health <b>Gabrielle Petruccelli</b> A Community-Based Fieldwork Exploring Occupational Justice: The Student Perspective</p>	
<p><b>1:00 p.m. -2:30 p.m.</b></p>	<p><b>Merritt Room</b></p> <p><b>Nikhil Tomar, Todd Jensen, and Nelson Pace</b> Occupations as vehicle for social change: Assessment of a multi-faceted intervention to reduce stigma towards mental illness. <b>Ashley E. Mason</b> Family Practice and Mealtime Occupation: A Literature Review</p>	<p><b>New River Room A</b></p> <p><b>Jill M. Innes</b> Occupation-based fieldwork: The importance of an occupational science perspective when designing <b>Blair C. Carsone</b> Cultivating Mindfulness To Alleviate Boredom</p>	<p><b>New River Room B</b></p> <p><b>Kathlyn L. Reed</b> The Development of ADLs as Occupations in OS and OT <b>Eimear Cagney, Chloe Carroll, and Helen Lynch</b> Play and play spaces: listening to children’s voices on designing for play in an Irish School Setting</p>
	<p><b>Eli Stav</b> First-Generation College Students: A Study of Experiences and Academic Success</p>	<p><b>Terry Peralta-Catipon</b> Interdependent Identities of Filipina Workers within a Liminal Sphere at Statue Square: An Ethnography of a Collective Occupation</p>	<p><b>Nancy Bagatell and Jenny Womack</b> Moving Beyond Body Structures and Functions: Foregrounding Human Capacity for Occupation</p>
<p><b>2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.</b></p>	<p><b>Patricia Gailey</b> Systems View of Life as a Support for Three Philosophies of Occupation</p>	<p><b>New River Room A</b></p> <p><b>Ashlea D. Cardin</b> An Investigation of Parent and Infant Occupational Performance in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit</p>	<p><b>New River Room B</b></p> <p><b>Mandy Stanley</b> Working in multi-disciplinary teams: Drawing on the Alone in a Crowd experience.</p>
	<p><b>Jennifer S. Pitonyak, Donald Fogelberg, and Tracy M. Mroz</b> Family leave policy in the United States: social determinants of family life course health</p>	<p><b>Lisette Farias, Debbie Laliberte Rudman, and Lilian Magalhães</b> Social action in occupational science: Pushing beyond interpretation and understanding</p>	<p><b>Gabrielle Petruccelli</b> Changes in the occupational self: The occupational implications for people following concussion</p>
	<p><b>Chetna Sethi</b> Grounded theory in Occupational Science: Misrepresented or simply misunderstood?</p>	<p><b>Nikhil Tomar</b> A Power analysis of participation in occupations through social interactions</p>	<p><b>Amber M. Angell</b> Latino families’ experiences of autism diagnosis and services: Using critical ethnography to explore opportunity as a concept for occupational justice</p>
<p><b>4:00 p.m. –4:30 p.m.</b></p>	<p><b>Closing Remarks</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Himmarshee Room</b></p>		